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**IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT AND EMAIL  
COMMUNICATION EXPOSURE ON THE ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION  
SERVICES CUSTOMER**

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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## SUMMARY

This dissertation deals with the effectiveness of relationship marketing in an online subscription service setting. In our dissertation, the following research questions were addressed: (i) What is the impact of select antecedents - social media engagement, email communication exposure, brand credibility, and customer-based reputation of a service company - on trust and loyalty (attitudinal and behavioral) in online subscription services? (ii) How does perception of commoditization moderate the relationship between the antecedents and trust? (iii) How to describe customer attitudes and behaviors with a relationship-marketing effectiveness model in order for it to be relevant to the online subscription services setting and to provide useful guidelines for marketing practitioners?

In the first chapter, “Subscription-based business models,” works about online subscriptions in the marketing literature are evaluated and compared. Specifically examined are service provider motivations and customer behavior perspectives. A systematic literature review was conducted to identify and evaluate 117 relevant journal publications and 6 relevant business book publications from 1998 to mid-2021. Key marketing-related concepts relevant to the online subscription business are pricing, willingness to pay, churn, retention, renewal, switching costs, customer acquisition, purchase intention (intention to subscribe), and freemium and free trial marketing tactics. Recurring revenue is the main motivation for firms to engage in subscription relationships; pricing and customer retention are the main marketing-related challenges. Customers’ motivations for engaging in subscriptions are convenience, curation, access, and entertainment. According to the literature review, the appropriate theoretical framework for modeling subscriber behavior is the relationship-marketing effectiveness model, with trust, commitment, and satisfaction as the central constructs.

The second chapter is devoted to the development of a relationships marketing effectiveness model for online subscription services. This chapter explains the rationale behind the selection of relationship-marketing effectiveness constructs, including social media engagement, email communication exposure, brand credibility and customer-based reputation of a service company, trust, and loyalty, and the hypothesized relationships are linked to an appropriate theoretical framework. The functioning of key digital marketing channels (email marketing and social media marketing) within a relationship-marketing effectiveness framework is described. Also explored is the effectiveness of customer engagement through email communication and social media postings of an online subscription service. Finally, we introduce the construct of customers’ perceptions of commoditization of an online subscription service by three dimensions: the perception of service homogeneity, customers’ price sensitivity, and switching cost assessment, along with its moderating impact on the model.

The empirical research into online subscription service customers is presented in the third chapter. The research is based on responses to online surveys that were completed by users of an online legal information subscription service. The respondents were located in three

different markets/countries where the service operates and has different competitive positions in the market. Using multigroup structural equation modeling, we show that customer exposure to email communication, customer-based reputation of a service company, and brand credibility all have a positive impact on trust, and that trust has a positive impact on loyalty; however, the difference in path estimates between countries are not statistically significant at the model level. To study the impact of social media engagement, the model was tested with only those respondents who used social media. It was confirmed that customer exposure to email communication positively influences a service provider's reputation and consumer trust in the online service, while the effect of social media engagement is indirect coming through the positive effect of email communication exposure. An important contribution of our research is to also show how the reported loyalty of online customers should be verified with observed loyalty in the vendor–customer relationship management system. We expected that perception of commoditization would negatively moderate relationships between antecedents and trust. Surprisingly, we could confirm only a weak moderating effect of commoditization perception on relationships between email communication exposure and trust for two samples.

The theoretical contribution of this dissertation is the conceptualization of online subscription services within a relationship-marketing theoretical framework. Key marketing-related concepts for online subscription services are outlined, and then we present the most appropriate constructs for describing customer behaviors and attitudes within a relationship-marketing effectiveness model. Also discussed is the conceptualization and operationalization of measures for email communication exposure and social media engagement. The role of email communication and social media engagement in the model is hypothesized and explained by applying cognitively oriented social exchange theory (Dwyer et al., 1987; Thibault & Kelley, 1959), social presence theory (Short et al., 1976), and media richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986). A model was built with email communication exposure, social media engagement, service company reputation, and brand credibility as antecedents, customer trust as a mediator, and loyalty as an outcome, and it was then verified with the same online legal information subscription service in three different markets. Customer perception of the commoditization of a service that is not highly commoditized is conceptualized and operationalized here for the first time in the marketing literature. We present actionable insight into the evolution of the subscription business and the motivations of consumers to engage in subscription relationships. Additionally, a managerial contribution of the thesis is made through recommendations on how to prioritize online marketing activities to build customer trust and loyalty.

**Keywords:** online subscription, pricing, customer acquisition and retention, relationship marketing, curation, email communication exposure, social media engagement, service firm reputation, brand credibility, trust, loyalty, customer perception of commoditization.

## POVZETEK

Ta disertacija obravnava vpliv angažiranosti na družbenih omrežjih in izpostavljenosti komunikaciji preko e-pošte na porabnika spletnih naročniških storitev. V raziskavi se ukvarjamo z naslednjimi raziskovalnimi vprašanji: (i) Kakšen je učinek izbranih predhodnikov (angažiranosti na družbenih medijih, izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju, verodostojnosti blagovne znamke in ugleda storitvenega podjetja pri porabnikih) na zaupanje in zvestobo (stališčno in vedenjsko) v spletnih naročniških storitvah? (ii) Kako porabnikovo zaznavanje komodizacije vpliva na donos med predhodniki in zaupanjem? (iii) Kako opisati odnos in vedenje porabnikov z modelom učinkovitosti trženja temelječega na odnosih, da bo relevanten za spletne naročniške storitve in bo dal tržnikom uporabne smernice za njihovo delo?

V prvem poglavju disertacije ocenjujemo in primerjamo teoretske koncepte, ki se uporabljajo pri raziskavah spletnih naročnin v trženjski literaturi. Natančneje, preučujemo motivacijo ponudnika storitev in interes porabnika za sklenitev naročniškega razmerja. V sistematičnem pregledu literature smo identificirali in ovrednotili 117 ustreznih publikacij v znanstvenih revijah in 6 ustreznih poslovnih knjig od leta 1998 do sredine leta 2021. Ključni koncepti, povezani s trženjem, ki so pomembni za spletno naročniško poslovanje so: cenovna politika, pripravljenost porabnika za plačilo, delež odpovedi naročnin, delež obnovljenih naročnin, stroški zamenjave ponudnika, pridobivanje novih strank, nakupne namere ter taktike trženja kot so na primer »freemium« (t.j. brezplačna uporaba storitve v omejenem obsegu) in brezplačno preizkusno obdobje. Redni prihodki so glavna motivacija za podjetja, da vzpostavijo naročniški poslovni model; cenovna politika in ohranjanje obstoječih naročnikov pa sta glavna trženjska izziva ponudnikov. Motivi porabnikov za naročniško razmerje so priročnost, skrbno urejanje (curation), dostop do storitve in zabava. Glede na pregled literature je ustrezen teoretični okvir za modeliranje vedenja naročnikov model učinkovitosti trženja temelječega na odnosih z zaupanjem, predanostjo in zadovoljstvom kot osrednjimi konstrukti.

Drugo poglavje je namenjeno razvoju modela učinkovitosti trženja temelječega na odnosih za spletne naročniške storitve. Pojasnjen je izbor naslednjih konstruktov v modelu: angažiranost na družbenih medijih, izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju, verodostojnost blagovne znamke, ugled storitvenega podjetja pri porabnikih, zaupanje in zvestoba. Predstavljene so hipoteze, ki določajo model in pojasnjene z ustreznim teoretskim okvirom. Opisano je delovanje ključnih digitalnih interaktivnih trženjskih kanalov (e-poštni marketing in trženje na družbenih omrežjih). Vpeljan je koncept zaznavanja komodizacije spletne naročniške storitve s strani porabnika, ki ga predstavljajo tri razsežnosti: zaznava homogenosti storitev, cenovna občutljivost porabnikov in ocena stroškov zamenjave ponudnika.

V tretjem poglavju so predstavljene empirične raziskave med uporabniki spletnih naročniških storitev, ki temeljijo na spletnih anketah med uporabniki pravne informacijske storitve na treh različnih trgih (državah) z različnimi konkurenčnimi položaji iste storitve na

trgu. Z modeliranjem sistema strukturnih enačb smo pokazali, da izpostavljenost strank komunikaciji po elektronski pošti, ugled storitvenega podjetja in verodostojnost blagovne znamke pozitivno vplivajo na zaupanje in da ima zaupanje pozitiven vpliv na zvestobo, vendar pa razlike v ocenah poti med državami na ravni modela niso statistično značilne. Da bi preučili vpliv angažiranosti na družbenih medijih, je bil model dodatno preverjen samo na anketirancih, ki uporabljajo družbene medije. Potrjeno je bilo, da izpostavljenost strank e-poštni komunikaciji pozitivno vpliva na ugled ponudnika storitev in zaupanje potrošnikov v spletno storitev, medtem ko je učinek angažiranosti na družbenih omrežjih posreden, zgolj s pozitivnim učinkom angažiranosti na družbenih omrežjih na izpostavljenost e-poštni komunikaciji. Pomemben prispevek naše raziskave je tudi, da pokažemo, kako je možno poročano zvestobo porabnikov verificirati z zvestobo, izmerjeno v CRM sistemu ponudnika. Pričakovali smo, da bo zaznava komodizacije negativno vplivala na razmerje med predhodniki in zaupanjem. Presenetljivo smo lahko potrdili le šibak negativen moderacijski učinek zaznave komodizacije za odnos med izpostavljenostjo e-poštnemu komuniciranju in zaupanjem na dveh vzorcih (trgih).

Teoretični prispevek disertacije je konceptualizacija spletnih naročniških storitev v okviru teoretskega okvira trženja temelječega na odnosih. Opisani so ključni koncepti, povezani s trženjem spletnih naročniških storitev in predstavljeni so najustreznejši konstrukti za opis vedenja in odnosa strank v okviru strukturnega modela. Konceptualizirani in operacionalizirani so konstrukti izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju in angažiranosti v družbenih medijih. Z uporabo kognitivne teorije družbene izmenjave (Dwyer et al., 1987; Thibault & Kelley, 1959), teorije prezence v družbi (Short et al., 1976) in teorije bogastva medijev (Daft & Lengel, 1986) smo postavili in razložili hipoteze glede vloge izpostavljenosti e-poštni komunikaciji in angažiranosti na družbenih medijih v modelu, ki je bil zasnovan in preverjen za isto spletno storitev na treh različnih trgih. Zaznavanje komodizacije storitve za storitev, ki ni zelo komodizirana, je v doktorski nalogi prvič konceptualizirano in operacionalizirano v trženjski literaturi. Predstavljen je poslovno uporaben vpogled v razvoj naročniškega poslovnega modela in motivacija potrošnikov, da se vključijo v naročniška razmerja. Poleg tega so poslovno uporaben prispevek doktorske naloge tudi priporočila, kako spletne trženjske aktivnosti uporabiti za vzpostavitev in povečanje zaupanja in zvestobe strank.

Ključne besede: spletna naročništva, cenovna politika, pridobivanje naročnikov, trženje temelječe na odnosih, skrbno urejanje, izpostavljenost e-poštni komunikaciji, angažiranost na družbenih medijih, ugled storitvenega podjetja, kredibilnost blagovne znamke, zaupanje, zvestoba, porabnikovo zaznavanje komodizacije storitve.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ANA	Association of National Advertisers
ARPU	average revenue per user
AVE	average variance extracted
B2B	business-to-business
B2C	business-to-consumer
CBR	customer-based reputation
CFA	confirmatory factor analysis

CRM	customer relationship management
CLV	customer lifetime value
CMB	common method bias
CSM	customer success management
ECE	email communication exposure
EFA	exploratory factor analysis
IoT	internet of things
KPI	key performance indicators
LLCI	lower-level confidence interval,
SaaS	software-as-a-service
SEA	search engine advertising
SEO	search engine optimization
SE	social media engagement
ULCI	upper-level confidence interval
WOM	word of mouth
WoS	World of Science
WTP	willingness to pay
XaaS	anything-as-a-service

# INTRODUCTION

## Dissertation setting and research background

With the appearance of widespread availability of the internet, the subscription business model has expanded into the online environment. In a majority of subscription businesses, all customer–vendor communications and all transactions have moved online. In addition, whenever possible, the service, or at least delivery of the service, is also provided online. In the last decade of the 20th century, mobile phones, the internet, and pay TV all became largely subscription businesses (Warrillow, 2015). These are followed in the 21st century by multimedia streaming services, online publishing, and software as a service (SaaS; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2007; Rudolph et al., 2017; C. L. Wang et al., 2005). In recent years, the subscription business model has also been applied in the retail of physical consumer goods (subscription boxes; Bray et al., 2021; Kestenbaum, 2017; McCarthy et al., 2018; Tan & Chen, 2021; Woo & Ramkumar, 2018). Achieving revenue enhancement by introducing new technological offerings (internet of things [IoT], artificial intelligence, or Big Data) often requires the introduction of a subscription-based business model for offering new related software (Gebauer et al., 2020).

The trend toward growing importance of the subscription business model has been recognized by business book authors and entrepreneurs (Baxter, 2015, 2016, 2020; Janzer, 2017; Lecky, 2018; Tzuo, 2018; Warrillow, 2015). Researchers have focused on one of the concepts of subscription business, pricing, willingness to pay (WTP), churn or retention, and customer lifetime value (CLV), within a particular industry segment. However, to date, there has been no comprehensive study of a strategic framework for marketing activities related to online subscriptions.

A subscription is a contractual arrangement between customer and provider for the recurring fixed-price purchase of a preselected combination of service units or goods at regular intervals across an extended period of time (Weinhardt et al., 2009). **Online services** differ from traditional services in that they promote more intense interactivity between users and exhibit positive network effects (Etzion & Pang, 2014). Network effects due to the key role of the internet in service delivery and the relatively low marginal costs of providing subscription services are the main characteristics that differentiate online subscription services from pre-internet era subscriptions and other recurring revenue businesses. To summarize, a business qualifies as an **online subscription service** if it includes the following elements: (i) a long-term contractual arrangement that provides for repeated use or consumption of the service or good (Bischof et al., 2020); (ii) customers commit to purchasing a preselected combination of service units or product assortments at a fixed price (subscription pricing; Weinhardt et al., 2009); (iii) the marginal cost of production or service

provision is very low or negligible (Bala, 2012); and (iv) the business promotes interactivity between customers or users and has a positive network effect (Etzion & Pang, 2014).

The aim of this dissertation is to conceptualize online subscription services within a relationship-marketing theoretical framework, exploring the impact of selected constructs on trust and loyalty and describing customer attitudes and behaviors with a relationship-marketing effectiveness model. Based on a review of the literature, key marketing-related concepts for online subscription services are outlined, the service provider's perspective is presented (including the key challenges of customer acquisition and retention), and the customer perspective within an online subscription relationship is clarified. The relevant literature on relationship marketing, engagement, digital marketing channels, and commoditization was explored to set up the research program that is the foundation for this dissertation.

An online subscription service is a highly relationship-based business arrangement between a subscriber (business customer or consumer) and a subscription provider (vendor). **Relationship marketing** is effective when relationships are critical to customers and it is individuals who interact in the relationship (Palmatier et al., 2006, p. 136). Given that a subscription implies a long-term relationship between the customer and the vendor, even in business-to-business (B2B), where the end user is an individual, relationship marketing is an extremely relevant conceptual framework for such services.

Among online subscription services, customer behavior in the context of relationship marketing is well researched for mobile phone and telematics subscribers (Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2015; Grzybowski & Pereira, 2011; Min & Wan, 2009; Mvele et al., 2019; Qayyum et al., 2013; Sichtmann, 2007; Sultan, 2018; Wangenheim et al., 2017) with memberships (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; George & Wakefield, 2018; Marinova & Singh, 2014) and social media platforms (Yahia et al., 2018). For many other subscription services, particularly the fast-growing SaaS subscription segment and services offering subscriptions for access to professional information online, customer behavior has not been studied within a relationship-marketing theoretical framework.

Communication is the most effective relationship-building strategy and a key determinant of B2B relationship outcomes (Murphy & Sashi, 2018; Palmatier et al., 2006). Currently, email and social media digital communication channels dominate the communication between vendors and customers in online services businesses; however, there is a lack of research regarding the role of customers' email communication exposure (ECE) and the impact of social media engagement (SE) within the relationship-marketing effectiveness model. For vendor–user relationships in online subscription services, digital media channels, and marketing tools are relevant and need to be acknowledged. Online communication tools such as email newsletters improve online branding and have a positive impact on customer loyalty (Müller et al., 2008). Moreover, marketing communication quality and marketing channel effectiveness contribute to more loyal behaviors of customers (Hänninen &

Karjaluoto, 2017), and the quality of service provider social media posts leads to more customer engagement with those service providers' social media marketing activities (Luarn et al., 2015). We intend to align customer SE and ECE with a service company's reputation and brand credibility role within a relationship-marketing theoretical framework.

At an early stage of the life cycle, services have a high degree of differentiation and are relatively unique. Their differentiating strengths, however, are diminishing under the increasing influence of competitive forces (Kasper-Brauer & Enke, 2016). There are two trends that cause increased competition and commoditization of service industries: First, customers are becoming more knowledgeable about the value proposition of services and the availability of substitutes; and second, increasing transparency and information exchange in competitive markets allow firms to imitate and improve upon competitors' services better and faster (Reimann et al., 2010). Buyers perceive commodities as goods and services that can be substituted for each other despite their overtly objective differentiating features (Kasper-Brauer & Enke, 2016), and no industry is immune to commoditization (Olson & Sharma, 2008). The commoditization of a certain product or service implies lower margins (Greenstein, 2004): management consultants would say that the service provider is falling into the commodity trap (d'Aveni, 2010, p. 7). It is an important challenge for marketing professionals, especially in industries that are still moderately to minimally commoditized, to offset the negative pressures of commoditization and build on the existing customer dependence within the vendor–customer relationship.

## **Research questions**

In our dissertation, we addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of the selected antecedents (SE, ECE, brand credibility, and customer-based reputation [CBR] of a service company) on trust and loyalty (attitudinal and behavioral) in online subscription services?
2. How does the perception of commoditization moderate the relationship between the antecedents and trust?
3. How to describe customer attitudes and behaviors with a relationship-marketing effectiveness model in order for it to be relevant to the online subscription services setting and to provide useful guidelines for marketing practitioners?

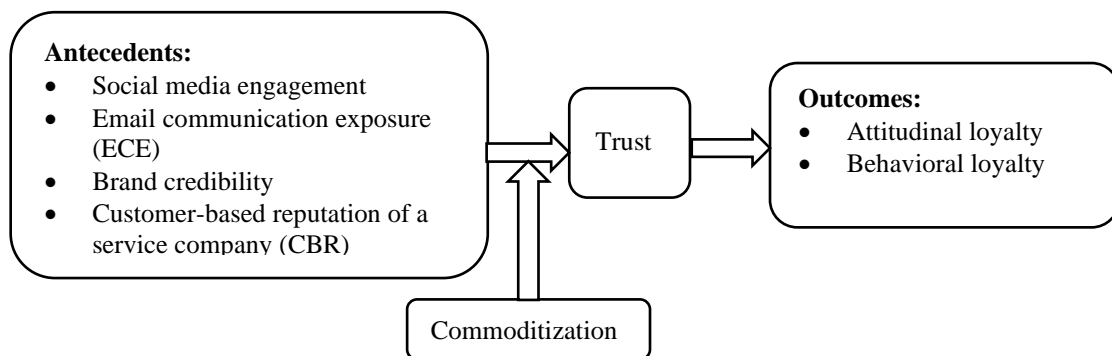
## **Conceptual framework**

The most frequently used focal constructs (relational mediators) in the relationship-marketing context are commitment, trust, relationship satisfaction, and relationship quality. The meta-analysis of relationship-marketing effectiveness systematizes antecedents as customer focal antecedents (relationship benefits, dependence on vendor), seller focal antecedents (relationship investment, seller expertise), or dyadic antecedents

(communication similarity, relationship duration, interaction frequency, conflict; Palmatier et al., 2006). The selection of focal construct for our research was influenced by characteristics exhibited by the customers of an online content subscription service. The majority of online content subscription businesses use the freemium business model in which users are offered free basic features of a service while premium content and/or functionality are provided for a subscription fee (V. Kumar, 2014). In most online subscription services, there are two types of customers: genuine subscribers who pay a fee for the usage of the service, and registered service users who do not see themselves as customers/subscribers because they only use the services that are free of charge. Nonsubscribers may deny their commitment to or relationship with the service, but we can assess their level of trust in the service through findings concerning their attitudes and their behaviors, with important managerial implications.

We selected two pairs of similar antecedents (reflective constructs). One pair was related to the general perception of the customer regarding the relational benefits from the vendor and its service, and the other pair was specifically related to the digital marketing relational investment of vendors. A service company’s CBR and customer perceptions of the brand’s credibility (credibility) delineate well the relational benefits perceived by customers, their experience with the seller’s relationship investments, and the customer’s perception of the seller’s expertise. The second pair, customer engagement in a service provider’s social media activities and ECE, are both interactive. The relationship lasts several months or years and is related to the service provider’s investment in communication (relationship) as well as to customer relationship benefits. Hence, SE and ECE contain all factors that influence the effectiveness of relationship marketing. Additionally, email communication and social media have for some time been marketers’ two most important digital marketing communication channels (Ascend2, 2017; Key, 2017; Peter & Dalla Vecchia, 2021). As an outcome from our model, we propose customer loyalty, which is the most frequently used outcome of relationship-marketing models (Watson et al., 2015). The proposed model of customer behavior for online subscription services is presented in Figure 1.

*Figure 1: Proposed model of customer behavior*



*Source: Own work.*

The conceptualization of a relationship-marketing model that can be applied across different contexts and settings is focused on potential moderators of the link between a relationship-marketing relational mediator and outcomes (Palmatier et al., 2006). For managers interested in only one particular context, it is more interesting to see what moderates relationships between antecedents and trust. In this context, customer perception of the commoditization of a service appears to be an interesting moderator. For highly commoditized products/services (where differences between the brand strengths of different services are minimal), a higher commoditization level negatively moderates loyalty-enhancing relations (Koschate-Fischer et al., 2014). The service that is the subject of our research is expected to be perceived as a moderately to minimally commoditized service. In such a setting, customers are aware of an increased offer of similar services, but this does not necessarily reduce their perception of the service's trustworthiness.

**Social media engagement (SE)** describes an active process of interaction between a brand or brand-generated message and a customer (Dahl, 2015, p. 155). SE has been researched on primarily a conceptual level (Barger et al., 2016; Dahl, 2015; Sashi, 2012; Smith & Gallicano, 2015; Vivek et al., 2012; Whiting & Deshpande, 2016). Vivek et al. (2012) claimed that customer engagement is an expanded domain of relationship marketing. They proposed that customer engagement has a positive effect on trust and on relationship management model outcomes. Further, involvement and customer participation should be antecedents to customer engagement. Brodie et al. (2013) proposed cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions of customer engagement operationalization. In our setting, the construct is operationalized as a second order reflective construct by two dimensions (behavioral and cognitive): customer behavior related to the services' FB activities and customer perception of the quality of the services' FB posts. We expected customer **SE** (related to a service provider's FB activities) to have a positive impact on the customer's trust in the service.

**Email communication exposure (ECE)** is developed as a three-factor construct measuring the customer's perception of the quality and informativeness of email messages, customer-perceived intrusiveness of email communications, and customer behavior related to email communication. Our measurements were modeled on the assessment of customer attitudes toward traditional advertising (Gaski & Etzel, 1986) and on attitude formation in the digital marketing context (Hsin Chang et al., 2013). Customer-perceived information quality that is related to the service (i.e., the customer's general perception of the accuracy and completeness of information) positively affects the customer's trust and negatively affects uncertainty regarding the trustworthiness of a service provider (D. J. Kim et al., 2008); low intrusiveness of email communication also increases loyalty-enhancing relationships. With respect to the impact of ECE on trust, we hypothesized a positive effect.

**Brand credibility** is defined as "the believability of the product information contained in a brand, which requires that consumers perceive that the brand has the ability (i.e., expertise) and willingness (i.e., trustworthiness) to continuously deliver what has been promised"

(Erdem & Swait, 2004, p. 192). In our relationship management model, the brand credibility construct is operationalized as one factor, as seen in relevant examples in the literature (Hyun Baek & Whitehill King, 2011; Sichtmann, 2007). To avoid collinearity in the credibility–trust relationship, we focused on the expertise dimension of credibility. In their signaling theory, Erdem and Swait (2004) argued that brand credibility is a signal of product positioning and the most important characteristic of a brand. Brand credibility is an information signal that increases customer confidence in a branded service. The trustworthiness and expertise of a service provider that are reflected in brand credibility led to strengthening positive customer expectations regarding future service provision. We hypothesized a positive impact of brand credibility on trust.

From the perspective of institutional theory, corporate reputation is characterized as a global impression reflecting the perception of all stakeholders (e.g., customers, employees, and investors; Keh & Xie, 2009). In our research, we focused on customers as the relevant stakeholders and on the service provider as an object with a reputation that is evaluated by customers. Walsh and Beatty (2007, p. 129) defined **customer-based reputation** (CBR) as “the customer’s overall evaluation of a service provider based on his or her reactions to the service provider’s goods, services, communication activities, interactions with the service provider and/or its representatives or constituencies (such as employees, management, or other customers) and/or known corporate activities.” In the relationship management context, the construct reflects the customer’s perception of relationship benefits and the vendor’s expertise. It depends on past communication and interaction between a service provider and a customer. A shortened version of the Walsh and Beatty (2007) definition was used for construct operationalization. Whenever a company has a good reputation, trust is created among consumers (Groenland, 2002). The existence of a relationship between the reputation of a service provider and trust and/or loyalty is well researched (Bartikowski & Walsh, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2013). Although the relationship between reputation and relationship management relational mediators is not always unidirectional (Walsh et al., 2009), we expected that a CBR of a service company has a positive effect on trust in our setting. For online subscription services, a certain level of service provider reputation is a precondition for establishing any relationship with the service provider. We expected this to be the case for all services that are knowledge-intensive (professional content and software).

R. M. Morgan & Hunt (1994) defined **trust** in a relationship-marketing context as “existing when one party has confidence in the exchange partner’s reliability and integrity”(p. 23). In line with Gefen and Straub (2004), we defined trust as the expectation of a customer that a service provider is dependable and can be relied on to deliver on its promises. Measurements were selected according to Gefen (2000). Based on qualitative interviews with managers and customers in the online subscription services setting, we can say that customers and potential customers understand the concept unambiguously, and managers see the customer’s trust as the key asset of the company. Based on the interviews, we also merged integrity and benevolence into one trust factor and predictability and ability into another.

Watson et al. (2015) showed that **attitudinal and behavioral loyalty** differentially influence managerially relevant outcomes and that attitudinal loyalty has a positive effect on behavioral loyalty. We expected loyal behavior to depend strongly on customer loyalty attitudes in online subscription-based services, and we therefore operationalized loyalty as two separate constructs: attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty. Attitudinal loyalty is defined as a degree of dispositional commitment in terms of some unique value associated with the brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). In our setting, this refers to a preference for the service brand over competitors, the enjoyment of doing business with the company/brand, and a general positive attitude toward the brand. Behavioral loyalty in our setting is defined as the willingness of a customer to purchase and/or repurchase (subscribe and/or extend the subscription) the service and to engage in positive word of mouth (WOM) about the service.

**Commoditization** is thought to occur when competitors in stable industries offer increasingly homogenous services to price-sensitive customers who have relatively low vendor-changing costs (Reimann et al., 2010). To the best of our knowledge, there have been no studies to date about the perception of commoditization within the relationship-marketing setting. There are only two papers that relate commoditization to customer behaviors or attitudes (Beldona et al., 2015; Koschate-Fischer et al., 2014). There are more studies from the industry executives' perspective focusing on the impacts of industry commoditization on product innovation strategies (Bronkhorst et al., 2019), the value creation chain (Homburg et al., 2017), and company responses to commoditization pressures (Coe, 2021; Riot et al., 2013). Most studies deal with highly commoditized industries. The only exception was a study by Reimann et al. (2010) that, in a comparative analysis of several manufacturing industries, included less commoditized manufacturing industries, such as furniture, wearing apparel, accessories, and toys. To the best of our knowledge, there has been no research on moderately or minimally commoditized services.

According to the marketing literature, to assess the level of commoditization of a certain product or service, the following four dimensions (first-order constructs) should be considered: product/service homogeneity, customer price sensitivity, switching cost, and industry stability (Reimann et al., 2010). The construct was originally developed by assessing the perceptions of managers who were active in the assessed industry (Reimann et al., 2010), but commoditization level can also be determined by measuring customer perceptions and attitudes (Beldona et al., 2015; Koschate-Fischer et al., 2014). Customers cannot assess industry stability, so customer commoditization perception for business services is operationalized in three dimensions in our setting: service homogeneity, price sensitivity, and (low) switching cost.

We have shown that Reimann et al.'s (2010) operationalization of commoditization is suitable also for moderately to minimally commoditized services similar to the online subscription services that are the focus of our research. We will explore the moderating effect of commoditization (as a second-order construct with the three dimensions of product

homogeneity, price sensitivity, and switching costs) on all relationships between antecedents and trust. Empirical measurement of commoditization is in line with sales executives' assessment of commoditization pressures on the three markets that were included in our research.

## **Research methodology**

A systematic literature review was conducted to identify and evaluate journal publications and business book publications from 1998 to 2020 that are relevant to the research question asking what the marketing-related characteristics are of online subscription services. Specifically, we sought to identify the underlying theoretical perspectives applied in research published in academic journals. We employed a five-step systematic literature review process suggested by Denyer and Tranfield (2009): 1) formulate questions, 2) locate studies, 3) select and evaluate studies, 4) analyze and synthesize, and 5) report and use the findings.

The empirical research is conducted in three well-developed markets for online subscription-based legal content services. The three markets differ in terms of the time since the service was launched, the market penetration of the service, and the degree of competitive pressure exerted on the service, so we expect customers in each market to perceive different degrees of commoditization of the service. The unit of analysis is a customer who is acquainted with the service (current customers, former customers, users of the limited free-of-charge service, or potential customers who were exposed to the marketing messages of the vendor).

An online survey was distributed to a sample of registered email addresses after adaptation to local languages (translated and back-translated from the English-language original). The scales for ECE and SE were developed and tested with control questions collecting data on the gender, age, relationship with the vendor, customer segment, FB usage, email acceptance, and purchase decision-making power of the respondents.

We conducted two surveys. The first survey, in 2017, gathered data from the customer base of an online service company (legal information services) operating in Croatia. An invitation to participate in the online questionnaire was emailed to 5,000 contacts who had the most exposure to the company's direct email campaigns. A total of 671 fully answered questionnaires were received within 1 week. Of these, 271 respondents had a social media (FB) account and could be identified in the vendor's customer relationship management (CRM) system to track their loyalty for 2 years after the survey.

The second survey was performed approximately two years after the first survey among customers of the same service, but this time, it was distributed to the customers with the most exposure to direct email campaigns from the vendor in Croatia (25,000 customers), Slovenia (15,000 customers), and Turkey (15,000 customers). The three markets differ regarding the time since the service was established, market penetration of the service and level of the competitive pressure that is exerted on the service, hence we expect that

customers on each market are perceiving different level of service commoditization. 1,926 complete responses were received in Croatia, 819 in Slovenia, and 795 in Turkey. To conduct the exploratory factor analysis and test the structural model, we randomly selected 488 respondents from the Croatian sample, 410 from the Slovenian sample, and 397 from the Turkish sample.

The hypothesized relationships were tested by multigroup structural equation modeling (Lisrel 9.2 and IBM AMOS 27). Model outcomes were verified against behavioral data from the vendors' CRM systems. To examine the moderating effects of commoditization on the relationship of antecedents and trust, the macro PROCESS was used (Hayes, 2013).

### **Theoretical and managerial contribution**

The theoretical contribution of this dissertation is a conceptualization of online subscription services within a relationship-marketing theoretical framework. Key marketing-related concepts for online subscription services are outlined, and the most appropriate constructs for describing customer behaviors and attitudes within a relationship-marketing effectiveness model are presented.

The measures for ECE and SE are conceptualized and operationalized on the basis of the marketing engagement literature. The roles of ECE and SE within the model is hypothesized and explained by applying cognitively oriented social exchange theory (Dwyer et al., 1987; Thibault & Kelley, 1959), social presence theory (Short et al., 1976), and media richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986)

A model with ECE, SE, service company reputation, and brand credibility as antecedents, customer trust as a mediator, and loyalty as an outcome was built and verified for the same online legal information subscription service in three different markets.

Furthermore, customer perception of the service commoditization for a service that is not highly commoditized is conceptualized and operationalized for the first time in the marketing literature.

Presented is the actionable insight into the evolution of the subscription business and the motivations of consumers to engage in subscription relationships. Additionally, the managerial contributions of this thesis include recommendations on how to prioritize online marketing activities to build customer trust and loyalty.

Our research shows that a successful firm in the online subscription market builds its reputation with a strong customer orientation, social responsibility, and quality of service. Quality content in and low intrusiveness of email communications are very important in building trust and trustworthy behavior. It helps if the service brand reflects the expertise of the company; however, this seems to be less important than the overall reputation of the company and email communication. Managers of online subscription services should pay a

great deal of attention to email communication to build customer trust and loyalty to their services.

An important finding relevant for marketing practitioners is that the perceived level of commoditization does not limit much the effectiveness of impact of digital marketing activities on trust and trustworthy behavior. In the dissertation, we propose the following areas for developing a comprehensive strategic framework for marketing online subscription services: (i) the value proposition of the subscription service; ii) an acquisition, retention, and reengagement strategy; and (iii) a commitment and trust strategy, where value proposition should address the customers' motivations for engaging in the subscription relationship.

### **Structure of the dissertation**

Following the introduction that briefly describes the research subject, questions, methods, and findings of the empirical research, the dissertation is structured in four chapters (Figure 2).

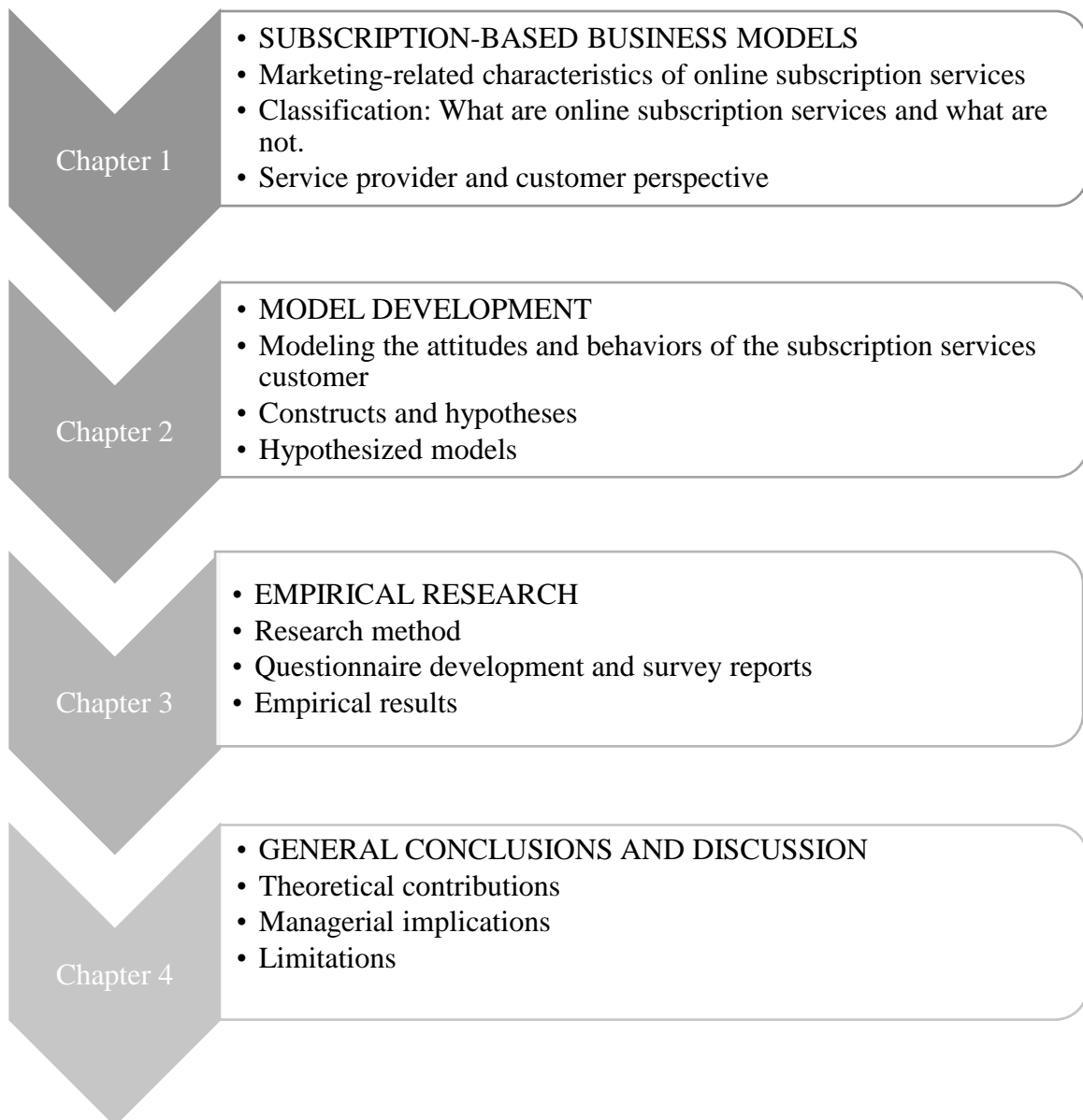
The first chapter discusses our review of the marketing literature in order to outline key marketing concepts of online subscription services and motivations of customers and vendors to engage in subscriptions.

In the second chapter, the development of a relationships marketing effectiveness model for online subscription services is reviewed. In addition, the conceptualization and operationalization of all model constructs is presented. The hypotheses that addressed the research questions are also outlined and theoretically underpinned.

The empirical research into online subscription services customer behaviors and attitudes is presented in the third chapter. The structural model's verification and confirmation of most of the hypotheses are discussed.

In the final chapter, the conclusions of the research are summarized, and contribution of the thesis outlined. Some insight for marketing practitioners is presented, and limitations of the dissertation and potentials for further research are outlined.

Figure 2: Structure of the dissertation



Source: Own work

## 1 SUBSCRIPTION-BASED BUSINESS MODELS

In this chapter, we evaluate and compare the conceptual and theoretical foundations of online subscription services in the marketing literature. We define what online subscriptions are and are not and examine service provider motivations for engaging in subscription relationships from the customer behavior perspective. We also outline guidelines for developing a comprehensive strategic marketing framework for online subscription services. A systematic literature review was conducted to identify and evaluate 117 relevant journal publications and 6 relevant business book publications from 1998 to mid-2021. In the second half of the 1990s, subscriptions to internet access and mobile telephony became widespread. This triggered the interest of researchers regarding subscription business models and

particularly the application of relationship-marketing theory to subscriptions and memberships (Bolton, 1998; Garbarino & Johnson, 1999). To include these relevant studies in our literature review we set 1998 as the initial year of our literature research.

The key marketing-related concepts relevant for online subscription businesses are pricing, WTP, churn, retention, renewal, switching costs, customer acquisition, purchase intention (intention to subscribe), and freemium and free trial marketing tactics. Recurring revenue is the main motivation for firms to engage in subscription relationships, while pricing and customer retention are the main marketing-related challenges.

Customers' motivations for engaging in subscriptions are convenience, curation, access, and entertainment. The concept of customers' perceptions of commoditization of an online subscription service is introduced through three dimensions: perception of service homogeneity, customers' price sensitivity, and assessment of costs to switch and its moderating impact on the hypothesized model. According to the literature review, the appropriate theoretical framework for modeling subscriber behavior is the relationship-marketing effectiveness model, with trust, commitment, and satisfaction as the central constructs.

## **1.1 From print to online subscriptions**

According to historical evidence, subscriptions were first applied to content (information) and cultural events. As early as the 16th century, European map publishers offered subscription plans to customers, and since the 17th century, the subscription business model has been used by newspapers, magazines and book publishers (Clapp, 1931; Warrillow, 2015). In the 20th century, insurance services, public utilities, healthcare services, and public transportation were at least partly offered to customers under subscription arrangements. In the 1990s, cellular phones, the internet, and pay TV became primarily subscription businesses (Warrillow, 2015). In the early 2000s, subscription business models were applied to multimedia streaming services (e.g., Netflix and Spotify), online publishing, SaaS, and anything-as-a-service (XaaS; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2007; Rudolph et al., 2017; C. L. Wang et al., 2005).

For equipment manufacturers that are currently utilizing new digital technologies such as the IoT, artificial intelligence, or Big Data, the introduction of related software subscription services is an important phase for achieving revenue enhancement with these new technological offerings (Gebauer et al., 2020).

In the second decade of the 21st century, the subscription business model for physical consumer goods became popular. Market leaders in subscription retail became fast-growing companies in health and beauty products (e.g., Dollar Shave Club), fashion (e.g., Stitch Fix) and meals (e.g., Blue Apron; Kestenbaum, 2017; Woo & Ramkumar, 2018). Recognizing

the importance of the subscription business model, Amazon launched an e-commerce platform to sell third-party subscription services (Amazon, 2017; Perez, 2017).

Due to the widespread use of the internet, users can access content and software mostly online (Baxter, 2016; Tzuo, 2018; Whitler, 2016). For instance, online content publishing (Oestreicher-Singer & Zalmanson, 2012) and SaaS businesses (Dubey & Wagle, 2007; Pettey, 2018; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2007) depend significantly on subscription revenue. Most consumer software (e.g., Microsoft Office 365) and professional software (e.g., all Adobe software) are available exclusively as subscriptions (Penmetsa et al., 2015).

New technologies and changing customer preferences are opening up new possibilities for businesses to offer their goods and services through a subscription business model. According to Tzuo (2018), subscriptions are exploding because billions of digital customers prefer access over ownership. However, the trend poses serious challenges for marketing practitioners in well-established businesses as well as start-ups. They must ask themselves whether they can modify their offering in a way that customers will use the services or buy their products within a subscription arrangement.

A **subscription** is a contractual setting between the customer and the vendor regarding recurring purchases of services or goods at regular intervals (Bischof et al., 2018). Within this framework, customers commit to ongoing relationships, and vendors commit to continuously providing services. A more narrow definition of subscription services is that customers subscribe to use a preselected combination of service units for a fixed price and within a longer time frame (Weinhardt et al., 2009).

**Online services** differ from traditional services because they promote more intensive interactivity among users and exhibit positive network effects (Etzion & Pang, 2014). Network effects due to the key role of the internet in service provision and relatively low marginal costs for providing subscription services are the key characteristics that delineate online subscription services from pre-internet era subscriptions and other recurring revenue businesses. Today, most subscription services are online services. The majority of communication between the vendor and the customer is done online, as well the majority of subscription purchases and renewals. Content, data, and software are delivered mostly online. In the case of physical goods (e.g., subscription boxes), all communications and purchasing are done online; the same occurs for delivery and transportation subscriptions (e.g., Amazon Prime).

The trend of the growing importance of the subscription business model has been recognized by business book writers and entrepreneurs (Baxter, 2015; Janzer, 2017; Lecky, 2018; Tzuo, 2018; Warrillow, 2015). Researchers have mainly focused on one of the concepts of the subscription business—pricing, WTP, customer behavior, churn, retention, and CLV—within a particular industry segment. However, to date, there has been no comprehensive study of a strategic framework for marketing activities related to online subscriptions.

## **1.2 Marketing-related characteristics of online subscription services**

The data collected for this chapter consist of an extensive systematic analysis of research on marketing-related issues for online subscription services. Specifically, we sought to identify the underlying theoretical perspectives applied in research published in academic journals. We employed a five-step systematic literature review process suggested by Denyer and Tranfield (2009): 1) formulate questions, 2) locate studies, 3) select and evaluate studies, 4) analyze and synthesize, and 5) report on and use the findings.

The phenomenon of subscription has been addressed by various scientific communities, according to the Web of Science (WoS) database, most frequently by information and library science, computer science, telecommunications, economics, management, and business. We attempt to synthesize an emerging field of knowledge that focuses on marketing issues for subscription businesses.

The following research question guided the literature review: what are marketing-related characteristics of online subscription services? Two complementary questions supported the research question: What are the main challenges faced by firms offering online subscription services, and what are the characteristics of customer behavior within the online subscription relationship?

The WoS database was used for the initial search for relevant articles. In the initial phase, the search term “subscription” was used. This choice was made to ensure that as many relevant articles as possible were included. On July 29, 2021, a search of the WoS using the keyword “subscription” yielded 3,749 journal articles for the period 1998–2021.

In addition to the WoS, we drew from business literature dealing with a subscription business model and published between 2015 and 2020 using the Amazon.com bookstore (Baxter, 2015, 2020; Janzer, 2017; Lecky, 2018; Tzuo, 2018; Warrillow, 2015).

### **1.2.1 Study selection and evaluation**

Using a systematic procedure, we gradually reduced the number of articles through a two-step filtering process. First, the original list was narrowed down to the category of business and management, resulting in 302 articles. In the next step, we reduced the list by reviewing the titles, keywords, and abstracts for relevance and deselecting those that did not fit the scope of the study.

The selected papers met the following inclusion criteria: The paper was about online subscription services, and the topic of the paper was marketing concepts (e.g., marketing theory, pricing, CLV, and churn). The search and filtering process yielded a net list of 117 papers.

### 1.2.2 Analysis and synthesis

Where possible, the theoretical perspective of each paper was identified and recorded in a database along with the key concepts, setting (industry) of the study, and key findings. We found that the majority of early papers did not attempt to explain the theoretical perspective in terms of key concepts, industry environment, and key findings.

For the analysis, the papers were grouped according to the paper's key subscription-related concept. An overview of the papers, grouped according to the number of citations of the paper, is provided in Table 1. The total number of papers shown is greater than 117 because 15 papers were categorized under two concepts, and 1 was categorized under three concepts.

The number of papers dealing with a specific industry is presented for each group of papers. The setting for 52 papers was the media; for 17 papers, it was telecommunications; for 12, it was memberships; for 11, it was subscription boxes; and for 1 paper, it was subscription services related to IoT as a research setting. For 12 papers, it was not possible to determine the study's industry setting because the content addressed the abstract subscription business.

There were 31 papers addressing one or more of the customer lifetime related concepts of churn, retention, renewal, CLV, life cycle revenue (LCR), and switching costs. Another 25 studies dealt with different aspects of subscription business model development or the viability of introducing a subscription business model. Articles about these concepts focused on all subscription industries except IoT.

For 23 papers, the key concept was pricing; 11 papers dealt with media, 4 with telecommunications, and 1 paper each with subscription boxes, memberships, SaaS, and IoT. For 15 papers, the key concept was WTP, where media was the most frequently explored setting (14 times).

A total of 14 papers were about customer acquisition, customer journey, or purchase intention, with media, telecommunications, memberships, and subscription boxes as settings. Out of 12 papers with freemium and free trial marketing tactics as a concept, 9 explored media settings, and 1 each explored subscription boxes and SaaS.

Customer behavior in the relationship management context was described in 12 papers (with media, telecommunications, and memberships as settings). In three papers, the common marketing concept was customer experience, with subscription boxes and media as the industries.

Table 1: Papers grouped according to the key marketing concept

Marketing-related concept/industry	No. papers	Papers
<b>Churn, retention, renewal, CLV, LCR switching costs</b>	<b>31</b>	Ascarza & Hardie, 2013; Becker et al., 2015; Ben Rhouma & Zaccour, 2017; Bhattacharya, 1998; Blattberg & Fox, 2004; Bolton, 1998; Burez & Van den Poel, 2007; Byun & Jang, 2015; Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2015; Coussement & Van den Poel, 2008; D'Alessandro et al., 2015; Datta et al., 2015; de Reuver et al., 2015; García et al., 2016; Gray et al., 2017; Grzybowski & Pereira, 2011; Hochstein et al., 2021; Huotari & Ritala, 2021; A. Kim et al., 2021; M.-K. Kim et al., 2019; V. Kumar et al., 2018; G. Li et al., 2014; Marinova & Singh, 2014; McCarthy et al., 2018; Pickett, 2011; Savary & Dhar, 2020; Schweidel et al., 2008a; Schweidel et al., 2008b; Sharp et al., 2002; Singh & Crisafulli, 2016; Wangenheim et al., 2017
Media	10	
Telecommunications	7	
Membership	4	
SaaS	3	
Subscription box	1	
<b>Business model development/assessment</b>	<b>25</b>	Baye & Morgan, 2000; Bischof et al., 2020; Bray et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2018; Cook & Garver, 2002; Gebauer et al., 2020; Huotari & Ritala, 2021; Kaiser & Kongsted, 2012; Kanuri et al., 2017; S. J. Kim et al., 2021; V. Kumar et al., 2018; Noorda, 2019; Olsen & Solvoll, 2018; Pasirayi & Fennell, 2021; Pauwels & Weiss, 2008; Randhawa & Kumar, 2008; Rudolph et al., 2017; Schöpfel & Leduc, 2012; Slater, 2005; Tao & Xu, 2018; Täuscher & Laudien, 2018; Wayne, 2017; Weinhardt et al., 2009; Wlömert & Papies, 2016; J. Zhang & Seidmann, 2010
Media	10	
Subscription box	7	
SaaS	2	
Membership	1	
<b>Pricing</b>	<b>23</b>	Allen et al., 2008; Bala, 2012; Basu & Ng, 2021; Blattberg & Fox, 2004; Bolton, 1998; Bolton & Lemon, 1999; Chao, 2012; Danaher, 2002; Dover & Murthi, 2006; Fishburn & Odlyzko, 1999; Fruchter & Sigué, 2013; Haruvy et al., 2004; Kanuri et al., 2017; S. Kumar & Sethi, 2009; Lambrecht & Misra, 2017; Penmetsa et al., 2015; Prasad et al., 2003; Randhawa & Kumar, 2008; Tan & Chen, 2021; Tian & Feinberg, 2020; R. Wang et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2013; Xu & Duan, 2018
Media	11	
Telecommunication	4	
Subscription box	1	
Membership	1	
SaaS	1	
IoT	1	

(table continues)

(continued)

<b>Marketing-related concept/industry</b>	<b>No. papers</b>	<b>Papers</b>
<b>Willingness to pay</b>	<b>15</b>	Aral & Dhillon, 2021; Berger et al., 2015; Chyi, 2005; Kammer et al., 2015; S. J. Kim et al., 2021; G. Li et al., 2014; Z. Li & Cheng, 2014; Lopes & Galletta, 2014; Oestreicher-Singer & Zalmanson, 2013; Papies et al., 2010; Punj, 2013; Saavedra & González, 2015; Setterstrom et al., 2018; C. L. Wang et al., 2005; Zhou et al., 2021
Media Subscription box	14 1	
<b>Customer acquisition, customer journey, purchase intention (intention to subscribe), demand</b>	<b>14</b>	Ben Rhouma & Zaccour, 2017; Bischof et al., 2018; Depken & Wilson, 2004; George & Wakefield, 2018; Hsiao & Chen, 2017; Krishnamurthy & Shainesh, 2017; Kwong & Park, 2008; Lee, 2017; H.-P. Lu & Hsiao, 2010; McDonald et al., 2013; Pauwels & Weiss, 2008; Pompe et al., 2018; Rojas & Briceño, 2019; Schweidel et al., 2008a; Sichtmann & Arnott, 2007
Media Telecommunication Membership Subscription box	7 3 3 1	
<b>Customer behavior in relationship management context</b>	<b>12</b>	Aydin & Özer, 2005; Blattberg & Fox, 2004; Bolton, 1998; Bolton & Lemon, 1999; Calvo-Porrá & Lévy-Mangin, 2015; Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Gruen et al., 2000; Lemon et al., 2002; Mvele et al., 2019; Qayyum et al., 2013; Sichtmann & Arnott, 2007; Sultan, 2018
Telecommunication Media Membership	7 3 2	
<b>Freemium and free trial marketing tactics</b>	<b>12</b>	Aguiar, 2017; Aral & Dhillon, 2021; Brandstetter & Schmalhofer, 2014; Datta et al., 2015; Hamari et al., 2017; V. Kumar, 2014; Laochumnanvanit & Bednall, 2005; Niemand et al., 2019; Olsen & Solvoll, 2018; Pattabhiramaiah et al., 2019; Saenger & Thomas, 2021; Wangenheim et al., 2017
Media Subscription box SaaS	9 1 1	
<b>Consumer experience</b>	<b>3</b>	C. M. K. Cheung et al., 2015; Mimoun et al., 2015; Woo & Ramkumar, 2018
Subscription box Media	2 1	

Source: Own work.

Recurring revenue was identified in nine papers as a motive for vendors to implement a subscription business model. The papers examined media, subscription boxes, SaaS, and memberships. No other vendor motives were found in our literature review (Table 2).

Motives for customers to engage in a subscription relationship are convenience, curation, access, and entertainment. The papers studying customer motives and referencing industry settings are presented in Table 3. The most frequently cited motives were convenience and

access, followed by curation. Curation was cited only in articles referencing media and subscription box industries, while entertainment (hedonic motive) was cited in articles that were related to subscription boxes and memberships.

*Table 2: Papers referring to recurring revenue as a motive for vendors to use a subscription business model*

Motive of vendor/industry	No.	Papers
<b>Recurring revenue</b>	<b>9</b>	Basu & Ng, 2021; Bischof et al., 2020; Gebauer et al., 2020; Hochstein et al., 2021; McCarthy et al., 2018; Pasirayi & Fennell, 2021; Savary & Dhar, 2020; Wlömert & Papies, 2016; Woo & Ramkumar, 2018
Media	4	
Subscription box	3	
SaaS	2	
Membership	1	

*Source: Own work.*

*Table 3: Papers referring to customer motives for engaging in a subscription relationship*

Motive/industry	No.	Papers
<b>Convenience</b>	<b>14</b>	Bischof et al., 2020; Bolton & Lemon, 1999; Bray et al., 2021; M.-K. Kim et al., 2019; V. Kumar et al., 2018; Lemon et al., 2002; Marinova & Singh, 2014; Pasirayi & Fennell, 2021; Prasad et al., 2003; Saavedra & González, 2015; Tao & Xu, 2018; C. L. Wang et al., 2005; Wlömert & Papies, 2016; Woo & Ramkumar, 2018
Media	5	
Subscription box	3	
Telecommunication	2	
Membership	1	
<b>Access</b>	<b>14</b>	Bhattacharya, 1998; Bischof et al., 2020; Bolton & Lemon, 1999; Brandstetter & Schmalhofer, 2014; Byun & Jang, 2015; Chyi, 2005; Danaher, 2002; Hsiao & Chen, 2017; Lambrecht & Misra, 2017; G. Li et al., 2014; Setterstrom et al., 2018; C. L. Wang et al., 2005; Weinhardt et al., 2009; Wlömert & Papies, 2016
Media	8	
Subscription box	1	
Telecommunication	1	
Membership	1	
<b>Curation/personalization</b>	<b>9</b>	Bischof et al., 2020; Bray et al., 2021; Hamari et al., 2017; Kammer et al., 2015; V. Kumar et al., 2018; Mimoun et al., 2015; Oestreicher-Singer & Zalmanson, 2013; Tan & Chen, 2021; Tao & Xu, 2018; Täuscher & Laudien, 2018
Media	5	
Subscription box	4	
<b>Entertainment (hedonic motive)</b>	<b>6</b>	Bischof et al., 2020; Bray et al., 2021; Byun & Jang, 2015; McDonald et al., 2013; Mimoun et al., 2015; Woo & Ramkumar, 2018
Subscription box	4	
Membership	2	

*Source: Own work.*

### 1.2.3 Report and use of results

The result of the analysis of the professional literature was a classification of online subscription services. For the service provider perspective, we outlined the following marketing concepts that appeared most often in the literature and are assumed to be most relevant for the context of online subscription services:

Vendor perspective:

- CLV and the related concepts of churn, retention, renewal, LCR, and switching costs
- Pricing

- Freemium and free trial marketing tactics

Customer perspective:

- WTP
- Customer-journey-related concepts: acquisition, purchase intention (intention to subscribe), demand
- Customer behavior in the context of relationship marketing
- Customer experience

Additionally, we singled out the studies where the use of a specific theory was applied in marketing strategy research (Chyi, 2005; N. A. Morgan et al., 2019) and was related to the discussed marketing concepts. Table 4 presents 23 studies. Each study's underlying theory, industry setting, and key insight is outlined. The findings from most of these studies are presented in more detail in the remainder of this chapter.

*Table 4: Selected studies of online subscription services marketing concepts*

<b>Key concept</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Key insight (relevant to this study)</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Business model</b>	Prospect theory	Surprise subscription box	Consumers prefer shorter delivery intervals for predefined subscriptions and longer delivery intervals for curated surprise subscriptions.	Bischof et al. (2020)
<b>Corporate valuation</b>	Corporate valuation theory	Subscription-based firms (pay TV & satellite radio services)	Customer acquisition and retention model embedded in a standard financial framework for corporate valuation.	McCarthy et al. (2018)
<b>Customer behavior–customer journey</b>	Theory of relational exchanges	Mobile communication services; theater company; membership in a professional association	Service value and corporate image have the strongest influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Switching costs are not significant/important for traditional mobile service. Core service performance was the only variable that influenced customer/member commitment.	Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin (2015); Garbarino & Johnson (1999); Gruen et al. (2000)

*(table continues)*

(continued)

<b>Key concept</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Key insight (relevant to this study)</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Customer behavior–customer journey</b>	Utility theory, social presence theory, social context cues theory	Professional sports, leisure service	Predictive model for likelihood of purchasing/renewing a season ticket. Frequent text-based contacts without voice-based interactions hinder the consumer journey and work against relationship building. Appropriate timing in contact drives the customer journey.	George & Wakefield (2018)
<b>Customer behavior–customer journey</b>	Attribution theory	Services	Model of the consumer evaluation process when offered a free trial.	Laochumnanvanit & Bednall (2005)
<b>Customer behavior–customer journey</b>	Commitment–trust theory	Not-for-profit leisure service, mobile telephony	Trust positively impacts upgrades and is inertial to downgrade decisions. Promotional materials trigger consumers' retrospective evaluation of the service relationship but do not determine its outcome. Downgrade options reduce churn. Competence and credibility have high explanatory power as antecedents of trust.	Marinova & Singh (2014); Sichtmann & Arnott (2007); Sultan (2018)
<b>Customer behavior–customer journey</b>	Technology acceptance model (TAM), innovation diffusion theory	Telematics service contracts	Length of service relationship and variety of services used predict a contract renewal decision. Frequency of use and perceived ease of use are not significant drivers of contract renewal.	Wangenheim et al. (2017)
<b>Customer behavior–customer journey</b>	Decision affect theory	Subscriptions with some hedonic orientation	Feelings of serendipity of a subscription may positively influence satisfaction and enjoyment.	A. Kim et al., 2021

(table continues)

(continued)

Key concept	Theory	Industry	Key insight (relevant to this study)	References
Customer behavior–purchase intention	SERVQUAL	Online games	The influence of perceived quality of a freemium service on premium purchases is mediated by freemium usage. Increasing the quality of a freemium service has little effect on demand for a premium service.	Hamari et al. (2017)
Customer behavior–purchase intention	Analytic hierarchy process technique	High-speed internet services	Selection criteria by importance: access, performance, price, support services, additional benefits, and firm reputation.	Lee (2017)
Customer behavior–renewal	Buyer–seller relationship theory, self-perception theory	Digital TV	CLV of free trial customers is 59% lower than that of regular customers. Free trial customers are more receptive to marketing communications and usage rates.	Datta et al. (2015)
Customer behavior–retention	Social exchange theory	Telecommunications	Incentives for customers to commit to subscription are beneficial for the service provider if they address long-term-oriented customers.	Becker et al., 2015
Customer behavior–service switching	Push–pull mooring framework; prospect theory; theory of planned behavior	Blog services provision; mobile telephony	Dissatisfaction with stability, attractiveness in functionality, and ease of use are reasons for switching behavior. Customer inertia has a moderate negative effect on the intention to change service. Switching costs indirectly reduce the intention to switch providers.	D’Alessandro et al. (2015); Gray et al. (2017); K. Z. Zhang et al. (2012)

(table continues)

(continued)

<b>Key concept</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Key insight (relevant to this study)</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Customer behavior–WTP</b>	Perceived value theory	Social networking sites	Perceived value significantly influences intention to pay social networking site subscription fees, while satisfaction does not.	H.-P. Lu & Hsiao (2010)
<b>Customer behavior–WTP</b>	Perceived value theory	E-book subscription	Content and price are the key antecedents of perceived value. Perceived value and attitude influence payment intention.	Hsiao & Chen (2017)
<b>Customer behavior–WTP</b>	Perceived value theory	Entertainment-related online content	WTP for the subscription to a website is based solely on the expected benefits of the website.	Lopes & Galletta, (2014)
<b>Customer behavior–WTP</b>	Organizational commitment theory	Content industry	Consumers' WTP increases the more they engage with the service provider's website.	Oestreicher-Singer & Zalmanson (2013)
<b>Customer behavior–WTP</b>	Perceived value theory; status quo bias theory	Content industry	Switching intention is enhanced by perceived value and perceived benefits. Social norms increase perceived benefits. Cognitive lock-in can be enhanced by loss aversion and cognitive inertia.	Z. Li & Cheng (2014)
<b>Customer behavior–WTP</b>	Engagement theory; gratification theory	Web-based content sites	Engagement and regularity of experience, in particular, have positive impact on WTP for subscription.	Zhou et al., 2021
<b>Customer behavior–WTP</b>	Regulatory focus theory	Recurring costs/benefits/effort	Promotion-focused consumers are more likely to perceive costs or benefits to be greater when they are framed in aggregate, while prevention-focused consumers' value more periodic framing.	Basu & Ng, 2021

(table continues)

(continued)

<b>Key concept</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Key insight (relevant to this study)</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Pricing</b>	Prospect theory; theory of planned behavior.	Tourist attractions membership	Bonus promotions were found to be more effective than discount promotions.	Byun & Jang (2015)
<b>Pricing</b>	Consumer decisions: utility maximization	Content industry	When equilibrium in price war occurs, revenue of competitors is below monopolist's revenue. Subscription model does better than pay-per-view model; Providers should increase the share of free content during periods of high demand.	Fishburn & Odlyzko (1999)
<b>Pricing</b>	Game theory	Software	An optimal pricing strategy based on previous customer behavior can be set if the entire population of consumers chooses to adopt the new technology early. Otherwise, the best price discrimination strategy is intertemporal price discrimination.	Penmetsa et al. (2015)

Source: Own work.

### 1.3 Classification—What online subscription services are and are not

To examine the marketing-related characteristics of online subscription services, we focused on services where we can expect similar provider and customer behaviors. A business qualifies as an online subscription service if the business has the following characteristics:

1. A long-term contractual arrangement that provides for repeated use or consumption of the service or good (Bischof et al., 2020)
2. Customers commit to purchasing a preselected combination of service units or product assortments at a fixed price (Weinhardt et al., 2009)
3. The marginal cost of production or service provision is very low or negligible (Bala, 2012)
4. The business promotes interactivity between customers or users and has a positive network effect (Etzion & Pang, 2014)

The third and fourth characteristics have only been outlined in studies of online services and have not been previously applied to the subscription business. However, these two characteristics allow for distinguishing the online subscription business model from various recurring revenue-based business models that have significant marginal costs and/or do not have a positive network effect.

Negligible marginal costs mean that there is no physical depreciation of the online subscription service and that there are no major secondary markets for these services (Bala, 2012). Freemium and free trial are important marketing tactics for attracting new subscribers to online subscription businesses (Warrillow, 2015, p. 161). However, for a business with significant marginal costs, such tactics are not viable.

Subscription box businesses (a recurring delivery of products such as cosmetics, food, or fashion) are also online subscription services, although the subscription arrangement is about the physical delivery of goods and not services (Bischof et al., 2020; Rudolph et al., 2017; Woo & Ramkumar, 2018). The production costs of goods in subscription boxes are typically very low compared to the price of the box, and there are no second-hand markets for these goods.

Although some researchers (Sharp et al., 2002) and some business authors (Tzuo, 2018) consider all regular, repetitive purchases from one provider (e.g., the provision of utilities, insurance, and flat-rate professional services) to be subscription businesses, we have not considered them in this study. The cost of providing these services is usually not marginal, interactivity among customers is rarely encouraged, and the pricing methods for these businesses differ significantly from those for online subscription businesses.

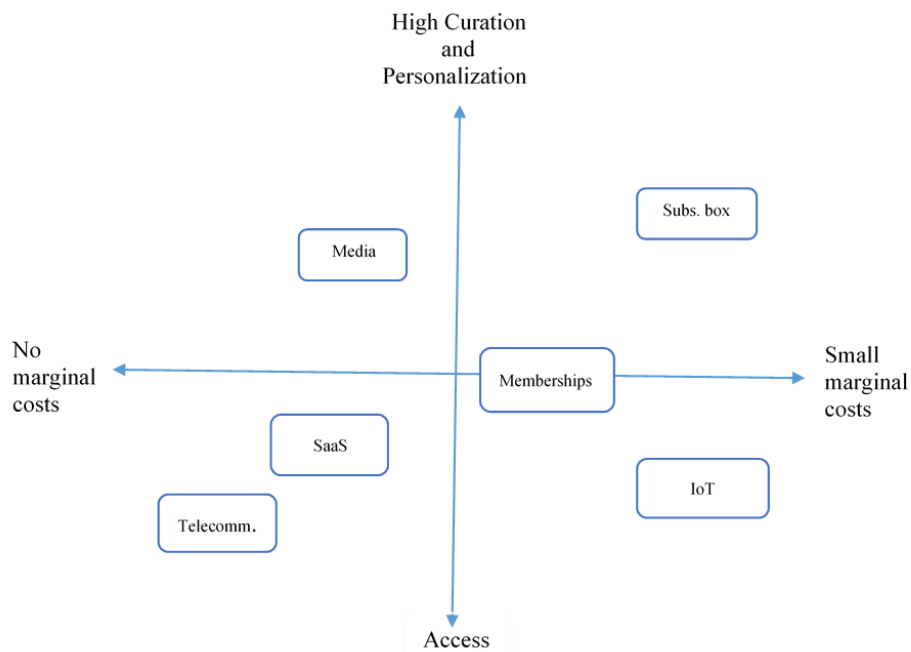
Some firms sell ancillary services as a subscription to support their core product or service. Ancillary subscription services are common in airlines, entertainment, sports, information, web services, and online retail where ancillary services may include Wi-Fi access, food and beverage, coaching, delivery (Amazon Prime), movies, and/or other content access (R. Wang et al., 2019). Subscription services can also be ancillary when a core service is a subscription service (cultural, sports, entertainment, media, and telecommunications) or a core service or product is procured with a single transaction (airfare, online purchases).

The terms “subscription” and “membership” are sometimes used interchangeably (George & Wakefield, 2018; Goligoski & Myers, 2018). In the cultural sector, for example, there are four types of membership schemes: subscriptions, season tickets, memberships (or friends), and patrons (Slater, 2005). Membership is a broader term and focuses on members’ affiliation with the membership system rather than a financial arrangement with recurring revenue. In this study, marketing concepts and tactics are also relevant to subscriptions that are part of a broader membership system, albeit only to those that use subscription pricing. Businesses that have all the other characteristics of subscriptions (long-term commitment,

marginal costs, interactivity) but use transactional pricing rather than subscription pricing are also not part of our research.

Bischof et al. (2020) depicted consumer goods online subscriptions typology in terms of two dimensions: level of curation and level of customer purchase control. Instead of customer purchase control, we use industry marginal costs to account for other online subscription services with very low or even zero marginal costs. Access to the service is essential for any online service and vendor use access manipulation as a mode of control of the subscription relationship. For industrial categories located at the lower end of the ordinate axis, it is characteristic that curation does not play much of a role in customer motivation for establishing a subscription relationship. This holds for telecommunications, software, and IoT-related online services that are predefined to the level that no personalization is possible and no curation viable (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Classification of online subscription services



Source: Own work.

**Curation** refers to “the activities of identifying, selecting, validating, organizing, describing, maintaining, and preserving existing artifacts” (Rotman et al., 2012, p. 1093). In this study setting, content, music, information, and consumer goods are curated (upper half of Figure 3). Personalization is when the firm, based on customer data, adjusts a suitable marketing mix for individual customers (Arora et al., 2008, p. 1). Efficient curation leads to a high level of personalization and is presented combined in our classification (Figure 3).

Media or content, telecommunications, and SaaS have negligible marginal costs. However, only in media or content subscriptions is curation an important value proposition. For

services where curation is technically not possible (telecommunications and the IoT) or is less important (SaaS and membership), the key value proposition for customers is access to a quality service (Figure 2, lower half). Ancillary services are similar to memberships because they offer basic personalization, access is important, and the ancillary services have very small marginal costs. In the literature overview (Table 2), eight papers where customer motivation for subscription was access were in a media setting; however, most were with regard to media before Web 2.0, when curation was limited and personalization impossible.

#### **1.4 Service provider perspective**

From the service provider perspective, the economic benefits of a subscription business are similar to the benefits of renting goods. Early studies showed that renting is prevalent in industries where stability of income, price discrimination, and market power are important issues (Bala, 2012; Engelbourg, 1966). When introducing a subscription business, firms face the same challenges a monopolist faces selling durable goods, where resale is impossible and consumers have different valuations of the good or service (Coase, 1972). In such circumstances, a monopolist can overcome customer intention to postpone purchasing, lack of customer commitment, and changing preferences by renting the durable good.

The equivalent behavior of a rational customer postponing the purchase of a durable good is an online service customer shortening the period and amount of service consumed or used to minimize the costs of consumption or use. To recover development costs and earn a profit, a firm should enforce a contractual setting with customers that a one-time transaction will cover the proportional costs and profit per customer based on the expected number of customers. Alternatively, and much more effectively, a firm facing high fixed investment costs, low marginal costs and customers as cost minimizers can maximize its revenue by establishing a contractual subscription setting (Fishburn & Odlyzko, 1999). In business consultancy terms, the firm is aiming at a “forever transaction,” and in so doing, it is committing to a “forever promise” in return (Baxter, 2020).

For a subscription business, the firm’s base of subscribers is the most valuable asset (Taylor, 2003). The subscription-based business model increases the predictability of future firm revenue streams. Because revenue is connected directly to the number of subscribers, indicators such as customer churn, customer or subscriber acquisition costs, average revenue per user (ARPU), and CLV are the focus of managers, analysts, and investors in these businesses (McCarthy et al., 2018). Measuring and tracking CLV and residual lifetime value (RLV) are important to increase return on investment for a firm’s acquisition and retention spending.

Pasirayi and Fennell (2021) studied the introduction of subscription-based direct-to-consumer channels by well-established listed corporations. On average, an announcement of the introduction of a subscription-based direct-to-consumer channel resulted in a 0.89% decrease in the firm’s value. For comparison, the announcement of a new product

introduction increases a firm's value by an average of 0.1%. In some cases, the introduction of a subscription channel complicates channel relationships and leads to conflict, which reduces firm value. Conversely, channel power diminishes the negative impact of channel conflict, and firms with greater channel power benefit from adding subscription channels. The study also showed that for firms offering exclusive content, the introduction of a subscription-based direct-to-consumer channel increases firm value (Pasirayi & Fennell, 2021).

Increased competition in the subscription market considerably erodes firms' profitability. Competition often leads to a ruinous price war. When equilibrium occurs, competitors' revenue is less than the monopolist's revenue (Fishburn & Odlyzko, 1999). Taylor (2003) observed "soft competition" when there were only two firms operating in a subscription market. In this case, both firms earn positive economic profit; however, when there are three or more firms in the same market, intensive price competition kicks in, and each firm earns economic rent on its customer base but zero economic profit (Taylor, 2003). According to the Taylor (2003) model (three or more firms), in the absence of mergers or acquisitions, no firm should be able to maintain a dominant position in a subscription market.

#### 1.4.1 Pricing

Pricing is the most challenging marketing concept for firms that intend to move from a transaction-based or pay-per-use model to a subscription-based model, as well as for those firms that implement the subscription business model at the first offering of a product or a service in the market (Janzer, 2017). Most pricing models proposed for subscription services imply that the firm's objective is to maximize the total discounted profits over an infinite time horizon. Some firms have a single subscription price for the offering, but most firms using a subscription-based business model have three pricing options to give customers the feeling that they are in command of selecting a subscription package that best suits their needs (Baxter, 2015).

The components of a subscription service price are (1) an activation or installation fee (a one-time payment the customer makes on entering into a subscription agreement), (2) the subscription fee, (3) a usage fee paid for additional specified uses in addition to the basic service, and (4) an exit or cancellation fee paid for early termination of the subscription contract (Fruchter & Sigué, 2013). Theoretically, for a monopolist, the optimal subscription fee is zero or close to zero when a service is introduced in the market and starts to increase only when the number of subscribers reaches a certain threshold (Fruchter & Sigué, 2013).

An activation fee is a legacy of utilities and telecommunication subscriptions. In the pre-internet era, activating a service provision was related to considerable installation costs. Danaher (2002) showed that the activation fee impacted the attrition rate, while Fruchter and Sigué (2013) revealed that a cancellation fee did not negatively affect new subscriptions. The authors proposed a skimming strategy for cancellation fees: a high cancellation fee at

the start of the offering is gradually reduced to a zero-cancellation fee when the number of subscribers increases substantially. Recent business book authors have not mentioned activation and cancellation fees because most vendors avoid charging these fees (Janzer, 2017; Tzuo, 2018).

In online subscription markets, firms deliver a flow of goods or services directly to their customers, so the vendor knows about customers' past purchasing behaviors and use of services. Thus, there are more opportunities for efficient price discrimination (Taylor, 2003). There are three possible price discrimination regimes: (i) different prices for new and returning customers (behavioral price discrimination), (ii) different prices at different time points (intertemporal price discrimination), and (iii) different prices based on customer behavior and service use time. Penmetsa et al. (2015) showed that if there is a sizable segment of subscribers who postpone the purchase of a new technology, the best price discrimination strategy is when the customer's past behavior does not serve as the basis for discrimination and where subscription fees decline over time as the vendor seeks to expand its market to more hesitant (low valuation) consumers.

For vendors that offer both free and paid content with a subscription arrangement it is an interesting question how to optimally adjust the amount of content offered for free. For transactions, classic economic theory suggests increasing prices when the demand is high and offering fewer free services/content during this period. For online news subscriptions with cyclical demand, Lambrecht and Misra (2017) showed that countercyclical offering is optimal and vendors should offer more free content in periods of high demand. For sport news and content online subscriptions, it has been empirically confirmed that this is the actual behavior of leading firms in the business. This is explained by the fact that subscription customers are heterogeneous in their valuation of online content and this heterogeneity varies over the course of a typical annual subscription contract term. By offering a smaller share of paid content during periods of high demand, a vendor pleases the low-consumption consumers, who are more sensitive to demand shock (Lambrecht & Misra, 2017).

In subscription box businesses, gambled price discount (i.e., a price promotion that involves uncertainty about the discount level) has lately become an interesting pricing tactic. Tan and Chen (2021) showed that for subscriptions where the main motive of customers was replenishment and/or curation, a gambled price discount increased the customer's enjoyment.

Some subscription services offer duration discounts by rewarding longer subscription commitments with lower subscription price. Tian and Feinberg (2020) suggested that pricing should be balanced to encourage potential customers to subscribe and nudge those who do into more profitable arrangements. Because subscription menu prices change occasionally, historical data about pricing impact cannot be used successfully, they advised that businesses conduct an experiment to determine optimal pricing. By modeling the opt-in, plan choice,

and opt-out decisions of users, they found that subscription service pricing is often too low, especially for the longer duration plans (Tian & Feinberg, 2020).

#### 1.4.2 Customer acquisition and lifetime value

Managers of subscription businesses focus on three central key performance indicators (KPI): customer acquisition costs, CLV, and retention rate (Rudolph et al., 2017). CLV is defined as the present value of future profits generated from a customer during the lifetime of the subscription arrangement. The CLV should consider the total financial contribution of transactions (i.e., revenues minus costs) for the particular customer (Venkatesan & Kumar, 2004).

In offering a subscription arrangement to customers, most marketers engage in free trial marketing tactics (Baxter, 2015; Janzer, 2017). With a free trial, a customer has an opportunity to evaluate and experience the service before signing up. Firms offer trials with two key objectives: to demonstrate value and to earn the customer's trust (Janzer, 2017).

A considerable number of online subscription services operate under the freemium business model. This model refers to a product or pricing structure in which the core service is free, and revenue is generated through the sales of premium services (Hamari et al., 2017; V. Kumar, 2014). In content-related online subscriptions, a basic, limited amount of content is available for free and full content is available only to paying subscribers. The quantity restriction nudges free users toward becoming paid subscribers (Aral & Dhillon, 2021).

With a free trial, all prospective customers can use the full service for a limited time. Then, it is expected that they subscribe or depart. In contrast, firms that offer freemium services expect that a large number of customers will remain unpaid subscribers, using only limited services indefinitely (Janzer, 2017). Some firms use a combination of customer nurturing approaches and conversion of free trial customers who do not subscribe to the freemium subscription package after the trial period expires.

Free trials create limited consumption experiences, which motivate customers to spread positive WOM. Customers feel comfortable in their ability to make a fully formed assessment when they complete a limited consumption experience. They are more certain about their attitudes, which are more positive and less ambivalent, despite having limited experience of the actual product or service (Saenger & Thomas, 2021).

In addition to offering trials and freemium access, firms try other marketing tactics to win the trust of potential subscribers, including discounts, bonus promotions, and promotional gifts. Some studies have shown that bonus promotions (e.g., an extended period using the service at no additional cost) are more effective at attracting new subscribers than discount promotions (e.g., reducing subscription fees; Byun & Jang, 2015).

### 1.4.3 Customer retention (churn)

Customer retention and customer churn are two sides of the same coin. Customer churn refers to the rate of customers who leave (do not renew or unsubscribe) within a certain period of time. Revenue churn is the reduction in subscription revenue over time. Some businesses have a natural churn rate, representing customers who actually have no need or reason to continue with the subscription. In the B2B subscription segment, this is most often a consequence of closure of customer activities due to liquidation, bankruptcy, or cost cutting. In the business-to-consumer (B2C) segment, natural churn is most evident in subscriptions curated for a certain age range of customers (toys or media; Janzer, 2017). Churn above the natural rate represents a loss of subscription revenue and profit. This churn happens due to customers switching to an alternative service or subscription provider.

Dover and Murthi (2006) developed a model to predict the duration of an online content subscription. They found that subscription service usage positively impacted the length of the subscription relationship and that customers who are billed monthly for annual subscriptions maintain their subscriptions longer than do customers billed quarterly or annually (Dover & Murthi, 2006).

Subscriptions with minimum contract durations help firms retain customers; however, incentives are needed to convince customers to commit to such contracts (Becker et al., 2015). Numerous studies have investigated management best practices to increase retention and reduce churn (attrition; Coussement & Van den Poel, 2008; Fox, 2004; Keaveney, 1995; Lam & Harrison-Walker, 2003; Pauwels & Weiss, 2008). Coussement and Van den Poel (2008) showed that the most important drivers of churn are the number of complaints, time since the last complaint, motivation for purchasing the subscription, conversion methods, time since the last conversion, number of customer responses to direct marketing actions, number of service suspensions, and average suspension time, elapsed time since the last step in the renewal procedure, and number of times the churner did not renew a subscription.

Offering customers incentives to switch suppliers is the natural mode of competition in subscription markets (Taylor, 2003). However, as we showed in the section on pricing, intensive competition of three or more providers of a subscription service leads to annihilation of the profit margin for all providers. Incentives for customers to commit to a minimum contract duration (subscription) are beneficial for the service provider if they successfully address long-term-oriented customers. Short-term-oriented customers usually cancel subscriptions after consuming incentives and once the minimum contract duration has passed (Becker et al., 2015).

Customers engage in the decision to renew, terminate, or modify a subscription arrangement over a short window of time around renewal points (Marinova & Singh, 2014). Before an existing service membership expires, service providers usually initiate promotional reminders to encourage consumers to renew or modify their service membership. Renewal

reminders prompt consumers to assess and evaluate their relationship with the service provider as they are pressed for a decision at a discrete point in time (Marinova & Singh, 2014).

Frequent text-based contacts without voice interactions hinder the consumer journey and work against relationship building. Appropriate timing in contact propels the customer journey. For a subscription business, it is important that customers perceive messages received from the service as coming from mindful individuals and are not mindless automation (George & Wakefield, 2018). The subscriber's regularity of reading the news about subscription service, use of ad blockers, and subscribing to service-related newsletters results in fewer subscription cancellations (S. J. Kim et al., 2021).

For service providers that regulate subscription-based business models with digital paywalls, which provide some amount of free content to nonsubscribers each month (freemium business model), it is essential to determine the optimal quantity (of free content) and exclusivity (which content is made freely accessible; Aral & Dhillon, 2021).

**Customer success management (CSM)** is defined as a “regular proactive action taken by the seller to (a) educate, prepare, and engage customers for value co-creation; (b) demonstrate the value delivered by the solution; and (c) provide a channel for advocacy on behalf of customers within the service-providing firm” (Hochstein et al., 2021, p. 1). CSM has become increasingly important in B2B online subscription services.

Hochstein et al. (2021) proposed that CSM focuses complement the firm's existing value creation efforts. In the customer acquisition phase, customer satisfaction managers participate mostly in the late negotiation phase to strengthen the key value proposition of the service. During the retention phase, the customer satisfaction manager nurtures a consultative relationship and acts as subject matter expert, customer advocate, and trusted advisor by focusing on mutual value outcomes. In the expansion phase, the customer satisfaction manager is involved in transactional relationships, similar to the acquisition phase, but in the early stage here, they do so by providing upsell leads and assessing customer fit and value expectations (Hochstein et al., 2021).

## **1.5 Customer perspective of online subscription businesses**

The key value propositions important to customers of online subscription businesses are convenience, ease of use, curation, access, and entertainment (Bray et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017; C. L. Wang et al., 2005). Consumers find subscription arrangements convenient when they assess they will get a product or regular access to a service for a good price. According to Rosenbaum (2011), the success of a subscription-based model is critically dependent on curation in the media sector and other content-related industry, as well as for subscription boxes.

Curation means that customers receive products or services selected by an expert that are fitted to their tastes and expectations (Mimoun et al., 2015). Tao and Xu (2018) reported that in fashion subscription retailing, consumers cite convenience, personalization, excitement, opportunities to try new styles, and the opportunity to better manage their apparel budget as the benefits they receive from a subscription.

Bray et al. (2021) explored motives for and obstacles to subscribing among a representative panel of UK consumers. The subscription services in the study were segmented into five clusters: home entertainment, personal care, household, hobbies, and luxury. In the clusters that dominate subscription boxes, media are represented in the home entertainment cluster only. Research has shown that younger consumers, those with higher incomes, and customers who are employed full-time are more likely to subscribe, and neither the presence or absence of children in the household nor household composition has a significant impact on the likelihood of subscribing.

The motives and barriers by type of subscription service, as found by Bray et al. (2021), are provided in Table 5, showing the percentage of existing subscribers who identified a particular motive or barrier as relevant to their subscription engagement. To make the classification of motives in Table 5 comparable to the proposal of Bischof et al. (2020), we can aggregate motives, convenience, and ease of use in a single motive, “convenience,” and the motives of variety/choice and discovery of new products in a single “curation” motive. It is important to be aware that all clusters in the Bray et al. (2021) example require at least some level of curation so the results are applicable for the online subscription services in the upper half of Figure 1.

*Table 5: Relevant motives and barriers by type of subscription service (percentage share of existing subscribers)*

		<b>Subscription Service</b>				
		Home entertainment	Personal care	Household/ housekeeping	Hobbies	Luxury
<b>Motives</b>	Convenience	16%	14%	19%	22%	20%
	Ease of use	19%	14%	21%	20%	19%
	Value for money	12%	17%	18%	13%	17%
	Variety & choice	14%	8%	5%	7%	10%
	Discover new products	12%	17%	13%	17%	12%
<b>Obstacles</b>	Poor value for money	24%	23%	19%	22%	28%
	Commitment	17%	16%	10%	11%	17%
	Quality concerns	12%	9%	8%	11%	8%
	End up with too much	7%	4%	4%	4%	8%

*Source: Bray et al. (2021)*

Some consumers remain subscribers even when they no longer use the service. Savary and Dhar (2020) showed that consumers who have low self-concept clarity and are motivated to maintain a stable self-concept are more likely to keep unused subscriptions than those who are more certain about their self-concept. Establishing a new subscription relationship, as

with canceling useless subscriptions, signals an identity change that threatens the stability of the self. Consumers with low self-concept clarity are also less likely to subscribe to a new service than those with more certain self-concepts. This is applicable only with subscription choices where identity is relevant (Savary & Dhar, 2020).

We consider the personalization and customization of an online subscription service to be a special case of curation. Curation is a crucial value proposition in the content and media industry and for subscription box businesses. These are also subscription businesses where hedonic motivation (customers seeking entertainment) is important for establishing a subscription relationship. In the subscription box business, the hedonic motivation is dominant in the surprise subscription boxes segment (Mimoun et al., 2015; Rudolph et al., 2017). Although the literature does not emphasize access to service as an important motivation for customers to subscribe, it is critical in cases where the vendor, due to its dominant position in the market, offers the particular service only within a subscription arrangement (e.g., Microsoft Office 365 and Adobe software).

According to the literature review, the main customer-centered concepts that should be addressed with a marketing strategy are value proposition and customer WTP for a subscription arrangement. The behavior of subscription customers is most often modeled within the relationship management framework.

### 1.5.1 Willingness to pay

Subscribers often prefer fixed-fee (flat-fee) pricing over pay-per-use due to overestimation of use and avoidance of worry about occasional excessively large bills (Fishburn & Odlyzko, 1999). WTP for a subscription to a website is based solely on the expected benefits offered by that site (Lopes & Galletta, 2014). For social networking sites, H.-P. Lu and Hsiao (2010) showed that the major motivations to pay subscription fees for digital products or services are user-perceived value and positive attitude. For media and content businesses, quality content and price are the key antecedents of perceived value (Hsiao & Chen, 2017). Punj (2013) showed that females and younger customers are willing to pay more for online content than males and older customers, and men are willing to pay more than women. Customer willingness to accept higher rates is also correlated with higher income and more education (Punj, 2013).

Different customers respond differently to the way the subscription price, benefits, and efforts are temporarily framed. Subscriptions can cost 10 EUR per month or 120 EUR per year. Weight loss advertisements can promise a loss of 1 kg per week or 4 kg per month. Physical exercise can be recommended for 20 minutes per day or 150 minutes per week. The effectiveness of temporal framing depends on consumers' salient regulatory goals. Promotion-focused consumers (i.e., ideal self—having a strong sense of their ideals and aspirations) are more likely to perceive costs or benefits as higher when they are framed in

aggregate, while prevention-focused consumers (i.e., ought self—placing greater emphasis on duties and obligations) value periodic framing more (Basu & Ng, 2021).

Consumer WTP increases as they are more engaged with a service provider's website, and the integration of social media with consumption helps increase WTP (Oestreicher-Singer & Zalmanson, 2012). Volume discounts and the convenience of receiving the product at the home or office also have important positive effects on WTP (Saavedra & González, 2015). G. Li et al. (2014) showed that users of social networks are willing to pay for VIP subscriptions if they face larger switching costs by moving to a competitive network and that preferences for information value-added privilege does not considerable affect their WTP.

Vendors often adjust their offerings according to the WTP of different customer segments by offering upgrades to VIP or premium subscription arrangements or downgrades to basic or introductory packages. The more downgrading options offered to the subscriber, the less likely the subscriber will terminate the subscription arrangement (Marinova & Singh, 2014).

The WTP is also influenced by the reference price (Kalyanaram & Winer, 1995), which is a benchmark against which the price of a subscription is compared. Subscribers perceive a psychological gain when the subscription price is below the reference price, and they experience a psychological loss when the subscription price is above the reference price. The service provider will overestimate the profit if he overlooks the negative effect of reference price on WTP (Xu & Duan, 2018).

Content online subscription providers tend to distinguish their customers according to their WTP by a paywall that separates those with high WTP, who are induced to subscribe, from those with low WTP, to be monetized through online advertising. In the case of the *New York Times*, a paywall introduction created increases in subscription revenue that offset the loss of advertising revenue (Aral & Dhillon, 2021).

Determining the optimal level of advertising for a hybrid (subscription and advertising) pricing model is a key challenge for online content subscriptions. Xu and Duan (2018) showed that when the consumer's sensitivity to advertising is low, the service provider should adopt a subscription model only rather than a hybrid business model. The more important experience is to consumers, the more the service provider should reduce advertising space (Xu & Duan, 2018). Conversely, Huotari and Ritala (2021) showed that where content novelty decreases with consumption, moving from a subscription-based or hybrid business model to an advertising model only may be viable.

In the online media subscription industry, WTP is closely related to the customer's engagement with the media. Zhou et al. (2021) determined that engagement constructed through the engagement experience dimensions of connectivity, utility, locality, and sociability have a positive impact on subscription WTP, while the regularity dimension of engagement mediates a positive impact on WTP.

### 1.5.2 Relationship marketing

Since Berry (1983) defined relationship marketing as “attracting, maintaining and in multi-service organizations enhancing customer relationships” (Berry, 1983, 2002, p. 61) up to 1999, Harker (1999) found 26 definitions of relationship marketing. He presented the wording of these definitions within seven conceptual categories (Table 6): birth, developing, maintenance, temporal, interaction, outputs, and emotional content (Harker, 1999).

*Table 6: Words used by authors of relationship-marketing definitions (1983–1999)*

<b>Conceptual category</b>	<b>Words used by authors of definitions</b>
Birth	<i>creating, attracting, establishing, getting</i>
Developing	<i>developing, enhancing, nurturing, building</i>
Maintenance	<i>sustaining, maintaining, retaining, keeping, supporting, nurturing</i>
Temporal	<i>continuous, long-term, lasting, ongoing, enduring</i>
Interaction	<i>exchange, cooperative, mutually, interactive, network interaction</i>
Outputs	<i>rewarding, profit, liquidation, dissolution, productivity, effectiveness</i>
Emotional content	<i>commitment, trust, promises, loyalty, bonds, obligation, respect</i>

*Source: Adapted from Harker (1999)*

Palmatier (2008, p. 5) summarized the definition of relationship marketing: “Relationship marketing is the process of identifying, developing, maintaining and terminating relational exchanges with the purpose of enhancing performance”. According to the Association of National Advertisers (ANA), “Relationship-marketing is a strategy of CRM that emphasizes customer retention, satisfaction, and lifetime customer value. . . . it leverages database marketing, Big Data, behavioral advertising, and analytics to target consumers precisely and create loyalty programs” (ANA, 2021). Subscription implies a long-term relationship between the customer and the vendor; hence, customer loyalty is of the utmost concern to subscription providers and developing an effective relationship-marketing strategy and program is one of key challenges for vendors. Relationship marketing is effective “when relationships are critical to customers (e.g., service offerings, channel exchanges, business markets)” and when individuals are involved in relationships (Palmatier et al., 2006, p. 136). Even in the B2B subscription setting, the end user of a service is an individual. These deliberations lead us to the conclusion that relationship marketing is an appropriate theoretical framework for studying online subscription services.

The focal constructs in relationship-marketing effectiveness models that have described most subscription businesses are commitment and trust. Marinova and Singh (2014) showed that a consumer’s decision to modify (upgrade or downgrade) a service subscription (membership) depended mostly on their level of trust in the service provider. Trust affects upgrading positively and downgrading negatively. For low-relational customers, the key mediating construct between attitudes and intentions is overall satisfaction; for high-relational customers, the mediators are trust and commitment (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999).

In the fashion and beauty subscription boxes segment, the most likely subscribers are women with a high level of trust in the vendor and high levels of fashion consciousness (Woo & Ramkumar, 2018). In mobile communication services, service value and corporate image have the strongest influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty, while switching costs are not important (Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2015). For telematics service subscriptions, the renewal decision is predicted by the length of the service relationship and the variety of services used; usage frequency and perceived ease of use are not significant renewal drivers (Wangenheim et al., 2017).

For subscription categories with substantial hedonic orientation, feelings of serendipity positively influence satisfaction and enjoyment. Perceptions of meaningfulness in the experience enhance the likelihood of the consumer recommending the service provider and the likelihood of purchasing additional services. An interesting finding was that a customer's enjoyment when positively surprised could be greater than the same service provided as a result of consumer choice. And when consumers perceive that they have enough knowledge to make their own choices, the positive effect of serendipity cannot be achieved (A. Kim et al., 2021).

### 1.5.3 Customer commoditization perception of a subscription service

According to Kasper-Brauer and Enke (2016), “commodities are goods and services that are perceived as substitutable by the vast majority of buyers despite their more or less existing, objectively differentiating features” (pp. 126–127) and “commoditization is a process by which a good or service achieves the status of a commodity and is perceived as substitutable by the vast majority of buyers despite more or less existing, objectively differentiating features” (pp. 126–127). In conceptualizing commoditization, Reimann et al. (2010) added to the perception of homogeneity (substitutability) of the goods/services also dimensions of customers' price sensitivity, switching costs for changing a supplier, and (in)stability of the competitive structure in the industry. They defined, “Industry commoditization describes an increase in similarity between the offerings of competitors in an industry, an increase in customers' price sensitivity, a decrease in customers' cost of switching from one to another supplier in an industry, and an increase in the stability of the competitive structure” (Reimann et al., 2010, p. 189).

Widespread importance of internet use is contributing to the growth of online services, with firms in online services facing intense competition. Online customers are able to independently access information about online services and compare the qualities of the offer. As a marketing communication medium, the internet “kills distance, homogenizes time, and makes location irrelevant” (Pitt et al., 1999) in information searches and in the delivery process. More and more, comparable services lead to service commoditization (Beldona et al., 2015; Reimann et al., 2010). The impact of commoditization creates parity perceptions and divided loyalties among brands and suppliers (Dick & Basu, 1994).

Understanding what impacts customer's perceptions of commoditization is important to forecast customers' future behavior and enable inclusion of commoditization in marketing models. Commoditization of service industries is caused by two phenomena: First, customers are more knowledgeable about the value proposition of services and about the availability of substitutes; and second, through increasing transparency and information exchange, competitive markets allow firms to imitate and improve competitors' services faster and better (Reimann et al., 2010).

Reimann et al. (2010) developed a second-order formative construct of commoditization based on industry managers' perceptions. However, to study the impact of commoditization on customers' attitudes and behaviors, customers' perceptions of commoditization should be considered. Commoditization of a certain product or service implies lower margins (Greenstein, 2004), and management consultants call it a "commodity trap" for vendors (d'Aveni, 2010, p. 7). Therefore, for marketing professionals, especially in industries that are still moderately to minimally commoditized, it is an important challenge to offset negative pressures of commoditization and build on the existing customer dependence within vendor–customer relationships.

## **1.6 Discussion of the literature review, and key marketing concepts**

Based on the literature review, in the first chapter, we have defined online subscription services, outlined key marketing concepts relevant for online subscription services, and evaluated the theoretical backgrounds used in studying online subscriptions in the marketing literature. We conducted an extensive systematic literature review in the WoS and Science Direct databases using the search term "subscription." We identified and evaluated 117 relevant journal publications and 6 relevant business book publications from 1998 to mid-2021 and investigated the marketing-related specifics of online subscription services. Then, we sought answers to questions about the main challenges of firms offering online subscription services and about setting-specific customer behaviors.

The common characteristics of online subscription services are: (i) a long-term contractual setting, (ii) continuous use or consumption of the service, (iii) a fixed price for a preselected combination of service units or product assortments, (iv) negligible marginal costs, and (v) a positive network effect among customers or users. Negligible marginal costs (Bala, 2012) and a positive network effect (Etzion & Pang, 2014) among customers delineate online subscription services (media, SaaS, telecommunications, memberships, IoT, and subscription boxes) from other recurring revenue-based businesses. Negligible marginal costs enable the vendor to engage in free trials and/or freemium marketing tactics, while a positive network effect makes social media and other community-building activities particularly effective marketing channels.

The key finding of the literature review is that the presence of negligible marginal costs and a positive network effect should be added as criteria for classifying an industry as an online

subscription service. A positive network effect is a common feature of most online services and is present when the value of the product or service increases with the number of users. In some industries with recurring revenues, such as transportation or professional services with flat fees, the number of users does not increase or even decreases the value of the service to customers, so most of our findings and managerial implications related to customers behavior and marketing tactics are not generalizable to these services. Services with significant marginal costs are not suitable for implementing freemium marketing tactics. Therefore, we should emphasize negligible marginal costs as an essential characteristic of online subscription services

Presenting the main online subscription industries, positioning them in terms of importance of curation and marginal costs in service provision, and outlining the key marketing concepts in one study is a source for marketing practitioners who are exploring possibilities for introducing the subscription business model or developing a marketing strategy for an existing online subscription business. Based on the literature review, we also suggest three main components of a strategic marketing framework.

The key subscription industries are telecommunications, media or content, SaaS, subscription boxes, membership, and IoT. Key marketing-related concepts relevant to online subscription businesses are pricing, WTP, churn, retention, renewal, switching costs, customer acquisition, purchase intention (intention to subscribe), and freemium and free trial marketing tactics. A comprehensive strategic framework for marketing online subscription services should focus on (i) the subscription service value proposition; ii) an acquisition, retention, and win-back strategy; and (iii) a strategy for driving commitment and trust. Each component is elaborated in the following.

Recurring revenue is the main motivation for firms to engage in subscription relationships; pricing and customer retention are the main marketing-related challenges. Customers' motivations for engaging in subscriptions are convenience, curation, access, and entertainment. According to the literature review, the appropriate theoretical framework for modeling subscriber behavior is the relationship-marketing effectiveness model, with trust, commitment, and satisfaction as central constructs.

A business has more potential to become a successful subscription business if it can credibly propose to its customers one or more of the following values: convenience, curation, and entertainment (Chen et al., 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017; C. L. Wang et al., 2005). The richer a service is in content and variety (media and subscription boxes), the more important curation becomes. Knowledge of past customer behavior and application of artificial intelligence technologies enable a vendor to offer a highly personalized subscription service. Overall convenience depends mostly on search convenience and transaction and decision convenience; high-income customers and time-pressed customers value service convenience most (Benoit et al., 2017).

Customers find subscription arrangements convenient if there is a high possibility that an alternative pay-per-use arrangement may lead to occasional excessively large bills (Fishburn & Odlyzko, 1999). Monopolists can limit service access to a subscription arrangement only. However, if the service provider is not trustworthy in terms of service quality, reliability, and technological capability, potential subscribers will not commit to a subscription (Bolton, 1998; Hamari et al., 2017; C. L. Wang et al., 2005).

Pricing is a cornerstone of an acquisition and retention strategy. Pricing should meet customers' WTP by segmenting the offering in different subscription packages according to customers' needs and expectations. WTP depends on the perceived value of the service and customers' positive attitude toward the service and the vendor (Hsiao & Chen, 2017).

Low marginal costs of online subscriptions enable vendors to initially lure customers with a very low price. Once customer commitment and trust are established, and when customers get used to the service, the price can be increased. For monopolists in a growing market, the best pricing strategy is to avoid any form of price discrimination. Facing hesitant customers, the second best solution is to adopt intertemporal price discrimination to lure these subscribers with lower prices (Penmetsa et al., 2015).

Free trial and freemium marketing tactics are used by most subscription businesses to nurture potential subscribers, and the most effective strategy for increasing pricing is upselling to a premium offering (Marinova & Singh, 2014).

We showed that relationship-marketing effectiveness models are useful for describing the behaviors of subscribers. Trust, commitment, and satisfaction are focal constructs for almost all subscription businesses. And loyalty, purchase intention, and WOM or recommendations are outcomes from a relationship-marketing model.

Regarding antecedents, studies offer different drivers for trustworthy behavior and commitment, depending on the type of subscription business. For memberships, only core service performance positively impacts commitment (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999). In mobile telephony, competence, credibility, service value, and corporate image have a positive impact on trust, satisfaction, and loyalty (Aydin & Özer, 2005; Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2015; de Reuver et al., 2015; Sichtmann, 2007). Switching costs appear as an antecedent of loyal behavior (Qayyum et al., 2013) or as a moderator between satisfaction and retention or loyalty (M.-K. Kim et al., 2019). Bolton (1998) showed that the length of previous experience moderates the impact of satisfaction on relationship duration, and perceived losses and gains based on experienced service transactions and failures affect relationship duration.

For many subscription businesses, there are no studies on factors that drive commitment and trustworthy behavior. Due to the high variety of value propositions among different types of subscriptions, it is not feasible to develop a relationship-marketing effectiveness model that would apply across a multitude of subscription business settings. Developing relationship-

marketing effectiveness models for fast-growing subscription businesses, such as subscription boxes, the IoT, professional content (media), and SaaS, may be of great interest to marketing practitioners.

Limitations of the methodology employed in conducting the research for this chapter should be mentioned. The review was limited by the search terms used and the data sources included. Nonetheless, they enabled insight into the most visible peer-evaluated publications on the topic of online subscription services and related marketing activities.

## **2 MODELING THE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS OF SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES CUSTOMERS<sup>1</sup>**

### **2.1 Rationale behind the selection of constructs**

The conceptualization of the model is based on the relationship-marketing literature, particularly factors that influence the effectiveness of relationship marketing. Relationship marketing's effectiveness, in general, is based on the evolutionary psychology of gratitude and unfairness (Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019). In a relationship-marketing effectiveness context, **gratitude** is defined as “the emotional appreciation for benefits received, accompanied by a desire to reciprocate” (Palmatier et al., 2009, p. 1). Gratitude rewards the adherence to group norms and perceived unfairness punishes deviance from such norms. Feelings of gratitude and pleasure from reciprocating and guilt due to deviating from norms are well-developed genetic systems that stimulate cooperative behavior (Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019, pp. 55–56).

**Reciprocity norms** of a society develop over time and present psychological pressure on people to reciprocate after receiving a benefit (for instance, in the form of a relationship-marketing investment), so that the act of reciprocating generates pleasure, and the failure to reciprocate leads to a feeling of guilt (Palmatier et al., 2009).

Relationship marketing is based on three major types of relationships (Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019):

1. Interpersonal (customer–salesperson)
2. Interfirm (customer networks–salesperson, customer–vendor firm, B2B)
3. Online (customer or customer firm–technology interface)

The key drivers of **interpersonal relationship** effectiveness are explained by evolutionary psychology (the role of customer gratitude and reciprocity norms) and social exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Social exchange theory explains how relationships arise from a subjective cost–benefit analysis when participants maximize benefits and minimize

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter is partially based on Kovač and Žabkar (2020).

costs. Customers maintain relationships in which the net benefit exceeds the net benefits of comparable relationships. The phenomena by which a customer distinguishes a social relationship from a transactional interaction are trust and commitment (Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019, p. 61; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959).

For an **interfirm relationship**, the relationship quality is defined by interpersonal relationship qualities (commitment, trust, gratitude, reciprocity norms) and by the relationship breadth and composition. Relationship breadth represents the number of relational bonds between the partners, and relationship composition relates to the decision-making capability of relational contacts based on the diversity and authority of the contacts (Palmatier, 2008, p. 21; Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019, p. 66).

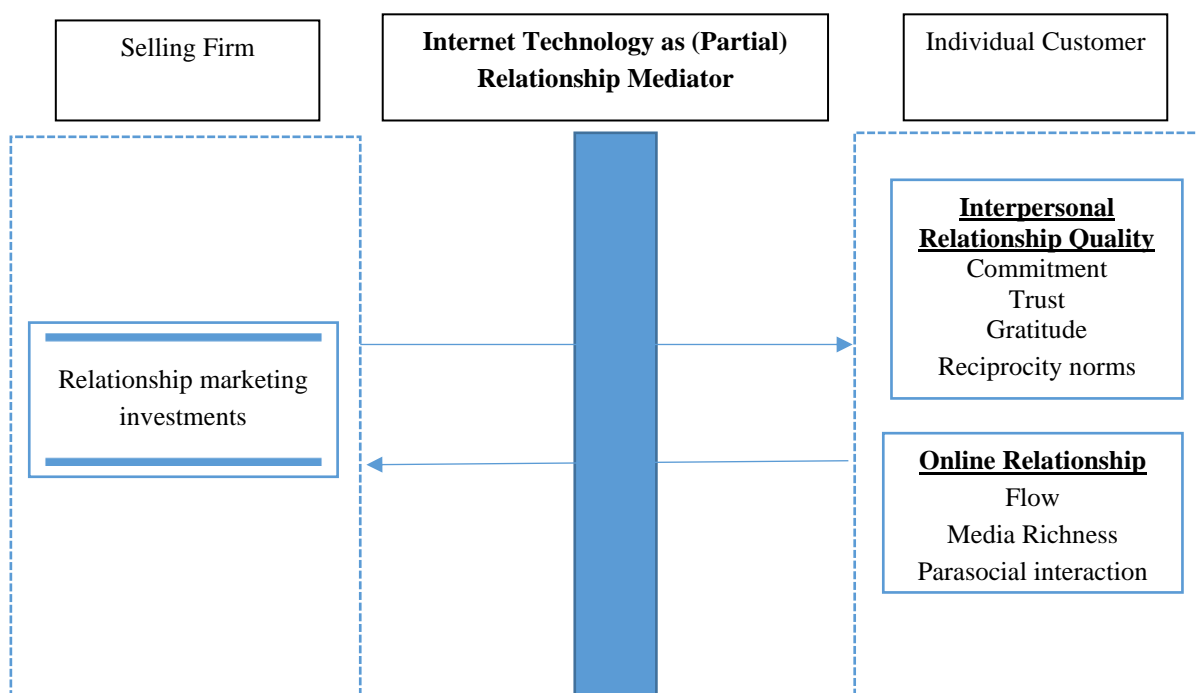
Individual customer relationship drivers in **online relationships** are beside interpersonal relationship quality drivers and online relationship drivers: flow, media richness, and parasocial interaction. Researchers use flow theory to explain customer online usage and behavior (Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019, p. 69). Flow is a psychological state in which people exhibit a high level of involvement and immersion in an activity, accompanied by feelings of fun and enjoyment. In this case, customers are aware of their engagement in an experience but feel they are expending little subjective effort in sustaining this engagement (Mihaly, 1997; Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019, p. 69).

Media richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986) explains the effectiveness of different communication channels. Media richness is defined as the ability “to change understanding within a time interval.” Richness is the amount of information that a particular medium allows to be transmitted in a given time interval; some media are more effective than others in resolving ambiguities and uncertainties, and richer media communication enhances relationship quality (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Horton and Wohl (1956) explored interactions between media users and media figures, and outlined the existence of a parasocial relationship, where the user acts as if they are involved in a typical social relationship. Later, parasocial relationships were extended to user behaviors in internet-mediated channels (Ballantine & Martin, 2005; Labrecque, 2014; Yuan & Lou, 2020) .

For an online subscription setting, we will focus on online relationships (Figure 4). In a number of industries, online relationships evolved from interpersonal and interfirm relationships after the traditional transaction-based business model was upgraded to an online subscription business model, and online relationships are evolving to mimic interpersonal relationships as much as possible. Nevertheless, online relationships are at the core of online subscriptions. The subscription box business model, for instance, where customers subscribe to shipments of physical goods, is based exclusively on the online relationship.

Figure 4: Theoretical model of online relationships



Source: Palmatier & Steinhoff (2019)

Palmatier et al. (2006) systematized the antecedents in relationship-marketing models: (i) Customer-focused factors (relationship benefits, dependence on vendor), (ii) Seller-focused factors (relationship investment, seller expertise) and (iii) Dyadic antecedents (communication similarity, relationship duration, interaction frequency, conflict).

Since the 1990s, online relationship marketing has evolved from e-commerce (Web 1.0) to encompass social media and online communities (social web), mobile apps and Big Data (semantic web), and artificial intelligence and augmented reality (symbiotic web) strategies (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Steinhoff et al., 2019). In our research, we limited these to email marketing and social media marketing, as the two most widely used marketing strategies among online subscription marketing practitioners (Ascend2, 2019a). To reflect a social media relationship-marketing investment, we will conceptualize **engagement in a service provider's social media activities**, and to reflect email communication relationship-marketing investment, we will conceptualize **exposure to service provider email communication**.

The engagement with the social media of a service and the exposure to a service email communication are both interactive relationships that last several months or years and are related to the service provider's investment in communication (relationship) as well as to customer relationship benefits. Hence, SE and ECE contain all three factors that influence the effectiveness of relationship marketing.

As cognitive relational mechanisms (mediators), we will conceptualize brand credibility, CBR of a service firm, and trust in an online subscription service.

Interactivity of the online service web pages and the addition of social networking features to the service contributes to **service credibility** (Tajudeen et al., 2018). Credibility of a brand is defined as the perceived believability of whether a brand has the ability and willingness to continuously deliver what has been promised (Erdem & Swait, 2004). Credibility of a brand has a positive impact on purchasing intentions (Hyun Baek & Whitehill King, 2011) and also on trust and the trustworthy behavior of a customer (Sichtmann & Arnott, 2007). De Vries (2019) found that low perceived credibility of a social media account dampens social media marketing effectiveness. All these findings encouraged us to include credibility in our relationship management effectiveness model, being aware that it will be a challenge to delineate the impact of credibility from the impact of trust within the model.

In the context of relationship marketing, the construct reflects the customer's perception of the relationship benefits and expertise of the vendor. It depends on the previous communication and interaction between a service provider and a customer. When a company has a good reputation, trust is established among customers (Groenland, 2002). This reasoning led us to use the well-developed construct of the **customer-based reputation (CBR) of a service firm** to reflect the online subscription vendor's reputation among customers.

**Trust**, along with commitment, is considered a fundamental building block of a relationship effectiveness model (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999). The selection of the focal constructs (trust and reputation) and outcomes (loyalty) for our research was influenced by the characteristics exhibited by customers of online services using freemium business models (V. Kumar, 2014), in which limited services are available free of charge. Customers using limited free services do not relate themselves to mediators in the relationship management effectiveness literature (commitment, relationship satisfaction, and relationship quality; Palmatier et al., 2006) because they do not see themselves as a "proper" customers. From their perspective, they are only free users of the service and have a weak noncommercial relationship with the service provider. This does not mean that they are not concerned about the service provider's reputation. Particularly in B2B subscriptions, the reputation of a service provider is a precondition for using even the free part of the service. Dijkmans et al. (2015) showed that customers' level of engagement in a company's social media activities has a positive impact on vendor reputation. We expected the same for customers' exposure to service provider email communication.

The study is focused on **loyalty** as an outcome. Customer loyalty is the most commonly used outcome of relationship management models (Watson et al., 2015), and it is also the most appropriate for our setting, in which loyal subscribers are the firm's most important asset (McCarthy et al., 2018). We address attitudinal and behavioral loyalty separately because

self-reported behavioral loyalty can be verified with the loyal behavior observed in a service provider’s CRM system.

Online customers are able to independently access information about online services and compare the qualities of an offer. As a “marketing communication medium,” the Internet “kills distance, homogenizes time, and makes location irrelevant” in (Pitt et al., 1999). More and more comparable services lead to service commoditization (Beldona et al., 2015; Reimann et al., 2010). Understanding what impacts **customer’s perceptions of commoditization** is important to forecast customers’ future behavior and to enable inclusion of commoditization in marketing models. One of the objectives of this study was to explore how commoditization perception moderates the relationship between antecedents and trust.

## 2.2 Engagement with digital marketing channels

Digital marketing is defined as “the use of digital or social channels to promote a brand or reach consumers. This kind of marketing can be executed on the internet, social media, search engines, mobile devices and other channels” (American Marketing Association [AMA], 2021). Digital marketing channels refer to “internet systems that have the ability to simultaneously create, promote, and deliver value from producers to consumers through digital networks” (Key, 2017, p. 27). In most online subscription services, a complete value chain transaction occurs online. In the case of a subscription to physical products (e.g., subscription boxes) and memberships, the last part of the value chain is based on physical interactions between customer and vendor; however, research, customization, purchase, review, and post-purchase communications are all completed in digital environments through web pages or mobile applications. The focus of our research was on the application of digital marketing channels to research, communication, and promotion. Having this in mind, we classified the channels based on the level at which the vendor controls communications (high vendor control vs. low vendor control) and whether communication is one-way or two-way (Table 7; Taiminen & Karjaluo, 2015).

*Table 7: Classification of digital marketing channels*

	High vendor control	Low vendor control
One-way	Website	
	Email communication	Search engine optimization (SEO)
	Online directories	Search engine advertising (SEA)
	Banner advertising	
Two-way	Vendor-generated blogs	Social media
	Vendor-owned communities	

*Source: Adapted from Taiminen & Karjaluo (2015)*

Digital content marketing is gaining particular importance as a relationship-marketing tool (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019; Holliman & Rowley, 2014), while email communication is considered to be the most important part of service provider content marketing endeavors.

Although it was predicted that email would be obsolete by 2020 (Brandon, 2015), the role of email in content marketing enhances the significance of email communication. Currently, there is no alternative technology on the horizon that could replace the main strengths of email communication: high possibility for customization and high return on investment (Santora, 2019). Social media are Web 2.0, internet-based applications that allow the creation, exchange, and collaboration of user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; A. J. Kim & Ko, 2012) and are communication systems that allow their social actors to communicate along dyadic ties (Peters et al., 2013). Email marketing and social media marketing were rated as the least difficult digital marketing tactics to implement, as measured by the necessary costs, efforts, and skills, which increases the relative importance of both communication channels (Ascend2, 2019b).

According to Vivek et al. (2012), customer engagement is an expanded domain of relationship marketing. To study customer behavior in a relationship-marketing framework with respect to digital marketing channels, we should therefore understand the customer engagement with the channels. The channels with which the customer engagement is possible are email communication, social media, blogs, websites, and the vendor's communities. In a survey on marketing resource effectiveness (Ascend2, 2019b), marketing influencers/practitioners rated social media marketing campaigns as the most effective digital marketing tactic, followed by content marketing campaigns, search engine optimization, and email marketing campaigns. Therefore, our research is limited to customer engagement with vendors' email communication and social media posts.

The marketing literature defines **customer engagement** and/or engagement behavior in a number of ways:

- “Behaviors that go beyond transactions, and may be specifically defined as a customer’s behavioral manifestations that have a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers” (van Doorn et al., 2010, p. 254).
- “A psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative customer experiences with a focal agent/object (e.g., a brand)” (Brodie et al., 2011, p. 260; Calder et al., 2016).
- “The intensity of an individual’s participation in and connection with an organization’s offerings and/or organizational activities, which either the customer or the organization initiate” (Vivek et al., 2012, p. 127).
- “Customers’ total set of behavioral activities toward a firm” (Gummerus et al., 2012, p. 857).
- “Different activities of the customer that affect a firm’s performance”(Pansari & Kumar, 2016, p. 295).

Customer engagement classification can also be based on who initiated the engagement (service provider or customer), on engagement initiated with offerings (product, service, brand, web pages, celebrities, etc.), and on activity-initiated engagement (programs, events, shopping, hobbies, etc.; Vivek et al., 2012). Our interest was focused on customer

experiences, interactions, and activities/participations related to the firm's digital marketing activities, specifically social media posts, and to the firm's email marketing activities. According to Vivek et al.'s (2012) classification, both engagements are initiated by a service provider and its offering.

Hollebeek et al. (2014) proposed that SE should be conceptualized through three dimensions: cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. According to Calder et al. (2016), engagement is manifested in five experiences (interaction, transportation, discovery, identity, and civic orientation), while Voorveld et al. (2018) included 11 dimensions of SE, of which negative emotion, practical use, and social interaction are relevant to our context.

Calder et al. (2016) advocated a flexible approach to measuring engagement that is based on context-specific experiences. For customers in a B2B setting (as opposed to a B2C setting), it is very difficult to exhibit and communicate emotions, and emotions seldom play an important role in customer actions (Pansari & Kumar, 2016). This also holds for the context of our study, which involves analyzing the behavior and attitudes of B2B customers of an online service (online legal information system). In such a setting, engagement depends more on the perceived usefulness and relevance of the media content (cognitive dimension) than on experience and emotions. Barger et al. (2016) proposed operationalizing engagement through the behavioral dimension (reacting, commenting, sharing, posting). Additionally, self-reported behavior (behavioral dimension) can be a reliable measure of engagement. With respect to email marketing, researchers report negative emotions in a B2B context, whereby the intrusiveness of email communication reduces favorable attitudes toward email advertising (Hsin Chang et al., 2013) and, consequently, engagement. Hence, in conceptualizing an email-communication-related construct, we added the perceived intrusiveness of email advertising as an additional negative emotional dimension to the engagement dimensions (cognitive and behavioral).

Social presence theory differentiates media according to the degree of media social presence, where social presence is "the degree of salience of the other person in the interaction and the consequent salience of interpersonal relationships" (Short et al., 1976). A high social presence is typical in face-to-face communication, whereas email communication has a low social presence (Gefen & Straub, 2004). According to Gefen and Straub (2004), the perception of the presence of others in an online environment is important because it implies direct or indirect human contact. In an online environment, social presence can be assessed using three dimensions: social presence as the medium's impersonality (i.e., how impersonal communication enabled by media is), SP as the perception of others, and social presence as interaction enabling (Caspi & Blau, 2008; B. Lu et al., 2016). Regarding the medium's impersonality, social media and email communication are equivalent. However, in terms of the perception of others and interaction enabling, brand/service social media has a greater social presence than email communication.

According to media richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986), communication media vary in their ability to enable users to communicate and change their understandings. Richness is the amount of information that a particular medium allows to be transmitted in a given time interval; some media are more effective than others in resolving ambiguities and uncertainties (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Mostly text-based digital media (e.g., email communication in our context) score the lowest in terms of media richness. Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), which, in addition to text-based communication, enable the sharing of pictures and videos, are considered media richer (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

In this paper, we will explain whether and in which circumstances social media as a communication channel outperforms email communication, as predicted by both theories (social presence and media richness).

### **2.3 Conceptualization of constructs and hypothesized model relations**

In this section we explain the conceptualization of each construct and outline the hypotheses that were used for models development (Figures 5 and 6).

#### **2.3.1 Social media engagement (SE)**

Social media are Web 2.0, internet-based applications that allow the creation, exchange, and collaboration of user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; A. J. Kim & Ko, 2012) and are communication systems that allow their social actors to communicate along dyadic ties (Peters et al., 2013). Social media appear in different online information-sharing formats and platforms, including social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn), creative work sharing sites (e.g., YouTube and Flickr), collaborative websites (e.g., Wikipedia), and microblogging sites (e.g., Twitter; Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

SE describes an active process of interaction between a brand or brand-generated message in social media and a customer (Dahl, 2015, p. 155). According to the management and marketing literature, the key determinants of popularity of a brand post are the number of likes, shares, comments, and followers (de Vries et al., 2012; Voorveld et al., 2018).

The engagement-related construct was adopted according to Brodie et al. (2013) and Hollebeek et al. (2014), who proposed cognitive, emotional/affective, and behavioral dimensions for customer engagement conceptualization.

Dessart (2017) categorized SE as brand-focused engagement or community-focused engagement. Examples of SE manifestations are presented in Table 8.

*Table 8: Social media engagement manifestations*

	<b>Brand focus</b>	<b>Community focus</b>
<b>Affective</b>	A customer feeling happy that a brand has replied to their question on social media	A customer enjoying interacting with other fans of a brand on social media
<b>Cognitive</b>	A customer who is so absorbed in the content posted by the brand on social media that they spend a lot of time browsing it	A customer paying a lot of attention to the comments and replies of other consumers about the brand on social media
<b>Behavioral</b>	A customer sharing their opinion about one of the brand's products on social media	A consumer seeking information about the brand and asking other members of the community for their help or advice on social media

*Source: Dessart (2017)*

Wirtz et al. (2013) outlined three broad types of brand–community engagement drivers:

- Brand identification and the brand's symbolic function to the individual
- Social benefits and social identity
- Functional drivers (functional benefits, uncertainty avoidance, and information quality; Hollebeek et al., 2017; Wirtz et al., 2013)

Most marketing practitioners use the term “social media engagement” to refer to interactive behaviors performed by customers with social media content, such as liking, commenting on, and sharing it (Ashley & Tuten, 2015).

In online subscription B2B settings, functional drivers are most relevant, so in Study 1, we conceptualized the following:

- As a cognitive dimension of SE, a customer preception of information quality of the brand's social media posting in line with the information quality measure proposed by Hsin Chang et al. (2013).
- As a behavioral dimension, concrete activities in relation to brand postings (following, sharing, commenting, recommending).

In Study 1, we conceptualized engagement only by cognitive and behavioral dimensions because we expected that the affective dimension is not relevant in a B2B setting. In Study 2, in conceptualizing SE, we strictly followed a well-established conceptualization of engagement as proposed by Hollebeek et al. (2014) with the cognitive processing, affective, and activation/behavioral dimensions, with an option to omit non-relevant affective dimensions in a later phase of modeling.

Vivek et al. (2012) proposed that customer engagement has a positive effect on trust and on relationship management model outcomes and that involvement and customer participation should be antecedents to customer engagement. Social media marketing activities have a positive impact on trust and purchasing intentions and facilitate the sharing of knowledge

and experience among customers (Hajli et al., 2017; H.-P. Lu & Hsiao, 2010). According to Jøsang et al. (2007), reputation is a collective measure of trustworthiness based on the referrals or ratings from members of a community. Dabholkar and Sheng (2012) have shown that greater customer participation in using recommendation agents leads to greater customer trust. Social media is an important communication channel for referrals and can be considered a recommendation agent, so we should expect to find a positive impact on trust. A number of studies have also shown that a firm can enhance its reputation using social media (Dijkmans et al., 2015; Sivertzen et al., 2013; Toplu et al., 2014) Therefore, our hypothesis is as follows:

*Hypothesis 1: A customer's SE has a positive impact on (a) the CBR of a service company and (b) the customer's trust in the service.*

According to media richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986), communication media vary in their ability to enable users to communicate and to change their understandings. Richness is the amount of information that a particular medium allows to be transmitted in a given time interval; some media are more effective than others in resolving ambiguities and uncertainties (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Mostly text-based digital media (e.g., email communication in our context) score the lowest in terms of media richness. Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), which, in addition to text-based communication, enable the sharing of pictures and videos, are considered media richer (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). According to both theories (social presence and media richness), social media outperform email as a communication channel. Therefore, richer and more socially present media would have a stronger influence on email media than the other way around. Additionally, high interactivity and membership in the social media community increase customer receptiveness to email communication. Consequently, the suggested hypothesis was the following:

*Hypothesis 2: Customer participation and engagement with social media would positively affect less media-rich ECE.*

### 2.3.2 Email communication exposure

Email communication is seen as a form of internet advertising (Breuer et al., 2011; Danaher & Dagger, 2013; Martin et al., 2003), taking various forms, such as newsletters (Müller et al., 2008) and promotional campaigns including several email messages with the same marketing objective (Cases et al., 2010). Email marketing can be used to empower consumers by making them active participants in the email communication process by making the emails relevant to the recipients (Hartemo, 2016).

Marketing practitioners measure the effectiveness of email marketing activities by examining email open rates and engagement with email content (X. Zhang et al., 2017). In the marketing literature, the term "email communication exposure" was first used by

Janakiraman et al. (2018) in reference to email communication with customers after a data breach announcement. They also measure exposure by counting only the opening of emails. However, customer behavior towards email communication is only one of the dimensions of ECE.

We conceptualized ECE by combining engagement dimensions as used in the conceptualizing of SE, and by adding the dimension of email advertising intrusiveness (Edwards et al., 2013; Hsin Chang et al., 2013; Morimoto & Chang, 2006). In Study 1, the engagement dimensions were cognitive (Hsin Chang et al., 2013) and behavioral (Ashley & Tuten, 2015), and in Study 2, engagement was conceptualized as proposed by Hollebeek et al. (2014) with cognitive processing, affection, and activation/behavioral dimensions, with an option to omit non-relevant affective dimensions in a latter phase of modeling.

Ha (1996, p. 77) defines intrusiveness as “the degree to which advertisements in a media vehicle interrupt the flow of an editorial unit.” Intrusiveness is important in forming customer sentiment towards advertising (Gaski & Etzel, 1986; Truong & Simmons, 2010). According to Gruner et al. (2019), communication intrusiveness is the degree to which communication interrupts a consumer’s task performance. They claim that online advertising is intrusive, and social media advertising is unintrusive (Gruner et al., 2019). We expect that engagement with email communication increases customer exposure to email communication while email intrusiveness decreases it (or an inverted measure of intrusiveness increases it).

Customer-perceived information quality of emails (i.e., the customer’s overall perception of the accuracy and completeness of information) positively affects customer trust and negatively affects customer uncertainty about a service provider’s trustworthiness (D. J. Kim et al., 2008); low intrusiveness of email communication also increases loyalty-enhancing relationships. Additionally, Merisavo and Raulas (2004) showed that email marketing has positive effects on brand loyalty. If a service provider’s email communication contains testimonials from other customers and credible information from third parties, email communication can be expected to have a positive impact on the CBR of the service provider. Regarding the effect of ECE on a service firm’s CBR, brand credibility, and trust, the hypothesis was the following:

*Hypothesis 3: ECE positively affects (a) the CBR of a service firm that performs the email communication, (b) the customer’s perceived credibility of the service brand, and (c) the customer’s trust in the service to which the email communication relates.*

### 2.3.3 Customer-based reputation of a service firm

Walsh and Beatty (2007, p. 129) defined the CBR of a service firm as “the customer’s overall evaluation of a service provider based on his or her reactions to the service provider’s goods, services, communication activities, interactions with the service provider and/or its

representatives or constituencies (such as employees, management, or other customers) and/or known corporate activities.” In the context of relationship management, the construct reflects the customer’s perception of the relationship benefits and expertise of the vendor. It depends on the previous communication and interaction between a service provider and a customer.

When a company has a good reputation, trust is established among customers (Groenland, 2002). The existence of a relationship between a service provider’s reputation and customer trust and/or loyalty is well established (Bartikowski & Walsh, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2013). Although the relationship between reputation and relationship management relational mediators is not always unidirectional (Walsh et al., 2009), for well-established online professional services, a certain level of service provider reputation is a prerequisite for customers to establish a relationship with the service provider, and a number of online services have been found to positively influence reputation on trust and trustworthy behavior (Nguyen et al., 2013; Shamma & Hassan, 2009; Yahia et al., 2018). Therefore, the following hypothesis was proposed:

*Hypothesis 4: The CBR of a service company positively affects (a) brand credibility and (b) customer trust.*

#### 2.3.4 Brand Credibility

Often, the corporate brand and the brand of the service are not identical. The customer’s attitude toward the brand may be different from his attitude toward the vendor. A brand’s credibility is more closely related to the qualities, strengths, and weaknesses of the service than to the overall reputation of the vendor. From a management perspective, it is interesting to compare the impact of a service brand and vendor reputation on customer trust. Brand credibility is defined as “the believability of the product information contained in a brand, which requires that consumers perceive that the brand has the ability (i.e., expertise) and willingness (i.e., trustworthiness) to continuously deliver what has been promised” (Erdem & Swait, 2004, p. 192).

Erdem and Swait (2004) argue in their signaling theory that brand credibility is a product positioning signal and the most important attribute of a brand. Brand credibility is an information signal that increases customer confidence in a brand service. A service provider’s trustworthiness and expertise as reflected in brand credibility lead to a strengthening of positive customer expectations about future service delivery. We hypothesized the following:

*Hypothesis 5: Brand credibility has a positive impact on trust.*

### 2.3.5 Trust and Loyalty

Already, three decades ago, marketing scholars emphasized the key role of trust in commercial exchange relationships and its potential to deliver a competitive advantage to a trusted company or a brand (Barney & Hansen, 1994; Berry, 1996). Berry (1995) even exposed trust as the single most powerful relationship-marketing tool available to a company.

R. M. Morgan and Hunt (1994, p. 23) defined trust in a relationship-marketing context “as existing when one party has confidence in the exchange partner’s reliability and integrity.” Trust is usually conceptualized by three dimensions: ability, honesty–integrity, and benevolence. These dimensions correspond to virtues from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*: intelligence (ability), good character (honesty–integrity), and good will (benevolence; Gefen & Straub, 2004). In our setting, we followed Gefen and Straub (2004) and we defined trust as the expectations held by the customer that the service provider is dependable and can be relied on to deliver on its promises.

In an online setting, trust is most often considered a mediator in research models, and loyalty is the most frequently cited outcome (Y. Kim & Peterson, 2017).

Loyalty is a complex phenomenon with different conceptualizations; however, the prevailing approach is to focus on two dimensions of customer loyalty: attitudes and behaviors (Watson et al., 2015). Oliver’s definition of loyalty (1999, p. 34) addresses both elements: “a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future” (i.e., attitudinal loyalty), “thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior” (i.e., behavioral loyalty).

Watson et al. (2015) have shown that attitudinal and behavioral loyalty differentially influence managerially relevant outcomes and that attitudinal loyalty has a positive effect on behavioral loyalty. We expect that loyal behavior depends strongly on customer loyalty attitudes also in online subscription-based services and therefore we operationalize loyalty as two separate constructs: attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty.

Attitudinal loyalty is defined as a degree of dispositional commitment in terms of some unique value associated with the brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). In our setting, this was a preference for the service brand over competitors, considering service brand as a first preference, enjoyment of doing business with the company/brand, and general positive attitude toward the brand.

Behavioral loyalty in our setting is defined as the willingness of a customer to purchase and repurchase (subscribe and/or extend subscription arrangement) service and to engage in giving positive WOM about the service.

Most researchers agree that the influence of trust on attitudinal loyalty is direct and strong (Hong & Cho, 2011). According to the theory of reasoned action, trust does not directly lead to positive behavioral intention but affects first the attitude, which then influences changes in intentions and behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Hong & Cho, 2011).

Meta-analysis of loyalty literature (Watson et al., 2015) shows that loyalty can be explained as a consequence of the following factors: commitment, trust, customer satisfaction, and loyalty incentives. Already R. M. Morgan and Hunt (1994) argued that trust is a mediator between loyalty and its antecedents. There are several studies of customer behavior in service settings that show positive impacts of higher levels of trust on the loyalty of the customers (Kantsperger & Kunz, 2010; Nguyen et al., 2013; Sichtmann & Arnott, 2007).

Bandyopadhyay and Martell (2007) and Jaiswal and Niraj (2011) demonstrated that behavioral loyalty is influenced by attitudinal loyalty, which was also confirmed by Watson et al. (2015). Therefore, we hypothesize:

*Hypotheses 6 and 8: Customer trust in an online subscription service has a positive effect on attitudinal customer loyalty toward the service, and attitudinal loyalty has a positive effect on behavioral loyalty.*

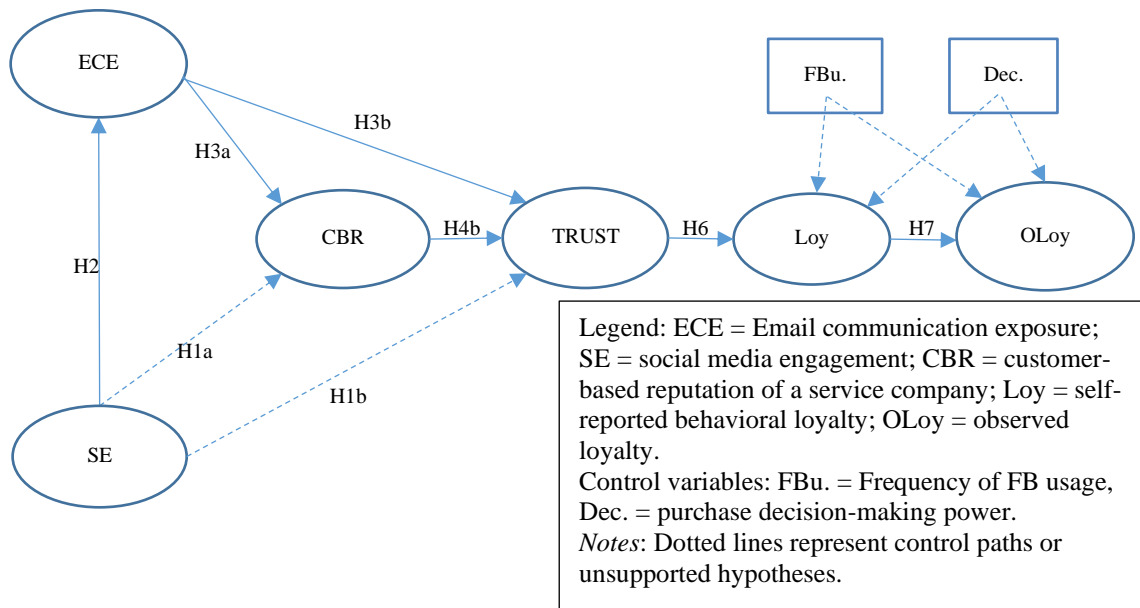
In Study 1, customers' self-reported behavioral loyalty was linked to actual observed loyalty through the service provider's IT system, in terms of customers' use of the service and status over the two-year period between the time of the survey and the completion of this research. The measure of observed loyalty was constructed as the natural logarithm of the number of documents + 1 from the online subscription service viewed by the customer in a given time. We expect self-reported loyalty to be correlated with observed loyalty. Since the self-reported construct also includes the item on customer intention "Loy2d - I am a committed subscriber to BRAND's service" and observed loyalty is measured over a longer period of time after the intention was recorded, we set:

*Hypothesis 7: Self-reported loyalty to the online service has a positive impact on observed loyal customer behavior.*

### 2.3.6 Models – Study 1 and Study 2

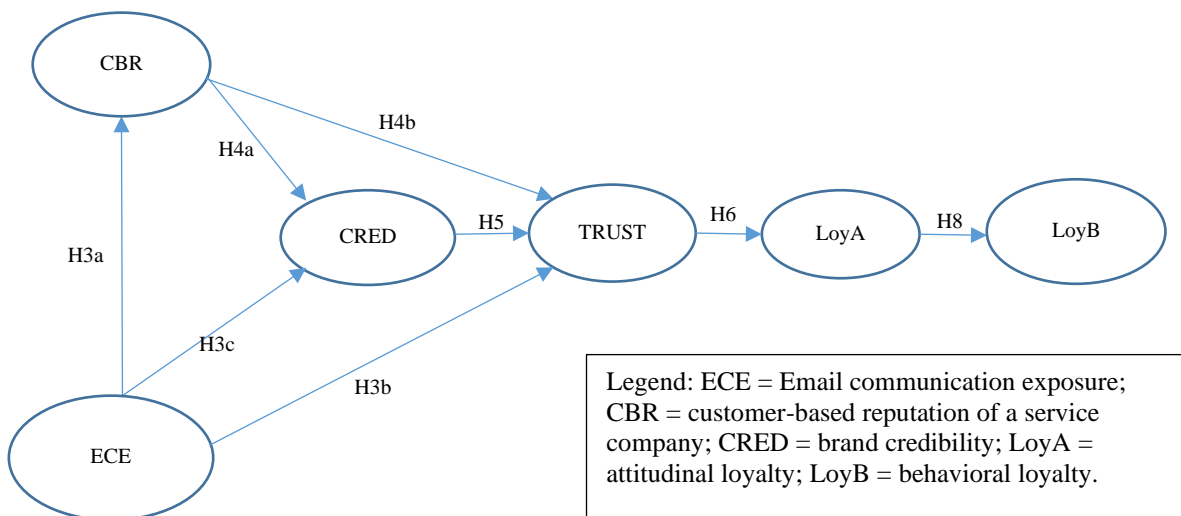
SE is relevant only to those customers of an online subscription service that have a social media account and that are acquainted with the social media postings of the vendor. Such customers, compared to customers that rely on email communication only are usually the minority, although sizable. We are testing two models. One for customers that are exposed to social media and email marketing—Study 1 (Figure 5)—and another for the customers that do not use social media and cannot be engaged with the service social media—Study 2 (Figure 6).

Figure 5: Study 1- Conceptual model



Source: Own work.

Figure 6: Study 2 – Conceptual model



Source: Own work.

The overview of constructs and hypothesized paths applied in both studies are outlined in Table 9.

Table 9: Overview of constructs and hypothesized paths applied in Study 1 and Study 2

Code	Hypothesized path	Study 1	Study 2
H1a	<i>Social media engagement → Reputation (CBR)</i>	+	
H1b	<i>Social media engagement → Trust</i>	+	
H2	<i>Social media engagement → Email communication exposure</i>	+	
H3a	<i>Email communication exposure → Reputation (CBR)</i>	+	+
H3b	<i>Email communication exposure → Trust</i>	+	+
H3c	<i>Email communication exposure → Brand credibility</i>		+
H4a	<i>Reputation (CBR) → Brand credibility</i>		+
H4b	<i>Reputation (CBR) → Trust</i>	+	+
H5	<i>Brand credibility → Trust</i>		+
H6	<i>Trust → Loyalty (reported)</i>	+	+
H7	<i>Behavioral loyalty (reported) → Behavioral loyalty (observed)</i>	+	
H8	<i>Attitudinal loyalty (reported) → Behavioral loyalty (reported)</i>		+

Source: Own work.

Analyzing SE is meaningful only among the customers who have a social media account, so Study 1 was conducted only among those respondents who reported usage of FB and other social media. In Study 1, the credibility construct was not used because we could not achieve discriminant validity for this construct. Study 1 was done among customers of a company that allowed us access to data in their CRM system, so we could measure the loyalty of subscribers two years after the survey was conducted, and we set observed behavioral loyalty as the final outcome of the Study 1 model. In Study 2, the outcomes were reported for attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. Study 2 was a multigroup study conducted in three different markets, where two vendors did not allow us to access CRM data.

### 2.3.7 Customers' perception of commoditization

Commoditization of a service, product, or industry and the degree of commoditization can be conceptualized from two perspectives: from the customer perspective and from the perspective of a manager who is involved in a respective industry.

Traditionally, a service or product category is seen as a commodity when characteristics of a product/service are so fungible and interchangeable that customers recognize this homogeneity across brands and distribution channels. For a customer, a high degree of commoditization exists when the risk for choosing an unsatisfactory product or a service is relatively low (Steiner, 1993).

For an industry specialist “industry commoditization describes an increase in similarity between the offerings of competitors in an industry, an increase in customers’ price sensitivity, a decrease in customers’ cost of switching from one to another supplier in an industry, and an increase in the stability of the competitive structure” (Reimann et al., 2010, p. 189). So higher degree of commoditization occurs when competitors in stable industries

offer increasingly homogenous services to price-sensitive customers, who are faced with relatively low vendor-changing costs (Reimann et al., 2010).

To assess the level of commoditization of a certain product/service, Reimann et al. (2010) derived the following four dimensions (first-order constructs) of commoditization: product/service homogeneity, price sensitivity, switching cost, and industry stability. The construct was originally developed by assessing the perceptions of managers active in the assessed industry (Reimann et al., 2010). Commoditization as a customer perception has been operationalized by Beldona et al. (2015) and Koschate-Fischer et al. (2014), both researchers adopted one or two dimensions conceptualized by Reimann et al. (2010) to relevant customer settings.

With some customers in legal online subscription services in Croatia, Slovenia, and Turkey we tested their understanding of various commoditization dimensions as operationalized by Reimann et al. (2010). We conclude that customers' assessment of industry stability is unreliable for most customers; however, the other three dimensions seem adequate and relevant. Therefore, the perception of commoditization for online subscription services is in our setting operationalized by three dimensions: service homogeneity perception, customers' price sensitivity, and customers' switching cost assessment.

#### *2.3.7.1 Service homogeneity perception*

Homogeneity of the product/service is the characteristic of products/services within a particular industry that is most often related to commoditization (Pelham, 1997; Reimann et al., 2010). High services homogeneity means that services are perceived in the market as being interchangeable (Bakos, 1997; Greenstein, 2004; Pelham, 1997; Reimann et al., 2010).

Services homogeneity is often a by-product of market saturation and intense competition, which occurs when a service is perceived as being similar in quality and performance to those of its competitors.

Another phenomenon that is linked to homogeneity is brand parity. Higher brand parity signifies greater commoditization of a service offering (Ramirez & Goldsmith, 2009): when customers perceive small differences between major brand alternatives in a product/service category, brand parity and homogeneity are high (Iyer & Muncy, 2005). The diffusion of know-how induces a homogenization of products and services offered on markets and consequently, commoditization often increases with the age of the product/service (Kasper-Brauer & Enke, 2016).

We define that service homogeneity is high when customers of a particular service do not differentiate between various brands and when standards and quality of services within a category are almost identical. Because we investigate perceptions of customers of legal online information services, we also expect perceived service homogeneity to be higher if

customers perceive that all services within a category offer almost the same content (e.g., legal information).

#### *2.3.7.2 Customers' price sensitivity*

Goldsmith and Newell (1997, p. 164) define price sensitivity as “an individual difference variable describing how individual consumers react to price levels and changes in price levels.” Highly sensitive customers will demand less from a service if the price goes up (or demand more as price goes down), and less price-sensitive customers will not react as strongly to a price change (Goldsmith & Newell, 1997). So price sensitivity in general points to customer reactions to price (Ramirez & Goldsmith, 2009).

In operationalization of commoditization as perceived by managers of a particular industry, they were asked about their perceptions of customers' price sensitivity. Price sensitivity was defined as a result of customers searching for the “best price for a standard product [and service] on the assumption that the products and services are equivalent in quality and function” (Reimann et al., 2010, p. 190). In our study, an attitudinal, self-reported measure of price sensitivity that relates to the service in question is used, because we want to operationalize the construct at the individual level.

In literature, price sensitivity is also related to brand parity. WTP for a brand rises with brand differentiation and falls with commoditization. Ramirez and Goldsmith (2009) show that perceived brand parity is positively related to price sensitivity.

In our operationalization of customers' price sensitivity, we expect that more price-sensitive customers put extra efforts to find lower prices for a service within a category and that money saved by searching for an alternative cheaper service provider is worth the effort. Additionally, we expect that for price-sensitive customers, the cost of service is more important than the brand of service and that price increase is likely to cause that customer would stop using the service.

#### *2.3.7.3 Switching costs*

According to Yin and Shen's (2016) literature overview, switching costs are conceptualized mostly by management and economics literature. Jackson (1985) defines switching costs as the economic, material, and psychological costs of switching suppliers that a customer must shoulder. Porter (2008) and Burnham et al. (2003) regard switching costs as a one-time cost facing the buyer of switching from one supplier to another. According to them, switching costs can be likened to an exit barrier, which grows with the time of consumption during a service provider–customer relationship. Weiss and Anderson (1992) observed two groups of switching costs: setup costs and takedown costs. Setup costs are costs of search and opportunity costs in looking for and selecting a substitute service provider, while takedown

costs are related to the investment already spent on relationship with an existent service provider.

In our study, we expect that lower switching costs are related to higher commoditization of an online service. Customers assess switching costs to be low if costs for switching to another provider are low and if the process of switching to another provider is quick and easy. If switching costs are low, customers do not have any problem switching to another provider if the price of service increases and they could easily adjust to the service from another provider.

#### *2.3.7.4 Commoditization perception moderation*

To our knowledge, there have been no studies about commoditization perception's role within the relationship-marketing setting so far. There are only two papers that relate commoditization and customer behaviors or attitudes.

Koschate-Fischer et al. (2014) found that commoditization (product homogeneity dimension) has a negative moderating impact on the relationship between private label share (expenditures allocated to private labels as a share of total expenditures in the store and store loyalty) and loyalty to the store. For highly commoditized products (where differences between the brand strength of different services are very small), higher commoditization level moderates negatively loyalty-enhancing relations. They found also, that the switching costs effect is negligible in retail (Koschate-Fischer et al., 2014).

Beldona et al. (2015) studied commoditization as viewed by hotel industry executives and by hotel customers. The study found that industry executives perceive product homogeneity as the most important source of commoditization, followed by industry stability, switching costs, and price sensitivity. From the customers' point of view, by far, the most important dimension is price sensitivity, with product homogeneity having a very small effect. Industry stability and switching costs are not suitable to assess consumers' perception of commoditization (Beldona et al., 2015).

There are more studies from the industry practitioner perspective. The paper's focus on the impact of industry commoditization on product innovation strategies (Bronkhorst et al., 2019), value creation chain (Homburg et al., 2017), and companies' responses to commoditization pressures (Coe, 2021; Riot et al., 2013). Reimann et al. (2010, p. 188) have shown that "as commoditization increases, operational excellence and product leadership lose impact, while customer intimacy becomes a more vital performance driver." Most studies deal with highly commoditized industries. The only exception is Reimann et al.'s (2010) study that in comparative analysis of several manufacturing industries includes also less commoditized manufacturing industries such as furniture, wearing apparel, and accessories and toys. To our knowledge, there has been no research on moderately or low commoditized services.

Besides Reimann et al. (2010) paper that defines commoditization operationalization is for our research interesting also Bronkhorst et al.'s (2019) research on the moderating impact of commoditization dimensions on positive relationships between different types of innovation in information technology products and IT firms' business performance. The main finding of the study is that increasing commoditization levels of IT markets is dampening this positive relationship (Bronkhorst et al., 2019).

As in Bronkhorst et al.'s (2019) study, we tested the moderation effect of second-order formative construct of commoditization perception (first-order constructs: service homogeneity perception, customers' price sensitivity, and customers' switching cost assessment) on relationships between:

- a) ECE and trust
- b) ECE end mediators CBR and credibility
- c) Mediators CBR and credibility and trust

We expected that if a moderation effect exists, commoditization perception negatively moderates relationships between digital marketing ECE and trust, CBR and trust, and credibility and trust.

## **2.4 Discussion of constructs conceptualization and hypotheses development**

In this chapter, we discussed how to describe behaviors and attitudes of customers by the relationship-marketing effectiveness concepts. The relationship-marketing effectiveness is based on the evolutionary psychology of gratitude and unfairness. Relationship marketing is based on three major types of relationships, interpersonal (customer–salesperson relationship) interfirm (customers networks–salesperson, customer–vendor firm, B2B), and online (customer or customer firm–technology interface; Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019). We have explained theoretical foundations of engagement within the particular type of relationship and we show that for the online subscription relationship we should focus on the online relationship, where internet technology is a partial relationship mediator between seller firm relationship investments and customer perception of interpersonal relationship quality (by commitment, trust, gratitude, and reciprocity norms) and by online relationship quality (by flow, media richness, and prosocial interaction; Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019).

We explained why we selected as antecedents in our relationship-marketing effectiveness model the constructs that conceptualize engagement with the two most important digital marketing channels: social media and email communication. We select engagement with social media of an online subscription service and exposure to online subscription service email communication that are both interactive, the relationship lasts several months or years and is related to the service provider's investment in communication (relationship) as well as to customer relationship benefits.

We related literature definitions of customer engagement to social media and email marketing settings. We followed the proposal from Hollebeek et al. (2014) that SE should be conceptualized through three dimensions: cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. We expected that the emotional dimension of engagement is not relevant for our B2B setting. For conceptualizing email communication effects, we added to cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions an inverted measure of email communication intrusiveness, defined as the degree to which email communication interrupted the flow of a communication unit (Ha, 1996).

As cognitive relational mechanisms (mediators), we conceptualized brand credibility, CBR of a service firm, and trust in an online subscription service. In the context of relationship marketing, we expected that the CBR of a service firm reflects the customer's perception of the relationship benefits and expertise of the vendor, while brand credibility reflects the perceived believability of whether a brand has the ability and willingness to continuously deliver what has been promised.

The selection of trust as a focal construct and loyalty as an outcome in the model was influenced by the characteristics exhibited by users of online services that, within a freemium business model, use a limited share of the service free of charge. Such customers do not relate themselves to commitment, relationship satisfaction, and relationship quality because they do not perceive themselves as a "proper" customer (buyers); however, they can relate to trust in the service they use.

Loyalty is the most often used outcome of a relationship-marketing effectiveness model and is also very appropriate for online subscription service settings, where long-term existence of a subscription relationship is a reflection of customers' loyalty. Watson et al. (2015) showed that attitudinal and behavioral loyalty differentially influence managerially relevant outcomes, so we operationalized attitudinal and behavioral loyalty as two unidimensional constructs.

Introduction of commoditization perception in the research of online subscription customers' attitudes and behaviors is an important contribution of our thesis. To our knowledge, there have been no studies about commoditization perception's role within the relationship-marketing setting so far. Also it has not been explored if commoditization as conceptualized and operationalized by Reimann et al. (2010) can be perceived and measured also in moderate and moderate to minimal commoditized services as is the case with online subscription services in the three markets that were the focus of our research. To assess the level of commoditization of online subscription service three dimensions (first-order constructs) of commoditization: product/service homogeneity, price sensitivity, and switching cost. From the Reimann et al. (2010) conceptualization, we omitted the industry stability dimension. Industry stability can be perceived by industry experts, but not by ordinary customers and users of a service.

We hypothesized mutual impact between ECE and SE according to social presence and media richness theories. Regarding richness and presence, social media outperformed email as a communication channel. Therefore, richer and more socially present SE would have a stronger influence on email communication exposure than the other way around.

The hypothesized positive impact of antecedents on trust is supported by signaling and social exchange theories, while trust–commitment theory supports the positive influence of trust on loyalty. Regarding commoditization perception’s impact, we expected that commoditization negatively moderates a relationship between digital marketing effectiveness constructs (SE and ECE) and trust and/or reputation.

### **3 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH OF SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES CUSTOMER ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR<sup>2</sup>**

#### **3.1 Research method**

Following the explained conceptual framework, we operationalized constructs for two studies. Study 1 focused on juxtaposing the role of Social media engagement and Email communication exposure in our model. The study was done in a market where the service provider uses email marketing and social media marketing extensively to maintain the existent subscribers base and to communicate with potential subscribers and users of the free of charge service. At the time the survey that formed the basis for Study 1 was conducted, the service had 10,000 followers on Facebook and 40,000 registered users who were subjects of email communication. The aim of Study 2 was to check the validity of our model for online subscription services in three different markets that vary in terms of the time since the service’s inception, the service’s market penetration, and the extent of competitive pressure exerted on the service. In one of the three markets, social media marketing was practiced for the online service, so we omitted social media engagement from the model.

For each study, we conducted an online survey with measurements scored using a seven-point Likert scale. We present sample characteristics, assess measurement model, and structural model for both studies. First study was done only on one market. Second study was done on three markets so a multigroup structural model was assessed. In second study measurement model was also assessed for customer perception of service commoditization and moderating effect of commoditization perception on relationship between antecedents and focal constructs was analyzed.

The questionnaires for two studies were almost identical. The only difference is in items that were used for operationalization of cognitive and behavioral dimensions of SE and ECE constructs. In the first survey that was done only among Croatian customers, items of

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<sup>2</sup> This chapter is partially based on Kovač and Žabkar (2020).

behavioral dimension were linked directly to customers actions (behavior) without emphasizing their perception of engagement reflecting behavior and items that were operationalizing cognitive dimension were related to the quality of social media postings and email messages and not the to the perception about how postings/emails stimulate customer thinking about the service. For the second survey that was done in three different markets (Croatia, Slovenia, Turkey) we have noticed that quality of information items cannot be unambiguously understood on all three markets, so we aligned operationalization of cognitive and behavioral dimension more to the engagement literature as explained in the following subsections. The difference in the items defining two dimensions of two constructs did not impact on the qualitative outcome of the models.

For the first study the data was gathered from the customer base of an online service company (online legal information services) operating in Croatia. The service offers updated and edited legal content (legislation, case law, legal articles and templates) to its customers (i.e., subscribers). The invitation to participate in an online questionnaire was sent by email to 5,000 contacts who were most exposed to the direct email campaigns of the company. The second survey performed approximately two years after the first survey among the customers of the same service in Croatia (25,000 customers), Slovenia (15,000 customers), and Turkey (15,000 customers).

### **3.2 Questionnaire development and constructs operationalization**

The questionnaires for quantitative research were developed based on well-established operationalization of the constructs in the marketing literature with some modifications to adjust items to be relevant for the online subscription setting and to be understandable to the subscribers/respondents. Operationalizations of all constructs except for SE and ECE were the same for questionnaires used in both studies. Measurement scales were scored using a seven-point Likert scale. The English questionnaire was translated into Croatian (for Study 1 and Study 2), Slovenian and Turkish (for Study 2) and pretested on a small group of respondents to ensure that all items were understandable, and no difficulties were encountered in responding. Respondents were aware that it is possible to track their behavior in the vendor CRM, however their usernames were coded, and their anonymity was granted by analyzing aggregates only.

#### **3.2.1 Social media engagement (SE)**

In both studies we have operationalized SE as a second order reflective construct. In Study 1 we operationalized cognitive dimension items of SE as customer perception of information quality of brand social media postings (Hsin Chang et al., 2013) and behavioral dimension as respondents report about concrete activities in relation to brand postings (following, sharing, commenting, recommending; Table 10).

Table 10: Set of items for Engagement in brand related social media activities (SE)—Study 1

DIMENSION	CODE	ITEM
Social media engagement: behavior/activation	FB1a	I have liked BRAND Facebook page, and I am following BRAND Facebook posts.
	FB1b	I share BRAND Facebook posts.
	FB1c	I comment on BRAND Facebook posts.
	FB1d	I recommend BRAND Facebook posts to others.
Social media engagement: cognitive	FB2a	BRAND Facebook posts are valuable source of information.
	FB2b	BRAND Facebook posts are entertaining.
	FB2c	BRAND Facebook posts are a convenient source of information about legal issues in the country.
	FB2d	BRAND Facebook posts supply complete and relevant information about advertised services or events.

Source: Adapted from Hsin Chang et al. (2013)

In Study 2, for the operationalization of SE, we followed the well-established proposal of operationalization by Hollebeek et al. (2014) for cognitive processing, affection, and activation/behavioral dimensions, with the option of omitting non-relevant affective dimensions later (Table 11). The behavioral and cognitive dimensions are operationalized by three items, and the affective dimension by four.

Table 11: Set of items for Engagement in brand related social media activities—Study 2

DIMENSION	CODE	ITEM
Social media engagement: behavior/activation	FB1a	I spend a lot of time engaging with BRAND social media pages/posts compared to social media posts of similar services.
	FB1b	Whenever I'm engaging with social media posts for these services, I usually engage with BRAND social media pages/posts.
	FB1c	Social media posts from BRAND are one of the company social media posts I usually engage with when I engage with social media for this type of service.
Social media engagement: affective	FB1d	I feel very positive when I engage with BRAND Social media posts.
	FB2a	Using BRAND social media posts makes me happy.
	FB2b	I feel good when I engage with BRAND social media posts.
	FB2c	Being part of BRAND social media community makes me a proud member of the overall service community.
Social media engagement: cognitive	FB2d	Using BRAND social media posts gets me to think about BRAND.
	FB2e	I think about BRAND social media posts a lot when I'm using BRAND.
	FB2f	Reading BRAND social media posts stimulates my interest in learning more about BRAND.

Source: Adapted from Hollebeek et al. (2014).

### 3.2.2 Email communication exposure

The same way as it was done for SE construct, we operationalized engagement part of the ECE construct by two reflective dimensions: cognitive, referring to quality of email information (Hsin Chang et al., 2013) and behavioral (reading emails, clicking on links in emails and reacting on emails; Table 12). The primary difference compared to SE operationalization is that we added to engagement dimensions also inverted measure of email advertising intrusiveness (Edwards et al., 2013; Hsin Chang et al., 2013; Morimoto & Chang, 2006). We operationalize ECE in Study 2 through four dimensions. Three dimensions from the customer engagement operationalization (behavioral, affective, and cognitive dimensions; Hollebeek et al., 2014) and by the dimension of email advertising intrusiveness (Edwards et al., 2013; Hsin Chang et al., 2013; Morimoto & Chang, 2006), where inverted measure is used in developing ECE construct (Table 13).

*Table 12: Set of items for email communication exposure (ECE)—Study 1*

DIMENSION	CODE	ITEM
ECE: behavioral	Email2a	I read BRAND emails right away.
	Email2b	I often click on links in BRAND emails.
	Email2c	I often attend events advertised by BRAND emails.
	Email2d	I want to receive BRAND emails in the future.
ECE: cognitive	Email1a	BRAND emails are convenient sources of information,
	Email1b	BRAND emails provide consumers with essential information.
	Email1c	I enjoy most emails received from BRAND.
	Email1d	BRAND promotional emails supply complete and relevant information about advertised services or events.
ECE: intrusiveness	Email1e	Many of the services advertised by BRAND emails do not perform as advertised.
	Email1f	Many of BRAND email advertisements are annoying.
	Email1g	There are too many advertisement emails in my inbox.
	Email1h	BRAND email advertising is more manipulative than it is informative.

*Source: Adapted from Hsin Chang et al. (2013).*

*Table 13: Set of items for email communication exposure (ECE)—Study 2*

DIMENSION	CODE	ITEM
ECE: behavioral	Email1a	I spend a lot of time reading BRAND emails compared to other legal professional services emails.
	Email1b	Whenever I'm reading legal professional services emails, I usually read BRAND emails.
	Email1c	BRAND emails are one of the legal information services emails I usually read when I read legal information services emails.
ECE: affective/emotional	Email1d	I feel very positive when I read BRAND emails.
	Email1e	Reading BRAND emails makes me happy.
	Email2a	I feel good when I read BRAND emails.
	Email2b	Being a recipient of BRAND emails makes me proud to be a member of a legal community.

*(table continues)*

(continued)

<b>DIMENSION</b>	<b>CODE</b>	<b>ITEM</b>
ECE: cognitive	Email2c	Reading BRAND emails gets me to think about BRAND.
	Email2d	I think about BRAND mailing a lot when I'm reading BRAND emails.
	Email2e	Reading BRAND emails stimulates my interest to learn more about BRAND. <i>(table continues)</i>
ECE: intrusiveness	Email3a	Many of the services advertised by BRAND email do not perform as advertised.
	Email3b	Many of BRAND's email advertisements are annoying.
	Email3c	There are too many advertisement emails in my inbox.
	Email3d	BRAND email advertising is more manipulative than it is informative.

*Source: Adapted from Hollebeek et al. (2014) and Hsin Chang et al. (2013).*

### 3.2.3 Customer-based reputation of a service firm

For the consumer-based reputation construct, a shortened version of Walsh and Beatty (2007) second order, reflective construct operationalization was employed (Table 14).

Five dimensions were used (customer orientation, company financial strength, service quality, good employer reputation, and social responsibility of a service firm), each with three items.

*Table 14: Set of items for customer-based reputation (CBR) of a service firm (COMP)*

<b>DIMENSION</b>	<b>CODE</b>	<b>ITEM</b>
CBR: customer orientation	Rep1a	COMP has employees who are concerned about customer needs.
	Rep1b	COMP has employees who treat customers courteously.
	Rep1c	COMP is concerned about its customers.
CBR: good employer	Rep1d	COMP looks like a good company to work for.
	Rep1e	COMP seems to treat its people well.
	Rep1f	COMP seems to have excellent leadership.
CBR: reliable and financially strong	Rep1g	COMP tends to outperform competitors.
	Rep1h	COMP seems to recognize and take advantage of market opportunities.
	Rep1i	COMP looks like it has strong prospects for future growth.
CBR: service quality	Rep2a	COMP offers high-quality products and services.
	Rep2b	COMP is a strong, reliable company.
	Rep2c	COMP develops innovative services.
CBR: social responsibility	Rep2d	COMP seems to make an effort to create new jobs.
	Rep2e	COMP would reduce its profits to be more socially responsible.
	Rep2f	COMP seems to be a socially responsible company.

*Source: Adapted from Walsh & Beatty (2007).*

### 3.2.4 Brand Credibility

The construct of brand credibility is operationalized as one reflective factor with four items (Table 15), as seen in the literature (Hyun Baek & Whitehill King, 2011; Sichtmann, 2007).

*Table 15: Set of items for brand credibility, expertise dimension*

DIMENSION	CODE	ITEM
CRED expertise	Branda	BRAND reminds me of someone who's competent and knows what they are doing.
	Brandb	BRAND doesn't pretend to be something it isn't.
	Brandc	BRAND is at the forefront of using technology to deliver a better service.
	Brandd	BRAND's brand stands for expertise.

*Source: Adapted from Hyun Baek & Whitehill King (2011).*

### 3.2.5 Trust

The measure for trust was selected according to Gefen (2000). Based on qualitative interviews with managers and customers in the online subscription service setting, the authors can say that customers and potential customers understand the concept unambiguously, and managers see the customer's trust as the key asset of the company.

The construct has one overall "trust" item and four dimensions proposed by literature: integrity, benevolence, ability and predictability (Table 16; Gefen, 2000; Gefen & Straub, 2004)

*Table 16: Set of items for trust*

DIMENSION	CODE	ITEM
	Trust1a	I tend to trust the BRAND service.
TRUST: integrity	Trust1b	Promises made by a provider of BRAND service are likely to be reliable.
	Trust1c	I do not doubt the honesty of the provider of BRAND service.
	Trust1d	I expect that the provider of BRAND service will keep promises they make.
	Trust1e	I expect that I can count on the provider of BRAND service to consider how its actions affect me. (BENEVO)
TRUST: benevolence	Trust1f	I expect that the provider of BRAND service has intentions that are benevolent.
	Trust2a	I expect that the provider of BRAND service is well meaning.
TRUST: ability	Trust2b	The provider of BRAND service is competent.
	Trust2c	The provider of BRAND service knows about law.
	Trust2d	The provider of BRAND service knows how to provide excellent service.
	Trust2e	I am quite certain about what the provider of BRAND service will do.
TRUST: predictability	Trust2f	I am quite certain what to expect from the provider of BRAND service.

*Source: Adapted from Gefen (2000) and Gefen & Straub (2004).*

### 3.2.6 Loyalty

The measures of attitudinal (Table 17) and behavioral (Table 18) loyalty were selected as unidimensional, reflective constructs based on the recommendations of Watson et al. (2015) and specifics of the online subscription service setting.

In Study 1, we omitted attitudinal loyalty construct and added observed loyalty. The measure for observed loyalty was constructed as a natural logarithm of the (number of documents + 1) from the online subscription service that were viewed by the customer in the two-year period since they answered the survey.

*Table 17: Set of items for attitudinal loyalty to service (LOYA)*

DIMENSION	CODE	ITEM
LOYA	Loy1a	I prefer BRAND over competitors.
	Loy1b	I enjoy doing business with BRAND/BRAND.
	Loy1c	I consider BRAND my first preference.
	Loy1d	I have a positive attitude toward BRAND.
	Loy1e	I really like BRAND.

*Source: Adapted from Watson et al. (2015)*

*Table 18: Set of items for behavioral loyalty (LOYB)*

DIMENSION	CODE	ITEM
LOYB	Loy2a	I often use BRAND service.
	Loy2b	I use only BRAND service.
	Loy2c	The last time I used an online legal information service, I used BRAND.
	Loy2d	I am a committed subscriber to BRAND service.

*Source: Adapted from Watson et al. (2015).*

### 3.2.7 Customers' perception of commoditization

We operationalize the commoditization perception as a second-order, formative construct, with three dimensions: first-order constructs service homogeneity, price sensitivity, and switching costs. The fourth dimension, industry stability, proposed by Reimann et al. (2010), is not relevant when commoditization perception of customers is measured.

Service homogeneity is operationalized by four items in line with operationalizations by Beldona et al. (2015). Price sensitivity and switching costs dimensions are also conceptualized by four items (Table 19). For these dimensions we adopted original Reimann et al. (2010) operationalization.

Table 19: Set of items for commoditization perception (COMM)

DIMENSION	CODE	ITEM
COMM: service homogeneity	COMM1a	Most legal information services like . . . have no perceivable differences.
	COMM1b	The service standards of information services like . . . are quite identical.
	COMM1c	The quality and accuracy of most information services like . . . are identical.
	COMM1d	All legal information services like . . . offer almost the same content.
COMM: price sensitivity	COMM1e	I put extra effort into finding lower prices for legal information services.
	COMM1f	I consider the money saved by finding a cheaper subscription for legal information service to be worth the effort.
	COMM2a	The cost of a subscription to a legal information service is more important to me than the brand of the service I subscribe to.
	COMM2b	If the price of a subscription service I use increased, I would consider canceling my subscription.
COMM: switching costs	COMM2c	The costs for switching to another provider of legal information services are low.
	COMM2d	The process of switching to another provider of legal information services is quick and easy.
	COMM2e	If the price of a subscription service I use increased, I would consider switching to another provider.
	COMM2f	I would have no problem adjusting to using a legal information service from another provider.

Source: Adapted from Reimann et al. (2010) and Beldona et al. (2015).

### 3.2.8 Control variables

In the selected setting, the customer status regarding purchasing decision-making power may also have an impact on customer loyalty to the service. Additionally, it is also important to assess whether the frequency of social media usage has an impact on the outcomes of our model. Therefore, two dichotomous variables were created:

- Status with respect to decision-making: whether to establish a commercial relationship with the vendor.
- Social media usage: daily or occasionally (less often than daily).

The control variables were relevant for Study 1 that includes social media related construct.

### 3.3 Study 1–social media and email impact

In first study we juxtapose SE and ECE impact within a relationship-marketing effectiveness model. The study is focused only on those subscribers that have social media account, so

that SE is relevant for modeling their attitudes and behavior. Focal constructs in the model are CBR of a service company and trust, while outcomes are reported attitudinal loyalty of subscribers and behavioral loyalty as observed/measured in the vendor CRM system.

### 3.3.1 Characteristics of the sample

A total of 671 fully answered questionnaires were received within 1 week of sending the questionnaire by email to 5,000 contacts, subscribers of paid and freemium services in Croatia, who were most exposed to the direct email campaigns of the company during last two years since the start of the study. Of these, 271 respondents had a social media (Facebook) account and could be identified in the vendor's CRM system to observe their loyalty in the two years after the survey. Due to having control over the selection of the respondents, relevant units were included. See Table 20 for the sample profile.

*Table 20: Study 1—Characteristics of the sample*

	Respondents with FB account		All respondents		All contacted through an online survey	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Total</b>	271	100%	671	100%	5.000	100%
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	87	32.1%	231	34.4%	1.524	30%
Female	184	67.9%	440	65.6%	2.581	51%
N.A.*	0	0%	0	0%	895	18%
<b>Age</b>						
up to 24 years	8	3%	10	1.5%		
25–34 years	60	22.1%	111	16.5%		
35–44 year	86	31.7%	198	29.5%		
45–54 years	51	18.8%	168	25%		
55–64 years	60	22.1%	160	23.8%		
above 64 years	6	2.2%	24	3.6%		
<b>Have FB account</b>						
Yes	271	100%	332	49.5%		
No	0	0%	339	50.5%		
<b>Using FB</b>						
Daily	84	31%	235	41.1%		
Less frequent and no**	187	69%	436	58.9%		
<b>Purchasing decision power</b>						
Decide or influence	162	59.8%	372	55.4%		
Cannot influence	109	40.2%	299	44.6%		

Notes: \*For 18% of individuals contacted through online survey, gender could not be determined

\*\* Among all respondents, the figure also includes respondents without a FB account

*Source: Own work.*

The non-response analysis was based on comparing the gender and subscription status of the respondents and all contacts invited. Excluding the contacts whose gender could not be determined, the authors invited 38% male and 62% female users of the service. Of the respondents, approximately one-third were male, and two-thirds were female. Of the initial email addresses, 30.7% belonged to service subscribers, while 69.3% belonged to freemium users (users of free content). Among the respondents, the share of subscribers was slightly higher (37%), and among respondents with FB accounts that could be identified in the CRM system, the share of subscribers was slightly lower (29.9%).

### 3.3.2 Measurement model

An exploratory factor analysis was performed for all five constructs (extraction method: principal axis and Varimax with Kaiser normalization rotation). We found out that items related to corporate and social responsibility dimension of Customer-based reputation of a service firm were ambiguously understood so this dimension was omitted from the CBR operationalization. Due to poor loading also Loy2a “I often use BRAND service” item was omitted. For all constructs, the share of described variance was higher than 63%.

*Table 21: Study 1–Construct measurement*

Code		Factor loading	Communality
<b>Social media engagement (SE) AVE=81.160%</b>			
<b>SE: behavioral dimension <math>\alpha=0.856</math>;</b>			
FB1a	I have liked BRAND Facebook page and I am following BRAND Facebook posts.	0.619	0.617
FB1b	I share BRAND Facebook posts.	0.915	0.883
FB1c	I comment BRAND Facebook posts.	0.882	0.802
FB1d	I recommend BRAND Facebook posts to others.	0.774	0.731
<b>SE: cognitive dimension (quality of information) <math>\alpha=0.950</math>;</b>			
FB2a	BRAND Facebook posts are valuable sources of information.	0.906	0.899
FB2b	BRAND Facebook posts are entertaining.	0.810	0.73
FB2c	BRAND Facebook posts are convenient sources of information about legal issues in the country.	0.927	0.922
FB2d	BRAND Facebook posts supply complete and relevant information about advertised services.	0.921	0.91
<b>Email communication exposure (ECE) AVE=73.701%</b>			
<b>ECE: quality of information <math>\alpha=0.903</math>;</b>			
Email1a	BRAND emails are convenient sources of information.	0.908	0.865
Email1b	BRAND emails provide consumers with essential information.	0.922	0.881
Email1c	I enjoy most emails received from BRAND.	0.745	0.692
Email1d	BRAND promotional emails supply complete and relevant information about advertised services or events.	0.791	0.761

*(table continues)*

(continued)

	<b>ECE: perceived intrusiveness of email advertising</b> <b><math>\alpha=0.761</math>;</b>		
Email1e	Many of the products do not perform as advertised.	0.828	0.742
Email1f	Many of BRAND email advertisements are annoying.	0.857	0.758
Email1g	There are too many advertisement emails in my inbox.	0.864	0.567
Email1h	BRAND email advertising is more manipulative than it is informative.	0.855	0.556
	<b>ECE: email customer response <math>\alpha=0.786</math>;</b>		
Email2a	I read BRAND emails right away.	0.776	0.692
Email2b	I often click on links in BRAND emails.	0.773	0.757
Email2c	I often attend events advertised by BRAND emails.	0.730	0.617
Email2d	I want to receive BRAND emails in the future.	0.515	0.511
	<b>Customer-based reputation of a service firm (CBR); AVE=82.215%</b>		
	<b>CBR: customer orientation; <math>\alpha=0.945</math>;</b>		
Rep1a	COMPANY, publisher of BRAND, has employees who are concerned about customer needs.	0.786	0.817
Rep1b	COMP has employees who treat customers courteously.	0.845	0.84
Rep1c	COMP is concerned about its customers.	0.729	0.848
	<b>CBR: reliable and financially strong company; <math>\alpha=0.886</math>;</b>		
Rep1g	COMP tends to outperform competitors.	0.787	0.814
Rep1h	COMP seems to recognize and take advantage of market opportunities.	0.856	0.839
Rep1i	COMP looks like it has strong prospects for future growth.	0.735	0.796
	<b>CBR: good employer; <math>\alpha=0.877</math>;</b>		
Rep1d	COMP looks like a good company to work for.	0.791	0.776
Rep1e	COMP seems to treat its people well.	0.751	0.783
Rep1f	COMP seems to have excellent leadership.	0.617	0.778
	<b>CBR: product and service quality; <math>\alpha=0.853</math>;</b>		
Rep2a	COMP offers high-quality products and services.	0.668	0.725
Rep2b	COMP is a strong, reliable company.	0.693	0.9
Rep2c	COMP develops innovative services.	0.737	0.885
	<b>Trust: AVE=76.040</b>		
	<b>Trust: integrity and benevolence; <math>\alpha=0.938</math>;</b>		
Trust1a	I tend to trust the BRAND service.	0.702	0.657
Trust1b	Promises made by providers of BRAND service are likely to be reliable.	0.738	0.705
Trust1c	I do not doubt the honesty of providers of BRAND service.	0.781	0.758
Trust1d	I expect that providers of BRAND service will keep promises they make.	0.833	0.786
Trust1e	I expect I can count on providers of BRAND service to consider how its actions affect me.	0.815	0.744

(table continues)

(continued)

Trust1f	I expect that providers of BRAND service has benevolent intentions.	0.828	0.783
Trust2a	I expect that providers of BRAND service are well meaning.	0.797	0.717
<b>Trust-ability, predictability, and ability; <math>\alpha=0.935</math>;</b>			
Trust2b	Providers of BRAND service are competent.	0.801	0.78
Trust2c	Providers of BRAND service know about law.	0.803	0.75
Trust2d	Providers of BRAND service know how to provide excellent service.	0.821	0.815
Trust2e	I am quite certain about what providers of BRAND service will do.	0.872	0.846
Trust2f	I am quite certain what to expect from providers of BRAND service.	0.816	0.783
<b>Loyalty: <math>\alpha=0.7</math>; AVE=63.1%</b>			
Loy2b	I use only BRAND service.	0.784	0.615
Loy2c	The last time I used an online legal information service, I used BRAND.	0.819	0.670
Loy2d	I am a committed subscriber to BRAND's service.	0.779	0.607

Source: Own work.

We tested for the presence of common method bias (CMB) using the CFA – based Harman's Single Factor Test (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results of the unrotated factor analysis show that the single factor solution does not explain more than 37% of the variance, leading us to conclude that there should be no problem with CMB. The results of Harman's single factor test are shown in Appendix 6. We did not perform the test for marker variable (Lindell & Whitney, 2001), because we did not have a variable in the survey formed the basis for Study 1 that was theoretically unrelated to the variables examined in the study study.

Measurement model exhibits acceptable goodness of fit with  $\chi^2 = 105.66$  (df = 52;  $p < 0.001$ ), RMSEA = 0.06, NNFI=0.936, CFI = 0.966. Discriminant validity was assessed using Fornell–Larcker criteria and  $\chi^2$  difference tests (see Table 23). Fornell–Larcker criteria is not met in two cases as square root of ECE's AVE is lower compared to ECE–CBR correlation for 0.017 and compared to ECE-Trust correlation for 0.161.

Additionally, discriminant validity was assessed for pairs of factors having relatively large correlations (e.g., trust and ECE and trust and reputation). The chi-square difference test (Bagozzi & Phillips, 1982) indicated that discriminant validity was achieved.

To reduce the number of parameters in the SEM analysis, we parceled the items for all multidimensional constructs. We used the internal-consistency parceling approach (Kishton & Widaman, 1994; Wu & Wen, 2011) to parcel the items on SE into two dimensions, on ECE into three dimensions, on CBR into four dimensions, and on trust into two dimensions.

Table 22: Correlations, average variance extracted (AVE) and construct reliability (CR)

	SE	ECE	CBR	Trust	Loyalty	CR
SE	<b>0.792</b>					0.767
ECE	0.506	<b>0.647</b>				0.652
CBR	0.39	0.664	<b>0.837</b>			0.900
Trust	0.455	0.808	0.809	<b>0.830</b>		0.816
Loyalty	0.182	0.312	0.311	0.358	<b>0.794</b>	0.837
Loyalty observed	0.03	0.047	0.047	0.057	0.155	

Note: Bold figures on the diagonal are square root of AVE, correlations are below the diagonal.

Source: Own work.

### 3.3.3 Assessment of the structural model

To test the hypothesized relationships, a structural equation model was estimated. To address multicollinearity, all measures that were the result of multiplied dimensions were residual centered, as recommended by Little et al. (2006). The model exhibited a good fit to the data:  $\chi^2 = 150.136$ ,  $df = 79$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.057$ ,  $SRMR = 0.054$ ,  $NNFI = 0.941$ ,  $CFI = 0.955$ . The regression coefficients and the statistic for our causal model is outlined in Table 22.

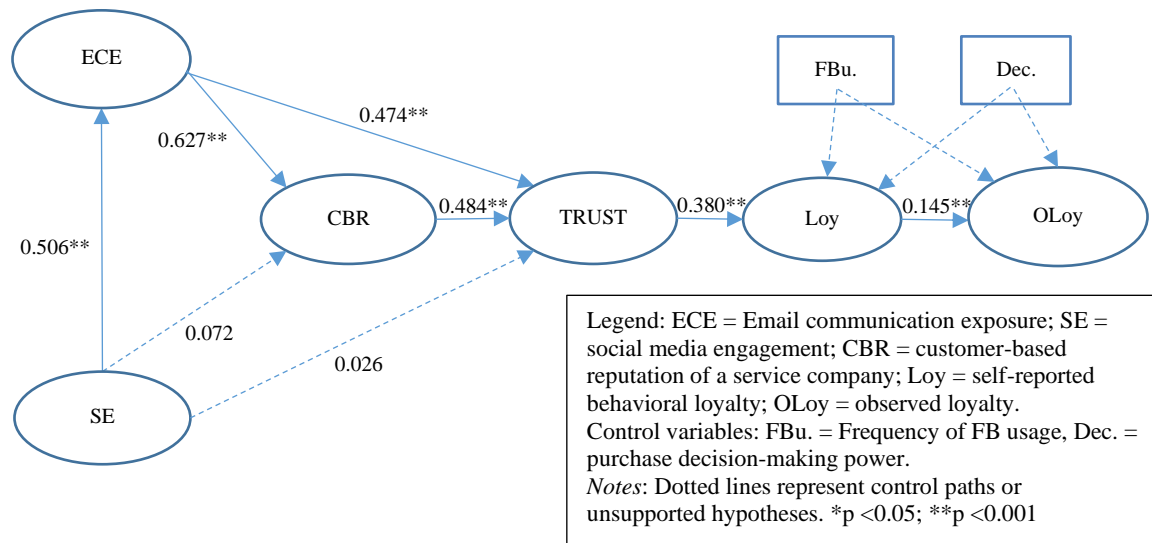
Table 23: Overview of supported hypotheses

Paths	$\beta$	T	p	
H2: SE $\rightarrow$ ECE	0.506	5.32	<0.001	Supported
H1a: SE $\rightarrow$ CBR	0.072	0.95	0.34	Not supported
H1b: SE $\rightarrow$ Trust	0.026	0.42	0.68	Not supported
H3a: ECE $\rightarrow$ CBR	0.627	6.65	<0.001	Supported
H3b: ECE $\rightarrow$ Trust	0.474	4.86	<0.001	Supported
H4b: CBR $\rightarrow$ Trust	0.484	6.16	<0.001	Supported
H6: Trust $\rightarrow$ Loyalty	0.380	6.08	<0.001	Supported
H7: Loyalty $\rightarrow$ Loyalty Observed	0.145	2.35	0.019	Supported
Control variables				
FBu $\rightarrow$ Loyalty	-0.01	-0.12	0.95	
FBu $\rightarrow$ Loyalty Observed	0.001	-0.002	0.99	
Dec. $\rightarrow$ Loyalty	0.162	2.53	0.011	
Dec $\rightarrow$ Loyalty Observed	0.058	1.185	0.402	

Note:  $\beta$  are standardized coefficients. ECE: email communication exposure, SE: social media engagement, CBR: customer-based reputation of a service company, Loy: self-reported behavioral loyalty, OLOY: observed loyalty. Control variables: FBu: Frequency of FB usage; Dec: purchasing decision-making power. Model fit:  $\chi^2 = 150.136$ ,  $df = 79$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.057$ ,  $SRMR = 0.054$ ,  $NNFI = 0.941$ ,  $CFI = 0.955$ .

Source: Own work.

Figure 7: Study I—Hypothesized path values



Source: Own work.

We examined the presence of indirect/mediating effects and the overall mediation model using Hayes (2013) PROCESS procedure (Model 6), which uses bootstrapping to examine the indirect effects. The direct, indirect, and total effects of SE, ECE and CBR on trust are presented in Table 24.

Table 24: Direct indirect and total effects of antecedents on trust

Direct effects	$\beta$	SE	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
SE → Trust	0.0641	0.0238	2.6992	0.0074	0.0174	0.1109
ECE → Trust	0.2573	0.0386	6.6678	<0.0001	0.1813	0.3332
CBR → Trust	0.4219	0.0401	10.5161	<0.0001	0.3429	0.5009
SE → CBR	0.1304	0.0352	3.6940	0.0003	0.0609	0.1999
ECE → CBR	0.4280	0.0526	8.1359	<0.0001	0.3244	0.5316
SE → ECE	0.1739	0.0395	4.4012	<0.0001	0.0961	0.2517
Indirect effect	$\beta$	SE			LLCI	ULCI
SE → ECE → Trust	0.0447	0.0125			0.0219	0.0711
SE → CBR → Trust	0.0550	0.0229			0.0157	0.1056
SE → ECE → CBR → Trust	0.0314	0.0100			0.0146	0.0536
Total effect	$\beta$	SE			LLCI	ULCI
SE → (ECE → CBR) → Trust	0.1311	0.0313			0.0750	0.1973

Notes: LLCI=lower-level confidence interval, ULCI = upper-level confidence interval

Source: Own work.

If the 95% confidence interval of the indirect effects does not include zero, mediation is present. Mediation analysis was performed using 5,000 bootstrap iterations. We found that all direct and indirect effects are statistically significant, however the direct effect of SE on trust and CBR is the weakest, consistent with the fact that this relationship was not supported when the complete structural model was tested by SEM.

#### 3.3.4 Discussion and Implications

Surprisingly, the results indicate that SE affects customer trust and the reputation of a service firm only indirectly by positively influencing ECE (H2). One explanation for this could be that customers see their SE as an activity that is significantly separate from their usage of the online service. Such reasoning is supported by a study of customer social media usage in banking (Toplu et al., 2014), according to which customers follow bank social media posts only to gain information about campaigns or to post complaints about the bank's services in relation to the electronic banking services they use. More than a half of the bank's customers stated that "social media was a platform for building up social networks rather than a channel that serves as a tool for following products and services of the banks they buy services from" (Toplu et al., 2014, p. 35).

SE is the construct least correlated with observed loyalty, which indicates that customers do not strongly relate their SE with service usage. Meanwhile, social media and email communication are seen as two communication channels between the customer and service provider, and the positive impact of SE on ECE is in line with the author expectations and social presence/media richness theory.

ECE positively affects the CBR of a service firm (H3a) and customer trust in the online service to which the email communication refers (H3b). The positive impact of customer trust in an online service on customer loyalty to the service (H6), and in turn the positive impact of self-reported loyalty on measured loyalty (H7), are also confirmed (see Table 22).

To examine the indirect effects of SE, ECE, reputation, and trust on loyalty and observed loyalty, the macro PROCESS was used (95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals, based on 5,000 resamples; Hayes, 2013). The results do not indicate any significant indirect effects except those already outlined by the model.

Regarding the impact of the control variables on model outcomes, the frequency of social media usage has no impact on loyalty (reported and observed). However, there exists a positive relationship between customer purchasing decision-making power and reported loyalty. The latter could be explained by the fact that customers with purchasing decision-making power were in the majority in the sample, and they are inclined to defend their decisions when reporting about their loyalty to the online service.

### 3.4 Study 2—email and brand credibility impact

Relevance of our model for online subscription services was also tested on three markets with different level of competition and consequently also of different level how customer perceived the commoditization of offered subscription service. As antecedents we select ECE and credibility, focal constructs were CBR of service company and trust and outcomes were reported attitudinal loyalty.

#### 3.4.1 Characteristics of the samples

Within one week after sending the questionnaire by email to, subscribers of paid and freemium service, who were most exposed to the direct email campaigns of the vendor during last two years since the start of the study, 1,962 complete responses were received in Croatia, 819 in Slovenia, and 780 in Turkey. Due to the control over the selection of respondents, we can be sure that relevant entities were included. Characteristics of the samples are presented on Table 24.

Table 25: Study 2—Characteristics of the samples

	Croatia		Slovenia		Turkey	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Total</b>	1,962	100%	819	100%	780	100%
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	583	30%	242	30%	470	60%
Female	1,379	70%	577	70%	310	40%
<b>Age</b>						
up to 24 years	14	1%	7	1%	88	11%
25–34 years	255	13%	114	14%	305	39%
35–44 year	637	32%	255	31%	204	26%
45–54 years	512	26%	220	27%	113	14%
55–64 years	476	24%	194	24%	56	7%
above 64 years	68	3%	29	4%	14	2%
<b>Has FB account</b>						
Yes	918	47%	432	53%	463	59%
No	1,044	53%	387	47%	317	41%
<b>Using FB</b>						
Daily	740	38%	286	35%	248	32%
Less frequent and no	1222	62%	533	65%	532	68%
<b>Purchase decision power</b>						
Decide or influence	1106	56%	368	45%	496	64%
Cannot influence	856	44%	452	55%	284	36%

Source: Own work.

To test CMB, we applied the marker variable test (Lindell & Whitney, 2001). As a variable unrelated to the study variable, we selected the respondent's answer regarding frequency of Facebook use. After adjusting for zero-order correlations by partitioning this proxy out, we found that all correlations remained significant after this adjustment. Therefore, it is unlikely that the relationships in the model were inflated by common method variance.

The non-response analysis was based on comparing the gender and subscription status of the respondents to all recipients of invitation to answer questionnaire and to non-response analysis in Study 1. In Croatia and in Slovenia, 30% of the respondents were male and 70% were female. In Turkey, male respondents were the majority (60%). The gender ratio of respondents on all markets correspond to the ratio in the initial databases and to the ratio in Study 1. Higher share of female users of subscription service in Slovenia and Croatia and higher share of male users in Turkey was confirmed also by data in vendors' CRM.

The age structure in Croatia and Slovenia is almost the same, while in Turkey more than half of respondents are younger than 35 years. This was also expected. In Turkey, compared to Slovenia and Croatia, younger generations of professionals are using online information services more than older generations.

Among the respondents, the share of subscribers was slightly higher than in the initial database as in the vendors CRM systems. Facebook usage could not be used for non-response analysis, because for the Slovenia and Turkey samples, we did not have data about the FB usage, except from the survey.

To conduct the exploratory factor analysis and test the structural model, we randomly selected 488 respondents from the Croatian sample, 409 from the Slovenian sample, and 397 from the Turkish sample.

### 3.4.2 Measurement model

Construct internal consistency and discriminant validity were examined using exploratory factor analysis. After an examination of correlations, indicator loadings, item content and results of EFA we selected the most valid items and dimensions for constructs that can be equally operationalized for studies on all three markets.

As already indicated, we omitted ECE affective dimension except for Email2b item (*Reading BRAND emails makes me proud to be a member of a legal community*), that fits well in ECE cognitive dimension. Dimensions CBR-good employer, CBR-reliable and financially strong, Trust ability and Trust - predictability were also omitted to make operationalization of CBR and Trust construct in Turkey comparable to operationalization on other two markets. Factor loadings, communalities, Cronbach's alphas and AVR are presented on Table 26.

The standardized factor loadings are all highly significant at  $p < 0.001$  and exceed 0.67 in all three datasets and Cronbach's alpha values are well above the value of 0.8 for all constructs.

Table 26: Study 2–Construct measurement

		<b>Croatia</b>		<b>Slovenia</b>		<b>Turkey</b>	
Code	Items	Factor loading	Communality	Factor loading	Communality	Factor loading	Communality
<b>Email communication exposure (ECE)</b>		<b>AVE=0.543</b>		<b>AVE=0.470</b>		<b>AVE=0.500</b>	
<b>ECE - behavioral</b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.920</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.897</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.927</math></b>	
Email1a	I spend a lot of time reading BRAND emails compared to other legal professional services emails.	0.789	0.827	0.780	0.744	0.830	0.857
Email1b	Whenever I'm reading legal professional services emails, I usually read BRAND emails.	0.843	0.889	0.883	0.890	0.825	0.870
Email1c	BRAND emails are one of the legal information services emails I usually read when I read legal information services emails.	0.831	0.856	0.877	0.867	0.836	0.894
<b>ECE - cognitive</b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.943</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.937</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.949</math></b>	
Email2b	Being a recipient of BRAND emails makes me proud to be a member of a legal community.	0.814	0.816	0.779	0.708	0.842	0.828
Email2c	Reading BRAND emails gets me to think about BRAND.	0.902	0.907	0.912	0.898	0.911	0.902
Email2d	I think about BRAND mailing a lot when I'm reading BRAND emails.	0.859	0.868	0.917	0.902	0.874	0.889
Email2e	Reading BRAND emails stimulates my interest to learn more about BRAND.	0.850	0.838	0.904	0.875	0.871	0.862
<b>ECE - intrusivness</b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.851</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.891</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.844</math></b>	
Email3a	Many of the services advertised by BRAND email do not perform as advertised.	0.730	0.542	0.748	0.561	0.828	0.697

(table continues)

(continued)

Email3b	Many of BRAND's email advertisements are annoying.	0.863	0.813	0.911	0.860	0.865	0.829
Email3c	There are too many advertisement emails in my inbox.	0.828	0.729	0.884	0.821	0.739	0.571
Email3d	BRAND email advertising is more manipulative than it is informative.	0.855	0.771	0.856	0.789	0.838	0.720
<b>Customer based reputation (CBR)</b>		<b>AVE=0.663</b>		<b>AVE=0.649</b>		<b>AVE=0.639</b>	
<b>CBR - customer orientation</b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.933</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.929</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.936</math></b>	
Rep1a	COMP has employees who are concerned about customer needs.	0.86	0.888	0.843	0.853	0.756	0.853
Rep1b	COMP has employees who treat customers courteously.	0.874	0.881	0.9	0.886	0.893	0.886
Rep1c	COMP is concerned about its customers.	0.863	0.879	0.879	0.904	0.884	0.904
<b>CBR - service quality</b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.833</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.888</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.910</math></b>	
Rep2a	COMP offers high-quality products and services.	0.808	0.832	0.84	0.848	0.798	0.848
Rep2b	COMP is a strong, reliable company.	0.741	0.813	0.803	0.842	0.83	0.842
Rep2c	COMP develops innovative services.	0.782	0.831	0.755	0.794	0.708	0.794
<b>CBR - social responsibility</b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.855</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.890</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.852</math></b>	
Rep2d	COMP seems to make an effort to create new jobs.	0.815	0.814	0.845	0.843	0.687	0.843
Rep2e	COMP would reduce its profits to be more socially responsible.	0.909	0.863	0.899	0.839	0.879	0.839
Rep2f	COMP seems to be a socially responsible company.	0.659	0.721	0.807	0.802	0.858	0.802
<b>Credibility</b>		<b>AVE=0.674 <math>\alpha=0.807</math></b>		<b>AVE= 0.737 <math>\alpha=0.860</math></b>		<b>AVE=0.795 <math>\alpha=0.914</math></b>	
Branda	BRAND reminds me of someone who's competent and knows what they are doing.	0.83	0.69	0.855	0.73	0.903	0.815
Brandb	BRAND doesn't pretend to be something it isn't.	0.725	0.526	0.801	0.641	0.869	0.755

(table continues)

(continued)

Brandc	BRAND is at the forefront of using technology to deliver a better service.	0.844	0.713	0.839	0.704	0.874	0.764
Brandd	BRAND's brand stands for expertise.	0.876	0.768	0.875	0.766	0.92	0.846
<b>Trust</b>		<b>AVE=0.795</b>		<b>AVE=0.573</b>		<b>AVE=0.791</b>	
<b>Trust - Integrity</b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.899</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.929</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.922</math></b>	
Trust1a	I tend to trust the BRAND service.	0.864	0.853	0.879	0.821	0.874	0.821
Trust1b	Promises made by a provider of BRAND service are likely to be reliable.	0.847	0.825	0.897	0.902	0.8	0.902
Trust1c	I do not doubt the honesty of the provider of BRAND service.	0.702	0.781	0.845	0.834	0.719	0.834
Trust1d	I expect that the provider of BRAND service will keep promises they make.	0.685	0.769	0.667	0.802	0.751	0.802
<b>Trust - Benevolence</b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.842</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.834</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.883</math></b>	
Trust1e	I expect that I can count on the provider of BRAND service to consider how its actions affect me.	0.666	0.658	0.857	0.802	0.752	0.802
Trust1f	I expect that the provider of BRAND service has intentions that are benevolent.	0.848	0.84	0.84	0.832	0.889	0.832
Trust2a	I expect that the provider of BRAND service is well meaning.	0.854	0.795	0.757	0.701	0.798	0.701
<b>Attitudinal loyalty</b>		<b>AVE=0.727 <math>\alpha=0.896</math></b>		<b>AVE= 0.782 <math>\alpha=0.924</math></b>		<b>AVE=0.837 <math>\alpha=0.948</math></b>	
Loy1a	I prefer BRAND over competitors.	0.868	0.753	0.889	0.79	0.882	0.778
Loy1b	I enjoy doing business with BRAND/BRAND.	0.753	0.567	0.84	0.706	0.925	0.856
Loy1c	I consider BRAND my first preference.	0.885	0.784	0.908	0.825	0.893	0.798
Loy1d	I have a positive attitude toward BRAND.	0.866	0.75	0.886	0.786	0.937	0.878
Loy1e	I really like BRAND.	0.883	0.779	0.884	0.781	0.936	0.875

(table continues)

(continued)

Behavioral loyalty		AVE=0.674 $\alpha$ =0.753		AVE= 0.742 $\alpha$ =0.831		AVE=0.748 $\alpha$ =0.825	
Loy2b	I use only BRAND service.	0.791	0.625	0.834	0.695	0.819	0.672
Loy2c	The last time I used an online legal information service, I used BRAND.	0.866	0.749	0.9	0.809	0.896	0.804
Loy2d	I am a committed subscriber to BRAND service.	0.804	0.647	0.86	0.74	0.878	0.772

Source: Own work.

The constructs are internally consistent as the lowest composite reliability scores for ECE are 0.76, 0.71, and 0.728, while the scores for all other constructs are above 0.84 (Table 25).

Table 27: Means, standard deviations, AVEs, and correlations among constructs

Croatia (N=488)		Mean	SD	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	ECE	4.652	1.389	0.764	0.543	<b>0.737</b>					
2.	Reputation	5.383	0.961	0.854	0.663	0.606	<b>0.814</b>				
3.	Trust	5.757	0.845	0.886	0.795	0.564	0.678	<b>0.892</b>			
4.	Credibility	5.767	0.883	0.892	0.674	0.521	0.739	0.621	<b>0.821</b>		
5.	Att. loyalty	5.727	0.897	0.930	0.727	0.495	0.688	0.719	0.605	<b>0.853</b>	
6.	Beh. loyalty	4.894	1.416	0.861	0.674	0.299	0.445	0.445	0.408	0.684	<b>0.821</b>
Slovenia (N=409)		Mean	SD	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	ECE	4.551	1.468	0.710	0.470	<b>0.686</b>					
2.	Reputation	5.252	1.044	0.846	0.649	0.501	<b>0.806</b>				
3.	Trust	5.889	0.889	0.721	0.573	0.481	0.678	<b>0.757</b>			
4.	Credibility	5.554	1.003	0.918	0.737	0.515	0.742	0.653	<b>0.858</b>		
5.	Att. loyalty	5.656	1.071	0.947	0.782	0.549	0.639	0.757	0.608	<b>0.884</b>	
6.	Beh. loyalty	4.638	1.633	0.896	0.742	0.446	0.353	0.367	0.366	0.600	<b>0.861</b>
Turkey (N=397)		Mean	SD	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	ECE	5.040	1.337	0.728	0.500	<b>0.707</b>					
2.	Reputation	5.521	1.062	0.840	0.639	0.663	<b>0.799</b>				
3.	Trust	5.689	1.053	0.883	0.791	0.742	0.871	<b>0.889</b>			
4.	Credibility	5.590	1.053	0.939	0.795	0.595	0.814	0.762	<b>0.892</b>		
5.	Att. loyalty	5.677	1.141	0.942	0.837	0.708	0.746	0.813	0.692	<b>0.915</b>	
6.	Beh. loyalty	4.929	1.562	0.899	0.748	0.475	0.455	0.489	0.426	0.641	<b>0.865</b>

Note: Bold figures on the diagonal are square root of AVE, correlations are below the diagonal.

Source: Own work.

In terms of measurement invariance, the goodness-of-fit statistics with respect to the three-group unconstrained model show good fit with  $\chi^2 = 406.35$  ( $df = 96$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), CFI = 0.962, RMSEA = 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that the model exhibits configural invariance. To test for metric invariance, factor loadings were constrained to be equal across groups. Full metric invariance was not achieved ( $\Delta\chi^2(10) = 25$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ), but the change in CFI between

the unconstrained and constrained model is only 0.001, suggesting that model fit was not significantly reduced by the imposition of factor loading constraints (G. W. Cheung & Rensvold, 2002).

The discriminant validity of the constructs was determined by comparing the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct with the correlations between the constructs. The results fully support discriminant validity for the Croatia and Slovenia dataset, as the square root of AVE of each construct is greater than its shared variance with other constructs. To meet this strictest criterion of discriminant validity, the correlation between reputation, trust, and brand credibility in the Turkish dataset is too high. Our assessment is that due to the shorter duration of the service's existence in the Turkish market, customers have difficulty in distinguishing between the service quality dimension of reputation, the expertise dimension of brand credibility and the integrity dimension of trust. This also confirms the high correlation between these dimensions.

The items for ECE, CBR and Trust were parceled using the internal-consistency approach (Kishton & Widaman, 1994; Wu & Wen, 2011). The items and dimensions for each construct were selected after exploratory factor analysis so that they were consistent across all three markets.

### 3.4.3 Assessment of the structural model

To test our hypotheses, we used SEM in AMOS 27.0 (Table 26). The goodness-of-fit statistics related to the three-group unconstrained model show an acceptable fit with  $\chi^2 = 549$  (df = 117;  $p < 0.001$ ), NFI = 0.935, CFI = 0.948, RMSEA = 0.053, therefore we found that the hypothesized multigroup causal structure model fits well across three markets.

Table 28: SEM results and results of path invariance test.

Paths	Standardized $\beta$			Path invariance test	
	Croatia	Slovenia	Turkey	$\Delta\chi^2_{(2)}$	p
H3a: ECE → Reputation	0.587**	0.501**	0.671**	1.678	0.432
H3b: ECE → Credibility	0.142*	0.191**	0.075	2.62	0.27
H3c: ECE → Trust	0.182**	0.241**	0.25**	2.479	0.29
H4a: Reputation → Credibility	0.661**	0.648**	0.817**	6.828	0.033
H4b: Reputation → Trust	0.427**	0.422**	0.558**	9.762	0.008
H5: Credibility → Trust	0.25**	0.276**	0.211*	1.01	0.6
H6: Trust → Att. loy.	0.765**	0.842**	0.839**	38.6	<0.001
H8: Att.Loy. → Beh. loy.	0.684**	0.6**	0.665**	6.59	0.001

Notes: Unconstrained model fit:  $\chi^2 = 549$ , df = 117, RMSEA = 0.05, NFI = 0.94.

Croatia model fit:  $\chi^2 = 165,57$ , df = 38, RMSEA = 0.083, NFI=0.950

Slovenia model fit  $\chi^2 = 197.04$ , df = 38, RMSEA = 0.098, NFI=0.911

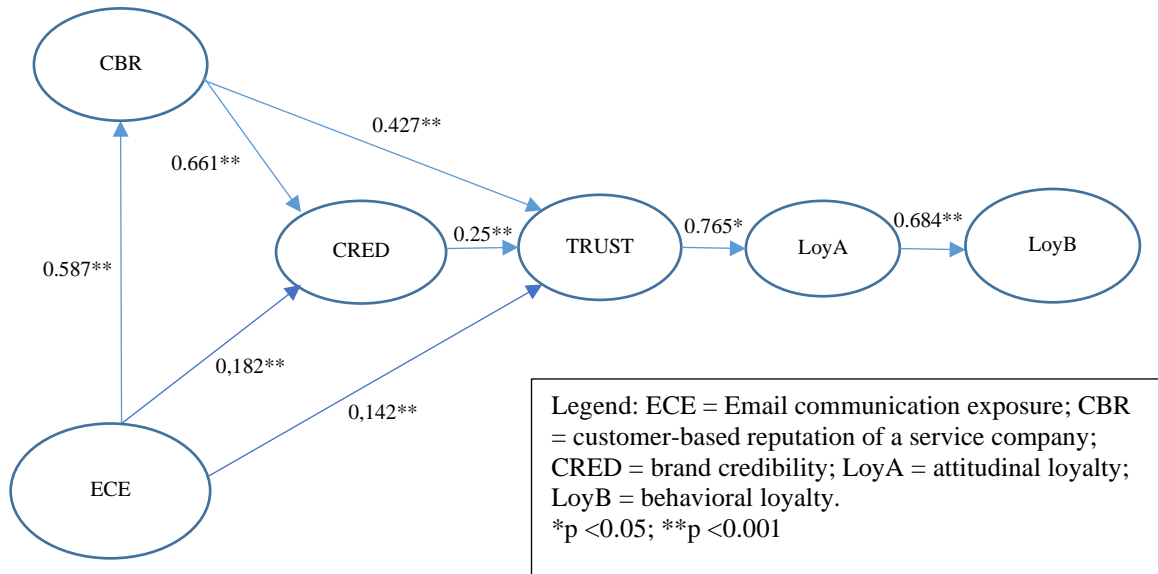
Turkey model fit:  $\chi^2 = 158.90$ , df = 38, RMSEA = 0.090, NFI=0.948

\*p < 0.05; \*\*p < 0.001; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; NFI = normalized fit index.

Source: Own work.

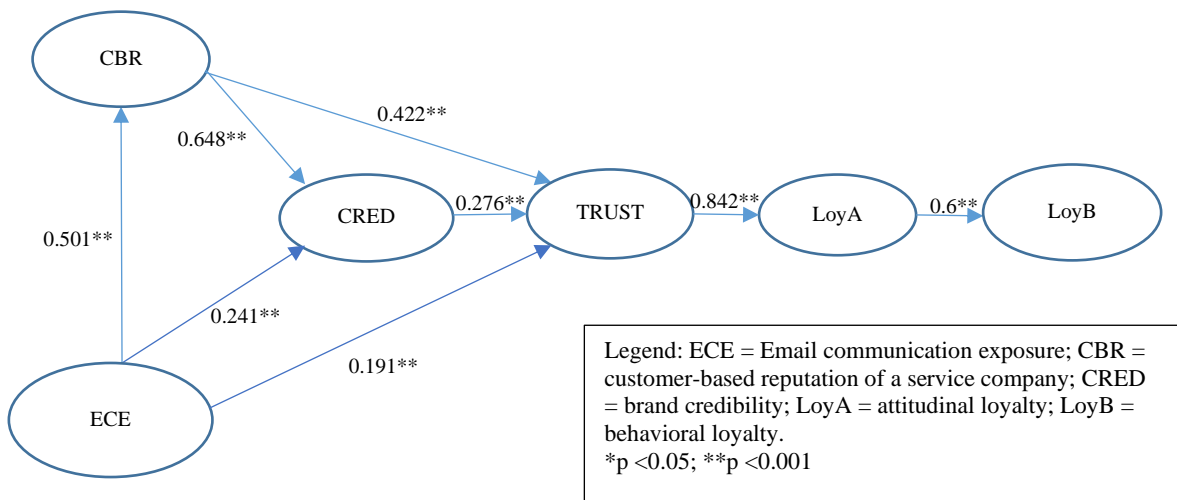
All hypothesized relationships are confirmed and are statistically significant for all three datasets. The only exception is the hypothesized influence of ECE on brand credibility in the Turkish dataset (H1b Turkey). In Croatia and Slovenia, the influence of ECE on brand credibility is relatively weak. In Turkey, where the brand is less known because it has been in the market for fewer years and consequently consumers were exposed to fewer years of email communication, the relationship is not yet established.

Figure 8: Study 2 - Hypothesized path values - Croatia



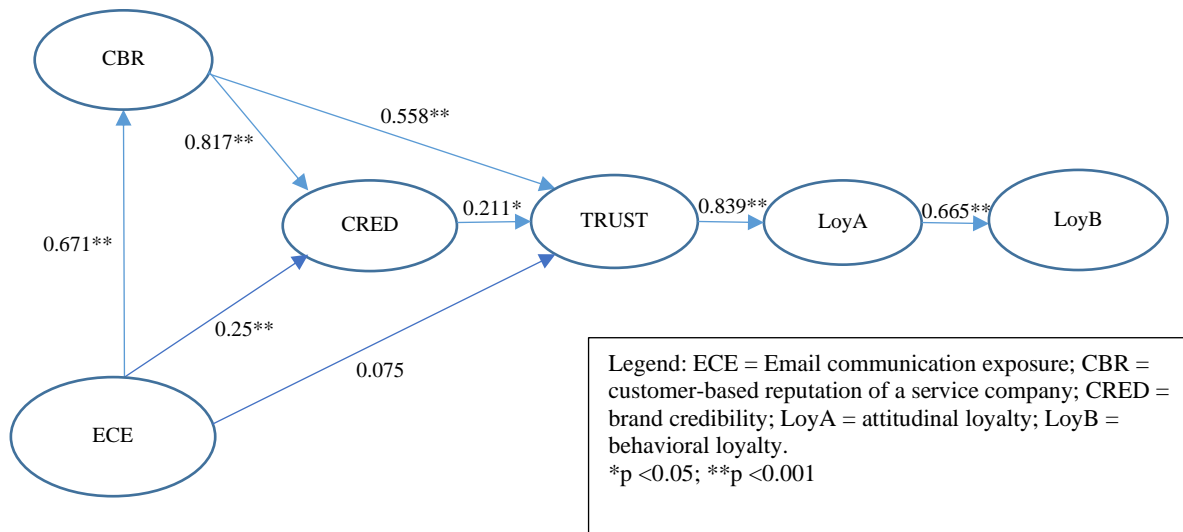
Source: Own work.

Figure 9: Study 2 - Hypothesized path values - Slovenia



Source: Own work.

Figure 10: Study 2 - Hypothesized path values - Turkey



Source: Own work.

ECE has direct positive impact on trust (H1c) and strong indirect impact via reputation (H1a and H2b). Reputation has a significant positive effect on trust directly (H2b) and via credibility. The direct impact of credibility on trust is relatively weak in all three markets, but statistically significant. The positive chain of effects trust → attitudinal loyalty → behavioral loyalty is, as for many similar models, also confirmed for the model presented in this study for all three datasets.

To test the invariance of the model at the structural level, all structural path weights were constrained to be the same in all markets. The constrained model is statistically significantly different from the unconstrained model ( $\Delta\chi^2_{(46)} = 451.6$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

When invariance was examined at the single path level, we found that the impact of ECE on reputation, credibility, and trust is invariant across all three markets, which is also true for the impact of credibility on trust, although the latter impact is small and not significant for the Turkey dataset.

The difference in the impact of reputation on credibility and on trust is statistically significant. It is highest for Turkish customers of the online subscription service, however there is no significant difference for the same relationship between the Slovenian and Croatian market. The influence of trust on attitudinal loyalty is higher in Turkey and Slovenia than in Croatia. Conversely, the influence of attitudinal loyalty on behavioral loyalty is highest in Croatia, followed by Turkey and Slovenia.

#### 3.4.4 Discussion and Implications

The aim of Study 2 was to investigate the behavior of customers of subscription online services by developing a relationship-marketing effectiveness model. We showed that the model, with customer trust in an online subscription service as a focal construct, ECE, service provider reputation, and brand credibility as antecedents, and loyalty as an outcome, adequately models customer behavior in markets that differ according to the service's competitive position in the market.

The online legal subscription service used for our research is very well established in Slovenia, where it is a well-known name for this type of service (25 years in the market, with more than 80% market share). In Croatia, the service has existed for 10 years and has also captured more than 70% market share during this time, while in Turkey the same service was established only five years ago and competes with a well-established market leader and several other competitors.

The fact that email communication is a strong driver of trust and trustworthy behavior in all three markets is an important finding useful for marketing practitioners, but also a challenging phenomenon for future research. How different segments of customers and potential customers respond to email communications and how to delineate email communications as part of content marketing, marketing automation, and email advertising is an interesting future research question.

In measuring the reputation of a service firm, we found that the customer orientation, service quality, and social responsibility dimensions of the reputation construct can be used unambiguously in culturally diverse markets. The other two dimensions proposed by Walsh and Beatty (2007), "reliable and financially strong company" and "good employer" can only be used if customers have some knowledge about the company beyond their experience as users of the service. In our study, this was not the case in the Turkish market, so we omitted these dimensions from our measurement model.

The impact of reputation on trust and credibility is highest in Turkey. In our opinion, this is related to the fact that the service is relatively new in the Turkish market and for this reason Turkish customers are more careful in assessing the reputation of the provider. More in-depth research is needed to confirm this assumption.

The lowest impact of attitudinal loyalty on behavioral loyalty in Slovenia can be explained by the fact that most customers in Slovenia have open-ended subscription renewal contracts and are less likely to show loyal behavior. The mean value of behavioral loyalty is also the lowest in Slovenia.

### 3.5 Commoditization moderation

Nowadays, many of online service offerings are increasingly undifferentiated, price sensitive, and have low switching cost (Bronkhorst et al., 2019). The same is also the case for some online subscriptions.

In line with our research question, we are interested if established measures of commoditization are appropriate to assess level of commoditization of online service as perceived by customers, and how commoditization perception moderates the relationship between antecedents and trust in Study 2 model.

#### 3.5.1 Measurement model

All commoditization perception items were subjected to exploratory factor analysis with principal axis extraction method and Varimax with Kaiser normalization rotation. The results of factor analysis are presented on Table 27. All three dimensions (i.e., first-order constructs of service homogeneity, price sensitivity, and switching costs) explain 75.5%, 76.4%, and 73.8% of the cumulative variance in Croatia, Slovenia, and Turkey, respectively.

The standardized factor loadings are all highly significant at  $p < 0.001$  and exceed 0.6 in all three datasets except COMM2a and COMM2b in the Croatian sample, which have also the lowest communalities in all three samples. Due to low factor loading we have omitted item “COMM2b If price of subscription service I use increases I would consider canceling a subscription” from further analyses.

Table 29: Commoditization perception—construct measurement

	Commoditization perception	Croatia AVE=75.5%		Slovenia AVE=76.4%		Turkey AVE=73.8%	
Code		Items	Factor loading	Communality	Factor loading	Communality	Factor loading
	<b>Service homogeneity</b>	$\alpha=0.927$		$\alpha=0.934$		$\alpha=0.925$	
COMM1a	Most legal information services like BRAND have no perceivable differences.	0.897	0.823	0.840	0.743	0.888	0.816
COMM1b	Service standards of information services like BRAND are quite identical.	0.931	0.880	0.922	0.882	0.915	0.884
COMM1c	The quality and accuracy of most information services like BRAND are identical.	0.864	0.805	0.921	0.873	0.840	0.776
COMM1d	All legal information services like BRAND offer almost the same content.	0.832	0.779	0.888	0.840	0.855	0.794

(table continues)

(continued)

<b>Price sensitivity</b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.811</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.838</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.847</math></b>	
COMM1e	I put extra effort into finding lower prices for legal information services.	0.871	0.838	0.842	0.732	0.862	0.797
COMM1f	I consider the money saved by finding cheaper subscriptions for legal information services to be worth the effort.	0.856	0.833	0.800	0.781	0.787	0.700
COMM2a	Cost of subscription to legal information services is more important to me than brand of the service I am subscribed to.	0.570	0.541	0.733	0.636	0.692	0.563
COMM2b	If the price of the subscription service I use increases, I will consider canceling my subscription.	0.399	0.698	0.613	0.772	0.718	0.722
<b>Switching costs</b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.867</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.847</math></b>		<b><math>\alpha=0.833</math></b>	
COMM2c	The costs for switching to another provider of legal information services are low.	0.764	0.666	0.820	0.692	0.813	0.718
COMM2d	The process of switching to another provider of legal information services is quick and easy.	0.847	0.737	0.853	0.766	0.841	0.756
COMM2e	If the price of a subscription service I use increases, I will consider switching to another provider.	0.830	0.772	0.665	0.793	0.616	0.710
COMM2f	I would have no problem adjusting to use of legal information services from another provider.	0.806	0.681	0.702	0.660	0.735	0.624

Source: Own work.

The first-order constructs exhibited internal consistency and reliability (composite reliability values above 0.81) and convergent validity (AVE values exceeding 0.56). See Table 28. Internal consistency was very good as Cronbach alphas for all dimensions and samples are above 0.83. The constructs also exhibited discriminant validity, with the square root of AVE for each construct exceeding the correlation coefficients of the construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Table 28).

In terms of measurement invariance, the goodness-of-fit statistics with respect to the three-group unconstrained model show very good fit with  $\chi^2 = 450,996$  (df = 102;  $p < 0.001$ ), CFI = 0.962, RMSEA = 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that the model exhibits configural invariance. To test for metric invariance, factor loadings were constrained to be equal across groups. Full metric invariance was not achieved ( $\Delta\chi^2(20) = 38$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), but the change in CFI between the unconstrained and constrained model is only 0.002, suggesting that model

fit was not significantly reduced by the imposition of factor loading constraints (G. W. Cheung & Rensvold, 2002).

*Table 30: Means, standard deviations, AVEs, and correlations among first-order constructs*

<b>Croatia (N=488)</b>		<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
1	Service homogeneity	3.499	1.253	0.927	0.762	<b>0.873</b>		
2	Price sensitivity	3.812	1.317	0.828	0.625	0.447	<b>0.79</b>	
3	Switching costs	4.316	1.070	0.869	0.625	0.281	0.525	<b>0.79</b>
<b>Slovenia (N=409)</b>		<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
1	Service homogeneity	3.639	1.296	0.936	0.785	<b>0.886</b>		
2	Price sensitivity	4.136	1.324	0.81	0.59	0.456	<b>0.768</b>	
3	Switching costs	4.395	1.154	0.849	0.586	0.334	0.627	<b>0.765</b>
<b>Turkey (N=397)</b>		<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
1	Service homogeneity	3.844	1.380	0.925	0.757	<b>0.87</b>		
2	Price sensitivity	4.483	1.510	0.825	0.616	0.459	<b>0.785</b>	
3	Switching costs	4.641	1.226	0.835	0.56	0.369	0.617	<b>0.748</b>

*Source: Own work.*

A one-way ANOVA was performed to determine whether the differences between three country samples for each first-order construct have significant statistical relevance. There was significant difference in mean for service homogeneity [ $F(2,1293) = 25.5, p < 0.001$ ], price sensitivity [ $F(2,1293) = 25.2, p < 0.001$ ], and switching costs [ $F(2,1293) = 13.9, p < 0.001$ ].

Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey test were carried out. Regarding service homogeneity there was a significant difference between Croatian and Slovenian sample ( $p = 0.013$ ), between Croatian and Turkish sample ( $p = 0.001$ ) and between Slovenian and Turkish sample ( $p < 0.001$ ). The same holds also for the price sensitivity of customers in three countries: Croatian–Slovenian sample ( $p = 0.003$ ), Croatian–Turkish sample ( $p < 0.001$ ) and Slovenian–Turkish sample ( $p = 0.001$ ). The difference in perception of switching costs is statistically significant only between Croatian–Turkish sample ( $p < 0.001$ ) and Slovenian–Turkish sample ( $p < 0.001$ ). We will discuss the difference in means for all three dimensions on three markets in Discussion and Implications subsection.

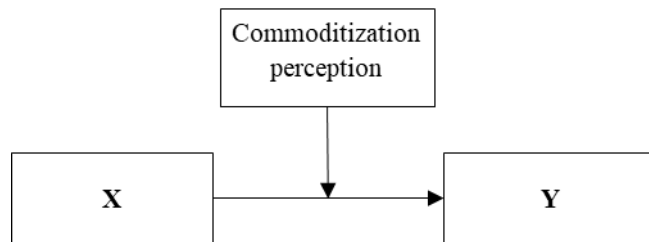
### 3.5.2 Moderation analyses

The items for Commoditization Perception were parceled into three dimensions using the internal-consistency approach (Kishton & Widaman, 1994; Wu & Wen, 2011): service homogeneity, price sensitivity and switching costs. To perform moderation analysis, the dimensions were then aggregated into a single measure of commoditization perception.

Moderation analyses was performed by using regression analysis in PROCESS 3.2 for SPSS, following the recommendations in Hayes (2013, 2017) and Cohen et al. (2003).

First, we checked direct moderation effect on relation between antecedent X ECE and focal construct Y (Trust), then between ECE (X) end mediators Y (CBR and credibility) and then between mediators (X) and trust (Y). For calculation we used Hayes PROCESS SPSS Model 8 (Hayes, 2017).

*Figure 11: Hayes PROCESS Model 1*



*Source: Adapted from Hayes (2017)*

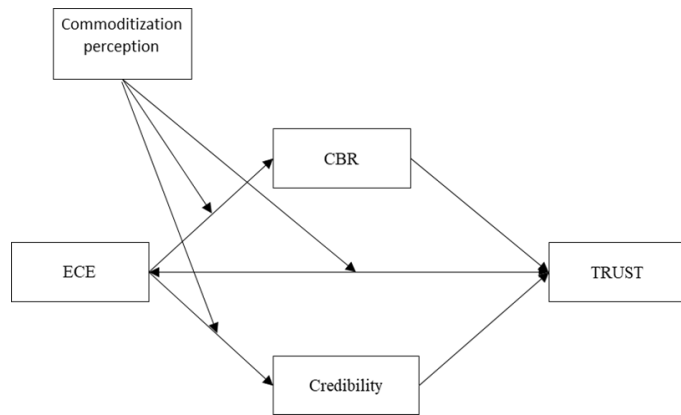
Out of 15 different potential moderation effects for three data samples only in Slovenian sample the commoditization perception moderation effect on relationship between credibility and trust was statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.115$ ,  $SE = 0.37$ ,  $t = 3.087$ ,  $p = 0.002$ , confidence interval [0.042, 0.189]). So, in the case of Slovenian subscribers' perception of higher commoditization level of the service they use enhance the positive impact of credibility on trust. This result is surprising and not supported by theory. We will discuss it in the next sub-chapter.

Additionally, we have explored moderation effect of commoditization perception within moderation–mediation models:

- a) on impact of ECE on CBR, on trust and credibility (Hayes PROCESS Model 8, Figure 8)
- b) on impact of CBR on credibility and trust (Hayes PROCESS Model 8, Figure 9)
- c) of impact of ECE on CBR and on impact of CBR on trust (Hayes PROCESS Model 59, Figure 10)

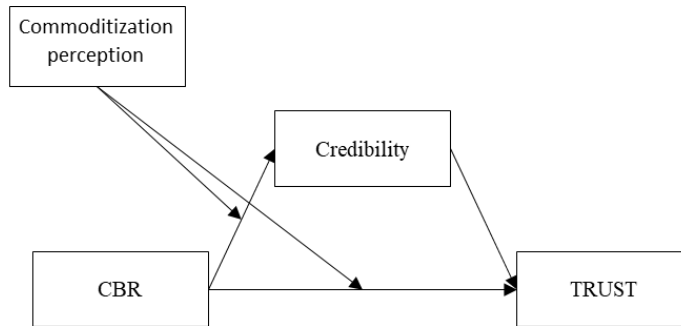
The results of analysis of moderation effect within moderation–mediation models are presented in Table 29.

Figure 12: Hayes PROCESS Model 8a



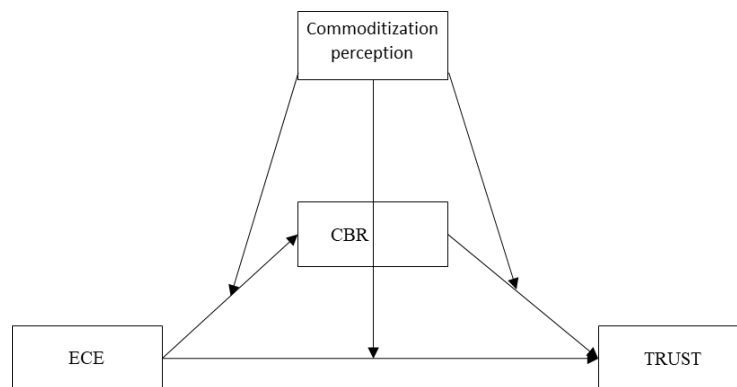
Source: Adapted from Hayes (2017)

Figure 13: Hayes PROCESS Model 8b



Source: Adapted from Hayes (2017)

Figure 14: Hayes PROCESS Model 59c



Source: Adapted from Hayes (2017)

Table 31: Analysis of moderation effect in moderation–mediation models

<b>CRO</b>	<b>Moderation effect</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
1a	ECE x COMM → CBR	-0.026	0.308	-0.858	0.932	-0.631	0.578
1b	ECE x COMM → Credibility	-0.098	0.323	-0.303	0.762	-0.732	0.537
1c	ECE x COMM → Trust	-0.345	0.026	-1.343	0.180	-0.850	0.016
2a	CBR x COMM → Credibility	0.026	0.037	0.702	0.483	-0.047	0.099
2b	CBR x COMM → Trust	0.030	0.036	0.851	0.395	-0.040	0.101
3a	ECE x COMM → CBR	-0.003	0.031	-0.086	0.932	-0.063	0.058
3b	CBR x COMM → Trust	0.084	0.043	1.957	0.051	0.000	0.168
<b>3c</b>	<b>ECE x COMM → Trust</b>	<b>-0.070</b>	<b>0.031</b>	<b>-2.223</b>	<b>0.027</b>	<b>-0.132</b>	<b>-0.008</b>
<b>SLO</b>	<b>Moderation effect</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
1a	ECE x COMM → CBR	-0.004	0.033	-0.129	0.897	-0.068	0.06
1b	ECE x COMM → Credibility	-0.01	0.035	-0.291	0.771	-0.079	0.058
1c	ECE x COMM → Trust	-0.049	0.025	-1.971	0.049	-0.099	0
<b>2a</b>	<b>CBR x COMM → Credibility</b>	<b>0.115</b>	<b>0.037</b>	<b>3.087</b>	<b>0.002</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>0.189</b>
2b	CBR x COMM → Trust	-0.013	0.035	-0.365	0.715	-0.081	0.055
3a	ECE x COMM → CBR	-0.004	0.033	-0.129	0.897	-0.068	0.06
3b	CBR x COMM → Trust	0.048	0.038	1.262	0.208	-0.027	0.123
<b>3c</b>	<b>ECE x COMM → Trust</b>	<b>-0.066</b>	<b>0.028</b>	<b>-2.327</b>	<b>0.02</b>	<b>-0.122</b>	<b>-0.01</b>
<b>TR</b>	<b>Moderation effect</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
1a	ECE x COMM → CBR	-0.003	0.031	-0.099	0.922	-0.064	0.058
1b	ECE x COMM → Credibility	-0.011	0.035	-0.318	0.75	-0.08	0.058
1c	ECE x COMM → Trust	0.005	0.023	0.238	0.812	-0.039	0.05
2a	CBR x COMM → Credibility	-0.001	0.027	-0.026	0.979	-0.053	0.052
2b	CBR x COMM → Trust	-0.037	0.026	-1.431	0.153	-0.087	0.014
3a	ECE x COMM → CBR	-0.003	0.031	-0.099	0.922	-0.064	0.058
3b	CBR x COMM → Trust	-0.008	0.03	-0.263	0.793	-0.067	0.051
3c	ECE x COMM → Trust	0.007	0.027	0.24	0.81	-0.047	0.061

Source: Own work.

Only three moderation effects are statistically significant. In Slovenian sample commoditization perception enhances the positive relationship between CBR and Credibility in a model with CBR as antecedent and credibility as mediator. This effect was not expected. In Croatian and Slovenian sample in PROCESS Model 59, the negative moderation effect of commoditization perception on relationship between ECE and trust is statistically significant. So, more is service seen as commoditized by subscribers in Slovenia and Croatia, less effective is impact of email communication on trust to the online service.

### 3.5.3 Discussion and Implications

We have shown that measure of commoditization as developed in the literature (Reimann et al., 2010) for highly commoditized services and industries and measuring industry managers perception can be successfully adopted and applied also for measuring low to medium

commoditized online subscription services where customer perception of commoditization is measured and not perception of industry practitioners. For operationalizing commoditization perception as a second-order construct, we have used first-order constructs service homogeneity, price sensitivity, and switching costs. The fourth dimension, industry stability proposed by Reimann et al. (2010) is not relevant when commoditization perception of customers is measured.

The online subscription service in Turkey is perceived as more commoditized than the same service on other two markets. The least commoditized is the service in Croatia. The levels of commoditization perception are in line with the reports received by sales managers from each market. More commoditized is service with more competitors and with shorter presence on the market. The overview of the market position of service as reported by sales managers is presented on Table 30.

*Table 32: Mean commoditization measure and market position*

<b>Market</b>	<b>Mean commoditization perception measure</b>	<b>Years on the market before the survey</b>	<b>Number of direct commercial competitors</b>	<b>Estimated market share</b>
Croatia	3.876	9	1	80%
Slovenia	4.057	24	1	80%
Turkey	4.441	4	7	15%

Note: Data about market position were reported by sales manager in each market.

*Source: Own work.*

The differences between three country samples for each first-order construct have significant statistical relevance, however post hoc comparisons using the Tukey test has shown that the difference in perception of switching costs between Croatian and Slovenian sample is not statistically significant. This can be explained, that in both countries majority of subscribers have open-ended subscription contract, with the same cancellation period, and that both services offer same personalization features that usually increase switching costs.

In our study we have found only one direct moderation effect of commoditization on a relationship in our model. In Slovenian sample commoditization positively enhances positive impact of credibility on trust. This effect is not supported by theory, and it is also contra intuitive. One would expect that more the service is commoditized, lower is positive effect of any antecedent on trust. We can explain the result by peculiarity of Slovenian subscription service. As being one of the first such internet-based service in Europe (online since 1995) the service is a household name among legal professionals. Perception of commoditization is low, and our conjecture is that users that trust service more are more aware about the competitor offering and about commoditization. The same argument can explain another unusual moderation effect in the Slovenian sample. Power users that are more knowledgeable about the market are more aware about the commoditization and perceive the service more credible.

We hypothesized negative moderation effect of commoditization on relationship between trust and its antecedents as analogy with negative impact found in three studies:

- 1) For highly commoditized products, commoditization (product homogeneity dimension) as perceived by customers has a negative moderating impact on relationship between expenditures allocated to private labels as a share of total expenditures in the store and store loyalty) and loyalty to the store (Koschate-Fischer et al., 2014).
- 2) Reimann et al. (2010) found that commoditization measured from the industry practitioner perspective is a moderator between marketing strategies and business performance across several industries. They have shown that commoditization has negative moderating impact on relationship between operational excellence and performance.
- 3) From industry practitioner perspective negative moderating impact of commoditization exists on positive relationship between different types of innovation in information technology products and IT firms' business performance (Bronkhorst et al., 2019).

All of the studies on which we relied for our hypothesis if a negative moderating effect of commoditization perception exists were conducted in highly commoditized settings/environments. For the retail sector, Koschate-Fischer et al. (2014) point out that the negative moderation effect exists only for highly commoditized categories. The services in our research are not highly commoditized, which is likely the main reason why we do not find a moderating effect of commoditization for most relationships between trust and its antecedents.

The only negative moderating effect of commoditization in line with expectations was found for relation between ECE and trust, where ECE is an antecedent and the CBR of a service firm is a mediator and where commoditization moderation is measured for positive relations ECE-trust, ECE-CBR, and CBR-trust. The effect is not statistically significant for the Turkish sample. This is probably due to lower intensity of email marketing in Turkey compared to Slovenia and Croatia. In Turkey informative, quality email messages are sent on the average once per month, while in Croatia and Slovenia, users of subscription service receive such messages at least weekly.

An important managerial implication of our commoditization study is extension of usage commoditization measure to medium and low commoditized online services. Measure can help marketing managers to count in commoditization level in their marketing strategies and plans. It can also help investors to assess commoditization level and growth potential of an online service company.

Regarding negative moderation of commoditization on trust-enhancing relations we found some evidence, that such negative impact can appear, however managers should be cautious before they apply this to their marketing strategies, (especially if they are dealing with low commoditized services) and start for instance saving on trust-enhancing activities. They should check if negative moderation is caused by commoditization or maybe is the consequence of specifics linked to the particular antecedent or specific trust perceptions.

## **GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

In the final chapter of the thesis, we are summarizing the research endeavors and findings presented in the previous chapters. We describe theoretical contribution and managerial implication of our research.

In our work we addressed all three research questions that were set up at the conception of thesis subject.

1. We conceptualized and operationalized SE, ECE, brand credibility and CBR of a service company, trust and loyalty (attitudinal and behavioral) constructs for online subscription service setting. We assessed the impact of the antecedents on trust and loyalty.
2. We adopted commoditization measure as established in literature (Reimann et al., 2010) to the online subscriptions services setting, so that can be used for measuring commoditization perception of medium to low commoditized services. We verified commoditization measure on three markets with the different level of service commoditization and we explored how commoditization moderates the relationship between antecedents and trust.
3. We described online subscription services customer attitudes and behavior with a relationship-marketing effectiveness model in two studies. We presented theoretical foundations for social media and email communication role within the models, and we verified the models with data from two online surveys.

### **Summary of the findings of the dissertation**

Findings in first chapter of the thesis are result of extensive literature review. In marketing literature, we have sought for various definitions of subscription services and of online services. Also considering conceptualization of subscription services by business literature (Baxter, 2015, 2016, 2020; Janzer, 2017; Lecky, 2018; Tzuo, 2018; Warrillow, 2015) we have defined online subscription services as

1. a long-term contractual arrangement that provides for repeated use or consumption of the service or good (Bischof et al., 2020);
2. commitment of customers to purchase a preselected combination of service units or product assortments at a fixed price (subscription pricing; Weinhardt et al., 2009);

3. the service where the marginal cost of production or service provision is very low or negligible (Bala, 2012);
4. the business that promotes interactivity between customers or users and has a positive network effect (Etzion & Pang, 2014).

Based on literature review we have also outlined marketing concepts that appeared most often in the literature and are assumed to be most relevant for the of online subscription services setting. From vendor perspective these are CLV and the related concepts: churn, retention, renewal, LCR, switching costs, pricing, and freemium and free trial marketing tactics. From customer perspective these are WTP, customer-journey-related concepts: Acquisition, Purchase intention (intention to subscribe), Demand–Customer behavior in the context of relationship marketing and consumer experience. We presented literature findings related to each marketing concept that are most important for online subscription services, which offer theoretical base for the findings and/or important managerial implications.

As a motive to implement subscription business model literature cite only recurring revenue, while the most often cited motives of customers to engage in subscription relationship are convenience, curation, access, and entertainment. We presented main subscription industries (Telecommunication, Media, SaaS, Memberships, Subscription boxes, IoT) according to marginal costs of service provision and according to level of curation or personalization.

In the conclusion of the first chapter, we present main findings from the literature that are relevant for online subscription services and are related to relationship-marketing effectiveness and commoditization.

In the second chapter we conceptualize the constructs used in our models and we outline hypotheses for model development. The conceptualizations from the literature are adopted to the online subscription service setting. Hypotheses are developed, based on the marketing theory and on the similar research published in the literature. We have developed two models with trust as a focal construct and loyalty as an outcome.

In first model (Study 1) we explore the interplay of SE and ECE in driving CBR of a service company and trust. The second model (Study 2) does not include SE as an antecedent but compared to Study 1, we have added brand credibility as an antecedent and mediator to trust. The second chapter is concluded by conceptualization of commoditization in relation to online subscription services.

Third chapter is devoted to empirical research. Following the conceptual framework explained in second chapter, we have operationalized constructs for both studies. Loyalty was operationalized in the questionnaire as attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. Additionally, we have conceptualized behavioral loyalty as observed loyalty in the vendor CRM system. The measure of observed loyalty is natural logarithm of (number of accessed service documents + 1 document) in the period of two years since the conduction of the online survey for Study 1. The English questionnaire was translated into Croatian (for Study 1 and

Study 2), Slovenian and Turkish (for Study 2) and pretested on a small group of respondents to ensure that all items were understandable, and no difficulties were encountered in responding.

The first study showed that SE affects customer trust and the reputation of a service firm only indirectly by positively influencing ECE. SE is the construct least correlated with observed loyalty, which indicates that customers do not strongly relate their SE with service usage. Meanwhile, social media and email communication are seen as two communication channels between the customer and service provider, and the positive impact of SE on ECE is in line with the authors' expectations and social presence/media richness theory. ECE positively affects the CBR of a service firm and customer trust in the online service to which the email communication refers. The positive impact of customer trust in an online service on customer loyalty to the service and in turn the positive impact of self-reported loyalty on observed loyalty, are also confirmed.

The aim of second study was to investigate the behavior of customers of subscription online services within marketing effectiveness model on three markets on which customers perceive the commoditization level of the online subscription service differently. In second study we operationalized ECE in line with proposed engagement operationalization as combination of behavioral and cognitive dimensions and inverse advertising intrusiveness dimension. In measuring the reputation of a service firm, we found that the customer reputation, service quality, and social responsibility dimensions of the reputation construct can be used unambiguously in culturally diverse markets. The other two dimensions proposed by Walsh and Beatty (2007), "reliable and financially strong company" and "good employer" can only be used if customers have some knowledge about the company beyond their experience as users of the service. In our study, this was not the case in the Turkish market, so we omitted these dimensions from our measurement model. The measurement model was confirmed by exploratory factor analysis. The measurement model exhibits configural invariance, while full metric invariance was not achieved. Positive impact of ECE on CBR and Trust was confirmed for all three markets. The same holds also for positive impact of CBR on trust and credibility, positive impact of credibility on trust and positive impact of trust on loyalty. The impact of ECE on credibility is not statistically significant for the Turkish sample but is positive and significant for the other two markets.

In the conclusion of the third chapter, we have operationalized customer perception of service commoditization. We have shown that established measures of commoditization as perceived by customers are appropriate to assess level of commoditization of online subscription service. We explored how commoditization perception moderates the relationship between antecedents and trust. We have found that commoditization perception moderates negatively only relation between ECE and trust, where ECE is an antecedent and Customer-based reputation of a service firm (CBR) is a mediator and where commoditization moderation is measured for positive relations ECE-trust, ECE-CBR, and

CBR-trust. The effect is statistically significant only on the markets on which vendor practices well-established, high-quality, and content-rich email marketing communication.

### **Theoretical contributions**

The main overall theoretical contribution of this dissertation is conceptualization of online subscription services within relationship-marketing effectiveness theoretical framework and assessing the impact of commoditization perception on the trust driving model relationships.

The theoretical contribution of dissertation in the first chapter is summary of the common features of online subscription services. Key marketing-related concepts relevant for all online subscription business are outlined based on an extensive literature review: Pricing, WTP, churn, retention, renewal, switching costs, customer acquisition, purchase intention (intention to subscribe), and freemium and free trial marketing tactics.

Furthermore, the main motivations for providers and for customers to engage in subscription relationships are outlined and explained. Based on literature review we have defined online subscription marketing setting and explained how main online subscription services industries (telecommunication, media, SaaS, memberships, subscription boxes, IoT) relate to subscriber motives (convenience, curation, access and entertainment) for engaging in subscription relationships.

In the second chapter we present theoretical foundations for customer engagement within online relationship where internet technology is partial relationship mediator between seller firm relationship investments and customer perception of interpersonal relationship quality (Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019).

The measures for ECE and SE are conceptualized and operationalized on the base of marketing engagement literature in two different ways and adopted to the thesis setting. Interesting theoretical contribution is also introduction and verification of a measure of observed behavioral loyalty that was constructed as a natural logarithm of the (number of documents + 1) from the online subscription service that were viewed by the customer in the 2-year period since they answered the survey.

The main theoretical contribution of Study 1 as conceptualized in the Chapter 2, is application of cognitively oriented social exchange theory (Dwyer et al., 1987; Thibault & Kelley, 1959), social presence theory (Short et al., 1976), and media richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986) to the role of ECE and SE within the model. Relation between the two constructs is hypothesized and explained.

The main theoretical contribution of Study 2 was development of model with ECE, service company reputation, and brand credibility as antecedents, customer trust as a mediator, and loyalty as an outcome that was verified for the same online legal information subscription

service in three different markets. The markets that differ in the level of service commoditization.

Introduction of commoditization perception in research of online subscription customers' attitudes and behavior is important contribution of our thesis. To our knowledge there have been no studies that would explore if commoditization as conceptualized and operationalized by Reimann et al. (2010) can be perceived and measured also in moderate and moderate to low commoditized services as is the case with online subscription services on the three markets that are focus of our research.

Operationalization of the constructs and questionnaire development for the two studies is the introductory theoretical contribution of Chapter 3. The important contribution of Study 1 is verification of only indirect impact of SE on trust and strong impact of SE on ECE. In Study 2 we showed that the model, with customer trust in an online subscription service as a focal construct, ECE, service provider reputation, and Brand credibility as antecedents, and loyalty as an outcome, adequately models customer behavior in markets that differ according to the service's competitive position in the market. Our measurement model exhibited full configural invariance and acceptable metric invariance.

Development of measurement model for measuring commoditization of online subscription service as perceived by customer is another theoretical contribution in the Chapter 3. This measurement model also exhibited full configural invariance and acceptable metric invariance across all three markets. Hypothesized negative moderating effect of commoditization on trust-enhancing relations was not confirmed for most relations. Contribution of our research is that this effect depends how customer perceives the antecedent in the concrete sample. In our study we found that commoditization perception moderates negatively only relation between ECE and trust on two markets where high-quality email communication is well established.

### **Managerial implications**

To present actionable managerial insights for subscription business development and provide guidelines for modeling customer behavior and developing a marketing strategy, we conducted an extensive systematic literature research including also recent business literature on subscription services. We investigated the marketing-related specifics of online subscription services and sought answers to questions about the main challenges of firms offering online subscription services and about setting-specific customer behavior.

Important information for marketing practitioners is that negligible marginal costs (Bala, 2012) and a positive network effect (Etzion & Pang, 2014) among customers delineate online subscription services (media, SaaS, telecommunications, memberships, IoT and subscription boxes) from other recurring revenue-based businesses. Negligible marginal costs enable the vendor to engage in free trials and/or in freemium marketing tactics, while a positive network

effect makes social media and other community-building activities very effective marketing channels.

A comprehensive strategic framework for marketing online subscription services should focus on (i) the subscription service value proposition, ii) an acquisition, retention and win-back strategy and (iii) a strategy for driving commitment and trust. Our findings in literature review about each component are elaborated in the following.

### Value proposition

A business has more potential to become a successful subscription business if it can credibly propose to its customers one or more of the following values: convenience, curation and entertainment (Chen et al., 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017; C. L. Wang et al., 2005). The richer in content and variety (media and subscription boxes) a service, the more important is curation. Knowledge of past customer behavior and application of artificial intelligence technologies enable a vendor to offer a highly personalized subscription service. Overall convenience depends mostly on search, transaction, and decision conveniences, while high-income customers and time-pressed customers value service convenience most (Benoit et al., 2017).

Customers find subscription arrangements convenient, if there is a high possibility that the pay-per-use arrangement may lead to occasional excessively large bills (Fishburn & Odlyzko, 1999). Monopolists can limit access to a service to a subscription arrangement only. However, if the service provider is not trustworthy in terms of service quality, reliability, and technological capability, potential subscribers will not commit to a subscription (Bolton, 1998; Hamari et al., 2017; C. L. Wang et al., 2005) .

### Acquisition, retention, and win-back strategy

Pricing is a cornerstone of an acquisition and retention strategy. Pricing should meet customers' WTP by segmenting the offering in different subscription packages according to customers' needs and expectations. WTP depends on the perceived value of the service and customers' positive attitude toward the service and the vendor (Hsiao & Chen, 2017).

Low marginal costs of online subscriptions enable vendors to initially lure customers with a very low price. Once customer commitment and trust are established, and when customers get used to the service, the price can be increased. For monopolists in a growing market, the best pricing strategy is to avoid any form of price discrimination. Facing hesitant customers, the second best solution is to adopt intertemporal price discrimination to lure these subscribers with lower prices (Penmetsa et al., 2015). Free trial and freemium marketing tactics are used by most subscription businesses to nurture potential subscribers. The most effective strategy for increasing pricing is upselling to a premium offering (Marinova & Singh, 2014). Aral and Dhillon (2021) suggest that media companies and newspapers in

particular should not compete with Google and Facebook in revenue maximization through advertising. They should strive to convert as much online visitors as possible to paid subscribers by offering differentiated content with the access restricted by digital paywalls. The quantity of content available freely and the sections available exclusively to paid subscribers should be adjusted so, that most users with high WTP will be nudged towards subscription (Aral & Dhillon, 2021).

### Driving commitment and trust

We showed that relationship-marketing effectiveness models are useful for describing the behavior of subscribers. Trust, commitment, and satisfaction are focal constructs for almost all subscription businesses. Loyalty, purchase intention, and WOM or recommendations are outcomes in a relationship-marketing effectiveness model.

The managerial contribution of the empirical part of thesis are insights on how to prioritize online marketing activities to build customer trust and loyalty. Our research shows that a successful firm in the online subscription market builds its reputation with strong customer orientation, social responsibility, and quality of service. Quality content in email communications and low intrusiveness of email communications are very important in building trust and trustworthy behavior. It helps if the service brand reflects the expertise of the company, however this seems to be less important than the overall reputation of the company and email communication. Managers of online subscription services should pay a lot of attention to email communication to build customer trust and loyalty to their services.

Social media as a communication channel are less important than email communication, although not unimportant. It creates a community of users/subscribers, and it increases email communication effectiveness. An important managerial implication of our commoditization study is extension of usage commoditization measure to medium and low commoditized online services. Measure can help marketing managers to count in commoditization level in their marketing strategies and plans. It can also help investors to assess commoditization level and growth potential of an online service company.

Regarding negative moderation of commoditization on trust-enhancing relations we found some evidence, that such negative impact can appear, however managers should be cautious before they apply this to their marketing strategies, (especially if they are dealing with low commoditized services) and start for instance saving on trust-enhancing activities. They should check if negative moderation is caused by commoditization or maybe is the consequence of specifics linked to the particular antecedent or specific trust perceptions.

*Table 33: Key findings, theoretical contributions, and managerial implications*

<b>Method (underlying theory if relevant)</b>	<b>Key findings</b>	<b>Theoretical contribution</b>	<b>Managerial implications</b>
Literature review	Online subscription services are defined: (i) a long-term contractual setting, (ii) continuous use or consumption of the service, (iii) a fixed price for a preselected combination of service units or product assortments, (iv) negligible marginal costs, and (v) a positive network effect among customers or users.	Definition of online subscription services	Benchmark for a feasibility study about introducing a subscription business model
Literature review	Key marketing-related concepts relevant to the online subscription services business are pricing, WTP, churn, retention, renewal, switching costs, customer acquisition, purchase intention (intention to subscribe), and freemium and free trial marketing tactics.	Key marketing-related concepts relevant to the online subscription business	Guidelines for comprehensive strategic framework for marketing online subscription services
Literature review	Motives of customers to engage in subscription relationship are convenience, curation, access, and entertainment.	Outlining customer motives for subscriptions	Benchmark for a feasibility study about introducing a subscription business model
Literature review (commitment–trust theory)	The appropriate theoretical framework for modeling subscriber behavior is the relationship-marketing effectiveness model, with trust, commitment, and satisfaction as central constructs.	Theoretical framework for modeling subscriber behavior	N/A

*(table continues)*

(continued)

<b>Method (underlying theory if relevant)</b>	<b>Key findings</b>	<b>Theoretical contribution</b>	<b>Managerial implications</b>
Literature review (flow, media richness, and parasocial interaction theories)	Social media marketing and email communication are key digital marketing channels to function within theoretical model of online relationships.	Email communication exposure and social media engagement as dyadic antecedents in relationship-marketing effectiveness model	Importance of focus on social media and email communication in relationship building
Literature review (social presence, media richness, and cognitively oriented social exchange theories)	Conceptualizing social media engagement and email communication exposure as antecedents in a model with a positive impact on reputation and trust.	Social media engagement conceptualized by cognitive and behavioral engagement dimensions; email communication exposure conceptualized by two engagement dimensions and advertising intrusiveness	Emotional/affective engagement dimension is not relevant in B2B online subscription services; low intrusiveness is important for effective email communication
Literature review, qualitative research, empirical research	Questionnaire development and measurement model verification in three different markets.	Operationalization of conceptualized constructs	N/A
Empirical research	The measure for observed loyalty was constructed as a natural logarithm of the number of documents + 1 from the online subscription service that were viewed by the customer in a certain period.	Loyalty measure appropriate for online subscription services developed and verified	Tool for loyalty assessment on the basis of service usage data
Empirical research (social presence, media richness, signaling, and commitment—trust theories)	A model with email communication exposure, social media engagement, service company reputation, and brand credibility as antecedents; customer trust as a mediator; and loyalty as an outcome are verified in three different markets.	Verification of hypothesized models	All selected antecedents have positive impact on trust and loyalty

(table continues)

(continued)

<b>Method (underlying theory if relevant)</b>	<b>Key findings</b>	<b>Theoretical contribution</b>	<b>Managerial implications</b>
Empirical research (social presence, media richness, signaling, and commitment—trust theories)	Email communication exposure has strong positive impact on trust, reputation, and credibility; however, social media engagement affects trust and the reputation only indirectly by positively influencing email communication exposure.	Juxtaposition of social media engagement and email communication exposure within relationship-marketing effectiveness model	Non-intrusive, high-quality email communication is powerful driver of trust and trustworthy behavior; social media should be used mostly to enhance email communication exposure
Qualitative research; empirical research	Established measures of commoditization as perceived by customers are appropriate for assessing level of commoditization of online subscription service.	Introduction of commoditization perception in research of online subscription customers' attitudes and behaviors	Tool for inclusion of commoditization level in marketing strategies and plans and for assessment of growth potential of an online service company
Empirical research	Commoditization perception moderates negative relationship between email communication exposure and trust on markets where high-quality email communication is well established.	Negative moderation of commoditization perception on relationship between antecedents and trust exists only in special circumstances	Caution is needed before cutting down on relationship investment because of increased perceived commoditization

Source: Own work.

## **Limitations and future research**

This thesis is not without limitations. Qualitative literature review has because its nature several limitations like limitations of objectivity, comprehensives, language, time and physical limitations of the reader/author. The review was limited by the search terms used and the data sources included. Nonetheless, they enabled insight into the most visible peer-evaluated publications on the topic of online subscription services and related marketing activities.

The author of the thesis and the researcher is an executive in the group of companies that cooperated in the research by providing access to their email marketing databases and as such an insider in the online subscription setting. The insider position of the researcher was formerly thought to be biased and thus inferior to an outside position; however, such a dichotomy is increasingly being abandoned. The insider position is more and more seen as valuable and legitimate, with all of the methodological challenges and research benefits that come with it (Banks, 1998; Chavez, 2008). According to Banks (1998, p. 8) categorization, the author in this thesis is an indigenous insider. The theoretical foundation and accompanying empirical evidence were scrutinized to prevent idiosyncratic conclusions, subjectivity, and lack of generalizability due to author's insider position.

Both studies in this dissertation were conducted among clients of one type of legal information online subscription service provided by one group of companies, thus restricting generalizability to other B2B and even more to B2C subscription services. For respondents in B2C industry emotional/affective dimension of engagement becomes relevant and they may be more sensitive regarding privacy and corporate social responsibility issues. In our setting we also did not notice any relevant business culture difference between Turkey on one side and culturally similar Slovenia and Croatia on the other side. Certainly, this does not hold for B2C subscription services, especially in media and gaming industries.

The impact of social media engagement in our relationship effectiveness model was studied only in one market (Croatia) where the vendor has been performing social media marketing for several years and the number of customers who have social media accounts is at least a quarter of the number of customers who receive email communications regarding the subscription service. We have shown that in our setting, social media engagement has a positive impact on email communication exposure because social media is a richer communication channel and is more socially present than email communication exposure. However, we have not conducted a survey of customers to determine if they truly perceive the vendor's social media communication to be richer and more socially present. This could be an important task for future research.

We explained the findings that SE has no direct impact on CBR and trust in our model by conjecturing that customers in our setting view engagement with vendor's social media postings

as an activity that is distinctly separate from their use of the online service and their business relationship with the vendor. It would be helpful to investigate and confirm this assumption in the future.

In Study 1, the vendor has been practicing email marketing for nine years prior to the survey and social media marketing for only five years prior to our survey. The impact of the length of time customers have been in contact with each communication channel on the reciprocal relationship between SE and ECE, as well as the impact of SE and ECE on CBR, trust and loyalty, should also be explored in the future. future.

The empirical research of the thesis used cross-sectional data to analyze the relationships among the selected constructs. Since the nature of the data collection for Study 1 and Study 2 was exploratory, such a collection method should be adequate. Due to the individual usage of the service, single informants of online legal information services were used. Further research could increase the extent to which our findings are generalizable to other online services and show how the results vary if data are modeled for different segments of customers (i.e., regular customers, potential customers, purchase decision-makers, service users).

In our setting, the customers already had experience with and a certain level of trust in the online service, which was already well established in the market. Hence, our study cannot be applied to new online services that are still in the initial phase of market entry. For such services, trust and reputation are preconditions for ECE or SE.

Developing relationship-marketing effectiveness models for fast-growing subscription businesses, like subscription boxes, the IoT, professional content (media) and SaaS, may be of great interest to marketing practitioners. ECE was conceptualized as a standalone relationship-marketing tool, and customers usually do not differentiate whether they are engaged with emails that are part of email advertising, newsletter campaigns, content marketing, or inbound marketing. It would be interesting to conceptualize email communication within content and/or inbound marketing and to explore the role of these broader constructs within the relationship-marketing effectiveness model.

It would be also interesting to investigate the long-term and dynamic changes in consumers' commoditization perception. Studies employing a longitudinal data collection may provide useful information for use in managerial strategy development. Future research should also test customers' commoditization perception within a more comprehensive nomological network that integrates theoretically related antecedents and consequences. For example, additional antecedents (e.g., customer characteristics) and consequences (e.g., trust, satisfaction, and loyalty) should receive more research attention. Future research could also examine the role of moderators such as relationship age and intensity.

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## **APPENDICES**

## **Appendix 1: Summary in Slovenian language / Daljši povzetek disertacije v slovenskem jeziku**

Ta disertacija obravnava vpliv angažiranosti na družbenih omrežjih in izpostavljenosti komunikaciji preko e-pošte na porabnika spletnih naročniških storitev. V raziskavi se ukvarjamo z naslednjimi raziskovalnimi vprašanji:

- Kakšen je učinek izbranih predhodnikov (angažiranosti na družbenih medijih, izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju, verodostojnosti blagovne znamke in ugleda storitvenega podjetja pri porabnikih) na zaupanje in zvestobo (stališčno in vedenjsko) v spletnih naročniških storitvah?
- Kako porabnikovo zaznavanje komodizacije vpliva na odnos med predhodniki in zaupanjem?
- Kako opisati odnos in vedenje porabnikov z modelom učinkovitosti trženja, temelječega na odnosih, da bo relevanten za spletne naročniške storitve in bo dal tržnikom uporabne smernice za njihovo delo?

### **Naročniški poslovni modeli**

V prvem poglavju disertacije ocenjujemo in primerjamo teoretske koncepte, ki se uporabljajo pri raziskavah spletnih naročnin v trženjski literaturi.

Že v 16. stoletju so evropski založniki zemljevidov kupcem ponujali redno naročnino na nove izdaje, od 17. stoletja dalje pa so naročniške poslovne modele uporabljali časopisi, revije in založniki knjig (Clapp, 1931; Warrillow, 2015). V 20. stoletju so bile zavarovalniške storitve, komunalne storitve, zdravstvene storitve in javni prevoz strankam vsaj delno na voljo v okviru naročniškega poslovnega razmerja. V devetdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja so bili mobilna telefonija, internetni dostop in plačljiva televizija na voljo porabnikom predvsem v okviru naročniških razmerji (Warrillow, 2015). Takoj po prelomu stoletja so naročniške poslovne modele začeli uporabljati za dostop do večpredstavnostnih vsebin (npr. Netflix in Spotify), za spletno založništvo, ponudbo programske opreme (SaaS-programska oprema kot storitev) in drugih storitev (XaaS – karkoli kot storitev ; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2007; Rudolph et al., 2017; CL Wang in sod., 2005). Razvoj novih digitalnih tehnologij, umetne inteligence in obvladovanje masovnih podatkov spodbujajo podjetja k prehodu v naročniški poslovni model, saj si obetajo boljšo komunikacijo s porabniki, boljše poznavanje namer porabnikov ter povečanje prihodkov (Gebauer in drugi, 2020).

V drugem desetletju 21. stoletja je postal popularen naročniški poslovni model za potrošniške izdelke. Vodilna na trgu naročniške maloprodaje v ZDA so postala hitro rastoča podjetja na

področju izdelkov za osebno nego (npr. Dollar Shave Club), mode (npr. Stitch Fix) in prehrane (npr. Blue Apron; Kestenbaum, 2017; Woo & Ramkumar, 2018). Zavedajoč se pomembnosti naročniškega poslovnega modela, je Amazon vzpostavil platformo za e-trgovino za prodajo naročniških storitev tretjih oseb (Amazon, 2017; Perez, 2017). Trend naraščajočega pomena naročniškega poslovnega modela so prepoznali avtorji poslovnih knjig in podjetniki (Baxter, 2015, 2016, 2020; Janzer, 2017; Lecky, 2018; Tzuo, 2018; Warrillow, 2015).

V sistematičnem pregledu literature smo identificirali in ovrednotili 117 ustreznih publikacij v znanstvenih revijah in 6 ustreznih poslovnih knjig od leta 1998 do sredine leta 2021. Ključni koncepti, povezani s trženjem, ki so pomembni za spletno naročniško poslovanje so: cenovna politika, pripravljenost porabnika za plačilo, delež odpovedi naročnin, delež obnovljenih naročnin, stroški zamenjave ponudnika, pridobivanje novih strank, nakupne namere ter taktike trženja kot so na primer »freemium« (t.j. brezplačna uporaba storitve v omejenem obsegu) in brezplačno preizkusno obdobje. Redni prihodki od naročnin so glavna motivacija za podjetja, da vzpostavijo naročniški poslovni model; cenovna politika in ohranjanje obstoječih naročnikov pa sta glavna trženjska izziva ponudnikov. Motivi porabnikov za naročniško razmerje so priročnost, skrbno urejanje, dostop do storitve in zabava. Glede na pregled literature je ustrezen teoretični okvir za modeliranje vedenja naročnikov model učinkovitosti trženja, temelječega na odnosih, z zaupanjem, predanostjo in zadovoljstvom kot osrednjimi konstrukti.

Skupne značilnosti spletnih naročniških storitev so: (i) dolgoročen pogodbeni odnos (ii) uporaba storitve v daljšem obdobju, (iii) fiksna cena za vnaprej izbrano kombinacijo enot storitve ali nabora izdelkov, (iv) zanemarljivi variabilni stroški in (v) pozitiven mrežni učinek med strankami ali uporabniki. Zanemarljivi mejni stroški (Bala, 2012) in pozitiven mrežni učinek (Etzion & Pang, 2014) med strankami ločujejo spletne naročniške storitve (mediji, SaaS, telekomunikacije, abonmaji, internet stvari in naročniške škatle blaga za osebno potrošnjo (angl. subscription box)) od drugih podjetij, ki temeljijo na rednih prihodkih od naročnin. Zanemarljivi mejni stroški omogočajo ponudniku, da uporablja taktiki trženja »freemium« (t.j. brezplačna uporaba storitve v omejenem obsegu) in »free trial« (t.j. brezplačno preizkusno obdobje) za pritegnitev novih naročnikov, medtem ko pozitiven mrežni učinek povečuje uporabnost družbenih medijev in digitalnega marketinga na sploh pri trženju spletnih naročniških storitev.

Ključne dejavnosti, primerne za naročniški poslovni model, kot so telekomunikacije, mediji, SaaS, naročniške škatle blaga za osebno potrošnjo, abonmaji in internet stvari, smo razvrstili glede na pomen skrbnega urejanje (angl. curation) v ponudbi vrednosti in glede na pomembnost mejnih stroškov v panogi. Med dejavnostmi s povsem zanemarljivimi mejnimi stroški je skrbno urejanje najpomembnejše pri spletnih medijskih naročninah in drugo naročniško ponudbo vsebin na spletu, med dejavnostmi z majhnimi mejnimi stroški pa v primeru naročnin na blago za osebno potrošnjo.

Ključni koncepti, ugotovljeni v pregledu literature, ki so pomembni za trženje spletnih naročnin, so cenovna politika ponudnika, pripravljenosti porabnika za plačilo, obnova naročnin, izguba naročnikov in vrednost življenjske dobe naročnikove zvestobe (angl. CLV – customer life time value) znotraj določenega segmenta naročniške industrije, stroški zamenjave ponudnika, pridobivanje naročnikov, namen nakupa (namera za naročnino) ter taktiki brezplačne uporabe v omejenem obsegu in časovno omejene brezplačne uporabe.

Celovit strateški okvir za trženje spletnih naročniških storitev bi se moral osredotočiti na (i) ponudbo vrednosti naročniške storitve; ii) strategijo pridobivanja, obnavljanja in vračanja odpovedanih naročniških razmerji; ter (iii) strategijo za spodbujanje predanosti in zaupanja.

Podjetje ima večji potencial, da postane uspešno naročniško podjetje, če lahko svojim naročnikom verodostojno predlaga eno ali več naslednjih vrednosti: priročnost, skrbno urejanje in zabavo (Chen et al., 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017; C. L. Wang et al., 2005). Bolj ko je storitev vsebinsko raznolika (mediji in blago za osebno potrošnjo), pomembnejše je skrbno urejanje. Poznavanje preteklega vedenja naročnikov in uporaba tehnologij umetne inteligence omogočata ponudniku, da ponudi vse bolj personalizirano naročniško storitev. Zaznavanje priročnosti storitve je odvisno predvsem od enostavnosti in učinkovitosti iskanja po ponudbi ter enostavnosti naročanja. Naročniki z visokimi dohodki in naročniki v časovni stiski najbolj cenijo priročnost naročniških storitev (Benoit et al., 2017).

Porabniki cenijo priročnost naročniškega razmerja, če obstaja velika verjetnost, da lahko alternativno razmerje (na primer, plačilo po uporabi) občasno povzroči pretirano velike stroške (Fishburn & Odlyzko, 1999). Monopolisti lahko omejijo dostop do storitev samo skozi naročniško razmerje. Če pa ponudnik naročniških storitev ni vreden zaupanja v smislu kakovosti, zanesljivosti in tehnoloških zmogljivosti storitve, se potencialni naročniki ne bodo odločali za naročniško razmerje (Bolton, 1998; Hamari et al., 2017; C. L. Wang et al., 2005).

Strategija pridobivanja in ohranjanja naročnikov temelji na cenovni politiki. Cene je potrebno prilagajati pripravljenosti za plačilo posameznih segmentov naročnikov z oblikovanjem ponudbe v različnih naročniških paketih glede na potrebe in pričakovanja strank. Pripravljenost za plačilo je odvisna od zaznane vrednosti storitve in od pozitivnega odnosa naročnikov do storitve in do ponudnika (Hsiao & Chen, 2017).

Nizki mejni stroški spletnih naročnin omogočajo prodajalcem, da na začetku privabijo kupce z zelo nizko ceno. Ko se vzpostavi zavezanost in zaupanje naročnikov ter ko se uporabniki navadijo na storitev, se lahko cena zviša. Za monopoliste na rastočem trgu je najboljša cenovna strategija izogibanje kakršni koli obliki cenovne diskriminacije. Druga najboljša rešitev je, ko se soočamo z obotavljajočimi se strankami, medčasovna cenovna diskriminacija, da bi nove naročnike privabili

z nižjimi cenami (Penmetsa et al., 2015). Brezplačna preizkus in brezplačna uporaba v omejenem obsegu sta tržni taktiki, ki ju uporablja večina naročniških podjetij za vzdrževanje odnosa s potencialnimi naročniki in za pridobivanje novih naročnikov. Najučinkovitejša strategija za zvišanje cene naročniške storitve pa je oblikovanje obsežnejšega, premijskega paketa ponudbe in spodbujanje naročnikov za prehod v naročništvo premijskega paketa. (Marinova & Singh, 2014).

V pregledu literature smo tudi pokazali, da je najbolj ustrezen teoretični okvir za modeliranje vedenja naročnikov model učinkovitosti trženja, temelječega na odnosih, z zaupanjem, predanostjo in zadovoljstvom kot osrednjimi konstrukti ter z zvestobo, nakupnimi nameni in priporočili od ust do ust kot rezultati. Učinkovitost različnih predhodnikov glede njihovega vpliva na zaupanje, predanost in zadovoljstvo je odvisna predvsem od vrste storitve, ki je na voljo v naročniškem razmerju. Nekateri predhodniki za nekatere naročnine sploh niso relevantni, pri nekaterih pa se je izkazal kot relevanten samo en predhodnik. Pri abonmajih, na primer, zgolj uspešnost osnovne storitve vpliva pozitivno na zavezanost (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999).

Na področju mobilne telefonije, usposobljenost, verodostojnost, vrednost storitve in podoba podjetja pozitivno vplivajo na zaupanje, zadovoljstvo in zvestobo (Aydin & Özer, 2005; Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2015; de Reuver et al., 2015; Sichtmann, 2007). Stroški zamenjave ponudnika kot predhodnik negativno vplivajo na zvestobo (Qayyum et al., 2013) ali pa kot moderator zmanjšujejo vpliv zadovoljstva na zvestobo (M.-K. Kim et al., 2019). Bolton (1998) je pokazal, da trajanje naročniškega razmerja zmanjšuje vpliv zadovoljstva na trajanje razmerja ter da na izkušnjah temelječe zavedanje preteklih izgub in dobičkov vpliva na trajanje razmerja.

### **Modeliranje odnosa in vedenja porabnikov naročniških storitev**

V drugem poglavju razpravljamo o tem, kako opisati vedenje in odnos porabnikov v modelu učinkovitosti trženja, temelječega na odnosih, ki temelji na treh glavnih vrstah odnosov: medosebnih (odnos porabnik–ponudnik), medorganizacijskih (mreža porabnikov–ponudnik, kupec–ponudnik) in na odnosih preko spleta (porabnik–tehnološki vmesnik) (Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019). Pojasnili smo teoretične temelje angažiranosti znotraj posamezne vrste razmerja in pokazali, da se moramo za spletno naročniško razmerje osredotočiti na teoretske temelje odnosov preko spleta, kjer je internetna tehnologija delni posrednik odnosa med ponudnikovimi naložbami v odnos in porabnikovem zaznavanju kakovosti odnosa (z normami zavezanosti, zaupanja, hvaležnosti in vzajemnosti) ter kakovostjo odnosov. (Palmatier & Steinhoff, 2019).

Pojasnili smo, zakaj smo kot predhodnike v našem modelu izbrali konstrukte, ki konceptualizirajo dva najpomembnejša kanala digitalnega trženja: družbene medije in e-poštno komunikacijo. Oba kanala sta interaktivna, v naročniškem razmerju odnos in komunikacija trajata več mesecev ali let in sta povezana z vlaganjem ponudnika storitve v komunikacijo (odnos) in tudi s koristmi, ki jih porabnik pričakuje od odnosa.

Skladno z literaturo smo konceptualizirali angažiranost na družbenih medijih in izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju kot predhodnika iz dejavnosti digitalnega trženja. Sledili smo predlogu iz literature, da je potrebno angažiranost konceptualizirati s tremi dimenzijami: kognitivno, čustveno in vedenjsko. Pričakovali smo, da čustvena razsežnost angažiranosti ni pomembna za trženje naročniških storitev med podjetji (B2B). Za konceptualizacijo komuniciranja po e-pošti smo kognitivni in vedenjski dimenziji angažiranosti dodali še inverzno merilo vsiljivosti komunikacije po e-pošti, ki je opredeljena kot stopnja, do katere je e-poštna sporočila motijo tok komuniciranja (Ha, 1996).

Kot kognitivne relacijske mehanizme (mediatorje) v našem modelu smo konceptualizirali kredibilnost blagovne znamke, ugled storitvenega podjetja in zaupanje v spletno naročniško storitev. V kontekstu učinkovitosti trženja, temelječega na odnosih, smo pričakovali, da ugled storitvenega podjetja odraža porabnikovo zaznavanje koristi odnosa in strokovnosti ponudnika, medtem ko kredibilnost blagovne znamke odraža zaznana verodostojnost blagovne znamke, to je, ali storitev, ki jo predstavlja blagovna znamka nenehno zagotavlja kar obljublja.

Na izbiro zaupanja kot osrednjega konstrukta in zvestobe kot rezultata v modelu so vplivale značilnosti spletnih naročniških storitev. Številni porabniki uporabljajo naročniško storitev brezplačno in v omejenem obsegu. Ti porabniki se ne dojemajo kot »pravi« porabniki-kupci in se težko opredelijo glede zavezanosti do storitve. O zaupanju v storitev, ki jo uporabljajo pa lahko poročajo na enak način kot porabniki-kupci, ki uporabljajo storitev v okviru plačljivega naročniškega razmerja. Zvestoba je najpogosteje uporabljen rezultat modela učinkovitosti trženja temelječega na odnosih in je zelo primerna tudi kot končni cilj trženja spletnih naročniških storitev, kjer je dolgotrajen obstoj naročniškega razmerja odraz zvestobe strank.

Pomemben prispevek naše naloge je uvedba percepcije komodizacije v raziskavo stališč in vedenja naročnikov spletnih naročnin. Kot nam je znano, doslej še ni bilo študij o vlogi dojetja komodizacije s strani porabnikov v okviru učinkovitosti trženja temelječega na odnosih. Prav tako ni bilo raziskano, ali je komodizacijo, kot so jo konceptualizirali in operacionalizirali Reimann in drugi (2010) mogoče zaznati in izmeriti tudi pri zmerno in nizko komodiziranih storitvah, kot je to v primeru spletnih naročniških storitev na trgih, ki jih je obravnavala naša raziskava. Porabnikovo zaznavanje komodizacije spletne naročniške storitve opredeljujejo tri razsežnosti: zaznava homogenosti storitev, cenovna občutljivost porabnikov in ocena stroškov zamenjave ponudnika. Iz konceptualizacije, ki je sicer najpogosteje uporabljena v literaturi, smo izpustili dimenzijo stabilnosti industrije. Stabilnost panoge lahko ustrezno zaznajo strokovnjaki iz panoge, navadni uporabniki storitve pa ne.

V drugem poglavju so predstavljene hipoteze, ki določajo model in so pojasnjene z ustreznim teoretskim okvirom. Z uporabo kognitivne teorije družbene izmenjave (Dwyer et al., 1987; Thibault & Kelley, 1959), teorije prezence v družbi (Short et al., 1976) in teorije bogastva medijev (Daft & Lengel, 1986) smo predpostavili medsebojni vpliv angažiranost na družbenih medijih in izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju v modelu ter pozitivni vpliv obeh konstruktov na posrednike v modelu. Glede bogastva in prisotnosti so družbeni mediji kot komunikacijski kanal boljši od e-pošte. Zato je verjetneje, da ima bogatejši in bolj družbeno prisoten kanal angažiranja na družbenih medijih vpliv na izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju kot pa obratno. Glede vpliva percepcije komodizacije smo pričakovali, da komodizacija zmanjšuje pozitivni vpliv med konstrukti digitalnega trženja ter zaupanjem in/ali ugledom.

### **Empirične raziskave odnosov in vedenja porabnikov naročniških spletnih storitev**

V tretjem poglavju so predstavljene empirične raziskave med uporabniki spletnih naročniških storitev, ki temeljijo na spletnih anketah med uporabniki pravne informacijske storitve na treh različnih trgih (državah) z različnimi konkurenčnimi položaji iste storitve na trgu.

Skladno s konceptualnim okvirom, predstavljenim v drugem poglavju, smo za izvedbo anket operacionalizirali konstrukte za dve študiji. Vprašalnika za obe študiji sta bila skoraj enaka. Razlika je le v merilih, ki so bila uporabljena za operacionalizacijo kognitivnih in vedenjskih dimenzij konstruktov ki opredeljujejo angažiranost na družbenih medijih in izpostavljenost e-poštni komunikaciji. V prvi študiji, ki je bila opravljena samo med hrvaškimi porabniki, so bili elementi vedenjske razsežnosti povezani neposredno z dejanji strank, ne da bi poudarjali njihovo dožemanje angažiranosti, elementi, ki so operacionalizirali kognitivno dimenzijo, pa so bili povezani s kakovostjo objav na družbenih medijih in e-poštnih sporočil in ne z dožemanjem porabnikov o tem, kako objave/e-poštna sporočila spodbujajo stranke k razmišljanju o storitvi. Pri drugi študiji, ki smo jo opravili na treh različnih trgih (Hrvaška, Slovenija, Turčija), smo opazili, da teh meril ni mogoče enoznačno razumeti na vseh treh trgih, zato smo operacionalizacijo kognitivne in vedenjske dimenzije bolj uskladili z literaturo o angažiranju porabnikov. Razlika v merilih v prvi in drug študiji, ni kvalitativno vplivala na rezultate strukturalnih modelov.

Za prvo študijo smo anketirali porabnike iz baze naročnikov in uporabnikov podjetja za spletne naročniške storitve (spletne pravne informacijske storitve), ki deluje na Hrvaškem. Podjetje nudi svojim strankam (tj. naročnikom) dostop do ažurnih in urejenih pravnih vsebin (zakonodaja, sodna praksa, pravna literatura in vzorci dokumentov). Vabilo k sodelovanju v spletni anketi je bilo po elektronski pošti poslano 5000 kontaktom, ki so bili najbolj izpostavljeni neposrednim e-poštnim kampanjam podjetja. Anketa za drugo študijo je bila izvedena približno dve leti po prvi anketi med strankami iste storitve na Hrvaškem (25.000 prejemnikov ankete), Sloveniji (15.000 prejemnikov ankete) in Turčiji (15.000 prejemnikov ankete).

Vprašalniki so za obe študiji so bili razviti na podlagi uveljavljene operacionalizacije konstruktov v trženjski literaturi z nekaj prilagoditvami meril tako, da so bila relevantna za spletne naročniške storitve in razumljive naročnikom/respondentom. Vsa merila so bila oblikovana kot sedem točkovne Likertove lestvice. Angleški vprašalnik je bil preveden v hrvaščino (za študijo 1 in študijo 2), slovenščino in turščino (za študijo 2) in predhodno testiran na majhnih skupinah anketirancev, da bi zagotovili, da so bila vsa merila razumljiva in da bi se izognili nepotrebni težavam pri izpolnjevanju spletnih anket. Anketiranci so se zavedali, da je mogoče slediti njihovem ravnanju v CRM sistemu ponudnika, vendar so bila njihova uporabniška imena kodirana, anonimnost pa jim je bila zagotovljena. V analizi smo uporabili le agregate. Za obe študiji smo predstavili značilnosti vzorca in potrdili merska modela s potrditveno faktorsko analizo.

V prvi študiji smo z modeliranjem sistema strukturnih enačb verificirali model z izpostavljenostjo e-poštnemu komuniciranju in angažiranostjo na družbenih medijih kot predhodnikoma, ugledom storitvenega podjetja in zaupanjem strank kot posrednikoma in zvestobo kot rezultatom. Pri tem smo operacionalizirali zvestobo z dvema konstruktoma: s poročano vedenjsko zvestobo iz ankete, ki naj bi pozitivno vplivala na opaženo zvestobo, zastavljeno kot naravni logaritem števila dokumentov + 1 iz spletne naročniške storitve, ki si jih je porabnik ogledal v dveletnem obdobju po izvedbi ankete. Predvidevali smo pozitiven vpliv predhodnikov na posrednike in pozitiven vpliv posrednikov na rezultate.

Presenetljivo, rezultati kažejo, da angažiranost na družbenih medijih vpliva na zaupanje strank in ugled storitvenega podjetja le posredno s pozitivnim vplivom na izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju. Ena od razlag za to bi lahko bila, da stranke vidijo svoj angažma v družbenih medijih kot dejavnost, ki je bistveno ločena od njihove rabe spletne naročniške storitve. Takšno sklepanje podpira tudi študija uporabe družbenih medijev strank v bančništvu (Toplu in drugi, 2014), po kateri stranke spremljajo objave bančnih družbenih medijev samo zato, da pridobijo informacije o akcijah ali da objavljajo pritožbe na storitve banke v okviru elektronskega bančništva. Več kot polovica strank banke je izjavila, da so »družbeni mediji platforma za mreženje in ne komunikacijski kanal za spremljanje produktov in storitev banke« (Toplu in drugi, 2014, str. 35).

Angažiranost na družbenih medijih je konstrukt, ki je najmanj koreliran z opaženo zvestobo, kar kaže, da stranke svojega angažiranja na družbenem mediju storitve ne povezujejo kaj dosti z uporabo storitve. Hkrati pa se družbeni mediji in komunikacija po elektronski pošti obravnavajo kot dva komunikacijska kanala med porabnikom, porabniki in ponudnikom storitev in je pozitiven vpliv angažiranosti na družbenih medijih na izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju v našem modelu potrjen v skladu s pričakovanji avtorja in teorijama prezence v družbi (Short et al., 1976) in bogastva medijev (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju pozitivno vpliva na ugled storitvenega podjetja in na zaupanje strank v spletno storitev, na katero se e-poštna sporočila nanašajo. Potrjen je tudi pozitiven vpliv zaupanja strank v spletno storitev na poročano zvestobo in pozitiven vpliv poročane zvestobe na opaženo zvestobo .

Za preučitev posrednih učinkov e-poštnega komuniciranja, angažiranosti na družbenih medijih, ugleda in zaupanja na zvestobo in opaženo zvestobo je bil uporabljen makro PROCESS (Hayes, 2013). Rezultati ne kažejo nobenih pomembnih posrednih učinkov, razen tistih, ki jih je model že opisal.

V drugi študiji smo preverjali model na treh trgih. Ker se aktivnost ponudnikov na družbenih medijih na treh trgih močno razlikuje, v tem modelu predhodnika angažiranosti na družbenih medijih nismo uporabili, smo pa v model umestili verodostojnost blagovne znamke.

Z modeliranjem sistema strukturnih enačb smo pokazali, da izpostavljenost strank komunikaciji po elektronski pošti, ugled storitvenega podjetja in verodostojnost blagovne znamke pozitivno vplivajo na zaupanje in da ima zaupanje pozitiven vpliv na zvestobo, vendar pa razlike v ocenah poti med državami na ravni modela niso statistično značilne.

Spletna naročniška storitev, ki jo vključuje naša raziskava, je zelo uveljavljena v Sloveniji (25 let na trgu, z več kot 80-odstotnim tržnim deležem), nekoliko manj na Hrvaškem (10 let obstoja in 70-odstotni tržni delež), v Turčiji pa je bila ista storitev ponujena na trgu šele pet let pred našo raziskavo in konkurira uveljavljenemu vodilnemu ponudniku na trgu ter številnim drugim konkurentom. Dejstvo, da je komunikacija po e-pošti močno gonilo zaupanja in zvestobe na vseh treh trgih, je pomembna ugotovitev, ki je uporabna za praktike trženja.

Pri merjenju ugleda storitvenega podjetja smo ugotovili, da je pri oblikovanju konstrukta ugleda storitvenega podjetja dimenzije kakovosti storitev, osredotočenosti na porabnika in družbene odgovornosti mogoče nedvoumno uporabiti na kulturno raznolikih trgih. Drugi dve dimenziji, ki sta ju predlagala Walsh in Beatty (2007), "zanesljivo in finančno močno podjetje" in "dober delodajalec" se lahko uporabita le, če imajo stranke dovolj vedenja o ponudniku. V naši raziskavi na turškem trgu anketiranci niso dovolj dobro poznali ponudnika, zato smo ti dve dimenziji izpustili iz našega merilnega modela. Med vsem trgi je v Turčiji vpliv ugleda na zaupanje in verodostojnost največji. Po našem mnenju je to povezano z dejstvom, da je storitev na turškem trgu razmeroma nova, zato so turški kupci bolj previdni pri ocenjevanju ugleda ponudnika.

Najmanjši vpliv vedenjske zvestobe na opaženo zvestobo v Sloveniji je mogoče razložiti z dejstvom, da ima večina porabnikov v Sloveniji sklenjene pogodbe o podaljšanju naročnine za nedoločen čas in se manj zavedajo svoje lojalnosti. Tudi povprečna vrednost poročane zvestobe je najnižja v prav v Sloveniji.

V zaključku tretjega poglavja smo operacionalizirali, kako porabniki zaznavajo komodizacijo spletne naročniške storitve. Pokazali smo, da so v literaturi uveljavljena merila komodizacije ustrezna za oceno stopnje komodizacije spletnih naročniških storitev. Izmerjene vrednosti komodizacije na osnovi anket med porabniki ustrezajo konkurenčnem položaju storitve na trgu, kot ga dojema poslovodstvo posameznega ponudnika, ki je sodeloval v naši anketi. Raziskali smo,

kako zaznava komodizacije vpliva na odnos med predhodniki in zaupanjem v modelu iz druge študije. Ugotovili smo, da zaznava komodizacije zmanjšuje le vpliv izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju na zaupanjem v modelu, kjer je izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju predhodnik, ugled storitvenega podjetja posrednik in kjer se moderacijski učinek komodizacije ocenjuje na odnosih med izpostavljenostjo e-poštnemu komuniciranju in zaupanjem, med izpostavljenostjo e-poštnemu komuniciranju in ugledom ter med ugledom in zaupanjem. Učinek je statistično značilen le na trgih, na katerih ponudnik že dalj časa izvaja, kakovostno in vsebinsko bogato e-poštno trženjsko komunikacijo.

## **Diskusija in zaključek**

Teoretični prispevek disertacije je konceptualizacija spletnih naročniških storitev v okviru teoretskega okvira trženja, temelječega na odnosih. Opisani so ključni koncepti, povezani s trženjem spletnih naročniških storitev in predstavljeni so najustreznejši konstrukti za opis vedenja in odnosa strank v okviru modela. Konceptualizirani in operacionalizirani so konstrukti izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju in angažiranosti v družbenih medijih. Z uporabo kognitivne teorije družbene izmenjave (Dwyer et al., 1987; Thibault & Kelley, 1959), teorije prezence v družbi (Short et al., 1976) in teorije bogastva medijev (Daft & Lengel, 1986) smo postavili in razložili hipoteze glede vloge izpostavljenosti e-poštni komunikaciji in angažiranosti na družbenih medijih v modelu, ki je bil zasnovan in preverjen za spletno storitev na treh različnih trgih. Zaznavanje komodizacije storitve za storitev, ki ni zelo komodizirana, je v doktorski nalogi prvič konceptualizirano in operacionalizirano v trženjski literaturi. Predstavljen je poslovno uporaben vpogled v razvoj naročniškega poslovnega modela in motivacija potrošnikov, da se vključijo v naročniška razmerja. Poleg tega so poslovno uporaben prispevek doktorske naloge tudi priporočila, kako spletne trženjske aktivnosti uporabiti za vzpostavitev in povečanje zaupanja in zvestobe strank. Sistematično so ključne ugotovitve, prispevki k teoriji in praktične implikacije doktorske naloge predstavljene v spodnji tabeli.

***Ključne ugotovitve, prispevki k teoriji in praktične implikacije***

<b>Metoda</b>	<b>Ključne ugotovitve</b>	<b>Prispevki k teoriji</b>	<b>Praktične implikacije</b>
Pregled literature	Spletne naročniške storitve so opredeljene kot: (i) dolgoročen pogodbeni odnos (ii) uporaba storitve v daljšem obdobju, (iii) fiksna cena za vnaprej izbrano kombinacijo enot storitve ali nabora izdelkov, (iv) zanemarljivi mejni stroški in (v) pozitiven mrežni učinek med strankami ali uporabniki.	Opredelitev spletnih naročniških storitev.	Kriteriji za študijo izvedljivosti o uvedbi naročniškega poslovnega modela.
Pregled literature	Ključni trženjski koncepti, za spletne naročniške storitve, so politika cen, pripravljenost porabnika za plačilo, delež odpovedi naročnin, delež obnovljenih naročnin, stroški zamenjave ponudnika, pridobivanje novih strank, nakupne namere ter taktike brezplačne uporabe v omejenem obsegu in časovno omejene brezplačne uporabe.	Ključni trženjski koncepti, ki so relevantni za spletne naročniške storitve.	Smernice za pripravo celovitega strateškega okvirja za trženje spletnih naročniških storitev.
Pregled literature	Motivi porabnikov, da se vključijo v naročniško razmerje, so priročnost, skrbno urejanje (curation), dostop do storitve in zabava.	Oris motivov porabnikov za vključitev v naročniško razmerje.	Kriteriji za študijo izvedljivosti o uvedbi naročniškega poslovnega modela.
Pregled literature	Ustrezen teoretični okvir za modeliranje vedenja naročnikov je model učinkovitosti trženja temelječega na odnosih, z zaupanjem, predanostjo in zadovoljstvom kot osrednjimi konstrukti.	Teoretični okvir za modeliranje obnašanja naročnikov.	N/A

*(se nadaljuje)*

*(nadaljevanje)*

<b>Metoda</b>	<b>Ključne ugotovitve</b>	<b>Prispevki k teoriji</b>	<b>Praktične implikacije</b>
Pregled literature	Trženje na družbenih omrežjih in komunikacija po elektronski pošti sta ključna kanala digitalnega trženja, v modelu učinkovitosti trženja spletnih naročnin.	Izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju in angažiranost na družbenih medijih kot diadna predhodnika v modelu učinkovitosti trženja temelječega na odnosih.	Pomen izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju in angažiranosti na družbenih medijih pri gradnji in vzdrževanju odnosov s porabniki.
Pregled literature	Konceptualizacija angažiranosti na družbenih medijih in izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju kot predhodnikov v modelu s pozitivnim vplivom na ugled ponudnika in na zaupanje v storitev.	Angažiranost na družbenih medijih konceptualizirana s kognitivnimi in vedenjskimi dimenzijami angažiranosti; Izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju konceptualizirana z dvema dimenzijama angažiranosti in z vsiljivostjo oglaševanja.	Čustvena/afektivna dimenzija angažiranosti ni pomembna pri B2B spletnih naročniških storitvah; nizka vsiljivost je pomembna za učinkovito e-poštno komunikacijo.
Empirična raziskava	Razvoj anketnega vprašalnika in verifikacija modela a na treh različnih trgih.	Operacionalizacija konceptualiziranih konstruktov.	N/A

*(tabela se nadaljuje)*

Empirična raziskava	Merilo za opaženo zvestobo zastavljeno kot naravni logaritem števila dokumentov + 1 iz spletne naročniške storitve, ki si jih je kupec ogledal v določenem obdobju.	Razvito in preverjeno kvantitativno merilo zvestobe, primerno za spletne naročniške storitve.	Orodje za oceno zvestobe na osnovi podatkov o uporabi storitve.
Empirična raziskava	Model z izpostavljenostjo e-poštnemu komuniciranju, angažiranosti na družbenih medijih, ugledom storitvenega podjetja in verodostojnostjo blagovne znamke kot predhodniki; zaupanjem strank kot posrednikom; in zvestobo kot rezultatom razvit in preverjen za isto spletno naročniško storitev na treh različnih trgih.	Preverjen na hipotezah temelječ model.	Vsi izbrani predhodniki pozitivno vplivajo na zaupanje in zvestobo.

*(se nadaljuje)*

(nadaljevanje)

<b>Metoda</b>	<b>Ključne ugotovitve</b>	<b>Prispevki k teoriji</b>	<b>Praktične implikacije</b>
Empirična raziskava	Izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju ima močan pozitiven vpliv na zaupanje, ugled in verodostojnost; med tem ko angažiranost na družbenih medijih vpliva na zaupanje in ugled le posredno preko pozitivnega vpliva na izpostavljenost e-poštnemu komuniciranju.	Vzporedna primerjava angažiranosti na družbenih medijih in izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju v modelu učinkovitosti trženja, temelječega na odnosih.	Nevsiljiva, kakovostna e-poštna komunikacija močno vpliva na zaupanje in na zaupanju temelječa vedenja; socialni mediji so uporabni predvsem za izboljšanje (povečanje) izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju.
Kvalitativna in empirična raziskava	Uveljavljena merila komodizacije storitve, kot jo zaznavajo porabniki, so primerna za merjenje stopnje komodizacije spletnih naročniških storitev.	Uvedba percepcije komodizacije v raziskavo stališč in vedenja porabnikov spletnih naročniških storitev.	Orodje za vključitev stopnje komodizacije v pripravo trženjske strategije ter za oceno potenciala rasti podjetja na področju spletnih naročniških storitev.
Empirična raziskava	Višja stopnja zaznave komodizacije zmanjšuje pozitiven vpliv izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju na zaupanje, v primerih ko je kakovostna e-poštna komunikacija.	Negativni vpliv višja percepcije komodizacije zmanjšuje pozitiven vpliv izpostavljenosti e-poštnemu komuniciranju na zaupanje le v posebnih okoliščinah.	Smiselno je biti zadržan pri zmanjševanju stroškov za komunikacijo s porabniki v primerih povečane komodizacije.

Vir: lastno delo

## Appendix 2: Study 1 – Online questionnaire Croatian market

### Istraživanje faktora povjerenja u uslugu BRAND

Molimo, odvojite nekoliko trenutaka i ispunite ovu anketu sa klikom na "Sljedeća stranica"

**Rep1 - Na skali od "Uopće se ne slažem" do "U potpunosti se slažem" za svaku tvrdnju odredite Vaše mišljenje o tvrtki COMPANY. koja je izdavač pravne internetske usluge BRAND.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
COMPANY, izdavač BRAND pravne internetske usluge (IS) ima zaposlenike koji se brinu o potrebama kupaca	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY ima zaposlenike koji uljudno tretiraju kupce	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY brine o svojim kupcima	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY djeluje kao društvo u kojem je dobro biti zaposlen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY dobro tretira svoje zaposlenike	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Izgleda da COMPANY ima odlično vodstvo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY teži nadmašiti konkurente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Izgleda da u COMPANY prepoznaju i koriste prilike na tržištu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Izgleda da COMPANY ima jake izgleda za budući rast	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Rep2 - Na skali od "Uopće se ne slažem" do "U potpunosti se slažem" odredite koliko tvrtka COMPANY. odgovara svakoj od navedenih tvrdnji.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
COMPANY nudi visokokvalitetne usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY je snažna i pouzdana tvrtka	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY razvija inovativne usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Čini se da se COMPANY trudi stvoriti nova radna mjesta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
U COMPANY bi smanjili svoju zaradu kako bi osigurali čist okoliš	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Čini se da je COMPANY ekološki odgovorna tvrtka	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Brand - Na skali od "Uopće se ne slažem" do "U potpunosti se slažem" za svaku tvrdnju odredite Vaše mišljenje o vjerodostojnosti branda BRAND.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
BRAND ispunjava ono što obećava	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND tvrdnje o njihovoj usluzi su vjerodostojne	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND ima ime kojem se može vjerovati	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND me podsjeća na nekoga tko je sposoban i tko zna što radi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND se ne pretvara da je nešto što nije	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND prednjači u korištenju tehnologije za pružanje bolje usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**FB1 - Na skali od "Nikad" do "Uvijek" za svaku tvrdnju odredite koliko često sudjelujete u BRAND Facebook aktivnostima.**

	Nikad	Manje od jednom mjesečno	1-3 puta mjesečno	Tjedno 2-4 puta	tjedno Dnevno	Uvijek
Prijatelj sam BRAND Facebook stranice i pratim BRAND Facebook objave	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dijelim BRAND Facebook objave	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Komentiram BRAND Facebook objave	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preporučujem BRAND Facebook objave drugima	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**FB2 - Na skali od "Uopće se ne slažem" do "U potpunosti se slažem" za svaku tvrdnju odredite svoje mišljenje o BRAND Facebook objavama.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
BRAND Facebook objave su vrijedan izvor informacija	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook objave su zabavne	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook objave su odgovarajući izvor informacija o pravnim pitanjima u Hrvatskoj	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook objave pružaju potpune i relevantne informacije o uslugama ili događajima koje oglašavaju	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**email1 - Na skali od "Uopće se ne slažem" do "U potpunosti se slažem" za svaku tvrdnju odredite svoje mišljenje o primanju BRAND e-pošte (e-mail).**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
BRAND e-pošta je odgovarajući izvor informacija	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND e-pošta daje potrošačima bitne informacije	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uživam u većini e-pošte koju mi šalje BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND promotivna e-pošta donosi potpune i relevantne informacije o uslugama ili događajima koje oglašava	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mnoge usluge ne ispunjavaju opis iz oglasa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mnogi BRAND oglasi putem e-pošte su dosadni	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Previše je oglasa putem e-pošte u poštanskom sandučiću	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND oglasi putem pošte više su manipulativni nego informativni	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**email2 - Na skali od "Uopće se ne slažem" do "U potpunosti se slažem" za svaku tvrdnju odredite Vaš odnos prema primanju BRAND e-pošte (e-mail).**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Odmah čitam BRAND e-poštu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Često kliknem na poveznice u BRAND e-pošti	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Često sudjelujem na događajima koji se oglašavaju putem BRAND e-pošte	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Želim primiti BRAND e-poštu u budućnosti	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Trust1 - Na skali od "Uopće se ne slažem" do "U potpunosti se slažem" za svaku tvrdnju odredite Vaše povjerenje BRAND internetskoj usluzi.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Sklon/a sam vjerovati BRAND usluzi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Obećanja koja daje BRAND usluga vjerojatno su pouzdana	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ne sumnjam u poštenje pružatelja BRAND usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Očekujem da će pružatelj BRAND usluge održati obećanje koje je dao	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mogu računati na to da će pružatelj BRAND usluge uzeti u obzir kako njegovi postupci djeluju na mene	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Očekujem da su namjere pružatelja BRAND usluge dobronamjerne	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Očekujem da pružatelj BRAND usluge interese potrošača stavlja ispred svojih vlastitih	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Očekujem da je pružatelj BRAND usluge dobronamjeran	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Trust2 - Na skali od "Uopće se ne slažem" do "U potpunosti se slažem" za svaku tvrdnju odredite Vaše povjerenje pružatelju BRAND internetske usluge.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Pružatelj BRAND usluge je sposoban	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pružatelj BRAND usluge je upoznat s pravom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pružatelj BRAND usluge zna kako pružiti vrhunsku uslugu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posve sam siguran u to što pružatelj BRAND usluge čini	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posve sam siguran što očekivati od pružatelja BRAND usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Lojalnost - Na skali od "Uopće se ne slažem" do "U potpunosti se slažem" za svaku tvrdnju odredite Vašu lojalnost prema internetskoj usluzi BRAND.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Radije koristim BRAND nego konkurente.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uživam poslovati s COMPANY/BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Smatram da je BRAND moj prvi izbor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Imam pozitivan stav prema BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zaista mi se sviđa BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Često koristim BRAND uslugu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Koristim samo BRAND uslugu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posljednji put kad sam koristio online pravnu informacijsku uslugu, koristio sam BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Predani sam pretplatnik BRAND usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Namjeravam zadržati BRAND pretplatu na neodređeno	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**XSPOL - Spol:**

- Muški
- Ženski

**XSTAR2a4 - Starost:**

- do 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- Više od 65

**Odnos - Kakav je vaš odnos sa uslugom BRAND?**

- pretplatnik
- bio pretplatnik ali više nisam
- registrirani besplatni korisnik
- povremeni posjetitelj BRAND internetskih stranica
- nisam ni u kakvom odnosu s BRAND-om

**Rad - Odredite Vaše područje rada**

- odvjetnik
- zaposlenik suda ili državnog odvjetništva
- profesionalac u privatnom društvu
- profesionalac u javnoj službi

- profesionalac u lokalnoj upravi
- student
- ostalo

**FB3 - Imam korisnički račun na Facebook-u**

- DA
- NE

**FB4 - Facebook koristim**

- nekoliko puta dnevno
- dnevno
- nekoliko puta tjedno
- nekoliko puta mjesečno
- nikad

**email3 - Primam e-poštu od BRAND**

- DA
- NE

**Role - U našem društvu (uredu) kada treba odlučiti o pretplati na uslugu kao što je BRAND, ja sam:**

- ključni donositelj odluka
- mogu preporučiti pretplatu
- samo sam korisnik

### Appendix 3: Study 2 – Online questionnaire Croatian market

#### Povjerenje u BRAND

Molimo, odvojite nekoliko trenutaka i ispunite ovu anketu sa klikom na "Sljedeća stranica"

**Rep1 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoje mišljenje o društvu COMPANY koje je izdavač pravne internetske usluge BRAND.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
COMPANY, izdavač BRAND pravne internetske usluge ima zaposlenike koji se brinu o potrebama kupaca	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY ima zaposlenike koji uljudno tretiraju kupce	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY brine o svojim kupcima	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY djeluje kao društvo u kojem je dobro biti zaposlen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY dobro tretira svoje zaposlenike	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Čini se da COMPANY ima odlično vodstvo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY teži nadmašiti konkurente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Čini se da u COMPANY prepoznaju i koriste prilike na tržištu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Rep2 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoje mišljenje o društvu COMPANY koje je izdavač pravne internetske usluge BRAND.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Čini se da COMPANY ima jake izgleda za budući rast	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY nudi visokokvalitetne usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY je snažna i pouzdana tvrtka	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY razvija inovativne usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Čini se da se COMPANY trudi stvoriti nova radna mjesta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
U COMPANY bi smanjili svoju zaradu kako bi bili više društveno odgovorna tvrtka	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Čini se da je COMPANY društveno odgovorna tvrtka	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Cred - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav u vezi sa BRAND uslugom.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
BRAND ostavlja dojam da je sposoban i zna što radi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND se ne pretvara da je nešto što nije	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND prednjači u korištenju tehnologije za pružanje bolje usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND predstavlja stručnost	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**FB1 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav/osjećaje u vezi sa BRAND Facebook stranicama/objavama.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Provodim puno vremena na BRAND Facebook stranicama, u usporedbi s Facebook stranicama ostalih pravnih internetskih usluga	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kad god čitam objave na društvenim mrežama pravnih internetskih usluga, obično čitam BRAND Facebook objave;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook stranice su stranice na društvenim mrežama koje obično koristim kada koristim stranice društvenih mreža pravnih internetskih usluga;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Osjećam se vrlo pozitivno kada pregledavam BRAND objave na Facebooku;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Korištenje BRAND Facebook stranica usređuje me;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**FB2 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav u vezi sa BRAND Facebook stranicama / objavama.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
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Osjećam se dobro kada pregledavam BRAND objave na Facebooku;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Članstvo u BRAND Facebook zajednici čini me ponosnim članom pravne zajednice;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Korištenje BRAND Facebook objava potiče me da razmišljam o BRAND usluzi;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mnogo razmišljam o BRAND Facebook objavama kada ih koristim;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Korištenje BRAND objava na Facebooku potiče moje zanimanje za više informacija o BRAND-u	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Email1 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav/osjećaje u vezi sa BRAND email porukama.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Provodim puno vremena na čitajući BRAND email poruke, u usporedbi s email porukama ostalih pravnih internetskih usluga;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kad god čitam email poruke pravnih internetskih usluga, obično čitam BRAND email poruke;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND email poruke su email poruke koje obično čitam kada čitam email poruke od ponuđača pravnih internetskih usluga;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Osjećam se vrlo pozitivno kada čitam BRAND email poruke;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Čitanje BRAND email poruka usređuje me;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Email2 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav u vezi sa BRAND email porukama.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Osjećam se dobro kada čitam BRAND email poruke;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Primanje BRAND email poruka čini me ponosnim članom pravne zajednice;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Čitanje BRAND email poruka potiče me da razmišljam o BRAND usluzi;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mnogo razmišljam o BRAND usluzi kada čitam BRAND email poruke;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Čitanje BRAND email poruka potiče moje zanimanje za više informacija o BRAND usluzi.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Email3 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav u vezi sa BRAND email porukama.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Mnoge usluge ne ispunjavaju opis iz email poruka	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND email poruke su dosadne	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Previše je BRAND email poruka u mom poštanskom sandučiću	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND email poruke više su manipulativne nego informativne	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Trust1 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav u vezi sa BRAND uslugom.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Sklon/a sam vjerovati BRAND usluzi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Obećanja koja daje BRAND usluga vjerojatno su pouzdana	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ne sumnjam u poštenje pružatelja BRAND usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Očekujem da će pružatelj BRAND usluge održati obećanje koje je dao	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mogu računati na to da će pružatelj BRAND usluge uzeti u obzir kako njegovi postupci djeluju na mene	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Očekujem da su namjere pružatelja BRAND usluge dobronamjerne	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Trust2 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav u vezi sa BRAND uslugom.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Očekujem da je pružatelj BRAND usluge dobronamjeran	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pružatelj BRAND usluge je sposoban	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pružatelj BRAND usluge je upoznat s pravom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pružatelj BRAND usluge zna kako pružiti vrhunsku uslugu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posve sam siguran u to što pružatelj BRAND usluge čini	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posve sam siguran što očekivati od pružatelja BRAND usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Loy1 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav u vezi sa BRAND uslugom.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Radije koristim BRAND nego konkurente.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uživam poslovati s COMPANY/BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND je moj prvi izbor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Imam pozitivan stav o BRAND usluzi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zaista mi se sviđa BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Loy - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav u vezi sa BRAND uslugom.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Često koristim BRAND uslugu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Koristim samo BRAND uslugu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posljednji put kad sam koristio online pravnu informacijsku uslugu, koristio sam BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Predani sam pretplatnik BRAND usluge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Com1 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav u vezi sa pravnim internetskim uslugama.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Među pravnim informacijskim uslugama poput portala BRAND nema prepoznatljive razlike	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Standardi informacijskih usluga poput portala BRAND potpuno su identični	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kvaliteta i točnost većine informacijskih usluga poput portala BRAND su identični	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sve pravne informacijske usluge poput portala BRAND nude gotovo isti sadržaj	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ulažem poseban trud da pronađem niže cijene za pravnu informacijsku uslugu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Smatram da će novac ušteden pri traženju jeftinije pretplate na pravnu informacijsku uslugu biti vrijedan truda	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Com2 - Na skali od »uopće se ne slažem« do »u potpunosti se slažem« za svaku izjavu, navedite svoj stav u vezi sa pravnim internetskim uslugama.**

	Uopće se ne slažem	Ne slažem se	Djelomično se ne slažem	Niti se ne slažem niti se slažem	Djelomično se slažem	Slažem se	U potpunosti se slažem
Troškovi pretplate na pravnu informacijsku uslugu važniji su mi od branda usluge na koju sam pretplaćen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ako cijena pretplate na uslugu koju koristim poraste, razmotrit ću otkazivanje pretplate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- |   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Troškovi prelaska na drugog pružatelja pravne informacijske usluge su niski   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Postupak prebacivanja na drugog pružatelja pravne informacijske usluge je brz i jednostavan                           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Ako cijene pretplate na uslugu koju koristim porastu, razmotrit ću mogućnost prebacivanja na drugog pružatelja usluge | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Neće mi biti problem prilagoditi se korištenju pravne informacijske usluge drugog pružatelja                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Gen - Spol:**

- Muški  
 Ženski

**Age - Starost:**

- do 24  
 25-34,  
 35-44,  
 45-54,  
 55-64,  
 65+

**Relat - Odnos s BRAND-om:**

- pretplatnik  
 bio pretplatnik ali više nisam  
 registrirani besplatni korisnik  
 povremeni posjetitelj BRAND internetskih stranica  
 nisam ni u kakvom odnosu s BRAND-om

**Job - Područje:**

- odvjetnik  
 zaposlenik suda ili državni odvjetnik

- profesionalac u privatnom društvu
- profesionalac u javnoj službi
- profesionalac u lokalnoj upravi
- student
- ostalo

**Face - Imam korisnički račun na Facebook-u:**

- Da,
- Ne

**FBusage - Koristim Facebook:**

- nekoliko puta dnevno
- dnevno
- nekoliko puta tjedno
- nekoliko puta mjesečno
- nikad

**EmailAcc - Primam e-poštu od BRAND:**

- Da
- Ne

**Status - U našem društvu (uredu) kada treba odlučiti o pretplati na uslugu kao što je BRAND, ja sam:**

- ključni donositelj odluka
- mogu preporučiti pretplatu
- samo sam korisnik

**Appendix 4: Study 2 – Online questionnaire Slovenian market**

**Zaupanje v BRAND**

Prosimo, če si vzamete nekaj minut in s klikom na Naslednja stran pričnete z izpolnjevanjem ankete.

**Rep1 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do »popolnoma se strinjam« podajte svoje mnenje za vsako izjavo o družbi COMPANY, izdajatelju pravne spletne storitve BRAND.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Zaposleni v družbi COMPANY skrbijo za potrebe kupcev/uporabnikov	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zaposleni v COMPANY prijazno ravnaajo s strankami	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY skrbi za svoje stranke	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY je videti podjetje, v katerem je dobro biti zaposlen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zdi se, da COMPANY dobro skrbi za svoje zaposlene	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zdi se, da ima COMPANY odlično vodstvo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY si prizadeva biti boljša od konkurentov	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zdi se, da v COMPANY znajo prepoznati in izkoristiti priložnosti na trgu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Rep2 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do »popolnoma se strinjam« podajte svoje mnenje za vsako izjavo o družbi COMPANY, izdajatelju pravne spletne storitve BRAND.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Videti je, da ima COMPANY dobre možnosti za prihodnjo rast	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY nudi storitve visoke kakovosti	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY je uspešno in zanesljivo podjetje	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY razvija inovativne storitve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Videti je, da se COMPANY trudi ustvariti nova delovna mesta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

V podjetju COMPANY bi zmanjšali dobiček, da bi bili bolj družbeno odgovorni	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zdi se, da je COMPANY družbeno odgovorno podjetje	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Cred - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo, navedite svoje stališče do blagovne znamke storitve BRAND .**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
BRAND me spominja na nekoga, ki je sposoben in ki ve, kaj počne	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND se ne pretvarja, da je nekaj, kar ni	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blagovna znamka BRAND je vodilna v uporabi tehnologije za zagotavljanje boljših storitev	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blagovna znamka BRAND je sinonim za strokovnost	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**FB1 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo navedite svoje mnenje/občutke, povezane z Facebook objavami storitve BRAND.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Veliko časa prebijem v pregledovanju BRAND Facebook objav, v primerjavi s Facebook objavami drugih pravnih internetnih storitev	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kadar pregledujem objave ponudnikov pravnih spletnih storitev na socialnih omrežjih	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kadar se vključujem v katero od socialnih omrežji spletnih ponudnikov pravnih storitev, sem običajno vključen/a v Facebook omrežje spletne storitve BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zelo dobro se počutim, ko pregledujem/berem BRAND objave na Facebooku	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uporaba BRAND Facebook strani mi je v zadovoljstvo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**FB2 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo navedite svoje mnenje/občutke, povezane z Facebook objavami storitve BRAND.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Dobro se počutim, kadar sem vključen v BRAND objave na Facebooku	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ker sem vključen v BRAND Facebook skupnost, se počutim ponosen/na član/ica pravniške skupnosti	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pregledovanje BRAND Facebook objav me spodbuja, da razmišljam o storitvi BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kadar pregledujem Facebook storitve BRAND, precej razmišljam o storitvi BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pregledovanje BRAND Facebook objav me spodbuja, da bi izvedel več o storitvi BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Email1 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo navedite svoje mnenje /občutke, povezane s prejemanjem e-poštnih sporočil storitve BRAND.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Veliko časa prebijem v prebiranju BRAND e-poštnih sporočil, v primerjavi e-poštnimi sporočili drugih pravnih internetnih storitev	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kadar prebiram e-poštna sporočila ponudnikov pravnih spletnih storitev, običajno prebiram e-poštna sporočila storitve BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Od vseh prejemanj e-poštnih sporočil ponudnikov pravnih spletnih storitev, sem najbolj vključen/a v prejemanje e-poštnih sporočil storitve BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zelo dobro se počutim, ko pregledujem/berem BRAND e-poštna sporočila	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prebiranje BRAND e-poštnih sporočil mi je v zadovoljstvo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Email2 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo navedite svoje mnenje /občutke, povezane s prejetjem e-poštnih sporočil storitve BRAND.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Dobro se počutim, kadar berem BRAND e-poštna sporočila	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ker sem vključen v prejetje BRAND e-poštnih sporočil, se počutim ponosen/na član/ica pravniške skupnosti;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Branje BRAND e-poštnih sporočil me spodbuja, da razmišljam o storitvi BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kadar berem BRAND e-poštna sporočila, precej razmišljam o storitvi BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Branje BRAND e-poštnih sporočil me spodbuja, da bi izvedel več o storitvi BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Email3 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo navedite svoje mnenje /občutke, povezane s prejetjem e-poštnih sporočil storitve BRAND.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Številne storitve, ki se oglašujejo preko BRAND e-pošte, niso tako dobre, kot se jih predstavlja	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Precej BRAND e-poštnih sporočil je nadležnih	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
V svoj e-nabiralnik prejemam preveč e-poštnih sporočil storitve BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E-poštna sporočila storitve BRAND so bolj manipulativna kot informativna	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Trust1 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo, navedite svoje stališče do BRAND storitve .**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Običajno zaupam storitvi BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

BRAND storitev je zanesljiva	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ne dvomim o poštenosti ponudnika BRAND storitve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pričakujem, da ponudnik BRAND storitve izpolni, kar obljubi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pričakujem, da ponudnik BRAND storitev razmišlja, kako njegova dejanja vplivajo name	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pričakujem, da so namere ponudnika storitve BRAND prijazne	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Trust2 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo, navedite svoje stališče do BRAND storitve .**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Pričakujem, da je ponudnik storitve BRAND dobronameran	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ponudnik storitve BRAND je sposoben	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ponudnik storitve BRAND se spozna na pravo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ponudnik storitve BRAND ve, kako zagotoviti odlično storitev	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Z gotovostjo lahko predvidim namere ponudnika storitve BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vem, kaj lahko pričakujem od ponudnika storitve BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Loy1 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo, navedite svoje stališče do BRAND storitve.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Storitev BRAND uporabljam raje kot konkurenčne storitve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rad/a poslujem z COMPANY / storitvijo BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND je moja prva izbira	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do storitve BRAND imam pozitiven odnos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND mi je zares všeč	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Loy2 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo, navedite svoje stališče do BRAND storitve.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Pogosto uporabljam storitev BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uporabljam zgolj BRAND storitev	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nazadnje, ko sem uporabljal/a spletno pravno informacijsko storitev, sem uporabljal/a BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sem predani naročnik/ca storitve BRAND	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Com1 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo, navedite svoje stališče do pravnih spletnih storitev.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Pravne informacijske storitve, kakršna je storitev BRAND, se v glavnem ne razlikujejo med seboj	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Standardi različnih pravnih spletnih informacijskih storitev, kot je portal BRAND, so popolnoma enaki	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kakovost in ažurnost večine pravnih spletnih informacijskih storitev, kot je portal BRAND, sta povsem enaki	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vse spletne pravne informacijske storitve, kot je portal BRAND, ponujajo skoraj enako vsebino	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zelo si prizadevam, da bi našel nižjo cene za spletne pravne informacijske storitve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mislim, da so prihranki pri iskanju cenejše naročnine na spletne pravne informacije, vredni truda	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Com2 - Na lestvici od » sploh se ne strinjam « do » popolnoma se strinjam « za vsako izjavo, navedite svoje stališče do pravnih spletnih storitev.**

	Sploh se ne strinjam	Ne strinjam se	Delno se ne strinjam	Niti se ne strinjam niti se strinjam	Delno se strinjam	Strinjam se	Popolnoma se strinjam
Stroški naročnine na storitev spletnih pravnih informacij so zame pomembnejši kot blagovna znamka storitve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Če se spletna pravna informacijska storitev podraži, bom razmislil(a) o preklicu naročnine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stroški zamenjave ponudnika spletnih pravnih informacij so nizki	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Postopek prehoda z enega na drugega ponudnika spletnih pravnih informacij je hiter in enostaven	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Če se cene naročnin za storitev, ki jo uporabljam, zvišajo, bom razmislil/a o zamenjavi ponudnika	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Brez težav bi se lahko prilagodil uporabi storitev spletnih pravnih informacij drugega ponudnika	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Gen - Spol:**

- Moški  
 Ženska

**Age - Starost:**

- do 24  
 25-34,  
 35-44,  
 45-54,  
 55-64,  
 65+

**Relat - Odnos z BRAND-om:**

- naročnik  
 bil sem naročnik, vendar nisem več  
 registriran brezplačni uporabnik  
 občasni obiskovalec spletnih strani BRAND

nikoli nisem uporabljal/a BRAND

**Job - Področje dela:**

- odvetnik
- zaposlen na sodišču ali v državnem tožilstvu
- pravnik/uslužbenec v zasebni družbi
- pravnik/uslužbenec v javnem sektorju
- pravnik v lokalni skupnosti
- študent
- drugo

**Face - Imam Facebook račun:**

- Da,
- Ne

**FBusage - Facebook uporabljam:**

- večkrat na dan
- vsak dan
- nekajkrat na teden
- nekajkrat na mesec
- nikoli

**EmailAcc - Prejemam BRAND e-pošto:**

- Da
- Ne

**Status - V naši družbi (pisarni), ko gre za odločanje o naročnini na storitev, kot je BRAND, sem:**

- ključni odločevalec/ka
- lahko priporočim naročilo
- sem samo uporabnik/ca



## Appendix 5: Study 2 – Online questionnaire Turkish market

### BRAND Hukuk Bilgi Sistemine Duyulan Güveni Etkileyen Faktörler

Lütfen birkaç dakikanızı ayırıp, aşağıdaki "Sonraki sayfa butonuna tıklayarak erişebileceğiniz anketimizi doldurunuz.

**Rep1 - BRAND Hukuk Bilgi Sisteminin yayıncısı olan COMPANY hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelerle katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılıyorum" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılıyorum ne katılmam	Kısmen katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
COMPANY çalışanları müşterilerinin ihtiyaçlarına önem verir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY çalışanları müşterilerine kibar davranır	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY çalışanları müşterilerine değer verir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gördüğüm kadarıyla, COMPANY, çalışmak için iyi bir şirket	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gördüğüm kadarıyla, COMPANY, çalışanlarına iyi davranıyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gördüğüm kadarıyla, COMPANY mükemmel bir lidere sahip	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY rakiplerini geride bırakmaya aday	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gördüğüm kadarıyla, COMPANY pazardaki fırsatları görebilir ve bunlardan yararlanabilir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Rep2 - BRAND Hukuk Bilgi Sisteminin yayıncısı olan COMPANY hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelerle katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılıyorum" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılıyorum ne katılmam	Kısmen katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
Gördüğüm kadarıyla, COMPANY'nın büyümeye yönelik ciddi planları var	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY çok kaliteli ürün ve hizmetler sunmaktadır	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY güçlü ve güvenilir bir şirkettir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY yenilikçi hizmetler geliştirmektedir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Gördüğüm kadarıyla, COMPANY yeni iş olanakları yaratmaya çalışmaktadır	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY sosyal sorumluluğunu yerine getirmek için kârlılığını azaltabilir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gördüğüm kadarıyla, COMPANY sosyal sorumluluğa sahip bir şirket	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Cred - BRAND Hukuk Bilgi Sisteminin güvenilirliği hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılıyorum" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılıyorum ne katılmam	Kısmen katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
BRAND bana yetkin ve ne yaptığını bilen insanları hatırlatıyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND olduğundan farklı görünmeye çalışmıyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND daha iyi bir hizmet sunabilmek için teknoloji kullanımında en önde gidiyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND markası uzmanlık demektir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**FB1 - BRAND Facebook sayfası ve paylaşımlarına yönelik yaklaşımınız hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılıyorum" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılıyorum ne katılmam	Kısmen katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
BRAND Facebook sayfası ve paylaşımlarıyla sosyal medyadaki diğer mesleki hukuk paylaşımlarına oranla daha fazla etkileşime giriyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sosyal medyada mesleki hukuk bilgi hizmetlerinin paylaşımları ile etkileşime girdiğimde, bunlar genellikle BRAND Facebook sayfası ve paylaşımları olur	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook sayfası ve paylaşımları, sosyal medyada mesleki hukuk bilgi hizmetlerinin paylaşımları ile ilgilendiğim zamanlarda, genellikle etkileşime girdiğim paylaşımlardır	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook paylaşımlarıyla etkileşime girdiğimde çok olumlu hissediyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook paylaşımlarını kullanmak beni memnun ediyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**FB2 - BRAND Facebook sayfası ve paylaşımları hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılıyorum" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılıyorum ne katılmam	Kısmen katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
BRAND Facebook paylaşımlarıyla etkileşime girdiğimde kendimi iyi hissediyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook camiasının bir parçası olmak beni hukuk camiasının saygın bir üyesi yapıyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook paylaşımlarını kullanmak beni BRAND hakkında düşünmeye sevk ediyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook paylaşımlarını kullanmak beni düşünmeye sevk ediyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND Facebook paylaşımlarını kullanmak BRAND hakkında daha fazla bilgi sahibi olma isteğimi artırıyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Email1 - BRAND Eposta gönderimleri hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılıyorum" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılıyorum ne katılmam	Kısmen katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
Diğer mesleki hukuk hizmetlerinin epostalarına kıyasla BRAND epostalarına daha çok vakit ayırıyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mesleki hukuk hizmeti veren yerlerden gelen epostaları okurken, bunlar genellikle BRAND epostaları olur	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND epostaları, mesleki hukuk bilgi hizmetleriyle ilgili epostalar arasında genellikle okuduğum epostalardır	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND epostalarını okurken çok olumlu hissediyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND epostalarını okumak beni memnun ediyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Email2 - BRAND eposta gönderimleri hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılıyorum" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılırim ne katılmam	Kısmen katılırim	Katılırim	Kesinlikle katılırim
BRAND epostalarını okurken kendimi iyi hissediyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND eposta listesinde yer almak beni hukuk camiasının mağrur bir üyesi yapıyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND epostalarını okumak beni BRAND hakkında düşünmeye sevk ediyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND epostalarını okumak beni düşünmeye sevk ediyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND epostalarını okumak BRAND hakkında daha fazla bilgi sahibi olma isteğimi arttırıyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Email3 - BRAND eposta gönderimleri hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılırim" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılırim ne katılmam	Kısmen katılırim	Katılırim	Kesinlikle katılırim
BRAND epostalarıyla reklamı yapılan hizmetlerin çoğu epostada anlatıldığı kadar iyi çıkmıyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Çoğu BRAND epostası can sıkıcı	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND'dan çok fazla eposta alıyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND epostaları bilgi vermekten ziyade yanıltıcı	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Trust1 - BRAND hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılırim" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılırim ne katılmam	Kısmen katılırim	Katılırim	Kesinlikle katılırim
BRAND güvenilir görünüyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND'nın verdiği sözler büyük ölçüde güvenilirdir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND'nın dürüstlüğünden kuşku yok	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND'nın sözüne sadık olduğunu düşünüyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

BRAND'nın atacağı adımların beni etkileyeceğini dikkate aldığını düşünüyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND'nın yardımsever olduğunu düşünüyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Trust2 - BRAND hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılıyorum" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılıyorum ne katılmam	Kısmen katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
BRAND'nın iyi niyetli olduğunu düşünüyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND yetkindir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND hukuku bilir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND mükemmel bir hizmetin nasıl sağlanacağını bilir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND'nın yapacaklarını öngörebiliyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND'dan umabileceğim konusunda tereddüt duymuyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Loy1 - BRAND hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılıyorum" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılıyorum ne katılmam	Kısmen katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
BRAND'yı rakiplerine tercih ederim	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMPANY ve BRAND ile çalışmaktan memnunum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND ilk tercihimdir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND konusunda olumlu düşünüyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND'yı gerçekten beğeniyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Loy2 - BRAND hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılıyorum" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılırim ne katılmam	Kısmen katılırim	Katılırim	Kesinlikle katılırim
Sık sık BRAND kullanıyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sadece BRAND kullanıyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Son olarak bir hukuk bilgi sistemi kullandığımda, BRAND kullanmışım	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sadık bir BRAND kullanıcısıyım	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Com1 - BRAND ve benzeri hizmetler hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılırim" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılırim ne katılmam	Kısmen katılırim	Katılırim	Kesinlikle katılırim
BRAND ve benzeri hukuk bilgi hizmetleri arasında önemli farklar yok	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND ve benzeri hukuk bilgi hizmetleri bir birine yakın hizmet standardına sahip	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND ve benzeri hukuk bilgi hizmetleri bir birine yakın kalite ve doğruluk seviyesinde	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BRAND ve benzeri hukuk bilgi hizmetlerinin hepsi aynı içeriği sunuyor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hukuk bilgi hizmetleri konusunda daha düşük fiyat bulabilmek için ekstra çaba sarfediyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Daha ucuz hukuk bilgi hizmeti bularak tasarruf edilen meblağın, sarfedilen çabayı haklı kıldığını düşünüyorum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Com2 - BRAND ve benzer hizmetler hakkında aşağıda yer alan ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı "Kesinlikle katılmam" ile "Kesinlikle katılırim" aralığında yer alan seçenekleri işaretleyerek belirtiniz.**

	Kesinlikle katılmam	Katılmam	Pek katılmam	Ne katılırim ne katılmam	Kısmen katılırim	Katılırim	Kesinlikle katılırim
Hukuk bilgi hizmeti üyeliğinin maliyeti benim için kullandığım hizmetin markasından daha önemli	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Kullandığım üyelik hizmetinin ücreti artarsa üyeliğimi iptal etmeyi düşünürüm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Başka bir hukuk bilgi hizmetine geçmenin maliyeti düşüktür	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Başka bir hukuk bilgi hizmetine geçme süreci hızlı ve kolaydır	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kullandığım üyelik hizmetinin ücreti artarsa başka bir hizmet sağlayıcıya geçmeyi düşünürüm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Başka bir hukuk bilgi hizmetini kullanmaya alışmak benim için sorun yaratmaz	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Gen - Cinsiyetiniz:**

- Erkek  
 Kadın

**Age - Yaşınız:**

- 24'ten küçük  
 25-34,  
 35-44,  
 45-54,  
 55-64,  
 65+

**Relat - BRAND ile ilişkinizin niteliği:**

- ücretli kullanıcıyım  
 eskiden ücretli kullanıcıydım, şu an değilim  
 ücretsiz üyeyim  
 ara sıra BRAND web sitesini ziyaret ederim  
 BRAND ile herhangi bir ilişkim yok

**Job - Mesleğiniz:**

- avukat  
 hakim veya savcı  
 özel şirket çalışanı

- kamu personeli
- yerel yönetim personeli
- öğrenci
- diğer

**Face - Facebook hesabınız var mı?**

- Evet
- Hayır

**FBusage - Facebook kullanım sıklığınız::**

- günde birkaç kez
- günlük
- haftada birkaç kez
- ayda birkaç kez
- hiç

**EmailAcc - BRAND'dan eposta alıyor musunuz?**

- Evet
- Hayır

**Status - Şirketimizde/ofisimizde BRAND üyeliğine karar verme konusunda:**

- karar verici konumundayım
- üye olunmasını tavsiye edebilirim
- sadece kullanıcıyım

## Appendix 6: Study 1 Harman's single factor test

Component	Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Rep1a	19.56	36.22	36.22	19.560	36.222	36.222
Rep1b	4.74	8.77	45.00			
Rep1c	3.19	5.90	50.90			
Rep1d	3.05	5.65	56.55			
Rep1e	2.21	4.10	60.65			
Rep1f	2.14	3.97	64.62			
Rep1g	1.58	2.93	67.55			
Rep1h	1.39	2.57	70.12			
Rep1i	1.31	2.42	72.54			
Rep2a	1.05	1.94	74.47			
Rep2b	0.91	1.69	76.16			
Rep2c	0.79	1.46	77.63			
FB1a	0.75	1.39	79.01			
FB1b	0.65	1.20	80.22			
FB1c	0.62	1.14	81.36			
FB1d	0.57	1.05	82.41			
FB2a	0.55	1.02	83.43			
FB2b	0.52	0.96	84.39			
FB2c	0.48	0.89	85.28			
FB2d	0.45	0.83	86.11			
email1a	0.43	0.79	86.90			
email1b	0.42	0.77	87.67			
email1c	0.40	0.73	88.40			
email1d	0.39	0.72	89.12			
email1e	0.36	0.67	89.79			
email1f	0.34	0.63	90.42			
email1g	0.33	0.61	91.04			
email1h	0.31	0.58	91.62			
email2a	0.30	0.56	92.18			
email2b	0.29	0.55	92.73			
email2c	0.28	0.52	93.25			
email2d	0.28	0.51	93.76			
Trust1a	0.25	0.46	94.22			
Trust1b	0.24	0.45	94.67			
Trust1c	0.23	0.43	95.10			
Trust1d	0.22	0.40	95.50			
Trust1e	0.21	0.39	95.88			
Trust1f	0.20	0.38	96.26			
Trust1g	0.18	0.34	96.60			

(table continues)

*(continued)*

Trust1h	0.18	0.33	96.93
Trust2a	0.17	0.32	97.26
Trust2b	0.17	0.31	97.57
Trust2c	0.15	0.28	97.85
Trust2d	0.14	0.26	98.10
Trust2e	0.14	0.25	98.36
Loy1a	0.13	0.23	98.59
Loy1b	0.12	0.22	98.82
Loy1c	0.11	0.21	99.03
Loy1d	0.11	0.20	99.23
Loy1e	0.10	0.19	99.42
Loy2a	0.09	0.18	99.59
Loy2b	0.08	0.16	99.75
Loy2c	0.07	0.13	99.88
Loy2d	0.07	0.12	100.00

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

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*Source: Own work.*