

MASTERARBEIT

Titel der Masterarbeit

“Consumer’s Country-of-Origin Knowledge and Implicit
Country-Cue Usage“

Verfasser

Alexander Wahl

angestrebter akademischer Grad

Master of Science (MSc)

Wien, 2013

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:
Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt:
Betreuer:

A 066 915
Masterstudium Betriebswirtschaft
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Adamantios Diamantopoulos

Acknowledgements

I would especially like to thank:

My Parents

For their love and encouragement of all my ambitions as well as their great emotional and financial support.

Prof. Adamantios Diamantopoulos

For giving me the opportunity to write my thesis at the Chair of International Marketing and providing me with feedback throughout the thesis.

Dr. Marc Herz

For his excellent support and insightful feedback during all steps of my thesis.

The entire Chair of International Marketing

The participants of both questionnaires

Content

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Conceptual Background and Hypotheses	4
2.1	Definitions of the COO.....	4
2.2	COO Effect.....	6
2.3	COO Knowledge	10
2.4	COO Usage.....	13
3	Study Design.....	15
3.1	Research Construct and Study procedure.....	15
3.2	Product Category Selection Process	16
3.3	Country Selection Process	17
3.4	Brand Selection Process	19
4	Questionnaire Development.....	21
4.1	Cover page.....	22
4.2	Demographics	22
4.3	Stimuli	22
4.4	Scales.....	23
5	Data Collection Process	29
5.1	Online Survey	29
5.2	Sampling method and Sample Size	30
5.3	Data Collection	30
6	Data Analysis	32
6.1	Preliminary Analysis	32
6.2	Descriptive Results	34
6.2.1	Descriptive Results for Outcome Variables	34
6.2.2	Descriptive Results for COO knowledge	37

6.2.3	Descriptive Results for Control Variables	41
6.2.4	Descriptive Results for COO Usage.....	43
7	Main Analysis	46
7.1	Results for Hypothesis 1	46
7.2	Results for Hypothesis 2.....	48
7.3	Results for Hypotheses 3	50
7.4	Results for Hypotheses 4	62
8	Discussion and Conclusions	63
9	Limitations and Future Research	65
10	List of References.....	66
11	Appendix	71

List of Figures

Figure 1: Pre-Survey Result for Product Category Electro	18
Figure 2: Pre-Survey Result for Product Category Chocolate	18
Figure 3: Impact of the Scenario Change for Brand Image Evaluations	36
Figure 4: Impact of the Scenario Change for Quality of the Brand	37
Figure 5: Classification of User Groups.....	58
Figure 6: Evaluation of implicit User Groups.....	59

List of Tables

Table 1: Selected Definitions of COO	5
Table 2: Content of the Questionnaire	21
Table 3: Cronbach α of Outcome Variable constructs and Product Category Involvement	33
Table 4: Results for all Outcome Variables before the Scenario Change	34
Table 5: Results for all Outcome Variables after the Scenario Change.....	35
Table 6: COO Knowledge Overall.....	38
Table 7: COO Knowledge by Product Category.....	39
Table 8: COO Knowledge by particular Brand.....	39
Table 9: COO Knowledge by Age	40
Table 10: COO Knowledge by Gender	40
Table 11: Result for Control Variables	41
Table 12: Country Image Roth & Romeo and Liu & Johnson.....	42
Table 13: Country Image Liu & Johnson (3 rd item).....	43
Table 14: Mean of COO- cue usage by Product Category.....	44
Table 15: Results for the 1 st Hypotheses	47
Table 16: Contingency table for COO knowledge and User Classification	49
Table 17: Result of the 2nd Hypotheses for both Product Categories	49

Table 18: Contingency table for “Scenario Direction” and User Classification.....	50
Table 19: Overall results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the Scenario.....	51
Table 20: Results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the Scenario (Chocolate)	52
Table 21: Results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the Scenario (Electro)	53
Table 22: Results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the “Better” Scenario	54
Table 23: Results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the “Same” Scenario	54
Table 24: Results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the “Worse” Scenario	55
Table 25: Effects of the Scenario Change regarding Brand Image Evaluation	56
Table 26: Effects of the Scenario Change regarding Brand Trust	57
Table 27: Classification of explicit and implicit COO-cue users.....	60

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Pre-Survey (Questionnaire and Results)	71
Appendix B: Paper Questionnaire for Samsung	74
Appendix C: Cronbach α for Country Image and Control Variables.....	81
Appendix D: Descriptive Results for all outcome variables before and after the Scenario	83
Appendix E: Results for the 1 st Hypotheses for both Product Categories	87
Appendix G: Abstract (German)	89
Appendix G: Abstract (English).....	90
Appendix G: CV (German)	91

List of Abbreviations

COO – Country of Origin

WTP – Willingness to pay

COOP – Country Origin of the Product

COP – Country of production

OFB – onlineFragebogen

CBO – Confidence in brand origin identification

GE – General Electric

1 Introduction

For the last decades Country of origin (COO) research has been “one of the most widely studied phenomena in international business, marketing, and consumer behavior combined” (Peterson and Jolibert 1995, p. 883). The COO concept refers to “the country in which corporate headquarters of the company marketing ... the brand is located” (Johansson et al. 1985, p. 389) and the related COO effect can be defined as “any influence or bias on product evaluation, risk perception, buying intention, etc. resulting from COO information” (Diamantopoulos and Zeugner-Roth 2009). The observed results in recent and past conducted studies show unequivocal evidence that the COO effect influence customer’s product evaluation and purchase behavior (Pharr 2005) especially consumers who possess a positive image or perception regarding a COO tend to evaluate brands of this COO more favorable (Liu and Johnsons 2005). In line with these findings the brand’s COO perception is constantly used as a promotion tool by multinational companies. Examples for this usage would be the German car producer Volkswagen which emphasizes its COO by using “Das Auto” as a slogan for the worldwide promotion campaigns or the Swedish furniture retailer IKEA which uses the colors blue and yellow, which appear on the Swedish flag, for the interior and the painting in their stores as well as their product labeling with traditional Swedish words in defiance of the pronunciation difficulties for the local consumers (Magnusson, Westjohn and Zdravkovic 2011).

Despite the findings in the literature and the implementation by multinational firm’s controversy amongst researchers aroused considering the importance of COO information in consumer decision making. Researchers in nearly all studies provided consumers the relevant COO-cues (Balabanis and Diamantopolous 2008) and as soon as this information is available “consumers will view it as relevant information and deliberately use in their evaluation of products” (Liu and Johnsons 2005 p. 88). Considering that, several studies showed that the actual COO knowledge of consumers is limited and therefore consumers “find such information relatively unimportant and thus unworthy of attention in memory” (Samiee, Shimp and Sharma 2005, p. 392). According to the lack of COO knowledge and willingness to utilize COO information several researchers concluded that COO cannot be such a relevant factor in the evaluation of brands ((Magnusson, Westjohn and Zdravkovic 2011). The controversy in the research can thereby summarized that although research strongly indicates that the COO influences consumers’ evaluation process consumers do not like to admit that it does (Heslop and Papadopoulos 1993). Regarding this dilemma Liu and Johnson (2005)

observed that country stereotypes can be activated spontaneously solely by the presence of COO-cues. The inherent influence on brand evaluation occurs even if the consumers deny basing their evaluation on COO information.

Against this background, the present study starts with measuring the actual COO knowledge of consumers, as well as the consequences of non- and misclassification (misperception) with regards to the selected four brands in two different Product Categories. Besides contemplating the intended COO usage of consumers, the influence of the exposure of additional COO-cues regarding the brand perception is measured. Furthermore consumer's actual COO-cue usage is considered and therefore consumers are categorized by their actual COO usage contemplating their implicit, explicit or "Non COO-cue usage" of provided COO information.

The contribution to the study is three-fold. First, it extends Liu and Johnson's (2005) study by testing consumer's implicit COO usage and its impact on brand perception processes for real brands in high and low involvement Product Categories. Second, differences in consumer's implicit COO-cue usage are tested by using a scenario where the additional provided COO-cues are related to either a "Better" rated, "Worse" rated, or the "Same" COO as the investigated and initial evaluated brand. Third, this thesis provides practitioners with empirically-based recommendations for incorporating their COO-cues, which is constantly used by multinational companies as promotional tool (Magnusson, Westjohn and Zdravkovic 2011), in their brand communication especially in terms of a cross-border takeover from a company which COO is different from the investigated brand. This is important as in today's interrelated economy the expansion of cross-border trade as well as the rising number of global firms suggests that intense competition will continue to accumulate in the international marketplace (Klein, Ettenson and Morris 1998) which consequently leads to an increase of multinational takeovers. To accomplish this examination an online and a paper survey was processed by 300 participants who evaluated their brand perceptions and purchase behavior before and after a takeover of a country from a "Same", "Better" or "Worse" rated country.

Structure of Thesis

The thesis is separated in nine chapters. After the already stated Introduction, the thesis continues with the conceptual background in form of a brief review of already published findings in the field of COO research. Furthermore the Research Question and the elaborated Hypotheses are presented. The third chapter contains a description of the study design which

was used to analyze the developed Hypotheses. This includes a detailed graphic with explanations as well as the brand and country selecting approach. Furthermore a brief description of the chosen brands will be provided. The fourth chapter describes the questionnaire development process. Therefore the survey method, sampling method and the data collection process are specified. Additionally a description of the used scales is provided. The fifth Chapter contains the whole data collecting process in line with the conducted online and paper survey. The sixth chapter consists of the analysis of the gathered data. Therefore the Descriptive Results and the COO knowledge are presented. The seventh chapter consists of the detailed results for the Hypotheses. Furthermore additional analyses with respect to the implicit and explicit COO usage of consumers are presented. The last two chapters contain the Discussion and Conclusions as well as the Limitations and Future Research recommendations.

2 Conceptual Background and Hypotheses

This chapter provides the theoretical foundation of this study and the tested Hypotheses. In particular several definitions of the COO construct as well as explanations regarding the topics COO usage, the COO knowledge, the COO effect are presented. Furthermore the development and formulation of the Research Question and the tested Hypotheses is elaborated in the corresponding theoretical subsection. Whereas the Research Question and the first Hypotheses are based on the knowledge the following three Hypotheses focus on the usage and processing of COO information.

2.1 Definitions of the COO

The understanding and the labeling of the “construct” COO has changed in the last decades through the expansion of global markets which provided companies multinational opportunities for sourcing and production abroad. Since the start of the research the 1980s (Usunier 2011) the definition of COO has changed as well. Whereas the “Made in” label was used in prior research as indicator for a products origin (Bilkey and Nes 1982) the densification of the global economy and the related production of components in more than one country led to the country in which the product is assembled ultimately as benchmark for COO research afterwards (Liefeld 2004). Contrary to the previous mentioned definitions Jaffe & Nebenzahl (2006) considered the COO as the country which is associated with the product or the brand regardless where the actual production took place. Exemplary the brand GE (General Electric) was mentioned since GE is associated by many consumers as American brand although several products are produced outside the USA. Furthermore with regards to the later mentioned lack of accurate COO knowledge by consumers, Magnusson et al. (2011) suggested shifting the focus of interest to consumers’ perceived brand origin instead of the actual COO of the brand. The current research and the definition suitable for this thesis focus on the actual geographic origin of the brands’ headquarter regardless where the actual production of the brand takes place. Since in today’s evolving global economy the e.g. design, research and manufacturing process can occur in several different countries and through types of global production like e.g. contract manufacturing, international sourcing and strategic alliances it’s nearly impossible to keep track on the origins of parts and components of the products (Magnusson et al. 2011). All relevant definitions which are used for the different research approaches can be seen in the following table.

Author(s):	Definition:
Bilkey and Nes (1982, p.89)	<i>The informational cue on which this article focuses is the country of origin of a product. Usually this is communicated by the phrase, "Made in (name of country)."</i>
Liefeld (2004, p.86)	<i>The place in the world where a product is manufactured is the 'country of origin of the product' (COOP). In today's global economy many products are agglomerations of components originating in more than one country but typically assembled in one country.</i>
Jaffe & Nebenzahl (2006, p.29)	<i>"the country which a consumer associates with a certain country or brand as being its source, regardless of where the product is actually produced. For example, many consumers consider GE to be an American brand even though some GE products are produced outside of the USA"</i>
Johansson et al. (1985, p. 389)	<i>"Country of origin is defined as the country where the corporate headquarter of the company marketing the product or brand is located. Though we recognize that the product may not necessarily be manufactured in that country because of multinational sourcing (e.g., Ford of Europe), we assume the product or brand is identified with that country."</i>

Table 1: Selected Definitions of COO

2.2 COO Effect

The following part contains a description of the COO effect and its distinction into cognitive, normative (conative) and affective aspects. Generally the COO effect is defined by Diamantopoulos and Zeugner-Roth (2011) “*as any influence or bias resulting from COO information*”. Previous research has shown that the COO effect influences the evaluation of products by consumers (Verlegh and Steenkamp 1999) and therefore the knowledge of the correct brand origin provides consumers an information cue (stimulus which is available before consumption) (Bilkey and Nes 1982). Hence, products which originate from a favorable COO tend to be evaluated more positively by the consumer and consequently brands from an unfavorable COO tend to be evaluated more negatively (Obermiller and Spangenberg 1989). To evaluate a product the consumer has an array of information cues consisting of extrinsic and intrinsic cues. Taste, design and fit are considered as intrinsic cues whereas price, brand name and warranties are considered as extrinsic cues (Bilkey and Nes 1982). To evaluate a product regarding its quality the COO may be considered as extrinsic cue. However several studies have shown that the COO effect is not merely a cognitive aspect but also a normative (conative) and affective aspect and can be caused by interplay of all three aspects (Verlegh and Steenkamp 1999). In the upcoming sections a distinction into cognitive, normative (conative) and affective aspects of the COO effect will be provided. The shift in research from COO of production to COO of the brand which was briefly mentioned in the COO Definition part of this thesis is also considered in the upcoming sections where the COO is regarded as the COO of the brand and not related to the place of or production although original labeling of the authors was not changed e.g. “country’s products”.

Cognitive effects of the COO

As prior research has shown the COO influences the cognitive evaluation of the brand although this effect is not regarded as direct effect, rather than several other attributes of the brand are inferred by the consumers which are then used to develop attitudes or assessments of quality. Examples for those attributes would be workmanship, durability and reliability.

Li and Wyer (1994) investigated three points about how consumer’s favorable or unfavorable perception regarding the brands of a country could influence the evaluation of specific brands of the same country. The three points are (1) COO serves as an independent brand attribute amongst others. This is congruent with above mentioned research by Bilkey and Nes (1982).

Furthermore (2) COO can serve as a signal which is relevant if only limited information about brand's attributes is available. This information can then be used to infer more specific product attributes. Besides that (3) COO can serve as a standard of comparison for the brand and therefore be used as contrast effect on evaluations if sufficient information about the product category and the brand are available.

According to Bloemer et al. (2009) the COO effects are based on four cognitive processes. The authors define the mentioned product country image as *"how consumers cognitively process their internally stored knowledge about a country's products"* (Bloemer et al. 2009, p. 65). Consequently other perceptions regarding the country and its people are not considered. The four processes are:

(1) The "halo-effect" which may occur if consumers are not familiar with the country's products and therefore use the product country image as "halo-effect" to infer product's attributes and make evaluations with regards to that inferential beliefs.

(2) Contrary to the previous effect the "summary construct-effect" occurs when consumers getting versant with the country's products and therefore the product country image may be used as a construct which summarizes consumer's perceptions regarding the attributes and directly affects their product evaluation (Han 1989).

(3) With respect to the above mentioned effects the "default heuristic effect" adds additional information with regards to the product which are processed simultaneously together with the product country image and results in an interactive effect on how consumer's evaluate products (Manrai et al. 1989).

(4) The "product attribute-effect" implies that the presentation of the COO-cue and intrinsic attributes at the same time lead to the perception of the COO-cue as another attribute. Opposed to that if the COO-cue is presented before any additional information of the intrinsic attributes of the product is revealed the COO-cue tends to have a bigger influence on the evaluation of products but impaired the interpretation of attribute descriptions (Hong and Wyer 1990).

According to Bloemer et al. (2009) the available COO-knowledge which is stored in the consumer's memory can be considered as extended, moderate or limited dependent from e.g. personal product usage, hearsay or word of mouth. This knowledge adjusts the cognitive mechanisms which will be activated each time and influences the size of the effect which

affects the product evaluation. The “summary construct-effect” processing mode is expected to be enabled by extended preliminary COO knowledge and is likely to have a direct and intense influence on product evaluation while the “default heuristic-effect” processing mode is likely to be activated by moderate COO knowledge and the COO effect on product evaluations tends to be moderate. The “halo-effect” processing mode is expected to occur if the COO knowledge is limited and the COO effect on product evaluation is also limited, likewise the influence of the “product attribute-effect” is limited (Balabanis and Diamantopolous 2011). The processing modes could also be linked to the economic status of the country. The “summary construct-effect” tends to occur with products from developed countries whereas the “halo-effect” tends to influence product evaluations for products from developing countries. The “default heuristic-effect” is likely to take place in newly – marketizing countries and newly-industrialized countries (Manrai et al. 1998).

Affective effects of the COO

COO effects do not solely influence the consumer’s perception with respect to the product quality, furthermore consumers have intense emotional as well as affective perceptions regarding the country. These perceptions can either be evoked through direct or indirect experiences with the country and their citizens. Direct perceptions could be built during holidays or encounters with foreigners whereas indirect perceptions could be built through art, mass-media or education (Verlegh and Steenkamp 1999). The perceptions are usually based on consumers affect regarding a specific country and occur through constructs like consumer animosity or consumer affinity. Sources for consumer animosity are besides military, economic or political histories (Klein, Ettenson and Morris 1998) differences in mentality and religion (Riefler and Diamantopoulos 2007).

Normative (conative) effects of the COO

Besides cognitive and affective COO effects normative (conative) COO effects can occur. Throughout the literature those effects are either labeled as normative or conative effects. Therefore both expressions are mentioned. Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999) considered the purchase and the coincident support of the economy of a product who’s COO engage in reprobate action as an a-moral action. The pressure of social norms in the compulsory

reasonable consumer conduct can lead to rules like “buy local” or “do not buy from the enemy” (Balabanis and Diamantopolous 2011). Among American consumers is a large proportion whose willing to buy products from a foreign COO whereas another group refuse to buy those product from an alternative COOs and reprimand other consumers who purchase products which are not American made. They argue that products from foreign COOs put Americans out of work, hurt the American economy or it is unpatriotic to buy those brands. Consequently strong consumer ethnocentrism relates to bias domestic products whereas weak ethnocentrism relates to bias foreign products (Shimp and Sharma 1987). Considering this it can be seen that “perceived morality” of purchasing domestic vs. foreign products has a considerable influence on how consumers evaluate product attributes (Verlegh and Steenkamp 1999).

Interplay of cognitive, affective and normative effects of the COO

The sections above distinguished between three different forms of the COO effect. Furthermore the boundaries between those three effects are ambiguous and interplay of the cognitive, normative (conative) and affective effects can often achieve a COO effect. According to Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2011) this interplay partly explains that the COO effect has a larger impact on the evaluation of brand attitudes compared to purchase intention (Verlegh and Steenkamp 1999) since purchase intention contains more “personal commitment” compared to a discerning response. Furthermore the brand evaluation is more direct whereas the purchase intention implies more “and a greater variety” of influencing effects (Peterson and Jolibert 2005).

COO effects on Willingness to pay (WTP)

Besides the revealed influence of the COO effect on brand evaluation and purchase intention Koschate-Fischer et al. (2012) also examined the COO effect on WTP. By using high and low involvement product categories and the COO in the context where the actual product is made in, it was observed that consumers are willing to pay higher prices for branded products which are produced in a country with favorable country image. Consequently the WTP for products produced in countries with a less favorable country image is lower. By focusing on the price of the product the study provided a “monetization” of the COO effect.

2.3 COO Knowledge

Due to criticism in the research community regarding the conducted research methods and the assumption that consumers are aware of the correct COO, researchers started to measure the COO knowledge of the consumers since this is necessary for a further evaluation of the product. The definition and the understanding of COO have changed in the last decades due to the change in global economy and therefore the point of interest regarding the COO knowledge has shifted from the country of manufacturing to the COO of the brand. The following sections provide an overview of already conducted research and their inherent results as well as the influence of product categories, socio-demographics, brand names on the degree of correct identification are explained. Besides the distinctions the Research Question is presented. Furthermore the negative effects of misclassification and non-classification of brands COO are presented which develop the conceptual background of the 1st Hypotheses which is attached to this part.

COO Knowledge in prior research

Several studies to test consumers' COO knowledge were accomplished in the last decade of research. According to the earlier established definitions consumers were asked directly after a purchase to reveal their knowledge where the product was manufactured. The results showed that 88.8% of the consumers were not able to identify the COO (country of origin of the product) correctly (Liefeld 2004). After the definition changed and the country from where the brand occurs reached the point of interest, the country of manufacturing was no longer investigated in the different studies. Regarding this, Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2008) showed that only 22.2% of the consumers in the United Kingdom were able to indicate the brands of microwave ovens to the correct COO. Samiee et al (2005) showed that among US consumers only 35% of the consumers were able to indicate the brand to the correct COO. Therefore 84 brands (44 Foreign and 40 US) were tested whereas the correct identification differed significant between foreign and local brands (49% vs. 22.3%). The score for foreign brands differed from 42.4% for Japan as the highest score to 13.8% and 13.7% for Switzerland and England as the two lowest scores.

COO Knowledge with regards to the Product Category

Besides the differences in knowledge accuracy between several COOs (Home vs. Foreign) distinctive results with respect to the product categories can be found. In a study by Magnusson et al. (2011) where the recognition score of brands which are regarded as “Top Global Brands” by Business Week are examined in the product categories TV brands, automobile brands and fashion brands the recognition score for the correct COO differed from 71.1% for automobile brands, 52% for fashion brands and 45.1% for TV brands.

Influence of brand name on COO Knowledge

Additional to the different mentioned criteria which influence the brand recognition process the brand name has taken into account. The used perceived linguistic cues used with regards to the brand name encourage consumers to guess the COO of the brand and thereby improve the correct brand recognition score for the investigated brands (Samiee et al 2005). Furthermore Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2008) investigated the importance of spelling and pronunciation of the brand name with regards to the correct identification of the brands COO since linguistically incongruence with the true COO of the brand lead to a lower brand recognition score. Consequently the COO of brands which uses acronyms as brand names are categorized fewest of all.

Influence of socio-demographics on COO Knowledge

Beside the already mentioned product category and country specific brand attributes that influence the degree of accurate COO recognition by the consumer, socio-demographic distinctions within the population can be identified. The recognition process of the COO is influenced by the socioeconomic status, international experience, gender and consumers ethnocentrism (Samiee et al 2005). The study by Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2011) revealed that female and older consumers as well as consumers who score low on consumer ethnocentrism are more likely to identify the correct COO of different brands.

Research Question

Despite the above mentioned differences which influence the degree of correct brand recognition the already conducted research reveals that consumers' brand origin knowledge is overall remarkably poor (Magnusson et al 2011). Besides the little knowledge there is also misclassification (misperception) on COO recognition amongst consumers (Balabanis and Dimantopoulos 2011). A categorization of respondents regarding their COO knowledge for the tested brands is crucial for the further analysis of the following Hypotheses as well as for the classification of COO users. Besides the mere classification of the respondents regarding their knowledge their confidence in their answer is taken into account to avoid guessing and provide accurate results. Thus, the following Research Question:

RQ: Is the majority of consumers able to identify the COO of the tested brands correctly?

Consequences of COO misclassification

By focusing on the outcome variables brand image perception and purchase intention Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2011) provided empirical insight into the consequences of brand COO misclassification (misperception) and non-classification. Their results show that both misclassification and non-classification have mostly unsolicited consequences. Particularly brands which are associated with countries which have a weaker country image than the brands' original COO are derogated. Strong as well as weak brands suffer from miss- and non-classification in so far that their brand image is lowered whereas strong brands are additionally hurt from reduced purchase intention. Besides the losses which occur if a brand is associated with a weaker COO than its' true COO (unfavorable misclassification) the association of a brand with a stronger country than the true COO (favorable misclassification) does not lead to higher brand image or purchase intention indeed both outcome variables suffer losses for strong brands if favorable misclassification occurs. It is thus hypothesized:

H1: Correct COO knowledge has a positive impact on Brand Perception, Purchase Intention and Word of Mouth.

2.4 COO Usage

After defining the COO construct and explaining the different effects which arouse through the influence of available COO-cues the following section contains an explanation of the different processing approaches of stereotypes (controlled and automatic) and thereby the change in the current research assumptions. Additionally a brief summary of findings of already conducted research together with the elaborated Hypotheses is presented.

Despite controversies in the research, the majority of researchers agree that the COO effect can influence the consumers' product evaluation (Verlegh and Steenkamp 1999). Furthermore researchers concur that if COO information is available it is viewed by consumers as relevant information and purposely used for evaluating products (Liu & Johnson 2005) although consumer do not like to admit it (Heslop and Papadopoulos 1993).

The requirement for consumers to admit the usage of COO cues would subsequently be that consumers are aware of their usage and thereby use COO cues intentionally. Thus COO usage would work as **controlled processing** which would be defined as *“a slow, capacity-limited generally serial, effortful, and participant-regulated processing mode. It is capacity-limited in the sense that interference is strong between tasks that have to be performed at that processing level.”* (Liu & Johnson 2005, p.88).

In contradiction to the assumption that the COO cue usage is exclusively an “explicit” intentional controlled process Liu & Johnson (2005) revealed that processing COO cues can also occur automatically. The introduced **automatic processing** is considered as a quick, rather effortless process which is not limited by the short term-memory capacity. Furthermore automatic processing is not under consumers' direct control. It is defined as *“Automatic processing involves the spontaneous activation of some well learned set of associations that have been developed through repeated activation in memory”* (Liu & Johnson 2005, p.88). Overall, automatic processing can be caused by the mere presence of COO cues in the environment. A decisive characteristic of automatic processing is the inevitability since processing occurs despite efforts to circumvent or disregard them (Liu & Johnson 2005).

Findings of previous conducted research and Hypotheses

In this section the accomplished research regarding the automatic processing will be presented. In 2005 Liu & Johnson explored that country stereotypes can automatically encountered by the mere presence of COO information and they can positively or negatively influence brand perception despite the consumers have no intention to do so. Martin, Lee and Lacey (2011) also detected that individuals automatically activate spontaneous COO associations upon mere exposure as well as that associations to a negative perceived COO lead to negative perception regarding the brand or product. In 2012 Herz and Diamantopoulos discovered that “implicit” attitudes towards a country can spontaneously be activated if COO-cues are presented and thereby influence consumer’s brand image perception and purchase intention without consumer’s intention or actually by denying any COO-cue usage. Furthermore it was revealed that COO-cues which occur form a country with a strong cognitive (affective) country stereotype positively influence the cognitive (affective) dimension of the brand image. It is thus hypothesized.

H2: Consumers, who classify a Brand to a certain COO and admit not to use this information, evaluate Brand Perception, Purchase Intention and Word of Mouth different from consumers who don’t know the COO.

H3: Consumers implicitly change their Brand Perception, Purchase Intention and Word of Mouth, even thou they deny any COO-cue usage.

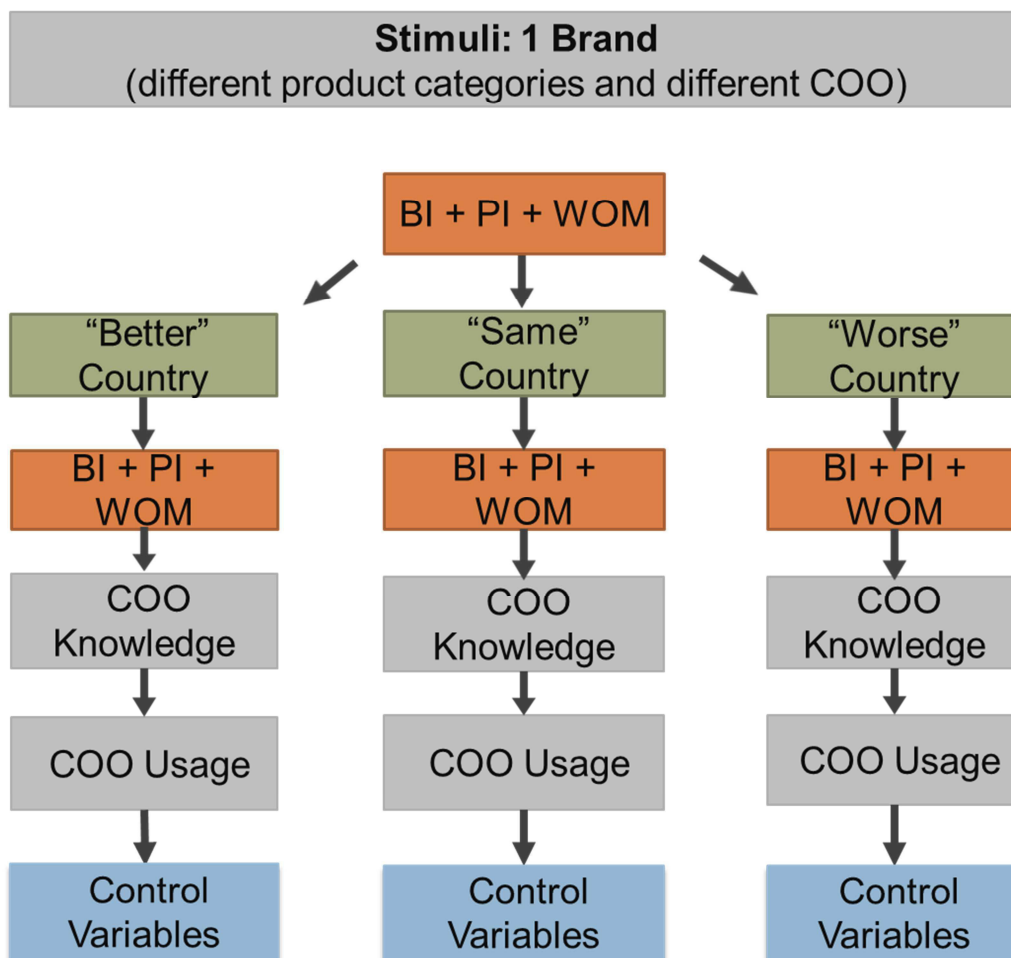
H4: The change of the COO has more influence on Brand Perception, Purchase Intention and Word of Mouth on “COO-cue users” compared to “Non COO-cue users”.

3 Study Design

In the last chapter the development and the conceptual background of the Hypotheses and the Research Question were described. The following chapter contains a detailed explanation of the conducted study to test consumer's COO knowledge, test the Hypotheses and classify respondents with regards to their COO usage. This chapter contains the Research Construct with a detailed explanation of all steps as well as the conducted processes to detect reasonable product categories, brands and countries to accomplish the study. The country selection part also contains the results of the performed Pre-Survey.

3.1 Research Construct and Study procedure

The following figure shows the Research Construct and the used design of the study. The product category, brand and country selection process and the design of the stimuli as well as the sequence of the questionnaire are explained in the following sections and chapters in detail.



The study starts with the stimuli of a brand and after the exposure the respondents were asked to answer questions regarding their brand perception, purchase intention as well as word of mouth. After finishing the brand related questions the respondents are exposed to three different Scenarios which are used as new stimuli. The stimuli contains the information that a fictional company from an either “Better” rated COO, a “Worse” rated COO or the “Same” COO as the selected brand is planning to takeover the brand. To this point the respondents had not been given any information that the aim of the study is to gather country-related information. Furthermore the respondent was not given any associations which are related to the correct COO of the brands as well as the participants were not able to skip to previous pages. The respondent should now process this new information and answer the same questions regarding brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth again continued by the question if the respondent is able to identify the original COO of the brand. The particular answer separates the respondents regarding their knowledge into three groups (Correct COO; Don’t Know COO; Wrong COO). Afterwards the respondent is asked about her perceived COO usage and the influence of COO-cues with regards to the evaluation process of the brand. Furthermore the respondent was asked to answer several related control variables and demographics.

3.2 Product Category Selection Process

Since the purpose of this thesis was to test the Hypotheses and to measure the actual COO knowledge on real brands it was necessary to find suitable brands in feasible product categories which could be used for the questionnaire. Therefore a list was elaborated where several brands in ten different product categories (e.g. Food; Clothing; Consumer Electronic; Luxury Goods) were selected. The selection was based on possible brand knowledge since it was necessary that the respondents had at least heard of the brand to answer questions regarding it. For the selection of brands Interbrands “Best Global Brand” (Interbrand 2012) and local consumer goods brands (Konsumgütermarken in Deutschland 2012) listings were used. To investigate the effects of a resolved Scenario Change the product categories should consist of high and low involvement product categories. For high involvement products consumers are more likely to carry out extensive evaluation and also take perceived consequences, brand attitudes and subject norms into account which consequently leads to a considerable amount of information procession which takes place before the purchase process. For low involvement products consumers carry out simple evaluations and choice

tactics to reduce time and effort during the purchase process (Jobber 2004). With regards to their degree of involvement and the availability of feasible brands and countries the three product categories chocolate products (low involvement), consumer electronics (high involvement) and clothing (high involvement) were chosen, although clothing was excluded in the later stage of the research. In the following parts of this thesis the product category consumer electronics is mentioned as Electro and chocolate products are mentioned as Chocolate.

3.3 Country Selection Process

Before starting to determine the final questionnaire for this thesis a pre-survey was conducted which was necessary to find appropriate countries that match the requirements for a suitable origin for possible brands in the selected product categories. Furthermore it should investigate possible countries for the scenario change. Therefore this section contains the methodology and the results of the conducted pre-survey as well as the result-based selection process for the countries.

Pre-Survey

The pre-survey was conducted by using an online survey. With respect to the three product categories Electro, Clothing and Chocolate the respondent had to rank six countries regarding their subjective country-product evaluation in the particular Product Category. The question was based on the third item of the Country Image construct by Liu & Johnson (2005) which is explained in more detail in the following chapter of this thesis. The different countries were selected by looking at the origin of Brands in the particular Product Categories. Therefore Interbrands “Best Global Brands” ranking (Interbrand 2010) was used and additional several other countries like the different COP’s (country of production) or countries which are traditionally related to a certain product category were taken into account. The country selection included (China, Japan, USA, South Korea, India and the Netherlands) for Electro and (Germany, Italy, USA, Belgium, Poland, Suisse) for Chocolate. Since the Product Category Clothing was no longer used in the ongoing process of this thesis the results are published in the appendix (A) only. The questionnaire was built and implemented with the help of the survey Tool OFB (onlineFragebogen). The screenshots of the particular questions, exemplary for Clothing, can also be seen in appendix (A). The Link for the questionnaire was

Study Design

forwarded to 50 students of the BWZ (Betriebswirtschaftliches Zentrum der Universität Wien) via E-Mail. Overall 35 students participated in the survey.

According to the position where the particular country was ranked (1 to 6) a Mean was calculated. In the following bar charts the results for Electro and Chocolate are shown.

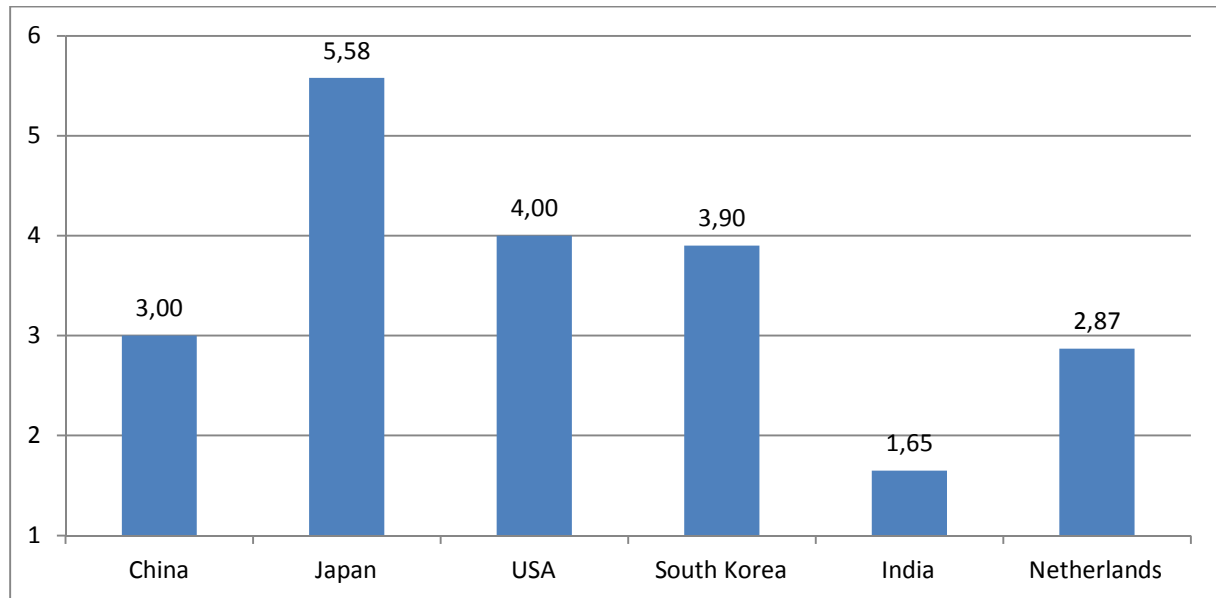


Figure 1: Pre-Survey Result for Product Category Electro

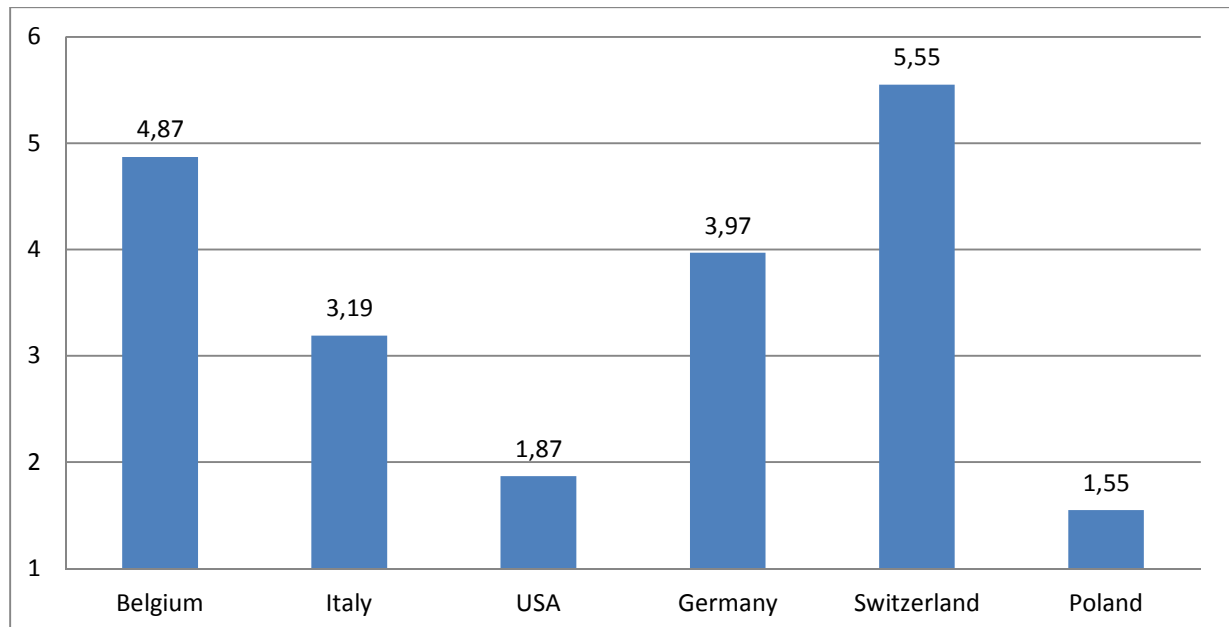


Figure 2: Pre-Survey Result for Product Category Chocolate

The results for Electro show that Japan was ranked highest with a Mean of 5.58 whereas India was ranked last with a Mean of 1.57. The countries with a medium ranked score are South Korea and the USA. The results for Chocolate show that Switzerland was rated highest with a Mean of 5.60 and Poland with the lowest score with a Mean of 1.54. The countries with a medium ranked score are Germany and Italy.

Selection Process for the Countries

The purpose of this questionnaire was the identification of suitable countries which fit in the “Better” “Same” “Worse” Scenarios and on which base the brands for the final questionnaire should be selected. The selection process was on the one hand based on the results of the means and on the other hand of the availability of well-known brands for countries with scored significantly better than the “Worse” rated countries and significantly lower than the “Better” rated countries. Consequently, the countries selected for Electro were (Japan, Korea and China) and for Chocolate (Suisse, Germany and Poland). Although India scored lowest in the pretest for the Electro category and India is also known as producer of Electronic devices, China was chosen as “Worse” rated country since this Scenario-Change could be perceived as more realistic since China also fulfilled the requirements. For the distinction between the countries regarding their Mean a T-test was conducted. The differences between all Scores were significant with ($p < 0.05$). The exact results of this T-test can be seen in the appendix (A).

3.4 Brand Selection Process

The selection which brands were used as stimuli for the questionnaire was based on the possible brand knowledge and brand familiarity of the consumers on the one hand and also based on results of the pretest on the other hand. Since the brands origin should be preferably in one of the countries which scored medium, brands from Germany and South Korea were selected. For Chocolate the two German brands Knoppers and PICK UP! and for the Electro Product Category the Korean brands LG and Samsung were picked. The following points contain a short description of the selected companies:

Electro:

- LG Electronics

The company was founded in 1958 in Seoul, South Korea under the name “Goldstar” and was renamed to LG in 1995. The abbreviation stands for “Lucky Goldstar” but is also used as “Life’s Good”. The core products of LG are e.g. Televisions, Mobile Phones, Smartphones, Notebooks and Home Appliances. The company has more than 114 subsidiaries worldwide and 82.000 employees. The total revenue in 2011 was US\$ 48.976 billion (LG 2012).

- Samsung

Samsung Electronics is also a South Korean based company which was founded 1969 in Suwon, South Korea as subsidiary of Samsung Group. Similar to LG their core business are Mobile Phones, Smartphones, Home Appliances and Semiconductors. Samsung is currently the world’s largest mobile phone maker and has 197 subsidiaries in 72 countries. In 2011 the total revenue was US\$ 148.944 billion (Samsung 2012).

Chocolate:

- Knoppers

The Brand Knoppers belongs to the August Storck KG which was founded in 1903 and has his headquarter in Berlin, Germany. Knoppers was established in 1983 and is available in Germany and its surrounding European countries (Storck). Storck has 5000 employees and the total revenue is approximately 1.4 billion € (Brück 2010).

- PICK UP!

PICK UP! belongs to the in 1889 founded and German based company Bahlsen GmbH. The Brand PICK UP! was established in 1999 and was first introduced in the German, French and Austrian market. In 2011 Bahlsens’ total revenue was 521 million €. Bahlsen has 2527 employees and exports its products in more than 80 countries (Bahlsen 2012).

4 Questionnaire Development

This chapter contains a description of the questionnaire which was designed to answer the Research Question and the developed Hypotheses. Therefore the used sequence, the integrated stimuli as well as the used constructs are explained in detail. Although the original language of this questionnaire was German, the constructs are described in English with the subsequent English content. The sequence, stimuli and constructs used are identical for both the online- as well as the paper survey. An example of the paper questionnaire can be seen in appendix (B). The sequence of this questionnaire can be seen in the following Table whereas besides the page number also the content of the specific page is displayed. Detailed explanations regarding the used constructs as well as information about the origin and usage in the literature are content of the following sections. Overall the length of the questionnaire was 8 pages. Every questionnaire contained questions about one of the four Brands (PICK UP!, Knoppers; Samsung, LG) within the two Product Categories (Chocolate; Electro).

Content	Page
Cover Page	1
Brand Stimuli	2
Brand Evaluation + Purchase Intention + Word of Mouth (before Scenario) + Product Ownership	3
Scenario Stimuli	4
Brand Evaluation + Purchase Intention + Word of Mouth (after Scenario)	5
Brand Familiarity + COO Knowledge + Confidence in Brand Origin Identification	6
Country Image + Scenario Authenticity	7
Demographics	8

Table 2: Content of the Questionnaire

4.1 Cover page

The cover page contained information regarding the researcher as well as information about the anonymity and general information regarding the questionnaire. Furthermore, the title of the questionnaire “Befragung zum Thema Markenwahrnehmung” didn’t mediate the purpose to measure the influence of COO on brand perception.

4.2 Demographics

At the end of the questionnaire the respondent is asked to answer several demographic questions. The questions and the corresponding choices are regarding the, sex, national identity, citizenship (city or rural area), highest educational level (compulsory school, apprenticeship, high school diploma, University, Other), profession (student, employed, unemployed, retired) and income in € (less than 650, 650 – 1349, 1350 – 1899, 1900 -2500, above 2500) of the respondent.

4.3 Stimuli

In the process of the questionnaire two different Stimuli were presented to the respondent. Whereas the brand stimuli’s purpose at the beginning of the questionnaire is to provide information about the tested brand the Scenario stimuli’s aim is to provide additional information regarding the brand and consequently measure the effects of this information.

The brand Stimuli for both Product Categories contains a picture of the brand Logo which is displayed at the center of the page. Besides the brand Logo several pictures of products of the Electro brands are circled around the Logo. The displayed products are chosen from a portfolio of products which have a significant market share in the EU (European Union). The portfolio contained electronic devices like mobile phones, washing machines, TV’s or vacuum cleaners. For the Chocolate brands, pictures of the packaged products are displayed. On top of the page the respondent is encouraged to look at the brand Stimuli to make himself some thoughts regarding the brand before answering questions.

The Scenario stimuli consist of two parts, an optical in form off a graphic and one in written form. The graphic shows the specific brand Logo on the left side and a black arrow which points to left side where the flag of the “New Country” and the self-designed brand Logo of the faked brand “PMP” are displayed. The picture should enhance the content of the written part. The written part provides the respondent additional information regarding the brand

whereby new information unveils the interest in a takeover of the original brand by the brand PMP which is located in the specific “New Country”. There are negotiations about a takeover of the original brand by PMP. Afterwards the respondent is asked to answer the same questions regarding brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth with respect to the recent information.

4.4 Scales

The following sections contain the used scales in the course of the questionnaire. Besides the content of the questionnaires the origin of existing scales and the implemented modifications are elaborated. Furthermore differences between the two Country Image scales are debated and scales to measure the authenticity of the used Scenario are introduced.

Attitude toward the Brand

Attitude toward the brand is the first construct which is measured regarding the assessment of the brand image of the selected brands. The aim of this scale is to assess the person’s general opinion of the company. Two items as well as the format of the scale were adapted from (Steenkamp et al 2010) where the scale was used to measure the attitude toward global brands. In comparison to Steenkamp et al. (2010) two additional items were used (Bruner 2009). The four items were measured on seven bipolar scales with the end poles given in items. The items are (I think this brand is good, I think this brand is bad), (I have a positive opinion of it, I have a negative opinion of it), (I like this brand, I dislike this brand) and (The brand is satisfactory, The brand is unsatisfactory).

Brand Image Evaluations

The scale brand image evaluation was introduced in a study by Balabanis and Diamantopoulos in 2011 where brand image evaluations were used besides purchase intention as an outcome variable to measure the gains and losses from misperception of brand origin. It was measured on a 7-point scale anchored with “strongly disagree/strongly agree”. The respondents were asked to rate the brand regarding “value for money”, “reliability”, “performance” and “quality”.

Brand Trust & Brand Affect

The scales for brand affect and brand trust were introduced in a study by Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) where the authors demonstrated that both variables indirectly lead to higher market share on the one hand and as well to premium-related outcomes such as higher relative prices on the market on the other hand. The authors defined brand affect as “*Brand's potential to elicit a positive emotional response in the average consumer as a result of its use*” and brand trust as “*the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function*” (Chaudhuri and Holbrook 2001, p. 82). Brand trust was originally measured by the usage of four items of a seven point rating of agreement scale which was anchored by “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree”. For this study only the item (I trust this brand) was used. Brand affect was measured by using the same scale also one of the original three items was (The brand gives me pleasure) used.

Purchase Intention

For measuring the respondents' purchase intention a 7 point single item bipolar scale (1 = “not at all” to 7 = “extremely likely”) was used. Purchase intention is assessed to be a concrete singular attribute, which means that there is a concordant consensus by the raters to what it is and that there is no doubt that there is only one characteristic being referred to when this attribute is depicted in a questionnaire. Therefore the usage of a single item measure is valid. Other concrete attributes are e.g. quality of a product, price perception or Ad likeability (Rossiter 2002).

Word of Mouth

The aim of this scale is to measure the degree to which a person speaks positive of a brand and does so in an active manner (Brunner 2009). The scale was originally introduced in a study by Arnett, German, and Hunt (2003) where it was composed of three, seven point Likert-type statements. In this study word of mouth was assessed as a concrete singular attribute and therefore one statement was used to measure it (“I would speak favorable about this brand”).

Product Ownership

The construct product ownership was included into the questionnaire to investigate if the tested products are owned or recently bought by respondents. This scale can be used to amplify the results of the outcome variable purchase intention if respondents are actual user of the products. The two items (I have recently bought a product of this brand) and (I own a product of this brand) are measured by using a 7-point scale anchored by “strongly disagree/strongly agree”.

COO Knowledge, Confidence in Brand Origin Identification and COO Usage

Measuring consumers COO knowledge and how they process their knowledge is a main part of this study. Therefore three scales were used for this measurement. The first scale measures the COO knowledge for the regarding brand whereas the second scales’ is focusing on consumers’ confidence in the given answer to enhance accuracy in the results. The last scales’ purpose is to measure consumers’ self-assessment regarding their COO usage.

For measuring the COO knowledge the respondents were asked to answer the question if they could indicate the COO of the specific brand used in the questionnaire. The question was presented in an open format in order that the respondent had to type the answer in the designated field. Additionally a Don’t Know alternative was provided which could be selected if the respondent was not able to identify the COO. The Don’t Know field was highlighted to create awareness for this option since respondents tend to guess if this alternative is not mentioned explicitly.

The scale to measure the confidence in brand origin identification (CBO) was introduced by Zhou et al. (2009). The aim for developing the scale was to compile a moderator which is used to affect the effects of perceived brand foreignness on consumer evaluation and brand value. The authors define CBO as a “*consumer’s belief in his/her judgment or attribution of a brands COO*” (Zhou et.al 2009, p. 2). The purpose to use the scale in this study was the limited knowledge and the existing misclassification of brands to wrong COOs which was described in detail in theoretical part of this thesis. By usage of this scale the respondent’s answers of the COO knowledge could be verified. Zhou et al. measured CBO by using a 7-point semantic differential for the two items. In this study the items were measured by using a 7-point scale with “strongly disagree/strongly agree”. The two items to measure the CBO are

I'm certain about my identification of this brand's COO and I am of high level of confidence in my identification of this brand's COO.

The measurement of consumer's COO usage is one of the main purposes of this study. Therefore it is crucial to implement a construct that captures the respondent's assessment regarding its own COO usage. The applied scale is based on the study of Liu & Jonson (2005) although two additional scales were used as well as 7-point scale instead of a 5-point scale which was anchored "strongly disagree/strongly agree. Besides the initial item "COO has a great deal influence" the items "the COO of the Brand is very important to me" and "When purchasing a _____ the COO is very important to me" were measured in this construct. The blank was filled with the corresponding Product Category.

Country Image

For measuring the country image of the six selected countries two different scales were used. In the following two sections both scales will be explained in more detail separately. Generally the country image scales can be differentiated regarding their purpose. Whereas the scale of Roth and Romeo is defined as "Country Image at the product class level" (Lee and Ganesh 1999, p. 19) the Country Image by Liu and Johnson (2005) is based on a combination of general country attitudes, general product attitudes and specific product attitudes. The usage of this combination is based on the circumstance, that consumers can have a positive image of products of a certain country while they have a negative overall image of the same country (Lee and Ganesh 1999).

The construct introduced by Roth and Romeo (1992) offers an insight what influences the attitude of consumers toward products manufactured in particular countries. They define Country Image as "*Country image is the overall perception consumers form of products from a particular country, based on their prior perceptions of the country's production and marketing strengths and weaknesses*" (Roth and Romeo 1992, p. 480). To measure this construct the authors used four different dimensions with the aim to yield a greater comparability for future research findings and therefore generalizability regarding the different COO. The used dimensions are "innovation", "design", "prestige" and "workmanship" which are defined as

Innovativeness: Use of new technology and engineering advances

Design: Appearance, style, colors, variety

Prestige: Exclusivity, status, brand name reputation

Workmanship: Reliability, durability, craftsmanship, manufacturing quality.

The different items were measured by using the four dimensions on a seven point rating of agreement scale which was anchored by “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree”.

The country image scale by Liu and Johnson rests upon the circumstance that country stereotypes can occur in different levels (Stereotype regarding the country in general, products of a certain country in general and specific products). Therefore the original three item scale was used to measure the construct. A seven point scale was used which was anchored by “dislike” and “like”. The three items are (1) the country as a whole, (2) products of a country and (3) the specific product group.

Product Category Involvement and Brand Decision Involvement

The concept of involvement is defined by Mittal and Lee (1989, p. 365) as “... *the perceived value of a “goal object” that manifests as interest in that “goal object”*. This “goal object” can either occur as the product itself (product involvement) or the purchase decision (brand decision involvement). Consequently the product involvement is the interest a consumer recognizes in a certain product category and the brand decision involvement is the interest in making the brand selection. With respect to this distinction product category involvement and brand decision involvement are measured using different scales introduced used by Mittal and Lee (1989). For measuring product category involvement the three items (1) I have a strong interest in _____. (2) _____ are very important to me. and (3) For me, _____ do not matter are used. The two items (1) I would choose my _____ carefully. and (2) Which _____ I buy matters to me a lot. were used to measure the Brand Decision Involvement All items were presented by using a 7-point scale anchored by “strongly disagree/ strongly agree”.

Control questions regarding the Brand PMP and the Scenario

In the process of this questionnaire a Scenario Change is presented where the respondents receive additional information about a faked brand PMP and PMP's plan to acquire the original tested company. Furthermore the COO of PMP is mentioned which provides COO related information regarding the brand. To reveal the perceived authenticity of the Scenario three one item questions were asked, since it was necessary for the aim of the research that the respondents are unbiased towards PMP. Although the prior research didn't deliver any results regarding an existing brand named PMP an existence couldn't get ruled out entirely and therefore the first question was introduced to test if user know a brand named PMP. Besides a possible knowledge it was also necessary to measure respondent's attitude toward the brand PMP. Therefore one item of the already mentioned attitude toward brand construct (I like this brand, I dislike this brand) was used in the same form as above.

Additionally the authenticity of the described scenario was tested. The respondents were asked if the takeover of the original brand by a brand originated in either the same or another country, depending on the questionnaire, seems plausible. The item was measured by using a 7 point scale anchored by "strongly disagree/ strongly agree"

5 Data Collection Process

In the following sections the data collection process of this thesis will be explained. This chapter contains a general description of the online survey process as well as the reason for collecting most of the quantitative data in this study online. Besides the research method there will be an explanation of the used sampling methods. After the theoretical remarks the conducted process will be explained and the characteristic of the final sample will be shown.

5.1 Online Survey

During the last ten years online surveys have gained more importance through expansion of internet users and the implementation of broadband internet connection for public households. Furthermore the number of active internet users is not limited to specific target groups as for example technology users, young people or internet shoppers. A general online survey can take several different forms but the most common is the general standard questionnaire format which was also used in this study. As in a paper questionnaire the respondent has to scroll down the page and answer the questions. The respondents have to complete every question on a particular page before their answers are submitted and they are allowed to move on to the next page. The questionnaire can be forwarded to potential customers via e-mail or the link can be distributed through social networks, forums, company websites or intranet sites. The main advantages of online surveys are reduced costs, fast delivery and the opportunity of penetrating different target groups. The cost reduction occurs, by using an online survey instead of telephone interviews or postal survey through reduced operating costs like expenses for personnel who administer the telephone interviews, call charges or postage costs. The fast delivery can be achieved by the usage of the numerous existing software packages and websites which offer survey tools. These tools enable the preparation, the distribution and the analysis of a large number of respondent's interviews. Additionally these tools facilitate the possibility to see interim results as they arrive. Another advantage of online surveys is the opportunity of penetrating target groups which could be difficult to reach using traditional survey methods like postal, face to face or telephone surveys. Especially business people could be reached by posting links on their company website or wealthy individuals could be reached on forwarding links on specific websites or forums. The online survey can also be used for company internal survey by distributing the survey link over the intranet which can be accessed only by the staff, contractors or distributors (Craig and Douglas (2005).

5.2 Sampling method and Sample Size

To conduct this study a non-probability sample method was used. Compared to a probability sampling method a non-probability sample has several advantages. The implementation of a non-probability sample is less cost intensive as well as through a less stringent selection of potential respondents the sampling procedure accelerates. Besides that the non-probability sample can lead to a smaller sample size. The disadvantages of a non-probability sample are an indicative result instead of a definitive result, missing options to calculate the sampling error as well as the lack of knowledge to which degree the sample is representative of the population from which it is drawn (Craig and Douglas (2005).

There are several non-probability methods like simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling, cluster sampling, convenience sampling and snowball sampling available. For this study a convenience sample was used. Characteristic of a convenience sampling is that the procedure of selecting potential respondents is based in the researcher's convenience. Therefore the most easily reachable respondents of the target population are contacted. Besides the usage of the convenience sample an additional snowball sampling was used. In a snowball sampling process the new respondents are identified and gathered through the referral and forwarding of the initial respondents (Craig and Douglas (2005). The necessary sample size was determined to an average of 25 respondents for every of the 12 different versions of the questionnaire referring to sample sizes of similar conducted studies.

5.3 Data Collection

The data was mainly collected by using an online survey. Like in the Pre-Survey the online tool "OFB" was used to create and to accomplish the self-administered questionnaire. Like mentioned above an online survey was used, to gain from benefits like the fast delivery or the reduced costs compared to face to face or paper interviews. To participate in the questionnaire the respondent had to use a link which directed them to the start of the survey. Twelve different versions of the questionnaire were used, distinguished regarding Product Category, Brand and the Scenario Direction. The randomization was conducted by the online tool therefore only one link was necessary to be forwarded. The link was distributed in social networks where potential respondents were asked to participate in the study as well as to forward the link. Besides that, the link was also published in different forums to get a diverse range regarding age education, occupation etc. Alongside with the online questionnaire a paper version of the questionnaire was distributed. It was used for elder respondents who had

no access to the internet. Although no restrictions regarding the origin were made and the link of the questionnaire was open to the public as well it was distributed by using a snowball sample the respondents mainly have a German or Austrian citizenship. Overall 300 respondents participated in the study. The online survey was stopped after 268 completed online surveys. Besides that, 32 paper interviews were used for the final data sample. No data were identified that were out of the permissible range, logically inconsistent or that had extreme values. Therefore, no participants were excluded from the analyses. The distribution regarding the sex of the interviewees showed that (53.3%) were female and (46.7) were male. As mentioned above the majority (85.3%) of respondents are German (46.7%) or Austrian (38.7%) citizens. The remaining of participants was either from countries within the EU (5.0%) or from countries outside the EU (9.7%). Most of these participants are living in Austria or Germany permanently for occupational or educational reasons and they speak German fluently. The age of the interviewees is between 17 and 73 whereas the category of the 17-29 year old respondents is with (60.7%) the largest proportion. The mean age of the sample is 32.46. The largest proportion of respondents are employed (46%) or students (45%) and 80% of the respondents have at least a high school degree. Regarding the distribution of the different surveys which are distinguished in terms of Product Category, Brands and Scenario Direction shows that there is an almost equal distribution between the three characteristics.

6 Data Analysis

The following chapters contain a detailed analysis of the 300 questionnaires obtained from the data collection process. Before the main analysis of the developed Hypotheses which were described in chapter 2, the different steps of the conducted Preliminary Analysis are described. Furthermore the descriptive results for the outcome variables, COO knowledge and the control variables will be shown. For the analysis the statistical software SPSS 20 was used.

6.1 Preliminary Analysis

Before performing the main analysis several preliminary tasks had to be accomplished. Besides including several variables manually the composite scores of the used constructs had to be calculated as well as a reliability analysis of these constructs was conducted.

Although the Online Survey tool “OFB” produced a SPSS file with all respondents some manual changes had to be implemented. The question regarding the COO of the respective Brand was asked in an open format and therefore the answers had to be categorized in correct and misclassification. Furthermore the heritage of the respondents was classified manually into Germans, Austrians, EU Citizens and Non EU Citizens.

In order to reduce a response bias, several items of the implemented constructs are reverse phrased. This forces the respondent to read through the questions more carefully (Field 2010). For example the first construct which appears on the questionnaire is attitude toward the brand and as mentioned before these items consist of four items which are measured on a 7-point semantic differential. The scales on item one, three and four were anchored with the positive attitude e. g. “I like this Brand” on the left side and the negative attitude e. g. “I don’t like this brand” on the right side. In contradiction to these items the second item was reversed whereas the positive attitude was anchored on the right and the negative attitude on the left side. Before calculating the composite score and test the reliability it was necessary to change the coding of the reversed codes items in line with the other items of the construct.

Although the respondents answered every item independently the results for every construct are combined in a composite score. After calculating the composite scores it is necessary to measure the reliability of these scores. This Analysis is essential to reveal if the construct produces consistent results under consistent conditions. If this is the case the construct would

to be referred as to have a high reliability. The internal consistency and the consequent reliability of the constructs in this study was measured by using the Cronbach α . Alpha can take on any value equal or lower than 1 although only the values between zero and one can be interpreted meaningfully. The Literature suggests that a Cronbach α higher than 0.7 can be used as cut off point for acceptable scales. Scores below 0.7 are considered as unreliable. (Field 2010) In the following table the α scores of the relevant brand perception constructs as well as the product category involvement construct can be seen. The constructs are listed in the sequence of their appearance in the questionnaire

Variable	Cronbach α
Attitude Towards Brand	.870
Brand Image Evaluations	.813
Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	.900
Product Ownership	.790
Product Category Involvement Chocolate	.721
Product Category Involvement Chocolate	.773

Table 3: Cronbach α of Outcome Variable constructs and Product Category Involvement

The table shows that none of the constructs has a Cronbach α below 0.7. The α scores for COO usage, the particular country image scales and all control variables are listed in the appendix (C).

6.2 Descriptive Results

This section contains the descriptive results of the measured variables. The different sections contain the results for the measured outcome variables, COO knowledge, COO usage and the control variables. Besides the mean, the standard deviation for every variable is presented. Furthermore in several cases the significance between compiled results is shown to elucidate issues which are important for testing the Hypotheses.

6.2.1 Descriptive Results for Outcome Variables

The results for the variables measuring consumers brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth can be seen in the following tables. The constructs and single item questions are brand perception, attitude toward brand, brand image evaluation, brand trust, brand affect, overall attractiveness of the brand, quality of the brand, purchase intention and word of mouth. A description of these variables is presented the 4th chapter of this thesis. For all outcome variables a detailed table with the overall scores (Means for both Product Categories combined) and the individual means are provided. Besides the mean, the standard deviation is listed as well. The results per separate brand can be seen in the appendix (D).

	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Overall Means	300	5.05 (1.27)	4.86 (1.13)	4.97 (1.30)	4.63 (1.53)	4.94 (1.37)	4.69 (1.46)	4.68 (1.73)	4.80 (1.54)
Electro Means	149	5.06 (1.22)	5.04 (1.14)	5.05 (1.31)	4.77 (1.47)	5.00 (1.40)	4.96 (1.38)	4.87 (1.68)	4.91 (1.54)
Chocolate Means	151	5.03 (1.32)	4.68 (1.10)	4.89 (1.29)	4.50 (1.59)	4.87 (1.34)	4.43 (1.49)	4.49 (1.78)	4.69 (1.55)

Table 4: Results for all Outcome Variables before the Scenario Change

The combined results of the relevant variables to measure consumer's brand perception show that all means are located between 5.05 and 4.69. The results for both Categories individually show that the scores for the high involvement Category (Electro) are slightly higher than for the low involvement Category (Chocolate). The difference is significant for brand image evaluations and overall attractiveness of the brand. The two other outcome variables which are investigated in this study are purchase intention and word of mouth. The mean for purchase intention is 4.67 and the mean for word of mouth is 4.80. Similar to the other

outcome variables the values for Electro are slightly higher than for Chocolate whereas no significant difference can be found. The different implemented characteristics of high and low involvement Product categories should be a reasonable explanation for this difference and will have no further influence in the following Analysis.

Furthermore, since the respondent was asked throughout the questionnaire to answer the same questions regarding the outcome variables on two occasions and under different premises a comparison of the obtained results is shown. In the following table the means and the standard deviation, of all respondents regardless of the COO usage, pre and post the Scenario Change are presented.

	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Pre Scenario	300	5.04 (1.27)	4.86 (1.13)	4.97 (1.30)	4.63 (1.53)	4.94 (1.37)	4.69 (1.46)	4.68 (1.73)	4.80 (1.54)
Post Scenario	300	4.67 (1.39)	4.56 (1.33)	4.53 (1.47)	4.31 (1.61)	4.58 (1.55)	4.38 (1.57)	4.19 (1.85)	4.43 (1.62)
T		6.20	4.84	5.83	4.22	4.85	4.22	6.70	5.13
P < 0.05		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table 5: Results for all Outcome Variables after the Scenario Change

The results show that all means before and after which were measured before are higher than the means measured after the Scenario Change. That difference is consistent for both Product Categories and for all four Brands. Furthermore an independent T-Test obtained that the distinction is highly significant with $p < 0.05$. Those results show that the takeover by a company whose origin is in either the “Same”, “Worse” or “Better” rated country clearly influence consumers’ brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth. This result confirms the observations of previous research that available COO information is processed and influences consumer brand evaluation (Liu and Johnson 2005). The results for the particular scenario show that a takeover by a company from the same or worse rated country have a negative impact on the brand evaluation whereas the takeover by a brand from a “Better” COO tend to have no effect regards the Brand evaluation. The differences between the initial results and the results for the worse and same scenario are significant for all outcome variables except for overall attractiveness of the brand in the “Same” Scenario. The

scores for the “Better” rated country a nearly identical to the results obtained before the scenario and show no significant difference in either direction. The results are graphically displayed exemplarily for the variables brand image evaluations and quality of the brand. The slopes show the result of the respondents answer before and after Scenario. The three different colors represent the three different Scenario possibilities.

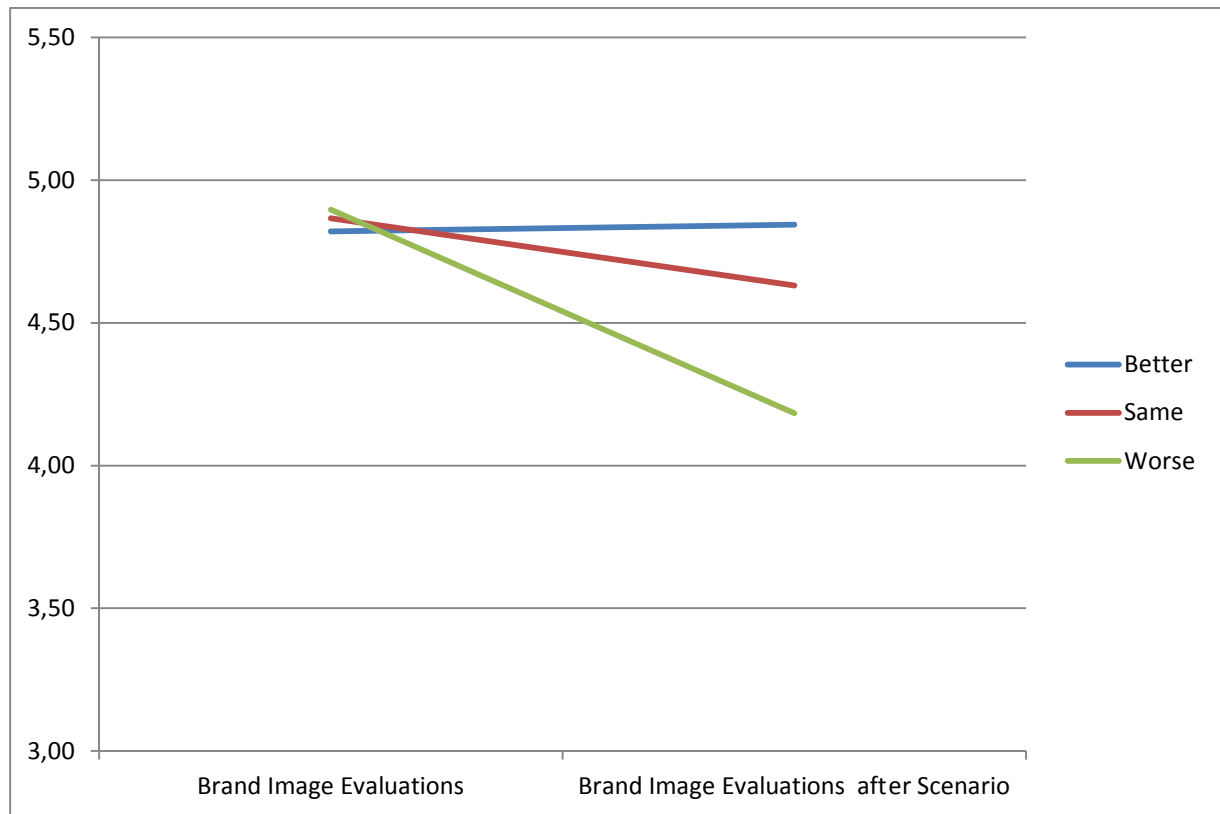


Figure 3: Impact of the Scenario Change for Brand Image Evaluations

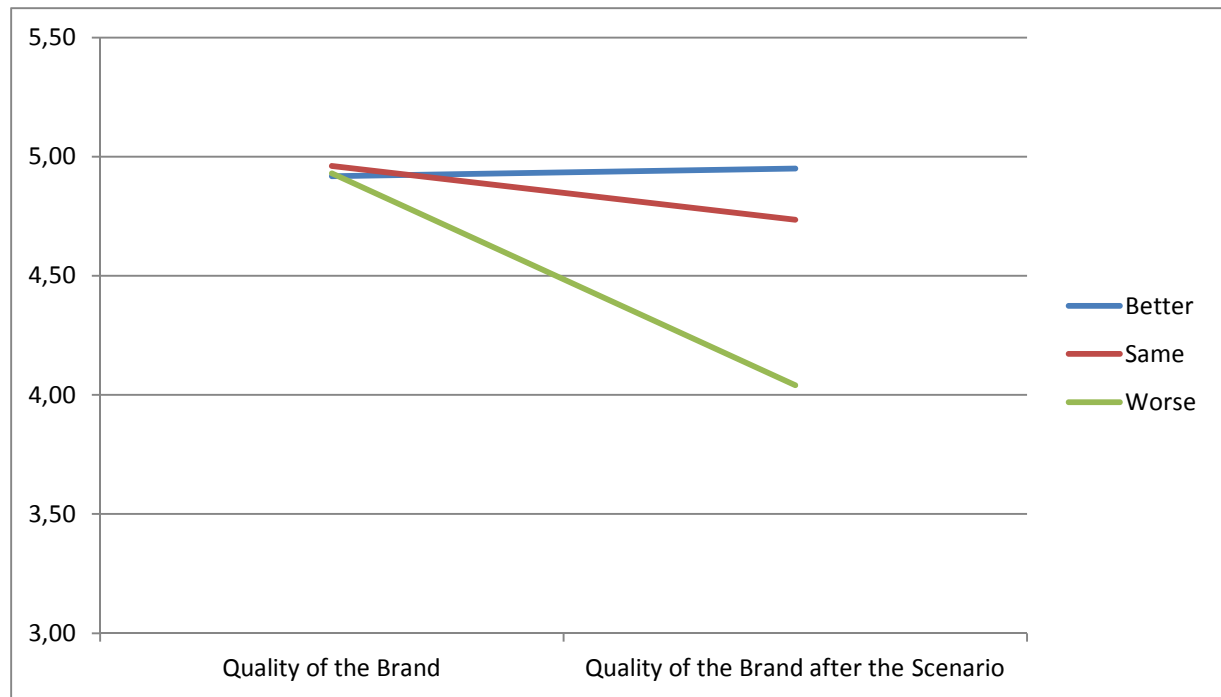


Figure 4: Impact of the Scenario Change for Quality of the Brand

Although an effect was anticipated the results are somehow surprising, since it was expected that the transfer to a better country would have a more noticeable positive effect on the brand evaluation and the transfer to the same country would only have a slight impact, since the conducted pre-survey already revealed that consumers have distinctive preferences for products from certain countries.

6.2.2 Descriptive Results for COO knowledge

The knowledge if consumers are able to identify the COO of a brand is crucial for the further analysis in this study. Therefore the COO knowledge consumers possess is examined. Besides solely relying on the respondent's answers the knowledge is furthermore verified by the additional test of respondent's confidence regarding their answer. Therefore the scales COO knowledge and confidence in brand recognition were used to categorize respondents regarding their knowledge into Correct, Misperception and Don't Know user.

By looking exclusively at the results of the question if consumers can identify the COO of the Brands in question it can be seen that 38% identified the COO correctly (Correct), 15% misclassified (Misperception) the COO and 47% had no knowledge (Don't Know) regarding the COO. These results are mentioned merely as a comparative value for the findings with regards to the respondent's confidence to the given answer.

To enhance the validity of the above mentioned results the confidence in brand recognition was also taken into account to evaluate consumers COO knowledge. The median for this construct was 6.00. It was only measured for user who identified the COO of the Brand correctly or classified the Brand to a wrong COO. Anyhow the calculated Median was not used as a split point in the further research. Furthermore to classify the participant's confidence in their supposed COO knowledge a cutoff point of 3 was chosen. The reason for choosing a cutoff point of 3 was founded with regards to the distribution together with a comprehensible assessment of the respondent's decision process. After the determination of the cutoff point all participants who answered the COO Knowledge question correctly or incorrectly and scored below 3 in the confidence in brand recognition construct are afterwards listed as Don't Know user. If the score was 3 or higher the participants are still listed under Correct or Misperception.

After the conducted adjustments regarding the confidence of the respondents the results to which degree consumers can identify the COO of brand can be seen in the following table.

	N	%
Correct	108	36.0
Misperception	33	11.0
Don t Know	159	53.0
Overall	300	100.0

Table 6: COO Knowledge Overall

Of the 300 respondents 108 (36%) were able to identify the COO Correct whereas 33 (11%) misclassified the COO and 159 (53%) answered the question with Don't Know or belong to the group of respondents who are uncertain about their choice of COO.

The following table shows the measured results for the two particular Product Categories Chocolate and Electro. It can be seen that the percentage of respondents who identified the Brand of the Product Category Electro is higher than for the Chocolate Brands.

	Chocolate		Electro	
	N	%	N	%
Correct	48	31.8	60	40.3
Misperception	14	9.3	19	12.8
Don't Know	89	58.9	70	47.0
Overall	151	100.0	149	100.0

Table 7: COO Knowledge by Product Category

In detail, the number of respondents who are able to identify the correct COO is by 9% higher for the Electro Product Category. The next tables show the results for the Chocolate and Electro brands.

	Chocolate				Electro			
	Knoppers		Pick Up!		LG		Samsung	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Correct	22	28.9	26	34.7	26	34.2	34	46.6
Misperception	6	7.9	8	10.7	11	14.5	8	11.0
Don't Know	48	63.2	41	54.7	39	51.3	31	42.4
Overall	76	100.0	75	100.0	76	100.0	73	100.0

Table 8: COO Knowledge by particular Brand

The results show that the number of respondents who are able to identify the correct COO is by 6% higher for the Brand Pick Up! compared to Knoppers. The number of participants who identified Samsung's COO correctly was by 12% higher than for LG.

In summary it can be stated that the majority (64%) of the respondents is not able to identify the COO of the given brands correctly. These results are consistent for both Product Categories since almost 60% in the Electro Product Group and 68% in Chocolate Product Group Don't know or Misperceived the COO of the selected brands. Those results are consistent with the findings of similar conducted research (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2008; Samiee 2005).

Besides the above mentioned findings other criteria like age and gender and are investigated to measure the influence of those demographics on the degree of COO knowledge of the

respondents. To test the influence on age the respondents COO knowledge file was separated into two groups, due to the age distribution of respondents. The first group contains the 182 respondents under 30 and the other group contains 118 respondents between 31 and 80. The results are presented in the following table.

	18 - 30		31 - 80	
	N	%	N	%
Correct	72	39.6	36	30.5
Misperception	6	3.3	27	22.9
Don't Know	104	57.1	55	46.6
Overall	182	100.0	73	100.0

Table 9: COO Knowledge by Age

The results show that the percentage of misperception from respondents over 30 is nearly 20% higher than from respondents below 30. Furthermore the ability to identify the correct COO of younger respondents is around 10% higher than for elder respondents.

Besides the age, gender was the second demographic which was tested regarding its influence on the COO knowledge. The results in the following table show the differences between male and female respondents.

	Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%
Correct	55	34.4	53	37.9
Misperception	9	5.6	24	17.1
Don't Know	96	60.0	63	45.0
Overall	160	100.0	140	100.0

Table 10: COO Knowledge by Gender

According to these numbers there is no meaningful difference regarding the correct identification of a brands COO between female and male respondents. Contrary to that female respondents tend to answer the COO related question more often with Don't know whereas male respondents tend to guess more and thereby more often misperceive the COO of the tested brands.

6.2.3 Descriptive Results for Control Variables

The last group of variables that is represented in the questionnaire is the group of control variables. In detail those variables are product ownership, product category involvement (product and brand level), country image by Roth and Romeo and country image by Liu and Johnson. Furthermore the results for two control question with respect to invented brand PMP are mentioned. The first table shows the mean and variances for the product ownership and the product category involvement for the product and brand level with respect to the tested brands.

	N	Product Ownership	Product category Involvement (Product Level)	Product category Involvement (Brand Level)
Overall Means	300	3.28 (2.24)	5.17 (1.22)	5.06 (1.41)
Electro Means	149	3.91 (2.40)	5.19 (1.35)	5.07 (1.24)
Chocolate Means	151	2.67 (1.90)	5.15 (1.69)	5.05 (1.56)

Table 11: Result for Control Variables

For the product ownership the overall mean for both Product Categories is 3.28 whereas the Mean for Chocolate is 2.68 and Means for Electro is 3.91. The difference can again be explained in the different characteristics of the tested Product Categories especially regarding durability. The Overall mean for product category involvement (product level) is 5.17 and for brand level is (5.06). These two means show that consumer's interest in Product Category and which brand they choose is of high interest regardless of the Product Category. The exact means for both Product Categories are nearly identical and can also be seen in the table.

In the upcoming table the mean and standard deviation of the two different country image scales can be seen. Every respondent had to rate a country regarding the Scenario of the distributed questionnaire.

		Country Image Roth & Romeo	Country Image Liu & Johnson
Better Scenario	Japan (Electro)	5.04 (1.17)	5.49 (1.06)
	Switzerland (Chocolate)	5.07 (1.15)	5.60 (1.25)
Same Scenario	South Korea (Electro)	3.78 (1.36)	4.39 (1.28)
	Germany (Chocolate)	5.48 (1.00)	5.60 (0.92)
Worse Scenario	China (Electro)	3.04 (1.10)	3.68 (0.97)
	Poland (Chocolate)	2.17 (1.11)	3.53 (1.16)

Table 12: Country Image Roth & Romeo and Liu & Johnson

For the Chocolate Product Category the results for the country image scale by Liu & Johnson showed the following results (MPoland = 3.53; MGermany = 5.60; MSwiss = 5.60). The results show that the country image is nearly the regarding Swiss and Germany. Poland scores lower than the other countries. The results for the Electro Product category are (MJapan = 5.50; MKorea = 4.39; MChina = 3.68). Contrary to the Chocolate Product Group the results of all three countries are ranked hierarchical.

The results of the second more product related country image by Roth & Romeo showed the following results for Chocolate ((MPoland = 2.17 ; MGermany = 5.48; MSwiss = 5.07) and Electro (MJapan = 5.04; MKorea = 3.78; MChina = 3.04). The results show differences between both variables whereas the means for the country image by Liu & Johnson are higher than the means for country image Roth & Romeo. The difference supports the theory by Lee and Ganesh (1999) that there are differences between the image of a country and the products of this country.

As mentioned in the 4th Chapter the Country Image Scale of Liu & Johnson consists of three different items whereas the third items is measuring the respondent's attitude regarding the specific product group with respect to the Country. In a second analysis to reveal the results gathered in the conducted pre-survey where the respondents had to rank several countries with regards to the most preferable country only the 3rd item of this construct was measured. In the following table the results of the third item can be seen.

Country Image Liu & Johnson (3rd Item)		
Electro	Japan	5.69 (1.24)
	Korea	4.52 (1.42)
	China	3.65 (1.30)
Chocolate	Switzerland	5.83 (1.43)
	Germany	5.29 (1.20)
	Poland	3.32 (1.50)

Table 13: Country Image Liu & Johnson (3rd item)

The results verify the data collected during the research process and supports the decision for the selected countries with regards to the New Scenario. All the differences between the countries in a Product Group are a statistically significant with ($p < 0.05$).

6.2.4 Descriptive Results for COO Usage

The measurement of respondents COO usage and the further classification of the respondents in either “COO-cue user” or “Non COO-cue user” are essential for testing the developed Hypotheses. The results regarding the COO usage construct were measured by the usage of three different items. Since one of the items was Product Category related the results for both Product Categories and the overall mean and standard deviation are listed in the following table.

	N	COO Usage
Overall Mean	300	3.32 (1.78)
Electro Mean	150	3.08 (1.66)
Chocolate Mean	150	3.56 (1.87)

Table 14: Mean of COO- cue usage by Product Category

The results show that the COO is more important for the Chocolate brands (3.56) than for Electro brands (3.08) although both Product Categories have nearly identical scores regarding the Product Category Involvement (Brand & Product Level). The differences are significant with $p < 0.5$. To categorize respondents into the two different user groups (“COO-cue users”; “Non COO-cue users”) a feasible cutoff point of 3.66 was selected by using the distribution of the variable as bias. Therefore respondents whose mean scores below 3.66 are classified as “Non COO-cue users” and respondents whose score is below 3.66 are classified as “COO-cue users”.

Descriptive Results for the fictional Brand PMP

The last Group of Control Variables is related to the compiled Scenario. The first question the respondent had to answer was regarding their Knowledge of the Brand PMP. This question was only asked to respondents who answered the online questionnaire. Out of the 268 respondents 3 replied the question with “yes” and 265 with “no”. The Brand attitude regarding the Brand PMP showed a mean of 4.05. Considering this mean as an indicator how people perceive the made up brand, the result shows no strong tendencies regarding perceived as bad or perceived as good. Hence it can be assumed that the unknown brand didn’t influence the respondents while evaluating the brands after they received the New Scenario information regarding any direction.

The last Control Variable measured the perceived authenticity of the given Scenario. The 268 online respondents were asked to evaluate to what extent the takeover of a brand from a foreign, perceived foreign or the same country is realistic. By looking at the results for every

possible brand country relation the means range from 3.64 to 5. The lowest score was for the potential takeover of Pick UP! by a company from Poland. The highest score was for the takeover of Knoppers by a German company. Although some scenarios were perceived as “more” realistic as others, none of the results was perceived as “unrealistic”.

7 Main Analysis

In the following part of this thesis the main Analysis will be described and the results will be shown and evaluated. It contains the results of the four formulated Hypotheses. Besides this analysis some additional findings will be provided. Furthermore the results and the used statistical operations as well as the transformation of the data file will be explained. For presenting the results, individual tables are used.

7.1 Results for Hypothesis 1

The following section contains the results for the 1st Hypothesis of this study. The Hypothesis is defined as “Correct COO knowledge has a positive impact on Brand Perception, Purchase Intention and Word of Mouth”. Besides the results of this Hypothesis all statistical relevant operations and necessary steps are described.

For measuring if Correct COO knowledge has a positive impact it was necessary to split the file into two groups. The results for Correct COO knowledge, Misperception and Don't Know were already discussed in the previous section. For this analysis it was necessary to merge the files of Don't Know and Misperception as counterpart to the Correct COO knowledge files. The overall number for Correct COO knowledge respondents was 108 and the number for the combined group of Misperception & Don't Know respondents was 192. Since the file was split into two groups of respondents with different conditions (Correct COO Knowledge; Misperception & Don't Know), the Hypothesis was tested using an Independent T-Test and therefore the difference between the two overall means, one for each condition, was compared. The Usage of the overall mean was necessary since different participants are not solely distinguished by the various conditions, but also by other sources of variance such as motivation or IQ (Field 2005). If there is a significant difference between the two calculated overall means the null Hypothesis would be rejected and the developed alternative Hypothesis could be confirmed.

The results regarding the 1st Hypothesis can be seen in the following table. Besides the means the tables show the F value of the T-test as well as the one and two tailed significance value.

Main Analysis

COO Knowledge	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Correct Mean	108	5.33 (1.33)	5.09 (1.12)	5.21 (1.33)	4.87 (1.54)	5.17 (1.44)	5.01 (1.38)	5.11 (1.58)	5.06 (1.55)
Misperception & Don't Know Mean	192	4.89 (1.21)	4.73 (1.12)	4.83 (1.27)	4.50 (1.51)	4.81 (1.31)	4.51 (1.51)	4.43 (1.77)	4.66 (1.53)
F		8.38	7.21	5.98	4.08	4.81	8.54	10.94	4.67
P < 0.05		.004	.008	.015	.044	.029	.004	.001	.031
P < 0.10		.002	.004	.008	.022	0.15	.002	.001	.016

Table 15: Results for the 1st Hypotheses

All variables which describe the brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth show higher means in the Correct COO knowledge group in comparison to the Misperception & Don't Know group. The differences regarding the means of all investigated variables are all statistically significant with ($p < 0.10$) for the two tailed and with ($p < 0.05$) for the one tailed test. With regards to the stated Hypotheses the results have shown that consumers who are able to identify a COO correctly score significantly higher on all variables measured. Therefore the Hypothesis, that a correct COO knowledge has a positive impact on all outcome variables, can be confirmed. Those results are consistent with the findings of Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2011) that both non-classification and misclassification have mostly undesirable consequences for brands in terms for the tested outcomes (brand image perception and purchase intention).

By looking at the result for the different product categories, which are presented in appendix (E), it can be seen that correct COO knowledge has the same impact. All variables have higher values if evaluated by respondents with a correct COO knowledge, although not all results are statistically significant which could occur through the limited number of respondents with a correct COO knowledge in the particular product categories.

7.2 Results for Hypothesis 2

This section contains the results for the 2nd Hypotheses which is defined as “Consumer who classify a brand to a certain COO and admit not to use this information evaluate brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth different from consumers who don’t know the COO”. For this analysis the file was split into a correct & misperception and into a don’t know group.

Before investigating the results of the Hypothesis the initial necessary action was to split the data file in two groups regarding their COO usage and COO knowledge. To determine if respondents use COO information the participants were split into the “COO-cue usage” and “Non COO-cue usage” group. By looking at the distribution of the variable the cutoff point was set at 3.66 which lead to 131 respondents in the COO usage group and to 169 in the “Non COO-cue usage”. The respondents who belong to the Don’t Know group are automatically allocated to the “Non COO-cue usage” group since they were not able to evaluate the brand regarding their COO if the COO is unknown to the respondents. Besides splitting the file regarding the COO usage of the respondents a second split was used for this analysis. Since the Hypotheses differ between “consumers who classify and admit not to use this information” and “consumers who don’t know the COO” the COO knowledge is a relevant factor for building the two groups. The first group (Correct & Misperception) contains respondents who answered the question regarding the COO of the brand correctly or misperceived the brand to the wrong country and belong to the “Non COO-cue usage” consumer group. The second group (Don’t Know) consists of respondents who are not able to classify the COO of the Brand. The following contingency table shows the respondents COO knowledge and their user Classification as well as the 61 participants who can’t be allocated to either of the two groups.

		COO Knowledge		Overall
		Correct & Misperception	Don't Know	
User Classification	Non COO-cue user	74	95	169
	COO-cue user	61	64	131
Overall		141	159	300

Table 16: Contingency table for COO knowledge and User Classification

After dividing the respondents the first group contains of 74 respondents and the second group of 159 respondents.

For testing the second Hypotheses the variables regarding the brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth of both allocated groups are compared. The alternative Hypotheses can be confirmed if the two calculated overall means are significantly different from each other. For computing the results an independent t-test was used. A brief explanation of this statistical instrument is described in the section above. The results can be seen in the following table. Besides the means and the standard deviation the tables show the F value of the T-test as well as the one tailed significance value.

COO Knowledge	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Correct & Misperception Mean	74	5.12 (1.35)	5.21 (1.12)	5.18 (1.31)	5.26 (1.62)	4.78 (1.43)	5.04 (1.44)	5.14 (1.48)	4.96 (1.55)
Don't Know Mean	159	4.91 (1.22)	4.64 (1.09)	4.77 (1.31)	4.73 (1.48)	4.42 (1.31)	4.46 (1.31)	4.33 (1.79)	4.61 (1.53)
F		1.45	13.59	4.76	7.73	2.84	8.59	11.44	2.62
P < 0.05		.229	.000	.030	.006	.093	.004	.001	.107

Table 17: Result of the 2nd Hypotheses for both Product Categories

All means for the Correct&Misperception group are higher compared to the Don't Know group although not all of these differences are statistically significant. Variables where the difference is statistically significant ($p > 0.5$) are brand image evaluations, brand trust, brand affect, overall attractiveness of the brand and purchase intention. The difference between the

means was not significantly different for attitude toward brand, quality of the brand and word of mouth. Therefore the Hypothesis can only be partly confirmed. Similar to the 1st tested Hypotheses the number of respondents, who identified the COO correctly or misclassified the COO, is limited and therefore several differences are not significant, although the differences could be described as considerable and according to that it can be assumed that respondents use the COO-cue (COO knowledge) to evaluate the brand, although they deny the COO-cue usage.

By looking at the results for the particular product categories, which can be seen in appendix (F) the results show the same characteristics in form that the scores for correct&misperception groups are higher although only a few differences are statistically significant.

7.3 Results for Hypotheses 3

In the following section the results for the 3rd Hypotheses “Consumers implicitly change their Brand Perception, Purchase Intention and Word of Mouth, even thou they deny any COO-cue usage.” are presented. For evaluating the results it was necessary to consider the respondents answers regarding the brand perception variables, purchase intention and word of mouth before and after the Scenario Change. Furthermore additional results which are elaborated through these findings are presented.

To conduct this analysis the file was spilt into respondents who deny any COO-cue usage which represented 169 out of the 300 respondents. Different from the other tested Hypotheses in this analysis the same respondents were compared whereas the condition changed. The selection can be seen in the following contingency table which shows respondents user classification with respect to the scenario direction.

		Scenario Direction			Overall
		<i>Better</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Worse</i>	
User Classification	<i>Non COO-cue user</i>	57	59	53	169
	<i>COO-cue user</i>	41	43	47	131
Overall		98	102	100	300

Table 18: Contingency table for “Scenario Direction” and User Classification

The table also shows that the distribution between the different Scenarios is nearly balanced. Contrary to the other tested Hypotheses the two comparable conditions originated from the same participants. Therefore the dependent T-Test was used whereby the difference in the score for the 1st condition and the score for the 2nd condition for every selected respondent is calculated. Hence the difference solely displays the effect of the experimental manipulation and no other sources of variance (Field 2005). If the calculated mean of all respondents differ between the two conditions significantly, the alternative Hypotheses would be confirmed.

The acquired study contained 3 different Scenarios (“Better”; “Same”; “Worse”). In the following section the Overall results of the Scenario Change, the results per product category as well as the results for every Scenario with regards to the tested variables is presented. The table for all analyzed conditions includes the scores of the tested variables before and after the Scenario. Furthermore the individual T score as well as the one tailed significance level will be shown. The differences for the particular Scenario are described and any occurring significance will be highlighted.

The following table shows the results for all respondents who denied the Usage of COO cues for all variables evaluating the brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth. All three Scenarios as well as the both product categories are combined in these results.

	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Non COO cue user Pre Scenario	169	5.00 (1.26)	4.83 (1.21)	4.91 (1.39)	4.56 (1.56)	4.95 (1.41)	4.72 (1.48)	4.72 (1.75)	4.71 (1.54)
Non COO cue user Post Scenario	169	4.63 (1.34)	4.49 (1.40)	4.47 (1.52)	4.21 (1.64)	4.50 (1.64)	4.29 (1.60)	4.21 (1.83)	4.31 (1.63)
T		4.91	4.25	4.85	3.64	4.65	4.69	5.49	4.27
P < 0.05		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table 19: Overall results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the Scenario

The results show that all variables have a higher score before the new Scenario occurs. All the measured differences are highly statistically significant with ($p < 0.5$). With respect to tested

Hypothesis it can be stated that that consumers who deny any COO usage “implicitly” change their perception for all tested variables and therefore the Hypotheses can be confirmed.

Findings for the particular Product Category

Since the overall measurement combined respondents participating in either a high or low involvement Product Category the following tables show the results for Electro and Chocolate in particular.

Starting with the low involvement category (Chocolate) the results show that the 76 respondents evaluated the entire outcome variables higher before the Scenario Change was performed.

	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Non COO cue user Pre Scenario	76	4.96 (1.37)	4.48 (1.20)	4.67 (1.42)	4.32 (1.63)	4.80 (1.38)	4.34 (1.58)	4.46 (1.83)	4.89 (1.52)
Non COO cue user Post Scenario	76	4.58 (1.34)	4.31 (1.42)	4.34 (1.51)	4.13 (1.68)	4.43 (1.59)	4.17 (1.61)	4.17 (1.98)	4.29 (1.60)
T		3.09	2.72	2.96	1.42	2.87	1.63	2.28	1.61
P < 0.05		.003	.090	.004	.159	.005	.107	.025	.112

Table 20: Results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the Scenario (Chocolate)

Although the results are not significant for all variables it should at least be a strong indicator that respondents, in a low involvement product category, who deny a COO cue usage implicitly, use the provided COO information.

By looking at the results for the high involvement Product Category (Electro) the results for the 97 respondents show the same tendencies like the results above. All variables measured before the Scenario show higher scores than after the Scenario.

	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Non COO cue user Pre Scenario	93	5.03 (1.18)	5.12 (1.51)	5.11 (1.34)	4.76 (1.49)	5.08 (1.44)	5.03 (1.33)	4.92 (1.66)	4.89 (1.52)
Non COO cue user Post Scenario	93	4.67 (1.35)	4.63 (1.37)	4.58 (1.53)	4.27 (1.60)	4.56 (1.68)	4.38 (1.60)	4.25 (1.70)	4.33 (1.66)
T		3.85	4.00	3.84	3.50	3.65	4.60	5.29	4.18
P < 0.05		.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table 21: Results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the Scenario (Electro)

Contrary to the low involvement product group the results for all outcome variables are highly significant with ($p < 0.5$).

Although, the implicit COO usage seem to have more influence on the high involvement product category it is possible that this difference is partly based on the smaller sample size for the low involvement group.

Findings for the particular Scenario

The results for the “Better” Scenario originate from respondents who deny any COO-cue usage and completed a questionnaire where the planned takeover is conducted from a brand of a “Better” rated country which is with respect to the different Product Categories either Japan or Switzerland. The results of these 59 respondents for the brand perception variables, purchase intention and word of mouth show that every variable scored higher in the initial evaluation than in the constructed Scenario. Although a difference between all variables can be identified, the difference is not significant for any of the variables.

Main Analysis

	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Non COO cue user Pre Scenario	57	5.12 (1.17)	4.87 (1.25)	4.89 (1.38)	4.68 (1.44)	5.09 (1.33)	4.83 (1.38)	4.98 (1.67)	4.86 (1.39)
Non COO cue user Post Scenario	57	4.96 (1.10)	4.86 (1.36)	4.75 (1.35)	4.60 (1.56)	5.02 (1.45)	4.68 (1.29)	4.72 (1.72)	4.77 (1.34)
T		1.26	.104	1.00	.607	.574	1.38	1.74	.711
P < 0.05		.213	.917	.322	.546	.568	.172	.087	.480

Table 22: Results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the “Better” Scenario

For measuring the respondent’s reaction for the “Same” Scenario the actual COOs, Germany and Korea for the respective Product Categories were used. The results of the 59 participants in the following table show that for all the measured variables the score of the initial evaluation is higher than the evaluation for the constructed Scenario.

	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Non COO cue user Pre Scenario	59	5.13 (1.10)	4.82 (1.04)	4.98 (1.24)	4.63 (1.38)	4.97 (1.30)	4.80 (1.26)	4.53 (1.70)	4.73 (1.41)
Non COO cue user Post Scenario	59	4.75 (1.27)	4.57 (1.21)	4.61 (1.36)	4.39 (1.45)	4.69 (1.41)	4.65 (1.42)	4.24 (1.70)	4.56 (1.38)
T		3.13	2.95	3.46	1.81	2.52	1.28	2.73	2.95
P < 0.05		.003	.005	.001	.075	.015	.207	.008	.005

Table 23: Results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the “Same” Scenario

The observed difference is statistically significant with ($p < 0.5$) for attitude toward brand, brand image evaluations, brand trust, quality of the brand and purchase intention. The difference was not significant for overall attractiveness of the brand and brand affect. The final Scenario which was taking into account to measure respondent’s response to new COO information was the “Worse” Scenario. Therefore the countries China and Poland were used

for the constructed Scenario. China was used as possible new country for Electro products and Poland for Chocolate products. Similar to the results observed above the pre Scenario Means for all variables are higher than for the post Scenario Means. Those results of the 53 respondents show that the difference between the initial and constructed Scenario are highly significant with ($p < 0.5$) for all measured variables.

	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Non COO cue user Pre Scenario	53	4.72 (1.50)	4.81 (1.36)	4.85 (1.56)	4.36 (1.87)	4.79 (1.62)	4.52 (1.80)	4.64 (1.88)	4.81 (1.36)
Non COO cue user Post Scenario	53	4.12 (1.52)	3.99 (1.13)	4.02 (1.77)	3.58 (1.76)	3.74 (1.82)	3.55 (1.91)	3.64 (1.95)	3.99 (1.51)
T		4.07	4.14	4.06	3.54	4.55	4.89	5.05	4.68
P < 0.05		.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table 24: Results of “Non COO-cue users” before and after the “Worse” Scenario

Summary of the Results

The Hypothesis that “Consumers implicitly change their Brand Perception, Purchase Intention and Word of Mouth, even thou they deny any COO-cue usage” is confirmed since the pre Scenario and post Scenario evaluation difference is highly significant for all variables considering the combined results for both product categories. Every variable regardless of the particular Product Category, Scenario or brand scored higher in the pre Scenario evaluation process than in the post Scenario evaluation although for the “Better” and “Same” direction as well as for the Chocolate Product Category not all differences were significant. Furthermore the identified implicit COO-cue usage is consistent with the findings of previous research (Herz and Diamantopoulos 2012; Liu and Johnson 2005). In the following sections the influence of the new Scenario is shown graphically as well as a classification of different user-types is provided.

Additional Results for the 3 Hypotheses

Besides confirming the third Hypotheses the obtained results provide additional content which contributes to the conclusion and furthermore the managerial implications of this thesis. Therefore a graphical illustration of the impacts on consumer's evaluation of the Scenario Change with regards to a takeover as well as a classification of the respondents regarding their implicit and explicit usage of COO information is presented.

Graphic display for the result of Hypotheses 3

The results mentioned regarding the three different Scenario directions in the sections above are also displayed in the following graphs. As described above the behavior of all variables is identical with regards to the different Scenarios (Mean pre Scenario > Mean Post Scenario). Exemplary the two variables brand image evaluations and brand trust are displayed to show the effect of a takeover by an either “Better”, “Worse” or “Same” rated country. The three lines display the difference in the means before and after the Scenario whereas the left side presents the Mean before the Scenario and the right side after the Scenario.

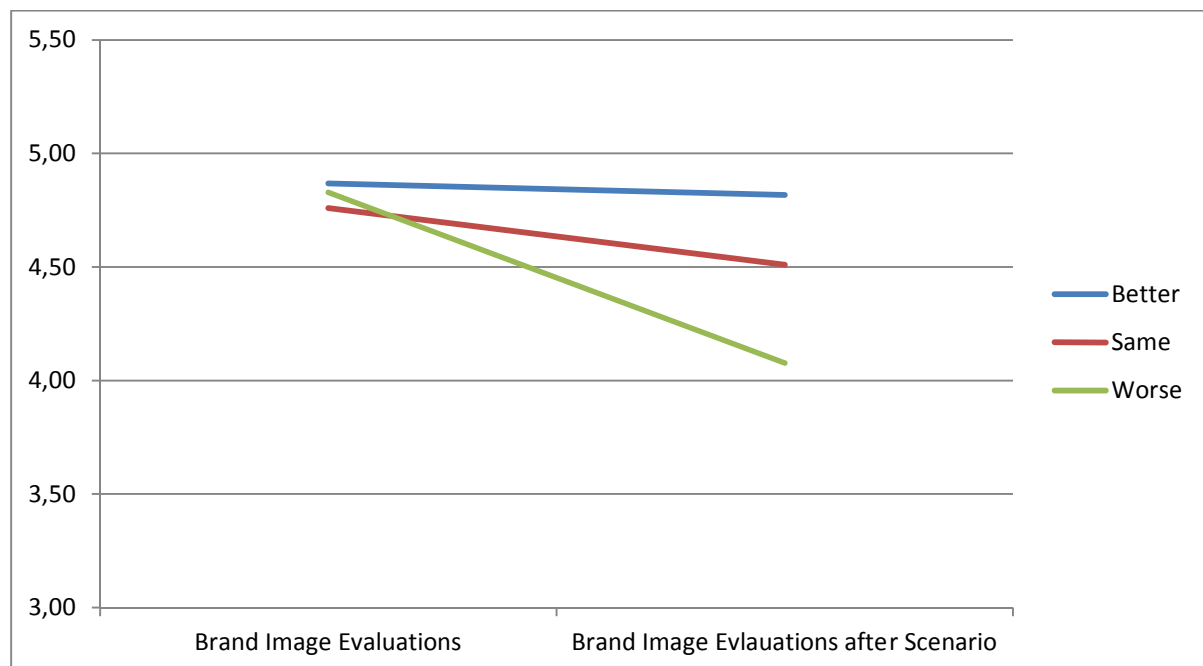


Table 25: Effects of the Scenario Change regarding Brand Image Evaluation

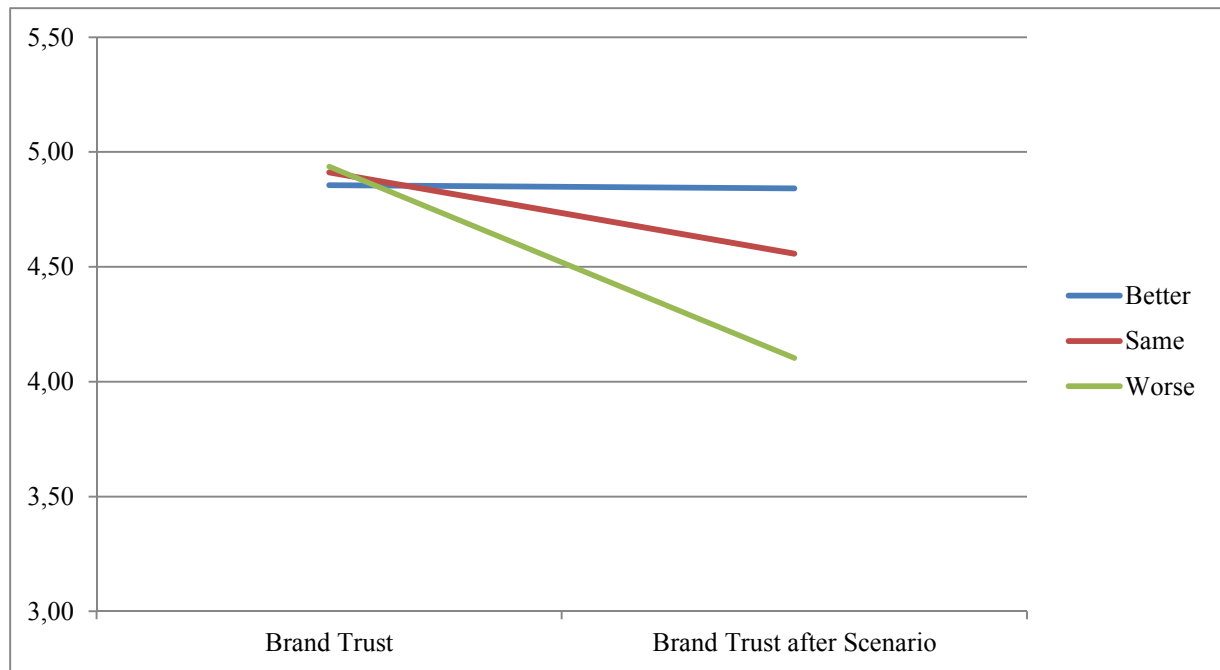


Table 26: Effects of the Scenario Change regarding Brand Trust

It can be seen that the Mean before the Scenario is in all three cases higher than after the Scenario although the difference between the Scenarios differs. Whereas the “Better” Scenario only leads to a slight difference between the two Means the difference increases for the “Same” Scenario and considerable increases for the “Worse” Scenario. Since all respondents who were selected for this analysis stated that the COO of a brand doesn’t influence their decision it could be assumed that there would be no difference between the lines but the graphs and the statistical results show that the COO-cues regarding the “new” Country clearly “implicitly” influences consumers brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth.

Classification of User Groups

The results observed by confirming the third Hypotheses already revealed that even if consumers state that the COO doesn't influence their judgment the new exposure of COO information implicitly change their evaluation. In a second step the respondents are now categorized regarding their explicit or implicit usage or non-usage of COO information. The construct of this approach can be seen in the following figure.

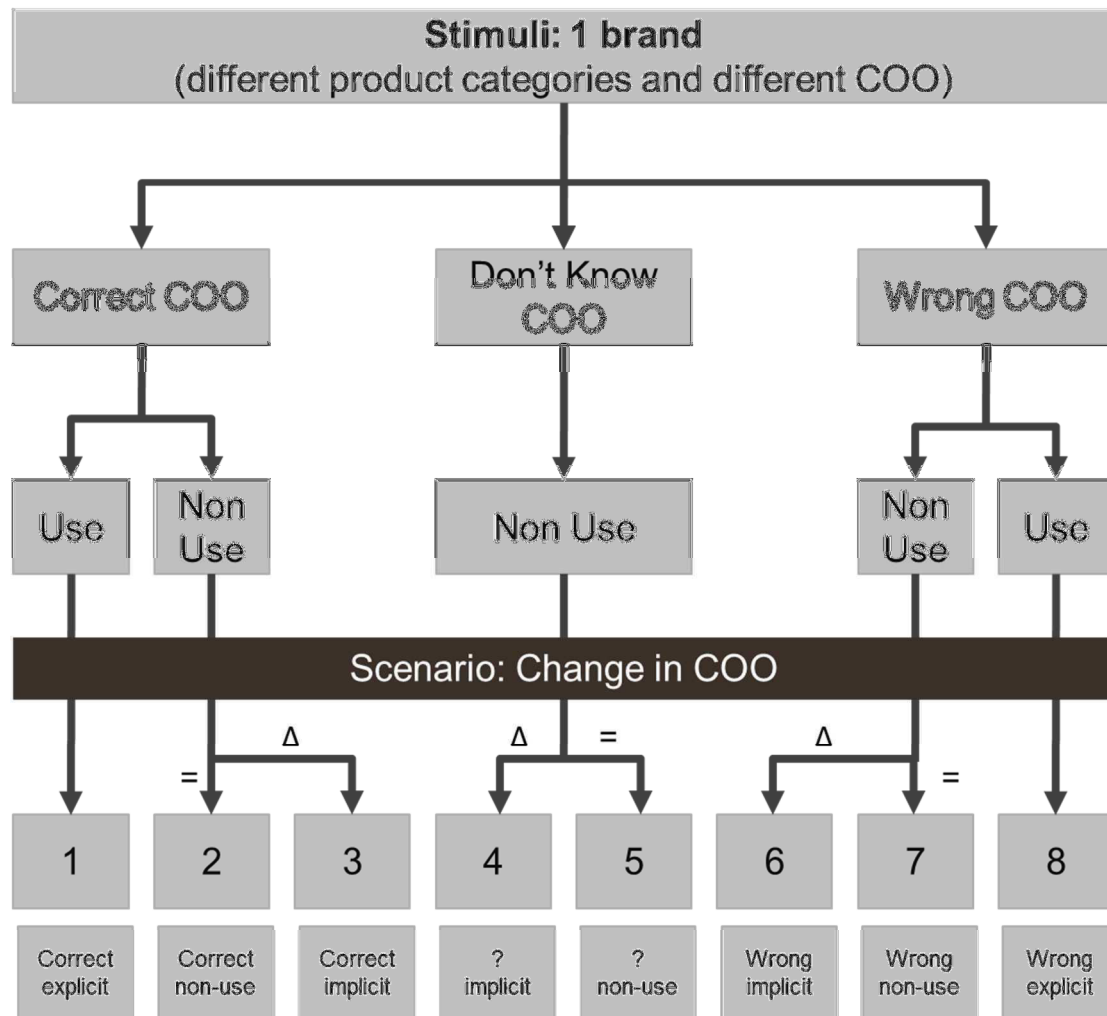


Figure 5: Classification of User Groups

According to their inherent COO knowledge and COO usage all respondents are classified into 8 different types of consumers, whereas the main focus for this research is on the Implicit User Groups (3), (4) and (6) since these groups contain respondents who deny any COO-cue usage but implicitly change their brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth based on the mere exposure of new COO information. The characteristics of the 8 user groups are described as followed:

- (1) Correct explicit: Correct COO knowledge + COO-cue usage(Explicit)
- (2) Correct non-use: Correct COO knowledge + Non COO-cue usage
- (3) Correct implicit: Correct COO knowledge + COO-cue usage(**Implicit**)
- (4) ? implicit: No COO knowledge + COO-cue usage(**Implicit**)
- (5) ? non-use: No COO knowledge + Non COO-cue usage
- (6) Wrong implicit: Wrong COO knowledge + COO-cue usage(**Implicit**)
- (7) Correct non-use: Correct COO knowledge + Non COO-cue usage
- (8) Correct implicit: Correct COO knowledge + COO-cue usage(Explicit)

In the following figure the actual amount of consumers who belong to the different user-groups based on their behavior throughout the questionnaire is displayed for quality of the brand exemplary. The distribution of all respondents with regards to their COO knowledge and COO usage into their dedicated User Group is shown. Additionally the percentage of respondents who implicitly use the given COO information is presented.

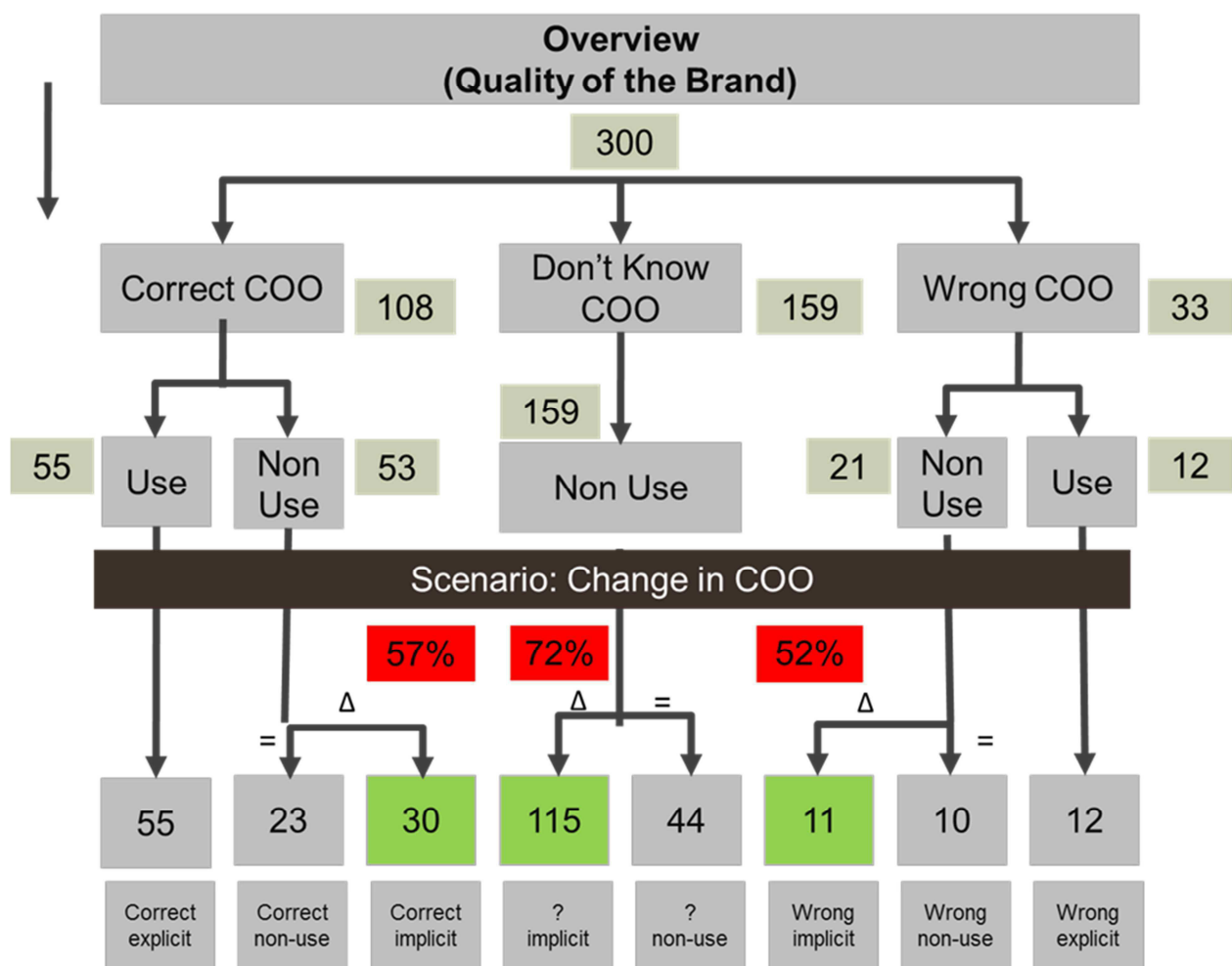


Figure 6: Evaluation of implicit User Groups

In the displayed example 30 (57%) respondents who identified the COO correctly, 115 (72%) respondents who were not able to connect the Brand to certain country and 21 (52%) respondents who misperceived the COO implicitly used the additional provided COO-cue and changed their brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth. Overall 67% of respondents who denied any COO Usage and 52% of all respondents implicitly use the given COO information and change their initial evaluation.

The following table shows the result for all outcome variables. The number and percentage of all implicit user groups are printed bold. For both variables brand affect and overall attractiveness the number of implicit user who identified the brand correctly could not be calculated since the statistical procedure didn't disclose significant results through the small number of respondents.

Variable	N	Correct non-use	Correct implicit	N	? non-use	? implicit	N	Wrong non-use	Wrong implicit	Overall implicit use
<i>Attitude toward Brand</i>	53	18 (34%)	35 (66%)	159	56 (35%)	103 (65%)	21	11 (52%)	10 (48%)	64%
<i>Brand Image Evaluation</i>	53	19 (36%)	34 (64%)	159	28 (18%)	131 (82%)	21	13 (62%)	8 (38%)	74%
<i>Brand Affect</i>	53	*	*	159	39 (25%)	120 (75%)	21	10 (48%)	11 (52%)	** 56%
<i>Brand Trust</i>	53	26 (49%)	27 (51%)	159	49 (31%)	110 (69%)	21	12 (57%)	9 (43%)	63%
<i>Overall Attractiveness of the Brand</i>	53	*	*	159	40 (25%)	119 (75%)	21	10 (48%)	11 (52%)	** 56%
<i>Quality of the Brand</i>	53	23 (43%)	30 (57%)	159	44 (28%)	115 (72%)	21	10 (48%)	11 (52%)	67%
<i>Purchase Intention</i>	53	22 (41%)	31 (59%)	159	69 (43%)	90 (57%)	21	14 (68%)	7 (32%)	55%
<i>Word of Mouth</i>	53	11 (21%)	42 (79%)	159	34 (21%)	125 (79%)	21	10 (48%)	11 (52%)	76%

Table 27: Classification of explicit and implicit COO-cue users

Main Analysis

The revealed results in the table above show that depending on the variable between 55% and 76% of respondents who denied any COO Usage implicitly use COO information to change their perception regarding the tested outcome variables. Considering all 300 respondents between 43% and 59% of all respondents would implicitly use COO-cues.

7.4 Results for Hypotheses 4

Besides measuring the influence of the Scenario Change on “Non COO-cue user” the 4th Hypotheses also considers the influence of the Scenario Change on “COO-cue user”. The Hypotheses is stated as “The change of the COO has more influence on Brand Perception, Purchase Intention and Word of Mouth on “COO-cue users” compared to “Non COO-cue users”. For measuring the influence, the evaluation for outcome variables before and after the Scenario for both respondent groups is investigated.

The following table shows the result of the 67 “COO-cue user”. It can be seen that all outcome variables have a higher score before the Scenario Change whereas this difference is

	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
COO cue user Pre Scenario	67	5.30 (1.26)	5.01 (1.14)	5.21 (1.21)	4.97 (1.49)	5.07 (1.39)	4.85 (1.51)	5.00 (1.71)	5.07 (1.36)
COO cue user Post Scenario	67	4.97 (1.41)	4.78 (1.29)	4.63 (1.53)	4.71 (1.56)	4.89 (1.47)	4.72 (1.58)	4.48 (1.82)	4.87 (1.54)
T		2.76	2.01	3.48	2.23	2.18	1.38	2.52	1.73
P < 0.05		.008	.049	.001	.030	.034	.173	.016	.089

Table: 1: Results of “COO-cue users” before and after the Scenario

significant with ($p < 0.05$) for attitude toward brand, brand image evaluations, brand trust, brand affect, quality of the brand and purchase intention. By way of comparison the results for “Non COO-cue user” behave in the same way. The detailed results were already presented in table 17 for measuring the influence of the Scenario Change for the “Non COO-cue users”. The results showed for the 169 respondents showed that all outcome variables were evaluated significantly lower after the Scenario Change.

Considering those results, the Hypotheses has to be rejected since both user groups behave the same way in terms of evaluating the outcome variables before and after the Scenario. In fact the influence on “Non COO-cue users” seems to have even more influence since all differences are statistically significant. Besides the bigger sample size, the already revealed large number of implicit COO-cue user could be the reason why both user groups behave nearly identical.

8 Discussion and Conclusions

The present study confirms the findings of previous conducted research that consumers COO knowledge is considerable limited since the majority of respondents was not able to identify the correct COO or even misclassified the brand to the wrong COO. These results are consistent throughout all tested brands and Product Categories. Furthermore in line with the tested Hypotheses non-knowledge and misperception of the COO causes undesirable consequences since all tested outcome variables (brand image perceptions, purchase intention and word of mouth) are significantly lower, compared to consumers who possess correct COO knowledge, throughout both product categories.

From a managerial perspective, the findings clearly suggest that companies should communicate or even educate consumers their COO since misperception and non-knowledge lead to lower perceptions of the brand. In the long run companies could even consider using their COO as promotional tool. Especially the two Korean Electro companies should consider this strategy since the results of the pretest show, that Korean electronic products are ranked on the same level like the US and even higher than products from other Asian and European countries.

Besides, measuring the actual knowledge and the impacts of COO knowledge regarding the outcome variables, consumers COO usage was measured. By dividing consumers based on their intention into “COO-cue users” and “Non COO-cue user” groups it was possible to encounter the reactions of a constructed Scenario in terms of COO usage. The results of the 2nd Hypotheses, although the differences were not statistically significant for all variables, revealed that “Non COO-cue user” who identified the COO correctly or misclassified it, evaluated the measured outcome variables with a higher score than respondents who were not able to connect the brand to any country. Considering this result, the assumption that respondents inherent COO knowledge, despite denying, influences the perception of the outcome variables was confirmed.

After demonstrating that the COO influences the outcome variables between different user groups, the analysis of the 3rd Hypotheses focused on the COO influence of solely “Non COO-cue users” by introducing a Scenario Change with three different characteristics “Better”, “Same” and “Worse”). The combined results of all Scenarios exposed that even though denying the “COO-cue usage” the exposure of COO-cues considerably changed the respondents brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth. Especially the scenarios

(“Same” and “Worse”) led to distinctly lower results. Those results decline the assumption, that respondent’s process COO-cues solely controlled instead it discloses that the presence of COO-cues can lead to automatic processing whereby the respondent’s brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth will be spontaneously influenced. Since the observed respondents denied any COO-Usage this automatic processing occurred implicitly. Those results are consistent with the findings of previous research (Herz and Diamantopoulos 2012; Liu and Johnson 2005). In line with this analysis it was revealed that based on the outcome variable 55% to 76% of “Non COO-cue user” and thereby 43% to 59% of all respondents implicitly used the provided COO-cue.

The conducted analyses clearly approve the previous findings that provided COO information is used by the consumers to evaluate brands (Liu and Johnsons 2005). Furthermore, considering the ongoing controversy in the research, the results disclose that the high percentage of implicit “COO-cue users” could be responsible for the stated dilemma that strongly indicates that the COO influences consumers’ evaluation process although consumers do not like to admit that it does (Heslop and Papadopoulos 1993).

By considering the managerial implications of these findings, companies should be aware that the COO of a brand clearly influences consumers brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth. Besides the mentioned positive effects, if consumers can identify the COO correctly, companies should consider the influence of the COO especially for cross-border takeovers. The result showed that cross-border takeovers lead to a lower brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth regardless if the new COO is “Better”, “Same”, or “Worse” rated, although the difference for Better rated countries is slightly. Especially cross-border takeovers from brands originating from “Worse” rated countries have undesirable effects for the brands. Therefore brands should consider these effects before processing the takeover and counteract by using mental imagery in Marketing communication to mitigate negative COO perceptions for unfavorable new COOs (Martin, Lee, Lacey 2011).

9 Limitations and Future Research

Although the conducted analysis revealed the existence of implicit “Non COO-cue users” the reason for not admitting the COO-cue usage cannot be identified. Furthermore any characteristics of this influential group of respondents are unknown. Despite having similar effects for both (high and low involvement) Product Categories it cannot be ruled out that another Product Category would reveal different results facing “Better”, “Same” and “Worse” rated countries. Finally, the study does not control for a COO unrelated takeover effect which could occur regardless of the new COO of the brand. Considering these limitations in future research could reveal new insights in the behavior of implicit “Non COO-cue users”. Furthermore the stability and generalizability of the observed effects could be established.

10 List of References

Dennis B. Arnett, Steve D. German and Shelby D. (2003), "The Identity Salience Model of Relationship Marketing Success: The Case of Nonprofit Marketing," *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 67, No. 2, pp. 89-105.

Bahlsen 2012, "Fact Sheet", Bahlsen.com, Available from: http://www.bahlsen.com/fileadmin/pdf/RZ_BAH_Factsheet2011_A4_web.pdf. [17.11.2012].

Balabanis, G. and A. Diamantopoulos (2008), "Brand Origin Identification by Consumers: A Consumer Classification Perspective," *Journal of International Marketing*, 16, 39-71.

George Balabanis, Adamantios Diamantopoulos (2011). Gains and Losses from the Misperception of Brand Origin: The Role of Brand Strength and Country-of-Origin Image. *Journal of International Marketing*: Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 95-116.

Bilkey, Warren J. and Erik Nes (1982), "Country-of-Origin Effects on Product Evaluations," *Journal of International Business Studies*, 13 (1), 89-99.

Bloemer, J., K. Brijs, and H. Kasper (2009), "The COO-ELM Model: A Theoretical Framework for the Cognitive Processes Underlying Country of Origin-effects," *European Journal of Marketing*, 43 (1/2), 62-89.

Bruner (2009), "Marketing Scales Handbook: A Compilation of Multi-Item Measures for Consumer Behavior & Advertising Research," GCBII Productions Carbondale, Illinois.

Mario Brück (2010), "Das bittere Nasch-Erbe von Storck-Chef Axel Oberwelland", *Wirtschafts Woche*, Available from: <http://www.wiwo.de/unternehmen/suesswarenhersteller-das-bittere-nasch-erbe-von-storck-chef-axel-oberwelland/5616410.html> [14.11.2012].

Chaudhuri, Arjun and Morris B. Holbrook (2001), "The Chain of Effects from Brand Trust and Brand Affect to Brand Performance: The Role of Brand Loyalty," *Journal of Marketing*, 65 (2), 81-93.

Craig S.C. and Douglas S.P. (2005): *International Marketing Research*, 3rd edition, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. (ISBN 0-470-01095-9)

List of References

Diamantopoulos, Adamantios and Katharina P. Zeugner-Roth (2009), "Country-of-Origin as Brand Element," in Wiley International Encyclopaedia of Marketing, J. Sheth and Naresh K. Malhotra, eds.

Field, Andy (2005), *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*, 2nd edition, London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Nicole Koschate-Fischer, Adamantios Diamantopoulos, Katharina Oldenkotte (2012). Are Consumers Really Willing to Pay More for a Favorable Country Image? A Study of Country-of-Origin Effects on Willingness to Pay. *Journal of International Marketing*: Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 19-41.

Han, M. C. (1989), "Country Image: Halo or Summary Construct?," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 26, 222-29.

Herz, M. and Diamantopoulos, A. (2012), "Implicit Country Attitudes and Their Spontaneous Influence on Cognitive and Affective Dimensions of the Brand Image", 2012 American Marketing Association Winter Educators' Conference (February 17-19, 2012, St. Petersburg, FL)

Heslop, Louise A. and Nicolas Papadopoulos (1993), "But Who Knows Where or When? Reflections on the Images of Countries and Their Products," in *Product-Country Images: Impact and Role in International Marketing*, Nicolas Papadopoulos and Louise A. Heslop, eds. New York: International Business Press, 39-76.

Hong, S.-T. and R. S. Wyer, Jr. (1990), "Determinants of Product Evaluation: Effects of the Time Interval between Knowledge of a Product's Country of Origin and Information about its Specific Attributes," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 17 (3), 277-88.

Interbrand 2012, "Best Global Brands", Available from: <http://www.interbrand.com/en/best-global-brands/2012/Best-Global-Brands-2012-Brand-View.aspx> [14.11.2012].

Jaffe, Eugene D. and Israel D. Nebenzahl (2006), *National Image and Competitive Advantage: The Theory and Practice of Place Branding* (2nd ed.). Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press.

Jobber, David (2004), "Principles and Practice of Marketing" McGraw-Hill

Johansson, J. K., S. P. Douglas, and I. Nonaka (1985), "Assessing the Impact of Country of Origin on Product Evaluations: a new Methodological Perspective.," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 22 (4), 388-96.

Jill Gabrielle Klein, Richard Ettenson and Marlene D. Morris (1998), "The Animosity Model of Foreign Product Purchase: An Empirical Test in the People's Republic of China," *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (Jan., 1998), pp. 89-100.

Dongdae Lee, Gopala Ganesh, (1999), "Effects of partitioned country image in the context of brand image and familiarity: A categorization theory perspective", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 16 Iss: 1 pp. 18 – 41.

LG 2012, "Global Operations", LG Global, Available from: <http://www.lg.com/global/about-lg/corporate-information/global-operations> [17.11.2012].

Li, W.-K. and R. S. Wyer, Jr. (1994), "The Role of Country of Origin in Product Evaluations: Informational and Standard-of-Comparison Effects," *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 3 (2), 187-212.

Liu, Scott S. and Keith F. Johnson (2005), "The Automatic Country-of-Origin Effects on Brand Judgments," *Journal of Advertising*, 34 (1), 87-97.

Liefeld, J.P. (2004), "Consumer knowledge and use of country-of-origin information at the point of purchase", *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 4 No. 2, pp. 85-96.

Manrai, L. A., D.-N. Lascu and A. K. Manrai (1998), "Interactive Effects of Country of Origin and Product Category on Product Evaluations," *International Business Review*, 7 (6), 591-615.

Magnusson, P., Westjohn, S.A. and Zdravkovic, S. (2011), " 'What, I thought Samsung was Japanese': accurate or not, perceived country of origin matters", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 28 No. 5, pp. 454-72.

Markenhersteller, "Konsumgütermarken in Deutschland" Available from: <http://www.markenhersteller.de/> [14.11.2012].

Martin, B.A.S., Lee, M.S.W., & Lacey, C. (2011). Countering Negative Country of Origin Effects Using Imagery Processing, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 10 (1), 80-92.

List of References

- Obermiller, C. and E. Spangenberg (1989), "Exploring the Effects of Country-Of-Origin Labels: An Information Processing Framework," *Advertising Consumer Research*, 16 (1), 454-59.
- Peterson, R. A. and A. J. P. Jolibert (1995), "A meta-analysis of country-of-origin effects," *Journal of International Business Studies*, 26 (4), 883-900.
- Pharr, J. M. (2005), "Synthesizing Country-of-Origin Research from the Last Decade: Is the Concept Still Salient in the Era of Global Brands?," *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 13 (4), 34-45.
- Riefler, P. and A. Diamantopoulos (2007), "Consumer animosity: a literature review and a reconsideration of its measurement," *International Marketing Review*, 24 (1), 87-119.
- Rossiter John (2002), "The C-OAR-SE procedure for scale development in marketing," *Intern. J. of Research in Marketing* 19 305–335.
- Roth, Martin S. and Jean B. Romeo (1992), "Matching Product Category and Country Image Perceptions: A Framework for Managing Country-of-Origin Effects," *Journal of International Business Studies*, 23 (3), 477-497.
- Samsung 2012, "About Samsung," Samsung USA, Available from: <http://www.samsung.com/us/aboutsamsung/> [17.11.2012].
- Samiee, S., T. A. Shimp, and S. Sharma (2005), "Brand origin recognition accuracy: Its antecedents and consumers' cognitive limitations," *Journal of International Business Studies*, 36, 379-97.
- Shimp, TA & Sharma S 1987, 'Consumer Ethnocentrism: Construction and Validation of the CETSCALE', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 280-289.
- Jan-Benedict E.M. Steenkamp, Martijn G. de Jong (2010). A Global Investigation into the Constellation of Consumer Attitudes Toward Global and Local Products. *Journal of Marketing*: Vol. 74, No. 6, pp. 18-40.
- Usunier, J.-C. (2011), "The shift from manufacturing to brand origin: suggestions for improving COO relevance", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 28 No. 5, pp. 486-96.
- Verlegh, P. W. J. and J.-B. E. M. Steenkamp (1999), "A Review and Meta-Analysis of Country-of-Origin Research," *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 20 (5), 521-46.

List of References

Lianxi Zhou, Zhiyong Yang, Michael K. Hui (2009), “Non-local or local brands? A multi-level investigation into confidence in brand origin identification and its strategic implications,” *J. of the Acad. Mark. Sci.*

11 Appendix

Appendix A: Pre-Survey (Questionnaire and Results)

50% ausgefüllt

1. Wie bewerten Sie die folgenden Länder für die Produktkategorie KLEIDUNG bezüglich Qualität und Design? [A602]

Bitte reihen Sie die Länder nun anhand Ihrer Einschätzung und beginnen dabei mit dem aus Ihrer Sicht führenden Land.

Italien	Polen	
England	Frankreich	1
		2
		3
		4
		5
		6
Deutschland	USA	

Figure 7: Screenshot of Pre-survey Questionnaire

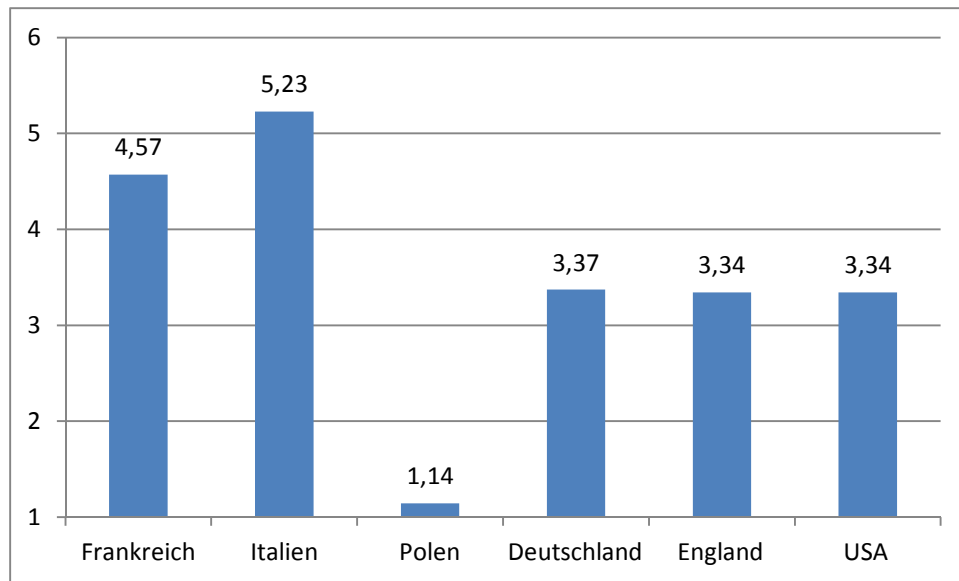


Figure 8: Pre-survey result for Product Category Clothing

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Japan	5.56	34	.860	.147
	Korea	3.91	34	1.240	.213
Pair 2	Korea	3.91	34	1.240	.213
	China	2.91	34	1.357	.233

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Pair 1	Japan - Korea	1.647	1.228	.211	7.821	33	.000
Pair 2	Korea - China	1.000	1.985	.340	2.938	33	.006

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Switzerland	5.59	34	.657	.113
	Germany	4.00	34	.888	.152
Pair 2	Germany	4.00	34	.888	.152
	Poland	1.53	34	.788	.135

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Pair 1	Switzerland - Germany	1.588	1.258	.216	7.361	33	.000
Pair 2	Germany - Poland	2.471	1.107	.190	13.008	33	.000

Appendix B: Paper Questionnaire for Samsung

Befragung zum Thema Markenwahrnehmung

Vorab zu diesem Fragebogen:

- Die vorliegende Umfrage findet im Rahmen eines Forschungsprojektes der Universität Wien statt. Alle Angaben werden **streng vertraulich** behandelt und werden so ausgewertet, dass keine Identifikation einzelner Teilnehmer möglich ist.
- In der Befragung gibt es **keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten**. Es wird überall **nach Ihrer persönlichen Einschätzung** gefragt.
- An einigen Stellen im Fragebogen stellen wir Ihnen bewusst mehrere ähnliche Fragen zum gleichen Thema. Bitte lassen Sie sich davon nicht irritieren. Dies hat methodische Gründe.
- Damit wir Ihren Fragebogen ausführlich auswerten können, ist es **wichtig, dass Sie alle Fragen beantworten**, selbst wenn Sie sich bei einer Antwort nicht ganz sicher sind. Eine ungefähre Angabe von Ihnen ist in diesem Fall wertvoller als ein unvollständig ausgefüllter Fragebogen.

Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme und Ihre Zeit!

Samsung

In der folgenden Befragung geht es um die Marke Samsung. Bitte machen Sie sich kurz Gedanken über diese Marke und beantworten anschließend die dazugehörigen Fragen.



In den folgenden Fragen bitten wir Sie um Ihre Einschätzung bezüglich der Marke Samsung. Es geht dabei lediglich um Ihre persönliche Einschätzung.

Was denken Sie über die Marke?		
Ich finde diese Marke gut	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ich finde diese Marke schlecht
Ich finde diese Marke nicht zufriedenstellend	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ich finde diese Marke zufriedenstellend
Ich habe eine negative Meinung über diese Marke	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ich habe eine positive Meinung über diese Marke
Ich mag diese Marke nicht	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Ich mag diese Marke

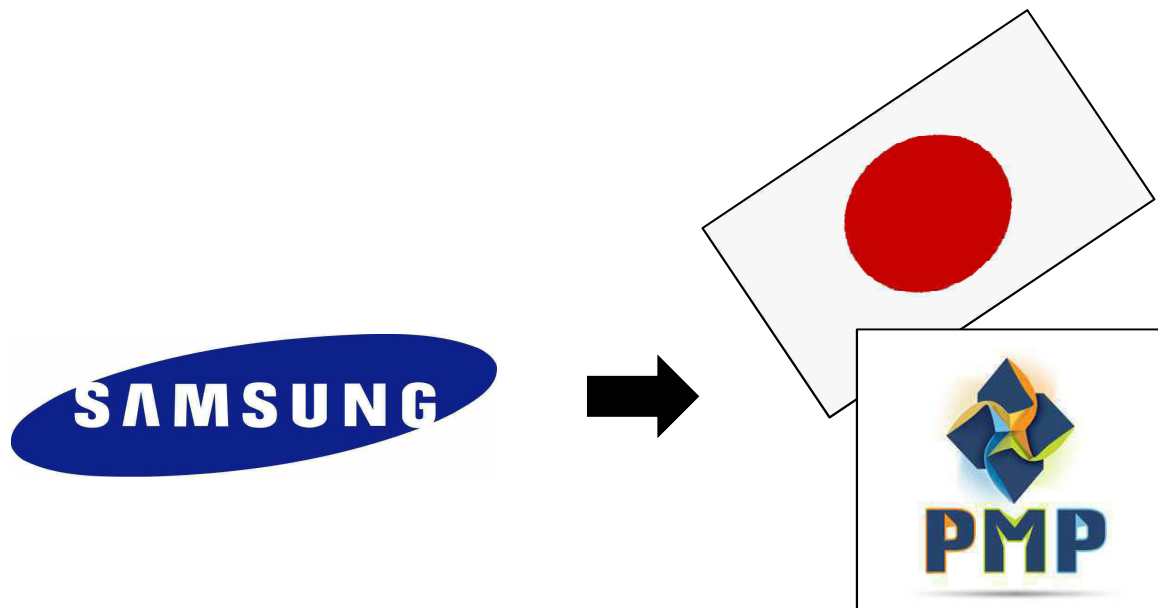
Inwieweit treffen folgende Aussagen zu?	Stimme gar nicht zu  Stimme voll zu
Die Marke hat ein sehr gutes Preis-Leistungs-Verhältnis	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Die Marke ist vertrauenswürdig	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Die Marke ist glaubwürdig	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Die Marke ist von hoher Qualität	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Die Marke ist attraktiv	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Die Marke ist interessant	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Die Marke vermittelt ein gutes Gefühl	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Inwieweit trifft folgende Aussage zu?	Stimme gar nicht zu  Stimme voll zu
Ich würde positiv über die Marke sprechen	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie die Marke kaufen würden?		
Überhaupt nicht wahrscheinlich	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	Sehr wahrscheinlich

Inwieweit treffen folgende Aussagen zu?	Stimme gar nicht zu  Stimme voll zu
Ich habe in letzter Zeit ein Produkt dieser Marke gekauft	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Ich besitze ein Produkt dieser Marke	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Wir bitten Sie nun, die folgenden Informationen bezüglich der Marke Samsung durchzulesen.



Das **japanische Unternehmen PMP** hat jüngst Interesse an der Marke Samsung angekündigt. Es soll verhandelt werden, ob Samsung vom japanischen Unternehmen PMP gekauft und übernommen wird.

Im Folgenden interessiert uns, wie sich Ihre Wahrnehmung der Marke Samsung ändert, sollte Samsung vom japanischen Unternehmen PMP übernommen werden.

Was denken Sie nun über die Marke?		
Ich finde diese Marke gut	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Ich finde diese Marke schlecht
Ich finde diese Marke nicht zufriedenstellend	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Ich finde diese Marke zufriedenstellend
Ich habe eine negative Meinung über diese Marke	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Ich habe eine positive Meinung über diese Marke
Ich mag diese Marke nicht	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Ich mag diese Marke

Inwieweit treffen folgende Aussagen nun zu?	Stimme gar nicht zu	Stimme voll zu
Die Marke hat ein sehr gutes Preis-Leistungs-Verhältnis	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Die Marke ist vertrauenswürdig	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Die Marke ist glaubwürdig	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Die Marke ist von hoher Qualität	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Die Marke ist attraktiv	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Die Marke ist interessant	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Die Marke vermittelt ein gutes Gefühl	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	

Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie die Marke nun kaufen würden?		
Überhaupt nicht wahrscheinlich	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Sehr wahrscheinlich

Inwieweit trifft folgende Aussage nun zu?	Stimme gar nicht zu	Stimme voll zu
Ich würde positiv über die Marke sprechen	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	

Allgemeine Informationen

Abschließend bitten wir Sie noch ein paar allgemeine Fragen zu beantworten.

Inwieweit treffen folgende Aussagen zu?	Stimme gar nicht zu  Stimme voll zu
Ich habe ein starkes Interesse an Elektrogeräten	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Für mich haben Elektrogeräte keine Bedeutung	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Eine Marke bei einem elektronischen Gerät auszuwählen, ist für mich eine sehr wichtige Entscheidung	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Welche Marke ich wähle, wenn ich Elektrogeräte kaufe, hat für mich eine sehr hohe Bedeutung	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Kennen Sie das Land aus dem die Marke Samsung ursprünglich stammt?							
Niederlande	Indien	<i>Ich weiss nicht</i>	Japan	Südkorea	China	USA	Brasilien
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Bezüglich der Aussagen die Sie gerade über das Herkunftsland der Marke gemacht haben, möchten wir noch Folgendes wissen:	Stimme gar nicht zu  Stimme voll zu
Ich glaube, dass ich das Herkunftsland dieser Marke richtig erkannt habe	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Ich bin sicher, dass ich weiß, aus welchem Land diese Marke kommt	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Wie sehr hat das Herkunftsland der Marke Ihre Entscheidung bei der Bewertung der Marke beeinflusst?	Stimme gar nicht zu  Stimme voll zu
Das Herkunftsland einer Marke ist sehr wichtig für mich	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Das Herkunftsland hat meine Bewertung stark beeinflusst	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Beim Kauf von Elektrogeräten ist das Herkunftsland sehr wichtig für mich	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Wie gut kennen Sie das folgende Land, z.B. von Urlauben oder durch Produkte aus dem Land, die Sie kennen? Für welche Eigenschaften steht Japan?	Japan	
	überhaupt nicht gut	sehr gut
		
Ich kenne das Land Japan sehr gut	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Japan steht für Design	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Japan steht für Qualität	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Japan steht für Prestige	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Japan steht für Innovation	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Wie bewerten Sie?		
Japan im Allgemeinen	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Die Produkte aus Japan	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
Elektrogeräte aus Japan	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	

Höchste abgeschlossene Schulbildung ☐ Pflichtschule ☐ Lehre/Fachschule ☐ Abitur/Matura ☐ Universität / FH ☐ _____	Beruf ☐ Student / Schüler ☐ erwerbstätig ☐ arbeitslos ☐ in Pension ☐ _____ _	Nettoeinkommen pro Monat ☐ weniger als 650 EUR ☐ 650 – 1.349 EUR ☐ 1.350 – 1.899 EUR ☐ 1.900 – 2.500 EUR ☐ mehr als 2.500 EUR
Geschlecht ☐ weiblich ☐ männlich Alter: _____ Jahre	Wohnsitz ☐ Stadt ☐ Ländlicher Raum	Staatsbürgerschaft Welche Staatsbürgerschaft besitzen Sie? _____

VIELEN DANK FÜR IHRE TEILNAHME!

Appendix C: Cronbach α for Country Image and Control Variables

Variable	Cronbach α
Switzerland	.934
Germany	.738
Poland	.833
Japan	.805
Korea	.920
China	.737

Table 28: Cronbach α Country Image (Liu & Johnson)

Variable	Cronbach α
Switzerland	.813
Germany	.812
Poland	.931
Japan	.787
Korea	.904
China	.788

Table 29: Cronbach α Country Image (Roth & Romeo)

Variable	Cronbach α
Product Category Involvement (Chocolate)	.773
Product Category Involvement (Electro)	.721
Confidence in Brand Origin	.926
COO Usage (Chocolate)	.904
COO Usage (Electro)	.892

Table 30: Cronbach α Control Variables

Appendix D: Descriptive Results for all outcome variables before and after the Scenario

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude towards Brand	76	1,75	7,00	5,2566	1,23759
Brand Image	76	2,00	7,00	4,8596	1,04316
Evaluations	76	2,00	7,00	5,0526	1,22087
Brand Trust	76	2,00	7,00	4,9474	1,29506
Quality of the Brand	76	1,00	7,00	4,8158	1,53806
Brand Affect	76	1,00	7,00	4,6382	1,39904
Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	76	1,00	7,00	4,8026	1,61674
Purchase Intention	76	1,00	7,00	4,9868	1,43753
Word of Mouth	76	1,00	7,00		

Table 31: Descriptive Results Knoppers pre Scenario

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude towards Brand	76	1,00	7,00	4,7730	1,25289
Brand Image	76	1,33	7,00	4,5132	1,33160
Evaluations	76	1,00	7,00	4,4737	1,50088
Brand Trust	76	1,00	7,00	4,5263	1,52730
Quality of the Brand	76	1,00	7,00	4,4474	1,57814
Brand Affect	76	1,00	7,00	4,4276	1,51592
Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	76	1,00	7,00	4,4700	1,74000
Purchase Intention	76	1,00	7,00	4,6700	1,47300
Word of Mouth	76	1,00	7,00		

Table 32: Descriptive Results Knoppers post Scenario

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude toward Brand	75	1,00	7,00	4,8100	1,37290
Brand Image	75	1,00	6,33	4,5067	1,13418
Evaluations	75	1,00	7,00	4,7200	1,35128
Brand Trust	75	1,00	7,00	4,8000	1,38525
Quality of the Brand	75	1,00	7,00	4,1867	1,59131
Brand Affect	75	1,00	6,50	4,2133	1,56000
Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	75	1,00	7,00	4,1733	1,88431
Purchase Intention	75	1,00	7,00	4,3867	1,60146
Word of Mouth	75	1,00	7,00		

Table 33: Descriptive Results Pick UP! pre Scenario**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude toward Brand	75	1,00	7,00	4,5467	1,37097
Brand Image	75	1,00	7,00	4,3867	1,37660
Evaluations	75	1,00	7,00	4,4800	1,49196
Brand Trust	75	1,00	7,00	4,6133	1,52363
Quality of the Brand	75	1,00	7,00	4,0933	1,69397
Brand Affect	75	1,00	7,00	4,0533	1,63073
Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	75	1,00	7,00	3,8100	2,00500
Purchase Intention	75	1,00	7,00	4,1700	1,70400
Word of Mouth	75	1,00	7,00		

Table 34: Descriptive Results Pick UP! post Scenario

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude toward Brand	76	1,00	7,00	4,8618	1,16074
Brand Image	76	2,33	7,00	4,7719	1,04734
Evaluations	76	2,00	7,00	4,7368	1,25824
Brand Trust	76	1,00	7,00	4,6579	1,38133
Quality of the Brand	76	1,00	7,00	4,5658	1,45452
Brand Affect	76	1,00	7,00	4,6908	1,27793
Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	76	1,00	7,00	4,4605	1,72388
Purchase Intention	76	1,00	7,00	4,6579	1,49267
Word of Mouth	76	1,00	7,00		

Table 35: Descriptive Results LG pre Scenario

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude toward Brand	76	1,00	7,00	4,3520	1,35596
Brand Image	76	1,00	7,00	4,3596	1,30613
Evaluations	76	1,00	7,00	4,2763	1,44774
Brand Trust	76	1,00	7,00	4,2632	1,61136
Quality of the Brand	76	1,00	7,00	4,0921	1,62626
Brand Affect	76	1,00	7,00	4,2171	1,54992
Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	76	1,00	7,00	3,7500	1,86300
Purchase Intention	76	1,00	7,00	4,0900	1,65900
Word of Mouth	76	1,00	7,00		

Table 36: Descriptive Results LG post Scenario

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude toward Brand	73	1,00	7,00	5,2740	1,25289
Brand Image	73	1,00	7,00	5,3196	1,16989
Evaluations	73	1,00	7,00	5,3836	1,28701
Brand Trust	73	1,00	7,00	5,3562	1,34753
Quality of the Brand	73	1,00	7,00	4,9726	1,45270
Brand Affect	73	1,00	7,00	5,2329	1,42907
Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	73	1,00	7,00	5,2877	1,52278
Purchase Intention	73	1,00	7,00	5,1781	1,55762
Word of Mouth	73	1,00	7,00		

Table 37: Descriptive Results Samsung pre Scenario**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude toward Brand	73	1,00	7,00	5,0274	1,28463
Brand Image	73	1,00	7,00	5,0000	1,21716
Evaluations	73	1,00	7,00	4,8904	1,40002
Brand Trust	73	1,00	7,00	4,9452	1,48969
Quality of the Brand	73	1,00	7,00	4,6164	1,48726
Brand Affect	73	1,00	7,00	5,8219	1,51467
Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	73	1,00	7,00	4,7400	1,58100
Purchase Intention	73	1,00	7,00	4,7900	1,54500
Word of Mouth	73	1,00	7,00		

Table 38: Descriptive Results Samsung post Scenario

Appendix E: Results for the 1st Hypotheses for both Product Categories

COO Knowledge	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Correct Mean	48	5.33 (1.34)	4.95 (1.06)	5.21 (1.24)	4.92 (1.53)	5.19 (1.30)	4.91 (1.49)	5.10 (1.41)	5.00 (1.46)
Misperception & Don't Know Mean	103	4.89 (1.29)	4.56 (1.10)	4.74 (1.30)	4.31 (1.59)	4.73 (1.34)	4.20 (1.44)	4.20 (1.86)	4.54 (1.57)
F		3.53	4.24	4.42	4.87	3.93	7.58	8.84	2.90
P < 0.05		.004	.041	.037	.029	.049	.007	.003	.091
P < 0.10		.002	.020	.018	.015	0.25	.003	.001	.045

Table 39: Results for the 1st Hypotheses (Chocolate)

COO Knowledge	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Correct Mean	60	5.33 (1.34)	5.21 (1.16)	5.22 (1.40)	4.83 (1.56)	5.15 (1.56)	5.10 (1.56)	5.12 (1.72)	5.10 (1.63)
Misperception & Don't Know Mean	89	4.88 (1.10)	4.93 (1.12)	4.94 (1.24)	4.71 (1.40)	4.90 (1.29)	4.86 (1.42)	4.70 (1.63)	4.79 (1.47)
F		4.88	2.13	1.56	0.22	1.15	1.09	2.27	1.48
P < 0.05		.029	.146	.213	.642	.286	.297	.134	.225
P < 0.10		.015	.073	.106	.321	0.143	.148	.067	.112

Table 40: Results for the 1st Hypotheses (Electro)

Appendix F: Results for the 2nd Hypotheses for both Product Categories

COO Knowledge	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Correct & Misperception Mean	25	4.94 (1.57)	4.77 (1.13)	4.96 (1.34)	4.64 (1.55)	5.12 (1.27)	4.76 (1.58)	5.24 (1.09)	4.80 (1.44)
Don't Know Mean	89	4.77 (1.13)	4.51 (1.07)	4.66 (1.32)	4.27 (1.61)	4.70 (1.33)	4.21 (1.42)	4.10 (1.88)	4.53 (1.57)
F		.005	1.13	.980	1.05	2.01	2.78	8.37	.610
P < 0.05		.944	.291	.324	.308	.160	.098	.005	.437

Table 41: Results for the 2nd Hypotheses (Chocolate)

COO Knowledge	N	Attitude toward Brand	Brand Image Evaluations	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Quality of the Brand	Overall Attractiveness of the Brand	Purchase Intention	WOM
Correct & Misperception Mean	49	5.21 (1.23)	5.43 (1.06)	5.29 (1.29)	4.86 (1.67)	5.33 (1.52)	5.18 (1.36)	5.08 (1.66)	5.04 (1.61)
Don't Know Mean	70	4.83 (1.16)	4.80 (1.09)	4.91 (1.29)	4.61 (1.29)	4.77 (1.28)	4.76 (1.35)	4.61 (1.64)	4.71 (1.48)
F		2.11	9.87	2.38	.800	4.66	2.76	2.33	1.31
P < 0.05		.149	.002	.126	.373	.033	.099	.130	.254

Table 42: Results for the 2nd Hypotheses (Electro)

Appendix G: Abstract (German)

Zusammenfassung

Im Zuge dieser Masterarbeit wird zuerst die Frage geklärt, inwieweit Konsumenten in der Lage sind, das Herkunftsland von Marken aus den Produktkategorien Elektrogeräte und Schokoladenprodukte zu identifizieren. Des Weiteren werden die Auswirkungen von Nicht-Klassifizierung und Falsch-Klassifizierung in Bezug auf die Bewertung der Marke aufgezeigt. Neben dem Wissen über die Herkunft der Marke werden in einem zweiten Schritt zuerst die Konsumenten nach dem Gebrauch dieser Informationen bei der Bewertung von Marken gefragt und in einem weiteren Schritt werden Aussagen der Befragten überprüft und der tatsächliche Gebrauch dieser Informationen evaluiert.

Die 300 Teilnehmer des Fragebogens bewerteten eine der vier getesteten Marken und machten Angaben über die Herkunft der Marke sowie über den Gebrauch dieses Wissens. Des Weiteren wurde im Laufe des Fragebogens ein fingiertes Szenario eingefügt, in dem die Befragten Informationen über eine geplante Übernahme der getesteten Marke durch eine ausländische oder inländische Firma erhalten. In der Folge wurde die Marke erneut von den Befragten bewertet.

Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass die Mehrheit der Befragten nicht in der Lage ist, das Herkunftsland der getesteten Marken zu bestimmen und das Miss- und Nicht-Klassifizierung unerwünschte Auswirkungen für die Marken haben, da Befragte die das Herkunftsland richtig identifiziert haben, die Marken besser bewertet haben.

Weiterhin konnte festgestellt werden, dass eine Vielzahl von Befragten, die den Gebrauch von Informationen in Bezug auf das Herkunftsland verneinen, bei Betrachtung neuer Informationen, die Marken anders bewerten und somit diese Informationen implizit benutzen. Im letzten Schritt dieser Arbeit wurde die Anzahl der „impliziten“ Nutzer für jede getestete Variable einzeln berechnet.

Appendix H: Abstract (English)

In course of this thesis, the first elaboration determines if respondents are able to identify the Country of origin (COO) of the tested brands in the Product Categories Electro and Chocolate. Furthermore the consequences of miss- and non-classification are measured. Besides the knowledge of the COO, the respondent's usage of COO information is measured. In a second step the respondent's statements regarding their COO usage are verified and the actual COO usage is evaluated.

The 300 respondents of the questionnaire evaluated one brands regarding their brand perception as well as they answered questions regarding their COO knowledge and COO usage. Furthermore a Scenario was provided which contained a new COO-cue in form of a possible takeover of the brand by an unknown foreign or domestic company. Afterwards the respondent was asked to answer the same questions regarding brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth with respect to the new information.

The results of this thesis show, that the majority of respondents is not capable of identifying the COO of the tested brands correctly. Furthermore the miss- and non-classification have undesirable consequences since respondents who possess correct COO knowledge evaluate brands more positive. By looking at the usage of COO information it was revealed that despite denying the usage of COO information the mere presence of new COO cues influence consumers brand perception, purchase intention and word of mouth. In a last step the number of "implicit" users is separately calculated for every tested variable.

Appendix I: CV (German)

PERSÖNLICHE ANGABEN

Alexander Wahl



KURZPROFIL

Masterstudium der Betriebswirtschaftslehre

Schwerpunkte: International Marketing und Supply Chain Management

Bachelorstudium „Internationale Wirtschaft und Management“

Ausbildung zum Versicherungskaufmann

STUDIUM

03/2009 –

Universität Wien, Österreich

Masterstudium der Betriebswirtschaftslehre

Schwerpunkte: International Marketing und Supply Chain Management

Thema der Masterarbeit: „Consumer's Country-of-Origin Knowledge and Implicit Country Cue Usage“

10/2005 - 07/2008

Fachhochschule Kufstein, Österreich

Bachelorstudium in „Internationale Wirtschaft und Management“

Schwerpunkte: Rechnungswesen; Marketing; Finanzen; VWL; Spanisch

Thema der Bachelorarbeiten: „Machtdistanz in Deutschland und Südkorea“;
„Methoden zur Messung von Kundenbindung“

Abschluss: Bachelor of Arts (B.A) in Business

09/2007 - 07/2008

University of Korea, Südkorea

2 Auslandssemester

Schwerpunkte: Marketing; Finanzen; Management; Logistik