



UNIVERSIDADE
CATÓLICA
PORTUGUESA

THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA CONTEXT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF PODCAST ADVERTISING

INTERNSHIP REPORT TO UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA
TO OBTAIN A MASTER'S DEGREE IN COMMUNICATION,
MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

By

Nina Sophie Ettmüller

Faculdade de Ciências Humanas

February 2021



UNIVERSIDADE
CATÓLICA
PORTUGUESA

THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA CONTEXT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
PODCAST ADVERTISING

INTERNSHIP REPORT TO UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA
TO OBTAIN A MASTER'S DEGREE IN COMMUNICATION,
MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

By

Nina Sophie Ettmüller

Faculdade de Ciências Humanas

Under the supervision of Eduardo Cintra Torres

February 2021

Abstract

Advertising in Audio Podcasts has gained huge popularity in the last years. However, education on how to advertise effectively on Podcasts is still at an early stage. A high effectiveness of advertising is only achieved when an advertisement is placed and consumed in the appropriate media context. The placement and its effectiveness are a topic that still needs to be researched intensively in this regard. The ad-context congruence, the correspondence of theme and image between a brand being advertised and a podcast episode are explored more intensively in this work. These are common criteria used for the selection of advertising contexts.

For the purpose of a deeper investigation of this topic, two experimental online surveys were realised. Here, either the thematic congruence or the image congruence and their advertising effectiveness were examined. Audio sequences of German podcast episodes were played to the panel participants. Fictitious podcast advertisements were inserted into these. These advertisements contextually fitted the episode either very well or not at all. After participants have been exposed to one audio sequence, advertising effectiveness was measured by the variables brand recall, brand recognition and attitudes towards the brand.

Brand recall and brand recognition were higher in percentage terms for the thematic and image congruent condition. However, the study did not yield statistically significant results for these variables. Nevertheless, experiments demonstrate that thematic but also image congruence had a strong and statistically significant impact on attitudes towards the brand. In both experiments, the congruent condition was able to trigger a much more positive evaluation of the brand than the non-congruent one.

Key words: Audio Podcasts, Audio Podcast advertising, ad-context congruence, thematic congruence, image congruence, advertising effectiveness

Resumo

Nos últimos anos, a publicidade em Podcasts áudio ganhou uma enorme popularidade. No entanto, a formação para anunciar eficazmente em Podcasts está ainda na sua fase inicial. Só é possível alcançar um alto nível de eficácia publicitária se uma publicidade for colocada e consumida no contexto de media adequado. A colocação e eficácia é um tópico que ainda precisa de ser intensamente pesquisado neste âmbito. A congruência do contexto publicitário, assim como a correspondência entre o tema e a imagem da marca que está a ser publicitada e o episódio do Podcast em causa, são explorados de forma mais aprofundada neste trabalho. Estes são os critérios mais comuns usados para selecionar os contextos publicitários.

Foram conduzidas duas sondagens experimentais online, com o intuito de aprofundar a investigação neste tópico. Através delas, foram examinadas a congruência temática ou a congruência de imagem, assim como a eficácia publicitária. Foram reproduzidas sequências de áudio de Podcasts alemães para que os participantes dos painéis as escutassem. Durante a reprodução, foram inseridos anúncios de Podcast fictícios. O nível de adequação destes anúncios ao episódio variava entre “muito adequados” e “nada adequados”. Depois de os participantes terem sido expostos a uma sequência de áudio, foi medida a eficácia publicitária do anúncio através das variáveis respeitantes à memória de marca, reconhecimento de marca e atitude perante a marca.

A memória de marca e o reconhecimento de marca obtiveram mais pontos em termos percentuais quando se verificavam condições de congruência temática e de imagem. No entanto, o estudo não providenciou resultados estatisticamente significantes para estas variáveis. Não obstante, as experiências demonstras que a congruência temática – e também a de imagem – tem um impacto estatístico significativo nas atitudes perante a marca. Em ambas as experiências, a condição de congruência conseguiu desencadear uma avaliação muito mais positiva da marca quando comparada com uma condição de incongruência.

Palavras-chave: Podcasts Áudio, publicidade em Podcasts Áudio, congruência de contexto publicitário, congruência temática, congruência de imagem, eficácia publicitária

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Eduardo Cintra Torres, for the advice and understanding within the last months. I would also like to thank my family for their support, guidance and encouragement during the last two years.

To the friends that have welcomed me in Lisbon as one of their own, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for making this experience a spectacular one. Lastly, to me fellow Lisbon housemates for the countless hours of advice, proof-reading and laughs. Thanks to you, I stayed strong during this pandemic.

Table of Content

List of Tables	IX
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the study	1
1.2 Problem Discussion	2
1.3 Research questions and research objective	3
1.4 Structure of the work and methodical procedure	4
2 Internship report	6
2.1 Company profile – Allianz Deutschland AG	6
2.2 Work organization and main responsibilities of the advertising department	7
2.3 Main responsibilities during internship period	7
2.4 Podcasts as a new advertising medium at Allianz Deutschland AG	9
2.4.1 The potential of Podcasts as an advertising medium for Allianz Deutschland AG	9
2.4.2 Process steps for integrating advertising into Podcast episodes	10
2.4.2.1 Systematic selection of Podcast shows	10
2.4.2.2 Advertising request	10
2.4.2.3 Creation and coordination of briefings	11
2.4.3 Selected examples of Allianz’s ad integration in Podcast shows	11
2.4.3.1 Ad placement for Allianz at <i>Beste Vaterfreuden</i>	11
2.4.3.2 Ad placement for Allianz at <i>brand eins</i>	12
2.4.3.3 Advertising placement for Allianz car insurance at <i>Übersteuern</i>	12
2.4.4 Project evaluation: Podcasts as an advertising tool at Allianz Deutschland	13
3 Theoretical framework	14
3.1 Explanatory approaches and delimitations of the Podcast medium	14
3.1.1 Podcasting	15
3.1.2 Podcast	17
3.2 Historical development of Podcasts as a media format	18
3.3 German Podcast landscape	19
3.4 Success factors of Podcasts as a media format	21

4	Podcasts as marketing tool	23
4.1	General characteristics of Podcast advertising	23
4.1.1	Main formats of Podcast advertising	25
4.2	Podcast advertising industry	26
4.2.1	Podcast advertising industry in Germany	27
4.3	Key success factors of Podcast advertising in the current advertising landscape	27
5	Advertising effectiveness	30
5.1	Psychological models of advertising effectiveness	30
5.1.1	Stage models	31
5.1.2	Relational models	33
5.2	Psychological variables for measuring advertising effectiveness	35
5.2.1	Cognitive variables	35
5.2.2	Affective variables	36
5.2.3	Conative variables	37
6	Media context studies	38
6.1	Ad-context congruence	38
6.1.1	Theoretical explanations: The effect of ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness	40
6.1.1.1	The effect of ad-context congruence on memory	40
6.1.1.2	Contextual Priming	40
6.1.1.3	Cognitive Interference Theory	41
6.1.2	The effect of ad-context congruence on brand evaluations	42
7	State of the art	43
7.1	Advertising effectiveness of Podcast advertising: Influential Factors for Success	43
7.1.1	Research gap	45
7.2	Current research on the effect of thematic ad-context congruence	45
7.3	Current research on the effect of image ad-context congruence	47
8	Methodology	51
8.1	Development of research hypotheses	51

8.2	Research design	53
8.2.1	Quantitative research design	53
8.2.2	Experimental research design	54
8.2.3	Online setting	54
8.3	Experimental design of independent variables	55
8.3.1	Advertised brands	56
8.3.2	Development of Podcast sponsorships	56
8.3.3	Development of audio sequences	58
8.3.4	Experiment 1: Development of an ad-context congruent and incongruent stimulus	59
8.3.5	Experiment 2: Development of an ad-context congruent and incongruent stimulus	60
8.4	Assignment of experimental groups to different audio sequences	62
8.5	Dependent variable—items and scales	62
8.5.1	Recall and recognition	62
8.5.2	Attitude towards the brand and programme enjoyment	63
8.6	Population and sampling	63
8.7	Pre-study	65
8.7.1	Study phase I	65
8.7.1.1	Perception of Podcast Sponsorships	65
8.7.1.2	Manipulation of independent variables	66
8.7.2	Study phase II	70
8.7.2.1	Pilot test of the questionnaire	70
8.8	Study procedure and questionnaire	70
8.9	Data collection	72
8.9.1	Exclusion criteria	72
8.10	Ethical consideration	73
8.11	Validity and reliability	74
8.11.1	Internal validity	74
8.11.2	External validity	75
8.11.3	Reliability	76

9	Results.....	77
9.1	Demographic characteristics of experimental groups	77
9.2	Results for brand memory: Brand recall and brand recognition in Experiment 1	78
9.3	Results for brand memory: Brand recall and brand recognition in Experiment 2	80
9.4	Brand evaluation: Experiment 1	81
9.5	Brand evaluation: Experiment 2	82
9.6	Further data analysis: Investigation of possible influencing factors on attitude towards the brand	82
10	Discussion	84
10.1	Classification and reflection of results	84
10.2	Study limitations.....	87
10.3	Future Research	88
10.4	Practical Implications	89
11	Conclusion	91
	References.....	93
	Appendixes	109

List of Tables

Table 1:	Overview –Advertising material produced for Allianz’s life and car insurance campaign.....	8
Table 2:	Overview – Psychological dimensions of popular hierarchy of effect models	32
Table 3:	Overview – Involvement model according to Krugman (1965)	34
Table 4:	Categorization of different forms of advertisement-context-congruence	39
Table 5:	Current state of research: Influential factors for success for Podcast advertising	44
Table 6:	Overview – Creation of the dependent variable thematic ad-context congruence	60
Table 7:	Overview – Creation of the dependent variable image ad-context congruence	61
Table 8:	Assignment of audio sequences to different experimental groups	62
Table 9:	Perception of brand <i>Delkan</i> and Pocast episode <i>The eighth day</i>	69
Table 10:	Perception of brand <i>Delkan</i> and Podcast episode <i>Best girlfriends</i>	69
Table 11:	Demographic characteristics of experimental groups after cleaning the datasets	77
Table 12:	Effect of thematic ad-context congruence on brand recall and brand recognition for Ex1c and Ex1ic	79
Table 13:	Effect of thematic ad-context congruence on brand recall and brand recognition for Ex2c and Ex2ic	80
Table 14:	Attitude towards the brand – Statistical comparisons between Ex1c and Ex1ic	81
Table 15:	Attitude towards the brand – Statistical comparisons between Ex2c and Ex2ic	82

1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

“We are living through a golden age of audio, more people are listening than ever before and the diversity of programme is better than ever”, stated the British journalist and technical expert Ben Hammersley (Hammersley 2018). Indeed, many people today are returning to the primal urge of listening and being heard. The voice is our most original and natural organ for expressing emotions, moods and thoughts. After half a century of visual dominance in the use of media, the importance of listening is now making a strong comeback. This is certainly also because people have obviously always had a need for listening, especially to narrative, personal stories. Already from the very beginning of humankind, telling and listening to stories was necessary in order to develop knowledge, values or religions, which are the basis for living in collectives (Harrari 2013: 41).

This need is currently being met by the diverse offer of Podcast formats, that are consumed such as never before. This can be observed on a worldwide level. For instance, according to one survey, more than one third of participants from Portugal and the U.S. and even half of the participants from Brazil and South Korea stated that they have listened to a Podcast in the past month (Newman et al. 2019). As a result, it is increasingly talked about a „Golden Age of Podcasting“ (e.g. Berry 2015), a „Podcast Renaissance“ (e.g. Roose 2014) or even about a „Podcast Revolution“ (e.g. Walker 2019).

Though Podcasting is still a relatively new phenomenon, it is already changing how audiences consume and interact with media content: Whether in the car while driving to work, during housework or before falling asleep, people put their headphones on and connect to the world through a stranger’s voice. Podcasts do not only serve as companions, but also fill in the gaps for activities such as physical work or queuing. Due to the high penetration of smartphones, the use of audio content and thus also the consumption of Podcasts is very easy. A wide range of audio content is available and downloadable anywhere and at any time, mostly for free, making Podcasts increasingly interesting for all conceivable niches and target groups.

What was once considered a niche product is now one of the up-and-coming media formats. This boom did not go unnoticed in the world of advertising. For advertisers, this medium

seems to be an increasingly popular advertising channel. Podcast advertising is seen as offering great potential and appears to be a suitable advertising format that is up to the biggest challenge of the current advertising world: Today, many consumers have developed a certain aversion to advertising due to receiving a daily overload of advertising, which constantly competes for their attention (Hsu 2019). However, Podcasts present characteristics that are fundamentally different from those of ordinary advertising channels. With Podcasts, for example there are no commercial breaks like in television. Instead, only one specific sponsor advertises on a Podcast show. In addition, advertising is often presented by the Podcast moderators themselves and is embedded within a personal story. Further, since it is a niche medium, marketers can reach very specific customer segments who are more likely to be interested in their product. These and many more benefits seem to positively influence advertising effectiveness. In general, Podcast advertising turns out to be perceived as an authentic and widely accepted advertising format (Riismandel 2018). As a result, consumers rarely skip listening to complex Podcast advertising content (Podstars OMR 2018).

1.2 Problem Discussion

Even though studies suggest that advertising on Podcasts can be extremely worthwhile for companies, Podcast advertising is faced with one of the oldest and most recurring problems of advertising design. In a quotation attributed to the advertising pioneer John Wanamaker (1838-1922) this problem is described as follows: “Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don't know which half”¹. Wanamaker faced this dilemma at a time when only traditional advertising media, such as newspapers and billboards, existed. Even if advertising expenditures led to positive sales results, it is still not clear what specific marketing efforts were responsible for those results. Today, nearly one hundred years later, influential and success factors of advertising effectiveness remain still unsolved. This especially applies to relatively new media formats such as Podcasts. Up until the present date, education on how to advertise effectively on Podcasts is still at an early stage.

¹ In literature, this quote is attributed to John Wanamaker. However, it is never referred to original sources. This quote can only be found on quotation websites (See The Quotations Page (1992) Quotation Details [online] <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/1992.html> [Accessed 09 February 2021]).

There are some studies dealing with the influence and success factors of advertising effectiveness in the context of audio Podcasts. In this context however, the ideal placement of podcast advertising in media contexts remains an essential problem. Especially due to the vast amount of podcast shows, one million shows as of today (Winn 2020), selecting an appropriate media context presents a challenging process.

Next to the importance of reaching a large audience, the following criteria are currently relevant for the selection of an appropriate media context for the placement of podcast advertising: As the thematic diversity of available Podcasts increases, the thematic connection between the advertising brand and the Podcast episode in which it is embedded becomes increasingly important. For products or services where there is no Podcast show with a suitable topic, such as for life insurances, other criteria are used to select the advertising context. For example, advertising for insurance and financial brands is increasingly found in expert and news Podcasts, which, like these service brands in general, are likely to be perceived as more complex and serious. Therefore, the perceived image fit between the Podcast episode and the therein advertised brand is another common criterion.

The obvious reason for an ad placement in a medium that shares similarities with the brand is the guarantee of a better target group match, so for instance, people listener to a health Podcast would be more likely to be the target group for health-related products. Apart from that, it is believed that a congruent advertising context enhances advertising effectiveness. A prevalent criterion for the selection of media which has been established throughout the years is the thematic congruence between the object of advertisement, namely, the brand, and the media context it is situated in (e.g. Norris and Colman 1992; Moorman et al. 2002; Germelmann et al. 2020). The criteria of media selection with regard to situating of Podcast advertising, however, is still unclear in its empirical support. As of now, the researcher knows of no studies to fill this gap. Subsequently, the paper presented here provides the first step towards an experimental examination pertaining this topic.

1.3 Research questions and research objective

The aim of this work is to find out if congruence between an advertised brand and the editorial content in which it is placed, so the Podcast episode, affects advertising effectiveness. Against this background, the following main research question can be derived for this thesis:

RQ1 Does context congruence between an advertised brand and a Podcast episode influence advertising effectiveness?

Given the described tactics that are usually applied for the selection of advertising contexts, the following sub-questions are developed:

RQ1.1 Does *thematic congruence* between an advertised brand a Podcast episode influence advertising effectiveness?

RQ1.2 Does *image congruence* between an advertised brand a Podcast episode influence advertising effectiveness?

By investigating this research topic, advertisers and media planners can gain valuable insights into the influence and success factors of Podcast advertising. These insights can help them to decide which selection criteria they should use when choosing a Podcast show in which to integrate their advertising in order to achieve high advertising effectiveness.

1.4 Structure of the work and methodical procedure

The beginning of the theoretical framework will provide general insight into the practice of Podcast advertising. In this context, my personal experiences, learnings and reflections, which I gained during my internship at the insurance company Allianz, will be presented. Subsequently, the topic of the present paper will be considered from a theoretical point of view. Since the focus of the empirical study will be on German Podcast shows, the German Podcast landscape will also be emphasised within the theoretical framework. At the beginning of the theoretical framework, the terms Podcast and Podcast advertising will be explained in detail. Furthermore, their development potential on a global level and in the current German media and advertising landscape will be described. Afterwards, an overview of existing models for advertising effectiveness will be given. In order to address the topic in depth, variables that are both derived from this model and used to determine advertising effectiveness will be described. This description will be followed by a presentation of theories dealing with advertising context congruence. Based on these preceding theoretical explanations, research hypothesis are developed within the subsequent methodological chapter. Furthermore, the methodology applied for the empirical research is presented in more

detail. In order to determine how context congruence actually affects advertising effectiveness, the empirical part of this study features an experiment online survey. Within the framework of this experimental survey, participants will listen to sequences of German Podcasts in which fictional audio advertisings are embedded. These advertisements will contextually fit the show either very well or not at all. On this basis, participants' knowledge and attitudes regarding the advertisement, which are indicators for advertising effectiveness, will be queried. Finally, the survey results will be evaluated and analysed in detail in relation to the research questions.

2 Internship report

From July 15, 2019 until January 15, 2020, I worked as an intern in the advertising department at Allianz Deutschland AG. Within this report, my activities and the experiences I gained as an intern are described and reflected upon. First, the company's profile is presented in brief. Following this, the work organization and general responsibilities of the advertising department are described. Subsequently, my main responsibilities during my internship are illustrated, which included realization of the 'Podcasts as a new advertising medium at Allianz Deutschland AG' project. Regarding the topic of this dissertation, the report concludes with a focus on activities related to this project.

2.1 Company profile – Allianz Deutschland AG

Allianz Deutschland AG is the holding company of the following three German insurance companies (Allianz Deutschland AG 2018):

- **Allianz Lebensversicherungs-AG** [*Allianz Life Insurance JSC*] offers different life insurance services such as private old-age provision and term life insurance (Allianz 2020).
- **Allianz Private Krankenversicherungs-AG** [*Allianz Private Health Insurance JSC*] offers comprehensive health and nursing care insurance, daily sickness allowance and private supplementary health insurance (*idem*).
- **Allianz Versicherungs-AG** [*Allianz Insurance JSC*] offers a wide range of property and casualty insurance such as car, household and legal expense insurance (GDV Gesamtverband der Deutschen Versicherungswirtschaft e.V. 2020).

A further subsidiary of Allianz Deutschland AG is **Allianz Beratungs und Vertriebs AG** [*Allianz Consulting and Sales JSC*], within which the exclusive sales organizations are bundled (Allianz Deutschland AG 2018). Allianz Group is represented worldwide in 70 different countries, including Portugal, with more than 147.000 employees (Allianz 2020b). Of these, around 38.000 employees and 20 million customers belong to Allianz Deutschland AG (Allianz SE 2019). The company is Germany's most profitable insurer (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 2020).

2.2 Work organization and main responsibilities of the advertising department

The advertising department is one section of Social Media Marketing, Sponsoring and Target Group Communications, a subunit of the Marketing and Communications department. In general, the Marketing and Communications department implements projects for the acquisition, promotion and activation of customer loyalty and the design of campaigns for online and offline media. Tasks of the advertising unit are limited to all activities related to the company's national advertising campaigns for customers and potential customers.

During my internship, the advertising unit consisted of five employees including myself. Except for one employee who was exclusively responsible for the media planning strategy, each employee was responsible for activities related to one specific campaign. Preparation for and execution of advertising campaigns for 2020 encompassed the main projects. These included the nursing care and life insurance campaign as well as the car and property insurance campaign. Since only a small number of employees are responsible for all national advertising activities, many tasks were outsourced to creative, media and production agencies.

2.3 Main responsibilities during internship period

One of my internship projects was the development of a TV commercial promoting the company's nursing care insurance. Within this project, I supported the team in gaining customer insights of the target group, creating a storybook and supporting post-production and media planning. Moreover, together with another intern, I was responsible for advertising measures for the Allianz Matchday Presenter event. At this event, Allianz is the official presenter of an FC Bayern Munich football game. A particularly large number of branding and advertising measures (such as raffles, merchandise and LED stadium banners) were organized by Allianz Deutschland AG in cooperation with the FC Bayern Munich Football Club and the stadium crew of the Allianz Football Arena. In addition, I was responsible for the media planning of a TV commercial promoting Allianz's insurance products. In this context, my weekly task was to monitor whether the placement of TV commercials within or between TV programs was adequate. Placements that were planned in violent, erotic or highly politicized contexts were considered inadequate.

However, most of the time, I supported the team in all activities around the multi-channel life and car insurance campaigns. Before the campaigns were created or adjusted, I helped to gather customer insights in collaboration with the market research department. Together with creative agencies, these customer insights were later translated into campaign messages. Media and production agencies assisted in planning the campaigns and with developing print and online advertising media. After a campaign began running, it was monitored and optimized regularly. My main task was to manage these outside agencies in terms of content, budget and time for the development of advertising materials for the 2020 life and car insurance campaigns. A great variety of advertising materials produced within the framework of the multichannel campaigns are listed below:

Table 1: Overview –Advertising material produced for Allianz’s life and car insurance campaign

Channel	Ad material
Print	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Print advertisements for magazines and daily newspapers
Out-of-home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Various forms of billboards, like Mega-Lights, roadside screens and full billboards
Mobile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interactive ad formats, like live poll ads and mystery scrollers
Online	<p><i>Online displays</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Various forms of online banners and branded players for websites <p><i>Social media</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ YouTube: Headers, spots (pre-rolls, mid-rolls and post-rolls) ▪ Facebook: Headers, spots in story format ▪ Instagram: Spots in story format
TV/Cinema	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TV commercials ▪ TV cut-ins ▪ Addressable TV: Home ads, click ads, selected ads, inline safe zones, inline selected, landing pages and Switch XXL ▪ Cinema commercials
Audio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Radio advertisements (audio spots and sponsorships of traffic reports) ▪ Podcast advertisements
Special advertising media for sponsored events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clap banners and sports tricots for games of sponsored volleyball and handball teams ▪ LED banners, circle banners, giveaways, homepage banners and so on for the Allianz Matchday Presenter event of the FC Bayern Munich Football Club

Another employee and I were specifically responsible for the implementation of the ‘Podcasts as new advertising medium at Allianz Deutschland AG’ project. This was the first time the company had used Podcasts as an advertising medium. Though Podcasts have so far only represented a small component of the general marketing mix, this new possibility represented itself as a particularly innovative and effective marketing tool. In the context of this work, the following sections focus on this project.

2.4 Podcasts as a new advertising medium at Allianz Deutschland AG

In 2019, Allianz Deutschland AG used Podcasts as an advertising medium for the first time. The company decided to produce audio Podcast advertisements for their car and life insurance campaigns and integrate them into different Podcast episodes. In the following sections, the project is described alongside associated ideas of learning and reflection.

2.4.1 The potential of Podcasts as an advertising medium for Allianz Deutschland AG

The advertising department recognized great potential in using Podcasts as a new advertising medium for Allianz Deutschland AG. The department came to recognize that advertising messages transmitted via Podcasts could be perceived as particularly authentic. Behind this idea was the thought that advertising integration is usually done directly by the moderator, which could lead to high credibility and acceptance. In addition, the wide range of topics covered by Podcast shows enables advertisers to integrate highly specific advertising directed at a target group. For example, it is possible to integrate Podcast advertising to promote a car insurance campaign into a Podcast episode that focuses on the topic of cars. The department believed that listeners of such Podcasts would more favourably perceive the target advertising.

Moreover, an extremely attractive target group that is difficult to reach through traditional advertising channels can be reached via Podcast advertising. These include – above all – young, educated and wealthy consumers. In addition, due to the fact that Podcasts allow longer advertising times (up to three minutes), this was seen as a valuable opportunity to explain complex insurance products and their advantages in more detail. Fundamentally, the main intention for using Podcasts as an advertising medium was to present the brand in an authentic and favourable way.

2.4.2 Process steps for integrating advertising into Podcast episodes

Together with my team, I created Podcast advertisings promoting either car or life insurance during my internship period. In the following sections, I describe the most important steps for integrating advertising into Podcast episodes. It should be noted that these motions are presented in a generalized form.

2.4.2.1 Systematic selection of Podcast shows

In the beginning, we searched for Podcasts that were suitable for advertising placements. A selection of Podcasts were subjected to specified criteria. Primarily, we attempted to place advertisements in Podcasts with the highest possible market reach. However, for some shows, other criteria were considered. For the car insurance campaign, we searched for Podcasts with a thematic fit to the advertised service. The underlying idea of this was that extremely specific target groups could be reached, and thus the ad would generally lead to greater effectiveness. For the life insurance campaign, we searched for a Podcast that corresponded with the intended image of the company. If there was an image fit between a Podcast and the brand, whether to advertise there or not was essentially decided through gut feelings rather than market research.

Nevertheless, these selection criteria were often in conflict with one another, since popular Podcasts with a high reach do not usually deal with target group-specific topics and, correspondingly, may not directly connect with the intended brand image. As a result, Allianz decided to weight the selection criterion of reach higher than other criteria.

2.4.2.2 Advertising request

Once a suitable Podcast was selected, a media agency with valuable marketing and Podcast hosting contacts – which was already working for Allianz – was contacted. Most times, this agency directly contacted Podcast hosts of selected Podcasts. However, the more professionalized Podcasts managed advertising message integrations via advertising and marketing professionals. As soon as an agreement was made between Allianz Deutschland AG and the host or advertising and marketing professional, the company began to construct a briefing for the host or the advertiser/marketer. For planning and developing the Podcast advertising,

the show hosts or advertisers/ marketers would subsequently send a briefing back to the company.

2.4.2.3 Creation and coordination of briefings

First, briefings serve to inform the host and/or the advertising and marketing professional about the values and the products of the company. Second, they include general ideas concerning the planned integration of advertising or already fully scripted text ideas that can be orally presented. No standardized briefing formulas exist. For each Podcast, a different briefing formula was utilized. These formulas were extremely different from one another in their structure and length. In some briefings, only bullet points were noted, whereas in others, the company's values, their products, arguments for using a certain product and examples of its use were explained in great detail.

2.4.3 Selected examples of Allianz's ad integration in Podcast shows

In total, Allianz selected seven different Podcast shows to integrate their advertising within. Depending on the cooperation offer, these advertisements were presented in up to four different episodes of one Podcast show. In the following sections, selected examples of Podcast advertising placements by Allianz are presented. For each of the three selection criteria described (see section 4.1.2.1. 'Systematic selection of Podcast episodes'), one advertising placement is presented alongside an illustration of which Podcast show was selected according to which criterion. Furthermore, components of respective advertising design are briefly discussed. In the theoretical framework of the thesis, different types of Podcast advertising design are described in greater detail.

2.4.3.1 Ad placement for Allianz at *Beste Vaterfreuden*

This Podcast was primarily selected due to its high reach in Germany (Chartable 2020). In this show, two young men honestly and directly discuss topics concerning family, relationships, having children and being a father. Allianz integrated an ad into this Podcast that was about two minutes in length. Before recording the episode, the men hosting the Podcast received only bullet points about the insurance service, examples of its use and unique selling points. In the middle of the episode, one of the hosts began presenting the advertising message and stated, "And before we go any further, a little greeting from our sponsor – and this

week it is Allianz insurance company.” To follow, the hosts of the Podcast spoke freely about their personal attitudes towards life insurance. They especially spoke in detail about the advantages of life insurance services as related to parents and their children.

2.4.3.2 Ad placement for Allianz at *brand eins*

The *brand eins* interview Podcast features entrepreneurs and executive chairmen or chairwomen. For each new edition of the widely known German business magazine, a new Podcast episode is released. The show was chosen due to the perceived fit between brand and Podcast image. It was argued that the show is generally perceived as entrepreneurial, professional and serious as is the case with the Allianz brand. However, it must be mentioned that it was at that point not clear whether customers perceived the brand or the show in this way. Evaluation of the intended perception of the show and the brand was only based on a gut feeling.

The Podcast advertising message was pre-produced, meaning the message had already been produced before the Podcast episode in which it was presented was recorded. The advertising message was presented by the show host himself, who was reading word for word from a script. The ad integration was introduced in the middle of the Podcast by a female speaker who stated, “Please dedicate your attention now to our advertising partner: namely, Allianz insurance company.” Then the one-minute-long audio spot was presented. To follow, the hosts of the Podcast continued with their programme.

2.4.3.3 Advertising placement for Allianz car insurance at *Übersteuern*

The *Übersteuern* Podcast is the audio version of the high-coverage German car magazine *Auto, Motor Sport*. In this Podcast, listeners are exposed to the daily work of the editorial staff. The show was chosen because the broad range of topics around motor vehicles is thematically aligned with the advertised service: Allianz’s car insurance. Right at the beginning of the Podcast episode, the show host stated, “This show is presented to you by Allianz car insurance.” Then, a one-minute-long advertising message was presented by the host.

2.4.4 Project evaluation: Podcasts as an advertising tool at Allianz Deutschland

Since the current Podcast boom has only been happening for a short time, the professionalization of the medium as an advertising tool is still at its beginning. One of the consequences for advertisers is that their production is currently extremely time consuming because there are few standardized processes for using Podcasts as an advertising medium. For example, coordination and approval processes run differently depending on the Podcast. As already mentioned, depending on the show, either a multi-page written briefing or only a few bullet points are required from the advertising partner. The latter case can be disadvantageous for advertising partners since they have only little influence on the final design of the Podcast advertisement. In some cases, however, Podcast advertisements are developed and finalized by the advertising company and the show host(s) together.

In addition, the hosts and/or advertising and marketing professionals sometimes decide at relatively short notice which topics or interview partners the next episode will cover. As a result, the integration of advertisements may require being postponed or cancelled if there is no suitable fit between the product and the topic of the Podcast. Furthermore, there are considerable deficits with regard to measurability. For example, there are still limited resources available for measuring the reach of a Podcast show. Moreover, it is not possible to track whether an integrated advertisement was actually listened to or not. As a result, the success or failure of a placement is difficult to evaluate.

Despite the mentioned difficulties and the low reach of Podcasts as compared to other advertising channels, Allianz Deutschland AG has recognized great potential in Podcasts as an advertising channel. Decision-makers in the advertising department have argued that authenticity in Podcast advertising is at least as important as achieving a high reach. In general, during my internship, I could observe that the Podcast medium received a lot of attention across departments, as many employees themselves increasingly listened to Podcasts and saw great marketing potential in this media format. Many employees were convinced that usage of Podcasts will increase in the future and that Podcasts should therefore be part of the standard marketing mix. Additionally, media agencies working for the advertising department became convinced of the fact that Podcasts as a media format will be increasingly professionalized in the future, which would make it a progressively important advertising channel.

3 Theoretical framework

3.1 Explanatory approaches and delimitations of the Podcast medium

Since the Podcast is a relatively young medium, the current literature describes it with many different definitions and explanations. In 2005, the New Oxford American Dictionary declared ‘Podcast’ the Word of the Year and defined it as follows:

A digital recording of a radio broadcast or similar program made available on the internet for downloading to a personal audio player.”

Bonini (2015, p. 21) describes the medium this way:

“[A] technology used to distribute, receive, and listen, on-demand, to sound content produced by traditional editors such as radio, publishing houses, journalists, and educational institutions (. . .) as well as content created by independent radio producers, artists, and radio amateurs.”

These two definitions reveal two major difficulties associated with defining the term “Podcast.” For one thing, the Podcast is often defined by being directly compared with radio. Usually in older articles, Podcasts are merely considered an extension of radio (e.g. Berry, 2006; Madsen 2009; Menduni 2007). For instance, Berry (2006: 149) argues that Podcasts would provide a good opportunity for radio stations to offer their audio content free of charge on other platforms, which could then be consumed independent of time and place. By referring to the term ‘radio’, scholars raise a number of expectations about the Podcast medium. However, this medium varies from radio by being a digital niche medium that is consumed in a very different way (Chan-Olmsted and Wang 2020). Against this background, comparisons with radio will be omitted in the context of the present work. Rather, characteristics through which the medium Podcast can be regarded as a new, independent and unique, will be emphasised.

Moreover, a further difficulty arising when explaining the term “Podcast” is that tech - and content-related explanations are often mixed up, generating a vague picture of the medium. Nevertheless, the term ‘Podcast’ itself only refers to the content-related aspects of the media format. However, most definitions also refer to the technological aspects that are conveyed by the term ‘Podcasting’. To deal with the research topic in depth, the technical and content-related components of the medium will be presented independently of each other in detail.

Thereby, Podcasts can become more clearly distinguished from other audio formats with which they are often associated or confused.

The following explanations will mainly focus on terms that repeatedly appear throughout the literature and thus can be identified as keywords that are either used for describing the technical (Podcasting) or the content-related (Podcast) aspects of the medium. It should also be emphasized here, when speaking about Podcasts, most of the time audio Podcasts are meant. However, audio Podcasts have an audio-visual counterpart: video Podcasts. Nevertheless, the present work solely focuses on audio Podcasts.

3.1.1 Podcasting

When technical components of the medium (Podcasting) are described in the current literature, the following terms frequently occur: *audio files, download, Internet, on demand, podcatcher, RSS feed, subscription*. In the course of describing Podcasting in this study, these terms will be explained in more detail. For now, Podcasting can generally be understood as „(...) a delivery mechanism – a method for delivering audio (and increasingly video) files over the Internet for download and later playback, on a variety of devices“ (Markman and Sawyer 2014: 21). Therefore, the term is used to describe a purely technical way of playout that says nothing about the actual content to be distributed.

To better understand the basic technicalities of this medium, the creation and distribution process of Podcasts is presented in a simplified way. First, creators of a Podcast show², need to sign up on a so-called Podcast hosting website. After having recorded audio content, they have to upload this content in mp3 format to the hosting website. All information stored on that website can then be sent to other websites via a so-called Really Simple Syndication Feed (RSS feed). An RSS feed is a special file format that can store information about the Podcast, such as the title, content, episodes and so on. These files can then be published and later downloaded via different software platforms and subscribed to by users. The best-known platforms, also called podcatchers, are currently Spotify and iTunes, work with a special feed reader software that is able to decode the RSS feeds and to download and display

² A series of audio files, so-called episodes, form a Podcast show. The principle can be compared with a series of episodes that form a television series.

them automatically on the platform. Every time the creator publishes or edits content on his webpage, the RSS feed automatically updates. This new information is then automatically transferred to the podcatcher, which in turn distributes frequently updated information to the audience's portable devices (Irelan 2007: 238–248).³ This means that when users subscribe to a Podcast via a podcatcher such as iTunes or Spotify, they actually subscribe to an RSS feed with a program that automatically downloads the latest audio media files to their portable devices. Since these files are downloaded from the Internet, they can be consumed on demand, meaning independent from time and space (Deal 2007: 2).

Moreover, the use of RSS feeds implies seriality. 'Subscribing to a specific Podcast' means that subscribers receive audio content from a Podcast, which content is automatically transferred to subscribers' devices without having to be explicitly requested by them. This implies that subscribers do not have to check the Podcast channel frequently to see if the Podcast host has delivered new audio content. Therefore, the RSS feed ensures seriality by automatically providing subscribers with the latest Podcast episodes on a semi-regular basis (Bottomley 2015: 166).

Since the creation of Podcast show is relatively easy, most of the shows are created by amateurs. Usually, these take on several roles at the same time: The role of the Podcast host, of the producer and maybe even of the sound engineer. Podcast hosts are the presenters of the editorial content of the show. They are the storytellers and shape the show's personality. The job of producers is very diverse and can range from transcribing and cutting the audio tape to research on the show content, organising interviews partners and so on. The engineer's task is to guarantee a good-quality audio show by using their audio-editing skills. However, in the case of more professionalised shows, specialists are hired for each of the different tasks (Kondrich 2020).

³ Most Podcasts can also be listened to without a podcatcher but via a web browser on the provider websites. However, at the time of consumption you have to be online, so you cannot automatically and comfortably receive new episodes on the move.

3.1.2 Podcast

As stated before, the term ‘Podcast’ only refers to content-related components of the medium. The growth and popularity of the Podcast format is driven less by its underlying technology but more by the uniqueness of its audio content (Berry 2006: 21). Through the development of Podcasts, new forms of media content, which are distinct from any other media content, emerged (Berry 2018: 29). The uniqueness of the content primarily derived from its production origins, which was based on user-generated content: Anyone can upload audio content and therefore, there is “no embedded hierarchy to distinguish between institutional and independent production, [which] has, perhaps accidentally, facilitated an environment in which a specific, even unique, creative culture has emerged” (Llinares 2018: 127). At the content level, the following terms frequently occur in the current literature: *seriality*, *episodes*, *shows*, *niche content*, *participatory media*. In the following sections, these terms and their correlations will be explained in more detail.

One characteristic of this auditive medium is its seriality. Audio content is delivered in a series of interrelated content episodes to consumers. These episodes are played off as part of a Podcast show. A Podcast refers to the entirety of all episodes that are played under the same show title over a longer period of time to which people can subscribe.

Moreover, compared to other media formats, production and distribution of Podcasts is easy and cost-efficient. Against this background, many individuals are motivated to independently produce their own Podcasts on various topics. As a result, a significantly higher range of audio content can be offered via podcatchers than that of traditional radio (Sterne et al. 2008). Now, listeners can access more than one million Podcasts worldwide (Winn 2020). A Podcast has been produced to satisfy nearly every kind of interest. Due to the variety of shows, which cover a wide range of topics, Podcasts have been established as a popular niche medium. As Morris (2015: 226) states, „(...) Podcasting apps represent a hyper-personalization of audio content (...)”

Another characteristic of the Podcast is the active role that the audience often plays in the content creation process. Therefore, the Podcast can be regarded as a participatory medium. Hosts often actively incorporate their listeners’ feedback, comments and questions as well

as even let them participate in the show. For instance, hosts encourage their listeners to participate via e-mails or comments on social media channels (Parks 2020). By this, a certain kind of intimacy or, rather, proximity between host and listeners can be created. This is further strengthened by the host, who often shares personal stories and experiences and are not creatively limited by media institutions (Sullivan 2018: 53).

3.2 Historical development of Podcasts as a media format

Two developments in media history were essential for the Podcast to emerge as a popular media format. For one thing, the development of RSS feeds enabled the creation and distribution of Podcasts. The first version of this technology was developed in 1999 by the software company Netscape Communications (Irlean 2007: 238). For another, the development of Apple's portable MP3 players in 2001, called iPods, played a significant role in the rise of Podcasts. Consuming audio content via iPods allowed listeners greater control over their listening experience and provided them with more niche content as compared to radio. This led to the popularity of consuming audio content via iPods (McClung and Johnson 2010), which can be reflected in figures: iPod distribution increased steadily, with 4.4 million devices sold in 2004, 22.5 million devices in 2005 and 39.4 million in 2006 (Richter 2019). Against this backdrop, journalist Ben Hammersley published a 2004 article about the possibilities for bloggers to distribute their own content through now-cheap audio software and the spread of MP3 players, coining the term 'Podcasting'. Hammersley made up this term by connecting the words 'iPod' and 'broadcasting' to describe the idea of broadcasting audio content that can be consumed on MP3 players such as iPods (Hammersley 2004).

At this point, Podcasts were far from reaching mass audiences since consumption was limited to portable digital audio players (for the most part iPods). Moreover, to access new downloaded content, these audio devices had to be connected to computers (Sullivan 2018: 38). However, in 2005 Apple integrated an RSS segregation service into its streaming service provider, iTunes, through which the computer automatically downloaded new audio files that had been uploaded to a website. This finally made it possible for someone to subscribe to a Podcast and automatically receive the latest version of the Podcasts (Sterne et al. 2008). iTunes additionally offered, for the first time, a Podcast directory, thus creating a platform that made Podcasts visible and accessible to a broad audience (Apple 2005a).

These features made iTunes the main distribution platform for Podcasts. Two days after the release of the 2005 version of iTunes, Apple announced that one million Podcasts had already been subscribed to (Apple 2005b). Years after, the international Podcast consumption increased continuously, but only slowly. Then, only in 2014 the Podcast *Serial* launched in the United States, triggering a new and bigger Podcasting hype than before. In each episode of *Serial*, a real, unsolved criminal case is reopened. It was the first Podcast that appealed to the masses and thus represents a key moment for Podcasting (Berry 2015: 170–171).

Today, authors speak about a “Podcast Renaissance” or the “Golden Age of Podcasting” (e.g. Roose 2014; Berry 2015; Spinelli and Dann 2019). This boom is certainly linked to the high market penetration of smartphones. Through smartphones, audio content can be downloaded at any time in any place for either a monthly subscription fee or free of charge, making Podcasts increasingly interesting to all conceivable niches groups (die medienanstalten – ALM GbR 2019: 20).

At a global level, the U.S. is the largest market in the Podcast industry, with 88 million Podcast listeners. It is expected that this number will rise to 164 million by 2024 (Watson, 2019). Further, U.S. Podcasts also dominate international Podcast markets (Newmann and Gallo 2019: 12–13). In terms of the percentage of regular Podcast listeners per inhabitants, the U.S. shares fourth place with Sweden in the international ranking (Newman et al. 2019). Nowadays, Podcasting is most popular in South Korea, with 53% of the population listening to a Podcast at least once a month, followed by Spain in second place with 39% and Ireland in third place with 37% (Newman et al. 2019). These figures clearly show that Podcasts have become established as a popular medium across media systems worldwide.

Since subsequent research in this study will only be related to German Podcast formats, recent developments in the German Podcast landscape will be illuminated in the following chapter.

3.3 German Podcast landscape

As in many other countries, Podcasts in Germany experienced an upswing and increasingly became a phenomenon for the masses, with listeners from all population groups (Domenichini, 2018a). Representative surveys reveal that 14 percent of German people sometimes

listened to Podcasts in 2016 and this number increased to 26 percent in 2019 (bitkom 2018; bitkom 2019). Almost half of Germans claimed to know what a Podcast is. Around one third of the participants said they listen to Podcasts on a regular basis: 15 percent of participants stated that they listen to Podcasts at least on a weekly basis or several times a month, 12 percent several times per week and 4 percent on a daily basis (Splendid Research 2018). Generally speaking, young people are driving the Podcast boom. Survey results show that around one third of all listeners are aged between 14 and 29 years and 40 percent between 30 and 49 years (Domenichini 2018a). Further results indicate that German Podcast listeners would be an attractive target group for marketers since they are young, educated, strong buyers who have an affinity for new media.

However, internationally, Germany performs comparatively poorly in terms of the number of Podcast listeners. According to Reuters Digital News Report (Newman et al. 2020: 25), an average of 31 percent of respondents in all countries surveyed have listened to a Podcast in the last four weeks. In Germany, however, the figure is only 24 percent. Nevertheless, further growth is generally expected in the German Podcast market. This is mainly due to increases in the number of listeners and new Podcast formats (Polshova 2020). Besides, expanding monetisation and professionalisation occurs within the Podcast industry. Due to monetisation efforts, mainly through advertising, larger budgets can be provided for Podcasts, resulting in high-quality content. Nevertheless, it needs to be emphasised here that monetisation and professionalisation is progressing slowly. Compared to the U.S. Podcast industry, where advertising revenues are in the three-digit-million-dollar range, revenues are still extremely low in Germany (Acast 2019).

Since the first national Podcast labels, such as Viertausendhertz or Audible, started producing their own Podcasts and the two largest German audio marketers, AS&S radio and RMS, intensively deal with this media format, Podcasts occupy an important place in German media landscape (Buermeyer 2020; die medienanstalten 2019: 22). All of these Podcasts have one thing in common: They went the way of professionalisation and commercialisation. Now their formats do not resemble the amateur Podcasts from fifteen years before. In addition to private and public media houses, an increasing number of publishing houses, such as DIE

ZEIT and DER SPIEGEL, are starting their own Podcasts. They are producing daily Podcasts and compete with traditional radio services for listeners (die medienanstalten 2019: 21).

Most popular Podcast formats are news Podcasts as well as entertainment and music Podcasts (Splendid Research 2018). The Podcast show *Gemischtes Hack* by the German comedian Felix Lobrecht and comedy author Tommi Schmitt is the Podcast with the highest reach (Birkner 2020). This show has an estimated 500.000 weekly listeners (Niessen 2019). In their Podcast, the hosts talk about everyday trivialities and pop cultural phenomena. In second place is the news format *Tagesschau in 100 Sekunden* and the long-time leader among German Podcast shows, called *Fest und Flauschig*. In this show, the well-known satirist Jan Böhmermann debates with the German singer-songwriter Olli Schulz about current social and political events, in sometimes humorous and sometimes serious ways (Birkner 2020).

3.4 Success factors of Podcasts as a media format

The increasing popularity of listening to Podcasts is based on many factors. One is the medium's user-friendliness. For one thing, Podcasts are easily accessible and, most of the time, free of charge. About three quarters of Podcast listeners state that they have no difficulties using Podcasts (Domenichini 2018a). Due the development of new technologies, including smart phones, smart speakers and connected cars, the trend of easy and comfortable Podcast consumption will probably continue in the future (Delfau 2019).

Moreover, Podcasting enables consumers to listen to audio content on demand. This implies that a consumer has greater control over their listening experience as compared to other auditive media such as radio. Podcasting allows listeners to listen to Podcasts comfortably at any time and at any place, independent of a broadcast schedule (Perez 2012: 29). About one third of Podcast listeners listen to Podcasts on the move or in waiting situations (Domenichini 2018a). In these kinds of boring and mundane situations, Podcasts can strengthen the feeling of doing something productive and learning something new while times passes (Perks and Turner 2018: 12). Furthermore, people can also listen to Podcasts in multi-tasking situations. Unlike watching TV, for example, people do not have to listen with their full attention to consume the Podcast (*ibidem*: 5). Therefore, Podcasts do not really compete with

other forms of media. As research shows, most people listen to Podcasts while driving or doing housework (die medienanstalten 2019: 60).

The feeling of having control over one's own listening experience is further strengthened by the fact that Podcasting offers consumers more selections of programmatic content than most other media formats. The low entry barriers for Podcast producers yield an increase in available Podcasts. The wide range of topics covered by Podcasts can be seen as another main marker of success. Unlike many other forms of media, this medium is targeting niche markets. Compared to traditional media, the entry barriers to Podcast production are comparatively low. Therefore, enable nearly every kind of interest to be represented (Delfau 2019). For this reason, consumers can find shows for nearly every topic (Domenichini 2018a). As revealed in a study, more than half of respondents stated that Podcasts would provide more depth and understanding as well as a wider perspective than other media types (Newman et al. 2020: 25). Due to the recent professionalisation of the Podcast industry, it can be expected that more diverse content with even higher production standards will be offered in the future (Delfau 2019).

In addition, the Podcast listening experience is quite personal. As mentioned in chapter 1.2, listeners are not just passive consumers. Instead, they often become producers themselves. Moreover, this personal experience can be conditioned by a strong connection to the show host. A sense of intimacy with the show host can occur, because the host often shares many of their personal experiences and beliefs throughout hours of episodes (Perks and Turner 2018: 15). As Sullivan (2018: 42) puts it, "Podcasts are a form of deeply personal, intimate form of creative expression that has unique power to connect listeners to stories".

4 Podcasts as marketing tool

Today, Podcasts are becoming increasingly popular as a marketing channel and are used in different ways for internal and external marketing measurements. In the following chapter, a brief overview about the main uses of Podcasts within the field of marketing will be given.

Currently, many companies have started their own corporate Podcasts for branding purposes. In general, corporate Podcasts refer to Podcasts whose senders are companies or brands (Schreyer 2019: 11). For one thing, corporate Podcasts can be used as a tool that supports and advances the company's content marketing strategy. Companies create their own Podcasts, dealing with topics related to their service or product in the form of reports or expert interviews (Keen Communications 2017). For instance, the online marketplace eBay created a successful Podcast called *Open for Business*, which features information about how to build a business from the ground up. The episodes offer expert advice, along with strategies for pricing or launching a product; therefore, they are of interest to sellers and buyers around the world (Apple 2020a). For another, a corporate Podcast can be used as a branding and recruitment tool, but such a Podcast slowly gains in popularity. In these shows, hiring needs are discussed, and the company gives information about the working environment (verify recruitment 2020).

Furthermore, companies also use Podcasts as tool in their internal corporate communications strategy. In this case, the purpose of Podcasts is to better integrate employees into the company by informing them about latest developments as well as the general corporate vision (Cangialosi 2008: 41–42). For instance, Audi's employee Podcast is produced on a monthly basis, mainly providing background information on current topics that affecting the company and information about corporate events or lotteries for employees (Apple 2020b).

Nevertheless, the most significant developments in recent years regarding the use of Podcasts as a marketing tool have been in the field of Podcast advertising. This topic will be examined in more detail in the following section.

4.1 General characteristics of Podcast advertising

Podcast advertising generally refers to the targeted placement of advertising spots within non-corporate Podcast episodes (Krugmann and Pallus 2008: 115). Podcast advertising can

manifest different characteristics. In the present work, only their main distinctive features are relevant.⁴ These include the advertisement's placement within a Podcast episode, the person who presents it, the style of presentation, the type of production and also their duration.

Placement

Podcast advertising can be distinguished by different placements within a Podcast. So-called pre-roll ads are placed in the first two minutes of a Podcast, mid-roll ads in the middle and post-roll ads at the end of a Podcast (*idem*: 118).

Presenter

Different types of Podcast advertising can further be characterised by the person presenting advertising content. On the one hand, there are so-called host-read advertisements. In this case, the show host presents the advertising content. On the other hand, advertisements presented by an external speaker are called announcer-read advertisements (iab 2020).

Style of presentation

Style of presentation distinguishes between on-scripted and off-scripted Podcast advertising. Podcast advertising is on-scripted when the show host reads a scripted text created by the advertiser. On the contrary, off-scripted advertisements are bullet points given to show hosts about the product to be advertised. When recording the show, hosts present the brand independent of a script and, therefore, in their own style (AdvertiseCast 2020a).

Type of production

Live-read Podcast advertising is an advertisement that the Podcast host presents live while recording their show. On the contrary, pre-produced Podcast advertising is a composed audio file that is inserted after Podcast episode has been recorded (*ibidem*).

⁴ Within the scope of a survey, the advertising business organization *Interactive Advertising Bureau* that develops international industry standards, created more specific and detailed classification categories of Podcast advertising (e.g. iab 2020, pp. 30–32).

Duration

Depending on the format of Podcast advertising, ad integration can take from 15 seconds up to three minutes (Podcastbu 2020). In the following, the main formats of Podcast advertising are presented in greater detail.

4.1.1 Main formats of Podcast advertising

By combining these different characteristics of Podcast advertising, different formats of Podcast advertising emerged. Nowadays, the most popular ones are audio ads, sponsorships and native ads (Domenichini 2018b).

Audio ads are analogue to radio commercials and are produced by the brand itself. As is the case with radio commercials, audio spots are always pre-produced, meaning that they were already produced before the Podcast episode was recorded. Further, they are scripted and presented by an external speaker. Normally, this type of Podcast advertising takes between 15 and 30 seconds (Podcastbu 2020). Audios ads can be integrated at any place within the show.

Further, Podcasts can be sponsored by a brand. In the case of so-called sponsorships, the advertising brand shapes the intro and/or the outro of the show. This means that the first or last words of Podcasts are shaped by advertising content. In the case of sponsorships, show hosts or external speakers tell their listeners at either the beginning or the end of a Podcast that the present show is or was sponsored by a specific brand (*ibidem*).

So-called native advertising occurs when ad content is embedded within the content of the actual episode (Rowles and Rogers 2019: 168–169). Such advertising takes the form of a personal story told by the hosts, who give personal recommendations for certain products or services. Since this form of Podcast advertising is often embedded within a story, it normally take up to two minutes or even longer. It is non-scripted and, since it is part of the show's content, it is mostly embedded in the middle of a show and presented in a more free and natural way (Podcastbu 2020).

4.2 Podcast advertising industry

As statistics reveal, more and more marketers believe that Podcasts have potential as an effective advertising environment. Data from the U.S. Podcast advertising market clearly indicate its growing significance: In 2015, the revenue for Podcast advertising was about 105 million U.S. dollars. Today, it is around 863 million U.S. dollars, and it is expected to reach the one-billion-dollar mark by 2021 (iab 2020). Further, most studies on Podcast advertising are conducted by U.S. companies or research institutes (e.g. Nielson 2018; Riismandel 2018; Edison Research 2019). Against this background, the U.S. is often referred to as the most important player regarding the development and professionalisation of the Podcast industry. Through high advertising revenues, higher quality Podcast formats can be produced, and money can be generated for marketing and PR purposes (Schreyer 2020).

Though increased professionalisation characterised the young Podcast advertising industry in recent years, marketers today are still confronted with many challenges (Haygood 2007: 522). One main difficulty for marketers is the lack of data – quantitative as well as qualitative. In this context, it is often reported that data is missing regarding the audience size but also about audience characteristics. As a result, it is difficult for advertisers to generally know which shows have a big audience and which shows have an audience that matches advertiser's target group. A new tool for Streaming Ad Insertion was recently launched by Spotify. This tool offers demographic consumer information to podcast publishers, as for example, age and gender (Bursztynsky 2020). Therefore, this tool delivers a more detailed data that can inform the decision-making process of advertisers as they consider their selection of Podcasts. This, in return, will probably motivate advertisers to more strongly invest in the Podcast industry.

Further, this tool enables Spotify to measure ad impressions for the first time (Carnahan 2020). Until Spotify created its tool, it was difficult to track the number of those who listen to Podcast advertising. To measure ad impressions, at least to a certain degree, Podcast advertising often refers listeners to a landing page or a promotional code. However, since not every listener visits the website or uses the code, these numbers do not comply with the actual numbers of advertising recipients. Despite Spotify's new streaming tool, it is still difficult for advertisers to understand which kind of advertising measurement is effective or not (AdvertiseCast 2020b; Midroll 2020).

4.2.1 Podcast advertising industry in Germany

The trend of growing Podcast advertising revenue can also be observed in Germany. While in 2017 the average advertising expenditure per listener was 2.13 euros, the amount increased to 2,72 euros in 2019 and is expected to increase to 4.53 euros by 2024 (Statista 2020). Further, the number of companies that advertise in Podcasts has risen continuously in recent years. Nevertheless, Podcasts have not yet become established as a "standard advertising channel" (Bundesverband Digitale Wirtschaft 2020: 7).

The extent to which the Podcast will become an established advertising channel mainly depends on how the monetisation of Podcasts will develop. Only a small number of German Podcast hosts currently earn money with their Podcasts. However, Podcast hosts can only professionalise their shows when they have more money available. Professionalisation, on the other hand, would increase the Podcast's chances of monetisation (Schreyer 2020). In any case, from a consumer perspective, the advertising format appears to become accepted. According to a study with German participants, 87% of participants stated they would accept advertisements placed in the Podcast.

4.3 Key success factors of Podcast advertising in the current advertising landscape

Due to the mentioned advantages for listeners regarding the consumption of Podcasts (see chapter 4), marketers expect that the number of listeners will continuously rise in future years (He 2020). In addition, Podcast listeners are an attractive target group for marketers. As stated before, the average Podcast listener is well educated, has high purchasing power and is technologically astute (Haygood 2007: 518). Furthermore, a significant advantage of Podcasting over traditional media is that people can consume and therefore also be reached at any time and at any place.

Besides the growing opportunity to reach an attractive target group, the specific characteristics of Podcast advertising lead more marketers to become interested in this advertising format. In general, Podcast advertising seem to be up to the challenges and difficulties that marketers face in today's advertising landscape. In the following, these success factors will be highlighted with regard to the challenges of the current advertising landscape.

One major challenge of current advertising is that consumers are exposed to an advertising clutter. In today's society, advertising is omnipresent since marketers constantly compete for consumer's attention with their advertising messages. Due to the resulting commercial overload that confronts consumers, it is not surprising that the majority perceives advertising as intrusive and has developed a generally negative attitude towards it (Ha 2017). With Podcast advertising, intrusiveness can be reduced. Due to the high concentration of available Podcasts, addressing a wide range of topics, there are many opportunities for advertisers to place their advertising message in a programmatic environment that is strongly connected to their brand. Thus, the target group of certain products, especially of niche products, can ideally be reached (Haygood 2007: 521). In this way, advertisers can avoid making listeners feel overwhelmed by advertising, and advertising may be perceived as less intrusive. A further contributing factor to this is that Podcasts do presently not run several spots in a single commercial break. Most of the time, only a single brand advertises within a show (Bourquin 2008: 371). In fact, Podcasts are one of the few advertising channels in which an advertised product does not directly compete with many other products and brands. Conversely, on YouTube or Facebook, countless banner ads or clips fight for listeners' attention.

Another major challenge of the current advertising landscape is that advertising messages are generally regarded as untrustworthy. This is because advertisers are often perceived as biased sources since they are producing paid content to influence consumers in favour of their advertised brand (Bell, Mieth and Buchner 2020). Advertising embedded in Podcasts seems to offer an appropriate solution to these challenges. As a study reveals, Podcast listeners perceive Podcast advertising as an authentic and trustworthy ad format (Podstars OMR 2018). Podcast hosts speak with passion about topics that are of real concern to them and potentially to their audiences. Often, these hosts are average citizens who present themselves as experts in a field they have contributed to for many years. But even if, for example, celebrities have their own Podcast, Podcast shows act as sympathisers. Many hosts talk about topics in a very personal way by sharing their own stories and experiences. By that, a new generation of influencers whom listeners trust is emerging and probably as a consequence the audience is much more receptive to the host's brand endorsements (die medienanstalten 2019: 24).

Besides, Podcast advertising could be an especially effective tool for advertising service brands. Today, service brands dominate the global economy more than ever before (Wirtz and Lovelock 2016: 7). However, service brands are intangible and complex for consumers to understand (McDonald, Chermetony and Harris 2001). Against this background, it is therefore all the more important to explain the services' benefits and features. To do so, time is needed. However, in many advertising media, such as in the case of TV or radio, commercials do usually last no longer than 30 seconds. Nevertheless, when advertisers decide to advertise in Podcasts with native advertisements, they have up to two minutes or even longer for explaining all benefits and features. In addition, since the purchase of services is usually a long-term investment, customer trust in the brand is particularly important (Coulter and Coulter 2002). As outlined in the previous section, especially compared to other advertising formats, Podcast advertising can serve as an effective tool for creating trust and credibility.

The previously mentioned success factors of Podcast advertising provides an explanation for the high advertising effectiveness of Podcast advertising. Studies that confirm advertising effectiveness or reveal the influence and success factors of Podcast advertising will be presented in the next chapter.

5 Advertising effectiveness

Advertising is considered effective if it leads to the advertiser's desired results (Steffenhagen 2009: 362). Within the scope of advertising communication, advertising is regarded as the input or stimulus. This input would trigger certain mental processes among consumers. In turn, these processes would cause different market outcomes (Tellis 2004: 58). Against this background, researchers started to measure the effectiveness of advertising communication on the one hand, on market outcomes and on the other hand, on mental processes.

In the context of market outcomes, external variables, such as purchase, sales and revenue, are used. Since these variables are of an economic nature, they can easily be measured. On the contrary, mental processes, which refer to internal psychological effects, such as thoughts, feelings and intent, are much more complicated to measure. However, since market outcomes are merely the result of preceding mental processes, there is no direct interdependence between a certain advertising communication and market outcomes (*idem*: 58–59).

For this reason, economic variables are not sufficient for understanding the underlying reasons for the success or failure of an advertising measure. As a result, today's research on advertising effectiveness primarily focuses on the psychological advertising effects that precede and determine those effects of an economic nature. The research addresses correlations between advertising measures and their effect on psychological levels (Steffenhagen 2009: 362). The following explanations will thus be based on psychological models and variables of advertising effectiveness.

5.1 Psychological models of advertising effectiveness

Gleich (2001: 145) outlines the objectives of advertising as follows: Advertising must reach the recipient, attract his attention and trigger positive reactions – beginning from a favourable assessment and ending to the purchase of an advertised product. According to Gleich, the general task of research into advertising effectiveness is to establish, on the one hand, a link between the elements of advertising design (e.g. content or placement) and, on the other hand, consumer-related variables (e.g. psychological characteristics or information processing strategies).

Nowadays, there are a remarkable number of models of advertising effects. Each model represents specific aspects of the diversity of advertising effects. Depending on the objective, models of advertising effects can be used to describe, explain or predict the experience and behaviour of individuals. For a long time, researchers have been trying to structure and order the multitude of models of advertising effectiveness, yielding several classification attempts that can be found in the current literature (e.g. Vakratsas and Ambler 1999; Bongard 2002). Nevertheless, for the purpose of the present work, it is not relevant to capture and analyse the numerous and controversial models of advertising effectiveness in its entirety. Of greater importance are the psychological variables of advertising effectiveness that are derived from these models, which will be presented in chapter 5.2. Against this background, only the models most popular in academic literature will be outlined. These models can be roughly divided between stage models and relational models, which will be presented in the following chapters.

5.1.1 Stage models

Stage models are one of the oldest models in marketing communication and demonstrate how advertising can generate behavioural outcomes, most importantly the purchase of an actual product or service. They attempt to present the effects of advertising in a structured form. According to this model, to achieve a behavioural effect, recipients would need to progress through certain stages in a specific order. The large majority of proponents of stage models assume that consumers respond to advertising messages, first cognitively (thinking), then affectively (feeling) and finally conatively (acting) (Barry and Howard, 1990).⁵ The probability of a purchase would increase with each stage that is reached through appropriate advertising measures (*idem*: 251). Since the order of the different stages is determined so that reaching the first stage is a prerequisite for reaching the second stage (and so on), stage models are also referred to as hierarchy models. These are the most classical and also the most dominant theoretical approaches within the field of advertising effectiveness (Ha 2020: 278).

⁵ Some authors disagree regarding the presented order of stages. For instance, Zajonc and Markus (1982) argue for an affect-conation-cognition sequence.

The oldest and most-referred to stage model is the so-called AIDA model, developed in 1898 by E. St. Elmo Lewis. The letters A, I, D and A each stand for one stage. ‘A’ stands for ‘Attention’, because, successful advertising would first need to attract the attention of the target group. ‘I’ stands for ‘Interest,’ which can be more easily aroused with increased attention. Increased attention would create an increased desire for the advertised product, so ‘D’ stands for ‘Desire’. The stage of desire, once reached, can lead to a purchase decision, thus the last ‘A’ stands for ‘Action’ (Ha 2020: 278).

Later, similar hierarchies of effect models, such as the DAGMAR model (Colley 1961) and the models from Lavidge and Steiner (1961) and Wells et al. (1965) aimed to explain the process of advertising communication. As can be seen in Table 1, the theoretical approaches of stage models mainly differ from each other in the amount and designation of the stages. Nevertheless, they all follow the same principal order of psychological dimensions, which asserts that first recipient’s knowledge (cognition), then feelings (affection) and finally actions (conative) can be influenced by an advertising message.

Table 2: Overview – Psychological dimensions of popular hierarchy of effect models

	KNOWLEDGES	FEELING	MOTIVATION → ACTION
AIDA (Strong '25)	<i>Attention</i>	<i>Interest</i>	<i>Desire</i>
DAGMAR Colley '61	<i>Awareness</i>	<i>Comprehension</i>	<i>Conviction</i>
Lavidge & Steiner '61	<i>Awareness</i>	<i>Liking</i>	<i>Conviction</i>
Wells et al. '65	<i>Perception</i>	<i>Understanding</i>	<i>Persuasion</i>
	COGNITIVE	AFFECTIVE	CONATIVE

Source: Egan (2007: 44)

Stage models postulate an orderly sequence of the advertising effects that is easy to understand. However, reality shows that this "ideal-typical sequence" is often not given. Cognition is measurably not upstream of affect or conation. Similarly, the connection between affect and conation is questioned by empirical findings (e.g. Ray 1973; Greenwald 1968; Barry and Howard 1990). Rather than imposing a structured order of psychological effects, each single effect should be individually acknowledged. Furthermore, it is nowadays assumed

that advertising does not have the same effect on all recipients and that recipients do not take a passive role when being exposed to advertising messages. Against this background, many criticisms strongly relativise the significance of stage models and declare them outdated. Scientific inquiry today addresses these points of criticism with so-called relational models (Gröppel Klein and Kroeber-Riel 2013: 677).

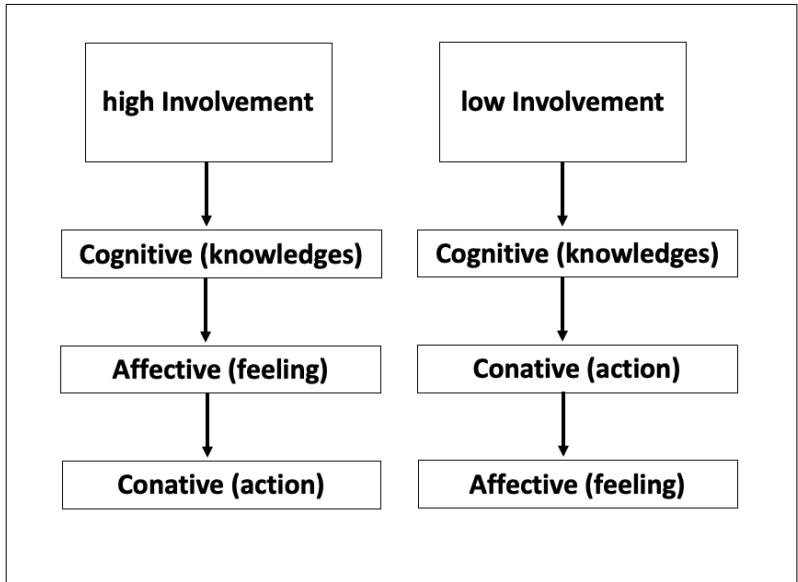
5.1.2 Relational models

In advertising research, all approaches having the involvement construct as a starting point can be determined as relational models (Bongard 2002: 293). Involvement theories assume that the recipient is no longer perceived as a passive recipient who reacts to all stimuli in the same way. Rather, recipients would actively influence the result, i.e. the effect produced by the advertising process (*idem*: 9). Against this background, not only the product or the advertising stimulus, but also recipients themselves would be involved in the outcome of advertising effects.

Krugman (1965) presented the first scientific involvement construct, which has been ever since functioned as fundamental model. Within his theory, involvement refers to recipients' conscious personal references between the information they are presented with and their personal experiences (Krugman 1965: 355). The involvement intensity describes the degree of intensity and differentiation of the recipient's media content processing. Overall, Krugman discerns two types of involvement, namely high and low involvement. Under high involvement conditions, recipients process information selectively and consciously engages with the information offered. Here, the processing of the offered information would undergoes comparisons with prior knowledge and opinions (Krugman 1965: 353, 355). In the case of high involvement, communication would go along the impact components attention – attitude – behaviour. The offered communication would be comprehensively processed cognitively, resulting in altered knowledge which itself presents a precondition for an alteration of attitude. Consequently, as an effect of the combination of media communication with direct personal experiences, neutral information would undergo association with information that is assessing and emotive. Through this the individual obtains new attitudes (Kroeber-Riel 1990: 126, 210). The conditions of 'low involvement' pertain to an alteration of the recipient's perceptual structure to an extent that cannot be described as a change

in attitude. In case of exposition towards offered communication including low involvement, recipients would not process information selectively or consciously engage with the information offered. This would therefore not lead to the alteration of the recipient's attitudes. However, constant reiteration would result in a shift of the recipient's cognitive structure. Only when this altered cognitive structure is (re-)activated by one's own behaviour, a change in attitude would occur at a later point in time (Krugman 1965: 355–356; Halff 1998: 35–36). (Krugman 1965: 355–356; Halff 1998: 35–36). Table 2 visualizes this theoretical model.

Table 3: Overview – Involvement model according to Krugman (1965)



Own illustration based on Schenk (1989: 452)

Petty and Cacioppo's Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) also assumes that a variety of individual and situational factors determine recipients' efforts to cognitively process information. In general, the ELM describes the probability (likelihood) of careful content processing (elaboration) of a stimulus on the way to an attitude change. Within the ELM, such an alteration can ensue through either the central or peripheral route of persuasion (Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann 1983: 135). The former attributes an alteration to the effect of intensive processing of information, where communicative content is carefully processed and elaborately examined (Petty and Cacioppo 1981: 21). The latter, then, includes no such intensive processing. Rather, an alteration in opinion is not achieved through the individual's

examination of the arguments communicated, but occurs through the perception of the object's secondary stimuli, as for example, the attractiveness of the source (ibidem).

Recipient motivation, to a certain extent, is preconditional to the central route of information processing. For this motivation, then involvement is a determinant. The importance of forming a justifiable opinion is higher when an object is highly relevant to the individual (high involvement), which, in turn, has a heightening effect on the motivation to cognitive exertion (Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann 1983: 137). If a recipient is highly motivated, they require suitable cognitive skills to perform elaboration. Therefore, elaborate argument processing can only occur if the individual is equipped with an appropriate scheme or previous information: Motivation alone would not suffice (Petty and Cacioppo 1996: 265). When either the motivation, or a stimulus towards elaborate content processing, is not present, the peripheral route applies.

However, also the briefly presented models are strongly criticised (e.g. Kitchen et al. 2014; Halff 1998). In general, relational models are mostly representative of the random variables that support a certain research focus. In summary, it can therefore be said that over time there has been some considerable progress in research on advertising effectiveness. However, there is no model that describes the effect of advertising in its entirety. Consequently, up until the present date, no universally accepted theory of advertising effectiveness exists (Duff, Faber and Nan 2019).

Nevertheless, all models of advertising effectiveness differentiate between the cognitive, affective and conative effects of advertising. For each type of effect, specific measurement variables exist. In the following explanations, the main indicators of the cognitive, affective and the conative dimensions of advertising effectiveness will be presented in more detail.

5.2 Psychological variables for measuring advertising effectiveness

5.2.1 Cognitive variables

In general, cognitive effects refer to “the knowledge and brand accessibility or top-of-mind awareness effect of advertising on consumers” (Ha 2020: 278). In the context of advertising effectiveness, cognitive variables provide information about what kind of knowledge is available to recipients after they have been exposed to an advertisement. These variables can

provide information about whether and to what extent an advertising medium, the brand, the company or an advertising message is remembered (Siegert et al. 2016: 550).

Perception and memory are carried out by the recipients on the basis of information contained in the advertising material and by the recipient's relevant prior knowledge about a certain brand or product (Gröppel-Klein and Kroeber-Riel 2013: 371). At the cognitive level, the objectives of advertising measures therefore include anchoring information in the memory of the target group (Lavidge and Steiner 1961: 59).

Remembering information related to an advertisement is typically measured by the indicators 'recall' and 'recognition'. Recall can be differentiated between aided and unaided recall. Unaided recall is usually carried out on the basis of an open question such as 'Which advertisement (for example which TV spot/ad) can you remember? Please name all brands or products that you have noticed'. In the case of aided recall, a certain clue is given to study participants, such as a list of brands. The participants are asked if they remember which of these brands has been advertised. The list includes both brands that actually appeared in the performance as well as unnamed distractor brands (foils), which serve as both a distraction and the control (Siegert et al. 2016: 553).

5.2.2 Affective variables

Affective variables compromise individual attitudes towards an object that are based on feelings and emotions (Lavidge and Steiner 1961: 60). Within the context of advertising effectiveness, two types of attitudes are decisive: attitudes towards advertising and attitudes towards the advertised brand.

Attitudes towards the ad and attitudes towards the brand refer to the feelings that recipients associate with an advertising medium or an advertised brand. Affective indicators of advertising effectiveness represent pleasures and displeasures – for example, the extent to which an advertising medium or an advertised brand is perceived as pleasant, likeable and appealing (e.g. Greshman and Shimp 1985; Macinnis and Park 1991; Madden, Allen and Twible 1998).

Several studies investigated the correlation between these two indicators of advertising effectiveness. However, there is no consensus regarding this topic: While some researchers

have not discovered a significant indirect effect between attitudes towards the advertising and attitudes towards the advertising brand (e.g. Greshman and Shimp 1985; Lutz and MacKenzie 1989), others have found a significant indirect effect (e.g. Homer 1990; Mitchell and Olson 1981).

5.2.3 Conative variables

Advertising effect variables that refer to a person's behavioural intention are described as conative (Lavidge and Steiner 1961: 60). According to the theory of planned behaviour, concrete behavioural intentions are closely related to actual behaviour, although not all intentions are translated into action (Ajzen 1985: 11). This is because not only an individual's positive attitude is the only factor that determines an actual behaviour. Also, subjectively perceived expectations of the social environment and the perceived possibility to control one's own behaviour, exert influence on an individual's behaviour (Ajzen and Madden 1986: 456 et sqq.).

Purchase intention is a principal determinant for the conative component. The following factors, after Schiffman, Kanuk and Wisenblit (2010: 86), also function as determinants: the scope of recipient interest in the brand, recipient motivation to research into the company or product of the advertisement, as well as the recipient's inclination towards recommending the products and services advertised to others.

6 Media context studies

Most of today's advertising messages are placed in media contexts such as newspapers, television programmes or webpages. It is assumed that these media contexts impact how consumers process and evaluate embedded advertising messages (Shen and Chen 2013). In this context, so-called media-context studies are of importance. They deal with "how and which media context variables influence the effects of the advertisements embedded in that context" (Bronner and Neijens 2006: 81).

In current literature, there exists a wide range of media-context studies examining numerous different media-context factors that may influence advertising effectiveness. For instance, De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Anckaert (2002) investigated the effect of context appreciation and context/ad congruence on advertising recall. Lord, Burnkrant and Unnava (2001) examined the effects of program-induced mood states on brand attitude and Yi (1990) the effects of cognitive and affective priming of the media context on purchase intention. With the subject matter of the present work, only the factor 'contextual congruence' will be illuminated from a theoretical perspective.

6.1 Ad-context congruence

A single definition of the term 'ad-context congruence' has not been established since every scientific publication uses its own, for the respective research suitable description. For instance, the words 'match', or 'similarity' are sometimes used as synonyms for congruence. In general, advertising context congruence can be characterized by a congruence between the expression of individual characteristics of an advertising object and an advertising context (Sieglerschmidt 2008: 6).

According to Sieglerschmidt (2008), congruence can be referred to different characteristics of the advertising object, e.g. an advertised product, an advertised brand, or to the design of the actual advertisement. But also, on the part of the media context, it is necessary to differentiate more precisely to which elements a possible congruence should refer to. On the one hand, media context can refer to the editorial environment that immediately surrounds an advertisement. An example for such an indirect context would be a film scene, which is

located directly before or after an advertising break. In contrast to a single film scene, congruence can also be referred to the recipient's perception of the editorial content on a holistic level, such as a whole TV or Podcast show (*idem*: 7).

Furthermore, Sieglerschmidt differentiates between the congruence of objective and subjective characteristics (*idem*: 6). Objective characteristics refer to characteristics that can objectively be determined such as the content or color design (e.g. Furnham and Gunter 2002, Zhang, Bao and Xiao 2018). On the contrary, there are subjective characteristics that refer for example to emotions or evoked moods (e.g. Feltham and Arnold 1994, Moorman, Neijens and Smit 2002). The table below by Sieglerschmidt (2009) illustrates the different variations of advertising context congruence.

Table 4: Categorization of different forms of advertisement-context-congruence

Congruency of...		indirect media context		direct media context	
and...		Advertising object	Advertising design	Advertising object	Advertising design
Objective characteristics	Theme	Furniture advertising during reportage about furniture production	Car advertising on the beach during travel report about the Carribbean	Furniture advertising during moving scene in feature film	Car advertising on the beach during beach scene in feature film
	Style	"Sensual" brand during love movie	advertising in cartoons tyle during cartoon movie	"Sensual" brand during erotic scene	Advertising with depiction of violence during violent scenes
Subjective characteristics (e.g. moods, involvement)		Advertising for sports cars in lifestyle programme	Creepy advertising in horror movie	Advertising for men's magazine during erotic scene	Humorous advertising during humorous scene

Source: Sieglerschmidt (2009: 9)

6.1.1 Theoretical explanations: The effect of ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness

6.1.1.1 The effect of ad-context congruence on memory

Theoretical explanations about the effect of ad-context congruence on memory derive from the field of cognitive psychology. In summary, the literature provides conflicting explanations for the effects of ad context congruence. While the Theory of Contextual Priming (e.g. Furnham, Bergland and Gunter 2002) argues that ad-context-congruence would have a positive effect on advertising effectiveness, proponents of the Cognitive Interference Theory (e.g. Furnham and Price 2006) assume the exact opposite. In the following section, the Theory of Contextual Priming and also the Cognitive Interference Theory will be presented in more detail.

6.1.1.2 Contextual Priming

Overall, priming is understood to be an influence on the stimulus processing of the human brain. The theory of priming can be traced back to psychological network models of memory. According to these models, it is believed that information is stored in memory as concepts that are connected with each other within a network via associative pathways. Related concepts would directly be connected with each other and are therefore located in close proximity (Moy, Tewksbury and Rinke 2016: 5). In general, concepts can be related with each other in many different ways, for instance semantically, visually or phonetically (Siegler 2016: 104).

When a concept is activated through retrieval, also closely located and therefore related concepts would become activated. For instance, when individuals see a picture of a burning forest, the concept of ‘global warming’ may be activated and spread over to other related concepts such as ‘climate strikes’ or ‘floods’. In general, “[t]he activation of concepts increases how accessible they are in memory — they are ‘primed’ for application to other stimuli” (Moy, Tewksbury and Rinke 2016: 5). To sum up, it can be said, that the accessibility of concepts is improved when exposure to related concepts preceded.

For advertising research, so-called contextual priming effects, are of particular interest. Most advertising is embedded into a media context, for instance in a magazine article or within a

YouTube video clip. According to Shen and Chen (2013: 69), context is a determining factor towards advertisement perception: Prior to advertisement exposition, the recipients are subject to the media context the advertisement is embedded in. Based on the theory of contextual priming, the media context can increase accessibility for concepts that are related to the ad (Yi 1993: 2). This means that if a concept is activated by recent exposure to a media context, accessibility of related concepts activated by subsequent exposure to an advertising message, would be increased and thus the storage of ad information facilitated. Therefore, by embedding an advertisement in a congruent media context, encoding and recalling advertising information would be much easier for recipients (Furnham, Bergland and Gunter 2002: 526).

6.1.1.3 Cognitive Interference Theory

Contrary to priming theory, proponents of cognitive interference theory assume that ad-context incongruence, rather than ad-context congruence would positively affect memory of the advertisement (e.g. Anderson; Zanjani, Diamond and Chan 2011). Interference theory belongs to the psychological theories of forgetting. These theories aim to explain why certain information are preferably forgotten or rather learned. It argues that forgetting occurs because of the interference from other memories (Anderson 2003). The storage of new memories could be inhibited by memories that were stored before or after.

In this context it is distinguished between proactive and retroactive interference. Proactive interference occurs when previous memories interrupt new memories, as when, for example, knowledge we have already acquired in the past interferes with what we are currently learning. On the other hand, retroactive interference occurs when new memories interfere and disrupt old memories (e.g. Köster, Degel and Piper 2002). It is believed that proactive and retroactive Interference is more likely to occur when memories are of similar nature. Similar elements of a message would therefore "merge" into one element during reception. This phenomenon is called meltdown. The greater the similarity of individual components, the more difficult it would be to remember the individual components (Furnham, Bergland and Gunter 2002: 526–527).

According to the theoretical approach of Cognitive Interference, advertisement-context-congruence would therefore result in negative effects on memory. In the case of advertisement-context-congruence, the advertisement and the media context entail similar elements. Based

on Cognitive Interference Theory, this would cause a meltdown which would inhibit remembering individual components of the ad message.

6.1.2 The effect of ad-context congruence on brand evaluations

In theoretical explanations about the effect of ad-context congruence on brand evaluations, it is often referred to schema theory. Schema theory is based on the theoretical principles of priming. As already described in chapter ‘6.1.1.1.2. Cognitive Priming’, similar mental concepts of information would be interconnected with each other by associative pathways. By that, different associative networks of knowledge, beliefs and expectations, would be build. These networks are referred to as schemata. Within these schemata, concepts that are similar to each other would be organised and structured. This organisational structure of knowledge, beliefs and expectations would help individuals to understand and organise their environment (Lundh 1995: 365–366). Congruence between an ad and the media context in which it is embedded thus implies that the ad conforms to the expected schemata that was by primed the media context. It is assumed that people would generally like things that go along with their expectations (e.g. Mandler 1982; Feltham and Arnold 1994; Campbell and Goodstein 2001. According to Mandler (1982: 16), in case of a high congruence between a new information and the structures of a recently activated schema, it seems likely that evaluations of “(...) familiarity, acceptability and a basic sense of liking” would occur. On the other hand, in the case of ad-context incongruence individuals would experience confusion what would result in negative ad evaluations.

Nevertheless, other interpretations of schema theory plead for opposite effects of ad-context congruence. For instance, Alwitt (2000) argues that due to the high amount of marketing communications reaching individuals every day, advertising messages need to be perceived as increasingly interesting in order to maintain viewer’s attention. Advertisings being perceived as interesting would be associated with more positive brand and ad evaluations. Alwitt assumes that an individual’s goal is to strive to understand schemata in an entire communication. However, when there is a mismatch of schemata, advertisings would be perceived as interesting. Therefore, when schemata are not perceived as “standard schemata” and do not fulfill individuals’ expectancies, this would create interest. It is therefore believed that a mismatch of schemata, as in the case of ad-context incongruence, would be perceived as challenging and interesting what would in return result in more favorable brand evaluations.

7 State of the art

7.1 Advertising effectiveness of Podcast advertising: Influential factors for success

As the Podcast industry continues to grow and more studies confirm the effectiveness of Podcast advertising, research interest in this area has increased, especially over the last five years. In this chapter, these studies are discussed in more detail.

Up until the present date, most of the research related to Podcast advertising has been primarily carried out in order to confirm its effectiveness. Within these studies, effectiveness of Podcast advertising was measured using the following Key Performance Indicators (KPI's): brand recall (Riismandel 2018), behavioural intention (Nielson 2018) and acceptance rate (Domenichini 2018a). As studies reveal, main types of Podcast advertising – audio spots, sponsorships and native ads – generate high performances on all of these indicators when compared to other advertising media. Within the framework of these studies, influential factors and success factors can be identified regarding the advertising effectiveness of Podcast advertising. The following will briefly present these findings.

A study conducted by AS&S Radio GmbH, a German advertising and marketing agency, examined the impact of different types of Podcast advertising on brand recall (Domenichini 2018b). Audio spots, sponsorships and native ads for fictional brands were produced for this study. Study results demonstrate that all of these types of Podcast advertising generate stronger aided and unaided brand recall than traditional radio commercials. Native ads generated the highest brand recall, with sponsorships generating the second highest recall and audio spots the lowest recall. Furthermore, the effectiveness of various creative approaches to native ads has been tested within this study. Some participants were exposed to 'personal native ads' in which the Podcast hosts presented the brand in a personally involved way. Other participants were exposed to 'informative native ads' in which Podcast hosts presented the brand or the product in a more informative and objective way. It was found that these kinds of ads generate a higher brand awareness and brand recall and lead to much higher KPIs in the category 'spontaneous consideration set'.

Another study (Domenichini 2018a) analysed advertisement acceptance (the percentage of listeners who do not fast-forward the advertisement but listen to it consciously) in different types of Podcast advertising. Findings revealed that sponsorships experienced the greatest acceptance rate, followed by audio spots. Native ads held the lowest acceptance rate. Nevertheless, compared to the acceptance rates of other types of media, the acceptance rates of native ads embedded in Podcasts were still high. A study conducted by the German advertisement marketer Podstars OMR (2018) discovered that Podcast advertisings presented by the host are more accepted by the listeners than externally produced audio spots.

Ritter and Cho (2009) investigated how the type of advertising and its placement within the Podcast affect perceived obtrusiveness and listener irritation. Their results show that commercials should be placed at the beginning of an audio Podcast in order to elicit a positive attitude toward the ad. However, the timing and the number of times the ad is played can prove influential. A survey by Midroll (Riismandel 2016), the world's largest provider of broadcast and Podcast advertising, found that the unaided recall of a target brand and purchase intention are higher with campaigns that place at least four ads in different episodes of a Podcast show.

The following table summarises the current research concerning the main influencing – and success factors on the effectiveness of Podcast advertising.

Table 5: Current state of research: Influential factors for success for Podcast advertising

Who	How	When	How often
Ads that are read by the hosts themselves generate the highest acceptance rates. (Podstars OMR 2018)	Native ads generate the highest brand recognition (Domenichini 2018b). Sponsorships generate the highest acceptance rate (Domenichini 2018a). Native ads that are presented in an informative rather than in a personally involved way generate a	Podcast advertising should optimally be placed at the beginning of the Podcast episode in order to generate positive brand attitudes. (Ritter and Cho 2009)	Commercials in audio Podcasts that are repeated within a four-episode span have a positive effect on brand recall and purchase intention. (Riismandel 2016)

	higher brand recall. (Domenichini 2018b)		
--	---	--	--

Own presentation

7.1.1 Research gap

The paragraphs above show that several success factors on the effectiveness of Podcast advertising have already been investigated. According to the current research, if the marketer's objective is to generate high brand recognition, then host-read native ads that are placed at the beginning of a Podcast episode, deliver information about the product in an informative way and are repeated within a four-episode span, are proven to be the most effective ones. However, if the advertiser's objective is, for instance, to enhance attitudes towards a brand, it may be more effective to create a sponsorship, due to its high acceptance rate.

As already outlined, advertisers often choose Podcast episodes that have a congruent theme or image with the advertised brand or product. Nevertheless, according to the researcher's knowledge, the effectiveness of these selection criteria is not scientifically proven. Against this background within the frame of the present work, the effect of ad-context congruence on Podcast advertising effectiveness will be investigated for the first time. In the following, selected media context studies dealing with the effect of thematic ad-context congruence and image ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness are presented.

7.2 Current research on the effect of thematic ad-context congruence

In current literature, studies dealing with the effect of thematic ad-context congruence can be found for almost every type of medium. The vast majority of these studies are experimental studies and, in rare cases, field studies.

Several studies have been conducted on the influence of thematic ad-context congruence for externally paced media such as TV commercials (e.g. Feltham and Arnold 1994; Furnham, Bergland and Gunter 2002) or radio (e.g. Martín-Luengo, Luna and Migueles 2013). Exposure to externally paced media implies that the medium and not the audience controls the viewing and listening pace (Janssens, De Pelsmacker and Geuens 2015: 580). However, also many studies on the effect of thematic ad-context congruence for internally paced media

such as magazines and newspapers exist (e.g. Aaker and Brown 1972; Yi 1993; Moorman, Neijens and Smit 2002; Dahlén et al. 2008). Participants of these studies perceive the media context and the ad simultaneously. In these studies, consumers can make their own decisions concerning their viewing or listening order and pace (Janssens, De Pelsmacker and Geuens 2015: 580). Due to the rise of online media, the focus of research on the effect of thematic congruence or incongruence has shifted over the last ten years to internally paced media, which gave rise to several new advertising formats (such as online banners and skippable advertisements). These advertisements are directly embedded within the media context and allow the consumer more freedom concerning ad consumption.

Some of these studies exploring the effect of thematic congruence for new advertising formats embedded in online media, are named here: Belanche, Flavián and Pérez-Rueda (2017) examined the effect of thematic ad-context congruence for online skippable video ads embedded in YouTube programmes. Segev, Wang and Fernandes' (2014) studied banner ads embedded on online blogs. Porta, Ravarelli and Spaghi (2013) examined ad banners embedded in online newspapers. With the constant addition of new types of ads and also online media formats, the complexity with regard to research on ad-context congruence is increasing. Today, there is a multitude of new possible ad-context constellations for which the impact of ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness could be investigated.

In general, empirical investigations on the effect of thematic content congruence on advertising effectiveness generate conflicting results. These results reflect the conflicting theoretical explanations for the effect of ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness (see chapter 6.1.1) Even in the same medium, different studies led to contradictory results for the same indicators of advertising effectiveness. For instance, Moorman, Neijens and Smit (2002) investigated the effect of congruence between the advertised brand and the editorial content of magazines on brand recognition. They found that advertisements embedded in thematically congruent programmes lead to a higher brand recognition than advertisements embedded in thematically incongruent programmes. However, a study conducted by Dahlén et al. (2008) resulted in different findings: this study revealed that ads embedded in a thematically incongruent environment have a more positive effect on brand recognition than those embedded in a congruent environment.

One possible explanation for different findings related to brand memory could be the use of different research designs: field studies versus laboratory experiments. Within a field study, participants are free to choose information, while in a laboratory experimental study, participants do not have a choice of what information they are exposed to. Therefore, since participants cannot freely choose their preferred editorial content, it may be the case that they are exposed to content and ads that do not correlate with their interests, which may result in lower recall and recognition (Sieglerschmidt 2008: 41). Contradictory findings could also be the result of too little experimental variation, so that the perception of congruence does not occur.

Since online blogs, like Podcasts, are a niche medium, two studies examining the effects of thematic ad-context congruence on online blogs are briefly presented. Lee (2017) examined the impact of thematic ad-context congruence in online blogs on memory. In the thematic congruent stimuli, participants of this study were exposed to an ad for a vacation planning website while reading a travel blog; in the incongruent stimuli, an ad promoting an ink pen appeared. Study results found that better recall and recognition occurred for the ad that was incongruent with the blog context than for the ad that was congruent with the blog context. However, there were more favourable attitudes towards the congruent ad than the incongruent ad. These findings agree with Segev, Wang and Fernande's (2014) study. Their study also investigated the effects of thematic ad-context congruence in blogs. Study findings suggest that banner ads that are thematically congruent with the blog's context would result in more favourable attitudes towards the ad and the brand.

7.3 Current research on the effect of image ad-context congruence

While thematic congruence can be easily determined objectively, this is does not apply for image congruence. In the field of marketing, an image generally refers to attributes people associated with a certain reference object such as a brand or a company (Stern, Zinkhan and Jaju 2001: 203). Therefore, image congruence is about tendencies of subjectively perceived attributes.

As already described in the introduction, within the context of ad placements in Podcast episodes, image congruence between a Podcast episode and the therein advertised brand is often considered as important. However, selection of a suitable episode based on the criterion of image congruence, is often done purely on gut feeling. Studies, empirically investigating

the effect of image congruence between an editorial advertising content and the therein advertised brand have not been found. However, image congruence has often been studied for other reference objects within the area of advertising: Existing advertising studies dealing with image congruence primarily focus on the image congruence between a brand endorser and the endorsed brand. In addition, some studies refer to image congruence when labelling a similarity between the self-image of a consumer and an advertised brand.

All of the studies found that deal with image congruence are experimental studies conducted in a classroom environment with students. However, depending on the study, operationalisation and measurement of the variable 'image congruence' is performed in various ways. In general, it can be observed that in some studies (e.g. Misra and Beatty 1990; Mishra, Roy and Bailey 2015) image congruence refers to a variety of commonly perceived attributes, whereas image congruence in other studies (e.g. Kamins 1990; Till and Busler 2000) refers to the congruence of a single attribute, such as perceived attractiveness. Besides, in some studies participants are directly asked about their generally perceived image fit between two reference objects. (e.g. Kamin and Gupta 1994; Chioa 2013). In the following sections, studies on image congruence are outlined and different approaches used to operationalise and measure image congruence are described.

Endorser image congruence can generally be understood as "the degree of match between accessible endorser associations and attributes associated with the brand" (Kirmani and Shiv 1998: 26). Most research on this topic reveals that endorser image congruence has a more positive impact on advertising effectiveness than image incongruence (e.g., Kamins 1990; Lynch and Schuler 1994; Chiosa 2013). Within these studies, different approaches are used to examine for which constellation of brand and programme a congruent or incongruent stimulus is given. These different approaches are outlined in more detail below.

Endorser image congruence refers to the congruence of different associations and attributes connected to the endorser and the endorsed product or brand. Often, image congruence is related to the physical attractiveness of the endorser (e.g. Kahle and Homer 1985; Kamins 1990; Till and Busler 2000). For instance, Kamins (1990) investigated the effect of congruence between physically attractive celebrities and attractiveness-related products. In the pilot study, participants first evaluated the degrees of the celebrities' perceived attractiveness on

a seven-point scale, with seven being ‘extremely physically attractive’ and one being ‘extremely physically unattractive’. The celebrity with highest and the lowest mean were chosen for the final study. In a second pre-test, subjects used a five-point scale to evaluate how much a product could enhance their own attractiveness: five meant ‘extremely’ and one meant ‘not at all’. For the congruent stimulus, a print ad was created with the celebrity perceived as most attractive promoting the most attractiveness-enhancing product. For the incongruent condition, an ad was created that showed the celebrity perceived as most unattractive promoting the less attractiveness-enhancing product. According to the researcher’s findings, endorser image congruence would improve attitudes towards the brand while image incongruence does not.

In Misra’s and Beatty’s study (1990), image congruence was achieved when attributes associated with the celebrity endorser and the endorsed brand, were congruent. In order to construct a congruent or incongruent stimulus, participants of the pre-study listed attributes they would associate with certain selected celebrities. Responses were then coded and analysed, resulting in the identification of two to four commonly perceived attributes. Afterwards, the researchers selected brands that were either congruent, incongruent, or irrelevant (neither congruent nor incongruent) to the identified characteristics of the celebrities. Another group of participants then rated the ‘holistic’ matching of celebrities and brands on a seven-point differential scale, ranging from ‘very appropriate match’ to ‘very inappropriate match’. The main study revealed that image congruence generates a higher brand recall and more positive brand evaluations than image incongruence.

Kamin and Gupta (1994) and Chioa (2013) did not define image congruence before conducting their empirical research. Instead, study participants were directly asked, within the framework of a pre-study, to indicate their degree of perceived endorser-product match. For instance, in Kamin’s and Gupta’s (1994: 575) study, participants used a scale from one (incongruent) to five (congruent) to label „the degree to which they perceived the image of each celebrity to be congruent with the role of spokesperson for the product category”. According to their findings, image congruence would lead to more favourable brand attitudes and increased purchase intentions.

In addition, many studies referred to image congruence when examining how a consumer’s self-image and the image of a brand, product, or endorser relate. In these self-congruence

studies, image congruence refers to the “process of consumers purchasing products/brands that they believe possess symbolic images similar and/or complementary to the image they hold of themselves” (Heath and Scott 1998: 1110). Studies on self-congruence demonstrate that, compared to incongruence, image congruence enhances consumers’ attitudes towards the advertised brand and increases their purchase intention (e.g. Sirgy 1985; Graeff 1996; Ericksen 1997).

8 Methodology

At the beginning of the methodology section, research hypotheses are developed. Afterwards, the main characteristics of the experimental research design are described in greater detail. Based on this, the characteristics and development of the experimental conditions are illustrated. Moreover, the measurement methods of the dependent variable are explained, and the results of the pre-study are reported. Furthermore, the sample characteristics of the main investigation and exclusion criteria are specified.

8.1 Development of research hypotheses

In this section, the research hypotheses are developed, which allows for a comprehensive answering of the following research questions:

RQ1 Does context congruence between an advertised brand and a Podcast show influence advertising effectiveness?

RQ1.1 Does *thematic congruence* between an advertised brand a Podcast show influence advertising effectiveness?

RG1.2 Does *image congruence* between an advertised brand a Podcast show influence advertising effectiveness?

Variables used to measure advertising effectiveness serve as dependent variables for the experimental studies. As illuminated in chapter 5.2, all advertising effectiveness models are based on the assumption that advertisings impact cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of behavior. For each of these behavioral dimensions, specific variables are used for measuring advertising effectiveness.

Within the scope of this study, the cognitive dimension is measured by the variables brand recall and brand recognition. The affective dimension is measured by the variable attitude towards the brand. These are most commonly used variables for measuring advertising effectiveness. However, the examination of the conative dimension is not suitable for this research study. Typically, the conative dimension is measured by the indicator purchase intention. However, by listening to an advertisement once as part of the study, the participants learn about a brand for the first time. It is extremely unlikely that based on this one-time

experience, participants will develop purchase intentions. As the purchase of insurance products is generally a costly and long-term investment, it is not expected that purchase intentions develop as a result of listening to a commercial only once. This is supported by several studies confirming that high levels of knowledge about insurance products positively influences purchase decisions (e.g. Dragos, Dragos, and Muresan 2020; Weedige et al. 2019; CoreData 2014). All of the variables just mentioned are used to measure the impact on advertising effectiveness of both, thematic but also image ad-context congruence. In the next sections, possible effects on these variables of thematic but also image congruences, will be hypothesized.

As described earlier, there is disagreement within the current advertising effectiveness research regarding the influence of thematic ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness. It is therefore generally difficult to identify tendencies regarding the impact of ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness. However, as Podcasts are a digital niche medium, the effect of thematic congruence on advertisement effectiveness may be similar to that of online blogs. As with Podcasts, online blogs are a highly personal and issue-focussed media format. As already mentioned in chapter 7.2., findings of Lee's (2017) study suggest that ads that are incongruent with the blog context would result in better recall and recognition of the ad and more positive attitudes towards the brand. Based on these findings, the following hypotheses are tested:

H1a Podcast advertising that is thematically incongruent with the Podcast episode will result in better brand recall than will congruence.

H1b Podcast advertising that is thematically incongruent with the Podcast episode will result in better brand recognition than will congruence.

H1c Podcast advertising that is thematically congruent with the Podcast episode will produce more positive attitudes towards the brand than will incongruence.

Moreover, within this work, the effect of image congruence between an advertised brand will be investigated. As of now, the researcher has no knowledge over previous research into the effects of image congruence between an advertised brand, and the media programme it occurs in. Therefore, no specific study can be used for comparison. Nevertheless, as demon-

strated in chapter 7.3. “Current research on the effect of image ad-context congruence”, studies examining the effect of image ad-context congruence all come to the conclusion that this type of congruence positively influences advertising effectiveness. Against this background, the following is hypothesised:

H2a Congruence between the image of a Podcast advertising and the image of a Podcast episode will result in better brand recall of the ad than will incongruence.

H2b Congruence between the image of a Podcast advertising and the image of a Podcast episode will result in better brand recognition of the ad than will incongruence.

H2c Congruence between the image of a Podcast advertising and the image of a Podcast episode will result in more positive attitudes towards the brand.

8.2 Research design

To investigate the research topic, a quantitative experimental online survey was conducted. Primary data is collected through a structured online survey. In this survey, different experimental conditions are incorporated. In the following sections, it is explained why the selected method is the most appropriate for analysing the established hypotheses, which allows for a comprehensive answering of the research questions.

8.2.1 Quantitative research design

In general, quantitative research demonstrates cause-effect relationships by testing a hypothesis. A hypothesis is a “tentative statement of a relationship between two variables” (Gunter 2002: 211). A hypothesis proposes that when an independent variable is manipulated (as in experimental studies), a measurable change of a designated dependent variable is expected (*ibidem*). The overall objective of the empirical analysis is to examine the cause-effect relationship between the manipulated independent variable ad-context congruence (cause) and dependent variables indicating advertising effectiveness (effect).

Furthermore, quantitative studies are empirical observations of a few, selected features that are systematically dedicated to numerical values and collected on a numerically broad basis

In differentiation to qualitative data, which illuminates a complex phenomenon in great detail, quantitative research attempts to reduce complex correlations to only a few pieces of evidence, which are expressed in numbers, percentages, and average values (Brosius, Haas and Koschel 2016: 4). This study strives to prove a correlation between different variables and their extent of measurable change. It does not focus on specific insights or seek reasons why people would evaluate ad-context congruence in a certain way. Therefore, given the quantitative nature of the research problem, a quantitative research method is used.

8.2.2 Experimental research design

With an experimental research design, a cause-effect relationship is measured for at least two different conditions. At least under one condition, the independent variable is manipulated in such a manner to become evident that the change of the independent variable was responsible for triggering a measurable change of the dependent variable. For this, participants must be divided at least into two different groups that are exposed to different study conditions and then asked to respond in some manner. The responses of each group are then compared with one another (Gunter 2002: 222–227). To determine whether ad-context congruence has an actual impact on advertising effectiveness, different experimental conditions are required. In this study, the effectiveness of a particular Podcast advertising is measured under two different conditions of media exposure: Some of the participants are exposed to an ad-context congruent stimulus and others an ad-context incongruent one.

8.2.3 Online setting

Even if most of the experiments that test the impact of ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness were conducted under laboratory conditions and sometimes in the form of field experiments, an online experiment provides many more advantages for the analysis of the research topic. Regarding the aim of the study, field research must be conducted in cooperation with brands and Podcast shows. Even if a field experiment would provide a more realistic setting, it exceeds the scope of the present work.

Furthermore, whenever empirical research requires a large sample size, online experiments are far more effective than laboratory ones. Since two different types of ad-context congru-

encies (thematic and image congruence) are tested under two different conditions (congruence and incongruence), a total of four different study groups must be created. Against this background, an overall large sample size is needed. As Reips (2002: 92–94) notes, the internet allows for access to a much wider sample range, as people worldwide can easily take part in the experiment, independent of time and place.

However, compared with experiments conducted under laboratory conditions, online experiments have disadvantages. An online setting enables participants to participate in the experiment in variable environments that may differ in terms of noise, lighting, or available technical equipment. This study environment may in turn affect their response behaviour (Dandurand, Shultz and Onishi 2008: 428). Moreover, the researcher has no control over multiple submissions. Nevertheless, in a web-based experiment, this ‘cheating behavior’ is quite rare and is more likely to appear with research topics that generate strong opinions (Reips 2002: 105).

In all, regarding the present research study, the advantages of online experiments outweigh those of laboratory experiments. Against this background, online experiments prove to be an adequate research method for this study.

8.3 Experimental design of independent variables

To investigate both thematic and image congruence between a Podcast advertising and Podcast show, two different experiments were created. In each experiment, the effect of only one type of congruence was tested at a time. One experiment tested the effects of thematic congruence between advertising and a Podcast episode, while the other experiment analysed the effects of image congruence. For both experiments, advertisements for fictitious brands were created so that previous brand knowledge and associations would not affect advertising effectiveness. In total, two simple yet professional advertisements promoting insurance services were developed as research stimuli. It would be obvious to use the same advertisements for both experiments and then to compare the experiment’s results against each other. Nevertheless, this was consciously avoided due to concerns regarding experiments’ internal validity (see chapter 8.14.1.).

8.3.1 Advertised brands

As illuminated in chapter 4.3., it is assumed that Podcast advertising can serve as an effective marketing tool for service brands. For this reason, empirical research was conducted using the example of service brands. Within the category of service brands, insurance brands were selected. Insurance services are widespread and therefore well-known among the German population. The overwhelming majority of the German population considers insurance coverage to be extremely important and exhibits a strong precautionary awareness (Clark 2020). Against this background, it is believed that a general interest in insurance services exists and is, in principle, not viewed as controversial. If the general interest and opinion about the service were to strongly polarise the respondents, this could have a major impact on the advertising effectiveness. To test the effect of thematic congruence, Podcast advertising promoting the fictitious car insurance brand *Telka* was created. Meanwhile, with a Podcast advertising promoting the fictitious life insurance brand *Delkan*, the effect of image congruence was examined.

These fictitious insurance services reflect the decision challenges regarding the programmatic placement of Podcast advertising. In general, there are many German Podcast shows about cars. For many marketers, the question arises whether they should focus their selection of Podcast shows for Podcast advertising placement on shows with a high reach or on those that fit the topic of their brand. However, finding a topic-specific Podcast with a high reach is unlikely. In thematically congruent Podcasts, it is more likely that listeners will be interested in the product or service that matches the show and therefore perceive it more intensely and positively. That said, there are also products and services, such as life insurance, for which there are no thematically congruent Podcast shows. Currently, there is for example no Podcast show concerning the topic of life insurance or insurance in general. For these types of products and services, different criteria are often used, namely the perceived image fit between the advertised brand and Podcast show.

8.3.2 Development of Podcast sponsorships

As outlined before, different types of Podcast advertising exist. Within the framework of this experimental study, the most common form of Podcast advertising, namely Podcast sponsorships, were created. The creation of authentic Podcast advertising was essential for the

success of the online experiment. To create authentic and credible Podcast advertising, the wording is similar to existing advertisements from car and life insurance companies. Before and during participation, subjects were not aware that the brands were purely fictional. In addition, care was taken to ensure that the design of the advertisement corresponds with a typical Podcast sponsorship in terms of style, structure, and length.

As mentioned, for examining the effect of thematic ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness, a Podcast sponsorship promoting the fictional car insurance brand *Telka* was created. Care was taken that through this sponsorship, the advertised brand was perceived as ordinary car insurance brand. For this purpose, solely standard wordings from existing car insurance campaigns were taken and slightly reworded. By that alternative explanations for variations in the dependent variables we tried to be avoided: If an attempt had been made to convey a particularly strong brand image through Podcast sponsorship at the same time, changes in advertising effectiveness could not have been clearly attributed to thematic ad-context congruence. It could just as well be that in this case a perceived image congruence or incongruence between brand and Podcast episode lead to altered results of advertising effectiveness. Against this background, no attempt was made to convey a particular image of the Podcast sponsorship of the car insurance *Telka*.

On the other hand, a strong perceived brand image was essential for successfully building experimental conditions of image congruence and image incongruence between a Podcast episode and a therein advertised brand. With this in mind, another Podcast sponsorship was created to convey a particularly strong brand image. A sponsorship promoting the fictional life insurance brand *Delkan* was thought to be suitable for this purpose. In general, it was expected that life insurance services are generally perceived as tendentially complex, serious and mature: Insurance products are intangible and especially the service of a life insurance policy is complex in itself. Moreover, due to the fact that it primarily concerns serious issues, such as old-age provision and occupational disability, it was thought to be more likely that also the brand would be perceived as serious and mature. This intended image was tried to be underlined with calm background music. Moreover, wordings such as “our life writes many stories – but not all of them are made of sunshine” or “for years costumers have known us for trust...” it was tried to enhance the perception of the advertised brand as serious and mature.

8.3.3 Development of audio sequences

Within the experimental survey, the participants were exposed to an audio excerpt from an existing Podcast episode. In this excerpt, a Podcast sponsorship was placed. The entire Podcast sequence was edited and created using ‘Garage Band’, an application for music and sound creation. In the following, the basic structure of these audio sequences, which were played for the study participants, is presented by means of illustration and then described in greater detail.

Intro of Podcast episode	Ringtone	Podcast sponsorship	Excerpt of Podcast episode
(30–45 sec.)	(3 sec.)	(around 45 sec.)	(first 4–5 minutes)

Figure 1: Basic structure of audio sequences

Intro of Podcast episode

The audio-sequence begins with the intro of the Podcast episode. In a Podcast episodes’s intro, the host(s) welcome the listeners and briefly present the general show topic. These intros typically last from 10 to 30 seconds.

Ringtone

At the end of the intro, a one-second ringtone was inserted. In many Podcast episodes, a ringtone initiates the start of the Podcast sponsorship. In general, the transition from show to advertising content is often marked by a ringtone in Podcasts. In this way, the listener feels less taken by surprise and is prepared for something new to follow.

Podcast sponsorship

After the ringtone plays, the self-created Podcast sponsorship begins. The sponsorship starts with an introduction typical for Podcast sponsorships: ‘This programme is presented to you by Telka car insurance’ (for full scripts see Appendix A and Appendix B). Furthermore, both advertisements are slightly longer than radio spots, which is typical for sponsorships. The Podcast advertising promoting the car insurance lasts 43 seconds, while the Podcast advertising promoting the life insurance lasts 47 seconds.

Podcast episode

When the Podcast sponsorship ended, the first four to five minutes of a Podcast episode were played. The extract from the Podcast episode was edited in such a way that it faded out from its original volume for the last five seconds until nothing could be heard.

These episodes, in which the Podcast sponsorships of car and life insurance have been inserted, are available on Spotify. For both the car and life insurance, two episodes were selected, which possessed either congruent or incongruent characteristics with the advertising. In the following section, the selected Podcast episodes are presented.

8.3.4 Experiment 1: Development of an ad-context congruent and incongruent stimulus

For the sake of simplification, the experiment investigating the effect of thematic congruence between a Podcast show and a Podcast sponsorship is referred to as Experiment 1 in the further course of this work. Within the framework of this experiment, participants were exposed to two different audio sequences that created either thematic congruence between advertised brand and Podcast episode or incongruence. These two sequences contain the same Podcast sponsorship promoting the fictional car insurance brand *Delkan*. However, these two sequences contain excerpts from different Podcast episodes. One audio sequence contains an excerpt from an episode of the Podcast show *mobile.de Motortalk*. As this Podcast show is primarily concerned with cars, one of its show episodes was chosen to create a thematic congruent stimulus between Podcast episode and the therein advertised brand. For creating a thematic incongruent stimulus, an excerpt from the Podcast episode *Animals*, belonging the Podcast show *NEON-Useless Knowledge*, was chosen. In this show episode, unnecessary facts about animals are presented. As this topic has nothing to do with cars or mobility in general, this episode was chosen as the thematically incongruent episode. The table below provides an overview of the two audio sequences, creating either a thematically congruent or thematically incongruent experimental condition.

Table 6: Overview – Creation of the dependent variable thematic ad-context congruence

	Programmatic context	Integrated Podcast sponsorship	Experimental condition
Audio sequence 1	<p>Podcast show: mobile.de Motortalk This is a monthly Podcast from <i>mobile.de</i>, a platform for buying and selling used cars. The show offers conversation topics for fans of motorised transportation and the automobile and motoring community</p> <p>Show episode: Apps that change driving In this episode <i>Apps that change driving</i>, two founders of the apps intended to make driving easier are invited.</p>	Podcast sponsorship for car insurance <i>Telka</i>	Thematic ad-context congruence
Audio sequence 2	<p>Podcast show: NEON – Useless Knowledge This is the show of the German youth magazine <i>NEON</i>. In the Podcast show <i>Useless knowledge</i>, useless knowledge facts on various topics are presented, as in the magazine's section of the same name.</p> <p>Show episode: Animals In this episode, show hosts Lars and Yvi discuss useless animal facts.</p>	Podcast sponsorship for car insurance <i>Telka</i>	Thematic ad-context incongruence

8.3.5 Experiment 2: Development of an ad-context congruent and incongruent stimulus

In the further course of this work, the experiment investigating the effect of image congruence between a Podcast episode and a therein advertised brand, is referred to as Experiment 2. Within the framework of this experiment, participants were exposed to two different audio sequences, that either created image congruence between Podcast episode and advertised brand or incongruence.

As presented in the chapter state of the art, image congruence is defined and operationalised in many ways. In general terms, image congruence refers to the congruence of perceived attributes between two reference objects, for instance between a brand endorser and the endorsed brand. When it comes to Podcast advertising, image congruence is related to image

congruence between a Podcast episode and the therein advertised brand. As already described, advertisers decide according to their gut feeling if the general image perception of a Podcast episode fits to the advertised brand.

The selection of Podcast episodes was made according to the personal perception of image congruence between the Podcast sponsorship promoting the life insurance *Delkan* and the selected Podcast episodes. As confirmed within the framework of the pre-study, the intended image of the selected Podcast episodes and the advertised brands was assessed as expected (for more information see chapter 8.8 ‘Pre-study’). The following table provides an overview of the two different experimental conditions, creating either image congruence or image incongruence.

Table 7: Overview – Creation of the dependent variable image ad-context congruence

	Programmatic context	Integrated Podcast sponsorship	Experimental condition
Audio sequence 3	<p>Podcast show: Best girlfriends In this show, show hosts Max and Jakob discuss topics around love, sex, and partnerships as honestly as if it were only the two of them.</p> <p>Show episode: What do men expect from dating apps? In this episode, the show hosts analyse men's relationship with dating apps, especially the chances of a woman finding a partner via a dating app.</p>	Podcast sponsorship promoting life insurance offers from <i>Delkan</i>	Image ad-context congruence
Audio sequence 4	<p>Podcast show: The eight day In this show, journalist Gabor Steingart speaks each evening to people who provide something to think about in various areas.</p> <p>Show episode: Emotional sovereignty In the episode, business mathematician and managerial coach Christoph Theile ponders how we as humans can acquire a better grip on our emotional world.</p>	Podcast sponsorship promoting life insurance offers from <i>Delkan</i>	Image ad-context incongruence

8.4 Assignment of experimental groups to different audio sequences

Two different experimental groups participate in each experiment and are exposed to either an advertising context congruent or advertising context incongruent condition. The audio sequence to which the participants are exposed determines which experimental group they belong to. To ensure clarity with regard to the different experimental groups and the respective experimental conditions, the table below summarises the assignment of audio sequences to different experimental groups. For the sake of improved clarity, the four different experimental groups are labeled. In the further course of this work, these labels are used when referring to the experimental groups.

Table 8: Assignment of audio sequences to different experimental groups

Audio sequence	Experimental group	Label
Audio sequence 1	Experimental group 1	Ex1c
Audio sequence 2	Experimental group 2	Ex1ic
Audio sequence 3	Experimental group 3	Ex2c
Audio sequence 4	Experimental group 3	Ex2ic

Note. Ex1c = Experimental group of the first experiment that is exposed to thematic ad-context congruence.
Ex1ic = Experimental group of the first experiment that is exposed to thematic ad-context incongruence.
Ex2c = Experimental group of the second experiment that is exposed to image ad-context congruence.
Ex2ic = Experimental group of the second experiment that is exposed to image ad-context incongruence.

8.5 Dependent variable—items and scales

8.5.1 Recall and recognition

The memory of advertising content is classically determined by the indicator's 'recall' and 'recognition'. Recall measurement is typically performed unaided by an open question (Siebert et al. 2016: 554). To examine the participants' memory of the advertised brand, they were asked '*Do you remember the name of the brand for which it was advertised for?*' Even if the actual name of the brand could not be remembered, it might have been the case that the participants were able to recognise the brand name when reading it. In general, for testing brand recognition, a certain clue is given to the study participants. In this study, a common method of measuring brand attitudes was used: a list of 12 different brand names presented to study participants. The participants were then asked whether they could remember which of the listed brands was advertised. The list included the brand name that actually appeared

within the Podcast advertising in addition to 11 freely invented distractor brands (foils) (e.g. *idem*: 553).

8.5.2 Attitude towards the brand and programme enjoyment

In advertising research, attitudes are typically determined by semantic differential scales. However, for attitudes modelled as dependent variables in the advertising impact process, hardly any established scales can be used as standard (Siegert 2016: 563). In this study, the participants were asked to assess their opinion towards the advertised brand using a 7-point bipolar semantic differential scale. This scale was composed of four bipolar adjectives frequently used in advertising research to measure the attitudes towards the brand (e.g. MacKenzie, Lutz and Belch 1986; Anand and Sternthal 1990; Low and Lamb 2000; Spears and Singh 2004). The bipolar adjectives based on which the participants evaluated both brands were unpleasant/pleasant, good/bad, favorable/unfavorable, and valuable/worthless.

To maintain consistency for the participants in rating scales, enjoyment of the Podcast show was measured using a 7-point bipolar semantic differential scale. For this, a scale from Lorde, Lee, and Sauer's study (1994), which assessed the enjoyment of audio media programmes, namely radio programmes, was used. The scale is composed of the items bad/good, unpleasant/pleasant, and unfavorable/favorable.

8.6 Population and sampling

Typically, it is not possible to interview all people associated with a particular study phenomenon due to the large population numbers involved. Therefore, a smaller and more manageable number of subjects must be extracted from a study population. The selected subset of persons from a study population participating in empirical research is called the 'sample' (Gunter 2002: 214). In general, this distinguishes between samples constructed on a probability basis and those constructed on a non-probability basis. Probability samples are selected according to mathematical requirements in such a manner that "it becomes possible to ascertain the extent to which the estimated characteristics of the sample reflect the true characteristic of the target population" (Mazzocchi 2008: 106). On the contrary, non-probability samples are selected based on availability and convenient accessibility. However, even if

non-probability samples do not underlie any strict mathematical control, more general selection criteria are applied (Gunter 2002: 215–216).

For this study, a non-probability sample is used, as the selection procedure of study participants does not follow any mathematical guidelines. As this sampling underlies a little control of the researcher, it is a purposive sample. Purposive samples are non-probability samples characterised by the fact that respondents are selected according to certain criteria (*ibidem*: 216). In this experimental survey, participants under the age of 18 are unable to participate. At the beginning of the questionnaire, it is asked whether the test person is 18 years of age or older. The denial of this question, whose answer is based on trust and honesty, results in the participant being taken directly to the last page of the questionnaire (the thank-you page). In this case, the survey is marked as completed, but the corresponding data set is excluded from the statistical analysis due to missing data points.

People younger than 18 are excluded from the study, since it can be assumed that they are not yet familiar with insurance services. Furthermore, some of the selected Podcast sequences in which the audio ads are embedded require a certain mental maturity. For instance, the Podcast show *The eight day* concerns the complex topic of emotional intelligence. Since a general understanding of the advertised product and media content is essential to evaluate the brand and the media content, minors are excluded from participating in the survey.

Furthermore, the experimental survey is directed towards people who are fluent in German. Within the experimental part of the study, participants are exposed to an audio sequence from a German Podcast show. In this sequence, an audio advertisement in German is presented. Moreover, in this case, if the participant does not understand German, the product and media content cannot properly be evaluated.

In addition to the sampling technique, the size of the sampling must be determined, as well. Since Experiments 1 and 2 each consist of two different study groups, a total of four study groups is needed. To formulate statistically meaningful statements, the minimum sample size for each study group must be 40. If the sample size is smaller than 40, only probability statements can be made (Byrne 2017). Given the time and cost constraints for this study, the experimental online survey was conducted only until 40 valid responses per experimental condition were collected.

8.7 Pre-study

A pre-study was conducted from the 10th to the 13th of September with a total of twenty-five participants (43% male and 57% female). The pre-study consisted of two phases in which different participants took part. In the following, the different tests conducted within these phases are described in greater detail.

8.7.1 Study phase I

In study phase I, a total of twenty subjects participated. Five people each listened to one of the four created audio sequences. In this phase, it was tested whether the created Podcast sponsorships are perceived as professional and authentic. Furthermore, it was determined whether the existence of thematic and image congruence between selected Podcast shows and Podcast sponsorships could be verified and if questions related to the content of the Podcast episode are easy to answer correctly.

8.7.1.1 Perception of Podcast Sponsorships

An essential success factor for the experiment is that the test subjects believe the Podcast sponsorship to which they are exposed were created for existing brands. It was therefore tested whether the self-created Podcast sponsorships are perceived as professional and authentic. To determine this, one of four audio files were randomly sent to participants via What's App. After the participants have listened to these files, the following questions were sent to them:

1. Did you perceive the advertising you have just listened to as professional?
2. Did you perceive the advertising you have just listened to as authentic?
3. The advertisement including the advertised brand are fictional. Did you suspect this at any time? If so: what component of the advertising creation made you suspicious?
4. Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

Two participants suspected that the Podcast sponsorships were fictional for the same reason. According to them, the presenter's voice sounded very young and not like a professional. For this reason, the Podcast sponsorships were recorded a second time. However, this time, the

advertising scripts were spoken by a professional moderator with a deeper voice. Furthermore, two participants indicated that the Podcast sponsorship for the life insurance was a bit lengthy. Against this background, the sponsorship was shortened by ten seconds so that, in the end, it was of the same length as the sponsorship promoting the car insurance. On average, the participants stated that they perceived the Podcast sponsorships as professional.

In addition, despite of one incorrect answer, all questions related to the content of the Podcast episodes were answered correctly. As a result, it could be assumed that they are understandable and not too complex. These questions are therefore suitable to check whether the test persons listened attentively to the audio sequence.

8.7.1.2 Manipulation of independent variables

In the present study, congruence as an independent variable is the result of an interaction between the ad and the programme. Since it can be determined objectively whether advertising is placed in a media context containing themes matching or not matching the brand, no pre-test was required for developing different media stimuli of thematic congruence and incongruence. Nevertheless, image congruence is about subjectively perceived characteristics that are similarly perceived for an advertising object and for instance a brand endorser, the recipient's self-image or a media context. As illustrated, the image is sometimes determined by one single characteristic such as perceived attractiveness and other times by a variety of different characteristics (see chapter 7.3.). In this study congruence between characteristics of a brand and a Podcast show are examined. Since people usually associate several different attributes with a brand, image congruence in this study, also refers a variety of different characteristics between a brand and a Podcast episode.

Before the influence of image congruence on the effectiveness of advertising can be measured, it must first be examined more closely, for which constellations of advertising and Podcast show, image congruence or incongruence exists. Against this background, a preliminary study was needed to identify trends regarding the perception of the brand image and Podcast shows. As illuminated, one possibility to indicate image congruence and incongruence is to directly ask participants about their perceived image congruence, for instance between an endorsed brand and the brand endorser (see chapter 7.3). In other studies, image congruence has been determined by assessing the fit of participants' perceived associations

of the advertised brand and the media context in which it was placed. Since it cannot be assumed that every participant interprets the word ‘image congruence’ in the same way, image congruence and incongruence is determined by participant’s evaluation of perceived association of the brand and selected Podcast episodes.

Items for measuring the perceived image of the brand and the episode were adapted from Malhorta’s (1981) semantic differential scale. Malhotra reports that this scale would have adequate reliability, internal consistency, and content and construct validity. This scale was developed as a general measurement of self-concepts, person concepts, and product concepts. Since the scale is similar to other brand image scales (e.g. Gardner and Levy 1955; Sirgy 1985), the original scale is often referred to as brand image measurement (Faircloth, Capella, and Alford 2001: 66). The original scale consists of fifteen bipolar-adjective pairs. The scale was reduced to eight adjective items that seemed to match with the intended brand (see chapter 8.3.2. ‘Development of Podcast sponsorships’). Final scale items were excitable/calm, contemporary/non-contemporary, rational/emotional, youthful/mature, formal/informal, conservative/liberal, complex/simple, modest/vain. Participants were then asked to select four items they would most associate with the advertised brand *Delkan*. The four most commonly perceived attributes were mature, formal, conservative and complex. This largely corresponds to the intended brand image.

Based on these items, a Podcast episode was searched for that corresponded more to the items on the left or the right side of the semantic differential scale. The episode *Emotional Intelligence* was identified as being congruent with the image of the life insurance brand *Delkan*. In this episode, complex societal phenomena are analysed. Due to the subject complexity of the episode content, it was assumed that this episode would rather be perceived as more complex than simple. Furthermore, the show host is a middle-aged journalist of a well-known German business and finance magazine who presents topics in an austere and structured manner. Given the background of the journalist and his means of content presentation, it was assumed that the subject would assess the episode as being more formal, mature, and conservative than informal, youthful, and liberal.

The Podcast episode *What do men expect from dating apps?* was identified as being incongruent with the image of the life insurance brand *Delkan*. In this episode, the show hosts do not discuss expert topics but share their everyday life stories related to dating. They only

speak about what comes spontaneously to their mind, so it seems like a normal conversation between friends. Against this background, it was assumed that the episode is perceived as more simple than complex. Moreover, since two young show hosts are talking very openly, bluntly, and informally about their experiences, it was expected that the episode would be perceived as more liberal, youthful, and informal than conservative, mature, and formal. From each of these two selected shows, an audio extract was taken. In each of these two sequences, the Podcast sponsoring promoting the *Delkan* life insurance brand, was placed (see illustration A: Basic structure of audio sequences). In a pre-test, it was checked whether the Podcast sponsorships and the selected Podcast episode actually correspond to the intended image perception. For this purpose, the researcher randomly assigned in each case ten participants to one out of these two audio extracts. While of these Podcast episodes was chosen to create the condition of image congruence between the advertised brand and a Podcast episode, the other episode was chosen to create an incongruent condition. This results in the following hypotheses to be tested for the pre-study:

H1a Image perception of the life insurance brand *Delkan* and the Podcast episode *The eighth day* is congruent.

H1b Image perception of the life insurance brand *Delkan* and the Podcast episode *Best girlfriends* is incongruent.

For that, after having listened to one of these two audio sequences, participants were asked to rate on a 7-point bipolar semantic differential scale first, their perception of the brand $P_{(B)}$ and afterwards, their perception of the Podcast episode $P_{(E)}$. As illustrated before, bipolar adjectives were complex/simple, conservative/liberal, mature/youthful, and formal/informal. The pre-study was also conducted via the survey tool Qualtrics (see Appendix C).

Table 9: Perception of brand *Delkan* and Pocast episode *The eighth day*

Perceived Image: Variables	N	minimum	maximum	mean	P
P _B complex – simple	10	2	4	2,50	,707
P _E complex – simple	10	1	3	2,10	,568
P _B conservative – liberal	10	1	3	2,00	,816
P _E conservative – liberal	10	1	3	2,20	,632
P _B mature – youthful	10	1	3	2,10	,568
P _E mature – youthful	10	1	3	2,20	,632
P _B formal – informal	10	1	3	2,00	,471
P _E formal – informal	10	1	3	2,20	,632

Table 8 shows that differences of variable means between P_B and P_E are small. The difference for the item complex/simple is 0.4, for conservative/liberal 0.1, for mature/youthful 0.1 and for formal/ informal 0.2. Therefore, it is assumed that the image perception of the brand *Delkan* and the Podcast episode *The eighth day* is congruent.

Table 10: Perception of brand *Delkan* and Podcast episode *Best girlfriends*

Perceived Image: Variables	N	minimum	maximum	mean	P
P _B complex – simple	10	1	3	2,00	,667
P _E complex – simple	10	3	6	4,10	,994
P _B conservative – liberal	10	1	4	2,20	,919
P _E conservative – liberal	10	4	6	4,80	,632
P _B mature – youthful	10	1	3	2,10	,568
P _E mature – youthful	10	3	5	4,60	,699
P _B formal – informal	10	1	3	2,20	,789
P _E formal – informal	10	4	6	4,90	,738

On the other hand, Table 9 shows that differences of variable means between P_B and P_E are high. The difference for the item complex/simple is 2.1, for conservative/liberal 2.6, for mature/youthful 2.5 And for formal/ informal 2.7. Therefore, it is assumed that the image perception of the brand *Delkan* and the Podcast episode *Best girlfriends* is incongruent.

Sample results of the pre-test have a high face validity. By comparing the mean values of the four variables used to determine the perceived image of the brand and the episodes, these hypotheses were confirmed. The image of the show and brand was thus assessed in both groups as intended, which speaks to the proper selection and combination of Podcast episodes and Podcast sponsorships.

8.7.2 Study phase II

Based on the participants' feedback, the audio sequences were adapted, and the first draft of the survey was created. The survey was then sent via a link in preview mode to a different group of five participants. In this study phase, it was tested whether the survey must be optimized in terms of language and style.

8.7.2.1 Pilot test of the questionnaire

To determine whether the questionnaire was appealing to and understandable for the participants, Bell (2010: 151) developed the following seven pilot test questions, which were used for this research study:

1. How long did it take you to complete the survey?
2. Were the instructions clear?
3. Were any of these questions unclear?
4. In your opinion, has any major topic been omitted?
5. Was the layout of the questionnaire clear /attractive?
6. Did you linguistically understand all questions of the survey?
7. Any further recommendations?

The participants' feedback was positive for all these aspects, and no further recommendations were proposed. The participants indicated that they took approximately 8 minutes on average to complete the survey.

8.8 Study procedure and questionnaire

A questionnaire including the dependent variables was created using the survey tool Qualtrics. Two different surveys with the same basic structure were created. One survey served to test the effect of thematic congruence (Experiment 1), while the other tested the effect of

image congruence (Experiment 2). All participants accessed the study using the same survey link. By the so-called randomizer function of Qualtrics, the subjects were randomly and evenly assigned to one of these two experiments.⁶ Both surveys share the same basic structure, which can be divided into seven sections. Despite of section 3, all sections are identical for subjects of Experiment 1 and Experiment 2. In the following, these sections are described.

The **first section** of the survey contained a consent form. In this section, the participants are welcomed and thanked for their participation in the survey. Furthermore, they are informed about the purpose of the study and the approximated study duration and are asked to ensure that they can listen to an audio sequence without interruption (for example, with headphones on). In addition, the test persons are informed about their rights and obligations as participants. By ticking a box, the participants must agree to the consent form to proceed with the survey. In the **second section**, the participants are asked to provide personal demographic information, including age and gender. Additionally, the listeners were asked about their Podcast-listening habits and indicated how many Podcast episodes they listen to weekly. In the **third section**, the subjects were asked to select a Podcast show from which they would like to hear an audio sequence and were asked questions related to the episode content. The cover image of each Podcast show, the show's and episode's name, and a short description of the show's and episode's content were viewed by the respondents (see Appendix C) . For both experiments, the respondents needed to select one of two audio extracts. The participants assigned to experiment 1 could choose between episodes from the shows *mobile.de Motortalk* and *NEON-Useless Knowledge*, while the participants assigned to experiment 2 could select an episode from the show *The eight day* or *Best Girlfriends*. After the respondents selected their preferred Podcast show, the corresponding audio file was displayed to them. Subsequently, the participants were presented a block of questions related to the content of the Podcast episode. As it is not technically possible to check whether the test persons listened attentively to the audio sequence, these questions served as a control mechanism. In total, two questions were asked about the content of the Podcast sequence. The questions are

⁶ How Qualtrics' randomizer function works is described in more detail on the following webpage: Qualtrics (2021) Randomizer, [online] <https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/survey-module/survey-flow/standard-elements/randomizer/>, [Accessed: 9 February 2021].

multiple-choice questions with four possible answers, one of which is considered the correct answer. In the **fourth section**, subjects were asked whether they knew the Podcast from which the sequence originated and, if so, the number of episodes of this show they had already listened to. In the **fifth section**, the participants were first asked whether they recognised any advertisement while listening to the show. The negation of this question led directly to Section 5, ‘Closing words’. Otherwise, if this question was answered in the affirmative, the participants’ brand recall, brand recognition and attitudes towards the brand and Podcast show were measured (see chapter 8.6. Dependent variables – scales and items). The **sixth and final section** of the survey was used to bid farewell to the participants. Furthermore, a great thank you was expressed to the speaker of the Podcast sponsorship.

8.9 Data collection

The survey was conducted using the online survey software Qualtrics. Data collection via Qualtrics occurred between the 20th of September 2020 and the 15th of October 2020. The primary goal during this survey period was to distribute the link generated by Qualtrics to as many people as possible. For this purpose, the following methods and networks were used in the ways described:

- WhatsApp: Direct messages to friends and acquaintances
- Facebook: Direct messages to friends and posts in special groups created for recruiting test persons
- e-mail: Use of various e-mail distribution lists from relatives, friends, and former work colleagues

The survey needed to run until at least 40 answers were available for the four different study groups. The number of valid responses for each of the four study groups was regularly checked via the ‘Data and Actions’ tab within the survey tool. After 25 days, at least 40 valid answers were received for each study group.

8.9.1 Exclusion criteria

Individuals who claimed to be under the age of 18 and individuals who did not agree to the consent form were automatically directed to the end of the survey. Furthermore, two scenarios occurred during the survey completion that led to exclusion from the study. The first

scenario involved people answering in the wrong way to at least one question related to the content of their selected Podcast episode. As confirmed by the pre-test, these content-related questions are general and therefore easy to answer correctly. It can therefore be assumed that in the case of an incorrect answer, the audio sequence was not listened to attentively. Second, the respondents who answered the question ‘Have you noticed any advertisement while listening to the audio sequence?’ with ‘No’ were excluded from the study as well. Since the sponsorship comprised a large portion of the audio sequence and there was no ability to skip the ad, it can again be assumed that in this case, the audio sequence was not listened to attentively.

Moreover, responses from participants who took less than 6:30 minutes to complete the survey were not considered. Since the length of the audio sequences alone was already longer than 5 minutes, it can be assumed that they were not listened to completely. In addition, all responses from participants who stated that they did not enjoy the selected show episode were excluded from the data set. Enjoyment of the show episode was determined as existent, when the mean of the four bipolar adjectives scales measuring programme enjoyment, is above 4.0. All participant responses that do not meet these criteria are removed from the data set. This is to ensure that only those answers are evaluated that were generated under a as real as possible Podcast user scenario: It can be assumed that, especially due to the wide range of Podcast shows on offer, only those shows are listened to that fit in well with one's own interests and are also listened to with pleasure. Compared to other media such as cable TV, magazines or radio, Podcast have an extremely wide offer of Podcast shows covering every kind of niche topic. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that users will be exposed to a podcast advertisement embedded in a show episode that does not appeal to them at all.

8.10 Ethical consideration

Today, online experiments and questionnaires are popular research tools for data collection, as they allow for quickly gathering a large number of participants from around the world (Reips 2002: 90). However, these types of studies raise specific ethical issues. Regarding online studies, privacy concerns may be one of the major reasons behind the non-participation of internet users (Ye 2007: 85). Against this background, online studies require a clear

statement regarding the protection of participants' privacy (Gurău 2007: 114). For this reason, participants were required to agree to a consent form prior to taking part in the survey. Through this form, they were informed that participation would be anonymous, that the data collected would be used exclusively for academic purposes, and that withdrawal from the study would be possible at any time. In addition, the consent form contained information about the purpose of the study and the researcher's contact information (name and e-mail address). It was possible to participate in the online experimental survey only if this form was agreed to.

8.11 Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are quality criteria in research that aid the researcher's trust and confidence in the results (Thomas and Magilvy 2011: 151). Validity can be divided into internal and external validity. The validity of a measurement indicates 'the extent to which a measure is actually tapping what we think it is tapping' (Leavy 2017: 113). Meanwhile, reliability refers to the consistency of the study measurements. When the repetition of the study under the same conditions yields the same results, consistency is given (Moser and Kalton 1989: 353). The following sections illuminate how the conducted experiments fulfilled the requirements for validity and reliability.

8.11.1 Internal validity

Internal validity refers to 'factors that affect the internal links between the independent and dependent variables that support alternative explanations for variations in the dependent variables' (Adler and Clark 2011: 188). Therefore, threats to internal validity include other possible causes than the determined independent variable that could be responsible for changes to the dependent variable.

In this study, the extent to which the participants listened to the audio sequence, could strongly influence memory and perception towards the ad (dependent variable). The study of the effect of ad-context congruence requires that both the context and the ad be listened to; as such, it is important to ensure that the participants listen attentively. Against this background, after having listened to the audio sequence, the participants were asked questions

about the content of the audio sequence. When preparing the questions, care was taken to ensure that they covered the full length of the sequences.

Moreover, the participants' knowledge about the study purpose would likely bias their perceptions of Podcast sponsorships. By knowing from the beginning that the study concerns the perception of Podcast sponsorships, the participants would probably give special attention to this while listening to the audio sequence. Against this background, people are not informed about the actual purpose of the study. The declaration of consent at the beginning of the survey keeps the study purpose very general. Participants are merely provided with information that the study concerns the topic of Audio Podcasts.

8.11.2 External validity

External validity can be defined as 'how well the results of a study can be generalized across populations, settings and time' (Wimmer and Dominick 2013: 269). One essential advantage of online experiments compared with conventional field studies is that online techniques allow for more precise targeting of recruitment procedures to thereby enhance the participants' diversity (Iyengar 2011: 83). However, one must be aware that elderly people who are not familiar with using the internet will miss out on this opportunity. Nevertheless, as outlined before, German Podcast listeners are on average, young and have an affinity for new media. An elderly demographic, which holds no familiarity towards new media, would thus not be corresponding to the demographic relevant to this study.

The major challenge for experimental studies concerning external validity is the artificiality of the setting, which does not reflect the real world (see Schram 2006). In a real user scenario, people can select between numerous shows and episodes that correspond to their interests. In addition, Podcasting allows consumers to listen to audio content at any time and place, independent from a broadcast schedule (Perez 2012). This provides listeners a sense of control over their listening experience. To maintain a sense of control for consumers and increase the likelihood that one of the topics matches the participants' broader areas of interest, the participants were asked to select one of two episodes according to their preference. In this way, a real listening situation can be simulated to a certain degree.

8.11.3 Reliability

A prerequisite for reliability is that respondents understand and interpret the survey questions similarly. To ensure reliability, it was tested beforehand whether respondents would interpret the questionnaire correctly and that there was no risk of misunderstanding (see chapter 8.8 ‘Pre-study’). Furthermore, to check the scale’s reliability, a Cronbach alpha test was conducted. The test results are presented in the findings (see chapter 8.4. ‘Brand evaluation: Experiment 1’).

9 Results

In the following chapters, the results of Experiment 1 and 2 are presented. For Experiment 1, the evaluation of the generated data for the variables brand recall, product recall, brand recognition and attitude towards the brand will be discussed in greater detail. Since measurement methods, items and scales were identical in both experiments, aspects of variable evaluation for Experiment 2 will not be explained any further.

9.1 Demographic characteristics of experimental groups

After applying all exclusion criteria, a total of 115 participants (57 female; $M_{Age} = 29.49$; $SD = 8.456$) remained for Experiment 1 and 103 participants (54 female; $M_{Age} = 28.46$; $SD = 7.899$) for Experiment 2. The age range in Experiment 1 was from 20 to 61 years, with 73% of the participants being between 20 and 30 years old. Similar results are available for Experiment 2, where the age range is from 19 to 58 years and around 79% were aged between 20 and 30 years.

Table 11: Demographic characteristics of experimental groups after cleaning the datasets

	n	female	male	M_{Age}	SD
Ex1c	49	21	28	31.31	10.164
Ex1ic	66	36	30	28.14	6.691
Total	115	57	58	29.49	8.456
Ex2c	47	24	23	29.96	9.612
Ex2ic	56	30	26	27.20	5.907
Total	103	54	49	28.46	7.899

The gender distribution between the experimental groups in Experiment 1 ($\chi^2(1) = 1.537$, $p = .215$, $\Phi = .116$) and Experiment 2 ($\chi^2(1) = .064$, $p = .800$, $\Phi = -0.25$) is not significant. With regard to age, the experimental groups of Experiment 1 ($U = 1067$, $p = 0.97$) and Experiment 2 ($U = 1379$, $p = 0.177$) also showed no significant differences. Also for podcast listening behavior no significant differences can neither be observed for Experiment 1 ($\chi^2(1) = .693$, $p = .875$, $\Phi = 0.078$) nor for Experiment 2 ($\chi^2(1) = 1.909$, $p = .592$, $\Phi = 0.136$).

In addition, in Experiment 1, a total of 10.4% of participants said they never listen to Podcasts, 22.6% of participants indicated to listen to Podcasts daily, 53% listen to Podcasts weekly, and 13.9% rarely listen to Podcasts. None of the participants indicated that they did not know what a Podcast actually is. Experiment 2 delivered similar results: 13.6% of study participants said they never listen to Podcasts, 20.4% listen to Podcasts daily, 49.5% listen to Podcasts weekly and 16.5% said they rarely listen to Podcasts. Also in Experiment 2, none of the participants indicated to not know what a Podcast actually is.

Participants in all experimental groups were also asked whether they knew the Podcast show from which they had heard an extract. In Ex1c, seven people (14.3%) said they knew the Podcast show. Of these, again five of the trial participants said they had listened to between one and three show episodes. A further two participants had listened to 4-6 episodes of this Podcast show. In Ex1ic, none of the participants knew the Podcast show from which an excerpt was heard. In contrast, the Podcast shows in Experiment 2 seemed to be more familiar to the participants. From Ex2c, fifteen (31.9 %) of the trial participants said they had already heard of the Podcast show. Of these, again three of the participants stated to never having heard an entire episode of this show. Another three participants had already listened to 1-3 show episodes. A further two participants said they had listened to 4-6 episodes and seven of the participants stated to have listened to seven or more episodes. The Podcast show *Best girlfriends* also seemed to be quite well-known among the participants: Sixteen (28.6%) participants from Ex2ic stated that they knew the show. Of these, eight participants said they had never listened to an entire episode. Three participants would have listened to 1-3 show episodes, and five participants would already have listened to seven or more show episodes.

9.2 Results for brand memory: Brand recall and brand recognition in Experiment 1

Within the framework of the survey, participants were asked if they could remember the name of the advertised brand. In case of an affirmative answer to this question, participants were asked to write down their reply. Since the study participants only heard the name of the fictitious brand and never saw it in written form, this resulted in different spellings of the brand name. In the survey analysis, written responses that sounded pronouncedly the same as the original in the advertisement were rated as correct. For instance, the spellings ‘Telka’,

‘Telca’ or ‘Tellca’ were all evaluated as correct. In return, responses that sounded pronouncedly not the same as the original in the advertisement were rated as incorrect. These included for example ‘Tecka’, ‘Tollca’ or ‘Tele’. Moreover, when participants answered the question ‘Do you remember the name of the advertised brand?’ in the negative, this answer was also evaluated as incorrect. On this basis, the results shown in the following table were obtained.

Table 12: Effect of thematic ad-context congruence on brand recall and brand recognition for Ex1c and Ex1ic

			correct	incorrect	total
Brand recall	Ex1c	Amount	39	10	49
		% of experimental group	79,6%	20,4%	100,0%
	Ex1ic	Amount	45	21	66
		% of experimental group	68,2%	31,8%	100,0%
Brand recognition	Ex1c	Amount	45	4	49
		% of experimental group	91,8%	8,2%	100,0%
	Ex1ic	Amount	55	11	66
		% of experimental group	83,3%	16,7%	100,0%

On a percentage basis, higher recall can be observed for brand recall in the thematically congruent condition: While 79.6% of Ex1c can recall the correct brand name in the congruent condition, 68.2% of Ex1ic can recall the advertised correctly. However, the chi-square test does not show any statistically significant accumulations with regard to brand recall and group membership ($\chi^2 (1) = 2.132$, $p = .173$, $\Phi = .136$). The null hypothesis, therefore, cannot be rejected.

Also for brand recognition, slight tendencies can be discerned for the different experimental groups: While 91.8% of Ex1c recognized the brand name, 83.3% of Ex1ic identified the correct brand name. Nevertheless, also for brand recognition, the chi-square test does not show any statistically significant accumulations ($\chi^2 (1) = 1.793$, $p = .181$, $\Phi = .125$).

9.3 Results for brand memory: Brand recall and brand recognition in Experiment 2

On a percentage basis, differences between different experimental conditions for brand recall and brand recognition are also evident for Experiment 2. As shown in Table 12, in both experimental groups, proportionally more participants were able to recognize the brand name than were able to recall it.

On a percentage basis, results of Experiment 2 show that brand memory is better for the congruent condition than for the incongruent one: 68.1% of Ex2c were able to recall the brand name correctly and 48.2% of Ex2ic. Moreover, brand recognition for Ex2c lies at 78.7% and for Ex2ic at 67.9%. Furthermore, in this experiment, the chi-square test indicates that the study result for brand recall ($\chi^2(1) = 4.123, p = .042, \Phi = .200$) and brand recognition ($\chi^2(1) = 1.524, p = .217, \Phi = .122$) are statistically not relevant.

Table 13: Effect of thematic ad-context congruence on brand recall and brand recognition for Ex2c and Ex2ic

			correct	incorrect	total
Brand recall	Ex2c	Amount	32	15	47
		% of experimental group	68,1%	31,9%	100,0%
	Ex2ic	Amount	27	29	56
		% of experimental group	48,2%	51,8%	100,0%
Brand recognition	Ex2c	Amount	37	10	47
		% of experimental group	78,7%	21,3%	100,0%
	Ex2ic	Amount	38	18	56
		% of experimental group	67,9%	32,1%	100,0%

9.4 Brand evaluation: Experiment 1

Cronbach's alpha for the four items measuring attitude towards the brand was 0.912. Scale items are therefore suitable for measuring attitudes towards the brand.

For comparing the results for brand attitude of the different experimental groups, a t-test for independent samples was used. This test is used when two mean values of two independent samples are to be compared and thus suitable for investigating a difference in the hypothesis. The t-test for independent samples requires that the dependent variable is metric and the independent variable is nominal, which is the case. In addition, the dependent variable should be normally distributed and the variances within the experimental groups should be approximately equal. To determine the normal distribution of the sample, a Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted: Since $p = .258 > 0.05$, there is a normal distribution. In addition, since the variances are also approximately the same (see Table 13), all necessary conditions for conducting a t-test on independent samples were met.

The results of the t-test for independent samples are presented in the table below. The test shows a significant difference between Ex1c ($M = 4.468$; $SD = .958$) and Ex1ic ($M = 3.234$; $SD = .959$) in terms of brand attitude $t(110) = 6.855$, $p < 0.01$, $d = .955$). According to Cohen (1988), a d value over 0.8 corresponds to a strong effect size. In context of the Experiment 1, this means that in Ex1c significantly more participants developed a positive attitude towards the brand than in Ex1ic.

Table 14: Attitude towards the brand – Statistical comparisons between Ex1c and Ex1ic

			Statistic	Std. Error
Attitude towards the brand	Ex1c	Mean	4,4688	,13838
		Median	4,6250	
		Variance	,919	
		Std. Deviation	,95876	
	Ex1ic	Mean	3,2348	,11812
		Median	3,2500	
		Variance	,921	
		Std. Deviation	,95965	

9.5 Brand evaluation: Experiment 2

Cronbach's alpha for the four items measuring attitude towards the brand was 0.946. Against this background, also in Experiment 2 scale items turned out to be suitable for measuring attitudes towards the brand.

Experiment 2 also meets all requirements for conducting a t-test for independent variables: $p = 0.07 > 0.05$, variances have approximately the same value (see Table 14), the dependent variable is metric and the independent variable is nominal. The results of the t-test for independent samples are presented in the table below. The test shows a significant difference between Ex1c ($M = 3.962$; $SD = 1.505$) and Ex1ic ($M = 3.234$; $SD = 1.218$) in terms of brand attitude $t(110) = 4.486$, $p < 0.01$, $d = 1.356$). According to Cohen (1988), this corresponds to a notably strong effect. In context of the Experiment 2, this means that in Ex2c significantly more participants developed a positive attitude towards the brand than in Ex2ic.

Table 15: Attitude towards the brand – Statistical comparisons between Ex2c and Ex2ic

Experimental group		Statistic	Std. Error
Attitude towards the brand	Ex2c	Mean	3,9628
		Median	4,2500
		Variance	2,266
		Std. Deviation	1,50541
	Ex2ic	Mean	2,7589
		Median	2,5000
		Variance	1,484
		Std. Deviation	1,21820

9.6 Further data analysis: Investigation of possible influencing factors on attitude towards the brand

As shown, thematic congruence and image congruence between Podcast episode and Podcast Advertising significantly influence brand attitudes. However, it cannot be excluded that there are other variables that also influence brand attitudes. With this in mind, it was additionally tested whether correlations between brand attitudes and Podcast listening behavior,

familiarity with the Podcast episode and enjoyment of the Podcast episode exist. To test for possible correlations, Spearman's rho test was conducted for the respective variables.

Statistically significant correlations between familiarity with the selected show and attitudes towards the brand could neither be found for Experiment 1 ($r = 0.94$, $p = 0.318$) nor for Experiment 2 ($r = -0.104$, $p = 0.297$). The same applies for correlations between Podcast listening behavior and attitudes towards the brand. No statistically significant correlation could be found for Experiment 1 ($r = .940$, $p = 0.318$) nor Experiment 2 ($r = -0.104$, $p = 0.297$).

Nevertheless, Experiment 1 ($r = .284$, $p = .002$) showed a weak positive correlation between enjoyment of the selected Podcast episode and brand attitudes. For Experiment 2 ($r = .329$, $p < .001$) a moderate positive correlation was found in this context. However, values for the variable brand enjoyment seemed to be distributed relatively evenly among the experimental groups. Statistically significant differences were found neither for Ex1c and Ex1ic ($U = 1555.0$, $p = 0.724$) nor for Ex2c and Ex2ic ($U = 1126.5$, $p = 0.206$).

10 Discussion

In this chapter, the results of the experiment will be classified and reflected upon, and the robustness of the data and limitations of the study will be explained. In addition, possible additional data analysis and future research will be discussed. The chapter concludes with the transfer of the results to practice and a conclusion.

10.1 Classification and reflection of results

The results of the experimental online survey reveal that congruence between an advertised brand and the Podcast episode in which it is placed affects advertising effectiveness. It was proven that both, thematic and image congruence, do have an impact on advertising effectiveness.

In Experiment 1, brand and product recall were higher in percentage terms in the thematically congruent condition than in the thematically incongruent condition. Even if some tendencies can be observed on a percentage basis, the Chi-squared test reveals a lack of statistical relevance for the study results. Against this background, hypothesis H1a (*Podcast advertising that is thematically incongruent with the Podcast episode will result in better brand recall than will congruence*) and H1b (*Podcast advertising that is thematically incongruent with the Podcast episode will result in better brand recognition than will congruence*) cannot be confirmed.

The study results are similar for Experiment 2. Also, in this experiment, figures for correct brand and product recall are proportionally higher in the case of image congruence than in the case of image incongruence. However, also in this experiment, the study results are not statistically relevant. For this reason, H2a (*Congruence between the image of a Podcast advertising and the image of a Podcast episode will result in better brand recall of the ad than will incongruence*) and H2b (*Congruence between the image of a Podcast advertising and the image of a Podcast episode will result in better brand recognition of the ad than will incongruence*) cannot be confirmed either.

However, for attitudes towards the brand, the results are more evident. In Experiment 1, brand evaluations gain significantly more favourable outcomes when being placed in the

Podcast episode where the thematic feature is congruent to the brand, compared to the incongruent scenario. Thus, hypothesis H1c (*Podcast advertising that is thematically congruent with the Podcast episode will produce more positive attitudes towards the brand than will incongruence*) can be confirmed.

Also, with Experiment 2, it was shown that image congruence between a Podcast Sponsorship and a Podcast episode elicits much more positive brand evaluations than image incongruence. Against this background, hypothesis H2c (*Congruence between the image of a Podcast advertising and the image of a Podcast episode will result in more positive attitudes towards the brand*) can be confirmed. However, it should be mentioned that in both experiments, weak positive correlations were found between enjoyment of the selected podcast programme and brand attitude. Nevertheless, since values for the variable brand enjoyment seemed to be distributed relatively evenly among the experimental groups, this weak correlation is not of further significance.

As illustrated within the theoretical framework, contradicting psychological explanations for the impact of ad-context congruence on advertising effectiveness exist. Theoretical explanations for the effect of ad-context congruence on memory provide for one the Theory of Contextual Priming but also the Cognitive Interference Theory. The present study was not able to present empirical support for these two theoretical approaches, as the results pertaining to brand memory are not relevant statistically.

For one, the limited sample size could be explanatory towards the results' absent significance. The larger the sample, the more likely it is that even small differences will be significant (Bergh 2015: 197). Moreover, memory effects between the congruent and the incongruent conditions may have been stronger if study participants would have listened to a complete show episode. Within the framework of this research study, participants only listened to a five minute audio extract. For this reason, there was only a very short time lag between the advertising heard and their brand memory being tested for study participants. For this reason, it is not surprising that the memory of the advertised brand performed very well in all experimental groups.

Schema Theory can provide theoretical explanations for the influence of ad-context congruence on brand evaluations (see chapter 6.1.1.2). Nevertheless, two different theoretical interpretations of schema theory exist. According to one interpretation, match of schemata,

which is achieved in the case of ad-context congruence, would lead to evaluations of familiarity and a basic sense of liking. The other interpretation of schema theory argues for the exact opposite. Nevertheless, the results of both experiments clearly support the first interpretation, according to which a match of schemata that can be achieved by ad-context congruence would lead to positive brand evaluations.

It is noticeable that in both experiments, mean values for brand attitudes are considerably different from each other for different experimental conditions. This suggests that in the context of podcasts, ad-context congruence has a particularly strong influence on brand attitudes. Schema theory could provide a possible explanation for this effect: It can be assumed that not only the congruence between characteristics of an advertisement and the media context, but also between an advertisement and the advertising medium itself could lead to a match or a mismatch of schemata. In return, as illuminated within the theoretical framework, a match or mismatch of schemata influences brand evaluations. These considerations are elaborated upon in further detail below.

As described within the theoretical framework, Podcasts differ in many aspects from conventional media formats. For this reason, people may have very different expectations and images of the medium Podcast than of other media. As already outlined, Podcasts stand out as a particularly personalized, issue-focused and targeted media format that is predominantly perceived as authentic. Audio content is created with the intention to attract specific groups of listeners that share similar interests and tastes. In the case of ad-context incongruence, Podcast advertising is not adjusted to the specific characteristics, such as the theme or the image of the Podcast episode in which it is embedded. In such case, listeners probably perceive integrated advertising as conventional mass advertising, placed as often as possible in all kinds of media formats. This perception would be in stark contrast to the main characteristics of the medium Podcast – personal, targeted and topic-oriented. Conversely, Podcast advertising that shows thematic or image congruence is probably more perceived as being personal and particularly targeted and issue-focused just as the advertising medium itself. Listeners may have the feeling that audio ads are not just produced for reaching the masses but are rather particularly created for the Podcast episode and its listeners. Based on schema theory, it could be assumed that the congruence or incongruence between characteristics of an ad and the advertising medium itself, would result in a match or mismatch of schemata.

Therefore, within the context of Podcasts, it may be the case that ad-context congruence may automatically be accompanied by the congruence of perceived characteristics between an ad and the advertising medium. Conversely, ad-context incongruence may also automatically be accompanied by an incongruence of characteristics between an ad and the advertising medium. Thus, not only the congruence between advertisement and advertising context could exert influence on the match or mismatch of schemata, but also the accompanying congruence between advertisement and advertising medium. Since based on schema theory the match or the mismatch of schemata would have an influence on brand evaluations, this may explain why in both experiments, such strong effects for attitude towards the brand could be observed.

10.2 Study limitations

For quantitative studies it can be said that the larger the sample the more accurate and therefore the more representative the results. Due to time and financial constraints, this study was only conducted with a comparatively small sample. Additionally, the sample profile can be considered as homogenous concerning the age distribution because in this study mainly young people were recruited. This is due to the methodical approach of an online survey, since the recruitment of test persons can only be influenced to a limited extent. Also, participants of different experimental study groups exhibit different characteristics in terms of age, gender and experience with Podcasts. Another limitation of the results is the artificial situation in which the online survey was conducted. For practical reasons, an excerpt of around five minutes in length was cut from the Podcast episodes to keep the duration of the audio sequence and thus the survey within limits. This length of the Podcast sequence, therefore, does not correspond to the actual lengths of the corresponding Podcast episodes. Thus, the ratio in the audio sequence between Podcast and commercial was markedly greater than in the real conception of a Podcast episode. Moreover, people usually listen to a Podcast show on a regular basis, so it can be assumed that most of the people are already familiar with the show host(s) and their way of presenting audio content. However, particularly in Experiment 1, most of the study participants were not familiar with the Podcast shows they were exposed to. Due to these limitations, the results of the survey can only be generalized for real user behaviour of Podcast listeners to a limited extent.

10.3 Future Research

As this work is the first research project dealing with ad-context congruence in the context of Podcasts, there are numerous conceivable research areas that can build on this work. The aim of the thesis was to compare different types of congruence. The resulting extensive experimental design necessarily entailed smaller test groups for reasons of research efficiency. A replication of the study with a larger and more diverse sample is recommended for future research. Moreover, future research should investigate congruence effects between a Podcast episode and a Podcast advertising in a more natural setting. As usually, people can choose from a variety of different Podcast episodes covering a wide range of different topics. Although the participants in this study were able to choose between two different Podcast shows, future research is recommended to offer options for multiple Podcast shows covering a wide variety of different areas of interest. Furthermore, Podcast episodes are normally consumed in different situations. Different consumption contexts of Podcast episodes such as walking, doing housework or driving the car, should be covered by future research to reflect a real-life setting. Additionally, in this study, audio sequences were relatively short (about 5 minutes) compared to most available episodes today. Therefore, it would be interesting to analyze the effect of ad-context congruence when participants are exposed to a full Podcast episode. Then it could also be examined whether ad-context congruence has different effects on advertising effectiveness depending on whether the ad is placed at the beginning, middle or end of an episode. Finally, caution must be exercised in generalizing these findings across different product classes and advertising types. In this study, the effect of ad-context congruence was only tested for insurance services. It would, therefore, also be interesting to investigate whether this applies equally to different products and services. In addition, findings may vary for different types of Podcast advertising. Within the context of this study, ad-context congruence was tested with a self-created Podcast sponsorship. It would be interesting to investigate whether other types of advertising, such as native ads or audio spots, lead to the same advertising effects.

Besides that, there are also a multitude of influential factors that may impact advertising effectiveness. In this study, only the impact of familiarity with the Podcast show and the familiarity with the advertising medium itself were analyzed. For instance, future research could analyze how participant's pre-existing views on advertising, context evoked moods or

general attitudes towards the advertised product influence advertising effectiveness in ad-context congruent or incongruent scenarios.

The preceding remarks provide starting points for future research on the interaction of advertising with the editorial context. However, they also reveal the real problem in the investigation of advertising effects: There is a multitude of exogenous factors and thus a multitude of all possible causal relationships that could influence advertising effectiveness. The potential complexity of the relationships between these factors makes an exploratory approach cumbersome and requires fundamental theories that could serve as a guideline for the researcher.

10.4 Practical Implications

The study results indicate that congruence between an advertised brand and a Podcast episode positively influences advertising effectiveness. For brand memory, only slight tendencies on a percentage basis can be discerned for different experimental groups but no statistically significant accumulations. However, it turned out that both thematic congruence and image congruence between an ad and a Podcast episode positively influence brand evaluations. Consequently, common selection criteria for ad placement within Podcast episodes can be supported by empirical findings. For the placement of Podcast advertising, it can therefore generally be recommended to invest time in searching for Podcast shows that share a congruent theme or image with the advertised brand.

However, the study results revealed that thematic congruence has slightly more positive effects on brand memory and brand evaluations than image congruence. The study further revealed that thematic congruence has a stronger positive influence on advertising effectiveness than image congruence. Nevertheless, since different advertisings promoting different services were created for both experiments, it is questionable whether these differences can really be traced back to different types of ad-context congruence. It cannot be excluded that other factors influenced the results in terms of advertising effectiveness. For example, the general attitude towards the advertised product could have had an influence on how an advertisement was remembered and evaluated. Maybe participants had tendentially a more positive attitude towards car insurances than towards life insurances or the other way round. It is also possible that for instance, the different wordings used for the Podcast sponsorships in Experiment 1 and Experiment 2, may have had an influence on brand memory or brand

evaluations. Against this background, differences in study outcomes regarding advertising effectiveness, should not be judged too strictly. Based on these elaborations, it will be explained how study results could be integrated into the decision-making process regarding the selection of Podcast episodes for ad placement.

As described within the framework of the introduction, besides a high reach, the main criterium for selecting a Podcast show for ad placement is the thematic connection with the brand. Nevertheless, for products or services where there is no Podcast show sharing the same topic, perceived image congruence between brand and Podcast show, is used as the selection criterion.

Since thematic congruence between a Podcast show and a brand is easy to determine and the results of both experiments revealed that thematic has slightly more positive effects on advertising effectiveness, it can be recommended to choose whenever possible, a Podcast show that is thematically congruent with the advertised brand. If no show with a congruent theme exists, shows that share a congruent image with the advertised brand should be selected. Nonetheless, determining image congruence can be very complicated. Even if many advertisers determine image congruence on pure gut feeling, this selection process should be based on empirical research because different from thematic congruence, image congruence can hardly be determined objectively. For that, perceived show and brand image need to be empirically examined by a market research institute or department. However, since research is quite time consuming and expensive, it is recommended to choose this selection criteria only if there is no, or only a few, thematically congruent podcast shows.

Nevertheless, since both types of congruence seem to significantly influence advertising effectiveness, image congruence should not be completely disregarded. Care should be taken that the image of a thematically congruent Podcast show does not differ too much from the advertised brand. Although extensive market research to determine the presence of image congruence is not always possible, common sense should be applied: For example, brands that are perceived as tending to be formal should not be placed in a podcast programme with locker room talk.

11 Conclusion

The results from this study contribute to the understanding of the relationship between an advertised brand and its surrounding media context. The conducted experiments have demonstrated that both thematic and image congruence between a Podcast episode and a therein advertised brand positively influence advertising effectiveness. However, the study results vary for different advertising effectiveness variables. Even if brand recall and brand recognition were superior for the thematic and image congruent condition in percentage terms, no statistically significant results could be gathered. Nevertheless, thematic but also image congruence had a strong and statistically significant impact on attitudes towards the brand. For both types of congruence, congruence was found to influence brand evaluations more positively than incongruence.

It can therefore generally be recommended to focus on placing Podcast advertising in episodes that have a congruent theme or image with the advertised brand. Embedding Podcast advertising in episodes that have a high reach but no congruent characteristics with the advertised brand, appears to have a detrimental effect on advertising effectiveness. In this case, probably less people develop positive attitudes towards the advertised brand. Nevertheless, it may be quite difficult to find a Podcast show that fulfils the criterion of thematic and image ad-context congruence at the same time. However, the thematic congruence between a Podcast show and a brand is easier to determine than image congruence. While the thematic congruence between the media context and an advertised brand is usually very obvious and unambiguous, image congruence is not. Image congruence is about subjectively perceived characteristics that are similarly perceived for a media context and a therein advertised brand. However, perceptual trends can only be unambiguously identified with the help of market research which is very time-consuming and costly. Having this in mind, thematic congruence between a Podcast show and a Podcast advertising could become a common selection criterion for ad placement in Podcast episodes. In case a thematic congruent show cannot be found, the selection criterion of image congruence can be applied.

In conjunction with previous research, this study proposes a beneficial effect of ad-context congruence for highly issue-focused, targeted, and personal media formats. Similar to the media formats themselves, advertising in new media formats has now the means to be increasingly individual, contextual, and targeted: As there is a broad variety of topics Podcast

programmes address, Podcast advertising can be highly targeted. Additionally, it can be presented very personally, particularly within native ads. However, realising these potentials requires more effort from the advertisers. They need to find an appropriate Podcast show within millions of available shows and adjust advertisements to the characteristics of different Podcast shows. As a result, however, these advertisements are highly effective.

Whether new advertising media will comprehensively alter the advertising landscape will manifest itself in the future. These new opportunities, however, offer a possible alteration of the advertising landscape in fundamental ways: Targeted advertising, perceived as authentic and personal, could supersede the idea of advertising as dishonest, invasive, and cluttered.

References

- Aaker, D. A. and Brown P. K. (1972): 'Evaluating vehicle source effects', in: *Journal of advertising research*, 12(4), pp. 11-16.
- Adler, E. and Clark, R. (2011): *An Invitation to Social Research: How It's Done*, 4th ed., Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning.
- AdvertiseCast (2020a): *Podcast Advertising Glossary. A Guide to understanding keywords related to Podcast advertising. Sound like a pro when you work with your sponsors*, [online] <https://www.advertisecast.com/Podcast-advertising-glossary> [15.09.2020].
- AdvertiseCast (2020b): *Track Your Podcast Advertising Results*, [online] <https://www.advertisecast.com/track-results> [16.09.2020].
- Ajzen, I. (1985): 'From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behavior', in: Julius Kuhl and Jürgen Beckman (eds.) *Action control: from cognition to behaviour*, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York: Springer Verlag, pp. 11-39.
- Ajzen, I. and Madden, T. (1986): 'Prediction of goal directed behavior: Attitudes, intentions, and perceived behavioral control', in: *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 22, pp. 453-474.
- Allianz (2020a) *Schützt Ihre Familie. Sichert Ihren Lebensstandard. Lebensversicherung*, [online] <https://www.allianz.de/vorsorge/lebensversicherung/> [17.05.2020].
- Allianz (2020b): *Was wir machen*, [online] <https://www.allianz.com/de/ueber-uns/wer-wir-sind/was-wir-machen.html> [19.02.2020].
- Allianz 2020. *Bester Schutz für Ihre Gesundheit. Private Krankenversicherung*, [online] <https://www.allianz.de/gesundheit/private-krankenversicherung/> [17.05.2020].
- Allianz Deutschland AG (2018) *Zahlen, Daten und Fakten zur AG*, [online] <https://www.allianzdeutschland.de/die-allianz-deutschland-im-portraet/> [16.09.2020].
- Allianz SE (2019) Allianz People Fact Book (2019): *Das Zuhause, für alle die sich trauen*, [online] https://www.allianz.com/content/dam/onemarketing/azcom/Allianz_com/about-us/hr-fact-book/PEOPLE-FACT-BOOK-2019-DE.pdf [16.09.2020].
- Alwitt, L. F. (2000): 'Effects of Interestingness on Evaluations of TV Commercials', in: *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 22(1), pp. 41-53.
- Anand, P. and Sternthal, B. (1990): 'Ease of message processing as a moderator of repetition effects in advertising', in: *Journal of Marketing Research*, 27(3), pp. 345-353.
- Apple (2005a): *Apple Takes Podcasting Mainstream*, [online] <https://www.apple.com/newsroom/2005/06/28Apple-Takes-Podcasting-Mainstream/> [10.06.2020].

- Apple (2005b): *iTunes Podcast Subscriptions Top One Million in First Two Days*, [online] <https://www.apple.com/newsroom/2005/06/30iTunes-Podcast-Subscriptions-Top-One-Million-in-First-Two-Days/> [10.06.2020].
- Apple (2020a): *Apple Podcast Preview*, [online] <https://Podcasts.apple.com/us/Podcast/4-every-launch-is-a-movement/id1122046166?i=1000372486781> [23.06.2020].
- Apple (2020b): *Audi Mitarbeiter-Podcast*. Available at: <https://Podcasts.apple.com/de/Podcast/audi-mitarbeiter-Podcast/id1457075352> [23.06.2020].
- Anderson, M.C. (2003). 'Rethinking interference theory: Executive control and the mechanisms of forgetting', in: *Journal of Memory and Learning*, 49(4), pp. 415–445. DOI: 10.1016/j.jml.2003.08.006.
- Barry, T. and Howard, D. (1990): 'A review and critique of the hierarchy of effects in advertising', in: *International Journal of Advertising*, 9(2), pp. 121-135.
- Belanche, D., Flavián C. and Pérez-Rueda, A. (2017): 'Understanding Interactive Online Advertising: Congruence and Product Involvement in Highly and Lowly Arousing, Skippable Video Ads', in: *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 37, pp. 75-88.
- Bell, J. (2010): *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-Time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science*, 5th edn., New York: Open University Press.
- Bell, R., Mieth, L. and Buchner, A. (2020): 'Source memory for advertisements: The role of advertising message credibility', in: *Memory & Cognition*, 49(4), pp 32–45.
- Bergh, D. (2015). 'Sample Size and Chi-Squared Test of Fit—A Comparison Between a Random Sample Approach and a Chi-Square Value Adjustment Method Using Swedish Adolescent Data', in: Q. Zhang and H. Yang (eds.) *Pacific Rim Objective Measurement Symposium (PROMS) 2014 Conference Proceedings: Rasch and the Future*, Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, pp. 197–211.
- Berry, R. (2006): 'Will the iPod kill the radio star? Profiling Podcasting as radio', in: *Convergence*, 12(2), pp. 143-162.
- Berry, R. (2015): 'A Golden Age of Podcasting? Evaluating Serial in the Context of Podcast Histories', in: *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*, 22(2), pp. 170-178.
- Berry, R. (2018): 'Just Because You Play a Guitar and Are From Nashville Doesn't Mean that You Are a Country Singer: The Emergence of Medium Identities in Podcasting', in: D. Llinares, N. Fox and R. Berry (eds.), *Podcasting new aural cultures and digital media*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 15-33.

- Birkner, H. (2019): 'Diese Podcasts wurden im Sommer 2020 auf Spotify am meisten gestreamt', HORIZONT, [online] <https://www.horizont.net/medien/nachrichten/ranking-diese-Podcasts-wurden-im-sommer-2020-auf-spotify-am-meisten-gestreamt-185271> [23.06.2020].
- bitkom (2018): *Jeder Fünfte hört Podcasts*, [online] <https://www.bitkom.org/Presse/Presseinformation/Jeder-Fuenfte-hoert-Podcasts.html> [22.06.2020].
- bitkom (2019): *Jeder Vierte hört Podcasts*, [online] <https://www.bitkom.org/Presse/Presseinformation/Jeder-Vierte-hoert-Podcasts> [22.06.2020].
- Bongard, J. (2002): *Werbewirkungsforschung. Grundlagen - Probleme - Ansätze*. Münster: Lit Verlag.
- Bonini, T. (2015): 'The 'second age' of Podcasting: Reframing Podcasting as a new digital mass medium', in: *Quaderns del CAC*, 41(18), pp. 21-30.
- Bottomley, A. (2015): 'Podcasting: A Decade in the Life of a "New" Audio Medium: Introduction', in: *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*, 22(2), pp. 164-169.
- Bourquin, D. (2008): 'Making Money with Your Podcast', in: Michael W. Geoghean (eds.), *The business Podcasting book. Launching, Marketing and Measuring your Podcast*. Burlington: Focal Press, pp. 355-397.
- Bronner, F. and Neijen, P. (2006): 'Audience experiences of media context and embedded advertising: A comparison of eight media', in: *International Journal of Market Research*, 48, pp. 81-100.
- Brosius, H.-B., Haas A. and Koschel, F. (2016): *Methoden der empirischen Kommunikationsforschung: eine Einführung*, 7th edn., Wiesbaden: Springer Verlag.
- Buermeyer, U. (2020): Interviewed by Carolin Gasteiger and Jean-Marie Magro for *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, [online] <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/medien/Podcast-preis-lage-der-nation-hass-im-netz-1.4856978> [26.06.2020].
- Bundesverband Digitale Wirtschaft (2020): *Podcasts - Gekommen um zu bleiben. Der Audio-Trend im Überblick*, [online] https://bvdw.org/fileadmin/user_upload/BVDW_Podcast-Audio_Trend_2020_im_Ueberblick.pdf [20.09.2020].
- Bursztynsky, J. (2021) Spotify made a huge investment in podcasts – here's how it plans to make them pay off [online] <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/12/19/how-spotify-plans-to-make-money-from-podcasts.html> [02.02.2021].
- Byrne, D. (2017): Project Planner. Data Collection: What is sampling?, [online] <http://methods.sagepub.com/project-planner/data-collection> [26.09.2020].

- Cangialosi, D. (2008): 'The Emergence of Corporate Podcasting', in: Michael W. Geoghehan (ed.), *The business Podcasting book. Launching, Marketing and Measuring your Podcast*. Burlington: Focal Press, pp. 37-61.
- Carnahan, D. (2020): 'Spotify introduces Spotify Podcast Ads, a measurement tool for Podcast advertising', *Business Insider*, [online] <https://www.businessinsider.com/spotify-introduces-measurement-tools-for-podcast-advertising-2020-1?r=DE&IR=T> [15.09.2020].
- Chan-Olmsted, S. and Wang, R. (2020): 'Understanding podcast users: Consumption motives and behaviors', in: *New Media & Society*, 0(0), pp. 1-21.
- Chartable (2020): *Auf die Ohren. Beste Vaterfreuden*, [online] <https://chartable.com/podcasts/beste-vaterfreuden> [25.09.2020].
- Chiosa, A.-R. (2013): 'Celebrity endorsement in fashion print advertising', in: *EuroEconomia*, 32(1), pp. 18-31.
- Clark (2020): *CLARK-Studie: So versichert sich Deutschland 2020*, [online] <https://www.presseportal.de/pm/139186/4632931> [15.09.2020].
- Cohen, J. (1988): *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd edn., Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Colley, R. (1961): *Defining Advertising Goals for Measured Advertising Results*. New York: Association of National Advertisers.
- CoreData (2014): *The Life Insurance Literacy Gap Zurich*, [online] <https://www.zurich.com.au/content/dam/au-documents/advisers/whitepapers/insurance-literacy-report-whitepaper-fpa.pdf> [23.09.2020].
- Coulter, K. and Coulter, R. (2002): 'Determinants of trust in a service provider: the moderating role of length of relationship', in: *Journal of Services Marketing*, 16(1), pp. 35-50.
- Dahlén, M. (2005): 'The medium as contextual cue effects of creative media choice', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 34(3), pp. 89-98.
- Dahlén, M., Rosengren, S., Torn, F. and Ohman, N. (2008): 'Could placing ads wrong be right? Advertising effects of thematic incongruence', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 37(3), pp. 57-67.
- Dandurand, F., Shultz, T., Onishi, K. H. (2008): 'Comparing online and lab methods in a problem-solving experiment', in: *Behavior Research Methods*, 40(2), pp. 428-434.

- De Pelsmacker, P., Geuens, M. and Ackaert, P. (2002): 'Media context and advertising effectiveness: The role of context appreciation and context/ad similarity', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 31(1), pp. 40-61.
- Deal, Ashley. (2007): *A Teaching With Technology Whitepaper*, [online] https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/resources/PublicationsArchives/StudiesWhitepapers/Podcasting_Jun07.pdf [27.06.2020].
- Delfau, J. (2019): 'Everything You Need to Know about the Podcast Industry', [online] <https://medium.com/@john.delfau/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-Podcast-industry-in-2019-fede9c8d9c11> [21.06.2020].
- die medienanstalten - ALM GbR (2019): *Digitalisierungsbericht 2019 Audio*. Berlin: Druckcenter Berlin GmbH.
- Domenichini, B. (2018a): 'Podcastnutzung in Deutschland. Ergebnisse einer empirischen Studie', in: *Media Perspektiven*, 2018 (2), pp. 46-49.
- Domenichini, B. (2018b): 'Formen und Wirkungsweise von Werbung in Podcasts. In: Media Perspektiven', in: *Media Perspektiven*, 2018 (12), pp. 583-586.
- Dragos, S. L., Dragos, C. M. and Muresan, G. M. (2020): 'From intention to decision in purchasing life insurance and private pensions: different effects of knowledge and behavioral factors', in: *Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics*, 87(C).
- Duff, B., Faber, R. and Nan, X. (2019): 'Coloring Outside the Lines. Suggestions for the Future of Advertising Theory', in: S. Rodgers and E. Thorson (eds.), *Advertising Theory*, 2nd edn., New York, London: Routledge, pp. 18-31.
- Edison Research (2019): *The Podcast consumer 2019*, [online] <https://www.edisonresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Edison-Research-Podcast-Consumer-2019.pdf> [21.06.2020].
- Egan, J. (2007): *Marketing Communications*. London: Thomson Learning.
- Ericksen, M. K. (1997): 'Using self-congruity and ideal congruity to predict purchase intention: A European perspective', in: *Journal of Euromarketing*, 6(1), 41-56.
- Faircloth, J. B., Capella, L. M. and Alford, B. L. (2001): 'The Effect of Brand Attitude and Brand Image on Brand Equity', in: *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 9(3), pp. 61-75.
- Feltham, T. S. and Arnold S. J. (1994): 'Program involvement and ad/program consistency as moderators of program context effects', in: *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 3(1), pp. 51-77.
- Festinger, L. (1957): *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. Evanston, IL: Row & Peterson.

- Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (2020). 'Die 100 größten Unternehmen', [online] <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/wirtschaft/unternehmen/die-100-groessten-unternehmen-der-deutschen-wirtschaft-16850144.html> [16.08.2020].
- Furnham, A. and Price, M.-T. (2006): 'Memory for televised advertisements as a function of program context, viewer-involvement, and gender', in: *Communications*, 31(2), pp. 155-172.
- Furnham, A., Bergland, J. and Gunter B. (2002): 'Memory for television advertisements as a function of advertisement-programme congruity', in: *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 16(5), pp. 525-545.
- Gardner, B. B. and Levy, S. J. (1955): 'The Impact of Brand Image on Consumer Behavior: A Literature Review', in: *Open Journal of Business Management*, p. 33-39.
- GDV Gesamtverband der Deutschen Versicherungswirtschaft e.V. (2020): *GDV Mitgliedsunternehmen*, [online] https://www.gdv.de/de/ueber-uns/unsere-mitglieder/wer-versichert-was/allianz-versicherungs-aktiengesellschaft-46800?fbclid=IwAR12utqEoE4kQvVuWo4VpG3UbaO_wbGjGCZH5FP_dKok5wsYwoftZ7XIsI4 [17.02.2020].
- Germelmann, C.C., Herrmann, J., Kacha, M. and Darke, P.R. (2020): 'Congruence and Incongruence in Thematic Advertisement-Medium Combinations: Role of Awareness, Fluency, and Persuasion Knowledge', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 49(2), pp. 141-164.
- Gleich, U. (2001): 'Aktuelle Ergebnisse der Werbewirkungsforschung', in: *Fachzeitschrift Media Perspektiven*, 3, pp. 149-154.
- Graeff, T. R. (1996): 'Using promotional messages to manage the effects of brand and self-image on brand evaluations', in: *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 13(3), pp. 4-18.
- Greenwald, A. (1968): 'Cognitive learning, cognitive response to persuasion, and attitude change', in: A. G. Greenwald, T. C. Brock and T. M. Ostrom (eds.), *Psychological foundations of attitudes*. New York, NY: Academic Press, pp. 147-170.
- Greshman, L. and Shimp, T. (1985): 'Attitude towards the Advertisement and Brand Attitudes: A Classical Conditioning Perspective', in: *Journal of Advertising* 14(1), pp. 10-49.
- Gröppel-Klein, A. and Kroeber-Riel, W. (2013): *Konsumentenverhalten*, 13th edn., Munich: Verlag Franz Vahlen GmbH.
- Gunter, B. (2002): 'The quantitative research process', in: Bruhn J. K. (ed.), *A Handbook of Media and Communication Research*. London, New York: Routledge, pp. 209-234.

- Gurău, C. (2007): 'The Ethics of Online Surveys', in: R.A. Rodney, R. Woods and J.D. Baker (eds.), *Handbook of Research on Electronic Surveys and Measurements*, Hershey, London, Melbourne, Singapore: Idea Group Publishing, pp. 104-111.
- Ha, L. (2020). 'Advertising Effect and Advertising Effectiveness', in: M.B. Oliver, A.A. Raaney and J. Bryant (eds.), *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*, 4th edn., New York: Routledge, pp. 275-289.
- Halff, G. (1998): *Die Malaise der Medienwirkungsforschung: Transklassische Wirkungen und klassische Forschung*, Opladen, Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag.
- Hammersley, B. (2004): '*Audible Revolution*', [online] <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2004/feb/12/broadcasting.digitalmedia> [10.06.2020].
- Hammersley, B. (2018): *Technology and disruption: How the world will be listening in 10 years*, [online] <https://www.radiodayseurope.com/news/radio-dead-sorry-audio-its-golden-age> [25.09.2020].
- Harrari, Y. N. (2013): *Eine kurze Geschichte der Menschheit*, 33rd edn., Munich: Pantheon.
- Haygood, D. (2007): 'A Status Report on Podcast Advertising', in: *Journal of Advertising Research*, pp. 518-523.
- He, A. (2020). *A Majority of US Podcast Listeners Tune In Regularly*, [online] <https://www.emarketer.com/content/a-majority-of-us-podcast-listeners-tune-in-regularly> [26.06.2020].
- Heath, A. P. and Scott, D. (1998): 'The self-concept and image congruence hypothesis: an empirical investigation in the motor vehicle market', in: *European Journal of Marketing*, 32(11/12), pp. 1110-1123.
- Hinojosa, A. S., Gardner, W. L., Walker, H. J., Cogliser, C. C. and Gullifor, D. (2017): A review of cognitive dissonance theory in management research: Opportunities for further development, in: *Journal of Management*, 43(1), pp. 170-199.
- Homer, P. (1990): 'The Mediating Role of Attitude toward the Ad: Some Additional Evidence', in: *Journal of Marketing Research*, 27(1), pp. 78-86.
- Hsu, T. (2019): '*The Advertising Industry Has a Problem: People Hate Ads*', [online] <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/28/business/media/advertising-industry-research.html> [27.06.2020].
- iab (2020): *U.S. Podcast Advertising Revenue Study*, [online] https://www.iab.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Full-Year-2019-IAB-Podcast-Ad-Rev-Study_v20200710-FINAL-IAB_v2.pdf [02.09.2020].

- Irelan, R. (2007): 'RSS: The plumbing behind the medium', in: M.W. Geoghegan (ed.), *The business Podcasting book. Launching, Marketing and Measuring your Podcast*. Burlington: Focal Press, pp. 235-253.
- Iyengar, S. (2011): 'Laboratory Experiments in Political Science', in: J. Druckman, D. P. Green, J. H. Kuklinski and A. Lupia (eds.), *Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 73-88.
- Janssens, W., De Pelsmacker, P. and Geuens M. (2012): 'Online advertising and congruency effects', in: *International Journal of Advertising*, 31(3), pp. 579-604.
- Kahle, L. R. and Homer, P. M. (1985): Physical Attractiveness of the Celebrity Endorser: A Social Adaption Perspective, in: *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11, pp. 954-961.
- Kamina, M. A. and Gupta, K. (1994): 'Congruence between spokesperson and product type: A matchup hypothesis perspective', in: *Psychology & Marketing*, 11(6), pp. 569-586.
- Kamins, M. A. (1990): 'An Investigation Into the 'Match-Up' Hypothesis in Celebrity Advertising: When Beauty.05. Be Only Skin Deep', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 19(1), pp. 4-13.
- KEEN COMMUNICATION (2017): *Das Content Format der Zukunft*, [online] <https://keen-communication.com/Podcasts-content-format-der-zukunft/> [23.06.2020].
- Kirmani, A., and Shiv, B. (1998): 'Effects of Source Congruity on Brand Attitudes and Beliefs: The Moderating Role of Issue-Relevant Elaboration', in: *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 7(1), pp. 25-47.
- Kitchen, P. J., G. Kerr, D. Schultz, R. McColl, R., and H. Pals (2014): 'The Elaboration Likelihood Model: Review, Critique and Research Agenda', *European Journal of Marketing* 48 (11-12), pp. 2033-2050.
- Kondrich, M. (2020): 'Who Does What on a Podcast Team', [online] <https://podcasters.spotify.com/blog/who-does-what-on-a-podcast-team> [20.09.2020].
- Köster, P., Degel, J. and Piper, D. (2002): 'Proactive and Retroactive Interference in Implicit Odor Memory', in: *Chemical Senses*, 27(3), pp. 191-206.
- Kroeber-Riel, W. (1990): *Konsumentenverhalten*, 4th edn., Munich: Springer Verlag.
- Krugman, H.E. (1965): 'The Measurement of Advertising Involvement', in: *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 29(3), pp. 349-356.
- Krugmann, D. and Pallus, D. (2008): *Podcasting - Marketing für die Ohren. Mit Podcasts innovativ werben, die Marke stärken und Kunden rund um die Uhr erreichen*. Wiesbaden: Gabler.

- Lavidge, R. and Steiner, G. (1961): 'A Model for Predictive Measurements of Advertising Effectiveness', in: *Journal of Marketing*, 25 (6), pp. 59-62.
- Leavy, P. (2017): *Research Design: Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Arts-Based, and Community-Based Participatory Research Approaches*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Lee, P. (2017): 'When and where should I place my ad? The Effects of cognitive load and ad-context congruence on memory and persuasion for advertisements in blogs', in: J. Huh, K. Shimamura, M. Hirose and M. Morimoto (eds.), *Advertising at the Intersection of Technology and Culture*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota, pp. 135-147.
- Llinares, D. (2018): 'Podcasting as Liminal Praxis: Aural Mediation, Sound Writing and Identity', in: D. Llinares, N. Fox and R. Berry (eds.), *Podcasting new aural cultures and digital media*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 123-145.
- Lord, K. R., Burnkrant, R.E. and Unnava, H.R. (2001): 'The effects of program-induced mood states on memory for commercial information', in: *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 23(1), pp. 1-15.
- Lord, K. R., Myung-Soo L. and Sauer, P. L. (1994): 'Program Context Antecedents of Attitude Toward Radio Commercials', in: *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22(1), pp. 3-15.
- Low, G. S. and Lamb, C. W. (2000): 'The measurement and dimensionality of brand associations', in: *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 9(6), pp. 350-368.
- Lundh, L.-G. (1995): 'Meaning structures and mental representations', in: *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 36, pp. 363-385.
- Lutz, R.J. and MacKenzie, S.B. (1989): 'An Empirical Examination of the Structural Antecedents of Attitude Toward the Ad in an Advertising Present Context', in: *Journal of Marketing*, 53(2), pp. 48-65.
- Lynch, J. and Schuler, D. (1994): 'The Matchup Effect of Spokesperson and Product Congruency: A Schema Theory Interpretation', in: *Psychology & Marketing* 11(5), pp. 417-45.
- Macinnis, D. and Park, C. W. (1991): 'The Differential Role of Characteristics of Music on High - and Low- Involvement Consumer's Processing of Ads', in: *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(2), pp. 161-173.
- MacKenzie, S. B., Lutz, R. J. and Belch, G. E. (1986): 'The role of attitude toward the ad as a mediator of advertising effectiveness: A test of competing explanations', in: *Journal of Marketing Research*, 23(2), pp. 130-143.

- Madden, T., Allen C. and Twible, J. (1998): 'Attitude towards the Ad: An Assessment of Diverse Measurement Indices Under Different Processing "Sets"', in: *Journal of Marketing Research*, 25(3), pp. 242-252.
- Madsen, V. (2009): *Voices-cast: A report on the new audiosphere of Podcasting with specific insights for public broadcasters*. Paper presented at ANZCA09 Communication, Creativity, and Global Citizenship Conference, Brisbane July 2009.
- Malhorta, N. K. (1981): 'A scale to measure self-concepts, person concepts, and product concepts', in: *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(4), pp. 456-464.
- Mandler, G. (1982): 'The Structure of Value: Accounting for Taste', in: M.S. Clark and S.T. Fisk (eds.), *Affect and Cognition: The 17th Annual Carnegie Symposium*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 203-230.
- Markman, K. and Sawyer, C. E. (2014): 'Why pod? Further explorations of the motivations for independent Podcasting', in: *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*, 21(1), pp. 20-35.
- Martín-Luengo, B., Luna, K. and Migueles, M. (2013): 'Memory for radio advertisements: the effect of program and typicality', in: *Span Journal of Psychology*, 16:E80, pp. 1-7.
- Mazzocchi, M. (2008): *Statistics for Marketing and Consumer Research*, London: SAGE Publications.
- McClung, S. and Johnson, K. (2010): 'Examining the Motives of Podcast Users', in: *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*, 17(1), pp. 82-95.
- McDonald, M., de Chernatony, L. and Harris, F. (2001): 'Corporate Marketing and service brands: Moving beyond the fast-moving consumer goods model', in: *European Journal of Marketing*, 35(3/4), pp. 335-352.
- Menduni, E. (2007): 'Four Steps in Innovative Radio Broadcasting: From QuickTime to Podcasting', *The Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*, 5(1), pp. 9-18.
- MidRoll (2020). *Frequently Asked Questions About Podcast Advertising*, [online] <https://www.midroll.com/faq-Podcast-advertising/> [16.09.2020].
- Mishra, A. S., Roy, S. and Bailey, A. A. (2015): 'Exploring Brand Personality-Celebrity Endorser Personality Congruence in Celebrity Endorsements in the Indian Context', in: *Journal of Advertising* 32(12), pp. 1158-1174.
- Misra, S. and Beatty, S. E. (1990): 'Celebrity spokesperson and brand congruence. An assessment of recall and affect', in: *Journal of Business Research*, 21(2), pp. 159-173.

- Mitchell, A. A. and Olson, J. C. (1977): 'Cognitive Effects of Advertising Repetition', *Advances in Consumer Research*, in: *Advances in Consumer Research*, 4, W.D. Perreault Junior Atlanta 1977, pp. 213-220.
- Moorman, M., Neijens P. C. and Smit E. G. (2002): 'The Effects of Magazine-Induced Psychological Responses and Thematic Congruence on Memory and Attitude Toward the Ad in a Real-Life Setting', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 31 (4), pp. 27-40.
- Morris, J. and Patterson, E. (2015): 'Podcasting and its apps: Software, sound, and the interfaces of digital audio', in: *Journal of Radio and Audio Media*, 22(2), pp. 220-230.
- Moser, C. A. and Kalton, G. (1989): *Survey Methods in Social Investigation*, 2nd edn., London: Gower.
- Moy, P., Tewksbury, D. and Rinke, E. M. (2017): Agenda-Setting, Priming, and Framing, in: J. Pooley, R. Craig, and E. Rothenbuhler (eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, pp. 1-13.
- Newman, N. and Gallo, N. (2020). *News Podcasts and the Opportunities for Publishers*, [online] https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2019-12/Newman_Gallo_Podcasts_FINAL_WEB.pdf [25.06.2020].
- Newman, N., Fletcher R., Kalogeropoulos A. and Nielsen R. (2019): *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2019*, [online] https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2019-06/DNR_2019_FINAL_0.pdf [25.06.2020].
- Newman, N., Fletcher R., Kalogeropoulos A. and Nielsen R. (2020): *Reuters Institute. Digital News Report 2020*, [online] https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-06/DNR_2020_FINAL.pdf [21.08.2020].
- Nielson (2018): *Nielson Podcast Insights. A marketer's guide to Podcasting*, [online] http://files.r-trends.ru/reports/marketeres_guide_to_Podcasting_march_2018.pdf.
- Niessen, B. (2019): 'Fußball ist zu heilig für Comedy - mit Autor Tommi Schmitt beim Borussia-Spiel', [online] <https://www.watson.de/sport/interview/744164976-interview-mit-tommi-schmitt-von-gemischtes-hack-ueber-borussia-moenchengladbach> [23.06.2020].
- Norris, C. E. and Colman, A.M (1992); 'Context Effects on Recall and Recognition of Magazine Advertisements', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 21 (3), pp.37-46.
- Oxford University Press (2005): *Podcast is the Word of the Year 2005*, [online] http://www.us.oup.com/us/brochure/NOAD_Podcast/?view=usa/ [15.06.2020].

- Parks, M., Kissel, B. and Zebrowski, H. (2020). 'Enrich Your Show with Listener Interaction', [online] <https://Podcasters.spotify.com/blog/enrich-your-show-with-listener-interaction> [09.06.2020].
- Perez, J. I. G. (2012): 'Podcasting in Spain: A new business model or a reflection of traditional', in: *The Radio Journal International Studies in Broadcast and Audio Media*, 10(1), pp. 23-34.
- Perks, L. and Turner, J. (2018): 'Podcasts and Productivity: A Qualitative Uses and Gratifications Study', in: *Mass Communication and Society*, 22(1), pp. 96-116.
- Petty, R. and Cacioppo, J. (1986): *Communication and persuasion: central and peripheral routes to attitude change*. Berlin: Springer Verlag.
- Podcatsbu (2020). *Werbeformen*, [online] <https://www.Podcastbu.de/werbeformen/> [15.09.2020].
- Podstars OMR (2018): *Podcast-Umfrage 2018*, [online] <https://podstars.de/wp-content/uploads/Podcastumfrage2018.pdf> [27.06.2020].
- Poleshova, A. (2020). *Anteil der Befragten, die hin und wieder Podcasts hören, in Deutschland in ausgewählten Jahren von 2016 bis 2020*, [online] <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/876487/umfrage/nutzung-von-Podcasts-in-deutschland/> [30.08.2020].
- Porta, M., Raverelli, A. and Spaghi F. (2013): 'Online newspaper and ad banners: An eye-tracking study on the effects of congruity', in: *Online Information Review*, 37(3), pp. 405-423.
- Ray, M. (1973): 'Marketing communication and the hierarchy-of-effects', in: P. Clarke (ed.), *New models for mass communication research*, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 147-176.
- Reips, U. D. (2000): 'The Web experiment method: Advantages, disadvantages, and solutions', in: M.H. Birnbaum (ed.), *Psychological experiments on the Internet*, San Diego: Academic Press, pp. 89-114.
- Richter, Felix (2019): *The Slow Goodbye of Apple's former Cash Cow*, [online] <https://www.statista.com/chart/10469/apple-ipod-sales/> [10.06.2020].
- Riismandel, P. (2016): *Midroll Study. Podcast Ads build strong relationships with brands*, [online] https://www.midroll.com/wp-content/uploads/Midroll_Recall_Survey_White_Paper.pdf [26.09.2020].

- Riismandel, P. (2018): *Midroll Study. The Power of Podcasts national brands: Case Studies in Ad Effectiveness*, [online] https://www.midroll.com/wp-content/uploads/Midroll_Webinar2018-Power_of_Podcasts_National_Brands-final.pdf [25.06.2020].
- Ritter, E. A. and Cho, C. (2009): 'Effects of ad placement and type on consumer responses to Podcast ads', in: *Cyberpsychology & Behavior*, 12(5), pp. 533-537.
- Roose, K. (2014): 'What's Behind The Great Podcast Renaissance?', [online] <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2014/10/whats-behind-the-great-Podcast-renaissance.html> [10.06.2020].
- Rowles, D. and Rogers, C. (2019): *Podcasting Marketing Strategy. A complete guide to creating, publishing and monetizing a successful Podcast*, London, New York: Kogan Page.
- Schenk, M. (1989): 'Perspektive der Werbewirkungsforschung', in: *Rundfunk und Fernsehen*, 37(4), pp. 447-457.
- Schiffman, L., Kanuk, L. and Wisenblit, J. (2010): *Consumer behaviour*, 10th edn., Boston, London.
- Schram, A. (2005): 'Artificiality: The tension between internal and external validity in economic experiments', in: *Journal of Economic Methodology*, 12(2), pp. 225-237.
- Schreyer, S. (2019): *Podcasts in der Unternehmenskommunikation*, Weinheim: Springer Gabler.
- Schreyer, S. (2020): 'Monetarisierung: Seifenblase Podcast-Markt?', [online] https://www.wuv.de/tech/monetarisierung_seifenblase_Podcast_markt [25.06.2020].
- Segev, S., Wang, W. and Fernandes, J. (2014): 'The effects of ad-context congruency on responses to advertising in blogs', in: *International Journal of Advertising*, 33:1, pp. 17-36.
- Shen, F. and Chen, Q. (2007): 'Contextual Priming and Applicability: Implications for Ad Attitude and Brand Evaluations', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 36(1), pp. 69-80. DOI: 10.2753/JOA0091-3367360105.
- Zajonc, R. B. and Markus, H. (1982). 'Affective and cognitive factors in preferences', in: *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(2), pp. 123-131. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1086/208905>.
- Siebert, G., Wirth, W., Weber, P. and Lischka, J. (2016): *Handbuch Werbeforschung*, Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

- Sieglerschmidt, S. (2008): *Werbung im thematisch passenden Medienkontext. Theoretische Grundlagen und empirische Befunde am Beispiel von Fernsehwerbung*, Wiesbaden: Springer Gabler.
- Sirgy, M. J. (1985): 'Using Self-Congruity and Ideal-Congruity to Predict Purchase Motivation', in: *Journal of Business Research*, 13(3), pp. 195-206.
- Spears, N. and Singh, S. N. (2004): 'Measuring Attitude Toward the Brand and Purchase Intention', in: *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10641734.2004.10505164>.
- Spinelli, M. and Dann, L. (2019): *Podcasting: The Audio Media Revolution*. New York: Bloomsbury.
- Splendid Research (2018): *Trendmedium Podcast. Eine repräsentative Umfrage unter 1.022 Deutschen zum Thema Podcasts*, Hamburg: n.p.
- Statista (2020). *Digitale Audiowerbung. Durchschnittliche Werbeausgaben pro Hörer weltweit*, [online] <https://de.statista.com/outlook/20220/100/digitale-audio-werbung/weltweit> [26.06.2020].
- Steffenhagen, H. (2009): 'Ableitung von Kommunikationszielen', in: Manfred Bruhn, Franz-Rudolf Esch and Tobias Langner (eds.), *Handbuch Kommunikation: Grundlagen, innovative Ansätze, praktische Umsetzungen*. Wiesbaden: Springer Gabler, pp. 359-377.
- Stern, B., Zinkhan, G. M., and Jaju, A. (2001): 'Marketing Images: Construct Definition, Measurement Issues, and Theory Development', in: *Marketing Theory*, 1(2), pp. 201-223.
- Sterne, J., Morris, J., Baker, M. and Freire, A. (2008): '*The politics of Podcasting*', [online] https://source.sheridancollege.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&context=fhass_comm_publ [25.06.2020].
- Sullivan, J. (2018): 'Podcast Movement: Aspirational Labour and the Formalisation of Podcasting as Cultural Industry', in: D. Llinares, N. Fox and R. Berry (eds.) *Podcasting new aural cultures and digital media*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 35-56.
- Tellis, G. (2004): *Effective Advertising. Understanding When, How and Why Advertising Works*. Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Thomas, E. and Magilvy, J. K. (2011): 'Qualitative rigor or research validity in qualitative research', in: *Journal for Specialists in Pediatric Nursing*, 16(2), pp. 151-155.

- Till, B. D. and Busler, M. (2000): 'The Match-Up Hypothesis: Physical Attractiveness, Expertise, and the Role of Fit on Brand Attitude, Purchase Intent and Brand Beliefs', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 29:3, pp. 1-13.
- Vakratsas, D. and Ambler, T. (1999): 'How Advertising Works: What do we really know?', in: *Journal of Marketing*, 62(1), pp. 25-43.
- verify recruitment (2020). *Podcasting for employer branding and branding*, [online] <https://www.verifyrecruitment.com/blog/Podcasting-recruitment/> [23.06.2020].
- Walker, J. (2019): '*The Podcast Revolution*', [online] <https://reason.com/2019/08/25/the-Podcast-revolution/> [14.11.2020].
- Walstra, B. and Nelissen, P. (1992): Adapting advertising to the media environment, or: the way to kill two birds with one stone. Paper presented at the Seminar on Media research meets the future. How new challenges promote new media uses and media research, Lisbon, Portugal.
- Watson, A. (2019): *Number of Podcast listeners in the U.S. 2014-2023*, [online] <https://www.statista.com/statistics/786826/Podcast-listeners-in-the-us/> [25.06.2020].
- Weedige, Sampath, Ouyang, Hongbing, Gao, Yao and Liu, Yaqing (2019): 'Decision Making in Personal Insurance: Impact of Insurance Literacy', in: *Sustainability* 2019, 11(23), pp. 1-24.
- Wells, W.D. and Chinsky J.M. (1965): 'Effects of Competing Messages: A Laboratory Simulation', in: *Journal of Marketing Research*, 2(2), pp. 141-145.
- Wimmer, R. D. and Dominick, J. R. (2013): *Mass Media Research. An Introduction*, 9th edn., Wadsworth: Cengage Learning
- Winn, Ross (2020): *Podcast Stats & Facts*, [online] <https://www.podcastinsights.com/podcast-statistics/> [09.06.2020].
- Wirtz, J. and Lovelock, C. (2016): *Services Marketing: People, Technology, Strategy*, 8th ed., New Jersey: World Scientific Publishing.
- Ye, J. (2006): 'Overcoming Challenges to Conducting Online Surveys. Electronic Surveys and Measurements', in: Reynolds, R.A., Woods, R. and Baker, J.D. (eds.), *Handbook of Research on Electronic Surveys and Measurements*. Hershey, London, Melbourne, Singapore: Idea Group Publishing, pp. 83-103.
- Yi, Y. (1990): 'Cognitive and affective priming effects on the context for print advertisements', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 19(2), pp. 40-48.
- Yi, Y. (1993): 'Contextual priming effects in print advertisements: the moderating role of prior knowledge', in: *Journal of Advertising*, 22(1), pp. 1-10.

- Zanjani, S. H., William D. D. and Kwong C. (2011): ‘Does Ad-Context Congruity Help Surfers and Information Seekers Remember Ads in Cluttered E-magazines’, in: *Journal of Advertising*, 40(4), pp. 67-83.
- Zhang, T., Bao, C. and Xiao, C. (2018): Promoting effects of color-text congruence in banner advertising, *Color Res Appl*, 2018, pp. 1-7.
- Zilch, S. (2019): Interviewed by Susanne Gillner for *Internet World Business*, [online] <https://www.internetworld.de/online-marketing/Podcast/Podcast-netzwerk-acast-startet-in-deutschland-1729201.html> [20.06.2020].
- Petty, R.E., Cacioppo, J.T. and Schumann, D.W. (1983): ‘Central and Peripheral Routes to Advertising Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Involvement’, in: *Journal of Consumer Research*, 10(2), pp. 135-146.
- Petty, R., Cacioppo, J. (1981): ‘Issue involvement as a moderator of the effects on attitude of advertising content and context’, in: *Advances in Consumer Research*, 8(1), pp. 20–24.
- Petty, R., Cacioppo, J. (1996): *Attitudes and Persuasion: Classic and Contemporary Approaches*, Boulder: Westview Press.
- Campbell, M.C. and Goodstein, R.C. (2001): ‘The moderating effect of perceived risk on consumers’ evaluations of product incongruity: preference for the norm’, in: *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28(3), pp. 439–449.

Appendixes

Appendix A: Script for Podcast sponsorship promoting Delkan Life Insurance
Company 110

Appendix B: Script for Podcast sponsorship promoting Telka Car Insurance
Company 111

Appendix C: Questionnaire for Experiment 1 112

Appendix A: Script for Podcast sponsorship promoting Delkan Life Insurance Company

This episode is brought to you by Delkan Life Insurance.

Our life writes many stories – and not all of them are made of sunshine.

It is thus important to have some securities.

With Delkan Life Insurance you can already today make financial provisions for different situations in life.

Such as in case you are unable to go on working in your job or for your personal retirement provision.

For years customers have known us for trust, entrepreneurship and an excellent performance.

The reason is that Delkan Life Insurance offers you secure investments with long term growth

Already today, we provide for a safe tomorrow.

Make use of the new offers of Delkan Life Insurance. Starting at just 2.90 euros a month.

All information is available at delkan.de/lohntsich.

And now – enjoy listening!

Appendix B: Script for Podcast sponsorship promoting Telka Car Insurance Company

This episode is brought to you by Telka Car Insurance Company.

Do you have a feeling that sometimes the parking space seems smaller? Or the alley narrower? Or maybe the pothole deeper than you expected?

There is no need for you to panic because this is exactly when Telka will help you.

Use the bonus our Telka garage offers you and save an additional 20% in comprehensive insurance premiums.

Switch now to your new Telka car insurance.

All information is available at telka.de/lohntsich.

And now – enjoy listening!

Appendix C: Questionnaire for Experiment 1 (English translation)

Introduction

Dear participants,

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey on audio podcasts. The present survey is part of my master's thesis. Participation is voluntary and anonymous, and the data collected is solely used for academic purposes. The survey will last no longer than 10 minutes and includes listening to an audio sequence of around 3 minutes.

For this reason, please make sure that you can hear this audio sequence uninterrupted (for example with headphones on).

I wish you have an enjoyable time answering the questions and thank you in advance!

Kind regards
Nina Etmüller



Table of consent

The guidelines for good ethical research stipulate that the participants in empirical studies explicitly and transparently declare that they consent to participation.

Voluntariness. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to stop participating at any point during the study without, afterwards, incurring any disadvantages on your behalf. To stop participating, simply close your browser window.

Anonymity. Your data is naturally confidential, will only be evaluated in anonymized form and will not be given to third parties. Demographic information such as age or gender does not allow for any clear deduction to be made on your person.

Questions. Should you have any further questions about this study, please contact ninaettmueller@web.de.

I hereby confirm that I am at least 18 years old and that I have read and understood the declaration of consent.

Yes

No (I do not participate in the study)

Screenener

Please indicate your age

Please indicate your gender

female

male

diverse

Which statement best describes your podcast listening behaviour?

I never listen to any podcasts

I listen to podcasts on a daily basis

I listen to podcasts on a weekly basis

I rarely listen to podcasts

I don't know what a podcast is

Experiment 1: Selection of Podcast episodes

At your discretion, please select a podcast show, from which you would like to hear an audio sequence.

Option A – Mobile.de Motortalk: Apps that change driving

This is the podcast from mobile.de, a platform for buying and selling used cars. The show offers conversation topics about motorized transportation. In the episode "Apps that change driving", founders of different apps, that were designed in order to make driving easier, are interviewed.



Option B – NEON Useless Knowledge: Animals

Knowledge is power – The NEON Useless Knowledge podcast will prepare you for any precarious job interview or just any form of unpleasant small talk. In the episode "Animals" Lars and Yvi talk about really useless animal facts.



Experiment 2: Selection of Podcast episodes

At your discretion, please select a podcast show from which you would like to hear an audio sequence.

Option A – Gabor Steingart: emotional intelligence

Every evening, Gabor Steingart talks to people who offer food for thought in many different areas. In the following episode, executive coach Christoph Theile reflects on how we as humans will become more efficient in handling our emotional side.



Option B – Best Girlfirends: Dating Apps

"Best Girlfriends" is the name of the absolutely honest men's podcast. The two hosts Max and Jakob talk about love, sex and partnerships as honestly as if they were just two of them. In the next episode they are going to analyze men's relationships with dating apps.



Experiment 1 – Option A: Audio sequence

Now please listen to the audio sequence carefully and without any distraction.

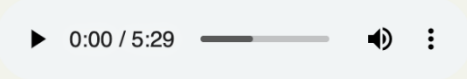
It may take up to 15 seconds for the audio file to be played completely.



Experiment 1 – Option B: Audio sequence

Now please listen to the audio sequence carefully and without any distractions.

It may take up to 15 seconds for the audio file to be played completely.



Experiment 2 – Option A: Audio sequence

Now please listen to the audio sequence carefully and without any distractions.

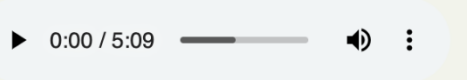
It may take up to 15 seconds for the audio file to be played completely.



Experiment 2 – Option B: Audio sequence

Now please listen to the audio sequence carefully and without any distractions.

It may take up to 15 seconds until the audio file to be played completely.



Experiment 1 – Option A: Questions related to the audio sequence

How is the app called that Sven has founded?

MoveYou

Drivo

Car Now

I don't know

What does the App Service include?

Paying for parking tickets

Navigation Services

Finding parking spaces

I don't know

Experiment 1 – Option B: Questions related to the audio sequence

You will now be asked two questions about the content of the audio sequence you just heard.

Which animal does podcast host Yvi hold in her basement?

mouse

spider

snake

I don't know

Podcast Moderator Lars is a fan of

meerkats

sharks

sea lions

I don't know

Experiment 2 – Option A: Questions related to the audio sequence

You will now be asked two questions about the content of the audio sequence you have just heard.

Mr. Theilen offers coaching that teaches to use emotions in a more controlled manner. At whom is his coaching primarily aimed?

At teachers

At executives in companies

At actors

I don't know

Which country does Mr Theile cite as an example where the curriculum subject "empathie" exists?

Austria

Finland

Denmark

I don't know

Experiment 2 – Option B: Questions related to the audio sequence

You will now be asked two questions about the content of the audio sequence you just heard.

What would podcast host Jakob refrain to do in a club?

ordering a drink

dancing up on women

going to the wardrobe

I don't know

According to the podcast hosts, dating apps would influence...

the brain

the heart

the formation of wrinkles

I don't know

Familiarity with the Podcast episode A

Do you know the podcast show you have just heard an audio sequence of?

Yes

No

Familiarity with the Podcast episode B (shows up when “Familiarity with the Podcast Episode A” was answered with “yes”

How many episodes of this show have you already heard?

I have never listened to a full episode

1 to 3 episodes

4 to 6 episodes

more than 6 episodes

Recognition of advertisement

Have you noticed any advertisement while listening to the audio sequence?

Yes

No

Brand recall

You will now be asked questions about the spot.

Do you remember the name of the advertised brand?

Yes (Please enter your reply)

No

Brand recognition

Please select the name of the brand which was advertised

Amon

Kalt

Delkan

Medco

Tilka

Vonda

Duka

Niva

Antkom

Kellbo

Luna

Attitude towards the brand

How did you perceive the brand which was advertised?

unpleasant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	pleasant
bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	good
not appealing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	appealing
useless	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	usefull

Programme enjoyment

How did you perceive the podcast episode you just heard?

unpleasant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	pleasant
bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	good
useless	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	useful

Closing words

Thank you very much for participating in the survey!

For your information: both the spot and the brand which has been advertised in it are pure fiction.

A special thanks goes to the spokesperson of the spot Anna-Lena Kempf.