

## WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET: CURRENT ISSUES ON WEB INTERFACE AND DESIGN

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### ABSTRACT

Why study interface & design in digital environments? This is probably only one of many determinants of the success and/or failure of digital ventures amongst other variables such as business model used, competitive environment, external communication effort etc. However, from a consumer behavior perspective, it is an important dimension impacting on an emotional level as researched and evidenced in the Atmospherics literature (Kotler 1974; Baker et al. 1992; Sherman et al. 1997). Think of the physical space contained within a computer screen as the setting where transactions are likely to occur, not unlike a physical retail environment. Accordingly, as in a physical retail setting, a gamut of additional peripheral cues are going to affect how consumers perceive stimuli exposed to them such as brands, metaphors, iconic representations etc. Given this, we can rightfully ask the research question: is the site design actually *furthering* or *hindering* the original business goals and objectives? The resulting consumer reaction to the peripheral stimuli is likely to impact on attitude toward the site and brand, the probability of revisit and probability of transaction (Lohse and Spiller 1999; Mandel and Johnson 1999). To understand the true nature of these effects, one has to draw from a diversity of literature streams, namely human/machine interface, usability, consumer-oriented design and cognitive psychology. The purpose of this special session is to present some results of empirical research conducted by marketing scholars involved in this specific area and to critically examine what research agenda lies ahead.

#### List of participants:

- **Session Chair:**
  - David R. Fortin, Director of [Web-L@b](http://www.mang.canterbury.ac.nz/weblab), Department of Management, University of Canterbury
- Paul Ballantine, Web-Lab, Department of Marketing, University of Auckland, New Zealand
  - “Examining the Role of Emotions as a Mediator of Interface Design Effects in an Online Retail Setting,” *An empirical examination of a proposed conceptual model using a Web-based experiment (using a 3 x 3 between-subjects factorial design) where subjects were exposed to a simulated online store for digital cameras.*
- Charlie Hofacker, Department of Marketing, Florida State University, USA
  - “Improving Marketing Response to Internet Sites Using Live Web Experiments” *A presentation on ways of leveraging Web server log data to empirically test marketing theory and help practitioners realize the marketing goals of their site. This research utilizes live randomized experiments on site structure, page design and hyperlink execution.*
- Mark Gabbott, Department of Marketing, Monash University, Australia
  - “Understanding the Factors Impacting on the e-Service Experience,” *A discussion on the issues impacting the specific area of services accompanied by a critical appraisal of research conducted to date in the field. Directions for future research will be presented with the purpose of generating some discussion on what should be key areas of focus in e-marketing research.*

Special session organized by:

**Web-L@b**  
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