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Towards a Common Terminology for Music Branding Campaigns

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Andreas Schoenrock is an audio engineer, audio branding consultant and scholar in popular music studies. In addition to his master's degree in musicology, communication studies and acoustics engineering he gained practical experience in various branches of the music industry, particularly from the ongoing operation of his Berlin-based audio mastering studio *Studio Schoenrock* founded in 2006. With a research focus on the consequences of the fundamental transformation processes within popular music cultures since the end of the 20th century as well as the construction of musical meaning on behalf of listeners, Andreas is an expert in music business, copyright and music perception. Intertwining his academic expertise with his practical skills, he cherishes an in-depth appreciation of the interplay between music, brands and end consumers. Andreas pursues an interdisciplinary and holistic research approach with a strong real-world reference. He submitted his PhD thesis on the influence of advertising brands on contemporary popular music cultures under the supervision of Peter Wicke at the Humboldt University Berlin in 2019.

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Towards a Common Terminology for Music Branding Campaigns

Our contribution involves the development and validation of a standardised terminology for the description and comparison of music branding communication aims. We initially review relevant literature from marketing and music psychology research, and then carry out two empirical studies. In the first, an expert focus group develops an inventory of categories and adjectives representing all aspects of brand identities that can be conveyed through music, the multi-lingual *Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET)*. The second one is an online survey with 305 marketing experts that successfully confirms the terminology's relevance across different product and service sectors. Finally, we describe how the practical application of the MBET can help to ease communication between all stakeholders in the music branding sector and how this will potentially increase the effectiveness of music branding campaigns.

Keywords: music branding; musical congruity; brand identity; brand personality; brand value; musical meaning; Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET)

Summary statement of contribution: The presented Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET) provides a practical tool for marketing strategists, music publishers, and music branding agencies to plan and compare music branding campaigns. Our contribution will improve the communication process between all involved actors and consumers and increase the effectiveness of music branding strategies. In addition, our work deepens the understanding of the function of music in branding, by interconnecting concepts of marketing theory, popular music studies, and music psychology.

Introduction

The topic of this contribution is how to improve professional *music branding* practice, employing existing music (pop music or 'hits' of the classical repertoire) as a part of branding strategies and campaigns. Numerous studies on music branding have confirmed its effects on consumption behaviour, enhanced cognitive brand image and augmented affective consumer-brand relationships (Gustafsson, 2015). Furthermore, music branding leads to increased brand loyalty (Fulberg, 2003) and brand recognition

(Kilian, 2009, p.36). Unsurprisingly, companies such as Coca-Cola, Mitsubishi (Lusensky, 2011), Starbucks (Dominus, 2006) or Nike (Fulberg, 2003) employ music branding strategies on a large scale. Although, no official numbers are available for the total turnover of the music branding industry, its volume is very substantial. Approximately two billion dollars in revenue reach the music industry from the branding business per year. Fees, paid for music to be used in advertisements, films, games and TV shows, contribute largely to this sum (Billboard, 2018).

As prior research shows, music is generally able to induce a positive mood in listeners, which has positive effects for example on consumers' brand extension evaluations (Sar, Duff, & Anghelcev, 2011). Moreover, listening to music of a specific genre (e.g. classical) can influence consumers' brand cognition by activating semantic concepts in memory (e.g. *expensive* or *sophisticated*) that are related to the intended brand image and thereby help to reinforce it (North, Sheridan, & Areni, 2016). Hence, classical music, when employed strategically in this way, was found to lead to perceptions of higher quality of services and merchandise (Grewal et al., 2003). Establishing this so-called *congruity* between the expressed identity of a certain brand or product on one hand, and the meaning conveyed by a certain piece of music on the other (MacInnis & Park, 1991; Zander, 2006), is a corner stone for successful music branding (North et al., 2016).

In practice however, music branding campaigns often struggle to achieve this congruity and hence, to exploit its positive effects. The main reason is the following: For realising music branding campaigns, marketing strategists typically work together with music branding agencies. The critical task for music consultants working at these agencies is to find music tracks most suitable to express a certain brand identity to specified consumer target groups. This, however, is a difficult challenge, since the

terminologies used for describing music within catalogues of record labels and stock music providers differ substantially from those terms initially used by marketing strategists to describe a brand's identity (see theoretical background section for example terminologies and a detailed description of the overall music branding process). To improve this situation, a common terminology is required to close the semantic gap between terms used by marketing strategists to express their communicative goals on one hand, and terms used by practitioners from publishing companies, such as record labels and stock music providers, to describe music and musical meaning, on the other. This terminology must be able to express the shared communicative intentions of all the aforementioned parties involved in the process of music branding. Yet, no commonly accepted terminology has been established for this purpose so far.

Our goal in this work is therefore to develop such a standardised inventory for planning, describing, and comparing music branding communication aims - the Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET). *Marketing strategists* will be able to use this terminology as a tool to describe their communicative goals, since it already contains a spectrum of only those terms that music is able to convey. Based on such a description, *music branding agencies* will be more successful in expressing the properties of suitable music and in identifying corresponding tracks. Finally, *practitioners from record labels and music databases* will be able to use the MBET to describe existing and new music with relevant marketing terms, and thus increase the applicability of their music catalogues for music branding. Therefore, the MBET will be an important instrument for all the stakeholders involved in music branding and aims to accommodate their common communicative needs. Development of the MBET was conducted as part of an EU-funded multi-national research and development project called ABC_DJ (ABC_DJ,

2018), aiming at improving the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises of the European audio branding sector.

Theoretical background

In this section, we present our understanding of the key constructs forming the theoretical foundation for developing the envisioned terminology. First, we provide a definition of music branding, on which this article is based on. Secondly, the underlying concept of musical congruity and its effects on consumers are discussed. Thirdly, we give a detailed description of the underlying communication process of music branding, in which the MBET will be applied. Finally, we investigate the potential of musical meaning for communication, which is fundamental for the terminology proposed in this work.

Music branding

For a long time, sound and music have been recognised as important means for communication in marketing under the label of *sonic branding* (Gustafsson, 2015), *audio branding* (Bronner & Hirt, 2009), or *sound branding* (Steiner, 2014). The approved ability of music and sound to affect listeners emotionally (Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008; North & Hargreaves, 2008) and convey socio-cultural meaning and values (Stone, 2016; Tagg, 2013) is the main reason why marketing practitioners increasingly rely on music as a powerful channel for brand communication (Jackson, 2003; Kilian, 2009). Focusing specifically on music as a central means for communicating brand identity, we will only use the term *music branding* (Müllensiefen & Baker, 2015) throughout this work. It refers to the employment of music as means for brand communication as part of marketing strategies, for example in advertisements or at the point of sale. Therefore, branding strategies employing non-musical acoustical elements, such as audio logos or

generic sounds, are not discussed or analysed in this work.

Musical congruity as key concept for music branding

Effects of music on consumer perception and behaviour have been studied in numerous field experiments for decades. Especially, the so-called *musical congruity* or *musical fit* between music and a brand or product is supposed to increase the effectiveness of music at the point of sale (North et al., 2016). Understanding the theoretical concept of musical congruity is therefore indispensable for implementing successful music branding campaigns, and for the development of the envisioned MBET.

Musical congruity can be defined as the perceived congruence between music (and the meaning it conveys) on one hand and an expressed identity of a certain brand or product or message on the other (MacInnis & Park, 1991; Zander, 2006). Positive effects of musical congruity on consumers have been demonstrated in several studies. North and colleagues (2004) demonstrated that congruity between music used in radio advertisements and brand identity lead to an increase of brand recall and consumers' purchase intentions of the advertised product. Manipulating television advertisements, Hung (2000) was able to prove, that high congruity between musical genre and advertised products lead to an enhanced brand attitude. Similarly, MacInnis and Park (1991) showed that brand attitude was also enhanced by congruity between song lyrics in advertisements and the intended marketing message. In a study examining the impact of tempo and timbre on musical congruity effects, Oakes and North (2006) were able to demonstrate, that applying congruent background music to advertisements led to positive effects for both, recall of and affective responses to these commercials.

The complexity of music as a construct entails a wide range of properties that influence the described musical congruity and its effects. For example, Oakes (2007) summarised *mood, genre, score, valence, lyrics, association, image, tempo,* and *timbre*

as parameters, which have been experimentally manipulated and tested in different studies on musical congruity effects. In particular, musical genre and style potentially evoke consumer associations, that may be utilised in order to achieve congruence with a certain brand image or product. Not only may these attributes be perceived very quickly (Plazak & Huron, 2011). They are also said to be associated more than any other property with extra-musical meaning concepts, such as lifestyle, location, era, or culture (Kristen & Shevy, 2013). For a detailed review on musical congruity effects confer to North and colleagues (2016) and Oakes (2007). Further explanations for the utility of music in branding and advertising, such as conditioning and symbolic consumption, as discussed by Abolhasani and colleagues (2017) and Larsen and colleagues (2010) contribute to the effect of musical congruity. It can be argued that these mechanisms enhance the cognitive priming of consumers, which is required for musical congruity to be exploited in music branding campaigns.

Exploiting consumers' expectation of congruent music appearing in advertisements, some marketing strategies specifically employ *musical incongruity* for example to attract attention (Lalwani, Lwin & Ling, 2009) or to convey humour (Oakes, 2007). In addition, Heckler & Childers (1992) could demonstrate that consumers' recall of an advertised product could get enhanced in situations where unexpected information was used. In summary, marketing strategists can selectively use musical incongruity in advertisements to evoke a specifically desired effect in consumers (Oakes, 2007). The MBET aims at providing marketing strategists with a terminology to describe their communicative goals. Moreover, this terminology shall contain a spectrum of only those terms that music is able to convey. Thus, the terminology proposed in our work will be equally useful for both scenarios: identifying music (conveying meaning), that is

either congruent, or incongruent to a certain brand or product identity, or marketing message.

Music branding as communication process

A first step towards a common terminology for planning, describing, and comparing music branding communication aims, is to conceive of music branding as a communication process, which is fundamental to the observed effects of music on consumer perception and behaviour. This process can be understood as a special case of sign communication (see Figure 1), which is discussed in this section.

Music branding as communication process

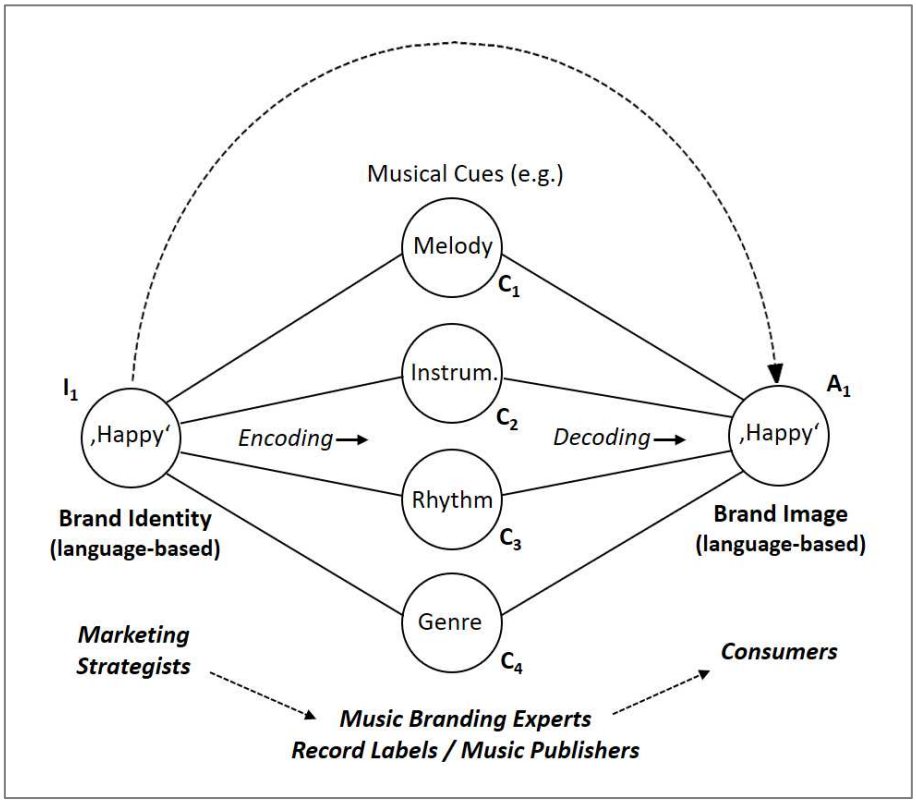

Figure 1. Conceptualisation of music branding as communication process, as exemplified by Egon Brunswik's 'lense model' (Brunswik, 1955). C_1 to C_4 exemplify the wide range of musical properties in general.

In a typical music branding scenario, marketing strategists describe their campaign goals in terms of a certain *brand identity* to be conveyed (Kilian, 2009). While a broad range of conceptualisations of brand identity have been proposed over decades, *brand personality* and *brand value* are essential concepts throughout these works (Burmann, Jost-Benz, & Riley, 2009; Chernatony, 1999; Nandan, 2005). Brand personality refers to a set of human personality traits associated with a brand, such as *responsibility, activity, emotionality, aggressiveness,* or *simplicity* (Geuens, Weijters, & De Wulf, 2009). On the other hand, a brand identity typically also encompasses terms describing human values, such as *achievement/power, aesthetics, benevolence, ecology, health, hedonism, self-direction, stimulation,* or *tradition* (Gaus et. al., 2010).

Conversely, record labels and providers of stock music for advertisements generally describe the contents of their music archives in terms of genre, style, mood, tempo, and instrumentation. While tempo and instrumentation are characteristics stemming from musicology, genre and style originate from radio and popular music research. Finally, mood descriptors are a newer development reflecting the notion, that music first and foremost conveys emotional meaning (as discussed in the following section).

As a result, a principal task for music branding agencies is to translate the attributes of brand identity (personality and values) into *fitting* musical properties, such as genre, style, mood, instrumentation, and tempo (confer to Figure 1). This step is essential for consumers to perceive congruity between a brand identity and the selected music and thus, it is fundamental to carry out successful music branding campaigns. However, the experience of listening to a music track can be very diverse at an individual level due to a variety of underlying psychological and situational factors (Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008). Therefore, music branding consultants normally have to rely

on their practical experience with music meaning attribution from different audiences in differing contexts. They need to anticipate what kind of music is typically associated with which attributes of brand value and brand personality not at an individual level, but for a certain target group. Then, in a second step, music consultants have to identify single music tracks or assemble playlists conforming to the corresponding musical properties. The selection of music is normally drawn from a music agency's own digital archive, from external archives of stock music providers, or from record labels. In some cases, composers and music producers are commissioned to create new music according to a set of given attributes. Finally, music branding agencies together with marketing strategists employ the selected music in a specific music branding campaign.

In an ideal case, consumers addressed by such a campaign will decode the same set of qualities in terms of a perceived *brand image* (Müllensiefen & Baker, 2015), which were initially intended to be communicated as the brand identity (see Figure 1). Depending on the context in which the selected music is embedded (for example in a product advertisement video) and the degree of penetration and music-brand congruity, consumers will later associate these qualities with the respective brand.

In the described process, the complete communicative success relies on the music consultant's ability to perform an appropriate translation of brand identity into the language of music. In many cases, this is not possible by drawing on existing music descriptors contained in digital archives such as genre, style, mood, and instrumentation. Hence, music branding agencies typically developed their own idiosyncratic terminologies. These terminologies are often seen as part of the business model and are therefore not publicly shared. There are a few published excerpts of such terminologies addressing music branding practitioners; however, they give only a rough outlook. Typically, these terminologies were evaluated by the use of semantic

differentials (Müllensiefen, Davies, Dossman, Hansen, & Pickering, 2013), and consist of adjective lists (Langeslag & Hirsch, 2004) with terms that are grouped to higher-order semantic dimensions or categories. However, none of these terminologies have been empirically validated regarding their overlap with marketing strategists' needs or in terms of their applicability for different consumer groups. This not only hampers communication between involved actors, but it also forms an obstacle to a transparent competitive market that presupposes the possibility of a fair comparison of music branding campaigns.

Therefore, we introduce the MBET as a first *common* terminology to reduce currently required translation efforts and the inherent risks of misinterpretation. It facilitates to achieve *congruity* between marketing attributes on one hand and the music played on the other. The degree of achievable congruity and the potential of different types of music to convey meaning in a marketing context have often been discussed from a consumer perspective and have generated an ongoing debate in marketing research (Scott, 1990; MacInnis & Park, 1991; Zhu & Meyers-Levy, 2005; North et al., 2016). However, in order to develop a terminology that may be applied generatively within the described communication process, understanding the capacity of music to convey meaning is indispensable (Egermann, 2019).

Musical meaning as potential for communication

Which content can be communicated through music? The empirical answer to this question, frequently overlooked in practice, can be of high value for marketing experts. It opens up the debate of the potential and boundaries of communication in the field of music branding in principle, which is a cornerstone for the envisioned terminology.

In general, music is able to fulfil its intermediary sign-function by help of its features such as timbre, melody, harmony, and rhythm as well as lyrics. By these

inherent *cues*, music may on one hand express or induce *emotions* in listeners based on biological and psychological mechanisms (Eerola, Friberg, & Bresin, 2013; Juslin & Sloboda, 2010; Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008). On the other hand, these cues may carry meaning by evoking collectively shared *semantic associations* with artists, genres, and musical subcultures and the values represented by these cultural entities (Kristen & Shevy, 2013; Rentfrow, Goldberg, & Levitin, 2011; Tagg, 2013; Stone, 2016).

A systematic investigation of music psychology research and popular music studies concerning potential meaning conveyed by music reveals three key concepts, which are employed in those different disciplines: *expressive qualities of music, emotional effects of music,* and *paramusical fields of connotation*, which are described in the following sections.

Expressive qualities of music

Music is often conceived of as a kind of 'universal language' being able to convey meaning without words (Cross, 2001; Boer & Fischer, 2011). However, apart from lyrics, music cannot express encoded tangible denotative semantic content such as objects or characters, but instead mainly conveys *connotative meaning* in terms of moods and emotions (Juslin & Laukka, 2003). In music psychology, a number of scales and inventories have been developed to describe and measure these expressive qualities of music. The resulting terminologies typically describe the *affective tuning* and *aesthetic character* of musical pieces *perceived* as attributes of the music itself and do not imply that these features would necessarily correspond to the *felt* emotional effect of music on the listener (Egermann & McAdams, 2013). Kate Hevner (1935) published the first standardised word list to measure the perceived affective-aesthetic expression of musical pieces. A recent update and psychometric improvement of this original word list has been developed by Rentfrow et al. (2012). The 36 adjectives contained in this

terminology, such as *joyful, depressing, mellow,* or *sophisticated*, are represented by four expressive qualities of music (*Positive affect, Negative affect, Energy* and *Cerebral*).

Emotional effects of music

The emotional effect of music is probably the most important reason for many people to listen to music (Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008). Music is used systematically in everyday life to reduce stress, to get into a good mood or to deliberately experience joy or sadness (Sloboda & O'Neill, 2001; Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008). Similar to perceived emotions and affects expressed by musical qualities as described in the previous section, a huge number of psychological terminologies exist to categorise and measure musically *induced* emotions. In difference to perceived emotions, they denote personal feelings that may result from the contact with music, and which are not necessarily identical with the expressed affective content (Gabrielsson, 2002). Ways to analyse induced emotions can be divided in *categorical, dimensional,* and *music-specific* approaches (Zentner & Eerola, 2010). Categorical approaches conceptualise human emotions as categorically discriminable, ideal type and as multi-component embodied processes existing in all cultures (Juslin & Sloboda, 2010). They are said to also contain a subjective feeling component specific for the respective category and being expressible in common language (e.g. *joy*). The Differential Emotions Scale (DES) by Izard (1971) is a famous example derived from this approach. In contrast, dimensional approaches consider emotions as cultural-specific language labels denoting a specific form of experienced interplay between bodily core affects (arousal and valence) and situation- and culture-specific cognitive categorisation (Barrett, 2006). An additional famous psychological inventory exemplifying this dimensional approach is the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) by Watson, Clark and Tellegen (1988). Finally,

music-specific emotion measurement instruments differ in that they theoretically assume that music might not induce 'full-blown' emotions but rather an attenuated aesthetic type, partly including 'mixed emotions'. The Geneva Emotion Music Scale (GEMS) by Zentner, Grandjean and Scherer (2008) is a well-established example of this approach. It contains aesthetic items such as *dazzled, inspired,* or *sensual* but at the same time draws on conventional emotional qualities representing valence and arousal, such as *joyful* or *stimulated*.

Paramusical fields of connotation in popular music

Another resource for meaning conveyed by music is the notion of *paramusical fields of connotation* (PMFCs), which is discussed within popular music studies (Tagg, 2013). This concept refers to the capacity of popular music tracks, frequently used in music branding scenarios, to function as sign carriers and thus, to convey extra-musical meaning in everyday popular culture. This mainly comprises references and social attributions related to pop stars, albums, and sub-cultures from which popular music works originate. Furthermore, it encompasses complex layered cultural associations formed by the 'semiotic career' that every piece of music runs through when entering the cycle of popular culture appropriation and semiosis. This effect is increasingly stimulated in the context of digitalisation, mediatisation and globalisation (Pontara & Volgsten, 2017), as exemplified by the prevalence of cover versions, sampling and remixes in nowadays popular music (Navas, Gallagher, & Burrough, 2018). Such aesthetic strategies are able to add additional layers of meaning to certain works, without abolishing their prior musical meaning, and thus can also be exploited in music branding. Four different basic dimensions of meaning contained in popular music can be differentiated (Stone, 2016). In the centre is the articulation of *social identities* (e.g. gender, race, class), which is complemented by references to *place and time* (e.g.

certain locations or epochs), expressions of *emotion and movement* (e.g. a happy rise or a sad fall), and finally, the expression of certain *aesthetic commitments* (e.g. authenticity, beauty, perfection, passion).

Research questions

The development of a Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET) as a common *linguistic* instrument for planning, describing, and comparing music branding communication aims, requires combination of two perspectives. First: what are the communication needs of marketing practitioners? Second: what is the underlying capacity of music to convey meaning? On one hand, it cannot be assumed that music is able to convey every part of a brand identity, and on the other hand, we do not expect every possible expression of music to be relevant in branding. Hence, the goal of the presented research is finding common ground between both perspectives, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Communication needs and communication potential expressed by the MBET

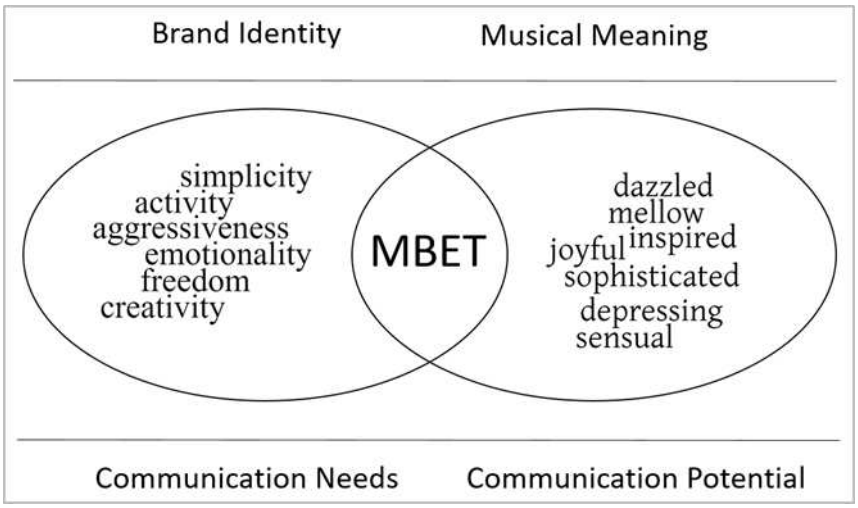

Figure 2. The Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET) representing the intersection of potential linguistic terms expressing brand identity and musical meaning, which are both represented by exemplary terms in this figure.

Aiming at the semantic overlap between these two perspectives, the development of the MBET was driven by three research questions:

- Which categories of brand personality and brand value can be expressed through music?
- Which linguistic terms are useful in music branding campaigns to describe these categories?
- How relevant are these terms in the field of marketing (and for different sectors of marketing) for expressing brand identities?

In order to investigate these questions, we combined qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches. In a first study, we conducted a focus group discussion (Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 1990) with experts from the field of music branding. The focus group methodology was conducted similar to the one by Lindau and colleagues (2014) who developed a vocabulary for the perception of spatial audio qualities. As result of the expert focus group, the Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET) is presented, interpreted and discussed with reference to the state of research literature on musical meaning. Afterwards, in order to validate the new terminology in terms of relevance for branding in different product and service sectors, we conducted an online survey with marketing professionals as a complementary quantitative study.

The reasoning behind applying a mixed methods strategy in our work is twofold: Firstly, we identified an open-ended exploratory approach with domain experts as the most suitable way to include the magnitude of concepts and linguistic terms reflecting the communicative abilities of music to convey brand identities. Secondly, carrying out a quantitative study with marketing experts was chosen to verify the quality and

relevance of our previously gained results and, if necessary, adjust the MBET or even reiterate the process of its development based on the findings.

Study 1: Expert focus group on music branding terminology

Aims

The first approach to arrive at a multi-lingual standardised music branding terminology was to conduct a focus group composed of music branding experts from all parties involved in the process of creating music branding campaigns. The rationale for this methodological choice was twofold: Firstly, it seemed necessary to initiate a communicative 'negotiation' process between the different professional stakeholders involved. The goal of this process was to find verbal terms that represent common ground and are at the same time considered useful for typical everyday business challenges by actors from each of the relevant parties. Furthermore, since many practice strategies in music branding have not yet been covered by scientific literature, the focus group aimed at helping to turn the practitioners' informal knowledge into concrete terms, based on existing inventories and key concepts from marketing research, music psychology, and popular music studies.

Method

Participant recruitment

The recruitment strategy for the focus group was to compile a multi-national music branding expert group with no gender bias, as well as avoiding conflicts of interests and thereby ensuring a transparent and impartial process. We further aimed at representing all relevant stakeholder groups in music branding: *marketing strategists,* who are describing their communicative goals, which are translated by *music branding experts*

into musical attributes that are used in communication with composers or to identify suitable music tracks, which are provided by *record labels or stock music libraries*.

The experts required for the focus group were recruited via public advertisements on sector-specific online portals and mailing lists. The incentives set for experts to participate in the one-day event comprised a financial compensation of 200 Euro, reimbursement of travel expenses, accommodation and catering as well as mentioning of all participants in future publications resulting from the focus group discussion.

The focus group finally consisted of 9 experts (4 women and 5 men) from 4 European countries (UK, Spain, Germany, and Sweden), representing the sectors *marketing, music branding,* and *record labels*. All participants had between 7 and 33 years of professional experience in their respective occupation and worked for different brands and enterprises. Some of the invited experts are authors of successful books in their respective fields or prominent speakers and founders of business networks addressing music branding strategies. Table 1 provides a list of the focus group participants including their affiliations.

Table 1: Focus group participants ('Music Branding Expert Group')

Participant	**Affiliation**
Margareta Andersson	Sound architect at Lexter, Stockholm, Sweden
Lynden Campbell	Head of synch at Domino Records, London, United Kingdom
Dr. Marcel Engh	Director of Exploding Plastic branding agency, Berlin, Germany
Marcus Gums	Vice president of synch at Kobalt Music Group, Berlin, Germany
Birte Krohn	CEO of Birte Krohn Music, Hamburg, Germany
Julia Lee	Marketing consultant at PICNIC, Madrid, Spain
Dr. Cornelius Ringe	Business developer at WESOUND, Berlin, Germany
Andreas Schönrock	Music consultant at HearDis, Stuttgart, Germany
Julian Treasure	CEO of Sound Agency, London, United Kingdom

Note. We would like to express our gratitude and thanks to the music branding experts participating in the focus group on April 11th 2016. They explicitly stated their consent to be named here.

Preparatory material and instructions

One week prior to the focus group discussion, all participants received comprehensive information material about the key concepts of brand personality and brand value, as well as research results that exemplified expressive qualities of music, emotional effects of music, and paramusical fields of connotation. Furthermore, they received a specification of their tasks in the upcoming focus group. This task was formulated as 'to compile a terminology composed of semantic terms in the English language which represent an essential and indispensable vocabulary for branding communication based on music'. Further, it was required that the terminology should consist of adjective or adverbial terms in everyday English language understandable by a layperson, which at the same time should cover the communicative needs of marketing strategists, music branding experts, and record labels.

Focus group procedure

A moderated focus group discussion was chosen as format for this one-day session,

allowing participants to talk and interact as freely as possible with other group members. Following a short and introductory presentation summarising relevant key concepts from marketing research, popular music studies, and music psychology, the procedure was structured into two main parts. In the first part, essential *expressive categories* of music branding communication were identified, discussed, and then formed into a structured list. In the second part, specific *adjective/adverbial terms* were identified and discussed which would be able to linguistically represent the expressive categories. For each category identified in part one, a minimum of at least four different terms were constructed and assigned in part two. The rationale for finding at least four representative terms was to ensure each category's suitability as semantically independent and clearly definable concept. Terms were assigned to expressive categories one by one. If no consensus could be reached to which category a specific term would fit best, a majority vote decision was taken.

All participants proved to be fluent in spoken and written English and use it regularly for their daily work. Therefore, observed differences in language proficiency between native and non-native English speakers were minimal and were deemed to have no substantial influence on the given tasks.

The development of MBET categories and terms was completely based on participants' extensive experience in music branding. Therefore, no music tracks were played during the focus group procedure, also avoiding the risk of biasing the discussion of participating experts.

Post-processing and translation of focus group results

After the focus group discussion, we transcribed results and sent the final list to all participants in order to give them the chance to revise their input or to add things that might have been lost during the course of action within two weeks following the event.

Participants turned out to be still in agreement with focus group results and suggested only minor additions to the list.

Afterwards, the terminology was translated by two native Spanish and two native German marketing experts to Spanish and German, respectively, in order to create alternative versions of the terminology for two other important non-Anglophone music branding markets.

Results

As intended, the experts jointly developed a comprehensive list of expressive categories of music considered relevant in the contexts of music branding. Based on their practical experience, participants explained and discussed several specific use case scenarios of music branding during the course of the first part of the focus group. With regard to these scenarios, a broad range of terms, addressing different customers and target groups, were proposed. As expected, the focus group centred on finding common ground between the actual needs of marketing strategists to express certain facets of brand identities and the ability of different musical works to communicate these brand identities. Resulting from this discussion and taking into account semantic concepts from marketing research, music psychology, and popular music studies, a list of 18 expressive categories considered relevant for music branding was created, including short semantic descriptions of each category (see Table 2) as well as translations of the category labels to Spanish and German (see Appendix A).

In the second part of the procedure, participants successively proposed a number of suitable adjectives for each of the 18 expressive categories. These adjectives were then discussed regarding their individual semantic fit for the respective category. This process again involved the analysis of each term regarding its practical usability in diverse branding scenarios, as well as the consideration of possible synonyms. In the

final refinement of the terminology, each set of attributes within a category was revised once again in order to decrease semantic redundancy on one hand, and to increase the level of expressive power on the other. As a result from this procedure, 132 expressive terms were recorded and assigned to the respective expressive categories.

The final MBET (Music Branding Expert Terminology) consists of 132 terms grouped into 18 categories relevant for music branding, sorted by semantic similarity. The complete terminology, including the expressive adjective terms found for each category in English, Spanish, and German is presented in Appendix B. In addition, the MBET categories are depicted in Table 2. Categories 1 to 3 describe attributes related to emotional and affective qualities. Categories 4 to 12 all contain words that describe human values, social identity and aesthetic commitments. Category 13 characterises the felt impact of a marketing message, while category 14 comprises words referring to inspiration and creativity. Categories 15 to 17 contain words that create spatial-temporal references to different times, places, cultures and styles. Finally, the last category describes the dynamic character of the music.

Table 2: Expressive Categories of the Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET).

No	Category	Description	No	Category	Description
1	Emotional Expression	Terms describing very specific emotions expressed	10	Hedonism vs. Seriousness	Terms describing the degree of seriousness
2	Emotional Valence	Terms describing positive or negative emotional expression	11	Gender	Terms describing a gendered appeal
3	Emotional Energy	Terms describing arousing or calming potential	12	Eros	Terms describing erotic and sexual qualities
4	Complexity	Terms describing the degree of complexity	13	Scale	Terms describing the felt impact
5	Sophistication	Terms describing the degree of perfection	14	Inspiration	Terms describing felt emotional and creative challenge
6	Intellectuality	Terms describing an intellectual demanding or cognitively inspiring potential	15	Time Reference	Terms describing references to time epochs in abstract words
7	Traditionalism vs. Progressiveness	Terms describing the reliance on traditional vs. progressive values	16	Culture / Location Reference	Terms describing references to cultures or locations in abstract words
8	Inclusiveness vs. Exclusiveness	Terms describing the assumed breadth of addressees	17	Style Reference	Terms describing references to subcultures in abstract words
9	Conformity vs. Non-conformity	Terms describing the degree of (non-) conformity	18	Dynamic Expression	Terms describing the temporal character of changes in speed, intensity, complexity, etc.

Discussion

The results obtained in the focus group discussion yield a number of observations about the expressive categories and linguistic terms considered useful by experts in music branding. By comparing the MBET categories and their respective adjective terms with existing concepts from terminologies and scales used in marketing research, music psychology, and popular music studies, important commonalities and differences become visible.

First of all, the MBET includes both the marketing concepts of brand personality and brand value, but to a different extent. Characteristic qualities of *brand personality*, such as *Responsibility, Emotionality, Excitement, Sophistication* and *Competence,* are comprehensively expressed by respective MBET categories. A total of 24 attributes of brand personality, as described by Aaker (1997) and Geuens and colleagues (2009), are represented within the MBET. Examples are *sentimental, confident* or *honest* within the category Emotional Expression (1). The terms y*oung, innovative, reliable* and *down-to-earth* are examples of brand personality expressed within Traditionalism vs. Progressiveness (7). Furthermore, the MBET categories Inspiration (14) and Style Reference (17) include typical attributes of brand personality such as *creative, exciting, glamorous,* or *cool*. These results indicate that the marketing concept of brand personality plays an important role in music branding campaigns. However, there are two aspects of brand personality which are hardly reflected within the MBET: *Sincerity* expressed by attributes such as *cheerful, real,* or *sincere* and *Ruggedness* expressed by attributes such as *tough, outdoorsy,* or *rugged* (Aaker, 1997). It can be concluded, that communication of those qualities of brand personality through music seems to be very difficult.

In contrast, the *brand value concept* appears much less applicable within the context of music branding. Only five terms of the *Schwartz Value Survey* (Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004), which is often used by companies to develop and shape their brand values, are represented by the MBET: *honest* in Emotional Expression (1), *daring* in Conformity vs. Non-conformity (9), *indulgent* in Hedonism vs. Seriousness (10), *creative* and *exciting* as part of Inspiration (14). These attributes represent only three (self-direction, stimulation and hedonism) out of ten distinct types of values that are described as possible brand values in the literature. However, important characteristics of brands and human values such as achievement, power, security, and universalism (see Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004) are not reflected in the MBET. Since we had asked the experts for typical terms they would employ to describe actual campaigns, this observation can be interpreted in several ways: One possibility is, that the brand value concept does not play a similar significant role in the planning and realisation of music branding campaigns as the brand personality concept does. Another explanation is that values communicated by popular music, which is typically employed in music branding campaigns, are rather confined to aesthetics and hedonism than expressing human values in general. However, we primarily interpret this outcome similar to a position that was taken during the focus group discussions by the experts and is discussed in literature as well (see Tagg, 2013): music as a mainly connotative sign system exhibits only limited means of transporting abstract, philosophical concepts. For example, it appears hard to non-ambiguously impart the notion of universalism by playing a specific pop song.

In addition to brand personality and brand value, concepts from music psychology related to emotional effects and expressive qualities as described especially by Hevner (1935) as well as Rentfrow and colleagues (2012) strongly shape the MBET.

This conclusion can be drawn by analysing the MBET categories Emotional Expression (1), Emotional Valence (2), and Emotional Energy (3) containing terms such as *sentimental* and *melancholic* (1), *happy, sad, warm,* and *dark* (2), and *restless, tense, aggressive* and *fierce* (3). Moreover, the category Dynamic Expression (18) comprises abstract words describing changes in speed, intensity, or complexity, such as *accelerating, resolving,* or *deepening.* Furthermore, by adding terms associated with Emotional Energy (3) such as *stimulating* and *relaxing*, the concept of emotional effects of music as characterised by Zentner and colleagues (2008) as well as Izard (1971) is also contained in the MBET. Similarly, the category of Inspiration (14) containing *awe-inspiring* and *exciting* or that of Scale (13), containing terms such as *epic, intimate*, or *iconic* exemplify the felt impact and power of music. Considering this multitude of categories comprising affective and emotional attributes indicates that music per se is strongly associated with those qualities. This observation also supports the notion arising from the state of research literature that it is predominantly the emotional meaning of music, which can be exploited in music branding.

The expressive categories for music branding defined by the MBET also include domains beyond the meaning captured by the concepts brand personality, brand value, expressive qualities of music, and emotional effects of music. These domains are expressed by additional categories that appear to address *paramusical fields of connotations* in popular music. The terms contained in the categories Sophistication (5), Intellectuality (6) and Traditionalism vs. Progressiveness (7) assemble *aesthetic commitments* as theorised in popular music studies (Stone, 2016; Tagg, 2013). In addition, Inclusiveness vs. Exclusiveness (8) refers to characteristics of potential target groups with terms such as *elite, communal,* or *niche*. These attributes are usually associated with the social identity function of music (North & Hargreaves, 2008; Stone,

2016). Music is especially used by adolescents as a tool to express their values and beliefs, and to position themselves in a social space. Hence, popular music in particular appears to have a communicative function that expresses these social qualities. Furthermore, the category Time Reference (15) refers to time epochs in words such as *futuristic, retro,* and *old-fashioned. Urban, cosmopolitan* and *natural* are examples of terms describing references to cultures or locations (16). Both of these concepts are intensively discussed in popular music studies (Stone, 2016). Especially references to time, cultures, and location might be very useful in branding when communicating brand origin (Thakor & Kohli, 1996) and can easily be conveyed via specific musical cues such as typical styles and genres (Egermann & Stiegler, 2014).

In summary, the MBET incorporates both: the most prevalent concepts from prior marketing research (describing brand identities), as well as essential concepts from prior research in music psychology and popular music studies (describing conveyable musical meaning). Therefore, we conclude that the endeavour of finding common ground between these two expressive domains was successfully achieved.

Study 2: Marketing expert survey

Aims

The focus group conducted in the first study resulted in the successful development of the MBET as a communicative tool for music branding practice. However, the participants' findings might have been biased due to the sectors of brands they worked for in the past and due to their strongly music-driven perspective. Hence, in order to validate and increase the usefulness of the Music Branding Expert Terminology from a general marketing perspective, we conducted an additional online survey with marketing experts to inquire the specific relevance of each of the identified terms to

express brand identities across different markets and business sectors. By validating and weighting each single term of the MBET from an applied marketing perspective, we aimed at improving the terminology's usefulness for planning, describing, and comparing music branding communication aims.

Method

Participants

An online survey was conducted, addressing $N = 305$ English speaking marketing experts, recruited by the help of a commercial German online panel provider. Participants were all based in either Germany, Austria or Switzerland, with an age ranging from 18 to 76 years ($M = 41$, $SD = 13$, 56% female). Furthermore, all participants exhibited a significant amount of professional branding experience between 1 and 50 years ($M = 12$, $SD = 11$).

Design and procedure

In the first step of the online survey, the 132 MBET terms were displayed in randomised order in 6 consecutive item blocks on the screen. Participants' task was to select half of the terms (66), which they considered 'most relevant and important in marketing practice for describing a brand identity'. This approach was implemented in order to avoid relevance rating of all 132 MBET terms on a Likert scale, which had turned out to be unfeasible in an adequate amount of time in prior test runs of the survey.

In a second step, participants were asked to specify the brand with which they were most recently professionally preoccupied. Afterwards, they had to assign this brand to the best corresponding class of products and services based on the

International Classification of Goods and Services (Nice Classification, 2018), containing a total of 45 classes (34 classes for goods, 11 classes for services).

Statistical analysis

The initial step of statistical analysis was to calculate relative frequencies for the sectors of brands participants were lastly preoccupied with, in order to describe the structure of the participant sample in terms of representativeness. Further analyses consisted of calculating relative frequencies of participants' relevance assignments per MBET term. In addition, an overall relevance index for each category was calculated as mean relevance of its contained terms. Finally, confidence intervals for both, categories and term relevance were calculated, based on a confidence level of 95%. For inclusion of terms into the final MBET, we defined a relevance threshold of 10%, i.e. a term had to be considered relevant by at least 30 marketing experts. This arbitrary threshold was implemented to guarantee that a considerable number of marketing practitioners would use the MBET terms in their daily work and thus ensuring the terminology to become a useful tool.

Results

The obtained sample structure reveals that participants' expertise covered a wide range of different brands from many different products and services (42 out of 45 Nice classes). The frequencies of selected classes are depicted in Figure 3 (6 most important classes) and Appendix C (full list).

Top 6 classes of products and services selected by marketing experts

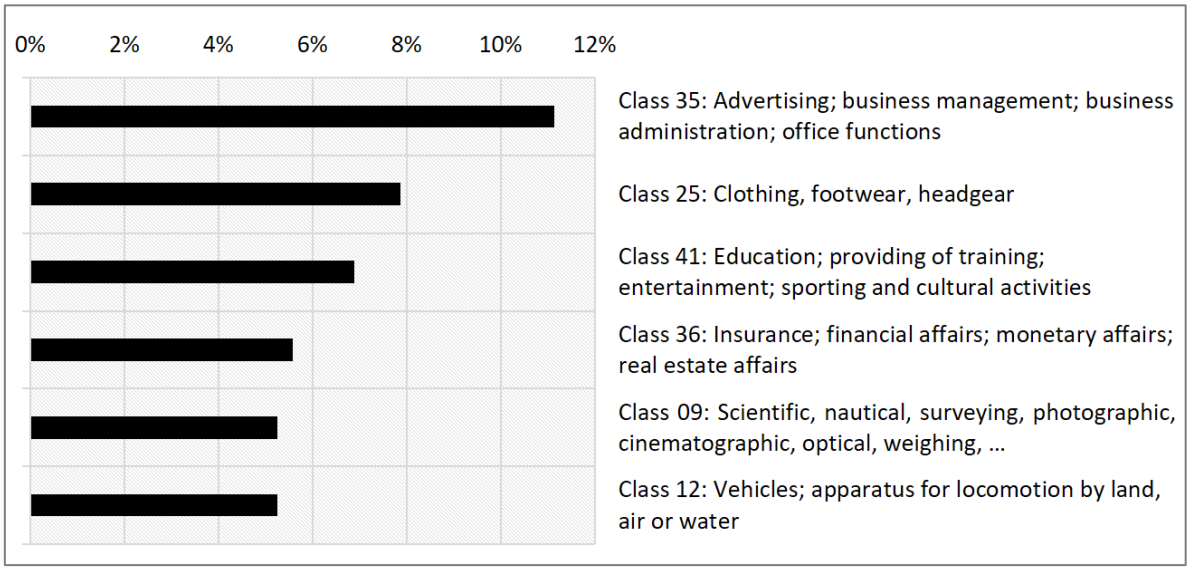

Figure 3: Top 6 classes of products and services of the Nice Classification (Nice Classification, 2018) selected by marketing experts ($N = 305$)

With regard to term importance, all 132 expressive terms of the MBET were assessed as being relevant and important in practice for describing a brand identity by at least a small proportion of participants (confer to Appendix B). All terms fulfilled the a priori inclusion criterion (relevance >= 10%). Furthermore, no single MBET term was selected as relevant for branding scenarios by all marketing experts. However, 64 of the items were selected as relevant by at least 50% of the experts. Based on the maximum number of 305 potential selections per term, *authentic* (88%, CI [84%, 91%]) turned out to be most relevant for the purpose of describing a brand identity. The term *sad* (13%, CI [10%, 17%]) scored lowest in terms of relevance, while still fulfilling the inclusion criterion. Figure 4 depicts the 20 MBET terms considered most relevant, the according MBET categories are denoted in brackets.

Most relevant MBET terms in marketing practice – Top 20

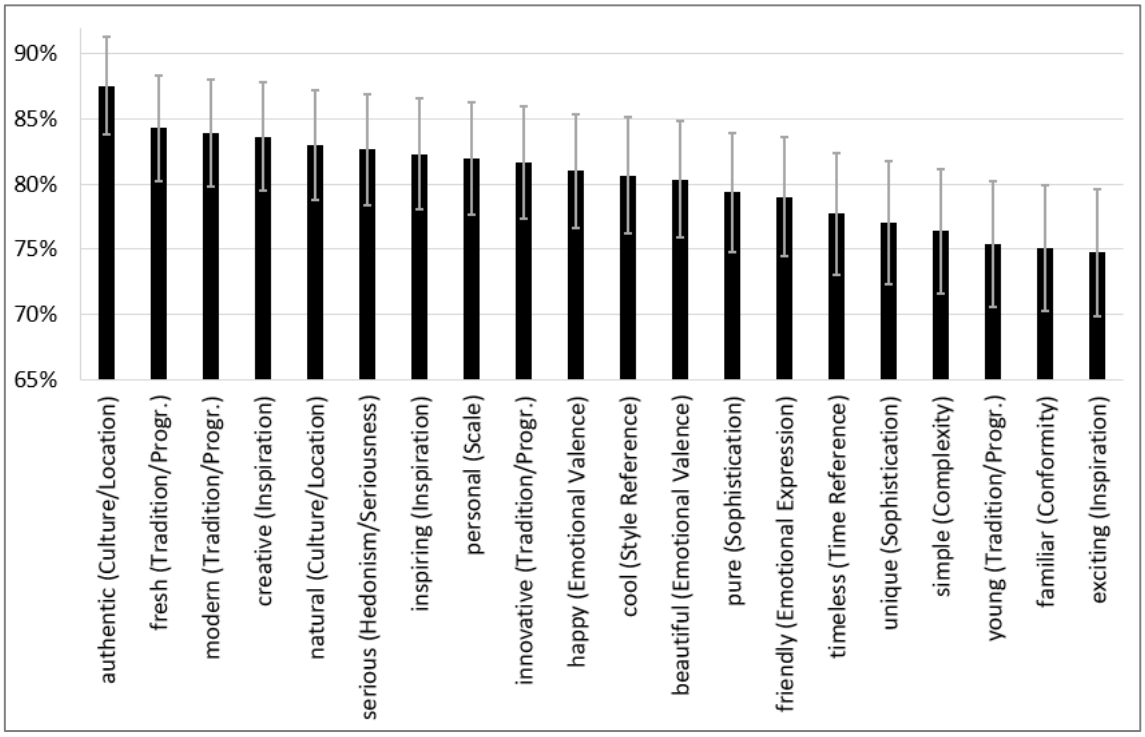

Figure 4: Top 20 most relevant MBET terms in marketing practice (N = 305). CI = 95%, α = 5%, z = 1.96.

MBET categories sorted by marketing relevance

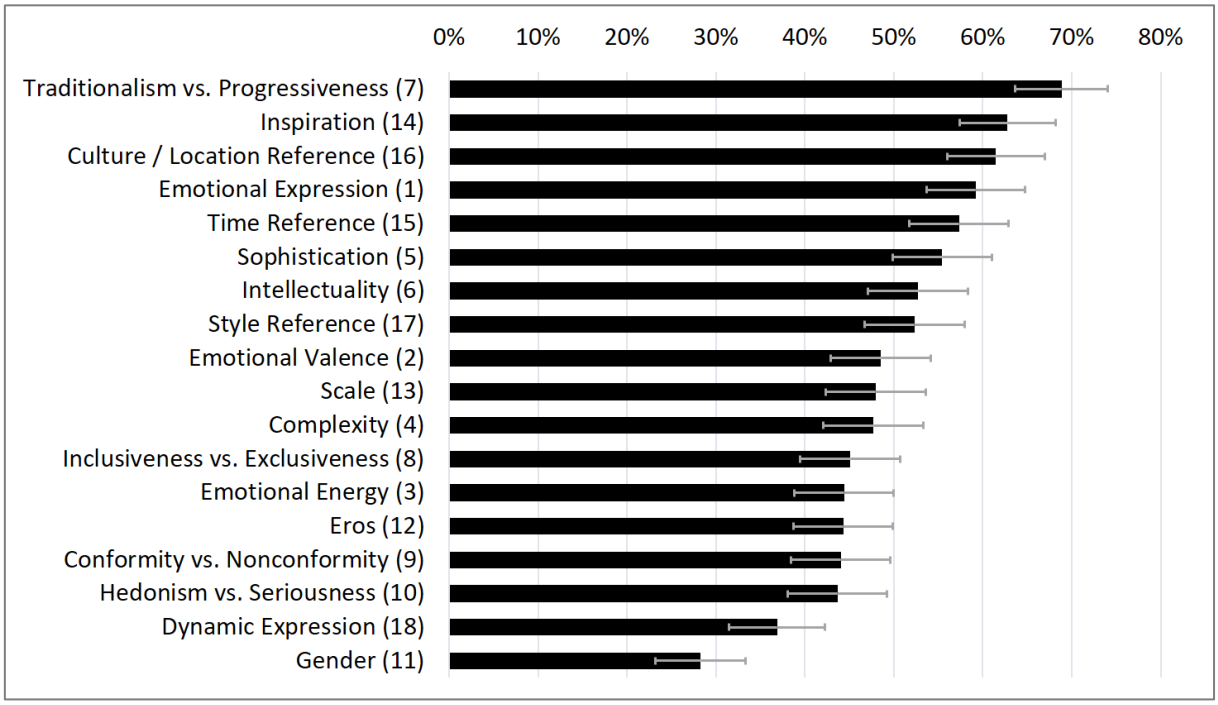

Figure 5: Relevance per MBET category based on mean perceived relevance of expressive terms within each category ($N = 305$). $SD = 9.9\%$, $CI = 95\%$, $\alpha = 5\%$, $z = 1.96$.

The ranking of MBET categories deemed most relevant for describing a brand image from the perspective of marketing experts reveals a very balanced picture (see Figure 5 and also Appendix B): All categories exhibit a mean relevance within the range of 28% (*Gender,* selected least frequently, CI [23%, 22%]) to 69% (*Traditionalism vs. Progressiveness,* selected most frequently, CI [64%, 74%]). Moreover, the resulting relevance of 15 out of 18 categories is between 44% and 63%. The second and third most relevant categories are *Inspiration (14):* 63%, CI [57%, 68%], and *Culture and Location Reference (16):* 62%, CI [56%, 67%]. All three categories expressing emotional qualities exhibit a lower mean relevance: *Emotional Expression (1):* 59%, CI [54%, 65%], *Emotional Valence (2):* 49%, CI [43%, 54%], and *Emotional Energy (3):* 44%, CI [39%, 50%].

Discussion

The obtained judgements of marketing experts on perceived term and category relevance indicate that the MBET, originally developed by music branding experts in our first study, proves to be applicable in a wide range of branding scenarios and sectors. Furthermore, all terms proposed by the focus group participants have passed the relevance threshold and were therefore included in the final MBET version (see Appendix B). In the following, we exemplarily discuss the top three ranked categories:

Traditionalism vs. Progressiveness (7) turns out to contain the most useful items for music branding practice, exhibiting 69% of mean relevance. The three most frequently selected terms of this category (*fresh, modern,* and *innovative*) clearly emphasise that *progressiveness* is a far more prominent concept in general marketing practice than *traditionalism,* which is expressed by less relevant terms such as *classic, solid,* or *reliable.*

The three highest rated terms within the category *Inspiration (14)* are *creative, inspiring,* and *exciting.* They reflect the excitement/extraversion dimension of brand personality (Aaker, 1997; Geuens et al., 2009), which is hence represented very prominently within the MBET. This is in line with works describing brand personality as an integral part of brand development and brand strategy (Freling & Forbes, 2005).

Culture-specific associations with musical styles have been described in various empirical accounts such as Rentfrow and colleagues (2011). These associations are also stressed as being a very important communicative device of popular music in the music scoring literature and popular music studies (Tagg, 2013). Correspondingly, relevance judgements from the participating marketing experts in our study illustrate the importance of *Culture and Location Reference (16)* as a concept also deemed highly important in general branding practice (see also Thakor & Kohli, 1996). Especially the terms *authentic, natural,* and *urban* emphasise this finding, while *authentic* being the most often selected MBET term overall with 267 out of 305 expert votes. The observation that certain terms (e.g. *authentic*) are more relevant to marketing professionals, than others (e.g. *sad*) is not surprising. However, based on this finding, it can be concluded, that positively valenced properties are communicated in a greater variety of branding scenarios, than negatively valenced ones - especially when the message to be communicated is a brand's identity. Despite music's well-known capabilities of conveying emotions, marketing experts in general consider those emotional qualities as less relevant for their work compared to many other MBET categories.

Overall, our results indicate that the diversity of a brand identity can be well described by using the various presented MBET categories. The high marketing relevance of a wide range of categories and terms provides evidence, that applying the

developed terminology, the general communication needs in music branding can be fulfilled. A further argument demonstrating the MBET's validity from a marketing perspective is the breadth of sectors of goods and services the members of our sample represent. This suggests a very high validity of the MBET across business sectors.

Overall discussion and implications

With the present study, a multi-lingual Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET) has been developed by professionals of the field in the framework of an expert focus group and afterwards been empirically validated from a wide marketing perspective (see Appendix B for the final version). As present results regarding the prior state of literature demonstrate, all relevant dimensions of music branding are encompassed by the new terminology. Hence, marketing strategists and audio branding practitioners are now able to use the MBET as a standardised tool to achieve communication goals in the field of music branding.

Applying the MBET in practice results in various advantages for music branding stakeholders, because MBET categories and terms represent properties of brand identity, which at the same time are evidently conveyable through music. When marketing strategists formulate communicative goals of a campaign for an initial briefing with a music branding agency, they can draw on the MBET in order to acquire an outlook on the subset of brand identity attributes that music can convey. In turn, the proposed common terminology ensures that music branding agencies can more easily process the brand profile descriptions provided by marketing strategists. In the next step, music consultants working for such agencies can use this input directly, in order to identify suitable music expressing the intended brand image. Translations and interpretations of a brand profile into linguistic terms that describe corresponding musical attributes as well as repeated meetings with marketing practitioners become

largely dispensable. Furthermore, record labels and stock music providers can use MBET categories and terms to systematically index their music catalogues. Hence, their music branding customers will be far more effective in finding suitable music complying to a brand's communication aims.

The major expected benefit of using the MBET as a tool for music branding is thus an increased overall success of music branding campaigns. As inaccuracies due to translation and interpretation of brand profiles to music are systematically resolved, brand messages can be communicated more accurately to consumers. In addition, marketing strategists can now reliably describe a brand identity using only those properties, which are known to be a subset of conveyable musical meaning as well. These practical implications consequently increase the musical congruity between the communicated brand identity of brands or products on one hand, and consumers' perceived semantic and emotional meanings on the other. Thus, the effectiveness of music in advertisements or at the point of sale can be increased. Further economic advantages for all parties involved in the described scenario will be the effort reduction of human and financial resources.

The effects of musical congruity on consumers' brand perception and behaviour have been discussed in numerous studies. In our work, we describe music branding as a communication process, which is fundamental to the observed effects on consumers. In contrast to existing works on music branding, we have firstly systematically analysed music's capability to convey meaning in general from the perspective of music psychology and popular music studies. The resulting Music Branding Expert Terminology is therefore not only to be considered a valuable tool for music branding practitioners. It can also be applied as an instrument for further research in music

branding, particularly for the design and evaluation of future consumer studies. The final Music Branding Expert Terminology is depicted in Appendix B.

Limitations and future research

A practical empirical limitation of our work is the number of focus group participants ($N = 9$) in the first study as well as their diversity regarding represented countries (UK, Spain, Germany, Sweden), which was predetermined by research economy. Similarly, the second study is limited by the composition of survey participants, since all recruited marketing experts were based in either Germany, Austria or Switzerland. Both limitations could be overcome by repeating the procedure with more experts from different countries in order to confirm the MBET's content and validity from a broader cultural perspective.

The full communication process, taking place in music branding, which is described theoretically at the outset of this work, also comprises the consumer side. So far, the developed MBET is a tool for communication between marketing strategists, music branding agencies, record labels, and music libraries, and does not include the consumers' perspective yet. Such an extension would be, however, of outmost importance if a further aim was also evaluation of music branding campaigns. Thereto, it remains to be empirically examined, how reliably a brand's identity, as described by MBET categories and terms, is actually decoded by consumers of different societal segments into a coherent brand image. In particular, drawing on music psychological literature, we expect that terms expressing emotional qualities (Izard, 1971; Watson et al., 1988; Juslin & Laukka, 2003) might be communicated more coherently than terms expressing more complex semantic concepts, such as personality traits, human values or aesthetic commitments.

In order to incorporate the consumer side of the music branding communication process, we will therefore expand our approach within the next phase of our multi-national research and development project. In that stage, we aim to identify the degree of coherence with which consumers with different social and cultural backgrounds understand the concepts conveyed by music branding, which are represented within the MBET. Thereto, we already performed a first large-scale online listening experiment in which participants were asked to describe their music-induced associations by rating the fit between MBET terms and presented music excerpts (Herzog et al., 2017). The results of this study may eventually lead to a multi-lingual psychometric scale, usable for not only planning and comparing, but also for systematically evaluating the actual success of music branding campaigns (Lepa et al., in preparation).

Conclusion

The Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET) proposed in this work represents the first standardised multi-lingual terminology for planning, describing, and comparing communicative aims in music branding campaigns. It integrates semantic concepts from marketing research, music psychology, and popular music studies while at the same time reflecting the experiences from music branding professionals. Moreover, the MBET has been validated independently by marketing practitioners, covering a vast amount of the products and services landscape in their work. The terminology can be considered as the first standardised inventory to describe the characteristics of a brand identity that can be communicated to consumers with the help of music. Using MBET categories and terms, marketing strategists can select and communicate properties of brand identity, which are evidently part of conveyable musical meaning. Provided with these properties, music branding agencies are able to identify and compile suitable music tracks. In addition, record labels and stock music libraries can index their

offerings using qualities of high interest to their customers from the music branding domain.

The MBET describes the core potential of semantic expression in music branding, which is of great interest for marketing strategists, music branding agencies, record labels, and stock music providers at the same time. Thus, applying this terminology could facilitate the communication processes between the parties involved, and therefore improve the success of music branding campaigns.

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Appendix A: Categories of the Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET)

Appendix A: Expressive categories of music relevant for branding (MBET categories)

No	Category	German Translation	Spanish Translation	English Description
1	Emotional Expression	Emotionaler Ausdruck	Expresión emocional	Terms describing very specific emotions expressed
2	Emotional Valence	Emotionale Wertung	Valoración emocional	Terms describing positive or negative emotional expression
3	Emotional Energy	Emotionale Energie	Energía emotiva	Terms describing arousing or calming potential
4	Complexity	Komplexität	Complejidad	Terms describing the degree of complexity
5	Sophistication	Überlegenheit	Sofisticación	Terms describing the degree of perfection
6	Intellectuality	Intellektualität	Intelectual	Terms describing an intellectual demanding or cognitively inspiring potential
7	Traditionalism vs. Progressiveness	Traditionalität vs. Progressivität	Tradicional frente a progresista	Terms describing the reliance on traditional vs. progressive values
8	Inclusiveness vs. Exclusiveness	Inklusivität vs. Exklusivität	Inclusivo frente a exclusivo	Terms describing the assumed breadth of addressees
9	Conformity vs. non-Conformity	Konformität vs. Nonkonformität	conformidad frente a conformidad	Terms describing the degree of (non-)conformity
10	Hedonism vs. Seriousness	Freude vs. Ernst	Hedonismo frente a seriedad	Terms describing the degree of seriousness
11	Gender	Geschlecht	Género	Terms describing a gendered appeal
12	Eros	Erotik	Eros	Terms describing erotic and sexual qualities
13	Scale	Ausmaß	Escala	Terms describing the felt impact
14	Inspiration	Inspiration	Inspiración	Terms describing felt emotional and creative challenge
15	Time Reference	Zeitliche Referenz	Referencia temporal	Terms describing references to time epochs in abstract words
16	Culture / Location Reference	Kulturelle / Ortsbezogene Referenz	Cultura/referencia espacial	Terms describing references to cultures or locations in abstract words
17	Style Reference	Stilreferenz	Referencia estilística	Terms describing references to subcultures in abstract words
18	Dynamic Expression	Dynamischer Ausdruck	Dinámica	Terms describing the temporal character of changes in speed, intensity, complexity, etc.

Appendix B: The Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET)

Appendix B: The Music Branding Expert Terminology (MBET), consisting of expressive categories and terms relevant for music branding per MBET category. Term percentages represent the average number of marketing experts (N = 305) assigning the term as relevant; category percentages represent averages across categories (*SD* category relevance = 9.9%, *SD* term relevance = 19.5%). The three terms achieving the highest relevance within each category were set in bold. Confidence intervals (CI min, CI max) for both, categories and terms, are based on a confidence level of C = 95%, α = 5%, and z = 1.96.

No	Category	CI min	Category relevance	CI max	English Term	German Term	Spanish Term	CI min	Term relevance	CI max
1	Emotional Expression	54%	59%	65%	sentimental	sentimental	sentimental	37%	43%	48%
					confident	**selbstbewusst**	**seguro**	**66%**	**71%**	**76%**
					loving	liebevoll	amoroso	61%	66%	71%
					friendly	**freundlich**	**amistoso**	**74%**	**79%**	**84%**
					honest	**ehrlich**	**honesto**	**65%**	**70%**	**76%**
					melancholic	melancholisch	melancólico	20%	25%	30%
					trustworthy	vertrauenswürdig	fiable	55%	61%	66%
2	Emotional Valence	43%	49%	54%	uplifting	aufmunternd	animador	45%	50%	56%
					happy	**fröhlich**	**contento**	**77%**	**81%**	**85%**
					sad	traurig	triste	10%	13%	17%
					compassionate	mitfühlend	compasivo	39%	44%	50%
					scary	beängstigend	aterrador	19%	24%	29%
					beautiful	**schön**	**hermosa**	**76%**	**80%**	**85%**
					dramatic	dramatisch	dramático	47%	52%	58%
					bold	frech	osado	33%	39%	44%
					soft	weich	suave	45%	50%	56%
					tender	sanft	tierno	44%	50%	55%
					delicate	fein	delicado	46%	51%	57%
					warm	**warm**	**cálido**	**69%**	**74%**	**79%**
					dark	dunkel	oscuro	22%	27%	32%
					birght	hell	claro	58%	63%	68%
					hard	hart	duro	23%	28%	33%
3	Emotional Energy	39%	44%	50%	**stimulating**	**anregend**	**estimulante**	**68%**	**73%**	**78%**
					relaxing	**entspannend**	**relajante**	**66%**	**71%**	**76%**
					chilled	**abkühlend**	**enfriador**	**49%**	**54%**	**60%**
					buzzing	aufwühlend	excitante	28%	33%	38%
					chaotic	chaotisch	caótico	24%	30%	35%
					restless	ruhelos	inquieto	34%	39%	45%
					tense	angespannt	tenso	34%	39%	45%
					aggressive	aggressiv	agresivo	28%	33%	38%
					fierce	wild	fiero	23%	28%	33%
4	Complexity	42%	48%	53%	**rich**	**reichhaltig**	**rico**	**41%**	**46%**	**52%**
					faceted	facettenreich	facetado	35%	40%	45%
					layered	vielschichtig	estratificado	25%	30%	35%
					detailed	**detailliert**	**detallado**	**53%**	**59%**	**65%**
					versatile	vielseitig	versátil	29%	35%	40%
					simple	**einfach**	**sencillo**	**72%**	**76%**	**81%**
5	Sophistication	50%	55%	61%	**pure**	**rein**	**puro**	**75%**	**79%**	**84%**
					unique	**einzigartig**	**único**	**72%**	**77%**	**82%**
					savvy	clever	sagaz	24%	30%	35%
					streetwise	gerissen	avispado	36%	42%	48%
					sophisticated	**raffiniert**	**sofisticado**	**44%**	**49%**	**55%**
6	Intellectuality	47%	53%	58%	witty	geistreich	ingenioso	23%	29%	34%
					reflective	**reflektiert**	**reflexivo**	**53%**	**59%**	**65%**

					thoughtful	**nachdenklich**	**considerado**	**54%**	**59%**	**65%**
					intellectual	**intellektuell**	**Intelectual**	**59%**	**64%**	**69%**
7	Traditionalism vs. Progressiveness	64%	69%	74%	**modern**	**modern**	**moderno**	**80%**	**84%**	**88%**
					classic	klassisch	clásico	68%	73%	78%
					young	jung	joven	71%	75%	80%
					innovative	**innovativ**	**innovador**	**77%**	**82%**	**86%**
					conservative	konservativ	conservador	35%	40%	46%
					solid	solide	sólido	63%	69%	74%
					reliable	verlässlich	complidor	52%	58%	63%
					down-to-earth	bodenständig	realisto	49%	54%	60%
					fresh	**frisch**	**fresco**	**80%**	**84%**	**88%**
8	Inclusiveness vs. Exclusiveness	39%	45%	51%	**inviting**	**einladend**	**atractivo**	**63%**	**68%**	**73%**
					accessible	zugänglich	accesible	44%	50%	55%
					elite	**elitär**	**élite**	**50%**	**56%**	**61%**
					tribal	ursprünglich	tribal	19%	24%	29%
					communal	gemeinschaftlich	comunal	39%	44%	50%
					eclectic	eklektisch	ecléctico	24%	30%	35%
					integrating	**integrierend**	**inclusivo**	**57%**	**62%**	**67%**
					collective	kollektiv	colectivo	45%	50%	56%
					approachable	aufgeschlossen	abordable	35%	40%	45%
					niche	speziell	nicho	22%	27%	32%
9	(Non-) Conformity	38%	44%	50%	edgy	kantig	anguloso	33%	38%	44%
					anti-establishment	nonkonformistisch	anti-sistema	25%	30%	35%
					rebellious	**rebellisch**	**rebelde**	**43%**	**49%**	**54%**
					anarchic	anarchisch	anárquico	18%	22%	27%
					daring	kühn	atrevido	28%	33%	39%
					adventurous	**abenteuerlich**	**aventurero**	**51%**	**57%**	**62%**
					familiar	**vertraut**	**familiar**	**70%**	**75%**	**80%**
					mainstream	gewöhnlich	corriente principal	42%	48%	53%
10	Hedonism vs. Seriousness	38%	44%	49%	**serious**	**ernsthaft**	**grave**	**78%**	**83%**	**87%**
					indulgent	nachsichtig	indulgente	18%	23%	27%
					exuberant	überschwänglich	exuberante	19%	23%	28%
					hedonistic	hedonistisch	hedonista	25%	30%	35%
					playful	**verspielt**	**juguetón**	**58%**	**64%**	**69%**
					mischievous	schelmisch	travieso	12%	16%	21%
					funny	**lustig**	**divertido**	**62%**	**67%**	**72%**
11	Gender	23%	28%	33%	**male**	**männlich**	**masculino**	**26%**	**31%**	**36%**
					female	**weiblich**	**hembra**	**37%**	**43%**	**49%**
					androgynous	**androgyn**	**andrógino**	**17%**	**21%**	**26%**
					gay	schwul	homosexual	14%	18%	22%
12	Eros	39%	44%	50%	**passionate**	**leidenschaftlich**	**apasionado**	**68%**	**73%**	**78%**
					charged	aufreizend	incitador	35%	40%	46%
					swaggering	protzig	fanforrón	15%	19%	24%
					sassy	keck	pícaro	20%	25%	30%
					romantic	**romantisch**	**romántico**	**46%**	**51%**	**57%**
					suggestive	anzüglich	sugestivo	41%	47%	52%
					desirous	begehrlich	deseoso	35%	40%	45%
					sexy	**sexy**	**sexy**	**53%**	**59%**	**64%**
13	Scale	42%	48%	54%	**epic**	**episch**	**épico**	**49%**	**55%**	**61%**
					anthemic	hymnenhaft	hymno	19%	24%	29%
					cinematic	filmisch	cinematográfico	35%	40%	45%
					dominant	dominierend	dominante	43%	49%	54%
					intimate	**intim**	**íntimo**	**46%**	**51%**	**57%**
					personal	**persönlich**	**personal**	**78%**	**82%**	**86%**
					understated	unaufdringlich	comedido	45%	51%	56%
					iconic	ikonisch	icónico	40%	45%	51%
					heroic	heldenhaft	heroico	29%	34%	40%
14	Inspiration	57%	63%	68%	awe-inspiring	ehrfurchtgebietend	impresionante	28%	33%	38%
					wondrous	wundersam	maravilloso	33%	38%	44%
					inspiring	**inspirierend**	**inspirador**	**78%**	**82%**	**87%**
					creative	**kreativ**	**creativo**	**79%**	**84%**	**88%**
					magical	magisch	mágico	60%	65%	70%
					exciting	**aufregend**	**emocionante**	**70%**	**75%**	**80%**

15	Time Reference	52%	57%	63%	contemporary	zeitgenössisch	contemporáneo	45%	50%	56%
					futuristic	**futuristisch**	**futurista**	**57%**	**63%**	**68%**
					retro	**retro**	**retro**	**51%**	**56%**	**62%**
					old-fashioned	altmodisch	pasado de moda	34%	39%	45%
					timeless	**zeitlos**	**eterno**	**73%**	**78%**	**82%**
16	Culture / Location Reference	56%	61%	67%	**urban**	**urban**	**urbano**	**67%**	**72%**	**77%**
					pastoral	ländlich	pastoral	10%	14%	18%
					cosmopolitan	kosmopolitisch	cosmopolita	60%	65%	70%
					natural	**natürlich**	**natural**	**79%**	**83%**	**87%**
					authentic	**authentisch**	**auténtico**	**84%**	**88%**	**91%**
					ethnic	ethnisch	étnico	42%	48%	53%
17	Style Reference	47%	52%	58%	**glamorous**	**glamourös**	**glamuroso**	**59%**	**64%**	**69%**
					posh	vornehm	pijo	23%	28%	33%
					cool	**cool**	**guay**	**76%**	**81%**	**85%**
					political	politisch	político	31%	36%	41%
					classy	**schick**	**con clase**	**60%**	**65%**	**70%**
					cutting edge	topaktuell	innovador	36%	42%	48%
					street	alltagstauglich	calle	45%	50%	56%
18	Dynamic Expression	31%	37%	42%	**building**	**aufbauend**	**edificio**	**43%**	**49%**	**54%**
					accelerating	beschleunigend	acelerador	29%	34%	39%
					decelerating	verlangsamend	decelerando	17%	21%	26%
					layering	schichtend	estratificando	21%	26%	31%
					simplifying	**vereinfachend**	**simplificando**	**55%**	**61%**	**66%**
					resolving	auflösend	resolver	26%	31%	37%
					deepening	**vertiefend**	**profundizando**	**30%**	**36%**	**41%**

Appendix C: Frequency of Nice classes selected by marketing experts

All classes of products and services of the Nice Classification (Nice Classification, 2018), have been selected by marketing experts, except Class 13: 'Firearms; ammunition and projectiles; explosives; fireworks' as well as Class 22: 'Ropes and string; nets; …' and Class 27: 'Carpets, rugs, mats and matting, linoleum and other materials for covering existing floors; wall hangings (non-textile)'. The following table depicts the Nice classes as selected by marketing experts in step 2 of the study, ordered by frequency of selections.

Appendix C. Frequency distribution of Nice classes as selected by marketing experts (N = 305, SD = 2.4%)

No	Nice class description	Freq. in %
Class 35	Advertising; business management; business administration; office functions	11.1
Class 25	Clothing, footwear, headgear	7.9
Class 41	Education; providing of training; entertainment; sporting and cultural activities	6.9
Class 36	Insurance; financial affairs; monetary affairs; real estate affairs	5.6
Class 9	Scientific, nautical, surveying, photographic, cinematographic, optical, weighing, measuring, signalling, checking (supervision), life-saving and teaching apparatus and instruments; apparatus and instruments for conducting, switching, transforming, accumulating, regulating or controlling electricity; apparatus for recording, transmission or reproduction of sound or images; magnetic data carriers, recording discs; compact discs, DVDs and other digital recording media; mechanisms for coin-operated apparatus; cash registers, calculating machines, data processing equipment, computers; computer software; fire-extinguishing apparatus	5.2
Class 12	Vehicles; apparatus for locomotion by land, air or water	5.2
Class 7	Machines and machine tools; motors and engines (except for land vehicles); machine coupling and transmission components (except for land vehicles); agricultural implements other than hand-operated; incubators for eggs; automatic vending machines	4.3
Class 3	Bleaching preparations and other substances for laundry use; cleaning, polishing, scouring and abrasive preparations; non-medicated soaps; perfumery, essential oils, non-medicated cosmetics, non-medicated hair lotions; non-medicated dentifrices	3.9
Class 38	Telecommunications	3.9
Class 16	Paper and cardboard; printed matter; bookbinding material; photographs; stationery and office requisites, except furniture; adhesives for stationery or household purposes; artists' and drawing materials; paintbrushes; typewriters and office requisites (except furniture); instructional and teaching materials (except apparatus); plastic materials for sheets, films and bags for wrapping and packaging; printers' type,; printing blocks	3.6
Class 32	Beers; mineral and aerated waters and other non-alcoholic beverages; fruit beverages and fruit juices; syrups and other preparations for making beverages	3.6
Class 5	Pharmaceuticals, medical and veterinary preparations; sanitary preparations for medical purposes; dietetic food and substances adapted for medical or veterinary use, food for babies; dietary supplements for humans and animals; plasters, materials for dressings; material for stopping teeth, dental wax; disinfectants; preparations for destroying vermin; fungicides, herbicides	3.3
Class 39	Transport; packaging and storage of goods; travel arrangement	3.3
Class 28	Games, toys and playthings; video game apparatus; gymnastic and sporting articles; decorations for Christmas trees	3.0
Class 42	Scientific and technological services and research and design relating thereto; industrial analysis and research services; design and development of computer hardware and software	3.0

Class 20	Furniture, mirrors, picture frames; containers, not of metal, for storage or transport; unworked or semi-worked bone, horn, ivory, whalebone or mother-of-pearl; shells; meerschaum; yellow amber	2.6
Class 44	Medical services; veterinary services; hygienic and beauty care for human beings or animals; agriculture, horticulture and forestry services	2.3
Class 45	Legal services; security services for the physical protection of tangible property and individuals; personal and social services rendered by others to meet the needs of individuals	2.0
Class 10	Surgical, medical, dental and veterinary apparatus and instruments; artificial limbs, eyes and teeth; orthopaedic articles; suture materials; therapeutic and assistive devices adapted for the disabled; massage apparatus; apparatus, devices and articles for nursing infants; sexual activity apparatus, devices and articles	1.6
Class 37	Building construction; repair; installation services	1.6
Class 4	Industrial oils and greases; lubricants; dust absorbing, wetting and binding compositions; fuels (including motor spirit) and illuminants; candles and wicks for lighting	1.3
Class 29	Meat, fish, poultry and game; meat extracts; preserved, frozen, dried and cooked fruits and vegetables; jellies, jams, compotes; eggs; milk and milk products; edible oils and fats	1.3
Class 30	Coffee, tea, cocoa and artificial coffee; rice; tapioca and sago; flour and preparations made from cereals; bread, pastries and confectionery; edible ices; sugar, honey, treacle; yeast, baking-powder; salt; mustard; vinegar, sauces (condiments); spices; ice	1.3
Class 40	Treatment of materials	1.3
Class 1	Chemicals used in industry, science and photography, as well as in agriculture, horticulture and forestry; unprocessed artificial resins, unprocessed plastics; manures; fire extinguishing compositions; tempering and soldering preparations; chemical substances for preserving foodstuffs; tanning substances; adhesives used in industry	1.0
Class 6	Common metals and their alloys, ores; metal building materials for building and construction; transportable buildings of metal; materials of metal for railway tracks; non-electric cables and wires of common metal; ironmongery, small items of metal hardware; pipes and tubes of metal; metal containers for storage or transport; safes;; ores	1.0
Class 33	Alcoholic beverages (except beers)	1.0
Class 43	Services for providing food and drink; temporary accommodation	1.0
Class 2	Paints, varnishes, lacquers; preservatives against rust and against deterioration of wood; colorants; mordants; raw natural resins; metals in foil and powder form for use in painting, decorating, printing and art	0.7
Class 11	Apparatus for lighting, heating, steam generating, cooking, refrigerating, drying, ventilating, water supply and sanitary purposes	0.7
Class 15	Musical instruments	0.7
Class 17	Unprocessed and semi-processed rubber, gutta-percha, gum, asbestos, mica and substitutes for all these materials; plastics and resins in extruded form for use in manufacture; packing, stopping and insulating materials; flexible pipes, tubes and hoses, not of metal	0.7
Class 18	Leather and imitations of leather; animal skins, and hides; trunks and travelling luggage and carrying bags; umbrellas and parasols; walking sticks; whips, harness and saddlery; collars, leashes and clothing for animals	0.7
Class 21	Household or kitchen utensils and containers; combs and sponges; brushes, (except paintbrushes); brush-making materials; articles for cleaning purposes; steelwool; unworked or semi-worked glass, (except building glass used in building); glassware, porcelain and earthenware	0.7
Class 34	Tobacco; smokers' articles; matches	0.7
Class 8	Hand tools and implements (hand-operated); cutlery; side arms; razors	0.3
Class 14	Precious metals and their alloys; jewellery, precious and semi-precious stones; horological and chronometric instruments	0.3
Class 19	Building materials (non-metallic); non-metallic rigid pipes for building; asphalt, pitch and bitumen; non-metallic transportable buildings; monuments, not of metal	0.3
Class 23	Yarns and threads, for textile use	0.3
Class 24	Textiles and substitutes for textiles; bed covers; table covers; household linen; curtains of textile or plastic	0.3
Class 26	Lace and embroidery, ribbons and braid; buttons, hooks and eyes, pins and needles; artificial flowers; hair decorations; false hair	0.3
Class 31	Raw and unprocessed agricultural, aqua-cultural, horticultural and forestry products; raw and unprocessed grains and seeds; fresh fruits and vegetables, fresh herbs; natural plants	0.3

	and flowers; bulbs, seedlings and seeds for planting; live animals; foodstuffs and beverages for animals; malt