

## Preface

In recent years, the evolution of internet and communication technologies and the proliferation of product alternatives have led to a more dynamic but also more complex search and decision process for consumers. For organizations, this evolution makes it even more difficult to stand out in the journey and steer consumers to purchase their brand. Since an accurate understanding of the purchase process is a prerequisite for effective brand management, a fundamental question for marketing researchers and managers alike is to what extent this evolution calls into question established models of consumer behavior and brand management such as the brand purchase funnel. In spite of a vivid debate, in which a more nuanced funnel is broadly perceived as beneficial, an accepted alternative to the traditional model, which combines the various proposed improvements and has been empirically applied, is not yet available. The thesis addresses this research gap and makes a twofold contribution to the re-modeling of the funnel model. First, based on a holistic, theory-backed, and practically applicable set of propositions, it develops a more nuanced brand purchase funnel. The proposed model describes consumer behavior more granularly. It thus allows monitoring brand performance among previously undifferentiated sub-groups and prioritizing as well as managing brand-related activities, accordingly. Second, drawing on survey-based, empirical research in two German industries, automotive and retail electricity, it investigates the model's added value in explaining consumers' brand purchase decisions. The thesis' findings give rise to a range of novel implications for managers, especially in the marketing department, across the brand management process.

The Faculty of Business Studies and Economics of the University of Bremen, Germany, has accepted this doctoral thesis in January 2017. I have written this dissertation during my time as an external doctoral candidate at the Chair of innovative Brand Management (Lehrstuhl für innovatives Markenmanagement, LiM®). Its successful finalization would not have been possible without the support of a number of individuals to whom I would like to extend my sincere gratitude.

Foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor Prof. Dr. Christoph Burmann for having accepted my research project during our initial meeting in Bremen in 2014 and for his highly valuable guidance and impulses as well as his personal inspiration in countless discussions since then. Moreover, I am much obliged to Prof. Dr. Maik Eisenbeiß for

assuming the role of second reviewer and to Prof. Dr. Martin Missonig and Prof. Dr. André W. Heinemann as well as Ayla Rößler and Tanja Fink for complementing the examining board of my oral examination.

I am thankful to my employer, McKinsey & Company, Inc. for the provision of the two survey-based data sets on which my dissertation builds and for supporting me in conducting my empirical research. In particular, I am indebted to my colleagues and mentors Dr. Jesko Perrey and Dr. Tjark Freundt for backing my dissertation project from the outset as well as for many helpful recommendations and amicable discussions in the course of my journey. Besides, I am obliged to a range of further colleagues, especially Dr. Kai Vollhardt and Reinhold Barchet, for their professional advice.

I would also like to thank all internal and external colleagues from the LiM, foremost Dr. Rico Piehler and Dr. Michael Schade, as well as McKinsey's "Fellows in Leave" community, especially in the Düsseldorf office, for their invaluable input and feedback on earlier parts of my manuscript as well as for many memorable moments. Additionally, thanks are due to Tanja Koppen for her support in all administrative matters at the chair as well as to Nicole Schweitzer for her aid in editing and publishing this document.

This thesis' completion would not have been feasible without my friends and my family, who provided tremendous backing across the ups and downs of my journey. I am grateful to my close friends in Düsseldorf, Munich, and beyond for backing this endeavor and for providing the necessary distraction during my spare time. I am indebted to my family – my parents, sister, and grandparents – for enabling me to complete this project. In particular, I would like to thank my parents, Monica and Jörg-Thomas, wholeheartedly for their advice and encouragement in every phase of my life and for offering both their affectionate support as well as the opportunity and freedom to pursue my own interests and choices. Without you, this thesis would not have been possible. Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to you, Stephanie. Your love, cheering up, and patience during the entire journey as well as your unconditional willingness to discuss, review, and constructively challenge my work have been of indescribable help and have substantially contributed to the successful finalization of this dissertation.

<http://www.springer.com/978-3-658-17821-5>

Re-Modeling the Brand Purchase Funnel  
Conceptualization and Empirical Application

Dierks, A.

2017, XVIII, 386 p. 22 illus., 2 illus. in color., Softcover

ISBN: 978-3-658-17821-5