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**Capturing Value from Non-Paying Consumers' Engagement Behaviours:
Field Evidence and Development of a Theoretical Model**

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Abstract

The emerging 'customer engagement behaviour' (CEB) literature predominantly discusses behaviours displayed by *paying* customers. However, the rise of free offerings, including free product trials, generates a need for re-examining the relevance of the existing paradigm based on paying customers. We propose the concept of 'non-paying consumer engagement behaviours' (CEBs) and outline how these may be leveraged to create value for the firm. We define non-paying CEBs as "a non-paying consumer's motivationally-driven, positive behaviours toward a product, brand or firm, which are predicated on free offerings". Using mixed methods and two field studies we develop a model of non-paying CEBs. Our investigations confirm that CEBs from previous studies are also applicable to non-paying consumers, but also identify additional CEBs. We examine the value created by non-paying CEBs for the firm, individuals as well as individual networks and indicate ways in which firms can capture value from non-paying consumers. We make a substantive contribution to extant theory relating to CEBs and enhance the understanding of managerial practice.

Keywords: Customer engagement behaviours (CEBs), non-paying CEB, mixed method approach, model development, WOM, product seeding

1. Introduction

The strategic importance of enhanced understanding of customers' engagement with particular offerings is increasingly recognised (Brodie et al., 2011; Calder et al., 2009; Hollebeek, 2011a/b). The benefit of maintaining an 'engaged' customer base displaying favourable brand-related behaviours has been promoted as an important source of competitive advantage (Bijmolt et al., 2010) and, to generate long-term profitability (Kumar et al., 2010; Verleye et al., 2013).

Hollebeek et al. (2014) propose a three-dimensional view of 'customer brand engagement,' which reflects individuals' cognitive, emotional and behavioural engagement with a focal brand; behaviour is directly observable, while cognisance and emotions are more latent. Consequently, the behavioural dimension of customers' brand engagement is considered paramount in achieving particular organisational metrics, including customer loyalty, revenue, lifetime value and shareholder value (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014; Kumar et al., 2010). Recognising this, Van Doorn et al. (2010: p. 254) coin the term 'customer engagement behaviours' (CEBs), defining them as "customers' behavioural manifestation that has a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, [and] results from motivational drivers." CEBs are considered to include varied behaviours, such as word-of-mouth (WOM) activity, helping others, blogging, and writing reviews. Van Doorn et al. (2010) predict CEBs to impact on specific customers, the firm and miscellaneous variables. These authors' findings are primarily applicable to engagement behaviours displayed by *paying* customers. However, there is little published on the nature, dynamics, antecedents or consequences characterising *non-paying consumers'* engagement behaviours. For example, the Internet has facilitated the creation of many new information and communication technologies that are available largely

free of charge (e.g. social media, e-mail or mobile apps). Within this emerging environment, regardless of whether a consumer is a paying customer of a focal brand, the individual has the potential to effect the brand's perceptions, image and equity by communicating specific brand-related experiences, either electronically or by WOM (Groeger and Buttle, 2014a). We posit the study of non-paying consumer engagement behaviours (non-paying CEBs) to be of prime importance for managers as a number of distinctions are expected between consumers' engagement with products and services distributed free of charge, and those observed for paid products/services.

Our investigations contribute to knowledge in several ways. First, extending Van Doorn et al. (2010), Kumar et al. (2010) and Verleye et al. (2013), we develop the concept of non-paying CEBs, which has not been done previously. Second, using empirical analyses, we develop a model of non-paying CEBs. This reflects the concept's nature and key dynamics, but also identifies antecedents and consequences. Brodie et al. (2011) emphasise that as 'engagement' is interactive it is best studied in association with other related concepts. Accordingly, we study non-paying CEBs within the broader network of theoretical associations, including types of value that may result for the firm, the non-paying consumers themselves and others.

2. Literature Review & Conceptual Development

2.1 Customer Engagement Research

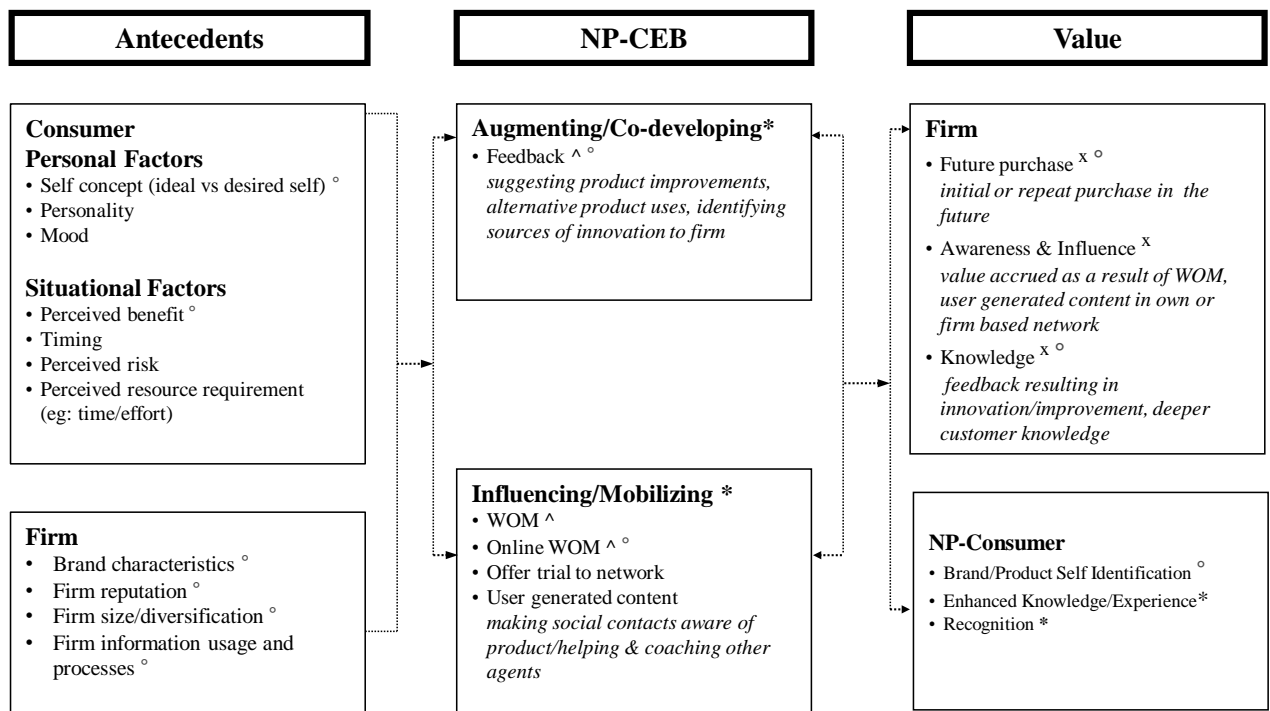
While the concept of 'engagement' has received extensive attention across a number of academic disciplines, its emergence in marketing literature has only occurred recently (Leeflang, 2011; Hollebeek et al., 2011a/b, 2014). In recent publications, 'engagement' is

presented as providing superior predictive and explanatory power for focal consumer behaviours, when compared to traditional concepts (Bowden, 2009; Hollebeek, 2012). In reviewing marketing-based engagement definitions and conceptualisations, a number of observations are relevant.

First, the different ‘engagement’ concepts proposed include ‘consumer’ and ‘customer engagement’ (Brodie et al., 2011, 2013), ‘community engagement’ (Algesheimer et al., 2005), and ‘brand engagement in self-concept’ (Sprott et al., 2009).

Second, ‘engagement’ reflects motivation (Van Doorn et al., 2010; Hollebeek, 2011a), resulting from an individual’s (i.e., the ‘engagement subject’) focal interactive experiences with a particular object (i.e., the ‘engagement object’), such as a customer’s interaction with a focal brand (Brodie et al., 2011). Third, although ‘engagement’ is typically conceptualised as multi-dimensional, with cognitive, emotional and behavioural facets (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Higgins, 2006;), specific dimensions may vary across contexts or applications. So while Calder et al. (2009) identify eight ‘online engagement’ dimensions, Hollebeek et al. (2014) proposed three-dimensional perspectives of engagement. Concurring with Van Doorn et al. (2010) and Verleye et al. (2013), we focus on the *behavioural* dimension of ‘engagement’, applied in the context of non-paying consumers.

Figure 1. Non-paying CEB Model



[^] Verleye et al. (2013) ^o Van Doorn et al. (2010)
^{*} Jaakkola & Alexander (2014) ^x Kumar et al. (2010)

Our initial conceptual model derives from the literature addressing CEBs for paying customers, and is adapted by application of our findings for non-paying consumers. The concept of non-paying CEBs and associated conceptual relationships are summarised in Figure 1.

2.2 CEBs & Non-Paying CEBs

Based on literature reviewed (in 2.1), and extending the CEB definition of Van Doorn et al. (2010) quoted, we define non-paying CEBs as “a non-paying consumer’s motivationally-driven, positively-valenced behavioural manifestation toward a product, brand or firm, which are predicated on consumption of free offerings”. For examples of non-paying CEBs see Table 1. While some non-paying CEBs have a private focus (e.g. compliance with brand-related rules or guidelines), others may be more social (e.g. helping other customers, providing electronic recommendations about a brand).

Table 1. Non-Paying Customer Type

| Non Paying Consumer Type | Description | Typical CEB |
|--|---|--|
| Prospective customer (Buttle,1998) | An individual who despite expressing interest in a focal brand (e.g. by talking about it with their friends) has not purchased the brand when making purchases in the particular product category | WOM, product recommendation, user generated marketing content |
| Prosumer (Feick and Price, 1987) | An individual who has a specific interest in a product category and derives satisfaction from interacting with firms and other consumers/customers in the network | Product feedback to firm, WOM, product recommendation |
| Product user (Bon and Pras, 1984) | An individual, who did not purchase a particular product, but uses the product (e.g. a member of a household using stereo equipment purchased by another) | User generated marketing content, WOM, product recommendation, offer network trial |
| Consumer trial (Peres, Muller and Mahajan, 2010) | An individual who has via direct interaction with the firm has been given an opportunity to trial a product (e.g. free sample or participation in point of sale demonstration) | Product feedback to firm, WOM, product recommendation, offer network trial |

From Jaakkola and Alexander (2014), we identify two broad categories of CEBs applicable to non-paying consumers: (i) ‘Augmenting/co-developing,’ which includes user communication or other input regarding the firm or its product(s); examples would be a non-paying consumer suggesting alternative product uses, or identifying sources of innovation (Sawhney et al., 2005); and (ii) ‘Influencing/mobilising,’ which refers to user communications or other input with a social or network orientation (e.g. generating awareness among contacts , helping or coaching others).

2.3 *Non Paying CEB Antecedents*

Kahn (1990) identifies three broad drivers of ‘employee engagement’: (a) personal factors (e.g. personality); (b) situational/context-specific factors (e.g. time of day, individual stress level); and (c) stimulus- (object)-related factors (e.g. packaging or pricing). Van Doorn et al. (2010) concur that these factor types exert effects on *paying* customers’ engagement behaviours. Extending previous studies, we anticipate similar categories of factor to influence non-paying CEBs. To illustrate, we posit an individual’s personality to effect ensuing non-paying CEBs; an introverted individual may prefer remote, computer-mediated interactions, while a more extraverted individual may prefer face-to-face interactions.

2.4 *Non-Paying CEB Consequences*

By displaying particular non-paying CEBs, consumers will create, destroy or maintain their perceived value levels of a focal engagement object (Woodruff, 1997). For the

engagement object (brand), such value creation, destruction or maintenance is designated as brand equity development (Keller, 2003).

Hollebeek (2012) identifies a curvilinear association between customer engagement (CE) and ensuing customer value (CV) perceptions. This implies that enhanced CE generates CV increases only to an optimal point, beyond which CE augmentations would generate reduced CV outcomes. This relationship poses a challenge regarding appropriate management and monitoring of the CE/CV interface in focal paying customer contexts, which should also apply in non-paying consumer settings.

Specific differences between consumers' perceived value in paying, versus non-paying, contexts are also expected. Zeithaml (1988: p. 13) defines 'customer value' as "a consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product/service based on perceptions of what is received and what is given;" this reflects the outcome of an individual's mental trade-off of focal object-related benefits versus costs (either financial or non-financial).

Applying this conceptualisation to non-paying consumers, individual expectations are that costs related to free offers will be low, or zero. For example, for a consumer providing their email address, the offer benefits are anticipated to substantially outweigh perceived costs. We now turn to the non-paying CEB/CV interface. First, Higgins (2006) defines value as a motivational force of attraction to, or repulsion from, an object (e.g. a brand), with engagement strength contributing to value intensity; this implies the antecedent role of engagement, and thus non-paying CEBs, to ensure value-based outcomes as shown in our model. Higgins and Scholer (2009) report that stronger engagement potentially makes an

object appear more strongly positive to the individual, but also emphasises negative perceptions.

Second, Kumar et al. (2010: p. 300-301) identify two specific value sources for the firm, related to value-generating properties of focal non-paying CEBs: (i) Customer Influencer Value (CIV), which represents the equity of a customer's influence on other (existing or prospective) customers by information sharing; and (ii) Customer Knowledge Value (CKV), which captures the value of informed, networked, co-producing, active customers' co-creation with the firm (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo and Lusch, 2004).

Contemporary consumers have the capability to add or detract value for the firm, by facilitating company development of consumer preferences and participating in knowledge development (Joshi and Sharma, 2004; Kumar et al., 2010). Consumers may also attribute value (including CIV and CKV) to specific firm-initiated activities prompting particular CEBs (Vivek et al., 2012); and value created from CEBs may accrue directly or indirectly to both consumers and firms.

3. Methodology

3.1 Field Study Overview & Objectives

Our study focused on engagement behaviours of non-paying consumers participating in two firm-initiated consumer campaign trials of two brands. The initial sampling frame included 'trial' consumers (see Table 1), that we observed and recorded (CEBs) over a discrete period; we also recorded antecedents and consequences where possible. Using this

sampling frame we addressed the following questions: (1) *Which type(s) of CEBs are displayed by non-paying consumers?*; and (2) *In which way(s) are firms able to capture value from non-paying consumers?*

To investigate these, we partnered with an Australian agency, that creates product seeding campaigns offering free samples to selected individuals who are not (past or current) customers. The Word of Mouth Marketing Association defines ‘Product Seeding’ as “placing the right product into the right hands at the right time, providing information or samples to influential individuals” (WOMMA, 2009: p. 7); and these trials are viewed as a key interaction with prospective customers (WOMMA & AMA, 2014). The Agency granted us access to previous campaign participants, based on a close match to customer profile for the brand. Campaign participants were not remunerated. As generalisability of most field studies is hampered by the use of only one focal product (Gilly, Graham, Wolfinbarger, & Yale, 1998), we collected quantitative (study 1) and qualitative (study 2) data from participants in two different campaigns.

3.2 Brand Selection & Respondent Overview

3.2.1 Campaign 1: Adriano Zumbo Bake Mixes

Adriano Zumbo (a Sydney-based pâtissier) operating five retail sites, has developed a range of bake mixes which are the focal product in this study. Six hundred participants received six different ‘Zumbo’ bake mixes and were encouraged to host a tasting occasion (Soup, 2012). Some 90% of selected participants were female, and all participants baked at least once weekly. Respondent ages ranged from 24 to 54.

3.2.2 Campaign 2: La Zuppa Soups

La Zuppa ('Zuppa') is a premium soup brand targeting health-conscious consumers. In 2013 Zuppa introduced new flavours in new pouch packaging and the trial analysed here was part of this product line extension. 850 participants received 12 pouches and 10 microwaveable bowls of soup. Participants were encouraged to host a dinner occasion and an office tasting session (Soup, 2013). Respondents were aged 24-54 and 90% were female.

3.3 Mixed Methods Data Collection Process

3.3.1 Overview

We adopted a mixed methods research design for data collection and analysis, because this increases robustness of findings compared with those from a single method (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

First, we surveyed participants in both campaigns to obtain a generic understanding of specific non-paying CEBs and associated antecedents and consequences. This survey collected quantitative data as well as "free text" responses from campaign participants. Second, we conducted in-depth interviews with selected participants. Use of semi-structured interviews permitted exploration of participants' perspectives, helping us develop a detailed understanding of contextual factors surrounding non-paying CEBs. Our partner Agency provided additional data from both campaigns, including: communications (eg: emails, mail-out packs, etc.) and descriptive statistics (eg: campaign reach, estimated purchase rates, etc.). The variety and richness of these data enabled us to identify additional behaviours and consequences, and to triangulate our findings.

3.3.2 *Quantitative Study 1*

Survey participants were asked to provide information on their online and offline non-paying CEBs; they were also asked about, first impressions of products, ways in which they used products, and user feedback. We collected 434 complete surveys for the Zumbo campaign (i.e. 72% response rate), and 576 for La Zuppa (68% response rate). Survey data were initially used to identify existence and frequency of focal non-paying CEBs; subsequent analyses recorded, categorised and tallied each of the non-paying CEBs identified.

3.3.3 *Qualitative Study 2*

A purposive sample was drawn from Study 1, based on geographic location in Sydney (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006); this yielded a total of 17 respondents for Study 2 (i.e. 10 from Zumbo: 7 from La Zuppa). Qualitative data were collected during semi-structured, face-to-face interviews each lasting about one hour. All interviews were recorded with agency permission, professionally transcribed and loaded into NVivo 10 for further processing, analysis and tracking of findings.

Initially, transcripts were coded using an “open coding” method by a member of the research team (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), allowing themes to emerge. Then a second round of closed coding was conducted to detect commonalities across data and assess how emergent themes reflected the existing CEB literature. During this process additional themes relating non-paying CEBs, their antecedents and consequences, were identified. Closed coding was then undertaken on these additional themes, using interview transcripts, campaign pages and “free text” data to triangulate findings and test robustness of additional themes. Once the enhanced model was formed, quantitative data were used to give insight into prevalence and

frequency of each of the antecedents, non-paying CEBs and resultant sources of value (cf Figure 2.)

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Non-Paying CEBs

To determine the *CEBs displayed by non-paying consumers* we compared Quantitative Study 1 data with the types of CEBs identified in our theoretical model (Figure 1). We found that consumers exhibited behaviours consistent with “*augmenting/co-developing*” by providing specific brand-related feedback. This included comments on product packaging, quality or usage instructions. In addition, most participants identified and described sources of innovation (see below). Our data demonstrate the effectiveness of firm-based antecedents: a firm’s ability to interact and offer a free trial triggers various engagement behaviours and create value for the firm and consumers.

4.1.1 Augmenting/Co-developing Engagement Behaviours

Zumbo campaign participants wrote nearly 10,000 words responding to the question: “*When you got your Adriano Zumbo dessert kits what were your first impressions?*” A range of answers were provided. To illustrate, Tom (aged 34) focused concise feedback on the packaging: “*bright, fun and classy;*” whereas Miranda (41) gave detailed feedback about packaging and instructions:

“I thought the pictures on the front looked super appealing. I wasn't sure about the pink/purple colours at first..... I really like the 'you will need' section at the top of the instructions. It's very clear and makes you think making it will be easy. The instructions appear quite long at first and may put some people off”.

Table 2 summarises responses in the feedback survey. Over 90 % of responses related to packaging, while 37 informants also commented about instructions; 5% (22 respondents), simply stated they ‘*loved it*’.

Table 2. Zumbo campaign participants feedback categories (n=434)

| | | Category | Count | Per cent |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Augmenting/Co-Developing | Feedback | Packaging feedback | 241 | 55.5% |
| | | Instructions and packaging feedback | 160 | 36.9% |
| | | "Loved it" | 22 | 5.1% |
| | | No feedback | 6 | 1.4% |
| | | Instructions feedback | 5 | 1.2% |
| | | Sum | 434 | 100% |

Zumbo participants were also asked to suggest what they believed “*could be improved about Adriano Zumbo Dessert Kits*”. Table 3 shows some 33% wrote about how to improve the baking instructions, 25% confirmed the product being ‘*great as is*’, 11% suggested additional line extensions, and 9% suggested changes to ingredients or gave recommendations about improved packaging or labelling. Respondent Janine (28) touched on a number of issues in her feedback:

“Perhaps include the printout of the Macaroon outlines instead of the small tracing ring. More guidance on what the final colour of the mixture should be when it is time to stop mixing would be great too Trouble shooting tips would be handy too; that is: If your macarons are a little lopsided it's likely that you.... .”

Table 3. Zumbo campaign suggested sources of innovation for the firm (n=434)

| | | Category | Count | Per cent |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|----------|
| Augmenting/Co-Developing | Suggested Improvements | Improve baking instructions | 142 | 32.7% |
| | | "Great as it is"/"Nothing" | 109 | 25.1% |
| | | Extend Range | 46 | 10.6% |
| | | Changes to ingredients | 42 | 9.7% |
| | | Enhance packaging | 39 | 9.0% |
| | | Other | 30 | 6.9% |
| | | No suggestions | 26 | 6.0% |
| | | Sum | 434 | 100% |

Similarly, La Zuppa participants were asked “*When you first received the La Zuppa pack, what were your initial impressions?*” A large majority (78%) commented on packaging, colours of the graphics, style and general product appearance (see Table 4). To illustrate the level of feedback detail, Hanna (42) explains that “*there is a typo on the Bean Soup bowl; it says CHILL instead of CHILLI in the ingredient list.*” Linda (31) mentioned that “*for the instructions it would be easier to read a sans serif font.*” Smaller numbers of respondents commented on: the (in-) convenience of using the bowls and pouches, the range of available products or quality of ingredients.

Table 4. La Zuppa campaign feedback categories (n=576)

| | | Category | Count | Per cent |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Augmenting/Co-Developing | Feedback | Packaging | 450 | 78.1% |
| | | Packaging & usage | 43 | 7.5% |
| | | Packaging & range of products | 31 | 5.4% |
| | | Packaging & ingredients | 26 | 4.5% |
| | | "Loved it" | 26 | 4.5% |
| | | Sum | 576 | 100% |

La Zuppa participants were also asked the open-ended question: “*What I think could be improved about La Zuppa is...*” Responses (summarised in Table 5) show that: 41% suggested improvements to taste, texture and ingredients, 21% want improvements to packaging, and 12% requested an extended product range.

| | | Category | Count | Per cent |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|--|-------|----------|
| Augmenting/Co-Developing | Feedback | Ingredients and Taste | 235 | 40.8% |
| | | Packaging suggestions | 120 | 20.8% |
| | | Great as it is | 66 | 11.5% |
| | | Extend Range | 66 | 11.5% |
| | | Packaging and taste, ingredient or usage | 40 | 6.9% |
| | | No comment | 33 | 5.7% |
| | | Other | 16 | 2.8% |
| | | Sum | 576 | 100% |

Qualitative Study 2 gave deeper insights into behaviours some participants exhibited to provide detailed feedback. For example, Jill (27) explained how she tested an alternate usage of the product, outside the scope of the original brand and marketing plan:

“... consumed one for breakfast ... just to see how I would feel in comparison to eating it at dinner. Whether it gave me energy, whether I sustained energy and was I able to perform to my best ...? I ate the chicken and asparagus and it actually kept me full until 1 o’clock, which is amazing because I usually get in about 7:30. ”

Similarly, Vanessa (25) explained how she visited a Zumbo retail store to “*taste the professional thing*”, compared with her own baking results. Others did not make so much effort, but all seemed to have a genuine interest in sharing their experience with the agency, suggesting a strong internal motivation.

4.1.2 *Influencing/Mobilising Engagement Behaviours*

Our data indicated the existence of non-paying consumers' "*influencing/mobilising engagement behaviours*," including traditional WOM, electronic WOM, intra-network trial offers, and user-generated content. Survey respondents had spoken to 26 (median 20, mode 20) individuals in the Zumbo campaign ($n=408$), and 21 individuals (median 16, mode 20) in the Zuppa campaign ($n=553$), within the first four weeks. Zumbo participants reported sharing the product with an average of 16 individuals (median 14, mode 10) over four weeks; whereas Zuppa products were shared with 14 individuals, on average (median 12, mode 8).

In addition to traditional WOM, we also observed 'influencing/mobilising' CEBs through electronic WOM (e-WOM). For Zumbo, 330 photos were uploaded to the campaign page, generating 2,083 page views and 309 comments – predominantly about product-related failure or success to help others. For Zuppa, 132 photos were uploaded generating 1,920 page views and 342 comments, within six weeks of campaign commencement.

The quantitative results indicated *what* and *how often* participants engaged in these behaviours; the qualitative interviews facilitated understanding of the *context* of these behaviours and *how* they were displayed. For example, Zuppa respondent Katelyn (52) mentioned engaging in product-related WOM while out of the house and sharing with her friends "*what's going on in your [Katelyn's] life*". Whereas Linda (29), engaged her work colleagues with the product, discussing the soup flavours and ingredients throughout most of their lunch break. Zoe (26), discussed Zuppa during a weekly '*flatmate dinner*' at home, and Linda (29) indicates that product endorsements via Facebook were used (see Table 6). Campaign participants would also actively distribute information, as demonstrated by Janessa (34): "*I also handed out the little flyers that came with the soups*".

Table 6. Influencing/Mobilising contexts and categories

| <i>Category</i> | <i>Non-Paying CBE</i> | <i>Manifestation</i> | <i>Example</i> |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Influencing/ Mobilising | WOM | At home | <i>“We kind of have a dinner once a week anyway all together, so kind of just one week we had soup and talked about it.” Zoe, 26 (Zuppa)</i> |
| | | Out of house | <i>“Yeah it’s, literally like just sitting down, having food with someone or having a drink and then saying, what’s going on in your life. [...] at times this would be one of the few things that was actually happening in my life.” Katelyn, 52 (Zuppa)</i> |
| | | At work | <i>“Because it was a big box that got delivered and it was heavy and Charlotte gets really curious like, “What did you get?” and so that’s when I told everyone about it and so I said, “Do you want to try some? We’ll do something one lunch hour” Linda, 29 (Zuppa)</i> |
| | Electronic WOM | Email | <i>“Quite simply I sent an email around to my colleagues and asked them if they wanted a free lunch. Who would knock that back?!” Janessa, 34 (Zuppa)</i> |
| | | Social Media | <i>“On a Facebook post. I would tell Kylie. She’s a really good friend of mine. She was like my family when I lived in the UK.” Linda, 29 (Zuppa)</i> |
| | Offer trial to network | At home | <i>“Some family on my husband’s side came over for dinner one night, and I made the brownies as a dessert.” Airyn, 42 (Zumbo)</i> |
| | | Friend’s home | <i>“My friend had the housewarming party [...] So I just told everyone I was bringing Macaroons and that they had to try them” Carmel, 29 (Zumbo)</i> |
| | | At work | <i>“So, I showed it around workmates. We kind of had a bit of a thing in the kitchen where we all tried different soups. So I put them all out and tried them. Just a couple of workmates I did it with but we had other people coming in and out and sort of try bits as well so it was like a main group in there with a few other people.” Rachel, 45 (La Zuppa)</i> |
| | | Other places | <i>“I did the Macaroons first and I took them to surf lifesaving and shared them with some surf lifesavers and my sister and my brother-in-law.” Alena, 35 (Zumbo)</i> |
| | User Generated Content | | <i>“Once we put the photos on Facebook and stuff, conversation afterwards of “What was that?” and all that sort of stuff.” Tom, 34 (Zumbo)</i> |

4.2 Established Value from CEBs relevant to non-paying CEBs

The data support a capacity to extract value from each of the non-paying CEB types identified, both for the firm and consumers; value was also created within and on behalf of campaign participants' networks.

4.2.1 Value for the Firm

Future Purchase Intent

Among Zumbo respondents, 314 plan to purchase the product, whilst 68 respondents had already purchased the product within six weeks post-campaign commencement. Some 63% of La Zuppa participants planned future purchases, and 27% had already purchased the product at the time of the feedback survey. The interviews provided additional insights into the drivers of the observed purchase behaviours. For example, respondent Jill (27) explained that she bought Zuppa for the convenience of having it:

“just bought some last weekend because I needed some stuff in my pantry at home ... You're stuck for dinner one night. Just grab it.”

Francine (32) explained her past purchases and future purchase intentions for Zumbo:

“if there was another special occasion that I have to bake for someone I'll definitely buy them.”

Awareness and Influence

The agency's reporting system indicated that individuals contacted by participants (known as 'Generation 1') continued to transmit campaign-related messages to friends and networks. From findings of over 100 campaigns, the agency estimates an average 50% drop-

off in number of conversations occurring from Generation 1 to Generation 2 (Soup 2014), a proportion endorsed by Carl, Libai, & Ding (2008) and supported with a correction factor by Groeger and Buttle (2014b). Thus, if 600 Zumbo participants speak to 26 individuals on average, these 15,600 (i.e. 600×26) individuals would initiate another 202,800 conversations (i.e. $26 \times 0.5 \times 15,600$), thereby extending total campaign reach to ~219,000. For La Zuppa, if 850 participants each spoke to 16 individuals, reaching 13,600 Generation 1, who spoke to another 217,600 people, then total reach would be 232,050.

Interviewed Zumbo participant Tom, explained how this pass-on behaviour occurs, demonstrating how his engagement behaviour creates awareness and exerts influence on both his immediate and extended network:

“I suppose with the people who came to the event, then afterwards that generated obviously conversation between their friends. So it was a domino effect. So then they probably even had conversations afterwards which filtered out further afield.”

Interviewee James (33) gives insight into the relationship between a specific type of non-paying CEB (hosting a sharing event), and subsequent value created for the firm, after the campaign finishes:

“... since hosting the dinner party I have been contacted by a few people seeking the specific name of a soup they sampled that night as they wished to find it and purchase it.”

Knowledge

Tables 2 to 5 demonstrate the large amount of feedback generated by non-paying CEBs and the range of product aspects covered; enabling firms to better understand product usage in-situ and identify areas for improvement. For Zumbo, this feedback initiated improvements to product packaging, provision of additional instructions for the Macaroons, and the launch

of an additional flavour. For La Zuppa, feedback resulted in three refinements: the introduction of small packets of ‘soup accompaniments’ (e.g. herbs, spices) to complement the soup; meal expander ideas, (e.g. soup-based recipes on the pack); a trial pack of two half-size serves of different flavours (Soup, 2014).

4.2.2 Value for Non-Paying Consumers

Free Trial, enhanced knowledge, premiums

For customers, value from non-paying CEBs includes free product trials, or premiums for participation in trials (e.g. gifts, discounts) (Figure 1). Our quantitative study demonstrated that all survey respondents received and experienced the products, thus enhancing their specific brand, general baking and cooking knowledge. Identified innovation sources (Tables 3, 5) demonstrate high levels of brand knowledge, in order to make these suggestions.

Brand/Product Self-Identification and Recognition

In study 2, we also observed how the campaign created value through brand/self-identification and elevated recognition from participant peer networks. This is demonstrated in Simone’s (28) comment:

“Someone came up to me at a party asking about the Macaroons because they had tried Donna hay [competitor brand] which failed and tried themselves from scratch and failed so they were very interested in the success I had and were keen to go and out and try to make them. We talked about different techniques.”

Simone's enhanced knowledge, by participating in the Zumbo campaign, resulted in further recognition of her 'success' in making these challenging Macaroons. Tom shared a similar experience, indicating that he had not only had a high impact on his friends, but others were also seeking his advice on successfully baking the Macaroons, further boosting his status as a baking expert.

4.3 Additional Non-Paying CEBs and Resultant Value Sources

4.3.1 Market and Brand Experience Creation

In addition to the non-paying CEB types identified in our literature-based model, we identify 'market and brand experience creating', which occurs where non-paying consumers, through discretionary (extra-role) behaviours, may jointly create part of the core offering, or participate in co-design or co-production (Lusch and Vargo, 2006).

The first additional CEB to emerge was "market creating". We define this as "effort expended by the non-paying consumer to selectively expose part or their entire network to the focal brand or product based on their assessment of the appropriateness or desirability of the focal brand or product". The consumer 'curates' by seeking brands or products or excluding brands or products from exposure to their network, prior to selectively exposing a focal brand or product to network individuals.

Anna (51) did not consider herself to be a very good cook and actively selected members within her network who she considered exhibited a high level of product-market fit, as recipients of additional product samples. As she explains:

“There are probably six people who I gave one of the products. I gave a mirror cake to one of the ladies who is a good cook... And I gave the other one, the Macaroons, to the nurse who’s a very, very good cook.”

By distributing free samples to selected network members, Anna amplified the campaign’s reach. Those selected recipients, in turn, shared experiences with their respective networks. La Zuppa participant Jill (27) also consciously selected members of her network to trial the product.

Brakus et al. (2009) conceptualise brand experience as “subjective consumer responses that are evoked by specific brand related experiential attributes in such settings... [that] can be broken down into four dimensions (sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioural), which are differentially evoked by various brands” (p.52). As non-paying customers have experiences containing ‘sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioural’ facets, they are creating brand experience.

Amy (51) provides an example of branded experience creation. She organised a Zumbo baking event for friends and their teenage daughters, who experienced the product in a social setting while engaging with brand-related content:

“I had a group of girlfriends with their teenage daughters join me and my daughter to cook all these yummy treats, some were great at piping the Macaroons and some needed a bit of practice, but we all had fun and loved tasting them afterwards. The girls all liked watching the videos to get some tips and were all trying to make the best Macaroons”

Another example from the Zuppa campaign, highlights how the brand became the focus of a social event, as Heidi (37) explains:

“The main La Zuppa tasting session was conducted as part of a dinner party that I hosted myself at home. To enable everyone to sample each flavour the soup was served as an entree with the option to add additional flavours/condiments as desired set up in a buffet style. Everyone loved the experience and many found it interesting to be involved in a taste testing session.”

4.3.2 Additional Firm Value: Future Purchases

In addition to the value created by consumers, we also found evidence for firm-based value creation. This was indicated by participants reporting both their own purchase intentions and those of their extended networks. For Zumbo, 226 respondents reported knowing of others they had spoken to, or shared product with, who had purchased product within six weeks of campaign launch. For Zuppa, 365 respondents were aware of others within their network who had already purchased the product.

Further, non-paying CEBs create value for both the firm and consumer networks, by means of increased exposure to profiled brands and products with free offers. In total, campaign participants’ hosting of sharing occasions generated 12,325 trials for Zuppa, and 9,480 for Zumbo. In addition, some 17,595 conversations about Zuppa and 15,780 conversations about Zumbo were initiated, creating value for the firms.

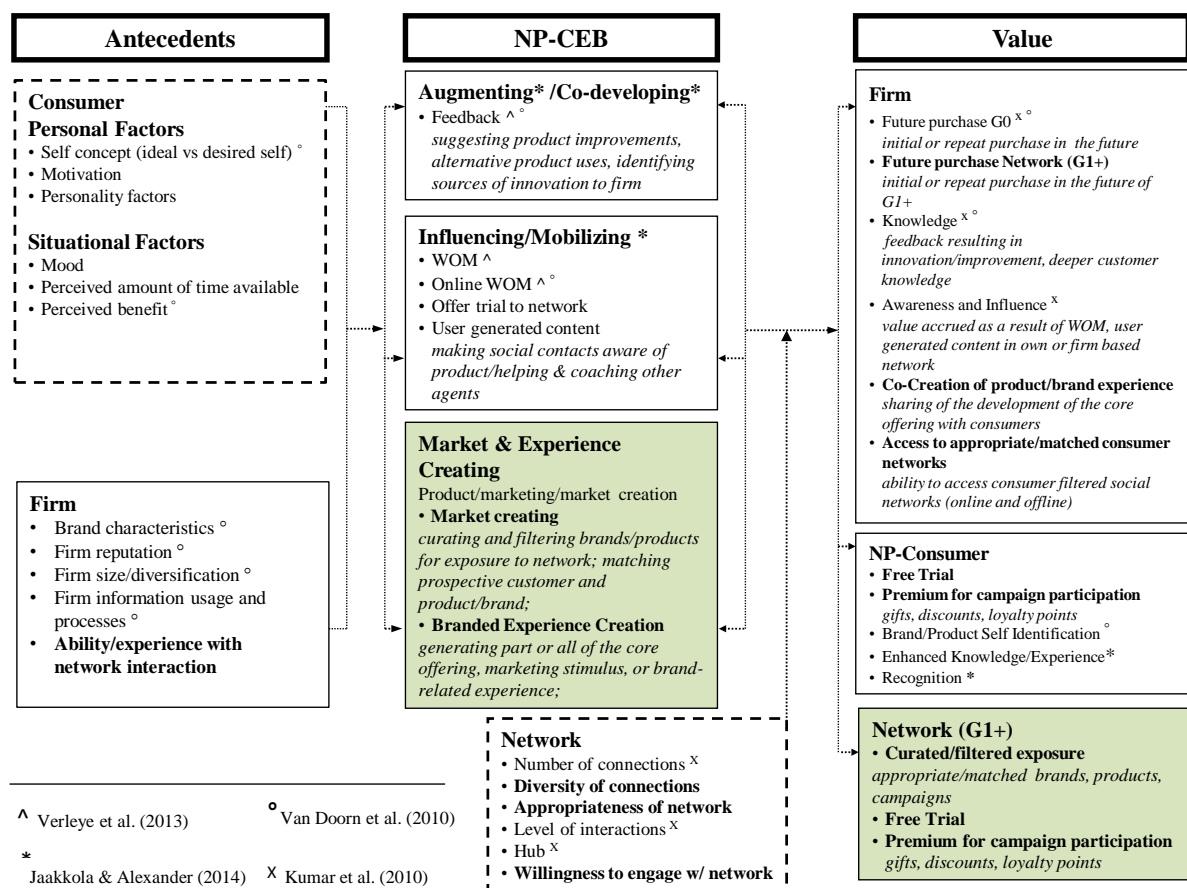
Non-paying CEBs also have the potential to directly generate future purchases among respondents’ networks (i.e. G1). The interviews verified this and provided a more nuanced understanding of the respondents’ networks, their structure and reach:

*“I made morning tea for my co-workers. Because I bake from scratch all the time I had a hard time convincing people I used packet mixes – they didn’t believe I would ever do it! Two of my co-workers have bought the mixes from Woolworths since.”
(Paula, 36)*

4.4 Extended non-paying CEB Model

The data collected indicated additional non-paying CEB types and value were created both within, and on behalf of, campaign participants' networks, as well as the existence of observed antecedents not identified in our literature-based model (Figure 1). These additional findings, in our extended model (Figure 2), are discussed below.

Figure 2. Proposed Extended Non-paying CEB Model



4.4.1 Additional non-paying CEBs

The two additional CEBs identified were ‘market creation’ and ‘brand experience creation.’ Our market creation is distinct from the concepts articulated by Jaakkola and Alexander (2014: p. 9), in that it goes beyond “influencing behaviour;” and “mobilising behaviour;” which may precede market co-creation. In contrast to general influencing or mobilising, market creation requires non-paying consumers to pro-actively select network individuals that they anticipate influencing and mobilising. Brand-experience creation, which we define as “generating part or all of the core offering marketing stimulus or brand-related experience,” similarly, extends beyond Jaakkola and Alexander’s (2014) definition of augmenting behaviour. Observed behaviours in our studies reflect all sensory, affective and intellectual facets of brand experience, as described by Brakus et al. (2009).

4.4.2 Additional Value Resulting from non-paying CEBs

We propose the inclusion of ‘creation of product/brand experiences’ (i.e. sharing the development of the core offering with consumers) and ‘access to consumer networks’ in value types displayed by non-paying consumers.

Firms’ ability to access consumer selected ‘curated/filtered’ social networks (online and offline), rather than those generated by the firm, is increasingly recognised as a source of long-term value and competitive advantage (Kimmel & Kitchen, 2014); it is distinct from value derived from sponsored referrals (Kumar et al., 2010). Similarly, creating relevant brand experiences raises firm value as it relates directly to consumer satisfaction and,

indirectly, to brand personality; it also strongly predicts future purchases (Brakus et al., 2009).

Both non-paying consumers and their networks valued access to product trials precipitated by engagement with focal firm campaigns. The participants' networks derived value from the market creating behaviour, because the participant's selectivity meant they were less likely to be exposed to unsuitable products.

We did not obtain evidence for "premium for campaign participation", as our data sources did not explicitly include premiums for participation. This value source has been retained in the model; however, on the basis of anecdotal evidence. To illustrate, firm-sponsored social media campaigns routinely employ premiums (e.g., "Pin us" to "receive a discount on your first purchase") to prompt non-paying CEBs.

While we saw evidence of "*Consumer Antecedents*" and "*Network*" as moderating variables (cf Figure 2, dashed outlined boxes), the consistency of data was insufficient to draw robust conclusions; this is addressed below.

5. Implications and Limitations

5.1 *Theory and Limits*

Our findings have a number of academic implications. First, we have developed a novel non-paying CEB concept, which comprises three key components of augmenting/co-developing, influencing/mobilising and Market/Brand Experience Creation. While the increasing importance of non-paying consumers (in social media settings) has been recognised, the concepts underpinning non-paying CEBs have remained nebulous. Our

proposed framework also links the emerging concepts of customer engagement and co-creation, which have also remained unclear to date.

Second, from empirical analyses, we propose a set of non-paying CEB observed antecedents and consequences. This contributes to the literature addressing customer engagement, which has been identified as a research priority for 2014-2016 (MSI, 2014). Third, by establishing linkage between customer engagement and co-creation, this research also contributes to development of broader service-dominant (S-D) logic, which Brodie et al. (2011) use as theoretical underpinning for 'customer engagement'.

Despite these contributions, the research also has limitations. While the mixed method approach yielded nuanced and rich findings, the use of qualitative data and analysis, with limited sample sizes, potentially undermines generalisability of findings. Future researchers may wish to adopt larger-scale validation studies. The cross-sectional nature of our data precluded investigation of evolution of non-paying CEBs over time. We recommend longitudinal research methodology in future.

While S-D logic provides an ostensibly suitable conceptual foundation for understanding and examining non-paying CEBs, further investigation of customer engagement merits scrutiny of alternate theoretical lenses to view the concept and dynamics (Brodie et al., 2011). The granularity of our data, regarding non-paying CEB antecedents, precluded exploration of consumer-based antecedents (cf Figure 2) and could be a subject for future research. Finally, implicit in Kumar et al.'s (2010) discussion of value derived from customer engagement is the effect of networks. These authors conclude that diversity of connections, appropriateness of the network as an audience and willingness to engage with

the network are positive associations for firm value. Our interviews suggested that these factors act as moderators in influencing future purchases, knowledge and awareness, as well as network matching value accrued to the firm from non-paying CEBs; however, the data were not sufficient for meaningful investigation of relationships and network effects are retained in our model (cf. Figure 2) for future research.

5.2 Managerial Implications

Given the diversity of non-paying CEBs, strong incentives exist for practitioners to consider non-paying consumers in any strategic program. By including these consumers in identification and evaluation of CEBs, firms can more accurately measure value created by these behaviours (Van Doorn et al., 2010), and more accurately estimate returns on marketing investment (ROMI). This is particularly important for value resulting from non-paying consumers' interactions with their networks, where understanding the potential for value creation beyond the initial campaign participants is critical. We also observed relationships between non-paying CEBs and types of value created which, viewed collectively, may assist aligning marketing objectives with campaign activities and participant selection (see Table 7).

To illustrate, *if* a non-paying consumer offers a trial to their network (see X₁, Table 7), *then* this is likely to impact future purchases of both campaign participants (G₀) and their networks (G₁). Quantifying the total offline reach of the campaign indicated that WOM increases awareness on a large scale(X₂); with 219,000 individuals notified of the Zumbo campaign and 232,050 about La Zuppa. Tables 2-5 summarise the kinds of feedback non-paying consumers provided and innovation sources identified; indicating that non-paying

CEB 'augmenting/co-developing' is likely to create value for the firm, in the form of knowledge (X₃). The qualitative interviews demonstrated that some participants consciously selected specific members of their network to trial the product; this 'Market Creating' behaviour is very likely to create value for the participant's network (X₄).

Table 7. NP-CEBs and Value Creation

| | | Firm | | | | | Non-Paying Consumer | | | | | Network G1+ | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------|--|
| | | Future Purchase G0, G1+ | Awareness & Influence | Knowledge | Co-Creation of Experience | Access to consumer network | Free Trial | Brand/Product Self Identification | Enhanced Knowledge/ Experience | Recognition | Premium for campaign | Curated /filtered exposure | Free Trial | |
| Then: Value | IF: NP-CEB | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Augmenting/ Co-Developing | Feedback | | X₃ | | | | (x) | (x) | (x) | X | | | |
| Influencing/ Mobilising | WOM | (x) | X₂ | | | X | | (x) | (x) | (x) | | X | | |
| | Online WOM | (x) | X | | | X | | (x) | (x) | (x) | | (x) | | |
| | Offer trial to network | X₁ | X | (x) | X | X | | (x) | (x) | (x) | X | X | X | |
| | User generated content | (x) | X | X | | X | | | (x) | (x) | | (x) | | |
| Co-Creating | Market Creating | X | X | (x) | X | X | | (x) | | | | X₄ | X | |
| | Brand Experience Creating | X | X | (x) | X | X | | (x) | | (x) | | X | X | |

Legend: (x) =potential impact; **X** = likely impact

X₂= examples described in text

Integral to the connection between the non-paying CEBs (“if”) and the resulting form of value (“then”) are three conditions, which increase the likelihood and magnitude of value creation arising from non-paying CEB marketing activity. The first condition is the firm’s willingness to act on knowledge gained from “augmenting/co-developing behaviours.” There is no benefit in uncovering product design flaws impeding brand experience if these are not remedied. This knowledge and remedial action enhances future value exchange between the firm, non-paying- and paying customers.

The second condition relates to characteristics of non-paying consumers’ networks. It is essential that the specific non-paying consumers selected for inclusion in a particular marketing activity represent a ‘strong hub,’ or act as opinion leaders, within their respective networks; networks should also be sufficient in size and diversity to facilitate meaningful impact. These criteria foster information flow from the firm, through focal campaign participants, to an extended network where value (e.g. future purchases, awareness and experience co-creation) can be leveraged. These dynamics should be consistent with the focal firm’s strategic intent and capability to support the CEBs (Sawhney et al., 2005).

The third condition is that managers must understand the selection and targeting of non-paying consumers, to include those for whom network recognition or enhanced product/usage experience holds value. This group will undertake cognitive, emotional and behavioural engagement with their networks to engender positive market creation and brand experiences. As Table 7 indicates, these co-creation behaviours are likely to generate value for the firm, relevant non-paying consumers and their extended networks. This situation generates potential for additional CEBs (e.g. augmenting/co-developing, influencing/mobilising) and amplified firm-based value creation. The selection of an appropriate ‘free’ offering, and

effective promotion of this offering to the target audience, represents a key strategic challenge.

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Appendix

The Zumbo pack



