

**Intended purchase decisions of Cause-related Marketing products**  
**– an application of the Theory of Reasoned Action**

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**Abstract**

Studies as well as ongoing discussions in politics and media indicate that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has gained incremental importance in the market place in recent years. One reason is the increasing consumer interest in socially responsible as well as eco-friendly produced goods. Firms can communicate their CSR engagement via the use of Cause-related Marketing (CrM). Although there exist several studies explaining drivers for ethical consumption, very little is published regarding the factors that influence consumers' purchase behavior for CrM products.

Based on the Theory of Reasoned Action, which has been used to explain consumers' choice for e.g. Fair Trade products, we developed a structural model outlining determinants of consumers' purchase decisions with regard to goods promoted in CrM campaigns. This model is tested using the example of the first CrM campaign of an organic dairy company in Germany in 2010. During the time of the promotion 306 face-to-face interviews were conducted at the point of sale in four organic supermarkets in Germany.

Seven determinants which influence consumers' purchase behavior either in a direct or indirect way, or both, have been tested in the model, namely: 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product', 'subjective norm', 'cause-brand fit', 'prior knowledge', 'extrinsic motivation', 'attitude towards the CrM product', 'relevance or involvement'. Moreover, it could be demonstrated that five of seven identified determinants significantly influence consumers' intended purchase behavior: The factors 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product' as well as 'subjective norm' affect consumers' intended purchase behavior in a direct way; the factors 'cause-brand fit', 'prior knowledge' and 'extrinsic motivation' show an indirect influence. To sum up, we are able to show that the factors derived from previous research on ethical consumption are transferable to the perception of CrM campaigns in Germany.

**Keywords:** Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Cause-related Marketing (CrM), Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Structural Equation Modeling (SEM),

## 1. Introduction

Ethical consumerism is part of an evolving new lifestyle of health and sustainability (Barth-Gillhaus, 2008). It implies that consumers consider in their decision making process not only traditional product characteristics such as taste, price and convenience but also one or several ethical issues related to the production or trading of the goods (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005; Harrison et al., 2005). According to Cowe and Williams (2001) ethical issues cover a wide range of concerns such as the consideration of fair trading conditions, labor standards throughout the supply chain, environmental protection and animal welfare. Due to the growing demand for goods produced in accordance to ethical and ecological standards (Barth-Gillhaus, 2008), companies face new opportunities but also new challenges in marketing (Nicholls, 2002; Quazi, 2002). Cause-related Marketing (CrM) is one answer of companies to meet consumers new requests. Varadarajan and Menon (1988) define CrM as "... the process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterized by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated cause when customers engage in revenue-providing exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual objectives." The aim of CrM is to link the economic objectives of a company with its social and ecological responsibility (Kotler and Lee, 2005).

CrM has its origin in the U.S. and is rooted in the long tradition of american philanthropy (Oloko, 2008) and its philosophy of 'giving back to the commons' (Berglind and Nakata, 2005). The pioneer of CrM mentioned in literature is the American Express campaign aimed to raise funds to restore the Statue of Liberty in 1983 (Völckner et al., 2009). Especially Anglo-Saxon countries have made extensive use of CrM as a marketing tool (Oloko, 2008). Within the last 25 years CrM evolved a widely popular form of charitable commitment (Berglind and Nakata, 2005). In Germany CrM has gained increasing attention only in the last decade (Blumberg and Conrad, 2006; Oloko, 2008).

CrM campaigns provide the potential for a triple win situation (Holmes and Kilbane, 1993). Companies profit from CrM campaigns if the marketing strategy increases their reputation, thereby strengthening customer loyalty and thus sales. CrM campaigns, in addition, might raise public awareness for the involved non-profit organization (NPO) and thus increase payments to the NPO not only via the campaign but also directly via donations to the NPO. Finally, consumers may benefit if the purchase of a CrM product and thus the support of a good cause evokes positive feelings (warm glow) in consumers. To ensure the success of a CrM campaign four basic elements have to be considered: relevance, commitment, integrity and credibility of a campaign (Blumberg and Conrad, 2006). According to Kienzle and Rennhak (2009) the credibility of a campaign critically depends on its duration, its transparency, as well as the fit between the company or the brand, and the cause. Also Lafferty et al. (2004) stress that there has to be a substantive relationship between the cause and at least one dominant product brand attribute to achieve success. Cause-fit alone, however, is not enough. In addition, the so-called partner fit is considered to be an important success factors (Meffert and Holzberg, 2008).

Current studies for Germany primarily focus on general issues of CrM, such as consumers' knowledge of CrM, general opinions towards CrM, the donation amount requested by consumers or consumers' evaluation of companies that make use of CrM (Huber et al., 2008). There also exist a number of studies on green consumerism (e.g. Shepherd et al., 2005; Harper and Makatouni, 2002), but contributions analyzing ethical consumption in the context

of CrM are so far missing (Solomon et al., 2001). Four recent studies identify critical success factors for CrM (Fries 2011; Langen et al. 2010; Langen 2012; Roos 2012). Our study wants to add to this literature by analyzing the factors influencing consumers' purchase behavior for CrM products. In the following section the theoretical model is presented and the research hypotheses are derived. The methodology applied is introduced in section three while the results are presented in section 4. This is followed by a discussion of the results and suggestions for future research (section 5).

## 2. Theoretical model and development of hypotheses

Well known models to predict and understand human behavior are the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) of Ajzen and Fishbein (1980); an extension of the TRA. According to the TRA, a person's actual behavior is determined by its behavioral intention. This intention in turn is guided by the attitude towards the behavior and the subjective norm. Attitude towards the behavior can be considered as "the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question" (Ajzen, 1991) while subjective norm "refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behavior" (Ajzen, 1991). The link between the attitude of an individual to perform a certain action and the intention of actually doing it has been confirmed repeatedly in the literature (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Given these considerations, we derive the following first hypothesis:

**H1.** The more positive the 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product', the greater is the 'purchase intention'.

According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) the 'subjective norm' has an impact on the 'purchase intention' too. 'Subjective norm' consists of two components: the normative beliefs (what a person thinks (s)he should or should not do and the motivation to comply (how important it is for an individual to do what is expected of her/him) (Heimbach, 2001). This means, the individuals' intention with respect to an action is the greater, the higher her/his belief that (s)he should perform the behavior and the more important it is for the person to comply to the norms (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

Thus, our second hypothesis is according to previous research (Huber et al., 2008):

**H2.** The stronger the 'subjective norm', the greater is the CrM 'purchase intention'.

Especially from a sociological perspective, the social component gets too little attention in the TPB. Social influences are only included in the model by the 'subjective norm' which influences the purchase intention. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, social recognition is considered to be a central human need. Therefore many individuals purchase products to achieve goals relating to their moral concept (Solomon et al., 2001).

Thus an extension of the model by considering that social determinants influence 'attitude towards the behavior' leads to the following third hypothesis:

**H3.** The stronger the 'subjective norm', the more positive is the 'attitude towards CrM product'.

Different views and empirical findings exist in the literature regarding the potential influence of external variables such as socio-demographics (e.g. age, gender), attitudes to the object (e.g. attitudes towards people, institutions, politics) or personality traits (e.g. introversion, extroversion, neuroticism) on the link between attitudes and behavior. According to Ajzen

and Fishbein (1980) those variables may have an effect on the relative importance of attitudinal and normative beliefs, but if so this influence is just of indirect nature. Fazio (1990), in contrast, considers the variable 'attitude towards the objective' to be of direct relevance. He defines this variable as "an association in memory between a given object on one's evaluation of that object" (Fazio, 1990, p. 81) and sees that attitudes determine behavior by influencing the perception of the situation. Also according to Eagly and Chaiken (2007) it is the attitude towards the object which is at the very beginning of the attitude-behavior relationship. Attitudes do not exist until an individual, consciously or not, is confronted for the first time with the object and reacts to it either in an explicit or an implicit manner. The initial reaction to the object leaves an embedded attitude in the individuals' memory towards the object. Further contact with this object or similar objects, will be influenced by this initial response. While according to Fazio (1990) the attitude towards the object can also directly affect the purchase intention, Eagly and Chaiken (2007) assume that it only has an impact on the attitude towards the behavior. Therefore we propose the following fourth and fifth hypotheses:

**H4.** The more positive the 'attitude towards the CrM product', the more positive is the 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'

**H5.** The more positive the 'attitude towards the CrM product', the higher is the 'purchase intention'.

In addition, recent research has shown that the perceived fit between the CrM product on the one hand and the NPO on the other hand influences the attitude towards the purchase as well as the purchase intention (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Lafferty et al., 2004; Simmons and Becker-Olsen, 2006). According to Becker-Olsen et al. (2006, p. 4) based on Varadajan and Menon (1988) fit in the context of marketing can be defined as '...the perceived link between a cause and the firm's product line, brand image, position, and/or target market'. If there exists a fit between the brand and the cause, consumers are more likely to respond favorably (Becker-Olsen et al. 2006; Hamlin and Wilson, 2002; Lafferty et al. 2004; Samu and Wymer, 2009), while in the case that consumers perceive the partners in a CrM campaign not to be well-matched, this leads to dissonance and thus might reduce consumers' purchase intention (Becker-Olsen and Hill, 2006).

Thus, the success of a CrM campaign seems to be directly influenced by the fit between the brand and the cause (Pracejus and Olsen, 2002) which leads to the following hypotheses:

**H6.** The better the 'cause-brand fit', the more positive is the 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'.

**H7.** The better the 'cause-brand fit', the higher is the 'purchase intention'.

Ringer et al. (2005) regard the fit as a multidimensional construct consisting of three different dimensions of congruence: cognitive, emotional and behavioral congruity. According to their proposed model, the attitudes towards the CrM campaign and the participating partner may be influenced by cognitive, emotional and behavioral congruity, in isolation or in conjunction with other variables, ultimately having a positive or negative impact on purchase intention (Ringer et al., 2005). The perceived cognitive congruity is generally conditioned by the prior knowledge with respect to the product/brand and the cooperating partners (Ringer et al. 2005). Previous research has shown that an increased familiarity with the products or the brands results in altered effects in information processing and brand evaluation (Alba and Hutchinson 1987; Fazio et al., 1989; Ringer et al., 2005).

Additionally, according to Zdravkovic et al. (2010) an increased familiarity with the social purpose raises the perceived fit and the positive attitude towards the brand. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis number eight:

**H8.** The higher the 'prior knowledge' with the NPO, the more positive is the 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM-product'.

Also the emotional congruity is considered to be important. Consumers who consider a cause to be of personal relevance are more involved and thus more likely influenced in their behaviour (Ringer et al., 2005). This leads to hypothesis 9:

**H9.** The higher the 'relevance or involvement' of the consumer, the more positive is the 'attitude towards the purchase'.

Finally, the behavioral congruity is of relevance. It is based on the Attribution Theory of Heider (Ringer et al., 2005). The Attribution Theory assumes that people draw causal conclusions from their own behavior or experiences and the behavior and experiences of others (Davis, 1994). Thus, consumers' aim is to obtain a cognitive understanding of why something happens. This reflects the importance people attach to their own behavior and the behavior of others in terms of the reasons underlying this behavior (Kelley and Michela, 1980). In the context of CrM firms' motivation to initiate a CrM promotion is very important for consumers (Webb and Mohr, 1998). If consumers believe that altruistic motives are the drivers for firms' engagement this likely will have a positive effect on their attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product while the opposite holds in the case of primarily egoistic motives (Ringer et al., 2005). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is considered:

**H10.** The higher the assumed 'extrinsic motivation' of a company, the more negative is the 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'.

### **3. Methodology - Structural equation modeling**

Structural equation modeling was used to test the conceptual model introduced previously. First, however, we used confirmatory factor analysis to assess the quality of the measurement model (Eichhorn and Friedrich, 2007) which consists of 7 latent variables and 19 indicators. Construct reliability was assessed by Cronbach's alpha while construct validity was evaluated using factor analysis. To test the causal relations among the latent variables of the structural equation model maximum-likelihood estimation (MLE) was used. An evaluation of the significance of the estimated parameters in the structural equations (Hair et al., 1998) was based on the reliability coefficients of each equation and the associated correlation matrix among the constructs (Backhaus et al., 2011). Finally, the goodness-of-fit of the model was evaluated.<sup>1</sup>

### **4. Empirical study in organic stores**

The data was collected in four different organic supermarkets in Cologne/Bonn in June and July 2010 based on face to face interviews using a standardized questionnaire. All participants received a yoghurt as incentive for their participation in this survey and additionally had the opportunity to take part in a prize draw to win a 15 Euro shopping voucher of the respective organic super market. People buying less than one yogurt every two weeks were excluded from the survey as in this study the focus of the analysis was a CrM promoted yoghurt launched by an organic dairy company in spring 2010. The CrM campaign was linked to the soccer world cup in summer 2010 and ended in autumn 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> The evaluation of the goodness of fit was based on the following indices: chi-square normalized by degrees of freedom ( $\chi^2/df$ ) should be less than 2.5 (Weiber and Mühlhaus, 2010), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI), normed fit index (NFI) should all exceed 0.9 and root-mean-square-error of approximation (RMSEA) should be less than 0.1 (Scott, 1994).

The questionnaire consisted of 72 questions grouped in five sections. The first two parts requested information regarding participants' purchase and consumption habits in general and with respect to yoghurt, their donation habits, their knowledge of CrM campaigns as well as their attitudes towards CrM campaigns and CrM products. In part 3 of the questionnaire participants were asked about their social orientation and their attitudes towards the organic dairy company that had launched the CrM yoghurt. In the fourth part, the CrM product and the respective campaign was introduced and then questions posed regarding participants' attitudes towards the presented CrM campaign, the NPO, the cause and the organic dairy company. Finally, respondents were asked to provide information with respect to their socio-demographics.

#### 4. Results - determinants influencing consumers' purchase behavior

The sample comprises 306 respondents. Table 1 describes participants' socioeconomic characteristics and reveals that the sample is not representative for the German population. As the survey took place in an organic super-market this was expected. Thus, it is not surprising that the sample is biased towards male and highly educated respondents with an above-average net income per month.

**Table 1: Sample characteristics (n = 306)**

Characteristic	% of the sample	Characteristic	% of the sample
<i>Gender</i> (n = 287)		<i>Age</i> (n=297)	
Female	26.1	15-25 years	7.4
Male	73.9	25-45 years	44.8
		45-65 years	40.4
		Older than 64 years	7.7
<i>Income in €</i> (n = 278)		<i>Education</i> (n=302)	
Lower than 900	17.7	Without any graduation	0.3
900 to 1499	15.5	Low school education	1.7
1500 to 1999	16.2	Medium school education	15.6
2000 to 2599	15.8	University entrance	32.1
2600 to 3599	17.3	University degree	45.7
3600 to 4999	12.2	Holding a doctorate	4.6
Greater than 5000	5.4		

Source: own calculations.

Table 2 provides the results of the factor analysis for the operationalization of the constructs. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (0.590) and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Chi-Square=626.240,  $p < 0.01$ ) indicate further factor analysis as appropriate. Seven factors were extracted explaining 64.88 % of the variance. Table 2 show Anti-Image-correlations, eigen values (range of loadings), Cronbach's alpha, KMO, and extracted variance of the constructs. Except for one construct all items loadings are above the suggested values (Weiber and Mühlhaus, 2010). Only for the construct 'attitude toward the CrM product' the value is with 0.68 slightly lower. Variance extracted is 0.63 or higher for every construct and thus exceeds the recommended .50 (Weiber and Mühlhaus, 2010). Construct validity is therefore acceptable.

**Table 2: Results factor analysis**

Construct	No. of items	Anti-image correlation	Eigen value	Cronbachs alpha	KMO	% variance extracted
'Attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'	4	0.68 to 0.76	0.72 to 0.83	0.83	0.72	0.67
,Extrinsic motivation'	3	0.65 to 0.76	0.72 to 0.85	0.87	0.74	0.80
,Prior knowledge'	3	0.44 to 0.53	0.77 to 0.88	0.75	0.68	0.67
,Relevance or involvement'	2	0.40 to 0.42	0.93	0.92	0.50	0.92
,Subjectiv norm'	3	0.47 to 0.65	0.47 to 0.65	0.71	0.66	0.63
,Cause-brand fit'	2	0.52 to 0.63	0.77 to 0.88	0.75	0.50	0.80
'Attitude towards the CrM product'	2	0.36 to 0.41	0.85	0.68	0.50	0.76

Source: own calculations.

The estimated structural equation model yields a chi-square-value of 315.368 ( $p = 0.00$ ), with 163 degrees of freedom. According to Using Hoelter's critical N indicates that the model will be accepted as 'true' with a smaller sample size,  $N_{kSP} = 106$  ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) and  $N_{kSP} = 113$  ( $\alpha = 0.01$ ). Table 3 shows the results of the model. Notice that the model fits the data well, although the NFI and CFI are somewhat lower than desirable.

**Table 3: Model Fit Summary**

Fit indices	Default model	Critical values	Sources
$\chi^2/df$	1.935	$\leq 3$	Homburg and Giering (1996))
NFI	0.771	$\geq 0.9$	Arbuckle (2008)
CFI	0.872	$\geq 0.9$	Homburg and Baumgartner (1995)
RMSEA	0.074	$\leq 0.05$ , close' model fit $\leq 0.08$ , reasonable' model fit $\geq 0.10$ , unacceptable' model fit	Browne and Cudeck (1993)

Source: own calculations, Arbuckle (2008), Browne and Cudeck (1993), Homburg and Baumgartner (1996), Homburg and Giering (1996).

The path coefficients measuring the relationship among the constructs are depicted in Table 4. Most of the path coefficients are significant ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), highly significant ( $p \leq 0.01$ ) or even extremely significant ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) (see Table 4).

As Table 4 and Figure 1 reveal the results provide support for the positive relationship between the constructs 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product' and 'purchase intention' at a significant level of 0.01 and with a standardized regression weight of 0.745. The construct 'subjective norm' has as expected a positive (0.833) and highly significant ( $CR = 3.275$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) effect on 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'. The findings also reveal that the relationships between the constructs 'cause-brand fit' and 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product' ( $CR = 2.133$ ,  $p = 0.033$ ), and 'cause-brand fit' and 'purchase intention' ( $CR = 2.517$ ,  $p = 0.012$ ) have with 0.156 and 0.376, respectively the expected direction. The path between the constructs 'prior knowledge' and 'attitudes towards the purchase' is positive 0.311 and highly significant ( $CR = 3.196$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). As well a highly significant but as expected negative (-0.418) relationship is revealed between the constructs 'extrinsic motivation' and 'attitudes towards the purchase of a CrM product' ( $CR = -4.750$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

Thus, these results confirm the hypothesis H1, H3, H5, H6, H7, H8 and H10 derived in section 2.

**Table 4: Standardized parameters**

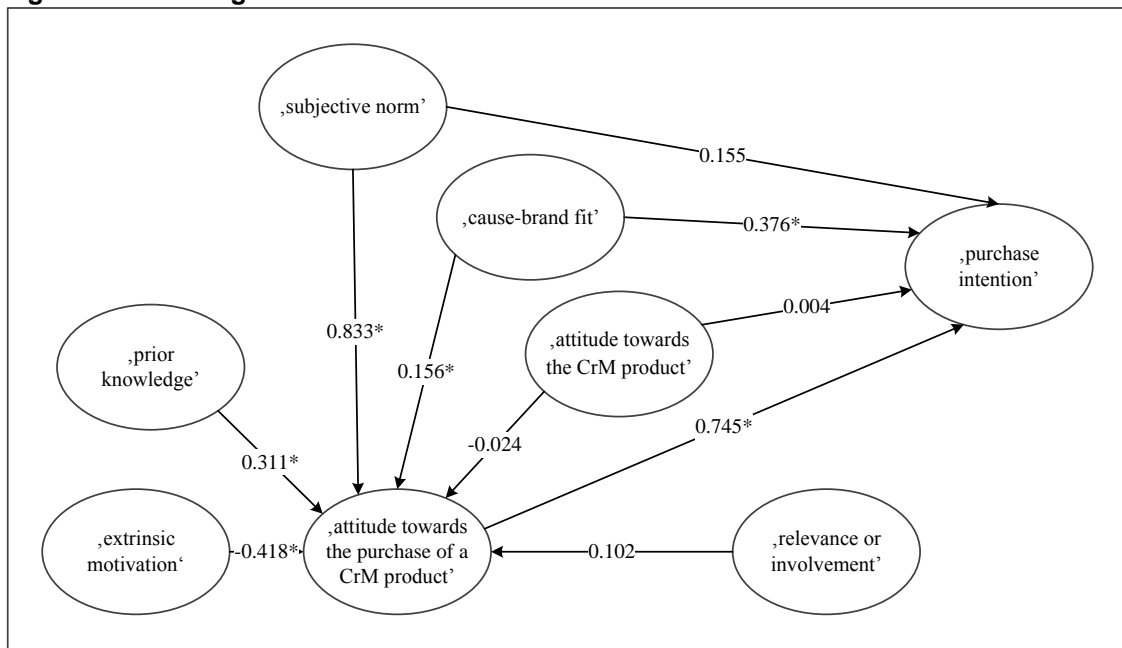
			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Estimate <sup>1</sup>
'Attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'	← ',Subjective norm'	H3	2.157	0.659	3.275	0.001	0.833
'Attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'	← 'Attitude towards the CrM product'	H4	-0.039	0.146	-0.264	0.792	-0.024
'Attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'	← ',Cause –brand fit'	H6	0.121	0.057	2.133	0.033	0.156
'Attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'	← ',Relevance or involvement'	H9	0.067	0.048	1.401	0.161	0.102
'Attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'	← ',Prior knowledge'	H8	0.429	0.134	3.196	0.001	0.311
'Attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'	← ',Extrinsic motivation'	H10	-0.258	0.056	-4.570	0.000	-0.418
',Purchase intention'	← 'Attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'	H1	5.931	2.292	2.587	0.010	0.745
',Purchase intention'	← ',Subjective norm'	H2	3.191	5.860	0.545	0.586	0.155
',Purchase intention'	← ',Cause –brand fit'	H7	2.322	0.922	2.517	0.012	0.376
',Purchase intention'	← 'Attitude towards the CrM product'	H5	0.056	2.357	0.024	0.981	0.004

<sup>1</sup> standardized: hypothetical constructs.

Source: own calculations.

However, the analysis also reveals that neither the relationships between the constructs 'attitude towards the CrM product' and 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product' (CR = -0.264, p = 0.792), nor between 'attitude towards the CrM product' and 'purchase intention' (CR = 0.024, p = 0.981) was supported by the data. The same holds for the relationships between the constructs 'relevance or involvement' and 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product' (CR = 1.401, p = 0.161) and the one between 'subjective norm' and 'purchase intention' (CR = 0.545, p = 0.586). Therefore hypothesis H2, H4, H5 and H9 had to be rejected.

**Figure 1: Path Diagram – Direction causal effects – Standardized Solution**



\* path coefficients are significant (p ≤ 0.05), highly significant (p ≤ 0.01) or extremely significant (p ≤ 0.001).

Source: own calculations.

## 5. Discussion and investigations for future research

The analysis confirms six of the proposed ten hypotheses. Our results are in accordance with the TRA of Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) as we found a direct effect between the 'attitude toward the purchase' of a CrM product and between the 'purchase intention' and 'social norm and purchase intention'. This is in line with a previous study (Braunstein, 2001). However, contrary to the assumption of Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), we could not detect a significant relationship between 'subjective norm' and 'purchase intention'. However, in the framework of our model subjective norm influences the construct 'purchase intention' indirectly via 'attitude towards the purchase'. This indicates that norms play a role in the purchase of CrM products.

Contrary to previous research, an extension of Ajzen and Fishbein's model (1980) by including the external variable 'attitude towards the object' as suggested by Eagly and Chaiken (2007) and Fazio (1990), was not supported by our results.

An important outcome of this study is the significant positive correlation between the 'fit' and the 'attitude towards purchase', and the 'purchase intention'. Thus, the cause-brand fit is an essential issue that needs consideration in the planning and execution of CrM campaigns. According to Becker-Olsen and Hill (2006) as well as Völckner et al. (2009), and in contrast to the results of Lafferty (2007), the perceived 'fit' between the company or the brand and the NPO may be considered as an important issue for a successful implementation of a CrM campaign. Our findings also show a highly significant correlation between the constructs 'prior knowledge or familiarity' with the NPO and 'attitude towards the purchase'. These findings are consistent with other studies (Fazio et al., 1998, Ratneshwar et al., 1987). An increase in 'prior knowledge or familiarity' of the NPO may thus lead to a more positive 'attitude towards the purchase' of a CrM product. The expected impact of 'extrinsic motivation' or 'behavioral congruity' on the 'attitude towards the purchase' of a CRM product is as well confirmed. According to the results of the structural equation model, 'extrinsic motivation' directly affects the 'attitude towards the purchase'. Companies' motives are quite important for consumers' perception of the company as already shown by the studies of Webb and Mohr (1998), Barone et al. (2007) and Rifon et al. (2004). Thus, our findings are in line with Heider's Attribution Theory (1958). Furthermore Dean (2002) supports this contribution. According to Rifon et al. (2004) there exists a causal connection between the perceived motives of the company, the credibility of the company and consumers' attitude towards the company. In turn, increased credibility leads to more positive attitudes and behaviors (Craig and McCann, 1978).

In contrast to our hypothesis, no significant impact between 'involvement' and 'attitude towards the behavior' can be shown via the structural equation model. Therefore, only two of the three dimensions of congruity on 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product' were confirmed.

The findings of our research have practical managerial implications. As demonstrated, 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product' has the main direct effect on 'purchase intention'. The results also indicate that the former is besides subjective norm especially influenced by consumers' perceived motivation for firm's CrM engagement. Companies are thus well advised to communicate their CrM involvement in a transparent and authentic manner so that consumers believe that the firms are indeed interested in the good cause and do not just use CrM to increase their profits. The relevance of good communication is further under-

lined by the significant positive correlation we obtained between 'prior knowledge' and the 'attitude towards the purchase'. Szyckman et al. (1997) shows, that knowledge about CrM reduces consumers' skepticism. Thus, companies should use communication means that inform the consumers (Bronn and Vrioni, 2001).

Our findings also point to the relevance of the construct 'cause-brand fit'. According to the results, we can assume that it is important for consumers that the activities of a company fit with the CrM campaign. Therefore the 'cause-brand fit' should be considered by the company while planning a CrM campaign (Rennhak, 2009).

The low values of Cronbach's alpha (e.g.  $\alpha = 0.683$  for 'attitude towards the purchase'), the low KMO values (e.g. 'KMO=0.500 for 'attitude towards the CrM product'), the low explained variances of the variables explaining different constructs and the small number of items loading on one factor are pointing out the necessity of an improvement of the concept used in this survey.

In addition, the performance criteria of the tested model show very different values. While RMSEA and chi-square divided by degrees of freedom demonstrate a good model fit, other values such as NFI and CFI indicate a rather poor model fit. This fact is partly due to the low explained variances of the variables that load on the constructs and due to non-significant correlations between several constructs.

As already noted in the upper section, other important influencing factors have to be considered regarding the research topic e.g. the influence of values on the purchase intention. Several studies already link sustainable or ethical behavior to personal values (De Pelsmacker et al., 2003; Roozen et al., 2001; Thoergesen, 2001;). Jager et al. (2000) noted that values are an important factor to be considered when determining individuals' choices. Given the triadic relationship of actors of a CrM campaign (Westberg, 2004), in further studies it might be interesting to take not only the 'attitude towards the product/brand/firm' but also the 'attitude towards the NPO' into account.

Additionally, it seems to be useful to divide organic consumers into several subgroups to identify possible differences and to address each of these subgroups more specifically. The present study reveals that the perceived fit between cause and brand has a significant impact on consumers' purchase behavior. Nevertheless, the appraisal of the fit itself has so far gone disregarded. Given the established importance of the fit a closer examination seems reasonable. In particular, the question of what exactly is meant by a 'good fit' should be examined. Not at least, to avoid construct misspecification, it is necessary to give a thought to the reflective or formative nature of the constructs (Freeze and Raschke, 2007).

## **6. Conclusion**

The aim of this study was to identify determinants that influence consumers' attitudes towards CrM campaigns as well as consumers' response to CrM promotions. The results allow us to give enterprises precise recommendations regarding how to successfully implement CrM campaigns. In an era of increasing competitive pressure, market-share gains through innovative products and marketing play an important role to distinguish firms from their competitors. When used correctly, CrM can enrich a brand with an ethical component, in addition

to functional and emotional components, and thus represent a suitable means of product differentiation.

On the basis of the Theory of Reasoned Action, we successively expanded the model of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) by the constructs 'attitude towards the CrM product', perceived 'cause-brand fit', 'prior knowledge' of the NPO, 'relevance or involvement' and suspected 'extrinsic motivation' of the company.

Within the framework of our investigation, we identified a total of five determinants of purchase intention regarding CrM products. Hereof 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product' influences purchase intention on a direct way, 'cause-brand fit' both on a direct and indirect way and 'subjective norm', 'prior knowledge' and 'extrinsic motivation' on an indirect way via 'attitude towards the purchase of a CrM product'. We can conclude that the existing knowledge of research on attitudes provides a good basis for considerations in the context of consumer behavior. Nevertheless, further studies are needed to analyze critical determinants of purchase intention regarding CrM campaigns.

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