

Communicating With Consumers During A Product Recall.

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Abstract

Organizational crisis can threaten an organizational reputation or even its existence. For organizations it is therefore important to act appropriately during a crisis. During a product recall an organization asks its customers to return a product, because the product could inflict damage. However, a product recall can also be a crisis response. The severity of a product recall is not always the same. It is therefore interesting to investigate whether consumers perceive information about a product recall differently, when the severity of the product recall differs. The accidental cluster of the SCCT (Coombs, 2007) is a commonly used clusters of crisis responsibility during a product recall. Furthermore, organizations can adjust the spokesperson of the message. They can choose to use a human spokesperson, or they can choose an unknown organizational spokesperson. Finally, the frame of the message can be adjusted in a crisis situation. Either the organization uses a rational frame, or an emotional frame. Altogether this research uses a 2 (Severity: minor vs. major) x 2 (Spokesperson: human (CEO) vs. organizational) x 2 (Framing: rational vs. emotional) design to investigate whether these factors affect the emotions and behavioral intentions of the consumers during a product recall. Furthermore the trustworthiness of the organization was measured during this research. The results show that crisis severity influences all the dependent measures. No significant effects were found for the type of spokesperson, and the frame of the message. Finally, an interaction effect was found between crisis severity and the frame of the message, on the anger of consumers.

Keywords

Product Recall, Spokesperson, Severity, Framing, Crisis Communication

Samenvatting

Een organisatorische crisis kan de reputatie van een organisatie schade, of kan zelfs het bestaan van de organisatie in gevaar brengen. Het is daarom van belang dat organisaties correct handelen tijdens een crisis situatie. Gedurende een terugroepactie vraagt een organisatie aan zijn klanten om een product terug te brengen naar de winkel, omdat het product mogelijk schade kan toebrengen aan de consument. De ernst van de terugroepactie kan verschillen per situatie. Het is daarom interessant om te onderzoeken of consumenten informatie omtrent de terugroepactie anders interpreteren, wanneer de ernst van de terugroepactie verschilt. De “accidental cluster” van het SCCT model (Coombs, 2007) is een veelgebruikt cluster tijdens een terugroepactie, om aan te tonen wie verantwoordelijk is voor de crisis. Verder kunnen organisaties de woordvoerder aanpassen tijdens een crisis situatie. Ook kan de toon van het crisisbericht worden aangepast tijdens de terugroepactie. Hierbij kan worden gekozen voor een emotioneel en een rationeel frame.

Dit onderzoek gebruikt een 2 (ernst van de crisis) x 2 (woordvoerder) x 2 (frame van het bericht) design, om te onderzoeken of deze variabelen de emoties en gedragsintenties van de consument beïnvloeden. Verder werd de invloed op de betrouwbaarheid van de organisatie gemeten. De resultaten laten zien dat de ernst van de crisis invloed heeft op alle afhankelijke variabelen. Geen significante effecten werden gevonden voor de woordvoerder en de frame van het bericht. Een interactie effect werd gevonden tussen de ernst van de crisis en de toon van het crisisbericht, op de woede die consumenten ervaren dankzij de terugroepactie.

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1 Introduction

“Kellogg Company initiated a voluntary product recall of three sizes of Kellogg’s Special K Red Berries cereal packages due to the possible presence of glass fragments. Please check any packages you have in your home. If your packages matches the given information below, do not consume the product and contact us directly for a replacement product”.

Corporate messages like these are almost seen on a daily basis in newspapers, companies’ websites and social media. Product recalls are not only about food products, also products within the electronic, automobile, cosmetics and clothing sector are often recalled. When an organization sends messages like these it is not without reason. For most companies a product recall is an expensive and drastic crisis situation which can have serious consequences for the company.

It is uncertain how many products are recalled every year. However, it is certain that product recalls happen often. Around 400 consumer products were recalled in 2007 in the United States of America according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (Chen, Ganesan & Liu, 2009). Furthermore research from Desai (2014) shows that on a yearly basis hundreds of millions of product units are recalled due to possible risks to consumers. These numbers make clear that the financial loss for an organization can be significant during a product crisis. But of course, there is not only the danger of a financial loss. A product recall could also lead to permanent damage to the product brand, and can decrease the goodwill and reputation with consumers (Choi & Lin, 2009). In other words, consumers’ view of an organization can also become more negative, when an organization states a product recall.

The possible consequences show that it is important for organizations to act appropriately during a product recall. Desai (2014) agrees with this by stating that during a product recall, effective public communication is necessary to reassure consumers that the problem is under control and that things are fine. In the past, fairly much research is done about crisis communication in general. Especially the work of Benoit (2007) and Coombs (2007) are commonly used to explain how organizations should respond during certain types of organizational crisis. There are however, gaps in the literature about the interaction between different variables during crisis communication. These effects will be studied during this research.

The variables that will be used during this research are the severity of the product recall, the spokesperson of the message, and how the product recall is framed by the organization. To begin with crisis severity influences the crisis outcomes (Hong & Len-Rios, 2015). Next, framing analysis can provide crisis manager with useful insights into the appropriate crisis response strategies to minimize the damage to an organizations’ image (Coombs, 2006). Lastly, research shows that appointing the appropriate spokesperson is an important part of the crisis response strategy (Seeger, Sellnow & Ulmer, 2006), because credible spokespersons are an important factor for effective crisis management (Coombs, 2007). Individually and collectively, these variables can have an important influence on the outcomes of a crisis situation.

In the past research has been conducted about the individual variables, such as crisis severity (Coombs, 1998; Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, Chatzipinanagiotou & Pantouvakis, 2009), the type of spokesperson (Snoeijs, Poels & Nicolay, 2014), and the frame of the message (Moon & Rhee, 2012; Claeys & Cauberghe, 2014), but never together in a 2x2x2 factorial design. This research will investigate what influence the used variables will have on the dependent measures during a product recall crisis situation. The interaction effects between these variables is a gap that has not been

researched in literature before. Only few studies have examined which framing method is more appropriate during different types of crisis (Moon & Rhee, 2012). Thus, this research will contribute to the use of framing during a product recall crisis situation. Previous studies on the effects of an organizational versus human spokespersons are limited during a crisis situation. This study will contribute to this subject by examining the effect of spokesperson type on consumers' emotions, behavioral intentions, and trustworthiness. In general, the following research question can be formulated:

RQ: In what way does the crisis severity, spokesperson of the message, and framing of the message, affect the emotions of the consumer, behavioral intentions of the consumer, and trustworthiness of the company during a product recall?

In chapter two, an overview will be given from previous studies discussing the variables within this research. Furthermore, the hypotheses and research questions will be presented in this chapter.

In the third chapter, the method will be discussed. During this study, an experiment was conducted to answer our research questions. Also, the procedure and participants of this study will be presented. Finally, the dependent measures of this study are discussed

In chapter four, the results of this study will be shown. MANCOVA and MANOVA calculations were used to analyze the effects of our variables. Furthermore, possible interaction effects will be presented in this chapter. The computer program "SPSS" was used to analyze the data.

The discussion of this study will be presented in chapter five. To begin with, the results of this study will be compared with results from previous studies. Furthermore, limitations, practical implications, and future research directions will be presented in this chapter. Finally, a global conclusion will be presented.

2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter will provide an overview of the studies into the variables included in this research. First there will be described what is known about previous crisis and product recall studies. Next, the different variables of this study and the hypotheses will be formulated. Lastly, a general research question will be formulated.

2.1 Crisis Response Strategy

When a company decides to recall a product because it could do harm to their consumers, the company should react in an appropriate way. This is because the first priority of an organization should be the stakeholders' safety during any form of crisis (Coombs, Frandsen, Holladay & Johansen, 2010). It is not only important for the organization to consider what they communicate, but also how the stakeholders perceive the message (Coombs & Holladay, 2002). According to the SCCT-model there are three groups of response strategies based upon accepting responsibility for a crisis: denial, diminish and rebuild (Coombs, 2006). These three groups all differ in the way the consumer will perceive the organization as responsible during a certain form crisis. The type of crisis during this research is a product recall, so a fitting crisis response strategy has to be formulated.

It should be noted that a product recall is not only a type of crisis, it could also be used as a crisis response. According to Lin (2007), in crisis response strategy, a product recall belongs to the repair strategy under corrective action. According to Benoit (1997) the key characteristic of a corrective action is a plan to solve, or to prevent a problem. A product recall can then be seen as an image restoration strategy. However, during this study, the type of crisis is a product recall.

2.2 Crisis & Responsibility

Crises are events that can disrupt an organizations operations and threaten to damage organizational reputations (Coombs & Holladay, 2002). A reputation is an evaluation stakeholders make about how well an organization is meeting the expectations of stakeholders, based on its past behavior (Wartick, 1992). Hence, for organizations it is important to act in an appropriate way during a crisis, or else their reputation might be damaged. Coombs' (2007) Situational Crisis Communication Theory identifies how key facets of the crisis situation influence attributions about the crisis and the reputations held by the stakeholders. Coombs and Holladay (2002) state that the damage of an organizations' reputation correlates positively to the perceived responsibility of the crisis. This means that when consumers think the organization is responsible for the crisis, the damage to the reputation of that organization will be higher.

The SCCT identifies three crisis clusters based upon who is responsible for the crisis: (1) The *victim* cluster has very weak attributions of crisis responsibility (natural disasters, workplace violence, product tampering and rumor) and the organization is viewed as victim of the event.; (2) The *accidental* cluster has minimal attributions of crisis responsibility (technical-error accident, technical-error product harm and challenge) and the event is seen as unintentional or uncontrollable by the organization. ;(3) The *intentional* cluster has very strong attributions of crisis responsibility (human-error accident, human-error product harm and organizational misdeed) and the event is considered purposeful (Coombs & Holladay, 2002).

During this study, the product recall will fit within the accidental cluster of Coombs & Holladay (2002). According to the SCCT a product recall belongs to the accidental cluster, if the recall

is caused by a technical-error incident (Coombs, 2004). In this case the product is deemed harmful to customers, and the cause of this crisis type is equipment or technology related. This cluster is chosen, because this seems the most fitting cluster during a product recall.

2.3 Product Recall & Communication

As stated, a possible type of crisis that occurs within an organization is a product recall (Pearson & Clair, 1998). During a product recall organizations asks its consumers to return a product, because the product could possibly inflict damage to the users of the product. Product recalls occur relatively frequent and can have possible harmful consequences for the company (Desai, 2014). However, while they state that recalls can mean the demise of a complete product line of a company, the positive effect is that an effective recall can minimize short-term damage and guarantee long-term survival.

Another positive side effect of handling a product recall well, is that an organization proves it is controlling the quality of its product, even after the product is already sold (Fisk & Chandran, 1975). When companies do not handle a product recall well, this will have negative effects on their market share, sales of recalled products, stock prices and purchase intentions (Siomkos & Kurtz, 1994). Also the corporate reputation will be threatened during a product harm crisis.

2.4 Crisis Severity

Crisis severity can be formulated as the number of individuals harmed or killed by the crisis, the amount of property damage, the impact on the community and the environment, and financial losses due to the crisis (Coombs, 1999). Stakeholders' perception of crisis severity is related to their examination of the damage created by the crisis situation and the effect of this damage on them (Fediuk, Coombs & Botero, 2010). Consumers may respond more negatively to recalls with more severe consequences than to recalls with less severe potential consequences, leading to a different kind of brand damage with a differing recall severity (Liu & Shankar, 2014). Coombs (1998) differs between two levels of crisis severity, minor damage and major damage. A minor damage has little property damage and/or non-serious injuries, while a major damage has a large amount of property damage and/or injuries require hospitalization or results in death. This distinction will also be used during this study.

2.4.1 Severity & Emotions

Crisis situations can lead to several emotional outcomes. Emotions such as anger are often the result of situations in which the affected party perceives the outcome to be negative and the procedure to be unfavorable (Weiss et al, 1999). A crisis can be described as such a situation. Crisis situations can produce a variety of emotions such as sympathy and anger (Coombs & Holladay, 2005). Kim & Cameron (2011) acknowledge that anger is an emotion that plays an important role during a crisis situation. Coombs & Holladay (2005) even state that most crisis incidents are emotional-laden experiences.

Mowen and Ellis (1981) state that when a company is unknown, and are in a high-injury crisis, they are perceived less favorably than companies in a low-injury crisis. This shows that when a crisis does more damage to consumers, consumers' view of the company will be more negative. Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, Chatzipinanioti & Pantouvakis (2009) acknowledge this by stating that the severity of a product recall has an impact on the emotional response of the consumers. Altogether, this shows that the severity of a crisis might be an important factor during a product

recall and that crisis severity influences the emotions of customers during a product recall. This leads to the following hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 1A: During a minor crisis, customers will have less negative feelings (anger) and more positive feelings (sympathy) towards the organization, than during a major crisis.

2.4.2 Severity & Behavior

According to Fediuk, Coombs & Botero (2010) crisis situations can be seen as an injustice event. When an injustice situation occurs, stakeholders are motivated to engage in justice restoration activities such as revenge behavior to restore the justice (Bies & Tripp, 1996). Fediuk, Coombs & Boters (2010) state that consumers can choose to reduce the support for the organization or stop purchasing products from the organization. This can be seen as the purchase intention of the consumer. Furthermore, negative word-of-mouth intention is a possible strategy to restore the justice situation.

In prior research of Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, Chatzipinanagiotou & Pantouvakis (2009) it has been found that crisis severity influences purchase intentions in the first period, i.e., 3 days after the crisis and was also found to influence the perceived danger in the second period, i.e., 3 months after the crisis occurred. They also state that a more serious crisis has a longer lasting effect on consumers. Furthermore, Arpan & Roskos-Ewoldsen (2005) showed that crisis severity has a negative influence on purchase intention. This leads to the following hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 1B: During a minor crisis, customers' behavioural intentions (purchase-intention & positive WOM-intention) are higher, than during a major crisis.

2.4.3 Severity & Trustworthiness

Previous studies showed that the more severe the damage is during the crisis, the greater crisis responsibility the public would attribute to the organization (Coombs, 2001, Coombs & Holladay, 2002). A study of Verhoeven, van Hoof, ter Keurs & van Vuuren (2012) showed that corporate trust is more damaged when crisis responsibility is high than when crisis responsibility is low. In this line, we could argue that while a crisis is more severe, consumers trust in the organization would decline more, compared to a minor severity crisis.

One approach to understand why a given party will have a greater or lesser amount of trust for another party, is to consider attributes of the trustee (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995). According to them, ability, benevolence, and integrity are the three dimensions of trustworthiness. Ability relates to the group of skills, competencies, and characteristics that enable a party to have influence within some specific domain. Benevolence is the extent to which a trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor, aside from an ego-centric profit motive. Lastly, integrity means that the trustee adheres to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable. As stated, crisis severity might have an influence on consumers' trust in the organization. Furthermore, it is interesting to research whether crisis severity has a different influence on the three dimensions of trustworthiness. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be described:

HYPOTHESIS 1C: During a minor crisis, customers will have more trust (ability, benevolence & integrity) in the organization, than during a major crisis.

2.5 Spokesperson

The spokesperson stating the product recall is also an important factor during a crisis. Credible spokespersons contribute to successful crisis management (Coombs, 2007). Snoeijsers, Poels & Nicolay (2014) conducted a crisis research where they distinguished between a human (Dean/CEO) spokesperson, and an unknown (University/Organizational) spokesperson. Their study showed that students were more likely to share and discuss the crisis message, when it was sent by the human spokesperson, in comparison to an unknown spokesperson. The study by Snoeijsers, Poels & Nicolay (2014) mainly focused on the effects on the volume of communication, while using these two different types of spokespersons. Since not much is known about the distinction between a human and an organizational source on other variables, it seems interesting to incorporate these two types of spokespersons within this research.

2.5.1 Spokesperson & Emotions

During a crisis the CEO should be the first person to issue a statement about the crisis (Johar, Birk & Einwiller, 2012). Coombs & Holladay (2012) state that organizational leaders are ideal sources of apologies and that it is possible that apologies are more effective when communicated by top managers. Kellerman (2006) explains this by stating that apologies from the CEO are useful because the leader is in the end responsible for the problem and serves an institutional purpose by seeking to restore the reputation of the organization. Studies also showed that consumers' attitude towards the company is more positive, when the CEO of the organization is visible during the crisis situation (Turk, Jin, Stewart, Kim & Hipple, 2012). Their study showed that when the CEO is present in immediate crisis response, the attitude of consumers towards the company would be better than when the CEO was not present. They explain this by emphasizing how important it is, that a CEO has an active role during a crisis situation. This leads to the following hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 2A: When the CEO is the spokesperson during a crisis situation, customers' feelings will be more positive, compared to the crisis situation where there is an unknown spokesperson.

2.5.2 Spokesperson & Behavior

A study of Turk et al. (2012) showed that a visible CEO during a crisis situation, has a positive influence of the purchase intention of the consumers. According to them, this is because the CEO then shows he has an active role in dealing with the crisis, rather than letting the media take a frontline role. Furthermore, they state that having a CEO present when the organization responds to a crisis, seems to improve the credibility of the organization. Another research from Lafferty & Goldsmith (1999) showed that corporate credibility directly influences the consumers purchase intention. Research also showed that the CEO of an organization often become spokespersons during a crisis, and are credited with high levels of authority, morality, and credibility (Seeger & Ulmer, 2001). Furthermore, crisis response messages from spokespersons who are seen as credible and trustworthy can positively influence post-crisis communication (Yang, Kang & Johnson, 2010). Word-of-mouth intention is a form of post-crisis communication. In this line you could state that while using a CEO as spokesperson, consumers behavior will be positively influenced during a product recall crisis. This leads to the following hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 2B: When the CEO is the spokesperson during a crisis situation, customers' behavioural intention (purchase-intention & positive WOM-intention) will be higher, compared to the crisis

situation where there is an unknown organizational spokesperson

2.5.3 Spokesperson & Trustworthiness

Coombs (2007) states that spokespersons who are trustworthy could enhance how believable the crisis message is perceived by the stakeholders. Trustworthiness can be defined as the level of acceptance of the communicator and the transmitted message, that is, the publics' believe the source can be trusted to provide objective and honest information (Martin-Santana, Reinares-Lara & Muela-Molina, 2015). Brocato, Peterson & Crittenden (2012) propose that the rational nature of an organization seemingly gives this entity a greater ability to foresee harmful consequences. Furthermore, Hans & Ermann (1989) state that the standards placed on organizations are often higher than those placed on individuals, therefore a corporation will be judged more harshly than an individual when evaluating trust. The study by Brocato, Peterson & Crittenden (2012) showed that the CEO was viewed as more trustworthy than an organization, when an apology or excuse was used as a crisis response strategy. Altogether, this leads to the following hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 2C: When the CEO is the spokesperson during a crisis, customers will have more trust (ability, benevolence & integrity) in the organization, compared to the crisis situation where there is an unknown organizational spokesperson

2.6 Framing

Research shows that the presentation of information, or framing the message, influences individuals willingness to thoroughly evaluate the content of advertising messages (McKay-Nesbitt, Manchanda, Smith & Huhmann, 2011). Framing means that not only *what* issues are presented to the audience are influenced, but also *how* these messages are presented, and what importance the public should attach to it (Durrant, Wakefield, McLeod, Clegg-Smith & Chapman, 2003). McKay-Nesbitt, Manchanda, Smith & Huhmann (2011) consider two different types of framing, emotional and rational. Rational frames focus on providing concrete and clear information about the given topic, in order to change the receivers beliefs by relying on arguments or reason. Emotional frames focus on presenting images and words that stimulate positive or negative emotions and atmosphere about the given topic (Albers-Miller & Stafford, 1999). Furthermore, providing information can be seen as a rational appeal to stimulate a cognitive appraisal by offering concrete information on the crisis, while showing compassion can be seen as an emotional response in that it can induce an affective appraisal from the public (Moon & Rhee, 2012).

2.6.1 Framing & Emotions

Research from Claey's & Cauberghe (2014) also showed that the framing method used during a crisis, influences how consumers perceive the organization. They state that emotional frames appeal to individuals emotions by using drama and including subjective, evaluative properties, while rational frames appeal to the rationality of the receiver by presenting information in an objective and straightforward manner. A previous study by Van der Meer & Verhoeven (2014) showed that when an organization incorporates emotion in their crisis message, the anger consumers feel towards the organization decreases. Jin (2009) acknowledges this by stating that emotion centered appeals may reduce anger and may elicit more positive attitudes. Lastly, Claey's, Cauberghe & Leysen (2013) show that in the case of organizational self-disclosure during a crisis situation, organizations are seen as more positive when they express emotions, than when they communicate rational. Altogether it

seems valuable what the influence of different frames is, on the emotions of consumers during a product recall. This leads to the following hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 3A: When emotional framing is used during a crisis, customers' view of the of the organization will be more positive, compared to the situation where a rational frame is used.

2.6.2 Framing & Behavior

When organizations express emotions during a crisis, they are more likely to be forgiven by the public (Kauffman, 2008; Claeys, Cauberghe & Leysen, 2013). They also state that when the organization is the first to discuss the crisis situation and expresses sadness during this statement, this results in less reputational damage in comparison to a rational statement. The way a message is framed shapes how people define a crisis and its' attributions of responsibility (Cooper, 2002). Behavioral responses are positive when a person is judged not to be responsible and sympathy is evoked (Weiner, 2006). Bearden and Shimp (1982) concluded that the source's credibility was negatively related to consumers' perception of the risk of purchasing new products from an organization. In this line we could argue that WOM-intention and purchase intention are part of the behavioral responses as stated by Weiner (2006). This leads to the following hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 3B: When emotional framing is used during a crisis, customers' behavioural intention (purchase-intention & positive WOM-intention) will be more positive, compared to the situation where a rational frame is used.

2.6.3 Framing & Trustworthiness

Crisis communication strategy can be disclosed to the public as either a rational appeal, or as an emotional appeal , or a combination of both (Moon & Rhee, 2012). Research shows that organizations that self-disclose during a crisis are considered more credible, in comparison to organizations that do not self-disclose during a crisis situation (Claeys & Cauberghe, 2012). Mayer, Davis & Schoorman (1995) state that trustworthiness is one of the main factors that affects credibility. Research already showed that emotions have an influence on perceived trust (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005). Negative emotions may prolong trust building or terminate relationships (Andersen & Kumar, 2006). On the other hand, positive emotions are necessary in trust building and allows actors to take a leap of faith in the trust building process. During an emotional crisis message it seems reasonable to focus on positive emotions of the consumers. Furthermore, it seems interesting to research whether the effects of crisis severity on the different dimensions of trust are different. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

HYPOTHESIS 3C: When emotional framing is used during a crisis, customers consider the organization more trustworthy (ability, benevolence & integrity), compared to the situation where a rational response is used.

2.7 Interaction Severity, Spokesperson & Framing

Earlier we stated which factors influence the way stakeholders think about an organization during a crisis. Next, the severity of the crisis is an important factor to consider during product recalls Furthermore we stated that the spokesperson can be used to influence consumers' view about a product recall. Also we stated that there are two possible types of framing possible, while providing a

crisis statement during a product recall. Furthermore the accidental cluster seems to be the most appropriate cluster of crisis responsibility while an organization copes with a product recall. This leads to a 2 (Severity: minor vs. major) x 2 (Spokesperson: human (CEO) vs. organizational) x 2 (Framing: rational vs. emotional) factorial design. In the next few paragraphs the possible interaction effects between severity, spokesperson and framing will be discussed.

2.7.1 Severity & Spokesperson

Previous studies show that during crisis situations with a high level of severity, CEO's often become spokespersons, and are credited with high levels of authority, morality, and credibility (Seeger & Ulmer, 2001). However, it is questionable if CEO's should step up during every type of crisis. One could for example argue that the CEO is the most important person within the company, and should therefore not step up in every minor crisis situation, and should only state a message when the crisis is highly severe. Altogether, the following research question can be formulated:

RQ1: *In what way does crisis severity interact with the type of spokesperson during a product recall?*

2.7.2 Severity & Framing

In previous literature, not much is known about the combination of crisis severity and the frame of the message. One could argue that during a major severity crisis, a rational frame is preferred. This is because then, the organization shows that it is in control of the crisis situation. On the other hand, it might be useful for the organization to use an emotional frame during a major severity crisis. Then, the organization can express feelings of sadness or compassion for the victims of the crisis. Thus, the following research question is formulated:

RQ2: *In what way does crisis severity interact with message framing during a product recall?*

2.7.3 Spokesperson & Framing

Not much is known about the type of spokesperson in a crisis, and the interaction with the frame of the message, in previous studies. One could assume that a CEO is seen as a professional, and therefore uses a rational frame while communicating with the public. On the other hand, while using an organizational spokesperson, no "physical person" can be seen by the public. Therefore, it might not correspond to link an unknown spokesperson to an emotional response. This leads to the following research question:

RQ3: *In what way does the type of spokesperson interact with message framing during a product recall?*

2.7.4 Severity, Spokesperson & Framing

Looking at previous literature, it can be stated that the severity of the product recall, the spokesperson stating the recall message, and the framing method used during this message, might influence how the crisis situation is perceived by the public. Altogether this leads to one more interaction effect question, and one global research question:

RQ4: *In what way does crisis severity, type of spokesperson, and framing of the message interact with each other during a product recall?*

RQ5: *In what way does the crisis severity, spokesperson of the message, and framing of the message, affect the emotions of the consumer, behavioral intentions of the consumer, and trustworthiness of the company during a product recall?*

3 Method

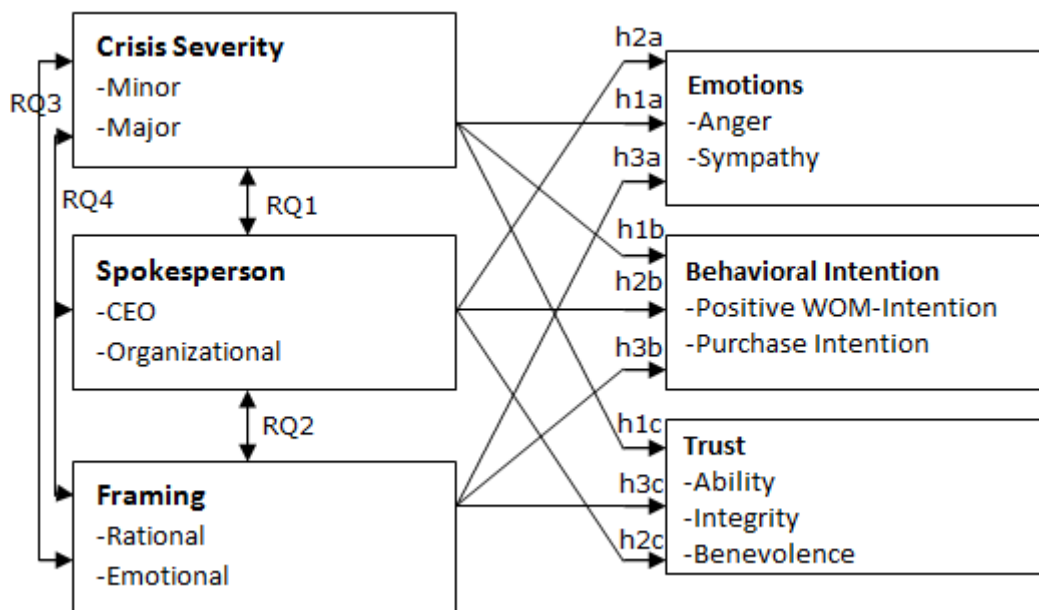
During this chapter the method of the study will be explained. First the design and procedure of this study will be discussed. Next, the pre-test is briefly explained. Then the participants of this study will be discussed. Furthermore, the manipulation check will be shown. Finally, the dependent measures are formulated.

3.1 Design

During this study a 2 (Severity: minor vs. major) x 2 (Spokesperson: human (CEO) vs. organizational) x 2 (Framing: rational vs. emotional) between-subjects experimental design (*Figure 1*) was used. This means there were a total of eight different primes used during this research.

The messages that were released differed in several ways. The first difference is the severity of the crisis. The product recall which has a minor severity has a packaging defect, which hardly has any danger for the consumer. The product recall with a major severity includes damage to the product, which can harm the consumer excessively. The other distinction that has been made in the crisis response message is the used spokesperson of the message. While using the organizational frame, it should be noticed that the organization itself is the sender of the message. In contrast to the human source, where the CEO of the company is the sender of the message.

Figure 1: Experimental Design - Controlled for Covariates (Health & Product Involvement)



The last distinction that has been made is the used framing method. While using the rational frame, concrete and clear information based on arguments and reason will be provided to the consumers. When using the emotional frame the message will be presented in a way that stimulates certain positive and negative emotions.

3.2 Procedure

Participants were collected with the help of convenience sampling. This was done by using the online survey tool Qualtrics. This survey was sent to respondents via e-mail and social media.

websites. First respondents received a short introduction texts, and a privacy statement. Then one of the eight scenarios was presented to the respondent. The newspapers article discussed a crisis situation at a cheese company called Kaas&Co. Respondents were asked to read the text thoroughly.

After the participants read one of the randomly assigned product recall messages, they answered questions about emotions, behavioral intentions, trustworthiness and responsibility. Furthermore, the respondents had to answer several manipulation checks. This was implemented to show whether the respondents correctly understood the newspaper article. Next, the respondents had to answer demographical questions and questions about their view about cheese and a healthy lifestyle. Lastly, The respondents were thanked for the time and effort put into this survey.

The complete survey was written in Dutch. It took around 7 minutes to complete the survey. No incentives were provided to the respondents.

3.3 Materials

The manipulated messages were adapted into the Volkskrant lay-out with the help of computer software. This newspaper was used during this research, since this is one of the most read newspapers in The Netherlands. As stated, the type of crisis is a product recall. Furthermore a fictitious name organizational was created. An imaginary company (Kaas&Co) was used, because then participants will have no prior knowledge about the history of the company that might influence their answers during the experiment (Coombs, 1995). A company within the food sector was used, since it is assumed that participants will feel highly involved when reading about problems within this sector. The CEO of the organization had a typical Dutch name, since research shows that the degree to which a spokesperson is similar to the receiver, positively influences the credibility of the spokesperson (Arpan, 2002).

3.4 Pre-test

A pre-test was conducted to measure whether the manipulations were successful, and if respondents understood the messages and questions of the survey. In total 20 respondents participated in the pre-test. Every participant answered the control question correctly. Furthermore the manipulation check was successful. Two grammatical mistakes were noticed in the manipulated messages, these errors were corrected. Furthermore, one survey question was described as vague. This question was also adjusted.

3.5 Participants

In total 288 respondents completed this experiment. 104 Male (36.1%) and 184 female (63.9%) respondents participated in the survey. The age of the respondents varied from 18 to 70 years old with $M = 32.1$ years old ($SD = 12.61$ years). Most participants were "College (High)" educated ($n = 133$, 46.2%), followed by "College (Low)" ($n = 56$, 19.4%), and "College (Medium)" ($n = 52$, 18.1%). In total there was a drop-out rate of 31 percent (130 incomplete surveys).

All respondents were capable of understanding the Dutch language. Most of the participants lived in Overijssel ($n = 157$, 54.5%). A global overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of participants

Demographic	N	%
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Gender		
Male	104	36,1
Female	184	63,9
Level of education		
Primary school	3	1.0
High School (Low)	23	8.0
High School (Medium)	11	3.8
High School (High)	5	1.7
College (Low)	56	19.4
College (Medium)	52	18.1
College (High)	133	46.2
Other	5	1.7
Region		
Groningen	5	1,7
Friesland	2	0,7
Drenthe	3	1,0
Gelderland	25	8,7
Flevoland	2	0,7
Overijssel	157	54,5
Zuid-Holland	12	4,2
Noord-Holland	36	12,5
Utrecht	10	3,5
Noord-Brabant	19	6,6
Limburg	8	2,8
Not living in Holland	9	3,1

As stated the 288 participants were randomly assigned to one of the eight manipulated conditions. Table 2 shows how the respondents were distributed per condition.

Table 2 Number of respondents per condition

	CEO		Organization	
	Minor severity	Major Severity	Minor severity	Major Severity
Emotional Frame	36	36	36	35
Rational Frame	36	36	36	37

3.6 Manipulation Check

Participants in the minor severity condition scored significantly lower on severity ($M = 2.16$, $SD = 1.02$), than participants in the major severity condition ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.81$). A significant difference could be concluded ($T = -20.44$, $p = .00$). Next, participants had to decide which employee discussed the product recall, i.e. CEO or unknown spokesperson. Participants in the unknown source condition scored significantly higher on the organizational spokesperson condition ($M = 1.83$, $SD = 0.37$), compared to the CEO condition ($M = 1.26$, $SD = 0.44$). It can be concluded that the spokesperson manipulation was significant ($T = -12.00$, $p = .00$). Finally respondents had to decide whether the frame of the message was emotional or rational. Four questions were used to measure this manipulation. Participants in the emotional condition scored significantly higher on the emotional

frame ($M = 7.68$, $SD = 3.06$), than participants in the rational frame ($M = 5.49$, $SD = 1.92$). This result was significant ($T = -7.246$, $p = 0.00$). In general it can be concluded that all manipulations were successful.

3.7 Control Question

To the control question “Are you familiar with the company called Kaas&Co?”, most participants (95,5%) answered “No”. Therefore, the control question was successful in this study.

3.8 Measures

The following dependent variables were measured during the result section (*Appendix A*);

3.8.1 Emotions

When taking a closer at the SCCCT-model (Coombs, 2007) emotions are seen as an important facet during a crisis. People who are affected by the crisis need information and emotional support from the responsible organization (Stephens & Mallone, 2009). Furthermore, Coombs (2007) states that a crisis response strategy is often used to reduce negative emotions. Therefore, it seems useful to investigate whether our variables influence the emotions felt by the consumers during a product recall.

Anger will be measured using four items on a 5-point Likert-scale from McDonald, Sparks & Glendon (2010). One example from these questions is: “Because of the crisis situation at Kaas&Co, I feel angry at the company.”. During this research it had $\alpha = .90$, which is excellent. Also sympathy will be measured with four items on a 5-point Likert-scale from this same research. One example from these items is: “Because of the crisis situation at Kaas&Co, I feel sorry for the company.”. The $\alpha = .84$, which is good.

3.8.2 Behavioral Intention

Another possible dependent variable that is noticeable within the SCCT model (Coombs, 2007) is the behavioral intention of the consumer. A product recall is a clear statement from an organization to return a certain product, because they could do harm to the consumer. The purchase intention is investigated. This is done by including four items from Lin, Chen, Chiu & Lee (2011). These items will be adjusted to the type of crisis within this research. One example of these question is: “I expect to purchase from Kaas&Co in the near future.”. These items will be measured by using a 5-point Likert-scale. In this research $\alpha = .95$, which is excellent.

Lastly, positive word-of-mouth (WOM) communication is a behavioral intention that will be measured during this research. This will be done by adopting three questions from Coombs & Holladay (2008) on a 5-point Likert-scale. An example of these items is: “I would recommend Kaas&Co products to someone who asked my advice.”. The $\alpha = .52$. which is poor.

3.8.3 Trustworthiness

The third dependent variable is trustworthiness. According to Coombs (2007) spokespersons who are trustworthy could enhance how believable the crisis message is perceived by the stakeholders. Furthermore CEO’s rate trustworthiness as one of the most important aspects of an organization, and trustworthiness is a viable measure for reputation(Coombs & Holladay, 2002). To measure this variable ability, benevolence and integrity will be measured, since these are important factors to measure trust (Mayer & Davis, 1999).

Trust (ability) will be measured by using a 5-point Likert-scale with six items from the research from Mayer and Davis (1999). An example of these items is: “Kaas&Co has much knowledge about the work that has to be done.”. Here $\alpha = .88$, which is good. Trust (benevolence & integrity) will be measured by using a 5-point Likert-scale with nine items from the same research. One example question is: “My needs and desires are very important to Kaas&Co.”. The $\alpha = .89$, which is good.

3.9 Factor analysis

A factor analysis was conducted to measure if the items from the questionnaire loaded on the correct dependent measure (Table 3). The variable word-of-mouth intention had to be removed, since those items loaded on the same variable as purchase intention. The loadings on purchase intention were higher than the WOM-intention loadings, therefore purchase intention was used during the result section.

All ability-based trust items loaded on the same factor. Furthermore, almost all of the benevolence and integrity items loaded on the same factor. Therefore the decision was made to reformulate trust in two different components, namely competence-based trust (ability), and character-based trust (benevolence & integrity). These two perspectives of trust were used in a previous study by Gabarro (1987). According to this study, character-based trust examines qualitative characteristics of behavior inherent in partners’ strategic philosophies and cultures. Competence-based trust examines specific operating behaviors and day-to-day performance. When comparing these characteristics with the trust characteristics stated by Mayer & Davis (1999), ability belongs to competence-based trust, while integrity and benevolence belong to character-based trust.

One character-based trust item had to be removed, “*Kaas&Co’s Actions and behavior are not very consistent.*”, since this item loaded on a different factor. Both the anger and sympathy items loaded on the correct factors. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.914, which is excellent.

Table 3 Factor Analysis

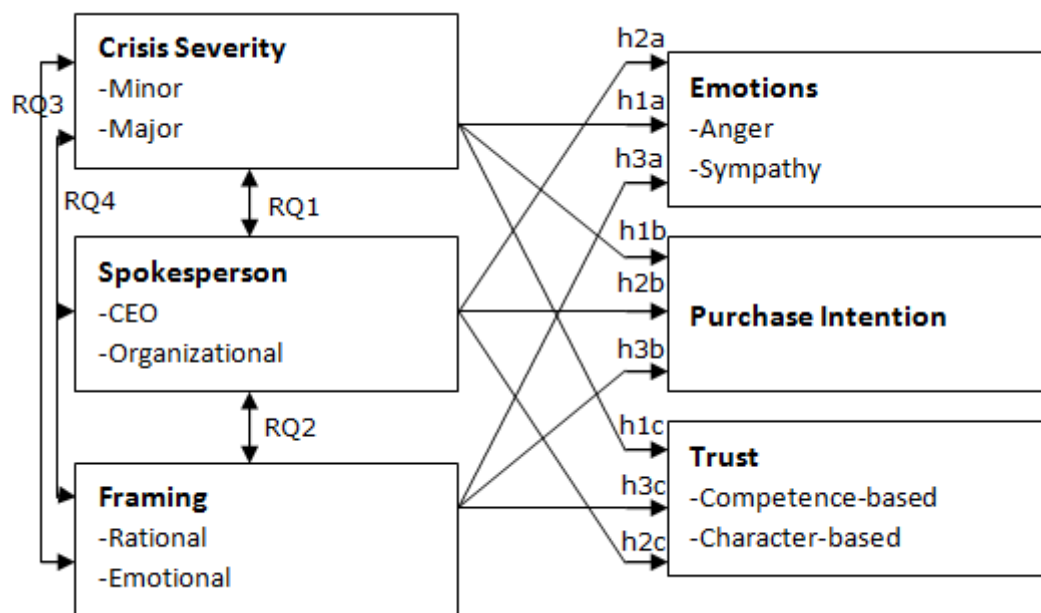
Item	Rotated factor Loading					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Anger1				-0.84*		
Anger2				-0.85*		
Anger3				-0.83*		
Anger4				-0.80*		
Symp1					0.68*	
Symp2					0.77*	
Symp3					0.88*	
Symp4					0.75*	
Purc1	0.84*					
Purc2	0.84*					
Purc3	0.86*					
Purc4	0.87*					
WOM1	0.78					
WOM2			0.40	0.46		
WOM3	0.74					
Abil1			0.66*			

Abil2	0.65*
Abil3	0.78*
Abil4	0.69*
Abil5	0.65*
Abil6	0.73*
Bene1	0.72*
Bene2	0.75*
Bene3	0.65*
Bene4	0.71*
Bene5	0.76*
Inte1	0.65*
Inte2	0.50*
Inte3	0.64*
Inte4	0.90
Inte5	0.46*

*Item is used in result section

As stated, positive WOM-intention was not added in the final list of hypotheses. This means that purchase intention is the only behavioral intention that is measured, during this study. Furthermore, the decision was made to reformulate trust in two different components, namely competence-based trust and character-based trust. This leads to the following experimental-model and hypotheses (Figure 2):

Figure 2: Final Experimental Design – Controlled for Covariates (Health & Product Involvement)



4 Results

The results of this study will be presented within this chapter. First, the main effects of the variables will be discussed. Furthermore, the interaction effects between the variables are discussed. Lastly, a global overview of the results will be given.

4.1 Severity

A MANCOVA analysis was conducted to calculate the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables. By using this statistical analysis the results were controlled for the influence of the covariates, i.e. the importance of a healthy lifestyle and the importance of cheese as a daily nutrition. Pillai's trace was used to measure whether the result are significant.

Severity has a significant effect on the dependent variables. $V = 0.363$, $F(5, 280) = 31.95$, $p < .001$. The individual results show that participants in the major severity condition scored significantly higher on anger ($M = 2.93$, $SD = 0.93$), than participants in the minor severity condition ($M = 1.74$, $SD = 0.83$), $F(1, 284) = 130.23$, $p < .001$. Also participants in the major severity condition scored lower on sympathy ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 0.85$) than participants in the minor severity condition ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 0.78$), $F(1, 281) = 13.11$, $p < .001$. Next, participants in the major severity condition scored significantly lower on purchase intention ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.94$), than participants in the minor prime ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 0.74$), $F(1, 281) = 40.99$, $p < 0.001$. Respondents in the major severity condition perceived significantly less competence-based trust ($M = 2.84$, $SD = 0.66$), than respondents in the minor severity condition ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.52$), $F(1, 281) = 47.13$, $p < 0.001$. Finally, participants in the major severity condition had significantly less character-based trust ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.68$), than participants in the minor severity condition ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 0.55$), $F(1, 281) = 21.61$, $p < 0.001$. Thus, hypothesis 1A, 1B, and 1C are all supported. Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6 give a global overview of the effects of severity on the dependent measures.

Table 4 Means & Standard Deviations – Minor & Major severity

Dependent measure	Minor			Major		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Anger	144	1.75	0.83	144	2.93	0.93
Sympathy	144	3.04	0.78	144	2.70	0.85
Purchase Intention	144	3.02	0.74	144	2.40	0.94
Competence-Trust	144	3.32	0.52	144	2.84	0.66
Character-Trust	144	3.54	0.55	144	3.21	0.68

Table 5 MANCOVA Effects - Severity

Dependent measure	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig
Anger	100.83	1	100.83	130.23	.000*
Sympathy	8.72	1	8.72	13.11	.000*
Purchase Intention	27.82	1	27.82	40.99	.000*
Competence-Trust	16.60	1	16.60	47.13	.000*
Character-Trust	8.21	1	8.21	21.61	.000*

*Significant Effect: $p < 0.05$

Table 6 MANOVA Effects - Severity

Dependent measure	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig
Anger	100.02	1	100.02	131.03	.000*
Sympathy	8.18	1	8.18	12.37	.001*
Purchase Intention	27.54	1	27.54	38.29	.000*
Competence-Trust	16.62	1	16.62	45.38	.000*
Character-Trust	7.36	1	7.36	19.85	.000*

*Significant Effect: $p < 0.05$

4.2 Spokesperson

No significant effects were found on the dependent variables for the use of a different type of spokesperson $V = 0.00$, $F(5, 280) = 0.31$, $p = .908$. The individual results show that there was no significant effect on anger ($M = 2.34$, $SD = 1.08$) when the CEO was used, or when the organizational source ($M = 2.31$, $SD = 1.04$) was used, $F(1, 281) = 0.16$, $p = .688$. Also no significant effects were found for sympathy when using a CEO ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 0.78$) or an organizational spokesperson ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 0.88$), $F(1, 281) = 1.40$, $p = 0.238$. Next, No differences were found in the purchase intention when using a CEO ($M = 2.65$, $SD = 0.92$), or an organizational spokesperson ($M = 2.76$, $SD = 0.87$), $F(1, 281) = 0.36$, $p = .548$. Results also showed that there were effects on competence-based trust when the CEO was used ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.68$) or the organizational spokesperson was used ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.60$), $F(1, 281) = 0.40$, $p = .527$. Lastly, there was no effect on the character-based trust in the CEO condition ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 0.66$) or the organizational condition ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.62$), $F(1, 281) = 0.32$, $p = .62$. Thus, hypothesis 2A, 2B, and 2C were all unconfirmed. Table 7, Table 8, and Table 9 provide an overview of these results.

Table 7 Means & Standard Deviations – CEO & Organizational Spokesperson

Dependent measure	CEO			Organizational		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Anger	144	2.36	1.08	144	2.31	1.04
Sympathy	144	2.81	0.78	144	2.94	0.88
Purchase Intention	144	2.65	0.92	144	2.76	0.87
Competence-Trust	144	3.06	0.68	144	3.11	0.60
Character-Trust	144	3.35	0.66	144	3.40	0.62

Table 8 MANCOVA Effects - Spokesperson

Dependent measure	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig
Anger	0.18	1	0.18	0.16	.688
Sympathy	0.97	1	0.97	1.40	.238
Purchase Intention	0.28	1	0.28	0.36	.548
Competence-Trust	0.16	1	0.16	0.40	.527
Character-Trust	0.13	1	0.13	0.32	.575

Table 9 MANOVA Effects - Spokesperson

Dependent measure	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig
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Anger	0.19	1	0.19	0.25	.619
Sympathy	1.19	1	1.19	1.79	.182
Purchase Intention	0.88	1	0.88	1.23	.269
Competence-Trust	0.19	1	0.19	0.54	.462
Character-Trust	0.16	1	0.16	0.40	.526

*Significant Effect: $p < 0.05$

4.3 Framing

No significant effects were found on the dependent measure when using a rational or emotional frame $V = 0.021$, $F(5, 280) = 1.217$, $p = .301$. The individual results show that there are no significant effects on anger when using a rational frame ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 1.10$) or an emotional frame ($M = 2.35$, $SD = 1.02$), $F(1, 281) = 0.02$, $p = .876$. Also no effects were found on sympathy when using a rational frame ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 0.80$) or an emotional frame ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 0.86$), $F(1, 281) = 2.00$, $p = .158$. Furthermore, the results show no effects on the purchase intention in the rational condition ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 0.88$) and the emotional condition ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 0.92$), $F(1, 281) = 0.02$, $p = .893$. Next, there were no difference on competence-based trust when comparing the rational frame ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.68$) or the emotional frame ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 0.59$), $F(1, 281) = 0.18$, $p = .59$. Lastly, no significant effects were found on character-based trust when differing between a rational frame ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.66$) or an emotional frame ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.61$), $F(1, 281) = 3.30$, $p = .07$. Thus, hypothesis 3A, 3B, and 3C are all unconfirmed. An overview of these results are shown in Table 10, Table 11, and Table 12.

Table 10 Means & Standard Deviations – Rational & Emotional Framing

Dependent measure	Rational			Emotional		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Anger	145	2.33	1.10	143	2.35	1.02
Sympathy	145	2.80	0.80	143	2.95	0.86
Purchase Intention	145	2.70	0.88	143	2.72	0.92
Competence-Trust	145	3.06	0.68	143	3.10	0.59
Character-Trust	145	3.30	0.66	143	3.44	0.61

Table 11 MANCOVA Effects - Framing

Dependent measure	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig
Anger	0.03	1	0.03	0.02	.876
Sympathy	1.38	1	1.38	2.00	.158
Purchase Intention	0.01	1	0.01	0.02	.893
Competence-Trust	0.08	1	0.08	0.18	.669
Character-Trust	1.33	1	1.33	3.30	.070

Table 12 MANOVA Effects - Framing

Dependent measure	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig
Anger	0.06	1	0.06	0.07	.788
Sympathy	1.54	1	1.54	2.33	.128
Purchase Intention	0.04	1	0.04	0.05	.825
Competence-Trust	0.08	1	0.08	0.23	.636
Character-Trust	1.36	1	1.36	3.55	.061

4.4 Interaction Between Severity, Spokesperson & Framing

Four different MANCOVA's were conducted to measure the interaction effects of the independent variables. These result will be discussed now. Again, the results were controlled for the influence of the covariates, i.e. the importance of a healthy lifestyle and the importance of cheese as a daily nutrition. Pilai's trace was used to measure whether the result are significant.

4.4.1 Severity & Spokesperson

No significant main effect was found between the severity of the crisis and the type of spokesperson $V = 0.05$, $F(5, 278) = 0.253$, $p = .938$. The individual results also show no interaction effects of crisis severity and spokesperson type on anger ($F(1, 282) = 0.32$, $p = .573$), sympathy ($F(1, 282) = 0.08$, $p = .773$), purchase intention ($F(1, 282) = 0.00$, $p = .992$), competence-based trust ($F(1, 282) = 0.91$, $p = .340$), and on character-based trust ($F(1, 282) = 0.15$, $p = .703$). It can be concluded that there is no interaction effect between the severity of the product recall and the spokesperson during this type of crisis. An extensive overview of these results can be seen in Table 13, Table 14, and Table 15.

Table 13 Severity*Spokesperson Means & Standard Deviations

Dependent measure		Minor			Major		
		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Anger	CEO	72	1.74	0.86	72	2.99	0.92
	Organizational	72	1.75	0.80	72	2.88	0.94
Sympathy	CEO	72	2.99	0.70	72	2.63	0.82
	Organizational	72	3.09	0.86	72	2.78	0.87
Purchase Intention	CEO	72	2.97	0.81	72	2.34	0.92
	Organizational	72	3.07	0.66	72	2.46	0.95
Competence-Trust	CEO	72	3.32	0.56	72	2.79	0.68
	Organizational	72	3.31	0.47	72	2.90	0.64
Character-Trust	CEO	72	3.35	0.57	72	3.18	0.66
	Organizational	72	3.55	0.53	72	3.24	0.62

Table 14 MANCOVA Effects – Severity*Spokesperson

Dependent measure	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig
Anger	0.25	1	0.25	0.32	.573
Sympathy	0.06	1	0.06	0.08	.773
Purchase Intention	0.00	1	0.00	0.00	.992
Competence-Trust	0.32	1	0.32	0.91	.340
Character-Trust	0.06	1	0.06	0.15	.703

Table 15 MANOVA Effects – Severity*Spokesperson

Dependent measure	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig
Anger	0.25	1	0.25	0.32	.573
Sympathy	0.05	1	0.05	0.08	.775
Purchase Intention	0.02	1	0.02	0.03	.866
Competence-Trust	0.29	1	0.29	0.81	.369
Character-Trust	0.03	1	0.0	0.09	.766

4.4.2 Severity & Framing

No significant main effect was found between the severity of the crisis and the framing method, $V = 0.024$, $F(5, 278) = 1.362$, $p = .239$. However, when looking at The individual results, an interaction effect was found between crisis severity and framing method on anger ($F(1, 282) = 4.32$, $p = .039$). No interaction effects were found on sympathy ($F(1, 282) = 1.80$, $p = 0.180$), purchase intention ($F(1, 282) = 0.01$, $p = .978$), competence-based trust ($F(1, 282) = 0.05$, $p = .826$), and character-based trust ($F(1, 282) = 0.03$, $p = .873$).

The results show that during a minor crisis, the use of an emotional frame increases the anger of the customers. In contradiction to a major crisis, where a rational frame increases the level of anger of the consumers. An extensive overview of these results are shown in Table 16, Table 17 and Table 18. Furthermore, the interaction graphic is shown in Figure 3.

Table 16 Severity*Framing Means & Standard Deviations

Dependent measure		Minor			Major		
		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Anger	Rational	72	1.63	0.78	73	3.01	0.90
	Emotional	72	1.87	0.86	71	2.84	0.95
Sympathy	Rational	72	3.03	0.77	73	2.57	0.77
	Emotional	72	3.05	0.80	71	2.84	0.90
Purchase Intention	Rational	72	3.01	0.69	73	2.39	0.95
	Emotional	72	3.03	0.79	71	2.41	0.93
Competence-Trust	Rational	72	3.30	0.51	73	2.84	0.76
	Emotional	72	3.34	0.53	71	2.86	0.55
Character-Trust	Rational	72	3.47	0.53	73	3.14	0.73
	Emotional	72	3.60	0.56	71	3.21	0.63

Table 17 MANCOVA Effects – Severity*Framing

Dependent measure	<i>Sum of Sq.</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean sq.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Anger	3.32	1	3.32	4.32	0.039*
Sympathy	1.19	1	1.19	1.80	0.180
Purchase Intention	0.00	1	0.00	0.01	0.978
Competence-Trust	0.02	1	0.02	0.05	0.826
Character-Trust	0.01	1	0.01	0.03	0.873

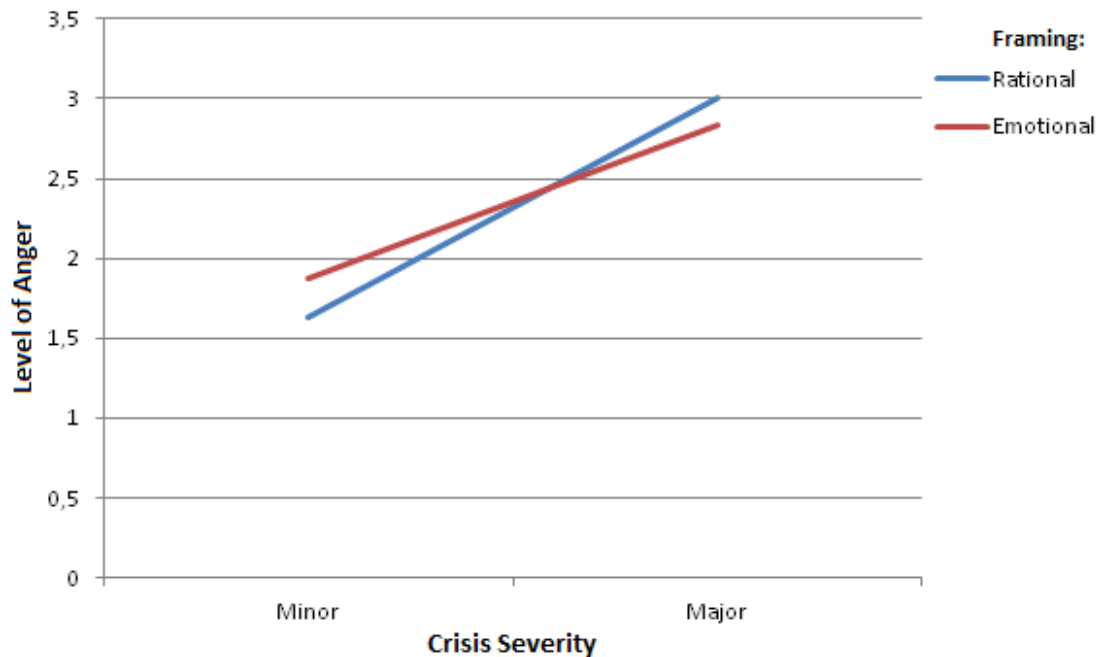
*Significant Effect: $p < 0.05$

Table 18 MANOVA Effects – Severity*Framing

Dependent measure	<i>Sum of Sq.</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean sq.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Anger	3.34	1	3.34	4.33	0.038*
Sympathy	1.20	1	1.20	1.81	0.180
Purchase Intention	0.00	1	0.00	0.00	0.982
Competence-Trust	0.02	1	0.02	0.05	0.828
Character-Trust	0.01	1	0.01	0.02	0.879

*Significant Effect: $p < 0.05$

Figure 3 Interaction Effects Severity*Framing - Anger



4.4.3 Spokesperson & Framing

No significant main effect was found between the type of spokesperson and the frame of the message $V = 0.003$, $F(5, 287) = 0.189$, $p = .967$. The individual results also show no significant effect between the type of spokesperson and framing of the message on anger ($F(1, 282) = 0.10$, $p = .749$), sympathy ($F(1, 282) = 0.56$, $p = .454$), purchase intention ($F(1, 282) = 0.56$, $p = 0.453$), competence-based trust ($F(1, 282) = 0.15$, $p = .697$), and on character-based trust ($F(1, 282) = 0.46$, $p = .497$). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no interaction effect between the type of spokesperson and the way the product recall is framed. An extensive overview of these results can be found in Table 19, Table 20, and Table 21.

Table 19 Spokesperson*Framing Means & Standard Deviations

Dependent measure		CEO			Organizational		
		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Anger	Rational	72	2.34	1.12	73	2.32	1.07
	Emotional	72	2.39	1.05	71	2.31	1.00
Sympathy	Rational	72	2.77	0.68	73	2.82	0.91
	Emotional	72	2.85	0.87	71	3.05	0.83
Purchase Intention	Rational	72	2.67	0.93	73	2.72	0.94
	Emotional	72	2.64	0.92	71	2.81	0.91
Competence-Trust	Rational	72	3.05	0.75	73	3.07	0.61
	Emotional	72	3.06	0.60	71	3.14	0.58
Character-Trust	Rational	72	3.31	0.66	73	3.30	0.66
	Emotional	72	3.39	0.66	71	3.50	0.56

Table 20 MANCOVA Effects – Spokesperson*Framing

Dependent measure	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig
Anger	0.12	1	0.12	0.10	0.749
Sympathy	0.39	1	0.39	0.56	0.454
Purchase Intention	0.44	1	0.44	0.56	0.453
Competence-Trust	0.06	1	0.06	0.15	0.697
Character-Trust	0.19	1	0.19	0.46	0.497

Table 21 MANOVA Effects – Spokesperson*Framing

Dependent measure	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean sq.	F	Sig
Anger	0.55	1	0.55	0.07	0.789
Sympathy	0.39	1	0.39	0.59	0.445
Purchase Intention	0.21	1	0.21	0.29	0.594
Competence-Trust	0.06	1	0.06	0.17	0.683
Character-Trust	0.23	1	0.23	0.59	0.445

4.4.4 Severity, Spokesperson & Framing

No significant main effect was found between the severity of the crisis, the spokesperson, and the framing of the message $V = 0.011$, $F(5, 271) = 0.617$, $p = .687$. The individual results also show no significant effect from crisis severity, spokesperson and framing on anger ($F(1, 282) = 0.21$, $p = .647$), sympathy ($F(1, 282) = 1.12$, $p = .290$), purchase intention ($F(1, 282) = 1.09$, $p = .297$), competence-based trust ($F(1, 282) = 1.20$, $p = .275$), and character-based trust ($F(1, 282) = 0.33$, $p = .569$).

Therefore, it can be concluded no interaction effect exists between the independent variables. A global overview of these results are shown in Table 15, Table 16, and Table 17.

Table 22 Severity*Spokesperson*Rational Framing Means & Standard Deviations

Dependent measure		CEO			Organizational		
		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Anger	Minor	36	1.58	0.75	36	1.67	0.81
	Major	36	3.09	0.91	37	2.96	0.91
Sympathy	Minor	36	2.97	0.65	36	3.10	0.88
	Major	36	2.57	0.66	37	2.56	0.88
Purchase Intention	Minor	36	2.93	0.74	36	3.08	0.64
	Major	36	2.41	1.03	37	2.37	0.87
Competence-Trust	Minor	36	3.28	0.61	36	3.31	0.39
	Major	36	2.83	0.82	37	2.84	0.70
Character-Trust	Minor	36	3.47	0.52	36	3.48	0.54
	Major	36	3.15	0.75	37	3.13	0.72

Table 23 Severity*Spokesperson*Emotional Framing Means & Standard Deviations

Dependent measure		CEO			Organizational		
		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Anger	Minor	36	1.90	0.93	36	1.83	0.79
	Major	36	2.88	0.93	35	2.79	0.97
Sympathy	Minor	36	3.09	0.75	36	3.09	0.86
	Major	36	2.56	0.96	35	3.00	0.81
Purchase Intention	Minor	36	3.01	0.88	36	3.05	0.71
	Major	36	2.26	0.80	35	2.56	1.04
Competence-Trust	Minor	36	3.37	0.51	36	3.31	0.54
	Major	36	2.75	0.52	35	2.96	0.57
Character-Trust	Minor	36	3.57	0.61	36	3.62	0.51
	Major	36	3.21	0.67	35	3.37	0.58

Table 24 MANCOVA Effects Severity*Spokesperson*Framing

Dependent measure	<i>Sum of Sq.</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean sq.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Anger	0.16	1	0.16	0.21	.647
Sympathy	0.74	1	0.74	1.12	.290
Purchase Intention	0.75	1	0.75	1.09	.297
Competence-Trust	0.43	1	0.43	1.20	.275
Character-Trust	0.12	1	0.12	0.33	.569

Table 25 MANOVA Effects Severity*Spokesperson*Framing

Dependent measure	<i>Sum of Sq.</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean sq.</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Anger	0.17	1	0.17	0.22	.639
Sympathy	0.69	1	0.69	1.04	.309
Purchase Intention	0.91	1	0.91	1.26	.262
Competence-Trust	0.38	1	0.38	1.07	.302
Character-Trust	0.09	1	0.09	0.22	.639

4.5 Results Overview

In this paragraph, a global overview of the hypothesis and research questions will be given. Furthermore, it will be shown what the outcomes are of this study.

HYPOTHESIS

HYPOTHESIS 1A: During a minor crisis, customers will have less negative feelings (anger) and more positive feelings (sympathy)towards the organization, than during a major crisis.	<i>Confirmed</i>
HYPOTHESIS 1B: During a minor crisis, customers' behavioural intentions (purchase-intention & positive WOM-intention) are higher, than during a major crisis.	<i>Confirmed</i>
HYPOTHESIS 1C: During a minor crisis, customers will have more trust (ability, benevolence & integrity) in the organization, than during a major crisis.	<i>Confirmed</i>
HYPOTHESIS 2A: When the CEO is the spokesperson during a crisis situation, customers' feelings will be more positive, compared to the crisis situation where there is an unknown spokesperson.	<i>Rejected</i>
HYPOTHESIS 2B: When the CEO is the spokesperson during a crisis situation,	<i>Rejected</i>

customers' purchase intention will be higher, compared to the crisis situation where there is an unknown organizational spokesperson.	
HYPOTHESIS 2C: When the CEO is the spokesperson during a crisis, customers will have more trust (ability, benevolence & integrity) in the organization, compared to the crisis situation where there is an unknown organizational spokesperson.	<i>Rejected</i>
HYPOTHESIS 3A: When emotional framing is used during a crisis, customers' view of the of the organization will be more positive, compared to the situation where a rational frame is used.	<i>Rejected</i>
HYPOTHESIS 3B: When emotional framing is used during a crisis, customers' purchase intention will be more positive, compared to the situation where a rational frame is used.	<i>Rejected</i>
HYPOTHESIS 3C: When emotional framing is used during a crisis, customers consider the organization as more trustworthy (ability, benevolence & integrity), compared to the situation where a rational response is used.	<i>Rejected</i>

Research Question	Results
RQ1: In what way does crisis severity interact with type of spokesperson during a product recall?	<i>No significant interaction effect was found during this study.</i>
RQ2: In what way does crisis severity interact with message framing during a product recall?	<i>A significant interaction effect was found between crisis severity and message framing on the anger of the consumer.</i>
RQ3: In what way does the type of spokesperson interact with message framing during a product recall?	<i>No significant interaction effect was found during this study.</i>
RQ4: In what way does crisis severity, type of spokesperson, and framing of the message interact with each other during a product recall?	<i>No significant interaction effect was found during this study.</i>
RQ5: In what way does the crisis severity, spokesperson of the message, and framing of the message, affect the emotions of the consumer, behavioural intentions of the consumer, and trustworthiness of the company during a product recall?	<i>The results show that crisis severity influences all of the dependent measures. No main effects were found for type of spokesperson, and framing of the message. The only significant interaction effect in this study is between crisis severity and the frame of the message. This interaction has an effect on the anger of the consumers.</i>

5 Discussion

The conclusion and discussion of this study are presented in this chapter. The purpose of this study was to investigate what role crisis severity, spokesperson type, and framing method has on the emotion, purchase intention of the consumers, and trustworthiness of the company. First the main effects and interaction effects of the independent variables on the dependent measures are discussed, in relation to previous studies. Next, future research directions are discussed. Then, practical implications of this study will be given. Lastly, the limitations of this study will be presented.

5.1 Crisis Severity

In line with previous studies, this study shows that the severity of a product recall has an effect on the emotions and purchase intention. Furthermore this study shows that the trustworthiness of an organization is affected, when a product recall is more severe.

Looking at previous literature, it makes sense that these hypothesis are supported. To begin with, negative emotions are common and seen as natural reactions during a crisis situation (Tiedens, Ellworth & Mesquita, 2000). Furthermore, previous studies show that companies that are in a more severe crisis, are seen as less favorable by consumers (Mowen & Ellis, 1981), and consumers' purchase intention is also lower (Vassilikopoulou, Siomkos, Chatzipinanagiotou & Pantouvakis, 2009). Furthermore, Laufer & Coombs (2006) state that consumers perception of crisis responsibility differs when crisis severity varies. While, Verhoeven, van Hoof, ter Keurs & van Vuuren (2012) showed that corporate trust is more damaged when crisis responsibility is high than when crisis responsibility is low. Therefore, it seems logical that consumers perceive more anger and are less sympathetic during a highly severe product recall situation, and that organizational trust declines when a product recall is more severe.

5.2 Spokesperson

Previous literature suggests that a different type of spokesperson influences how the message is perceived by consumers. According to previous literature, using a CEO as a spokesperson during a crisis results in positive emotions among customers. Also, earlier studies show that purchase intention is higher when a CEO is used during a crisis, compared to an organizational spokesperson. However, this study shows no significant effect when a different type of spokesperson is used.

The effects of the spokesperson type on the dependent variables in this study can possibly be explained, by the appearance of the spokesperson in the manipulated articles. During this study, the name of the CEO, the companies' name, and the CEO title was used in the manipulations where the CEO was the spokesperson. Furthermore, only the organizational name was used, when there was an unknown spokesperson. Therefore, it is possible that participants did not recognize the difference between these types of spokespersons well enough. In the study conducted by Turk et al. (2012) a video was used when the CEO was spokesperson during the crisis situation. Their study showed that a CEO positively influences emotions and purchase intention. These findings possibly indicate, that when participants were shown more visual cues of the spokesperson in the manipulated materials, this could lead to different results.

5.3 Framing

Previous literature suggest that the frame of the message influences how consumers perceive the

message. Previous studies suggest that the use of an emotional frame leads to more positive emotions, a higher purchase intention, and more trust in the organization. However, no significant effects were found while using an emotional or a rational frame in this study. This, in contradiction to the studies by Choi & Lin (2007) and Kim & Cameron (2011).

Again, this could possibly be explained by taking a closer look at the manipulated materials. It was shown that many respondents were having trouble, to notice a difference between the rational and emotional frame in this study. So it might be possible that the stimuli was not correctly manipulated in this study. This study shows that solely adjusting the frame of a product recall message, is not enough to influence the consumers' emotions, purchase intentions and trust in the organization. Possibly, a clearer distinction between the rational frame, and the emotional frame, could have an impact on the results.

5.4 Interaction Severity & Spokesperson

The first interaction effect that was studied during this research was the following: *"RQ1: In what way does crisis severity interact with type of spokesperson during a product recall?"*. Previous studies stated that the CEO should not step up as spokesperson during every type of crisis. Earlier we suggested that the CEO of the organization, only has to step up as spokesperson when the crisis is highly severe. However, in this study no interaction effect between crisis severity and spokesperson type are found.

Looking at previous literature, it might be possible to explain why no interaction effect was found during this study. The study of Lucero, Kwang & Pang (2009) shows different crisis situations where a CEO should come forward as a spokesperson. According to them, during a technical-error product recall, a CEO does not necessarily have to step up, and is merely there to create and/or strengthen the bond with their consumers. However, the same study shows that during technical-error accidents which results in injury or death, it can be a good idea to use a CEO as the spokesperson. Possibly one of the reasons no effects were found in this study, is because the crisis situations did not differ enough from another, since both crisis situations were product recalls. Although, there was a clear distinction between the severity of the product recalls in the different conditions.

5.5 Interaction Severity & Framing

One interaction effect was found for the following research question: *"RQ2: In what way does crisis severity interact with message framing during a product recall?"*. This study showed that during a product recall, severity and framing has an influence on the anger of consumers. During a minor severity crisis, the use of a emotional frame causes more anger at the consumers. In comparison to a major crisis, where a rational frames causes more anger.

Unfortunately, not much is known in literature about the interaction effect of crisis severity and framing on anger. Still, this interaction effect might be explained by looking at earlier studies around these subjects. For instance Janssen, Sen & Bhattacharya (2015) state that severity increases the challenge brought by the crisis to the company, because more negative social effects need to be contained and addressed. It can be argued that these higher negative effects can only be addressed by also expressing emotion during the crisis message. On the other hand, one could argue that a less severe crisis brings less negative effects. Therefore less negative social effects have to be addressed, and a more straightforward, and rational frame might be suitable to inform consumers about the product recall in that situation. That there was no significant interaction effect on the other

measures, might be explained by looking at the stimuli materials. This shows that almost a third of the respondents could not notice the difference between the emotional and rational frame. The results could be different, when the distinction between the frames would be more clear to the participants.

5.6 Interaction Spokesperson & Framing

The next research question during this study was “*RQ3: In what way does the type of spokesperson interact with message framing during a product recall?*” Again, no interaction effect was found between the type of spokesperson and the frame used, during the product recall. There is hardly any literature about the interaction between the spokesperson and the frame of a message during a crisis. However, when looking at the results concerning framing and spokesperson individually, some interaction might have been expected beforehand.

This might be explained by looking at previous results about these individual variables. For instance, Choi & Lin (2007) conducted a study where they found that framing of the message affects how consumers interpret the message. Kim & Cameron (2011) acknowledge this by stating that an emotional appeal positively influences consumers' response, in comparison to a rational appeal. Furthermore, by communicating emotions an organization may be perceived as more human, which enables people to feel more sympathy towards the organization (Van der Meer & Verhoeven, 2014). It is expected a CEO is seen as more human than an unknown spokesperson. Therefore, we might expect that the results differ when using different types of spokespersons. However, during this study the distinction between an organizational and human spokesperson, might not have been clear enough, since no visual cues were used. Also, not every respondent correctly made the distinction between the rational and emotional frames. Possibly, a clearer distinction between the frames and spokespersons, could influence the results.

5.7 Interaction Severity, Spokesperson & Framing

The last effect that was studied during this research was the interactions between crisis severity, spokesperson, and the frame of the message. In this study, no significant effect was found between the three stated variables. This also answers the next research question: “*RQ4: In what way does crisis severity, type of spokesperson, and framing of the message interact with each other during a product recall?*”.

Lastly the global research question “*RQ5: In what way does the crisis severity, spokesperson of the message, and framing of the message, affect the emotions of the consumer, behavioral intentions of the consumer, and trustworthiness of the company during a product recall?*” has to be answered. As stated before, only significant main effects were found for crisis severity on all the dependent measures, and an interaction effect between severity and framing on anger. All other variables show no results in this study. However, this does not mean that spokesperson type, and/or message framing are not important during a product recall situation. Possible limitations and implications for these results will be discussed in the next two paragraphs.

5.8 Theoretical Implications & Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be mentioned. To begin with, convenience sampling was used during this research. This makes it difficult to achieve a representative and generalized sample of the population. Furthermore, this leads to overrepresentation of certain characteristics within the sample. This is seen in the overrepresentation of young respondents, highly educated

participants and of participants from Overijssel. In future research it might be useful to use a different sampling method. The use of stratified sampling would seem useful, since this sampling method makes sure that representative groups of study units with specific characteristics will be included in the sample frame (Hardon, Hodgkin & Fresle, 2004).

The next limitation is the manipulated stimuli. It was shown that the manipulations were significantly different from another. However, around thirty percent of the participants had difficulties in differentiating the emotional from the rational frame. This could have had consequences for the final results of this study. As stated earlier, this study showed no significant effects for the framing method. This, in contradiction to earlier studies from Claeys & Cauberghe (2014) and Claeys, Cauberghe & Leysen (2013). So it should be noted that the effects of framing could differ, when all participants correctly notice the difference between an emotional and a rational frame. In future research, the stimuli materials from this study can be improved, or new materials should be pre-tested more thoroughly.

Next, the type of crisis and the type of organization is a limitation of this study. There are many reasons why a product can be recalled. This study only researches two of those reasons. The possibility exists that results will differentiate from this study when other reasons for a product recall are used. Furthermore, a fictive cheese company is used during this research. Again, results can differ from this study when an organization from a different type of product is used or when an existing company is used. A previous study from Turk et al. (2012) also suggests that using an existing organization, may lead to different results.

Fourth, the media that was used during this research could influence the results of this study. As McLuhan (1967) already stated "The medium is the message.". While using a newspaper during a product recall, it is hard to implement visual cues in the message. When richer media, such as a YouTube-video, is used to state a product recall, it is possible to show the face or body language of the spokesperson. For future research it can be interesting to study the effects of the variables in this study, while using different media settings.

Finally, it is interesting to implement other independent variables in this type of research. For example, previous studies show that when organizations are the first to report about the crisis, the organization suffers less damage than if third parties are the first to report about the crisis situation (Claeys & Cauberghe, 2012). Arpan & Roskos-Ewoldson (2005) agree with this by stating that self-disclosure can result in more positive evaluations of the organization in an crisis. A variable such as message timing could be easily mixed with the variables used in this study.

5.9 Practical Implications

As stated before, a crisis can disrupt an organizations operations and threaten to damage the reputation of the organization (Coombs & Holladay, 2002). Furthermore, Desai (2014) stated that during a product recall, effective public communication is necessary to reassure consumers that the problem is under control and that things are fine. This study tries to give practical implications about what exactly effective public communication is during a product recall, and how the damage for the organization can be minimized. Several practical guidelines will be discussed.

To begin with, this study shows that crisis severity is an important factor during a product recall situation. The results show that the severity of the crisis influences customers' emotions and purchase intention. When a crisis is more severe, consumers feel more anger, have less sympathy, and there purchase intention will be lower. Furthermore, consumers have less trust in the organization, when a crisis is more severe. The results of this study underline that, if possible,

organizations should try to minimize how severe the crisis is perceived by the public.

However, the severity of a crisis is not always a factor that is controllable by the organization.

Second, the results of this study show that message framing can be an important factor during different types of crisis severity. These two variables especially have an influence on the anger consumers feel during a product recall. When crisis severity is minor, organizations should frame the message in a rational way. In contradiction to a major severity crisis, where the company should frame the product recall in an emotional way. The illustrated framing methods minimize the perceived anger of consumers, during both described crisis situations.

Both spokesperson type, and framing of the message showed no direct main effects on the measured dependent variables. However, this does not mean that it is not important to carefully consider both variables while formulating a crisis response. Earlier mentioned studies showed that both variables can have an effect on how the organization is perceived by the public. So possibly, in different crisis scenarios, both the spokesperson and framing method, should be carefully considered by the organization.

6 Conclusion

The goal of this research was to examine what the influence of crisis severity, the type of spokesperson, and the frame of the message has on the emotions and behavioral intentions of the consumers during a product recall. Furthermore the trustworthiness of the organization was measured during this research. The accidental cluster was used as the cluster of crisis responsibility during this research.

Previous studies state that a crisis can be perceived as a minor crisis or as a major crisis. Furthermore, an organization can use a human spokesperson or an organizational spokesperson. Finally, the crisis message can be framed in an emotional, and a rational context. The emotions measured during this research were anger and sympathy. The behavioral intention was formulated as the purchase intention of the consumers. Lastly, trustworthiness was divided in competence-based trust and character-based trust.

This study found that crisis severity has a significant effect on all the stated dependent measures. No direct main effects were found for the type of spokesperson, and the frame of the crisis message. Furthermore, this study found an interaction effect between crisis severity and the frame of the message on the anger of consumers. When a minor severity crisis occurs, the organization should use a rational frame towards the consumers. However, when a major crisis occurs, the crisis message should be framed in an emotional manner.

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Appendix A: Items

Emotions

McDonald, Sparks & Glendon (2010) Anger

Because of the crisis situation at Kaas&Co..

- I feel angry at the company.
- I feel disgusted at the company.
- I feel annoyed at the company.
- I feel outraged at the company.

McDonald, Sparks & Glendon (2010) Sympathy

Because of the crisis situation at Kaas&Co..

- I feel sympathetic towards the company.
- I feel sorry for the company.
- I feel compassion for the company.
- I feel empathetic for the company.

Behaviour Intention

Lin, Chen, Chiu & Lee (2011) Purchase intention

- Given the chance, I intend to purchase from Kaas&Co.
- Given the chance, I predict that I would purchase from Kaas&Co in the future.
- It is likely that I will buy products from Kaas&Co in the near future.
- I expect to purchase from Kaas&Co in the near future.

Coombs & Holladay (2008) Positive WOM-intention

- I would encourage friends or relatives to buy products from Kaas&Co.
- I would say negative things about Kaas&Co and its products to other people. *(reversed)**
- I would recommend Kaas&Co products to someone who asked my advice.

Source Variables

Mayer & Davis (1999) Trustworthiness

Ability

- Kaas&Co is very capable of performing its job.
- Kaas&Co is known to be successful at the things it tries to do.
- Kaas&Co has much knowledge about the work that needs done.
- I feel very confident about Kaas&Co's skills.
- Kaas&Co has specialized capabilities that can increase our performance.
- Kaas&Co is well qualified.

Benevolence

- Kaas&Co is very concerned about my welfare.
- My needs and desires are very important to Kaas&Co.
- Kaas&Co would not knowingly do anything to hurt me.
- Kaas&Co really looks out for what is important to me.

-Kaas&Co will go out of its way to help me.

Integrity

- Kaas&Co has a strong sense of justice.
- I never have to wonder whether Kaas&Co will stick to its word.
- Kaas&Co tries hard to be fair in dealings with others.
- Kaas&Co's actions and behaviors are not very consistent.
- Sound principles seem to guide Kaas&Co's behavior.

Manipulation checks:

-How severe is this crisis?:

-Not severe - Very severe

-How would you describe the reaction of Kaas&Co?:

-Rational - Emotional

-Formal - Informal

-Objective - Subjective

-Gives information about the crisis - Tries to influence the emotions of the receiver

-Which employee of Kaas&Co delivers the message?:

- CEO of Kaas&Co - Unclear in the text

Control Question

-Have you heard about Kaas&Co before?

Demographics/Personality

-Age

-Gender

-Education

-Province

Product involvement:

-Cheese is an important part of my life.

-I could not imagine a day without eating cheese.

Health:

-I am highly concerned about my health.

-My health is important to me.

Appendix B: Manipulation Texts

Rational/Minor/Organizational

Kaas&Co roept jongbelegen kaas terug.

De Zuid-Hollandse kaasproducent start een vrijwillige terugroepactie, wegens een verpakkingsfout op de jongbelegen kaas. Kaas&Co komt naar buiten met informatie over de terugroepactie.

GOUDA. Door een technische storing is het verkeerde etiket op de kaas geplaatst. In plaats van het etiket voor jonge kaas, staat het etiket voor jongbelegen kaas op de verpakking. De term “jongbelegen” mag alleen op de verpakking worden afgedrukt, als de kaas minimaal twee maanden heeft gerijpt. Het gaat om verpakkingen met de productiecode KS27JB. Consumenten lieten weten dat de kaas een afwijkende smaak had, waarna de storing werd opgemerkt.

Kaas&Co zegt over de terugroepactie het volgende: “Onze excuses voor de problemen met ons product. Door een technische storing is gisteren het verkeerde etiket op het product gekomen. De storing is na ontdekking direct verholpen. Het voorkomen van dergelijke storingen zal voor ons van belang blijven in de toekomst. Consumenten die het product hebben gekocht, kunnen dit in de winkel omruilen.”. Meer informatie over deze terugroepactie kunt u vinden op de website van het bedrijf.

Emotional/Major/CEO

Kaas&Co roept jongbelegen kaas terug

De Zuid-Hollandse kaasproducent start een vrijwillige terugroepactie, wegens toevoeging schadelijke stoffen aan de jongbelegen kaas. Directeur van Kaas&Co noemt de terugroepactie verschrikkelijk.

GOUDA. Door een technische storing is een bijtend schoonmaakmiddel in de jongbelegen kaas van Kaas&Co terecht gekomen. Het consumeren van deze kaas kan tot ernstige gezondheidsschade leiden. Mogelijke schadelijke gevolgen zijn misselijkheid, braken en in ernstige gevallen kan het leiden tot inwendige brandwonden. Het gaat om verpakkingen met de productiecode KS27JB. De fout kwam aan het licht toen twee consumenten in het

ziekenhuis moesten worden opgenomen, nadat ze de jongbelegen kaas hadden gegeten.

De directeur van Kaas&Co, Maurice Vermeer, zegt over de terugroepactie het volgende: “Het spijt ons verschrikkelijk dat er problemen zijn met ons product. We schrokken gisteren enorm, toen we erachter kwamen dat dankzij een technische storing een schoonmaakmiddel in ons product is gekomen. We hebben de storing gelukkig snel kunnen herstellen. We zullen ontzettend ons best blijven doen om dergelijke storingen te voorkomen in de toekomst. Consumenten die het product hebben gekocht, kunnen dit natuurlijk omruilen in de winkel.”. Meer informatie over deze terugroepactie kunt u vinden op de website van het bedrijf.

Rational/Minor/CEO

Kaas&Co roept jongbelegen kaas terug.

De Zuid-Hollandse kaasproducent start een vrijwillige terugroepactie, wegens een verpakkingsfout op de jongbelegen kaas. Directeur van Kaas&Co komt naar buiten met informatie over de terugroepactie.

GOUDA. Door een technische storing is het verkeerde etiket op de kaas geplaatst. In plaats van het etiket voor jonge kaas, staat het etiket voor jongbelegen kaas op de verpakking. De term “jongbelegen” mag alleen op de verpakking worden afgedrukt, als de kaas minimaal twee maanden heeft gerijpt. Het gaat om verpakkingen met de productiecode KS27JB. Consumenten lieten weten dat de kaas een afwijkende smaak had, waarna de storing werd opgemerkt.

De directeur van Kaas&Co, Maurice Vermeer, zegt over de terugroepactie het volgende: “Onze excuses voor de problemen met ons product. Door een technische storing is gisteren het verkeerde etiket op het product gekomen. De storing is na ontdekking direct verholpen. Het voorkomen van dergelijke storingen zal voor ons van belang blijven in de toekomst. Consumenten die het product hebben gekocht, kunnen dit in de winkel omruilen.”. Meer informatie over deze terugroepactie kunt u vinden op de website van het bedrijf.

Emotional/Major/Organizational

Kaas&Co roept jongbelegen kaas terug

De Zuid-Hollandse kaasproducent start een vrijwillige terugroepactie, wegens

toevoeging schadelijke stoffen aan de jongbelegen kaas. Kaas&Co noemt de terugroepactie verschrikkelijk.

GOUDA. Door een technische storing is een bijtend schoonmaakmiddel in de jongbelegen kaas van Kaas&Co terecht gekomen. Het consumeren van deze kaas kan tot ernstige gezondheidsschade leiden. Mogelijke schadelijke gevolgen zijn misselijkheid, braken en in ernstige gevallen kan het leiden tot inwendige brandwonden. Het gaat om verpakkingen met de productiecode KS27JB. De fout kwam aan het licht toen twee consumenten in het ziekenhuis moesten worden opgenomen, nadat ze de jongbelegen kaas hadden gegeten.

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Emotional/Minor/CEO

Kaas&Co roept jongbelegen kaas terug.

De Zuid-Hollandse kaasproducent start een vrijwillige terugroepactie, wegens een verpakkingsfout op de jongbelegen kaas. Directeur van Kaas&Co noemt de terugroepactie verschrikkelijk.

GOUDA. Door een technische storing is het verkeerde etiket op de kaas geplaatst. In plaats van het etiket voor jonge kaas, staat het etiket voor jongbelegen kaas op de verpakking. De term “jongbelegen” mag alleen op de verpakking worden afgedrukt, als de kaas minimaal twee maanden heeft gerijpt. Het gaat om verpakkingen met de productiecode KS27JB. Consumenten lieten weten dat de kaas een afwijkende smaak had, waarna de storing werd opgemerkt.

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omruilen in de winkel.”. Meer informatie over deze terugroepactie kunt u vinden op de website van het bedrijf.

Emotional/Minor/Organizational

Kaas&Co roept jongbelegen kaas terug.

De Zuid-Hollandse kaasproducent start een vrijwillige terugroepactie, wegens een verpakkingsfout op de jongbelegen kaas. Kaas&Co noemt de terugroepactie verschrikkelijk.

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Kaas&Co roept jongbelegen kaas terug

De Zuid-Hollandse kaasproducent start een vrijwillige terugroepactie, wegens toevoeging schadelijke stoffen aan de jongbelegen kaas. Directeur van Kaas&Co komt naar buiten met informatie over de terugroepactie.

GOUDA. Door een technische storing is een bijtend schoonmaakmiddel in de jongbelegen kaas van Kaas&Co terecht gekomen. Het consumeren van deze kaas kan tot ernstige gezondheidsschade leiden. Mogelijke schadelijke gevolgen zijn misselijkheid, braken en in ernstige gevallen kan het leiden tot inwendige brandwonden. Het gaat om verpakkingen met de productiecode KS27JB. De fout kwam aan het licht toen twee consumenten in het ziekenhuis moesten worden opgenomen, nadat ze de jongbelegen kaas hadden gegeten.

De directeur van Kaas&Co, Maurice Vermeer, zegt over de terugroepactie het volgende: “Onze excuses voor de problemen met ons product. Door een technische storing is gisteren een schoonmaakmiddel in ons product gekomen. De storing is na ontdekking direct verholpen. Het voorkomen van dergelijke storingen zal voor ons van belang blijven in de toekomst. Consumenten die het product hebben gekocht, kunnen dit in de winkel omruilen.”. Meer informatie over deze terugroepactie kunt u vinden op de website van het bedrijf.

Kaas&Co roept jongbelegen kaas terug

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GOUDA. Door een technische storing is een bijtend schoonmaakmiddel in de jongbelegen kaas van Kaas&Co terecht gekomen. Het consumeren van deze kaas kan tot ernstige gezondheidsschade leiden. Mogelijke schadelijke gevolgen zijn misselijkheid, braken en in ernstige gevallen kan het leiden tot inwendige brandwonden. Het gaat om verpakkingen met de productiecode KS27JB. De fout kwam aan het licht toen twee consumenten in het ziekenhuis moesten worden opgenomen, nadat ze de jongbelegen kaas hadden gegeten.

Kaas&Co zegt over de terugroepactie het volgende: “Onze excuses voor de problemen met ons product. Door een technische storing is gisteren een schoonmaakmiddel in ons

product gekomen. De storing is na ontdekking direct verholpen. Het voorkomen van dergelijke storingen zal voor ons van belang blijven in de toekomst. Consumenten die het product hebben gekocht, kunnen dit in de winkel omruilen.”. Meer informatie over deze terugroepactie kunt u vinden op de website van het bedrijf.

Appendix C: Dutch Questionnaire

Introductie:

Beste deelnemer,

Bedankt dat u mee wil werken aan dit onderzoek. Deze enquête wordt uitgevoerd in het kader van mijn master thesis voor de opleiding Corporate Communication aan de Universiteit Twente. Het onderzoek richt zich op de communicatie van een organisatie gedurende een crisis situatie.

Het onderzoek zal ongeveer 5 -10 minuten in beslag nemen. Alle resultaten van deze vragenlijst worden anoniem verwerkt en zullen niet aan derden worden verstrekt. U heeft de mogelijkheid om tussentijds uw deelname af te breken.

Voor vragen over dit onderzoek kunt u e-mailen naar d.g.gerrits@student.utwente.nl.

Hierbij wil ik u nogmaals hartelijk bedanken voor uw deelname aan dit onderzoek!

Met vriendelijke groet,

Danny Gerrits
Communication Studies- Corporate Communication
Universiteit Twente

Uitleg onderzoek:

U krijgt een krantenartikel te lezen uit De Volkskrant. Lees dit artikel zorgvuldig door. Na de tijd mag u enkele vragen over dit artikel beantwoorden. Hierbij zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden mogelijk. U heeft de mogelijkheid om tussentijds terug te keren naar het krantenartikel.

Vragen:

Hoe zou u de crisissituatie van Kaas&Co beoordelen?

	1	2	3	4	5
-Niet ernstig:Zeer ernstig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Hoe zou u de reactie van Kaas&Co omschrijven?

	1	2
-Rationeel:Emotioneel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Geeft informatie over de crisis:Speelt in op gevoel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Objectief:Subjectief	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Formeel:Informeel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Welke werknemer van Kaas&Co bespreekt de terugroepactie?

	1	2
-De directeur van Kaas&Co:Dit wordt niet duidelijk uit het artikel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q18 Geef bij onderstaande stellingen aan in hoeverre u dit ervaart ten opzichte van Kaas&Co:
Dankzij de terugroepactie van Kaas&Co..

	Helemaal mee oneens	Oneens	Niet oneens, niet eens	Eens	Helemaal mee eens
-Voel ik woede	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Voel ik walging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Voel ik irritatie	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Voel ik verontwaardiging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef bij onderstaande stellingen aan in hoeverre u dit ervaart ten opzichte van Kaas&Co:Dankzij de terugroepactie van Kaas&Co..

	Helemaal mee oneens	Oneens	Niet oneens, niet eens	Eens	Helemaal mee eens
-Voel ik sympathie	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Heb ik medelijden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Heb ik mededogen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Voel ik empathie	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef bij elk van de onderstaande stellingen aan in hoeverre u dit ervaart ten opzichte van Kaas&Co:

	Ze er on waarschijnlijk	On waarschijnlijk	Niet on waarschijnlijk, niet waarschijnlijk	Waarschijnlijk	Ze er waarschijn-lijk
-Als ik de kans krijg, heb ik de intentie om producten te kopen van Kaas&Co.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Als ik de kans krijg, voorspel ik dat ik in de toekomst producten koop van Kaas&Co.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Het is aannemelijk dat ik in de nabije toekomst producten koop van Kaas&Co.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Ik verwacht in de nabije toekomst producten te kopen van Kaas&Co.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef bij elk van de onderstaande stellingen aan in hoeverre u dit ervaart ten opzichte van Kaas&Co:

	Ze er onwaarschijnlijk	Onwaarschijnlijk	Niet onwaarschijnlijk, niet waarschijnlijk	Waarschijnlijk	Ze er waarschijn-lijk
-Ik zou vrienden of familie aanmoedigen om producten van Kaas&Co te kopen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Ik zou negatieve dingen over Kaas&Co en zijn producten zeggen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Ik zou Kaas&Co aanraden aan iemand die mijn advies vraagt.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef bij elk van de onderstaande stellingen aan in hoeverre u dit ervaart ten opzichte van Kaas&Co:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Oneens	Niet oneens, niet eens	Eens	Helemaal mee eens
-Kaas&Co is zeer geschikt in het uitvoeren van zijn werk.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kaas&Co staat bekend succesvol te zijn in de dingen die ze doen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kaas&Co heeft veel verstand van het werk dat gedaan moet worden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Ik heb vertrouwen in de kwaliteiten van Kaas&Co.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kaas&Co heeft speciale kwaliteiten die hun prestaties verbeteren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kaas&Co is goed gekwalificeerd voor hun werk.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef bij elk van de onderstaande stellingen aan in hoeverre u dit ervaart ten opzichte van Kaas&Co:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Oneens	Niet oneens, niet eens	Eens	Helemaal mee eens
-Kaas&Co is bezorgd om mijn welzijn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Mijn behoeften zijn belangrijk voor Kaas&Co.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kaas&Co zou mij niet opzettelijk willen kwetsen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kaas&Co let echt op naar wat belangrijk voor mij is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kaas&Co zal er alles aan doen om mij te helpen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef bij elk van de onderstaande stellingen aan in hoeverre u dit ervaart ten opzichte van Kaas&Co:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Oneens	Niet oneens, niet eens	Eens	Helemaal mee eens
-Kaas&Co heeft een sterk gevoel voor rechtvaardigheid.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik hoef mij nooit zorgen te maken of Kaas&Co zich aan zijn woord houdt.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kaas&Co probeert altijd eerlijk te zijn tegenover anderen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kaas&Co's acties en gedrag zijn niet erg consistent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Gezonde principes lijken het gedrag van Kaas&Co te leiden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Leeftijd:

_____ Jaar

Geslacht:

- ☐ Man
☐ Vrouw

In welke Nederlandse provincie woont u momenteel?

- ☐ Groningen
- ☐ Friesland
- ☐ Drenthe
- ☐ Gelderland
- ☐ Flevoland
- ☐ Overijssel
- ☐ Zuid-Holland
- ☐ Noord-Holland
- ☐ Utrecht
- ☐ Noord-Brabant
- ☐ Limburg
- ☐ Zeeland
- ☐ Ik woon in het buitenland

Wat is uw hoogst afgeronde opleidingsniveau? (Bent u met een opleiding bezig, vul dan dit niveau in)

- ☐ Basisonderwijs
- ☐ VMBO
- ☐ HAVO
- ☐ VWO
- ☐ MBO
- ☐ HBO
- ☐ WO
- ☐ Overig

Bent u bekend met het bedrijf Kaas&Co?

	1	2
-Ja:Nee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Persoonlijke voorkeuren:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Oneens	Niet oneens, niet eens	Eens	Helemaal mee eens
-Ik vind mijn eigen gezondheid van groot belang.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Ik houd me bezig met mijn gezondheid.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Kaas is een belangrijk onderdeel van mijn eetpatroon.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-Het liefst eet ik elke dag kaas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>