

**Acceptance and critical success factors of Cause-related Marketing in Germany –
Evidence from a consumer survey**

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ABSTRACT

Although Cause-related Marketing (CrM) is increasingly applied little is known about consumers' attitudes, knowledge and perception of CrM campaigns and critical factors influencing consumers' purchase intention. Based on a consumer survey conducted in 2009 this paper focuses on the role of the cause-brand-fit and corporations' credibility for German consumers' willingness to switch to a CrM promoted product. Results provide evidence that consumers hold in general positive attitudes towards CrM but that these are not strongly reflected in actual or intended purchase behavior. Based on a factor and a cluster analysis we derive marketing recommendations for enterprises on how to effectively address different consumer segments regarding the CrM products. In this regard, we identify four groups of consumers that differ in their attitudes towards CrM products. For example one group of consumers that appreciates CrM products while another group holds skeptical attitudes towards CrM.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the saturated and highly competitive food markets of the industrialized countries consumers can be critical as to what they choose. Thus, differentiated products that satisfy consumers' needs and create "customer value" for different consumer segments are vital for firms' success. One opportunity for companies to differentiate their products is by means of labeling e.g. societal effects related to the production or consumption of the product or of the firms' whole strategy (ALEXANDER 2005; ZIMMERMANN AND VAN DER LANS 2009). Studies reveal that consumers value societal benefits such as environmental impact, ethics, and animal welfare supported by companies besides those attributes directly linked to the specific product or the process of the food under consideration (GFK, ROLAND BERGER AND BVE

2009; SEVENONE MEDIA 2009; ZIMMERMANN AND VAN DER LANS 2009). So illustrates the recent Brands & Values Ethical Brand Monitor[®] (which uses the 'ethical brand value' to describe the impact ethical factors have on brand image and consumers' preferences for the brand) that consumers in Germany prefer brands they perceive to be sustainable (DRÖGE AND BLUMBERG 2009). The results of this survey further indicate that social, ecological, and economical responsibility as well as firms code of conduct positively influence brand image and consumers' trust in the brand. The better trust results in increased purchase intentions for brands with a relatively higher perceived ethical brand value (DRÖGE AND BLUMBERG 2009). The development of sales volumes for e.g. organic and Fair Trade products reveal that especially the growing environmental and social awareness increasingly motivates consumers in Germany to choose the environmental or ethical substitute of a regular good and that the increased awareness and respective consumer statements are sales relevant (TRANSFAIR 2010, BLE 2008). For instance, the enlarged number of Fair Trade products in Germany is evidence for corporations' efforts to meet consumers' 'new' requests. Besides, they conduct diverse marketing activities - e.g. several studies reveal that corporations in Germany are increasingly socially and environmentally engaged (KRÖHER 2009; POPPELREUTHER AND STEIN 2008) - thereby trying to differentiate their brand from that of competitors. Such social commitment¹ can be perceived as additional benefit of a brand or a company which might be purchase relevant for conscious consumers. Thus, supporting social or environmental causes account not only for satisfying consumers' demands or social or ecological issues but might also enhance brand awareness, create positive brand image and reputation which is all benefiting the company.

Against this background, Cause-related Marketing (CrM) is a marketing strategy, where the product purchase leads to a target-oriented donation regarding a designated cause which is promoted on the product by label. This means that each time a consumer purchases a CrM product money is donated to a charity organization or a good cause. Thus, CrM allows companies to advertise its social or environmental commitment via the product. In doing so, companies are linking their name or brand with a particularly good cause or a charitable organization. Reasons for corporations to get involved with social causes via CrM range between the two poles of altruism and self-interest (Wymer and Samu 2009). Altruism if the firm believes in the value of the cause. Self-interest as CrM enables firms to gain consumers' attention and at the same time to differentiate themselves from competitors (e.g. CADBURY 2000; BERGER ET AL. 1996; BROWN AND DACON 1997). Also it enables stakeholders to identify

¹ The commitment of companies for social causes is commonly known as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). As there is no consistent definition of CSR we refer to the one given from the European Commission (2001) which states that CSR is "a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis" (EUROPEAN COMMISSION 2010).

themselves with the corporation and its brands (ROY AND GRAEFF 2003) and to increase sales volumes by encouraging consumers to switch brands or retailers (WEBB AND MOHR 1998). Thus, it is not surprising that CrM is an increasingly applied marketing strategy.

Since 2002 more than 90 CrM promoted products have been launched in Germany (OLOKO 2008), but little is known about consumers' appreciation of CrM products and their motives of buying a CrM product instead of a comparable one without CrM (WEBB AND MOHR 1998). For Germany up to now one study shows simply that CrM is able to increase brand sympathy (BLUMBERG AND CONRAD 2006). Nevertheless, manufacturers and retailers need to know the critical success factors of this strategy in order to apply it effectively. Therefore, our study investigates German consumers' attitudes, knowledge and perceptions of CrM campaigns and identifies critical factors that influence their purchase intention. We analyse consumers' purchase behaviour regarding CrM products and the sources they use to be informed about CrM. Furthermore, we examine whether CrM campaigns are able to change and influence brand preferences of consumers and the related role of the cause-brand-fit.

The paper continues with a brief literature review with respect to the motives for and the critical success factors of CrM. In section 3 we describe the design of the empirical study and the sample characteristics. The empirical results are presented in section 4. In section 5 a summary is given and conclusions are derived.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In most cases companies are using CrM primarily to enhance their image, reputation and profile and most importantly to increase their sales volumes and consumers' loyalty. The support of a good cause is rather secondarily of interest to them (CADBURY 2000). Several studies confirm that the economic objective of increasing sales volumes can be achieved by CrM as it encourages consumers to switch brands or retailers due to CrM (WEBB AND MOHR 1998). Moreover, previous research revealed that consumers' perception of corporate motivations of a company, claiming to be socially responsible, affects their responses towards the company itself (SEN AND BHATTACHARYA 2001, DRUMWRIGHT 1996), the product (BROWN AND DACIN 1997) and the cause (LICHTENSTEIN ET AL. 2004).

According to WEBB AND MOHR (1998) empirical analyses showed that consumers hold positive attitudes towards CrM campaigns and that they also express purchase intentions regarding CrM products. Nevertheless, research also reveals that elements of the promotion, such as type of product can make a difference. Besides, the success of CrM campaigns seems to depend on consumers' interest in the topic, i.e. the cause which is supported as well as the credibility of and the fit between the advertising profit organisation, the cause and the NGO.

In the following we focus on the issues of cause-brand-fit, firms' credibility, and brand switching. Cause-brand-fit is discussed because it is described to be important for consumers' positive evaluation of the campaign. The same holds for the credibility of the firm applying the CrM promotion. Finally, brand switching is likely to depend crucially on consumers' evaluation of CrM. From the companies' point of view, a CrM campaign is the more successful the more costumers purchase the CrM product.

PORTER AND KRAMER (2002) advice companies that are willing to take social responsibility, to identify a social cause that relates to the company's business; on the grounds that the ability to compete depends on the location it operates. PRACEJUS AND OLSEN (2004) agree with them and state it as inevitable, that companies wanting to be authentic and gaining a healthy margin from their competitors need to pay attention to the so-called "cause-brand-fit". They consider this fit to be the most important decisive factor for the credibility of a CrM cooperation and thus for its success. In this context it is important to identify social causes, which - from the consumers' point of view - appear related to the company's business or the brand itself. According to the brand-extension research it is vital for a successful campaign that there is at least one fit between the social cause and the brand or the company (LAFFERTY ET AL. 2004). The more the social cause and the brand/ company relate to each other the merrier the credibility and consequently consumers' acceptance of the campaign. This influences directly purchase intention and willingness to switch brands. Studies from different countries have shown that the extent of compatibility and similarity that consumers perceive to exist between cause and brand leads to a positive effect on their attitudes (AAKER AND KELLER 1990; BUCKLIN AND SENGUPTA, 1993; RIFON ET AL. 2004; SIMONIN AND Ruth 1998). At the same time DACIN and BROWN (2002) question that the level of relatedness between a company and the supported charitable cause has an impact on consumer response at all. These two contrary positions reveal that the relevance of the cause-brand-fit for the success of CrM campaigns has not been answered yet.

Another critical success factor for effective CrM campaigns is according to BLUMBERG AND CONRAD (2006) the credibility of firms' social engagement promoted in the very campaign. Also as stated by SINGH (2009) scepticism with respect to CrM arises primarily because customers question the company's motivations for participating in such actions. Studies reveal that consumers mistrust the altruistic motives of firms, firms' sustainability efforts and are sceptic with regard to the "fair" amount of money spent on the "cause" (OLOKO 2008; HAVAS MEDIA 2009). CrM is believed to be used primarily as a marketing tool and a fig leaf. This may be partly due to the fact that a great number of CrM promotions lack transparency with regard to the amount of donations as well as with respect to the success of the 'cause' the money is aimed at. Also, CrM campaigns seldom disclose details of the agreement between the NGO and the company (BERGLIND AND NAKATA 2005).

The Cone Corporate Citizenship Study (2004) emphasizes that 86% of consumers in the United States state they would switch brands from the one they normally purchase to one that supports a worthy cause, when price and quality are equal. The review of similar studies conducted by ENDACOTT (2004) reveals similar results for Australia, the UK, New Zealand and Mexico though on a lower level. In Australia 54% of consumers indicated they would switch brands due to CrM, in Mexico the respective share amounted to 76%. The other countries show values in between. The higher willingness to switch brands articulated by respondents from the US might be explained by the long tradition of CrM in the US compared to the other countries. ADKINS (1999) concludes from this cross-national similarity, if CrM can influence consumer perceptions and their accepted customs, it can be considered as a vital strategy in the marketing mix.

However, the change might be limited to a certain time or period and needs to be differentiated from brand loyalty. Since the early 1960s researchers study the reasons and factors influencing brand switching behavior. MAFFEI (1961) shows that marketing activities are able to influence brand preferences for at least a short time. GÖNÜL, POPKOWSKI LESZCZYC AND SUGAWARA (1996) find that purchase frequency influences the probability of brand switching. The more regularly a product is purchased the less likely it is that the brand is switched. SUN, NESLIN AND SRINIVASAN (2003) come to the conclusion that most of the promotion-induced brand switching effect cannot be referred to as an actual brand switch of consumers but only a temporary change of purchases. This means brand loyal consumers adjust their purchase time due to promotions.

Therefore, we can conclude that the cause-brand fit as well as the credibility of CrM campaigns are critical for consumers' acceptance and thus for their willingness to switch brands. Whether that holds true for Germany and which other determinants influence consumers' perception of CrM will be analyzed based on a consumer survey in the next section.

3 DESIGN OF THE STUDY AND SAMPLE CHARACTERIZATION

To answer our research questions we conducted a survey with n=217 respondents in Germany in 2009. Table 1 describes participants' socioeconomic characteristics in comparison to the German population. It reveals that young and highly educated people are over-represented in the sample.

Table 1: Socioeconomic characteristics of the sample and the German population

Variable	Specification	Percentage of the	
		sample (N=217)	German population (2007)
Gender	Female	53.6	51.0
	Male	46.4	49.0
Age ¹	18-24 years	11.5	9.9
	25-34 years	23.4	14.5
	35-44 years	20.1	20.4
	45-54 years	19.6	17.6
	55-64 years	17.2	14.0
	> 64 years	8.1	23.4
		< 500 €	16.0
	500 - < 1300 €	30.6	27.1
Income ¹ (N=214)	1300 - < 2000 €	24.1	24.5
	2000 - < 3600 €	19.6	2000 to 4500 € 33.8
	3600 - < 5000 €	7.0	
	> 5000 €	2.0	> 4500 € 5.4
		Without any graduation	0.0
Education	Volks-/ Hauptschulabschluss	19.4	42.9
	Mittlere Reife	26.3	26.4
	University entrance diploma	27.6	27.7
	University degree	23.0	n.p.

¹ Compared to German statistical office year 2005.

n.p.: not provided

Source: Own calculation; StBA 2007; StBA 2008, p. 29, 62.

4 EMPIRICAL RESULTS

To start with the analysis of consumer acceptance and critical success factors of CrM participants were asked whether they are in favour of the fact that they are doing something good by purchasing a CrM product. Results show that this holds for 93% of the respondents. While this result is not surprising, detailed results show that there are indeed variations among consumers as we will show in the following.

In this regard, we assessed respondents' attitudes towards CrM. Therefore, they had to evaluate a number of items on a Likert scale ranging from 1 = 'completely disagree' to 7 = 'completely agree'. Items included for example whether participants agree that donations generated by product purchases through cooperation between a NGO and a brand are meaningful, not authentic, and the like (see table 2). Table 2 reveals the degree of compliance with these statements and shows that it was highest for those items referring to labelling and thus for a greater transparency with respect to CrM campaigns. Consumers also agreed to a great extent with the positive statements regarding CrM (e.g. CrM is meaningful). In contrast, most of the rather sceptical and negative statements regarding CrM

(e.g. CrM is a marketing gag) were on average not confirmed (a mean below 4, indicating that participants are either indifferent or do not agree).

Overall, the results lead to the conclusion that respondents hold rather positive attitudes towards CrM. Table 2 also shows that on average consumers perceive CrM products to be different from Fair Trade products, monetary donations in general and even monetary donations to the NGO cooperating with the brand in the CrM campaign. This is an interesting result as in both cases, the purchase is linked to an ethical (social or environmental or both) cause. It provides some evidence that CrM might be complementary and does not crowd out donations or Fair Trade purchases.

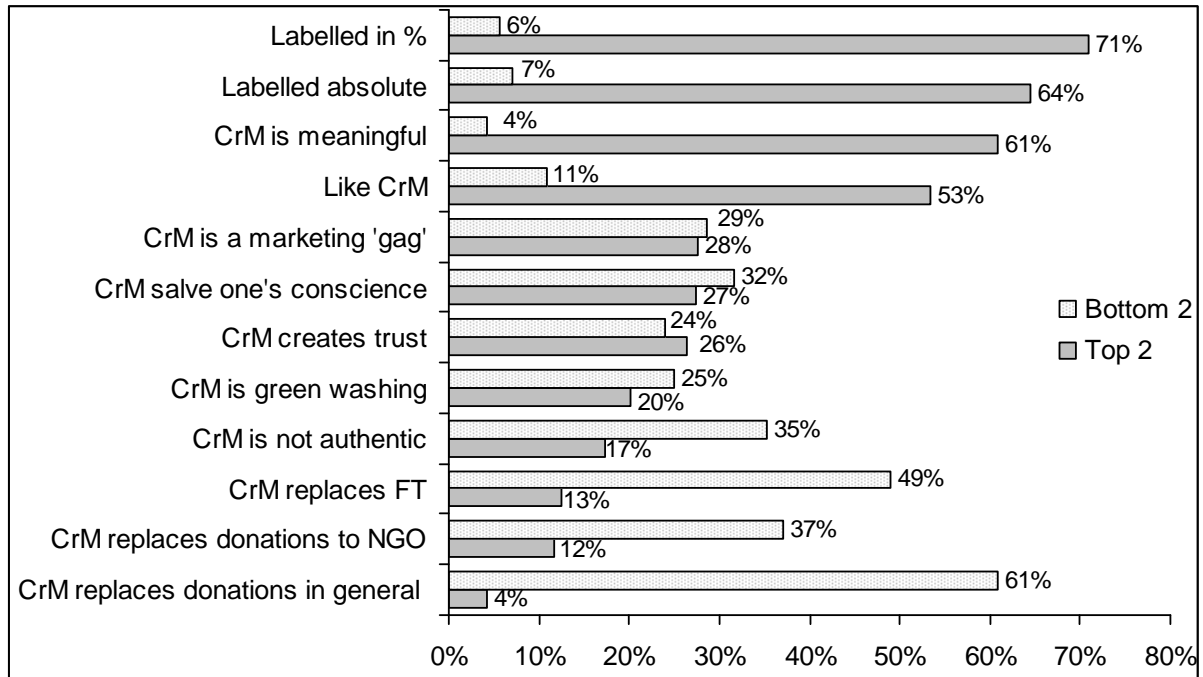
Table 2: Consumers' attitudes towards CrM

	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Donation amount labelled in %	213	5.87	1.51
Donation amount labelled in absolute figures	211	5.70	1.63
CrM is meaningful	215	5.69	1.44
Like CrM	212	5.23	1.79
CrM creates trust	212	4.08	1.90
CrM is a marketing 'gag'	210	3.92	1.97
CrM is green washing	208	3.87	1.74
CrM save one's conscience	208	3.87	2.09
CrM is not authentic	207	3.54	1.85
CrM replaces donations to NGO	205	3.36	1.83
CrM replaces FT	208	3.00	1.89
CrM replaces donations in general	210	2.38	1.63

7 point scale: 7: completely agree to 1: completely disagree.

To describe these results more in detail, we consider firstly the share of consumers who completely or strongly agree (Top-2-boxes) and secondly those who completely or mostly disagree (Bottom-2-boxes) (see figure 1). This reveals a different picture for some of the above discussed statements holding especially for the negative statements regarding CrM where we find great heterogeneity among respondents. E.g. the responses to the statement 'CrM is a marketing gag' indicates that an almost equal share (28%; 29%) of survey participants exists who either completely/strongly agrees or completely/strongly disagrees. Furthermore, responses regarding the statement 'CrM creates trust' are rather heterogeneous. These findings emphasize that we can differentiate between at least three groups of consumers differing strongly in their perception of CrM. The first group doubts this form of marketing and social engagement, the second groups appreciates it and the third group is indifferent of whether they should like it or not.

Figure 1: Consumers' attitude towards CrM: Top-2-box and Bottom-2-box in %



As figure 1 suggests different groups of consumers are holding different opinions towards CrM. To test this we applied a factor analysis aiming at the identification of major dimensions of CrM attitudes. We used the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (0.000) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (0.744) to assess the adequacy of the correlation matrices of the obtained items for factor analysis.

As the obtained values for both tests are good, principal component analysis was used to develop different components constituting the mental attitude about CrM. The survey statements and the rotated factor loadings for each item are presented in table 3. Four attitudinal factor components were identified based on eigenvalues greater than or equal 0.4 explaining 66% of the variance.

The first factor ('FA1_Positive Perception') merges all positive statements towards CrM. Accordingly, respondents with a high score on this factor hold positive attitudes towards CrM. The second factor includes all negative items related to CrM. Participants with a high score on this second factor are sceptic and doubt the positive intentions of firms applying CrM. This factor was labelled 'FA2_Sceptics'. The third factor reflects the respondent's opinion on the nature of CrM compared to other forms of ethical behaviour such as the purchase of Fair Trade products or giving to charity. High values for factor 3 indicate consumers do not differentiate between CrM and Fair Trade or donations to charity. They believe one is able to replace the other. Therefore we call this factor 'FA3_Replacer'. The fourth factor combines the items 'Labelling the donation amount in percent' and 'labelling the donation amount in absolute figures'. High values for this factor point toward a strong pro-labelling attitude with

regard to effects and amount of the CrM donation. This factor was labelled 'FA4_Effi Label less'.

Table 3: Rotated component matrix regarding consumers' attitudes towards CrM

	FA1 Positive Perception	FA2 Sceptics	FA3 Replacer	FA4 Effi Label less
CrM meaningful	.832			
Like CrM	.827			
CrM creates trust	.759			
CrM salves conscience	.654			
CrM marketing ,gag'		.836		
CrM greenwashing		.813		
CrM not authentic		.736		
CrM replaces donations in general			.828	
CrM replaces FT			.826	
CrM replaces donations to specific NGO			.533	
Labelled in %				.792
Labelled absolute				.777

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 6 iterations. Missing Values were excluded listwise.

After determining consumers' CrM attitudes we focused on the perception of products suitability regarding CrM campaigns. According to WEBB AND MOHR (1998) differences exist between products regarding their acceptability for a CrM campaign. Hence, we investigated this issue, by asking survey participants which products they would purchase in the context of a CrM campaign. Again we applied a seven-point Likert scale (1= completely disagree to 7 = completely agree). Results are summarised in table 4. The findings lead to the assumption that coffee seems to be most suitable to be promoted as CrM product (mean 5). However, CrM was introduced using coffee as an example. This has influenced responses most likely. But, besides coffee also chocolate seems to have a good fit with a CrM campaign. One possible explanation might be that the purchase of coffee and chocolate serves to satisfy hedonistic feelings and this might provide an additional motivation to do something good for someone else at the same time. Results also indicate that consumers do not distinguish between food and non-food as tooth paste ranks fourth before cereals. The results might be influenced by the frequency of purchasing specific products (e.g. wall paint versus water) and by the fact that some of the items are not needed by all consumers at the time of the campaign specifically or in general (e.g. pet food and wall paint). However, it seems noteworthy that there existed CrM campaigns for all seven product categories in Germany.

Table 4: Products respondents would buy when being subject of a CrM campaign

	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Coffee	210	5.00	1.98
Chocolate	208	4.59	2.11
Water	204	3.52	2.32
Tooth paste	202	2.99	2.07
Cereals	202	2.86	1.97
Pet food	199	2.58	2.08
Wall paint	199	2.54	1.87

7 point scale from 7: completely agree to 1: completely disagree.

To pay attention to the brand-cause fit of companies with regard to CrM campaigns, participants were asked whether they think it is important that there is a 'good fit' between a companies' general activities and the objectives of the promoted CrM campaign. 71% of the respondents hold the opinion that this is important and very important respectively (top 2 boxes; 7 point scale).

As discussed in section 2, MAFFEI already discovered in 1961 that brand switching is influenced by marketing activities. To assess whether the CrM promoting marketing strategy is effective to a degree that consumers remember it we asked participants in which media they had heard about CrM and if so, to what extent. Table 5 reveals that consumers hardly heard anything about CrM campaigns. From all sources 'ads on the product', 'product advertisement' and 'TV commercials' had the greatest relevance. Though with a mean between 3 and 4 on a 7 point Likert scale their relevance is modest. All other information sources are of almost no relevance for consumer information regarding CrM campaigns (see table 5).

Table 5: Sources consumers heard about CrM before

	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Ad on the product	205	3.97	2.17
Product advertisement	203	3.83	2.13
TV commercials	199	3.49	2.19
Retail outlet	203	2.90	1.88
Print media	197	2.85	1.81
Outdoor advertisement	199	2.51	1.80
Internet	195	2.42	1.78
Radio	204	2.22	1.70
Cinema	198	1.60	1.22

7 point scale: 7: heard a lot 1: heard nothing

4.1 Segmenting consumers with regard to CrM

As table 3 suggests, four different latent factors constituting the attitudes towards CrM can be identified. In this section we aim to segment consumers based on their attitudes towards CrM, brand switching behaviour, CrM purchase behaviour, use of information sources, social activities performed, and socioeconomic characteristics. Therefore, we group consumers based on the factors identified before in the principal component analysis (see table 3) via a k-means cluster analysis. The aim is to answer the question which consumer characteristics

influence positive, sceptic or other opinions concerning CrM. For a detailed description of the determinants included in the analysis see table 6.

Table 6: Description of Variables (n=213)

Category	Variable	Variable Description	Mean	Std. Dev.
Attitudes towards CrM	CrM marketing ,gag'	CrM is a marketing ,gag' ^a	3.92	1.97
	CrM not authentic	CrM is not authentic ^a	3.54	1.85
	CrM greenwashing	CrM is greenwashing ^a	3.87	1.74
	CrM meaningful	CrM is meaningful ^a	5.69	1.44
	CrM creates trust	CrM creates trust ^a	4.08	1.90
	CrM salves conscience	CrM salves ones conscience ^a	3.87	2.09
	Like CrM	I like CrM ^a	5.23	1.79
	CrM replaces donations to specific NGO	CrM replaces donations to the specific NGO ^a	3.36	1.83
	CrM replaces FT	CrM replaces FT ^a	3.00	1.89
	CrM replaces donations in general	CrM replaces donations in general ^a	2.38	1.63
	Labelled in %	Donation amount labelled in % ^a	5.87	1.51
	Labelled absolute	Donation amount labelled in absolute figures ^a	5.70	1.63
	Do good for society	By purchasing CrM products I do something good for society ^b	0.93	0.26
	Donation amount	Estimated donation amount of CrM relative to the product price ^c	3.52	2.13
	Cause Brand Fit	Importance of the Cause Brand Fit ^e	3.97	1.16
Brand switching behaviour	Switch imaginable	Brand switch imaginable ^b	0.39	0.49
	Switch done	Brand switch done ^b	0.16	0.36
	Switch back	After CrM promotion: switch back to former brand 1 ^b	0.75	0.43
	Stay	Stay with former CrM brand 2 ^b	0.51	0.51
	Purchase CrM	Did purchase CrM previously ^b	0.22	0.41
Purchase behaviour CrM	Conscious decision	Conscious decision for a CrM product ^b	0.16	0.37
	Several products	Did purchase several products because of CrM ^b	0.04	0.19
	TV	Where and to which extent did you here about CrM campaigns ^d	3.49	2.19
Information sources	Print media	Did give to developmental charity organisations in the last 12 month ^b	2.85	1.81
	Internet		2.42	1.78
	Retail info		2.90	1.88
	Outdoor ad		2.51	1.80
	Radio		2.22	1.70
	Product advertise		3.83	2.13
	On-product info		3.97	2.17

	Donor		0.67	0.47
Social Activities	Member: church	Membership or voluntary engagement in the respective organisation ^b	0.50	0.50
	Member: environmental organisation	Age in years	0.05	0.22
	Member: sport		0.37	0.48
	Member: party		0.08	0.27
	Member: world shop		0.01	0.12
	Member: youth work		0.10	0.30
	Member: NGO		0.12	0.32
	Age		42.71	15.03
Socio-economic characteristics	Children < 18	Number of children under the age of 18	0.29	0.70
	Edu: 9	Education: 9 years	0.20	0.40
	Edu: 10	Education: 10 years	0.27	0.44
	Edu: Abitur	Education: university entrance diploma	0.29	0.45
	Edu: University	Education: university degree	0.23	0.42
	Edu: PhD	Education: PhD	0.01	0.12
	Siblings: number	Number of siblings		
	Siblings: older	Older siblings	0.34	0.48
	Siblings: older and younger	Siblings are younger and older	0.16	0.37
	Siblings: younger	Younger siblings	0.30	0.46
	Female	Gender (1=female, 0=male).	0.54	0.50
	Income	Household Net-Income (EUR/month) Categorical variable from 1 (< 300 EUR) to 12 (>5000 EUR).	6.02	3.38

^a: Attitude measured on Likert-Scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree)

^b: Dummy Variable equal to 1 if yes, 0 otherwise

^c: Categorical variable from 1 (0-2%) to 9 (>25%)

^d: Measured on Likert-Scale from 1 (nothing) to 7 (a lot)

^e: Measured on Likert-Scale from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important)

Tables 7, 8, 9 and 10 depict the differences in the clusters with regard to brand switching and purchase behaviour of CrM products as well as consumers' information sources with respect to CrM, their social activities, and general socioeconomic characteristics. In each table the cluster specific means and the total sample means are given. If the variables are dummy variables, the data are shown in percent.

4.1.1 Attitudes towards CrM

Table 7 reveals that cluster 1 holds a positive attitude towards CrM as the lower than average scores regarding the negative statements ('CrM is a marketing gag', 'CrM not authentic' and 'CrM greenwashing') and the higher than average scores regarding the positive statements ('CrM meaningful', 'CrM creates trust', 'Like CrM' and 'do good for

society') show. On the contrary cluster 2 is rather sceptic which is revealed by a higher than average score regarding the first set of items and a lower one for the second bundle. Members of the third cluster feel that the purchase of CrM promoted products is likely to replace the purchase of Fair Trade products or donations in general or to specific NGOs as the above average values for those items indicate. Finally, cluster 4 has little interest in labelling of CrM (comparable low value for labelling items). The cause-brand-fit is especially important for clusters 1 and 2, which as Table 7 shows are in general more involved in CrM than cluster 3 and 4. However, it should be noted that all consumer segments are in favour of CrM. They perceive it as an opportunity to do something good.

Table 7: Attitudes towards CrM: Cluster means

Variable	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Total Sample
	<i>Positive Perception</i>	<i>Sceptics</i>	<i>Replacer</i>	<i>Effi Label less important</i>	
	n=43	n=35	n=35	n=27	n=213
CrM marketing ,gag'	2.26	5.34	4.37	3.77	3.92
CrM not authentic	2.23	4.77	3.52	3.57	3.54
CrM greenwashing	2.91	4.94	4.44	3.34	3.87
CrM meaningful	5.84	5.80	5.85	5.83	5.69
CrM creates trust	4.56	3.17	5.15	4.00	4.08
CrM salves conscience	4.33	3.34	5.15	3.49	3.87
Like CrM	5.70	4.94	5.70	5.23	5.23
CrM replaces donations to specific NGO	2.56	3.14	5.30	3.06	3.36
CrM replaces FT	2.40	2.09	4.78	3.71	3.00
CrM replaces donations in general	2.02	1.49	4.15	2.51	2.38
Labelled in %	6.60	6.54	6.44	4.03	5.87
Labelled absolute	6.42	6.06	6.52	4.11	5.70
Do good for society	98%	88%	96%	97%	93%
Donation amount	4.54	3.88	2.80	3.62	3.68
Cause Brand Fit	4.30	4.24	3.65	3.76	3.97

Note: Sample size of the clusters is lower than the total sample size due to listwise exclusion of missing values in the factor analysis.

4.1.2 Brand Switching due to CrM and CrM purchase behaviour

52% of the members in cluster 1 can imagine switching brands because of CrM (see table 8). However, only 18% of this cluster has already done so. The respective shares for cluster 2 are 47% and 25%. This shows that consumers might be sceptic but this is no barrier for CrM purchases. This suggests that effective marketing strategies are able to convince them to switch brands. Especially for the group of 'replacers' the share of respondents who can imagine switching a brand due to CrM is with 24% low and so far they hardly have behaved accordingly (6%).

One of the reasons for firms to introduce CrM is to increase their market share. However, the respondents indicate that once the CrM promotion ended, most of them (75%) would switch back to their former brand. This means the success based on CrM campaigns could be

rather temporary. Especially, the fourth cluster is prone towards switching back (91%). In contrast, 35% of members of the first consumer segment indicate that they would continue to purchase the new brand (product), even after the campaign ended.

However, so far only 22% of the overall sample has experienced CrM products. Surprisingly, the share is lowest in cluster 1 which perceives CrM to be very positive.

Table 8: Brand Switching and Purchase Behaviour of CrM products

Variable	Cluster 1 <i>Positive Perception</i> n=43	Cluster 2 <i>Sceptics</i> n=35	Cluster 3 <i>Replacer</i> n=35	Cluster 4 <i>Effi Label less important</i> n=27	Total Sample n=213
Brand switch imaginable	52%	47%	24%	41%	39%
Brand switch done	18%	25%	6%	15%	16%
After CrM promotion:					
Switch back to former brand 1	65%	79%	75%	91%	75%
Stay with former CrM brand	50%	38%	43%	67%	51%
Did purchase CrM previously	17%	28%	24%	26%	22%
Conscious decision for a CrM product	17%	18%	12%	20%	16%
Did purchase several products because of CrM	0%	6%	0%	9%	4%

4.1.3 Communication

CrM being a marketing strategy depends on being communicated to consumers. In general the results indicate that there is scope to improve communication to consumers. This holds for all clusters and sources of information. The findings also show that the different clusters use different information sources when it comes to CrM (see table 9). The first cluster mainly refers to retail ads and on-product labels when seeking the information in question. The second consumer segment relies mainly on the product information, however compared to the other clusters results show an above average use of internet sources and information provided by retailers. The fourth cluster uses mainly product information but shows the least interest in information provided by retailers. The third cluster as well uses mainly product information. However, compared to the other segments this cluster receives most information on CrM from the radio.

Table 9: CrM Information Sources and Social Activities

	Cluster 1 <i>Positive Perception</i>	Cluster 2 <i>Sceptics</i>	Cluster 3 <i>Replacer</i>	Cluster 4 <i>Effi Label less important</i>	Total Sample
	n=43	n=35	n=35	n=27	n=213
TV	3.35	3.85	3.52	3.88	3.49
Print Media	2.83	3.06	2.83	2.76	2.85
Internet info	2.18	2.59	2.52	2.47	2.42
retail info	3.10	3.38	3.21	2.63	2.90
outdoor ad	3.03	2.76	2.33	2.31	2.51
Radio	2.21	2.18	2.77	2.20	2.22
On-product info	3.98	4.63	3.88	3.79	3.97
Donor	72%	71%	70%	51%	67%
Member: church	0.44	0.53	0.44	0.51	0.5
Member: environmental organisation	5%	6%	0%	6%	5%
Member: sport	30%	29%	48%	29%	37%
Member: party	9%	9%	4%	6%	8%
Member: world shop	0%	0%	0%	6%	1%
Member: youth work	16%	3%	7%	6%	10%
Member: NGO	12%	24%	4%	6%	12%

Note: each row depicts the mean of the variables of the particular cluster and total sample, respectively. If the variables are dummy variables, the data are shown in percent. The use of the information sources was measured on Likert-Scale from 1 (nothing) to 7 (a lot).

4.1.4 Socioeconomic characteristics

As CrM is a marketing strategy that targets the altruistic motives of consumers one can assume that those consumers with altruistic traits in other parts of their lives might be more inclined to buy products promoted by a CrM campaign. Results in table 10 show that while members of cluster 1 and cluster 2 as well as to a lower degree cluster 4 support youth work and NGOs or in the case of cluster 4 world shops. This does not hold for members of cluster 3. Their involvement is highest in sport clubs, a membership which is in general more encouraged by egoistic than altruistic motives. This is in line with former results presented, e.g. only 24% of this cluster could imagine switching brands for a cause and only 6% had done this already. The respective shares were as twice as high for the other clusters. However, this might be explained as well by the fact that this cluster does differentiate between donations and CrM. They believe these are substitutes. As 70% of the members of this cluster have given to charity organisations in the last 12 months their reluctance to buy CrM promoted products might be partly explained by their potential preference for direct donations.

Table 10: Socioeconomic characteristics

	Cluster 1 <i>Positive Perception</i>	Cluster 2 <i>Sceptics</i>	Cluster 3 <i>Replacer</i>	Cluster 4 <i>Effi Label less important</i>	Total Sample
	n=43	n=35	n=35	n=27	n=213
Age	47.47	39.97	39.69	42.93	42.71
Children < 18	19%	15%	34%	37%	29%
Edu: 9	19%	18%	20%	11%	20%
Edu: 10	38%	15%	31%	26%	27%
Edu: Abitur	21%	32%	31%	41%	29%
Edu: University	21%	35%	14%	19%	23%
Edu: PhD	0%	0%	3%	4%	1%
Siblings: number	1.49	1.56	1.69	1.48	1.64
Siblings: older	53%	44%	37%	11%	0.34
Siblings: younger	23%	24%	29%	44%	0.30
Siblings: both	9%	9%	17%	26%	0.16
Female	60%	44%	57%	46%	0.54
Income	6.51	6.43	5.8	6.67	6.02

Note: each row depicts the mean of the variables of the particular cluster and total sample, respectively. If the variables are dummy variables, the data are shown in percent.

With regard to socioeconomic characteristics the results show that the first cluster is the oldest with 47 years on average. Only 19% of the members of this cluster have children below the age of 18 years. Their education level is slightly below average, while their income is above average. 60% of this cluster are female and 53% have older siblings. Members of the second cluster are on average rather young (40 years), have the lowest share of children and a higher than average education. Income is highest in this consumer segment. 44% of this cluster is female and the same share has older siblings. The third consumer segment is 43 years on average. 37% have children below 18 in their household. They have a rather high education level and the second highest income level. 46% are female and only 11% have older siblings. Members of the fourth cluster are also about 40 years old, 34% have children in the household and more than 50% have the most 10 years of education. Their income is the lowest compared to the other clusters. 57% are female (see table 10).

Thus, socio-demographics might explain differences in preferences when it comes to the purchase of CrM promoted products regarding the four consumer segments. Assuming that promoting the cause is somewhat reflected in higher prices this is most difficult to bear for cluster 3 as a high share of members of this segment has children under 18 while the average income is lowest in this cluster. However, AMATO (1985) postulates that helping behaviour is correlated with everyday life characteristics and that involvement is higher at some stages in the life cycle than it is in others. Therefore it is remarkable that those with the lowest percentage of children under 18 (cluster 1 and 2) are most interested in helping via the purchase of CrM products than those having a higher share of children. Another interesting finding is that sibling's position is a factor differing in the respective consumer segments. Those with the highest share of younger siblings (group 4) are less interested in

CrM products than those having older siblings. The explanation is difficult as on the one hand older siblings can be educated to feel responsible towards others and on the other hand younger siblings can have learned to share things. As the role of siblings position is hardly researched in the case of pro-social behaviour and charitable giving (HEIDBÜCHEL 2000) we can not draw conclusions concerning the reasons here. Further research is needed.

4.1.5 Marketing recommendations

The results indicate that there is a lack of information regarding CrM campaigns. Thus, given the overall positive attitude towards CrM, with respect to marketing recommendations these results suggest to focus especially on consumers with positive perception and sceptic consumers. Those respondents being older than average and holding a positive attitude towards CrM promoted products inhabit usually rather stable brand preferences. But if they are drawn to CrM and convinced to purchase the CrM product they have a lower probability to switch back than other consumer segments. As this cluster is so open towards CrM, marketers should try to convince this group to transform the positive attitudes in positive purchase decisions. The sceptics hold the highest share of participants who already purchased CrM products and are willing to switch brands. Also, CrM products are usually sold on a higher price level. This youngest segment has the highest monthly net income. As results show these consumers are seeking actively for information. For example their use of internet sources provides an opportunity to be better informed. They should be prone towards informational rather than emotional marketing strategies. For marketers this is also a chance to provide more background information for instance on the internet.

4.2 Brand switching behaviour regarding CrM

As it is stated in literature consumers switch brands because of additional benefits CrM products provide. Hence, we asked respondents whether they would be willing to switch from their regular brand to a brand which is promoted via CrM. 39% answered they would. And 16% told us that they still did it. Then, we posed the question whether respondents had already purchased a CrM product. 22% confirmed this and 16% said they intentionally purchased the CrM product because of the CrM campaign. But on the downside only 4% purchased several units of the product because of the CrM campaign.

In addition participants were asked to hypothetically switch from their regular coffee brand A to a different coffee brand B promoting their coffee within a CrM campaign. Participants were then asked to state what they would do once the CrM campaign of brand B ended. 75% responded they would switch back to their regular brand A, the one they had purchased before the CrM campaign of brand B. 50% of those 25% who stated to retain purchasing CrM

brand B even after CrM campaign indicated they would purchase brand B as often as during the campaign. The other half stated they would purchase brand B less often.

To finish our analyses with respect to CrMs' potential for brand switching we applied a logit model to identify potential determinants of brand switching behaviour due to CrM (see table 11). The dependent variable is the answer to the question 'If a company promotes products by means of a CrM campaign I am willing to switch brands'.

Table 11: Potential determinants of brand switching behaviour – a logit model

	Coef.	Std. Err.	z value ^a
FA1_Positive Perception	0.565	0.278	2.03 **
FA2_Skeptics	-0.099	0.249	-0.4 n.s.
FA3_Replacer	-0.497	0.236	-2.1 **
FA4_Effi Label less important	-0.049	0.210	-0.23 n.s.
Cause Brand Fit	-0.066	0.237	-0.28 n.s.
CrM coffee thinkable ^b	0.372	0.165	2.26 **
Cups of coffee per day ^c	-0.389	0.142	-2.73 ***
Income	0.018	0.068	0.26 n.s.
Female	-0.596	0.456	-1.31 n.s.
Age	0.002	0.018	0.09 n.s.
Education: Abitur and more	-0.917	0.543	-1.69 *
Constant	-0.053	1.634	-0.03 n.s.

^a p<0.1=*, p<0.05=**, p<0.01=***, n.s. = not significant

Wald chi² (11) = 23.41, Prob > chi² = 0.01, Log Pseudolikelihood = -66.17, Pseudo R² = 0.22

^b Coffee as CrM product would be purchased (Scale: 7=fully agree; 1=do not agree)

^c Cups of coffee the respondents drink per day

The results presented in table 11 indicate that consumption behaviour and attitudes towards CrM are crucial for consumers' willingness to switch from their regular brand to the brand promoted via CrM. Respondents holding positive attitudes towards CrM, which were described in detail in section 4.1., are willing to switch to a brand promoted in a CrM campaign. Those thinking the purchase of a CrM product replaces a donation to charity or the purchase of Fair Trade products are not willing to switch to a CrM brand. The same holds for participants drinking many cups of coffee per day. This is in line with the results of GÖNÜL, POPKOWSKI LESZCZYC AND SUGAWARA (1996) indicating that intensive coffee drinkers switch less likely from their regular brand to one promoted via CrM. Furthermore, the results show that it is of great importance that consumers can imagine that the respective product is promoted in a CrM campaign. This supports the assumption of WEBB AND MOHR (1998) that the type of product determines to some extent the success of a CrM campaign. The perceived fit between cause and brand has no influence on consumers' willingness to switch brands because of CrM. In addition only education shows a significant effect out of all socioeconomic characteristics. Participants holding at least a university entrance diploma are less likely willing to switch a brand because another one is promoted in a CrM campaign.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The present study is one of the first to retrace German consumers' attitudes regarding CrM promoted products. Thus, our results provide insights to marketers on how to improve the effectiveness of CrM campaigns. Overall, there seems to be a great potential for CrM marketing campaigns as a large share of consumers holds a positive attitude towards CrM and 52% of the respondents' state to be willing to switch brands due to CrM. Our findings indicate that the low share of consumers who actually have switched brands due to a CrM campaign might be attributed to the little information respondents obtained about CrM. Thus, there seems to be a need for information on the products but also in the retail stores and in the media.

Marketing strategies should address German consumers' skepticism regarding firms' underlying motives for applying CrM. Despite the positive attitude towards CrM this skepticism exists and is likely an impediment for the purchase of CrM products.

To gain deeper insights into consumers' perception of CrM, we clustered consumers according to their attitudes towards CrM. By this we identified factors influencing positive and negative attitudes towards CrM and derived critical success factors which allow companies to enhance the quality of their CrM activities. We showed that the cause-brand-fit is especially important for the positive thinking cluster 1 and the sceptic cluster 2. These two clusters form the consumer segments which are willing to purchase CrM products and to switch brands to do so. Therefore, marketers should focus with their marketing activities on these two consumer groups. As the two groups differ explicitly in socio-economic characteristics, social engagement, information utilization etc. targeted-marketing approaches would be appropriate.

Our findings are limited to the extent that consumers' willingness to purchase CrM was investigated via hypothetical questions instead of using incentive-compatible approaches, i.e. participants were not forced to actually buy CrM promoted products.

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