“IT’S NOT ABOUT YOUR BRAND, IT’S ABOUT ME”
LOOKING GOOD WHEN USING THE “LIKE” ON BRAND POSTS

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by
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Abstract

While millions of “Likes” (thumbs-up) are given every day on social network sites, companies encounter difficulties in assessing what Likes mean. Recent findings have demonstrated that Likes on brand posts do not necessarily change consumer attitudes. Yet, the literature has omitted to assess why some consumers do continue to use the Like on a variety of brand posts despite no apparent stated interest for the brands. To bridge this gap, this dissertation explores whether social acceptance concerns influence the way individuals use the Like on brand posts. It is proposed that when concerned about social acceptance, individuals tend to diversify their choices to present the self positively to others. This mindset leads individuals to associate brand posts they encounter with the self. However, this association decreases the cognitive effort dedicated toward the posts’ content. Consequently, brand posts are not deeply analyzed despite serving as means to present the self. Four studies test the effect of social acceptance concerns on willingness to use the Like and examine four boundary conditions: brand post privacy setting, brand post retransmission, self-esteem and mood. Overall, this work provides evidence that social approval concerns influence the way individuals use the Like on brand posts.
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Dedication

To Antoine & Mamilou.
Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

Scrolling on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or Twitter’s News Feeds is part of many people’s daily routines. Individuals often use social media platforms to share and receive content about news, opinions, hobbies, personal events, etc. (Angelis, Bonezzi, Peluso, Rucker, & Costabile, 2012; Chen, 2017; Chen & Berger, 2016; Dubois, Bonezzi, & De Angelis, 2015; Dubois, Rucker, & Tormala, 2011). On Facebook alone, 1 million links are shared, and 4.86 million photos are uploaded every 20 minutes (Peter, 2017). In turn, these sharing activities create more than 3 billion of “Likes” (thumbs-up button) a day (McGee, 2012).

The Like is originally defined as a way to express enjoyment received from a post content (facebook.com). Companies invest considerable amounts of money and efforts into social media with the firm belief that increasing the number of Likes on brand posts will increase visibility and profits (John, Mochon, Emrich, & Schwartz, 2017). However, recent studies have demonstrated that the number of Likes received on brand pages or posts is not a direct significant predictor of customers’ engagement or intentions when factors such as offline brand fondness or financial incentive received when using the Like are not taken into consideration (John, Emrich, Gupta, & Norton, 2016; Mochon, Johnson, Schwartz, & Ariely, 2016). Therefore, an important question that remains is why brand posts still receive millions of Likes every day?

In this dissertation, it is proposed that using the Like on a variety of brand posts is a way to be socially accepted by others. The Like is conceptualized here as a non-verbal positive signal that displays to others one’s preferences via brand posts. This idea is
supported for multiple reasons. First, a recent exploratory study has demonstrated that the Like is not only given for enjoyment, as originally thought, but is also related to self-presentation (Ozanne, Cueva Navas, Mattila, & Van Hoof, 2017). For instance, some individuals use the Like on public posts to show to others their preferences or desired identities. Second, a recent evidence suggests that non-targeted sharing (i.e. sharing information about the self to a non-targeted audience) is a preferred method of communication when people feel socially apprehensive (Buechel & Berger, 2018). Similarly, when wanting to reach social acceptance, non-targeted sharing via the Like is a credible pathway. Finally, individuals wanting to look good in front of others tend to incorporate diversity in consumption choices (Ratner & Kahn, 2002). Individuals do so because they believe that seeking variety helps them being perceived as interesting or open-minded. Here, the same theoretical mechanism applies. When individuals are concerned about being socially accepted, they should be more willing to present the self by using the Likes on a variety of brand posts.

However, what is not clear is how consumers internally justify that their choices present the self. So far, the variety-seeking literature has mainly focus on why people engage in variety seeking (e.g., for status, self-presentation) or when they do so (e.g., choosing for others, in public) (Choi, Kim, Choi, & Yi, 2006; Ratner & Kahn, 2002; Yoon & Kim, 2017) but has failed to explain how they do engage in such process.

This work suggests that engaging in variety-seeking to present the self induces a state of ownership of brand posts. This feeling of ownership leads individuals to internally justify their choices. This feeling is driven by an opportunistic mindset and can be seen as a means-end approach. In a means-end approach, the focus is on the product's
role in achieving one or several desired states rather than conceiving the product itself as the repository of value (Cohen, 1979; Hansen, 1969). The motivation is placed on the opportunity to “display” one’s diverse choices rather than on whether the content really fits with one’s values or interests. Consequently, the motivation to deeply process the content of brand posts is particularly low. This rationale provides an explanation on why some consumers do use the Like on brand posts and why a Like does not mean a “change” in consumers’ attitudes.

To summarize, it is proposed that individuals concerned about being socially accepted (1) associate diverse brand posts with the self (via ownership), (2) are less willing to engage in information processing and (3) present their diversified choices via “Likes”. Four studies test this proposition and demonstrate that such behaviors are present online.

This dissertation is important for three key reasons. First, it provides an explanation for why Likes do not necessarily represent a lasting change in consumer attitudes. By doing so, it highlights an unexplored link between variety-seeking and psychological ownership and contributes to explain how individuals engage in the use of the Like. Second, it shows the importance of indirect communication in social network sites and demonstrates that the use of social media tools, such as the Like, can help satisfy social approval concerns. Third, this work demonstrates that the identity that we present online is malleable and governed by opportunities to meet basic needs. This extends the work on identity signaling (Aaker, 1999; Jonah Berger & Heath, 2007) and suggests that a state of psychological ownership influences the use of the Like without necessarily influencing consumer attitudes.
Chapter 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Social acceptance and self-presentation

Human beings strive to feel socially accepted by their peers. From the earliest moments of their lives, human beings need respect, affection, and be perceived as loved individuals (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Different from selfishness or immaturity, the need to be socially accepted is an essential need to gain confidence to reach the fulfillment stage of the Maslow’s pyramid (Maslow, Frager, Fadiman, McReynolds, & Cox, 1970) and is a crucial determinant of behaviors (Ainsworth, 1989; Homans, 1961). To gain social acceptance, individuals implicitly influence others through self-presentation (Dahl, 2013; Kristofferson & White, 2015), a behavior that seek to convey some information about oneself or some image of oneself to other people (Baumeister & Hutton, 1987).

One way to present the self is to “please” one’s audience (Baumeister, 1982). The goal of this behavior is to match one's self-presentation to the audience's expectations and preferences. For example, individuals incorporate more variety into their consumption decisions when their behaviors are subject to public scrutiny (Ratner & Kahn, 2002). They do so because they expect others to prefer varied assortments. Similarly, when a public self-image is activated, consumers tend to donate more to charity (Glazer & Konrad, 1996). Doing or choosing what others expect lead individuals to believe that they will be perceived positively.
While conforming to others’ expectations is helpful in being perceived positively, individuals also refrain from behaviors leading to negative judgments (Arkin, 1981). For example, they are less likely to redeem a coupon in public to avoid the negative perception of being cheap (Ashworth, Darke, & Schaller, 2005). Important motivations for conveying the right impression is therefore both the attainment of desired outcomes and the avoidance of undesired ones. Both motives satisfy the general need to be accepted by pleasing the audience’s expectations.

The Like can be used to convey a desired impression. The Like as an indirect way of sharing things about the self helps avoiding undesired outcomes of direct sharing (Ozanne et al., 2017). Furthermore, sharing things with a non-directed target or to a broad audience has been shown to reduce anxiety developed by other’s reactions (Buechel & Berger, 2018). Therefore, the Like can be used to gain acceptance by presenting one’s diverse preferences to an audience without engaging in direct sharing. This way of using the Like is of particular interest in this study and is conceptualized as an online non-verbal behavior.

2.2 The “Like”: An online non-verbal behavior

The analysis of non-verbal behaviors was first explored by Erving Goffman, (1959) in the presentation of self in everyday life. In his analysis, he differentiates expressions “given” from expressions “given-off”. While expressions “given” are mostly verbal and symbolic, expressions “given-off” are expressive body gestures that are
genuinely and unselfconsciously reflective of something about the person. Expressions given-off can be controlled to (e.g. smiling) or uncontrolled (e.g. blushing).

In her review of non-verbal behaviors and self-presentation, DePaulo (1992) shows that personality differences are powerful predictors in self-presentation abilities. She explains how people sensitive to social approval are particularly likely to use non-verbal behaviors when presenting the self. For example, individuals concerned about being approved are not very adept at communicating negativity with their face or voice (Zaidel & Mehrabian, 1969). Moreover, when conversing with others, the intensity of their speech tends to converge with the intensity of their partner's speech (Natale, 1975). They also tend to sit closer to the target, smile more and show signs of active listening (Rosenfeld, 1966). To get approval, individuals send positive non-verbal signals and avoid negative ones. In such cases, behaviors are directed toward a particular target.

The present study proposes non-verbal behaviors can also be non-directed and can be expressed online via “Likes”. A common feature of the Like is that it can be seen by other users (facebook.com) but the person who uses the Like never really knows who will see it. Furthermore, the Like is not only used to express enjoyment, as defined originally, but also to present personal values and interests, especially via public posts (Ozanne et al., 2017). Because Likes on public posts can be seen by a broad audience, there is evidence to suggest that some individuals do use the Like on public posts to present the self to others.
Given that individuals tend to conform to others’ expectations when they know that others watch them (e.g. Asch, 1956; Diener, 1979) and that variety-seeking in choices is favorable, those concerned about being socially accepted will be more willing to use the Like on brand posts they encounter.

_Hypothesis 1: When there is an opportunity to present the self to others, individuals high (vs. low) in social approval concerns are more willing to use the Like on brand posts._

A natural concern is that self-presentation via the Like should also be linked to the brand post content. For example, self-enhancing content should be of interest when wanting to present the self to a broad audience (Barasch & Berger, 2014). While this reasoning holds, it is argued that brand posts are considered as opportunities to gain acceptance. This opportunistic mindset leads individuals to see a brand posts as “utilities” that they can “own” to gain acceptance. This is referred as a means-end approach, where the focus is on the product's role in achieving one or several desired end states rather than conceiving the product itself as the object of value (Cohen, 1979; Hansen, 1969). Consequently, brand posts of varying levels of interest should get Likes as long as individuals can diversify their choices and can display those Likes. To do so, individuals should feel that they psychologically “own” the brand posts. This idea of psychological ownership is further developed in the next section.
2.3 Psychological ownership

Sartre (1943, 1969) affirmed that "to have" (along with "to do" and "to be") is one of the three categories of human existence. He suggested that possessions reflect the totality of one’s being, and that “what is mine is myself" (p. 591-592). Consumers see possessions like cars or clothes as extensions of who they are (Belk, 1988). While associations with the self often occur with material things, they can also occur with nonmaterial entities, such as thoughts, ideas or e-books (Baer & Brown, 2012; Belk, 1988, 2013). The idea that psychological ownership is motivated by identity signaling has been studied multiple times in the consumer behavior literature (Jonah Berger & Heath, 2007; Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2003). For example, consumers tend to construct their self-concept and to signal it with brand images that are consistent with an ingroup (Escalas & Bettman, 2005) and that represent symbolic expressions of their self-identity (Dittmar, 1992; McCracken, 1986).

This construction of self-concept through expression of one’s identity is particularly attractive in social media. Sources (i.e. users) can customize the presentation of their identities via the content that they share (indirectly or directly) or comments. In turn, sources get a stronger sense of agency (i.e. control) about one’s self-presentation and, more generally, about what is shared online (Sundar, 2008a).

Displaying identity through possessions of brand posts should be a central component when one wants to get accepted by others. However, how an individual can feel a psychological ownership of information that is not considered for its value (i.e. content of that information) but for the opportunity to diversify one’s identity?
It is suggested that the importance given to the “entity” possessed to present one’s identity is linked to how psychological ownership is motivated. If ownership is motivated by displaying a high status, the display of luxury goods will be a predominant behavior (Amaldoss & Jain, 2005; Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996). In such case, entities (i.e. luxury goods) are particularly important. Yet, if ownership is motivated by variety seeking, diversifying the entities possessed will be a predominant behavior, but the nature of the entities themselves will be of lesser importance. This idea is further conceptualized through the means-end approach.

Gutman (1982) suggested that consumers make purchase choices in terms of consequences (benefits or risks) and on what kind of personal values products help individuals to achieve. Later work conceptualized this means-end approach as “goal-directed” and suggested a hierarchical structure to it (Pieters, Baumgartner, & Allen, 1995). A goal structure comprises a set of goals “that are relevant to a given behavior, and [the goal structure] specifies how these goals are organized” (p.228). Goals at lower levels in the hierarchy serve as means to achieve higher-level goals. The focal goal is seen as “what” to satisfy, the subordinate goals are seen as “how” to satisfy the focal goal and the super-ordinate goals are seen as “why” satisfying the focal goal. For example, if the focal goal is to lose weight, a subordinate goal (how) will be to eat lighter meals and a super-ordinate goal (why) could be to have a long and healthy life (Pieters et al., 1995).

In this dissertation, it is proposed that consumers use a goal structure to satisfy the focal goal of being socially accepted. To do so, the first sub-ordinate goal to satisfy is to present the self in a positive manner. To achieve it, the second goal is to display diversity
in one’s identity. To achieve this second goal, the third goal is to psychologically own a variety of brand posts, and thus to use the “Like” on those posts.

To summarize, it is proposed that social approval concerns activate a self-presentation goal. To satisfy this goal, consumers adapt their behaviors to the audience expectations by seeking diversity in brand posts and by psychologically owning them. The display of this diversity in choices representing one’s identity is done through the Like. The following hypothesis is put forth:

**Hypothesis 2a:** When there is an opportunity to present the self to others, individuals high (vs. low) in social approval concerns will experience a higher level of psychological ownership over brand posts encountered.

This association with the self, in turn, explain the mechanism between social acceptance concerns and willingness to use the Like. When the opportunity to present the self through the Like is reduced, those concerned about being socially accepted should experience less psychological ownership and thus Like less. The following hypothesis is put forth:

**Hypothesis 2b:** When there is an opportunity to present the self to others, psychological ownership should mediate the relationship between social approval concerns and willingness to use the Like.
Furthermore, psychological ownership influences the way brand posts are cognitively processed.

2.4 Depth of cognitive processing

Recent research in consumer behavior has demonstrated that associating content found (vs. received) with the self decreases information processing (Chen & Berger, 2016). This type of heuristic is called possession heuristic, where individuals infer ownership from possession (Friedman, 2008; Friedman & Neary, 2008; Krier & Serkin, 2014). For example, the first person to play with an object or to sit on a chair acts as the owner of the object and is perceived by others as such. Similarly, finding information online activates feeling of possession. In turn, possession heuristic increases certainty and trust toward the information because the self is generally certain. This certainty reduces the need to deeply process the information (Baumgardner, 1990; J. D. Campbell & Lavallee, 1993; Marsh & Weary, 1989).

This type of heuristic can be explained by the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). ELM proposes that depth of processing (i.e., elaboration) falls on a continuum, with peripheral/heuristic processing on one end and central/systematic processing on the other (Chaiken, 1980; Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). Under the central route, individuals think deeply and analytically to evaluate information. Conversely, under the peripheral route, individuals depend on cues
such as attractiveness, credibility or reputation of the source delivering the content (Bhattacherjee & Sanford, 2006; Sussman & Siegal, 2003).

Similarly, when psychological ownership is experienced, possession heuristic should decrease cognitive processing when analyzing brand posts. The following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 3: When psychological ownership is activated, depth of cognitive processing will mediate the relationship between social approval concerns and willingness to use the Like. However, such an effect should not occur in absence of psychological ownership.*

To summarize, the relationship between social approval concerns and willingness to use the Like on brand posts is mediated by psychological ownership. This state of ownership activates possession heuristic which reduces the amount of cognitive effort dedicated toward brand posts encountered. However, when psychological ownership is not experienced, individuals should process more deeply information on brand posts.

The following section discusses four boundary conditions to the proposed framework. The first two involve external factors, namely the presence of others (Study 1) and psychological ownership impairment through brand post retransmission (Study 2). Study 3 and Study 4 examine individual level factors, such as self-esteem when seeing others’ reactions and mood.
2.5 Boundary conditions

2.5.1 Assessment of the boundary conditions

The proposed external and internal the boundary conditions are chosen for several reasons. First, as defined above, the (evaluative) presence of others is important when one wants to get accepted by others. In this research context, it means that other users should see the Likes on brand posts. One way to do so is by manipulating the privacy setting of brand posts. While Facebook algorithm does not reveal who can see the Likes, a public (vs. private) privacy setting allows for a maximum (vs. specific) number of people to see the post and the Likes. A specificity of Facebook is that rather than controlling who is the audience, most users base their perception of the audience as rather broad (public setting) or restricted (customized setting). As such, manipulating privacy setting of brand posts is the best way to control for the perception of the size of the audience and it reinforces the ecological validity of the theoretical framework.

Second, this dissertation proposes that psychological ownership is the mechanism explaining the relationship between social approval concerns and willingness to use the Like. While psychological ownership is intended to be measured, one way to assess whether this proposed mediator is indeed a key driver of the current effect is to manipulate it (Spencer, Zanna, & Fong, 2005). As such, psychological ownership is manipulated in Study 2 and tested as a boundary condition.

Third, while social approval is a trait essentially driven by external factors (Horton, Marlowe, & Crowne, 1963), individual differences can affect the way social acceptance concerns is presented. The most important variable studied in relationship to
social acceptance is self-esteem. Self-esteem is evaluated by how one believes that the characteristics s/he possesses are positively evaluated by others (Jones, Brenner, & Knight, 1990; MacDonald, Saltzman, & Leary, 2003; Shrauger & Schoeneman, 1979). It is demonstrated that people high in self-esteem interact in a different manner than those low in self-esteem. Self-esteem correlates positively with extraversion (Watson, Suls, & Haig, 2002) and those high in self-esteem tend to associate new things with the self more easily than others (Baumeister, 1982). As trait self-esteem is linked to the perception and approval from others, assessing how it affects positive self-presentation with the use of the Like is essential. Self-esteem is thus tested as a boundary condition.

Finally, it is also important to evaluate how a positive or negative mood interferes with the use of the Like. A high social desirability influences positively cooperation (Forgas, 1998) and the presentation of the self regardless of the valence of one’s mood (Baumeister, 1982; Clark, Pataki, & Carver, 1996; Goffman, 1959; Schlenker & Pontari, 2000; Vohs, Baumeister, & Ciarocco, 2005). When concerned about making a good impression on others, individuals in a negative mood use coping strategies to present the self as positively as those in a positive mood. Because the Like is considered as a positive signal, it is necessary to assess how a temporary positive or negative mood influences its use. This makes mood-valence a fourth boundary condition to test. The four boundary conditions are further discussed below.
2.5.2 Privacy setting

The influence that others have on our emotions, opinions and behaviors is extremely powerful. Pioneers in social psychology have highlighted the strong impact that others have on one’s attitudes and behaviors (Boush, Friestad, & Rose, 1994; Latané & others, 1981). While early research looked at the direct tactics utilized by salespeople or other agents to influence others (M. C. Campbell & Kirmani, 2000; Pechmann, Zhao, Goldberg, & Reibling, 2003), more recent work has moved to implicit social influences. In their review of interpersonal influences in consumer psychology, Kristofferson & White (2015) define implicit social influence as: “emerging when there is not an explicit or direct attempt to influence another, yet social elements or cues in the context itself subtly impact consumers attitudes and behaviors (p.420)”. They argue that self-presentation, along with association, uniqueness and self-enhancement, is a common motive that underlies consumers’ reactions to implicit social influence.

Furthermore, presenting the self in a positive light by “pleasing the audience” is a common way to gain social acceptance from others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). “Pleasing the audience” responds to the influence of other people that leads us to conform in order to be liked and accepted (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991; Deutsch & Gerard, 1955). However, one major determinant highlighted by the self-presentation theory is that self-presentational motivations are activated by the “evaluative” presence of other people and by others' knowledge of one's behavior (Baumeister & Hutton, 1987).

Consequently, when wanting to be socially approved, willingness to use the Like on brand posts should only hold when the Like can be seen by others. If the privacy setting of the brand post is set-up such that no one in the network see the Likes,
psychological ownership and willingness to use the Like should be reduced. The following hypothesis is thus put forth:

_Hypothesis 4: Individuals high in social approval concerns will be more willing to use the Like on brand posts under a public (vs. private) privacy setting._

This first boundary condition is tested in Study 1. The second boundary condition involves brand post retransmission.

2.5.3 Brand post retransmission

Chen and Berger (2016) recently found that methods of acquisition of information affect association with the self. They demonstrated that when an information is found, people tend to associate it more with the self than when the same information is received. They attributed this effect to the concept of who first finds a “content” can claim as his/her “own” (Pierce et al., 2003). In their implications, Chen and Berger (2016) stated that despite that methods of acquisition influence sharing behavior, motives to transmit and retransmit information could also be influential.

Relying on this idea, the motives to use the Like on a transmitted or retransmitted brand post should differ when social acceptance concerns are high. A transmitted brand post is defined as a post that is created and shared by the brand. Conversely, a brand post is retransmitted when a friend shares the transmitted brand post. In both scenarios, the post still appears on one’s News Feed. When a brand post is retransmitted by a friend,
possession should be more difficult to claim as the friend already psychologically “owns” the post. The following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 5: Individuals high in social approval concerns will be less willing to use the Like on brand posts that are retransmitted (vs. transmitted).*

The first two boundary conditions show how the context in which individuals encounter brand posts (privacy setting or retransmission) impacts the effect of social acceptance concerns on willingness to use the Like. These boundaries can be considered as external as individuals do not have control over them. For instance, on Facebook, a company decides the privacy setting of its posts. Then, based on its algorithm, Facebook displays the posts to some users on their News Feed. Similarly, when a brand post is retransmitted, it is the decision of the friend to do so. Consequently, the online environment does impact the way individuals see information online and how they use the “Like” button. The next set of internal boundary conditions refer to psychological drivers (self-esteem, mood) that can affect the relationship between social acceptance concerns and willingness to use the Like.
2.5.4 The role of self-esteem

When an individual use Likes on public posts, s/he does not control who in the network will see these Likes. This uncertainty in the audience accentuates the use of self-enhancement techniques to increase one’s desirability (Barasch & Berger, 2014; Chen, 2017). However, this effect should be moderated by self-esteem. In his work on self-presentation, Baumeister (1982) linked social approval and self-esteem. He demonstrated that individuals high in self-esteem use a compensatory self-enhancement technique when trying to obtain approval from others. This strategy suggests that to compensate for some bad aspects of one’s possible existing image, individuals high in self-esteem tend to “*make positive claims about themselves even despite the expectation of future interaction—partly because of the expectation of future interaction which they hope will vindicate their self-enhancing claims*” (p.30). However, individuals low in self-esteem do not to use a compensatory self-enhancement technique because their lack of confidence prevents them to vindicate such positive claims about themselves.

By introducing new and positive materials about the self, individuals high in self-esteem should not see any risk when using the “Like”. Conversely, this behavior should be uncomfortable for those low in self-esteem. Self-esteem should then moderate the way individuals use the Like when they are unsure of who is in the audience.

Furthermore, there is a debate in the literature on whether social validation (e.g. social approval) influences self-esteem. The humanistic approach considers self-esteem as a personal evaluation of one’s goodness or worth. Therefore, self-esteem arises when one lives in congruence with its intrinsic values regardless of what are the values of others (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Rogers, 1959). Yet, an interpersonal view of self-esteem
posits that not only one needs to believe that s/he possesses positive attributes, but one needs also to see that those attributes are perceived positively by others. Only in this context the perception of possessing the right attributes will predict self-esteem (Leary & Downs, 1995). As social acceptance might enhance a state of self-esteem, it was important to measure both social acceptance and self-esteem in ways that they don’t affect each other’s. To do so, social acceptance will be manipulated via satiation. It has been demonstrated that fundamental needs, such as belongingness or approval, display satiation patterns (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). Conversely, self-esteem will be measured as an individual difference trait embedded in filler tasks.

To recap, once social acceptance concerns are reduced (via satiation) individuals high in self-esteem should be less willing to use the Like on brand posts. However, such an effect should not hold for individuals low in self-esteem.

Hypothesis 6: When social approval is satiated (vs. not), individuals high in self-esteem will be less willing to use the Like. Such an effect should not occur for individuals low in self-esteem.

Furthermore, the literature demonstrates that when a broad audience agrees on a certain opinion, other individuals tend to believe that this opinion is correct (Chaiken, 1987; Sundar, 2008b). This effect, called “bandwagon” (see Sundar, 2008b), is a heuristic especially present on the internet. The abundance of information available online leads individuals to spend less time in analyzing each piece of information available and to rely
on what the majority thinks (Bonabeau, 2004). For example, online news with higher recommendation ratings or products with higher star ratings are perceived as higher in quality (Knobloch-Westerwick, Sharma, Hansen, & Alter, 2005; Sundar, Oeldorf-Hirsch, & Xu, 2008). Therefore, the bandwagon effect should reduce the difference in willingness to use the Like for those high in self-esteem. In other words, when social acceptance is satiated, those high in self-esteem should still be willing to use the Like. The following hypothesis is put forth:

**Hypothesis 7**: When a bandwagon cue is present, the effect of high self-esteem on the relationship between social approval and willingness to use the Like will be reduced.

Hypothesis 6 and 7 will be tested in Study 3. The second internal boundary condition is mood. Because the Like is considered as a “positive” signal, it is important to assess how mood influences the way individuals use the Like.

2.5.5 The role of mood

Numerous studies have demonstrated that intense use of social media predicts mood disorders, such as addiction and depression (Andreassen, Torsheim, Brunborg, & Pallesen, 2012; Blaszczynski, 2006; Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). More recent findings also show that mood predicts the way individuals share things on social media. For example, extreme weather conditions and rainy days are indicative of negative sentiments expressed on Twitter (Baylis et al., 2018). This is contingent with what
Schwarz and Clore (1983) found in an offline condition, where on sunny days (in a positive mood) people give higher ratings of life satisfaction than on rainy days (in a negative mood).

In regard to self-presentation, expressing happiness increases others’ liking of us, and, as a consequence, individuals often choose to strategically present positive emotions and cope with competing negative ones when motivated to gain approval (Baumeister, 1982; Clark et al., 1996; Goffman, 1959; Schlenker & Pontari, 2000; Vohs et al., 2005). This emotional regulation strategy is especially true if doing so outweighs the physiological and psychological costs of such a strategy (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).

Furthermore, individuals spontaneously adopt a positive self-presentational style when interacting with acquaintances, but when talking with friends, they present themselves in a more modest fashion (Barasch & Berger, 2014; Chen, 2017; Tice, Butler, Muraven, & Stillwell, 1995). Because “Likes” on public posts can be seen by a broad audience with different levels of friendship, a positive self-presentational style should be particularly salient and negative emotions reduced.

Conversely, a positive mood reduces the amount of attention and effort toward any task which in general leads to more positive evaluations of such tasks (Bless, Bohner, Schwarz, & Strack, 1990; Schwarz & Bless, 1991). It is widely shown that positive mood increases persuasion by relying on heuristics (Mackie & Worth, 1991; Park & Banaji, 2000; Petty, Schumann, Richman, & Strathman, 1993). In this research, positive mood should then have an impact on the cognitive involvement dedicated to brand posts. Because positive mood induces heuristics other than possession heuristic, positive mood
should directly affect cognitive processing dedicated to the brand post regardless of the effect of psychological ownership.

To recap, mood acts as a moderator in the relationship between social acceptance concerns and willingness to use the Like. When wanting to gain social acceptance, those experiencing negative mood should strategically present a positive mood and should be as willing as those in a positive mood to use the Like on brand posts. However, when social acceptance concerns are reduced (via satiation) a negative mood should have an adverse effect on the use of the Like. Conversely, a positive mood should trigger heuristics lowering depth of cognitive processing. Consequently, regardless of psychological ownership, individuals in a positive mood should find brand posts more interesting as what they are and be more willing to use the Like. The following hypothesis is thus put forth:

*Hypothesis 8: When social approval is satiated (vs. not), individuals in a negative mood should decrease their willingness to use the Like. However, in a positive mood, individuals should be equally willing to use the Like.*

*Hypothesis 9: Positive mood will decrease cognitive processing involvement toward brand posts regardless of psychological ownership.*
The effect of mood is tested in Study 4. Taken together, the four boundary conditions articulate how social acceptance affects the way individuals use the Like on brand posts. They demonstrate the richness and complexity of behaviors motivated by social acceptance and provide an explanation for why some individuals use the Like on brand posts. The next chapter of this dissertation empirically tests the proposed hypotheses. The conceptual framework is shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 - Conceptual Framework**
Chapter 3. EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT

3.1 Social acceptance concerns measures

The literature has demonstrated that social approval/acceptance is a basic need that everybody has and which varies by individuals (Baumeister & Leary, 1995a). The most frequently used scale to measure the differences in social acceptance is the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MC-SDS) (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). This instrument indicates that individuals differ in the relative value they place on gaining approval and avoiding disapproval. However, later work demonstrated that people with high Marlowe-Crowne scores will rather cheat to avoid negative evaluations or disapproval rather than obtain positive recognition (S. E. Berger, Levin, Jacobson, & Millham, 1977). Because the use of the Like is conceptualized to present the self, it was necessary to find a scale that captures such engagement.

Recently, Chen (2017) used three items to measure social acceptance concerns when writing an online review. This scale is a good fit to test the hypotheses because it reflects social acceptance concerns in an online setting and it measures engagement by asking whether people will engage in writing a review. I adapted the questions by asking whether people will engage in using the Like. This scale is used in Study 1 and Study 2 (See Appendix A). The Cronbach’s α in both studies demonstrated a high level of internal consistency (Study 1: Cronbach’s α=.94, Study 2: Cronbach’s α=.93).

Furthermore, while the literature has treated social acceptance as an individual difference, Baumeister and Leary (1995) demonstrated that fundamental needs such as
belongingness or approval display satiation patterns. Those patterns have been later studied in applied psychology (see Carvallo & Pelham, 2006; Gardner, Pickett, & Brewer, 2000). Therefore, Study 3 and Study 4 use social acceptance satiation to test the effect of the internal boundaries on willingness to use the Like. By doing so, the internal validity is enhanced, and the possible effect of social acceptance on self-esteem is reduced.

Three pilot studies assess the main effect of social acceptance concerns (Pilot study 1) and psychological ownership (Pilot study 2) on willingness to use the Like. Pilot study 3 demonstrates that seeking diversity (rather than relying on the post content) is the mechanism driving the use of the Like when individuals are concerned about social approval.

3.2 Pilot studies

3.2.1 Pilot study 1

The first pilot study shows the positive relationship between social acceptance concerns (SACs) and the use of the Like on Facebook. Students (N=25) were asked to go on their activity log on Facebook. The activity log displays all past actions made by the Facebook user (likes, comments etc.). Those actions are classified per day. Students counted their last 20 Likes and reported in how many days they reached 20 Likes. The number of Facebook friends was controlled to make sure that the use of the Like on different posts was not induced by the number of friends. Next, students responded to three questions on their social acceptance concerns when using the Like on posts (see
appendix A). The logarithm of the number of days to reach 20 Likes (skewness: .328, kurtosis: -.855) was the dependent variable. The results revealed that the higher the SACs, the faster the 20 Likes were reached ($b$=-.337, $t(23)=-3.523, p<.01$). The number of Facebook friends as a control variable was not significant, despite being correlated with social acceptance concerns. The results of the first pilot study indicate that the higher the social acceptance concerns, the higher the willingness to use the Like.

3.2.2 Pilot study 2

The second pilot study demonstrates that people high in social acceptance concerns (SACs) have a higher tendency to associate brand posts to the self. Participants of an online panel (N=60) imagined browsing their News Feed and encountering a brand post. After reading it, they indicated to what extent they associated the content with themselves (1: Not at all to 7: Very much so). The association measures were adapted from Chen and Berger (2016). Participants were presented with seven pairs of circles where one circle represented the self and the other represented the content (coded as 1: No association to 7: complete overlap). Participants chose the pair of circles that reflected their association to the brand post. Finally, after a filler task, participants indicated their social approval concerns (see appendix A). On both association measures, higher SACs indicated a stronger sense of association ($b$:.4763, $t(58)=4.47, p<.000$ and $b$:.2968, $t(58)=3.15 p<.01$ respectively).
3.2.3 Pilot study 3

The third pilot study shows the content of the post is of lesser importance for individuals high in SACs. To test this proposition, an interesting and uninteresting brand post were used. The posts were pretested by Chen and Berger (2016) and categorized as either interesting or less-interesting. The interesting article reflected on a spray-on battery and the less-interesting one was about loss-weight (see appendix B). Participants of an online panel (N=62) were either exposed to the interesting or less-interesting post. Then, participants were asked for the perceived post interestingness (1: not at all, 7: extremely) as a measure of cognitive processing involvement (Chen & Berger, 2016). After a filler task, they answered the SACs questions (see appendix A). After centering SACs, the results demonstrated a main effect of the article interestingness ($b$:1.41 $t(58)$=3.39, $p<.01$), a main effect of SACs ($b$:2.7, $t(58)$=2.40, $p<.05$) and a significant interaction effect ($b$:-.64, $t(58)$=-2.7, $p<.01$). Precisely, when SACs were high (+1 SD), no difference in content interestingness between the posts was found ($t$<1). Those low in SACs (-1SD) rated the “interesting” post as more interesting ($M$=5.3) than the less interesting post ($M$=2.7) ($b$: 2.58, $t(58)$=4.23, $p<.01$). These results demonstrate that when SACs are high, no difference in content interestingness is found.

Taken together, the three pilot studies show that social acceptance concerns are (1) positively correlated to the number of Likes one’s give in a specific number of days (2) induce a state of ownership and (3) trigger heuristic processing. The next section presents the methodology and findings of the four main studies.
3.3 Study 1: Privacy settings

3.3.1 Empirical overview

The goal of Study 1 is to demonstrate that the use of the Like is linked to self-presentation. When SACs are high, willingness to use the Like on a brand post should be reduced when other Facebook users (audience) cannot see the Like. However, such an effect should not occur for individuals low in SACs. Furthermore, this effect should be mediated by both psychological ownership and depth of cognitive processing.

3.3.2 Methodology

248 participants on Amazon MTurk completed the study in exchange for a small compensation. 52 percent of the participants were between 18 and 34 years old, 60 percent had a household income of $50,000 or higher and 50 percent were females.

The study employed a quasi-experiment design with privacy setting of the article manipulated in two conditions (private vs. public setting) and SACs measured. To manipulate the privacy setting, participants were asked to imagine browsing their Facebook News Feed and encountering an article (See appendix C for the article). The privacy setting of this article was private (public) such that Likes and comments given to this article couldn’t (could) be seen by other Facebook users, including Facebook friends. The world icon representing a public brand post on the stimuli was changed to a customized icon representing a private privacy setting (See appendix C). To ensure that the manipulation was successful, participants indicated at the end of the survey to what extent they agreed with the following sentence: “Other Facebook users can see the
“Likes” (thumbs-up) given to this article (1: strongly disagree to 7: strongly agree). A higher level of agreement was reported in the public condition ($M=6.07$, $SD=1.32$) than in the private condition ($M=2.55$, $SD=1.95$, $p<.000$).

SACs were measured with the same instrument as in the pilot studies (Cronbach’s $\alpha=.92$). The three questions of SACs were mixed with a series of unrelated questions on various personality traits. These questions were either seen before or after the manipulation of privacy setting and the dependent variables. Counterbalancing of the SACs questions (as either before or after) had no significant effect on the dependent variables when the order of the SACs questions was inserted as a control variable.

After reading the brand post, willingness to use the Like was measured (To what extent would you click on the Like button (thumbs-up) for this brand post? 1: Extremely unlikely to 7: Extremely likely). Association with the self was measured with the same items as in pilot study 2 ($r=.72$) and depth of cognitive processing was measured via perceived interestingness as in pilot study 3. Finally, participants answered some demographic questions and were thanked for their participation.

3.3.3 Results

Results revealed a significant main effect of SACs ($b=.23$, $t(244)=3.15$, $p<.01$), a non-significant main effect of privacy setting ($t(244)<1$) and a significant interaction of privacy setting and SACs on willingness to use the Like ($F(1,244)=7.38$, $p<.01$).

Precisely, when the post was public, higher levels of social acceptance concerns led to a higher willingness to use the Like the brand post ($b=.43$, $t(244)=4.29$, $p<.000$, 95% CI:}
This effect was not significant when the setting of the post was private ($p = .73$) (See Figure 2). These results support hypotheses 1 and 4.

Results of the moderated sequential mediation (Process V3, Model 84, 5000 iterations) (Hayes, 2017) indicated a significant index of moderated mediation (index: .07, se: .03, 95% CI: .001 to .148). As expected, the sequential mediation was significant when the privacy setting was public (effect: .12, se: .03, 95% CI: .061 to .185) but not when it was private (95% CI: -.003 to .106). Furthermore, the direct effect became non-significant (effect: .065, $t(244) = 1.21, p = .23$), indicating a full mediation of psychological ownership and depth of cognitive processing.

When cognitive processing (i.e. perceived interestingness) was the only mediator (controlling for psychological ownership) the indirect effect was not significant (95% CI: -.05 to .13). Nonetheless, when psychological ownership was the only mediator (controlling for perceived interestingness) the indirect effect was significant (95% CI: -.002 to .269). These results indicate that psychological ownership is the variable leading to a decrease in depth of cognitive processing and an increase in willingness to use the Like. As such, hypothesis 2a, 2b and 3 are supported.
3.3.4 Conclusion

When social acceptance concerns are high and posts are public, the use of the Like is related to self-presentation. When other Facebook users cannot see the Like, willingness to use the Like decreases among those high in SACs. Furthermore, consumers high SACs experience higher level of psychological ownership than those low in SACs and find the brand post more interesting. Such an effect does not occur in a private setting. These results demonstrate that psychological ownership is experienced when there is an opportunity to present the self to others. While the results of Study 1 are congruent with the general framework, one could suspect that the solo effect of SACs, rather than psychological ownership, reduces depth of cognitive processing. To rule out such an alternative account and to increase the external validity of the findings, psychological ownership is manipulated in Study 2.
3.4 Study 2: Brand post retransmission

3.4.1 Empirical overview

The goal of the second study is to demonstrate that when psychological ownership is impaired, individuals high in SACs process more brand posts information, which, in turn, reduces their willingness to use the Like. To manipulate psychological ownership, this study relied on Chen and Berger's (2016) manipulation of information ownership. They demonstrated that when an individual receives information from a friend via email, s/he is less likely to associate such information with the self and is less willing to share it again than when this same information is found by the individual on a website. Precisely, receiving (vs. finding) information decreases ownership of such information.

On social network sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or LinkedIn, consumers mostly acquire content via News Feeds. When a brand shares a post on Facebook, the brand post can be seen by a non-brand follower if (1) an entity known of the consumer (e.g. friend) retransmits the brand post or (2) if the brand advertises the post. As such, brand information received on the News Feed can be either transmitted (by the brand) or retransmitted (by Facebook friends). Relying on Chen and Berger’s (2016) findings, retransmission of a brand post by a friend should act as a moderator influencing the relationship between social approval concerns and willingness to use the Like.
3.4.2 Methodology

A total of 243 people from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) participated in the study in exchange for a small compensation. A quasi-experiment was used with source of information manipulated in 3 conditions (a close friend, a distant friend, and a brand). Participants were prescreened for having a Facebook account. To manipulate how participants encountered the brand post, they were asked to imagine themselves browsing their News Feed. While browsing, they encountered a brand post that a close friend (distant friend) had retransmitted. In the other condition, the brand post was directly transmitted by the brand. The brand post intentionally had grammar issues, such as electrical written as “eletrical”, battery as “battry” and layers as “lawyers” (See appendix B). Text with typos or grammatical errors reflect low writing quality and should be less catch when individuals are less involved cognitively to process the text information (Chen & Berger, 2016; Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986).

After reading the brand post, willingness to use the Like was measured as in Study 1. Then, to test the underlying process (depth of cognitive processing), participants rated how well written they thought the post was (1: Not at all well written to 7: Extremely well written). Finally, after a filler task, participants were exposed to the SACs measurement items (Cronbach’s α=.93).
3.4.3 Results

Social acceptance concerns (SACs) was centered and retransmission was split into dummy variables with X1 (0: brand, 1: close friend, 0: distant friend) and X2 (0: brand, 0: close friend, 1: distant friend) prior to testing the interaction. X1 represents the effect between brand post transmitted and a brand post retransmitted by a close friend while controlling for retransmission by a distant friend. In contrast, X2 represents the effect between brand post transmitted and a brand post retransmitted by a distant friend while controlling for retransmission by a close friend. Results of the regression revealed a significant main effect of SACs on willingness to use the Like ($b$:.5705, $t(237)=4.42$, $p<.000$) and a non-significant effect of X1 ($t<1$) and X2 ($t(237)=-1.63$, $p=.1$). Yet, the results demonstrated a significant interaction between SACs and X1 ($b$: -.4011, $t(237)=-2.24$, $p<.05$) and a significant interaction effect between SACs and X2 ($b$: -.3533, $t(237)=-1.98$, $p<.05$). The slope was positive when the source of transmission was the brand ($b$: .5705, $t(237)=4.41$, $p<.001$, 95% CI: .3161, .8250). However, the slopes were not significant when the brand post was retransmitted by a close ($b$: .1694, $t(237)=1.37$, $p=.17$) or distant friend ($b$: .2172, $t(237)=1.76$, $p=.08$) (see Figure 3). Overall, these results support the hypothesis 5.
Finally, the results of the PROCESS analysis (Model 7, 5000 iterations) (Hayes, 2017) indicated a moderated mediation effect for X1 (index: -.3164, 95% CI: -.5492, -.0942) and for X2 (index: -.2152, 95% CI: -.4363, -.0147). These findings provide support for hypothesis 2b and hypothesis 3.

3.4.4 Conclusion

Study 2 reveals important findings. First, when the brand post is transmitted, SACs do influence willingness to use the Like. However, this effect does not appear when the brand post is retransmitted. Diagnostics in writing quality (i.e. depth of cognitive processing) explains this effect. Precisely, the transmitted brand post was judged as more well-written by individuals high (vs. low) in SACs. No difference in writing quality between high and low SACs was found for retransmitted brand posts. These results support the idea that retransmissionimpairs psychological ownership.
among people high in SACs, which, in turn, leads them to process information more deeply and decrease their willingness to use the Like.

Second, post-hoc tests reveal that consumers at a moderate level of SACs (3.43 and higher) are more willing to use the Like on a brand post transmitted by a brand than retransmitted by a distant friend. However, only consumers at a high level of SACs (4.99) are more willing to use the Like on a brand post transmitted by a brand than retransmitted by a close friend. No difference in writing quality occurs between a brand post retransmitted by a close friend and by a distant friend. As such, the increase in willingness to use the Like when the content is retransmitted by a close friend cannot be explained by differences in content diagnostics. These surprising results are commented in the general discussion. Overall, individuals high in SACs are more willing to use the Like on transmitted than on retransmitted brand posts, but such an effect does not occur when SACs are low.

Although the initial results of the first two studies support the conceptual framework, the findings are correlational. Thus, the direction of causation is not clear. Even though the order of the SACs questions was counterbalanced in Study 1, it is possible that consumers may report high willingness to use the Like because SACs questions primed the use. Conversely, it is possible that once an individual decided to use the Like on a post, s/he justifies this action by thinking about others’ perceptions. To demonstrate that SACs are the psychological drivers, social acceptance is manipulated in Study 3 and Study 4 through temporary acceptance satiation. Also, Studies 3 and 4 use a different brand post than in the first two studies.
3.5 Study 3: The role of self-esteem

3.5.1 Empirical overview

It is suggested that individuals high in self-esteem should be less willing to use the Like on brand posts when social acceptance is satiated than when it is not satiated (neutral condition). Such an effect should not occur for individuals low in self-esteem. However, when a high number of Likes is already given to a brand post, those high in self-esteem should be equally willing to use the Like across the social acceptance or neutral conditions.

3.5.2 Methodology

147 participants on MTurk participated in the study in exchange for a small compensation. 58 percent of the participants were females, 65 percent of the participants were between 25 and 44 years old and their median household income was between $50,000 and $60,000.

The study involved a quasi-experimental design. Social approval satiation was manipulated via a cross-word puzzle (see Carvallo & Pelham, 2006), bandwagon cue was manipulated via the number of Likes already given to the post (high vs. low number of Likes) and self-esteem was measured. In the satiation condition, participants completed a word-search task that contained words related to acceptance (accepted, included, welcomed, adored, supported, wanted). In the neutral condition, participants were asked to complete the same word-search task by finding pleasant words that were unrelated to acceptance (chuckle, smile, peace, amuse, laugh, giggle). To check that the manipulation
was effective, participants were asked to what extent they wanted to connect with friends or peers via text, phone, apps, emails etc. Those in the satiated condition reported wanted to connect less with friends or peers ($M=2.17$) than those in the neutral condition ($M=2.80$, $p<.05$). Bandwagon cue was manipulated by displaying below the post either 12 Likes (low number of Likes) or 1,200 Likes (high number condition) (See appendix D for an example).

After the manipulations, participants were told that they will complete a survey unrelated to the word-search puzzle. As in Study 2, they were asked to imagine browsing their Facebook News Feed and seeing an article. The article described new feature of a thermos (see appendix D). After reading the article, participants were exposed to the same dependent variables as in Study 2: willingness to use the Like, association with the self and depth of cognitive processing via perceived post interestingness. Thermos usage was controlled by asking participants if they generally use a thermos in their everyday life (1: Never, 5: Always). After a filler task, participants indicated their level of self-esteem via the scale developed by Rosenberg (see appendix E) (Cronbach’s $\alpha=.94$). This scale have been used successfully in multiple studies (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003; Ciarrochi, Heaven, & Davies, 2007; Gray-Little, Williams, & Hancock, 1997; Rosenberg, 2015, originally published in 1965).

3.5.3 Results

Results revealed a significant effect of the control variable (thermos use) on willingness to use the Like ($b:.55$, $t(138)=4.15$, $p<.000$), a significant main effect of SACs ($b:-.71$, $t(138)=-2.32$, $p<.05$), a significant effect of bandwagon cue ($b:.68$,
$t(138)=2.18, p<.05$, a non-significant main effect of self-esteem ($t<1$) and a significant interaction of self-esteem (mean-centered) and SACs ($F(1,142)=4.73, p<.05$). However, the three-way interaction was not significant ($p>.1$) (See Table I).

**Table 1 - Results of the three-way interaction in Study 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>coefficient</th>
<th>se</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.600</td>
<td>0.326</td>
<td>7.967</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1.955</td>
<td>3.245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SACs (A)</td>
<td>-0.716</td>
<td>0.308</td>
<td>-2.322</td>
<td><strong>0.022</strong></td>
<td>-1.325</td>
<td>-0.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandwagon (B)</td>
<td>0.680</td>
<td>0.310</td>
<td>2.190</td>
<td><strong>0.030</strong></td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>1.294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction A*B</td>
<td>0.479</td>
<td>0.619</td>
<td>0.774</td>
<td>0.440</td>
<td>-0.744</td>
<td>1.702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem (C)</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>1.006</td>
<td>0.316</td>
<td>-0.119</td>
<td>0.365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction A*C</td>
<td>-0.533</td>
<td>0.245</td>
<td>-2.178</td>
<td><strong>0.031</strong></td>
<td>-1.017</td>
<td>-0.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction B*C</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>0.439</td>
<td>0.661</td>
<td>-0.378</td>
<td>0.594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction A<em>B</em>C</td>
<td>0.545</td>
<td>0.493</td>
<td>1.106</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>-0.429</td>
<td>1.519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (thermos use)</td>
<td>0.557</td>
<td>0.134</td>
<td>4.159</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.292</td>
<td>0.821</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the interaction between SACs and self-esteem, the Johnson-Neyman significance region indicated a difference between the two SACs conditions when self-esteem was at 65 percent of the distribution ($M=5.21$) (see Figure 4). People moderately high in self-esteem and above indicated a higher willingness to use the Like in the neutral than in the satiation condition. However, such an effect was not significant among individuals low in self-esteem. Taken together, Hypothesis 6 is supported but hypothesis 7 is not supported.
Results of the moderated sequential mediation (Process V3, Model 84, 5000 iterations) (Hayes, 2017) revealed a significant indirect effect of SACs on willingness to use the Like through psychological ownership and perceived content interestingness (i.e. depth of cognitive processing) (index: -.1641, se:.0716, 95% CI: -.3102, -.0259). Precisely, the indirect effect was significant at both the mean level (effect: -.3087, se:.1272, 95% CI: -.5791, -.0921) and high self-esteem (+1SD) (effect: -.4399, se:.1614, 95% CI: -.7786, -.1540). However, the indirect effect was not significant for a low level of self-esteem (-1SD) (95% CI: -.3419, .1492). Furthermore, the direct effect became non-significant (95% CI: -.6158, .2466) which indicated a full sequential mediation.
When analyzing each path separately, the indirect effect holds when psychological ownership serves alone as a mediator (effect: -.1798, se:.0926, 95% CI: -.3803, -.0235) but does not hold when depth of cognitive processing is the only mediator in the model (95% CI: -.3313, .0241). It indicates that psychological ownership is the variable that do trigger a decrease in cognitive processing.

3.5.4 Conclusion

Study 3 shows that once social acceptance is satiated, willingness to use the like decreases. Furthermore, such an effect is moderated by self-esteem. When the need for social acceptance is satiated, people high in self-esteem reduce their willingness to use the Like. However, for those low in self-esteem, no difference between the two conditions are found. Overall, the findings suggest that the use of the Like serves as a way to positively present the self to others. Study 4 tests the second internal boundary condition: mood.

3.6 Study 4: The role of mood

3.6.1 Empirical overview

Study 4 examines the role of mood in the relationship between social acceptance and willingness to use the Like. When social approval is satiated, negative mood should decrease willingness to use the Like. However, when not satiated, those in a negative mood should try to present a positive mindset. Individuals in a positive mood should be
equally willing to use the Like on brand posts regardless of the social acceptance condition. A positive mood should trigger heuristics and decrease depth of cognitive processing regardless psychological ownership.

3.6.2 Methodology

A total of 170 consumers via MTurk participated in the study in exchange of a small compensation. 61 percent were females, 65 percent were between 18 and 44 years old and 53 percent had a household income of $50,000 or higher.

The study involved a 2x2 experimental between-subjects design with social acceptance manipulated (satiated vs. neutral) and mood manipulated (positive vs. negative). Participants were told that they had to perform several unrelated tasks. Social approval satiation was manipulated as in Study 3. Those in the satiated condition wanted to connect less with friends or peers ($M=2.42$, $SD=1.78$) than those in the neutral condition ($M=2.95$, $SD=2.07$, $p=.07$). Then, participants were randomly assigned to either a positive or negative mood condition. Participants in the positive (negative) condition were told the following: “Describe the happiest (unhappiest) day of your life. Try to recall it as vividly as possible to relive the feelings you experienced at that time.” (Labroo & Patrick, 2008; Schwarz & Clore, 1983). Then, they were exposed to the following manipulation check: “How did writing about this situation make you feel” (1: very unhappy to 7: very happy). Those in the positive mood condition reported significantly higher happiness ($M=6.48$, $SD=.86$) than those in the negative mood condition ($M=1.94$, $SD=1.21$).
After the mood manipulation, participants performed a third unrelated task about social media. The article encountered was the same as in Study 3 except that Likes of other participants were not displayed. Willingness to use the Like, psychological ownership, perceived content interestingness (i.e. depth of cognitive processing) and thermos use (see study 3) were measured followed by the demographic questions. At the end of the survey, participants guessed the purpose of the Study. Three participants had doubts regarding the links between the tasks and were thus excluded from the analysis.

3.6.3 Results

Results revealed a significant effect of the control variable (thermos use) \((F(1,162)=42.37, p<.000)\) an non-significant main effect of social acceptance satiation \(p=.13\), an non-significant main effect of mood \(p=.17\) and a significant interaction effect \((F(1,162)=3.98, p<.05)\). As expected, no difference in willingness to use the Like was found in the neutral condition \((M_{positive} = 4.17, SD = 2.18; M_{negative} = 4.1), SD = 2.28, p = .67)\). However, in the satiation condition, those in a negative mood indicated a lower willingness to use the Like \((M=2.98, SD=2.10)\) than those in the positive mood condition \((M=4.21, SD=1.88, F(1,162)=5.69, p=.02)\) (See Figure 5). The results support hypothesis 8.

As expected, when perceived interestingness was the only mediator in the model, the index of moderated mediation was significant \((index:.5264, se:.2504, 95\% CI:.0817,1.0509)\). Precisely, the indirect effect was significant in the negative mood, \((effect:-.3618, se:.2029, 95\% CI:-.7857, -.0065)\) but not in the positive mood condition \((95\% CI: -.1084,4.466)\). The results support hypothesis 9.
3.6.4 Conclusion

Mood alters the effect of SACs on willingness to use the Like. In the satiation condition, positive mood elicited a higher willingness to use the Like across both social acceptance conditions. This effect occurred because positive mood decreases depth of cognitive processing. Interestingness of the brand post was high despite that psychological ownership was not activated. Furthermore, individuals in a negative mood in the neutral condition did respond positively to the use of the Like, confirming that when presenting the self to others, individuals are motivated to demonstrate positive emotions (Baumeister, 1982; Clark et al., 1996; Goffman, 1959; Schlenker & Pontari, 2000; Vohs et al., 2005). Overall, these findings are consistent with hypotheses 8 and 9.
Chapter 4. GENERAL DISCUSSION

The first two studies support the idea that SACs as individual differences affect the use of the Like on brand posts. By knowing that others can see their Likes, individuals high in SACs develop a feeling of psychological ownership toward brand posts which reduce their depth of cognitive processing when analyzing posts and increase their willing to use the Like. Second, when the same public posts are retransmitted by a friend, psychological ownership is impaired which increases depth of cognitive processing and reduces the willingness to use the Like. The first two studies suggest that the external environment does impact the relationship between social acceptance concerns and the use of the Like and psychological ownership explains this relationship.

Study 3 and Study 4 employed a manipulation of social acceptance. The findings from Study 3 demonstrate that when social acceptance is satiated, willingness to use the Like decreases. They also reveal that self-esteem impacts the use of the Like such that in an acceptance satiation (vs. neutral) condition, those high in self-esteem reduce their use the Like. However, such an effect did not occur for those low in self-esteem. The effect of the bandwagon cue did not impact these results despite its significant main effect.

Finally, Study 4 shows that a positive mood can reverse the effect of social acceptance satiation on willingness to use the Like. A positive mood increases the use of the Like despite a lack of psychological ownership. Positive mood triggers heuristics which reduce cognitive processing when evaluating brand posts. Conversely, those in a negative mood use the Like when social approval is not satiated, suggesting that when self-presentation is salient, those in a negative mood will present the self in a positive
light. Taken together, these four studies offer important implications for researchers, consumers and practitioners.

4.1 Theoretical implications

Social acceptance is a rich and complex variable. While this topic has been studied in applied psychology (Joseph Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch, 1972; S. E. Berger et al., 1977; Millham & Kellogg, 1980), it has been largely under-investigated in consumer behavior research (for a notable exception see Chen, 2017). This is surprising given that social acceptance is directly linked to implicit social influence, a major subject in consumer behavior research (Dahl, 2013).

This dissertation makes several key contributions to the literature. First, it provides an explanation for why some consumers use the Like on brand posts despite no apparent interest for the brands (see John et al., 2016; Mochon et al., 2016). The study findings demonstrate that social acceptance concerns (SACs) influence the use of the Like. To look good online, those concerned about social acceptance are more willing to diversify their personalities and to use the Like on different brand posts. In this regard, brand posts serve as means to get socially accepted.

Second, this work establishes a link between variety-seeking and cognitive processing. While the literature has focused on antecedents of variety seeking in consumption choices (i.e. such as self-presentation concerns (Ratner & Kahn, 2002), making choices for others (Choi et al., 2006) or increasing one socioeconomic status
(Yoon & Kim, 2017)) it has not investigated how the chosen products (or information) are further evaluated by the consumer. This dissertation demonstrates that individuals who seek to diversify their personalities to get socially accepted feel a higher psychological ownership toward brand posts they encounter. This state of ownership decreases subsequent involvement in cognitive processing which reduces chances of a durable change in attitudes toward brands encountered (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Petty et al., 1983),

Third, this dissertation contributes to the information retransmission literature. Research on transmission and retransmission in consumer behavior has been largely omitted, with some notable exceptions (Angelis et al., 2012; Buechel & Berger, 2018; Chen & Berger, 2016). Chen and Berger (2016) found that content acquisition affects information processing and sharing behaviors. They suggest that self-esteem explains why individuals who find articles are certain about those articles and are more willing to share them. They demonstrated that when self-esteem increases, certainty increases, which in turn results in similar levels of willingness to share an interesting and a less interesting article. However, the study findings reveal that when social acceptance is satiated, people high in self-esteem decrease their willingness to share things about themselves with others despite that the post is transmitted. Those findings extend the ones of Chen and Berger (2016) by demonstrating that social acceptance concerns predict the effect of content acquisition on willingness to share in a non-directed way.

Fourth, this work contributes to the effect of mood in social network sites. While the use of social media tends to increase mood disorders (Andreassen et al., 2012; Blaszczynski, 2006; Diener et al., 1999, p. 277), the study findings suggest that when
social acceptance is salient, both negative and positive mood increase activities in social media. A change in mood may therefore not only be predicted by social media activities, but mood itself can contribute to the use of social network sites. Future research should examine if the use of the Like, considered as a positive signal, decreases subsequent negative moods and if this mechanism can explain social media addiction. For example, when feeling bad, one can go online and engage in the use of the Like. This activity can counter negative feelings and can be repeated each time negative thoughts appear.

Finally, most research on consumer behavior focused on the motives in engaging in social network sites (Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013; De Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012; Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014) and on their social aspects (Blumler & Katz, 1974; Stafford, Stafford, & Schkade, 2004) without reaching a consensus on whether those sites encourage interpersonal communication. On one hand, some research demonstrates that social network sites encourage social connections and communication (Buechel & Berger, 2018; Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007) while others suggest that they reduce personal interactions (Kraut et al., 1998; Tonioni et al., 2012). Buechel and Berger (2018) have recently found that socially apprehensive individuals tend to share messages with others in a non-targeted way (via their News Feed) which lead them to think that the diverse tools offered on social network sites encourage self-expression and communication. The present findings suggest that some tools, as the Like, promote self-expression, but not necessarily communication. Compared to direct sharing, the Like may or may not be seen by other users and may not necessarily mean “sharing” things with others. The different ways to interpret a Like create an ambiguity when trying to
understand one’s intentions. This ambiguity, in turn, may refrain communication between users despite the Like used to self-express.

Overall, this dissertation provides strong evidence that social network sites are considered as opportunities to present the self. The ambiguity of what individuals communicate through a Like may provide a safer way to share things with others than a more direct form of sharing. While the idea of safeness in the use of the Like should be tested in future research, this could support the general notion that social media can be seen as a safe environment for self-expression (Forest & Wood, 2012; Steinfield, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008).

4.2 Societal implications

The study findings can help social network sites end-users in two ways. First, it provides evidence that social acceptance concerns lead to higher use of the Like. While the need to be accepted is an inherent human need, it is important to understand how such needs trigger social media dependency and addiction (Andreassen et al., 2012). For example, a high use of the Like can also be related to a high use of social network sites.

Second, Likes tell a lot about who we are, and the findings of this research are probably known by social network sites companies. Facebook uses the Like button to place cookies on people’s computers and track their preferences (Roosendaal, 2010). Recently, Likes have been even used to assess personality traits. For instance, Facebook Likes can accurately predict a range of highly sensitive personal attributes including:
sexual orientation, ethnicity, personality traits, happiness, use of addictive substances etc. (Kosinski, Stillwell, & Graepel, 2013). Therefore, regardless of how much one’s use the Like or what are the content of the posts that get a Like, social media companies find ways to understand our needs and personalities. As such, engaging in social media activities without understanding how consumers data are used may lead individuals to share much more than what intended. Ultimately, by understanding how self-expression is analyzed by those companies, this dissertation brings awareness on the benefits and drawbacks of engaging in social media activities.

4.3 Managerial implications

Brand managers also benefit from this research. First, the findings demonstrate that considering all Likes as equal when evaluating brand performances can be misleading. Focusing on understanding the relationship between personality traits and the use of the Like should be of a great help. While marketing managers do not have direct access to personality traits, other proxies, such as the number of friends one has on social network sites, could be helpful (see pilot study 1). When accessible, each Like could be weighted based on this proxy and used to assess performance. Second, it seems important to note that only high-quality content will attract Likes of people who process information more systematically. Third, because this dissertation helps consumers understand better how their individual differences are tracked online, it is recommended to companies to develop ethical guidelines when collecting data from consumers. Privacy breaches make individuals less confident in social network sites and in online purchasing.
(Culnan & Bies, 2003; Miyazaki & Fernandez, 2001). A focus on transparency when analyzing “Likes” could, over the long run, help companies develop a more trustful relationship with their customers.

Finally, managers should take into consideration is the use of brands as momentary expression of identity. While it is known that expression of the self through products provides positive outcomes for brands (Belk, 1988; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Simonson & Nowlis, 2000), a momentary expression of identity through brand posts does not necessarily change consumers’ attitudes. However, the strength of consumers’ emotional attachment to brands predicts commitment and loyalty (Thomson, MacInnis, & Whan Park, 2005). If marketing managers want to convert the Likes into (repeated) purchases, they should focus on developing emotional attachment.

4.4 Limitations

As with any other research, this work comes with several limitations. First, Studies 3 and 4 used a newly developed manipulation check question to assess social acceptance satiation. The original study where the manipulation was taken from did not use a manipulation check to probe participants’ acceptance levels (see Carvallo & Pelham, 2006). Researchers stated that the nature of the priming made it “difficult to include manipulation checks without affecting participants responses to the dependent variable” (p.103). In this work, the developed manipulation check question reached significance in Study 3. However, the difference in means between the control and the
The second limitation is the use of a continuous measure to assess one’s willingness to use the Like. In reality, individuals either click or not on the Like button, making the choice binary in nature. The use of a continuous measure as an indicator of the use of the Like undermines the external validity of this research. The use of this continuous measure was done so because of there are plenty of gratifying motives that lead an individual to use the Like on a brand post (see Ozanne et al., 2017). Consequently, a binary choice would have reduced the possibility to show the magnitude of the effect of social acceptance concerns on the use of the Like. Even when controlling for the use of thermos (Studies 3 and 4), the standard deviations of the dependent variable were high. It is possible that with multiple other control variables, the use of a binary dependent variable would have led to significant results.

Finally, this dissertation focused on a single social network site, Facebook. While this is the original platform for Likes, other network sites, such as LinkedIn, also use the Like. Yet, LinkedIn is a professional network, and the appearance of brand posts on this network seemed less realistic than on Facebook. One could argue that the “heart” on Twitter or Instagram has the same meaning as the Like on Facebook. However, this idea has not been empirically tested. It would be interesting to replicate this research with the heart button or with the other positive reactions that Facebook proposes (e.g. happy, love).
4.5 Future research

Overall, this work offers pathways to multiple future research. First, the results on retransmission demonstrate that there is no difference in writing quality (cognitive processing involvement) between a brand post retransmitted by a close friend and by a distant friend despite a significant difference in willingness to use the Like. The literature on source-similarity shows that people are motivated to connect with others they like (Baumeister & Leary, 1995b; Lee & Robbins, 1995). As such, individuals may be more inclined to connect via Likes with close friend regardless of the quality of the post shared. Future work should investigate the effect of source-similarity on willingness to use the Like for retransmitted posts.

Second, a negative mood increases the use of the Like. This has important implications for emotional contagion. Because emotional states can be transmitted through social networks (Coviello et al., 2014; Kramer, Guillory, & Hancock, 2014), it is possible that positive mood is over-represented on social media and doesn’t reflect people's actual feelings. Future work should investigate this effect. Furthermore, memories, friendship anniversary etc. that Facebook displays to users can enhance positive feelings and keep individuals engaged in the network.

Third, while this dissertation focused on the role of adapting one’s behavior to please the audience, self-presentation can also be used to construct the self (Baumeister, 1982). Individuals tend to infer personal qualities from the roles they enact and other people's reactions to them. As such, pleasing an audience may not only lead to use the Like more (Belk, 1988; Fournier, 1998) but can also lead to define the self. Furthermore,
inferring personal qualities from reactions of the audience also leads to internalize behaviors reflecting such qualities (Jackson & Hogg, 2010). As such, it would be interesting to assess if over time individuals who tend to use the Like on public posts to get socially accepted define themselves as individuals genuinely interested by a variety of brand posts.

This last argument is also linked to the notion of self-deception. This work suggests that the opportunity to present the self via seeking variety in choices is sufficient to induce a state of psychological ownership. However, a question that remains is whether individuals who want to get accepted believe that brand posts that get their Likes represent who they are. If they are convinced that such posts represent well themselves, then variety seeking to gain acceptance can lead to some form of self-deception. It is known that to convince others, one needs to be convinced too (Festinger & Carlsmith 1959). By avoiding recognizing some “critical information”, people deceive themselves in the same way that they deceive others (Von Hippel & Trivers, 2011). However, reinforcing self-affirmation successfully reduces self-deceptive processes (Steele & Liu 1983, Sherman & Cohen 2006; Steele 1988). Self-affirmation can focus on self-centered values (e.g., power, status) on transcending values (e.g., compassion, service to others) or on sources of integrity (e.g. being approved or loved) (Burson et al. 2012, Schimel et al. 2004). It would be interesting to see if the present results can also be explained by self-deception such that social acceptance satiation could have triggered self-affirmation and reduces self-deceptive processes.

Fifth, implicit self-theories demonstrate that individuals view their personal qualities as either malleable or fixed (Dweck & Molden, 2000; Robins & Pals, 2002).
Individuals who view their personal qualities as malleable, which they can improve through their own efforts endorse an incremental theory. In contrast, individuals who endorse an entity theory believe that their personal qualities are fixed. As such, if one relies on the incremental theory, s/he may believe that the use of the Like on brand posts will improve some personal qualities (i.e. being an open-minded and interesting individuals) whereas an entity theorist may believe that the use of the Like will not change anything about his/her qualities. This effect could moderate the relationship between social approval concerns and willingness to use the Like such that entity theorists could refrain from Liking brand posts.
Chapter 5. CONCLUSION

Despite that social media tools (share, Like, comment) can positively influence word of mouth (De Vries et al., 2012), academic research on consumers’ use of the Like is scant. Studying the psychological drivers of the use of the Like is thus warranted. This work sheds light on the paradox of using the Like on a brand post while not being deeply interested by the brand. This non-verbal behavior that is used online for self-presentation parallels with offline techniques. While we clap for a variety of reasons (Vialaret, 2006; Victoroff, 1955), we also use the Like for a variety of reasons. For example, we can clap because others clap. We can clap to be notified. We can clap to express support. Online, we don’t clap, we use the Like.

In social media, we are both actors and spectators. And as much as we evaluate others by the quantity of Likes they receive, we evaluate ourselves in a similar way. Yet, the Like may not be directed toward the poster or the post content. As such, how can we modify the impact that Likes from others has on us?

Social rewards have been shown to increase the amount of dopamine in our brain (Krach, Paulus, Bodden, & Kircher, 2010). The Likes, just as claps, are direct rewards. When a reward is felt, it enables behaviors leading to this reward to become a habit. But if all the Likes do not mean the same thing, how do we train our brain to differentiate valuable rewards from less valuable ones? One solution may be to reconceptualize how we define our well-being online. For example, we could begin to give a qualitative value to each Like. This could be based on who gives a Like, how this person knows us or what is the quality of our offline relationship. Similarly, we could reflect on whether the Likes
that we give really represent an intention that is other-directed is a way to present the self. Nowadays, Shakespeare would probably wonder, in front of his computer, whether to use the Like or not.
Appendix A : Social Acceptance Concerns (SACs) scale

- On social network sites, to what extent are you concerned about being socially accepted by others when deciding whether to use the Like (thumbs-up) on a post? (1: Not at all concerned to 7: Very concerned)

- To what extent do you care about others' acceptance of you when deciding whether to use the Like (thumbs-up) on a post? (1: Do not care at all to 7: Care a lot)

- To what extent are you motivated to be socially accepted by others on Facebook? (1: Not at all to 7: Very)
Appendix B: Pilot study 3 stimuli

Less interesting article

Weekly News

Starbucks Diet: Woman Claims She Lost 85 Lbs. by Only Eating at the Coffee Chain

Christine Hall, 66, claims to have lost 85 pounds by eating all of her meals at her local Starbucks, MSNBC reported. Starbucks’ prepackaged foods -- located right underneath those sugary cakes and buttery croissants -- make up her breakfast, lunch and dinner, and offer "really healthy choices," Hall explained to a reporter. And because nutritional information is provided on each item, she can keep track of her caloric intake.

More interesting article

Weekly News

Scientists Develop a Spray-on Battery

Scientists at Rice University in Houston, Texas have developed a spray paint that can store and deliver electrical power. This spray-on battery breaks down the elements of a traditional battery and incorporates them into a liquid that can be spray painted in layers onto almost any surface. This means that most objects can be turned into an electrical storing device, such as a ceramic mug.
Appendix C: Studies 1 & 2 stimuli

Study 1

**Material & Co**

Scientists Develop a Spray-on Battery commercialized by Material & Co

Scientists at Rice University in Houston, Texas have developed a spray paint that can store and deliver electrical power. This spray-on battery breaks down the elements of a traditional battery and incorporates them into a liquid that can be spray painted in layers onto almost any surface. This means that most objects can be turned into an electrical storing device, such as a ceramic mug.

Study 2 (example close friend- Grammatical issues)

[Your close friend] shared a link.

**Material & Co**

Scientists Develop a Spray-on Battery commercialized by Material & Co

Scientists at Rice University in Houston, Texas have developed a spray paint that can store and deliver electrical power. This spray-on battery breaks down the elements of a traditional battery and incorporates them into a liquid that can be spray painted in layers onto almost any surface. This means that most objects can be turned into an electrical storing device, such as a ceramic mug.
Appendix D: Studies 3 & 4 stimuli

Stimuli of Study 3 (i.e. low number of Likes)

Select your temperature!
This thermos made from stainless steel holds a whopping 61 ounces of your favorite hot beverage. It keeps its promise of maintaining temperature for up to 24 hours at the degrees that you prefer. All you have to do is set your desired temperature using a dial on the thermos.

Stimuli of Study 4

Select your temperature!
This thermos made from stainless steel holds a whopping 61 ounces of your favorite hot beverage. It keeps its promise of maintaining temperature for up to 24 hours at the degrees that you prefer. All you have to do is set your desired temperature using a dial on the thermos.
Appendix E: Self-esteem scale

Instructions
Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement (1: strongly disagree to 7: strongly agree).

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
2. At times I think I am no good at all.
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
6. I certainly feel useless at times.
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Scoring:
Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 are reverse scored.
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Roosendaal, A. (2010). Facebook tracks and traces everyone: Like this!


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Her research focuses on consumer psychology in social media. In particular, she examines how social media tools are used to communicate online. Her work aspires to highlight the psychological drivers that push the use of social network sites (SNSs). By doing so, her goal is to draw the benefits and the drawbacks of using SNSs. Ultimately, consumers and companies will benefit from Marie’s work by developing knowledge that would help them create a healthy and trustful consumer-brand relationship online.