
An Audience-Centered Perspective on Media Brands: Theoretical Considerations, Empirical Results and ‘White Spaces’

Kati Förster

Abstract

In an audience perspective a media brand can be understood as a construct carrying all the connotations of (potential) recipients comprising cognitive, emotional, conscious or unconscious associations towards specific media formats, personae, genres, channels etc. Audience-centered media brand study has successfully stimulated research, but is largely isolated from communication science and other related disciplines. The aim of this article is to review and structure audience-centered research on media brands and to uncover ‘white spaces’ in this field of interest. In applying a multi-level approach of audiences, the chapter not only considers extant theoretical and methodological approaches in audience theory, but also presents a flexible framework for different interpretations of media brands’ functions and effects.

Keywords

Media brands • Audience theory • Brand personality • Brand extension • Symbolic media consumption • Participation

1 Media Brand Management in an Interactive Environment

From social media via interconnected multiple platforms, to web-based, on-demand services—the ‘brandsphere’ for media has changed dramatically as a result of digitalization and interactive technologies. Chan-Olmsted (2011, p. 3) puts it as follows: “The branding efforts in the media industries will become more complex when the world of marketing is turned upside down by the arrival of Web 2.0, with social media acting as a new means of connecting with consumers personally,

K. Förster (✉)

University of Vienna, Department of Communication, Vienna, Austria

e-mail: kati.foerster@univie.ac.at

interactively, and collectively.” Consequently, with the turn from passive recipients to active audiences, brand strategies have also had to change significantly (Mitchell, 2001). This development has led to a modified function of a brand manager, who is no longer seen as a ‘guardian’ but as a ‘host’ of a brand (Christodoulides, 2009).

In fact, the Internet and its related technologies have upset the information asymmetry that worked in favor of brand managers for many years. With the new empowered consumers who interact with brands and their peers and who create their own content, a more participative approach to branding is needed. Among others, Chan-Olmsted (2011) thus conceives the key for media branding in formulating audience centered branding programs. Mooney and Rollins (2008) also suggest that modern branding is all about engaging consumers more richly, deeply and meaningfully to develop brand participation. So, the question occurs, if and how research on media branding has provided theoretical and empirical answers to these challenges up to now.

Thus, the aim of this article is to review and structure audience-centered research on media brands, and to uncover ‘white spaces’ in media brand research.

2 Media Brands as an Audience Construct

When looking at media products as media brands from an audience perspective, we should first clarify the definition and nature of the construct. So, what is a media brand? In fact, the efforts to define the term *media brand* seem to be an ongoing battle in the literature between communication and marketing scholars, further complicated by discussions between marketing and public relations (McDowell, 2006). The American Marketing Association proposes a brand be understood as “a name, term, sign, design, or a unifying combination of them intended to identify and distinguish a product or service from its competitors” (Kotler, Bliemel, & Keller, 2007, p. 509). We here see a recipient centered definition which assumes that a brand is all the stronger the better it can be identified and distinguished by consumers. The same applies to media brands. Chan-Olmsted (2006) goes even further and proposes that brands add thoughts and feelings that are designed to enhance the value of a product beyond its product category and functional values. To sum up, from an audience’s perspective, we may understand a (media) brand as a construct carrying the audience’s associations in terms of cognitive, emotional, stylistic, conscious and unconscious significations.

This directly leads us to the next question: What exactly do we mean when speaking about audiences? Bird (2003, p. 4) characterizes the audience as an “ever-changing, fluid concept” and also Moores (1993, p. 2) states: “The conditions and boundaries of audiencehood are inherently unstable”. Audience research, especially reception studies, has developed from different research traditions, such as critical communications, feminist theory, microsociology and literary reception-aesthetics (Livingstone, 1998) providing diverse paths to conceptualize and—as a consequence—to empirically examine audiences. Among others, Livingstone (1998, 2013) suggests that audiences can be theorized on different levels. Research on a

micro level respects the individual agent and provides information about media usage patterns in everyday life. At a meso level, analyses focus on patterned interactions relating to social groups, while on the macro level audiences are understood as the public. So, the question occurs to what extent media branding research has applied these different levels up to now. Furthermore and in more detail, how can we define the functions of media brands at these different levels, which theoretical approaches and methods have been applied and what research disciplines are involved?

To identify the different core themes, a literature review on (audience centered) research with a focus on media brands has been made. Single studies are taken to illustrate the main streams at the different audience levels (for a systematic literature review please see also Krebs & Siegert, 2015). The following discussion will thus not provide a complete overview on extant literature, but it aims to point up the main research interests, theoretical approaches and methodologies applied in this area of inquiry.

2.1 Micro Level

The audience at the micro level represents an individual perspective on the media demand side, with a focus on the empirical analysis of perceptions, associations and attitudes towards media brands, or respective media branding strategies (see also Shay, 2015). Audience centered research on media brands at this individual level mainly employs theoretical approaches and empirical findings from non-media brand research. Therefore, the main focus is to test the feasibility of scales, concepts and theories in a media branding context. Two main areas can be identified at the micro level when reviewing research on media brands from an audience perspective (Table 1).

Firstly, the field of media brand research includes a number of empirical studies on media brand personality, its dimensions, antecedents, effects and interdependencies with self-concepts. Aaker defines brand personality as “the set of human characteristics associated with a brand” (1997, p. 347). It has been assumed that consumers choose the product they perceive as having a desirable (brand) personality (Aaker, 1999; Ahuvia, 2005; Belk, 1988) to express and validate their identity (Aaker, 1997; Berger & Heath, 2007). Thus, it has been hypothesized that a self-congruent brand reflects who the consumer actually is or who the consumer would like to be (Mälar, Krohmer, Hoyer, & Nyffenegger, 2011). Applied to media, this implies that audiences feel the need to reaffirm their perceptions of self-concepts by choosing compatible media brand personalities. The major issue of brand personality research is to provide an instrument to measure brand associations with human characteristics, preferably standardized. Nevertheless, the most vital criticism in regard to brand personality scales is that dimensions and indicators depend on the cultural context, since every language has its own vocabulary with untranslatable meanings. But most of the studies on media brand personality are limited to the American audience and are

Table 1 Audience centered media brand research at a micro level

Author (year)	Main theories and concepts	Main variables/measures	Method
Chang and Chan-Olmsted (2010)	Media brand extensions	<u>IV</u> : parent brand (pb) familiarity, pb attitude, pb portfolio quality variance, perception of subbrands, perceived fit, innovativeness, channel repertoire; <u>DV</u> : brand extension attitude	Survey n = 301
Chan-Olmsted and Cha (2007)	Media brand personality	Brand personality dimensions, differences among news brands	Survey n ₁ = 113 n ₂ = 265
Chan-Olmsted and Cha (2008)	Media brand personality	<u>Antecedents</u> : audience's motivations, demographics, political and media profile, network affiliation, preferences; <u>IV</u> : brand personality; <u>DV</u> : attitude towards the brand, brand usage, brand loyalty	Survey n ₁ = 113 n ₂ = 165
Förster and Kleinen-von Königslöw (2013)	Media brand emotions, brand personality	<u>IV</u> : television brand emotions; <u>DV</u> : television brand personality	Survey n = 498
Förster and Zeilinger (2012)	Media brand personality, self-concepts	<u>IV</u> : self-concepts, brand personality; <u>DV</u> : social brand identification	Survey n = 502
Habann, Nienstedt, and Reinelt (2008)	Media brand extensions	<u>IV</u> : pb strength, pb experience, involvement, price perception, product fit, image, image fit; <u>DV</u> : brand extension attitude, buying intention	Survey n = 174
Ha and Chan-Olmsted (2001)	Media brand extensions	<u>IV</u> : exposure to network websites (treatment); <u>DV</u> : brand extension acceptance, perceived quality, image, usage, interactivity perception, flow experience	Experiments n = 252
Horppu et al. (2008)	Media brand extensions	<u>IV</u> : parent-brand level experiences with a women's special interest magazine; <u>DV</u> : website satisfaction, website trust, website loyalty	Survey n = 867
Kim, Baek, and Martin (2010)	Media brand personality	News brand personality dimensions	Survey n = 229
McDowell (2004)	Media brand personality	Brand associations, differentiation	Free association n = 166
Nienstedt, Huber, and Seelmann (2012)	Congruence theory	<u>IV</u> : actual congruence, ideal congruence, credibility, brand relationship; <u>DV</u> : loyalty	Survey n = 736
Sung and Park (2011)	Media brand personality	Cable network brand personality dimensions	Survey n = 355
Tarkiainen et al. (2009)	Media brand extensions	<u>IV</u> : loyalty towards magazine's websites; <u>DV</u> : loyalty towards printed magazine brand	Survey n = 3,009

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Author (year)	Main theories and concepts	Main variables/measures	Method
Tarkiainen et al. (2014)	Media brand extensions, Double Jeopardy	<u>IV</u> : offline and online market shares and penetration of magazines; <u>DV</u> : online loyalty	Secondary analyses

lacking in comparative analyses, both for different media categories and language areas. Moreover, studies on media brand personality have revealed some peculiarities compared to non-media brands. Considering another major conceptual restriction, namely the focus on positive aspects of brand personality associations whilst disregarding negative brand-related associations held by consumers (Bosnjak, Bochmann, & Hufschmid, 2007), the results imply that media brands require (1) an adapted brand personality scale, (2) an application in a specific language domain, and (3) an inclusion of negative brand associations.

Secondly, media brand extensions and their perceptions by individuals or potential consumers have been the object of a number of studies in regard to media brands. Brand extensions are a common type of strategy (also) used by media companies to transfer the awareness and brand perceptions of consumers to a new product (Chang & Chan-Olmsted, 2010). Some of the studies investigating brand extensions in a media context adopt a consumer-based framework to empirically test the factors affecting the success of *cable network* brand extensions (e.g. Chang & Chan-Olmsted, 2010; Ha & Chan-Olmsted, 2001). Moreover, *magazine* websites have been treated as brand extensions of their offline parent brands. Different studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between the offline magazine brands (e.g. in terms of experiences, loyalty, market share, penetration) and the online magazine brand (Horppu, Kuivalainen, Tarkiainen, & Ellonen, 2008; Tarkiainen, Ellonen, & Kuivalainen, 2009; Tarkiainen, Ellonen, Ots, & Stocchi, 2014).

The application of theoretical approaches stemming from non-media brand research has successfully stimulated research on media brands. However, this research has led to the development of a peripheral zone of media management research largely isolated from media reception studies within communication science. We must thus ask if it is possible and desirable to better connect this research area in future. This in fact would require an enlargement of this research area with a deeper integration of established communication science theories.

2.2 Meso Level

Audience research at the meso level focuses on patterned interactions relating to social groups (Livingstone, 1998). Maffesoli (1990) characterizes these social groups as ‘tribes’ within consumer cultures, meaning shared lifestyles, (media) preferences, or (genre) interests. Media have a specific role in these tribes. As

previous research has shown, individuals use media (in terms of ownership, usage and knowledge) to increase their cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1983, 1985, 1986). Also Scherer, Naab, Niemann, and Adjei (2012) found that genre preferences act as means to increase or decrease one's social capital. Hence, media consumption can be regarded as an attempt to accumulate a symbolic profit (Mörth & Fröhlich, 1994; Park, 2009). In other words, audiences utilize those (media) symbols that are appropriate, to signal a certain form of lifestyle in order to strengthen their cultural and social capital.

This has also been a subject of research in related disciplines. Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998, p. 134) put it as follows: "All voluntary consumption carries, either consciously or unconsciously, symbolic meanings; if the consumer has choices to consume, he or she will consume things that hold particular symbolic meanings." Thus, consumption practices partially determine the social self, which is in turn a result of an active creation process (e.g. Dittmar, 1992; Giddens, 1993; Holt, 2002).

We can thus construe the functions of media brands—at a meso level—as being symbols in socio-communicative relationships (Carpentier, 2012; Park, 2009). This is connected to collective forms of media consumption and socially negotiated interpretations within certain lifestyle groups or tribes. Media brands here act as social 'glue', as embodied carriers of shared meanings about symbols within and between social groups. Berkler (2008) addressed this aspect of the prestige function of brands that mirrors the aspiration to belong to a supposed user group or to draw distinctions towards a perceived out-group. Moreover, Förster, Kleinen-von Königslöw, and Baumann (2014) explored the use of (popular) media genres in everyday media practices, and uncovered their symbolic meanings for identity practices of affiliation with in-groups, and distinction towards out groups (Table 2).

Compared to the individual level, media branding research at the group level is rather rare. One reason can be seen in the necessity to apply different empirical methods (such as experiments, ethnography, projective techniques). Moreover, studying media brands at a meso level requires interdisciplinary approaches including social psychology, sociology and cultural theory. Evidently, interdisciplinarity is always connected to an appreciation of differing perspectives, theories and methods, but also to obstacles emerging through these differences. Nevertheless, the relevance of this perspective increases as social processes of meaning construction are finally decisive for creating a strong (media) brand.

2.3 Macro Level

At the macro level we look at audiences as the public or as citizens. Munch and Smelser (1987, p. 357) specify the macro level "as referring to those structures in society (groups, organizations, institutions, and cultural productions) that are sustained (however imperfectly) by mechanisms of social control and that constitute both opportunities and constraints of individual behavior and interactions." When taking this Cultural Studies perspective—as one possible view—we can

Table 2 Audience centered media brand research at a meso level

Author (year)	Main theories and concepts	Main variables/measures	Method(s)
Berkler (2008)	Prestige function	<u>IV</u> : complexity reduction, risk reduction, identification, prestige; <u>DV</u> : differentiation, preference, loyalty	Survey n = 2,700
Förster (2012)	Social identity, social capital	<u>IV</u> : cognitive centrality, ingroup affect, ingroup ties, intergroup relations; <u>DV</u> : size of the network, strength of ties, resources	Survey n = 495
Förster et al. (2014)	Symbolic resources	<u>IV</u> : genre preferences; <u>DV</u> : gender associations, likability, personal similarity, similarity with friends ^a	Media diaries, content analysis, n = 59; ^b experiment, projective techniques, n = 450
Scherer et al. (2012) ^c	Impression management	<u>IV</u> : genre preferences for comedy, crime, politics, soaps; <u>DV</u> : likability ^d	Survey, experiment, n = 562 (female)

^aA construction technique has been applied in the study asking the respondents to describe a person having specific genre preferences (using fictive media diaries), both with open associations and standardized questions

^bIn sum, 15,000 instances of media use situations were analyzed using content analysis

^cScherer and colleagues did not explicitly use a media branding framework

^d‘Genre preferences’ refer to oneself and to a fictive person (Anna). ‘Likability’ measures how likable Anna is perceived

understand a media brand as a place of cultural struggle (Winter, 2001) proceeding from extant societal power relations.

Up to now, this perspective has been given little consideration by media branding scholars [as valued exceptions see Lobigs (2015), Russ-Mohl and Nazhmidinova (2015) as well as Siegert (2015)]. This is particularly true when considering literature with an explicit reference to media brands. In fact, in many publications these themes are addressed, but without using a media branding frame and—therefore—without translating the findings into implications for media branding strategists. However and undoubtedly, it opens up interesting and important perspectives for further research. As an example, recent research has contributed to audience participation in convergent institutional settings (e.g. Bruns, 2005; Carpentier & De Cleen, 2008; Deuze, 2007). Nowadays, audience members are not only recipients of media content but (also) producers, even more so with the advent of social media. Production is extensively guided by a prior assessment of audience response, thus making processes of production and reception reciprocally structuring, although not necessarily with equal power. Hence, participation can manifest itself in a co-deciding on content or organizational policies by the production and the reception side with—more or less—equal powers. From a dialectical media branding view, we must ask what consequences participation has for media

brands in a convergent ‘brandsphere’ and—furthermore—how participation as a socially and politically desirable goal can be incorporated in contemporary media branding approaches.¹

This clarifies an important aspect or possible obstacle for research on media branding at this macro level: when approaching this level, one has to consider that research on audiences at the macro level intersects with other macro level theories, such as the economic and political (Livingstone, 1998). Also Carpentier (2012) argues that all participants are embedded in a democratic logic. Hence, to strengthen the societal perspective in media branding research their role for transparency, validation and integration within the public (Kleinen-von Königsłow, 2010) could be considered in more detail. Undoubtedly, the integration function of mass media is one of the big questions in communication research (Vlašić & Brosius, 2002). However, there is a broad consensus that mass media contribute to the cohesion of a society through sharing themes, opinions or simply ‘must-know-catchphrases’. On the one hand, mass media convey values and norms, which are important for the formation of public opinion and public debate (Vlašić, 2004, 2012). On the other hand, entertainment content also has an important integrating role (Vlašić & Brosius, 2002).

This leads us to another, more general aspect, namely to the question of how television may serve its public as citizens. Syvertsen (2004) argues that broadcasters increasingly neglect to serve the public as citizens (the public as members of a democratic society) in favor of serving them as consumers (the public as buyers keen to consume products and services). Also Steemers (2002) claims that broadcasters not only fail to address their democratic role, but also their cultural role in regarding their audiences as consumers. Dahlgren (2000) distinguishes four dimensions of these media-society links: civil, political, social and cultural. Without question, research on television news and current affairs predominantly implies that serving the public as citizens means the provision of news and political information. But Syvertsen (2004), declares that media serve people in a variety of ways. As an example, the provision of family programs provides opportunities for different generations to be together, serving the public as citizens in a *social* sense. Moreover, entertainment programs could be seen as means to serve the public as social or *cultural* citizens. What does this broad understanding of citizenship for media branding research imply? Research on media brands and their role as ‘campfires’ within society, for example, might contribute new perspectives. This can refer to different levels in a media brand’s architecture, which typically consists of the corporate or channel brand (e.g. *BBC1*) as well as its sub-brands with genre (e.g. news on *NBC*), format (e.g. *Tatort* on *ARD*), and persona brands (e.g. *David Letterman* on *CBS*) (Wolff, 2006). Hence, we could ask: How do

¹ It has to be mentioned, that participation and co-creation can be attributed to the micro and also the group level (e.g. individual perception and motivation to co-create, co-creation as part of a group identity). On the macro-level it is, indeed, connected with economic and political questions.

media brands—and the respective activities to establish strong media brands—serve the public as civil, political, social and cultural citizens?

To sum up, the question is: how do media brands serve as ‘societal glue’, and should this fundamental integration function be considered in more detail in media branding research? In fact, as recent research has stated, media brands perform several functions for both media companies and for recipients; they are communicators, symbols, and information memories. Berkler (2008) has suggested the various purposes a media brand fulfills in the recipient’s decision process, i.e. cognitive relief functions and activating functions. While cognitive relief addresses a brand’s function to rationalize search and decision efforts for the recipient through complexity and risk reduction, identification as a self-centered goal as well as prestige as a socially determined aspect, are activating components used for self-definition purposes. But does this not fall too short neglecting the specific characteristics and responsibilities media have in society? In integrating the macro perspective media branding research could closely connect to communication science tradition and, moreover, add new perspectives in regarding economic processes and logics.

3 Media Branding Research at Its Crossroads

Research on media brands has successfully applied theoretical concepts from diverse research traditions. It is now time to reflect and to determine the current position of media branding research. Studying media brands as an audience construct requires diverse approaches including psychology, sociology, economics, political and cultural theory, to name just the most important ones. The audience centered perspective of the media as media brands provides a construct that condenses the perception of audience(s) at different levels of aggregation. Evidently, there is an excessive weight of research at the micro level, applying theoretical considerations stemming from non-media brand research and primarily using quantitative research methods. Research on media branding at the meso level is rather sparse, and also the macro level has, up to now, been rarely considered.

As the literature review has revealed, media branding research at the micro level primarily applies approaches stemming from non-media brand research. This has formed a research field widely independent of other disciplines. At this level research can be described as multidisciplinary characterized by little interaction or collaboration across disciplines (Choi & Pak, 2006). In other words, concrete research questions are investigated with separate methodologies and concepts and researchers maintain their own disciplinary roles.

At the meso level we found a stronger integration of related disciplines, such as sociology and social psychology. As recent research has shown, media brands serve as symbols of a certain lifestyle, and to define the borders of tribes. Overall, media and their brands move from being mere intermediaries to instances that relatively autonomously stage realities as symbolic markets (Mörth & Fröhlich, 1994) or create markets for symbols with potentials for distinctional gains in cultural and

social contexts. Thus, it requires an interdisciplinary access to the respective research questions, as interdisciplinarity involves an integrative, reciprocal action of different disciplines with shared goals, often connected to a blurring of disciplinary boundaries (Choi & Pak, 2006). This working *between* several disciplines has the potential to create new knowledge or perspectives and is the basis for establishing a new discipline (Choi & Pak, 2006).

Finally, as the literature review showed, the macro level of audiences has not been much considered yet by media branding research. Especially against the background that consumers act as co-developers, and that innovation and product development depend on external consumer communities (Jeppesen & Molin, 2003), consensual notions of strategic media (brand) management are challenged. Moreover, the diminishing corporate control over the creative media-making process changes the professional identity of media work towards a more clearly articulated responsive and interactive position with the public. Or as Jenkins puts it: “Media companies are learning how to accelerate the flow of media content across delivery channels to expand revenue opportunities, broaden markets and reinforce viewer commitments. Consumers are learning how to use these different media technologies to bring the flow of media more fully under their control and to interact with other users” (2004, p. 37). A transdisciplinary approach is needed when looking at media products as brands at this macro level. Transdisciplinarity means working across and beyond single disciplines, taking a holistic, transcendental and integrative approach (Choi & Pak, 2006). In particular, the integration of the societal function of media would allow a closer connection to key research areas of communication science.

Media branding is an area of interest where inter- and transdisciplinarity opens up its dynamics, and where in turn disciplines keep shifting and evolving by integrating diverse approaches and methods. Generally, the view of media branding from an audience perspective does not only consider extant theoretical approaches in audience theory, but additionally, presents a flexible framework for different interpretations of the functions and effects of media brands. It helps to structure and integrate the current multitude of unrelated or loosely related theories, concepts and empirical findings from different scientific disciplines. At the same time, by considering media as brands, related disciplines can profit from a better integration of economic processes and logics, and thereby respond to the vital reproof of several authors (e.g. Budd & Steinman, 1989; Müller, 1993).

References

- Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 43(3), 347–356.
- Aaker, J. L. (1999). The malleable self: The role of self-expression in persuasion. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 36(February), 45–57.
- Ahuvia, A. C. (2005). Beyond the extended self: Loved objects and consumer’s identity narratives. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32, 171–184.

- Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15, 139–168.
- Berger, J., & Heath, C. (2007). Where consumers diverge from others: Identity signaling and product domains. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 34(June), 121–134.
- Berkler, S. (2008). *Medien als Marken? Wirkungen von Medienmarken aus medienökonomischer Perspektive*. Konstanz: UVK.
- Bird, S. E. (2003). *The audience in everyday life*. New York: Routledge.
- Bosnjak, M., Bochmann, V., & Hufschmid, T. (2007). Dimensions of brand personality attributions: A person-centric approach in the German cultural context. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 35(3), 303–316.
- Bourdieu, P. (1983). Ökonomisches Kapital, kulturelles Kapital, soziales Kapital. In R. Kreckel (Ed.), *Soziale Ungleichheiten (Soziale Welt Sonderband 2)* (pp. 183–198). Göttingen: Schwartz.
- Bourdieu, P. (1985). The social space and the genesis of groups. *Theory and Society*, 14(6), 195–220.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Bruns, A. (2005). *Gatewatching: Collaborative online news production*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Budd, M., & Steinman, C. (1989). Television: Cultural studies and the “blind spot” debate in critical communication research. In G. Bums & R. J. Thompson (Eds.), *Television studies. Textual analysis* (pp. 9–20). New York: Praeger.
- Carpentier, N. (2012). The concept of participation. If they have access and interact, do they really participate? *Revista Fronteiras—Estudios midiáticos*, 14(2), 164–177.
- Carpentier, N., & De Cleen, B. (2008). *Participation and media production: Critical reflections on content creation*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.
- Chang, B.-H., & Chan-Olmsted, S. M. (2010). Success factors of cable network brand extension: Focusing on the parent network, composition, fit, consumer characteristics, and viewing habits. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 54(4), 641–656. doi:10.1080/08838151.2010.519811.
- Chan-Olmsted, S. M. (2006). *Competitive strategy for media firms: Strategic and brand management in changing media markets*. New York: Routledge.
- Chan-Olmsted, S. (2011). Media branding in a changing world: Challenges and opportunities 2.0. *International Journal on Media Management*, 13(1), 3–19.
- Chan-Olmsted, S. M., & Cha, J. (2007). Branding television news in a multichannel environment: An exploratory study of network news brand personality. *The International Journal on Media Management*, 9(4), 135–150.
- Chan-Olmsted, S. M., & Cha, J. (2008). Exploring the antecedents and effects of brand images for television news: An application of brand personality construct in a multichannel news environment. *The International Journal on Media Management*, 10, 32–45.
- Choi, B. C. K., & Pak, A. W. P. (2006). Multidisciplinarity, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity in health research, services, education and policy: Definitions, objectives, and evidence of effectiveness. *Clinical and Investigative Medicine*, 29(6), 351–364.
- Christodoulides, G. (2009). Branding in the post-internet era. *Marketing Theory*, 9(1), 141–144.
- Dahlgren, P. (2000). Media, citizenship and civic culture. In J. Curran & M. Gurevitch (Eds.), *Mass media and society* (pp. 310–328). London: Arnold.
- Deuze, M. (2007). *Media work. Digital media and society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Dittmar, H. (1992). *The social psychology of material possessions: To have is to be*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Elliott, R., & Wattanasuwan, K. (1998). Brands as symbolic resources for the construction of identity. *International Journal of Advertising*, 17, 131–144.

- Förster, K. (2012). A Social Me? Soziale Identität als Werttreiber für das Sozialkapital von TV-Marken. In C. Kolo, T. Döbler, & L. Rademacher (Eds.), *Wertschöpfung durch Medien im Wandel* (pp. 137–154). Baden Baden: Nomos.
- Förster, K., & Zeilinger, U. (2012). *Profiling TV brands: Managing TV brand personality along self concepts*. Presentation on the World Media Economics Conference, Thessaloniki, Greece.
- Förster, K., & Kleinen-von Königslöw, K. (2013). L'amour est-il la réponse? Les émotions et leurs rôles pour les chaînes de télévision. In H. Laurichesse (Ed.), *La Stratégie de Marque dans l'Audiovisuel* (pp. 209–224). Paris: Arman Colin.
- Förster, K., Kleinen-von Königslöw, K., & Baumann, S. (2014). *Media brands as symbolic resources*. Presentation on the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) conference, Montreal.
- Giddens, A. (1993). *Sociology* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Ha, L., & Chan-Olmsted, S. M. (2001). Enhanced TV as brand extension: TV viewers' perception of enhanced TV features and TV commerce on broadcast networks' web sites. *International Journal on Media Management*, 3(4), 202–213.
- Habann, F., Nienstedt, H.-W., & Reinelt, J. (2008). Erfolgsfaktoren von Markenerweiterungen in der zeitungsbbranche. Eine empirische Analyse. *Medienwirtschaft—Zeitschrift für Medienmanagement und Kommunikationsökonomie* (Sonderheft), pp. 48–57.
- Holt, D. B. (2002). Why do brands cause trouble? A dialectical theory of consumer culture and branding. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29(June), 70–90.
- Horppu, M., Kuivalainen, O., Tarkiainen, A., & Ellonen, H.-K. (2008). Online satisfaction, trust and loyalty, and the impact of the offline parent brand. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 17(6), 403–413.
- Jenkins, H. (2004). The cultural logic of media convergence. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 7(1), 33–43.
- Jeppesen, L. B., & Molin, M. J. (2003). Consumers as co-developers: Learning and Innovation outside the firm. *Technology Analysis & Strategic Management*, 15(3), 363–383.
- Kim, J., Baek, T. H., & Martin, H. J. (2010). Dimensions of news media brand personality. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 87(1), 117–134.
- Kleinen-von Königslöw, K. (2010). *Die Arenen-Integration nationaler Öffentlichkeiten. Der Fall der wiedervereinten deutschen Öffentlichkeit*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Kotler, P., Bliemel, F., & Keller, K. L. (2007). *Marketing-management: Strategien für wertschaffendes Handeln* (12th ed.). München: Pearson Studium.
- Krebs, I., & Siegert, G. (2015). 20 years of research on media brands and media branding. In G. Siegert, K. Förster, S. M. Chan-Olmsted, & M. Ots (Eds.), *Handbook of media branding* (pp. 33–47). Cham: Springer.
- Livingstone, S. (1998). Audience research at crossroads: The 'implied audience' in media and cultural theory. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 1(2), 193–217.
- Livingstone, S. (2013). The participation paradigm in audience research. *The Communication Review*, 16(1), 21–30.
- Lobigs, F. (2015). An economic theory of media brands. In G. Siegert, K. Förster, S. M. Chan-Olmsted, & M. Ots (Eds.), *Handbook of media branding* (pp. 371–384). Cham: Springer.
- Maffesoli, M. (1990). *Au creux de apparences. Pour une éthique de l'esthétique*. Paris: La Table Ronde.
- Mälär, L., Krohmer, H., Hoyer, W. D., & Nyffenegger, B. (2011). Emotional brand attachment and brand personality: The relative importance of the actual and the ideal self. *Journal of Marketing*, 75(July), 35–52.
- McDowell, W. S. (2004). Exploring a free association methodology to capture and differentiate abstract media brand associations: A study of three cable news networks. *Journal of Media Economics*, 17, 309–320.
- McDowell, W. S. (2006). Issues in marketing and branding. In A. B. Albarran, S. M. Chan-Olmsted, & M. O. Wirth (Eds.), *Handbook of media management and economics* (pp. 229–250). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Mitchell, A. (2001). *Right side up: Building brands in the age of the organized consumer*. London: HarperCollinsBusiness.
- Mooney, K., & Rollins, N. (2008). *The open brand: When push comes to pull in a web-made world*. Thousand Oaks, CA: New Riders.
- Moore, S. (1993). *Interpreting audiences: An ethnographic approach*. Oxford: Berg.
- Mörth, I., & Fröhlich, G. (1994). Lebensstile als symbolisches Kapital? In I. Mörth & G. Fröhlich (Eds.), *Das symbolische Kapital der Lebensstile. Zur Kulturosoziologie der Moderne nach Pierre Bourdieu* (pp. 7–30). Frankfurt: Campus Verlag.
- Müller, E. (1993). Pleasure and resistance. John Fiske's Beitrag zur Populärkulturtheorie. *Montage/AV*, 1(1), 52–66.
- Munch, R., & Smelser, N. J. (1987). Relating the micro and the macro. In J. C. Alexander, B. Giesen, R. Munch, & N. J. Smelser (Eds.), *The micro-macro link* (pp. 356–387). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Nienstedt, H.-W., Huber, F., & Seelmann, C. (2012). The influence of the congruence between brand and consumer personality on the loyalty to print and online issues of magazine brands. *International Journal on Media Management*, 14(1), 3–26.
- Park, D. W. (2009). Pierre Bourdieu's 'Habitus' and the political economy of the media. *Democratic Communiqué*, 23(1), 1–21.
- Russ-Mohl, S., & Nazhmidinova, R. (2015). Media branding and media marketing: Conflicts with journalistic norms, risks of trial & error. In G. Siegert, K. Förster, S. M. Chan-Olmsted, & M. Ots (Eds.), *Handbook of media branding* (pp. 335–351). Cham: Springer.
- Scherer, H., Naab, T. K., Niemann, J., & Adjei, B. (2012). Macht Mediennutzung sympathisch? Eine empirische Untersuchung zur Eindrucksbildung durch Kommunikation über Genrepräferenzen. *Medien & Kommunikationswissenschaft*, 60(1), 64–79.
- Shay, R. (2015). Audience perspectives on the perceived quality of pure play distribution: A cross-platform analysis. In G. Siegert, K. Förster, S. M. Chan-Olmsted, & M. Ots (Eds.), *Handbook of media branding* (pp. 127–140). Cham: Springer.
- Siegert, G. (2015). Market driven media brands: Supporting or faking high journalistic quality? In G. Siegert, K. Förster, S. M. Chan-Olmsted, & M. Ots (Eds.), *Handbook of media branding* (pp. 353–369). Cham: Springer.
- Stemers, J. (2002). *Public broadcasting is not dead yet: Survival strategies in the 21st century*. Paper presented at the RIPE Conference, 17–19 January, Helsinki.
- Sung, Y., & Park, N. (2011). The dimensions of cable television network personality: Implications for media brand management. *International Journal on Media Management*, 13(1), 81–105.
- Syvertsen, T. (2004). Citizens, audiences, customers and players. A conceptual discussion of the relationship between broadcasters and their publics. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 7(3), 363–380.
- Tarkiainen, A., Ellonen, H.-K., Ots, M., & Stocchi, L. (2014). Creating loyalty towards magazine websites: Insights from the Double Jeopardy phenomenon. *International Journal of E-Business Research*, 10(1), 1–14.
- Tarkiainen, A., Ellonen, H.-K., & Kuivalainen, O. (2009). Complementing consumer magazine brands with internet extensions? *Internet Research*, 19(4), 408–424.
- Vlašić, A. (2004). *Die Integrationsfunktion der Massenmedien. Begriffsgeschichte, Modelle, Operationalisierung*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.
- Vlašić, A. (2012). Medien und Integration: Ein Vorschlag zur theoretischen Konzeption und empirischen Erfassung integrationsrelevanter Medieninhalte. *Publizistik*, 57(4), 419–444.
- Vlašić, A., & Brosius, H. B. (2002). "Wetten dass . . ."—Massenmedien integrieren? Die Integrationsfunktion der Massenmedien: Zur empirischen Beschreibbarkeit eines normativen Paradigmas. In K. Imhof, O. Jarren, & R. Blum (Eds.), *Integration und Medien* (pp. 93–109). Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag.
- Winter, R. (2001). Kritik und Engagement John Fiske und die Tradition der Cultural Studies. In R. Winter & L. Mikos (Eds.), *Die Fabrikation des Populären. Der John Fiske-Reader* (pp. 7–16). Bielefeld: transcript.
- Wolff, P.-E. (2006). *TV Markenmanagement. Strategische und operative Markenführung*. Magdeburg: Reinhard Fischer.