

ACADEMIA DE STUDII ECONOMICE

DOMENIUL DE STUDII UNIVERSITARE DE DOCTORAT: MARKETING

HABILITATION THESIS

*Empirical Models of Users' Willingness to Share
Personal Information on Online Social Networking
Websites*

- SUMMARY -

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The Habilitation Thesis titled „*Empirical Models of Users' Willingness to Share Personal Information on Online Social Networks*” is a review of the main results obtained by the author during his scientific and didactic research, performed after the completion of his PhD thesis titled „*Marketing Information Systems Audit*”, including a brief presentation of the academic, scientific and professional career development of the author, future development directions for his academic career, respectively a brief presentation of his ability to lead research teams, to organize and coordinate didactic activities, to explain and facilitate learning and research.

The first part of the thesis presents the main original scientific results obtained by the author in his research, after defending his PhD thesis titled „*Marketing Information Systems Audit*”, in October 2007. During this time the author published, as sole author or with other co-authors, 3 books, 10 articles in ISI Thomson Reuters indexed journals, over 30 scientific papers in journals indexed in various international academic databases, as well as over 30 communications in international and national conferences. The original scientific research activity has been grouped within the framework of the habilitation thesis in four subsections: the first one is examining the use and impact of online tools for marketing activities, both at the corporate and at the individual level; the second examines blogs from a „marketing tool” perspective, as well as the transmission of marketing messages through the blogosphere; the third subsection presents the author’s research with regard to the efficiency of online social networks as a marketing communication medium; the last theme presents users’ willingness to share personal data online, data that is used for marketing purposes, in the general context of users’ privacy, and how it impacts the quality and efficiency of promotional actions taken by organizations over social networking websites.

Thus, the first theme addresses works of a rather heterogeneous nature, having as main theme the use of the Internet for marketing activities, assessing users' satisfaction with educational services (in various fields such as health services, economic studies or entrepreneurship), how the use and perception of online services has evolved over the last decade, the effectiveness of using online marketing tools to promote E.U. funded projects, as well as online communication in tourism marketing and public institutions.

The second theme addresses a research stream comprised of papers published by the author about the use of blogs as online marketing tools, including several theoretical and empirical models for blog marketing evaluation, as well as marketing message transmissions

through the blogosphere, the RSS-based network that makes a post almost instantly available to anyone interested in the topic.

The third theme includes several papers that examine online social networking websites and how they are embedded in marketing communication, as perhaps one of the most dynamic environments associated with modern marketing. Topics such as marketing messages diffusion and the likelihood of a message reaching the targeted audience, the way in which trust leads to the adoption or abandonment of online social networking websites, the study of the precursors of the adoption of certain online social networks, respectively factors that influence the perception of advertising messages within these websites.

Finally, the fourth major research stream, which addresses users' willingness to disclose real information about themselves in online social networks, studies in detail how the quality of online communications can be assessed, given that online marketing budgets for social media advertising have increased spectacularly in recent years, reaching tens of billions of dollars for advertising just in the account of Internet giants such as Facebook and Google. I have also tried to segment the social networking websites users' using social media information disclosure antecedents as group predictors, and I tried to assess the impact of constructs such as privacy perceptions, trust, perceived benefits and normative beliefs have on users' decision to disclose real data about themselves when using online social networking services.

The second part of the paper presents the evolution of my academic, scientific and professional career, following five major directions: continuous professional development, improvement of competences in didactic field, furthering of scientific research, both for fundamental and applied marketing topics, respectively a continuous involvement in academic administration. It details the postdoctoral studies conducted by the candidate with important European Union universities (e.g.: IESE Business School, University of Groningen and Leuven Catholic University), specialization studies, the contribution to the improvement of didactic activities within the Marketing Department of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, the contribution to the founding and the management of the Online Marketing master program of the Marketing School, new courses development as part of the Marketing Department academic offering, fundamental and applied research activities that includes 15 research projects, 25 papers indexed by ISI Thomson Scientific Web of Knowledge database, 29 other articles published in academic journals indexed by various other academic international databases, as well as

contributing to the foundation and development, since 2007, of the "Online Marketing Journal", edited by the Faculty of Marketing alongside Uranus Publishing House.

The third part of the Habilitation Thesis highlights the future directions of my academic career, in the general context of my present scientific achievements in the field of marketing, following the same five major directions: continuous professional development, improvement of competences in didactic field, furthering of scientific research, both for fundamental and applied marketing topics, respectively a continuous involvement in academic administration, with priority being given to the development of international research projects, to the implementation and development of international conferences and workshops at ASE, the development of complex case studies, based on the Harvard Business School methodology, based on the experience of companies that found success on the Romanian market, publication of scientific articles in widely recognized international academic journals in the field of marketing, such as Marketing Science, Journal of Marketing, Journal of Interactive Marketing, indexation of the Online Marketing Journal in new international databases, as well as developing research partnerships with partners from the business environment, including conducting doctoral projects with companies operating on the local market.

The last chapter highlights the candidate's individual ability to coordinate research teams, organize and coordinate teaching activities, explain and facilitate learning and research. In this respect, the candidate has been coordinating graduate and undergraduate students for the graduation thesis since 2003, when he became a member of the Marketing Department of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, that amount to over 500 bachelor and dissertation papers until now.

My teaching experience included various didactic activities in the field of marketing, which during the last decade and a half have consisted in teaching courses and seminars on subjects such as Marketing Research, Marketing Research on International Markets, Marketing Information Systems, Marketing Simulations, Marketing Forecasting, Applied Marketing Software, Marketing Data Analysis Using SPSS, Cybermarketing, Internet Marketing, Marketing Models, Marketing Projects, Scientific Seminars and, of course, Marketing. I was also directly involved in the development of new academic courses as part of the Marketing Department offer, which included: Advanced Marketing Analysis Methods, Social Media and Mobile Marketing, Online Marketing, Online Public Relations, Online Advertising, Modelling and Simulation of

Marketing Phenomena, Advanced Techniques in Marketing Research and Intelligent Marketing Decision Support Systems. For many of these subjects I was principal responsible and chair of the examination committee.

As far as my organizational and coordinating experience, I mention that since 2012 I am an associate dean of the Faculty of Marketing, responsible for all teaching aspects, and as such I've been directly involved in the development, management and evaluation of the Faculty of Marketing's curricula, both on undergraduate and graduate levels. I have also been involved in the accreditation of study programs since 2009 and I am responsible for the students' assessment for both didactic activities and disciplines.

Also, during 2010-2012, I was the director of the Postdoctoral Research Program (PD) "Exploratory Research Aimed to Develop Operational and Behavioral Models of Efficient Employment of Online Social Networks As Marketing Communication Tools" (UEFISCDI project 664/2010) , won through a highly contested national competition, and in 2015 I coordinated as Project Manager the project "Developing Entrepreneurship and Managerial Skills for Students and Young Entrepreneurs in order to Generate New Enterprises (BizStart)", contract no. POSDRU / 176 / 3.1 / S / 150298, co-financed by the Regional Operational Program for Human Resources Development 2007-2013, European Social Fund, Priority Axis 3 "Increasing adaptability of workers and enterprises", Key Area of Intervention 3.1. "Promotion of Entrepreneurial Culture", obtained through national competition, in which I coordinated the activity of over 30 teachers, a project also aimed at carrying out entrepreneurial training activities for over 400 students.

The Habilitation Thesis ends with the presentation of the bibliography, which features 342 bibliographic references, including general references and my own publications which are relevant to the research activity carried out by the author after the completion of his doctoral studies.

In conclusion, I believe that the abilities, competences and knowledge acquired through my teaching and research experience, summarized in this Habilitation Thesis will allow me to contribute to the development of relevant marketing studies and the training of competent marketing professionals, as part of the Doctoral School of Marketing of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies.