

The Research Centre of the Faculty of Economics
cordially invites you to a research seminar
on **Tuesday, 22nd January 2019**
at **1 p.m.** in room **P-119**
at the **Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana**

Author:

Peeter W.J. Verlegh, PhD

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

will present the article:

“How consumers use brands to show off on (visual) social media”

“The past few years have seen a significant shift of the social media landscape towards the visual. This trend is illustrated by the rapid rise of platforms like Snapchat, Instagram and Youtube, which are characterized by an emphasis on the creation and sharing of visual information. Although much research has been devoted to social media use, thus far, few studies have specifically addressed this trend. Social media are ideal platforms for self-presentation and convey a favorable impression of the self to others, as the information one shares online is easier to control and curate than the information one reveals during interpersonal interactions. Images seem particularly popular for self-presentation purposes. Nascent research on the topic indeed suggests that individuals tend to carefully construct, select, and edit the images they share on social media. Prior research suggests that the effects of self-presentation activities may be regarded as “bragging” and (therefore) disliked by others. As a result, such efforts may in fact be counterproductive. The question that remains unanswered, however, is: when, or under what conditions are social media posts about brands interpreted as bragging, and how do they influence impression formation online? Drawing on the literatures on self-presentation and conspicuous consumption, the present research aims to answer these questions. We look at this phenomenon from both the sharer and audience perspective. We conduct four studies using diverse methodologies. First, we use content analysis of actual Instagram posts to investigate how consumers construct brand related posts in social media, and what visual cues they use to self-present, and how these are perceived by observers/the audience. Next, we conduct several experimental studies to assess the impact on the audience’s evaluations of the sharer. Our study will focus on the type of brands posted on social media, arguing that high status brands are more likely to be used for self-presentation purposes, and that posts about such brands are more likely to contain visual self-presentation cues. In addition, we examine the audience’s reactions to such posts, testing the premise that the presence of high status brands, as well as the presence of self-presentation cues in posts are interpreted by the audience as signs that the sharer is trying to impress others. In line with prior research on self-presentation and conspicuous consumption, we show that such post characteristics trigger perceptions of bragging, and negatively affect the audience’s evaluation of the sharer. “

You can register for the free seminar by phone (01) 58-92-490, or via e-mail:
research.seminars@ef.uni-lj.si by Monday, 21th January 2019.

We look forward to seeing you!

