

# Editorial

## Articles in this Issue

Trust is something akin to an invisible glue – on a very large level in entire market economies or on a very small level in interpersonal relationships. In large market economies need trust to act on the assumption of a stable currency and the independence of the monetary institutions. In interpersonal relationship we need trust to be able to start relying on each other and to gain the freedom to deal with complex problems outside the relationships. Even to edit this Editorial, it was necessary to declare it a “trusted document.”

The three papers in this issue reflect the multiple levels at which trust operates. The first paper looks at the society level, the second paper studies interpersonal interactions in negotiations, and the third one investigates online customer journeys. Together, they demonstrate that understanding trust requires attending to both the micro-level mechanisms that shape individual behavior and the macro-level consequences that affect market functioning.

The first paper is entitled “Negative Moral Stereotypes of Managers: Antecedents, Consequences, and Boundary Conditions.” Authors are Jacqueline Schmidt, Sascha Alavi, Jan Wieseke, and Johannes Habel. Together they are interested in understanding how negative stereotypes of managers are formed. While managers are still viewed comparably positively compared to other elites (especially politicians), many individuals also hold negative stereotypes of managers. Based on comprehensive survey data, the study identifies boundary conditions for the emergence of such negative stereotypes. They intensify when people perceive managers as a homogeneous group and lack personal contact with them, particularly in environments marked by perceived corporate corruption and unfair competition. These findings suggest that trust in the economic system depends on both direct experience and broader social narratives about business leaders. By connecting individual-level stereotypes to macro-level trust in economic institutions, the paper underscores how fragile the social license for market capitalism can be, and how important it is to understand the conditions under which public trust erodes or endures.

The second paper shifts to interpersonal trust. Entitled “Mind the Anchor: Mindfulness Strengthens Anchoring Bias in Marketing Negotiations” is authored by Franziska Frank and Johannes Habel. Mindfulness is the concept of individuals being fully present in a given moment

or activity – and you can be purposefully and intentionally mindful. In their experimental studies Frank and Habel empirically study potentially unintended consequences of being mindful in a negotiation setting. In particular, the initial offer of the other side (“the anchor”) has a stronger effect on outcomes if mindfulness is high. This finding reframes mindfulness not simply as a cognitive enhancement but as a psychological state that alters interpersonal trust dynamics.

The third paper is entitled “Among the Stars: A Text-Based Approach to Analyzing Online Customer Experience.” It is authored by Annika Wagner, Franz Molnar, and Michelle Khanh Phan. Together they develop and validate a dictionary-based approach to measure online customer experiences based on text data. Hence they make it possible to use data from user-generated content to determine online customer experiences along its multiple dimensions. While they link this to customer satisfaction in the paper, it is arguably also linked to the emergence of trust in the relationship between customers and the online domains of companies.

One other aspect stands out that makes this paper especially relevant to Marketing ZFP. At the end, we have a German-language dictionary – aligned with our vision to be both, a home of leading publications in Marketing in general, but also providing an outlet for material that would have been more difficult to publish in the current international marketing journals.

## A Personal Note and a Goodbye

As of October 1, 2025, Hermann Schenk has entered retirement. Many readers may not immediately recognize his name, but this does not reflect his significance to Marketing ZFP. For decades, Mr. Schenk was the ever-available point of contact at C.H.Beck (our publisher) for the respective editors. All editors of Marketing ZFP who worked with Mr. Schenk are aware of his prudence and his intrinsically motivated commitment to our journal. He has thus played a major role in the success of Marketing ZFP. At this point, we would like to sincerely thank Mr. Schenk for his dedication and wish him a smooth transition into this new phase of his life!

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Editors-in-Chief