

Tell your customers what they really want to hear! – Improving the effectiveness of advertising campaigns in the financial sector using SNA on the Web2.0

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In an empirical study with a German bank we established an SNA-based methodology to enhance the effectiveness of online marketing campaigns. To achieve this goal, we first searched for all German webpages (including blogs and forums) containing the name of a given (financial) product category. Afterwards, all terms on these pages served as rows and columns of an adjacency matrix (excluding words from a stopword list like “a” or “the”). If both terms did not occur on the same web page, the corresponding element in the adjacency matrix was set to 0. If both terms could be found on the same webpage, the corresponding value in the adjacency matrix was increased by one. Afterwards, we used centrality measures from (social) network analysis to identify the most relevant terms. Assuming these terms should boost the effectiveness of a marketing campaign we conducted a field experiment in collaboration with a German bank, and created banner and Google-AdWords-Campaigns using this SNA-enhanced wording. In order to control for success, we used the same images and media vehicles as the most effective traditional banner campaigns proposed by the marketing department of the bank, but changed the advertised buzzwords only (e.g. from “Sofortkredit (engl. instant loan) to “Restschuld” (engl. residual debt)). Hence, the most effective traditional campaigns of the bank served as control. Results indicate that click-through rates were 81% higher in our optimized banner campaign than in the traditional campaigns. Furthermore, we compared Google-AdWords campaigns using the same approach. Results indicate that click through rates were 97% higher for the AdWords campaigns based on the proposed approach. Both results were significant ($p < 0,0001$).