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FROM ACADEMIC RESEARCH TO PRACTICAL USE

Marketing

Intelligence

Review

# Emotions

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## in Marketing

Measuring  
Emotions

Passion Brands

Emotional  
Commercials

Feelings in decisions

Leaving  
brands

Stress



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# Editorial



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At first glance, emotions seem to be restricted to the private realms of our lives. But a closer look quickly makes clear that emotions play a major role in many aspects of business life as well – not just in our personal reasoning. In fact, emotions, markets and companies constitute a very broad field for investigation and researchers have been working on various facets of this complex, challenging, yet highly significant topic.

Are emotionally stable managers more effective than others? Are decisions guided by feelings better than strictly rational ones? Are emotions the decisive factor determining whether brands succeed or fail? Does a deep emotional attachment to a brand favor higher loyalty? Do consumers end their brand relationships because they feel disappointed, angry or simply bored? And do commercials have to be funny or emotionally stimulating to be convincing?

This special issue of the GfK Marketing Intelligence Review is dedicated to emotions in marketing and addresses some of these questions. I invited several renowned researchers to present their insights in this field. We begin with a brief explanation of what emotions are, looking at different theories and their implications for management. To round out our contributions, Mr. Meysenburg from BMW shares with us his experiences with his company's "Sheer Driving Pleasure" brand promise and other emotional aspects of the BMW brand.

Quite in the sense of our subject, I wish you an *enjoyable* dive into the world of emotion research!

Yours,  
Andrea Gröppel-Klein  
*Editor*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Gröppel-Klein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Saarbruecken, March 2014



# Contents

---

3

Editorial

6

Editors

7

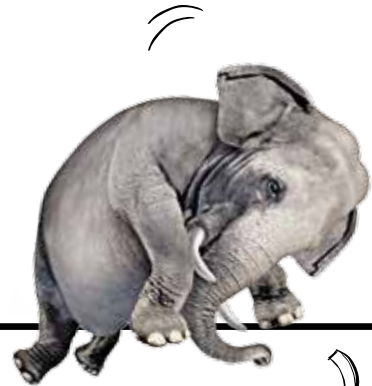
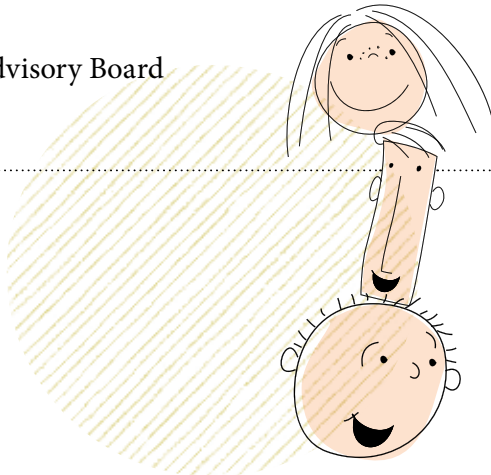
Advisory Board

8

No Motion without Emotion:  
Getting Started with Hard Facts on a Soft Topic  
*Andrea Gröppel-Klein*

Methods for measuring emotions are as diverse as the various theoretical approaches. The best approach needs to be selected on a case-by-case basis.

---



16

Stressed Out:  
How Stress Develops and How to Cope with It  
*Marcello Mortillaro and Klaus R. Scherer*

In principle, any event can be a stressor. The voice is particularly sensitive to stress and is frequently used to measure stress levels.

---

22

Feels Right ... Go Ahead?  
When to Trust Your Feelings in Judgments  
and Decisions  
*Michel Tuan Pham*

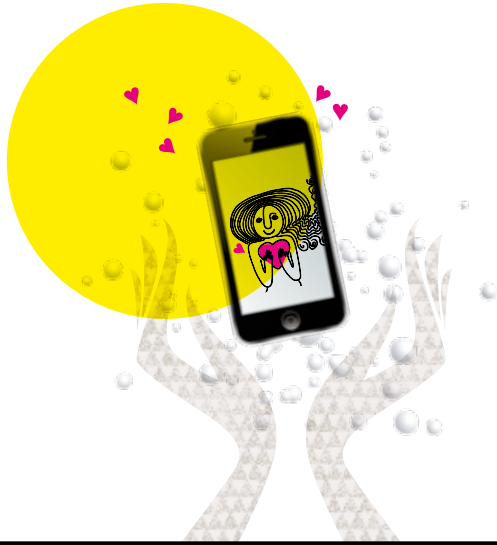
Subjective feelings can lead to improved decisions and better predictions.

28

Breaking Up is Hard to Do:  
The Ups and Downs of Divorcing Brands  
*Susan Fournier*

A brand breakup redefines the type of brand relationship and is part of a never-ending cycle of change.





## 34

There's No Passion; I Need Passion:  
Why Some Brands Excite Consumers So Much

*Andrea Hemetsberger*

True passion needs a pinch of magic in extraordinary and unique brand experiences.

## 40

Do Pleasant Emotional Ads Make Consumers Like Your Brand More?

*Maggie Geuens, Patrick De Pelsmacker and Michel Tuan Pham*

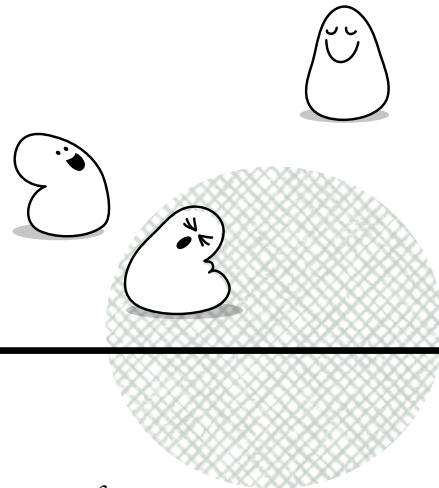
Emotional commercials are not only better liked, but also lead to more favorable brand attitudes.

## 46

Success with pleasure

*Interview by Professor Andrea Gröppel-Klein*

MIR interview with Helmut Meysenburg, Head of Brand Strategies, Market Research, Competition at BMW Group



## 52

Writ large on your face:  
Observing Emotions by automatic facial analysis

*Anja Dieckmann and Matthias Unfried*

The GfK EMO Scan can provide valuable insights whenever emotional reactions play a major role in the evaluation of marketing activities.

## 59

Executive Summaries

## 62

Next Issue Preview

## 63

Imprint

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Prof. Gröppel-Klein has published numerous articles in renowned international marketing journals and publishes the standard reference on consumer behavior in the German language, now in its 10<sup>th</sup> edition. (Kroeber-Riel, W. †1995) und Gröppel-Klein, A.: Konsumentenverhalten, 10. Auflage, 2013).

She has collaborated with the GfK Verein on various projects, providing academic support in the development of EMOSENSOR, an image scale for measuring emotions, among other projects.



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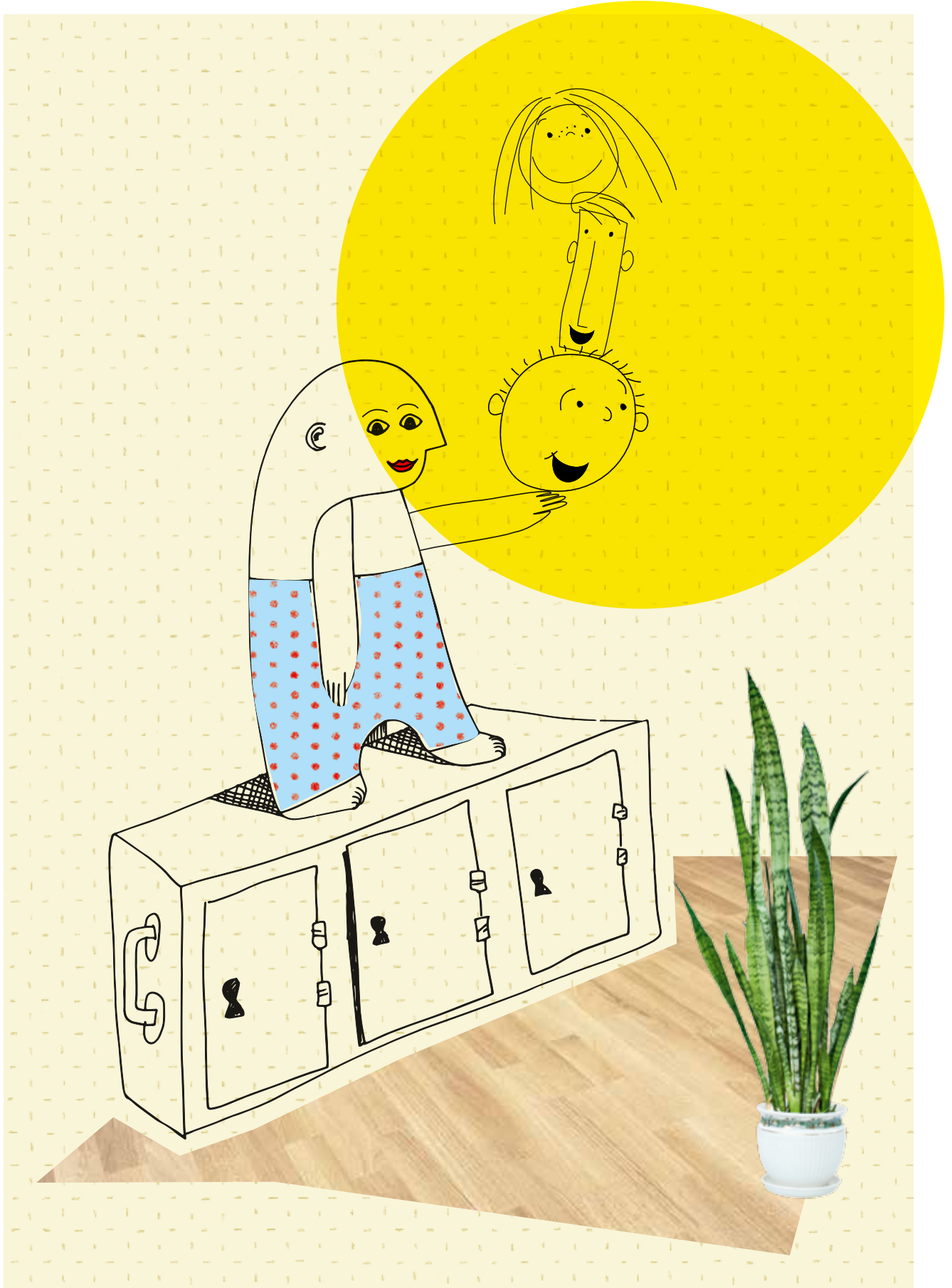
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# No Motion without Emotion: Getting Started with Hard Facts on a Soft Topic

*Andrea Gröppel-Klein*



## KEYWORDS

*Emotion Theory,  
Emotion Research, Emotion Measurement,  
Emotions in Marketing*



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## WHAT ARE EMOTIONS?

“Everyone knows what an emotion is, until asked to give a definition.” This quotation by the researchers Fehr and Russell illustrates the difficulty that science has in capturing “emotion”. To date, no standard definition of emotions exists. Common ground is a list of characteristics, according to which emotions are complex reactions to events that are relevant to a person’s subjective wellbeing. Emotions involve changes in physiology, behavior (including facial expression) and subjective experience. They may also depend on the conscious or unconscious appraisal of the triggering event and are associated with certain behavioral responses, partly formed by evolution. Last but not least they can be distinguished from other affective phenomena such as mood by their relatively fast onset, short duration and intensity. Three different traditions in the theory of emotions may be distinguished.

- > ***Emotions result from cognitive appraisal*** /// Appraisal theorists (like the researcher Lazarus) claim that emotions result from the comparison between a desirable or undesirable goal and the degree of goal attainment. Positive emotions such as happiness or joy are associated with the attainment of a goal; this usually leads to a decision to continue with the plan. By contrast, negative emotions such as frustration, anxiety or disappointment result from problems with ongoing plans and failure to achieve the desired goals. For example, marketing managers may feel

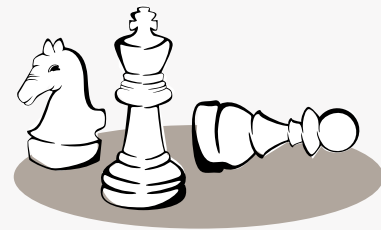
joy when their company is more profitable than expected; they may feel pride when they attribute the company's success to their own actions; or they may feel relief when sales of a brand are steady despite an economic downturn. Some emotions are easy to cope with, such as happiness after completing a major deal. Other emotions may need longer to work through, such as being turned down for a promotion at work. According to his theory, emotional experience requires the understanding that an event can have positive or negative consequences. Furthermore, people can anticipate and revive emotions by pure mental activity (called a "How do I feel about it?" heuristic), which in turn can lead to physical reactions.

> **Emotions are genetically preprogrammed** /// By contrast, biologically oriented theorists (like the researcher Zajonc) argue that emotions are genetically programmed. They can be triggered automatically and without higher cognitive processing by innate or learned stimuli, even before a person becomes conscious of these stimuli. With the help of modern brain-imaging technologies, neuroscientists have done impressive work in recent years shedding light on such automatic emotional processes and propose that genetically and neurochemically coded sub-cortical affect systems exist in the brain that can be characterized as our "natural" emotional action systems. When they are aroused directly – by local electrical or chemical stimulation, say – emotional reactions automatically occur. Thus, different emotional categories have their roots in distinct mechanisms in the brain and the body. Infants are born with this set of primary emotions that occur in response to specific stimuli.

## WHAT EXACTLY IS AN EMOTION?

### Appraisal theory

Leading appraisal theorists consider cognitive activity a necessary precondition for emotions. Emotions are derived from cognitive appraisals, reflecting whether the event is accompanied by the attainment of goals or not: If one of my meeples is kicked out (event), it gets more difficult to win (goal) and I get angry (emotion).



### Biological theory

Emotions occur automatically and unconsciously in sub-cortical areas of the brain, facilitating fast reactions without cognitive interpretation: Cuteness, for instance, always works.



### Constructivist perspective

A set of interacting brain regions are active during emotional experiences. We feel a bodily, often innate experience first, then we interpret what it might mean. Basic psychological operations of both an emotional and cognitive nature are involved.





> **Emotions are formed by an interplay of innate and cognitive processes** /// A constructivist perspective combines these two perspectives (this is also called the Lazarus-Zajonc-debate). Neurological studies present evidence that emotions can also result from mental anticipation and construction. The constructivist perspective helps explain how “everyday” emotions occur. It is argued that an interplay of cognitive and innate affective processes take place: First, we perceive bodily sensations, known as “core affects” (e.g., arousal, increase in heart rate); then, we try to find a meaning for these core affects by referring to prior experiences and mental representations of typical emotions such as joy or anger. For example, a manager feels uneasy when making a presentation about the company’s new marketing strategy. The manager may attribute this core affect either to fear, anger or illness according to prior experiences. This interpretation also depends on the focus of the manager’s attention and the context. For instance, if he sees someone in the audience yawn during the presentation, he may think that the audience member is bored, increasing the likelihood that he interprets the core affect as anger.

## OVERVIEW: TYPES OF EMOTIONS

*Primary emotions are innate,  
fundamental concepts.*

•  
*Secondary emotions evolve during  
the course of socialization.*

•  
*Emotion schemas are derived mainly  
through cognitive appraisal.*

## TYPES OF EMOTIONS

- > **Primary/Basic Emotions** /// Darwin postulates the existence of a number of fundamental, innate emotions, based on his observations of emotional expressions in many different human societies and across different species. Many later scientists also argue for the existence of a set of primary or “basic emotions”. Although there is disagreement about their precise number, these primary emotions (also called “first order emotions”) usually include joy, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, and surprise. They are characterized by special qualities such as cross-cultural transferability, development in earliest childhood, and accompaniment by certain physiological, mimic, and behavioral reactions. Basic emotions are fundamental to human mentality and adaptive behavior.
- > **Secondary emotions** /// They include emotions such as admiration, pride, remorse, shame, and awe. Some biologically oriented theorists argue that these secondary emotions are the result of a blending of basic emotions. For instance, the secondary emotion “awe” is characterized as a mixture of surprise and fear.

From a social constructivist perspective, on the other hand, secondary emotions are defined as products of social construction through the attachment of social definitions, labels, and meanings to differentiated conditions of interaction and social organization. In other words, human beings experience autonomic reactions of one or more of the primary emotions, and through a socialization process and socializing agents they learn to differentiate these experiences and to develop new, specific emotional states. Thus guilt is a socialized response to arousal of the physiological conditions of fear. Children, for instance, do not feel any shame when they are born; they learn this emotion during their development from the reactions of their parents.

- > **Emotional schemes** /// The term “emotion schemes” is used to define emotions that are derived by an interplay of basic affects with perceptual and cognitive processes. Emotion schemes give experiences a meaning, or a value and a direction and thus, influence mind and behavior. Emotion schemes are often elicited by appraisal processes but also by images, memories, and thoughts, and various non-cognitive processes such as changes in neurotransmitters and periodic changes in hormone levels. This term also meshes with the constructivist perspective.

## MEASURING EMOTIONS

Because of their complex origins – discussed above – measuring emotions for the purpose of marketing and advertising effectiveness research is highly challenging.

One option is to try to capture emotions through *self-reporting* or *standardized verbal scales*. Appraisal theorists tend to concentrate on capturing the conscious emotional experience using verbal methods, such as thinking-aloud techniques or questionnaires. Indeed, self-reporting is the only way to access subjects' subjective experience of their emotions, and complex secondary emotions cannot be identified in any other way. Standardized questionnaires (e.g., the Consumption Emotion Set) are easy to use and cost-effective, both for collecting data and analyzing it. But verbal methods are often criticized for inducing rationalizations in respondents and preventing intuitive responses. Questions arise such as whether respondents really have sufficient insight into their emotions to be able to answer the questions truthfully. Does the interview situation induce cognitive filtering of emotional experiences, thereby increasing the tendency to give socially desirable answers? And what unconscious or automatic components of emotional reactions are missed by verbal measurement approaches?

Unlike purely verbal questionnaires, *picture-based approaches* (e.g., the GfK EMO Sensor) try to facilitate intuitive access to emotions that are difficult to verbalize, or which respondents are reluctant to talk about. They can also give fresh impetus to the interview, increasing the subject's interest, motivation and response rate. For basic emotions, picture scales have the additional advantage of cross-cultural applicability. Their ease and efficiency of application is comparable to verbal scales. However, selecting and validating pictures requires special care: If it is not clear that the picture is a metaphor, it may be misinterpreted. For example, a picture of a woman smiling while riding on a carousel may be associated with the situation "being in an amusement park" rather than with the

emotion "joy". The pictures themselves can also trigger emotions and change the emotional experience being measured. It is thus important to ensure that the picture only shows an emotion (e.g., a frightened woman) rather than inducing the emotion itself (e.g., a scary picture of a hairy spider).

Biologically oriented researchers often prefer *neuroscientific methods such as measuring heart rate, electrodermal reactions or regional brain responses*. Observational methods for capturing emotional facial expressions are also popular, such as the Facial Action Coding System: these methods are objective and can capture emotions as they occur. Special software for automatic facial expression is currently being developed, such as Automatic Facial Image Analysis (AFA) and the Shore System, used by the GfK (p. 52) and others. These new tools are very promising, however, not all emotions have a unique physiological or mimic pattern and it is almost impossible to identify secondary emotions unambiguously.

»

No gold standard exists for capturing all aspects of emotions. Researchers should therefore take pragmatic criteria into account when choosing their measurement approach.

«



FIGURE 1:  
Example of a picture scale for measuring emotions

Envy



Boredom



Joy





## EMOTIONS IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND MARKETING

The power of emotions is evident in almost all areas of marketing and consumer behavior. Consumers often strive for “affect optimization”: At the end of the day, the balance must be positive. Thus products, advertisements and other people – everything that can make us happy – all have the potential to be highly successful. Hundreds of empirical studies exist demonstrating the importance of emotions in marketing and consumer behavior. Their findings include the following:

- > **Emotions may be the result of marketing policy** /// For instance, consumers may perceive happiness, surprise or curiosity on seeing advertising campaigns. Joy is important for experiential shopping and customer satisfaction. Often, consumers feel pride when they buy a luxury good or have had to save up to buy the item purchased. Anger is a typical negative emotion; it may be triggered when a consumer has to wait too long to speak to someone on a hotline. Likewise, boredom can explain a tendency to seek variety.
- > **Positive emotions have an impact on the perception of brands** /// competence, brand quality, brand attractiveness and sympathy. The article by Hemetsberger (p. 34) in this volume looks at the extremely positive emotional brand relationship of “brand devotion”, which involves making products sacred in order to fulfill a deeply rooted desire for spirituality. Fournier (p. 28), shows that negative emotions such as regret are involved in the termination of customer/brand relationships and can prohibit actual disengagement.
- > **Emotions influence decisions** /// For instance, perceived joy at the point of sale when seeing a beautiful product may be the reason for an impulse purchase. The perceived originality of a visual merchandising concept can evoke pleasure and in turn increase the amount of time or money consumers spend in the store.
- > **Emotions can also trigger behavior** /// People who are fascinated by advertising campaigns like to share their emotions with others. The Volkswagen commercial “The Force”, featuring a child dressed as Darth Vader, received more than 60 million hits on YouTube, making it probably one of the company’s most successful marketing campaigns ever. This shows the importance of the phenomenon of “sharing emotions”.
- > **Emotions shape relationships** /// in particular when affective states are enduring. A negative mood, for instance, can weaken the normally strong relationship between high involvement in fashion and appreciation of talking to a sales assistant. Emotions further shape cooperation between people: Trust facilitates cooperation whereas resentment leads to social exclusion. This is also true for interactions in social media.
- > **Emotions may favor learning and increase motivation** /// Many empirical studies test the impact of mood on cognitive information processing and memory during the learning phase. They show that consumers remember information more accurately when there is congruence between their moods while learning and while retrieving the information. Furthermore, positive emotions such as anticipated pride can increase consumers’ motivation to achieve their goals.
- > Anticipated emotions and trust in one’s **feelings can improve negotiations and predictions** about the future, as shown in the article by Pham (p. 22).
- > **Evoked emotions do not necessarily need to be all positive** /// Positive emotions make life worth living. However, if everything in life is positive, consumers may become bored. Commercial breaks are often overflowing with emotions of love, peace and harmony. In this context a commercial evoking mixed emotions – two conflicting emotions simultaneously – may be particularly effective. If the ad is “bittersweet”, or barefaced and courageous at the same time it may be more provocative and arousing than a purely positive campaign, leading to increased recall. However, the positive emotion must persist after a period of exposure in order for the advertising campaign to have a positive emotional conditioning effect on the brand (see Geuens et al. and their article on the relevance of evoked feelings on page 40).



## THE FUTURE OF EMOTION RESEARCH

*Mixed emotions* are an interesting field for future researchers and marketing executives. It is important to find out what conditions must be met for this strategy to be successful. This is also relevant for the interplay between program and commercial breaks. Some researchers recommend congruent media/commercial settings. An advertising campaign that picks up the same emotional atmosphere as the surrounding program is perceived a less intrusive than incongruent advertising campaigns, and are therefore expected to increase advertising effectiveness. But in other contexts congruency is less advantageous. For instance, when watching fear-arousing horror movies the relief given by a commercial break plays an important role. If the commercials evoke relief by distracting viewers with incongruent, fear-free stimuli and positive emotions, they might be more efficient.

Coping with ambiguous situations that evoke mixed feelings is also an interesting area for research; the article by Mortillari and Scherer (p. 16) in this volume presents some initial insights on this topic "coping with stress".

Other new fields are *emotions in social media and viral campaigns*. As discussed above "sharing emotions" is a relevant motive for consumers to upload funny commercials in YouTube or to vent one's anger in customer online reviews. Further research needs to investigate if emotions in online contexts work similarly as in more traditional media.

Further, there is a lot cooking in the field of *measurement of emotions*. New technologies such as functional magnetic resonance imaging or face readers allow new insights into the processing of emotions. Researchers will be able to observe whether specific stimuli automatically evoke distinct emotional reactions or detect conditions for successful emotional conditioning by combining a brand name with an emotional experience.

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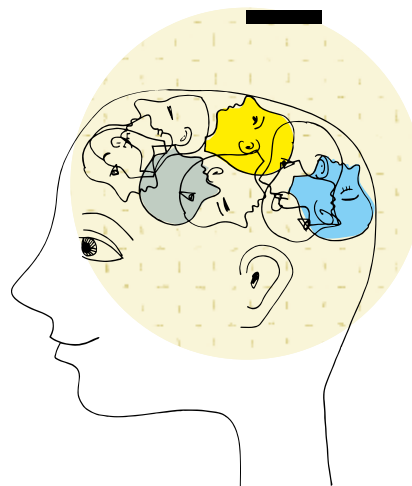
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# Stressed Out: How Stress Develops and How to Cope with It

*Marcello Mortillaro and Klaus R. Scherer*

■

**KEYWORDS**

*Stress, Burnout, Stress Measurement,  
Coping with Stress*

•

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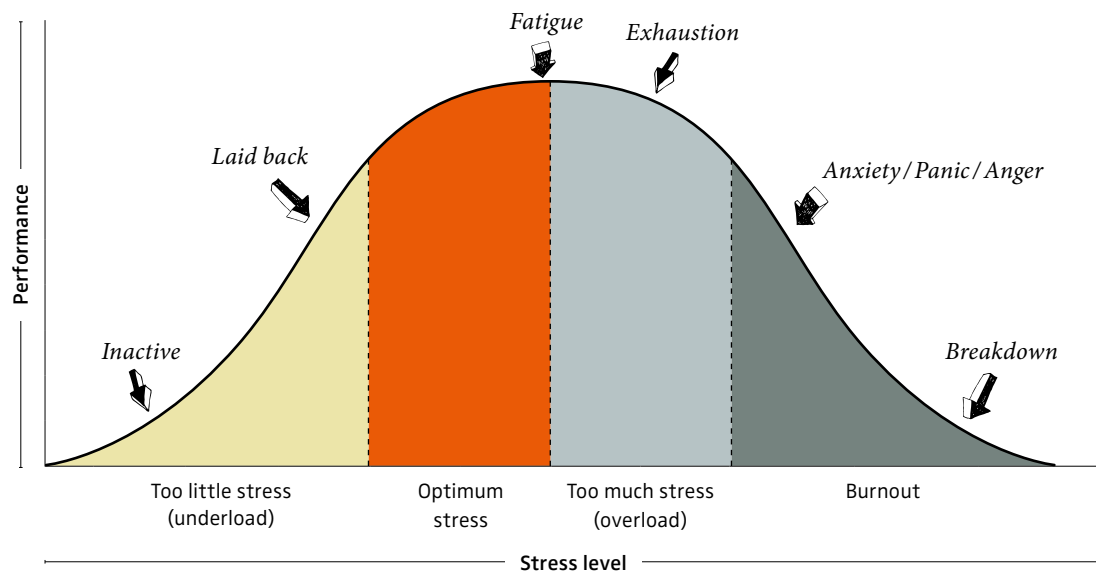
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Managers – whether working in marketing or not – increasingly suffer from stress. Burnout has become a widespread condition; even stress-related suicides are not unheard of. Yet stress can also be positive, spurring us on to tackle challenging situations. Reason enough to take a closer look at how stress develops and how we can best cope with it.

**Stress as an emotion** /// The word “stress” is used to refer to many different experiences caused by many different situations. It is sometimes described as a psychological phenomenon, sometimes as a physiological state. In fact, attempting to separate the two is misguided: Like all emotions, stress has both a psychological and a physiological component. Stress is not some special syndrome, but the result of an intense emotional state that persists for an extended period of time. In this respect it differs from most emotions, which are short episodes.

Behind most stress responses lies a situation that elicits an emotion. If the individual cannot cope with this situation, or the situation lasts too long or becomes more intense, the emotion can turn into “emotion-stress”. For example, people normally feel apprehensive before important meetings with clients. But if they experience this anxiety continuously over many days, it can become “anxiety-stress”.

**FIGURE 1:**  
Stress level and individual performance



**Characteristics of stress as an emotion** /// So, before we delve further into the nature of stress, we need to establish what emotions are and what this means for stress in particular. Emotions concern objects that are relevant for the individual. If the individual experiences an emotion, then the stimulus that caused the reaction is important for that individual. For instance, an important meeting with a client is more likely to elicit stress than a routine team meeting would.

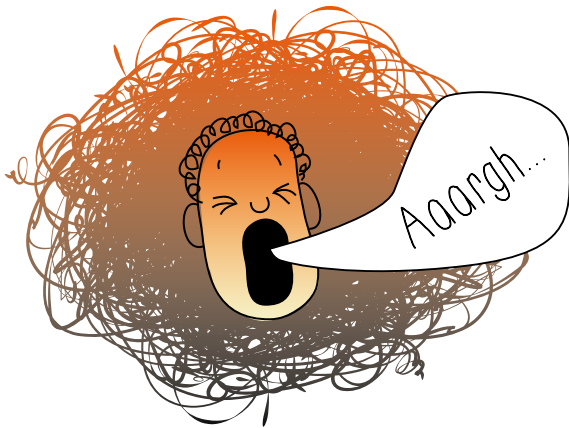
Emotions have evolved because they help us cope with challenges. For example, anger triggers the body's resources for a physical fight. Signs of anger, such as facial expressions and voice quality, have the potential to discourage aggressors. A stress response, if it does not become too strong, can give us the energy to cope with a difficult situation. The stress felt by someone giving a presentation before a large audience, for instance, can make him or her more focused and alert (Figure 1).

Emotions trigger reactions in our various bodily systems. The stress response is also accompanied by strong physiological changes; it has a pervasive effect on our organism and on functions such as memory and learning.

Emotions have "control precedence": They take priority when it comes to controlling behavior and experience. This is the main reason why emotions influence our judgment, decisions and behavior.

**Stressful feelings are subjective evaluations** /// According to the appraisal theory of emotions, our experience of stress depends entirely on how we evaluate the circumstances impacting our individual well-being. In principle, any event can be a stressor: What matters is our *subjective evaluation* of the event, its relevance for us. Certain events can produce complex emotional states, such as a mixture of anger and worry. If this emotional state is prolonged, it can lead to stress.





»

Modern technology now makes it easy to study voice and speech markers, which provide a continuous indication of stress and other emotional states.

«

A single situation can be a powerful stressor for one person yet entirely irrelevant for another. For example, soccer fans watching their team play react differently than someone who is not interested in soccer does when watching a game. Situation appraisal is continuous: We are constantly scanning and evaluating what is going on around us to see whether the stimuli are relevant, what their implications for us are, how well we can cope with them and what their normative significance is for our self-image, values and moral rules.

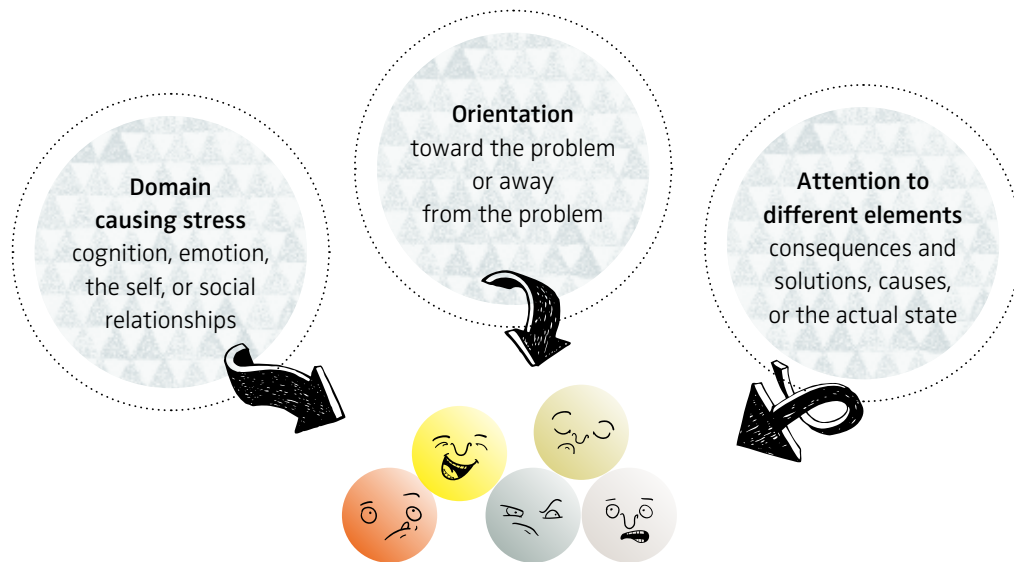
**Identifying stress – what the voice reveals** /// Stressful situations have a direct effect on different components of our emotional experience: our physiology, “action tendency”, expression and subjective feelings. There has been a significant amount of research into expressive components such as facial expression and signs of stress in the voice. Indeed, the voice is particularly sensitive to stress.

The two major determinants of vocalization are respiration and muscle tone, both of which are heavily influenced by emotions and stress. More than 30 years ago, using primitive technological equipment, researchers already noted how the tension caused by emotions and stress is reflected in the sound of the voice.

One of the most interesting vocal parameters is fundamental frequency, commonly described in terms of pitch. Research shows that stress is often associated with an increase in fundamental frequency, although there are many individual differences linked to personality. Other parameters also change, such as volume and energy distribution across the spectrum. Modern technology now makes it easy to study voice and speech markers, which provide a continuous indication of stress and other emotional states.

**Coping with stress** /// Consider the following example: Two people working for a company are told to carry out a task that is critical to the future of the company. The first person sees the task as a challenge that she can cope with: She believes she has the necessary personal resources and skills and is proud to have been chosen for the task. Her colleague, however, sees the task as a threat: He is afraid that he doesn’t have the necessary personal resources or skills and is very worried about having been chosen for the task. If this emotional state persists over the following days, he will experience a strong negative feeling of stress. While the first person is likely to experience positive stress – stress that gives her additional energy to tackle the task, the second person has a problem. But what can he actually do to reduce his feelings of stress?

**FIGURE 2:**  
**Three dimensions of coping strategies**



»  
 In principle, any event  
 can be a stressor: What matters  
 is our subjective  
 evaluation of the event.  
 «

Of course, no one-size-fits-all solution exists. The effectiveness or “functionality” of a strategy depends on a person’s coping potential – their perceived ability to cope with a situation. The individual, the situation and the concrete social context in which the stressor occurs are all crucial for choosing a response.

Psychologists use the term “coping processes” to refer to the concrete strategies that individuals use to handle such events and their consequences. Coping strategies have three dimensions (Figure 2). These different dimensions also provide the key to understanding how we can best cope with stress.

It should be noted that the three dimensions are not strategies in themselves; they describe possible reactions by individuals. Coping strategies are typically focused on more than one dimension. In our example of the two colleagues assigned a challenging task, the second person might try to change the situation by seeking support or advice on how to perform the

task successfully: This is a “domain-focused” coping strategy that is oriented toward the problem. Alternatively, he may change his personal goals or values, telling himself: “Well, my career is not that important to me and I want a new job anyway.” This coping strategy is focused on elements other than the actual domain, and is oriented away from the problem.

Another form of coping strategy is rumination: the act of continuously thinking about the event and its causes. Rumination addresses cognitive aspects of the stressful situation, is oriented toward the problem, and focuses on the actual situation and its causes. A contrasting strategy is emotion suppression, which aims to regulate the emotion by adopting an avoidance attitude toward the actual problem and its causes.

These different strategies are not mutually exclusive; often, people use multiple strategies at the same time. Not all coping strategies are good for individual well-being or favor a cooperation-based work culture, either. For instance, people with lower levels of emotional competence tend to use more dysfunctional coping strategies, often with a negative effect on their emotional stability. If they are managers, they tend to over-externalize or blame others for failures. They also tend to use other dysfunctional strategies such as wishful thinking, bolstering self-esteem and substance abuse. Such managers more frequently experience worry, show lower emotional stability and demonstrate fewer positive work values, such as the value of intellectual challenge.

#### **How can companies reduce stress for their employees?**

/// One option is to organize training sessions that actively address emotional competence and stress management. They may soon also be able to use new technology to identify staff suffering from stress: Different research groups are currently working on software applications that can detect individual stress levels via cellphone by analyzing vocal characteristics. Companies could use these applications as a tool for immediately managing workplace health, either giving stressed salespersons standard recommendations for reducing stress or by having trainers personally coach them over the phone about how to deal with stress. Although, of course, the problem remains that it may be the cell phones that are causing them stress in the first place ...

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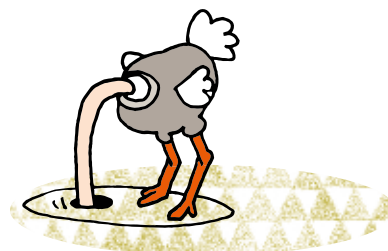
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# Feels Right ... Go Ahead? When to Trust Your Feelings in Judgments and Decisions

*Michel Tuan Pham*

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KEYWORDS

*Emotions, Feelings,  
Subjective Experiences, Decision,  
Negotiation,  
Prediction, Forecasting*

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General advice on decision-making in a business context usually suggests collecting all relevant information on a topic, then carefully balancing the pros and cons, and deciding based on the outcome of this analysis: Good decisions flow from a rational analysis. Managers and business students are trained to mistrust their subjective feelings, which are portrayed as misleading and are instead encouraged to provide “objective” arguments for their decisions.

But what seems to be crystal clear to rational minds at first glance is being challenged by new research on the role emotions play in decisions, negotiations and forecasts. This research shows that subjective feelings are an integral part of many judgements and decisions and can even lead to *improved* decisions and better predictions.

Rather than making decisions on the basis of a rational assessment of potential outcomes, people often rely on how different options make them feel. This is especially the case when people see a connection between the judgment or decision to be made and the feelings that they have. In a consumer context this happens, for instance, when products are purchased for fun (like a book to read at the beach) rather than for functional purposes (like a textbook one buys to prepare for an exam). In relationships this happens when people evaluate whether to go out with someone or whether to have some friends over for dinner. People also tend to rely on their feelings whenever their ability to process information is reduced, for example, under time pressure, distraction or overabundance of information.

## THE TRUST-IN-FEELINGS MANIPULATION

In this procedure, participants are divided into two groups and subtly encouraged or discouraged to rely on their feelings.

- > The high trust-in-feelings group is asked to think of **two** instances in which they trusted their emotions when making a decision and the outcome was favorable. Because it is relatively easy for most people to think of a few such instances, this group tends to infer that their feelings are trustworthy and rely on these feelings.
- > The low trust-in-feelings group is asked to recall **ten** such instances. Because it is typically difficult to think of many such instances, this group tends to infer that their feelings are not to be trusted and avoid relying on these feelings.

This procedure has been shown to change people's trust in and reliance on feelings without changing people's involvement in tasks, their mood or confidence in their own judgment.

Reliance on feelings also depends on how much individuals trust in what they feel. People who believe that their feelings generally point them toward the "right direction" in a decision or prediction are more inclined to rely on it. Such trust is learned from a history of success and failure in reliance on feelings and from what is considered right in the person's social and cultural environment. Advice ranges from "always follow your heart" to "the heart has its reasons of which reason knows nothing". However, by manipulating individual success and failure histories, the level of trust in feelings can be experimentally altered. And this is exactly what Profes-

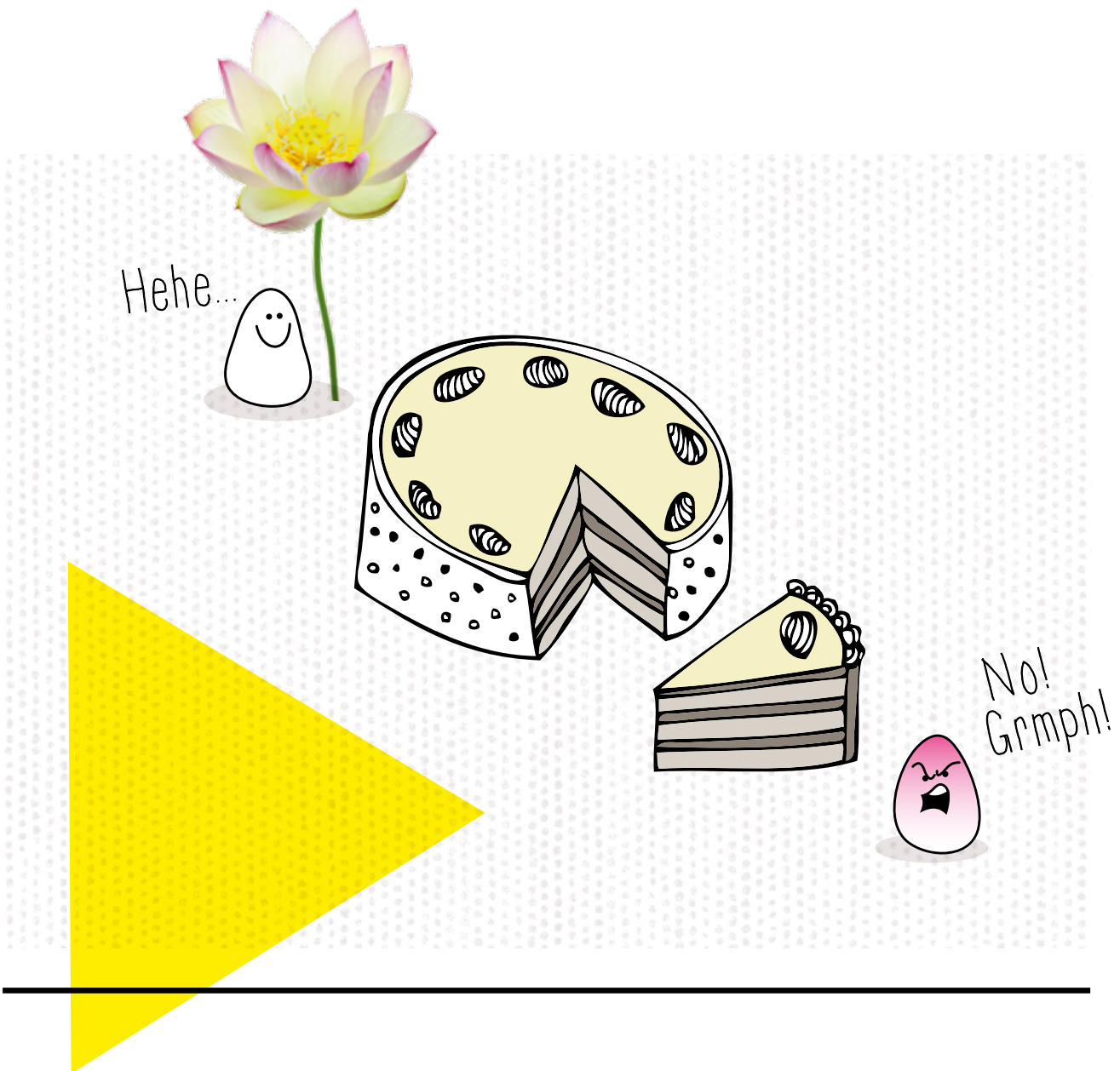
sor Michel Pham and his collaborators did to explore the role of feelings, using a novel research technique known as "the trust-in-feelings manipulation".

**Feelings in negotiation** /// To test the effects of relying on feelings in a business-like context, the researchers invited participants to play a classic negotiation game called the ultimatum game. In this game, two players have to split a sum of money. One player, the proposer, makes an offer that the other player, the responder, either accepts or rejects. If the responder accepts the offer, the money is split accordingly; if the responder rejects the offer, both players receive nothing.

In one experiment proposers received the trust-in-feeling treatment before playing the game against supposedly real online responders – in fact a preprogrammed computer. "The results were intriguing", Pham says. "The participants who were encouraged to trust their feelings offered somewhat less money than those who did not trust their feelings, but their offer still fell in a range that was likely to be accepted. As a result, participants who trusted their feelings ended up making more money than those who did not trust their feelings." Those who trusted their feelings apparently selected their offer based on whether the amount "felt right" given the situation rather than on the probability that it would be accepted or rejected.

In another experiment, the researchers administered the trust-in-feelings manipulation to responders in the ultimatum game. The results showed that high trust in feelings amplified the tendency to reject unfair offers but did not attenuate the high probability of accepting fair offers. According to Pham, "while at first glance it may seem irrational to reject any offer, however small, in the long run the tendency to reject unfair offers but accept fair offers helps negotiators by signaling to the other party that one cannot be taken advantage of."

Thus, a high level of trust in feelings guides decision-makers to do whatever "feels right," even if it contradicts short-term economic arguments or is against immediate material self-interest. Relying on such emotional instincts may also simplify the negotiation process. "When the participants were primed to trust their feelings, they saw the negotiation in simpler terms, rather than as a complex, strategic task", Pham explains. Interestingly, negotiators who were guided by their emotions did not fare worse than the others financially: "Under different versions of the ultimatum game, they ended up with more money than their calculating counterparts, suggesting that emotional decision-making may be not only simpler but also more lucrative."

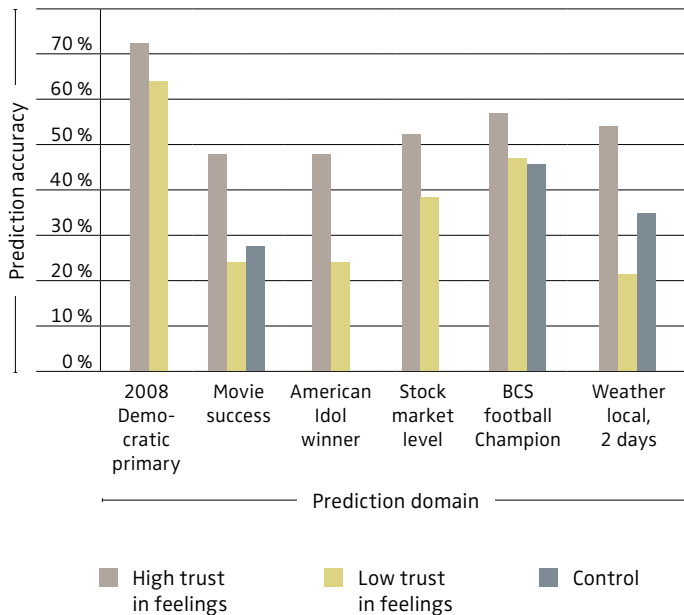


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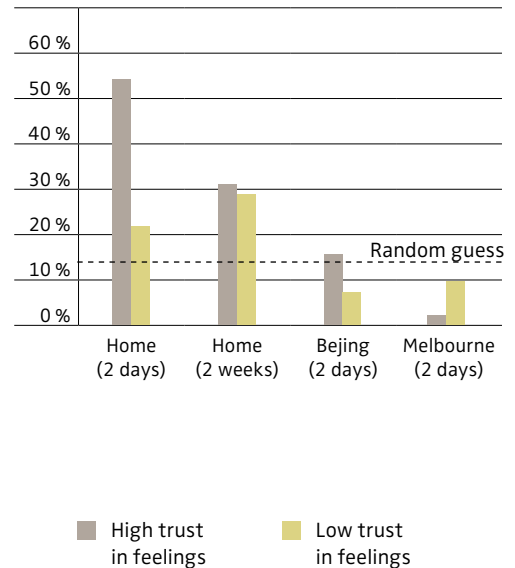
**Feeling the future** /// Emotions are not only relevant in negotiation contexts but also in forecasting future events. In another series of experiments, the researchers invited participants to predict the outcome of a variety of future events, including the 2008 U.S. Democratic presidential nominee, the box-office success of different movies, the winner of the television show American Idol, movements of the Dow Jones Index, the winner of a college-football championship game, and the weather. Again, they used the trust-in-feelings manipulation to vary high and low levels of trust in one's feelings.

Across the whole range of events to be predicted, the results were remarkably consistent. People with higher trust in their feelings were more likely to predict the eventual outcomes compared to low trust-in feelings groups or control groups who did not undergo any treatment (see Figure 1).

**FIGURE 1:**  
Prediction accuracy of people with high and low trust in feelings



**FIGURE 2:**  
Proportion of participants who correctly predicted the various weather conditions



- > In the case of the Clinton-Obama contest, high-trust respondents correctly predicted Obama about 72 % of the time compared with low-trust respondents, who predicted Obama about 64 % of the time. This was a particularly striking result because at the time of the experiment the eventual winner was far from certain: All major polls reflected a very tight race between Clinton and Obama.
- > For the winner of American Idol, the difference was even more pronounced: 41 % of high-trust respondents predicted correctly who of the two finalists would win compared with 24 % for low-trust respondents. (The fact that accuracy was still below 50 % is due to the fact that the actual winner of that season was particularly surprising.)
- > When individuals were asked to predict what the weather in their own ZIP code would be in two days, those with high trust in their feelings did so correctly 54 % of the time, compared with 21 % of the time for individuals with low trust in feelings.

- > Even in the context of the stock market – an area where rational analysis and thinking is the dominant paradigm – emotions worked well. High-trust individuals made predictions that were roughly 30 % closer to the levels the Dow Jones actually achieved than low-trust individuals at two different points in time: a rather volatile period in March 2009 and in fall 2010, a period of economic recovery.

As a follow-up, the researchers tested whether the “emotional oracle” effect works universally: They found clear evidence that this is not the case. Indeed, preconditions seem to exist for feelings to function as powerful predictors:

- > For the weather, participants with high trust in feelings made better predictions for a two-day horizon but not for a two-week horizon. Hence, the researchers conclude that the outcome needs to be inherently predictable. The phenomenon tends to dissipate when the criterion can be regarded as unpredictable in general.



- > People who trusted their feelings were able to better predict their local weather but not the weather in a distant foreign location. And only participants who knew enough about college football were better able to predict the winner of the championship game if they trusted their feelings. When people's domain knowledge was insufficient, the effect disappeared. Therefore, a certain level of domain knowledge seems to be necessary for feelings to work. The more this knowledge is general and acquired over time, the better. Restricted or "local" knowledge about particular aspects of the objects seem to be of little or no help in the prediction.

**Feelings represent relevant knowledge – often but not always** /// But why do people who trust in their feelings score consistently higher? This is because feelings seem to summarize large amounts of information about the world around us. This information is not as readily available in our mind as hard facts but rather lies in the background of our conscious attention. Thus, "our feelings provide us a 'privileged window' into all we tacitly know about the environment around us", Professor Pham explains. "In negotiation situations like the ultimatum game, feelings give us an intuitive sense of what level of offer is about right and what level of offer is too high or too low." Pham goes on to note that feelings also summarize statistical relationships among things that, on the surface, may seem disconnected. "It is these statistical relations that make more probable futures feel more right than less probable futures", he says.

However, the researchers warn that you should not always trust your feelings. "If you are not knowledgeable at all in a given domain, your feelings won't help you", Pham explains. He further advises on how to diagnose whether a particular feeling should be trusted. "If something 'feels right' to you for a particular reason that you can verbalize (e.g., 'This movie feels like it's going to be a success because Tom Cruise is in it'), this is usually not a good sign. This is because this feeling is a response to a 'local' part of your knowledge (e.g., your attitude toward Tom Cruise). Feelings that tend to help are those based on your general knowledge, not those based on local knowledge. When feelings are based on your general knowledge, you usually can't articulate the specific source of your feelings."

In Pham's experience, decision-makers who decide based on feelings with little knowledge or only local knowledge usually get it wrong. "They are the ones that have led Western thinkers and leaders to prematurely discredit the value of feelings in judgment."

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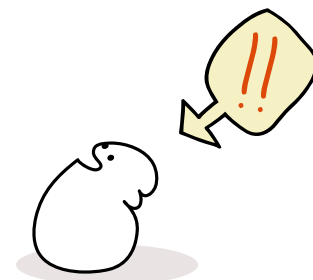
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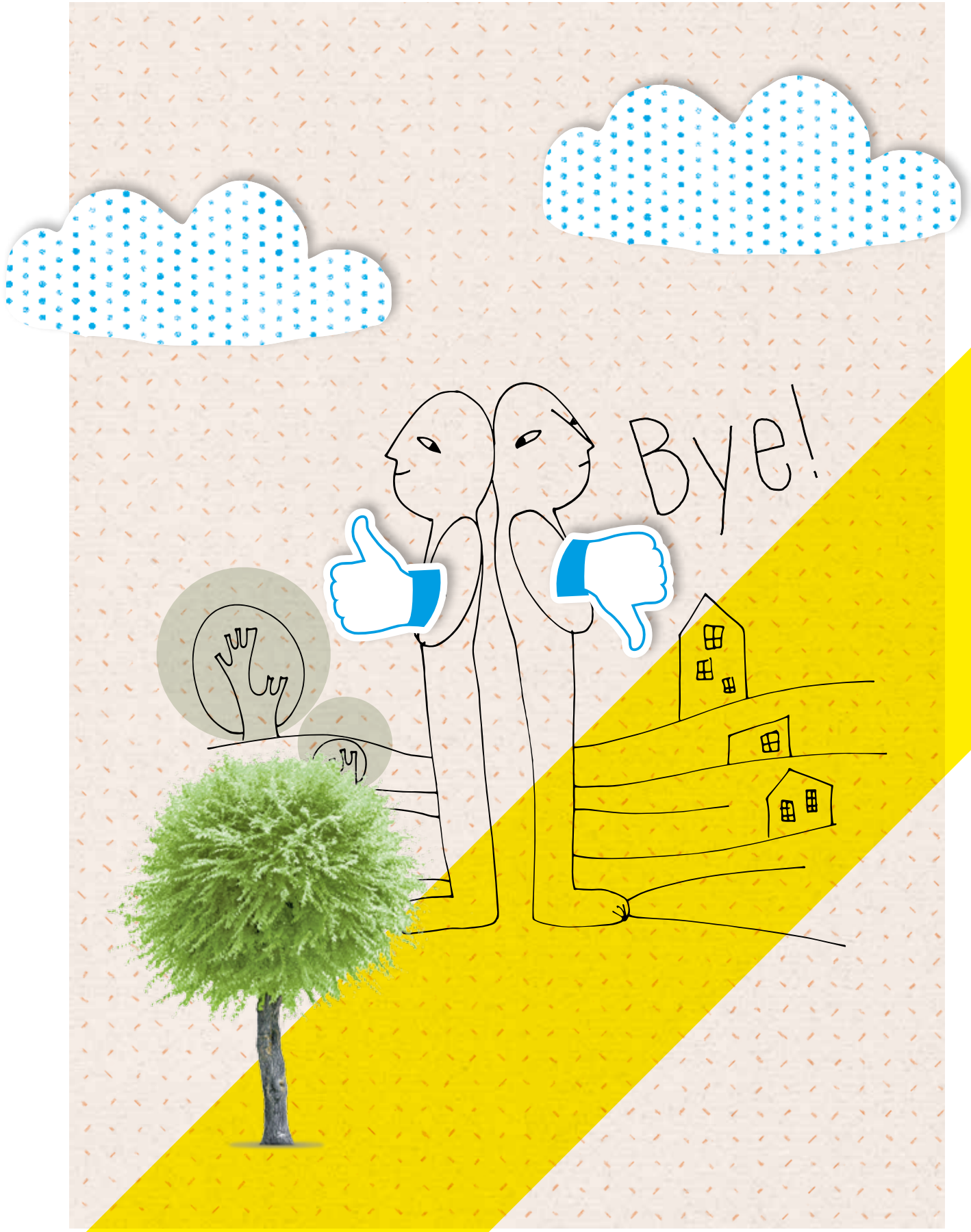
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# Breaking Up is Hard to Do: The Ups and Downs of Divorcing Brands

*Susan Fournier*

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KEYWORDS

*Brand Relationships, Breakup,  
Disadoption, Facebook*

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When Alicia Keys was officially appointed BlackBerry's creative director in early 2013, she described the different stages of her relationship with the brand. She had previously been in a "long-term relationship with BlackBerry". At some point she started to "flirt with other smartphone brands". The iPhone and Android seemed much sexier to her, and she turned her back on BlackBerry – like many other ardent admirers of the former cult brand.

BlackBerry realized that it had to work hard to regain Alicia's interest. It relaunched with a new platform, a new phone and a number of new, user-friendly features. Ultimately, BlackBerry won her back. She claimed to have "an exclusive relationship with the BlackBerry 10". But not all brand relationships have such happy endings. Alicia's flings with other brands might have led to a permanent farewell for BlackBerry. Just as in personal relationships, even close brand commitments sometimes come to an end.

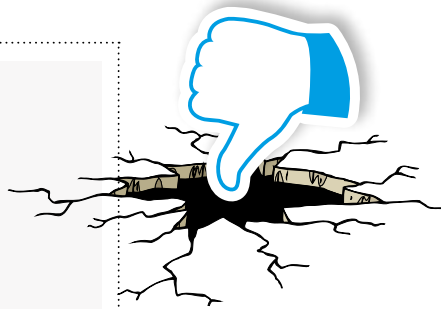
**Why consumers disadopt brands** /// Consumers have various reasons for breaking up with brands. Sometimes their reasons are quite banal: Maybe they move to a place where the brand is not available, or they simply find a better alternative. But sometimes disadoption is more complicated, involving a mixed emotional process that can take a lot of time. Relationships with brands are in many ways like relationships between people. The reasons for disadopting a brand can be remarkably similar to the reasons for breaking up with a partner or spouse:

## CASE STUDY: LEAVING FACEBOOK

Opening a Facebook account is easy: It takes a few minutes at most. Leaving Facebook is a different story. In an in-depth analysis of information posted on the Internet, we learned a lot about how and why consumers leave Facebook and what they feel throughout the process of leaving.

In posted entries on Facebook, blogs, discussion groups and online magazines, we found breakup stories that began long before the first real action was taken, and did not end with a simple deletion of the account. Consumers found themselves on a roller coaster of emotions, discussing the psychological fallout with friends and family throughout the process. Sooner or later consumers become aware of the far-reaching social consequences of their breakup decision: missed birthdays, an inability to play online games with friends, a lack of access to online social services. Sometimes the level of deprivation was so bad that people rejoined the social network. Some found themselves in on-again-off-again relationships, caught in a vortex of emotions tugging them toward and away from the brand.

For many, their Facebook relationships were redefined and started anew with different routines and objectives. In other cases, people stayed away permanently, relieved and liberated once the disentanglement was finished. For those freed from their Facebook entanglements, leaving the brand felt like successful negotiation of an addiction and the beginning of a new phase of life.



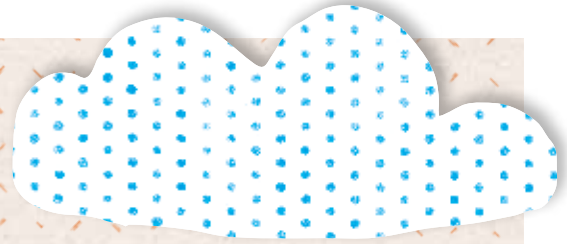
- > Pre-existing doom: The brand does not match the consumer. Sooner or later the consumer figures this out.
- > The brand changes for the worse: Quality declines, the target group shifts, or the style changes.
- > “You’re not the brand I married”: The brand does not live up to its promises; the qualities it advertises turn out to be untrue.
- > The consumer changes, but the brand doesn't change with them: This happens when personal circumstances change, consumers outgrow brands, or financial and situational restrictions make a change necessary.
- > Brand misbehavior forces the consumer to leave: Consumers can feel betrayed by inattentive or rude service staff, or if their complaints are ignored.
- > The brand “dumps” the consumer for a better relationship: Sometimes the promise of an attractive target market can cause marketers to shift attention elsewhere; sometimes the lifetime value of a customer can seem low in the face of alternatives.

**Disadoption of favorite brands doesn't happen overnight** /// Especially when the brand has played a major role in a consumer's life, or has been used intensively, the consumer-brand breakup will prove an extended process and not a clear-cut, “it's now over” one-time event. Breakups include a phase of deterioration in which the consumer disengages, often slowly, sometimes painfully, from the brand. Seen through the relationship prism, the disadoption process is even more diverse and complex than the concept of brand switching would lead us to assume.





*"Deleting my Facebook account was a four-day affair. It took me that long to disentangle myself from the service and to let others know how else they could find me. "Disentangling" entailed deleting my photos, "unliking" everything and disconnecting all of the third-party services that used Facebook Connect to log me in."*



*"I reactivated my Facebook account. Rejecting it felt, well, extreme. You can't get away from it. It's everywhere. It's everywhere. We can't reject it entirely. But I am approaching it this time with new wariness, not as a place to make and maintain friends but where, as an author, I can cultivate an image."*



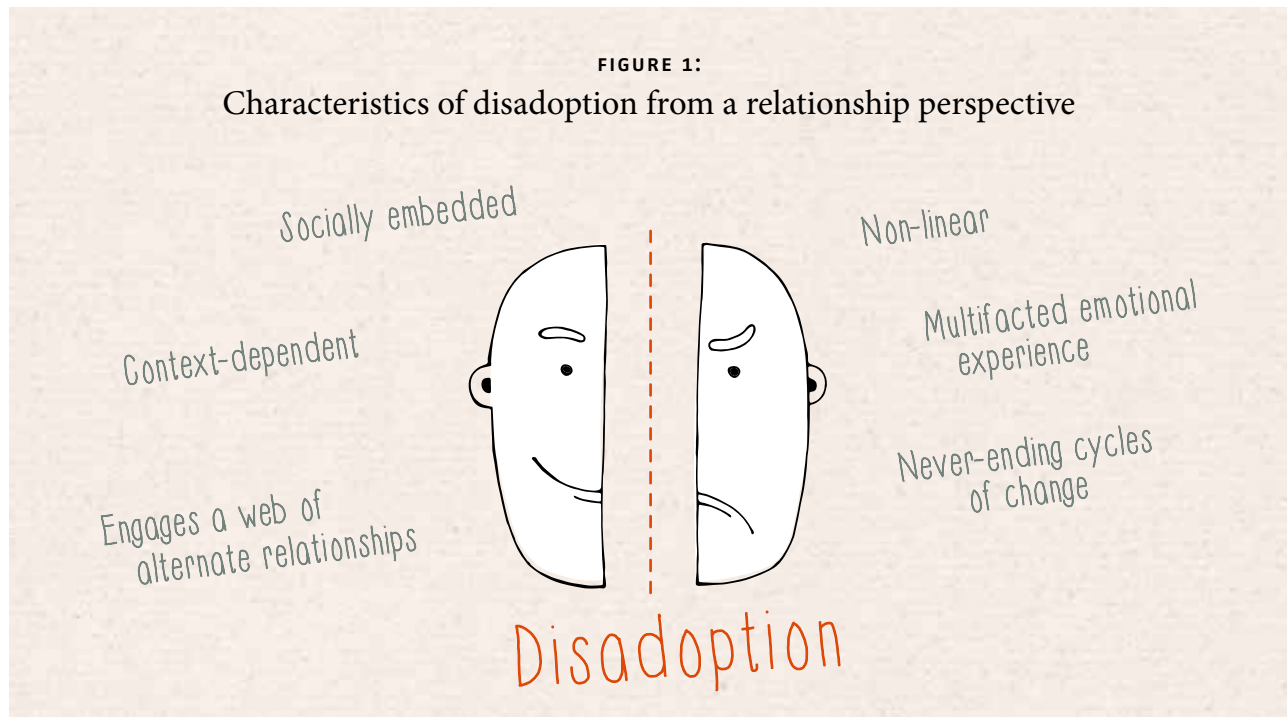
*"I found a tiny link at the bottom of the security settings page for "how to deactivate Facebook." After clicking the link, a page popped up with photos of me and my friends. 'Jake will miss you,' one caption read. 'Jules will miss you,' 'Aaron will miss you.' All of my friends were smiling at me and telling me to please don't go."*

*"(...) my decision to jettison Facebook has drawn me closer to those that matter and allowed peripheral acquaintances to fade away naturally. I can no longer just toss a meaningless 'Happy Birthday, ugly!' on my friends' Facebook walls, but instead must all them to express such sentiments."*

*"When I broke up with Facebook, I lost access to my friends. In the span of two weeks, I missed a friend's birthday, a family get-together, and a lunch with friends."*

*"I have toyed with the idea of logging back in, but prying Facebook's sticky tentacles out of my life has inexorably improved my life, and I urge you to give it a shot, if only for a week."*





The order and lived experience of events in the breakup process varies substantially: No one-size-fits-all model exists here. One commonality is that disconnecting is generally accompanied by mixed and intense emotions, alternating from feeling on top of the world to the depths of despair. Regret sometimes takes over with on-and-off attempts to revive the relationship. A clear break is the exception rather than the rule.

Breakups are also networked phenomena: they are not isolated to the person and the brand. Friends and family often get involved in the ongoing breakup. Invited to or not, they offer their opinions and advice. Other brand relationships are also affected by the disconnection, and this can speed up or delay the process of breaking up. If there is a ready alternative at hand, the process may go quickly. If other brands and routines need to be replaced, the process may slow down.

Even when consumers stop using a brand, they still have a relationship with it: The relationship merely changes its form. A brand – like a person – can go from being a best friend to a platonic love, a distant friend, a stalker, or even an enemy. Breakups are never the end of the relationship. Rather, they redefine the type of relationship and are part of a never-ending cycle of change.

**Finding the good in the bad** /// Living through the end of a close relationship can be a painful process, but even this is not necessarily all bad. Consumers may experience a loss, but overcoming loss generates feelings of freedom and renewed self-discovery. Stress is replaced by relief: the joy of having escaped from an emotional drain. Like any period of life change, the breakup offers an opportunity for learning and personal growth. Once disconnection is accomplished, it leaves room for renewal, self-enhancement and change.

**So what? Implications for brand managers** /// Brand managers are often so fixated on starting relationships and making them stronger that they fail to realize that relationship endings require active management as well. Sure, you can try to prevent breakups by staying fresh and exciting, managing customer complaints, and rewarding customers to keep the relationship healthy. We know these techniques, and we know they are sometimes not enough. Brand breakups are part of life, and sometimes we are best served by accepting them on their own terms.

- > **Manage customer churn carefully** /// Standardized approaches to churn are risky. The reasons for leaving a brand relationship, and the processes involved in the breakup, are so varied that cookie-cutter reactions like simply sending price discounts or “we want you back” deals may do more harm than good.
  
  - > **Don't try to keep customers at any cost** /// Sometimes a breakup will be imperative in the eyes of the consumer. CRM programs must accept that sometimes there exists a point of no return. When that point is reached, it is better to let customers go than to try to make them stay at any cost. Just as in personal relationships, accepting a breakup makes it easier to hold onto positive memories and remain on good terms later on. This is particularly important in business given the power of word of mouth.
  
  - > **Know that the end is not always the end** /// Former relationships are still relationships. Although transformed, they can still be positive, as with a distant friend, or negative, like the relationship with a betrayed spouse or between stalker and prey. Transformed relationships can also involve different levels of activity. If the former relationship is still perceived in a positive light, it may be possible to revive it or transform it back into a more active, intense form. If it is negative, you may still need to manage it lest your other, healthy customers be swayed.
  
  - > **Take advantage of the regret that can color relationship endings** /// Relationship management programs – especially in the area of services – should not stop too early. In this context, the following comparison may help: Think of a person tempted to try out a new, more stylish hairdresser. She might be disappointed with her new style and long to return to her old stylist, who knew just what style suited her. However, she might not dare to return because she feels bad for or ashamed of having abandoned her “long-standing partner”. Most likely, it will be sufficient for the stylist to send her a short, friendly note explaining that she will always be welcome, to break the ice and win back the “prodigal daughter”.
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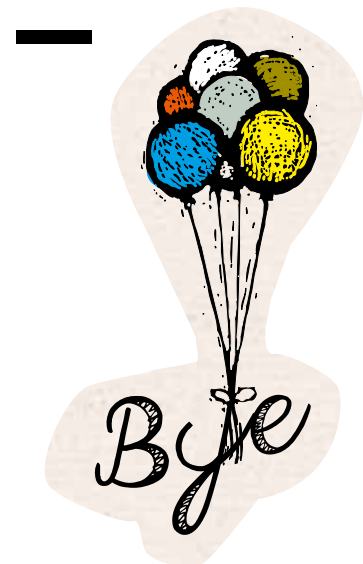
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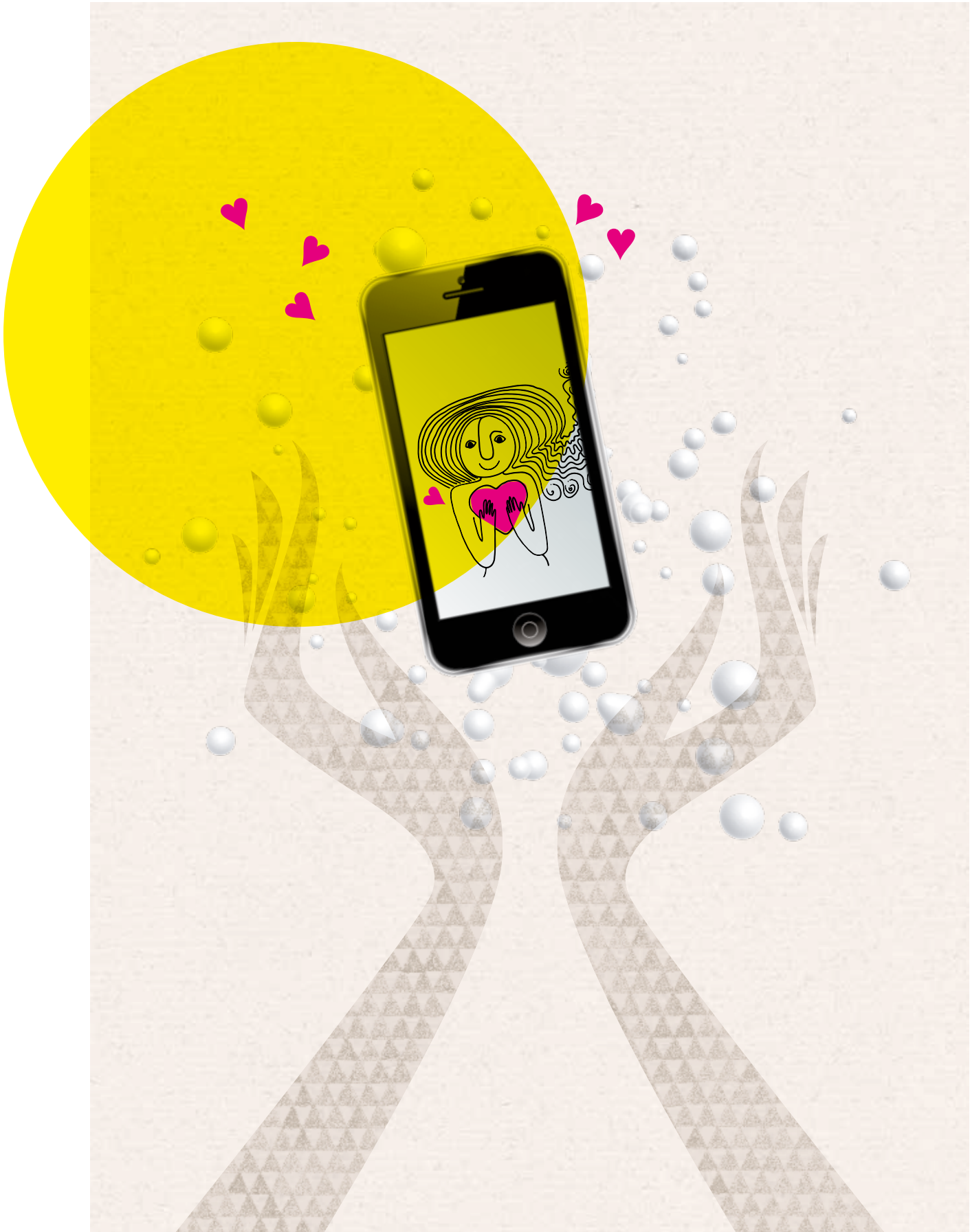
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# There's No Passion; I Need Passion: Why Some Brands Excite Consumers So Much

*Andrea Hemetsberger*

KEYWORDS

*Passion, Brand Experience,  
Self-Transformation, Personality*

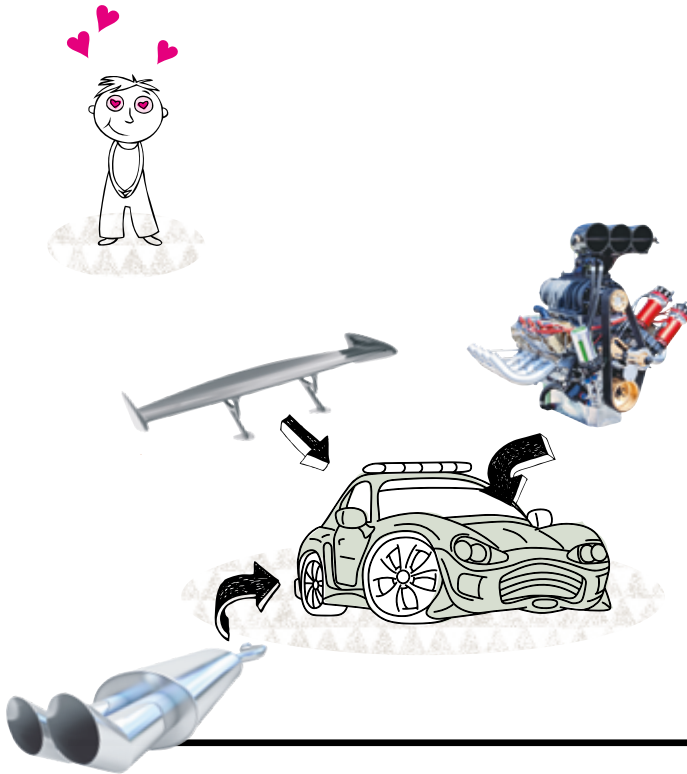
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When brightly polished Golf GTIs hit the road with their engines roaring and wheels a-squealing: That's how you know it's time for up to 200,000 passionate car enthusiasts to make their yearly pilgrimage to a four-day spectacle – the GTI Brandfest. Harley Davidson fans, Trekkies, Abercrombie & Fitch groupies, shoe fetishists and collectors of glass figurines serve as additional examples of the ubiquitous nature of this phenomenon. Consumers, just like Rod Stewart sang in his famous song, are looking for passion – which they find and nourish in certain brands. Passion commonly accompanies very intense relationships between consumers and objects or activities. As in interpersonal relationships, consumer passion can be defined as an intense feeling of attraction toward and desire for an object. Passion is linked to strong feelings like love, feelings of spiritual or religious excitement, and adoration, and often implies religious fervor and zeal.

**What makes a brand a passion brand** /// Companies commonly love to think of their brands as offers that excite their consumers and evoke strong emotions. However, not all brands have the potential to develop into such meaningful objects and relationship partners. They need to serve certain psychological and symbolic functions in order to qualify as passion brands. One common feature of these is the fact that they help consumers define and express a strong personality, serving their psychological well-being and/or their social status. Passion brands send strong social signals. Therefore, consumers engage in collective forms of passion, which is commonly addressed as consumer fandom. Researchers, for



instance, report of Star Trek fans who describe their bond with this TV series as “devotion.” They dress like their Star Trek heroes, they meet with other like-minded fans to share their passion, and they produce their own Star Trek episodes. Other studies describe Harley Davidson fans’ strong potential for building subcultures of consumption and developing their own rituals and language. Loyal Mac users have even been portrayed as acting like religious zealots. Some brands, however, also become very private objects of devotion, bringing about feelings of closeness and intimacy. Can you think of any? How about in your closet, your bathroom, your garage, or locker room? It is not uncommon to hear about a person’s passion for lingerie or a collector’s passion for certain kinds of objects or artwork.

**Who is passionate?** /// Studies have found that consumers who show their passion in public have distinct personalities. Depending on the specific attributes of the brand, very open-minded consumers who like to be intellectually stimulated appreciate brands with mind-boggling qualities and are eager to know everything about the brand. As their brand knowledge increases, their passionate feelings toward the brand increase as well. Extroverted consumer personalities exhibit strong feelings of passion toward the brand instead of constantly seeking food for thought. These are also the types who are more likely to evangelize about and fervently hail their object of passion.

Interestingly, when passion remains in the private domain, differences in personality characteristics cannot explain why consumers develop such strong feelings for an object. Using lingerie as an example, there seems to be no relationship between a woman’s personality and her passion for the product. Consumers are passionate about brands that help them transform, make them feel like a different person and allow them to live out other aspects of themselves. However, there are many different reasons why consumer passion develops.

### Why are consumers so passionate?

> **Passion brands express who we are** /// Objects often hold special meanings and serve different functions. They help clarify who we are – to ourselves and with respect to others. They communicate social status and class, they reflect personal style, and they help to express one’s identity. Attempts to explain why individuals feel such strong urges to possess and interact with their favorite objects usually focus on self-perception and personal identity projects in the lives of consumers. When consumers develop strong passionate feelings toward brands and objects, it can lead them to see those





**FIGURE 1:**  
Passion brands and consumers

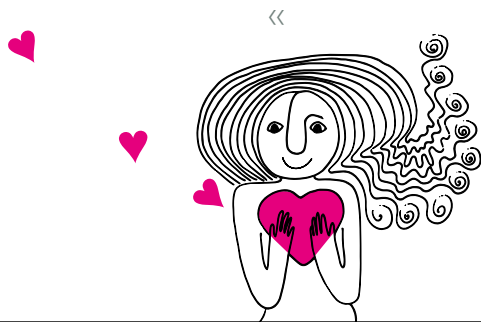


objects as sacred, thereby fulfilling spiritual needs. Just like with religiousness, a need for spirituality draws attention to the sacred object’s function as a way of defining one’s identity, as a source of personal development, and as a means of communicating this identity to others.

- > **Passion brands extend our personalities** /// Passionate feelings can grow so strong that products and brands literally become extensions of the consumer. Passion is the underlying motive behind why people never leave home without their iPhone, why they carefully put back their favorite watch in its satin-lined box at night; why they play computer games until midnight; and why they never get tired of looking at their collection of Mickey Mouse figurines.
- > **Passion brands transform consumers** /// Objects we are passionate about sometimes help symbolically demarcate the boundary between self and identities that we reject. In other instances, adored objects support an identity that combines potentially conflicting aspects of one’s self, such as conflicts between what a consumer wants to be and ideas that are advocated by socializing agents. Often, this

means that consumers need to make major compromises – a scenario in which a brand is occasionally able to help by creating a synthesis of two role identities. When brands really help us to cope with the multiple role demands in our lives, we are very prone to become passionate brand believers. Manolo Blahnik shoes and Chanel dresses, which magically transform us into stunning queens, an iPad that makes a graduate student look very cool, or Audi cars that make young professionals feel like successful entrepreneurs – they all exhibit transformative qualities, the ingredients of brand passion. However, brands do not just transform us like magic; they speak to our senses, to our minds, to our hearts, and they involve us in activities. Or in theoretical terms: They enable magical sensory, intellectual, emotional and behavioral brand experiences.

»  
Real passion  
comes with consumers being  
magically transformed through  
extraordinary, "once in a lifetime"  
brand experiences.



**Passion for brands and what comes with it** /// Research shows that there are many ways in which consumers express and act out their passionate feelings. More active and obvious deeds motivated by the consumers' strong emotionality are emblematic for passion. Passionate consumers speak of "labors of love," which require considerable investments in terms of time and money, but are deliberately and willingly done, accepting that "pleasure can be bought, but love is made".

- > Passionate consumers *sacrifice considerable amounts of time and money* for their favorite objects. In the case of Golf GTI enthusiasts, there are fans who work no less than 40 hours per week on and for their cars in their free time. No wonder they also regularly flock to the Golf GTI Brand-fest – an act quite common to brand lovers.
- > Passionate consumers with a high degree of emotional attachment *spread positive word of mouth*. They are likely to act as missionaries trying to persuade and convince others of their object of devotion, which is commonly referred to as *evangelizing*. Exemplary cases can be found in work on cult followers of the Apple brand, where the authors also confirm that Mac believers engage in proselytizing and converting nonbelievers.

- > Looking into consumers' private domains uncovers *even more interesting activities* that consumers engage in, which have astounding consequences for brand management. Passion is expressed mainly in the form of frequent consumer-brand interaction, consumption rituals and brand pledges. These interactions sustain the relationship with the brand and encompass a long list of behaviors. Consumers sometimes show their feelings for objects in very subtle ways, for instance through *physical closeness* to their favorite object. An act such as leaning against the object or touching it, for example, is expressive of the consumer's perceived degree of attachment to the object. Passionate consumers perceive brand objects as relevant "other" subjects, which need to be cared for, exhibiting private patterns of behavior that have been commonly overlooked. *Ritualistic behavior*, for instance the grooming rituals of passionate car owners, integrates passionate behavior into the everyday life of consumers, thus making it more sustainable. Consumers *build beautiful shrines* for their collectibles, talk to the brand, pay it compliments, set up a Facebook page for it, renovate it, and carefully pass it on to their heirs. *Careful restoration* of the object ensures its ongoing existence, and is often time-intensive proof of the consumers' love, concern and care.

Consumer passion goes beyond ordinary feelings of desire, emotion or product attachment. Passionate consumers are not just brain-dead fanatics and bragging evangelists. They engage in respectful and caring relationships with objects and their manufacturers in an attempt to compensate for their largely disenchanting, mundane and self-centered lives.

### Implications for managing passion brands

- > *Work on transforming qualities of the brand* /// Numerous studies show that passion brands transform consumers. Brands can leverage these transforming qualities. For one thing, they should adapt to open-minded and extroverted consumer personalities. They also need to clearly help consumers in supporting qualities that the consumer does not (yet) have. This is hardly a trivial practice, as those qualities need to be imbued with strong symbolic qualities, in order to be able to trigger consumer fantasies, feelings and fun. Myths and rituals help consumers to think in other variants of themselves. Managers may want to

think in terms of childhood fantasies, which once led us to try out many different possible roles as heroes with a sleek sports car, a sage with precious old books, or Cinderella with perfectly fitting high heels. Research refers to this phenomenon as the alternative self – the person I could have become.

- > **Address desired lifestyles** /// Brands may want to address typical lifestyles of people consumers are dreaming of and “build” these qualities into their brands. Luxury brands are role models for this strategy, and Audi shows us how it’s done. In order to address the target group of modern mainstream consumers, the car is depicted within the social environment of the postmodern success-oriented societal class.
  
- > **Support consumers’ interactions with the brand** /// Because passionate consumers also like to take on a caring role, work with their brands, maintain them and dedicate time, space and money to them, companies can support their customers in these efforts. Shoes, for example, could come with a dedicated shoe-shining kit, crystal figurines with displays, bikes could be supplemented with replacement parts, or lingerie with a lingerie storage set. Dedicated consumers also go out of their way to make pilgrimages to brands’ birthplaces. Experiential places, such as brand worlds (Crystal World by Swarovski), museums (the Porsche museum or BMW World), and flagship stores (the Chanel flagship store in Tokyo) cater to the needs of passionate consumers.
  
- > **Re-enchant your brand with magic** /// Real passion, however, comes with consumers being magically transformed through extraordinary, “once in a lifetime” brand experiences. It’s the little magic moments when we unwrap and place our new little figurine in the glass display, the grand event of seeing them illuminated in the brand palace at their birthplace or the many other experiences that spark brand passion among consumers.

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1,070  
TV-Spots



# Do Pleasant Emotional Ads Make Consumers Like Your Brand More?

*Maggie Geuens, Patrick De Pelsmacker  
and Michel Tuan Pham*

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## KEYWORDS

*TV Commercials,  
Emotional Ads, Brand Attitude,  
Ad-Evoked Feelings*

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It is generally assumed that emotionally pleasant TV commercials not only cause consumers to like the ad itself, but they also create more positive feelings toward the advertised brand. However, because previous studies have often investigated only a small set of ads, and then sometimes only for unknown brands, the question arises as to how factual this statement actually is. Does this apply to all product categories, or is it true only for some? For example, does an emotional ad have similar effects on attitudes toward a brand of automobiles as it does for a brand of financial services, soap or chewing gum? In other words, which types of brands and categories might the positive effect of emotionally pleasant ads be true for? The results of a large Belgian study show that ad-evoked feelings indeed have a substantial impact on brand evaluations. Interestingly, these effects depend neither on the level of involvement associated with the product category nor on whether the product is a durable good, nondurable good, or a service. However, the effects are slightly more pronounced for products that are more hedonic and experiential than for products that are functional and utilitarian.

**Ad-evoked feelings make brands likable** /// The results were very much in line with previous lab studies that were typically carried out with much smaller sets of ads from a limited number of product categories, often among student participants. Thus, even with a large sample of real-life commercials for many well-known brands across a full spectrum of product categories, ad-evoked feelings exerted a substan-



## A STUDY OF 1,070 BELGIAN TV COMMERCIALS

The attitudinal responses of 1,576 Belgian consumers to 1,070 TV commercials shown on Dutch-language Belgian television over a three-year period were analyzed. This pool of commercials featured 318 national and international brands across 153 different product categories, including beer, credit cards, diapers, coffee, laundry detergents, cars and computers.

Over a period of three years, groups of 20 to 30 respondents were shown sets of between 20 and 50 commercials and asked to rate them. Each ad was rated by an average of 43 consumers. After seeing each commercial, respondents rated their attitude toward the ad, how useful and informative the ad was, and their attitudes toward the advertised brand. Additionally, an independent group of judges rated the degree of emotionality of each ad and their degree of creativity. Given that the vast majority of TV commercials in Belgium had a positive emotional tone, only positive emotions were measured.

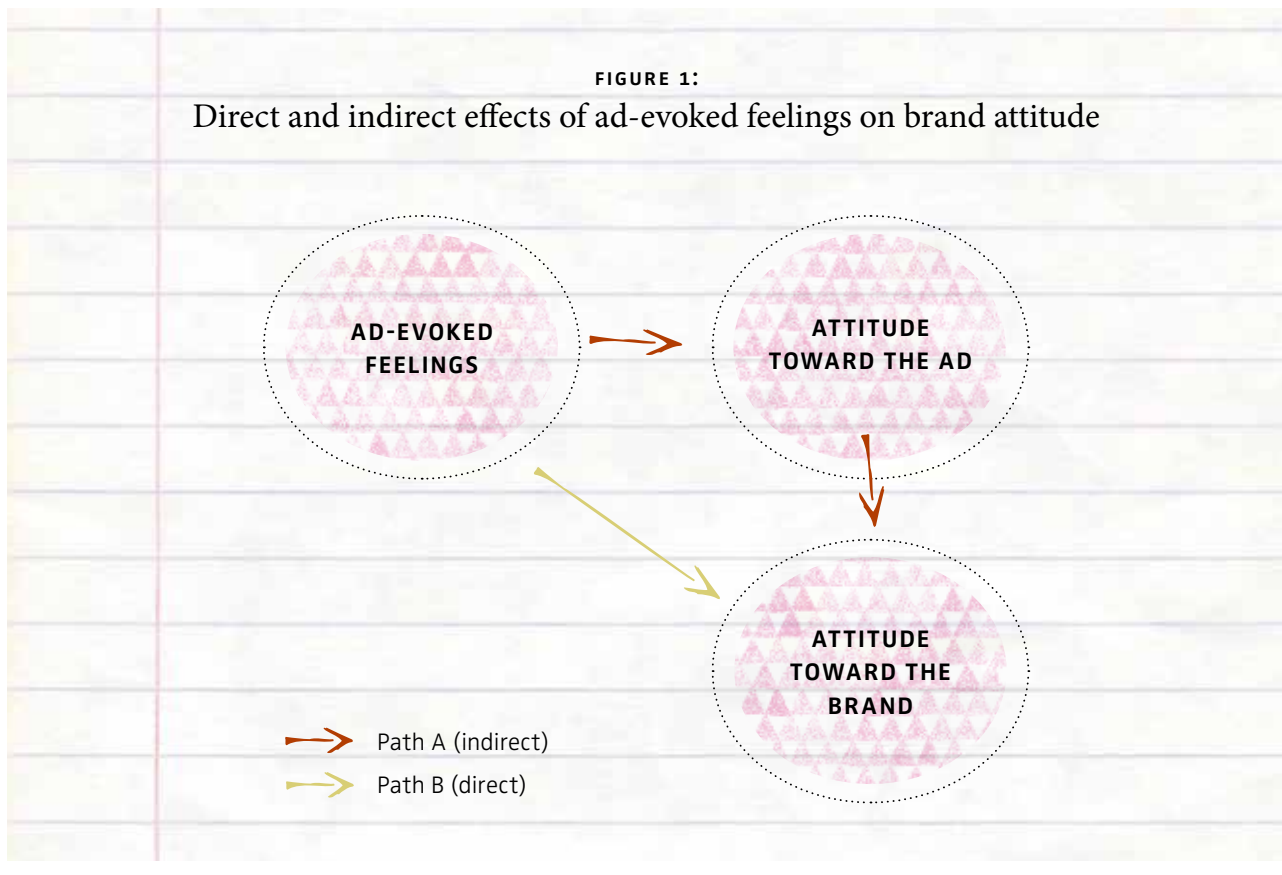
The viewers indicated, for instance, how warm, excited, happy and cheerful the ad made them feel. Another set of judges coded the 153 product categories represented in the ads in terms of their level of involvement and type of buying motivation (hedonic/experiential or utilitarian/instrumental), as well as whether the advertised product was a durable, a non-durable or a service and whether the ad was for a search or an experience product.

tial influence on brand attitudes. Regardless of how creative or informative the respondents found the ads to be, the emotional content of these ads had a significant positive influence on consumers' attitudes toward the advertised brands. Indeed, variation in the pleasantness of ad-evoked feelings across advertisements accounted for about 11 % of the variation in attitudes across advertised brands. This effect of evoked feelings on brand attitudes was both direct and indirect (Figure 1).

- > **Positive ad-evoked feelings lead directly to more positive brand attitudes** (direct path A) /// This direct effect can arise in two different ways. First, ads that elicit more pleasant feelings may trigger more positive thoughts about the brand, which results in more favorable brand attitudes. Second, the effect can result from an automatic process of evaluative conditioning: By pairing the brand with the feelings evoked by the ad, the feelings become part of the brand's evaluation.
- > **Positive ad-evoked feelings increase liking of the ad, which translates into more favorable brand attitudes** (indirect path B) /// In addition, feelings have an indirect effect on brand attitude through their effect on the attitude toward the ad itself. Ads that evoke positive feelings are liked better, and well-liked ads lead to more positive brand attitudes. Consumers simply transfer their liking of the ad itself onto the advertised brand. This indirect effect is stronger than the direct effect.

**Ad-evoked emotions work independent of product characteristics** /// To test the generality of the effects of ad-evoked feelings, the study investigated classic product-category determinants of ad effectiveness commonly considered by the industry.

- > **Ad-evoked feelings work for high- and low-involvement categories** /// First, the analysis considered whether the product category is typically categorized as low involvement (e.g., shower gel and paper towels) or high involvement (e.g., cellphones and banking). Results showed that the effects of ad-evoked emotions on brand attitudes did



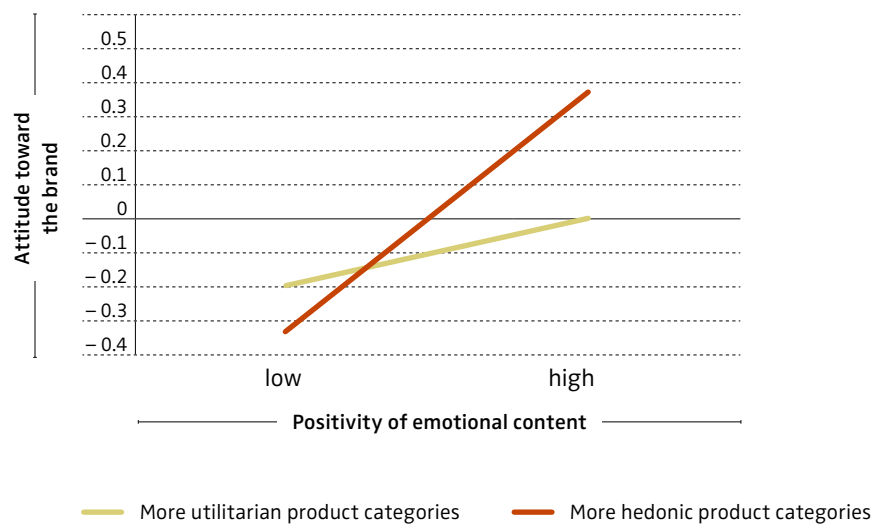
not depend on the level of product category involvement: The emotional content of the ad had an equally strong influence on brand evaluations in low- and high-involvement product categories. Although this result may come as a surprise, it could be that categorizing a whole product category as either high or low involvement is problematic. For instance, a car may be a high-involvement product for some consumers but not for others. Similarly, buying milk or soap, products that are generally considered low-involvement, might be very important to some consumers. It could also be that ad-evoked feelings exert an influence under both low and high involvement, but through different underlying processes. Under low involvement the effect may be indirect (path B), whereas under high involvement the effect may be more direct (path A).

> ***Ad-evoked feelings work better for fun products than for functional products*** /// Second, the study investigated the effect of different buying motives. Products are usually bought either for fun (hedonic/experiential motives), such as when buying products like ice cream or perfume, or to serve a rather functional purpose (utilitarian/instrumental motives), such as when buying products like detergents or trash cans. Consumers with experiential motives are driven by the intrinsic rewards of the consumption itself (e.g., how much fun one will have playing a game of tennis), and therefore concerned with issues such as how much pleasure, sensory stimulation or entertainment they may experience. On the other hand, consumers with instrumental motives are driven by some extrinsic functional benefits



FIGURE 2:

## Impact of emotional content on brand attitude



of the consumption (e.g., whether playing tennis would help them lose weight), and therefore less concerned with issues such as pleasure, entertainment, and sensory stimulation. As expected, the effects of ad-evoked feelings on brand attitudes were more pronounced for products typically associated with fun than for products typically associated with functionality. This result is consistent with other research showing that feelings are typically considered to be more relevant and weighted more heavily when consumers have experiential goals than when they have instrumental goals.

> **Ad-evoked feelings work equally well for durables, non-durables, and services, and for search and experience goods** /// Third, the effect of durables (e.g., cars and refrigerators), non-durables (e.g., food and toilet paper) and services (e.g., haircuts and phone subscriptions) was also investigated, as was the distinction between search goods and experience goods. Search goods can be easily evaluated by the consumer before a purchase (e.g., clothing and furniture), while experience goods can only be evaluated after the purchase, by consuming and experiencing the product (e.g., a diet program and movies). The results showed that the durability and tangibility of the product and the search-versus-experience nature of the product did NOT influence the effects of ad-evoked feelings on brand evaluations. The effect was similar across all of these product characteristics.

**Use positive emotions in advertising, especially for hedonic products** /// “Convincing a consumer to like a brand through advertising is largely an emotional challenge”, Pham, Geuens and De Pelsmacker conclude from their research. Their findings can be summarized with the following recommendations:

- > The effects of ad-evoked feelings on brand evaluations are substantial. Whenever possible, advertisers should develop ads that elicit pleasant feelings, not only because these ads are liked better, but more importantly because these ads lead to more favorable brand attitudes.
- > It does not really matter which type of product category is advertised; positive ad-evoked feelings have an equally strong positive effect on brand attitudes for durables, non-durables, services, high- and low-involvement products, and search and experience products.
- > However, for brands in product categories that are mostly hedonic and experiential, evoking positive emotions is even more important for developing favorable brand attitudes.  
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**Managerial summary of an article published in the top academic journal “International Journal of Research in Marketing”:**

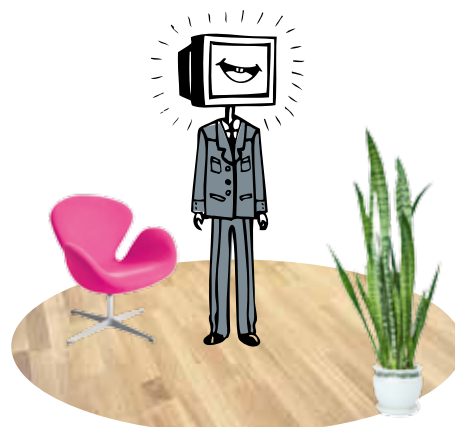
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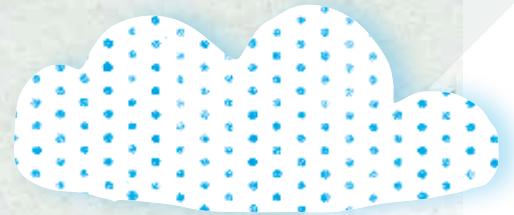
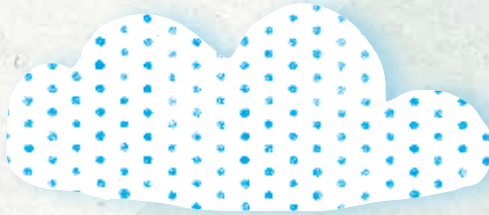
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#### ABOUT BMW

With its BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce brands, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium producer of cars and motorcycles. The international group operates 28 production and assembly plants in 13 countries and maintains a global sales network with representatives in more than 140 countries.

In 2013, the BMW Group sold about 1.963 million cars and 115,215 motorcycles around the world. In financial year 2012, its earnings before taxes totaled about € 7.82 billion while revenues reached € 6.85 billion. On December 31, 2012, the company's global workforce totaled 105,876 people.

From the company's very beginning, long-range thinking and responsible business practices have been the linchpins of the BMW Group's commercial success. The company has firmly integrated environmental and social sustainability along its entire value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to the conservation of resources into its strategy.

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#### ABOUT HELMUT MEYSENBURG

Helmut Meysenburg earned a degree in engineering at the University of Karlsruhe. Meysenburg, who is married and has a son, began his career in 1995 at the Boston Consulting Group in Munich. He joined the BMW Group in 1999. Since then, he has held a number of different positions in marketing, sales and corporate planning. Today, he serves as the department head of product and brand strategy and oversees brand strategy, market research and market and competition forecasting.

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#### THE INTERVIEWER

The interview was conducted by Professor Andrea Gröppel-Klein in December 2013.



# Success with pleasure

*MIR interview with Helmut Meysenburg, Head of Brand Strategies,  
Market Research, Competition at BMW Group*



“Sheer driving pleasure” is the essence of the BMW brand. For this reason, we have an ideal candidate for our real-world interview in this MIR issue about emotions in marketing. Mr. Meysenburg takes us behind the scenes of the world brand from Bavaria, the success of which makes one think that the promised thrill behind the wheel is definitely not a product of chance ...

**MIR:** *Mr. Meysenburg, BMW's advertising slogan is “sheer driving pleasure”. This is astonishing language to use in a slogan. After all, one would think that, for such technical products as cars, hard facts like horsepower, acceleration and gas mileage would be the key elements of the sales pitch. Why did BMW choose to use this emotional hook for its communications?*

**HELMUT MEYSENBURG:** Pleasure is a key component of the BMW brand. Sheer driving pleasure, sheer joy about the car and sheer delight about mobility. At BMW, technology is not an end in itself. Rather, it is the means that empowers people to do something primal: to move, to proceed forward, to enjoy the feel of speed, but also to travel safely and comfortably. Of

course, emotions are not just triggered by the dynamics. They are also set off by the design of the exterior and interior, the innovations and, finally, the quality.

**MIR:** *How do you try to keep this emotional promise?*

**HELMUT MEYSENBURG:** We believe this emotional promise embodies all of those things that we want to ultimately provide the customer. In these terms, I am not just referring to the vehicle and its driving performance. I am also including services and customer assistance. As far as cars go, design is right at the top of the priority list. The emotionalizing potential of the exterior design is very important.



**MIR:** *What exactly sets off this feeling of pleasure?*

**HELMUT MEYSENBERG:** As I just said, it all starts with the design. From there, it is a matter of the vehicle's entire concept, the driving experience itself, the quality and craftsmanship in the interior and the integrity of the entire package – and we are really determined to ensure that the driver and front-seat passenger experience is something more than the ride itself. For instance, with the aid of Connected Drive, people have access to certain online services and information. We are the first premium automaker to integrate a Head-Up Display into the vehicle that projects information onto the windshield. This is something people have seen in the cockpits of jet planes. As a result, driving not only becomes safer, but you also feel more connected to the vehicle. This is a source of pleasure, too. The most critical factor for us is that the entire package creates a harmonious whole and appeals to our customers.

**MIR:** *When a car is being developed, is the emotional impact of individual elements consciously considered in the design work? For instance, do you ask consumers to comment on interior elements or colors?*

**HELMUT MEYSENBERG:** We conduct a range of studies and customer clinics to get feedback about new concepts, including the design, of course, as well as about innovations like information services and infotainment. We take a few extra steps in other areas, including communications and measure people's state of excitement, the things they feel and perceive ...

**MIR:** *May I interrupt you for a moment? Do you measure electrodermal reactions or biofeedback reactions?*

**HELMUT MEYSENBERG:** We have measured electrodermal response for some communications tools. We have also tested neuromarketing topics to determine which areas of the brain were activated when films or images were viewed and what emotions this triggered. But we think this is still rather fundamental research. That said, we are keeping our eye on the work being conducted in this area. Specifically, we test our brand communications in our "Communication Monitor". Here, we measure both the impact of communications on perception of the brand and the style, something that you might call the hands-on execution of the communications.

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Emotions are not just triggered by the dynamics. They are also set off by the design, the innovations and the quality.

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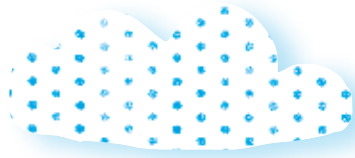
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**MIR:** *How do you go about obtaining this feedback? What do you do exactly?*

**HELMUT MEYSENBERG:** We ask the subjects to judge what they like and don't like and, in the end, what fits the brand.

**MIR:** *Do you use something like "emotions management", something that extends beyond the design of individual vehicle elements?*

**HELMUT MEYSENBERG:** Let me give you two examples. The first is: our BMW World in Munich. We not only display products here, but also give people an opportunity to experience all brands of the BMW Group – BMW, the sub-brands BMW M and BMW i, MINI, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars and BMW Motorcycles – in a unique setting. In addition, new vehicles are delivered to our customers here. Picking up a new car is an emotional moment for anybody. At the BMW World, we turn it into an unforgettable experience. The second example: In the United States, short films were shot in 2002, including one by Guy Ritchie with Madonna. The series was called "The Hire", and people could watch them online. It was really successful and emotional, and it created quite a buzz. We showed short films in which a BMW played the leading role more or less. This was something new, and we even threw in very well-known actors

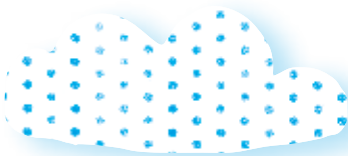


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Pleasure does not  
come down to a matter of age.

Joy is ageless.

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and directors. This was emotions management in its purest form. I was working in the United States at the time, and we received online comments like: "My next car will be a BMW, so help me God."

**MIR:** *In this issue, we have an article that explores the topic of "passion brands". One example cited in the story is the legendary Wörthersee get-together of the Golf GTI community. Do BMW customers have something like this? And what approach do you take to dealing with brand communities or passionate BMW fans?*

**HELMUT MEYENBURG:** We have a lot of fan clubs that organize events. These include clubs in which drivers of a certain vehicle type will get together. We really are happy when such fan communities contact us and ask to do things like visit a plant or tour the BMW World.

**MIR:** *This sounds more like passive support. Do you play an active role in such communities or do you provide support to them?*

**HELMUT MEYENBURG:** We have our own BMW Classic department that works with such clubs and handles practical jobs as well, things like tracking down replacement parts that are no longer available in retail. It maintains relationships with the owners of older BMW models. We also organize our own racing events and outings. The legendary BMW Motorcycle Days are held in Garmisch-Partenkirchen each year. For several years now, very successful tours have been made by BMW 3 Series drivers in China. These rides have also been held in Europe. A lot is done in this area because we encourage the emotional attachment to the brand and driving.

**MIR:** *How do you actually define your target group? When doing communications tests, do you for instance draw a distinction between new-car and used-car buyers?*

**HELMUT MEYENBURG:** The more important factor for us is whether an individual knows a premium brand, is considering one or has already bought one.

**MIR:** *If I am correctly informed, the average age of the new-car customers of many premium brands is around 55. Do you conduct studies to determine whether the slogan "sheer driving pleasure" has the same impact on various age groups?*

**HELMUT MEYENBURG:** Pleasure does not come down to a matter of age. When we introduced our BMW 1 Series, we used the slogan "joy is ageless". It expresses just that fact.

**MIR:** *And does this apply to both men and women? ... The question suggests itself.*

**HELMUT MEYENBURG:** I would assume that the difference in this regard would not be too big.

**MIR:** *Now that we are talking about women and men, we come across a comparison that is frequently made: Relationships with brands can take on marriage-like qualities: People fall in love with them, learn to respect them – despite a flaw or two, people get frustrated with them, forgive them and remain true to them forever or get a divorce. What do you think of such analogies?*

**HELMUT MEYENBURG:** Such analogies certainly are used: You love your brand and excuse its imperfections. On the other hand, other customers are simply looking for a change. They want to try something different and then come back again.

**MIR:** Does that mean that loyalty is not so important to you?

**HELMUT MEYSENBURG:** Yes, it is. This desire to try something new is both a curse and a blessing because we can also profit from it to the same degree. Every customer is important to us, and we want to have the right vehicle for every customer.

**MIR:** And what do you have to offer to the customers looking for a long-term relationship?

**HELMUT MEYSENBURG:** The dealer plays a key role here. We focus on how we can better understand the relationship between the customer and the brand and determine what really drives loyalty.

**MIR:** When talking about emotions, we cannot forget about one of your products in particular: the MINI. It has been said that people's affection for this car is inbred because it reminds them somewhat of a baby schema. Do you measure this emotional impact?

**HELMUT MEYSENBURG:** Let's stick with the analogy of a relationship. One study we conducted found that nearly half of the surveyed customers had given their MINI a name – the MINI had really been personalized. And it was not just a character. It had even become a member of the family. We are talking about a very emotional attachment here.

**MIR:** Let's move away from the individual brands and talk about BMW's corporate culture. If you watch a new commercial about the new electric car, spontaneously think the ad is just great and really get a thrill out of viewing it, can you just wave it through? Or do you still subject the ad that you think is so tremendous to a whole battery of pretests?

**HELMUT MEYSENBURG:** As a market researcher, I must be disciplined: If something excites me – that's fine. But am I really the person who is supposed to get excited when watching the ad? Our own emotions are important. In such decision-making processes, however, another customer-focused evaluation criterion is added through market research.

**MIR:** Do you then see yourself as an "emotions controller"?

**HELMUT MEYSENBURG:** That doesn't have a positive ring to it. No, as a market researcher, I am actually the individual who tries to introduce customer-relevant factors into decisions.

This would be something more like a "neutralizer" in terms of: The fish has to like the bait.

**MIR:** But we also have gut feelings. In such situations, your reason will tell you to select concept A. But your gut will say concept B. How do you react in such situations?

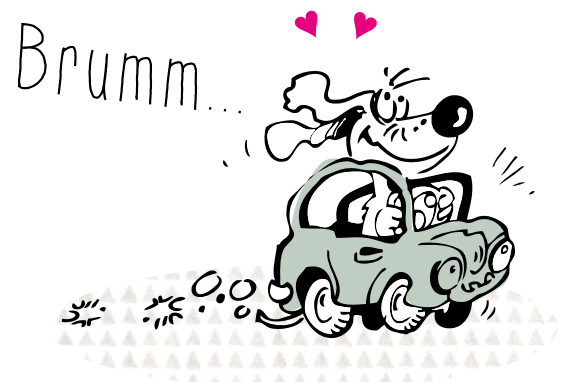
**HELMUT MEYSENBURG:** It really depends on what is at issue. Sometimes, it is important to listen to those gut feelings. Other times, you have to try to turn off your gut. When a variety of gut feelings from experienced and enthusiastic employees get together in one room, it is the job of market researchers to provide neutral facts. At the end of day, it is the customers' opinion that counts.

**MIR:** You just said that your decision makers are all very enthusiastic. But if the media are to be believed, many executives are burned out and the stress they face is not only positive, but also negative. Is this also the case in your company and what does BMW do to prevent employees from getting burned-out?

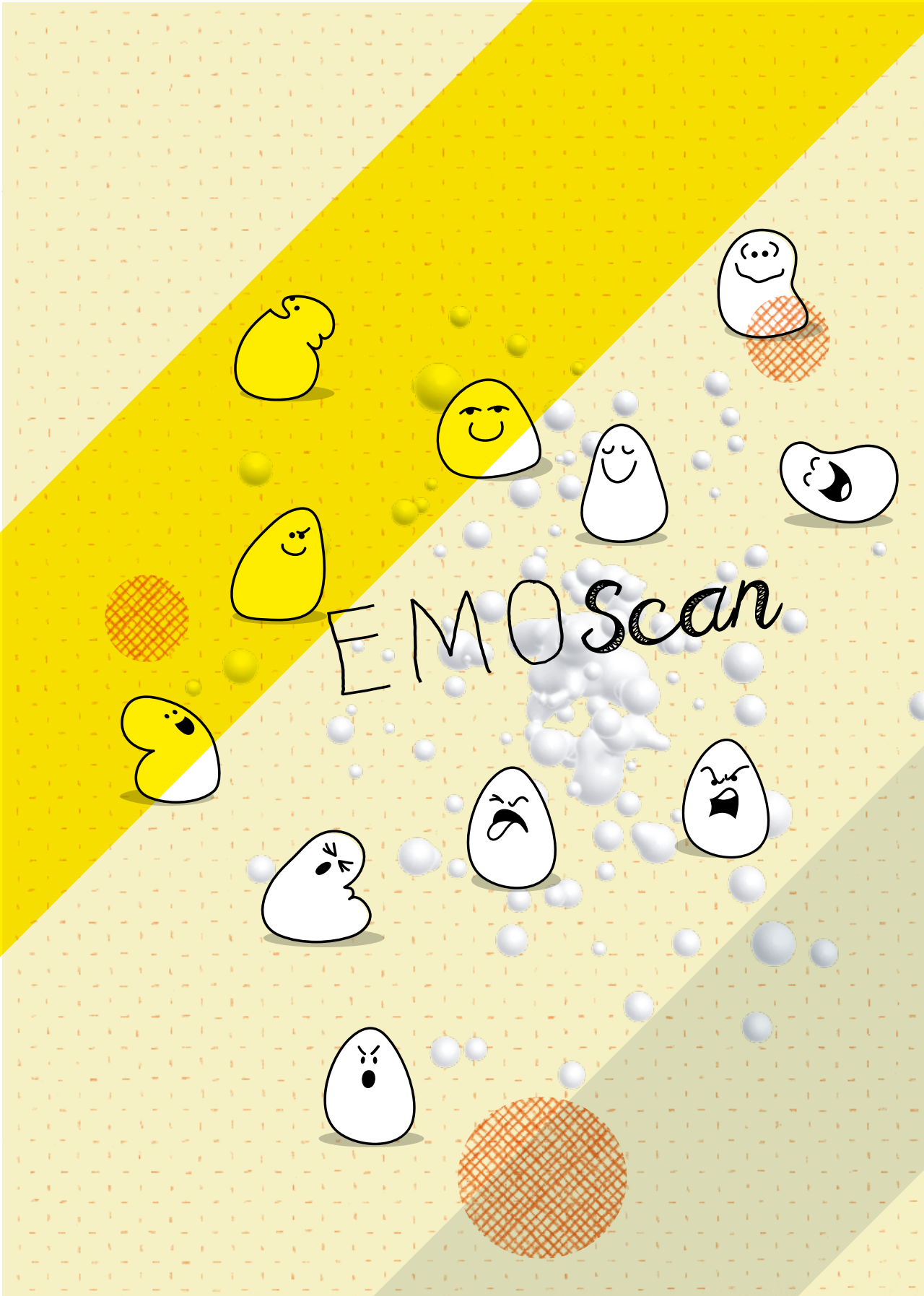
**HELMUT MEYSENBURG:** We take this issue seriously because employees are our most important form of capital. We need the smartest people, the best employees and the best working conditions. And we pay careful attention to prevent ourselves from becoming burned-out, despite all of our enthusiasm, and to maintain each individual's ability to perform.

**MIR:** This sounds very promising for the future. I wish you much success, sheer driving AND working pleasure with your team. I also would like to thank you for your very detailed and interesting answers!

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# Writ Large on Your Face: Observing Emotions Using Automatic Facial Analysis

*Anja Dieckmann and Matthias Unfried*

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## KEYWORDS

*Measurement of Emotions,  
Automatic Facial Analysis, EMO Scan*

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Emotions affect all of our daily decisions and, of course, they also influence our evaluations of brands, products and advertisements. But what exactly do consumers feel when they watch a TV commercial, visit a website or when they interact with a brand in different ways? Measuring such emotions is not an easy task. In the past, the effectiveness of marketing material was evaluated mostly by subsequent surveys. Now, with the emergence of neuroscientific approaches like EEG, the measurement of real-time reactions is possible, for instance, when watching a commercial. However, most neuroscientific procedures are fairly invasive and irritating. For an EEG, for instance, numerous electrodes need to be placed on the participant's scalp. Furthermore, data analysis is highly complex. Scientific expertise is necessary for interpretation, so the procedure remains a black box to most practitioners and the results are still rather controversial. By contrast, automatic facial analysis provides similar information without having to wire study participants. In addition, the results of such analyses are intuitive and easy to interpret even for laypeople.

These convincing advantages led GfK Company to decide on facial analysis and to develop a tool suitable for measuring emotional responses to marketing stimuli, making it easily applicable in marketing research practice.

**Facial expressions reveal a lot** /// Not everyone is an open book from which one can read moods and emotions at first glance. Yet all humans communicate unconsciously, even when they are silent. Back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Darwin investigated the general innate principles that underlie the expression of emotion in humans and animals. Following up on his work in the 1960s and 1970s, Ekman and Friesen studied human facial expressions in many different cultures around the globe. They were able to demonstrate that the facial expressions of the basic emotions joy, surprise, disgust, fear, anger and sadness are universally understood. Based on their observations, Ekman and Friesen developed the Facial Action Coding System (FACS). It encompasses all possible singular movements of the human face, which they called Action Units. To use this system, trained experts need to code the occurrence of each Action Unit manually. This can be very cumbersome: One minute of video recording can take up to one hour of coding, which, of course, severely limits the practical applicability of FACS.

**Automatic analysis of facial expressions: Can it really work?** /// To nonetheless make use of what our facial expressions reveal, GfK Fundamental Research launched a project with the Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits and emotion experts from CISA (Centre Interfacultaire en Sciences Affectives) at the University of Geneva, which is headed by Klaus Scherer, a renowned expert on the psychology of emotion. The aim of the collaboration was the development of a software tool for not only detecting prototypical emotions such as anger, surprise, sadness and joy, but also weaker, subtler emotion expressions. These can be observed much more frequently in response to marketing stimuli and thus are of high relevance for market research.

Most of today's affective science researchers no longer consider emotions to be unitary elementary entities. Instead, emotions are seen as complex processes with different components. One fundamental component is the emotional appraisal of the eliciting event. And the good news is: Facial expressions give off clear indications of those appraisals. In the development of our software tool, we therefore focused on the basic appraisal dimensions that underlie all emotions:

- > Valence (the intrinsic pleasantness or unpleasantness of an event)
- > Novelty (whether an event is new or familiar)
- > Control (which measures if an event is clear and easy to understand, confusing or too demanding)
- > Arousal (this dimension, unfortunately, does not show in the face)

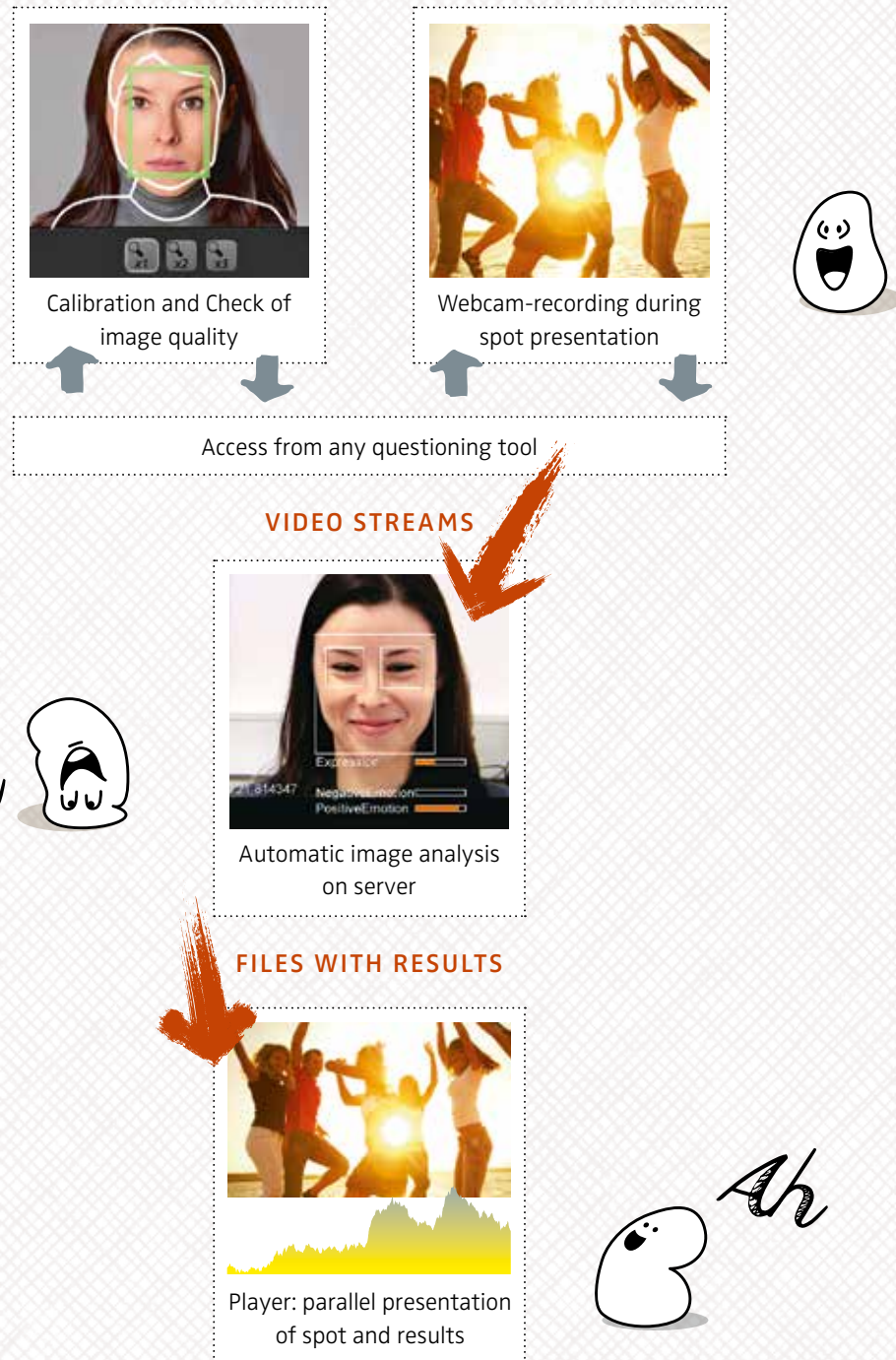
An event that, for instance, is unpredictable and novel, unpleasant and not controllable may result in the specific emotion fear. But given that such clear-cut, basic emotions are relatively rare, many different nuances and shades are possible. By focusing on the basic appraisal dimension, facial expression analysis can deliver continuous results that are more easily traced over the course of watching marketing stimuli such as TV commercials.

#### **What can EMO Scan deliver and how does it work?** ///

The current version of our software is called EMO Scan and infers from respondents' facial expressions the valence of an emotional reaction, that is, the extent to which a stimulus is perceived as pleasant or unpleasant. The software has been trained with a large data set comprising more than 12,000 pictures of different positive and negative faces. It identifies the facial regions pixel by pixel that best discriminate between positive and negative emotions. New faces, such as from video recordings of respondents, are then compared to the faces from the data set in these critical face regions. The output is a numerical value assigned to every recorded video frame that indicates the typicality of the recorded facial expression by comparing it with the positive and negative faces in the training data set.

Analysis on secure GfK servers is fully automated, thus preserving participant anonymity. Figure 1 shows the typical analysis process. With the participant's explicit consent, video recording and upload can begin. The initial step consists of calibration and quality control. In step 2 the participants watch a TV commercial while their facial expressions are recorded. In step 3 the software analyzes those facial expressions. Subsequently, the video is deleted and only its results – the valence scores – are retained. Final (step 4) results can be visualized with a special player.

**FIGURE 1:**  
Automatic facial expression analysis with EMO Scan





**Is the output of EMO Scan reliable?** /// To test the validity of EMO Scan, we conducted an empirical study with 180 respondents. The respondents were shown four different TV commercials and 32 pictures from the standardized International Affective Picture System (IAPS), half of which elicit positive and half of which elicit negative emotional responses.

While watching the TV commercials and looking at the pictures, the study participants' faces were recorded with a webcam. The recordings were subsequently analyzed with the software. Participants were additionally asked to rate each picture in terms of how they felt while viewing it (picture rating). Validity was evaluated based on three criteria:

- 1) To what extent can the picture valence according to the objective IAPS classification be predicted based on the results of the EMO Scan software?
- 2) To what extent can EMO Scan results explain differences in individual picture ratings?
- 3) How well do EMO Scan results fit the storyline of the TV commercials?

In terms of the first criterion, the prediction of the pictures' IAPS classification, EMO Scan showed excellent performance. For all pictures, the hit rate was 75 %. Focusing only on the pictures with average valence scores of more than one standard deviation above or below zero, the hit rate even increased to 100 %.

To judge the explanatory power of EMO Scan, valence scores for the individual picture ratings (criterion 2), different regression analyses were conducted. In all cases EMO Scan valence scores contributed significantly to explaining individual picture ratings.

The software also achieved compelling results in terms of the third criterion: Due to the high temporal resolution, the captured emotional responses can be very precisely assigned to the different scenes in a spot – and with a high fit in terms of face validity. Figures 2 and 3 show the results for two of the four TV commercials as examples. For the funny car commer-

cial, average valence is positive throughout the whole timeline. The first rise happens when the first celebrity is shown and the music begins. The two punch lines entail significant rises of the valence curve, that is, they clearly result in positive emotions that last until the end of the spot (cf. Figure 2).

The valence for the toothpaste spot shows clear dips into the negative range at the beginning. These are the results of two shock effects at the beginning of the advertisement. Although factual information and problem solution are presented in the second half of the commercial, valence stays in the negative range (see Figure 3). The conclusion is that in this case most respondents disapprove of the underlying marketing strategy based on provoking disgust and fear.

The impressive results above show that EMO Scan findings are valid and deliver valuable information for optimizing TV commercials.

In addition to the validity checks described above, we measured participants' electrodermal activity during their exposure to the stimuli in cooperation with Prof. Andrea Gröppel-Klein from Saarland University. The results showed temporal correlation of the EMO Scan results with the galvanic skin response, an indicator of emotional effects. This is additional proof for the validity of the EMO Scan measure.

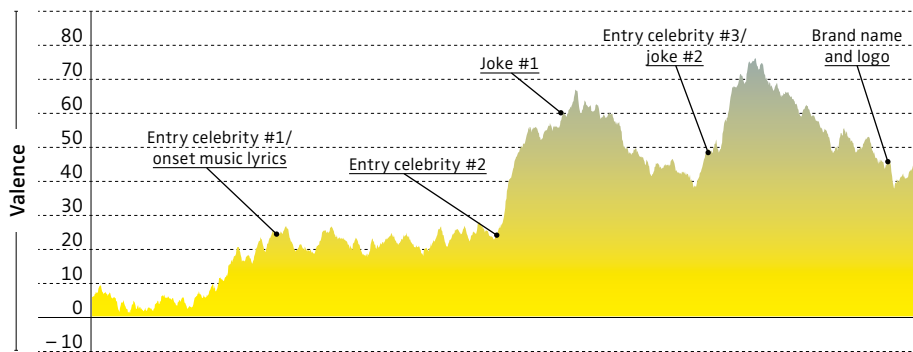
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This procedure of facial analysis  
can provide valuable  
insights whenever emotional reactions  
play a major role in the  
evaluation of marketing activities.

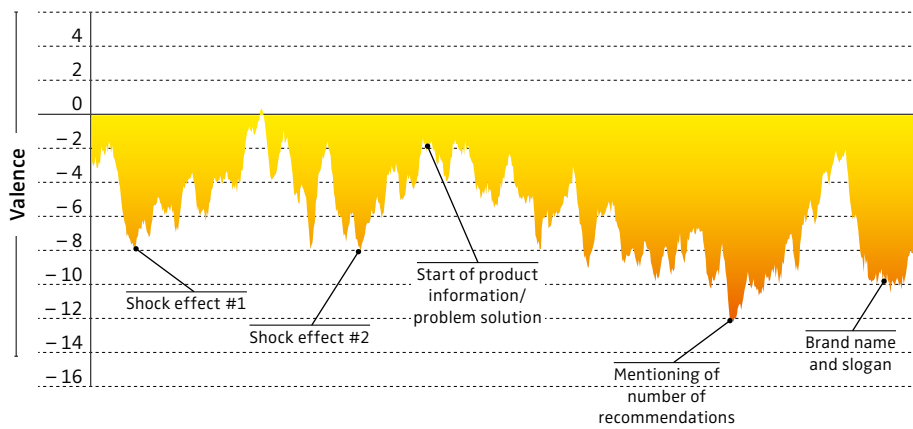
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**FIGURE 2:**  
Average valence during the humorous car commercial



**FIGURE 3:**  
Average valence during the fear-appeal toothpaste commercial



**Applications for EMO Scan** /// The procedure of facial analysis outlined here can provide valuable insights whenever emotional reactions play a major role in the evaluation of marketing activities. GfK EMO Scan has already been successfully used in several studies of diverse brands. In addition to tests of commercials for German cars and French cosmetics, it was used for tests of automobile designs and TV programs. The software seems to offer a very promising practical addition to conventional surveys for the following applications:

- > **Optimizing promotional material** /// The software can be used to test commercials, print advertisements and what is known as eDetailing material. EMO Scan can also be utilized when testing television programs or any form of communication media.
- > **Usability research** /// Furthermore, the technology holds a lot of promise for usability research for websites, software and consumer electronics. Confusion, lack of understanding or frustration can be detected very well in survey participants' facial expressions. Therefore, facial analysis can also help to develop more intuitive and easier to use devices and applications for consumers.

**And what to expect next? EMO Scan 2.0 ...** /// The new version, 2.0, which will provide additional dimensions of emotional appraisal, will reach the market soon. The appraisal dimensions "Novelty" and "Control" will be added to the set. The latter dimension in particular should prove valuable for usability tests. Future analysis will no longer be based on pixel-level comparisons with large databases. Instead, individual facial expressions will be analyzed according to characteristic muscle movements of single action units. We are starting with nine important action units in which emotions frequently manifest as mimic expressions. Examples for such action units are the furrowing of the brows or the wrinkling of one's nose. In time, the number of action units will be expanded.

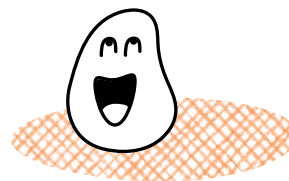
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# Executive Summaries

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## No Motion without Emotion: Getting Started with Hard Facts on a Soft Topic

*Andrea Gröppel-Klein*

The power of emotions is evident in almost all areas of marketing and consumer behavior. Consumers often strive for “affect optimization”: At the end of the day, they want their emotional balance to be positive. That means products, advertisements and other people – anything that can make us happy – all have a high potential for success. Hundreds of empirical studies demonstrate the importance of emotions in marketing and consumer behavior.

But emotions are very diverse and can be researched from different perspectives. Biologically oriented theorists deal with basic emotions that are genetically programmed, whereas appraisal theorists consider cognitive appraisal as a precondition for emotions. In their view, emotions result from the comparison of actual and desired states. The constructivist perspective combines these two theories. Constructivists assume that the body first reacts to an experience and then the brain interprets the event to form an emotion.

Methods for measuring emotions are as diverse as the various theoretical approaches. They range from verbal self-evaluation and picture-based scales to neuroscientific measures like heart rate, electrodermal reactions or regional brain response. Other popular approaches include observational methods that attempt to capture emotional facial expressions. Which method fits best needs to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

## Stressed Out: How Stress Develops and How to Cope with It

*Marcello Mortillaro and Klaus R. Scherer*

Our experience of stress depends on how we evaluate the circumstances impacting our individual well-being. In principle, any event can be a stressor. Certain events can produce complex emotional states, such as a mixture of anger and worry. If such states are prolonged, they can lead to stress.

Stress can be identified by means of such expressive components as facial expression and signs of stress in the voice. Indeed, the voice is particularly sensitive to stress and is frequently used to measure stress levels.

Coping strategies differ from person to person and are not mutually exclusive. Often, people use multiple strategies at the same time. Not all of these strategies are good for individual well-being or favor a cooperation-based work culture. To avoid employee burnout, companies should keep an eye on the stress load of their employees and develop trainings to increase emotional competences and improve constructive stress management.



## Feels Right ... Go Ahead? When to Trust Your Feelings in Judgments and Decisions

*Michel Tuan Pham*

Not only are subjective feelings an integral part of many judgments and decisions, they can even lead to improved decisions and better predictions. Individuals who have learned to trust their feelings performed better in economic-negotiation games than their rational-thinking opponents. But emotions are not just relevant in negotiations and decisions. They also play a decisive role in forecasting future events. Candidates who trusted their feelings made better predictions than people with less emotional confidence.

Emotions contain valuable information about the world around us. This information is not as readily available in our mind as hard facts but rather lies in the background of our conscious attention. In negotiation situations like the ultimatum game, feelings provide an intuitive sense of what offer is about right and what offer is too high or too low. But feelings also summarize statistical relationships among things that, on the surface, may seem disconnected. These statistical relationships make more probable futures feel more right than less probable futures.

However, researchers warn that you should not always trust your feelings. Feelings that tend to help are those based on general knowledge, not those based on easy-to-verbalize local knowledge.

## Breaking Up is Hard to Do: The Ups and Downs of Divorcing Brands

*Susan Fournier*

Relationships with brands are like relationships between people. Even when they were very close, they can fail for diverse reasons. The disadoption of favorite brands doesn't happen overnight. It tends to be an extended, often painful process and not a clear-cut, one-off event.

Breakups are not isolated to the person and the brand. Friends and family often get involved and offer their opinions and advice. Other brand relationships are also affected by the disconnection, and this can speed up or delay the process of breaking up. The brand relationship changes its form and can go from being a best friend to a platonic love, a distant friend, a stalker or even an enemy. A breakup is never the end of the relationship. Rather, it redefines the relationship and is part of a never-ending cycle of change.

If the former relationship is perceived positively, it is easier to eventually activate and intensify it. If negative aspects prevail, negative word of mouth is a danger and companies must be able to counter it. Some relationships reach a point of no return. But there are also customers who might regret having abandoned a brand. With some sensitivity, it might be possible to win them back.



## There's No Passion; I Need Passion: Why Some Brands Excite Consumers So Much

*Andrea Hemetsberger*

Not all brands have the potential to develop into meaningful objects for consumers. They need to serve certain psychological and symbolic functions in order to qualify as passion brands. They need to help consumers define and express their personality, combine potentially conflicting social roles or experiment with new roles.

Brand passion is lived in very different ways. Some fans invest a lot of time and money in their beloved objects; others join brand communities to collectively enjoy the brand. Others yet act as missionaries on behalf of the brand or develop their own rituals in dealing with it.

Companies can encourage customers' relationships with their brands by helping consumers care for the brand and enhance or maintain it. True passion, however, also needs a pinch of magic in extraordinary and unique experiences and transformations. Creating such magical moments is the true challenge for brand management.

## Do Pleasant Emotional Ads Make Consumers Like Your Brand More?

*Maggie Geuens, Patrick De Pelsmacker  
and Michel T. Pham*

Emotionally pleasant TV commercials are often preferred over merely factual ones. A large-scale study of Belgian TV ads confirms this notion and shows that such commercials also create more positive feelings toward the advertised brand. Interestingly, these effects depend on neither the level of involvement associated with the product category nor the type of product. Independent of the perceived creativity of the commercial or its informational value, emotionality had a significant impact on the evaluation of a brand. However, the effects were slightly more pronounced for products that align themselves with pleasure and experience than for functional products.

Advertisers should therefore leverage the power of emotions not only because these ads are better liked, but more importantly because they lead to more favorable brand attitudes.



## Next Issue Preview

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# Social Branding

The State of Social Branding

*Robert V. Kozinets*

The Megaphone Effect in Social Media

*Edward F. McQuarrie, Jessica Miller  
and Barbara J. Phillips*

Stories and Narratives in Social Branding

*Robert V. Kozinets, Kristine de Valck,  
Andrea C. Wojnicki and Sarah J.S. Wilner*

Interactivity in Digital Marketing

*John Deighton and Leora Kornfeld*

Consumer Participation The Backbone of Social Media

*Henry Jenkins*

Marketing with User-generated Brands and  
Consumer Co-creation

*Johann Fueller*

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# Imprint

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