Call for Papers

Special Issue: Looking across Product Categories in Marketing Science

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The majority of studies to explain customers’ purchase behavior focus on one product category only, despite appeals to abandon this restricted orientation (e.g., Seetharaman 2005). Such an orientation implicitly assumes that customer choices are independent across product categories. However, ignoring cross-category interdependences in marketing response models may lead to biased estimates of marketing effects. Consequently, decisions based on such estimates may result in considerable profit losses.

Studies aiming to discover and measure interdependences between product categories follow exploratory or explanatory approaches. Exploratory approaches do not consider marketing variables or other covariates which might affect the response variables (e.g., Mild and Reutterer 2003, Hruschka 2014). Because they typically ignore marketing mix effects, the managerial value of conventional exploratory approaches appears to be rather limited.

Though explanatory approaches which deal with multiple product categories include marketing variables, they are not free from weaknesses as well. Several studies assume conditional independence between categories (e.g., Ainslie and Rossi 1998) and others only consider a rather small number of categories, usually six or even less (e.g., Boztug and Hildebrandt 2008). But taking into account only a small number of categories may lead to biased estimates as shown by Dippold and Hruschka (2013). Another limitation accrues from focusing on only one type of dependent variable. Most disaggregate multi-category response models exclusively focus on purchase incidence. Interestingly, store choice has not been investigated as one of several other relevant dependent variables, even though it is of obvious importance to retailers.

Though several authors present models with deterministic time effects, it is remarkable that more sophisticated models with dynamic effects are to date missing. We also notice that the vast majority of studies exploring multi-category choices focus on grocery categories, while studies for apparel or shoes assortments, financial services, tourism, consumer electronics, etc. seem to be missing completely.
Finally, while contributions using disaggregate response models emphasize the benefits of a multi-category orientation for marketing decisions, they typically only derive qualitative recommendations.

We welcome papers which attempt to overcome the shortcomings discussed above and contribute over the extant literature. Without claiming to be exhaustive authors of submissions are encouraged to apply exploratory techniques, aggregate and/or disaggregate market response models as well as optimization, simulation or game-theoretical methods in their contributions.

Author guidelines are available at: [http://www.springer.com/11573](http://www.springer.com/11573)

**To accommodate requests of several potential contributors we extend the deadline to July 1, 2015.**

If you have questions regarding relevance and submission of your work to this special issue, please email Harald Hruschka at harald.hruschka@wiwi.uni-r.de

**References**


