



University of St.Gallen

*Never delivers
a promise*

Long

*Short term hype
Long term delivery*

Institute for
Media and Communications Management

Annual Report 2022

Dead on arrival

Second coming

Dead on arrival

Steady, calm improvements

Facts & Figures

1
Institute

1998
Foundation

4
Directors

21
Employees

Cover note:

The sketches illustrate technology hype cycles and stem from the book "An Introduction to Visual Variations", which was published in 2022 by Prof. Martin Eppler, chair of =mcm1.

Accreditations



Mitgliedschaften



Foreword



Dear readers,

the year 2022 was a challenging year. Globally all over the world, there was great hope that 2022 would be the year of recovery after more than two years of COVID-19 pandemics. However, the war in Ukraine, the resulting energy crisis, inflation, a looming recession, the changing political and supply-chain world order as well as the ongoing climate crisis are becoming global challenges that are putting companies and countries under great pressure. Consumers and other stakeholders increasingly require that companies take position regarding these developments and consider them in current and future strategies and solutions. Many companies have identified the response to the ensuing pressures as an important strategic area and have significantly increased their investments for it. However, only strategies that are accepted by consumers and other stakeholders as authentic and trustable, result in the desired effects and competitive advantage. Thus, companies' communication to consumers and stakeholders about coping strategies and acting in terms of sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR) becomes as important as acting.

At the same time, there is a powerful proliferation of new digital technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), data-driven algorithms or quantum computing, that are also transforming societies, economies and

companies and have an unprecedented effect on humanity. There is global need for knowledge and insights to better understand the impact and potential of these technologies. Companies need to find transparent, authentic, and responsible ways to apply them.

The research of our Institute for Media and Communications Management (=mcm^{institute}) is positioned exactly at the intersection of the societal and company needs to better understand future political, economic, and technological developments as well as their need to effectively communicate and even negotiate resulting solutions with consumers and various stakeholders. By adhering to the vision of the University of St.Gallen, and its general research principles such as "Research for Society" and "From Insights to Impact" the =mcm^{institute} is conducting cutting-edge internationally recognized research: =mcm² led by Prof. Dr. Miriam Meckel and =mcm³ led by Prof. Dr. Veronica Barassi are pursuing research related to assessment of the potentials and challenges of emerging technologies such as AI, quantum computing, or application of data-driven algorithms. =mcm¹ led by Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler and =mcm⁴ led by me are analyzing the effects of communication in different settings as well as developing methodologies and tools for visual and digital communication.

This strategic positioning of the **=mcm**institute research was a favorable starting point for a successful year 2022 despite of the challenging global environment. The **=mcm**institute achieved a significant progress in terms of acquisition of new research projects, innovative research activities, scientific publishing, international networking as well as teaching and executive education.

In February 2022 Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler started in his new role as Prorector for Academic Affairs. In addition to this commitment to the University of St.Gallen, research and transfer activities were of great importance in 2022 for **=mcm1**. Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach, Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler and Prof. Dr. Sabrina Bresciani won the HSG Impact Award for their research on Life Design. **=mcm1** continued further-more the tradition and published three books out of which the new "Life Design Action Book" was named one of the Business Books of 2022 by Human Resources and the book "How to talk about Data" made it to the business bestseller list in England and was nominated as best business book for 2023. Significant progress in the research area of knowledge visualization resulted in the launch of new prototypes in the field of knowledge visualization in teaching, such as CourseGlancer and CourseBadges for the HSG's new Learning Center SQUARE.

One major achievement of Prof. Miriam Meckel and her team in **=mcm2** is the successful acquisition of the international CHANSE Project: "Qshift Decision-Making in the Age of Quantum AI" that is dedicated to the investigation of both the potential and caveats of quantum computing regarding its social impact and to ideally shape the implementation in a way that will allow for thorough inclusive and fair approaches. **=mcm2** continued furthermore the research on face news and

the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the AI suffrage project.

In year 2022 Prof. Dr. Veronica Barassi and her **=mcm3** team continued their research focused on research projects which explored the complex relationship between AI technologies, cultural transformations, data privacy and human rights. An important success that **=mcm3** achieved together with the Institute for Business Ethics (IWP-HSG) and the Institute of Computer Science (ICS-HSG) is the acquisition of a development grant to design a new project on AI, Youth and Human Rights by The Botnar Foundation. A newly acquired InnoCheck project was furthermore dedicated to the analysis of data protection in Swiss law firms. Significant progress was also made in the "Human Error" project with the completion of the data gathering work package and the "Hello Barbie Project" that is aimed at examining the entertainment products designed for children using voice-recognition software, identifying products available on the global marketplace, and analyzing and comparing their privacy controls, terms of service, and the embedded cultural values within their design. The leadership-program for media executives organized by **=mcm3** in collaboration with MAZ was successfully organized in 2022 for the 3rd time. Prof. Dr. Barassi presented the research results at several media appearances.

Together with 15 European universities and industrial partners, **=mcm4** was successful in acquiring "ENTRUST", a prestigious Marie-Curie Doctoral Network project under Horizon Europe, which will start beginning of year 2023. Another successful acquisition was an InnoCheck project that explored the application of affective computing in analysis of the communication part of negotiation processes. In year 2022, the **=mcm4** team

widened its data-driven research dedicated to analysis of digital CSR and sustainability communication. The intensive data-scraping and cleansing phase was finished, and a first publication related to CSR communication in Instagram was accepted for presentation at the prestigious ICA 2023 conference. This research was furthermore extended to the mobile channel and a first overview of personal mobile sustainability tracking apps was developed. In year 2022, **=mcm4** organized a successful "Mobile Marketing & CX" Conference for the 6th time.

In the year 2022, the **=mcm**institute was also able to extend and strengthen its international research relationships: Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach (**=mcm1**) received a visiting professorship at Stanford University; Dr. Fabienne Buenzli, spent year 2022 as Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania (**=mcm1**); Prof. Dr. Barassi (**=mcm3**) spent the summer 2022 as Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies at Loughborough University, UK; Kimberley Kernbach (**=mcm3**) received a grant from the Swiss National Foundation (SNF) for a research stay at Stanford University, and Prof. Dr. Stanoevska-Slabeva (**=mcm4**) spent her sabbatical as visiting professor at the St. Gallen Institute in Asia (SGI-HSG).

Finally, the year 2022 was also a year of renewal. Six new researchers were recruited at the **=mcm**institute: Four PostDocs (Dr. Bing Huang at **=mcm2**, Dr. Philip Di Salvo at **=mcm3**, Iago Santos Muraro and Prof. Dr. Vera Lenz-Kesekamp at **=mcm4**) together with two new doctoral students (Christian Spletter at **=mcm1**, Charles Ma at **=mcm2**).

Overall, the **=mcm**institute was able to meet the challenges of the year 2022 well. I would like to thank our practice partners, who always support our research and have remained loyal to us. Many thanks also go to our employees. Without their tireless commitment and great flexibility, it would not be possible to constantly improve, grow and conduct cutting-edge research. At this point I would like to thank the employees for their commitment and wish us all just as much creativity, vigor, flexibility and good health for the year 2023.



Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva
Managing Director **=mcm**institute

St. Gallen, 31st of March 2023

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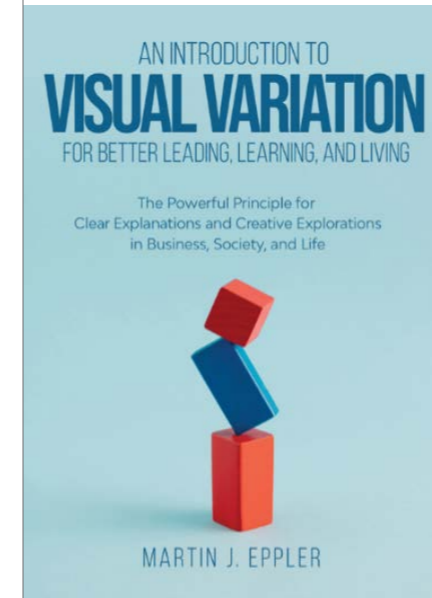
Communications Management

The year 2022 was a productive and enjoyable year for the Chair of Communication Management with exciting projects, publications, awards and partnerships.

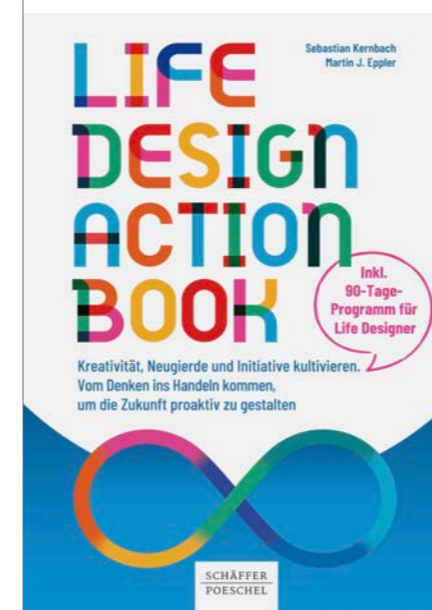
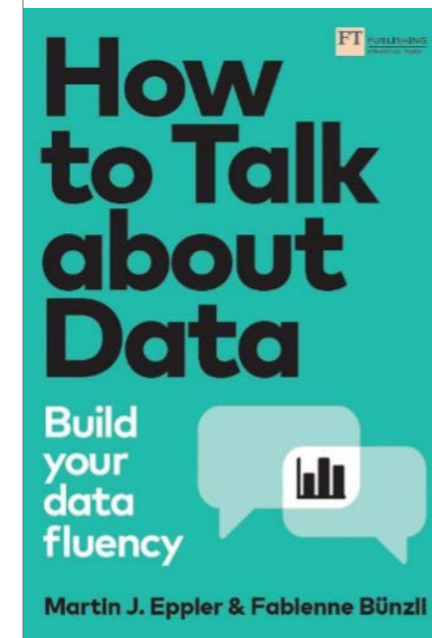
One example of a new project is our new initiative in the field of curriculum visualization under the label "Visualizing Learning Offers". Three new books and various articles were also published in traditional research areas, and collaborations with other researchers were expanded, such as with the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to the chair's commitment to the HSG in his role as Prorector for Academic Affairs, research and transfer activities were of great importance in 2022.

Highlights of the =mcm1 in 2022:

- Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach, Prof. Dr. Martin J. Eppler and Prof. Dr. Sabrina Bresciani won the HSG Impact Award for their research on Life Design.
- Dr. Fabienne Bünzli spent the year as Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania.
- The new Life Design Action Book was named one of the Business Books of 2022 by Personalwirtschaft magazine.
- The knowledge visualization methods that emerged from the "Visual Variation" project were further developed and used in numerous training courses and trainings for various organizations - in universities or companies such as Sales Force or Brazilian cooperatives.
- The book "How to talk about Data" made it to the business bestseller list in England and was nominated as best business book for 2023.
- We launched new prototypes in the field of knowledge visualization in teaching, such as CourseGlancer and CourseBadges for the HSG's new Learning Center SQUARE.
- Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach received a visiting professorship at Stanford University.
- Dr. Christian Muntwiler successfully completed his doctoral studies.



Covers of the =mcm1 books published in 2022



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Knowledge Visualization in Teaching

Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler & Christian Spletter

The year 2022 was a year of personnel and structural changes. After Prof. Dr. Martin J. Eppler was elected as the new Prorector for Academic Affairs, the SQUARE opened its doors for academic teaching at the University of St. Gallen on the 21st of February. The new SQUARE building serves as a place of encounter where curricular and extracurricular learning opportunities can be experienced in an experimental environment. It is part of the HSG strategy to promote innovative teaching and learning settings of the future. Therefore, initial impulses have been set by the =mcm1 to exploit the potentials of knowledge visualization for teaching at SQUARE. These build on six visualization areas we have identified, which we summarize as "Vis2Learn" (see Table 1).

Table 1: Areas in the field "Vis2Learn" Knowledge Visualization for Teaching

Area	Form of Visualization	Example
Visualization Learning Offers	Interactive Maps	Course Glancer
Visual Learning Environments	2D and 3D-Worlds of Learning	Metaverse
Learning Content Visualization	Infographics	Visual Variation Patterns
Visual Techniques for Learning	Mappingmethods	Concept Mapping
Visual Learning Analytics	Diagrams	Learner Dashboard
Visualizing Learning Outcomes	Badges, Embleme, Incons	Course Badge

Accordingly, using courses offered in SQUARE during the Fall 2022 semester, we not only designed a version of our *Course Glancer visualization tool* (Visualizing Learning Offers), but also piloted the use of *SQUARE badges* (Visualizing Learning Outcomes).

Course Glancer - A Tool for Interactive Visualization of Course Offerings at SQUARE

The Course Glancer as an interactive visualization tool offers not only students in their daily study routine, but also faculty members (e.g. in the area of course planning) a possibility to navigate intuitively through the courses offered at SQUARE. The accompanying orientation function of its visual design follows Shneiderman's well-known mantra for supporting human information processing:

overview first, zoom and filter, then details-on-demand. For example, it would be immediately apparent that courses from the business administration major (category: Management) and those from the context studies (category: Context) currently make up the largest share of the SQUARE offering (see Figure 1).

In order to promote the students' experience of coherence with regard to the courses offered, either learning paths or purely conceptual connecting lines can be displayed along defined key concepts (e.g. leadership, see Figure 2). While learning paths include courses that, for example, both address the concept of "leadership" and build on each other, conceptual connecting lines are limited to those courses addressing the topic of "leadership" in terms of content. In both modes of presentation, this is a so-called "shared concept".

Finally, the Course Glancer offers the possibility to compare two course offerings with each other, e.g. with regard to the main competencies trained by the courses (technical, methodological, social or personal competence, see Figure 3).

First Pilot Phase of SQUARE Badges Launched

In addition to the visual integration of the SQUARE badges into the Course Glancer (see Figure 3), these were also made available to lecturers and students individually for selected courses. The main goal was for both groups of people to communicate their course on their channels, both to promote the innovative nature of the SQUARE itself and to make individual learning successes at the SQUARE visible to the outside world. In addition, they were displayed on the video screen in the SQUARE during the semester to draw attention to this offering. The information is based on a survey of faculty who taught at SQUARE during the Fall 2022 semester. While the title reflects the key competency specific to the course, the remaining data on competency, sustainability, and evaluation (form of examination) refer to the facet that faculty perceive to be of particular focus in their course. For example, Figure 4 shows Prof. Dr. Martin J. Eppler's SQUARE badge, which he used as the first pilot for his course "Global Managerial Communication". Since this course was about the possibilities of effective communication in a global context, it was therefore also primarily about the acquisition of social, communicative competencies, taking into account issues of social sustainability. The form of examination carried out in the course was oriented accordingly to the group setting (e.g. group presentation).

Figure 1: Front view of the Course Glancer (SQUARE version)

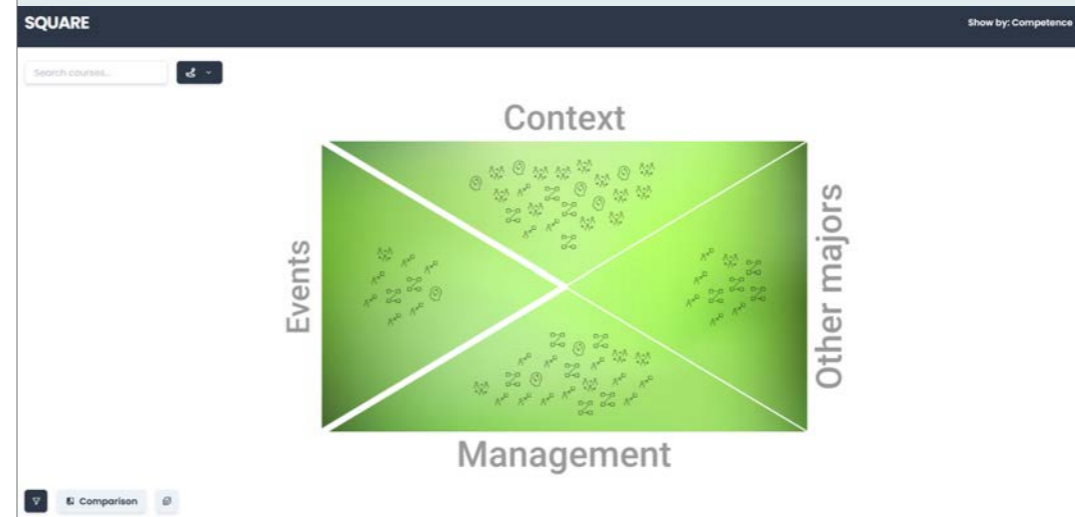


Figure 2: Exemplary visualization of a "Shared Concept" (SQUARE version)

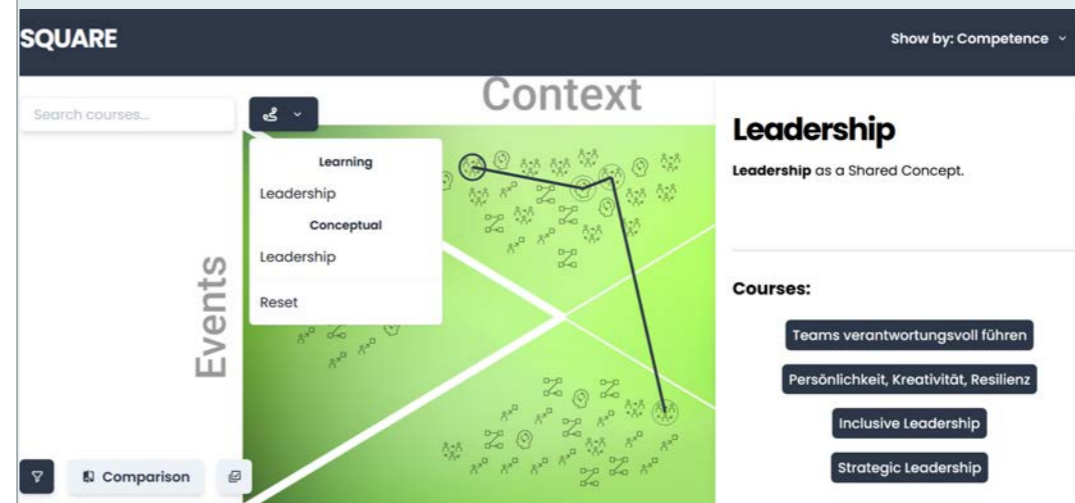


Figure 3: Comparison of two courses in Course Glancer (SQUARE version)

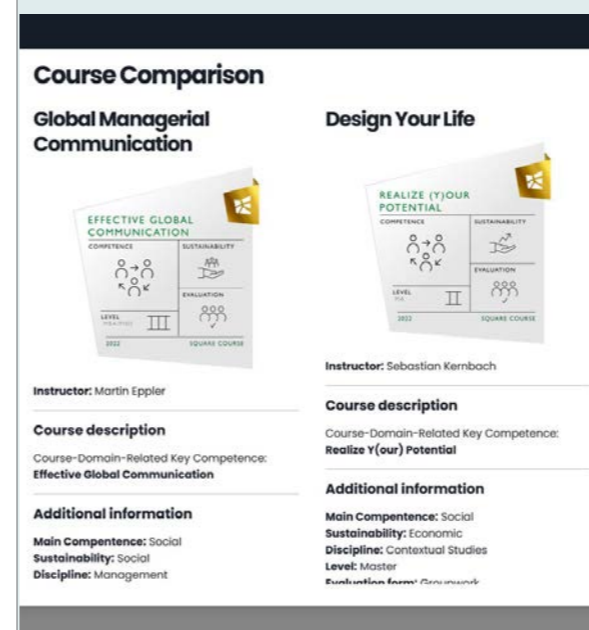


Figure 4: SQUARE badge for the course "Global Managerial Communication" (Prof. Dr. Martin J. Eppler, HS22/23)



Outlook for 2023

For the spring semester 2023, among other things, a renewed edition of the SQUARE badges is planned. Based on an interim evaluation, the goal is to offer so-called digital badges for all courses at the HSG. From this, we derive the interest in finding out to what extent their use influences the professional opportunities of our HSG students - not least in the sense of Open Education. As an alternative to the SQUARE version of Course Glancer, we are also in the process of creating a way to support students' decision-making in their course selection by means of interactive knowledge visualization. The psychological effects associated with this are being investigated by Christian Spletter as part of his doctorate, which is being supervised by Prof. Dr. Martin J. Eppler.

Creativity and Life Design Lab

Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach

In the field of creativity, Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach was able to continue and expand his collaboration with Stanford University. He taught at the Stanford Institute of Design on the topics of visual thinking, creativity and storytelling. He also presented his paper from the *Information Visualization Conference (iV22)* on Design Thinking and presented his current project on the "Science of Action", about which he also gave a talk at IBM in Silicon Valley and at the Swiss incubator Swissnex in San Francisco. He has now been officially named "Visiting Professor" at the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at the University of Stanford.

HSG Impact Award for the Life Design Lab

The work of the past years at the Life Design Lab was honored this year by the HSG Impact Award, which made the team around Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach, Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler and Prof. Dr. Sabrina Bresciani very happy. The award was given for the impact of Life Design on individuals, companies and society. Among other things, the Life Design Lab completed a large project with SwissRe on "Design Your Work-Life-Experience" in which more than 1000 employees applied Life Design to increase resilience and well-being. In addition, the Life Design Lab is collaborating with the World Demographic Forum. At a World Demographic Forum presentation at the United Nations in New York, Life Design was presented as a focus area that can help people at different stages of life to proactively manage transitions.

Trailer HSG Impact Award 2022:
Life Design



Video: Impact Award for the
Life Design Lab
[unisg.ch/de/news/videoreihen/
impact-awards/](https://www.unisg.ch/de/news/videoreihen/impact-awards/)

"Creativity & Science of Action"
at the opening of the new
Hasso Plattner Institute of Design
at the University of Cape Town
(October 2022)



Teaching Activities & Research Communication

In addition to his activities at the University of St. Gallen at the Executive School, in the Contextual Studies and in the Young Investigator Program, Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach's expertise continued to be in demand at the Swiss Summer School, at the African Doctoral Academy and at the MBA at Stellenbosch University. By invitation, he also gave a lecture and workshop on "Creativity & Science of Action" at the opening of the new Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at the University of Cape Town, where a new collaboration is in preparation.

SNF Grant for the "Science of Action"

In addition, Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach received his second SNF grant, which enabled him to present and advance the research project "Science of Action" at Columbia University in New York. In addition to various lectures and workshops at the Columbia Design Studio, he collaborates with the co-working provider wework and the City of New York. The collaboration also inspired the first Life Design Research Track at an academic conference, initiated by Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach, which debuted with 16 papers at the European Academy of Management in Zurich.

Life Design Action Book

In June, the new book "Life Design Actionbook" was published by Schäffer-Poeschel Verlag, in which the concept of the "Science of Action" as a framework for overcoming procrastination was published in a book for the first time worldwide. Various podcast interviews and newspaper articles (e.g. in the well-known FOCUS magazine in Germany) show the great interest in the topic of Life Design and Procrastination. The topic of Life Design continues to enjoy great popularity, be it in the courses offered for the HSG Early Career Program, in the Career Service Center or the HSG Children's University, where Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach was able to successfully teach Life Design for the first time to 400 children aged 8–18.

Research on Communication In and By Non-profit Organizations

Dr. Fabienne Bünzli & Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler

The non-profit research area at =mcm1 is concerned with persuasion in non-profit campaigns. The focus of interest is the effect of verbal and visual campaign content on the attitudes and behavior of target groups.

Research Collaboration with Pennsylvania State University

At the beginning of 2023, Dr. Fabienne Bünzli followed a call as Visiting Assistant Professor to Pennsylvania State University, USA, and had the honor to teach and conduct joint research for one year. During this time, she taught several courses at the Bachelor level on the topics of "Strategic Organizational Communication" and "Persuasion". Her courses were met with great interest from students and received excellent evaluations. Dr. Fabienne Bünzli also became involved in the department and joined the Teaching Faculty Committee, which represents the interests of the teaching faculty and serves as a think tank for innovations in teaching.

An important activity during Dr. Fabienne Bünzli's stay at Pennsylvania State University was to further deepen the collaboration between Prof. Martin J. Eppler, Prof. Dr. James Price Dillard (Penn State) and Dr. des. Yuwei Li (Penn State). Thus, they successfully continued their joint research on visual reactance effects in sustainability communication. First, they finalized a study funded by the GFF Basic Research Fund at the University of St.Gallen. The study is the first experimental study using a so-called within-subjects design to investigate why certain images in environmental campaigns lead to a boomerang effect. Dr. Fabienne Bünzli then had the privilege of presenting this pioneering study at the *Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA)* in Paris. The study is currently in the second round of review at the journal of *Human Communication Research*.

Furthermore, the team around Prof. James Price Dillard, Dr. des. Yuwei Li, and Dr. Fabienne Bünzli launched another study. The project investigates to what extent certain verbal elements (emotional appeals) as well as visual elements (camera distance between photo model and recipient) trigger reactance to climate campaigns. In addition to the innovative content of the research project, the design of the study is also a novelty. Using a sophisticated within-subjects design that includes 288 experimental stimuli, the findings are extremely robust and broadly supported. The team is currently analyzing the data. Initial results are promising - especially in view of the planned submission to a conference as well as to a top journal.

Public Relations Campaigning: Bernese Red Cross

The interplay between image and text in public relations campaigns also engaged the =mcm across chairs. Together with Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva and Alena Hofer, Prof. Dr. Martin J. Eppler and Dr. Fabienne Bünzli researched the interplay between image and text based on a campaign of the *Bernese Red Cross*. The corresponding experimental study was published this year at the *International Journal of Business Communication*.

Social Media Communication for Non-profit Organizations

Another research focus is on multimodal social media communication of non-profit organizations and the corresponding effects on user engagement (e.g. number of likes, comments or shares). In the spirit of "lived networking" between HSG institutes, Dr. Fabienne Bünzli and Dr. Omid Alizadeh Afrouzi from the Centro Latinoamericano-Suizo (CLS-HSG) have launched a joint pilot project. Dr. Fabienne Bünzli and Dr. Omid Alizadeh Afrouzi then presented the theoretical background, the design and the first preliminary results at the *Annual Conference of the Association for Business Communication (ABC)* in Florida. At the conference, the team received important input that was also incorporated into the paper. The resulting manuscript has been accepted for presentation at the *2023 Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA)* in Toronto. Furthermore, the paper is currently under review at the journal *Mass Communication and Society*.

The exciting results of this study prompted Prof. Dr. Martin J. Eppler and Dr. Fabienne Bünzli to start further research projects on this topic in the coming year. Planning and conceptualization are already in full swing. The goal is to make the results known to a broad audience through conference presentations and journal publications.

After her stay abroad in the USA, Dr. Fabienne Bünzli returned (also geographically) to the University of St.Gallen at the end of the year, where she will devote herself with full vigor to the aforementioned projects as well as to teaching at MBA and Bachelor level.

Using
Visual Variation:
21 Cognitive Biases

Research on Biases

Dr. Christian Muntwiler & Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler

Another research focus of =mcm1 is the investigation of the influence of cognitive biases on strategic decision making and potential debiasing methods that can be applied in this context. As part of this focus, a visual representation of 190 such "cognitive biases" has been further developed (already since 2021). In addition, we have represented about dozens of such thinking biases using the Visual Variation technique (see illustration on the right) and used them in different channels, media and occasions.

In 2022, two articles were also published in this context. One of them is based on our experiments on a specific bias, the Illusion of Explanatory Depth. The second article is based on a study initiated in collaboration with NIM Nürnberg Institut für Marktentscheidungen e.V., which investigates the prevalence of cognitive biases in management decisions among 500 managers from Forbes 500 companies, and shows the results of this study regarding managers' bias awareness, prioritization and bias blind spots.

In addition, Christian Muntwiler's dissertation based on this research focus was successfully completed.

A simplified illustration of 21 key management decision traps using the Visual Variation method.

Curse of Knowledge		How you believe you're explaining it. But how you're actually explaining it.
Sunk Cost		You should stop it now. But you keep investing/working on it.
Confirmation Bias		You should look for other evidence. But you just confirm your own view.
Functional Fixedness		You should use it differently. But you use it as always.
Planning Fallacy		It take this long. But you think it takes this long.
Bandwagon Effect		The others go this way. So you go that way too.
Anchoring Bias		You should decide independently of a reference point. But you get anchored by somebody's initial reference point.
Problem solving set		You should use the solution most fitting to the problem. But you re-use the solution that helped you recently.
Endowment Effect		How much you should value what you've got. How much value you actually give it.
Reactance		Where others want you to go. Where you go as a result of this threat.
Dunning Krueger Effect		How well you think you master a new topic. How well you actually understand it.
Loss Aversion		What you should persue in spite of likely losses. What you do when you face losses.
Hyberbolic Discounting		How much you should value future benefits. How much you actually value them.
Hot Hand Fallacy		A positive result doesn't guarantee another one. But you think so anyway.
Stereotyping		How you should assign characteristics to people of a certain group. How you actually assign characteristics to people.
Availability		How likely an event is. How likely you think it is if you can remember it easily.
Imaginability		How likely an event is. How likely you think it is if you can imagine it easily.
Illusion of Explanatory Depth		How deeply you think you understand something. How deeply you actually understand it.
In-group Bias		How you should build a team. How you actually build a team.
Framing		How you should assess information. How you actually assess it.
Illusory Superiority		How you should see yourself compared to others.

Corporate Communication

Over the past few decades, the world has witnessed a rapid proliferation of new technologies that have revolutionized the way we interact and communicate with each other. From smartphones to social media to generative AI, these technologies have not only transformed the way we communicate and how we do business but also have had a significant impact on the social fabric of our society. As we continue to develop and adopt new technologies, it is important to consider the potential implications they may have on our social fabric and communication patterns. This is the focus of our team's work at =mcm2.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the impact of misinformation on public health and public opinion. The rapid spread of misinformation on social media platforms has led to confusion, mistrust, and a lack of cooperation among the public. While technology has made it easier to access information, it has also created an environment where misinformation can spread rapidly. It is essential to explore the impact of misinformation on human communication and social fabric and to find ways to mitigate its effects. We have continuously researched this field since the pandemic began and have in the last years particularly worked on the connection between fear and misinformation.

Journal "Morals & Machines", Issue No. 3 2022



One technology that has garnered significant attention in recent years is Quantum AI. The potential of Quantum AI to revolutionize the way we communicate and process information is huge. However, the development of this technology also raises concerns about the impact it may have on our social fabric. As Quantum AI becomes more sophisticated, it may lead to a shift in the way we interact with each other and may even create new forms of social inequality. It is therefore important to explore the potential impact of Quantum AI on human communication and social fabric. This is the main focus of our joint European research project "Qshift".

Human judgement, intuition, experience is increasingly being supplemented and challenged by the growing options posed by data analytics. Data-driven forecasting has long been used to stock warehouses appropriately. Using AI and quantum computers will make it possible to simulate and forecast ever larger, systemic relationships. All of this will change how managers make strategic or even operational decisions. But what will remain of the freedom to make decisions and managerial autonomy if AI systems can interpret the world better and more precisely than humans? These are the questions we explored in joint study with Kienbaum Consulting International. How managers make decisions using the power of AI will impact a company's strategy, risk profile and its economic performance. Our data provides interesting insights into all these aspects and it also reveals significant potential for development.

One extreme idea entails the perspective of using AI-based voting systems to replace human elections. While this technology has the potential to improve the efficiency and accuracy of elections (if the correction for data biases will be possible among wome other challenges), it also raises concerns about the impact on human communication and social fabric. It is essential to explore the potential impact of such an AI-based voting system to consider the ethical implications of such a system and to critically examine the potential impact of new technologies on our society and to find ways to mitigate any negative effects they may have.

All these research threads come together at one point of reference, and that is the question: How will we secure freedom and agency for human beings in an environment that is rapidly changing through technological innovation, and how much freedom and agency will these new technologies at some point be granted by humanity itself?

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Research on the Impact of the Covid Pandemic

In 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to have a impact on the world and our work. We examined the effects of Covid via two different studies.

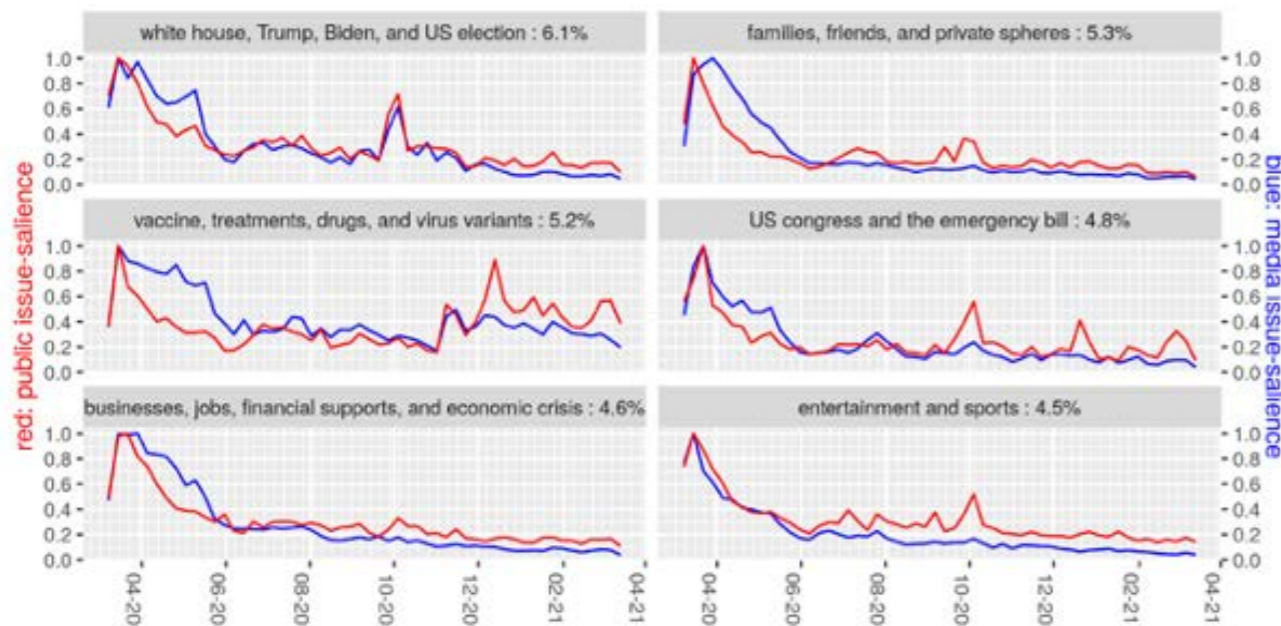
First Study: Analysis of the Mediated Discourse on COVID-19

In the first study, we analyzed over 150,000 English-language news articles from 39 major international news organizations that were most frequently shared on Twitter. Our goal was to understand how the media and public were discussing the pandemic and its various implications. Using standard topic modeling algorithms, we identified 26 relevant COVID-19-related agendas and created weekly time-series trends for each agenda. By examining a large dataset of pandemic-related Twitter activity, we found that the pandemic's psychological implications were potential confounders that influenced how the media and public prioritized certain agendas. Our findings also suggested that the mental health implications of the pandemic need to be considered when analyzing how the media and the public frame discussions about the pandemic. Additionally, we evaluated the media's agenda-setting power and the public's reverse-agenda setting strength, finding evidence of agenda-setting and reverse agenda-setting for five of the agendas. Surprisingly, the media's agenda-setting influence was limited to only about 20% of the agendas.

Second Study: Implementation of Digital Technologies during COVID-19

In a second study, we examined the challenges of implementing digital technologies in the Swiss public administration during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study aimed to analyze the opinions and perspectives of experts involved in the deployment of SwissCovid, a digital contact tracing app rolled out by the federal government. By conducting qualitative semi-structured interviews with members of the federal and cantonal governments and the Swiss National COVID-19 Science Task Force, the study sought to generate insights into common challenges and suggest potential reforms for the adoption of digital technologies within public administration. The interview data was analyzed by applying topic modeling algorithms and manual thematic coding. Our analysis revealed the limitations of current digitization efforts within the Swiss public administration, including gaps in expertise, unsatisfactory institutional structures, and shortcomings in the legal framework. The study, currently under review, provides evidence that the digital infrastructure of the Swiss public administration should be improved if it is to remain agile and quick to deal with emergency situations like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Excerpt from the poster on pandemic agenda setting presented at ICA 2022 in Paris. The graphs show media and public issue salience for the top six topics.



AI Suffrage Project

Automated decision-making using algorithms and artificial intelligence raises issues that challenge long-held notions about the design and functioning of liberal democracy. The =mcm2 team has taken up this discussion in a series of scientific publications, teaching events, conference contributions, lectures, and publications in leading popular media in order to initiate a debate on the social acceptance of digital technologies in the democratic process. In particular, the AI Suffrage project, funded by the HSG's Basic Research Fund, has enabled us to stimulate public discussion with suggestions and food for thought. The project aimed to investigate the following premise: What if political decisions could be derived from comprehensive datasets? Could digital data on the electorate be collected and fed into an AI-based voting system to predict politically relevant issues and voter preferences that would formally guide the decision-making of parliamentarians and ultimately replace the vote of citizens at the ballot box?

Equipped with this controversial idea, we addressed different target groups through a variety of channels in the German-speaking media. We contributed to the public debate on the digitalization of democracy through articles in popular newspapers in which we argued that AI may better solve distribution conflicts in politics than humans and speculated whether AI might better guarantee the conditions for democracy than human intelligence. The history of the impact of this project included the podcast "AI Voting Rights: Are Machines Better Democracies?", part of the "ada - Understanding Tomorrow Today" series (www.join-ada.podigee.io), in which we extensively discuss the idea of an AI-based voting system. We explored the trend of delegating decisions to machines to optimize tasks and whether this thinking could and should be applied to political decision-making processes as a whole. Furthermore, the project involved interactive discussions and voting at conferences and university courses during the spring and fall semesters of 2022, including a thought experiment on the AI voting system at the Morals & Machines conference in Düsseldorf and the Mercator Lecture 2022 at the "Stiftung Mercator" in Berlin.



Thought experiment in class:
Who would approve of an
automated voting system?

CHANSE Project: Qshift

Decision-Making in the Age of Quantum AI

Quantum Computing (QC) emerged as an entirely new form of computation that builds on quantum theory and computer sciences. In contrast to traditional computers, the basic promise of QC is a technology that can calculate inputs simultaneously and thus significantly enhance the speed of solving complex computational tasks. For instance, computational simulations to predict natural phenomena can be enhanced by the help of QC. Another example is that quantum-like modeling can help illuminate our understanding of information processing in the brain. Similarly, QC methods have been applied to the simulation of societal dynamics such as social networks. Numerous facts signpost the transformational potential of QC. In a recently published report, the consulting firm McKinsey estimates the global market value of QC to exceed 1 trillion USD by 2035, with major impacts on the financial, chemical, pharmaceutical and automotive sectors. Leading technology giants, such as Google, IBM, Microsoft, Amazon, and Alibaba, have allocated billions of USD in research and development investment to their QC efforts. Meanwhile, national governments and intergovernmental actors are also investing in QC: The European Union has devoted over EUR 1 billion of its budget to QC, for example through the Quantum Technologies Flagship initiative, while the US has earmarked USD 1 billion and China is investing USD 10 billion in a National Quantum Computing Laboratory. This commitment of funding is flanked by impressive breakthroughs in QC development over the last years. While IBM has announced that their latest system named Eagle operates on a 127 qubit quantum processor that cannot be simulated by any existing classical supercomputer, even more recently, QuEra, a startup by MIT and Harvard University physicists, built a 256 qubit quantum computer based on the Ryberg approach.

Recent research has underlined the significant potential of QC applied specifically to solve computational problems within artificial intelligence (AI) demonstrating that while these two domains are independently impactful for humanity, they can be mutually enhancing. Experts expect the high performance of QC to significantly boost the speed and efficiency of AI traditionally powered by classical computing, coining such fusion as Quantum AI. Besides enabling extremely complex computational modeling that cannot be performed with current systems, progress in quantum reinforcement learning could allow for meta-learning, i.e. the ability “to learn how to learn” which was not achieved with conventional AI so far. This points to the possibility of revolutionary quantum-enhanced smart technologies that overcome many existing bottlenecks in conventional AI in the near future.

The combination of quantum computing and AI holds massive promises, such as greatly facilitating decision-making and benefitting healthcare, but also introduces risks involving data privacy, national security, immense investment costs, and susceptibility to hype. However, there is a sharp deficit on the analysis of social narratives and the impact of these pros and cons surrounding quantum computing and quantum AI. Therefore, the objective of this project is to employ a literature review and automated content analysis in order to interpret how current narratives in different societal segments and academic fields affect the development of both quantum computing and AI. In our European research project, funded by the CHANSE-program, the University of St. Gallen collaborates with the Charité in Germany as well as the Universities of Copenhagen and Lund to investigate the potential and caveats of this new technology regarding its social impact and to ideally shape the implementation in a way that will allow for thorough inclusive and fair approaches. In our part of the project we will analyse the current narratives about Quantum Computing to better understand how they might shape public awareness and social acceptance.

Technology Narratives on Quantum Computing

To answer these questions, our research team at =mcm2 is currently mainly focussing on technology narratives. These are explicit or implicit stories that are told about technologies. Like all other narratives, technology narratives are a communication format but concentrate on the nature, advancement, and impact of a certain technology. They can come along in the form of media articles, academic papers, blog posts, videos, documentaries, and science fiction novels, and more.

Technology narratives have a crucial role in the development of technology and people’s interaction and engagement with it. These narratives can be positive or negative about the technology, and they can determine what aspects of the technology are salient and which aspects are suppressed or neglected in these stories. As a result, these narratives can affect people’s perception of, attitudes about, and even the level of trust in technology. Recent examples of narratives around artificial intelligence (AI) demonstrate this point: an overemphasis on humanoid representations may increase anxiety about AI and exaggerated promise may in turn affect public confidence, thus hindering the adoption of this technology.



Kick-off CHANSE project “Qshift” in Berlin, November 2022

MORE ABOUT CHANSE

www.snf.ch

Quantum computing (QC) has recently attracted much attention not only in academia, but also in media, industry and government, and narratives surrounding it are emerging and evolving. For example, “Quantum Supremacy”, which refers to quantum computers outperforming classical computers, has been appeared very frequently in media coverage, since Google claimed to have reached “Quantum Supremacy”. However, the use of “supremacy” has been noted to have a problematic association with “racism”. Some have suggested replacing the term with “quantum advantage”, but this new term could also lead to an overpromise of the technology, which consequently influence its future adoption.

In this project, we will explore how QC is portrayed and perceived in academia, media, governmental documents, and industrial reports. Specifically, we attempt to answer the following critical research questions:

1. Which narratives surrounding QC are most prevalent and what are their historical roots?
2. How are these narratives influencing people’s perception of this technology and how are they shaping its development?
3. What are the implications of current QC narratives for communicators, policy makers and practitioners?

By answering these questions, we can gain valuable insights into the social and cultural dimensions of QC technology. These insights are crucial for guiding the design and development of this new technology in a manner that is more aligned with the values and interests of the broader society.

We analyze these narratives by automated content analysis which describes methods where text analysis is, to some degree, automatically handled by computers. Although automated content analysis cannot completely grasp texts and is prone to some uncertainty and errors, the techniques can greatly augment analysis by reviewing enormous amounts of literature and detecting crucial text associations. For example, sentiment analysis and keyword extractions are two valuable methods to uncover underlying semantic patterns and attitudes among different academic fields and media articles on quantum computing and AI. Accordingly, automated content analysis is apt to improve understandings of the societal narratives and sentiments surrounding quantum AI in academic and media content.

Media & Culture

The Chair of Media and Culture specializes in different aspects of the relationship between media, technology, and cultural change from issues that relate to media and democratic cultures (e.g. social media, alternative media, journalism) to AI cultures and data futures. Over the last year we focused on research projects which explored the complex relationship between AI technologies, cultural transformations, data privacy and human rights.

The year 2022 has been a successful year for all the =mcm3 team! In the subsection *Research Highlights* below you will find all the details of our accomplishments, with a focus on the many different research outputs as well as media appearances.

An important success that we achieved this year is that together with the Institute for Business Ethics (IWP-HSG) and the Institute of Computer Science (ICS-HSG) we received a development grant to design a new project on AI, Youth and Human Rights by *The Botnar Foundation*. During the year the Chair of Media and Culture, Prof. Barassi, has continued to pursue her commitment to research excellence and collaboration as well as to public engagement. In the summer 2022 she was a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies at Loughborough University, UK. In addition to that over the year she was invited to speak at different public and policy driven events. For instance, she participated in a round table discussion at Wilton Park virtual dialogue “Lancet and Financial Times Governing Health Futures 2030” (Feb 2022) and she delivered a keynote at the *National Congress of Italian Pediatrics* on the relationship between AI and Childhood (May, 2022). Furthermore Prof. Barassi was an invited speaker at the *WiredNextFest* (October 2022), gave a one hour lecture at *Biennale di Tecnologia* at the Politecnico di Torino (November, 2022) and she also co-organized a workshop on Youth and AI at the *Geneva City Hub* in conjunction to the *UN Forum on Business and Human*

Rights (November, 2022). Prof. Barassi’s research has also appeared on different media outlets, including two radio interviews on *RSI*, two interviews on the *Italian Radio Scienza*, and one full article on *The Huffington Post*.

Another important success for our team was that Dr. Philip Di Salvo has joined our team in November 2021 as Postdoctoral Research Assistant, replacing Dr. Antje Scharenberg who has been awarded a 2 year GFF International Postdoctoral Fellowship for her new research on civil society organizations at sea and media technologies. Dr. Di Salvo obtained his PhD from the Università della Svizzera italiana (USI)’s Institute of Media and Journalism where he has also held teaching and research positions (2012-2021). Over the last year he was also Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)’s Department of Media and Communications (2021-2022) and has worked as Lecturer at NABA - New Academy of Fine Arts in Milan, Italy (2018-2020). As a freelance journalist, Dr. Di Salvo has written for *Wired*, *Motherboard/Vice*, *Esquire* and other publications covering the social impacts of technology, has worked as the European Journalism Observatory (EJO)’s Italian editor and is a member of the board of DIG Festival, an international investigative journalism event based in Italy. Dr. Di Salvo has authored two books (LUISS University Press, Rome, 2019; Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2020) and several articles.

At the =mcm3 we strongly believe in the importance of research-led teaching and in the last year Prof. Dr. Barassi has taught in the Media Concentration Area of the Contextual Studies Program as well as on the DOK. She has also designed a new course for the MOK Masters Program. As we shall see in our *Teaching Highlights* section, perhaps the best success when it came to teaching was the launch of the MA Certificate Program Digital Communication and Journalism (Formerly Business Journalism), as well as the running of the ‘Leadership Program for Media Executives’, which is organized together with the MAZ (Die Schweizer Journalistenschule, Lucern) and the Akademie für Publizistik (Hamburg).



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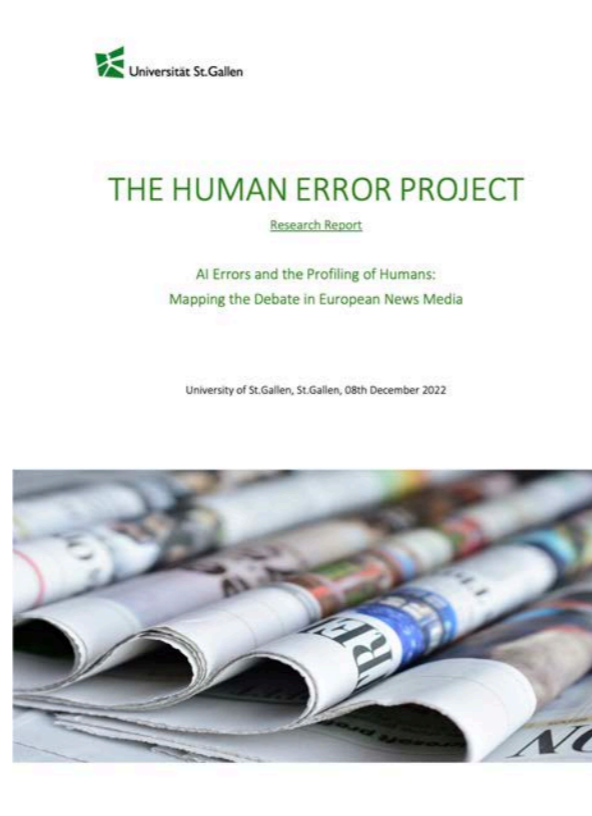
The Human Error Project: AI, Human Rights, and the Conflict over Algorithmic Profiling

Ongoing Research Project

At the end of 2020 we launched a new research project titled *The Human Error Project: AI, Human Nature and the Conflict over Algorithmic Profiling*, which combines anthropological theory with critical data research and explores the emerging debates and conflicts over AI error, algorithmic profiling and human rights. We launched The Human Error Project because we believe that one of the most fundamental questions of our times has become that of mapping, studying, and analyzing the emerging debates and conflicts over AI fallacy and algorithmic profiling. With this project we position ourselves amongst those scholars that have called for an analysis of the ‘political life of technological errors’ (Aradau and Blanke, 2021) and for a qualitative approach to the understanding of algorithmic failures (Munk et al., 2022; Rettberg, 2022). Our aim is to map the discourses and listen to the human stories of different sections of society, to try and understand how AI errors - when it comes to the profiling of humans - are experienced, understood and negotiated. To achieve our goals, The Human Error Project team is researching three different areas of society where these conflicts over algorithmic profiling are being played out in Europe: *the media* (work package 1); *civil society* (work package 2) and *businesses* (work package 3). For all these different sections of society we are gathering data primarily through three main methodologies: critical discourse analysis, organizational mapping, and the collection of 100 in-depth interviews.

Work Package 1: Media

In 2022, we completed the work package 1 of The Human Error Project and published its first report resulting from the first two years of research (Feb. 2020 – Feb. 2022). The report, titled “AI Errors and the Profiling of Humans: Mapping the Debate in European News Media” [🔗](#) is based on a critical discourse analysis of over 500 news articles published in France, Germany and the United Kingdom across 15 general interest newspapers. Overall, the 60 pages report looks into how AI errors and algorithmic profiling are covered by European media and sheds light on the juxtaposed, contradictory narratives that are shaping the debate around AI and human rights. The report discusses an array of case studies and instances that offer an overview of how different AI systems can misunderstand and mismeasure humans and how they get covered by European journalists. The report is divided in two parts. On the one hand it looks at the coverage of errors, inaccuracies, and biases in facial, speech and emotion recognition technologies, and on the



Published Report: "AI Errors and the Profiling of Humans: Mapping the Debate in European News Media"

other hand on the reporting of how AI errors are impacting on employment and work, crime and policing, health, and social media censorship.

The report, which is freely available on the Human Error Project’s website, has been announced through a blog post authored by Prof. Dr. Veronica Barassi and published on the Media@LSE blog in December 2022. The post, titled “AI, The Western Illusion of Human Nature and The Human Error Project” [🔗](#) was widely circulated online and on social media among academics and the critical AI international community. Additionally, the report was also featured in “The Syllabus” weekly newsletter, which offers a selection of academic, journalistic, and cultural content. The Syllabus project was launched by author Evgeny Morozov. Prof. Dr. Barassi also discussed the outcome of the Human Error Project on RSI’s Rete Uno [🔗](#) addressing the Italian-speaking Swiss audience.

Work Package 2: Civil Society

Society Organizations of The Human Error Project which was aimed at investigating how civil society organizations understand the relationship between algorithmic errors, AI ethics and human rights. This work package was led by Dr. Antje Scharenberg who carried out an organizational mapping of civil society organizations in Europe and a critical discourse analysis of their websites. The work package also included the collection of 35 in-depth interviews with civil society actors. The findings of this part of the project will be published in Summer 2023 in a Research Report titled: “The civil society’s struggle against algorithmic profiling in Europe”.

Work Package 3: Businesses

We also worked proactively on work package 3, Critical Tech Entrepreneurs, which maps and investigates the AI Ethics debates in Europe amongst business-leaders and aims to carry out 35 in-depth interviews with entrepreneurs that are developing privacy-by-design, ethical, or human-centered AI solutions. Over the last year we have carried out 28 out of 35 interviews.

Extension of Work Package 1: Media

The hiring of Dr. Di Salvo and the publications of our Critical Discourse Analysis report led us to extend work package 1 on the Media and complement the discourse analysis with interviews with Journalists. We realized that the media play a pivotal role in shaping public understanding of AI innovation and ethics, but that they are shaped by conflicting and contradictory media frames. Hence, we decided to also carry out in-depth interviews with 35 journalists who focus on tech reporting. So far we carried out 15 interviews with journalists and reporters based in various European countries. The data gathering phase will conclude in late spring 2023.

Ongoing Research & Scientific Communication

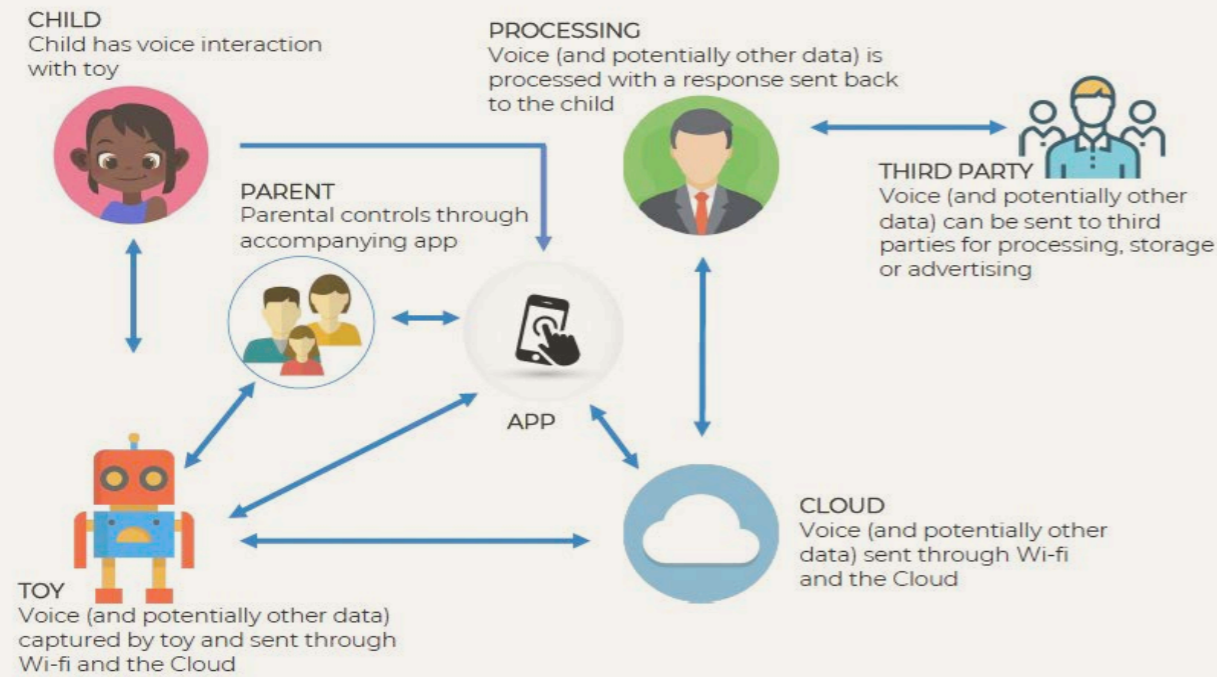
During the last year, as it can be seen above, The Human Error Project was primarily focused on data gathering and the publication of the first report of the project. The plan is to eventually publish three research reports. However over the last years we have also worked proactively towards different conference papers, articles and book chapters. Prof. Barassi and Rahi Patra, published a co-authored article titled “AI Errors in Health? The problem of scientific bias and the limits of media debate in Europe” [🔗](#) in the 2022 issue of *Morals and Machines* journal. In addition Prof. Barassi has published a book chapter in the Routledge Companion to Media Anthropology (2022) titled “Algorithmic Violence in Everyday Life and the Role of Media Anthropology” [🔗](#).

We also presented four papers at leading international conferences. Prof. Dr. Barassi presented a paper at the Royal Anthropological Institute Conference in London (RAI 2022) in June 2022. Furthermore, members of The Human Error team attended the 9th European Communication Research and Education Conference (ECREA 2022) in Aarhus (Denmark) to present the preliminary results of the critical discourse analysis report. Additionally, Dr. Scharenberg and Prof. Dr. Barassi presented preliminary results about the role of civil society organizations in the struggle against algorithmic profiling in Europe at the Association for Internet Research Conference (AoIR)’s annual conference in Dublin (Ireland) and at the “Shaping AI” research network at the Institut National de la Recherche Scientifique in Quebec (online).

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THE HUMAN
ERROR
PROJECT

thehumanerrorproject.ch



DATA FLOW IN ENTERTAINMENT VOICE TECH
Hello, Barbie? - Poster Presentation by Shimshak et al., 2020

Hello Barbie! – Voice Recognition, Cultural Values & Privacy-by-design in Entertainment Voice Tech for Children

Ongoing Research Project

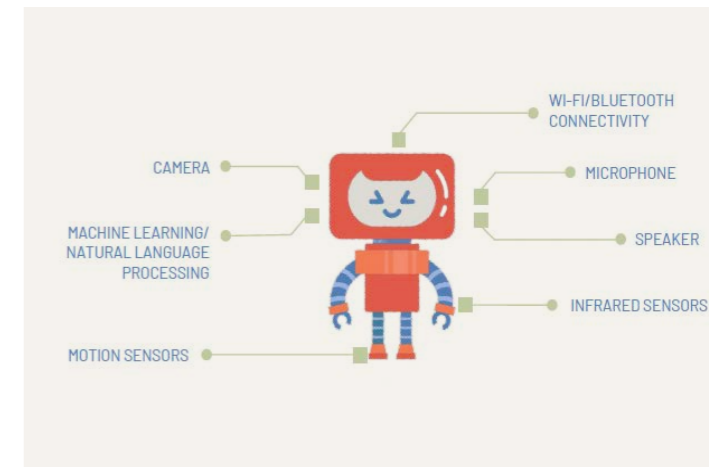
In 2022, the =mcm3 team continued the research collaboration on the project “Hello Barbie! Voice recognition, cultural values, and privacy-by-design in entertainment voice tech for children” which is an international research collaboration with the Australia-based Professors Jenny Kennedy, an ECR, research fellow in the school of Media and Communication at RMIT, and Yolande Strengers, Associate Professor of Digital Technology and Society based at the Emerging Technologies Research Lab at Monash University, who are the authors of the MIT Press book *The Smart Wife: Why Siri, Alexa and Other Smart Home Devices need a Feminist Reboot* (2020). The project is aimed at examining the entertainment products designed for children using voice-recognition software, identifying products available on the global marketplace, and analysing and comparing their privacy controls, terms of service, and the embedded cultural values

within their design. The project received an ECR Seed Funding Grant from the ADM+S Centre’s Research Training Program supported by the Australian Government.

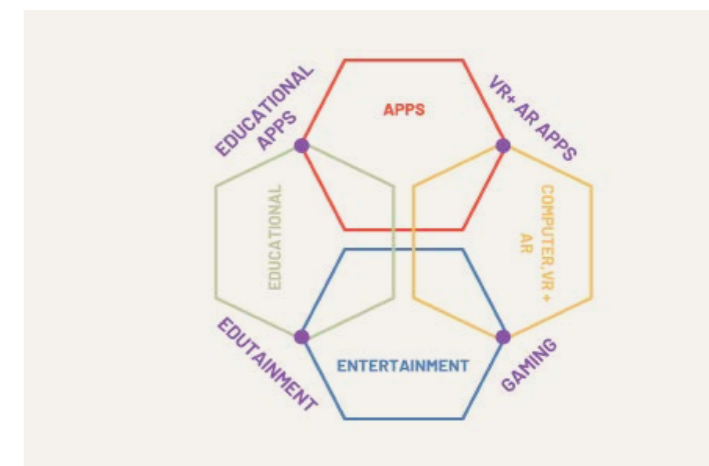
In Summer 2022 we completed the first part of the project which consisted in the mapping of the existing voice-activated entertaining technologies designed for children in Europe and Australia, and it enabled us to gain a deeper understanding of the political economy which characterizes these technologies. Our findings revealed that the market for AI voice-operated toys is profoundly limited, and that whilst promotional cultures of companies often stress on the ‘smartness’ and ‘intelligence’ of their device the offer out there is still inadequate. Our research also revealed that with all the ‘hype’ over the market of AI toys there is very little societal understanding of what these toys can do or on their privacy implications.

We have decided to present the findings of this first part of the research in the form of an accessible poster that was designed by Ms. Shimshak et al. (2022). Prof. Dr. Barassi had the pleasure to present the industry challenges and failures in entertainment voice tech industry during her talk as a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies of Loughborough University in July 2022.

Over the last year, after mapping the AI Toy market and realizing that there were only very few AI Toys that had incorporated all the different features of what we expected from an AI powered voice activated toy (see poster on the Anatomy of a Smart Toy), we decided to purchase four products (two in each team) and document the ‘unboxing experience’ (with a particular focus on privacy policies as well as every day interactions with the toy (ethnographic analysis). Prof. Dr. Barassi and her doctoral research assistant Marie Poux-Berthe focused on the analysis of two voice-AI toy robots and documented how they experienced the unboxing of the toy, its setting up and how the interactions with the toy evolved through several months with a peculiar attention to its data privacy features and the cultural values that the toy conveyed. Throughout the process we collected important data on the privacy implications of such technologies, and the discourses and ideologies embedded in their responses (especially in relation to human computer comparison or interaction).



ANATOMY OF A SMART TOY
Hello, Barbie? - Poster Presentation by Shimshak et al., 2020



TOY MARKET SECTORS
Hello, Barbie? - Poster Presentation by Shimshak et al., 2020

TYPOLGY OF TOYS
Hello, Barbie? - Poster Presentation by Shimshak et al., 2020



Data Protection in Swiss Law Firms

Research Project Completed


In February 2022, the =mcm3 launched a new project titled, "Data Protection in Swiss Law Firms" to shed light on the attitudes, beliefs and day-to-day practices of Swiss law practitioners towards data protection and on benefits associated with finding innovative technological solutions which focus on Privacy by Design/Default. Funding for the project was granted by the Innosuisse Innovationcheck thanks to a collaboration between the =mcm3 and ARCANO, a Swiss Privacy by Design legal technology file sharing solution company, who was interested in understanding the issue of data protection in Swiss law firms more in-depth.

To achieve an in-depth understanding of the privacy issues that affect legal practitioners in their day-to-day work life this research project conducted a mixed quantitative and qualitative survey amongst legal practitioners in Switzerland. The survey focused on four areas of investigation: 1) Understandings of Data Protection and Regulations, 2) Data Protection and File Sharing Practices, 3) Data Training Experience and Literacy, and 4) Understanding of Legal Technology Solutions. The final report discusses the state of awareness, action and room for improvement within the current legal scenario in Switzerland. The aim of this survey was to shed light and give voice to the beliefs, practices and challenges that law practitioners face in their everyday work life when it comes to data protection, and what solutions they are envisaging for their firms and the legal sector in general. Indeed, while some general research discussing issues of data protection in Swiss companies can be found, there is a lack of critical and qualitative understanding of the problems that emerge in everyday practice for law firms, of the ways in which legal practitioners understand data protection, or what they think about the technologies they use.

In total, the survey was distributed to over 4000 Swiss law practitioners. Thus, 160 participants have been recruited and 77 participants have successfully completed the survey. This number fell comfortably within the range of our proposed sample target (min. 50 – max. 100) that is suitable for a mix-method approach which focused on a qualitative dimension. More than three quarters (86%) of the sample participants were employed in positions directly related to practicing law. Hence the results of this survey are particularly reflective of law partners or individuals who belong to the decision-making process when it comes to implementing legal technology solutions.

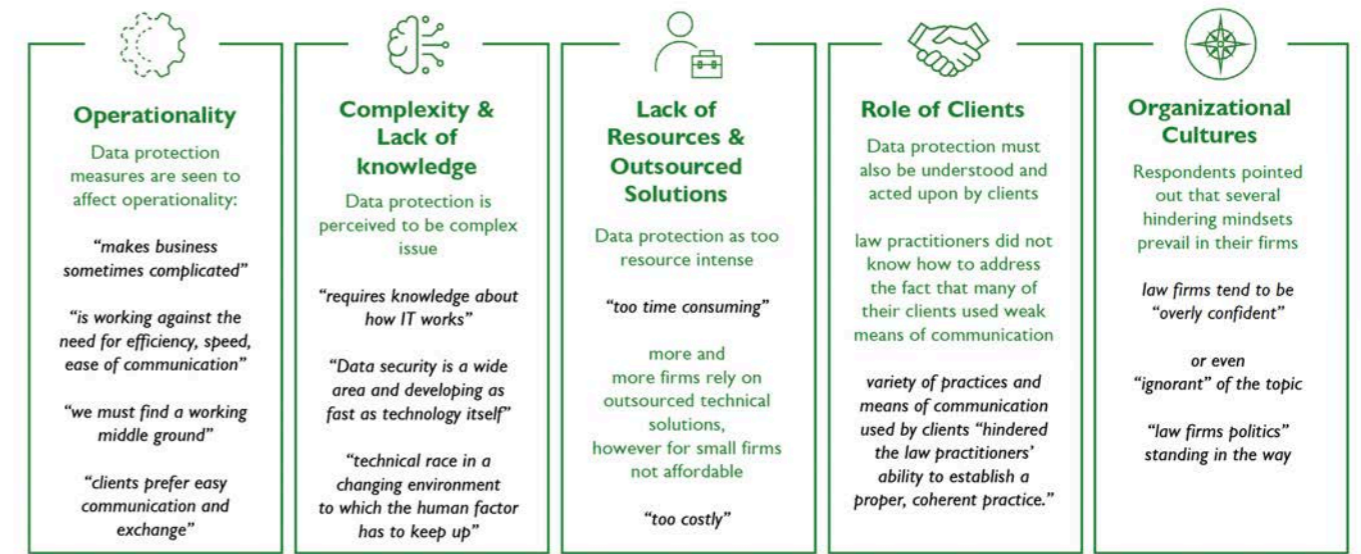
Our survey highlighted *five different yet interconnected challenges* that make the pursue of greater data protection and security difficult. A fundamental issue that emerged in our responses was the *problem of operability (1)* and the fact that data protection makes business more complicated and less efficient. Another fundamental problem was the perception that data protection and security were ever-

changing, that respondents were involved in a technical race in a changing environment to which the human factor has to keep up and in a *field of knowledge that was too complex and too specific (2)*. Our survey also revealed that data protection is seen to be too *resource-intensive (3)* and that outsourcing data security to experts is too costly especially for smaller firms. In addition to these problems our respondents also listed the *malpractices of clients (4)* as well as the *organizational cultures (5)* of firms as barriers to ensuring greater data protection and security. Whilst some of the challenges that have been described by our respondents can be difficult to address, our respondents revealed that the most *effective strategy* to really achieve change seems to be the strategy of *combining (1) behavioural change through more and better data protection training and (2) by investing in and supporting IT solutions that support secure file sharing in Privacy by Design/Default*. In fact, what we realized is that amongst our respondents those who were confident in the data protection strategies of their firm also believed that their firm had developed a culture of handling sensitive and confidential data.

In this research project, Prof. Dr. Barassi was supported by her research assistants Kimberley Kernbach and Rahi Patra who helped her with the data collection, analysis and research report published in September 2022. The findings of the research are open access and aimed at the legal sector in general, the public, as well as those interested in acquiring an in-depth understanding of everyday practices and challenges when developing legal technology solutions, and can be downloaded from mcm.unisg.ch .



Published Report: "Data Protection in Swiss Law Firms"



Key Challenges to Data Protection in Swiss Law Firms: Respondents identified five key challenges. Results from the final report on "Data Protection in Swiss Law Firms"



mcm.unisg.ch

«Data protection is not only about up to date IT, it is also mainly an educational issue. To protect data in an effective way every person in the company must know that we treat sensitive data, must know how to deal with different classes of data, must know how data thieves work (spoofing, phishing, social engineering) to recognize potential attacks, must know how to act in case of a potential data breach.»

Anonymous Survey Participant



During the last year the =mcm3 team contributed to the design and teaching of different courses for the Media Concentration Area of the Contextual Studies Program, and Prof. Dr. Barassi has also taught on the Doctoral Program Organizations and Culture (DOK) and has designed a new course on Media Organizations and Communication Power for the Master in Management and Organizational Cultures (MOK). One of the new courses that Prof. Dr. Barassi designed and launched this year is a new course for the open area of the Contextual Studies Program, in connection to the Teaching Innovation Lab at HSG. This SIGMA Responsible Digital Transformations course is co-taught online at international level with five other Business Universities in the world (including WU Wien, Hitotsubashi University, ESADE, Université Paris Dauphine, Singapore Management University). Also, Dr. Di Salvo and Dr. Scharenberg have designed new courses and proposed them to Media Concentration Area of the Contextual Studies Program. Whilst Ms. Kernbach in the last year has continued to graduate from the CAS in Higher Education and Teaching, it is suspected that she will also become active in teaching in 2023.

Another fundamental news when it comes to Teaching Highlights is the launch of the new Digital Communication and Journalism Certificate Program for MA students. This is the result of the re-structuring of the old Business Journalism Certificate Program, which was approved by the Senate of the University in May 2021.

Furthermore, as you can see below, we also continued our executive teaching collaboration with two institutions of higher education in media and journalism (MAZ, Lucern; Akademie für Publizistik, Hamburg) within the "Leadership Program" for media executives.

Leadership-Program for Media Executives

Executive Teaching

In collaboration with "MAZ – Die Schweizer Journalistenschule" from Lucern and "Akademie für Publizistik" from Hamburg the Institute for Media- and Communication Management is offering an executive teaching program entitled "Leadership – Als Chef/in überzeugen".

The "Leadership Program" addresses editors-in-chief, managing editors and executive leaders in the media industry who have many years of experience in media work, but find themselves confronted with new leadership roles and business management tasks. The program trains participants on topics such as Change Management, Finance and Controlling, Business Models, Product Innovation and Human Resource Management. The program consists of 8 modules which are taught in 16 full-day workshops over a period of one year. The Institute for Media and Communication Management is teaching 2 of the 8 modules, which focus on "New Business Models for Media Companies" and "Product Innovation".

Interested media executives can register for the full program or choose to visit individual modules via mcm.unisg.ch/weiterbildung/programme. We are very much looking forward to welcoming new participants at the HSG in the upcoming year!



DCJ Cohort
Start Autumn 2022

Digital Communication and Journalism

Teaching Program

In September 2022 we successfully launched the renewed teaching program "Digital Communication and Journalism" (DCJ/ "Digitale Kommunikation und Journalismus", DKJ). The teaching program is an additional qualification for HSG master's students, who are interested in an interdisciplinary extension of their main studies towards journalistic news work and public communication. The program educates its participants in journalistic research and writing techniques as well as corporate communication, public relations, and the use of digital platforms. In total the participants complete six courses and graduate with a specific certificate, that functions as a minor to their major master program. A completion of the program allows students to start careers in journalism, media agencies or the public relations departments of companies and NGO's.

The renewed teaching program DCJ replaced the prior teaching program "Business Journalism", which successfully ran since 2010. Following the HSG vision "From Insight to Impact" and yielding at high learning experiences through outstanding teaching concepts, the program was redesigned to add a stronger focus on new digital profile requirements brought forward by the digitalization and social media.

After two years of preparation the new program kicked-off in September 2022 and welcomed 18 master's students. Additionally, we are happy to welcome Dr. Léa Steinacker and Dr. Andreas Meili as new members of the DCJ lecturing team, who now teach the courses "Communication Strategies I" and "Law and Ethics". Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to long-lasting and new media partners of the program which provide and supervise the students' internships taking place within the course "Workshop II". Currently, the following ten media partners actively support the program: SRF Wirtschaft & Online, Finanz & Wirtschaft, Handelszeitung, Bilanz, Neue Zürcher Zeitung (NZZ), Handelsblatt, AWP Finanznachrichten, Blick, Tagensanzeiger, St.Galler Tagblatt, Aargauer Zeitung. The collaboration with a broad variety of media companies remains to be at the heart of the program and interested media companies are invited to reach out to us any time for possible collaborations or internship offerings to co-create the value and success of the Certificate in Digital Communication and Journalism.

Current Media Partners of the DCJ Program

-  Tages-Anzeiger
Zurich, Switzerland
-  SRF
SRF Wirtschaft & Online
Zurich, Switzerland
-  Handelsblatt
Dusseldorf, Germany
-  awp
AWP Finanznachrichten
Zurich, Switzerland
-  Handelszeitung
Zurich, Switzerland
-  BILANZ
BILANZ Wirtschaftsmagazin
Zurich, Switzerland
-  FuW
Finanz und Wirtschaft
Zurich, Switzerland
-  NZZ
Neue Zürcher Zeitung
Zurich, Switzerland
-  Aargauer Zeitung
Aarau, Switzerland

PostDoc & PhD Projects at =mcm3

Ongoing Research



Dr. Antje Scharenberg, PostDoc

Throughout 2022, Dr. Scharenberg has contributed to The Human Error Project's in two main ways. Firstly, she contributed to the development of the critical discourse analysis of AI Errors in European newsmedia in collaboration with her colleagues, focusing in particular on the German speaking and English-speaking media for the aforementioned report that was published in 2022. Secondly, she led the civil society research strand of the project. Between July 2021 and July 2022 she organized, conducted and analyzed a total of 37 interviews with participants based in 15 European countries as well as textual analysis of 30 organizational websites and 7 selected campaigns pages. She presented the findings of this part of the project at AoIR in Dublin and at the Shaping AI research network in Quebec (online) and compiled them in a civil society research report which will be published in 2023 in collaboration with Dr. Di Salvo. Since September 2022, Dr. Scharenberg has been able to further expand her research focus on transnational civil society through a fully funded GFF IPF Fellowship which is hosted by Prof. Barassi's chair and which investigates transnational agency and mediated resistance in sea-based civil society organizations. Dr. Scharenberg already published an article on this new project in The Sociological Review Magazine in August 2022. Two additional articles have been submitted and are currently under journal review: one methodological article for Ethnography and one literature review article on ocean activism for Social Movement Studies. Throughout the year 2022, Dr. Scharenberg also presented five conference papers at the MeCCSA Annual Conference in Aberdeen, at the Institut für Protest- and Bewegungsforschung's Annual Conference at Humboldt University in Berlin, at EISA in Athens and at the University of St. Gallen's 'Commoning Struggles' workshop. Additionally, Dr. Scharenberg was invited to give a guest lecture on her new research project in Tanja Schneider's MA Management, Organisation and Culture course "Organisations and Digital Activism" in October, and presented at the Critical Ethnography Series in September on "Militant Ethnography: Negotiating the Epistemic Politics of Engaged Research". Dr. Scharenberg has also been invited to participate in a workshop on maritime governance in Copenhagen in October 2022, which will result in the forthcoming publication of a chapter in an edited book.

Since September 2022, the =mcm3 hosts Dr. Scharenberg' GFF International Postdoctoral Fellowship project on mediated resistance in sea-bound civil society organizations. The project asks what it means for European civil society to act in the transnational space of the sea, investigating three research questions: 1) what are the particular challenges of acting politically in ocean space; 2) what role do (digital) media and AI technologies play here; and 3) what can sea-bound civil society tell us about the limits of territory-bound politics and the possibilities for transnational agency? The project approaches these questions by analyzing six organizations active in the Mediterranean Sea (civil sea rescue organizations) and the European Atlantic (sea-bound environmental organizations) with three qualitative methods (textual analysis of organizational media, participant observation at key actions and semi-structured interviews). In the first months of the project, Dr. Scharenberg has conducted qualitative textual analysis, started to build important contacts with participants and colleagues at the HSG, in Switzerland, Germany and the UK for future research opportunities and possible collaborations and, once she received ethics clearance, commenced with the conduction of interviews and ethnographic fieldwork.

The project was already able to achieve some early successes. Concretely Dr. Scharenberg has been invited to participate in two research networks: (1) a fieldtrip organized by Prof. Federico Luisetti and Flurina Gradin in the context of the HSG's "Unruly Natures" environmental humanities research network, in September 2021, which will lead to the publication of a blogpost entitled "Hydro Ecologies" (submitted October 2022) and (2) a workshop on "Ocean Infrastructures" at the University of Copenhagen in October 2022 by the director of the Safe Seas maritime research network, which will lead to the contribution of an edited book chapter in 2023, tentatively entitled "Infrastructures of solidarity: considering maritime governance from the perspective of sea-bound civil society". Moreover, Dr. Scharenberg has also already managed to publish a short piece on her new project in The Sociological Review Magazine in August 2022, entitled 'Sea changes: How ocean activism reshapes the way we see borders, sovereignty and power'.

Dr. Philip Di Salvo, PostDoc

Philip Di Salvo joined =mcm3 in November 2022 and he is currently part of the Human Error Project team. Philip Di Salvo is working on a new chapter of the project, dealing with European journalists covering AI errors and algorithmic profiling. The new chapter is based on 35 qualitative interviews and aims at analyzing journalists' backgrounds, ideas and rationales about AI, its potential errors and the role of journalism in contributing to these debates. The outcome of Philip Di Salvo's research within the Human Error Project will result in a report in late 2023 and later in an academic peer-reviewed publication.

Additionally, Philip Di Salvo's most recent research will be featured in some forthcoming publications in 2023. These include a paper for Digital Journalism and book chapters in the following forthcoming volumes: The Routledge Companion to Digital Journalism Studies (2nd Edition); The Palgrave Handbook of Everyday Digital Life and Digital Media and Grassroots Anti-Corruption: Contexts, Platforms and Practices of Anti-Corruption Technologies Worldwide (Edward Elgar Publishing). Since 2023, Philip Di Salvo is also serving as co-editor of the Book Reviews section of the Swiss academic journal Studies in Communication Sciences (SComS) since the end of 2022.

Marie Poux-Berthe, PhD Candidate

Marie Poux-Berthe is a PhD candidate in the Organization Studies and Cultural Theory (DOK) program in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of St. Gallen since September 2020. Her PhD research is concerned with the relations between visions and understandings of technologies and the western construction of old age and aging. With a specific focus on France, she has concentrated her efforts in 2022 in conducting interviews with older people about their relationship to and experience with digital technologies to later compare and analyse institutional, public and professional claims with these personal accounts. She also presented preliminary results of the first phase of her research, focused on the mapping of news media and silver economy discourses on aging in France, at the 9th European Communication Conference taking place in Aarhus University in Denmark in October 2022.

As a PhD Research Assistant on the Human Error Project in the =mcm institute, Marie Poux-Berthe is exploring critical questions about misconstruction of human nature with a specific focus on the process of ageing and ageist algorithmic bias in the field of care and the silver economy. In 2022, she contributed to The Human Error Project taking part in the writing of the project's first report, conducting interviews with critical tech entrepreneurs and continuing the organizational mapping of critical tech businesses in Europe. She also moderated a conversation titled "White Knight AI: Can AI help overcome bias?" on the place and role of AI technologies in addressing (gender) inequality issues with the entrepreneur Nicole Büttner and the CFO of Ringier AG Dr. Annabella Bassler at The Square. She continues to assist Prof. Barassi in the Australian research project "Hello Barbie!" and concentrated her efforts in 2022 in taking part in the ethnographic analyses of voice technologies designed for children selected by the team. Insightful parallels can indeed be drawn between voice-activated technologies designed for children and those designed for older users.



Foresight 2023

=mcm3

Rahi Patra, PhD Candidate

Rahi Patra is a PhD candidate in the Organization Studies and Cultural Theory (DOK) program within the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of St. Gallen. Her PhD research focuses on surveillance technologies and casteism in India from a postcolonial techno-scientific perspective. In the year 2022, Rahi focused on exploring the current state of caste-based practices in relation to surveillance technologies through the voices of Dalit communities who are at the core of this issue and NGOs focused on Dalit rights and empowerment.

In addition to this, Rahi is a PhD Research Assistant on The Human Error Project at the MCM institute where her work relates to scientific racism and algorithmic error when it comes to reading human bodies with a specific focus on health technologies. In 2022, she contributed towards the publication of The Human Error Project's first report concerning the current news media debate in Europe regarding AI errors and profiling of humans. In October 2022, she presented the findings of the report at the 9th European Communication Conference that took place in Aarhus University, Denmark. She also co-authored an article with Prof. Veronica Barassi titled, "AI Errors in Health? The problem of scientific bias and the limits of media debate in Europe" published in the *Morals and Machines* journal based on the findings of the Project. Additionally, her work included organizational mapping and interviewing of critical tech businesses in Europe.

Also, Rahi assisted Prof. Barassi in the research project, "Data Protection of Swiss Law Firms" funded by the Innosuisse Innovationcheck. Her work concerned providing support in the data collection, analysis and writing the final research report that was published in September 2022.

Kimberley Kernbach, PhD Candidate

Kimberley Kernbach is a PhD candidate in the Organization Studies and Cultural Theory (DOK) program since 2018. Within her thesis, entitled "Conceptualizing Audience Engagement for media research and practice", Kimberley Kernbach aims at building a framework of engagement strategies for traditional media companies. Triggered by the digital transformation, publishers and broadcasters are increasingly pressured to find sustainable business models. Thus, building loyal audiences, that find themselves emotionally, behaviorally and cognitively involved in the media product and brand remains to be a crucial task for media companies. Even though media scholars and companies have given great attention to the concept of "Audience Engagement" as a strategy and tool to create strong audience relationships, the body of knowledge remains to be very fragmented. Therefore, the thesis aims at developing a comprehensive framework of "Audience Engagement" which brings together the yet fragmented field of research and learnings from media companies' endeavors in their engagement practices. The thesis is structured in two parts: Firstly, using a deductive approach she has carried out a systematic literature review on the term "Audience Engagement". Secondly, to add an inductive approach to the study and collect case studies, learnings and insights from practice, extensive field research and 50 in-depth interviews with media executives were conducted. The thesis shall be finished and published in 2023.

Further, Kimberley Kernbach supports the =mcm3 as the manager of the master's program in Digital Communication and Journalism (DKJ) since 2020 and is a member of the =mcm3 team since 2017. At times, she also participates in various research projects of the =mcm3 team as for example the "Data Protection of Swiss Law Firms" project in 2022.

We entered 2023 in full speed, with many upcoming projects and commitments. Our first aim for 2023 is to finish the data gathering stage of The Human Error Project and finally focus on the research outputs. We are currently working on a new report on Civil Society Organizations which we aim to publish in Spring/Summer 23. We are also working on one Journal Article provisionally titled The Mediated Lives of AI Errors: How News Coverage in Europe deals with the Human Rights Implications of AI Fallacies, which we aim to submit to a top-ranked journal in the field of Media and Communications such as *Information, Communication and Society* or *Media, Culture and Society*. In February 2023 we have submitted abstracts to the International Association of Media and Communication Research Conference (IAMCR 2023) and the Future of Journalism Conference (Cardiff University) which will take place in Lyon in July and Cardiff in September, and we are awaiting decisions.

We are looking forward to push further also our other projects that relate to the relationship between youth, childhood and AI. Over the last year we have been working on a development grant funded by the Botnar Foundation, together with the Institute of Business Ethics (IWP-HSG) and the Institute of Computer Science (ICS-HSG) and other partners for a project that looks at the human rights implications of AI for children and youth. We are aiming to submit the final report to the Botnar Foundation as well as full application for a 5-year project in March 2023. In addition to that, in 2023 we plan to advance further with our project on AI Voice-Activated Toys (Hello Barbie?). Prof. Barassi will deliver a Keynote at the Datafied Family Conference: Algorithmic Encounters in Care Intimacies, Routine and Play organized by the Institute of Advanced Studies of the University of Sussex. The talk will be based on an article that Prof. Barassi is currently co-authoring with the project team, provisionally titled AI in Children's Toys? Deconstructing Myths, and Hypes of Artificial Intimacy in Voice Operated AI Toys through Ethnographic Lenses.

Digital Communication

The research of =mcm4 is focuses on investigating various aspects of digital communication: analysis of the chances, challenges, and potential impact of emerging digital communication channels (i.e., Metaverse), analysis of the impact and effects of various forms of digital communication, development of concepts for effective and efficient channel-specific and cross-channel communication as well as digital communication analytics. Our research is preferably data-driven and based on both real data scraped and extracted from existing digital communication sources and computational research approach. This approach is combined with prevailing survey based statistical analysis.

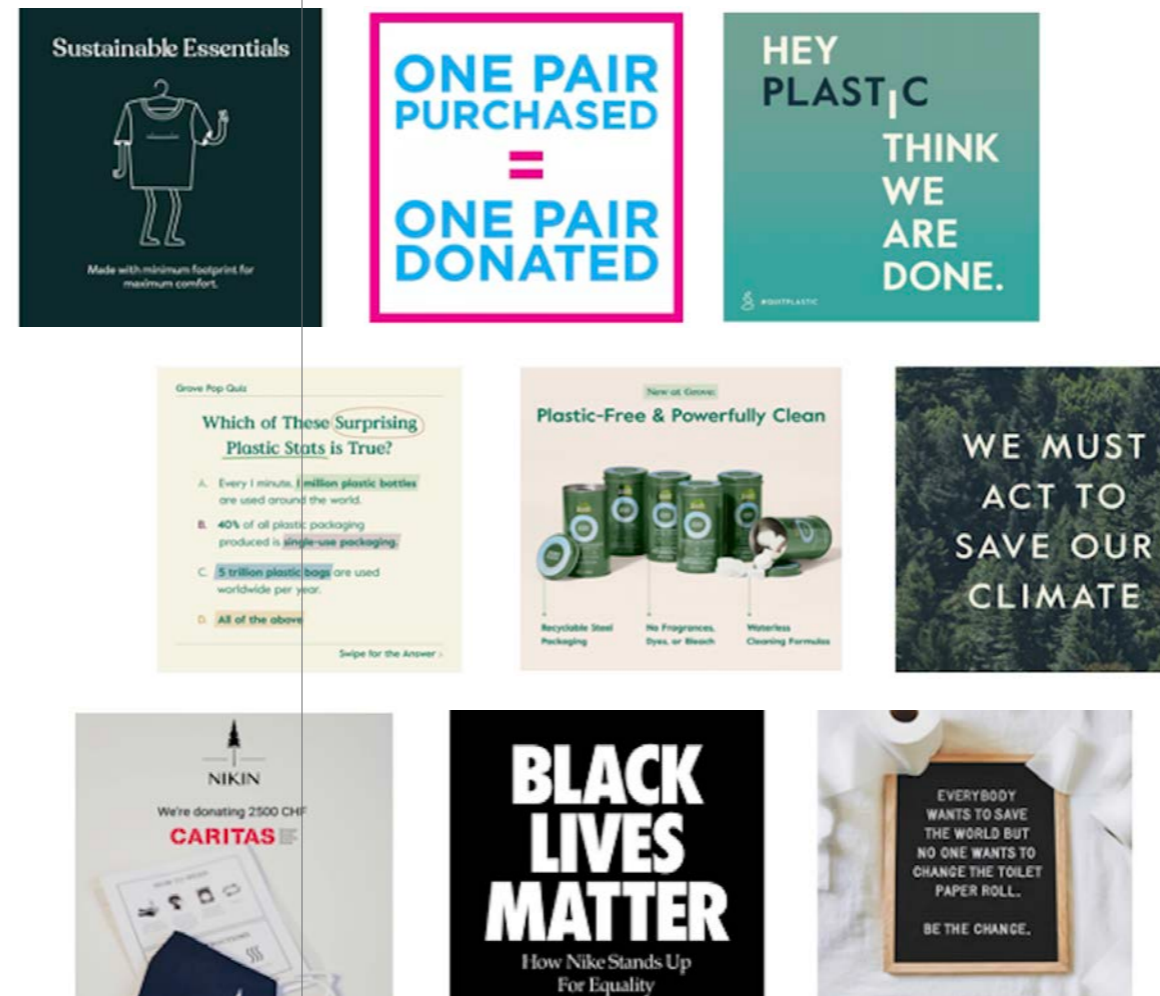
Digital Communication, i.e., communication over the web, social media, the mobile channel, the Metaverse, chatbots and artificial intelligence-based communication has become the dominating way of communicating for companies, individuals and even for smart products. It has become the prevailing way of communication also in different companies' functions such as corporate communication, marketing, human resources, and others. It is transforming the interface and dialog of companies to employees, customers, and other external stakeholders. Digital communication is a dynamic evolving field that is subject to continuous digitalization and transformation based on innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence, data science, analytics, and automatization.

In year 2022 the research of =mcm4 focused on the following areas: analysis of the effectiveness of the social media Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) communication, exploring the priming effect of social media in context of cross-channel communication; mCSR - analysis of Corporate Social Responsibility and sustainability communication through the mobile channel; analysis of the persuasiveness of social media push notification, analysis of the potential of affective computing for automatic analysis of communication processes, analysis of the potential of Metaverse for higher education. In year 2022 we also extended the cooperation with other researchers within the institute and internationally.

The major highlights of =mcm4 in year 2022 are:

- Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva received a visiting professorship at the St. Gallen Institute of Management in Asia (SIG-HSG) and initiated a collaboration related to intercultural digital CSR communication as well as in the context of social entrepreneurship with researcher from this institute.
- Together with 15 European universities and industrial partners, =mcm4 was successful in acquiring "ENTRUST", a prestigious Marie-Curie Doctoral Network Project under Horizon Europe, which started beginning of year 2023.
- Successful acquisition and completion of the Inno-Check project "Negotiation Intelligence - Affective Computing and its application for automatic analysis of communication processes"
- First appraisal of the potential and challenges of the Metaverse on the example of higher education and first conference publication related to Metaverse
- Two doctoral students, Maximilian Schacker and Armando Schär submitted their dissertations
- Successful organization of the 6th Mobile Marketing & Customer Experience Conference

Research on Social Media Communication (See Next Section):
Examples of CSR Communication on IG



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Social Media Communication

Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva, Iago Santos Muraro, Maximilian Schacker

Global challenges such as the ongoing and strengthening climate crisis, the war in Ukraine, the resulting energy crisis, inflation, a looming recession, the changing political and supply-chain world order are shaping the environment in which companies do business. Consumers and other stakeholders increasingly require that companies take position regarding these developments and the sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the United Nation as well as to consider them in current and future strategies and solutions. Companies, countries, and other active units in a society need to find a balance between business and social interests and develop competence for the strategic handling of social and environmental issues. Companies increasingly try to respond to the ensuing pressures and invest significantly in sustainability and other CSR strategies and solutions. However, only strategies that are not classified as “greenwashing” and are accepted by consumers and other stakeholders as authentic and trustable, result in the desired effects and competitive advantage. Thus, CSR communication is increasing becoming an important mean to communicate and explain CSR strategies to consumers to get legitimation and approval for it. In many cases there is even a need to negotiate and discuss the acceptable solutions with relevant stakeholders and to build and maintain long-term relationships with the relevant stakeholders. The goal here is to reduce consumer skepticism, increase credibility, and influence stakeholder CSR attribution. However, there is still a lack of insights in science and practice related to both how effective CSR communication over digital channels is and which CSR communication approaches result in successful communication. The goal of the =mcm4 team is to provide a scientific and practical contribution in this area. We explore digital CSR communication based on real-world data with emphasis on social media and mobile CSR communication.

Exploring social media CSR-communication on the example of Instagram

Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva, Iago Santos Muraro, Maximilian Schacker

This research project is dedicated to the analysis of the effectiveness of social media CSR communication, i.e., to analysis of the antecedents and effects of CSR communication based on real-world data on the example of Instagram (IG). In year 2022 we were able to finalize the literature analysis, the data-gathering and coding process, and perform first analysis of the data.

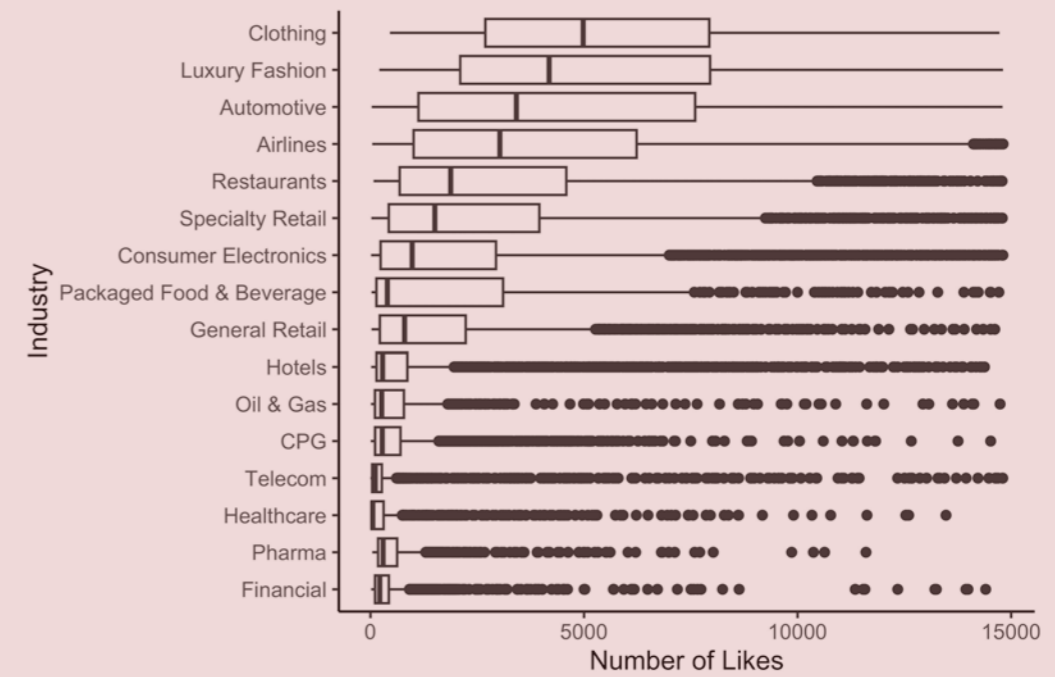
The literature analysis focused on 62 papers that used a computational approach to the analysis of social media CSR communication. The analysis revealed that most analyzed social media with respect to CSR communication is Twitter

followed by Facebook. There is almost no research dedicated to visual social media as IG. Among other results, one most striking insight of the literature research is that most of the published articles found out that CSR posts in social media result in less engagement compared to other posts and in more negative comments. This inspired our research to explore CSR communication with visual social media, that are currently under-researched, and to compare the effects of CSR communication on IG to results in literature. Based on these results we plan to develop guidelines for practice how to effectively communicate CSR matters in visual social media.

In year 2022 we also finalized the data-gathering and coding process. The scraping of 100 last IG posts for 394 companies resulted in 39'400 posts with associated audience engagement information in terms of likes and comments (544,031). To distinguish CSR posts from non-CSR posts the IG posts were manually coded by two coders. For this task a codebook for identification of CSR-posts was developed, based on the extensive literature review conducted previously. During this process it became evident that there is no clear and unique definition in the research field when a social media post might be considered as CSR-post by the addressed target group. We conclude that CSR communication is a fuzzy concept and that diverging theoretical conceptions of CSR and CSR-relatedness as well as different operationalizations have led to highly inconsistent and difficult-to-replicate results. To improve rigor and replicability in future CSR research, this led to additional research in our team within the dissertation of Maximilian Schacker and to the following journal publication:

Schacker, M. (2022). *Tackling fuzziness in CSR communication research on Social Media: Pathways to more rigor and replicability. Sustainability, 14(24)*. 17006; <https://doi.org/10.3390/su142417006>

In year 2022 we were also able to perform first analysis of the collected data through a computational approach and by referring to the signaling theory. The analysis of the IG data reveals that compared to non-CSR posts, CSR posts (company CSR signals) tend to result in more negative countersignals, i.e., in a lower number of likes and comments and an increase in the proportion of negative comments. This confirms similar results found in extant literature for non-visual social media. However, this negative effect of CSR communication on IG seems to vary between companies and across industries considerably, thus suggesting that CSR communication effectiveness is not only a function of CSR post features, but also users' perceptions about businesses. To the best of our knowledge, this research paper is one of the few studies to investigate CSR communication



Boxplots Displaying Number of Likes Across Industries

on IG. Our findings provide important theoretical and practical insights for CSR visual and textual communication on this under investigated social media platform and were summarized in the following paper, accepted for presentation at the prestigious International Communication Association (ICA) Annual Meeting in 2023.

Muraro, I. S., Schaecker, M., Stanoevska-Slabeva, K. (2023). *CSR Communication on Instagram: Exploring CSR Signals and Countersignals on a Visual-Centric Social Media Platform [Paper presentation]. International Communication Association 71st Annual Meeting, Toronto, Canada*

An extended version of this paper, containing additional metrics of user engagement and that explores the costs and benefits of CSR communication across the various SDGs set forth by the United Nations is in preparation and will be submitted to a high-quality journal in 2023. Further activities planned for 2023 are: further deep-dive analysis of the data, analysis how culture impacts global CSR social media communication as well as extending the research in direction of exploring the choices that companies make with respect to CSR topics (signals) they chose.

Cross-channel digital communication – Is there a priming effect of social media?

Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva, Dr. Armando Schär

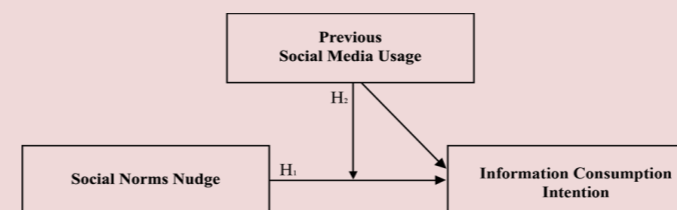
Our research related to digital nudging as part of social media communication indicates that nudging and communication in one digital channel (i.e., a specific social media platform) in one phase of the customer journey might impact the communication effects in subsequent channels visited by users along the customer journey. Thus, we hypothesize that conceptualization of digital nudges should not be focused only on one channel but needs to be considered as part of a nudging pipeline that connects several channels. Furthermore, a previous usage of one channel might have a priming effect on the communication and buying behavior of users in the next channel. Furthermore, due to the strong social influence of social media on users, previous usage of social media might impact consumer behavior and choices in channels used subsequently.

In year 2022, we started to explore if we can find evidence of a priming effect of previous social media usage on subsequent nudging activities of companies. For this purpose, two online experiments were designed one focusing on TikTok as social media environment and one extending the experiment to all social media platforms. We were not able to prove the priming effect for previous TikTok usage, but a certain priming influence was discovered when other social media platforms were considered. The results were summarized in the following papers:

Schär, A, Dalmus, C. & Stanoevska-Slabeva, K. (2022). *Nudging in the pre-purchase phase: On the effectiveness of social norm nudges, previous TikTok usage and potential interactions. Proceedings of AMCIS (2022)*

Schär, A., Dalmus, C., & Stanoevska-Slabeva, K. (2022). *Is there a social impact paradox in cross-channel communication? A management perspective. Academy of Management Proceedings 2022 (1)*. 17559. Briarcliff Manor, NY: Academy of Management

Theoretical Concept: Investigating Priming Effects of Social Media Usage





Topic Portfolio of Individual CSR Apps

Mobile Communication

Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva, Dr. Vera Lenz-Kesekamp

In year 2022 we continued the long tradition of research in mobile communication, by extending our research into mobile CSR communication and by continuing research related to the persuasive power of Facebook push notification and successful organization of the 6th Mobile Marketing and Experiences Conference.

Mobile CSR Communication

Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva, Dr. Vera Lenz-Kesekamp

By leveraging previous research related to the mobile channel and digital nudging, in year 2022 we extended our research dedicated to digital CSR communication to the mobile channel. An extended literature review and analysis of available apps in app stores revealed that companies have not yet discovered the mobile communication channel for CSR communication. However, there are many mobile apps that target individual CSR and sustainability behavior. As result of our first search in app stores we discovered 92 national and international apps (mCSR Apps) dedicated to different topics of personal CSR. A first classification of these apps shows that they target different SDG goals such as: measuring individual energy consumption and supporting behavioral change in this area, promotion of environmental awareness and sustainable living, promotion of slow food and decreasing of food waste, reduction of individual car use, creating awareness and offering second hand or fair fashion, and others. mCSR Apps offer support

in setting and achieving individual CSR goals and in many cases participation and exchange within communities. They also offer information about the reliability of a quality seal, test results, ingredients, and manufacturing conditions. All these topics and services are already part of various apps that turn the smartphone into a green everyday helper and drive individual mCSR communication. In addition, the internal CSR communication towards the employees can be solved via mCSR apps. Current examples in the field of mCSR apps are: myKNIPPEX, Work Jam, Sustayn. In 2023 we will extend the research in this area with a broad analysis of literature related to personal mCSR apps as well as nudging, behavioral and acceptance studies of mCSR Apps.

Persuasive power of Facebook push notification

Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva, Prof. Dr. Bozena I. Mierzejewska, Prof. Dr. Vera Lenz-Kesekamp

The research of the =mcm4-team on Facebook push notifications has gained some tradition. Results of previous studies about the persuasiveness of Facebook push notifications were presented at the 2022 Social Media & Society Conference and published in the proceedings of the 35th Bled Conference:

Stanoevska-Slabeva, K., and Mierzejewska, B. I. (2022). Facebook Push Notification as Triggers for Habit-Forming Feedback Loops. 12th International Conference on Social Media & Society. Virtual Conference.

Stanoevska-Slabeva, K. & Mierzejewska, B.I. (2022). Can escapist use of Facebook be triggered by Facebook push notification. In Proceedings of the 35th Bled Conference, 187-202

In the past, our research examined the effectiveness of Facebook push notifications in persuading users to use the platform more frequently. In this context Facebook push notifications are viewed as the initial step in a series of persuasive offerings on the social media platform. A push notification is considered successful and has a high level of persuasiveness when users respond to it, log into the platform, spend more time on Facebook, and consume additional content and services not directly related to the notification. Facebook push notifications, along with the entertainment and media offerings of the platform, often lead to an escapist consumption of the content provided. To our surprise, according to the results of a survey of Facebook student users, the use of the platform by acting upon a Facebook notification results in positive rewarding for them. These findings inspired us to further explore the initiation and impact of unplanned use of social media. In 2023, we will expand our research on further social media channels like TikTok, IG and LinkedIn.

Mobile Marketing & CX Conference 2022 (#momako22 & #momacx22)

Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva, Dr. Vera Lenz-Kesekamp

The annual mobile marketing and CX conference took place on October 25, 2022. For the sixth time, we were able to inspire our audience with exciting examples from mobile marketing practice and the latest developments in this field. The #momako22 & #momacx22 was realized again with SWICO-IG Mobile Business as well as with Inside IT as a new media partner.

The event focused on exciting keynote speeches, interactive discussions, and creative hands-on sessions from regional, national and international companies as well as on our research. The 100 guests had the opportunity to interact intensively with Meta, Authena, Post, Viseca, Adello & GeoCTRL, St. Gallen Kantonalbank and the Weisse Arena Group to learn and to discuss the latest developments in mobile marketing and CX.

This year, special thematic focus lied on the application possibilities of the Metaverse as well as on Web3, NTFs, IoT, automation, mobile apps, and mobile social media experiences and on the question how these developments would impact mobile communication in the future. In addition, we also addressed the issue of CSR communication in social networks.

As in previous years, we look back on #momako22 & #momacx22 with great satisfaction and look forward to the next exciting topics from the world of mobile marketing and CX.

In 2023, #momako23 & #momacx23 will be held in Zurich on the 28th of September, 2023.

Impressions from the Mobile Marketing and CX Conference



InnoCheck Project: Negotiation Intelligence – Applicability of Affective Computing for Automatic Analysis of Communication Processes

Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva

Together with the industry partner Better Solutions International, Prof. Dr. Stanoevska-Slabeva successfully acquired and completed the InnoCheck project “Negotiation Intelligence – Applicability of Affective Computing for automatic analysis of communication processes”. The goal of the project was a market analysis of affective computing solutions available on the market, assessment of their applicability in practice and development of a concept for their application for automatic analysis of communication processes.

Affective computing or emotion AI systems can identify, analyze, interpret, and express human emotions. Emotion AI is based on various technologies for analysis of speech and text (i.e., analysis of voice tone or text), analysis of gestures and expressions of the face, or analysis of body language. This second analysis uses audio and visual recordings of users’ behavior as input.

The project provided the following interesting insights:

- An overview of prevailing affective computing solutions on the market.
- An overview of the depth of emotion analysis and classification of emotions that can be detected automatically. For example, a widespread rather simple emotion analysis is sentiment analysis, which focuses on detection of positive, negative and neutral sentiment of text messages. Compared to that emotional computing aims to detect different emotions such as anger, happiness, sadness, and other emotions.

Based on these insights, a concept for the application of affective computing for the automatic analysis of communication processes was developed.

Example Output of an AI-based Emotion Analysis



Metaverse – Opportunities and Challenges for Higher Education

The Metaverse denotes the evolution to the next generation Internet also called Web3 or post-reality universe. Resulting from a convergence of several technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, Internet of Things, 5G and 6G networks, technologies for AR, VR, MR, and head-mounted end devices, a new 3D version of the Internet is emerging. The convergence of these technologies enables new opportunities for 3D and virtual-world-based education and communication with immersive, but also haptic experiences and better connections between the real and virtual world.

In this project the chances and challenges of the Metaverse for communication were assessed on the example of higher education. As starting point a literature analysis was conducted that involved 37 papers. The considered papers comprised published first case studies of educational use of the Metaverse, papers describing a possible architecture for the Metaverse, and papers describing the role of the specific technologies constituting the Metaverse. This showed that there is already a growing body of literature on the Metaverse, however there is no consensus yet about what the Metaverse is and might be as well as about its definition. Thus, based on the different opinions in the literature a

Metaverse definition was extracted. Furthermore, based on the case studies the main opportunities and challenges for higher education were identified. The insights were summarized in the following conference paper:

Stanoevska-Slabeva, K. (2022). *Opportunities and challenges of metaverse for education: a literature review*. EDULEARN22 Proceedings (2022). 10401-10410. <https://doi.org/10.21125/edulearn.2022.2527>

In 2023 the paper will be extended to a journal paper and the goal is to identify and create suitable Metaverse applications for teaching digital communication at the University of St. Gallen and for executive education.



Extension of Internal and External Research Collaboration

Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska-Slabeva

In year 2022 =mcm4 was able to extend its research collaboration internally with other parts of the =mcm institute. Within the =mcm institute the collaboration was extended with =mcm1 and =mcm2. The collaboration with Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler and Dr. Fabienne Bünzli (=mcm1) involved the analysis of the effects of different combinations of pictures containing a direct and indirect gaze and text in Facebook posts. This collaboration in resulted in the following common publication:

Bünzli, F., Eppler, M.J., Stanoevska, K., Hofer, A. (2022). *Expressing demands or offers: How to promote volunteering using visual and verbal appeals. International Journal of Business Communication*. 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23294884221104799>

We also continued the collaboration with Prof. Dr. Miriam Meckel and Dr. Morteza Shahrezaye related to a computational analysis of agenda setting during the COVID-19 pandemic. On this collaboration we analyzed over 150,000 English-language news articles from 39 major international news organizations that were most frequently shared on Twitter. Using standard topic modeling algorithms, we identified 26 relevant COVID-19-related agendas and created weekly time-series trends for each agenda. Additionally, we evaluated the media's agenda-setting power and the public's reverse-agenda setting strength, finding evidence of agenda-setting and reverse agenda-setting for five of the agendas. Surprisingly, the media's agenda-setting influence was limited to only about

20% of the agendas. This research was summarized in the following paper presented as poster on the prestigious ICA 2022 conference in Paris:

Shahrezaye, M., Stanoevska-Slabeva, K. & Meckel, M., (2022). *COVID-19 pandemic: When fear affects the agenda. A big-data Twitter-based analysis of the media's agenda-setting power. Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA). Paris, France.*

Our first findings from the analysis of CSR communication in IG indicate that there are cultural differences how CSR communication is received by users located in different regions. Companies that communicate globally must take potential cultural differences into account. This initiated a new research stream related to inter-cultural global CSR communication that we would like to explore with experts for intercultural research. During her sabbatical at the (SIG-HSG) Prof. Stanoevska-Slabeva was able to establish a new cooperation with Prof. Dr. Chieh Hsu of the center for intercultural studies. Further collaboration was established with Prof. Dr. Matthias Tietz from the center of entrepreneurship related to social entrepreneurship. In this context the common research question is how entrepreneurs choose CSR matters as component of their value proposition and if CSR communication influences investor relations as well as their success and growth. This research questions are also subject of new collaboration with Prof. Sarah Cheah of the National University of Singapore Business School.

PhD Projects at =mcm4

In year 2022 two doctoral students finalized their dissertation: Dr. Armando Schär successfully defended his dissertation in September 2022 and Maximilian Schacker submitted its dissertation in January 2023.

Dr. Armando Schär

Dissertation project

Pre-Purchase Nudging: Digital Nudging Efficacy in the Pre-Purchase Stage of the Customer Journey

Behavioral economics have come up with theories that support individuals in decision-making situations. In decision making, psychological effects such as loss aversion and social norming are used to lead recipients toward a specific decision. In the digital context, this is also referred to as digital nudging. Existing studies confirm these nudging principles in specific contexts (e.g., environmental topics, financial industry). This dissertation broadens the understanding of digital nudges and links nudging with customer journey perspectives and the influence of an individual's personality traits. It focuses on the context of pre-purchase decision situations and potential influencing factors. While studies have demonstrated that digital-nudging principles are generally effective, evidence shows that various moderating factors influence a person's decision and the effectiveness of digital nudges. Such factors may explain the great variance in the strength of digital nudging effects. One study within this dissertation shows that extroverts are less likely to be influenced by loss aversion nudges. Another experiment showed that the individual's need for cognition has a significant negative influence on the effect of social norm nudges within the pre-purchase customer journey stage. Furthermore, it was found that customers that previously consumed social media, respond better to social norms nudges than customers who did a web search prior to being nudged. Therefore, this dissertation shows that the efficacy of digital nudges is influenced in many ways. In addition to the previously known dimensions of nudge type and context of use, other factors such as personality traits and previous social media usage also influence the effectiveness of nudges. These new findings, allow digital nudges to be used more precisely to help the recipients make decisions that best serve their interests.

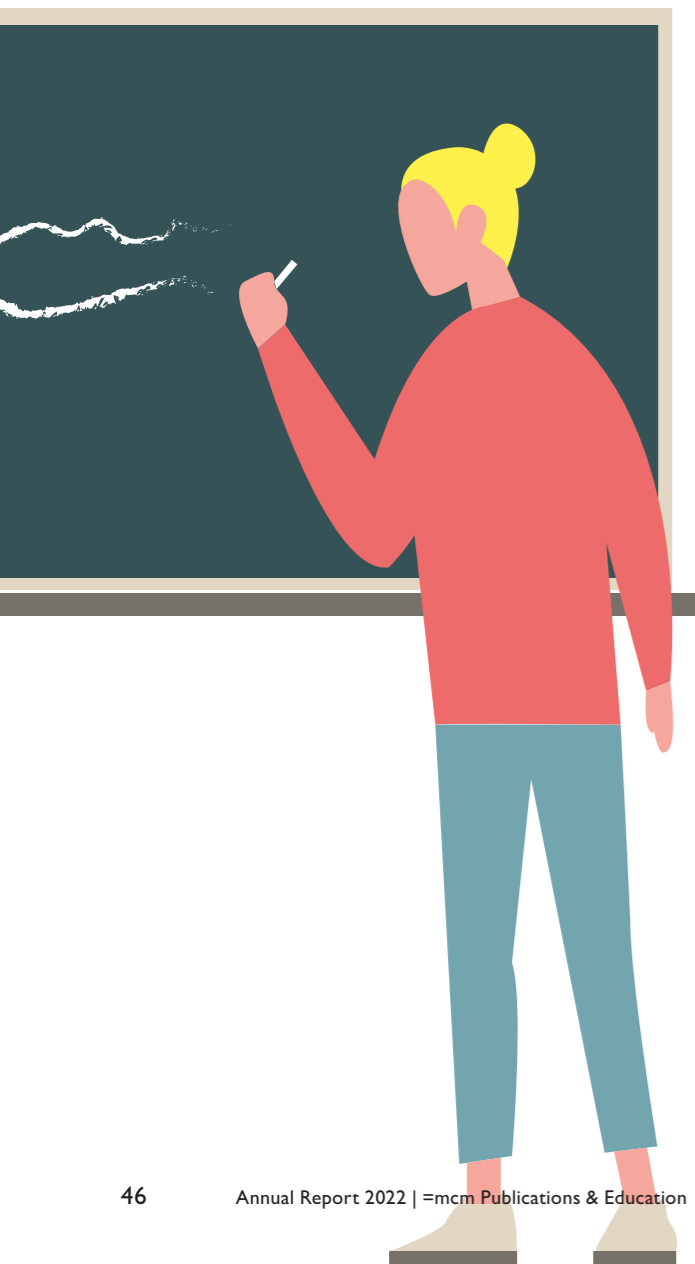
Maximilian Schacker, PhD Candidate

Dissertation project

CSR Communication on Social Media: A Data-Driven Perspective

In response to increasing legitimacy pressure, many companies have started to explore and leverage social media as a corporate social responsibility (CSR) communication channel to enhance and manage their legitimacy, improve their brand image, and engender favorable consumer behaviors. However, as noted by Du et al. (2010), "CSR communication is a very delicate matter", as it can have backlash effects if perceived as insincere or hypocritical. This dissertation contributes to our understanding of the characteristics and effects of CSR communication on social media through five studies: based on an initial review on CSR communication in online shops, study 2 presents a literature review on CSR communication in social media and develops an agenda for future research. Study 3 revolves around methodological issues, conceptualizes CSR communication as a fuzzy concept, and proposes guidelines for more rigor in pertinent research. Study 4 aims to improve conceptual clarity through the development of a taxonomy of CSR posts on Instagram. Finally, study 5 explores CSR communication on Instagram through a signaling theory perspective and empirically analyzes the effects of CSR signals on the quantity and valence of social media engagement.





Publications & Education

in 2022 by the Institute for Media &
Communications Management

Publications

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Dissertations

Schacker, M. (2023).

CSR communication on Social Media: A data-driven perspective. Submitted 04.01.2023.

Schär, A. (2022).

Pre-purchase nudging: Digital nudging efficacy in the pre-purchase stage of the customer journey. Submitted 06.2022.

Education

Spring Semester 2022

Bachelor

Course Nr.	Course Title	Lecturer(s)
4,580	Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Data Science	Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska Prof. Dr. Melinda F. Lohmann
4,691	Medien/Media: Data Cultures - Understanding Mediation from Social Media to Artificial Intelligence	Prof. Dr. Veronica Barassi

Master

Course Nr.	Course Title	Lecturer(s)
8,026	Digitale Kommunikation und Content Management	Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska
8,044	IC: Gesellschaftliche Aspekte der Digitalisierung	Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska
8,062	Digitale Werbung und Programmatic Advertising	Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska
8,570	Medien/Media: LWJ Werkstatt II	Prof. Dr. Veronica Barassi
8,572	LWJ Kommunikations- und Redaktionsstrategien	Prof. Dr. Miriam Meckel
8,640	Kreativität/Creativity: Creability - gemeinsam kreativ	Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler
8,642	Kreativität/Creativity: Creative Storytelling	Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach
8,948	Global Managerial Communication (ISP)	Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler

P.h.D.

Course Nr.	Course Title	Lecturer(s)
10,640	Colloquium: Social Sciences	Prof. Dr. Veronica Barassi Prof. Dr. Patrik Aspers

Autumn Semester 2022

Bachelor

Course Nr.	Course Title	Lecturer(s)
5,127	Management in the Digital Economy	Prof. Andrea Back Maximilian Schacker

Master

Course Nr.	Course Title	Lecturer(s)
7,031	Kreativität/Creativity: Design Your Life	Prof. Dr. Katarina Stanoevska Maximilian Schacker
7,642	Kreativität/Creativity: Design Your Life	Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kernbach
7,659	Kreativität/Creativity: Werkstatt/Workshop	Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler
7,682	Medien/Media: Big Data, Artificial Intelligence and the Algorithmic Society	Prof. Dr. Veronica Barassi
7,699	Medien/Media: Werkstatt/Workshop	Prof. Dr. Veronica Barassi
7,722	Technologien/Technologies: The Economic and Social Impact of Artificial Intelligence	Prof. Dr. Miriam Meckel Dr. Léa Steinacker
7,725	Technologien/Technologies: TikTok, TikTok - Schlägt die Stunde der Überwachungsgesellschaft?	Prof. Dr. Miriam Meckel Prof. Dr. Thomas Beschorner
7,761	Freier Bereich/Open Area: SIGMA GVC: Responsible Digital Transformation	Prof. Dr. Veronica Barassi
7,948	Global Managerial Communication (ISP)	Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler
9,012	Community Management	Prof. Dr. Vera Lenz-Kesekamp

P.h.D.

Course Nr.	Course Title	Lecturer(s)
10,202	Taxonomies and Typologies in Research	Prof. Dr. Martin Eppler

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