

# **Marketing for Sustainable Consumption**

Syllabus  
Fall Semester

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Chair for Marketing and Market Research  
URPP Social Networks  
Department of Business Administration  
University of Zurich, Switzerland  
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## PREAMBLE

Welcome to our “Marketing for Sustainable Consumption” syllabus!

**“Sustainability, ensuring the future of life on Earth, is an infinite game, the endless expression of generosity on behalf of all.”**

*Paul Hawken*

In 2015, the United Nations adopted seventeen *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* as a general call to action to protect the planet, end poverty, and create a peaceful environment. They emphasized that the implementation of these goals in certain areas will affect outcomes in other areas, and that social, economic, and environmental sustainability has to be balanced. **Goal 12 calls for responsible consumption and production.**

In the last century, our social and economic growth has only been possible at the cost of environmental degradation. The latter, however, is negatively correlated with our future survival and resilience. As such, **economic growth has to be decoupled from environmental degradation**, natural resources have to be used efficiently, and sustainable consumption and lifestyles have to be promoted. Most of the SDGs may not be met on their own, but rather through the interconnection of many small actions in local communities that together strive towards a common goal.

We created this seminar titled “**Marketing for Sustainable Consumption**” to open a discourse about this important topic, to raise questions and carefully think about interventions that may lead people to more sustainable behavior. The pandemic has shown us the threats of growth, mobility, and over-consumption, but it has also challenged our perceptions and sensibility of fairness, equality, peace, and freedom. It even dominated much of our energy, attention, and emotions. With this mindset, we’d like to start rethinking consumption in this seminar.

The seminar is built around the **SHIFT framework**, developed by Professor Katherine White to support companies and assist societal marketers in better understanding their customers, discover the best methods to communicate to their consumers and establish tools that foster sustainable behavior. The framework focuses on the following aspects linked with consumer choices: **Social influence, Habit formation, Individual self, Feelings and cognition, and Tangibility**. The SHIFT framework takes its name from these key aspects. “The five key principles summarized in the SHIFT framework present the best ways to affect consumer behavior and make it sustainable. Many great challenges of our time are related to the choices we make as consumers: how, what, why and how much we consume,” says Professor Katherine White.

In this seminar, students will:

- Be introduced to the SDGs and the SHIFT framework.
- Analyze, present, and discuss each dimension of the SHIFT framework in a group setting.
- Design research experiments nudging consumers into sustainable behaviors.
- Develop a critical thinking about sustainability in marketing and consumption.

- Create new ideas for local initiatives fostering sustainability.

This seminar will most likely take place in the **fall semesters**. All necessary information concerning the course can be found within this syllabus, in the UZH course book, and on our corresponding webpages.

We are pleased to welcome you to this seminar and hope that we'll be able to create a small contribution to our planet.

# 1. QUICK OVERVIEW

## Instructors:

Prof. Dr. René Algesheimer

Dr. Radu Tanase

Katherine Rother

Office: Andreasstrasse 15, CH-8050 Zurich, Switzerland

Phone: +41 44 634 2918

E-mail: market-research@business.uzh.ch

Web: www.market-research.uzh.ch

Office hours by appointment.

## Type:

Seminar

## Target Audience:

Master students assigned to the “Wahlpflichtbereich” BWL 4.

Master students assigned to the Minor in Marketing.

## Frequency:

Fall semester.

## APS (ECTS):

3

## Workload Statement:

Part	Workload	ECTS
Course Preparation	15h	
Class attendance (meetings)	20h	
Individual work	40h	
Final Presentation	15h	
Total	90h	3

## Maximum Number of Students:

20

## Content:

Introduction into sustainable consumption behavior and behavioral interventions.

## Language:

English

## Basic Literature:

1. *The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.*

2. Katherine White, Rishad Habib, David J. Hardisty (2019): How to SHIFT Consumer Behaviors to be More Sustainable: A Literature Review and Guiding Framework, *Journal of Marketing*, 83 (3), 22-49, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0022242919825649>.
3. Katherine White, Rishad Habib (2018): SHIFT. Sustainable Consumer Behaviour Change Workbook, SITRA, Erweko/Helsinki, <https://media.sitra.fi/2018/05/23145322/sitrashift-workbookv04-www.pdf>.
4. Katherine White, Rishad Habib (2018): SHIFT. A Review and Framework for Encouraging Ecologically Sustainable Consumer Behavior, *SIRA Studies* 132, Erweko/Helsinki, <https://media.sitra.fi/2018/05/23161207/sitrashiftraporttiwww.pdf>.
5. Philipp Kotler (2011): Reinventing Marketing to Manage the Environmental Imperative. *Journal of Marketing*, 75(4), 132-135.

Additional literature, videos, tools, and some other recommendations will be given in class.

### **Prerequisites:**

-

### **Course Number:**

MOECO605

### **Registration:**

Please contact us through our website for enrolling and for current information. The number of participants is limited. Requirements are listed on our website mentioned below. Thus, to apply for the seminar, please follow the application procedure as specified on our homepage. For the application, you need to send your documents including a short motivation letter, cv, and transcript of records to [market-research@business.uzh.ch](mailto:market-research@business.uzh.ch) using the subject: "Sustainability Seminar HS2021".

If you receive our positive confirmation, you are asked and allowed to officially book this seminar using the "Modulbuchungstool". Booking the seminar without a positive confirmation from our chair is not implying the right to attend the course. In this case, the course will be graded as failed. [www.market-research.uzh.ch](http://www.market-research.uzh.ch).

### **Registration deadline:**

Students have to **apply** for the seminar no later than **Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 12:00h**.

Students will be **notified** about their potential participation on **Monday, September 13<sup>th</sup>**.

### **Grading:**

Participation, group presentation, and written documentation.

### **Location:**

Please see the respective information posted on our website and in the VVZ.

### **Note:**

This information in the syllabus supports the official information in the electronic university calendar (VVZ - Vorlesungsverzeichnis). In cases of doubt, the official information at the VVZ is valid.

## 2. COURSE MATERIAL

Students have access to our web-based e-learning platform on OLAT to download the slides presented in class and find other relevant material such as datasets and literature. The following procedure is strongly recommended as preparation for the classes.

### 2.1 Overview of Classes

On our webpage, an overview of all courses given by our team can be found. Students can develop an idea of the classes and how they best fit into their personal agenda. The sites can be accessed through:

*Chair for Marketing and Market Research Website*

*Marketing Group Zurich Website*

### 2.2 Hands-on Guides

Several files have been prepared that provide background knowledge of the expectations in the classroom and some tips concerning “How to give presentations in class”, “How to write in an academic style”, etc. These guides should be read prior to class to obtain a good understanding of what is expected.

### 2.3 Syllabus

For each course, a syllabus exists with all details concerning that specific course. This is the guideline for the class and a must-read. Everything concerning the grading of the course, the agenda, the planned topics, the workload, readings, and much more can be found in the syllabus.

### 2.4 The Slides

The slides presented and discussed in class are available on the e-learning platform. Slides can be downloaded for each class. The slides do not completely cover the entire syllabus. Therefore, it is necessary to participate in class.

### 2.5 Recommended Readings

Recommended readings are articles that go into more details on the specific topics. They are presented at the end of each session.

### 2.6 Recommended Other Material

Throughout the class, we recommend different videos to watch, websites to verify, tools to test, and so on. In fact, the class is filled with a lot of material to experiment with. They are presented at the end of each session.

### 2.7 Templates

Slide presentations have to meet our formal requirements. Templates will be provided at the beginning of this course.

### 2.8 Additional Readings

The academic and professional papers published online or in marketing journals can also be used by students to obtain additional information about digital marketing and branding concepts, theories, and methods. The following journals are reputable and are therefore strongly recommended:

Marketing journals:

Journal of Marketing, Marketing Science, Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Research, International Journal of Research in Marketing, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Quantitative Marketing and Economics, Journal of Interactive Marketing,

Journal of Business Research, Journal of Service Research, Journal of Product and Innovation Management

Management journals:

Academy of Management Review, Academy of Management Journal, Management Science, Administrative Science Quarterly, Strategic Management Journal

For inspiration:

Harvard Business Review, Sloan Management Review, McKinsey Quarterly

## 3. COURSE CONTENTS

### 3.1 Overview of Meetings\*

- Kick-Off meeting, Sep 20, 2021, 14-15:45h. Room: tba.
- 1st: Oct., 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 14-15:45h.
- 2nd: Nov., 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, 14-15:45h.
- 3rd: Nov., 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 14-15:45h.
- 4th: Nov., 29, 2021, 14-15:45h.
- 5th: Dec., 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 14-15:45h.
- Submission of report: Dec., 10<sup>th</sup>, 12h.
- Own Experiment and final meeting: Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 14-18h (!).

### 3.2 Details of Classes

This is the preliminary outline for HS 2021. This is subject to change and additional literature might be given in class.

#### W1: Kick-off and First Workshop

##### Objectives:

- (1) Introduction to the seminar
- (2) Overview of the SHIFT framework
- (3) Fundamentals of experimental design
- (4) Use-case for the final experiment
- (5) Assignment of group topics

##### Before the workshop:

Read the following paper: Katherine White, Rishad Habib, David J. Hardisty (2019): How to SHIFT Consumer Behaviors to be More Sustainable: A Literature Review and Guiding Framework, *Journal of Marketing*, 83 (3), 22-49, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0022242919825649>.

##### During the workshop:

In this first meeting, we'll get together for the very first time. For that, we are going to instruct you on the ideas, objectives, and procedures of this seminar. Afterwards, we start directly into the workshop.

We will first introduce you to the SHIFT framework and the basic principles of experimental design. Note that the purpose of this seminar is not to provide a comprehensive introduction to experimental design. Rather, we'll provide you with just enough concepts such that you can understand the assignments and expect you to do some further reading on your own, if you are not familiar with the topic.

We'll then introduce you to a use-case and ask you several questions you will need to answer at the end of the seminar. For this, we'll split you into groups and each group will be assigned one of the SHIFT pillars. Throughout the seminar, each group will present its pillar to the others and show how a typical experiment works. At the end of the seminar, each group is asked to develop an experiment that addresses the use-case presented, using their assigned SHIFT pillar.



In this seminar, we distinguish between

- *Session experiments* (session 2-6) as replications from the original SHIFT article that are applied each week by the group in charge for that week;
- *Own experiments* (session W7) as your contribution to the seminar. This is an experimental design newly developed by each group based on the learned principles and processes in the final session.

## **W2: Social influence (S)**

### **Objectives:**

- (1) Showcase of a social influence intervention.
- (2) Discussion of the Social Influence pillar.

### **Before the workshop**

The group responsible for the Social Influence pillar reviews the corresponding literature and prepares an experiment replicating a study of their choice.

### **During the workshop**

In the first part of the workshop, the group conducts the experiment and the students in all other groups participate. In the second part, the group leads a discussion about the principles of social influence interventions for sustainable consumption. In the last part, the group shows the results of the experiment and discusses them in the light of the topics discussed.

## **W3: Habit Formation (H)**

### **Objectives:**

- (1) Showcase of a habit formation intervention.
- (2) Discussion of the Habit Formation pillar.

### **Before the workshop**

The group responsible for the Habit Formation pillar reviews the corresponding literature and prepares an experiment replicating a study of their choice.

### **During the workshop**

In the first part of the workshop, the group conducts the experiment and the students in all other groups participate. In the second part, the group leads a discussion about the principles of habit formation interventions for sustainable consumption. In the last part, the group shows the results of the experiment and discusses them in the light of the topics discussed.

## **W4: The Individual Self (I)**

### **Objectives:**

- (1) Showcase of interventions targeting the individual self.
- (2) Discussion of the Individual Self pillar.

### **Before the workshop**

The group responsible for the Individual Self pillar reviews the corresponding literature and prepares an experiment replicating a study of their choice.

### **During the workshop**

In the first part of the workshop, the group conducts the experiment and the students in all other groups participate. In the second part, the group leads a discussion about the principles of sustainable consumption interventions targeting the individual self. In the last part, the group shows the results of the experiment and discusses them in the light of the topics discussed.

## **W5: Feelings and Cognition (F)**

### **Objectives:**

- (1) Showcase of a behavioral intervention targeting feelings and cognition.
- (2) Discussion of the Feelings and Cognition pillar.

### **Before the workshop**

The group responsible for the Feelings and Cognition pillar reviews the corresponding literature and prepares an experiment replicating a study of their choice.

### **During the workshop**

In the first part of the workshop, the group conducts the experiment and the students in all other groups participate. In the second part, the group leads a discussion about the principles of sustainable consumption interventions targeting feelings and cognition. In the last part, the group shows the results of the experiment and discusses them in the light of the topics discussed.

## **W6: Tangibility (T)**

### **Objectives:**

- (1) Showcase of a tangibility intervention.
- (2) Discussion of the Tangibility pillar.

### **Before the workshop**

The group responsible for the Tangibility pillar reviews the corresponding literature and prepares an experiment replicating a study of their choice.

### **During the workshop**

In the first part of the workshop, the group conducts the experiment and the students in all other groups participate. In the second part, the group leads a discussion about the principles of tangibility interventions. In the last part, the group shows the results of the experiment and discusses them in the light of the topics discussed.

## **W7: Own Experiment**

### **Objectives:**

- (1) Create your own experimental design based on your substantial SHIFT pillar.
- (2) Conduct the experiment in class; present and discuss the results.

### **Before the workshop**

All groups prepare a survey-based experiment addressing the use-case discussed during the kick-off session. The experiment can be inspired from the literature read, but it should contain novel elements contributed by the students. Each group distributes the survey five days before the workshop to the other groups. All students are required to participate in all other groups' experiments.

All groups write-up their work in a documentation containing:

- The objective of the experiment.
- The hypotheses to be tested in the experiment and their theoretical justification.
- The experimental design.
- The results of the experiment.
- The implications for the different stakeholders involved.

In addition, the groups also create a short power-point presentation which summarises the main findings. The presentation & documentation must be submitted no later than **Dec 10, 2021, 23:59** to [katherine.rother@business.uzh.ch](mailto:katherine.rother@business.uzh.ch).

### **During the workshop**

Each group is allocated 30 min for presenting the power-point slides submitted in advance and for follow-up discussions.

## **4. EVALUATION**

### **Group work on the SHIFT pillar**

#### **(1) Dedicated pillar sessions (40%)**

Each group must present the assigned pillar of the SHIFT framework in a dedicated session. This includes a showcase of an experimental intervention, discussion of the fundamental principles behind the assigned pillar, and presentation of the experimental results. The group should not only present, but lead a discussion involving the students in the other groups.

We evaluate:

- Completeness of presentation
- Clarity and path of the SHIFT dimension communicated
- Overall quality of the message
- Conducting the experimental design and presenting the results.

#### **(2) Own experiment (30%)**

Based on their received SHIFT dimension, each group must design, process and document their own experimental design. The experiment has the objective to SHIFT consumers to a sustainable behavior, following the use-case presented during the kick-off session.

We evaluate:

- Originality of experimental design
- Impact of experiment
- Documentation of experiment
- Thoughtfulness and actionability.

The presentation & written documentation must be submitted no later than **Dec 12, 2021, 23:59** to [katherine.rother@business.uzh.ch](mailto:katherine.rother@business.uzh.ch).

### **Participation in the Seminar (20%)**

We'd like to create a very interactive environment in which we all participate and openly share our ideas in a kind way.

We evaluate:

- Activity level
- Thoughtfulness
- Quality of participation

### **Peer Evaluation Score (10%)**

To control for free riders, we have a survey with which each group can evaluate the performance of each other group member. The received grades are averaged and count for 10% of the overall grade.

## **5. ACADEMIC FRAUD**

Academic fraud is an act by a student, which may result in a false academic evaluation of that student or of another student. The Honor Code of the University of Zurich applies to all work in this course and will be strictly enforced. The intent of the Honor Code in this course is to ensure that each student claims and receives credits for his/her own efforts. Violations to this are considered academic fraud.

## **6. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS**

### **6.1 Students with Disabilities**

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustment or accommodations is requested to speak with the instructor of this course during the first day of the course. All discussion will remain confidential. Students with disabilities will need to also contact the directors of the school.

### **6.2 Registration Cards**

Registration cards will be handed out at the beginning of the course. Students will be asked to add a recent profile picture and some personal information. The information is kept confidential and is only accessible to our team. We will need this information to learn the students' names by pictures and for administrative reasons. Delivering these files is of course voluntary.

### **6.3 Name Plates**

Name plates should be used regularly in class so that we can learn the students' names. Name plates will be handed out during the first day of the course.

### **6.4 Getting in Contact**

Emails should be short and to the point. Before sending an email, it should be clarified that email is the right medium for the question or concern at hand. Questions can also be asked at the beginning of or during lectures and exercises. Emails should be first sent to the TAs.

### **6.5 Class Dismissal**

Students are asked to remain seated and attentive until class is dismissed by the lecturer or teaching assistant.

### **6.6 Sound-emitting Devices**

It is expected that everyone turns off/mutes all devices that emit sounds and noises that may interrupt the class (e.g., mobile phones, pagers, watch alarms). If an occasion arises, in which a student may need to receive a phone call, he or she has to inform the lecturer or teaching assistant before class.

### **6.7 Laptops and Calculators**

Laptops, tablets, mobile phones, and programmable calculators are allowed in class if indicated by the lecturer or teaching assistant and as far as their usage supports the individual learning process. Otherwise, they are not permitted.

### **6.8 Important Deadlines and Class Schedule**

Important deadlines and the class schedule are communicated in the first lecture. If a student cannot participate in this lecture, it is his/her duty to obtain any relevant information.

***We are very much looking forward to meeting you in class!***