



# The practice of strategic marketing in today's digital environment : a paradox perspective

Jie Yu Kerguignas

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Environment:  
A Paradox Perspective**

Soutenue par

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**The Practice of Strategic Marketing in Today's Digital Environment :  
A Paradox Perspective**

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Thèse pour l'obtention du titre de docteur en sciences de Gestion (Section CNU 06)

Présentée et soutenue publiquement le 20 janvier 2020 par

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**La volonté trouve, la liberté choisit. Trouver et choisir,**

**C'est penser.**

Victor Hugo



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## Introductory chapter

On the morning of February 12, 2019, Thibault Vasseur, the global digital sales and resort director of ClubMed accompanied by two other members of Comex, were waiting impatiently to start the special half-day workshop on the management of paradox. In total, 20 managers from marketing, digital, and IT had attended this event. The Comex of ClubMed had initiated this workshop because of the increasing adverse feedbacks of middle managers regarding the *a priori* “paradoxical or contradictory decision” of the Comex. “*The general lack of awareness regarding the paradox management and the out of the box thinking is the main cause of the adverse feedback.*” – stated by Thibault. The objective of this half-day workshop was twofold, according to him.

The first objective of the workshop was to work on sense-making through the awareness of paradoxes that exist in daily professional life. “*We have found nine paradoxes, which drove our day-to-day life. These nine paradoxes had two facets that seem contradictory but represented the reality of our daily life. More importantly, we wanted to stress that these two facets can be complementary if we managed them well,*” said Thibault. Through this workshop, the Comex of ClubMed aimed at giving sense to the management of paradox within their organization and training their managers to have a better understanding and discourse regarding the paradoxical elements in their daily life. For ClubMed, this change of mind is important, because “*as long as they [the middle managers] do not integrate it [the management of paradox] being a part of their job as managers, they would communicate it as a change of decision to their team rather than a strategic decision. We needed our managers to understand (the paradox) and carry the discourse (towards paradoxical decision) because*

*the management of the paradox is constructive. Moreover, that was the meaning we wanted to give to our team,"* as outlined by Thibault.

The second objective of this workshop was related to the way that managers deal with the paradox. “We worked in groups of 4 people. Each group worked on a paradox from the list and presented a proposal of how they could better manage the paradox, especially when they cannot choose only one facet of the paradox. Furthermore, how could they made the paradox meaningful to their teams? ” as explained by the global digital sales and resort director of ClubMed. Indeed, he emphasized that one of the expected outcomes of this workshop was that the middle managers could “give sense to the way he or she deals with paradox.” This half-day workshop ended with the presentation of an action plan of six initiatives. The members of the ClubMed Comex were quite satisfied with the results.

## **I. Introduction**

Through the previous case, two managerial problems emerge. The first managerial problem relates specifically to the paradox within the organization. As outlined by the global digital sales and resort director of ClubMed, various paradoxes truly exist in the practitioner's daily life. However, most Western cultures are heavily influenced by Aristotle's formal logic, which tends to avoid potential contradictions (Jullien & Lloyd, 2002; Ngoc, 2008) and emphasize the importance of the consistent and coherent strategy (Mintzberg & Waters, 1986; Nath & Sudharshan, 1994). Accordingly, in the world of management, practitioners diligently avoid the use of the term of paradox because of its negative connotation. The paradox is either hidden or considered as a problem that has to be resolving imperatively.

On the contrary, academic research is assigning increasing importance to the study of the paradox for more than 25 years (Cunha & Putnam, 2019). Wit and Meyer (2013) state,

“viewing strategy tensions as strategy paradoxes is the ultimate intellectual challenge. Looking at the tensions as paradoxes will help [managers] to avoid 'jumping to solutions' and will encourage the use of creativity to find ways of benefiting from both sides of tension at the same time” (p. 18). Lüscher and Lewis (2008) advocate, “a paradoxical lens may offer means for new and more enabling understandings of contradictory managerial demands and ubiquitous tensions” (p. 239). The adopting of the paradoxical lens in the context of marketing management, especially in today's digital environment, is essential because the environmental factors such as changes, plurality as well as resource scarcity render the inherent organizational tension salient (Smith & Lewis, 2011).

More than ever, in today's digital environment, marketing is poised to be local and global, efficient and effective, relational and transactional, visionary and practical, to explore and to exploit, to innovate and to build routines, and to differentiate and to adapter. However, there is a general lack of awareness regarding the management of paradox (Cohen, 1998). This lack of awareness of importance paradox management could result in vicious and short-term management and the inability of managers to make sense of contradictory strategic decisions (Smith & Lewis, 2011). O'Driscoll (2008) stresses, “a deeper conversation with the notion of paradox should be of benefit to marketing theory and practice.” Adopting a paradox lens allows dealing with the increasing tensions in digital-enabled marketing activities and giving meaning to the increasing change process. “Staying with the paradox makes it possible to discover a link between opposing forces and opens up the framework that gives meaning to the apparent contradictions in the experience” (Vince & Broussine, 1996, p. 4).

In this regard, the existence of contradictions or paradoxes per se is either productive or destructive, but how managers perceive and manage them (Gibbs, 2009; Guilmot & Vas, 2015). Scholars generally agree that a "both/and" approach allows encouraging practitioners

to deal with paradox through coexistence instead of fit (Lewis & Smith, 2014), and enabling virtuous cycles and producing successful and sustainable outcomes over time (Heracleous & Wirtz, 2014; Smith & Lewis, 2011). However, Cunha and Putnam (2019) point out “either-or approaches, which encompass a complex array of responses to paradox, become aggregated, treated as ineffective, and labeled a tyranny” (p. 97) is one of the symptoms of the paradox of success. Moreover, they stress, “the focus on synergy over trade-offs may seem attractive, but it risks emptying paradox of its emergent, surprising, and often uncontrollable effects” (p. 98). Instead of precipitately converging to a “both/and” approach, Cunha and Putnam (2019) call for establishing a *repertoire* of how organizations and their members use to deal with multiple types of paradoxes over time.

This *repertoire* of the managerial response strategy to the paradox is essential. Currently, we still see the managerial response strategy to the paradox like a black box. Firstly, we need to have more understanding of what response strategies managers use to deal with the paradox in the different context. After that, we could assess the performance of the response strategies to the paradox and give recommendations accordingly. This understanding is even more important in today’s digital environment. Not only digital technology per se is paradoxical (Fournier & Mick, 1998), but also its management raises the tensions (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014). However, to the best of our knowledge, no research has investigated the paradox of digital-enabled marketing from the managerial perspective. Thus the questions, such as what are the paradoxes embedding in marketers' daily practices, how the practitioners respond to the paradox of digital-enabled marketing remain unanswered.

The second managerial problem relates to marketing management in today's digital environment. Immediacy, flexibility, complexity, and velocity of digital technology, alongside with the predictive analytics capability based on data management, have changed

the landscape of the marketplace entirely and the way that firms do strategy (Tushman, Kahn, Porray & Binns, 2017). For instance, retailers in the digital era can predict sales and develop merchandising plans based on the combining of data on demographics and weather. An analysis of Google research regarding real estate allows a more accurate prediction of house market price changes than the forecast of the field expert. Traditional marketing planning has lost its power face to data-driven marketing.

During many decades, strategic planning school (Ansoff, 1965) used to dominate strategic management and thinking. However, “transformation and organizational change of this kind trigger resistance, because routine is disrupted and people assume that they have lost their ability to plan” – (Deloitte, 2016, p. 3). On the contrary, “social media has been largely realized as an effective mechanism that contributes to the firms' marketing aims and strategy” (Alalwan, Rana, Dwivedi & Algharabat, 2017, p. 1178). However, social media has also raised many challenges, for instance, the liquification of the economy, adjusting to reactive marketing management, adjusting to the changing customer purchase journey, the management of customer creation and engagement, the management of multi-side markets and the C2C sender-receiver system (Hofacker & Belanche, 2016). Moreover, as indicated in a report of OECD<sup>1</sup> (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) in 2019, “Digitalisation leads to market integration, promotes international trade and enables new data-driven business models that promote competition, create economic growth opportunities, but also pose new challenges.” In the same report, OECD states the rapid market changes,

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<sup>1</sup> [HTTPS://WWW3.UNIFR.CH/COMPETITIVENESS/EN/ASSETS/PUBLIC/THE%20DIGITAL%20ECONOMY,%20INNOVATION%20AND%20COMPETITIONCAOPIANCO.PDF](https://www3.unifr.ch/competitiveness/en/assets/public/the%20digital%20economy,%20innovation%20and%20competitioncaopianco.pdf)

disruption of incumbents, risk of market power, big data and privacy as the critical challenges of digitalisation.

From the human resource perspective, digital technologies have also stressed the resource scarcity – talent gap, and data analytical skill within an organization (Hofacker & Belanche, 2016; Hunsberger, 2017; Leeﬂang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014). Technologies have a detrimental impact on the mental or physical health of the practitioners. The term “technostress” was coined in 1984 by clinical psychologist Craig Brod, it describes a modern disease (Ayyagari, Grover & Purvis, 2011) or stress that an individual could experience from the inability to cope or deal with the demands of IT use (Pirkkalainen, Salo, Tarafdar & Makkonen, 2019). When an individual experiences techno-uncertainty, that is, the stress relating to the quick change of technology (Maier, Laumer, Weinert, & Weitzel, 2015; Tarafdar, Ragu-Nathan, & Ragu-Nathan, 2007). Beyond the severe psychological problem, technostress can also cause adverse behavioral problems such as reducing one's productivity, job satisfaction, creativity, and organizational commitment (Pirkkalainen, Salo, Tarafdar & Makkonen, 2019; Tarafdar, Pullins, & Ragu-Nathan, 2014).

Accordingly, as pointed out by Kaplan and Orlikowski (2015), “one of the great challenges for organizations in the current economy is making strategy under the uncertainties posed by turbulent environments, intensified competition, emerging technologies, shifting customer tastes and regulatory change”(p.14). In line with this statement, we question what is marketing strategy making and strategy doing in today's digital environment? Does it concern STP (i.e., segmentation, targeting, and positioning), marketing mix, and or customer relationship management solely? How does the daily practices of practitioner influence the strategy doing or strategy making? How can we capture the inherent holistic, dynamic, and

interrelated interaction of the strategic activities to deepen our understanding of strategy doing in digital-enabled marketing?

To address those general questions that we have discussed previously, we firstly start with a general literature review of marketing strategy, strategic marketing, digital marketing, strategy-as-practice, and paradox in order to have a solid theoretical foundation. We then present the research problems and questions of this thesis. This is followed by the presentation of the overall research design of the three essays. The introductory chapter ends up with the details of the theoretical and managerial contributions of the thesis.

## **1.2 Theoretical Background**

The current theoretical framework starts with delineating marketing strategy and strategic marketing, outlining their difference. We then review the literature on digital marketing before focusing on the literature on strategy-as-practice and paradox.

### **1.2.1 Distinguishing marketing strategy from marketing tactics**

The first commentaries that discuss strategy are originated from China during the period of 400 – 200 B.C <sup>2</sup>. The term strategy (στρατηγική) emanated from the ancient Greek word (Liddell & Scott, 1871) and was used exclusively in the military field. It refers to the act of a general or piece of generalship (Shaw, 2012). In 1926, the term ‘strategy’ was used for the first time in the business literature via a marketing text by Lyon (Sharma, 1999). Despite that, the practice of marketing exists for thousands of years (Petkus, 2010), the academic discipline of marketing was born at the turn of the twentieth century (Bartels, 1988) and had a substantial development in the 1960s and after that (Shaw, 2012).

In the marketing field, the terms marketing strategy is often interchanged with the term strategic marketing despite those are two different concepts. Marketing strategy is an organizational strategy construct (Varadarajan, 2010) that focuses on the essence of marketing management (Tadajewski & Jones, 2014). It is useful to start by shedding light on the diverse definitions of marketing strategy before exploring the concept in more detail. Notably, it exists a large magnitude of definitions of marketing strategy in the extant marketing literature.

<sup>2</sup> Sun Tzu's The Art of War, written in 400 B.C.



Table 1 displays diverse definitions of marketing strategy and outlines its specific characteristics. The marketing strategy manifesting as a set of those specific characteristics allows a company to differentiate its offer and to maintain a competitive commercial advantage (Tadajewski & Jones, 2014).

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Definitions</b>	<b>Fundamental element of the definition</b>
Thomas & Gardner (1985)	“Marketing strategy is the deployment of a satisfactory and profitable marketing mix and the targeting of a consumer group to acquire a differential advantage over competitors.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing mix</li> <li>• Targeting</li> <li>• The differential advantage</li> </ul>
Varadarajan & Clark (1994)	“Marketing strategy can be defined as configuration and allocation of resources across marketing mix variables in a particular product market.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Configuration and allocation of resources</li> <li>• Marketing mix</li> <li>• Product market</li> </ul>
Sharma (1999)	“Marketing strategy is focused on the analysis of a product’s life cycle or the processes behind product innovation.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of product lifecycle</li> <li>• Product innovation</li> </ul>
Varadarajan (2010)	The marketing strategy can be defined as an organization's integrated pattern of decisions that specify its crucial choices concerning products, markets, marketing activities and marketing resources in the creation, communication and/or delivery of products that offer value to customers in exchanges with the organization and thereby enables the organization to achieve specific objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decisions</li> <li>• Product</li> <li>• Marketing activities</li> <li>• Marketing resources</li> <li>• Offer value to the customer</li> <li>• Objective</li> </ul>
Kirova & Trinqucoste (2011)	Marketing strategy is defined in two parts: “(1) definition of target markets and (2) the composition of a marketing mix.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target market</li> <li>• Marketing mix</li> </ul>

*Table 1. Definitions of marketing strategy*

*Source: adapted from (Kirova & Trinqucoste 2011)*

As displayed in the table above, the definition of marketing strategy is generally associated with strategic level marketing decisions (i.e., segmentation, market positioning, and targeting) and tactical level marketing decision (i.e., marketing mix). Thus, marketing mix – targeting - segmentation constitutes the critical characters of the marketing strategy for the decades. Therefore, the conceptual distinction between the marketing strategy and

marketing tactic has risen the controversies when it comes to marketing mix (Varadarajan, 2010); 1/ some sources consider that marketing mix (product, promotion, price and place/distribution) as marketing strategy; 2/ whereas in other sources, the 4Ps are considered as the domain of marketing tactics; 3/ in yet some sources, a part of the 4Ps (i.e., product and place/distribution) turns out to be marketing strategy and the other part of the 4PS (i.e., price and promotion) proves to be marketing tactics; 4/ and in still other sources, certain concepts (e.g., pull and push promotion strategy; market skimming price strategy and market penetration price strategy) in the realm of the 4Ps are characterized as marketing strategy while others concepts (e.g., promotion tactics and pricing tactics) as marketing tactics. The distinction between marketing strategy and marketing tactic may seem sterile. However, it is of important implication as it places marketing functions and activities at a different level within a firm.

To lead the debate, Webster (1992, p. 10) states, “To consider the new role of marketing within the evolving corporation, we must recognize that marketing operates at three distinct levels, reflecting three levels of strategy. These can be defined as the corporate, business, or SBU and functional or operating levels... In addition to the three levels of strategy, we can identify three distinct dimensions of marketing—marketing as culture, marketing as a strategy, and marketing as tactics... Marketing as a strategy is the emphasis at the SBU level, where the focus is on market segmentation, targeting, and positioning in defining how to compete in its chosen businesses. At the operating level, marketing managers must focus on marketing tactics. The '4Ps' of product, price, promotion, and place/distribution, the elements of the marketing mix.” In a similar vein, Varadarajan and Yadav (2002) detail that strategy at the corporate level refers to the business choice of where to compete and what to compete; at a business level, it refers to business choice of how to compete in the marketplace; at the functional level, marketing strategy relates to a business choice of how to allocate the extent

marketing resources to gain the competitive positional advantage(s) in the marketplace. Beyond the strategic and tactical level of marketing strategy, the scope of the concept also involves three dimensions that are the content (i.e., what to compete or where to compete), the process (i.e., how to do) and the purpose (i.e., what for). The primary marketing strategies constructs could further clarify these dimensions in Table 2.

Constructs	Marketing Strategy	Description	Scope of marketing strategy
Positioning	Product-market growth strategies (Ansoff, 1965)	<p>Juxtaposing new and existing products with new and existing markets in a two by two matrix.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market penetration</li> <li>• Market development</li> <li>• Product development</li> <li>• Diversification</li> </ul>	What to compete
Segmentation	Market segmentation (Smith, 1956)	<p>“The process of defining and subdividing a large homogenous market into clearly identifiable segments having similar needs, wants, or demand characteristics.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local marketing</li> <li>• Regional marketing</li> <li>• Global marketing</li> <li>• International marketing</li> </ul>	Where to compete
Brand	Private label (Economist Intelligence Unit, 1968)	“Consumer products produced by, or on behalf of, distributors and sold under the distributor's name or trademark through the distributor's outlet.”	How to compete
	Brand extension (Tauber, 1981)	The practice of using a current brand name to enter a completely different product class.	How to compete
	Co-branding strategy (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000)	Two brands are deliberately paired with one another in a marketing context, such as in advertisements, products, product placements, and distribution outlets.	How to compete
Product	Product differentiation (Smith, 1956)	“Development or incorporation of attributes (e.g., benefits, price, quality, styling, service) that a product's intended customers perceive to be different and desirable.”	How to compete

	Product life cycle (Forrester, 1959)	<p>“Four distinct but not wholly-predictable stages every product goes through from its introduction to withdrawal from the market:”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction,</li> <li>• Growth</li> <li>• Maturity</li> <li>• Decline</li> </ul>	How to compete
Price	Skimming and Penetration strategies (Dean, 1951)	“The strategic decision in pricing is the choice between 1) a policy of initial high prices that skim the cream of demand; and 2) a policy of low prices from the outset serving as an active agent for market penetration”.	How to compete
	Product-line pricing (Petroshius & Monroe, 1987)	“An approach that focuses on obtaining the optimal price solution for a multiproduct firm when the firm is interested in maximizing contribution to profit.”	How to compete
	Bundling pricing (Guiltinan, 1987)	“The practice of marketing two or more products and/or services in a single package for a special price.”	How to compete
Distribution	Distribution strategy (Stern, 1996)	<p>“One of the key elements of channel management is deciding how many sales outlets should be established in a given geographic area.”</p> <p>Distribution intensity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive distribution strategy</li> <li>• Selective distribution strategy</li> <li>• Exclusive distribution strategy</li> </ul>	Where to compete

	Multi-channel strategy (Neslin et al., 2006)	"The design, deployment, coordination, and evaluation of channels to enhance customer value through effective customer acquisition, retention, and development."	Where to compete
	Cross-channel strategy (Beck & Pygl, 2015)	"The set of activities involved in selling merchandise or services through more than one channel but not all widespread channels, whereby the customer can trigger full channel interaction and/or the retailer controls full channel integration."	Where to compete
	Omni-channel strategy (Verhoef, Kannan and Inman, 2015)	"The synergetic management of the numerous available channels and customer touchpoints, in such a way that the customer experience across channels and the performance over channels are optimized."	Where to compete
Promotion	Push strategy (Kerin & Peterson, 2013)	"Push communication strategy is one in which the offering is pushed through a marketing channel sequentially, with each channel level representing a distinct target market."	How to compete
	Pull strategy (Kerin & Peterson, 2013)	"Pull communication strategy seeks to create initial interest among potential buyers, who in turn demand the offering from intermediaries, ultimately pulling the offering through a marketing channel."	How to compete
	Integrated marketing communication (Kerin & Peterson, 2013)	"The practice of blending different elements of the communication mix in mutually reinforcing ways to inform, persuade, and induce consumer action."	How to compete

Table 2. Definitions of main concepts related to marketing strategy and its scopes.

As displayed in Table 2, most marketing strategies focus on product-market since the 70s (Berry, 1983; Sharma, 1999). This situation has had been sharply criticized. The main criticism put its finger on the problem that "marketing had moved away from a holistic concept of competitive strategy to a much narrower focus on the marketing mix" (Sharma, 1999, p. 76), and the lack of organizational and environmental factors analysis in marketing strategy. Thus, the domain of marketing strategy was considerate as imbalanced and contributes to marketing marginalization.

Since three decades, marketing strategy integrates the concepts from inter-organizational relationship and points out the shift from transactional marketing to more relationship-building marketing (Varadarajan and Clark, 1994). This shift led to the formation and development of strategic marketing, which aims at having a better external– internal fit (Sharma, 1999).

#### **Main outputs of the current literature to the reflection on the thesis**

The marketing strategy can be operated at different levels and is closely related to the concept of the marketing mix. However, the alignment between the marketing strategy and marketing mix results in a short-term vision. This situation has been criticized because the marketing strategy does not solely concern the marketing mix.

#### **New issue**

Beyond the marketing mix, what strategy doing in marketing concerns? Furthermore, how does it enhance the sustainability of the organization?

### 1.2.2 Understanding the notion of strategic marketing

Even though the term ‘strategic marketing’ is often interchangeable with the term ‘marketing strategy’ in the marketing literature (Sharma, 1999), the concept of strategic marketing emerged much later than the one of marketing strategy (Varadarajan, 2010). Strategic marketing was first developed to respond to criticisms that point the finger at the failure of the marketing function to achieve a long-term competitive advantage (Kirova & Trinqucoste, 2011). Table 3 displays the different definitions of strategic marketing and allows us to compare and to emphasize the fundamental elements of each definition.

Authors	Definition	Fundamental elements of the definition
Wind & Robertson (1983)	Strategic marketing consists of the search for competitive advantages and long-term advantages in terms of consumer relations, but also the analysis and management of a company’s strategic activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Competitive advantages</li><li>• Long-term advantages</li><li>• Consumer relations</li><li>• Strategic activities of a firm</li></ul>
Shiner (1988)	Strategic marketing consists of combining corporate strategy and competitive strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Corporate strategy</li><li>• Competitive strategy</li></ul>
Sharm (1999)	Strategic marketing involved a more judicious matching of a firm's resources with environmental opportunities and constraints to achieve a long-run competitive advantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Firm’s resources</li><li>• Environmental opportunities and Constraints</li><li>• Long-run competitive advantage</li></ul>



Trinquecoste (1999)	Strategic marketing is the contribution made by marketing to a company's general strategy. It is intended to align the company's effective capabilities with the promises it makes in order to generate a strategic competitive advantage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Company's general strategy</li> <li>• Company's effective capabilities</li> <li>• Strategic competitive advantage</li> </ul>
Varadarajan (2010)	The domain of strategic marketing encompasses the study of organizational, inter-organizational and environmental phenomena concerned with (1) the behavior of organizations in the marketplace in their interactions with consumers, customers, competitors and other external constituencies, in the context of the creation, communication and delivery of products that offer value to customers in exchanges with organizations, and (2) the general management responsibilities associated with the boundary spanning role of the marketing function in organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational, inter-organizational and environmental phenomena</li> <li>• Behavior study of organizations in the marketplace</li> <li>• Behavior study of the organization in its interactions with different stakeholders</li> <li>• Management responsibility</li> <li>• Boundary spanning role of the marketing function</li> </ul>

*Table 3. Definitions of strategic marketing. Source: adapted from (Kirova & Trinquecoste, 2011)*

In view of the above, strategic marketing involves 1) the behaviors' study of organization in its marketplace and its interactions with diverse stakeholders and competitor, 2) the alignment with the general corporate strategy, 3) the allocation of internal resource and capabilities, 4) marketing boundary spanning function and 5) the focus on long-term strategic competitive advantage.

The choice of the right strategic marketing may hinge on the circumstances of marketplace, current resources and capabilities, and the relationships among the various resources and their fit. Against this background, Bingham and his colleague (2015) resume the logics of different strategic frameworks into three archetypes – 1) position strategy aims at “building mutually reinforcing resource systems with many resources in an attractive strategic position. Deepen their links. ” (Bingham, Eisenhardt, & Furr, 2015, p. 22) – This type of strategy can be best deployed in a stable environment, does not require any specific resource, enables the firm to tighten its interlocked resources that are difficult to imitate for competitors, and seeks long-term competitive advantage; 2) leverage strategy encompasses building “strategically important resources for current markets. Leverage them into attractive new products and new markets” (Bingham, Eisenhardt , & Furr, 2015, p. 22) – A type of strategy that can be best operated in a moderate dynamic environment, with the valuable, rare, inimitable and no substitutable resources that are fairly interlocked and pursues a medium-term competitive advantage; 3) opportunity strategy “picking a few strategic processes with deep and swift flows of opportunities. Learn simple rules to capture opportunities.” (Bingham, Eisenhardt, & Furr, 2015, p. 22) – Differ from the previous strategies, opportunity strategy can be best performed in a dynamic and turbulent environment that is characterized by superabundant flows of fast-moving but often unpredictable opportunities; where competitors come and go, customers change their preferences, and business models are in flux. The

competitive advantage of this strategy consists of capturing attractive but ephemeral opportunities sooner, faster, and better than competitors. Thus, it requires a flexible organizational structure and focal strategy process (Bingham, Eisenhardt, & Furr, 2015). Building on this work, we categorize the fundamental elements of strategic marketing into three key distinguishing characteristics, as displayed in Box 1.

**a. Strategic marketing decisions**

Strategic marketing decisions refer to organizational decisions in the realm of marketing, which are of significant consequences in terms of long-term performance (Kirova & Trinqucoste, 2011). The hierarchical level of strategic marketing decisions concerns both corporate and business unit level, and its orientation could be internal as well as external. (Sharma, 1999; Varadarajan, 2010). Strategic marketing decisions concern choosing the right place (where), the right time (when), right goods or service (what), and the right resources (how) to compete.

**b. Strategic resources and capabilities**

Strategic marketing entails sizable resource commitments that are either irreversible or relatively difficult to reverse, more substantial in magnitude, spread over the more extended period, and have a more significant impact on the performance of the firm over the long-term. (Kirova & Trinqucoste, 2011). Strategic marketing shifts the marketing focus from an exclusive emphasis on the customer and product to skill and resources (Varadarajan, 2010) based management that enables spurring effectiveness and flexibility (Day, 1994, D'Aveni, 1994; Furrer, Thomas & Goussevskaia 2008). The marketing capabilities allow a firm to effectively integrate and deploy market-based resources to produce desired outcomes (Ketchen et al., 2007; Vorhies, Harker, & Rao, 1999).

### **c. Strategic competitive advantage**

The rapid technological change stresses the firm to shift the focus from competitiveness (i.e., commercial competitive advantage) to sustainability and non-imitability of competitive advantage (i.e., strategic competitive advantage) (D'Aveni, 1994). In other words, the distinctive competencies (Trinquecoste, 1999) tie tightly to the concept of strategic competitive advantage in the study of strategic marketing.

#### *Box 1. Key unique characteristics of strategic marketing*

Accordingly, from the strategic marketing perspective, strategy in the realm of marketing is a set of decisions through which a firm coordinates its strategic marketing pattern with the external environment in order to gain a sustainable long-term performance. The scholars argue that the strategic marketing pattern manifests as the configuration of firms' specific market-based resources and marketing capabilities that is valuable to the customers, and has the advantage of being non-substitutable and difficult to imitate (Agić et al., 2016; Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984). The marketing capabilities seen as a source of competitive advantage are “glue that brings the assets together and enables them to be deployed advantageously” (Day, 1994, p. 38) as well as “the bundle of interrelated routines that facilitate the capacity to engage in specific marketing activities and respond to the market knowledge” (Kamboj & Rahman, 2015, p. 1041).

There exist two broad types of capabilities in the marketing literature, namely, the externally focused marketing capabilities and the internally focused marketing capabilities (Möller & Anttila, 1987). Internal marketing capabilities are tied with a function or practice of marketing strategy, and enable the development of market-oriented culture (Hooley, Greenley, Cadogan, & Fahy, 2005; Ngo & O'Cass, 2012). External marketing capabilities, such as market-sensing capability, customer-linking capability or channel-bonding capability

(Day, 1994; Greenley, Hooley, & Rudd, 2005), are the bonding mechanism by which a firm can effectively integrate and deploy marketing-related resources, skills and accumulated knowledge to sense, understand and respond to the evolving needs of customers and markets (Day, 1994; Ketchen et al., 2007; Slater & Narver, 2000; Vorhies, Harker, & Rao, 1999; Wu, 2013). These capabilities have been challenged by the new digital technologies.

With the advent of the Internet, scholars criticize the widening gap between the increasing complexity markets and the capacity of most marketing organizations to understand and cope with this complexity (Day, 2011; Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014). On the one hand, consumers and markets have changed to the detriment of firms and shortened the length of the strategic decision-making process. On the other hand, most of the firms have difficulty developing new capabilities and resources to create a sustainable competitive advantage in today's digital environment. Accordingly, Digital marketing is reshaping the process and the content of the strategy of marketing (Kannan & Li, 2016).

#### **Main outputs of the current literature to the reflection on the thesis**

Strategic marketing addresses the long-term sustainability of a firm through strategic marketing decision-making based on the strategic resources and capabilities management. However, the arrival of the Internet has dramatically changed the marketing landscape and strategic marketing practices accordingly.

#### **New issues**

In today's digital environment, what are strategic marketing practices in terms of strategic decision-making, resources, and capabilities management?

### 1.2.3 From digital marketing to marketing strategy in today's digital environment

In the agricultural era, products were produced according to the needs of consumers and businesses and brought to the closest physical location for the value exchange. With the advent of disruptive digital technologies such as mobile, virtualization, peer-to-peer networks, cloud computing, Internet of things, augmented reality, facial recognition, and other IT developments, the global business landscape, and consumer behaviors have been undertaken a fundamental shift.

The Internet revolution is analogous to the advent of the Industrial Revolution (e.g., Printing or railroads invention), which has a huge impact on politics, social, monetary, communication, business value creation, and marketing. The fast evolution of marketing practice is unprecedented (Coviello, Brodie, Brookes, & Palmer, 2003; Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014). The terms such as *web marketing*, *internet marketing*, *interactive marketing*, *e-marketing*, or *digital marketing* are used interchangeably (Varadarajan & Yadav, 2009) and have evolved rapidly over time in the realm of marketing to describe the process of using digital technologies to find, acquire and retain customers to increase sales. The official definition given by the American Marketing Association's<sup>3</sup>, delineates digital marketing as “activities, institutions, and processes facilitated by digital technologies for creating, communicating and delivering value for customers and other stakeholders”. Kannan and Li (2016, p.23) have narrowed down the definition of digital marketing into a more inclusive perspective – “an adaptive, technology-enabled process by

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ama.org/AboutAMA/Pages/Definition-of-Marketing.aspx>

which firms collaborate with customers and partners to jointly create, communicate, deliver, and sustain value for all stakeholders." In terms of value creation, E-business has challenged the established value creation process of the firm. Amit and Zott (2001) develop a model that suggests the value creation process of e-businesses encompasses four sources, namely *efficiency*, *complementarities*, *lock-in*, and *novelty*. 1/ *Efficiency* is one of the primary value drivers for e-business according to the analysis of Amit and Zott (2001). Internet allows reducing information asymmetries (Kannan & Li, 2017) and customers' search and bargaining costs (Lucking-Reiley & Spulber, 2001), fostering the speed and facility of information transmission (Mellet, 2011) and the decision-making process. 2/ *Complementarities* as a value driver suggest that firms can create value by offering bundles of complementary products and services to their customers through the Internet or capitalizing on complementarities among activities (e.g., supply-chain integration) or among technologies (i.e., linking the imaging technology of one business with the Internet communication technology of another). There exist two forms of complementary - vertical complementarities (e.g., after-sales services) or horizontal complementarities (e.g., one-stop shopping, or cameras and films). 3/ *Lock-in* is a condition where companies make it difficult for customers and partners to migrate to competitors. 4/ *Novelty* refers to the innovations of online business in the structure of transactions, that is, the innovation in the ways companies do business as well as the strategic selection of participating parties. The competitive advantage hinges on a strong first-mover position by learning and accumulating proprietary knowledge, and by preempting scarce resources.

The new value creation of marketing in today's digital environment changes the practice of strategic marketing (Coviello, Brodie, Brookes, & Palmer, 2003) and the drivers and outcome of competitive strategy (Varadarajan & Yadav, 2002). Kannan and Li (2016) delineate the adaptive process of digital technologies that create value through new customer

experience and interactions among customers. They have also identified the key touchpoints in the marketing strategies where digital technologies are playing or likely to play a key role. In this regard, their framework of digital marketing encompasses 1/ The conventional marketing strategy process (i.e., the analysis of the digital environment including the five C's – customers, collaborators, competitors, context, and company). 2/ Marketing mix (i.e., product, price, promotion, and place) as well as marketing research. 3/ Value creation chain – creating value for customers (through value equity, brand equity, relationship equity, and customer satisfaction), creating customer equity (through strategies of customer acquisition, retention, and profitability), and creating firm value (as a function of sales, profits, and growth rate). 4/ The impact of digital technologies. 5/ Marketing strategy. This framework considers mainly the digital as a tool, whereas the impact of digital is much more than a tool. For instance, in order to stay in the course, many traditional brick and mortar businesses are vesting in digital and playing offense strategy.

In 2016, a Forbes Insight survey showed that 90 percent of firms in their survey have taken up a formal digital transformation<sup>4</sup>. At the society level, digital transformation refers to the thorough changes taking place in society and industries with the use of digital technologies (Agarwal, Gao, DesRoches, & Jha, 2010; Nambisan, Lyytinen, Majchrzak, & Song, 2017); Vial, 2019). At an organizational level, it manifests as “strategies that embrace the implications of digital transformation and drive better operational performance” (Hess, Matt, Benlian, & Wiesböck, 2016), p. 123). Lamberton and Stephan (2016) claim that the field of digital marketing has evolved from a static and utilitarian statue - new “tool” that marketers and customers can use toward more transformative marketing. In other words, the

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<sup>4</sup> Hitachi “How to Win at Digital Transformation.” Survey/inter- views. Forbes Insights. November 2016. Murray, A. (June 10, 2016) Every company is a technology company.” Fortune.



term digital marketing is becoming obsolete because the digital is playing an increasingly integral role in practically all of the marketing actions (Varadarajan, 2009) – digital marketing has just become marketing (Lamberton & Stephan, 2016).

Researchers claim that technology per se is only a part of the complex puzzle of marketing strategy in today's digital environment (Kane, 2014; Vial, 2019). Several conceptual papers, as displayed in Table 4, have studied marketing strategy in today's digital environment (also called digital marketing) from different perspectives.

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Components of framework</b>
Varadarajan & Yadav (2002; 2009)	Delineate many changes in terms of the pattern of deployment of marketing resources in the competitive marketing strategies and critical linkages between competitive marketing strategy and its drivers and outcomes in the context of the internet-enabled market place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drivers of competitive marketing strategy in the internet-enabled environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- industry structure (i.e., market Thinness, customer dispersion, network externalities, market Tippiness, channel structure)</li> <li>- firm characteristics, competencies, and resources (i.e., information resources, IT resources and information processing skills)</li> <li>- product characteristics (i.e., product digitizability, product tangibility, product perishability)</li> <li>- buyer and buying environment characteristics (i.e., Diminishing information search cost, diminishing information asymmetry, increasing cost transparency, many to many communication models)</li> <li>- Macro-environment</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Outcomes of competitive marketing strategy in the internet-enabled environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- marketplace (e.g., Performance, market share, sales and growth, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty)</li> <li>- financial performance (e.g., ROI, earnings growth, shareholder wealth)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Constantinides (2002)	A Web-Marketing Mix framework encompassing four online marketing strategic, operational, organizational, and critical technical factors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope (strategic issues),</li> <li>• Site (operational issues),</li> <li>• Synergy (integration into the physical processes)</li> <li>• System (technical issues)</li> </ul>

Coviello et al. (2003)	Identify five constructs of marketing practice in an internet-enabled environment and their linkage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five constructs of marketing practice in an internet-enabled environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transaction Marketing,</li> <li>- database Marketing,</li> <li>- e-Marketing,</li> <li>- interaction Marketing</li> <li>- network Marketing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Four combinations of different aspects of marketing practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- traditional transactional</li> <li>- traditional relational</li> <li>- transactional 'plus'</li> <li>- pluralistic</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Yadav & Pavlou (2014)	An organizing framework for identifying specific research gaps and emerging trends of marketing in computer-mediated environments (CMEs)	<p>Four key interactions in computer-mediated environments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- consumer–firm interactions (i.e., consumer behavior in the context of consumers' interactions with firms in CMEs)</li> <li>- firm–consumer interactions (i.e., firms' strategies and tactics in the context of firms' interactions with consumers in CMEs)</li> <li>- consumer–consumer interactions (i.e., consumer behavior in the context of consumers' interactions with other consumers in CMEs)</li> <li>- firm–firm interactions (i.e., firms' strategies and tactics in the context of firms' interactions with other firms in CMEs)</li> </ul>
Lamberton & Stephen (2016)	This article allows for gaining a macro-level view of the significant shifting of digital, social media, and mobile marketing (DSMM) from 2000 to 2015.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Era 1: digital media shapes and facilitates buyer behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- theme 1: the internet as a platform for individual expression</li> <li>- theme 2: the internet as a search and decision support tool</li> <li>- theme 3: the internet as a marketing intelligence tool</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Era 2: consumers shape dsmm: wom and networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- theme 1: online WOM as an individual expression that matters to marketing</li> <li>- themes 2 and 3 converge: digital networks as tools for information and value</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Era 3: the age of social media</li> </ul>

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Kannan & Li  
(2017)

The article highlights the touchpoints in the marketing strategy process where digital technologies are playing a pivotal role.

- theme 1: individual self-expression as a means of amplifying or dulling marketing actions
  - theme 2: user-generated content as a marketing tool
  - theme 3: capturing marketing intelligence in specific social media platforms
  - New era: the rise of DSMM culture and the post-digital world
    - themes 1 and 2 combined: revisiting consumer expression and internet as a tool
    - theme 3: the internet as market intelligence source revisited and improved tools for data analysis
  - Digital Environment
    - consumer behavior
    - social media and user-generated content
    - platforms and two-sided markets
    - search engines
    - contextual interactions
    - Marketing actions
    - Product, price, promotion, and place
  - Marketing outcomes
    - value for the customer, customer value, firm value
  - Marketing research
    - acquisition and processing of information
  - Marketing strategy
    - customer and brand management
-

Vial (2019)	An indicative framework for representing the digital transformation process across eight building blocks.	<p>Eight overarching building blocks that describe digital transformation as a process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of digital technologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social, mobile, analytics, internet of things, platforms and ecosystem</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Disruption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- consumer behavior, competitive landscape, availability of data</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Strategic responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Digital business strategy and digital transformation strategy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Changes in value creation paths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Value proposition, value networks, digital channels, agility, and ambidexterity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Structural changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizational structure, organizational culture, leadership, employee role and skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Organizational barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inertia and resistance</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Negative impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Security and privacy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Positive impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Operational efficiency, organizational performance, industry and society improvement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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*Table 4. Diverse conceptual frameworks of digital marketing strategy*

As displayed in Table 4, some research has studied the digital marketing strategy from a digital as tool or as a process perspective (Kanna & Li, 2017; Varadarajan & Yadav, 2002, 2009; Vial, 2019), whereas others have adopted a more macro level that considerate digital as new phenomenal societal and industrial phenomenon (Constantinides 2002; Coviello, Brodie, Brookes, & Palmer, 2003; Lamberton & Stephen, 2016; Yadav and Pavlou, 2014). However, people (e.g., marketers and customers) as a critical marketing resource who is playing an active role in shaping strategic marketing in today's digital environment (Lamberton & Stephan, 2016) has received less attention in the strategic digital marketing research. Notably, one of the biggest challenges raised by the digital technologies concerns digital talent gap and digital management capabilities (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014). Accordingly, an overarching and holistic framework for representing strategic marketing in today's digital environment is needed.

#### **Main outputs of the current literature to the reflection on the thesis**

Digital technologies have integrated into every practice of marketing and render the concept of digital marketing obsolete. The new value creation and digital transformation have been undertaken in the organization. However, we lack a holistic strategic view of new marketing practice in the digital era.

#### **New issues**

How digital as a tool or as a new societal and industrial phenomenon constitutes a marketing strategy in today's digital environment? Moreover, how digital practitioners (marketers and customers) shape the latter strategy?

### 1.2.4 Strategizing from the strategy-as-practice perspective

Strategy study, as a fertile academic research field, has seen widely developed over the last decades, it encompasses numerous perspectives such as the leader-focused approach (Selznick 1957), ten schools of thought on strategy formation (Mintzberg, 1990), decision-making (Andrews, 1971), strategic analysis (Porter, 1996), individual cognitive processes (Calori, Johnson & Sarnin, 1994) as well as various dichotomous debates, take for example, process vs. content debate (Bourgeois, 1980), emergent vs. deliberate strategy (Pettigrew, 1990), micro vs. macro levels of strategic activity (Mintzberg & McHugh, 1985), inductive vs. deductive strategy-making (Langley, 1999), and collective vs. individual foci in strategy work (Chakravarthy & White, 2002). More recently, strategy research has experienced a *practice turn* on strategy (e.g., Jarzabkowski, 2005; Whittington, 2003) and has seen a stream of studies focusing on activities and practices, under the label Strategy-as-Practice (SAP) (Golsorkhi, Rouleau, Seidl, & Vaara, 2010; Jarzabkowski, Balogun, & Seidl, 2007; Whittington & Caillaet, 2008).

Strategy-as-Practice takes its root from practice theory - a stream of social theory that has been sketched by such authors as Bourdieu, Giddens, Taylor, late Foucault, and others (Reckwitz, 2002). SAP research distinguishes itself from the other approaches on strategic management by focusing on a web of social practices (i.e., social interactions, routines conversations, and strategic tools) through which strategic practitioners draft a direction for the firm and assume its achievement is mobilizing through tacit and collective knowledge (Chia, 2004). Thus, researchers in strategic marketing generally concur that three elements of practice theory relevant to the “practice turn”: praxis, practices and practitioners (e.g. Feldman and Orlikowski, 2011; Jarzabkowski et al., 2007, 2016; Schatzki et al., 2001;

Whittington, 2006), - also identified as how, what, and who of practice (Jarzabkowski et al, 2015).

In practice theory, *praxis* refers to human activity (Reckwitz, 2002), which is always embedded within a web of social practices. In other words, praxis relies on practices and practitioners. “The human actor is never a discrete individual detached from context, but rather a social being whose possibilities are defined by the practices in which he or she is immersed” (Vaara & Whittington, 2012, p. 4). The notion of “doing” is intrinsically associated with the nature of *practices*, which reveals the behavioral, cognitive, procedural, discursive, and physical resources of the social practices of the actors. *Strategy practitioners* are those who are in charge of making, shaping, and executing strategies.

In order to better tell the differences between practice, practices, and practitioners, it would be illuminating to take a close look at diverse definitions of each concept in Table 5



	<b>Authors</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Praxis - HOW	Jarzabkowski et al. (2007)	"Situated, socially accomplished flows of activities that strategically are consequential for the direction and survival of the group, organization, or industry."	Highlight praxis is contextual and social flows of activities.
	Whittington, (2006)	"Comprises the interconnection between the actions of different, dispersed individuals and groups and those socially, politically, and economically embedded institutions within which individuals act and to which they contribute."	Delineate the more micro (what people are doing) and macro (what is going on in society) level of strategizing.
Practices - WHAT	Sztompka, (1991)	"Routinized types of behavior which consist of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge."	Units of analysis are focused on examining how practices are drawn upon, how to use them alter over time.
	Schatzki (2001)	"Embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activities centrally organized around shared practical understanding."	Highlight the nature of practices is doing.
	Jarzabkowski et al. (2007)	"Behavioral, cognitive, procedural, discursive, motivational, and physical practices that are combined coordinated and adapted to construct practice."	Outline the fact that practices could be behavioral, cognitive, procedural, discursive, motivational and physical

	Vaara & Whittington (2012)	"Practices refer to the various tools, norms, and procedures of strategy work."	It implies that the use of tools and norms, procedures reflect the strategy doing in daily life.
Practitioners - WHO	Jarzabkowski & Whittington (2008)	"Strategy's practitioners are defined widely to include both those directly involved in making strategy – most prominently managers and consultants – and those with indirect influence – the policy-makers, the media, the gurus, and the business schools who shape legitimate praxis and practices."	Delineate the direct and indirect level of practitioners.
	Vaara & Whittington (2012)	"Those involved in or seeking to influence, strategy-making."	Outline the aim of the practitioner's practice – making, shaping, and executing the strategies.
	Jarzabkowski et al. (2007)	"Actors who shape the construction of practice through who they are, how they act, and what resources they draw upon."	Emphasize the importance of the elements such as personality, education, culture, skill, the purpose of the practitioner may influence their strategy making.

*Table 5 - Definitions of praxis, practices, and practitioners*

## ***Research on praxis***

From the practice perspective, the question of what practices are enacted (i.e., praxis) is essential to understand. *Praxis* could be activated at a micro-level as well as at a macro level. For instance, at a macro and institutional level, praxis has been studied as merger and acquisition behavior within an industry, likewise, at the micro-level, as a particular individual or group of individuals engaged in merger and acquisition activity (Vaara et al., 2004).

Praxis involves discrete but interrelated social actions of different individuals, groups, and institutions (Sztompka 1991). Take, for example, from an individual perspective, Stensaker and Falkenberg (2007) study organizational responses to change over time and found that individuals' (e.g., employees or middle managers) interpretative responses affect the implementation of a corporate change. Brundin and Nordqvist (2008) show how negative emotional dynamics between the two board members prevent discussion of the most critical and urgent strategic issues, and thereby impede strategic change. From a group perspective, Balogun and Johnson (2005) investigate how the daily informal interactions (e.g., gossiping, rumor-mongering) between the middle managers shape the sense-making around a strategic change in a manner beyond top management control. Similarly, Ambrosini et al. (2007) observe the actual work of staff in two organizations closely and suggest that inter-team coordination as a resource advantage is a critical factor in delivering increased customer satisfaction.

From an institution perspective, studies such as the one of Salvato (2003) study the underlying dynamic capabilities of strategic initiatives of two mid-sized companies and found out that they operate more through repeated recombination of stable "core micro-strategies" (i.e., established system of interconnected routines, micro-activities, and resources) than

through disruptive change to the fundamental organizational fabric. Given the above, it is inevitable that *praxis* is “not simply to document activity in itself but also to illuminate the performed nature of practices” (Vaara & Whittington, 2012, p.10). *Praxis* and *practices* are mutually constitutive.

### ***Research on practices***

For two decades, SAP scholars have studied a wide range of practices comprise strategic planning, analytical practices, socio-material practices, and the discursive practices of strategy. Ocasio and Joseph (2008) track the evolution of strategic planning practices at the General Electric Company (GE) during six CEO regimes and claim that strategic planning does not “fall” (Mintzberg, 1994). Instead, it is a dynamically evolving practice that requires the involvement of the CEO in its design and specialized governance channels for decision-making and communications in its implementation. The study of Molloy and Whittington (2005) on eight on-going reorganizations explores the tension between standardization and customization in reorganization processes and highlights the critical role of material and analytical practices.

Beyond simple rational strategy analysis, research in “practice” covers the social and the material as well. Some studies have examined socio-material practices such as strategy workshops (MacIntosh et al. 2010), strategy meetings (Liu & Maitlis 2014), committees (Hoon, 2007), formal teams (Hendry, Kiel & Nicholson, 2010) and various formal administrative routines (Jarzabkowski 2005); whereas others have interested in objects or artifacts such as cardboard (Whittington et al., 2006), Whiteboard, Post-it notes, or PowerPoint (Kaplan, 2011). The objects are not inherently meaningful (Jarzabkowski, Balogun & Seidl, 2007); instead, they are made meaningful through social interaction. They may represent practices and contribute to forming strategic activities based on their situations

of use (Sztompka, 1991). Moreover, *practices* are shaped, transmitted, enacted, and improved by *practitioners*. Thus, *practices* and *practitioners* are entangled.

### ***Research on practitioners***

Practice study advocates that practitioners are not the unaffected individuals, rather the social beings that be influenced by gender, education, and national culture, and whose socio-political and rhetorical skills make a difference to how they work and what they can achieve (Rouleau, 2005; Samra-Fredericks, 2005; Vaara & Whittington, 2012).

Practitioners play different direct roles in strategy making, such as 1/ senior executives for whom strategy is the core of their work (Sztompka, 1991). 2/ Strategic planners who build strategy (Grant & Spender, 1996). 3/ Middle managers who are engaging in strategy work through the implementation of strategy, middle-top-down processes of agenda seeking, proposal selection, and information filtering (Davids, 1995). Practitioners also play an indirect role (i.e., outside strategy advisers) such as strategy consultants, business gurus (Floyd & Lane, 2000), and customers (Clark, 2004).

Beyond the organizational positions of the practitioners, research also claims that some other specific characteristics of practitioners, such as their cognitive traits (Powell et al., 2011), roles (Mantere, 2008), identity (Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994), skills (Jarzabkowski, 2008) and subjectivity (Dameron and Torset, 2014) are having substantial implications for practice use in different firms. For instance, Gavetti and Rivkin's (2007) stress that Lycos, an engineer dominated web research engine, have different searching algorithms to those of Yahoo that is dominated by marketers. Angwin et al. (2009) advocate that senior strategy directors play an 'interconnected' role in strategy formation and implementation. In the case of the introduction of planning practices in a new context, Oakes et al. (1998) show how the

professional identity change of practitioners can influence their actions in successive planning episodes. Dameron and Torset (2014) find the different kinds of strategy discourse (e.g., mystification, disciplining, or technologization) and stress that the art of strategists discursively cope with tensions can be conceptualized as a way of doing strategy. Certain discourse can render actors central as “strategists” and exclude others from strategic activities (Mantere & Vaara, 2008). In this respect, the study of Laine and Vaara (2007) sheds light on how some managers legitimate their power positions with the aid of strategy discourse, whereas engineers distance themselves from strategy by appeal to the technique focused discourse.

Given the above, the three elements of the theory of practice: praxis, practices, and practitioners, are highly entangled and mutually influenced. Practitioners are inseparably carriers of practices, while practices have only a virtual existence outside of praxis (Jarzabkowski et al., 2015). We might use “praxis,” “practices,” and “practitioners” separately as the units of analysis for studying how strategy-as-practice is constructed, each of which constitutes a different analytic choice (Jarzabkowski, 2005).

### ***Strategizing - doing of strategy***

Against this backdrop, strategy research claims that strategy should not be considered as something that an organization has but something its members “do” (Denis, Langley & Rouleau, 2007), - strategizing refers to the “doing of strategy.” From a practice perspective, strategizing tends to be the situated activity rather than the abstract processes, and focus more on the routine and people than organizations per se. Jarzabkowski et al. (2007) proposed a framework for representing strategizing comprises the nexus between three fundamental elements of the theory of practice (Sztompka, 1991) - praxis practices, and practitioners.

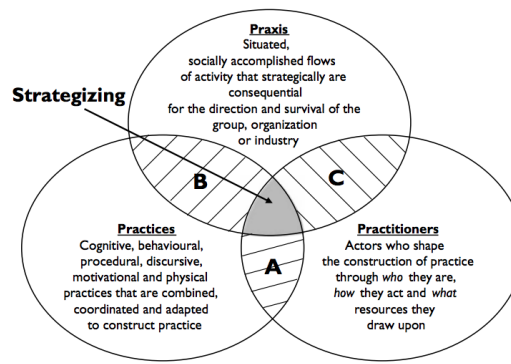


Figure 1. A conceptual framework for analyzing strategy-as-practice  
Source: adapted from Paula Jarzabkowski, Julia Balogun and David Seidl, 2007

### ***Section A: the nexus between practitioners and practices***

Section A overlaps the sphere ‘practices’ and ‘practitioner’ and designates that practitioner derives agency in the doing of strategy. Studies (e.g., Lowendahl & Revang, 1998) in this section are likely to develop micro-level analysis combined with more macro-level outcomes, likewise, as a piece of a larger picture of practices. Beech and Johnson (2005) show how individuals' identities and even their shifting through time could influence their way of doing strategy. Moreover, the practices such as meetings (Jarzabkowski & Seidl, 2008), analytic tools ( Beech & Johnson, 2005; Mantere, 2005; Samra-Fredericks, 2003), management processes and discursive (Dameron & Torset, 2014) have the impact on how practitioners doing strategy.

### ***Section B: the nexus between practices and praxis***

Jarzabkowski et al. (2007, p. 11) define practices as “cognitive, behavioral, procedural, discursive, motivational and physical practices that are combined, coordinated and adapted to construct practice.” In this sense, praxis is considered as the outcome of practices. However, as indicated in the definition, praxis as “situated, socially accomplished flows of activities” is also consequential for the direction and survival of the organization. In this regard, it constitutes in certain way practices - praxis is also the antecedent of practices. Thus, the two concepts are inseparable because they mutually constitute each other.

### *Section C: the nexus between praxis and practitioners*

Strategy-as-practice research views strategy as something that people do (Kaplan, 2011). This perspective outlines the important theoretical focus on strategy practitioners and strategic praxis and practice. For instance, Kaplan (2011) shows how middle managers' ambitions drive the framing and reframing of strategic agenda, and how discursive devices such as disclaimers and self-handicapping influence the practice of strategizing. Through their study, Sillince and Mueller (2007) demonstrate that how social, lateral, and informal processes of sense-making of middle managers as change recipients (i.e., they try to make sense of the change interventions) contribute to both intended and emergent change outcomes. In short, the efficiency of praxis relies massively on practitioners' capacity and motivation to approach and deploy practices. Likewise, practitioners are key mediators between practices and praxis (Balogun & Johnson, 2005).

More specifically, in the marketing field, since the 90s, Contemporary Marketing Practices (CMP) as a formal research program contributes to improving the understanding of marketing practices in different organizational, economic, and cultural contexts. The CMP researcher draws our attention to the underlying theories in marketing, strategic management, and organizational theory that underpin contemporary practices (Whittington, 2006), especially in today's digital environment. The principal of CMP is the use of a multi-theoretical approach with evidence of managerial practice to understand marketing practices better. By adopting a multi-theory position, CMP research breaks through the boundaries of alternative aspects of marketing, and advocates that each aspect is dependent and mutually exclusive (Brodie, Coviello & Winklhofer, 2008). This position allows broadening the view of marketing and identifying, recognizing, and categorizing the fullest possible range of relevant empirical phenomena (Brodie, Coviello & Winklhofer, 2008).



It is also interesting to note that CMP research calls for the study of paradox embedding in technologies (Brodie, Coviello & Winklhofer, 2008). For instance, Mick and Fournier, (1998) study paradox embedded in the consumers technology. Jarvenpaa and Lang (2005) highlights the paradox of mobile technology. Many recent (Aguirre et al., 2015; Martin, Borah & Palmatier, 2017; Xu et al., 2011) shed light on the privacy paradox. These research has investigated the paradox of technology from the practice perspective. Indeed, more and more researchers advocate that paradox theory and practice perspectives share a common base, and the combination of the two theories offers a perspective, which is mutually exclusive and complementary. (Dameron & Torset, 2014; Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Lê & Bednarek, 2016; Jarzabkowski et al, 2007). Lê and Bednarek (2016) coin “Practice-based studies of paradox” as the study of socially constructed paradoxes that are embedded in everyday activities, “*consequential for* broader dynamics including the structural conditions of paradoxes, which supports a *relational view* in which multiple paradoxes and their poles are seen as interdependent and mutually constitutive” (Lê & Bednarek, 2016, p. 13155).

### **Main outputs of the current literature to the reflection on the thesis**

Strategizing—doing of strategy encompasses three fundamental elements that are praxis, practices, and practitioners constitute a holistic way of studying strategy. Notably, the practice-based studies of paradox are of importance in the marketing field, where the practices and the theories are dispersed, unstructured as well as paradoxical.

### **New issues**

As a part of the SAP study, how paradox theory offers a complementary perspective to study strategizing when it comes to marketing?

### **1.2.5 Making sense of paradoxes in organizations**

The Western thought has been unparalleled influenced by Aristotle's logic and the “law of noncontradiction,” which depicts contradictory propositions cannot both be true in the same sense at the same time. This thought was born in Ancient Greece where was dominated by myths, that is, a world ambivalent, a world of twofold powers that are at once true and false (Jullien & Lloyd, 2002). For instance, Apollo could be the Shining God as well as the Dark One. Philosophy was born in this world where gods and things were always confused, to clarify this entanglement of true and false. Supported and theorized by Aristotle, the principle of noncontradiction cut through the ambiguity and declares, “it is impossible that the same thing belong and not belong to the same thing at the same time and in the same respect” (Lukasiewicz & Wedin, p. 487). The formal logic of Aristotle and noncontradiction in philosophy put an end to the ambiguity of myths. The thought became coherent, and the world became stable, categorical, dichotomous, or even antinomic (Ngoc, 2008). This is the world in which European reason prospered (Jullien & Lloyd, 2002). Accordingly, contradictions are considered undesirable and eliminated or hidden (Shrivastava & Persson, 2014). Chen and Lee (2008) states that western analytical rationality as the core of strategic thinking and theory building does not handle “contradictions” very well.

However, some other Greek philosophers have long interested in paradox. For instance, Heraclitus maintained the thought that “all things [even opposites] are one.” He advocated that “there could not be one without the other: no beauty without ugliness, no justice without injustice” (Jullien & Lloyd, 2002). Anaximander noted the paradox of origin and declared anything that has a beginning must have been created by something previously existing, thus creating an infinite regress (Lukowski, 2011). The Philosopher, Eubulides of Miletus and his liar's paradox—A man, says that he is lying. Is what he says true or false? For these Greek

philosophers, paradox involves the logically correct reasoning that would lead to a contradiction that an item was both true and not true (Lukowski, 2011). These thoughts are congruent with the one in Chinese culture. The philosophy of Yin and Yang (阴阳) describes that yin (阴) and yang(阳) are complementary, interdependent opposites and one contains a seed of the other within and it is what makes the whole process possible. Moreover, in Chinese culture, water is a symbol of contradiction and sustainability, and its flexibility and weakness make it “stronger than strength” (Jullien, 2004, p. 171).

### ***Paradoxes in mathematicians, logicians, economists, and psychologists.***

Thus, the notion of paradox takes roots in both Eastern and Western ancient teachings. It has long interested philosophers as well as mathematicians, logicians, economists, and psychologists.

The modern paradox in mathematics and logic concern the notions of ordinal and cardinal numbers. This paradox includes Burali-Forti contradiction and Cantor's Naive Set Theory, which were later extended into Russell's Paradox—if we let  $\phi(x)$  stand for  $x \in x$  and let  $R = \{x: \sim\phi(x)\}$ , then  $R$  is the set whose members are exactly those objects that are not members of themselves. In other words, a set appears to be a member of itself, if and only if it is not a member of itself. As illustrated by Barber Paradox—“In a certain village, there is a barber who shaves all (and only those) villagers who do not shave themselves; does the barber shave himself ?” (Raclavsky, 2013).

Regarding economists, they have been fascinated by the paradoxes between human behavior and economic theory. The Simpson's paradox, the Allais paradox, the Ellsberg paradox, and the Scitovsky reversal paradox are the well-known economic paradoxes

(EconPort, 2011). Simpson's paradox—it is possible to have  $P(A|B) < P(A|B')$  and have at the same time both  $P(A|BC) \geq P(A|B'C)$  and  $P(A|BC') \geq P(A|B'C')$  (Blyth, 1972). Both the Allais paradox and the Ellsberg paradox demonstrate inconsistencies between people's actual choices and predictions of expected utility theory. The Scitovsky reversal paradox reveals a situation in which it appears that switching from allocation A to allocation B will cause an improvement in social welfare when, at the same time switching back from allocation B to allocation A seems to create a similar improvement.

The theories of Carl Jung (1965) in psychology are mainly founded on the principle of paradox. For instance, Jung conceptualized one's conscious and unconscious as the two-sidedness of the self. He advocates that mental health stems from embracing interwoven opposites (i.e., trust-distrust, independence-dependence, love-hate). In other words, as delineated by Jung that light creates shadow, whereas shadow accentuates the light (Schneider, 1990). Jung and his follower use the therapy based on Jung's theory of paradox to heal one's mental illness. The theories of Jung are less straightforward and more symbolic-hermeneutic than causal-mechanistic (Harris, 1996). According to Harris (1996, p. 5), "hermeneutic systems interpret events multidimensionally, whereas causal-mechanistic systems seek to develop immutable meanings and laws." In other words, a hermeneutic system enables freedom to study events via a paradox lens and favorites a both/and approach rather than either/or predicaments.

### ***Definitions of paradox***

Paradox is not a new concept and has been examined in many disciplines. However, there has been no strong consensus regarding the definition of paradox (Cunha & Putnam, 2019; Putnam et al., 2016; Schad, Lewis, Raisch & Smith, 2016; Smith & Lewis, 2011). The word *para παρά* (beyond) and *doxa δόξα* (a common belief) derive from two Greek words

(Rescher, 2001). Ancient Greeks viewed paradoxes as antinomy, that is, the reason is logically correct, and it justifies the opposite.

Modern philosophers define paradox as the situation that “arises when a set of individually plausible propositions is collectively inconsistent” (Rescher, 2001, p. 6). “In Jungian usage, the term of paradox has a broader meaning. To Jungians, paradox need not mean absolute contradiction or inconsistency but includes ambiguity, a puzzle or dilemma, a tension between opposite poles of an issue, even incongruity between elements of a larger whole” (Harris, 1996, p. 4). Sociologists consider paradox as “a self-referential statement in two parts; each of which is unremarkable when taken separately, but irreconcilable in combination” (Arnold, 2003, p.233).

Perret and Josserand (2003) advocate that there exist mainly three types of paradox: logical, semantic, and pragmatic. The logical and semantic paradoxes are the absurd consequences of claiming that ordinary conditionals are truth-functional' (Evans & Over, 2004, p. 19), whereas the pragmatic paradox is the contingent propositions that are “falsified by their own utterance” (Cohen, 1950, p. 85). The pragmatic “refers to the act of utterance” (Chan, 2010, p. 218). Different from logical and semantic paradox, the pragmatic paradox does not concern the inner contradictions of a statement; rather, it concerns the contradictory impression of the statement. For instance, the sentence “She loves me, but I do not know” is not contradictory, because the two parts could be true; nevertheless, the second statement seems to reject the perception of the first statement (Nadeau, 1999), and thus constitute a pragmatic paradox. In their book “*Le paradoxe : penser et gérer autrement les organisations*” Perret and Josserand (2003) adopt a pragmatic paradox lens to study diverse organizational phenomena as it enables one to better understand the dynamic system of the complex interactions of an organization. Moreover, they explain that, by adopting a pragmatic paradox

perspective, researchers enter into a real universe of human interaction that is conditioned by circumstances and context, rather than a purely logical universe (Perret & Josserand, 2003).

In view of the above, we adopt the pragmatic paradox perspective because this thesis aims at understanding the underlying dynamic system of the organization. In this sense, Lewis and Smith (2011, p. 386) define paradox as “contradictory yet interrelated elements that exist simultaneously and persist over time”. These interrelated elements seem "logical when considered in isolation but irrational, inconsistent, and even absurd when juxtaposed" (Lewis, 2000, p. 760). This definition is generally accepted and shared by the management and strategy scholars. However, Cunha and Putnam (2019) criticize the convergence of the essential features of paradox stemming from this definition in the management research.

Moreover, they point out “The paradox of success, while reaping the benefits of convergence, may result in worldviews that simplify and desensitize members to divergent environmental demands (p. 96).

### ***Paradox and related concepts***

Beyond the controversy of the definition of the paradox, the concept of paradox is often confused with notions such as contradiction, ambivalence, ambiguity, and ambidexterity (Atuahene-Gima, 2005; Tse, 2013). Table 6 compares the divers definitions and highlights the fundamental differences between these notions. We also displayed the different ambivalence in the Appendix 1.

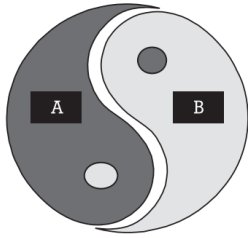
<b>Concept</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Definitions</b>	<b>Related research topics</b>
Ambidexterity	Tushman & O'Reilly (1996)	“Ability to simultaneously pursue both incremental and discontinuous innovation and change.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambidexterity and firm performance (Ellis &amp; Tishler, 2012)</li> <li>• Ambidexterity as a dynamic capability (O'Reilly &amp; Tushman, 2008)</li> <li>• Ambidexterity and innovation (Tallman, &amp; Almeida, 2012)</li> <li>• Strategic marketing ambidexterity (Josephson et al., 2016)</li> </ul>
Ambiguity	Ellsberg, (1961)	“A quality depending on the amount, type, and 'unanimity' of information, and giving rise to one's degree of 'confidence' in an estimate of relative likelihoods.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambiguity, uncertainty, risk (Ellsberg, 1961)</li> <li>• Ambiguity, ignorance and decision making (Fox &amp; Tversky, 1995)</li> <li>• Ambiguity and vagueness (Daft &amp; Wiginton, 1979)</li> </ul>
Ambivalence	Laplanche & Pontalis, (1974)	“The simultaneous co-existence of contradictory tendencies, attitudes, or feelings in the relationship to a single object.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cognitive ambivalence (Thompson et al., 1995).</li> <li>• Affective ambivalence (Jonas, Broemer, &amp; Diehl, 2000)</li> <li>• Affective-cognitive ambivalence (Lavine, Thomsen, Zanna, &amp; Borgida, 1998).</li> <li>• Subjective ambivalence (Otnes, Lowrey, &amp; Shrum, 1997)</li> <li>• Evaluative ambivalence (Plambeck &amp; Weber, 2009).</li> </ul>
Paradox	Lewis & Smith (2011)	“Contradictory yet interrelated elements that exist simultaneously and persist over time.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paradox and exploitation-exploration tension (Andriopoulos &amp; Lewis, 2009)</li> <li>• Paradox and discursive construction of strategist's subjectivities (Dameron &amp; Torset, 2014)</li> <li>• Paradox and managerial sense-making (Lu &amp; Lewis, 2008)</li> <li>• Paradox and humor (Hatch &amp; Erhlich, 1993)</li> <li>• Paradoxes of technology (Fournier &amp; Mick, 1998)</li> <li>• Paradoxes of data privacy-personalization (Xu et al., 2011)</li> </ul>

*Table 5. Delineate the concepts of paradox, strategic contradiction, ambivalence, Ambiguity and ambidexterity*

Schad et al. (2016) contend that ambivalence and ambiguity are the potential adverse outcomes of experiencing paradox, whereas the ambidexterity is the potential positive outcome when an organization tries to work through, rather than against paradox. Organizational ambidexterity signifies that firms are capable of simultaneous exploiting current competencies and exploring new domains with equal dexterity (Lubatkin et al. 2006). In the marketing field, *exploration* refers to R&D capabilities to search, develop and acquire new opportunities and knowledge through innovative activities (Tallman & Almeida, 2012), whereas *exploitation* consists in extracting value or economic rents from the current environment with the existing competencies (Voss and Voss 2013). Marketing-based exploitation and exploration activities focus respectively on value extraction and creation (Josephson et al., 2015) and allow a firm heading of competitors and market turbulence (Vorhies et al. 2011) as well as develop the stronger competitive positions in the current market context (Han et al. 2001). In the literature of ambidexterity, there are two points of view: some scholars considerate strategic marketing ambidexterity (i.e., exploitation and exploration) is mutually exclusive (e.g., Raisch and Birkinshaw, 2008), whereas others suggest that the two can, and do, coexist simultaneously (e.g., Andriopoulos & Lewis 2009). The latter view suggests that a balanced alignment of exploitation and exploration is preferred because it allows a firm to be present-oriented as well as be able to look towards the future.

Beyond those confusing and sometimes interchangeable notions, the concept of '*paradox*' is frequently confused with the concept of *dilemma*, *dialectic*, *trade-off* and *puzzle* in the universal language as well as organizational tension. (See Figure 2)





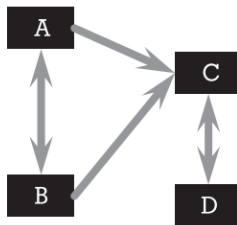
### Paradox

A paradox is ‘contradictory yet interrelated elements that exist simultaneously and persist over time’ (Lewis and Smith, 2011). Paradox manifests as a tension, which constitutes two elements that seem logical when considered individually, but irrational, inconsistent, and absurd when juxtaposed (Lewis and Smith, 2011). Just like the symbol of Yin and Yang, dualities (A and B) co-exist within a unified whole.



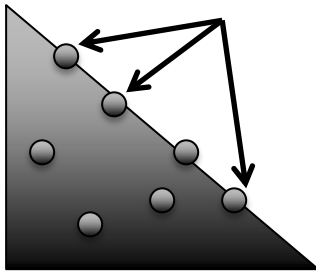
### Dilemma

A dilemma designates a tension with competing choices and each with clear advantages and disadvantages (Richins, 2004). The solution to cope with the dilemma consists of weighing the pros and cons (A or B) (Lewis and Smith, 2011).



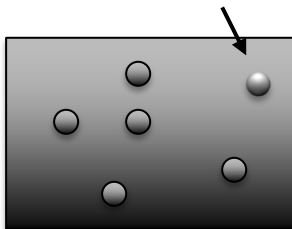
### Dialectic or synthesis

Dialectic refers to a continuing process of resolving tensions through integration (synthesis) of contrasting elements (thesis and antithesis)- (A and B into C), which, over time, will confront new opposition (Lewis and Smith, 2011). It is an alternative approach to tension.



### Trade-off

A trade-off refers to a problem situation in which there many possible solutions. In between, two conflicting elements strike a different balance as one optimal solution line. In a trade-off, the two opposites can be combined and have their own pros-cons, but none of the many solutions is inherently superior to the other. The objective of trade-off is to continually strive to find the most appropriate balance between the solutions.



### Puzzle

Strategy tensions can be viewed as puzzles. The pair of opposites look like incompatible because the puzzle is not well understand yet. But there is an optimal solutions.

Figure 2. Different strategy tensions

Through their action research, Luscher and Lewis (2008) find that the more managers push to explore one side of the tension, the more it accentuates the opposite. Cameron and Quinn (1988) claim that often actors impose an 'either/or' choice to cope with tensions whereas a both/and could be more beneficial as it examines the impacts of plurality and change, improving our understandings of divergent perspectives and disruptive experiences (Mcgrath, 1981).

### ***Level and category of paradox***

“The term of paradox has been used in over 300 studies published from 1990–1997” (Lewis, 2000, p. 760), it proves that more and more management and organization researchers are interested in this field of research. This enthusiasm stems from the external environment that has become more global, fast-paced, and competitive as well as the internal organizational process has become more complicated with the increasing salient and persistent contradictory demands (Lewis, 2000). In fact, organizations are increasingly pressed to be efficient and effective, visionary and profitable, individual-collective, to explore and to exploit, to transform and to build routines, to integrate and to differentiate as well as to cooperate and compete (e.g., Dameron & Torset, 2014; Driscoll, 2008; Saren & Pels, 2008; Smith & Lewis, 2011; Smith & Tushman, 2005;). At an individual level, the tensions may manifest in someone’s everyday work, for instance, coordinating and brokering new activities, participative and directive leadership, passion and profits, change and stability, or learning and performance (Denison et al., 1995; Gebert, Boerner, & Kearney, 2010).

Beyond the different levels, that paradox surfaces, Smith and Lewis (2011) delineate four types of tensions: learning (knowledge), organizing (processes), belonging (identity/interpersonal relationships), and performing (goal and outcomes) paradoxes.

- *Learning (knowledge) paradoxes* encompasses tensions between old and new mode of operation, stability and change, or exploration and exploitation (Klarner & Raisch, 2013; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008) and raise different temporal orientations (i.e., short term vs the long term) (Slawinski & Bansal, 2015). *Learning paradoxes* examine how organizations break down past understandings and construct new processes and frames of reference. The related literature to *learning paradoxes* includes Sensemaking (Lüscher & Lewis, 2008), Innovation (Hunt & Ropo, 1995), and Transformation (Davis, Maranville, & Obloj, 1997; Vince & Broussine, 1996).
- *Organizing (processes) paradoxes* stem from a complex system within a firm that enables competing designs and processes to achieve the desired outcome. This paradox considers the processes of balancing conflicting forces within organizations can be found in research alignment and flexibility (Gibson& Birkinshaw, 2004) or between controlling and empowering employees (Gebert, Boerner, & Kearney, 2010).
- Because of the diversity of internal and external demands as well as the plurality of stakeholders, *performing paradoxes* manifest as competing goals and outcomes.
- *Belonging paradoxes* (identities and interpersonal relationships) represent the competing identities (i.e., self and others) within organizations (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014) or across the organization (Schad, Lewis, Raisch & Smith, 2016). This type of paradox deals with the tensions between individual and collective affiliations, focuses on understanding the conflicting roles and values between the individual and the collective.

### ***Salience of paradox***

Paradox researchers suggest that paradoxical tensions can exist either as inherent phenomena (i.e., existing within the system) as well as socially constructed (i.e., created by actors' cognition or rhetoric). In their research, Lewis and Smith (2011) propose that paradoxical tensions may exist in both ways within a firm. Against this backdrop, the two researchers conceptualized two types of tensions – latent tension and salient tension.

Latent tensions are the opposite yet interrelated elements incorporated in organizing processes. These latent tensions become salient when environmental factors or cognitive efforts accentuate the oppositional and relational nature of dualities (Lewis, 2000). The researchers advocate that environmental factors such as plurality, change, and scarcity render latent tensions salient. Plurality refers to the competing demands of multiple stakeholders. Change emphasizes tensions between new capabilities and existing competencies (Lüscher & Lewis, 2008). Scarcity in terms of resources (i.e., time, financial resources) challenges firms to meet competing, yet coexisting demands (Smith, 2014). Plurality, change, and scarcity accentuated by the growing globalization (Smith and Lewis, 2011), rapid technological innovation (Bradach, 1997), and hyper-competition (Iansiti, 1995), push organization to be more flexible, and to address the demands of an array of different stakeholders.

### ***Responses to paradox***

In order to cope with diverse tensions, managers use a variety of response strategies (e.g., Poole & Van de Ven, 1989; Vince & Broussine, 1996), which can be mainly classified into defensive and active responses (Lewis, 2000; Smith and Lewis, 2011). Pole and Van de Ven (1989) propose four responses to working with the paradox:

1) *opposition* consists of accepting the paradox and learning from juxtaposing contradictory propositions and assumptions. The opposition is an active response whereas the other three strategies are defensive responses;

2) *spatial separation* consists in clarifying the levels of reference and connections of paradox (e.g., part-whole, micro-macro, or individual-society);

3) *temporal separation* involves taking the role of time into account by assuming that the two horns of the paradox are holding during two periods; “the two contrary assumptions or processes exert separate influence, and each may influence the other through its prior action.” (p.566);

4) *synthesis resolution* refers to the introduction of new terms to resolve the paradox.

Later, Lewis (2000) catalogs six defensive responses and three active responses. The six defensive responses are 1/ *Splitting* competing elements to polarize contradictions *further*. 2/ *Projecting* paradoxical attributes or feelings to a third party. 3/ *Repressing or denying* tensions by the blocking of awareness of experience or memories. 4/ *Regressing* to more secure actions or understandings. 5/ *Reaction* that is forming oppositional actions or beliefs. 6/ *Ambivalence*, which involves compromising to engage both alternatives with “‘lukewarm’ reactions that lose the vitality of extremes” (p. 763). The three active responses are 7/ *Acceptance*, which indicates a willingness to live with the elements that cause tension. 8/ *Confrontation* that consists of working through directly the sources of paradox; 9) *Transcendence*, that refers to a mode of thinking in which paradoxical elements are understood as complex interdependencies rather than contradictory interests.

As a complement to these two conceptual research, Jarzabkowski, Lê, and Van de Ven (2013) identify four empirical responses to paradoxes in a longitudinal case study of Telco's restructuring. Their research emphasizes 1/ *adjusting* as an active response, which deals with both poles of the tension by satisfying the need of both. 2/ *Splitting*, as a defensive response that separates contradictory elements either temporally (dealing with one, then the other) or spatially (compartmentalizing elements into different areas). 3/ *Suppressing*, another type of defensive response that consists of prioritizing one pole of tension so that it can overrule the other pole. 4/ *opposing*, a defensive response that involves active confrontation and conflict in order to separate contradictory elements.

Although the individual tends to reject the paradoxes (Orenes & Johnson-Laird, 2012) because the tensions foster anxiety (Freud, 1937), researchers in management and organization theories have widely adopted paradox as a powerful lens for understanding and managing complex organizational tensions (e.g., Dameron & Torset, 2014; Smith et al., 2010; Wareham et al. 2014). The heuristic value of paradox lies in its ability to question and point out the inconsistencies of reasoning, an opinion, a situation, and a problem. (Perret & Jossierand, 2003). Thus, it allows “avoiding ‘jumping to solutions’ and encourages the use of creativity to find ways of benefiting from both sides of a tension at the same time” (Wit & Meyer, 2010, p.16). Moreover, choosing among competing tensions enables only short-term performance, whereas making continuous efforts to meet multiple and divergent demands results in long-term sustainability (Lewis, 2000; Smith & Lewis, 2011). A summary of the main articles that have investigated paradox in different contexts is presented in the Appendix 2.

### ***Strategic Yin-Yang balancing logic***

Strategic Chinese thinking is a process of ongoing transformation that focuses on continuous adaptation and on taking advantage of the unfolding potential of a situation (Shrivastava & Persson, 2006). The ongoing transformation and continuous adaptation processes are linked to a critical indigenous research concept (Li, 2012), namely a Yin-Yang logic (Li, 1998). This frame of thinking is an open system (Gu, 2005), which, in essence, considers all contradictions as a permanent yet relative natural phenomenon and treats them with a both/and approach. Li (1998) emphasizes that Chinese culture involves “a holistic, dynamic, and paradoxical epistemology which views everything in the universe as interdependent and interactive” (p. 829). The ability to embrace contradictions constitutes a significant cultural difference between Western and Eastern cultures, as most Western cultures are heavily influenced by Aristotle's formal logic, which tends to avoid potential contradictions and prioritizes an either/or approach (Jullien & Lloyd, 2002; Ngoc, 2008). For the Chinese, contradictions reflect the essence of reality (Faure & Fang, 2008; Li, 2016; Shrivastava & Persson, 2006). The Chinese approach to strategy allows for contradictions and ambiguities to maximize the potential of the situation (Jullien, 2004). As one Chinese expression illustrates 无为而无不为 “do nothing (on purpose) without neglecting anything” (Chen, 2011). Yin Yang balancing approach illustrates that Chinese see opposites inherently containing the seed of the other and together forming a dynamic unity (Chen, 2001).

### ***Paradox research in the marketing field***

In the marketing field, an increasing number of researchers are asking for a renewed understanding of strategic marketing and management as the capability to manage contradictions, oppositions and tensions (Josephson, Johnson & Mariadoss, 2015; O'Driscoll,

2008; Saren and Pels, 2008). The study of paradox in marketing involves the service recovery paradox (e.g., Gohary, Hamzeli & Pourazizi, 2016; Hübner, Wagner & Kurpjuweit, 2018;), the tension between authenticity and advertising (e.g., De Mooij, 2018; Stern, 1994; Rose & Wood, 2005;), the paradoxical consumers experience with respect to technology (e.g., Fournier & Mick, 1998; Jarvenpaa & Lang, 2005; Johnson, Bardhib & Dunn, 2008) as well as the tension between personalization strategy and data privacy (Aguirre et al., 2015; Norberg, Horne & Horne, 2007; Xu et al., 2011;).

Service recovery paradox (SRP) refers to a situation where a customer's satisfaction is enhanced after a service failure thanks to a superior recovery. Hart, Heskett, and Sasser (1990) notes, "a good recovery can turn angry, frustrated customers into loyal ones. It can, in fact, create more goodwill than if things had gone smoothly in the first place" (p. 148). SRP has been studied in various contexts, such as transportation, hospitality, finance, and organizational ethic (Hart et al., 1990; Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002).

Concerning advertising and media, marketing researchers shed limited light on the paradoxes involved in advertising's attempt and the management of the persona's paradoxical components to achieve authenticity (Stern, 1994). The study of Stern (1994) finds out three persona's paradoxical components — reality vs. fictionality, originality vs. reproducibility, and revelation vs. concealment. Zinkhan and Ford (2005) further investigate these phenomena and delineate four underlying paradoxes related to authenticity in marketing messages — information vs. entertainment, information vs. meaning enhancement, decisions based on price vs. decisions based on other attributes, and too much information vs. just enough (p. 544).



“Technologies of many kinds perform in ways that are ironic, perverse and paradoxical” (Arnold, 2003, p. 231). To this concern, Mick and Fournier's (1998) qualitative research show how consumers react to the technological products and underline a set of eight paradoxes — assimilation vs. isolation, control vs. chaos, efficiency vs. inefficiency, fulfills vs. creates needs, engaging vs. disengaging, competence vs. incompetence, freedom vs. enslavement, and new vs. obsolete. This research shows that consumers can fluctuate between opposing positive and negative experiences at times.

Similar to technological paradoxes, recently, marketing research has granted increasingly important attention to data privacy and personalization paradoxes (Aguirre et al., 2015; Norberg, Horne & Horne, 2007; Sutanto, 2013; Xu et al., 2011). With the aid of the data technology, the process of personalized marketing has been facilitated and reached a one-to-one level at scale (Ansari & Mela 2003; Peppers et al., 1999; ). But, paradoxically, greater personalization of marketing approach may expand customer's sense of vulnerability and suspicion, and finally result in lower adoption rates (Aguirre et al., 2015). An unduly intrusive personalized marketing action such as online advertisement (Aguirre et al. 2015), emailing (White et al. 2008), location-aware marketing (Xu et al., 2011) may cause customers to experience certain discomfort (Tucker, 2012), or at worst, it could lead to customer's reactance vis-à-vis the marketing message (White et al. 2008).

In other words, the tension between intimacy and intrusion (Malley & Evans 1997) of relationship marketing turns out to be more than ever challenging in digital-enabled marketing. However, despite the fact that “when environments are complex and changing, conditions are ripe for the experience of contradiction, incongruity, and incoherence and the recognition of paradox and ambiguity within organizations” (Hatch & Ehrlich, 1993, P. 505–506), to the best of our knowledge, no previous study has examined marketing strategy

formation via a paradox lens, or studied the strategic responses of marketing practitioners to the paradoxes.

### **Main outputs of the current literature to the reflection on the thesis**

Many types of paradoxes are embedded in organizational activities. As the environment of most organization is becoming more turbulent, these paradoxes become more than ever salient. Faced with paradox, the responses of practitioners differ according to the context. In today's marketplace where technologies have caused numerous tensions, paradox offers an alternative way to study how marketers strategize in today's digital environment.

### **New issues**

What are paradoxical marketing practices in today's digital environment? How these practices constitute marketing strategizing? What are the responses of practitioners to the various paradoxes they encounter, notably the personalization privacy paradox?

### 1.3 Research questions

Given the literature review, we identify three main theoretical gaps in strategic marketing and paradox literature. First, in the area of strategic marketing research, the strategy formation based on the marketing strategizing (i.e., praxis, practices, and practitioners) in today's digital environment is still mostly unknown. Second, in the area of paradox research, the knowledge concerning the paradoxes that are specific to today's digital-enabled marketing management is scant, and there is no evidence of how the managerial responses to these paradoxes shape marketing strategies. Third, there is a lack of knowledge concerning the managerial responses to today's digital-enabled marketing paradoxes. For example, there is no empirical evidence of how managers respond to personalization-privacy paradox. To address these gaps, we conduct three essays to address a general research question and three sub research questions accordingly, as illustrated in Table 6.

<b>General research question:</b> How the practice of strategic marketing constitutes marketing strategizing in today's digital environment, especially through a paradox perspective?			
Essay 1.	<b>Gap 1.</b> Lack of understanding of marketing strategizing (i.e., praxis, practices, and practitioners) in today's digital environment.	<b>Q1.</b> What is marketing strategizing in today's digital environment?	Praxis focus
Essay 2	<b>Gap2.</b> Lack of knowledge concerning the paradoxes that are specific to digital-enabled marketing management and how the management of these paradoxes constitutes strategic marketing.	<b>Q2.</b> How paradoxical marketing practice, especially in today's digital environment, constitute and affect the content of resulting marketing strategies?	Practices focus
Essay 3	<b>Gap3.</b> Lack of knowledge concerning managerial response to today's digital-enabled marketing paradoxes. For example, there is no empirical evidence of how managers respond to the personalization-privacy paradox.	<b>Q3.</b> What are the responses of marketing practitioners to the paradox to personalization privacy paradox?	Practitioner focus

*Table 6. General research problems and questions*

## **1.4 Research objectives**

In line with contemporary marketing practice (CMP) research, this thesis advocates the importance of practice in marketing strategy study and emphasizes that the Strategy-as-Practice (SAP) approach and the paradox lens offer various interesting theories, concepts, and methods that marketing research should not neglect. The objective of this thesis is threefold. Firstly, it aims at deepening the understanding of what does marketing strategizing implies in today's digital environment from an SAP perspective. Secondly, it sets out to find out the tensions and paradoxes embedding in the practice of marketing strategy in today's digital environment. Thirdly, it seeks to provide evidence of how digital and marketing managers respond to the paradox in their daily activities.

## **1.5 Research design**

Essay #1 overviews the digital transformations and its impact on the marketing field from the strategizing perspective - that is – praxis, practices, and practitioner. Over the last decades, numerous researchers have studied how the digital has changed the practice of strategic marketing. Therefore, those pieces of research have often studied one aspect of digital marketing and neglected the crucial interactions between the praxis, practices, and practitioners in the digital marketing field. Accordingly, Essay #1 addresses the increasing difficulty in understanding how digital transforms the marketing field, how digital tools and technologies shape marketing strategy, and how digital practitioners influence the outcome of digital marketing strategy. Essay #1 provides a conceptual framework, which first of all allows categorizing the sparse extant literature of digital marketing into three domains of strategizing – namely praxis, practices, and practitioners; secondly it highlights the underlying

interactions and the relationship between the three domains of digital marketing strategizing, and it discusses different levels of analysis. By combining the three aspects of strategizing, we picture a situated and socially accomplished flow of professional marketing practice in today's digital environment. At the end of section, we also provide a future agenda. From this perspective, we may say that Essay#1 is praxis focused.

Essay#2 proposes an alternative conceptualization of how paradoxical marketing practices constitute the marketing strategy in today's digital environment to better understand the role played by digitized forms of materiality in the 'strategic conversation' and the changes in strategy making that digitized forms allow. This essay enriches the "conversation with paradox" as well as extends the knowledge of strategizing materials (Dameron, Lê, & LeBaron, 2015). Based on twenty-two qualitative interviews with digital and marketing managers from various industries, we explore the tension between the strategic dimensions of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment. Our analysis brings out eighteen marketing dimensions, which constitute nine paradoxes. The main results of our research provide evidence of what are the specific paradoxes of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment. It suggests that marketing strategizing in today's digital environment can be conceptualized as the art of balancing simultaneously and circularly the opposite dimension (tensions). By shedding light on the paradoxical practices within the digital-enabled marketing organization, Essay#2 focuses on practices.

Essay#3 responds to the call of Cunha and Putnam (2019), which encourages the empirical study on how organizations and their members deal with paradox. Essay#3 investigates the response strategy used by the marketing managers to deal with the personalization-privacy paradox (PPP) through experimental quantitative research. The

findings of this exploratory research allow extending the current paradox literature by providing preliminary empirical evidence about how marketing practitioners respond to PPP under the influence of the characteristics of the PPP (i.e., salient vs. latent paradox, high vs. low time constraint, high vs. low uncertainty) and personal factors (i.e., high vs. low cognitive complexity, high vs. low emotional equanimity). Essay#3 contributes to enriching the *repertoires* of the responses that the organization uses to deal with multiple paradoxical elements. Essay#3 focuses mainly on the practitioners by taking into account their psychological characteristics.

In a nutshell, the three essays of this thesis focus on praxis, practices as well as practitioners. In this sense, we can say that the whole thesis has adopted a strategy as a practice perspective (Figure 3).

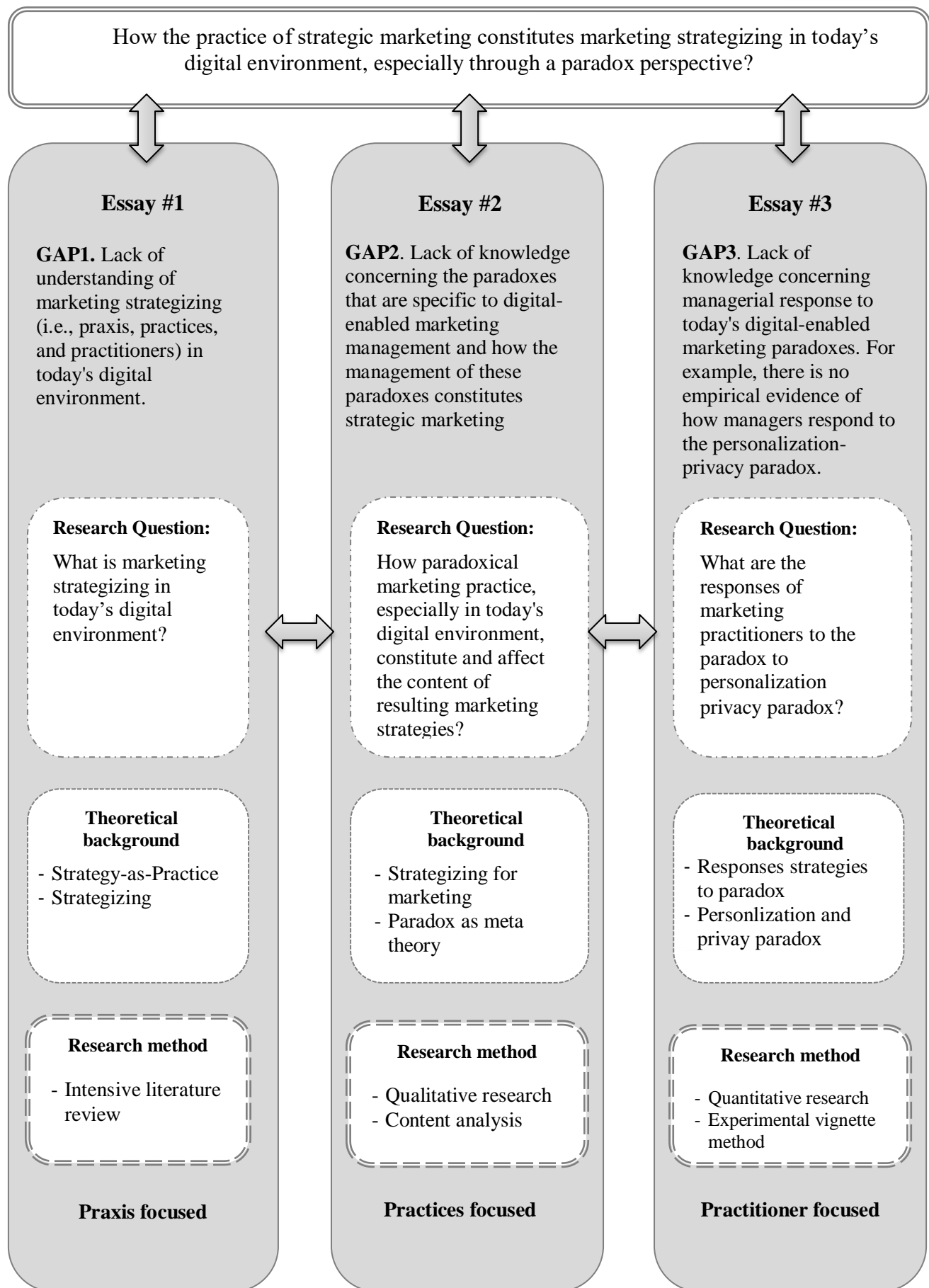


Figure 3. Overall research design

## **1.6 Contributions**

### **1.6.1 Theoretical contributions**

From a theoretical point of view, our thesis has three theoretical contributions. First, we test the boundary conditions of the existing literature in today's digital environment. In Essay #1, we apply a strategizing framework (Jarzabkowski, Balogun & Seidl, 2007) in the context of digital-enabled marketing. In Essay #2, we test the tension-based strategy (Dameron & Torset, 2014) as well as the categorization of paradox (Smith & Lewis, 2011) in the context of digital-enabled marketing. In Essay #3, we apply the response strategy (Jarzabkowski, Lê; Van de Ven, 2013) in the context of the personalization-privacy paradox.

Second, we deepen the existing literature through two essays. Essay #2 permits the deepening of the existing knowledge of the embedded tensions in the strategic practices and extending the understanding of how paradoxical practices constitute strategizing. Through Essay #3, we extend the existing literature of the response strategy to the paradox by adding two more factors (i.e., time constraint and uncertainty) and one type of response (i.e., indecision).

Third, we test empirically the robustness of the three elements stemming from the equilibrium model of Smith and Lewis (2011), and the four response strategies of the study of Jarzabkowski (2013) with a new methodology – Essay #3.

### **1.6.2 Managerial contributions**

Sharing the responsibility for integrating strategic contradictions may occur at the different levels of management (i.e., leader, senior manager, middle manager, or operational staff) (Bunderson & Sutcliffe 2003). Very often, the practitioners consider that making



decisions means to make an 'either/or' choice. However, they widely ignore the benefice of both/and approach, which examines the impacts of plurality and change and improves our understandings of divergent perspectives and disruptive experiences (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Through empirical research, our thesis allows emerging the tensions embedded in the marketing practices in today's digital environment and advocates that the marketing strategizing consist of managing and balancing the opposite and interrelated tensions simultaneously. As a consequence, managers and other practitioners can benefit from a high awareness of paradox management. This awareness is essential because research shows that the ability to embrace the contradictory demands simultaneously is associated with various advantages in not only the individual level or group level but also the corporate level.

### ***Individual-level***

The paradox is an alternative means for managers to consider other perspectives (DeCock & Rickards, 1996; Lüscher & Lewis, 2008). Managers who accept the paradox and potential synergies of their challenges can experience less anxiety and stress (Lewis, 2000). Studies have shown that embracing simultaneously the contradictory demands are associated with career success (Murnighan & Conlon, 1991) and the development of excellent leadership capabilities (O'Mahony & Bechky 2006). Wendt (1998) explains, “The wisdom extracted from organizational paradoxes can change how we think more than what we think” (p. 361).

### ***Group level***

By managing organizational paradoxes as a dynamic equilibrium, fosters learning, and creativity. From his empirical research with fifty-four highly creative individuals, Denison et al. (1995) conclude that their ingenuity comes from the ability to juxtapose opposing ideas.

Thus, managing the paradox encompasses a shifting process of “cognition, restructuring of resources, altering of structures, and rethinking of goals” (Smith & Lewis, 2011, p. 394). Such a movement encourages the development of a sense of adaptability (Rothenberg, 1979) and can unleash human potential.

### ***Corporate level***

The effective management of contradictory demands results in high-performing groups (Weick and Quinn, 1999), and organizational performance (Murnighan and Conlon, 1991).

# **Essay # 1 – Strategic Marketing practice in today’s digital environment: a strategizing perspective.**

## **2.1 Introduction**

Today's marketplace is leading by disrupted technology and innovation. The digital evolution accelerates the increasing market complexity and turbulence, challenges marketing practice, and renders some traditional approach of strategy obsolete. Thus, it confuses the understanding of marketing strategy formation and paralyzes the strategic decision-making process. From a strategy-as-practice (SAP) perspective, strategy (Chia, 2004) encompasses a set of social practices (e.g., social interactions, routines conversations and strategic tools), through which strategic practitioners (e.g., leader, top and middle managers) draft a direction for the firm and assume its achievement by mobilizing through tacit and collective knowledge (Denis, Langley, & Rouleau, 2007).

Against this backdrop, strategy research claims that strategy should not be considered as something that an organization has or planned, instead of as something its members “do” (Sztompka, 1991). Strategizing refers to the 'doing of strategy.' In today's digital environment, rapidly evolving and disruptive technologies such as mobile, virtualization, peer-to-peer networks, cloud computing, Internet of Things as well as augmented reality, facial recognition, and other IT developments have radically transformed industries and challenged the established marketing practices (Moorman & Day, 2016). Many practitioners consider the Internet and other digital technology simply as a tool because of the nature of technology. This is a quite narrow vision because the technology has not only shifted the firm's focus from competitiveness to the sustainability and non-imitability of competitive advantage (Sharma, 1999) but also it has established a set of new social practices and trained new digital

practitioner. For more than two decades, a significant number of articles have studied strategic marketing and digital practice individually, but to the best of our knowledge, no academic research that has studied marketing strategizing in today's digital environment from an SAP perspective despite the best interests that the theory offers.

The objective of the current essay, therefore, is to develop a conceptual framework that examines the marketing strategizing in today's digital environment from an SAP perspective based on the strategizing framework developed by Jarzabkowski and her colleagues (2007). The current study highlights the notion that the marketing strategizing in the digital environment does not solely concern the use of digital tools, but also the digital practitioners and the new flow of marketing activities in the digital era which are consequential for the direction and survival of the organization (i.e., praxis). This essay contributes to study the digital transformation phenomena in a more holistic and pluralistic perspective and emphasize the multidisciplinary of strategy-as-practice theory.

This article is organized as follows. The study starts by reviewing the theory of strategy as practice and strategizing. Second, this article presents the framework of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment through praxis, practices, and practitioner perspectives and illustrates their underlying interaction.

## **2.2 Theoretical Background**

### **2.2.1 Strategy as practice and strategizing**

Strategy-as-practice (SAP) as “ a research topic is concerned with the doing of strategy; who does it, what they do, how they do it, what they use, and what implications this has for shaping strategy” (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009, p. 69). The ‘practice turn’ (Schatzki et al, 2001) on strategy are becoming increasingly widespread in the management and strategy disciplines because of its unique capacity to understand how the outcome of a strategy or other organizational actions are enabled and constrained by situated organizational and societal practices (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Vaara & Whittington, 2012). Strategizing, as a part of SAP studies, extends the notion of strategy beyond intended, formal, and macro-level processes of strategy making, to a more practical focus, that is, strategy-doing. Jarzabkowski and her colleagues (2007) propose that strategizing comprises the nexus between three fundamental elements of the theory of practice (Whittington, 2006) - praxis, practices, and practitioners.

“Praxis comprises the interconnection between the actions of different, dispersed individuals and groups and those socially, politically, and economically embedded institutions within which individuals act and to which they contribute.” (Sztompka, 199, p. 249). This definition delineates the micro- and macro-properties of praxis, and the nexus between praxis (i.e., what is going on in society) and practices (i.e., what people are doing). Praxis can be operationalized at the institutional as well as micro-level. The shifting interactions strengthens the dynamic of praxis.

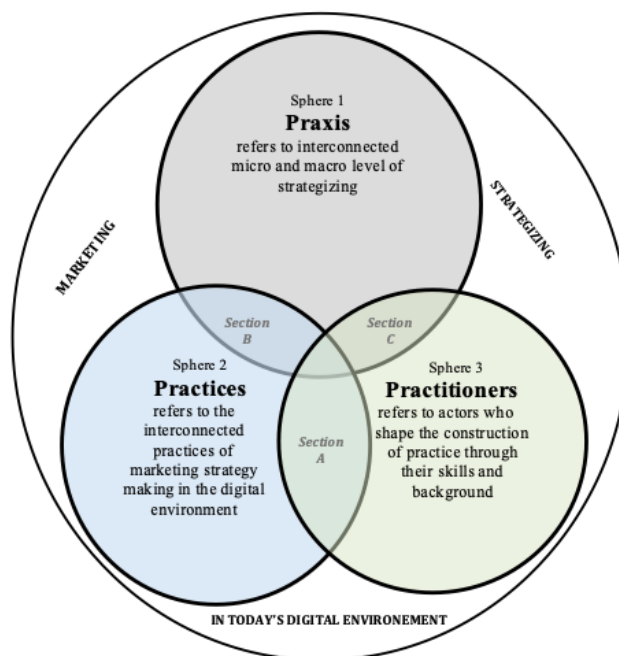
“Practices refer to the various tools, norms, and procedures of strategy work.” (Vaara & Whittington, 2012, p. 6). The notion of “doing” is intrinsically associated with the nature of practices, which reveals the behavioral, cognitive, procedural, discursive, and physical resources of the social practices of the actors. Moreover, 'things' (e.g., Gantt charts, whiteboard, post-it notes or Powerpoint) may also represent practices and contribute to forming strategic activity on the basis of their contexts of use (e.g. Blackler & Crump, 2000; Eden & Ackerman, 1998; Sapsed & Salter, 2004). Practices can be combined and altered depending on the usage and the environment (Jarzabkowski, Balogun & Seidl, 2007).

Practitioners are defined widely to include both those directly and indirectly involved in making strategy and who shape and legitimate praxis and practices. (Jarzabkowski, Balogun & Seidl, 2007). Practitioners could play a direct role in strategy making, such as 1/ Senior executives for whom strategy is the core of their work (Grant & Spender, 1996). 2/ Strategic planners who play a key role in strategy formation (Davids, 1995). 3/ Middle managers who are engaging in strategy work through the implementation of strategy, middle-top-down processes of agenda seeking, proposal selection, and information filtering (Floyd & Lane 2000). Alternatively, they can play an indirect role (i.e., outside strategy advisers) such as strategy consultants, business gurus (Clark, 2004; Schwarz, 2004), and customers (Lowendahl & Revang, 1998). Under the influence of their education, experience, personality, skill, and knowledge, the behaviors of Strategy Practitioners may influence and also be influenced by the firm and society.

## 2.2.2 A framework of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment

### *A conceptual framework*

The framework of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment is composed of three overlapping spheres, which are praxis, practices, and practitioners (see Figure 4). Praxis of digital marketing comprises the transformation of consumer behavior, organizational, and marketing practice. Practices of digital marketing comprise procedures (e.g., consumer co-creation process, dynamic pricing process, reverse caution process), norms (e.g., permission-based marketing, omnichannel distribution) and various digital tools (e.g., Search Engine Optimization, Search Engine Adverting, Google analytics, email), of digital-enabled marketing and emphasizes the notion of “doing”. Practitioners of digital marketing include the persons who are directly (i.e., Chief Digital Officer) and indirectly (i.e., external stakeholders) involved in making digital strategy and who shape and legitimate the praxis and practices of digital-enabled marketing.



*Figure 4. The framework of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment through praxis, practices and practitioners perspective*

### 2.2.3 The strategic marketing transformation from the praxis perspective

“Situated, socially accomplished flows of activity those strategically are consequential for the direction and survival of the group, organization or industry” (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007, p. 11). In a disruptive digital era, technology has changed the flows of social activity at a micro (i.e., consumer behavior), meso (i.e., corporate), and micro (i.e., marketing) level. This phenomenon is also named as digital transformation. At the society level, digital transformation refers to the thorough changes taking place in society and industries with the use of digital technologies (Agarwal, Gao, DesRoches, & Jha, 2010 Nambisan, Lyytinen, Majchrzak, & Song, 2017); Vial, 2019). At the organizational level, it manifests as “strategies that embrace the implications of digital transformation and drive better operational performance” (Hess, Matt, Benlian, & Wiesböck, 2016, p. 123). The change of consumer behavior at the macro level of digital transformation (i.e., consumer behavior change) constitutes, as well as, is influenced by the meso and micro level of digital transformation (i.e., corporate and marketing actions). (See Figure 5)

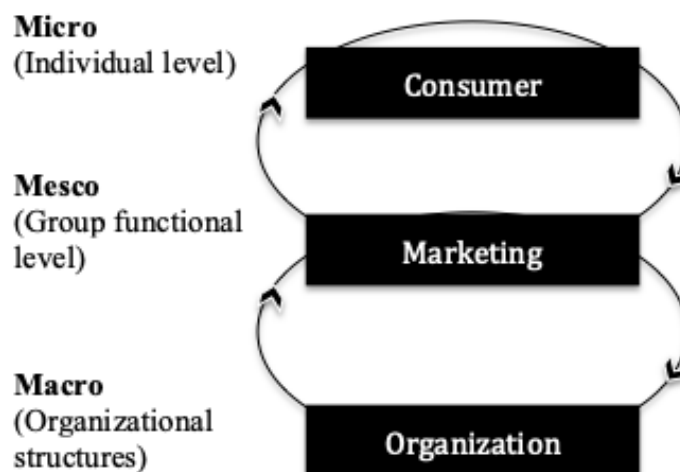


Figure 5. Interconnected micro, meso and macro-level of praxis of digital-enabled marketing strategizing



### ***From a consumer perspective***

Some disruptive technologies such as the Internet, smartphone, social network, cloud sourcing have transformed specific social practice concerning customer behavior at an individual level. For instance, global connectivity and increasing Internet usage (i.e., online review, blog, and social media content) have empowered customers and changed their buying behavior (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014). Nowadays, customers may use their mobile devices (Balasubramanian, Peterson, & Jarvenpaa, 2002) to share their experiences with someone else in real-time (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010) without any geographical restriction. Moreover, the customer empowerment in the digital era may further be illustrated by 1/ their ability to find the right information and online offerings (i.e., price transparency) before the purchase, (Pires, Stanton, & Rita, 2006); 2/ share their experience (i.e., consumer-generate content) after the purchase with the community of the other users (i.e., social network); 3/ participate the production process of the firm by providing their knowledge regarding the usage of the product (i.e., co-production). These new consumer behavior shave influenced, in turn, the use of digital tools and marketing practice. Accordingly, it has changed its marketing functions.

### ***From an organization perspective***

In order to cope with today's digital challenge (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014), many firms have undergone some profound organizational changes that enable different forms of dynamic capabilities (Bharadwaj, Sawy, Pavlou & Venkatraman, 2013). This new form of dynamic capabilities as a macro level of praxis is reshaping the way of “doing” strategy within firms.

*Fusion of IT strategy and business strategy* – IT strategy as a functional-level strategy (Bharadwaj, Sawy, Pavlou & Venkatraman, 2013) use to have a subordinate role *vis-à-vis* business strategy, however, the fusion of IT strategy and business strategy has an increasingly crucial strategic part to play in today's digital environment (Chan & Reich, 2007). This alignment represents a great source of competitive advantage. As such, a recent study of CEOs (Institute. 2016) has affirmed it. Moreover, this fusion results in a new form of organizational strategy - digital business strategy (DDS). This new form of strategy refers to “organizational strategy formulated and executed by leveraging digital resources to create differential value,” (Bharadwaj, Sawy, Pavlou & Venkatraman, 2013, p. 472). According to the authors, this definition of DDS underlines four fundamental principles: 1/ recognize the pervasiveness of digital resources in other functional areas such as operations, purchasing, supply chain, and marketing; 2/ align the IT strategy with the resource-based view of strategy; 3/ link DDS to the creation of differential business value. In short, the performance implications of DDS does not limit to efficiency and productivity metrics; instead, it allows driving competitive advantage and strategic differentiation. Moreover, some researchers predict that when firms and industries attain digital maturity, there will be no separation between business strategy and digital business strategy (Bharadwaj et al., 2013).

*A boundaryless organization* – Digital business as a cross-functional strategy transcends the support activities (e.g., procurement, HR and firm infrastructure), the primary activities (e.g., Operations, marketing and sales, logistic) and others IT-enabled business processes (e.g., customer services, order management, after-sales services), to enable a more flat and boundaryless organization. Combining the inter-firm IT capabilities with the digital tools allows tightening the interconnectivity of multifunctional strategies and processes of the firm (Rai et al. 2012). The cross-functional digital resource, serving as the connective tissue, relies

on real-time data exchanges through various digital platforms inside and outside the organization (Klein & Rai, 2009; Rai et al., 2012). As a consequence, the modern digital organization tends to be less of a soloed process and more of boundaryless organizing than traditionally constructed.

*Human resources management* – The use of digital tools and new social practice challenge the human resources management within the firms. On the one hand, leaders tend to be more technology-oriented and are required to be more digital committed. Indeed, digital tools encourage the leaders to communicate their visions and ideas in a more personalized and one-to-many way with their employees. For instance, sharing employees' experiences by telling their stories on the company's internal social media platform has proved its efficiency, because this “show me” method creates more engagement with employees than the traditional “tell me” method (Hunsberger, 2017). On the other hand, employees also show their willingness and ability to be active brand ambassadors by using their own network and the digital social platform to promote their corporate brand.

Moreover, many advanced technologies such as file sharing, virtual collaboration, transparent task management have changed the nature of work and encourage the urbanization of work (i.e., diversifies the place where work is performed) (Hill, 2015). More and more virtual marketplaces are taking shape. As a consequence, the engagement of a firm's employee and the blended workforce is becoming increasingly challenging for HR. Some new approaches to employee engagement, such as “employee journey” and “candidate journey,” are emerging; the learning from consumer marketing transferred to the human resource domain is becoming more and more popular.

In short, the praxis of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment refers to actual transformative activity due to the digital revolution - what people or a group of people do in practice from the consumer, marketing as well as organization perspective.

### ***From a marketing perspective***

The dynamic shift of the following aspects of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment emphasizes the praxis dimension of the transformation process.

*From demand management into customer-centric marketing* – Digital technologies shift the focus of marketing from a “supplier perspective” to a “customer perspective” (Sharma & Sheth, 2004) because customer behaviors become less predictable and forecasting less accurate (Sheth & Sisodia, 2015). Big data, tracking, and, more recently, the learning machine and artificial intelligence are all these technology-enabled dynamic capabilities that allow firms to understand the needs of the customer better and organize their marketing activities accordingly. From this point of view, we may also consider that marketing has shifted from a narrow “managerial/organizational focus to a much broader definition that acknowledges marketing's role in other institutional contexts and in society in general” (Wymbs 2011, p. 94). Thus, marketing has evolved from a “function” perspective into an “activity” perspective (Wymbs, 2011). Consequently, American Marketing Association (AMA) in 2013 has renewed its definition of marketing as, “Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” This definition has further outlined the social practice nature of marketing, especially in today's digital environment.

*From mass marketing into personalized marketing* – Along with the evolution of technology, marketing has developed from a mass-market perspective into personalized marketing in order to attract the attention of customers, acquire their loyalty, and ultimately increase marketing effectiveness (Kumar, 2014). Digital technologies allow marketing to track past behaviors of customers and tailor the offerings based on individual needs. Customized communication could take the form of personalized website pages (e.g., personalized homepage at Easyjet.com), personalized web experiences (e.g., “Me, The Musical” campaign of Facebook), personalized emails or other promotional initiatives. Firms may take advantage of customized products and services (Ansari & Mela, 2003) to develop a more sustainable and personal relationships with customers (Kumar, 2014) and reinforce their loyalty, especially those valuable customers.

*From creative marketing to more data-driven marketing* – analytical tools are becoming increasingly crucial in marketing decision making. Notably, it has transformed the marketing practice from the creative, focused activities into more data-driven activities (Fan, Lau & Zhao, 2015). Indeed, the marketing field used to be considered as a creative industry that relies solely on the intuition, experience, imagination, and talent of marketers (Tarka 2018). With ongoing digital transformation, the marketing decision does no longer rely on human intuition only; instead, it has been supported more and more by knowledge management system encompass Internet technologies such as cloud, social networks as well as data mining, data warehousing, and marketing analytics (Zekić-Sušac & Has, 2015). Knowledge management enhances marketing capability to forecast sales; the best example could be the MIT Media Lab's experiment of retail sales estimation. Combining user location data and the estimated average spend per customer, the researchers had successfully predicted the sales

performance on “Black Friday” even before the retailers had recorded sales themselves (Tushman, Kahn, Porray, & Binns, 2017). Thus, knowledge management driven by data marketing contributes to creating a hard-to-copy competitive advantage (Tarka, 2018). Therefore, the digital transformation does not limit to the marketing function; somewhat, it has expanded its outreach to the entire organization.

### ***Agenda for future research***

Given the above, digital transformation manifests as an ongoing process combining the connectivity and communication technologies that trigger significant changes at the level of society, corporate as well as marketing level. As suggested by Kannan and Li (2017), "Any new research effort has to be cognizant of the theories and models developed in marketing as well as in consumer psychology, sociology, economics, computer science, and operations research in taking on new lines of inquiry." (p. 38). We present several broad research avenues for each sphere (i.e., praxis, practices, practitioners, and their nexus) in our conceptual model at the end of each sub-section. The objective is not to come up with an in-depth research agenda but sharing some refreshing ideas and questions regarding the future research of digital-enabled marketing strategy.

#### **I. Consumer perspective**

- a. How could the change in the status of consumers (i.e., from user to co-producer) influence their cognitive capabilities and the process of decision-making in different contexts?
- b. What is the moderating effect of digital technologies in connection with consumption- versus the production-oriented activities of the consumer?

- c. What is the new value creation chain with the participation of customer as the individual co-producer, or as the community of co-producers?
- d. How digital devices such as mobile and wearable technologies (Hoffman & Novak, 2015) change consumer's cognitive capabilities and their purchase behaviors (i.e., customer purchase journey)?

## **II. Organizational perspective**

- a. How the technology affordances and constraints (Majchrzak & Malhotra, 2013) influence the relationship between the company's digital business management and overall performance?
- b. What is the role of digital technologies in the building of the boundaryless organization?
- c. What is the interaction process between digital technologies and innovation agents that fosters innovative socio-cognitive sensemaking (Nambisan, Lyytinen, Majchrzak, & Song, 2017)?
- d. How are digital-enabled human resource management practices foster the company's competitiveness and innovativeness?

## **III. Marketing perspective**

- a. How artificial intelligence or the other forms of cognitive learning facilities enhance learning capabilities of marketing?
- b. How marketing culture influence big data-enabled customer relationship management (Zerbino, Aloini, Dulmin, & Mininno, 2018) and marketing performance?
- c. What is the marketing structure and capability that ensure the efficient management of brand-generated and customer-generated content?

- d. What is the antecedent and outcome of the management of the privacy paradox?

#### **2.2.4 The strategic marketing practices in today's digital environment**

Vaara and Whittington (2012, p. 291) state, "practices refer to various tools, norms, and procedures of strategy work." Based on this definition, two critical dimensions emerge concerning the concept of practices — Tools, norms, and procedures as one dimension; Strategy work as another dimension. We then build a conceptual model to illustrate the practices of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment with one dimension comprising tools, norms and procedures, and a second strategy work dimension comprising the four elements of the marketing mix (Figure 6). The reason why we define the marketing mix as the dimension of strategy work in our conceptual model is that the concept of marketing mix originally proposed by Jerome McCarthy (1960) is still used as an essential part of the marketing strategy by many marketing practitioners. In other words, the practices of the marketing mix in today's digital environment reflect the "doing" aspect of marketing strategy. The combination of the two dimensions, as well as the combination of all the sections (e.g., PP1, NP3, TP4) can best represent the practices nature of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment.



<b>Procedures</b>	PProd	PPric	PProm	PPlac
<b>Norms</b>	NProd	NPrice	NProm	NPlac
<b>Tools</b>	TProd	TPrice	TProm	TPlac
	<b>Product</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Promotion</b>	<b>Place</b>

Figure 6. Conceptual model of practices of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment

In order to study in more detail the *practices* of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment, we will go through the different sections one by one.

#### Section PProd- procedures and product

First of all, digital technologies enable continuous product testing and experimentation before mass production and product launch. Such a process was inconceivable in the past, has become more and more popular and crucial in the digital era (Rogers 2016). Second, the increasing co-creation process (Sharma & Sheth, 2004) with the “prosumer” (Wolny, 2016) results in a high involvement of customers in the firm's product development programs. For instance, Godes and Silva (2012) study the online shopper and the online rating process through a book review data on Amazon, their study finds out that there exists a multiple and distinct process encompassing the “time” and “order” as two dynamic variables, which co-occurring during the book review practice. Moreover, the product strategy processes are directly linked to the branding process, which consists of creating and evolving a successful brand by providing a seamless customer experience.

### Section PPric - procedures and price

Through the Internet and other digital tools, online pricing has become more and more competitive and transparent (Ancarani, 2002). For instance, 1) dynamic pricing process - prices can be updated in real-time according to the type of customer or current market conditions (Farias, Roy, & Roy, 2016), 2) reverse auctions process – sellers (e.g., brand) compete in deciding whether to accept or not the price set by the buyer (e.g., customer) are the best examples of emergence online pricing process. Because of the increasing competitiveness and transparency of the online market as well as the relatively low cost of online customer research, the balance of bargaining power is gradually shifting from firms to customers and has changed the process of price setting.

### Section PProm- procedures and promotion

By creating a two-way interactive dialogue through its interactivity, digital media such as mobile and interactive TV plays an increasingly important role in influencing the customer's purchase decision. Facilitated by the digital tools, communication process in today's digital environment shifts rapidly from an one-to-many communication (from company to customers) to an one-to-one communication (from company to customer), and finally, to a many-to-many communications (from companies to customers, or from customers to customers) (Hoffman & Novak, 1996). The interactive process of online communication is further emphasized by the fact that customers can easily interact with other customers via web site or social media.

### Section PPlac- procedures and place

In a digital era, an optimal distribution strategy refers to the process of “getting the right mix of bricks and clicks” (Gulati & Garino, 2000). The term refers to traditional “bricks and mortar” enterprises that have only a physical presence. The traditional commerce has evolved rapidly with the Internet because its survival mainly depends on the distribution process and its evolution. For instance, Waterstones ([www.waterstones.co.uk](http://www.waterstones.co.uk)), an ancient ‘bricks and mortar’ bookseller, which became ‘clicks and mortar’ when it ventured online, and now, delivers its goods through Amazon.com infrastructure bases on a partnering arrangement.

The procedure is composed of a set of repetitive activities. Also, the repetition of digital practices gives birth to the new norms of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment.

### Section NProd- norms and product

The constant learning and rapid iteration of product testing, before and after their launch date, are becoming the norm (Rogers, 2016) regarding the product strategy in today's digital environment.

Digitization of products and services is fostering the “economies of aggregation” (Bakos & Brynjolfsson, 2000) as it reduces the marginal cost of the production and the distribution of digital content significantly. Thus, large-scale bundling of digital content becomes an optimal product strategy in and of itself. Paradoxically, some research also reveals the trend toward unbundling offers in many information and entertainment industries due to the lower transaction cost of digital channels (Elberse, 2010). For

example, Apple's iTunes sells music in the form of individual tracks instead of albums; Moreover, the firm may also count on the mixed-bundling strategy (i.e., the mix of conventional formats and digital formats of product) to encourage the sales, capture a higher markup on individual components.

Digitally enabled “customization,” combining mass customization with configurators (Felfernig et al., 2014), is becoming an increasingly standard product strategy. The examples are numerous: Coca-cola “share a coke” campaign; Nutella “own your personalized label,”; Nissan's customizable vehicle. These established new practices constitute the product marketing strategy in today's digital environment.

#### Section NPric- norms and price

Upon the arrival of the Internet, digital start-ups, pure players, as well as established brands have started practicing low pricing to improve competitiveness and gain market share online. One of the most controversial pricing strategies in the digital era is the freemium model (e.g., apps, online streaming, open-source software), which reduces consumer psychological costs significantly in the process of decision making, has become a more and more accessible price strategy. A number of specific online models of pricing emerged in today's digital environment have become more and more common way of practicing the price online: name-your-own-price-channels (Fay, 2004), online auctions (Popkowski Leszczyc & Häubl, 2010), as well as price dispersion in online markets (Pan et al. 2004), demand aggregation, Priceline's reverse auction model, and dynamic posted prices.

### Section NProm- norms and promotion

The increasing interactivity and connectivity provided by the Internet and especially social media and mobile (Fortin & Dholakia, 2005), contribute to the demise of the long-established advertising norms. Indeed, these technologies are re-establishing the norms of the advertising industry, notably by the use of tools such as real-time bidding, A/b testing, real-time updating, and retargeting strategy for search, views, shares, and engagement. Of the tools used, emails benefit from customized design and targeted content resulting in an increasing efficiency (Ansari & Mela, 2003). Permission-based e-mails (also known as ‘opt-in’ email) have become a dominant interactive communication because of widespread consumer complaints about unsolicited e-mails (known as “spam”). This marketing practice concerns, in most cases, the recipient providing explicit consent to receive direct e-mails or, in other cases, implying a legal requirement. Indeed, a critical problem that companies are facing is that consumers tend to devalue email practices because of the volume and frequency of the latter (Schwarzl & Grabowska, 2015). To cope with this problem, one common practice in e-mail marketing consists of extending the email experience to support others, such as social media. Social media was born with the arrival of Web 2.0 (Constantinides, 2014). In a virtual marketplace, viral marketing is an equivalent practice of Word of Mouth Marketing at a larger scale and with accelerated speed (Kalyanam & McIntyre, 2002). Studies have shown that a successful viral marketing action is positively correlated with increasing purchase intent (Ecker & Bolls, 2011).

### Section NPlac- norms and place

Multi-channel marketing manifests as ‘simultaneously offering their customers and prospects information, products, services, and support (or any combination of these) through two or more synchronized channels’ (Rangaswamy & Van Bruggen, 2005). This new standard of distribution strategy contributes to increasing the competitiveness of firms and the effectiveness of marketing actions by offering better customer value (Neslin & Shankar, 2009), enhancing customer loyalty and satisfaction (Verhoef et al., 2010), increasing sales volumes and customer value. Much research has proved that the sale volume and the equity of the average multichannel buyers are higher than the single-channel customer (Ansari, Mela, & Neslin, 2008). The leading brands, such as Apples, Dell, and Burberry, have successfully built a multichannel marketing strategy that provides a complete end-to-end customer journey across all channels and platforms.

*Metric* – Beyond the marketing mix, strategic learning capabilities based on the analysis of digital metrics have been regulated as an essential component in the marketing decision marking process. Moreover, this marketing practice permits to maximize the “effective-efficiency” of marketing actions and leads to the strengthening of customer loyalty and “share of wallet’ (Sharma & Sheth 2004). Thus, digital marketing metrics contribute to the improvement of marketing performance.

Not only the norms of digital practices have changed the way of marketing strategy marking, but also the digital tools are the essential drivers of this shift.

### Section TProd- tools and product

There are increasing calls within the strategy-as-practice literature to focus on those material objects (Kaplan, 2011; Demeron, Lê & LeBaron, 2015; Wawarta & Paroutis, 2019) to investigate the explicit and implicit link between material and strategy.

With the digital revolution, E-customization is no longer limited to the customization of the website pages. Indeed, tools such as design systems, toolkits (Piller & Walcher 2006), or co-design platforms allow clients to customize physical products that they have bought online. Studies show that E-customization enables clients to customize products, services, or information to their individual needs in a variety of ways, increasing the consumption of digital content and consumers' satisfaction (Yadav & Pavlou, 2014).

The proliferation of the product and product information in today's digital environment (Yadav & Pavlou 2014) has an increasingly significant impact on the customer's purchase decision. To cope with this challenge, the online product recommendation system incorporating consumer's stated and unstated preferences, expert opinions, and product and demographic information becomes one of the most useful digital tools. It allows simplifying and improving consumer's choices and therefore increasing sales (Ansari, Essegaiier & Kohli, 2000; Ying, Feinberg, & Wedel, 2006).

### Section TPrice- tools and price

Interactive shopping agents enable consumers to access price and availability information about a large number of online suppliers through one click (Iyer & Pazgal, 2003). Moreover, new pricing approaches, such as forward auctions, reverse auctions, price testing,

and dynamic pricing, have proved the technological capability of the internet to create new pricing options.

### Section TProm- tools and promotion

Numerous internet and digital tools are of crucial importance and implication for successful marketing communication. Digital practitioners use many different digital media tools to attract visitors to their websites. Therefore, choosing the most effective digital communications tools and refining them to attract or engage the customer at an efficient cost is now the crucial marketing practice. Table 8 displays the description, different techniques, and common forms of main online communication tools.

<b>Digital media tools</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Different communication techniques</b>	<b>Common forms</b>
Behavioral ad targeting	The practice of collecting information about consumers' behavior and using that information to customize an advertisement or other services for the consumer' (Berger 2011).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavioral re-targeting or remarketing based on the behavioral criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• banners</li> <li>• layer ads,</li> <li>• interstitials</li> <li>• videos</li> </ul>
Emailing	Emailing is, no doubt, one of the most effective forms of interactive communication (McAdams et al. 2006). E-mail is an essential medium of marketing communication, especially for companies emphasizing on relationship marketing strategy (Ellis-Chadwick & Doherty 2012).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquisition email activity including list rental, co-branded publisher campaigns, advertising on e-newsletters</li> <li>• Retention and growth activity</li> <li>• Automatic or event-triggered email campaign activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Automatic or event-triggered email</li> </ul>



Interactive display advertisement	The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) defines interactive advertising as all forms of online, wireless and interactive television advertising (such as banners, sponsorships, email, keyword searches, referrals, slotting fees, classified ads, and interactive television commercials).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site-specific media buys</li> <li>• Use of ad networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• banners</li> <li>• layer ads,</li> <li>• interstitials</li> <li>• videos</li> </ul>
Search Engine Marketing (SEM)	Search engine marketing was initially employed to generate direct search results by click through. However, practitioners and scholars in the digital marketing field increasingly recognize that search results have a significant impact on the performance of a brand (Dou et al. 2010).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search Engine Optimization attract a fee per click based on on-page optimization and link-building</li> <li>• Pay-per-click advertising and sponsored listings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organic links</li> <li>• Internet sponsored links or ads</li> </ul>
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	High-ranking position of a Brand on the search engines (e.g., Google, Bing, Yahoo) reveals it is outstanding in terms of performance or trustworthy in some way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organic position of a Brand on the search engines (e.g., Google, Bing, Yahoo) based on on-page optimization and link-building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet organic links</li> </ul>
Search Engine Advertising (SEA)	Search advertising is one of the dominant forms of online advertising (Katona & Sarvary 2010)(Katona & Sarvary 2010) refers to the practices that web advertisers pay content providers or search engine sites to display "sponsored links."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay-per-click advertising and sponsored listings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet sponsored links or ads</li> </ul>
Social media and viral marketing	Social media is characterized by the social aspect of the practice, such as communication, sharing, and mutual enrichment (Faci et al. 2017).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branded-presence of company page or adverting on social network</li> <li>• 'Viral agents' or compelling interactive content</li> <li>• Viral message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social network website</li> <li>• Viral marketing campaign</li> </ul>

Table 7. Description of different online communication tools.

- 1. Behavioral targeting is 'the practice of collecting information about consumers' behavior and using that information to customize an advertisement or another service for the consumer.' Behavioral targeting technologies enable advertisers to target their audiences more appropriately, and based on the behavioral criteria such as the preference or interest according to keyword search, browsing interests, or even email contents. However, this technique is causing increasingly privacy Issues, such as data privacy and financial fraud.
- 2. Emailing is, no doubt, one of the most effective forms of interactive communication. E-mail is an essential medium of marketing communication, especially for companies emphasizing on relationship marketing strategy. Regarding the low cost of email marketing, its profitability has been proved much higher than the other primary forms of online advertisement (Pavlov et al. 2008). Moreover, emails benefit from the customized design, and targeted content results in increasing website traffic Ansari and Mela (2003).
- 3. The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) defines interactive advertising as all forms of online, wireless and interactive television advertising (such as banners, sponsorships, email, keyword searches, referrals, slotting fees, classified ads and interactive television commercials). This media channel aims at initiating a high level of interaction with customers and influencing their courses of action. The personalization of the banner allows increasing its effectiveness, whereas the perception of informativeness and obtrusiveness from the customer may have an impact on its performance. Moreover, with the emergence of behavioral targeting, the efficiency of the online display ads has been boosted.

- 4. Search engine marketing was initially employed to generate direct search results by clickthroughs. However, practitioners and scholars in the digital marketing field increasingly recognize that search results have a significant impact on the performance of a brand. The results in the Search Engine Result Page (SERP) offer an efficient way for a consumer to collect information about brands and thus enhance the awareness of brands.
- 5. Consumers believe that the high-ranking organic position of a Brand on the search engines (e.g., Google, Bing, Yahoo) reveals it is outstanding in terms of performance or trustworthy in some way. As a consequence, brands fight for a higher-ranking position for their websites in the organic search results through a variety of techniques or by hiring an external agency to develop specific techniques. The organic search ranking strategy seeks to obtain a long-term and sustainable branding impact, which differs from the purpose of the search engine advertising (SEA) strategy.
- 6. Search advertising as one of the dominant forms of online advertising refers to the practices that web advertisers pay content providers or search engine sites to display “sponsored links.” As search engines are the most popular and powerful means for locating information research on the Internet, sponsored links can drive effective traffic to the virtual or physique shop and thus increase sales. Besides, through their research, Chan, Wu and Xie (2011) claim that the customers converted through sponsored links tend to buy more and lead to a higher customer lifetime value than those acquired from other online or offline channels. The effectiveness of sponsored links relies on relevancy and attractiveness of the content of advertisements and keyword auction strategy of a firm.

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- 7. Social media was born with the arrival of Web 2.0 (Constantinides 2014), which is characterized by the social aspect of the practice, such as communication, sharing, and mutual enrichment. Social media allows us to shape or change consumers' perceptions of a brand, enhance the new product adoption, and foster the relationship-building (i.e., the development of loyalty). Furthermore, researchers have shown that consumers' communication activities on social media are more effective than a brand's communication aiming at acquiring new customers (Trusov et al. 2009). In a virtual marketplace, viral marketing is an equivalent of *Word of Mouth Marketing* at a larger scale and accelerated speed. Studies have shown that successful viral marketing is positively correlated with increasing purchase intent.

#### Section TPlac- tools and place

The astonishing revolution of technology had a significant impact on marketing channels, and it is proliferation (Webb, 2002), that is, from brick and mortar channels to telephone, email, website, social media, mobile, and most recently, the IoT channels. For instance, Uniqlo, a leading casual wear brand, is well known for its culture of embracing new technologies and its successful multi-channel marketing. The mobile applications provide useful information on products as well as the availability of stock in their E-commerce website and the brick and mortar stores. The brand has also installed some digital kiosk displays in their stores so that customers may try on outfits in front of screens with global city backdrops and take a picture. Customers may then share the image with their friends on social media. Frequently also, Uniqlo sends coupons or promotions to their community via their social media platforms. All these actions on different touchpoints aim to deliver a seamless customer experience and encouraging the customer to renew their shopping.

*Metrics* – Marketers and marketing managers have long been under pressure to demonstrate their economic value to the firm. In a digital era, marketing value assessment that measures how marketing activities contribute to the overall business performance on the base of the calculation of Return On Investment (ROI) of the marketing actions and the monitoring of the specifics digital metrics such as Click-Through Rate, Cost Per Mille, Cost Per Acquisition, number of view, like, share, engagement, conversion rate and many others. Moreover, digital analytical tools monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of online communication in real-time (Fortin & Dholakia, 2005).

The practices manifest as the process, norms, and tools play a “strategic” role in forming the basis of competitive advantage of a firm. Through repetition, the practices form patterns of action that constitute emergent strategies (Mintzberg & McHugh, 1985) and contribute to the marketing strategizing in today’s digital environment.

### ***Agenda for future research***

#### **I. Process**

- a. What are the factors that influence the digital-physical product development process in industry 4.0?
- b. What are the contingency factors that constitute a dynamic pricing process? Moreover, how they influence the relationship between dynamic pricing strategy and its outcome?
- c. How digital technologies (e.g., chatbots) foster the interactive dynamic of a two-way communication flow (Pang, Shin, Lew, & Walther, 2016)?
- d. Which are the factors that influence the implementations of e-service touchpoints in the Omni-channeling process?

## **II. Norms**

- a. What are the implications of cross-device usage of mix-bundling digital content?
- b. What is the impact of digital devices on customer's price sensitiveness in the context of price discrimination strategy?
- c. What are the critical risk factors of permission-based advertisement regarding the use of digital devices?
- d. How factors such as timeliness of communication, location flexibility, message source control moderate the relationship between omnichannel distribution and sales outcome?
- e. What are organizational and marketing capabilities that improve the ability of firms to measure the impact of their online marketing investments accurately?

## **III. Tools**

- a. How digital technologies and innovations support marketers in better building the consumer production journey (Dellaert, 2018) in the context of the sharing economy?
- b. What are the deviations between the observed price dispersions and the stated regular price? And how the factors such as the latitude of acceptance of consumer influence the deviation?
- c. How the advertisement in a multi-device and multi-screen environment fragments and distracts customers' attention? In this environment, when a firm should insert their ads on customers' journey to encourage the customer's engagement?
- d. What are the factors relating to digitalization that allow retailers embracing the multi-sided marketplace model (Hänninen, Mitronen, & Kwan, 2019)?
- e. What are appropriate methodologies and data that deepen the understanding of the personal impact of channels and touchpoints – across offline (e.g., TV, print) and online boundaries, and across various devices and online channels?

### **2.2.5 The strategic marketing practitioners**

“Strategizing comprises those actions, interactions and negotiations of multiple actors and the situated practices that they draw upon in accomplishing that activity” (Jarzabkowski, 2005, page 8). Drawing upon this definition, the studies of who is the marketing strategist in the digital era, what do they do, and the implications for marketing strategy praxis enhance the understanding of the constitution of marketing strategizing in today’s digital environment. Evolving technologies continually challenge industry practitioners (Royle & Laing, 2014) and their practices. For instance, until now, it has been the IT department that decided and controlled which software and digital tools employees should use. However, digital transformation and new digital practitioners have challenged this practice. Instant messaging (IM) has replaced e-mails as the preferred method of internal communications for many practitioners. Nowadays, employees use their devices increasingly in the workplace in order to improve their productivity and mobility. Moreover, Generation Y and the Millennium Generation who have been born and raised in the digital era access strategic position within a firm and change its' business agenda. Primarily, they represent a driving force in incorporating social networking into the business environment.

#### ***Digital expert***

The strategic skill sets such as expert in social networking, digital media technologies, and data analytics are in short supply (Royle & Laing 2004). The researchers advocate that the growing demand for digital talent and the current offer creates the talent gap (Leeftang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014). To cope with this challenge, one solution consists of hiring more analytically skilled individuals and marketing intelligence specialists. Therefore, digital specialists may excel in quantitative and analytical skills, but they often lack a solid

background in marketing (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014). This difference may result in problems in the interface between marketing and analytics. Another solution refers to be outsourcing to external agencies. However, as analytical capabilities represent a valuable strategic asset (Day 2011) and a strategic resource, firms run a risk of losing an asset if they completely outsource analytical skills to external partners.

### ***Digital governance***

From the management perspective, the emerging role of the chief digital officer (CDO) reveals the desire as well as the maturity of a firm's digital transformation. The creation of a CDO function as a new C-level role with a direct reporting relationship to the CEO (Haffke et al., 2016), shows that organizations proactively adopt several governance initiatives in order to foster digital transformation. The CDO can be defined as a business role that is in charge of understanding the industry-specific aspects of digitization, determining the implications for the company, developing and communicating a holistic digital strategy across the firm, and leading the required change efforts. Other aspects of the role involve more operational tasks such as the advertisement of forthcoming digital opportunities and threats, the evangelization of digital tools, the stimulation of digital cultural change across the company, as well as the creation and direction of digital innovation labs, and business responsibilities for digital marketing or digital sales (Haffke et al. 2016).

In a nutshell, the CDO is a “digital business strategist who holistically understands and communicates the implications of digitization across the organization” (Haffke et al., 2016, P. 8). The general objective of the CDO is to ensure a holistic digital vision and the alignment between the digitization initiatives and the digital business strategy (Haffke et al. 2016). Furthermore, in their article (Tumbas et al., 2017), Tumbas and his colleagues (2017)



categorize three types of CDO: digital accelerator CDOs, digital marketer CDOs, digitalization harmonizer CDOs, which have a different but focused domain and develop a specific digital capability.

- 1) *Digital accelerator CDOs* mostly focus on the domain of digital innovation. They emphasize establishing digital innovation. They typically complement the existing IT leaders of a firm and have the freedom and flexibility to experiment intensely through a variety of digital technologies.
- 2) *digital marketers CDOs* mainly focus on the domain of data analytics. They monitor the digital marketing initiatives based on the analysis of customer needs and preferences, which is obtained through intensive data analysis stemming from the resources such as social media and mobile.
- 3) *digital harmonizers CDOs* focus on the customer engagement domain. They aggregate existing digital initiatives to strategically engage with the customer and streamline existing and new digital initiatives.

### ***External stakeholders***

As discussed previously, with the rise of new technologies, the customer has been empowered (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014), and the importance of the strategic alliance with the supplier has been emphasized (Rai et al., 2012). Customer, supplier, and other external stakeholders could be considered as the strategy practitioner who participates in the marketing strategizing of the company in today's digital environment by the simple fact that they are involved in and seeking to influence the outcome of strategy-doing. For instance, user-generated content allows a firm to adjust its product strategy and to create

additional value (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). The increasingly important of co-creation process with the “prosumer.” More and more retailers and manufacturers integrate customer feedback into their marketing strategy or enrich it (Chen & Xie, 2008). From a supplier side perspective, enhanced by IT-capabilities (Rai et al. 2012), the “cooperative logic” manifests as the strategic relationships between supplier and buyer to co-create a higher relational value (Rai et al. 2012) such as sharing costs, developing new products and innovation, managing complex processes, as well as reaching new markets, technologies and resources. Of equal importance but less addressed, is directly or indirectly external stakeholders influencing on strategy-making of the firms (Sztompka, 1991) that has become even more valid in the digital era.

### ***Agenda for future research***

- I. How are the factors that foster the integration of digital experts as a critical marketing resource in a non-digital expert marketing team?
- II. What are the specific skills and professional expertise that allow Chief Digital Officer brings a dynamic approach to digital business? How the different types of Chief Digital Officer (Tumbas et al., 2017) influence the dynamic business approach?
- III. How the company's digital governance enhances the co value-creation process between external stakeholders and firm?

## **2.2.6 The underlying interaction of marketing praxis, practices and practitioner in today's digital environment**

Some researchers (Whittington, 2006) propose that the study of three elements of strategizing may be isolated and /or comprises a different analytic choice. While others emphasize that each element is interrelated to each other and that the study should consider the interaction between the three elements, in the previous paragraphs, we have discussed the three elements in the marketing and digital context. After that, we will discuss their interaction in the following paragraphs.

Praxis refers to human behavior is incorporated within a web of social practices; in other words, praxis and practices are mutually constitutive. Moreover, strategy-as-practice research views strategy as something that people do (Kaplan, 2011). This perspective underlines the important theoretical focus on strategy practitioners and strategic praxis (Mahr et al., 2014). Accordingly, the three elements of strategizing (i.e., praxis, practices, and practitioners) are interconnected and mutually constructed.

### ***The nexus between new marketing practices and practitioners in today's digital environment***

Section A overlaps the sphere of 'practices' and 'practitioner' and designates that practitioner derives agency in the doing of strategy. For instance, Godes and Silva (2012) study the online shopper (practitioner) and the online product rating (practices) through the book review data on Amazon. Kazadi and his colleagues (2016) study the role of customers (practitioner) in innovation co-creation processes (practices) through intensive interviews with the directors of general management. The research that focuses on the interaction of the digital practitioners and their practices of strategy-making remains scant.

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### ***The nexus between practices and praxis***

Section B overlaps the sphere of 'practices' and 'praxis.' Brown and Goolsbee (2002) study the impact of Internet competition on prices (practices) and its dispersion on a company's online and offline sales (praxis). Ettlie and Pavlou (2006) study the role of technology (practices) in the development of interfirm partnership dynamic capabilities (praxis). Rai and his colleagues (2012) study how IT functionalities (practices) facilitate the different profiles of interfirm IT capabilities to create the relational value in interfirm relationships (praxis). Kumar and his colleagues (2016), for their part, are interested in the impact of firm-generated content (practices) on customer spending and cross-buying behavior on social media (praxis).

### ***The nexus between praxis and practitioners***

Section C overlaps the sphere of 'praxis' and 'practitioners.' Brown and his colleagues (2003) empirically study the online shopper and their shopping orientation and elaborate a new typology of online shoppers (practitioner) based on the segmentation of online consumer's shopping orientation (praxis). In a similar vein, there are very few studies that have focused on the interactions between practitioners and praxis in today's digital environment. Thus, it represents a whole new avenue for the strategizing study in the marketing and digital area.

### ***Agenda for future research***

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- I. How digital practitioner uses various digital tools and technologies to build and legitimate his identity and how they incorporate their situated and person-specific knowledge in the use of digital tools?

- II. How the use of digital marketing technologies (e.g., staff-generated content) fosters the boundaryless organization?
- III. How the community of co-producers (i.e., a collaboration between the consumers) constitutes a new value creation for the firm?

## **2.3 Limitations and conclusion**

Over the past two decades, there has been an explosion of research studying the marketing strategy and digital practice. However, to the best of our knowledge, no research has investigated the marketing strategizing in a digital environment through the praxis, practices and practitioners perspective. Our framework not only displays the digital transformation from the customer, business, and marketing perspective but also sheds light on new digital marketing practices and tools. Essay#1 enlarges the notion of strategy from a deliberate and formal process of strategy making, to a more new and practical focus. This essay proposes an alternative and a new way of formulating marketing strategy in today's digital environment as patterns of praxis and practices of practitioners rather than intended and formal initiatives. The application of the framework of strategizing of Jarzabkowski et al. (2007) into digital marketing practice based on the extant literature provide a new way to study the digital marketing practice in a more holistic and pluralistic way. The review of extant research is not meant to be exhaustive but somewhat representative in order to cover the issues with sufficient depth. Thus, the primary research or review articles included in the essay come mainly from four marketing journals: International Journal of Research in Marketing, Marketing Science, Journal of Marketing Research, and Journal of Marketing, focusing on articles. This point may constitute a limitation. Future research may use the same framework with a more systematic content analysis method on an extensive selection of journals. To

conclude, the practice perspective on how digital praxis, practices, and human agency links together in the explanation of marketing strategy in today's digital environment should, from now on, be a central issue in digital and marketing studies.



## **Essay # 2 - marketing strategizing in today's digital environment: a paradox perspective**

“Digital is just a tool like many others. The very idea of elaborating a digital marketing strategy is ridiculous as we do not have any print marketing strategy or mobile marketing strategy”, stated by a marketing manager in the HR services industry.

### **3.1 Introduction**

Marketing as a paradox-rich domain (e.g., transaction vs. relationship marketing, global vs. local marketing, product orientation vs. customer orientation marketing, exploration vs. exploitation marketing) provides a fertile ground for paradox research (Sztompka, 1991). In line with the Contemporary Marketing Practices (CMP) research program, the article of O'Driscoll (2008) studies the paradox in both marketing literature and practice. Indeed, the researcher advocates that paradox studies offer a non-exclusionary lens and a both/and approach to bridge paradoxical marketing practice and deepen the understanding of the plurality and interrelationship of complex marketing practice (Fournier & Mick, 1998; O'Driscoll, 2008; Brown, McDonagh & Shultz, 2013).

The notion of paradox has roots in both Eastern and Ancient Western teachings (e.g., Tao Te Ching and the Judeo-Christian Bible), and has long interested philosophers and psychologists. Despite the different definitions in different fields, the paradox in management has centered around the idea “that polar opposite conditions can simultaneously exist or at least can be potentiated, in the same thing” (O'Driscoll, 2008; Saren & Pels, 2008). Different from the concept of dilemma (i.e., either/or exclusionary approach), paradox offers a both/and dynamic and holistic approach (Li, 2015) to address both latent and salient tensions in



marketing activities. In the last 25 years, the concept of paradox or its equivalents (i.e., ambiguity tension, equivocation, ambidexterity) has received increasing attention in the academic marketing literature (Brown, McDonagh & Shultz, 2013). Researchers call for the consideration of paradox management as a strategic management capability (Brown, McDonagh & Shultz, 2013; Fournier & Mick, 1998; Rose & Wood, 2005; Giovanardi, 2017; Hughes, 2018; Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014) and the way strategists manage paradox constitutes in itself a strategizing (i.e., doing strategy) (Dameron & Torset, 2014; Schad, Lewis, Raisch & Smith, 2016; Smith & Lewis, 2011).

From the practice-based studies of paradox (Lê & Bednarek, 2016) perspective, the study of paradoxical marketing practice offers an alternative framework for understanding the marketing strategy in a non-exclusionary and holistic approach. Notably, with the advent of the Internet, digital social media has functionally displaced traditional mass media, transformed the way marketers communicate with clients, and renewed marketing practice, thus challenging the concept of marketing strategy. Moreover, today's digital environment characterized by plurality, change, and scarcity renders the latent paradox more than ever salient (Smith & Lewis, 2011). However, how paradoxical marketing practices, especially in today's digital environment, may constitute and affect the content of resulting marketing strategies, has been largely neglected. Not only the technology itself represents certain paradoxes (Coviello, Brodie, Brookes, & Palmer, 2003; Kannan & Li, 2017; Palmer, Simmons & Mason, 2014; Varadarajan & Yadav, 2009; Yadav & Pavlou, 2014), but also the Internet has raised many tensions to challenge marketing strategy and practice (Fournier and Mick, 1998). Moreover, in a special issue of "materializing strategy and strategizing materials," the guest editors have launched a call for "better understand the role played by digitized forms of materiality in the 'strategic conversation' and the changes in strategy

making that digitized forms allow.” Accordingly, the objective of this essay is to enrich the “conversation with paradox” as well as to extend the knowledge of strategizing materials (Dameron, Lê, & LeBaron, 2015).

This paper is structured as follows. First, we briefly review the strategic marketing practices in today’s digital environment as well as the tensions and paradoxes associated with this new environment. Second, we discuss the methodology of our study. Third, we present our findings (i.e., the paradoxical tensions associated with marketing strategizing in today’s digital environment), and finally, we discuss the contributions and the limitations of the research.

## **3.2 Theoretical background**

### **3.2.1 Marketing strategy in today’s digital environment**

The strategic marketing-related actions and resource deployment is an organizational and environmental study, which manifests itself as competitive marketing in the marketplace (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström & Freundt, 2014). Digital marketing as a strategic marketing action and resource refers to an adaptive, technology-enabled process by which firms collaborate with customers and partners to jointly create, communicate, deliver, and sustain value for all stakeholders (Varadarajan, 2010). Both scholars and practitioners raise the prospect that digital marketing might become an integral part of practically all marketing actions (i.e., product development, communication, sales, and services). Thus, marketing strategizing in the digital-enabled environment concerns all online and offline interactions between the firm and its customers through an information infrastructure network or Internet-connected devices. From a marketing strategy perspective, numerous research have been

undertaken to study different forms of interactions, such as technology-enabled search (Huang et al. 2009; Yang et al. 2016), social network (Huang, Lurie and Mitra, 2009; Yang *et al.*, 2016), online behavioral tracking and targeting (Trusov, Bucklin and Pauwels, 2009) etc. Therefore, with the rise of digital technologies in marketing activities, many tensions (Alreck and Settle, 2007) emerge from the practices and challenge the traditional concept of marketing-mix.

### **3.2.2 Paradox as a meta-theory: marketing and management implications**

#### ***Foundation of paradox studies***

The concept of paradox takes roots in both Eastern and Ancient Western teachings (e.g., Tao Te Ching and the Judeo-Christian Bible) and has rich foundations in philosophy and psychology (e.g., works of Aristotle, Freud, Hegel, Confucius, Lao Tsu and Jung). Ancient Greek philosophy noted that the paradox involves antinomic reasoning; that is, logically correct reasoning would lead to a contradiction (i.e., P and not P). This vision of seeing opposites inherently containing the seed of the other is in convergence with the ancient Eastern teaching. The latter taught that the opposites together forming a dynamic unity as illustrated by the symbolism of Yin and Yang. Within a world becoming more and more uncertain and changing, paradoxes and tensions have been exacerbated in our daily life as well as in contemporary organizations. Although the conception and definitions of paradox remain broad (Schad, Lewis, Raisch & Smith, 2016), much academic research has adopted a paradox lens to study management organizational phenomena.

### ***The paradox in the marketing research***

In his article, O'Driscoll (2008) defines the paradox as "a situation where two apparently contradictory tensions appear to be simultaneously credible and where resolution is pursued in a non-exclusionary way." In the field of marketing research, paradoxes lens has been used to study consumer behavior and brand management. Mick and Fournier (1998) identify eight central paradoxes of technological products (i.e., control/chaos, freedom/enslavement, new/obsolete, competence/incompetence, efficiency/inefficiency, fulfills/creates news, assimilation/isolation, engagement/disengagement) through their study of the consumption and consuming behavior of the technological products. Quine (1966) has interested in the ambivalence/tension manifest between what the consumer internally wishes or feels and the reality they face, and the coping strategies that they have been used to respond to consumer ambivalence. Otnes, Lowrey and Shrum (1997) study how the inherent ambiguity and equivocality of a brand contribute to building its personality and even its legend. Brown et al. (2013) investigate the case of the city brand of Belfast in order to underline the paradox, or the ambiguity of the bad branding practices can give rise to good branding outcomes. In a similar vein, Fournier et al. (2005) investigate the case of Harley-Davidson and point out four management paradoxes in brand community building. O'Driscoll (2008) have conducted a longitudinal case study *of a* European building materials firm, and five examples of paradoxical values-in-tension (i.e., upstream/downstream marketing, competence building/competence leveraging, tacit/explicit marketing, codification/personalization, adhocracy/market culture) emerge from this study. Although the paradox research in the marketing field may appear modest compared to those in the field of strategic management and organization, however, the extant literature reveals already the

holistic, pluralistic, and dialectical nature of the market (Schultz & Hatch, 2006) and encourage the future research.

### ***The paradox in the strategic management studies***

The research advocates that individuals, managers, organizations, and markets are “inherently paradoxical, embroiled in tensions and reinforcing cycles at their very core” (Lewis, 2000, p. 760). The paradox manifests as underlying tensions that “logical individually but inconsistent and even absurd when juxtaposed” (Smith and Lewis, 2011, p. 382). Paradoxical tensions can be considered as an inherent character of an organization as well as social constructions developing by actors’ cognition and rhetoric (Dittrich *et al.*, 2006). In a similar vein, (Smith and Lewis, 2011) denote two divergent views of paradoxes: (1) as material (i.e., inherent to the nature of the phenomenon) and (2) as representation (i.e., the means of representation of a phenomenon).

Additionally, Smith and Lewis (2011) have identified two types of tensions – latent and salient tension in management strategies. Latent tension refers to the unperceived or ignored contradictory yet interrelated elements, which embed in organizing processes and persist over time because of organizational complexity. Moreover, the latent tension can become salient with the aid of two factors - environmental factors and actors' paradoxical cognition. And Salient tensions concern ‘the contradictory yet interrelated elements experienced by organizational actors’ (Smith & Lewis 2011, P. 389).

Different from paradox, dilemma consists of choosing one pole of the tension after evaluating the clear advantages and disadvantages of the competing choices ( Dameron & Torset, 2014; Smith & Lewis, 2011), while dialectic refers to an ongoing process of resolving

tensions through integration. Smith and Lewis (2011) conceptualize a dynamic equilibrium model to illustrate that the paradoxical tensions and their management interact in an ongoing cycle process, in other words, the system maintains equilibrium across opposing forces (Smith & Lewis, 2011). This virtuous cycle enables sustainability by foresting creativity and learning.

#### ***Four types of tensions at micro, meso and macro levels***

Smith and Lewis (2011) delineate four types of tensions: *learning, organizing, belonging, and performing* paradoxes. *Learning paradoxes* encompasses tensions between old and new mode of operation, stability and change, or exploration and exploitation (Klarner & Raisch, 2013; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008) and raise different temporal orientations (i.e., short term vs the long term, or today vs tomorrow) (Slawinski & Bansal, 2015). *Learning paradoxes* examine how organizations break down past understandings and construct new processes and frames of reference. Learning paradoxes address the question of “when organizations are going to do.”

*Organizing* paradoxes stem from a complex system within a firm that enables competing designs and processes, such as loosely coupled versus tightly coupled, centralized versus decentralized, and flexible versus controlling, to achieve the desired outcome. This types of paradox considers the processes of balancing conflicting forces within organizations can be found in research alignment and flexibility (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Smith & Tushman, 2005) or between controlling and empowering employees (Gebert et al., 2010; Sundaramurthy & Lewis, 2003). Organizing paradoxes address the question of “how organizations are going to operate.”

Facing the diversity of internal and external demands (Margolis & Walsh, 2003) as well as the plurality of stakeholders, accordingly, *performing paradoxes* manifests as competing goals and outcomes such as global versus local and socially focused versus financially focused. Performing paradoxes address the question of “what organizations are trying to do.”

*Belonging paradoxes* represent competing identities (i.e., self and others) within organizations (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014) or across the organization (Schad, Lewis, Raisch & Smith, 2016). This type of paradox deals with the tensions between individual and collective affiliations (Wareham et al., 2014), focuses on understanding the conflicting roles and values between the individual (Amason, 1996) and the collective (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). Belonging paradoxes address the question of “who is going to do.” Moreover, as suggested by Jarzabkowski, Lê and Van de Ven (2013), different types of paradoxes could be located at different levels within an organization: Organizing paradox is situated at the macro level – it addresses the organizational structures issue; Belong paradox at meso level – it refers to the group identity goals and values; and performing paradox at micro level – it deals with the individual’s roles and goals.

### ***Tension-based representation of the strategy***

Dameron and Torset (2014) develop a tension-based representation of strategy – strategizing as the art of balancing between the tensions (i.e., social tension, time tension, cognitive tension, focus tension), on the basis of the analysis of strategists’ discourses on strategizing work. *Social tension* concerns the tension relating between sharing (e.g., sharing strategic knowledge) and solitude (e.g., being alone) social relations that strategists have in the strategic process. According to the researchers, this tension is similar to the collective–individual debate, or the relational–individual debate in strategy research (Chakravarthy &

White, 2002; Mantere & Whittington, 2008). *Focus tension* refers to two opposite views of strategy (i.e., exogenous vs. endogenous). Exogenous view of strategy considers strategizing as being constrained principally by external factors, whereas endogenous perspective considers strategizing as being driven by internal factors. *Cognitive tensions* manifest as the tension between analytical-based rational and experience-based intuitive perspective on strategy. *Time tensions* relate to how practitioners balance between taking time to think or decide deliberately and act more spontaneously and intuitively. This tension-based conceptualization of strategizing enables overcoming and embracing oppositions, distinctions, oppositions, and disjunctions in the research of strategy. It contributes to sharpen a paradox lens on organizing and strategizing to face complexity (McGRATH, 1981) and develop a more integrative perspective on the nature of strategy work.

We build our theoretical framework based on the literature discussed previously. To be more precise, we integrate the four tensions (i.e., social tension, focus tension, cognitive tension, time tension) stemming from the study of Dameron and Torset (2014) and the four categories of paradoxes (i.e., organizing, performing, belong and learning) of the research of Smith and Lewis (2011) into our coding procedures and guide our content analysis accordingly.



### **3.3 Methodology**

#### **3.3.1 Research design**

Scholars argue that different aspects of “reality” of strategy could be constructed via the discourses of strategists which do not merely describe things but do things (Poole & Van de Ven, 1989; Quinn, 1988; Smith & Lewis, 2011). The manager’s discourse on their practices (re-) constitutes the very concept of strategy. Following this perspective, we have conducted 22 semi-directed interviews with senior marketing and digital managers in various industries, as showed in Table 9. The interviewed companies were selected based on several criteria such as external market turbulence, the importance of marketing function within a firm, organizational complexity within the marketing department, maturity in digital, and digital transformation operated in the organization. Some of them are the pioneers in digital marketing (i.e., banking, real estate, telecommunication, advertising), the others have gone under a remarkable transformation within the last few years (i.e., luxury, car manufacturing, energy, fast-moving consumer goods, business-to-business services, like human resources companies).

The diversity of the different industries allows improving the representativeness of our results. Moreover, our research aims to find common strategic dimensions across the industries instead of finding the specific dimensions to one particular industry. Most of the interviewed firms are established multinational companies and employ more than 2 000 employees (e.g., SFR, Renault, Neslté, Essilor, Manpower, Randstad, BNP Paribas, Visa). Regarding the selection of the key-informant, managerial exposure to high-level strategic decision-making was a primary criterion; The profiles of the respondents are either an

experimental senior marketing manager or digital native CDO. They have a solid marketing background, and their digital experience may vary from 4 to 18 years.

### **3.3.2 Data collection and analysis**

Key-informant interviews took place between February 2016 and December 2016. The semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix 3) structured and guided the 22 interviews (Grant, Keenoy and Oswick, 2001). The interviews began with the collection of information on the interviewee's general background and career path, before addressing the following subjects: use of tools or methods for digital activities; understanding of what is a digital marketing strategy (in general and for the firm) ; maturity of digital marketing activities; role and organization of the marketing department (in silos, collaborative or transverse). The interviewees were asked to detail several successful digital marketing projects and the difficulty, which they had experienced within their organization. It was important to allow respondents to talk openly and freely about the issues and without prejudice. We recorded all interviews with an audio phone and subsequently transcribed 252 pages of verbatims. The length of the interviews varies from 30 minutes to 1 hour and 40 minutes, allowing us to access over 22-hours of interview material. The quality and depth of the interviews enable us to assert a degree of confidence concerning qualitative credibility (Tracy, 2010) of the gathered data.

Industrial division	Industry	Company	General information	Founded	Function of respondent	Subsidiary	Interview length
Construction	Heavy construction	Eiffage	French civil engineering construction company. The third-largest company of its type in France, and the fifth largest in Europe in 2016	1844	General Marketing manager	Eiffage construction - French market	73'
Manufacturing	Beverages	Nestlé	The world's largest food and beverage company.	1866	Global Com' and Digital Manager	Nestlé Waters	45'
	Low-price apparel	Kiabi	A low-price French fashion brand.	1978	Head of web-marketing	Corporate	54'
	Luxury apparel	Hermes	French high fashion luxury goods manufacturer.	1837	Digital marketing manager	Corporate	58'
	Pharmaceutics	Novartis	Swiss multinational pharmaceutical company	1996	Marketing manager	Corporate	78'
	Lenses	Essilor	French world leader in ophthalmic optics company, and a key player in visual health.	1972	Head of Global Marketing.	Corporate	30'
	Automobile	Renault	French multinational automobile manufacturer.	1898	Head of B2E & B2B digital department	Corporate	69'
	Tyre	Michelin	French tyre manufacturer and the second-largest tyre manufacturer in the world	1889	E-commerce manager	Bicycle tyre	50'

Communi- cation	Operator	SFR	French telecommunication group.	1987	Head of digital for retail and cross channel	Corporate	69'
Electric and gas service	Electric and gas service	Direct Energie	A world-leading provider of electricity, natural gas, & home services	1986	Chief digital & marketing officer	French subsidiary	60'
Finance	Banking	BNPP	French international banking group. 8th biggest global bank in 2017	1848	Marketing project manager	Personal Finance	61'
	Financial services	Visa	American multinational financial services company.	1958	Head of marketing and communication	French subsidiary	65'
Services	Advertising	Bolloré media régie	French advertising company	2006	Project manager	NA	31'
		McCANN	American multinational leading advertising agency.	1930	Deputy general manager.	Corporate	44'
		Place loop	French location-based mobile marketing platform	2011	Chief operating officer	NA	36'
	Human Resource agencies	Manpower	American multinational staffing firm. The world's third-largest employment company.	1948	Head of marketing and communication	French subsidiary	52'
		Randstad	Dutch multinational human resource firm. The world's second-largest employment company.	1960	Digital marketing manager	French subsidiary	102'
	Computer programming, data	EfficientIP	French multinational DDI solution vendors.	2009	Head of marketing	Corporate	73'

	processing	Soft Computing	French leading consulting and service provider of data sciences and digital technologies	1985	Head of the marketing service	Corporate	47'
		Viaccess-Orca	French leading multinational solutions provider of OTT and TV platforms, content protection.	2008	C level executive	Corporate	68'
	Online Real Estate services	Seloger	French leading online real estate services		Deputy general manager.	Corporate	60'
	Tourism	CFF Vacances	A French company specializing in all-inclusive holidays.	1968	Head of Sales and marketing	Corporate	93'
	Internet pure player	Seloger.com	French leading web portal for property	1992	Vice general manager	Corporate	40'

*Table 8. Details of the sample and the interviews.*

### **3.3.2 Coding process**

The data was coded and categorized by using content analysis with NVivo software (11.4.3) (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). The coding process of the current paper has undertaken three stages.

At the first stage, we transcribed the interviews and used the open coding technique by applying the grounded theory techniques based on the constant comparison (Strauss, 1987) to elaborate the 1st order codes (Johnny & Saldana, 2016). When a recurrent combination of codes emerged, we attributed it as a category (Saldana, 2016). We refined the resulting categories continuously as we progressed in our analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Each category was directly rooted in the discourses of the interviewees and represented the strategic dimension of the digital strategizing work.

At the second stage, we have proceeded the coding in the same manner, but the coding is made based on a coding sheet stemming from the marketing and strategic management literature.

Moreover, at the third stage, we searched the paradoxical sentences in the discourses of the managers (e.g., the sentence such as yes..; but..., paradoxically, contradiction, on the other hand).

After the comparison of the results stemming from the three stages, we decided to keep the eighteen themes that were found at all three stages. For more details of coding grill, please refer Appendix 4

### 3.4 Discussions and implications

#### 3.4.1 Paradoxical perspective on marketing strategizing in today's digital environment

Overall, 18 strategic dimensions have emerged from the coding phase base on the discourses of the strategists, which represent the different facets of the marketing strategizing, as shown in Table 9.

Tensions				
	Theme	Inductive content analysis	Expressed by the interviewees	Quotes
Cognitive tension	Analytical skill			“It is true, the digital tools that we use restrict creative and freedom.” (Global Com’ and Digital Manager, beverage industry)
	Creative skill	x	x	“The marketer must have analytical sensitivity, not just creativity. You need to have both.” (Head of marketing, data processing agency)

Time tension	Innovating			<p>“One of the risks incurred for our company is that we allocate all the resources on the new product launch, but we forget ‘the life’ of our customers with the products already sold.” (Head of the digital for retail and cross channel, telecommunication service)</p>
		x	x	<p>“Innovation is necessarily key. After, once we have said that. It is not so simple, to innovate, we must first master the basics. So we will try to innovate in topics that we actually feel ... already the mastery of the subject itself, so the ability to understand where we can make innovation, and then the business or consumer interest to go injecting innovation.” (Head of digital and marketing, electronic and gas company)</p>
	Mastering			



Path tension	Deliberate approach			<p>“By the way, we have an exercise called the strategic planning every year, well, it is an exercise over 3 or 4 years, all I did, when we look at executions, it is very very different. Well, finally, we do it because it is an intellectual exercise, it allows projecting, we can identify major trends, now, when we look at our executions. I cannot say that we did all the opposite, but there are significant differences in execution. So, it is an interesting exercise to spot major trends, anticipate. However, during the execution, there are a lot of things different.” (C level executive, computer programming company)</p>
	Emergent approach	x	x	<p>“So, on the one hand, we have iterative, once a year, we try to write the plan of the year. And every quarter, we will review the roadmap and the subjects that we delivered. We adjust, and we advance, but we are in line with our convictions and our ambitions that we had at the beginning.” (Head of digital and marketing, electronic and gas company)</p>

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Focus tension	Economic focus			<p>“As a professional, of course, two important things are important for me, the quality of the response for consumers or partners, but it is not the reason that allows me to move forward. That is not what makes me decide, “yes, we are going.” Instead, financial is the real point.”</p> <p>(General marketing manager, heavy construction company</p>
		x	x	
	Customer focus			<p>“For me, the digital strategy, it means, very simply, it is how the digital technologies allow the company to satisfy the need of the customers.” (Head of the digital for retail and cross channel, telecommunication service )</p>

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Power tension	Brand generated content	x	x	<p>“<b>B</b>ad buzz, especially the online complaint, can suddenly cause a brand to go bankrupt. It is true, and it had really happened. Someone makes a video on Youtube about the brand, and this communication is not under the control of the brand. The online communities have more power than ever. ..The brands have had a lag time, and they were caught off guard. However, now, the famous YouTuber or famous bloggers are also manipulated and influenced consciously or unconsciously by the brand.” (Digital marketing Manager, HR services company)</p>
	User-generated content			<p>“<b>Y</b>our consumers help you to improve the quality of your product, test them, and so on. Etc. ... They own the brand because they participate in the creation of the brand.” (Marketing Manager, pharmaceutical company)</p>

Machine-Human tension	Technological innovation capability			<p>“That is to say, and they took between somewhat contradictory logic. Again, in our field, changes happen very fast. Sometimes we feel a bit lost.” (C level executive, computer programming company)</p>
	Human cognitive capability	x	x	<p>“There is a hugely important difficulty that relates to the digital technology and the digital world, which is a world of infinite complexity with an ecosystem of the solutions and the stakeholders and many other issues; we have to master simultaneously the acquisition logic, digital customer relationship, the digital tools, like Content Management System, website, data issues, etc. ” (Marketing director, energy industry)</p>
tension				

Collecting Data	x	<p>“Data capture strategy, how are we doing to get clients into this program in order to retrieve data from those customers. Because without customer data, you can not build a loyalty program.” (Deputy general manager, an advertising company)</p>
Valorizing Data	x	<p>“It is better that you spend time doing some things else than collecting information you do not use. ...when, we ask them about digital strategies, and they say, “Now, I gather the data from social networks, facebook, twitter.” Moreover, when you ask them, “ok, and what are you doing with his information. – there was no answer.” (Head of marketing and communication department, computer and programming company)</p>

Function tension	Robust digital tool			<p>“Marketing in the telecommunication, as in many other domains, it is hellish. The marketer spends his time, every week, to imagine new promotion mechanisms. Once an IT manager said, “it is very good your idea, but I need nine months to develop it. So, I can not work like that.” (Head of the digital for retail and cross channel, telecommunication service)</p>
	Flexible marketing activities	x	x	<p>“Marketing needs to make the promotion for sales, to be able to quickly reposition its offers compared to one of the competitors.” (Head of the digital for retail and cross channel, telecommunication service)</p>

The vision tension	Digital as a tool			<p>“So I contradict myself. If at the beginning of the digitalization, there were a big technical part, but it gets away more and more. ..., but finally, the problem will not be so technical. The problem is, how do I engage my community, how do I make them react to my videos, how do I do it? so here we are more about marketing than digital marketing.” (Head of digital marketing, HR services company)</p>
		x	x	
	Digital as a strategy			<p>“So we use an internal communication and training tool. We have made some training videos, for example, quizzes. So we start having pretty sophisticated things. So, they are tools, but they become strategic.” (C level executive, computer programming company)</p>

Table 9. Tension-based strategic dimensions of digital-enabled marketing strategizing.

Each theme seems logical individually, but tensions appear when two dimensions been juxtaposed (Lewis, 2000). Moreover, a paradox is manifested by the underlying tensions that are in opposition to one another yet simultaneously synergetic and interrelated within a more extensive system (Clegg et al., 2002). Moreover, these tensions are also presented directly in the discourses of the managers. In other words, these tensions are salient.

### **3.4.2. Tension-based view of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment**

#### ***The cognitive tension - analytical vs. creative***

Marketing is a center of excellence for gathering creative practitioners, such as art directors, copywriters, and creative directors, who exhibit creative excellence (Stuhlfaut & Windels, 2013). Thus, the marketing field is considered as a creative industry that relies on the intuition, experience, imagination, and talent of marketers (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997).

“The creative director, when he conceives, when he has an idea, he will sell his idea to the customer, but it is not necessarily rational, rather, it is often personal, intuitive and subjective.” (General marketing manager, heavy construction company)

“There are tensions or zones of incompatibility. That is to say, that data is very technical and rational. While those who are work in communication and marketing, this is another profile.” (Digital marketing manager, luxury and apparel company)

However, marketing strategizing in the digital era is strongly characterized by data and analytics tools.



“Each campaign is monitored and measured since the beginning. The advantage of digital is that we can change the content, media plan, or other things in real-time. So there is a real-time monitoring and control. Once the campaign is completed, we analyze the results and report them for the optimization of the next campaign...It is true, the digital tools that we use restrict creative and freedom.” (Global Com’ and Digital Manager, beverage industry)

Be aware that, the marketer in the digital era tries to manager equally these two dimensions. As explained by this manager:

“The marketer must have analytical sensitivity, not just creativity. You need to have both worlds.” (Head of marketing, data processing agency)

The tension between analytical and creative decisions is not new; many researchers from the strategic decision-making field have investigated the tension between rationality and intuition (Calabretta, Gemser, & Wijnberg, 2016). Therefore, this tension has further emphasized the use of technology. As it corresponds to the cognitive tensions of the article of Dameron and Torset (2014), it is named “cognitive tension:”

### ***The time tension - innovating vs. mastering***

According to the managers that we have interviewed, innovation is definitively a key element to gain a competitive advantage in the digital era. In the marketing field, innovation is not solely linked to technology but also the practice as well as the mindset (i.e., think for tomorrow).

“To identify potential business with our partners and markets that we could develop. To be able to think outside the box. To develop our route map towards what something more original and new. It is a general state of mind. So there are both new projects and a general

state of mind. So, we focus mainly on this innovative dimension.” (C level executive, computer programming company)

“Innovation is something that we have developed in our process. I give you an example; we just finished an operation called Innovation Van, which has mobilized the entire company. We set up a collaborative platform to collect all the innovative ideas of all the employees; we have collected 1000 ideas on this platform. And we have selected 6, and we will certainly achieve 2 or 3.” (Digital manager, apparel company)

Moreover, marketers are good at renewing marketing actions such as creating new offerings, devising new promotions, pricing schemes, and innovating in terms of channels and distribution agreements, and thus substitute the current marketing activities.

“One risk for the company like us is that the marketer launch new products, and you put all your focus on the new products, and you forget ‘the life’ of your customers with the products already sold. While the job of the operator, it is not just a sales business. It is, first and foremost, a service. We have to give a good quality mobile network, and you have to be able to call, we are not there to sell mobiles, it has to work.” (Head of the digital for retail and cross channel, telecommunication service)

Meanwhile, many managers also stressed that they might neglect the present state of affairs by focusing too much on new creation or innovation.

“Innovation is necessarily key. After, once we have said that. It is not so simple, to innovate, we must first master the basics. So we will try to innovate in topics that we actually feel ... already the mastery of the subject itself, so the ability to understand where we can

make innovation, and then the business or consumer interest to go injecting innovation.”  
(Head of digital and marketing, electronic and gas company)

“It is important to have a clear balance of what I am thinking for future, so innovation, but also keep in mind that the first thing that I have to do well is that all that I sell to customers must work perfectly.” (Head of the digital for retail and cross channel, telecommunication service)

In the digital era, the marketplace develops at an unprecedented speed. In order to stay in the course of the competition, firms have to innovate and think about tomorrow. However, it is also crucial to the grand importance of the present. Because there is no future without a present, thus we named this the “time tension”, which fits the one of Dameron and Torset (2014).

### ***The path tension - deliberate approach vs. emergent approach***

Most of the managers have affirmed that they set an annual marketing planning at the beginning of each year (i.e., deliberate approach).

“We make plans. We try to anticipate and predict the future. So we do market research, we do tests, pre-tests, post-tests; we quantify, to anticipate the future reaction or behavior. So we plan without stopping.” (Deputy general manager, an advertising company)

“A 10 years strategic vision of marketing through the prospective studies, it is perfect, honestly, it is exciting, it is good for the ego, it is culturally rewarding, but I am not sure that it is really productive. I think we are in short time-circles. You have to ask the market what they think about it first.” (General marketing manager, heavy construction company)

“By the way, we have an exercise called the strategic planning every year, well, it is an exercise for 3 or 4 years. All I did, when we look at executions, it is very very different. Well, finally, we do it because it is an intellectual exercise, it allows projecting, we can identify major trends, now, when we look at our executions. I cannot say that we did all the opposite, but there are significant differences in execution. So, it is an interesting exercise to spot major trends, anticipate. However, during the execution, there are a lot of things different.” (C level executive, computer programming company)

However, digital technologies have significantly reduced the notion of time. Firms need to be agile as well as adaptive. Thus the marketing strategizing in the digital era involves the practice of annual planning setting as well as the monthly or trimester adjustment (i.e., emergent approach).

“So, on the one hand, we have iterative, once a year, we try to write the plan of the year. And every quarter, we will review the roadmap and the subjects that we delivered. We adjust, and we advance, but we are in line with our convictions and our ambitions that we had at the beginning.” (Head of digital and marketing, electronic and gas company)

“An action plan has been put in place. Of course, it is a big big job, it is time-consuming, and it is expensive. Thus, we set up a multi-step drawer action plan to achieve the vision.” (Head of marketing and communication, HR services company)

Being agile in the digital era is a crucial capability with respect to marketing competency. Therefore, a sustainable strategic vision is also primordial for marketing strategizing, even in the digital era (Bungay, 2019). We named this the “path tension,” and it is also a part of “time tensions” (Dameron & Torset. 2014).

### *The focus tension – customer focus vs. economic focus*

The tension between economic logic (i.e., transactional) and customer logic (i.e., relational) of marketing strategizing has been accentuated in today's digital environment. On the one hand, the strategists claim that a customer-centric culture and a close relationship building with customers symbolizes the practice of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment.

“For me, the digital strategy, it means, very simply, it is how the digital technologies allow the company to satisfy the need of the customers.” (Head of the digital for retail and cross channel, telecommunication service)

“We might call digital marketing direction as customer direction. Thanks to digital, we can create more touchpoints with the final customer.” (Digital Marketing Manager, HR services company)

“Our marketing strategy consists of building a closer relationship between our customer and our brand. A real man to man relationship.” (Digital manager, low-price apparel company)

Meanwhile, most of the digital managers revealed also the digitalization is built on the transactional logic.

“There is also an economic reason. With our digital tools, we can automate a large part of our processes. That is to say, instead of having someone who manually enters documents such as passports, rent receipts, identity documents that are standardized, we can replace it with digital tools. The digitalization allows lowering our costs.” (Digital Marketing Manager, HR services company)

“The trade-off concerns the choice between internal needs, internal demands, and the other side, what are the expectations of the customer.” (Head of marketing and communication, HR services company)

The cost saving as well as the relationship building characterize the marketing strategizing in today’s digital environment. Most firms start the digitalization because of the cost saving. As they are achieving a higher maturity of digitalization, they shift the focus to customer. However, the economy performance is the foundation of firms.

“The brands work on both relational performance and business performance in the digital era.” (Head of marketing, data processing agency)

“Our Marketing objective is twofold. To make it very simple, the first objective is to improve customer satisfaction by providing a good customer experience. And then, we address the question of acquisition, I mean, the growth of acquisition. The challenge we have set for ourselves is to support and accelerate sales growth. Making digital as the locomotive of the sale.” (Head of digital and marketing, electronic and gas company)

Accordingly, we named this tension between customer logic and economic logic the “focus tension” (Daeron & Torset, 2014) that co-exists inside the organization.

### ***The power tension - brand-generated content vs. customer-generated content***

Digital technologies, such as web portal and social media page of the brand, offer a direct and additional marketplace where the brand can tell a story about them and their product, and clarify their identity. This is even more important for the brands that are operating on both B to B and B to C market.

“The digital channels have allowed us to promote our corporate brand better. We posted regularly many opinion papers on our website.” (Head of marketing and communication, financial service company)

With the increasing use of digital technology, such as the rating system, the mass use of user-generated content on facebook, twitter, blog, or any other social media platform, consumers have engaged in an active role in creating brand content and product with the company. Customer empowerment implies the shifting of power and control of branding and product development from the company to its customers (Acar & Puntoni, 2016).

“Your consumers help you to improve the quality of your product, test them, and so on. etc. ... They own the brand because they participate in the creation of the brand.” (Marketing Manager, pharmaceutical company)

Therefore, face to the increasing power of customer-generated content, many marketing practitioners feel losing control of their brand management and relatively powerless.

“Bad buzz, especially the online complaint, can suddenly cause a brand to go bankrupt. It is true, and it had really happened. Someone makes a video on Youtube about the brand, and this communication is not under the control of the brand. The online communities have more power than ever.” (Digital Marketing Manager, HR services company)

Furthermore, they have tried to resolve the tension by controlling the user-generated content as much as they can.

“Regarding the problem of online branding, it is about how to deal with these bad and negative online consumer-generated contents. How to guide or manage them via our customer service?” (Digital marketing manager, luxury and apparel company)

Even some practices in terms of control are subtler.

“The famous YouTuber or famous bloggers are also manipulated; they can be influenced consciously or unconsciously by the brand. This has happened to the journalists before. Moreover, now, the influencers are integrated into the company’s PR strategy.”  
(Digital Marketing Manager, HR services company)

The battle for power between customer-generated content and brand-generated content is more than ever salient; Accordingly, we named it the “power tension.” This tension is specific to the marketing strategizing in today's digital environment.

***The machine-human Tension - technological innovation capability vs. manager’s cognitive capability***

Innovative digital disruption has the increasing influence on company’s value proposition and its resulting market strategy.

“Innovation occupies a key position in our business, integrating the digital tools and technologies into the global business development are the most important strategies to address.” (Head of the digital for retail and cross channel, telecommunication service)

Therefore, facing rapid technological change, digital managers mentioned a particular limitation regarding their cognitive capabilities.

"There is a hugely important difficulty that relates to the digital technology and the digital world, which is a world of infinite complexity with an ecosystem of the solutions and the stakeholders and many other issues; we have to master simultaneously the acquisition



logic, digital customer relationship, the digital tools, like Content Management System, website, data issues, etc.” (Marketing director, energy industry)

“I often say that digital experts, we are expert for 5 mins, because it changes so much quickly” (Digital marketing manager, luxury and apparel company)

This frustration is further emphasized when it comes to managing a digital expert team (e.g., data scientist, UX designer).

The tension between the cognitive ability of digital and marketing managers and the rapid evolution of technology has result in increasing technostress, which manifests as one’s inability to cope or deal with the demands of IT use (Pirkkalainen, Salo, Tarafdar & Makkonen, 2019, Maier, Laumer, Weinert, & Weitzel, 2015 ; Tarafdar, Ragu-Nathan, & Ragu-Nathan,2007). Neglecting technostress may cause adverse psychological problems as well as negative behavioral problems such as reduce one's productivity, job satisfaction, creativity, and organizational commitment (Tarafdar, Pullins, & Ragu-Nathan, 2014; Pirkkalainen, Salo, Tarafdar & Makkonen, 2019). We then named this the “machine-human Tension." This tension is specific to marketing strategizing in today's digital environment and will be further fostered with the arrival of the age of AI (i.e., artificial intelligence) (Cappelli, Tambe & Yakubovich, 2018).

### ***The use Tension – data collecting vs. data activation***

Internet technologies, such as cloud, social networks, email, online content, web 3.0, even web 4.0, result in a higher level of information availability, and enhance data management. The analytical tools are becoming increasingly crucial in the marketing decision

marketing (Fan, Lau & Zhao, 2015). Notably, it permits changing the perception of marketing from a cost service to a value-generating service (Kumar et al., 2013).

“Data capture strategy, how can we get clients into this program in order to retrieve data from those customers. Because without customer data, you can not build a loyalty program”. (Deputy general manager, an advertising company)

“Our strategy consists of building a closer customer relationship with the brand. A real man to man relationship. So how can we use the data to reduce the distance between us, the brand and our customers? This question is fundamental” (Digital manager, low-price apparel company)

“Very often, especially in the digital or in the social media age, the goal of the performance indicators is to reassure. It allows justifying a choice. The results of quantitative research are generally opaque. When we present it to the top managers who do not have the technical knowledge or expertise of the profession, in this case, the indicators have much more conviction value than explanation value”. (Vice-president, Advertising agency)

However, many managers also recognize that their company lack data culture and competency in data analytics. They spent a large amount of money on collecting data. Therefore, they do not really know what to do with data thereafter; that is, they do not know how to valorize the data into activated marketing knowledge.

“It is better that you spend time doing some things else than collecting information you do not use. ...when, we ask them about digital strategies, and they say, “Now, I gather the data from social networks, facebook, twitter.” And when you ask them, “ok, and what are you

doing with these information. – there was no answer”. (Head of marketing and communication department, computer and programming company)

“To be completely transparent again. It is a big mess today....There was no data culture. And it has arrived recently.” (Digital Marketing Manager, HR services company)

“The problem is not so much about the massive collection of data. It concerns mainly the question of what to do with it? Sometimes, we do not really know what to do” (C level executive, computer programming company)

All the interviewees have emphasized the critical role of the data in marketing strategizing in today's digital environment. To gain the competitive advantage throughout the data strategy, firms spend a sizeable budget to redesign their IT infrastructure to collect and manage the data. Meanwhile, they also stress the lack of data culture and the difficulties regarding the effective use of data (i.e., how to identify which sources matter, how to integrate the different data sources, identify what are valuable insights). (Kumar et al., 2013). We named this “use tension,” which is also specific to the marketing strategizing in today’s digital environment.

### ***The function tension - robust digital technology vs. flexible marketing activities***

The development of the IT projects such as CRM, data mining, website, mobile application, necessitates generally the important financial and human resource allocation. As a consequence, the robustness and the stability of the system are the key requirements that firms look after. And the creation of digital technology is generally a long-term investment.

“Marketing in the telecommunication, as in many other domains, it is hellish. The marketer spends his time, every week, to imagine new promotion mechanisms. Once an IT

manager said, “it is very good your idea, but I need nine months to develop it. So, I can not work like that.” (Head of the digital for retail and cross channel, telecommunication service)

“We question very often, do we need to change regularly the digital tools? The digital projects are generally the resource-heavy projects. It is time-consuming. And, we could not change it every 5 mornings.” (Head of marketing and communication, financial service company)

However, as consumer becomes much more changing and volatile, digital marketers have to develop more marketing promotions and activities to attract the consumers. Accordingly, marketing promotion activities have been further intensified, and marketing activities are more agile in the digital era.

“Marketing needs to make the promotion for sales, to be able to quickly reposition its offers compare to the one of the competitor”. (Head of the digital for retail and cross channel, telecommunication service)

Thus, tension emerges from the robustness of the digital technology and tools, and the flexibility of marketing activities that we named the “function tension” is closely linked to the marketing strategizing in today’s digital environment.

### ***The vision tension - digital as a tool vs. digital as a strategy***

Because digital is technology, since the beginning, we consider it as a tool or a channel. Therefore, with the massive digital transformation at the level of society, consumer as well as organization, digital has undertaken a strategic turn and became increasingly strategizing

“There has been a general awareness that the web is not just a tool for communication. And it could have business interests ... So there is a real problem of thinking about digital through the whole company, its business, and its economic model. Digital could bring something more to the current economic model.” (Head of digital and marketing, electronic and gas company)

“So, in fact, behind the digital strategy, there are many things that we find. I would say mainly two things. Some companies think that the digital strategy is the implementation of tools, and that creates a function or a digital project apart and solo, so total nonsense. And then, there are some companies, they are more rare, but they start to think that the digital strategy is the problem of the whole company.” (Head of marketing and communication, HR services company)

Accordingly, we term the tension between digital as a tool and digital as a strategy the “vision tension.” This tension characterizes the marketing strategizing in today's digital environment. This tension, which links the materiality and strategy directly, is of growing interest. Because we are granting increasing importance to the understanding of the role plays by materiality in strategy work – *strategizing materials* (Dameron, Lê, & LeBaron, 2015). The further study of this tension will allow improving the understanding of the strategy process.

### ***Categorization of the tensions***

As illustrated in Table 10, we further category the nine tensions emerging from the qualitative research into different categories of paradoxes, and we compare the tensions of the current research with the tensions of the study of Dameron and Torset (2014).

Four tensions of the current study (i.e., cognitive tension, time tension, path tension, and focus tension) correspond to the three tensions in the study of Dameron and Torset (2014). The rest of the five tensions of our research (i.e., power tension, machine-human tension, use tension, function tension, and vision tension) are specific to digital-enabled marketing strategizing.

We then classify the tensions of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment into different categories base on the work of Smith and Lewis (2011).

Cognitive tension belongs to organizational paradoxes (Smith & Lewis, 2011) because it enables a competing design, which encompasses analytical vs. creative design thinking, and it addresses the question of how marketing practices are going to operate.

Time tension, as well as path tension, belongs to learning paradoxes (Smith & Lewis, 2011) as the two poles of time tension raise temporal orientations (i.e., tomorrow vs. today, deliberate vs. emergent) and examines how organizations break down past understandings and construct new processes (Smith & Lewis, 2011). Indeed, time tension and path tension address the question of when marketing practices are going to operate.

Focus tension is performing paradox (Smith & Lewis, 2011). This tension deals with the diversity of demands as well as the plurality of stakeholders. This paradox addresses the question of what marketing practices are trying to do.

Power tension is a form of belonging paradoxes (Smith & Lewis, 2011) because it implies the conflicting roles and values between consumer and brand. Belonging paradoxes address the question of who is going to operate marketing practices.

In addition, we create a new category named *materializing paradoxes*, which refers to the tensions caused by digitized forms of materiality and its use in marketing strategy making and operating. This new category sheds particular light on how the tensions caused by digitized forms of materiality create and affect resulting marketing strategy. *Materializing paradoxes* address the question of 'with what marketing practices are going to do.' Accordingly, it enriches the conversation regarding the role of materiality in strategy making, as well as the 'conversation with paradox.'

The tensions emerging from the current study are located at different organizational levels, as suggested by (Jarzabkowski, Lê, and Van de Ven, 2013). At a macro level, *time tension*, *path tension*, *machine-human*, *use tension as well as vision tension* represent not only the marketing strategizing, but also the overall organizational structure and culture. At a meso level, *cognitive tension*, *focus tension*, *power tension*, and *function tension* concern more particularly the marketing department as well as its interaction with the other department. Therefore, there is no micro-level tension in the current research, as our study does not investigate the marketing strategizing from an individual perspective.

Tension-based representation of the strategy						
Article	Dameron & Torset (2014)	Current study	Level	Smith & Lewis (2011)	Current study	Question
Focus	General strategizing tension	Strategizing tensions for marketing in today's digital environment		A general categorization of paradoxes	Categorization of paradoxes in today's digital marketing environment	
Tension	Cognitive tension	Cognitive tension	Meso	Organizing paradoxes	Organizing paradoxes	How to do
	Time tension	Time tension	Macro	Learning paradoxes	Learning paradoxes	When to do
		Path tension				
	Focus tension	Focus tension	Meso	Performing paradoxes	Performing paradoxes	What to do
	Social tension	x	Meso	Belonging paradoxes	Belonging paradoxes	Who will do
	x	Power tension				
	x	Machine-human tension	Macro	x	Materializing paradoxes	With what to do
	x	Use tension	Macro			
	x	Function tension	Meso			
	x	Vision tension	Macro			

Table 10. Categories of paradoxes with related tensions of digital-enabled marketing

In a nutshell, the eighteen tensions emerging from the current research represent diverse strategic dimensions of marketing strategizing (i.e., how to do, when to do, what to do, who will do, and with what to do). Moreover, these tensions are interrelated.

### ***The art of managing simultaneously and circularly the opposite but interrelated tensions***

A dynamic equilibrium, in contrast, assumes constant motion across opposing forces. The system maintains equilibrium by adapting to a continuous pull in opposing directions. In biological terms, cells achieve a dynamic equilibrium state of homeostasis when molecules flow in and out of the cell at an equal rate. The dynamic equilibrium involves simultaneous and vigorous forward and backward reactions. In a dynamic organizational system, the role of



leadership is to support opposing forces and harness the constant tension between them, enabling the system to not only survive but also continuously improve. (See Figure 7)

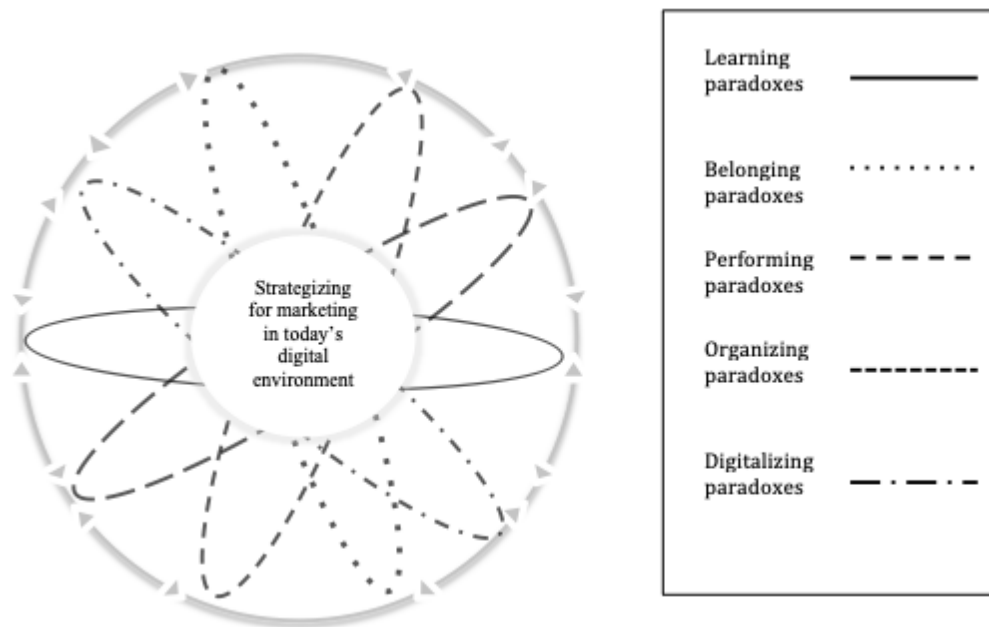


Figure 7. Conceptual model of Marketing strategizing in today's digital environment through a paradox lens

### 3.4.3. Contributions

This research participates in two conversations, one concerns the role of materiality in strategy making, and the other is the “conversation with paradox.” Our contribution is, therefore, threefold. First, we provide empirical evidence of embedded tensions in the strategic digital-enabled marketing practices. This extends the understanding of how paradoxical practices constitute strategizing. Second, we test the boundary conditions of the use of two theories (i.e., Dameron & Torset, 2014; Smith & Lewis, 2011) in the digital marketing context. Third, we extend the above two theories with our findings. Moreover, Essay#2 shows the digital practitioners that digital marketing is not only about implementing

a set of tools and technologies; it is about strategizing differently in an ever more complex environment.

In general, practitioners consider that paradox is something negative and try to avoid it because it causes anxiety, as they are not used to the management of paradox. Marketing practitioners can no more neglect paradox because it becomes increasingly salient within today's digital environment characterized by plurality, change, and scarcity. This raising of awareness of paradox is of importance because it allows practitioners to face it, appropriate it, make sense of it, and deal with it. By embracing paradox management, marketing practitioners feel less stress when it comes to deal with contradictory demands and could be more active and creative in their way to address paradoxes.

Top management can use the paradoxes stemming from this essay as the training material in their workshops of paradox management. They can also apply the framework of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment in Essay#2 into their management context, and think about what are the tensions in their daily management and how the tensions disrupt their management and one of their middle managers. These reflexing will allow them to build their marketing strategy more holistically.

### **3.6 Limitations and conclusion**

Today's digital environment characterized by plurality, change, and resource scarcity renders the latent management paradox more than ever salient (Smith & Lewis, 2011). However, how paradoxical marketing practices, especially in today's digital environment, may constitute and affect the content of resulting marketing strategies, has been largely neglected. Through a qualitative research with twenty-two marketing managers, nine tensions emerge from the data analysis. Among the nine tensions, four tensions (i.e., cognitive tension,

time tension, path tension, and focus tension) are the general tensions of strategizing, whereas five tensions (i.e., power tension, machine-human tension, use tension, function tension, and vision tension) are specific to marketing strategizing in today's digital environment. Moreover, we further categorize the nine tensions into five categories. And one category, named "Materializing paradoxes" is the specific category of paradox to digital-enabled marketing strategizing.

The paradoxes stemming from the essay #2 are all tension-based. Future studies could take another perspective to study paradoxes, for instance, investigate empirically what are the "doxes" – common believe within the marketing organization, and what are the contradictory activities to the "doxes." In our research, we have studied one form of practice. Future research should pay attention to the other forms of practice (e.g., annual reports, white papers) to study the marketing strategizing in today's digital environment. Moreover, the current Essay does not shed light on how marketing practitioners deal with the paradoxical tensions embedded in their daily life. In other words, study how practitioners influence and shape the marketing strategizing in today's digital environment via a paradox lens.



## **Essay #3 – Strategic responses to the personalization and privacy paradox**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Paradoxical tensions are ever-present in daily organizational life and thus continuously challenge our understanding of organizational strategizing (Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013; Lewis, 2000). Tracy (2004) advocates “it is not paradox, per se, that is productive or unproductive, good or bad, liberating or paralyzing, but rather, that employees can react to contradictions in various ways, and that their framing techniques of workplace tensions can have various personal and organizational effects” (p. 120). The way that employees respond to paradoxes constitutes the management of paradox (Ehnert, 2009; Guilmot & Ehnert, 2015).

Lewis (2000) claims that organizations may not be able to manage tensions as they can be controlled; instead, tension can only be coped with. Thus, coping strategy, also named as the response strategies to paradox have a direct impact on the organization. Paradox research has classified two main strategies — defensive and active responses to paradox (i.e., Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013; Poole & Van de Ven, 1989; Smith & Lewis, 2011; Vince & Broussine, 1996). Defensive responses enable managers to deal with paradoxical tension in short-term relief, whereas active responses attempt to cope with a paradox on a longer-term basis and foster a company's sustainability ( Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013; Smith & Lewis 2011).

However, this vision of positive and negative response has been challenged recently by Cunha and Putnam, (2019), who advocate that effective responses to paradox demands entail

a combination of defensive and active responses and foster the dynamic interplay between the opposites. This is even more challenging in today's digital environment.

In this period of upheaval and renewal, digital technology fosters the market's uncertainty, accelerates change, and thus accentuates paradoxical tensions (Smith and Lewis, 2011). One of the most prominent examples of paradox in the field of digital marketing is the tension between personalization strategy and data privacy — namely the personalization–privacy paradox (PPP) (Gerber, Gerber, & Volkamer, 2018; Kokolakis, 2017; Sutanto et al., 2013; Xu et al., 2010). With the aid of data technologies, the process of personalized marketing has been facilitated and reached a one-to-one level (Ansari & Mela 2003; Peppers et al. 1999). However, Internet users are also increasingly concerned by the collection and use of their personal information (Gerber, Gerber & Volkamer, 2018; Palos-Sanchez, Saura, & Martin-Velicia, 2019; Sutanto et al., 2013; Tarafdar, Pullins, & Ragu-Nathan, 2014; Xu et al., 2010). Greater personalization of the marketing approach may paradoxically expand customer's sense of vulnerability and suspicion (Aguirre, Mahr, Grewal, de Ruyter, & Wetzels, 2015).

Nevertheless, despite the increasing privacy concern of Internet users, studies have shown that customers are still willing to give their personal information away in particular contexts (Carrascal et al., 2013; Kokolakis, 2017). The different customer reactions to marketing personalization reveal that paradoxical tension could manifest itself in different degrees of salience. In this regard, Smith and Lewis (2011) advocate that paradoxical tensions can be simultaneously salient and latent, depending on the way that is perceived. Latent tension is unperceived, dormant, or ignored contradictory yet interrelated elements, whereas salient tension refers to the tension that the practitioner has experienced (Smith & Lewis, 2011). The salience of paradox changes managers' perception of paradox; consequently, the

salience influences managers' use of response strategies to the paradox — besides, uncertainty and time constraint influence also their judgment and the perception of the paradox.

Since the first appearance of the term “privacy paradox” at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Brown, 2001), numerous studies have investigated the many facets of this phenomenon (Gerber, Gerber & Volkamer, 2018; Palos-Sanchez, Saura, & Martin-Velicia, 2019; Sutanto et al., 2013; Tarafdar, Pullins, & Ragu-Nathan, 2014; Xu et al., 2010). Most of them have studied how customers respond to the privacy paradox as it allows providing practical guidance for marketers and IT engineers to address the paradox better. However, to the best of our knowledge, how marketing managers respond to the PPP has not been studied.

Thus, we formulate two research questions:

1. What are the response strategies that marketing managers use to deal with the PPP?
2. In which circumstance do they use these different response strategies to deal with the PPP?

It is important to address the above questions, as more research effort should focus on examining how practitioners respond in the paradoxical situation (Cunha & Putnam, 2019). Therefore, in the current study, the primary purpose is to gain a more in-depth insight into what is the range of response strategies to the PPP, and when do managers use them. Numerous studies have investigated the response strategies to deal with paradox conceptually (Lewis, 2000; Poole & Vand de Ven, 1989; Seo et al., 2004), whereas some other studies have explored the subject using qualitative methodologies (Gibbs, 2009; Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013; Tracy, 2004; Vince & Broussine, 1996). Few studies have used quantitative methods when it comes to paradox management (Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de

Ven, 2013; Vince & Broussine, 1996). This issue maybe because of methodological difficulties due to the lack of scales to measure paradox, or endogeneity concerns (Echambadi, Campbell, & Agarwal, 2006). To overcome this shortcoming, we use an experimental vignette methodology, which has proven its usefulness in the strategic decision sciences (Tjemkes & Furrer, 2010) and to overcome the endogeneity concerns (Echambadi, Campbell, & Agarwal, 2006).

More precisely, our conceptual model integrates: (1) the three elements stemming from the equilibrium model of Smith and Lewis (2011), that is the salience of paradox (i.e., latent vs. salient paradox) and two individual factors that influence the choice of responses (i.e., cognitive complexity and emotional equanimity); (2) the four response strategies identified by Jarzabkowski et al. (2013); and (3) three critical concepts from the field of strategic decision-making, that is indecision as an additional defensive responses, time constraint and uncertainty as the additional factors that influence the perception of the PPP. Our study integrates and extends existing literature of the management paradoxes.

We organize the remainder of the paper as follows. We first present the conceptual foundation for this study. This is followed by a description of the research hypothesis, and research methodology. We then conclude the paper with a discussion of the key results, limitations, theoretical contributions, and managerial implications.



## 4.2 Theoretical background

### 4.2.1 *Response strategies to the paradox*

Paradoxes, which manifest as tensions, are ever-present in daily organizational life. The management of tensions and paradoxes has a direct impact on the organizational management. Paradoxically Lewis (2000) claims that organizations may not be able to manage tensions, as they cannot be controlled. Instead, tensions can only be coped with. In the paradox research field, a variety of response strategies have been identified (e.g., Poole & Van de Ven, 1989; Vince & Broussine, 1996), which can be classified into defensive and active responses (Smith & Lewis, 2011), as display in Table 11.

On the one hand, defensive responses enable one to temporarily overcome paradoxical tension but do not allow to work within or understand the paradox, thus it provides short-term relief. They allow actors to temporarily cope with paradoxical tensions and reduce anxiety but do not offer a sustainable way to work with or understand the paradox (Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013). On the other hand, active responses consider paradox as a natural part of organizational life and attempt to deal with a paradox on a longer-term basis and result in a virtues circle that fosters sustainability (Jarzabkowski et al. 2013; Smith & Lewis 2011). Thus, these two categories of response strategies have two different time focus — defensive responses focus on the short term, whereas active responses focus on the long term.

Both defensive and active responses have been studied in conceptual as well as empirical studies. Defensive responses to paradox include: 1/ *spatial separation* consists of clarifying levels of reference and connections of paradox (e.g., part-whole, micro-macro, or individual-society), and *temporal separation* involves taking the role of time into account. (Poole & Van de Ven, 1989); 2/ *selecting* involves ignoring one pole and selecting the other

(Gibbs, 2009; Seo et al., 2004; Tracy, 2004); 3/ *synthesis resolution* refers to the introduction of new terms to resolve the paradox (Poole & Van de Ven, 1989); 4/ *integration* combines both poles of tension through a forced merger or neutralization (Seo et al., 2004); 5/ *splitting* separates the two poles of tension and prevents their interaction temporally or spatially (Jarzabkowski, et al., 2013; Lewis, 2000; Tracy, 2004); 6/ *regression* resorts to more secure actions or understandings, whereas 7/ *repression* manifests as the blocking of awareness of experience or memories (Lewis, 2000; Vince & Broussine, 1996;); 8/ *suppressing* consists of prioritizing one pole of tension so that it can overrule the other pole (Jarzabkowski, et al., 2013); 9/ *projection* is the deportation of one's deficiency to someone else (Lewis, 2000; Vince & Broussine,1996), 10/ *reaction formation* refers to the development of the opposite feeling to the threatening one (Lewis, 2000; Vince & Broussine,1996;); 11/ *ambivalence* involves compromising to engage both alternatives with “lukewarm reactions that lose the vitality of extremes” (Smith & Lewis, p. 763); 12/ *denial* is the rejection of the disagreement (Vince & Broussine,1996); 13/ *withdrawal* (Gibbs, 2009) oneself being actively envolved; 14/ *opposing* involves in active confrontation and conflict that separates contradictory elements (Jarzabkowski, et al., 2013) and 15/ *vacillation* is the switching and back and forth between two poles based on time, target, or topic (Tracy, 2004).

Active responses consider paradoxes as a natural part of organizational life and manifest as resolutions that base on the long-term. In the extant literature, it includes *acceptance or confrontation* (Lewis, 2000), *transcendence* (Gibbs 2009; Lewis, 2000; Seo et al., 2004), *Opposing* (Poole & Van de Ven, 1989) as well as *adjusting* (Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013). *Acceptance* indicates a willingness to live with the elements that cause tension, whereas opposition concerns not only accept the paradox but also learn from juxtaposing contradictory propositions and assumptions. *Confrontation* consists of working through directly the sources of paradox. *Adjusting* as an active response deals with both poles of the

tension by satisfying the need of both. From a higher plane, *transcendence* refers to thinking in which paradoxical elements are understood as complex interdependencies rather than contradictory interests. However, this vision of positive and negative responses has been challenged recently by Cunha and Putnam (2019). They advocate that effective responses to paradoxes demands entail a combination of defensive and active responses.

References	Type of study	Empirical setting	Findings	Type of responses
Poole & Van de Ven (1989)	Conceptual	-	Four responses to the paradox: spatial separation, temporal separation, synthesis resolution, and opposition.	Both defensive and active
Vince & Broussine (1996)	Empirical Qualitative	49 senior managers and 37 middle managers from six public service organizations	Five defensive mechanisms of managers to deal with paradoxical tensions in the context of change management: repression, regression, projection, reaction formation, and denial.	Defensive
Lewis (2000)	Conceptual	-	This study categorizes six defensive responses: splitting, projecting, repressing, regressing, reaction forming, and ambivalence. The three active responses are acceptance, confrontation, and transcendence.	Both defensive and active
Seo et al. (2004)	Conceptual	-	The study categorizes the literature on contradictions into four types of responses: selection, separation, integration, and transcendence.	Both defensive and active
Tracy (2004)	Empirical Qualitative	Two correctional facilities	The study has shed light on the various ways officers responded to contradictions or paradoxes in their work. The responses can be conceptually classified into three general groups: selection, vacillation, and splitting.	Defensive
Gibbs (2009)	Empirical Qualitative	50 managers, assignees, and customers have been interviewed on both the US East and West coasts	Three types of responses (i.e., selection, transcendence, withdrawal) have been studied in a set of dialectical tensions in the context of global virtual team management.	Both defensive and active
Jarzabkowski et al. (2013)	Empirical Qualitative	Longitudinal real-time study	The research emphasizes four responses, which are splitting, suppressing, opposing, and adjusting, like the way a firm copes with an organizing paradox between market and regulatory demands.	Both defensive and active

*Table 11. Research on defensive and active responses*

In the extant literature on response strategies to paradox, some have studied the responses conceptually and built the foundation for the future research (Lewis, 2000; Poole & Van de Ven, 1989; Seo et al., 2004), whereas others have undertaken empirical research to provide evidence of the use of response strategies to paradoxes in different contexts (Gibbs, 2009; Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013; Tracy, 2004).

Vince & Broussine (1996) and Tracy (2004) have examined the defensive responses exclusively, whereas the research of Gibbs (2009) and Jarzabkowski et al. (2013) has investigated empirically both defensive responses and active responses. Through their study of paradoxical tensions between autonomy vs. connectedness, inclusion vs. exclusion, and empowerment vs. disempowerment in the context of global virtual teams, Gibbs (2009) shows the productive or detrimental of the project is depending on how team members manage (i.e., selection, transcendence, and withdrawal) the tensions. However, their study focuses only on two defensive and one active responses. The four responses to paradoxes that emerged from the longitudinal case study in the context of restriction are more developed than the coping strategies of Gibbs (2009).

In their research, Jarzabkowski et al. (2013) define *adjusting* as “a response to a tension that recognizes that both poles of the paradox are important and interdependent and thus both need to be accommodated” (p. 255). *Splitting* is “a response to the tension that involves separating contradictory elements either temporally (dealing with one, then the other) or spatially (compartmentalizing elements into different areas)” (p. 255). The splitting response separates the two poles and prevents interaction that might occasion tension (Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009). This response strategy is considered as the least conflicting one (Jarzabkowski et al. 2013). *Suppressing* is “a response to the tension that involves prioritizing one element

and allowing it to dominate or overrule the other element of a paradox” (p. 255). The suppressing response refers to a response to the tension that involves prioritizing one element and allowing it to dominate or overrule the other aspect of a paradox (Jarzabkowski et al. 2013). *Opposing* is “a response to the tension that involves parties supporting contradictory elements of a paradox engaging in active confrontation and conflict that polarize paradoxical elements.” thus, it represents the most conflicting responses (Jarzabkowski et al. 2013). The use of such aggressive responses is frequent when actors become unwilling to engage in compromise (Lüscher & Lewis, 2008), and potentially it results in spiraling and vicious conflict circles (Bateson, 1972; Smith & Lewis, 2011; Werner & Baxter, 1994). The explicit definitions of the four responses to paradox facilitate the replication of the coping strategies in some other context.

Decision-making being complex, different response strategies is possible. Notably, when the choice is complicated, the consequences are weighty, and time pressure is low, one solution consists of postponing the final decision and think about all options thoroughly, also named indecision (Ferrai & Dovidio, 2000). Different from the *indecisiveness*, *indecision* relates to a specific domain or situation; it does not necessarily imply that one has problems with making decisions in other circumstances. Research shows that the disturbing factors such as information asymmetry, valuations problems, time constraint or uncertainty can cause stressful situation with high tension, and thus promote indecision as a “function of an environmental susceptibility to distraction and an inability to maintain cognitive focus” (Harriott, 1996, p. 338).

#### ***4.2.2 The personalization - privacy paradox***

Internet users are highly concerned about the collection and use of their personal information — privacy concern (Gerber, Gerber & Volkamer, 2018; Palos-Sanchez, Saura, & Martin-Velicia, 2019; Sutanto et al., 2013; Tarafdar, Pullins, & Ragu-Nathan, 2014; Xu et al., 2010). This concern refers more specifically to informational privacy, “which is concerned with controlling whether and how personal data can be gathered, stored, processed, and disseminated” (Kokolakis, 2017, p. 123). Customers’ informational privacy concerns are correlated with privacy attitudes, which in turn influence Internet users’ privacy intentions and privacy behavior (Gerber, Gerber, & Volkamer, 2018). However, despite the sensitive privacy attitudes of Internet users, studies show that they are still willing to give their personal information away if they have something to gain in return (Carrascal et al., 2013; Kokolakis, 2017). For instance, Carrascal et al. (2013) have shown that Internet users value their personal online data at about 7 euros.

The privacy paradox has been studied in different context through diverse perspectives, for instance, privacy preferences vs. behaviors in the context of e-commerce (Spiekermann et al., 2001), private vs. public space in the context of social network (Barnes, 2006), information disclosure intention vs. behaviors in the context of finance service (Norberg, Horne & Horne, 2007), privacy concern vs. information disclosure in social networking sites (Hughes-Roberts, 2013), privacy risk perception vs. the use of privacy-enhancing technologies (Oomen & Leenes, 2008), as well as personalization vs privacy (Sutanto et al., 2013; Xu et al., 2010).

The personalization-privacy paradox refers to the tension between personalization and privacy. Digital technologies facilitate the process of personalized marketing; however,

greater personalization of marketing approach may expand customer's sense of vulnerability and suspicion, and finally result in lower customer adoption rates (Aguirre et al., 2015). White et al. (2008) explain that consumers are less willing to respond to highly personalized emails when firms fail to justify the fit between the personalized offer in the email and consumers' characteristics. This effect concerns mainly the consumers with lower perceived utility. The reactance of consumers with higher perceived utility is relatively low, and the justification of personalization is less important for them. Aguirre et al. (2015) conduct an exploratory field study on social networking sites, which shows that overt information collection results in a higher click-through intentions.

### ***Personalization-privacy paradox in the context of location-aware marketing***

On the contrary, covert information collection leads to sharp drops in click-through rates as soon as customers realize their personal information has been collected without their consent. More specifically, in the context of mobile location services, Xu et al. (2009) emphasize that a positive relationship between financial compensation benefits and mobile app adoption has only been observed for “push” services (those proactively induced by the firm). On the contrary, perceived personalization benefit stems only from overt data collection. In the same vein, Xu et al. (2011) study how covert and overt personalization systems influence the customers' privacy concerns in the context of location-aware marketing.

Moreover, Zhao, Lu, and Gupta (2012) affirm that Internet users' privacy concerns, together with perceived personalization benefits, may affect the intention to disclose location information. Sutanto et al. (2013) investigate the relationship between IT-enabled personalization marketing and users' privacy concerns in the context of the smartphone. Their study allows prototyping both privacy-safe and personalized application that stores users'



information locally on their smartphones while still providing them with personalized product messages. Location-aware marketing (Xu et al. 2011) may cause customers to experience certain discomfort (Tucker 2012), or at worst, it could lead to customer's reactance vis-à-vis the marketing message (White et al. 2008). These reactions are the outcomes of a complex decision process, namely *privacy calculus*. This theory claims that consumers make constant mental tradeoffs between perceived benefits and privacy risks in the process of decision-making (Dinev & Hart, 2006). The privacy calculus results in various privacy protection responses. Son and Kim (2008) shed light on six types of internet users' responses to privacy threats: *refusal* (i.e., Internet users refuse to provide their personal information), *misrepresentation* (i.e., Internet users claim false personal information), *removal* (i.e., Internet users eliminate their information from online companies databases), *negative word-of-mouth*, *complaining directly to online companies*, and *complaining indirectly to third-party organisations*. Their study reveals that information privacy concern is strongly correlated with all types of responses, except for misrepresentation. Zafeiropoulou et al. (2013) specifically examine the privacy paradox in the context of the mobile application and found out that privacy concerns trigger protective responses, such as uninstalling mobile applications. In other words, the tension between intimacy and intrusion (Malley & Evans 1997) of relationship marketing turns out to be more challenging in today's digital environment.

As stated by Hatch and Ehrlich (1993) "when environments are complex and changing, conditions are ripe for the experience of contradiction, incongruity, and incoherence and the recognition of paradox and ambiguity within organizations" (p. 505). Significant research efforts have been made to study the PPP through customer perspective. However, to the best of our knowledge, what are the coping strategies of marketing practitioners to deal with the personalization privacy paradox that remain unknown?

### 4.3 Hypothesis development

As discussed above, prior research has identified various response strategies to paradox. More specifically, Jarzabkowski et al. (2013) have empirically tested one active response (i.e., adjusting) and three defensive responses (i.e., suppressing, splitting, and opposing) through longitudinal research. On the base of the research of Jarazabkowski et al. (2003), we add indecision as one additional defensive response to deal with the PPP. Because indecision does not allow embracing the two poles of the tension, in other words, this response strategy does not encourage a *both/and* approach; we thus classify indecision as a defensive response. As advocated by Smith and Lewis (2011), the response strategies to paradox can be influenced by the characteristics of the paradox as well as personal factors. In this research, we examine how the characteristics of the paradox, that is, the salience of paradox, uncertainty as well as time constraint, and personal factors, that is, cognitive complexity as well as emotional equanimity influence the response strategies to paradox (Figure 8).

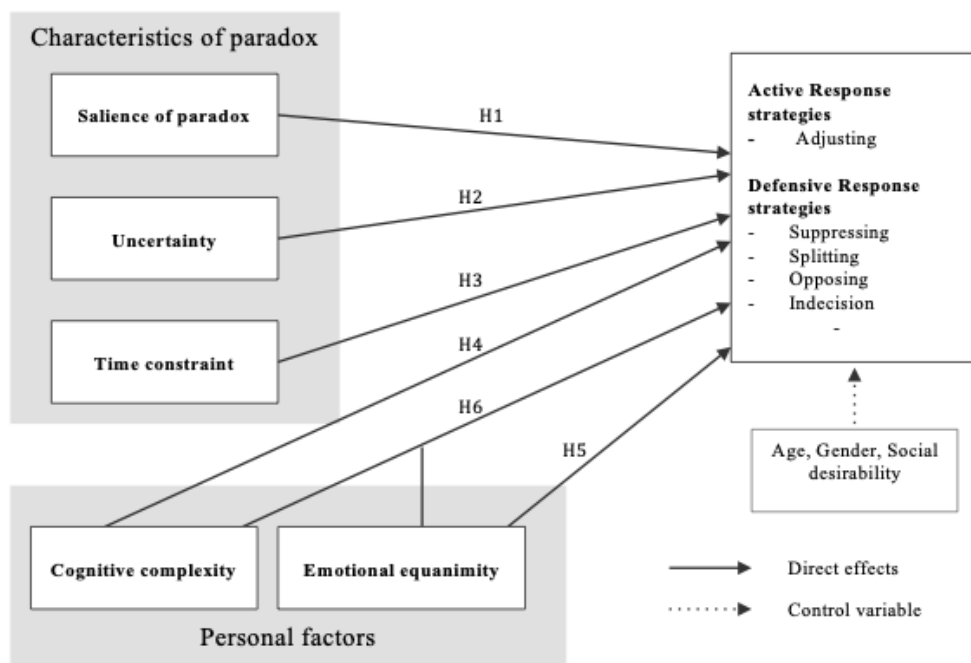


Figure 8. The conceptual model of managerial response strategies to the personalization-privacy paradox.

### 4.3.1 Characteristics of paradox

#### *Salience of paradox*

The different customer reactions and attitudes toward the personalization–privacy paradox reveal different degrees of the salience of paradoxical tension. In other words, the salience of paradox triggers different response strategies. As when the salience of paradox is high, marketing practitioners may respond differently because the tension and the stakes are higher, whereas lower salience paradox could give rise to some other reactions. The salience of paradox changes managers' perceptions of the paradox; consequently, it influences his or her use of response strategies. Smith and Lewis (2011) have identified two types of tensions – latent and salient tensions. Latent tensions refer to the unperceived or ignored contradictory yet interrelated elements, which embedded in organizing processes and persist over time because of organizational complexity. Salient tensions concern “the contradictory yet interrelated elements experienced by organizational actors” (Smith & Lewis 2011, p. 389). The main difference between the two types of paradoxes is that latent tensions are the unperceived tensions, whereas salient tensions are the tensions that managers have experienced.

Freud (1937) explained that tensions or contradictions generally foster anxiety and stress. Thus, when an individual experiences a paradox, he or she tends to deny, hide, or reject the tensions (Smith & Lewis, 2011; Vince & Broussine, 1996). In other words, individuals are more likely to use defensive response strategies (i.e., suppressing, splitting, opposing, and indecision) than active response strategies (i.e., adjusting) to deal with salient paradox.

*H1. When marketing practitioners experience salient tension, compare to latent tension, they are more likely to use a (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing, (d) indecision, and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with PPP.*

### ***Uncertainty***

Digital technologies foster the uncertainty that the practitioner may experience. Not only changing technologies render the environment uncertain, but also digital technologies appeal to new and scarce competency (e.g., analytical competency). Thus, it challenges the established organizational capabilities (e.g., management culture, process, IT infrastructure, and capability) and fosters organizational uncertainty accordingly. Given this context, managers who operate in an environment or an organization of high resource uncertainty may perceive and deal with the paradox differently than the ones who operate in an environment or an organization of low resource uncertainty. From this perspective, uncertainty influences one's perception of the paradox and his response to paradox. Uncertainty gets along well with paradox. As illustrated by Werner Hiesenberg's famous uncertainty principle: "The more precisely we determine the position (of an electron), the more imprecise is the determination of velocity in this instance, and vice versa"(Cassidy, 1992, p. 228). Uncertainty can be defined as "a situation in which one does not know which of several states of nature has occurred or will occur" (Lipschitz & Strauss, 1997, p. 150) and as, "individual's perceived inability to predict something accurately" (Milliken, 1987, p. 136).

An individual experiencing a highly uncertain paradox will have difficulty in understanding the direction in which the situation might be changing and thus tends to experience a high degree of stress, and a lack of confidence on the organization's managers and employees (Waldman, Ramirez, House, & Puranam, 2001). In this sense, when a manager perceives the high uncertainty PPP, the individual could become unwilling to engage

in compromise (Lüscher & Lewis, 2008; Smith & Berg, 1987), and use defensive response to engage in an active confrontation. On the contrary, when the uncertainty of the PPP is low, the practitioner could feel confident in the organization's managers and employees and experience a strong internal control (Holland, 1992), which fosters active responses to paradox accordingly (Huy, 1999; Smith & Lewis, 2011).

*H2. When marketing practitioners experience high uncertainty, compare to low uncertainty, they are more likely to use a (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing and (d) indecision, and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with the PPP.*

### ***Time constraint***

A time constraint is a crucial factor in designing and managing business processes (Eder, Panagos & Rabinovich, 1999). Time pressure can be defined as “a perceived limitation of the time available to consider information or make decisions” (Suri & Monroe, p. 92). The research suggests that time pressure can change one’s judgments and choices process by reducing one’s ability to correctly collect and evaluate information (Park, Iyer, & Smith 1989). When the time constraint of the PPP is low, the practitioner can either use splitting to separate temporally the contradictory elements of personalization and privacy paradox temporally (i.e., dealing with one, then the other) or be indecisive and postpone the decision-making later on.

*H3. When marketing practitioners perceive low time constraints, compare to high time constraints, they are more likely to use an (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing, (d) indecision, and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with the PPP.*

### 4.3.2 Personal factors

Smith and Lewis (2011) highlight two individual factors that influence the response strategies to the paradox – cognitive complexity and emotional equanimity.

#### *Cognitive complexity*

Cognitive complexity is “defined as the number of independent dimensions-worth of concepts the individual brings to bear in describing a particular domain of phenomena” (Scott, 1962, p. 405). Cognitive complexity is characteristic or trait that measures the degree to which an individual can differentiate among various constructs in the environment (Bieri, 1955).

“More cognitively complex individuals have available to them a more differentiated system of constructs for perceiving events than do less cognitively complex individuals” (David et al., 2009 p. 112). In other words, individuals who are high in cognitive complexity possess the ability to perceive constructs in more dimensions than do individuals who are low in cognitive complexity (Bieri et al., 1966). Accordingly, the individuals who are high in cognitive complexity have more ability to perceive and host paradoxical cognition (Smith & Lewis, 2011, Smith & Tushman, 2005) and accept more easily the paradoxical situation.

*H4. When marketing practitioners have low cognitive complexity, compare to those who have high cognitive complexity, they are more likely to use a (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing, and (d) indecision and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with the PPP.*

### ***Emotional equanimity***

Recent studies have investigated the effects of emotional state on decision-making (Forgas & George, 2001; George & Dane, 2016; Turla & Evangelista, 2013). “The emotional state implies a certain set of feelings that come up with a certain activity under certain circumstances” (Turla & Evangelista, 2013, p. 137).

In circumstances of high tension caused by the competing demands, strong emotions and highlight ambiguity, uncertainty, and equivocality can be elicited, and finally provoke anxiety (Lewis, 2000; Vince & Broussine, 1996). Emotional equanimity refers to an emotional state of calmness, balance, evenness, and internal control (Holland, 1992), which reduces anxiety and fosters active responses to paradox accordingly (Huy, 1999; Smith & Lewis, 2011). The study of Holland (1992) on the emotion of the Western Indonesian group shows that emotional equanimity—measured, controlled, graceful and tranquil behavior can be achieved with an effort to minimize the intense emotional defensiveness and fight the disorder and confusion again. In doing so, it fosters comfort and acceptance to contradictions and leads to a virtuous cycle (Sundaramurthy & Lewis, 2003; Smith & Lewis 2011).

*H5. When marketing practitioners have low emotional equanimity, compare to those who have high emotional equanimity, they are more likely to use a (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing, and (d) indecision and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with the PPP.*

Emotion is a form of cognitive complexity (Denison, Hooijberg & Quinn, 1995). Smith and Lewis (2011, p. 392) propose, “Actors with cognitive and behavioral complexity and emotional equanimity are more likely to accept paradoxical tensions rather than respond defensively.”

*H6. When marketing practitioners have low emotional equanimity and low cognitive complexity, compare to those who have high emotional equanimity and high cognitive complexity, they are more likely to use a (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing, and (d) indecision and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with the PPP.*

## **4.4 Methodology**

### **4.4.1 Research design**

Atzmüller and Steiner (2010) recommend the use of the vignette technique along with a traditional survey as “a promising but too infrequently used research method for investigating respondents’ beliefs, attitudes, or judgments” (p. 128). Experimental Vignette Methodology (EVM) “consists of presenting participants with carefully constructed and realistic scenarios to assess dependent variables, including intentions, attitudes, and behaviors” (Aguinis & Bradley 2014, p. 352). The EVM includes both the vignette experimental manipulation and a traditional survey. A *vignette* “is a short, carefully constructed description of a person, object, or situation, representing a systematic combination of characteristics (Atzmüller & Steiner, 2010, p. 128). In this study, we used an EVM to test our hypotheses. This choice of methodology stems from several reasons. 1) EVM has proven useful in the strategic decision sciences and response strategies study (Lee & Jablin, 1992; Tjemkes & Furrer, 2010; Furrer et al., 2012; Geyskens & Steenkamp, 2000); 2) EVM permits the elimination of endogeneity concerns (Echambadi et al., 2006); 3) EVM enhances the understanding of causal relationship between predictors and outcomes in controlled conditions (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014; Tjemkes & Furrer, 2010); 4) EVM allows controlling confounding effects (Tjemkes & Furrer, 2010; Atzmüller & Steiner, 2010), which is critical as managerial behavior varies according to contexts (Bateman & Zeithaml, 1989); 5) the combination of EVM with traditional surveys



enhances experimental realism, and ultimately improve internal and external validity (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014; Atzmüller & Steiner, 2010); 6) the use of scenario avoids the potentially sensitive nature of the certain questions—respondents may not be willing to answer questions about real-life situations in which they were involved (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972; Tjemkes & Furrer, 2010).

In this research, our EVM uses a three-factor (i.e., salience of paradox, time constraint, and uncertainty) by two-level between-subjects design, which results in eight vignettes.

#### **4.4.2 Sample**

Data collection for this research was made in two stages. In the first stage, we sent a questionnaire to 40 digital and marketing managers who are in the close network of the author. We then used the snowball sampling technique and asked our network to send the questionnaire to their network; In the second stage, we then contacted 158 marketing professionals through Inmail on LinkedIn with a response rate of 15%. The sample on LinkedIn is composed of 13% of women and 19% of man. The whole collect had taken place between Mai 2019 and August 2019. The sample is made up exclusively of marketing practitioners. More details are displayed in Appendix 5.

#### **4.4.3 Scenario manipulations**

Consistent with the EVM methodology (Aguinis & Bradley 2014), we used four manipulation-check items to assess the degree to which respondents understand the scenarios. More precisely, we developed an one-item measure for the salience of paradox and for the time constraint, and a two-items measure for uncertainty.

The vignettes used in this research describe the situations where the marketing manager was assigned to work on a project of mobile application development. We manipulated the salience of the personalization-privacy paradox by the number of unsubscribing (1% of unsubscribing for latent tension vs. 40% of unsubscribing for salient tension). The uncertainty was manipulated in terms of corporate resources (customer-oriented culture, process, infrasture) and human and team competence (DSI, marketing). The marketing practitioners that we interviewed have suggested the description of this manipulation. The time constraint in the vignettes varied from two weeks to two years of development. More details are avaialbe in Appendix 6.

### ***Manipulation check***

During the phase of analysis, we used a four-factor multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) to check the effect of these manipulations. The analysis of MANCOVA shows that the effects of the four factors are strongly significant at 1%. It shows that the respondents have well understood the manipulations.

Moreover, we have also checked the interaction of the different items to ensure that there is no confounding effect of the manipulations (Perdue & Summers, 1986). The results show that none of them is significant. Moreover, we have set up four questions to assess the realism of the scenarios and the manipulations (Morales, Amir, & Lee, 2017). (See Appendix 7). A The results show that the eight scenarios are all realistic for the respondents.

### **4.4.3 Measures**

The study used existing scales for measuring emotional equanimity (Chan et al., 2014). However, scales for the other constructs (i.e., five response strategies and cognitive

complexity) included in the study are not available in the current literature. We developed the items based on the definitions and the context of personalization and privacy paradox. We measured adjusting with items pertaining to recognize that both poles of the tension are important and both need to be embraced accordingly (Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013). The measures for splitting include separating the contradictory elements of personalization and privacy paradox temporally (i.e., dealing with one, then the other) (Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013). For suppressing, we used the items that involve prioritizing one element and allowing it to dominate the other aspect of the PPP (Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013). To measure opposing, the items indicate the active confrontation and conflict that polarize paradoxical elements (Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013). We operationalize indecision with items such as the inability to maintain cognitive focus and to make a decision because of the information asymmetry, or valuations problems. All these measures use seven-point Likert scales, ranging from “Strongly disagree” (1) to “Strongly agree” (7).

	1 <sup>st</sup> pretest	2 <sup>nd</sup> pretest	3 <sup>rd</sup> pretest
Complexity cognitive	5	3	3
Emotional equanimity	5	3	3
Adjusting	8	4	4
Suppressing	8	4	4
Opposing	8	4	4
Splitting	8	4	4
Indecision	8	4	4

*Table 12. Number of the items of each pretest*

In order to establish the new scales for the constructs, we developed a four-phase iterative procedure to pretest the scales (Table 12). First, we conducted three intense

interviews with a lawyer specialized in data privacy, a marketing data manager, and a chief digital officer from multinational firms to generate a large pool of items for each of the constructs and scenarios included in the study. As suggested by Churchill (1979), we selected a subset of items to convey “different shades of meaning” to informants. We reversed several items to reduce response set bias (Herche & Engelland, 1996). Second, we sent the questionnaire with the items and scenarios to six marketing digital managers and ask them to indicate any ambiguity or other difficulties they experienced concerning the scenario setting and item specificity and clarity of construction. Based on their feedbacks, some wordings in the scenario, and the items have been modified. Then the additional wording and items were developed. This was followed by the first phase of pretests in which we have collected the data from 91 bachelor students from Fribourg University. Then, we used the analysis of SPSS to eliminate the irrelevant items and improve the items accordingly. We refined the questionnaire and asked 36 master students from Fribourg University to fill it out. From the second stage of the pretest, we decided not to erase the number of items, but improve the clarity and relevancy of those items that cross-loaded with the others. We then tested them again in the third phase of the pretest. The third phase of the pretest was realized with 321 students from Dauphine University, and among them, 57 are professional MBA students. We tested not only the factor loading but also the manipulation-check through this pre-test, and the results were acceptable. We sent the questionnaire to the marketing managers. In Table 13, we provide the wording of these items. All data analyses have been carried out with SPSS (version 25). The French version of the items is available in Appendix 8.

### Standardized factor loadings for five response strategy model

	Splitting	Adjusting	Opposing	Indecision	Suppressing
<b>Sp11:</b> I can not measure the impact of our customers' potential responses to data protection. To be careful, I will suspend the development of the data collection feature for launching the application. The content of the application will, therefore, not be personalized. Moreover, I will resume this development once users are familiar with the application.	.819				
<b>Sp13:</b> My main objective is to decrease the subscribe rate, I will not take the risk of losing subscribers. I will first develop an application that does not collect customer data; that is, the content of the application will not be customized. But in 6 months, when we will have more knowledge about the reactions of our customers concerning the protection of their data, we can always resume the development.	.842				
<b>Sp16:</b> I will not take the risk of losing customers; I decide not to develop any specific function for data collection right away in the app. The content will not be personalized. But, I will conduct so,e extensive studies with our customers. Based on the results of these studies, I will decide later on if we can develop functionalities for data collection.	.790				
<b>Sp18:</b> The high rate of unsubscribers after the last e-mailing campaign is an alarm signal. I have to be careful with the use of customer data. As we do not know very well how to manage the data for the moment, at first, the contents of the mobile application will not be personalized. The customization of the content of the application can be re-studied in 6 months when we will have more knowledge of data management.	.867				
<b>Adj3:</b> Because the customers are increasingly suspicious of the use of their data, the brands must explain to them in a transparent way what the purpose of collecting the data is and for what purpose it will be used. This is what I will do while developing the functionality in the application to collect customer data and to be able to customize the content of the application. In addition, I will show the benefits of this use by rewarding our customers.		.807			
<b>Adj5:</b> Because customers are increasingly suspicious about the use of their data, brands must explain as clearly as possible to customers what are the reasons for collecting the data and for what purposes it will be used. This is what I will do while developing the functionality in the application to collect customer data and to customize the content of the application. In addition, I will show the benefits of this use by rewarding our customers.		.867			
<b>Adj7:</b> I will develop functions to collect client data and to customize the content of the application. And in parallel, I will raise awareness of the importance of data protection within the organization.		.823			
<b>Adj8:</b> I will develop functions for collecting customer data. And in parallel, I will study with our customers to find out how customizing the content of the application can be useful for them.		.867			

<b>Opp1:</b> The information requested by the commercial department is too intrusive. I will not take them into account.	.817	
<b>Opp3:</b> The request of the commercial department shows that they do not understand the customers. I will exclude them from the project.	.873	
<b>Opp4:</b> The sales department always imposes their ideas on the collection and use of customer data in the application. It's not my way of working. I'm going to exclude them from the project.	.886	
<b>Opp6:</b> What the commercial department asks me goes against the expectations of customers. I will exclude them from the project.	.830	
<b>Ind1:</b> I do not want to make a decision because the information about how our customers react to the protection of their data is insufficient.	.844	
<b>Ind3:</b> I do not have enough information to make a decision. I will wait.	.899	
<b>Ind7:</b> I do not have enough knowledge about our customers' reactions to data protection, I'm not making a decision right now.	.874	
<b>Ind8:</b> I do not know what to decide. I will wait a bit.	.864	
<b>Sup2:</b> I do believe that customers have become more suspicious about data protection. This is not their main concern. I will develop a specific function in the app to collect their data. The content of the application will be personalized. But I will make sure that customers do not notice it.		.903
<b>Sup3:</b> Customer needs are important, but the sales objective is even more important. I will still develop specific functions to collect client data through my application and then customize the content of the application.		.826
<b>Sup4:</b> Customers always have reasons to be dissatisfied, but in the end, they continue to buy our products. The problem of data protection, I do not believe at all, I will develop functions to collect data and to customize the content of the application. The top management and the sales department will be happy too.		.779
<b>Sup7:</b> Collect customer data to increase sales; this is what top management and the sales department expect from this application. It's that simple. I will develop functionalities for this purpose. The content of the application will be personalized. I will not worry about what customers think.		.857

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Méthode d'extraction : Analyse en composantes principales.

Méthode de rotation : Oblimin avec normalisation Kaiser.<sup>a</sup>

a. Convergence de la rotation dans 6 itérations.

*Table 13. Pattern matrix with items.*

## **Control variables**

In order to control for individual differences, we also measured several different variables such as the M-C2 version of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability scale (Strahan and Gerbasi, 1972), as some response strategies could be more socially desirable than others; age and gender as influential demographic characteristics of the respondents (Rusbult et al., 1988).

## **4.5 Analyses and results**

To assess the convergent validity and discriminant validity of our measures, we assessed both the alphas and the composite reliability (CR), which are greater than 0.70. The factor loading exceeds 0.50. And average variance extracted (AVE) are greater than the surrounding values in the correlation table (see Table 14). These indicators suggest acceptable reliability and convergent validity (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). As displayed in the Figure 9, We used AMOS 26, more specifically, a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) (Byrne, 2001) to ensure that whether the five response strategy items are distinct constructs, as CFA evaluate the convergent and discriminant validity of the response strategies. Twenty items allow measuring the five response strategies and six items for individual factors in the full measurement model. The analyses reveal no offending estimates in any of the models. In the stage of CFA, the loading of the first indicators was fixed to 1 for scaling purposes. Thus, each item was only allowed to load on its corresponding construct, and errors are uncorrelated.

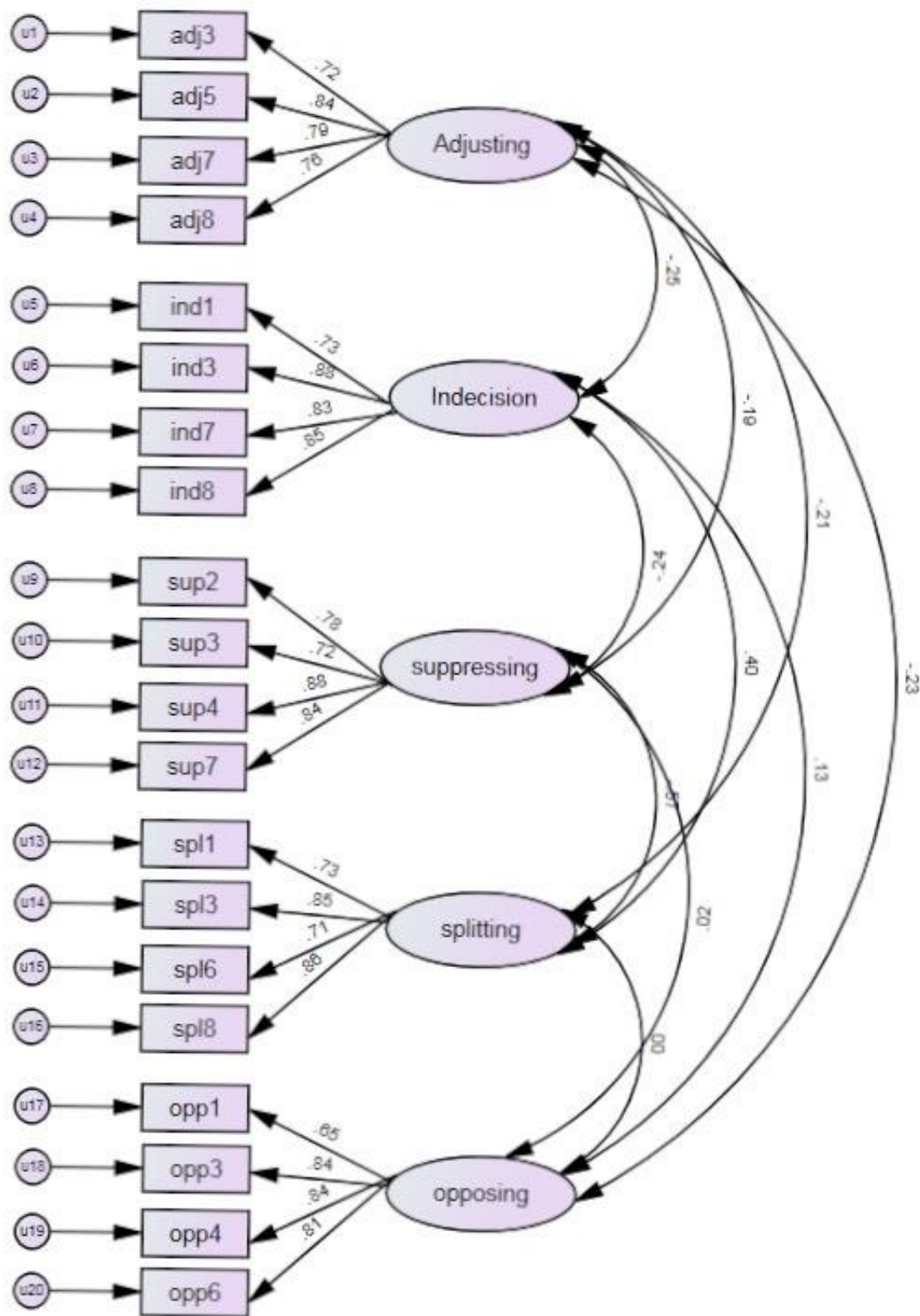


Figure 9. AMOS Analysis



Regarding the psychometric properties of our model, we examined the error variances, correlations, standard errors, goodness-of-fit indices, and factor loadings (Byrne, 2001). All the error-variances are positive. They do not significantly differ from 0. Correlations are not greater than 1, and standard errors are not too large. In line with the common practice (Byrne, 2001; Hu & Bentler, 1999), we use multiple indices to estimate model fit (see Table 15). The normed chi-square in our study is 1.62, which suggests a good fit as it is less than 3.0 (Carmines and McIver, 1981). Other goodness-of-fit indices, namely 0.88 (GFI), 0.84 (AGFI), 0.95 (CFI) A root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) value of .06 (90 percent confidence interval (CI): 0.046-0.073) and a square root mean residual (SRMR) value of 0.06 also are acceptable (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

As displayed above in Table 16, we have conducted a MANCOVA analysis to test the effect of individual and situational factors on response strategies. Regarding the analysis, we first calculated the average scores for each response strategy and used it as dependent variables and the scenario manipulations and individual factors as the fixed factors, with age, gender, and social desirability as covariates. Before the analysis, we examined the MANCOVA assumptions and found no violations. The MANCOVA tests indicate significant differences in the exchange variables.

		Mean	S.D.	$\alpha$	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Adjusting	20,51	5,04	0,87	0,86	0,61												
2	Suppressing	11,96	5,53	0,89	0,88	0,65	-0.14*											
3	Splitting	14,22	5,62	0,87	0,87	0,63	-0.20*	-0.51**										
4	Opposing	10,8	4,83	0,87	0,87	0,62	-0.16*	-0.03	0,24									
5	Indecision	10,1	5,45	0,9	0,89	0,68	-0.22*	-0.24*	0.37**	0,1								
6	Complexity cognitive	11,88	3,75	0,69	N/A	N/A	0.59**	-0.20*	-0.18*	-0,11	-0,07							
7	Emotional equanimity	13,88	3,23	0,81	N/A	N/A	0.51**	-0,12	-0,05	-0.13*	-0.17*	0.42**						
8	Salience of paradox	1,54	0,5	N/A	N/A	N/A	-0,01	-0.37**	0.38**	-0,01	-0,08	-0,03	0,09					
9	Time constraint	1,53	0,5	N/A	N/A	N/A	0,07	0.36**	-0.30**	0,08	-0.58**	0,01	-0,01	-0,06				
10	Uncertainty	1,51	0,5	N/A	N/A	N/A	-0.19*	-0,04	-0,01	0.46**	0,04	-0,11	-0,05	0,06	-0,02			
11	Age	1,99	0,96	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.21*	-0,08	-0,04	0,03	0,03	-0,03	0,07	0,09	0.15*	0,08		
12	Gender	1,48	0,5	N/A	N/A	N/A	-0,1	0,06	-0,09	0,13	0,05	-0,05	-0,12	-0,01	-0,09	-0,01	0.14*	
13	Social desirability	0,39	0,26	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.27**	-0.20*	0.20*	-0,04	0,05	0,49	0.15*	0.20**	-0.18*	0,12	0,15	-0,09

Notes:  $n = 177$ . The diagonal shows the square root of the average variance extracted for each response strategy. \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; +  $p < 0.1$

Table 14. Construct reliability and partial correlation matrices

Model	$\chi^2$	d.f.	p-value	$\chi^2$ /d.f.	RMSEA [90% CI]	SRMR	NNFI(TLI)	CFI	GFI	AGFI
Model 1	260	160	0	1.624	0.06 (0.046-0.073)	0.06	0.94	0.95	0.88	0.84

Table 15. Table of overall fit indices

		Splitting	Suppressing	Opposing	Indecision	Adjusting	Wilks's $\Lambda$ (F)
Salience of paradox	L	3.05	3.43	2.75	2.9	4.99	0.76**
	H	4.05	2.46	2.69	2.68	4.76	-9.76
	(F)	(25.36)**	(25.29)**	-0.12	-1.57	(2.77) <sup>+</sup>	
Uncertainty	L	3.65	2.95	2.13	2.74	5.13	0.71**
	H	3.45	2.95	3.13	2.85	4.62	-12.31
	(F)	-1.12	0	(47.65)**	-0.4	(13.72)**	
Time constraint	L	3.92	2.45	2.63	3.61	4.76	0.57**
	H	3.17	3.44	2.8	1.96	5	-22.64
	(F)	(15.02)**	(26.76)**	-1.05	(86.47)**	(3.04) <sup>+</sup>	
Complexity cognitive	L	3.82	3.21	2.7	2.64	4.5	0.81**
	H	3.28	2.68	2.74	2.95	5.26	-6.93
	(F)	(4.73) <sup>+</sup>	(4.75) <sup>*</sup>	-0.04	-1.99	(18.85)**	
Emotional equanimity	L	3.68	2.82	2.75	3.16	4.37	0.77**
	H	3.42	3.07	2.68	2.43	5.39	-8.8
	(F)	-1.06	-1.08	-0.1	(10.63)**	(34.26)**	
Complexity cognitive $\times$ Emotional equanimity	LL	3.97	3.08	2.74	2.76	4.26	0.91 <sup>*</sup>
	LH	3.67	3.35	2.66	2.52	4.74	-2.81
	HL	3.38	2.56	2.77	3.56	4.48	
	HH	3.18	2.8	2.71	2.35	6.04	
	(F)	-0.42	0	-0.01	(4.47) <sup>*</sup>	(9.16)**	
Age	O	3.33	2.93	2.72	2.49	5.62	0.88 <sup>*</sup>
	Y	3.59	3	2.7	2.52	5.4	-3.92
	(F)	-2.62	0	0	-0.25	(18.49)**	
Social desirability	L	3.35	3.29	2.78	2.49	4.83	0.85**
	H	3.78	2.66	2.63	2.57	5.45	-5.26
	(F)	-2.96	-0.83	-1.1	-0.41	(20.03)**	
Corrected model		8.21**	8.10**	6.26**	12.81**	24.72**	

Notes: n = 177. L = low; H = high. M = male; F = female. Age: Y = 16 - 49 years old; O  $\geq$  49 years old;

Social desirability: L  $\leq$  0.395 ; H > 0.395.

<sup>a</sup>. Values are the mean level of each response and could range from 1 to 7. <sup>b</sup>. The F-values in the rows list the univariate effects on the dependent variables. <sup>c</sup>. The multivariate column lists the multivariate effect of each independent variable on the five response strategies.

\*p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; + p < 0.1

Table 16. MANOVA test results

Hypothesis 1 predicted When marketing practitioners experience salient tension, compare to latent tension, they are more likely to use a (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing, (d) indecision and less likely to use (e) adjusting to deal with PPP. Wilks' lambdas of salience of paradox ( $\Lambda = 0.76$ ,  $F = 9.76$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) is significant. The significant p-value for splitting ( $F = 25.36$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) as well as higher mean value of salient tension ( $M_L = 3.05$ ;  $M_H = 4.05$ ) provide support for H1<sub>a</sub>; the significant p-value for suppressing ( $F = 25.29$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) but higher mean value of latent tension ( $M_L = 3.42$ ;  $M_H = 2.46$ ) does not provide support for H1<sub>b</sub>; the insignificant p-value for opposing ( $F = 0.12$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H1<sub>c</sub>; the insignificant p-value for indecision ( $F = 1.57$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H1<sub>d</sub>; and the significant p-value for adjusting ( $F = 2.77$ ,  $p < 0.1$ ) provide support for H1<sub>e</sub>. (See Table 17)

Hypothesis 2 predicted that when marketing practitioners experience high uncertainty, compare to low uncertainty they are more likely to use a (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing and (d) indecision, and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with the PPP. Wilks' lambdas of uncertainty ( $\Lambda = 0.71$ ,  $F = 12.31$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) is significant. The insignificant p-value for splitting ( $F = 1.12$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H2<sub>a</sub>; the insignificant p-value for suppressing ( $F = 0.001$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H2<sub>b</sub>; the significant p-value for opposing ( $F = 47.65$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) as well as the higher mean value of high uncertainty ( $M_L = 2.13$ ;  $M_H = 3.13$ ) provide support for H2<sub>c</sub>; the insignificant p-value for indecision ( $F = 0.40$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H2<sub>d</sub>; the significant p-value for adjusting ( $F = 13.72$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) as well as the higher mean value of low uncertainty ( $M_L = 5.13$ ;  $M_H = 4.62$ ) provide support for H2<sub>e</sub>.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that when marketing practitioners perceive low time constraints, compare to high time constraints, they are more likely to use an (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing, (d) indecision, and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with the PPP. The significant Wilks' lambdas of time constraint ( $\Lambda = 0.57$ ,  $F = 22.64$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), significant p value for splitting ( $F = 15.02$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) as well as higher mean value of low time constraint ( $M_L = 3.92$ ;  $M_H = 3.17$ ) provide support for H3<sub>a</sub>; the significant p value for suppressing ( $F = 26.76$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) but higher mean value of high time constraint ( $M_L = 2.45$ ;  $M_H = 3.44$ ) does not provide support for H3<sub>b</sub>; the insignificant p value for opposing ( $F = 1.05$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H3<sub>c</sub>; the significant p value for indecision ( $F = 86.47$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) as well as the higher mean value of low time constraint ( $M_L = 3.61$ ;  $M_H = 1.96$ ) provide support for H3<sub>d</sub>; insignificant p value for adjusting ( $F = 3.04$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) as well as the higher mean value of high time constraint ( $M_L = 4.76$ ;  $M_H = 5.00$ ) provide support for H3<sub>e</sub>.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that when marketing practitioners have low cognitive complexity, compare to those who have high cognitive complexity, they are more likely to use a (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing, and (d) indecision and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with the PPP. Wilks' lambdas for complexity cognitive ( $\Lambda = 0.81$ ,  $F = 6.93$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) is significant. The insignificant p-value for splitting ( $F = 4.73$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) as well as the higher mean value of low cognitive complexity constraint ( $M_L = 3.82$ ;  $M_H = 3.28$ ) provide support for H4<sub>a</sub>; the significant p-value for suppressing ( $F = 4.75$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) as well as higher mean value of low cognitive complexity ( $M_L = 3.21$ ;  $M_H = 2.68$ ) provide support for H4<sub>b</sub>; the insignificant p value for opposing ( $F = 0.04$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H4<sub>c</sub>; the insignificant p value for indecision ( $F = 1.99$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H4<sub>d</sub>; the significant p-value for adjusting ( $F = 18.85$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) as well as higher mean value of high cognitive complexity ( $M_L = 4.50$ ;  $M_H = 5.26$ ) provide support for H4<sub>e</sub>.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that when marketing practitioners have low emotional equanimity, compare to those who have high emotional equanimity, they are more likely to use a (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing, and (d) indecision and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with the PPP. Wilks' lambdas for emotional equanimity ( $\Lambda = 0.77$ ,  $F = 8.80$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) is significant. The insignificant p-value for splitting ( $F = 1.06$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H5<sub>a</sub>; the insignificant p-value for suppressing ( $F = 1.08$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H5<sub>b</sub>; the insignificant p-value for opposing ( $F = 0.1$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H5<sub>c</sub>; the insignificant p-value for indecision ( $F = 10.63$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) as well as higher value of low emotional equanimity ( $M_L = 3.16$ ;  $M_H = 2.43$ ) provide support for H5<sub>d</sub>; the significant p-value for adjusting ( $F = 34.26$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) as well as higher mean value of high emotional equanimity ( $M_L = 4.37$ ;  $M_H = 5.39$ ) provide support for H5<sub>e</sub>.

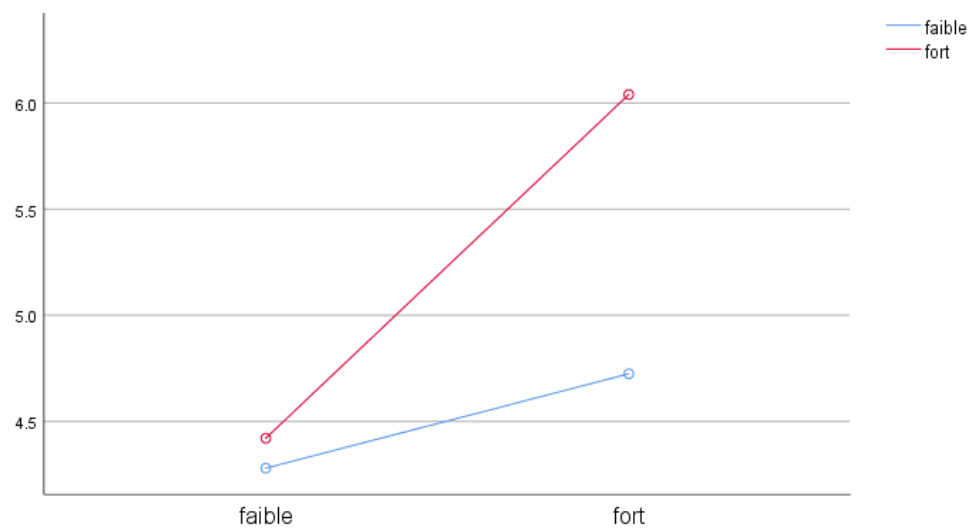
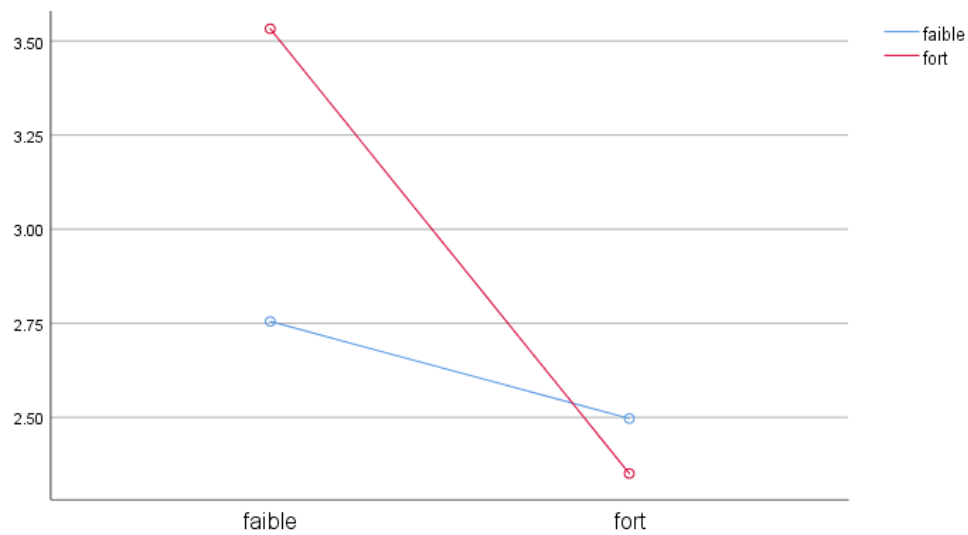
Hypothesis 6 predicted that when marketing practitioners have low emotional equanimity and low cognitive complexity, compare to those who have high emotional equanimity and high cognitive complexity, they are more likely to use a (a) splitting, (b) suppressing, (c) opposing, and (d) indecision and less likely to use an (e) adjusting to deal with the PPP. Wilks' lambdas for two-way interactions between cognitive complexity and emotional equanimity ( $\Lambda = 0.91$ ,  $F = 2.81$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) is significant. The insignificant p-value for splitting ( $F = 0.00$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H6<sub>a</sub>; the insignificant p-value for suppressing ( $F = 0.01$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H6<sub>b</sub>; the insignificant p-value for opposing ( $F = 0.42$ ,  $p > 0.1$ ) does not provide support for H6<sub>c</sub>; the significant p-value for indecision ( $F = 4.47$ ,  $p < 0.1$ ) provide support for H6<sub>d</sub>; the significant p-value for adjusting ( $F = 9.16$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) as well as higher F values of those individuals who have high cognitive complexity and emotional equanimity ( $M_{HH} = 6.04$ ,  $M_{HL} = 4.48$ ,  $M_{LH} = 4.74$ ,  $M_{LL} = 4.26$ ) provide support for H6<sub>e</sub>.

Furthermore, two of the three control variables are significant: age ( $\Lambda = 0.88$ ,  $F = 3.92$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and social desirability ( $\Lambda = 0.85$ ,  $F = 5.26$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The results of gender are not displayed in Table 16 because its p-value is not significant.

	a (splitting)	b (suppressing)	c (opposing)	d (indecision)	e (adjusting)
H1 Salience of paradox	Supported	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported	Supported
H2 Uncertainty	Not supported	Not supported	Supported	Not supported	Supported
H3 Time constraint	Supported	Not supported	Not supported	Supported	Supported
H4 Cognitive complexity	Supported	Supported	Not supported	Not supported	Supported
H5 Emotional equanimity	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported	Supported	Supported
H6 Cognitive complexity x Emotional equanimity	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported	Supported	Supported

Table 17. The results of the hypothesis.

The interaction between cognitive complexity and emotional equanimity is also significant ( $\Lambda = 0.91$ ,  $F = 2.81$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). As Figure 10 shows that when the emotional equanimity is low, the cognitive complexity has a strong influence on the indecision. In contrast, when the emotional equanimity is high, the cognitive complexity has a strong impact on the adjusting responses



*Figure 10. The interaction between cognitive complexity and emotional equanimity.*

We know, traditionally, the alpha is fixed either at the 0.05 level or the 0.01 (Cowles & Davis, 1982). By increasing the alpha at the 0.1 level, we raise the probability of Type 1 error occurring. However, the researchers have increasingly criticized the classical vision of alpha error in hypothesis testing (Gibbons & Pratt, 1975; Greene, 2003). Many social research



support the use of the 0.10 significance level (Cascio & Zedeck, 1983; Nickerson, 2000; Skipper, Guenther, & Nass, 1967). Mayers and Melcher (1969, p. 35), point out: “To set a at the same level, say, 0.05 for all hypothesis-testing situations is hardly rational. Rather, for some actions the probability of not taking the right action when the hypothesis is true should be small such as one out of 100 times; while for other statistical-inference problems this alpha error should be rather large such as 30 or 40 per cent”.

## **4.6 Discussions and implications**

### **4.6.1 Discussion of findings**

Most of the researches that have investigated the response strategies are either conceptual or qualitative. Moreover, they do not examine the response strategy in the PPP context. The objective of this study is to provide insight into which response strategy marketing manager uses to deal with the tension in the PPP context under the influence of the characteristics of paradox and personal factors. Toward this end, we built a conceptual model that features the role of the characteristics of paradox (i.e., the salience of paradox, time constraint, and uncertainty) as well as personal factors (i.e., complexity cognitive, emotional equanimity) in strategist’s decision-making process in the PPP context. In addition to the extant response strategy to paradox (Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Hvan de Ven, 2013), we added one more response, which is indecision. We classify this response as a defensive strategy because it is not a *both-and* approach and does not allow embracing the two poles of the tension simultaneously.

Furthermore, beyond the salience of paradox (Smith & Lewis, 2011), we also add two more characteristics of the PPP that may influence the response strategy, which is time constraint and uncertainty. The data supports the extended typology and reveals the direct as

well as the interactive influence of the characteristics of paradox and personal factors on the use of response strategies. Through our research, we validate the five types of response strategies (i.e., adjusting, splitting, suppressing, opposing that Jarazabkowski et al. (2013) have used for their longitudinal study) and indecision as an additional response in the context of the PPP. This study allows shedding light on such an element of characteristics of paradox as well as personal factors influence such a coping strategy. We also approve empirically the influence of personal factors on the response that a strategist may undertake to deal with the tension in the PPP context.

The salience of paradox influences the response strategy that the marketing manager would use. Our finding reveals that facing a salient PPP, practitioners tend to separate temporally the two poles of the tension (i.e., splitting), whereas facing a latent paradox, they more likely to prioritize one pole the tension (i.e., suppressing) or accepting the two-pole of the tension (i.e., adjusting). Splitting is considered as the least conflicting one because it separates temporally or spacially the two poles and prevents interaction that might occasion tension (Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009; Jarzabovski et al., 2013). When the tension between personalized marketing action and privacy issue is high, separating the two poles of tension temporarily (i.e., postpone the personalization) allows reducing the tension in the short-term and allows marketing managers having time to find a solution to deal with the paradox. Whereas when the tension is low – latent PPP, strategists feel more confident in taking one pole of the tension (e.g., ignore the privacy issues of the customer); or embracing the two-pole of the tension (e.g., developer the functionality in the app to collect the data and assure the customer about this choice).

Similar to the salience of paradox, time constraint also has a direct and significant effect not only on splitting and suppressing but also on indecision. When the time constraint of the

PPP is low, the marketing managers are more likely to stay indecision. Research shows that factors such as information asymmetry, and time constraint could foster indecision and reduce one's ability to stay cognitive focus (Harriott, 1996). The marketing managers could also use splitting to separate the two poles of the tension temporally (i.e., take a decision on the basis of one pole of the tension and come to cover the other pole later on) to deal with low time constraint PPP. Whereas when the time constraint of the PPP is high, marketing managers tend to make a more radical decision (i.e., suppressing) as they have less time to take a step back and think more holistically. In this sense, time constraint could be a factor that influences the quality of the decision-making negatively. In some situations, research shows that time constraints could create the cognitive discrepancy (i.e., between the time at disposal and time required to perform a given task) (Hornik, 1984; Maule & Svenson, 1993). The cognitive discrepancy could stimulate a state of alertness, vigor, and activation (Liebert & Morris 1967) that results in an increased effort and motivation to perform better (Eysenck & Calvo 1992). In this regard, the high time constraint could encourage the adopting of adjusting and enables the virtuous management of paradox. The degree of uncertainty of the PPP has an influence on two types of responses – adjusting or opposing.

When uncertainty is low (e.g., human resource and digital skill is qualified and high within a company), marketers feel more comfortable taking an adjusting response and embrace the two poles of tension. In contrast, when the uncertainty is high, they tend to confront the paradoxical elements actively (i.e., ignore the personalization demand from the commercial department).

Consistent with the prior research, especially the article of Smith and Lewis (2011), complexity cognitive and emotional equanimity have directly and interactively effect on a type of response strategy that is *adjusting*. Our research provides evidence that a manager

who has a high cognitive complexity could resort to a wide range of activities and a higher level of creativity (Miron-Spektor, 2011; Quinn, 1988) and embraces more easily the conflicting demands. Whereas the person who has lower complexity cognitive tends to either separate or prioritize one pole of the tension as it allows temporarily reducing the tension and thus offer an absolute psychological reassurance. Especially in western culture, paradoxes or contradictions are considered undesirable and eliminated or hidden (Shrivastava and Persson, 2014). In a similar vein, a marketing strategist who is under emotional stress (i.e., low in emotional equanimity) tends to be paralyzed (i.e., indecision) when it comes to handling the tension, especially in the PPP context. Because on the one hand, in the digital era, marketers are being pushed to increase the efficiency of marketing actions, notably through personalization marketing; and on the other, if client decides to disclosure its personal information because they witness a sense of vulnerability or perceive privacy risk through the personalized marketing actions, the marketing efficiency will be dramatically decreased (Aguirre et al., 2015; Oomen & Leenes, 2008).

The findings of the current study show that practitioners respond differently to PPP. Some strategists may use active response (*both-and*), while others may use a defensive response (*either-or*). It differs according to the characteristics of paradoxes as well as personal factors. However, one crucial output of the current study is to show that there is no one “best paradoxical practices” (Cunha & Putnam, 2019). In the real organizational life, the defensive and active responses both are used to deal with paradox according to the particular circumstances (Barge et al., 2008; Cunha & Putnam, 2019; Lüscher & Lewis, 2008), and it thus reveals the dynamic and complex interplay of paradox.

We have also found that age pattern has a major significant influence on adjusting and a minor significant effect on splitting. The older the given age group is, the more likely the

person is to recognize that both poles of the tension are important and embrace them simultaneously. This finding is congruent with research in psychology, which have shown that older evinces great equanimity (Gove, Ortega, & Style, 1989; Ross & Mirowsky, 2008) and experiences more emotional stability, and improved emotional regulation (Carstensen et al., 1999; Pinquart, 2001).

Besides, the relatively high number of non-supported hypotheses may because we categorize the response strategies into two types, that is, defensive and active based on the existing literature. The categorization of the responses to paradox neglects the different degree of defensiveness that may exist in different defensive responses. Jarzabowski et al. (2013) claim that splitting is less conflicting responses, whereas opposing is the most conflicting one. However, this distinction of the level of conflict does not exist for the other response strategies in the current literature. The conceptualization of the degree of defensiveness of the different responses is necessary because it turns out that several defensive responses are not going in the same direction, for instance, splitting and suppressing in the hypothesis of the salience of paradox; and in the hypothesis of time constraint. Thus the distinction of different levels of defensiveness of the response strategies could provide a more fine-grained analysis.

#### **4.6.2 Limitations and future research**

By implementing an experimental vignette methodology, we manipulate the independent variables and measure behavioral intentions instead of actual behaviors. Accordingly, and it may cause external validity concern and a loss of generalizability (Tjemkes & Furrer, 2010; Xu et al., 2011). However, consistent with the prior research, the experimental design stays a potent tool to the theory-development and causal investigations

(Atzmüller & Steiner, 2010). Notably, we have also measured the realism of the manipulation with four questions that show highly significant results.

Future research should also clarify the degree of defensiveness to different responses. This conceptualization could be very useful for refining the influence of the characteristic of paradox on the response strategies and provide a more fine-grained analysis. Using the groundwork laid in this study, further research with diverse methods and directions could contribute to extending our theoretically and practical ability to understand the paradox better. For instance, investigate the real behaviors of marketing managers in a PPP context through a longitudinal study could provide more insights and explanations of response strategy dynamics and track this ongoing response in the complex paradoxical situation (Cunha & Putnam, 2019).

Furthermore, future research could also more specifically study how age influences the response strategies to paradox. Or control the social desirability in a way to better constrain the effect of social desirability (e.g., instead of asking the respondent to fill in the survey, ask their managers to complete the survey).

#### **4.6.3 Theoretical and managerial contributions**

Through the causal modeling of antecedents affecting response strategies in the context of PPP, our research has provided preliminary empirical evidence about how marketing practitioners deal with the personalization privacy paradox and the dynamic structural relationships of responses. As claimed by Cunha and Putnam (2019), more research focus should examine how practitioners respond in a paradoxical situation. The current research strives to extend prior research on response strategies to paradox further, especially attempts to fill in this research gap in the context of personalization – privacy paradox.

From a theoretical point of view, our research has a threefold contribution. Firstly, we test empirically the robustness of the three elements stemming from the equilibrium model of Smith and Lewis (2011), and the four response strategies of the study of Jarzabkowski et al. (2013). Secondly, we extend the existing literature of the response strategy to the paradox by adding two more situational factors (i.e., time constraint and uncertainty) and one type of response (i.e., indecision). Thirdly, we test the boundary conditions of existing literature of response strategy to the paradox in a new context – personalization-privacy paradox.

From a managerial perspective, the findings of the current study allow marketing practitioners taking a step back when it comes to handling the tension in a paradoxical situation, especially in the digital environment. The awareness of the PPP in their daily life and the divers' responses to the paradox can reduce their anxiety and avoid paralysis in their decision making and foster their creativity after that. In addition, our research allows top management to understand better under which circumstance marketing managers are more likely to use a response strategy to deal with personalization – privacy paradox. This understanding could be important because it permits top management to recognize the elements to be highlighted to encourage such a response strategy to the paradox; or recognize the elements they must avoid if they do not want to encourage such a response strategy to the paradox. In other words, when top management communicates a decision or assign a project that could be interpreted as a decision or situation highly paradoxical by the middle managers, top management should be caution with the informations relating to the salience of paradox, the uncertainty of paradox and time constraint of paradox in their communication on the basis of their objective (short term or long term). For instance, when top management has a long-term objective, and they want their middle manager to adopt an active response (i.e., adjusting) to the paradox. Top management should be careful with the salience of paradox (i.e., reduce the salience effect), reassure the middle manager in terms of resources and human

competency at their disposal, but also they could give a challenging deadline in order to stimulate their engagement.

## 4.7 Conclusion

The findings of our exploratory study contribute to extend existing paradox literature by providing preliminary empirical evidence about how marketing practitioners respond to PPP under the influence of the characteristics of the paradox (i.e., salient vs. latent paradox, high vs. low time constraint, high vs. low uncertainty) and personal factors (i.e., high vs. low cognitive complexity, high and low emotional equanimity). It allows enriching the *repertoires* of the responses that the organization uses to deal with multiple paradoxical elements.

Moreover, this research outlines the iterative approach of defensive and active response strategies to the paradox. Some strategists may use active response (*both-and*), while others may use a defensive response (*either-or*) under the influence of the characteristics of the paradox as well as the personal factors. The current study shows that there is no one “best paradoxical practices.” In the real organizational life, the defensive and active responses both are used to deal with paradox according to the particular circumstances, and it foster the dynamic interaction of the paradox.





## General conclusion and discussion

### Research objectives

We first present the summary of the research projects and their associated research objectives. This is followed by a presentation of the main findings and contributions (theoretical, managerial, methodological and pedagogical) of the thesis. We then conclude the thesis with a discussion of the key limitations and future research avenues.

Initially, we have two general managerial problems that trigger our original reflexion. One managerial problem relates to the understanding of marketing strategy in the context of digital, whereas the other concerns more particularly the management of paradox within the marketing organization in today's digital environment.

The traditional vision of marketing strategy is closely related to the marketing mix. However, the alignment between the marketing strategy and marketing mix results in a short-term vision. Strategic marketing ensures the long-term sustainability of the firm through strategic resources and capabilities management. However, digital technologies integrated into every practice of marketing change fundamentally the strategic marketing landscape and thus challenged our understanding of the strategy of marketing.

To address this challenge, we adopt the theory of strategy-as-practice theory firstly as it offers a deeper understanding of how the outcome of a strategy are enabled and constrained by situated organizational and societal practice. Strategizing, as a core concept of SAP, comprises the nexus between praxis, practices, and practitioners and allows placing the focus on the doing of strategy — who does it, what they do, how they do it, what they use, and what implications this has for shaping strategy. This framework is of great interest to study the

marketing strategy in today's digital environment. Because it extends the notion of strategy marking from intended, formal, and macro-level focus to a more emergent, informal, and multi-level practical focus. In particular, despite an extensive and in-depth digital and marketing agenda, there is still a lack of integrated understanding of marketing strategizing (i.e., praxis, practices, and practitioners) in today's digital environment (Gap 1).

To understand the managerial problem that relates to the paradox management, we resort to the practice-based studies of paradox, which investigate paradoxes that are embedded in everyday activities. The heuristic value of these studies lies in its ability to question and point out the inconsistencies of reasoning, an opinion, a situation, and a problem (Perret & Josserand, 2003). Moreover, it allows practitioners to face the tension embedded in strategic marketing activities. This raise of awareness of paradoxical tensions that embedded is of importance because a paradox lens on strategy offers a more integrative perspective and understanding of the nature of strategy work. The existant categorization of paradox — organizing, performing, belonging, and learning address to the questions of how to do, what to do, who will do, and when to do. Thus, the four categories of paradoxes address the different facets of organizational strategizing. However, to the best of our knowledge, what are the paradoxes that are specific to digital-enabled marketing management and how the management of these paradoxes shapes marketing activities in today's digital environment is still unknown (Gap 2).

Moreover, paradox per se is either productive or unproductive, good or bad, liberating, or paralyzing. However, the reactions of practitioners to paradox could spur the vicious or virtuous cycle. The ways that employees respond to paradox constitutes the management of paradox and have a direct impact on the organization. The literature identifies two types of coping strategies — defensive or active response strategies. In parallel, research in paradox

management has also determined some factors (i.e., characteristic of paradox, personal factors) that influence the selection of the response strategies to paradox. However, although digital technologies have intensified the management tensions within the marketing department, there is still a lack of knowledge concerning the managerial responses to today's marketing paradoxes. For example, there is no empirical evidence of how managers respond to the personalization-privacy paradox (Gap 3).

In view of the above, we formulate one general research question:

**How the practice of strategic marketing constitutes marketing strategizing in today's digital environment, especially through a paradox perspective?**

Based on this general research question, we formulate three sub research questions to address each research gap, as discussed previously.

<b>Gap 1.</b> Lack of understanding of marketing strategizing (i.e., praxis, practices, and practitioners) in today's digital environment.	<b>Q1.</b> What is marketing strategizing in today's digital environment?
<b>Gap2.</b> Lack of knowledge concerning the paradoxes that are specific to digital-enabled marketing management and how the management of these paradoxes shapes marketing activities.	<b>Q2.</b> How paradoxical marketing practice, especially in today's digital environment, may constitute and affect the content of resulting marketing strategies?
<b>Gap3.</b> Lack of knowledge concerning managerial response to today's marketing paradoxes. For example, there is no empirical evidence of how managers respond to personalization-privacy paradox.	<b>Q3.</b> What are the responses of marketing practitioners to the paradox to the personalization privacy paradox?

## **Findings of the thesis**

The main findings of the two empirical research can be classified into two groups: 1/the first set of findings that renew our understanding of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment through a paradox perspective. 2/the second set of findings contributes to clarifying the response strategies that marketing managers use to deal with the personalization-privacy paradox and when these strategies are used.

### **1. Deepen the understanding of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment through a paradox perspective**

#### *The development of the tensions*

Eighteen strategic dimensions have emerged from the empirical research in Essay#2, which allows the development of nine tensions (see Table 19) of digital-enabled marketing. This development of the tensions permits to clarify the nature of the tension, facilitate the comparison with the tensions identified by previous research relating to tension-based strategizing, and identify the specifics tensions to digital-enabled marketing management. Four out of nine tensions (i.e., cognitive tension, time tension, path tension, and focus intention) identified in Essay#2 coincide with the findings of Dameron and Torset (2014). The rest five tensions (i.e., power tension, machine-human tension, use tension, function tension, and vision tension) are the specifics tensions to marketing strategizing in today's digital environment. Our research shows the digital practitioners that digital marketing is not only about implementing a set of tools and technologies; it is about strategizing differently in an ever more complex environment.

### *Categorization of the tensions*

We then classify the nine tensions into different categories based on the extant literature of paradox theory. This categorization of the tensions allows delineating the level of the tensions, enhancing the comparison with the extant categorization, and identifying the specific category of the digital-enabled marketing tensions. The nine tensions are all operated at macro and meso levels (see Table 10). Four out of five categories of tensions (i.e., organizing, performing, belonging, and learning paradoxes) in Essay#2 correspond to the categorization of Smith and Lewis (2011). One category, namely materializing paradoxes is specific to digital-enabled marketing strategizing.

### *Conceptualization of tension-based marketing strategizing in today's digital environment*

The conceptualization of tension-based marketing strategizing in today's digital environment as a dynamic equilibrium assumes a constant balancing simultaneously and circularly between the opposing but interrelated tensions (see Figure 7). Through this conceptualization, we highlight that the tension-based marketing strategizing in today's digital environment maintains the equilibrium by adapting to a continuous pull in opposing directions and thus outline the dynamic and interrelated nature of paradox.

## **2. Clarification of the response strategies to the personalization-privacy paradox and when these strategies are used.**

### *Responses strategies to the personalization-privacy paradox*

The findings of empirical research of Essay#3 provide evidence of how marketing managers use the five response strategies (i.e., splitting, suppressing, opposing, indecision, and adjusting) to deal with the personalization-privacy paradox. Four out of five response

strategies that we have used in the Essay#3 stem from the empirical research of Jarzabkowski et al. (2013), and one response strategy (i.e., indecision) comes from the decision-making field. The use of the five response strategies is influenced by the characteristics of paradox as well as personal factors.

#### *The characteristics of paradox*

The salience, the uncertainty, and the time constraint of the personalization-privacy paradox influence the perception of marketing managers about the paradox that they need to manage. When facing a salient PPP, marketing managers tend to use splitting, whereas facing a latent PPP, they are more likely to use suppressing or adjusting. When facing a high uncertainty PPP, marketing managers are more likely to use opposing; whereas facing a low uncertainty PPP, they tend to use adjusting. When facing a low time constraint PPP, marketing managers will use more easily splitting or stay indecisive; whereas facing a high time constraint PPP, they will tend to use suppressing or adjusting.

#### *The personal factors*

Cognitive complexity and emotional equanimity are the two personal factors that influence the choice of response strategies to the PPP. When a marketing manager has a high cognitive complexity, the individual is more likely to use adjusting to embrace the two poles of the tension; whereas when a marketing manager has a lower cognitive complexity, the individual is more likely to use splitting or suppressing to deal with the tension; When a marketing manager has a high emotional equanimity, the individual tends to use adjusting, while a marketing manager who has a lower emotional equanimity, the individual tend to be paralyzed when it comes to deal with the personalization and privacy paradox. The findings

of Essay# 3 provide evidence that there is a positive interaction between cognitive complexity and emotion equanimity.

## **Contributions**

In this third part, we present the theoretical, managerial, methodological, and pedagogical contributions of the current thesis.

### ***Theoretical contributions***

#### Contributions to the literature of digital marketing strategy

In Essay #1, we apply the framework of strategizing (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007) to investigate the strategic digital marketing practice. Our conceptualization (see Figure 4) proposes a new way of formulating marketing strategy in today's digital environment by systematically designing the strategy through praxis, practices, and practitioner's perspectives. This practice-focus way of formulating marketing strategy supports the thinking that marketing strategy in today's digital environment has switched from intended, formal, and macro-level focus to a more emergent, informal, and multi-level practical focus. Essay #1 enriches the research of digital marketing strategy by adding a holistic and pluralistic way to study digital strategic marketing practice. We stress the importance of taking a "practice turn" in the marketing strategy research field. By doing so, we join the Contemporary Marketing Practices (CMP) research program and also extend the CMP research by employ a multi-theoretical approach and providing evidence of managerial practice to understand marketing practices in today's digital environment better. The multi-theory position of Essay#1, as well as Essay# 2 Essay#3, allow breaking through the boundaries of alternative aspects of marketing strategy.



### Contributions to the paradox theory

Through Essay#2 and Essay#3, we teste the applicability of the practice-based studies of paradox in the context of digital-enabled marketing and provide evidence that the paradox lens is of great importance in the digital-enabled marketing strategy research.

Essay#2 permits to deepen the existing knowledge of the embedded strategic tensions in the context of digital-enabled marketing and extend the understanding of how paradoxical practices constitute marketing strategizing in today's digital environment. More specifically, nine tensions relating to marketing strategizing in today's digital environment have emerged through the empirical research of Essay#2.

Thus, the theoretical contribution of Essay#2 is threefold. First, this essay enables to fill the gap of the lacking of knowledge about the paradoxes that are specific to digital-enabled marketing management. Second, Essay#2 has not only validated the findings of Dameron and Torset (2014) empirically in the context of the digital-enabled marketing context, but also it completes their research by adding five new tensions. Third, Essay#2 validates empirically the conceptualization of Smith and Lewis (2011) relating the four categorizations of tension. Moreover, this essay contributes to add one additional category, namely materializing paradoxes, which is specific to digital-enabled marketing strategizing. In doing so, Essay#2 responds to the call of Dameron et al., 2015 about “ Studying materials in strategy work should also enable scholars to understand better the role played by digitized forms of materiality in the 'strategic conversation' and the changes in strategy making that digitized forms allow” (p. S9).

### Contributions to the response strategy to the paradox

Through the causal modeling of antecedents affecting response strategies in the context of PPP, Essay#3 provides preliminary empirical evidence about how marketing practitioners deal with the personalization privacy paradox and the dynamic structural relationships of responses. Essay#3 responds to the call of Cunha and Putnam (2019) about more research focus should examine how practitioners respond in a paradoxical situation. This research filled in the research gap of lacking knowledge concerning the managerial responses to today's marketing paradoxes. More specifically, Essay#3 tests the robustness of the four response strategies (i.e., splitting, suppressing, opposing, and adjusting) to the paradox of Jarzabkowski et al. (2013) in the context of personalization-privacy paradox. Furthermore, based on these four response strategies, we added one additional defensive response strategy (i.e., indecision) in the *repertoires* of coping strategies to paradox. We also tested empirically the boundary conditions of the three elements stemming from the equilibrium model of Smith and Lewis (2011) — cognitive complexity, emotional equanimity, salience of paradox in the context of the PPP; Finally, we extended the existing literature of the response strategy to the paradox by adding two more characteristics of paradox (i.e., time constraint and uncertainty).

### **Managerial contributions**

In general, individuals consider paradox as something negative and try to avoid it because it causes anxiety and stress. Practitioners are not used to the management of paradox. Essay#2 provides evidence that paradox truly exists and is intrinsically embedded in organizational life. Marketing practitioners can no longer neglect paradox because it becomes increasingly salient within today's digital environment characterized by plurality, change, and scarcity. This raising of awareness of paradox is of importance because it allows practitioners

to face it, appropriate it, make sense of it, and deal with it. By embracing paradox management, marketing practitioners feel less stress when it comes to deal with contradictory demands and could be more active and creative in their way to address paradox. Top management can use the paradoxes stemming from Essay#2 as the training material in their workshops of paradox management.

The Essay#3 allows marketing and digital practitioners taking a step back when it comes to handling the tension in a paradoxical situation, especially in the digital environment. The awareness of the divers' responses to the PPP can reduce their anxiety and avoid paralysis in their decision-making and foster their creativity after that. Moreover, Essay#3 allows top management to understand better under which circumstance marketing managers are more likely to use a response strategy to deal with personalization – privacy paradox. This understanding is vital because it permits top management to recognize the elements to be highlighted to encourage such a response strategy to the paradox; or recognize the elements they must avoid if they do not want to encourage such a response strategy to the paradox. In other words, when top management communicates a decision or assign a project that could be interpreted as a decision or situation highly paradoxical by the middle managers, top management should be caution with the informations relating to the salience of paradox, the uncertainty of paradox and time constraint of paradox in their communication on the basis of their objective (short term or long term). For instance, when top management has a long-term objective, they want their middle manager to adopt an active response (i.e., adjusting) to the paradox that the latter deal with, top management should be careful with the salience of paradox (i.e., reduce the salience effect). They should reassure the middle manager in terms of resources and human competency at their disposal. Also, they could give a challenging deadline in order to stimulate their engagement.

## **Methodological contributions**

Since the 1960s, marketing research has mainly developed in consumer behavior; however, research on marketing management behavior is scant. By focusing on managerial behavior, we respond to the call of Wierenga (2011), which encourages researchers to leave the "comfort zone" of consumer behavior to develop studies on the practice of the practitioners further. We use the qualitative and quantitative methodologies in this thesis: the semi-directive interview method (Essay#1) and the vignette experimentation method (Essay#2).

Scholars claim that different aspects of "reality" of strategy could be constructed via the discourses of strategists, which do not merely describe things but do things ( Dameron & Torset, 2014; Poole & Van de Ven, 1989; Quinn, 1988). In Essay#2, we use content analysis to study the discourses of 22 marketing managers relating marketing strategizing in today's digital environment. The coding of the 22 discourses allows emerging 18 dimensions, which then been classified into nine tensions.

In Essay#3, we teste empirically the robustness of the three elements stemming from the equilibrium model of Smith and Lewis (2011) — conceptual paper, and the four response strategies of the study of Jarzabkowski (2013) — qualitative research, with a new methodology – vignette experimentation method. The significant values of the response strategy, as well as the characteristics of paradox and personal factors, validate the conceptual model.

## **Pedagogical contributions**

Since the decades, digital marketing has been the subject of abundant research. Therefore, there is a lack of a general framework, which structures the strategic marketing practice in today's digital environment through praxis, practice, and practitioner perspective. Essay#1 demonstrates how the theory of strategy-as-practice and the use of the conceptual model of Essay#1 can be useful in teaching digital marketing practice to current and future managers.

Essay#2 provides evidence that tensions exist in real organizational life. Teaching the managerial paradoxes allows the current and future managers arising awareness about the importance of paradox management. Moreover, the tensions relating to marketing strategizing in today's digital environment can be served as teaching materials. The workshop could be organized to train the current and future managers not 'jump to solutions and encourage them to use their creativity to find ways of benefiting from both sides of tension at the same time.

Essay#3 allows the current and future managers to understand the impact of characteristics of paradox and personal factors on the choice of response strategies to the personalization-privacy paradox. Use the findings of Essay#3 to train the top management will allow them to better manager characteristics of paradox and the personal factors, and adjust their communication to give sense to those decisions or assignments, which might perceive as paradoxical by the middle managers.

## **Limitations and future research**

In the thesis, we have adopted a tension-based view of paradox. Future studies could take another perspective to define and study paradox, for instance, investigate empirically what are the “doxes” – common believe within marketing organization, in other words, the marketing myths; and the contradictions to the identified “doxes”, that is, what is plausible and what is wrong regarding the myths. Essay#2 has studied one form of practice, and future research can pay attention to the other forms of practice (e.g., annual reports, white papers) to study the digital-enabled marketing strategizing.

By implementing an experimental vignette methodology, Essay#3 manipulate the independent variables and measured behavioral intentions instead of actual behaviors. Further research can undertake some other methods. For instance, investigate the real behaviors of marketing managers in a personalization-privacy context through a longitudinal study. This method could provide more explanations regarding the motivation of such a response strategy and track the ongoing response process and provide evidence of its dynamic.

Two categories of response strategies to paradox (i.e., defensive and active) have been studied in Essay#3. Therefore, this dichotomous categorization put the divers coping strategies into two boxes without taking into account their different degrees of defensiveness. Future research should also clarify the degree of defensiveness of the different response strategies and categorize the response strategies based on their defensiveness. This conceptualization could be very useful for refining the influence of the characteristic of paradox on the response strategies and provide a more fine-grained analysis. Furthermore, future research can shed more light on how age influences the response strategies to paradox.



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### *Appendix 1. Different types of ambivalence*

<b>Cognitive ambivalence</b> (Thompson et al., 1995)	It describes a tension in which an individual has beliefs about an attitude or object that are associated with inconsistent evaluations, such as positive and negative beliefs towards an object.
<b>Affective ambivalence</b> (Jonas, Broemer, & Diehl, 2000).	It exists when positive and negative emotions are harbored at the same time, such as love and hate.
<b>Affective-cognitive ambivalence</b> (Lavine et al., 1998)	It occurs when there is conflict between the affect and cognitions.
<b>Subjective ambivalence</b> (Priester & Petty, 1996)	It develops when there is a discrepancy between one's personal attitudes and those held by important others.
<b>Evaluative ambivalence</b> (Plambeck & Weber, 2009)	It is the holistic assessment of an issue in which one sees both positive and negative aspects.

## *Appendix 2. Main articles of paradox research*

References	Type of study	Empirical setting	Findings
Poole & Van de Ven (1989)	Conceptual	-	Four modes of working with paradoxes are distinguished: 1) accept the paradox and use it constructively; 2) clarify the levels of analysis; 3) temporally separate the two levels; and 4) introduce new terms to resolve the paradox. These four modes of paradox resolution are illustrated by application to the action/structure paradox in organization theory.
Vince & Broussine (1996)	Empirical Qualitative (drawings)	49 senior managers and 37 middle managers from six public service organizations	The paper analyses how manag
Lewis (2000)	Conceptual	-	The paper develops a framework that clarifies the nature of paradoxical tensions, reinforcing cycles and their management.
Josserand & Perret (2003)	Conceptual	-	The paper presents 6 organizational practices to manage paradox
Beech, Burns, de Caestecker, MacIntosh & MacLean (2004)	Empirical Action research	UK's National Health Service	The purpose of this article is to explore the potential for managerial action where the paradox is held open through the use of theory on "serious playfulness."
Gibson & Birkinshaw (2004)	Empirical Qualitative (interviews and survey)	4195 individuals from 41 business units in ten multinational firms	The paper investigates contextual organizational ambidexterity and argues that a context characterized by a combination of stretch, discipline, support, and trust facilitates contextual ambidexterity.

Seo, Putnam & Bartunek (2004)	Conceptual	-	The paper examines both theories and practices linked to planned change to uncover underlying dualities and tensions and their implications
Smith & Tushman (2005)	Conceptual	-	Using the literature on paradox, contradictions and conflict, the authors develop a model of managing strategic contradictions that is associated with paradoxical cognition.
Lüsher & Lewis (2008)	Empirical Action research	45 managers from the Lego Company	The results transform paradox from a label to a lens, contributing a process for working through paradox and explicating three organizational change aspects: paradoxes of performing, belonging, and organizing.
Andriopoulos & Lewis (2009)	Empirical Qualitative (interviews, archival data and observations)	86 managers (senior executives, directors, designers and engineers) from 5 firms in the product design industry	The paper presents nested paradoxes of innovation and theorizes how integration and differentiation tactics help manage these interwoven paradoxes and fuel virtuous cycles of ambidexterity.
Gibbs (2009)	Empirical	Global software team in a digital imaging corporation	This study examines dialectic tensions (autonomy-connectedness, inclusion-exclusion, empowerment-disempowerment) in global virtual teams, and the ways in which tensions are negotiated through the communicative practices of team members.
Gotsi, Andriopoulos, Lewis & Ingram (2010)	Empirical Qualitative (interviews, archival data and observations)	86 managers (senior executives, directors, designers and engineers) from 5 firms in the product design industry	Leveraging the paradox literature, the paper analyses how differentiation and integration strategies may accommodate creative workers' needs to cope with multiple identities, as well as their aversion to sanctioned subjectivities.

Smith, Binns & Tushman (2010)	Conceptual	-	The paper identifies several types of complex business model that seek value by supporting paradoxical strategies, and notes the critical role of senior leaders in implementing these complex business models successfully.
Smith & Lewis (2011)	Conceptual	-	After reviewing the paradox literature, categorizing types and highlighting  fundamental debates, the paper presents a dynamic equilibrium model of  organizing, which depicts how cyclical responses to paradoxical tensions enable  sustainability.
Stoltzfuz, Stohl & Seibold (2011)	Empirical  Qualitative  (interviews)	15 executives and leaders from justice agencies in a large county government	The purpose of this paper is to examine how institutional contradictions become simultaneously embedded in the process and outcomes of organizational change.
Jarzabkowski, Lê & Van de Ven (2013)	Empirical Qualitative (interviews, observations and documents)	Key senior, middle, and operational managers in a telecommunications company	This article develops an empirically grounded process model that clarifies the recursive relationship between different kinds of paradox, the cumulative impact of responses to paradox over time, and the way that responses to paradox become embedded in organizational structures.
Lewis & Smith (2014)	Conceptual	-	Identifying core elements viewed from a paradox perspective (underlying  assumptions, central concepts, nature of interrelationships and boundary  conditions, the paper illustrates the meta-theoretical nature of paradox.

Fredberg (2014)	Empirical  Qualitative  (interviews of CEO)	CEOs of 20 global organizations selected for their ability to create both economic and social value	The article contributes to the literature by showing how CEOs relate to paradoxes and strategies for resolving the paradoxes.
Papachroni, Heracleous & Paroutis  (2014)	Conceptual	-	Viewing exploration and exploitation as dynamically interrelated or even complementary activities enables the authors to conceive prescriptions that move beyond structural or temporal separation toward synthesis or transcendence, as well as toward longitudinal explorations of how paradoxical poles dynamically interrelate over time.



## *Appendix 3 Interview Guide*

### **Thème 1 Maturité de la digitalisation de l'entreprise**

- Avez-vous des outils de monitoring digitaux (balanced scorecard, personas, digital marketing planning, user journey map)
- Comment procédez-vous au retour d'expérience suite à une opération digitale?
- Quelle est votre regard sur l'innovation? Et quelle est la place du digital dans l'innovation? Pensez-vous qu'ils sont indispensables pour votre société? Pourquoi?

### **Thème 2 Définition de la stratégie digital en marketing**

- En quoi le digital a transformé votre stratégie marketing ? Vous avez mis en place certaines nombre d'initiatives digitales, quelles étaient vos buts (objectifs) ?
- En terme de segmentation, de ciblage, et de positionnement, qu'est-ce que ca a changé?
- Quelles sont les grandes décisions que vous avez pris ?
- Pourriez-vous citer quelques projets digitaux dont vous êtes très satisfait ?
- Par rapport aux cas que vous venez de citer, quels sont les grandes décisions en matière de la stratégie digitale ?
- En quoi le digital en marketing a permis de créer de la valeur pour votre entreprise ?
- Avez-vous une stratégie marketing digital plus ou moins formalisée?
- Si oui, comment définiriez-vous la stratégie marketing digital ?
- Quelles sont les difficultés que vous avez rencontrés pour formaliser la stratégie ?

### **Thème 3 Structure & Ressources**

- Existe-t-il de manière indépendante un service « marketing digital » ? Si oui, combien de personnes travaillent dans ce service? Quels sont leurs postes ? (UX designer, mobile developer, trafic manager??? CMO...)
- Si oui, comment ce service travaille avec d'autres services ? (en silo, transversale, collaboratif) ?
- Si non, quelle est l'organisation actuelle ?
- Qui est(sont) les responsable(s) des activités marketing digital ?
- Qui sont les parties prenantes de la stratégie digital en marketing au sein de votre entreprise? Et quelle est leur compétence à l'égard du digital ?
- Quelles sont les ressources allouées au digital? Existe-t-il des formations permettant aux employées de monter en compétence ?

Profil du répondant

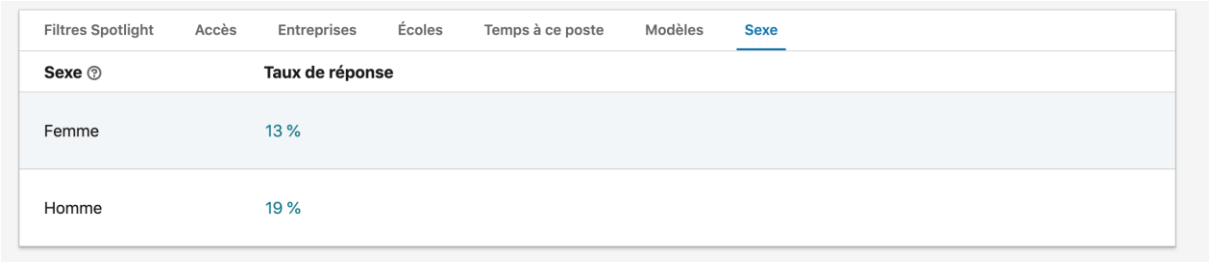
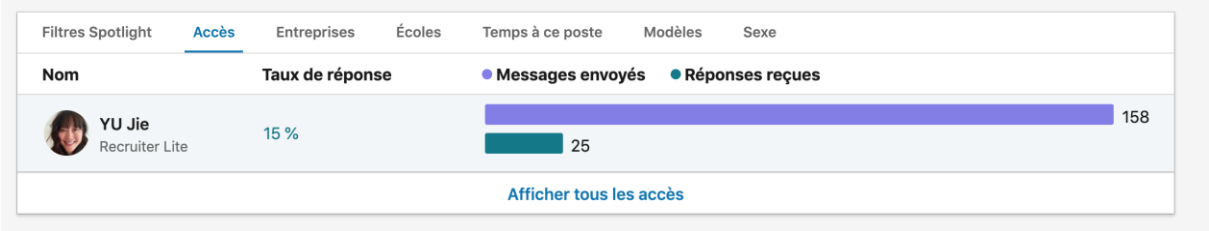
- 1.1. Poste occupé :
- 1.2. Secteur :
- 1.3. Ancienneté :
- 1.4. Taille
- 1.5. Nationalité de l'entreprise :
- 1.6. Maturité digital :
- 1.7. Durée entretiens


Category	1 order codes	Words
Analytical skill	KPI	CTR, CPM
	Metrics	fine grained analysis, Scoring
	ROI	investment
	Data-driven dicesion making	Decision
Creative skill	Intuition	Intuition, experience, personal knowledge
	Artistic director	Artistic director, adversting agency
	Creativity	Creation, beautiful,
Innovating	Stay innovative,	Innovative, novelty
	aller en avant	Tomorrow, change, new
Mastering	Master the basic	Think about the current product,
	Control	Control
Deliberate approach	Top down planning	Annual planning, road map
	Coherence	Coherence between online and offline
		Coherence between global and local market
		Strategic coherence in multichannel
Emergent approach	Change	Real time
	Agile	Agile, adaptive, Scrum
	Bottom up approach	Idea of the frontline work, flat strcture,
	Work as start up	Start up, be agile,
	Marketing activities in short cycle	short cycle, speed,
	No coherence	No coherence in actions
Economic focus	Efficiency	More margin, replace human, repetitive taches
	Cost0-effienctiveness	Saving, reduce the expense
Customer focus	User engagement	Share, follower, Word of Mouth
	Customer journey	Buying, research, collecting information
	Customer experience	Satisfaction, engagement,
	Customer segmentation	Touchpoints
	Customer value	High value, value creation, increase the value, repeat purchase
	Customer orientation	Customer need, Listen to customer, collect their opinions
Brand generated content	Rich media	Video, online advertisement, co-branding
	Digital campaigns	mini event website, SEA,
	Emailing	Emailing, content creating,
User-generated content	UGC	Customer opinions, product rating, bad buzz
	Social media	Conversation between end user, brand story created by customer

	Community	Community on Facebook, social media, community engagement
	Customer empowerment	first position, impact on the brand,
	Influencer	Bloggers, internautes, journalistes, youtubers
	Social listening	Barometer, their opinions, listen, Buzavoce, tools
Technological innovation capability	Automated marketing	Matching, Automated interactions
	Data Miner	System, DSI, IT, customer relationship management
	Incubation projects	Start up mode, small but agile project
Human cognitive capability	Complexity	Complexity, difficulty, hard decision
	Competency	Not confident, lack of knowledge, I have no idea, I don't work
	Digital talent	Immature population, lack of data culture, incompetent
	CMO	leader, expert, digital specialist
	skill	Lack of skill, specific skill
	Training	Need more training, the training is crucial
	Analytical difficulty	Don't have analytical skill, being lost among the numbers
	Complexity of the digital ecosystem	Infinity, complexity, change,
	Difficulty to manage the digital expert	Can not control or monitor his job.
Collecting data	Customer data	Online behavior
	Local market	Competitor information, consumer trends,
	Centralized data	customer data, historical data, competitor data,
Valorizing data	Data privacy	Divers social media, Personalized data
	lack of data culture,	No data culture, a total mess,
Robust digital tool	Data synchronization	Full use, large scope,
	Exigence & quality	Robustness, heavy investment, time and resource consuming
Flexible marketing activities	Creative destruction	New campaign, new offer, innovation
	Digital dynamic	Change, refresh, renew
Digital as tool	Digital devices	Website, mobile,
	Mobile	Location-based mobile marketing
Digital as strategy	Challenge	market, consumer, competitor, Leadership
	Culture	Digital user
		AB testing
	Process	testing process, learning, returning,
	Collaborating	better collaborating between the services, less solo
	Digital ability	Quick move, risk taking, test and learn, online laboratory
	Digital marketing plan	short, changing, dynamic
	Strategic alignment	fit, collaboration



Appendix 5. The details of sample on LinkedIn



 **Isabelle Zammit** ✓  
Chief Marketing Officer | CMO | Directeur Marketing | Digital transformation | I  
PhD.candidat à l'Université Paris Dauphine et l'Université de Fribourg

✓ Isabelle Zammit a accepté votre InMail. N'hésitez pas à lancer une conversation. [Apprenez comment fonctionnent les réponses aux InMails](#)

Je viens de répondre. Bonne continuation.

09:14

Bonjour Madame Zammit,

Je vous remercie pour votre soutien à la recherche academique.

Bien cordialement,  
Jie YU KERGUIGNAS

 **Raphaël Adeyemo** ✓  
Jr. Digital Project Manager chez Groupe SEB

Bonjour Jie,

J'ai complété l'enquête. :)

Bon courage!

Raphaël

12:47

Bonjour Monsieur Adeyemo,

Je vous remercie pour votre soutien à la recherche academique.

Bien cordialement,  
Jie YU KERGUIGNAS

13:50

## *Appendix 6. Scenarios*

### **Scenario 1.**

Imaginez que vous travaillez en tant que responsable marketing digital au sein d'une entreprise. Cette année, la direction vous a chargé de développer une application mobile. Elle vous a délégué tous les pouvoirs décisionnels, cependant, elle demande une participation active du département commercial dans le développement du projet.

Pendant la phase du développement de l'application, vous faites face à une décision difficile qui concerne la collecte, l'usage et la protection des données. D'un côté, vous voudriez développer des fonctionnalités dans l'application pour pouvoir collecter un maximum de données clients afin de personnaliser vos actions marketing. C'est aussi une demande de la part du département commercial qui vous a lui-même adressé une liste d'informations qu'il souhaiterait avoir. Cette liste contient une trentaine d'informations, et parmi elles, certaines sont très sensibles, par exemple, le revenu, la situation familiale, le niveau d'éducation, etc... Il vous demande aussi de mettre en place la fonctionnalité de géolocalisation. Vous savez que cette demande est liée à l'objectif de vente. D'un autre côté, l'agence de conseil Datapro qui vous accompagne dans ce projet, vous a sensibilisé sur le paradoxe relatif à l'attitude et au comportement des consommateurs vis-à-vis des actions marketing personnalisées et la protection de leurs données. Aujourd'hui, les clients exigent de plus en plus des services ou des actions marketing qui leur sont personnalisés. Néanmoins, ils peuvent ressentir de la gêne lorsque la personnalisation représente pour eux une utilisation intrusive de leurs données personnelles.

En effet, vous avez constaté cette forte tension car vous avez perdu plus de 40% d'abonnés suite à la dernière campagne d'e-mailing concernant la demande de consentement pour le programme de la Newsletter et sa personnalisation.

Avec l'entrée en vigueur la loi RGPD (Règlement général sur la protection des données), vous savez que l'utilisation et la protection des données deviennent un enjeu majeur pour l'entreprise. Pour cela, vous êtes inquiet(e), car pour le moment, dans votre entreprise, il n'y a pas de ressources (i.e., de culture orientée clients, de processus, d'infrastructure), ni de compétences humaines (i.e., DSI, marketing) pour la protection des données comme la loi le stipule.

De plus, la direction a donné un délai de deux mois pour le développement de l'application. Il vous reste peu de temps, à peine 2 semaines pour terminer le projet.

## **Scenario 2.**

Imaginez que vous travaillez en tant que responsable marketing digital au sein d'une entreprise. Cette année, la direction vous a chargé de développer une application mobile. Elle vous a délégué tous les pouvoirs décisionnels, cependant, elle demande une participation active du département commercial dans le développement du projet.

Pendant la phase du développement de l'application, vous faites face à une décision difficile qui concerne la collecte, l'usage et la protection des données. D'un côté, vous voudriez développer des fonctionnalités dans l'application pour pouvoir collecter un maximum de données clients afin de personnaliser vos actions marketing. C'est aussi une demande de la part du département commercial qui vous a lui-même adressé une liste d'informations qu'il souhaiterait avoir. Cette liste contient une trentaine d'informations, et parmi elles, certaines sont très sensibles, par exemple, le revenu, la situation familiale, le niveau d'éducation, etc... Il vous demande aussi de mettre en place la fonctionnalité de géolocalisation. Vous savez que cette demande est liée à l'objectif de vente. D'un autre côté, l'agence de conseil Datapro qui vous accompagne dans ce projet, vous a sensibilisé sur le paradoxe relatif à l'attitude et au comportement des consommateurs vis-à-vis des actions marketing personnalisées et la protection de leurs données. Aujourd'hui, les clients exigent de plus en plus des services ou des actions marketing qui leur sont personnalisés. Néanmoins, ils peuvent ressentir de la gêne lorsque la personnalisation représente pour eux une utilisation intrusive de leurs données personnelles.

A ce titre, vous constatez une faible tension entre les actions marketing personnalisées et la réaction des clients, puisque vous n'avez eu qu'une perte de 1% d'abonnés suite à la dernière campagne d'e-mailing concernant la demande de consentement pour le programme de la Newsletter et sa personnalisation.

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De plus, vous avez un délai de 2 ans pour terminer le projet.

### **Scenario 3**

Imaginez que vous travaillez en tant que responsable marketing digital au sein d'une entreprise. Cette année, la direction vous a chargé de développer une application mobile. Elle vous a délégué tous les pouvoirs décisionnels, cependant, elle demande une participation active du département commercial dans le développement du projet.

Pendant la phase du développement de l'application, vous faites face à une décision difficile qui concerne la collecte, l'usage et la protection des données. D'un côté, vous voudriez développer des fonctionnalités dans l'application pour pouvoir collecter un maximum de données clients afin de personnaliser vos actions marketing. C'est aussi une demande de la part du département commercial qui vous a lui-même adressé une liste d'informations qu'il souhaiterait avoir. Cette liste contient une trentaine d'informations, et parmi elles, certaines sont très sensibles, par exemple, le revenu, la situation familiale, le niveau d'éducation, etc... Il vous demande aussi de mettre en place la fonctionnalité de géolocalisation. Vous savez que cette demande est liée à l'objectif de vente. D'un autre côté, l'agence de conseil Datapro qui vous accompagne dans ce projet, vous a sensibilisé sur le paradoxe relatif à l'attitude et au comportement des consommateurs vis-à-vis des actions marketing personnalisées et la protection de leurs données. Aujourd'hui, les clients exigent de plus en plus des services ou des actions marketing qui leur sont personnalisés. Néanmoins, ils peuvent ressentir de la gêne lorsque la personnalisation représente pour eux une utilisation intrusive de leurs données personnelles.

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Toutefois, en ce qui concerne le développement de l'application mobile, vous avez un délai de 2 ans pour terminer le projet.



## **Scenario 4**

Imaginez que vous travaillez en tant que responsable marketing digital au sein d'une entreprise. Cette année, la direction vous a chargé de développer une application mobile. Elle vous a délégué tous les pouvoirs décisionnels, cependant, elle demande une participation active du département commercial dans le développement du projet.

Pendant la phase du développement de l'application, vous faites face à une décision difficile qui concerne la collecte, l'usage et la protection des données. D'un côté, vous voudriez développer des fonctionnalités dans l'application pour pouvoir collecter un maximum de données clients afin de personnaliser vos actions marketing. C'est aussi une demande de la part du département commercial qui vous a lui-même adressé une liste d'informations qu'il souhaiterait avoir. Cette liste contient une trentaine d'informations, et parmi elles, certaines sont très sensibles, par exemple, le revenu, la situation familiale, le niveau d'éducation, etc... Il vous demande aussi de mettre en place la fonctionnalité de géolocalisation. Vous savez que cette demande est liée à l'objectif de vente. D'un autre côté, l'agence de conseil Datapro qui vous accompagne dans ce projet, vous a sensibilisé sur le paradoxe relatif à l'attitude et au comportement des consommateurs vis-à-vis des actions marketing personnalisées et la protection de leurs données. Aujourd'hui, les clients exigent de plus en plus des services ou des actions marketing qui leur sont personnalisés. Néanmoins, ils peuvent ressentir de la gêne lorsque la personnalisation représente pour eux une utilisation intrusive de leurs données personnelles.

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De plus, vous avez un délai de 2 ans pour terminer le projet.

## **Scenario 5**

Imaginez que vous travaillez en tant que responsable marketing digital au sein d'une entreprise. Cette année, la direction vous a chargé de développer une application mobile. Elle vous a délégué tous les pouvoirs décisionnels, cependant, elle demande une participation active du département commercial dans le développement du projet.

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Toutefois, la direction a donné un délai de deux mois pour le développement de l'application. Il vous reste peu de temps, à peine 2 semaines pour terminer le projet.

## **Scenario 6**

Imaginez que vous travaillez en tant que responsable marketing digital au sein d'une entreprise. Cette année, la direction vous a chargé de développer une application mobile. Elle vous a délégué tous les pouvoirs décisionnels, cependant, elle demande une participation active du département commercial dans le développement du projet.

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A ce titre, vous constatez une faible tension entre les actions marketing personnalisées et la réaction des clients, puisque vous n'avez eu qu'une perte de 1% d'abonnés suite à la dernière campagne d'e-mailing concernant la demande de consentement pour le programme de la Newsletter et sa personnalisation.

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## **Scenario 7**

Imaginez que vous travaillez en tant que responsable marketing digital au sein d'une entreprise. Cette année, la direction vous a chargé de développer une application mobile. Elle vous a délégué tous les pouvoirs décisionnels, cependant, elle demande une participation active du département commercial dans le développement du projet.

Pendant la phase du développement de l'application, vous faites face à une décision difficile qui concerne la collecte, l'usage et la protection des données. D'un côté, vous voudriez développer des fonctionnalités dans l'application pour pouvoir collecter un maximum de données clients afin de personnaliser vos actions marketing. C'est aussi une demande de la part du département commercial qui vous a lui-même adressé une liste d'informations qu'il souhaiterait avoir. Cette liste contient une trentaine d'informations, et parmi elles, certaines sont très sensibles, par exemple, le revenu, la situation familiale, le niveau d'éducation, etc... Il vous demande aussi de mettre en place la fonctionnalité de géolocalisation. Vous savez que cette demande est liée à l'objectif de vente. D'un autre côté, l'agence de conseil Datapro qui vous accompagne dans ce projet, vous a sensibilisé sur le paradoxe relatif à l'attitude et au comportement des consommateurs vis-à-vis des actions marketing personnalisées et la protection de leurs données. Aujourd'hui, les clients exigent de plus en plus des services ou des actions marketing qui leur sont personnalisés. Néanmoins, ils peuvent ressentir de la gêne lorsque la personnalisation représente pour eux une utilisation intrusive de leurs données personnelles.

A ce titre, vous constatez une faible tension entre les actions marketing personnalisées et la réaction des clients, puisque vous n'avez eu qu'une perte de 1% d'abonnés suite à la dernière campagne d'e-mailing concernant la demande de consentement pour le programme de la Newsletter et sa personnalisation.

Avec l'entrée en vigueur la loi RGPD (Règlement général sur la protection des données), vous savez que l'utilisation et la protection des données devient un enjeu majeur pour l'entreprise. Pour cela, vous êtes inquiet(e), car pour le moment, dans votre entreprise, il n'y a pas de ressources (i.e., de culture orientée clients, de processus, d'infrastructure), ni de compétences humaines (i.e., DSI, marketing) pour la protection des données comme la loi le stipule.

Toutefois, en ce qui concerne le développement de l'application mobile, vous avez un délai de 2 ans pour terminer le projet.

## **Scenario 8**

Imaginez que vous travaillez en tant que responsable marketing digital au sein d'une entreprise. Cette année, la direction vous a chargé de développer une application mobile. Elle vous a délégué tous les pouvoirs décisionnels, cependant, elle demande une participation active du département commercial dans le développement du projet.

Pendant la phase du développement de l'application, vous faites face à une décision difficile qui concerne la collecte, l'usage et la protection des données. D'un côté, vous voudriez développer des fonctionnalités dans l'application pour pouvoir collecter un maximum de données clients afin de personnaliser vos actions marketing. C'est aussi une demande de la part du département commercial qui vous a lui-même adressé une liste d'informations qu'il souhaiterait avoir. Cette liste contient une trentaine d'informations, et parmi elles, certaines sont très sensibles, par exemple, le revenu, la situation familiale, le niveau d'éducation, etc... Il vous demande aussi de mettre en place la fonctionnalité de géolocalisation. Vous savez que cette demande est liée à l'objectif de vente. D'un autre côté, l'agence de conseil Datapro qui vous accompagne dans ce projet, vous a sensibilisé sur le paradoxe relatif à l'attitude et au comportement des consommateurs vis-à-vis des actions marketing personnalisées et la protection de leurs données. Aujourd'hui, les clients exigent de plus en plus des services ou des actions marketing qui leur sont personnalisés. Néanmoins, ils peuvent ressentir de la gêne lorsque la personnalisation représente pour eux une utilisation intrusive de leurs données personnelles.

A ce titre, vous constatez une faible tension entre les actions marketing personnalisées et la réaction des clients, puisque vous n'avez eu qu'une perte de 1% d'abonnés suite à la dernière campagne d'e-mailing concernant la demande de consentement pour le programme de la Newsletter et sa personnalisation.

Avec l'entrée en vigueur la loi RGPD (Règlement général sur la protection des données), vous savez que l'utilisation et la protection des données devient un enjeu majeur pour l'entreprise. Pour cela, vous êtes inquiet(e), car pour le moment, dans votre entreprise, il n'y a pas de ressources (i.e., de culture orientée clients, de processus, d'infrastructure), ni de compétences humaines (i.e., DSI, marketing) pour la protection des données comme la loi le stipule.

De plus, la direction a donné un délai de deux mois pour le développement de l'application. Il vous reste peu de temps, à peine 2 semaines pour terminer le projet

## *Appendix 7. Questions to check the realism of the scenario and manipulation*

### **Questions to assess the realism of the scenario**

La description de la situation me semble réaliste.

1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Je peux facilement me projeter dans la situation.

1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

La description de la situation correspond à une situation que j'ai déjà vécue.

1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Je connais quelqu'un qui a déjà expérimenté une situation similaire.

1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Questions to assess the manipulation

Comment évaluez-vous le degré de la tension entre les actions marketing personnalisées et la réaction des clients vis-à-vis de cette dernière dans la situation écrite ci-dessus?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout fort						Très fort
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Comment évaluez-vous le degré d'urgence en terme du timing pour le développement de cette application mobile dans la situation écrite ci-dessus?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout urgent						Très urgent
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Comment évaluez-vous votre degré de confiance en ce qui concerne la compétence interne de l'entreprise pour le développement de l'application mobile dans la situation écrite ci-dessus?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout confiant(e)						Très confiant(e)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Comment évaluez-vous votre degré de confiance en ce qui concerne les ressources internes de l'entreprise pour le développement de l'application mobile dans la situation écrite ci-dessus?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout confiant(e)						Très confiant(e)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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## Appendix 8. Items

### Cognitive complexity and emotional equanimity

Lorsque je dois prendre une décision, je n'aime pas les contradictions.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

En règle générale, j'accepte facilement les hauts et les bas dans la vie.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Je me sens à l'aise de travailler sur des demandes contradictoires (ex. demandes contradictoires de la direction).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

En général, j'accepte facilement les changements dans la vie que ce soit professionnels ou personnels.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Je pense qu'une décision contradictoire est forcément une mauvaise décision. Il faut l'éviter à tout prix.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Je suis à l'aise avec ce que la vie me réserve.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



## Five response strategies to the personalization-privacy paradox

### En tenant compte de la situation, que feriez-vous?

Parce que les clients sont de plus en plus méfiants quant à l'utilisation de leurs données, les marques doivent leur expliquer de manière transparente quelles sont les raisons de la récolte des données et à quelles fins elle seront utilisées. C'est ce que je vais faire tout en développant la fonctionnalité dans l'application pour récolter les données clients et pour pouvoir personnaliser le contenu de l'application. De plus, je vais montrer les bénéfices de cette utilisation en récompensant nos clients.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Je ne veux pas prendre de décision car les informations concernant les réactions de nos clients vis-à-vis de la protection de leurs données sont insuffisantes.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Les clients ont toujours des raisons d'être mécontents, mais, en fin de compte, ils continuent d'acheter nos produits. Le problème de la protection des données, je n'y crois pas du tout, je vais développer des fonctionnalités pour récolter des données et pour personnaliser le contenu de l'application. Comme ça, la direction et le département commercial seront contents aussi.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Je ne prendrai pas le risque de perdre des clients, je décide de ne pas développer les fonctionnalités pour la collecte des données tout de suite dans l'application. Son contenu ne sera pas personnalisé. Mais, je ferai des études approfondies auprès de nos clients. En fonction des résultats de ces études, je verrai s'il sera bien ou pas de développer des fonctionnalités pour la collecte de données.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Les informations demandées par le département commercial sont trop intrusives. Je ne vais pas les prendre en compte.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Je n'ai pas assez d'informations pour prendre une décision, je vais attendre.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Je vais développer des fonctionnalités pour la collecte des données clients. Et en parallèle, je vais étudier avec nos clients pour savoir en quoi la personnalisation du contenu de l'application peut être utile pour eux.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Récolter des données clients pour augmenter les ventes, c'est ce que la direction et le département commercial attendent de cette application. C'est aussi simple que ça. Je vais donc développer des fonctionnalités à cette fin. Le contenu de l'application sera personnalisé. Je ne vais pas me préoccuper de ce que les clients pensent.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Je n'arrive pas à mesurer l'impact des réactions potentielles de nos clients vis-à-vis de la protection des données. Pour être prudent, je vais suspendre le développement de la fonctionnalité de la collecte des données pour le lancement de l'application. Le contenu de l'application ne sera donc non personnalisé. Et Je vais reprendre ce développement une fois que les utilisateurs seront familiarisés avec l'application.

1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Le département commercial m'impose constamment des idées sur la collecte et l'utilisation des données clients dans l'application. Ce n'est pas ma façon de travailler, je vais faire en sorte qu'il ne soit pas impliqué dans le projet.

1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Je ne sais pas quoi décider. Je vais attendre un peu.

1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Mon objectif principal est de diminuer le taux d'abandons, je ne vais pas prendre le risque de perdre des inscrits. Je vais d'abord développer une application qui ne récolte pas de données clients, c'est-à-dire le contenu de l'application ne sera personnalisé. Mais dans 6 mois, quand on aura plus de connaissances sur les réactions de nos clients quant à la protection de leurs données, on pourra toujours revenir sur ce choix.

1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Je n'ai pas assez de connaissances sur les réactions de nos clients vis-à-vis de la protection des données, je ne prends pas de décision pour le moment.

1 Pas du tout d'accord	2	3	4	5	6	7 Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Je vais développer des fonctionnalités pour collecter des données clients et pour personnaliser le contenu de l'application. Et en parallèle, je vais sensibiliser les collaborateurs en interne sur la protection des données.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

La demande du département commercial montre qu'ils ne comprennent pas les clients. Je vais l'exclure du projet.


1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Je ne crois pas que les clients soient devenus plus méfiants concernant la protection des données. Ce n'est pas leur préoccupation principale. Je vais développer des fonctionnalités dans l'application pour récolter leurs données. Le contenu de l'application sera personnalisé. Mais je vais faire en sorte que les clients ne s'en aperçoivent pas.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

La perte des abonnés suite au dernier e-mailing est un signal d'alarme. Je dois être prudent avec l'utilisation des données. Comme on ne sait pas bien gérer les données pour le moment, dans un premier temps le contenu de l'application mobile ne sera pas personnalisé. La personnalisation du contenu de l'application pourra être réétudiée dans 6 mois lorsque l'on aura plus de connaissances sur la gestion des données.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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L'entrée en vigueur de la loi RGPD (Règlement général sur la protection des données) est une opportunité. Je vais pouvoir sensibiliser la direction sur la protection des données. Je vais donc développer des fonctionnalités pour récolter des données clients et personnaliser le contenu de l'application. En même temps, je vais m'assurer que la direction met des moyens financiers et organisationnels pour assurer leur protection.

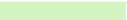
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ce que le département commercial me demande va à l'encontre des attentes des clients. Je vais l'exclure du projet.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Le besoin du client est important mais l'objectif de vente en est plus. Je vais quand même développer des fonctionnalités spécifiques pour pouvoir collecter des données clients via mon application pour ensuite personnaliser le contenu de l'application.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pas du tout d'accord						Tout à fait d'accord
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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## RÉSUMÉ

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La technologie numérique ne cesse de défier les pratiques établies du marketing stratégique. Un paysage digital en constante mutation, des consommateurs plus volatiles, une concurrence plus vive sont autant d'enjeux qui remettent en question la notion même de stratégie marketing dans un contexte de transformation numérique. Notre recherche vise à comprendre comment la pratique (la praxis, les pratiques et les praticiens) façonne l'élaboration des stratégies marketing en adoptant la perspective de la théorie du paradoxe. Vingt-deux entretiens approfondis auprès des managers en marketing digital ainsi qu'une expérimentation réalisée auprès de cent soixante dix sept professionnels dans le domaine du marketing digital ont été menés. Sur la base de ce matériau empirique, nous proposons une conceptualisation de la pratique de la transformation numérique en marketing dans la perspective de la praxis, des pratiques et des praticiens. Nous expliquons que l'art du mouvement de balancier entre les différentes tensions liées à la digitalisation de l'organisation est également un processus de développement des stratégies en marketing. Nous éclairons les différents types de réponses (actives ou défensives) que les managers peuvent adopter pour faire face au paradoxe, sous l'influence des facteurs situationnels ou personnels. Nous contribuons ainsi à la fois aux travaux relatifs au marketing stratégique dans un contexte de transformation numérique et au management du paradoxe, ainsi qu'au champ de la théorie de la stratégie en pratiques (strategy-as-practice).

## MOTS CLÉS

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[Marketing stratégique ; Strategy-as-practice ; Management du paradoxe]

## ABSTRACT

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Digital technology challenges the established practices of strategic marketing. The constantly changing digital landscape, increasingly volatile consumers, and increased competition are all issues that challenge the notion of marketing strategy in today's digital environment. In addition, technology and its management raise paradoxical tensions in the management of marketing practice and can confuse managers' understanding of the marketing strategy and its development. Our research aims to understand how practice constitutes the formation of marketing strategies, especially from the perspective of paradox. Twenty-two in-depth interviews with digital marketing managers and an experiment with one hundred and seventy-seven marketing managers are conducted. We propose a conceptual framework of the practice of digital transformation in marketing from the perspective of praxis, practices, and practitioners. We advocate that the art of balancing simultaneously and circularly opposite but interrelated tensions constitute a way of marketing strategizing in today's digital environment. We shed light on the different types of responses (active or defensive) that managers can use to deal with the paradox, notably under the influence of situational or personal factors. We contribute to the research related to strategic marketing in today's digital environment and the management of paradox, as well as to the field of strategy as practice.

## KEYWORDS

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[Strategic marketing ; Strategy-as-practices ; Paradox management]

