

Department of Marketing



Research Seminars Series

Harald Van Heerde, University of New South Wales (AU)

December 19, 2024 | 12:00 - 14:00 | AD.0.114 Sitzungssaal 1

Empowering Prosumers in the Sharing Economy: The Role of Physical Sharing

Abstract: Prosumers are resource-providing consumers in the sharing economy such as AirBnB hosts. A key element of the sharing economy is that resources can be offered to consumers in a physically shared mode (e.g., a consumer shares an Airbnb accommodation) or in a non-physically shared mode (e.g., a consumer rents a private Airbnb accommodation). Yet, it is unclear how physical sharing moderates the effects of a listing's communication and pricing on consumer demand. We identify three novel communication elements that drive consumer demand in the sharing economy: prosumer availability, prosumer self-investment, and information about the offering. We analyze monthly field data of 132,576 Airbnb offerings across six U.S. cities observed over six years to demonstrate that physical sharing moderates the effectiveness of these communication elements on consumer demand and enhances price sensitivity. While prosumer self-investment into the offering lifts demand, the effect weakens for physically shared offerings. Conversely, physical sharing enhances the benefits of prosumer availability and information about the offering. Additionally, a text analysis of over 800,000 consumer reviews from 31,410 Airbnb offerings explores a potential underlying mechanism by showing that physical (versus non-physical) sharing reduces consumers' sense of psychological ownership. We discuss implications for prosumers and platforms.