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Master thesis

*The influence of social presence and bi-directionality within email-newsletters
on consumer attitudes and continuous use intention*

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Summary

This study examines the effects of social presence and bi-directionality on consumer attitudes and the intention to continue using the e-newsletter, mediated by perceived benefits (usefulness), perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment. Social presence is the perception of personal, sociable, sensitive human elements in an online environment and bi-directional communication is two-way communication between the source and the receiver. This study aims on permission-based e-newsletters. The purpose of this study is to extend our knowledge of the effects of social presence and bi-directionality on consumer attitudes and continuous use intention within an e-newsletter context by using experimental research methods.

To conceptualize the concepts of social presence and bi-directionality, existing theories were used as a theoretical framework. First, the Media Richness Theory was elaborated to conceptualize the concept of bi-directionality. Second, the Social Presence Theory was discussed to conceptualize the concept of social presence. Also, the relationship between effectiveness, attitudes and the intention to continue using the e-newsletter was discussed. Based on the theoretical background it can be concluded that social presence and bi-directionality have a number of effects on the perceived benefits (usefulness), perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment. In turn, these variables seem to play a mediating role in forming attitudes and intentions.

A 2×2 between-subject experiment was conducted to test the hypotheses. Four versions of an e-newsletter were designed and operationalized on level of social presence and bi-directionality. The company that was willing to take part in the study was Bruna (a Dutch retailer). The four experimental e-newsletter versions were randomly sent to Bruna's subscribers. Each e-newsletter contained a link to a questionnaire. The number of valid responses was 314. A revised research model was presented to illustrate the connections between the variables.

Empirical findings indicate that both perceived social presence and perceived bi-directionality seem to play a significant role in forming the perceived benefits (usefulness), perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment of an e-newsletter. The findings suggests that providing an e-newsletter that users perceive as high in social presence and bi-directionality will positively influence their perceptions on informativeness and entertainment. In turn, a more informative and especially a more entertaining e-newsletter will generate more favorable attitudes and intentions to continue using that e-newsletter.

Finally, the limitations of this study and recommendations for future research are discussed.

1. Introduction

Companies can communicate with their customers through a variety of media. Many companies use traditional media to reach their customers, such as printed brochures. Although this type of traditional media could reach many new customers, it has limitations. Only broad segmentation is possible and the feedback of the customer is limited. As a communication medium, it is fundamentally different from online advertising. The online environment is not a one-way channel: customers often have the chance to interact with the advertising company. Furthermore, the online environment can be viewed as lacking human warmth and sociability, as it tends to be more impersonal, anonymous and automated than the offline shopping environment (Gefen and Straub, 2003; Hassanein and Head, 2007).

The online environment permits the use of text, pictures, animations, video and/or sound. These multisensory modes of communication have the potential to increase the effectiveness of messages by a company that is advertising by synergistically conveying different aspects of the message in each mode (Gallagher, Foster and Parsons, 2001). Furthermore, the interactive capacity of the online environment can change the customer from a passive receiver of information into an active participant (Gallagher et. al., 2001; Ko, Cho and Roberts, 2005). In this study, there will be a focus on email newsletters (e-newsletters) to examine if synergy can be achieved by adding certain elements in the e-newsletter. The elements that are addressed in this study will be introduced in section 1.1.

The focus will be on permission-based e-newsletters. In the case of permission-based emails, the customer provides explicit consent to receive promotional direct emails (Ellis-Chadwick and Doherty, 2012). Many e-commerce marketers use permission-based emails to notify prospects about their products and promotions, increase sales, and to develop an ongoing relationship with their customers (Engelland, Lehman and Pearson, 2012). Using email as a marketing tool is a cost-efficient way to share information, to keep in touch with customers and to increase traffic to a website or social media site, such as Facebook and YouTube. A study that measured the overall impact of a financial e-newsletter concluded that using email marketing is cheaper than traditional media and results in faster response times from the company's customers (Erickson and Hansen, 2012).

In the Netherlands, email marketing is considered an important tool in the marketing strategy. A study by E-Village (2014) analyzed about 3 billion promotional emails from more than 6000 email campaigns that had been sent in 2013. In this study, 75% of the surveyed marketers

indicated that they have a tailor-made strategy for email marketing. This year, 84% of the marketers indicated that they would like to be more involved with email marketing. Hence, email marketing is a hot topic among marketers in the year 2015.

The effectiveness of email marketing gained a lot of research attention as well. For instance, a study by Ellic-Chadwick and Doherty (2011) examined executional elements in a sample of almost 1000 permission-based email marketing campaigns. The researchers analyzed the content and revealed different tactics of format, address, subject lines and hyperlinks to attract customers' attention and to encourage further interest. However, this study only summarizes how the analyzed emails are designed. The researchers do not focus on the effects of the content and design characteristics on attitudes and behavioral intentions, although these are considered important constructs in the marketing field. There are some studies that focus on elements within an email and their effects, such as the study of Huang, Lin and Lin (2009). However, this study focuses on pass-along emails and pass-along intentions. No studies have been found that focus particularly on permission-based email marketing and the influence of certain content and design elements on consumer attitudes and the intention to continue using the e-newsletter.

Unlike traditional information systems, e-marketing is a mix between both an information system and a marketing channel. First, the online environment contains static elements that provide functionality. These elements are, for instance: technical aspects, navigation and design elements such as a company logo and a consistent web page (Liang and Lai, 2001; Hausman and Siekpe, 2009). In addition, the online environment contains hedonic, more interactive elements that add value by contributing to user satisfaction. Hausman and Siekpe (2009) suggest that providing improved interactive elements within a website (richer media with a more real environment, providing improved human factors such as feedback features) has a positive influence on the customer's attitude towards the website and, in turn, influence purchase and return intentions more than a website that contains the recommended static elements (such as an un-do button and a company logo). Although most literature focuses on websites, it is interesting to investigate whether similar suggestions can be made for e-newsletters as well.

The days when one could argue that the online environment is simply another medium to convey commercial information (just like television, radio, print etc.) have passed. Nowadays, researchers believe that the interactive nature of the online environment – the ability for the user to respond and react – creates an entirely new environment which have different parameters compared with traditional mass communication (Fortin and Dholakia, 2005). However, Sundar

and Kim (2005) argue that this web-based advertising still follows many aspects of the traditional advertising models. Ellis-Chadwick and Doherty (2012) agree and argue it is important that marketers follow the latest academic research to guide the design of their email marketing campaigns.

As stated earlier in this chapter, researchers argue that the online environment (including e-newsletters) lacks human warmth and sociability. It is often perceived as being impersonal, anonymous and automated. In this study it will be examined if improving these elements (more human warmth, social- and personal communication elements and less anonymity) will result in more favorable attitudes towards the e-newsletter and/or the company and in more favorable continuous use intentions.

The elements described earlier are characteristics of concepts called ‘social presence’ and ‘bi-directionality’. It is clear that these concepts have a noticeable effect in forming attitudes and intentions within the online environment. However, no studies can be found on the effects within an e-newsletter context. Because of this, there will be a focus on e-newsletters to see whether similar effects are noticeable. This study examines the effects of social presence and bi-directionality on consumer attitudes and the intention to continue using the e-newsletter, mediated by perceived benefits (usefulness), perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment. The concepts of social presence and bi-directionality will be introduced in section 1.1. and the mediating variables will be addressed in chapter 2. The overall research question that will be addressed in this study is:

To what extent does social presence and bi-directionality influence the effectiveness of email-newsletters?

1.1. Introduction to social presence and bi-directionality

In this study the concepts of social presence and bi-directionality will be examined. In an online environment these concepts are particularly relevant due to the restriction of direct human interaction between the website/e-newsletter and the customer, especially in comparison to offline shopping (Ogonowski, Montandon, Botha and Reyneke, 2014). First, the definitions of social presence and bi-directionality within the e-commerce context will be given.

Short, Williams and Christie (1976) were the first to give an operational definition of social presence. They defined social presence as the degree of salience of the other person in the interaction and the consequent salience of the interpersonal relationships. However, this definition is only applicable in a human context. Focusing on the e-commerce context in this

study, a more recent definition by Gefen and Straub (2004) will be used. They state that social presence is the perception of personal, sociable, sensitive human elements in an online environment. There is a restriction of direct two-way human interaction between a company and a customer in an online environment, in comparison to offline shopping (Maity and Dass, 2014). For example: in a brick-and-mortar shopping environment a customer can directly ask an employee for more information about a product or the availability of alternatives. The online environment does not offer such direct two-way human interaction, although nowadays techniques are used that try to emulate two-way human interaction (such as the possibility to contact an employee directly instead of contacting the customer service department).

An important element of social presence is the availability of bi-directional communication; the two-way communication between the source and the receiver (Yoo, Lee and Park, 2010). In the past, studies have concluded that bi-directional features in an online environment could have favorable effects (Ellis-Chadwick and Doherty, 2012; Sundar, 2007; Yoo, Lee and Park, 2010). Although just a few of these studies focus on e-newsletters in particular, much more information can be found about bi-directionality in the online environment in general. For instance, the study by Yoo, Lee and Park (2010), which investigated the role of bi-directionality on user satisfaction in an online shopping environment - by asking participants to recall an online purchasing experience - concluded that higher bi-directionality has positive effects on consumer decision making and satisfaction in the e-commerce context.

In a study on email marketing, Ellis-Chadwick and Doherty (2012) selected twenty medium to very large U.K. retailers email marketing campaigns. Over an 18-month period 957 emails were content-analyzed. The researchers concluded that bi-directional features seem to be an effective tactic to develop sustained attention or engagement with an email message. This corresponds with other studies on online bi-directionality which also conclude that higher levels of bi-directionality can lead to more engagement and participation (Ko, Cho and Roberts, 2005; Sundar, 2007). Besides the studies discussing the concept of bi-directionality, there are other studies which investigated social presence within the online environment.

A study by Hassanein and Head (2007) suggests that social presence is important in forming positive consumer attitudes towards websites that are selling products. The study manipulated social presence on a fictitious shopping site in three levels: low, high and medium. Within the low social presence manipulation, the products were shown in a solitary format with just functional descriptions in a bulleted list. The medium social presence manipulation contained all features of the low version, but added a socially rich-text: descriptions aimed at evoking

positive emotions. Finally, the high level social presence manipulation again contained all features of the medium version, but in this version the researchers added socially-rich pictures: the products are shown used by people in positive emotional, dynamic settings. The results indicated that the perceived social presence level of a commercial website has a positive effect on perceived benefits (usefulness) and entertainment. Research in this field describe entertainment as the ability to fulfill the needs for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment or emotional release (McQuail, 1983, as cited by Ducoffe, 1996). Although Hassanein and Head used a commercial website in their experiment, the situation is in many ways similar to an e-newsletter situation. For instance, both commercial websites and e-newsletters supply information about (new) products in an online environment. Also, both media are permission-based, as the customers choose to view the content. For a commercial website, customers choose to visit the website. In an e-newsletter situation, customers choose to open the e-newsletter. Because of the similarity of both media, it is interesting to investigate whether the results of Hassanein and Head's study are applicable in an e-newsletter situation as well.

The previous section has shown that perceived social presence affects perceived benefits (usefulness) and entertainment. However, it is not quite clear how to interpret the constructs within the online environment. In this context, entertainment is described by Ducoffe (1996, p. 23) as:

The ability of an advertisement to fulfill the needs of the user for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment, or emotional release.

Perceived benefits (usefulness) can be defined as (Davis, 1989, p. 320):

The degree to which the customer believes that a certain system (in this case, the e-newsletter) would enhance his or her performance.

In the literature there are studies which describe the above-mentioned definition as perceived benefits, but there are studies which describe it as perceived usefulness as well. Therefore, the construct will be reported as 'perceived benefits (usefulness)'.

A study by Wang, Chen, Herath and Rao (2009) measured the effect of an individual's perceived email benefits on the attitude toward email use in general. On the basis of a survey asking participants about their general email use, the researchers concluded that a higher level of perceived benefit of using email positively affects attitude toward email use. They operationalized the benefits of using email as including a discounted price, time-based offers, new product information and special events. Their conclusions support earlier work, such as

the study from Karahanna and Straub (1999), where perceived social presence within an email has a positive relationship with the perceived benefits (usefulness) of email. It is interesting to investigate if similar effects can be noticed within the context of an e-newsletter.

1.2. Theoretical relevance and practical implications

This study aims to fill the gap in existing scientific literature by examining the effects of bi-directionality and social presence on e-newsletter effectiveness. As indicated in the previous sections, most of the studies that investigate the concepts of social presence and bi-directionality focus on websites. There are some studies within the email context; but most of them do not focus on social presence and bi-directionality in particular. Furthermore, the studies that do focus on these concepts seem to be exploratory. This study will extend our knowledge of the effects of social presence and bi-directionality on consumer attitudes and continuous use intention within an e-newsletter context by using experimental research methods. On a more theoretical level, the study aims for a better understanding of the Media Richness Theory and how this theory can be connected to the concepts of social presence and bi-directionality. The conclusions of this study broadens our knowledge of the Media Richness Theory and how the theory can be used for a better match between the medium and the communication goal(s). The practical implications of the study can be of great value for companies that are currently using e-newsletters as a marketing tool. Furthermore, recommendations could be in the advertising strategy: deriving maximum response (sales) and providing maximum exposure with minimal cost.

2. Theoretical background

To conceptualize the research question mentioned in the previous chapter, and in particularly the concepts of social presence and bi-directionality, existing theories will be used as a theoretical framework. First, the Media Richness Theory (MRT) (Daft and Lengel, 1984) will be elaborated to conceptualize the concept of bi-directionality. The theory was originally developed in the context of organizational communication, but according to Maity and Dass (2014) MRT is often applied these days to examine the effects on message processing in interactive media and to understand consumers' behavioral intentions. Second, the Social Presence Theory (SPT) (Short, et al., 1976) will be discussed to conceptualize the concept of social presence. In the past, it has been argued that social presence is a significant factor in explaining motives and motivations of consumer behavior and choices of customers in the online environment (Dash and Saji, 2008; Hassanein and Head, 2007). Finally, the relationship between effectiveness, attitudes and the intention to continue using the e-newsletter will be discussed.

2.1. Media Richness Theory

The Media Richness Theory (sometimes referred as Information Richness Theory) was originally developed by Daft and Lengel (1984). The theory suggests that communication media can vary in their ability to convey information and enable consumers to communicate and exchange understanding. MRT is used to evaluate the 'richness' of specific communication media (such as email). To be precise, the theory states that the more ambiguous and uncertain a specific task is, the richer the format of media has to be to suit it. Using four components, the media richness evaluation includes:

- Availability of instant feedback
- Capacity of the medium to transmit multiple information cues
- Use of natural language
- Personalization

The more a medium incorporates these components, the richer it is. Media are described in MRT as a continuum of richness (Lu et. al., 2014). For instance, face-to-face communication is considered to be a rich medium, as it allows (bi-directional) communication with instant feedback.

Also, with face-to-face communication an individual has the possibility to communicate a variety of cues simultaneously (like facial expressions or emotions). At the other end of the continuum, text-based interaction such as texting through a mobile phone is much less rich than face-to-face communication (Maity and Dass, 2014) as there is much less capacity to transmit multiple information cues and there is no instant feedback.

Extending the theory to decision making in e-commerce, media richness is a characteristic that allows a certain marketing channel (in this study, email) to communicate information to customers and help them with their decision-making process. Maity and Dass (2014) stated that decision-making inside a physical (offline) store involves face-to-face, bi-directional communication. It has direct feedback and communication capabilities due to the availability of in-store salespeople. As a consequence, a personal focus and a wide variety of language support is available. And so, it is concluded that the in-store marketing channel is very high in media richness. The researchers stated that the online environment has fewer capabilities of instant feedback and personal focus in comparison with physical (offline) stores. Therefore, they considered the online environment to be much lower in media richness.

Within an online environment, bi-directionality between the company and its customers is possible if the environment has rich, diverse and direct communication abilities. A high degree of bi-directionality can create co-presence: in a study by Kim, Suh and Lee (2013) about the effects of collaborative online shopping through social perspectives it is concluded that bi-directionality is a characteristic of media richness and that a higher level of bi-directionality can improve the online shopping experience. Furthermore, the researchers found out that embodiment (supplying an avatar as a user's alter ego in an online environment) can lead to increased perceived co-presence. In turn, co-presence enhanced bi-directionality and the shopping experience.

In a study by Hausman and Siekpe (2009), participants were randomly directed to one of the two websites which both simulate a shopping site. The websites were manipulated on interface features, where a number of features could be classified as 'computer features' (such as a company logo and an un-do button) and 'human features' (such as feedback features and language options). The results suggested that both computer and human factors were influential on perceptions of benefits (usefulness) and informativeness. Informativeness can be referred to (Ducoffe, 1996, p. 22):

The capability to present necessary information to target users.

Furthermore, human factors were influential on perceptions of entertainment. To study these relations, the following hypotheses are designed:

- H1: A higher level of social presence increases the perceived informativeness of the e-newsletter
- H2: A higher level of bi-directionality increases the perceived benefits (usefulness) of the e-newsletter
- H3: A higher level of bi-directionality increases the perceived entertainment of the e-newsletter

Connecting the Media Richness Theory to the concept of bi-directionality, there seems to be a combined effect. Research within the marketing field shows that media richness and bi-directionality both have effect on perceived knowledge/informativeness (Li, Daugherty and Biocca, 2002; Suh and Lee, 2005), and that better knowledge of the product leads to higher purchase intentions (Berger, Ratchford and Haines, 1994). In a study of Lu, Kim, Dou and Kumar (2014) about promoting physical activity among college students in an online environment, the researchers argue that website designers should consider using technology with high media richness to enhance knowledge, attitude, and to increase behavioral intention. The following hypotheses are designed to study these relations:

- H4: A higher level of bi-directionality increases the perceived informativeness of the e-newsletter
- H5: A higher level of perceived informativeness positively influences the attitude towards the e-newsletter
- H6: A higher level of perceived informativeness positively influences the attitude towards the company

The study of Lee and Kozar (2012) focuses on the effect of website usability constructs on online customers' purchase intention conducted a field study with 1000 online customers. The target website of the study was Amazon.com. The researchers designed an online purchase scenario, which the participants had to follow. After finishing the shopping task, the participants had to complete an online survey. In the survey, questions were asked about ten usability constructs that were defined in an earlier study by the researchers. These constructs were, for instance: consistency, readability and interactivity. Interactivity was defined as: "the ability to create vivid interaction and communication with users" (Lee and Kozar, 2012, p. 460). According to this definition, it seems to have a high connection with bi-directionality. The

researchers concluded that interactivity significantly influences purchase intention. One major contributor to the significant influence of interactivity on purchase intention was that it enables enhanced communication between companies and its customers, for example by embedding Twitter into the website. This could also be noted as a form of bi-directionality between the user and the company.

Most of the previous studies focus on websites. In this study it will be investigated whether the effects are applicable in an e-newsletter situation as well.

2.2. Social Presence Theory

In the previous chapter social presence was introduced as the perception of personal, sociable, sensitive human elements in an online environment (Gefen and Straub, 2004). Within this section the theory of social presence will be elaborated.

While the concept of social presence is originally developed for synchronous bi-directional communication it is used within asynchronous settings as well, for example in the study of Otondo, Van Scotter, Allen and Palvia (2008). They state that social presence can create or elicit personal feelings and emotions that gives a message a personal focus. Therefore, it can enhance the effectiveness of the communication by increasing the relevance of the message and the receiver's involvement.

In an online environment, social presence cues communicate human warmth and sociability through the web-interface. Social presence can be embedded and function from no social presence at all to having a real person present (on the other side of the screen) during the interaction of the customer and the medium. Social presence is often used as a cue that enables interaction between customers and companies in an online environment. Many social presence cues present elements of human interaction such as images of a person or a socially descriptive text, but they do not necessarily directly relate to customer service (Ogonowski et. al., 2014; Qiu and Benbasat, 2005). An example of an extreme or very visual form of social presence is given by Ogonowski et. al. (2014): online chat boxes, where if a customer comes online a live chat box pops up on the screen, indicating that there is an expert available online to help the customer.

In earlier literature (Hassanein and Head, 2004; Hausman and Siekpe, 2009; Hassanein and Head, 2009; Dash and Saji, 2008) there are indications that social presence can be linked to perceived benefits (usefulness), informativeness and entertainment. A study by Hassanein and

Head (2007) about social presence - manipulated in a fictitious online clothing store - concluded that social presence is important in forming positive customer attitudes towards websites selling physical products. The researchers argued that entertainment and perceived benefits (usefulness) are important consequences of perceived social presence. Also, Hausman and Siekpe (2009) concluded that perceived benefits (usefulness) has a substantial impact on behavioral intentions. Moreover, in study by Dash and Saji (2008) within a B2C online shopping context in India, it is concluded that social presence is a key driver for greater perceived benefits (usefulness) and it can positively influence consumer attitudes towards online shopping. In addition to the study of Dash and Saji (2008), significant effects of social presence on perceived benefits (usefulness) and entertainment in an online environment were found in a study by Hassanein and Head (2004). Therefore, the following hypotheses are designed to study this relation:

- H7: A higher level of social presence increases the perceived benefits (usefulness) of the e-newsletter
- H8: A higher level of social presence increases the perceived entertainment of the e-newsletter
- H9: A higher level of perceived benefits positively influences the attitude towards the e-newsletter
- H10: A higher level of perceived benefits positively influences the attitude towards the company

Another recent study on social presence within a corporate website shows a direct effect of social presence on user satisfaction (Barnes and Vidgen, 2014). The researchers studied the concept of social presence in the context of professional users of a corporate website for a major European utility company. A redesign was made of the EuroUtility website and with a survey the researchers examined the level of social presence by measuring honesty, personableness, responsiveness and helpfulness. The researchers operationalized this by adding images showing a wide range of people in informal settings and by adding more rich media. They concluded that the perceived social presence of the website significantly contributes to increased user satisfaction (direct effect).

In conclusion, social presence – the perception of personal, social, sensitive human elements – can be integrated within the online environment to positively affect perceived benefits (usefulness), informativeness and entertainment. Furthermore, recent literature indicates that

there is a direct effect of perceived social presence on user satisfaction as well. Despite that most studies focus on websites, it is interesting to investigate whether this effect is noticeable within the e-newsletter channel as well.

2.3. Attitudes, behavioral intention and effectiveness

In this study, an e-newsletter is considered (more) effective when:

- The attitude of the customer towards the e-newsletter is (more) positive
- The attitude of the customer towards the company is (more) positive
- The continuous use intention of the e-newsletter is (more) positive; i.e. users will be (more) likely to stay subscribed to the e-newsletter and to continue use it

According to Hausman and Siekpe (2009), attitude towards a website is positively influenced by the perceived benefits (usefulness) of the website by customers. Also, the researchers state that a website high in perceived informativeness and entertainment is likely to generate a favorable attitude towards the site. The study of Hausman and Siekpe (2009) focuses on websites, but another study on email usage reported similar conclusions (Wang et al., 2009). Finally, the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) suggests that a customer his/her behavior is determined by his/her intention to perform the behavior. This intention is, in turn, a function of a customer his/her attitude toward the behavior. The following hypotheses are designed to study these relations:

- H11: A higher level of perceived entertainment positively influences the attitude towards the e-newsletter
- H12: A higher level of perceived entertainment positively influences the attitude towards the company
- H13: A more positive attitude towards the e-newsletter positively influences the continuous use intention of the e-newsletter

To summarize, the table in appendix 1 presents the studies that focus on social presence and bi-directional features and how they are operationalized. Furthermore, the table displays the main findings of the studies regarding social presence and/or bi-directionality.

Based on the theoretical background it can be concluded that social presence and bi-directionality have a number of effects on the perceived benefits (usefulness), perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment. In turn, these variables seem to play a mediating role in forming attitudes and intentions. A number of these studies focus on websites.

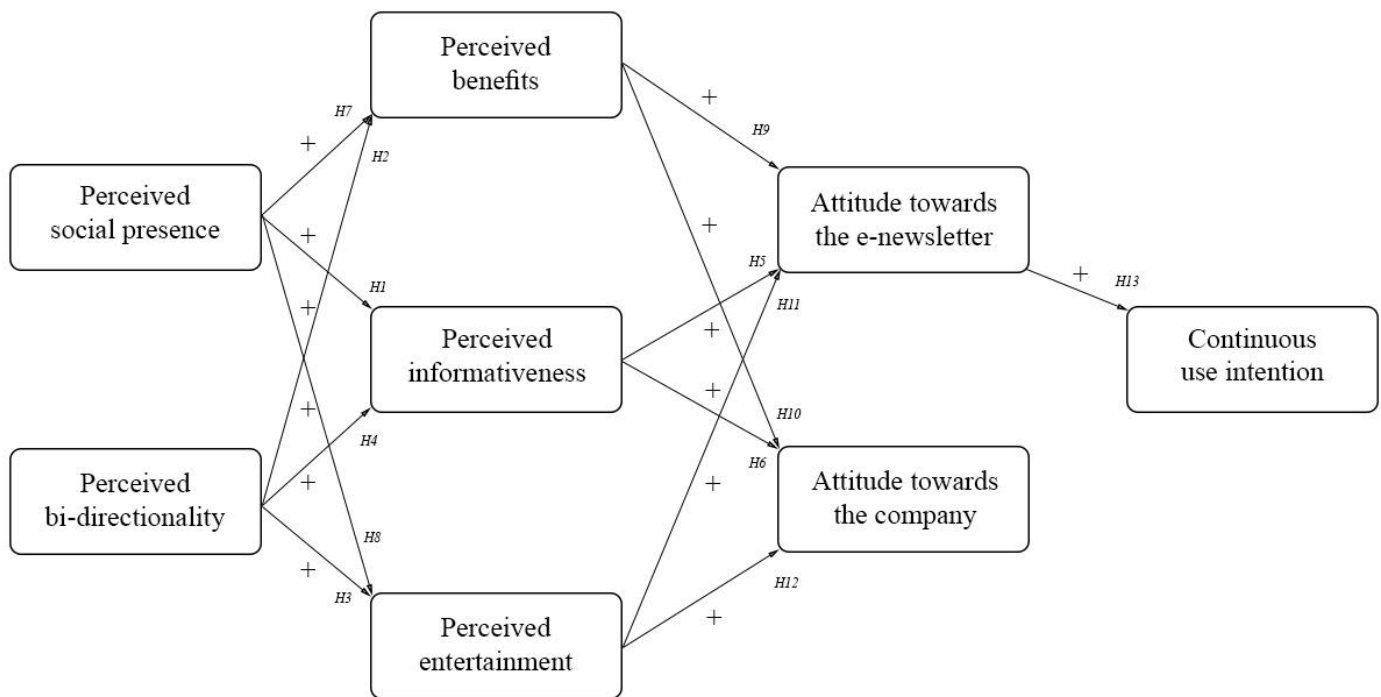
Nevertheless, it is interesting to investigate whether similar conclusions can be made in the field of e-newsletter marketing.

2.4. Research model

For this study, the following research model is created (figure 1) to answer the proposed research question:

To what extent does social presence and bi-directionality influence the effectiveness of email-newsletters?

Figure 1: The research model



3. Methodology

In this study, an experiment and a survey will be conducted to test the hypotheses and to provide an answer to the research question. The results of the experiment will indicate whether there are significant differences between how the participants perceive the four manipulated e-newsletter versions. A survey will be used to gather the data about the perceived social presence and bi-directionality. Moreover, the survey will provide data about the perceived benefits, perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment of the e-newsletter. Finally, the questions about the attitude towards the e-newsletter, the company, and about the continuous use intention of the e-newsletter subscription will provide the data of the corresponding constructs. Further elaboration on the research methods will be given in the next sections.

3.1. Context and participants

The company that is willing to take part in the study is Bruna. Bruna is a Dutch retailer, founded in 1868. The company is the market leader in the book, magazine, newspaper and greeting card branch. At the moment, there are almost 400 Bruna stores throughout the Netherlands. Around 380.000 people have a subscription to Bruna's e-newsletter. The target group will be everyone that is voluntarily subscribed to the promotional emails of this company. Bruna divided its customer population in 7 segments to target their e-newsletters. The average open-rates differs between these segments, for example: the e-newsletter targeted on men has an average open-rate of 34%, where the BrunaTablisto (a Bruna app) has an open-rate of 24%. Taking the four largest groups in account, the average open-rate of these groups together is around 34%.

3.2. Instrument development

A 2×2 between-subject experiment will be conducted to test the hypotheses. Based on the theoretical framework, four versions of an e-newsletter will be designed and operationalized on level of social presence and bi-directionality. There will be a division of four groups:





1. Participants receiving an e-newsletter with high levels of both social presence and bi-directionality (condition 1).
2. Participants receiving an e-newsletter with a high level of social presence, but a low level of bi-directionality (condition 2).
3. Participants receiving an e-newsletter with a low level of social presence, and a high level of bi-directionality (condition 3).

4. Participants receiving an e-newsletter with low levels of both social presence and bi-directionality (condition 4).

The first version of the e-newsletter (condition 1) contains a picture of an employee of the company. Next to the picture, text is added. In this condition the text contains a link to directly send a message to the company. Furthermore, a motivational text is inserted to encourage customers to contact the company. If a customer clicks on the link to contact the company, he/she will be redirected to an online contact form on the company's website (see appendix 5). Condition 2 contains the same social presence element as the first version of the e-newsletter but it will not contain a link to directly send a message to the company. Instead of this, the link to contact the company will be replaced by a generic text without the opportunity to contact the company. Within the third version of the e-newsletter (condition 3) the picture of the employee is replaced by the logo of the company. This version contains the same link to a contact page as in condition 1. The fourth version (condition 4) does not contain any elements of social presence and bi-directionality. Thus, this version of the e-newsletter features an image of the logo and a generic text without the opportunity to contact the company.

For a graphical overview of the operationalization of the manipulations as they are used in the pre-test, see figure 2 below.

Figure 2: The operationalization of the manipulations

	High level of bi-directionality	Low level of bi-directionality
High level of social presence	<p><i>Condition 1</i></p>  <p>Laat iets van u horen! Klik hier om contact met mij op te nemen.</p> <p>Bruna cadeaukaart winnen t.w.v. € 20,-? Vul nu de enquête in en maak kans!</p> <p>Klik hier voor de enquête ></p>	<p><i>Condition 2</i></p>  <p>Bekijk eens onze nieuwe e-books!</p> <p>Bruna cadeaukaart t.w.v. € 20,- winnen? Vul nu de enquête in en maak kans!</p> <p>Klik hier voor de enquête ></p>
Low level of social presence	<p><i>Condition 3</i></p>  <p>Laat iets van u horen! Klik hier om contact op te nemen.</p> <p>Bruna cadeaukaart t.w.v. € 20,- winnen? Vul nu de enquête in en maak kans!</p> <p>Klik hier voor de enquête ></p>	<p><i>Condition 4</i></p>  <p>Bekijk eens onze nieuwe e-books!</p> <p>Bruna cadeaukaart t.w.v. € 20,- winnen? Vul nu de enquête in en maak kans!</p> <p>Klik hier voor de enquête ></p>

3.3. Quality of instrument

All experimental conditions will contain a link to a questionnaire. In the questionnaire the participants will be asked about the perceived social presence and bi-directionality. Furthermore, questions will be asked about the perceived benefits, perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment of the e-newsletter. Also, questions will be asked about the attitude towards the e-newsletter and towards the company. Finally, questions will be asked about the continuous use intention of the e-newsletter subscription. See appendix 6 for the construct items, scales, wording, sources and reliability coefficients. Most of the items are originally focusing on websites. For this study, they are reformulated so that they better match the context of e-newsletters. In the questionnaire, the questions will be translated into Dutch. For the full Dutch questionnaire, see appendix 7.

3.4. Pre-test

First, a pre-test is conducted with all the experimental conditions to ensure the validity of the conditions. In other words: with the pre-test it is tested whether, for instance, the high bi-directional e-newsletter is perceived as significantly higher on bi-directionality than the low bi-directional e-newsletter. In the pre-test, a convenience sampling technique is used. Using convenience sampling, the needed data about the manipulation can be obtained without the complications of using a randomized sample. After reviewing one of the e-newsletters, the participants had to fill in the full survey as it is designed for the actual experiment.

After the data collection of the pre-test, the data was analyzed in SPSS. In total, 87 valid responses were recorded. It turned out that 36 of the responses were men and 51 of the responses were women. The mean age of the participants was 31 years. First, the scales were tested on reliability. The test revealed that all scales were sufficiently reliable. See table 3 below for the reliability statistics for each variable.

Table 3: Pre-test reliability coefficients

<i>Variable</i>	α
Perceived social presence	0,92
Perceived bi-directionality	0,88
Perceived benefits (usefulness)	0,91
Perceived informativeness	0,87

Perceived entertainment	0,91
Attitude towards the e-newsletter	0,92
Attitude towards the company	0,91
Continuous use intention	0,94

Next, a manipulation check will test if the manipulations have the intended effect. See table 4 on the next page for an overview of the mean scores and standard deviations of perceived social presence and perceived bi-directionality, divided by the manipulation that the participant was assigned to.

Table 4: Descriptives of the mean scores versus condition type

Variable		Mean	SD
Perceived social presence	High social presence condition	4,06	1,07
	Low social presence condition	3,52	1,44
Perceived bi-directionality	High bi-directional condition	4,65	1,29
	Low bi-directional condition	3,56	1,22

It can be noticed that the mean score of perceived social presence are higher for the high social presence condition, in comparison with the low social presence condition. Furthermore, the mean score for perceived bi-directionality is higher within the high bi-directional condition compared to the low bi-directional condition.

To examine if these differences were statistically significantly different, two ANOVA's were conducted. First, perceived social presence was inserted as the dependent variable and the condition types were inserted as independent variables. The results of the pre-test indicated a statistically significant effect of the high social presence condition on the perceived social presence ($F(1, 83) = 4.004, p = .049$). The second ANOVA was conducted with perceived bi-directionality inserted as the dependent variable. This resulted in a statistically significant effect

of the high bi-directional condition on the perceived bi-directionality ($F(1, 82) = 14.852, p = < .001$). Looking at these results, it can be concluded that the manipulations within the e-newsletters have the desired effect on perceived social presence and perceived bi-directionality. However, in the first ANOVA the assumption of equality is violated. In the low social presence condition there is more variance than in the high social presence condition. Because of this, a non-parametric test is performed. The Kruskal-Wallis test showed that the scores of social presence were non-significant: $\chi^2(1) = 2.152, p = .142$. This indicates that there is a possibility that the social presence manipulation is not present enough to be seen by others. As a result of the pre-test, the social presence element will be more salient within the experimental e-newsletters: a different picture of an employee is used and the name of the employee has been added next to the picture. Appendix 2 – 5 presents the full modified versions of the e-newsletter as they are sent in the experiment.

3.5. Data analysis

After the data collection from the experiment, all data have been analyzed in SPSS. A reliability analysis is executed to test the survey and the constructs. Also, the assumptions of normality and equal variances have been tested. To check whether the manipulations had the desired effect, one-way ANOVA's are used. With this measure it can be studied whether participants had significantly different perceptions between the four experimental conditions. Furthermore, multiple (stepwise) regression analyses are used to answer the hypotheses. With these analyses it can be examined whether the assumed relations between the constructs exists or not.

4. Results

The results of the experiment are described in this chapter.

4.1. Descriptives of the respondents

The four versions of the e-newsletter were sent on the 17th of July to a total of 331.410 subscribers. The total open rate was 19,5% which means that 65.483 subscribers opened the e-newsletter. 522 subscribers filled out the survey. That makes the overall response rate of the e-newsletter around 0,8%. After deleting incomplete responses and leaving out a number of participants that were under 18, the total number of valid responses was set on 314. See below in table 5 an overview of the descriptives of the total number of respondents.

Table 5: Characteristics of the respondents

		N	%
Gender:	Male	102	32,5%
	Female	212	67,5%
Average age:		46,85	SD: 15,77
Educational level:	Primary/secondary school	19	6,1%
	Vocational school	12	3,8%
	Intermediate vocational education	141	44,9%
	College/University	137	43,6%
	Other	5	1,6%
Number of purchases in the last 3 months:		4,17	SD: 4,41
Number of contacts in the last 3 months:		0,57	SD: 1,82

After further investigation on the respondent characteristics no systematic differences were found between the four e-newsletter conditions. The distributions of gender, age, educational level, number of purchases in the last 3 months and the number of contacts in the last 3 months are the same across all experimental conditions.

4.2. Instrument quality

The scales used in this study were tested on reliability. See table 6 below for the reliability statistics for each variable.

Table 6: Reliability coefficients

<i>Variable</i>	<i>α</i>
Perceived social presence	0,91
Perceived bi-directionality	0,92
Perceived benefits (usefulness)	0,87
Perceived informativeness	0,92
Perceived entertainment	0,93
Attitude towards the e-newsletter	0,91
Attitude towards the company	0,94
Continuous use intention	0,87

Almost all variables have a higher reliability coefficient than the original items, except perceived benefits (usefulness) and attitude towards the company. Although these variables test slightly lower in reliability in this experiment they were sufficiently reliable.

Furthermore, it is examined if the data is normally distributed. The assumption of normality was tested by visually inspecting the Q-Q plot and histogram of the dependent variable (see appendix 9). Also, a number of Shapiro-Wilk tests were executed on the social presence and bi-directionality variables. The data seems to be approximately normal, by examination of the Q-Q plots and histograms (see appendix 10 and 11). However, the Shapiro-Wilk tests stated that in some conditions the assumption of normality is violated (see table 7 on the next page).

Table 7: Tests of Normality

		Shapiro-Wilk		
<i>Experimental Condition</i>		Statistic	df	Sig.
Mean Score Social Presence	Condition 1	0,980	63	0,407
	Condition 2	0,972	75	0,097
	Condition 3	0,977	95	0,098
	Condition 4	0,938	81	0,001*
Mean Score Bi-Directionality	Condition 1	0,968	63	0,100
	Condition 2	0,957	75	0,013*
	Condition 3	0,975	95	0,066
	Condition 4	0,969	81	0,048*

* $p < .05$

It seems that the scores of social presence within condition 4 and the scores of bi-directionality in the conditions 2 and 4 are not normally distributed ($p = < .05$). The research model will still be tested by one-way ANOVA's as it is known to be fairly robust to deviations of normality. To be cautious, non-parametric tests such as the Kruskal-Wallis test will be run as an addition to the parametric tests.

4.3. Perceptions of social presence and bi-directionality

Within the experiment there were four versions of the e-newsletter. Each version of the e-newsletter was manipulated on level of social presence and bi-directionality. To see if these manipulations are perceived by the participants, a manipulation check will be performed. The results of this manipulation check are presented in table 8 on the next page:

Table 8: Manipulation check (mean scores)

	Condition 1		Condition 2		Condition 3		Condition 4	
	(+SP +BD)		(+SP -BD)		(-SP +BD)		(-SP -BD)	
	N = 63		N = 75		N = 95		N = 81	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<i>Mean scores</i>								
Social presence	4,94	0,94	4,96	1,04	4,82	1,03	4,85	1,03
Bi-directionality	4,78	1,05	4,63	1,22	4,74	1,17	4,51	1,16

It seems that there are only minor differences within the means scores of social presence and bi-directionality between the experimental conditions. Social presence seems to be slightly higher in the high social presence conditions where bi-directionality scores slightly higher in the bi-directional conditions. To test if these differences are statistically significant, an one-way ANOVA is conducted. There were no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of social presence between the experimental conditions, $F(3, 310) = 0.953$, $p = .415$. Also, there were no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of bi-directionality between the experimental conditions $F(3, 310) = 0.875$, $p = .454$. Kruskal-Wallis tests were run in addition to the ANOVA to determine if there were systematic differences in the mean scores of social presence and bi-directionality between the experimental conditions. The mean rank of social presence was not systematically significantly different between the experimental conditions, $\chi^2(3) = 1.450$, $p = .694$. Also, the mean rank of bi-directionality was not systematically significantly different between the experimental conditions, $\chi^2(3) = 2.496$, $p = .476$.

T-tests were run to see if there were statistically significant differences in social presence and bi-directionality scores between males, females and their education level. There was a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of social presence between intermediate vocational education and college/university participants, $M = 0.36$, $SE = 0.12$, $t(276) = 3.084$, $p = .002$. Participants with intermediate vocational education gave significant higher scores to the perceived social presence than participants who have a college/university degree. Also, a statistically significant difference was found in the mean scores of bi-directionality between these two education levels, $M = 0.50$, $SE = 0.14$, $t(276) = 3.659$, $p = < .001$. Here is

the same situation: participants with intermediate vocational education gave significant higher scores to the perceived bi-directionality than participants who have a college/university degree.

To investigate the influence of perceived social presence, bi-directionality and the other variables, an one-way ANOVA was conducted. With the ANOVA it is tested if there are statistically significant differences in the mean scores of the variables in the model between the experimental conditions. No statistically significant differences were found in the ANOVA between all the variables. The Kruskal-Wallis tests indicated a similar result: no systematically significant differences were found in the mean scores of the variables between the experimental conditions. In other words: the scores of all variables seem to be equally distributed between all experimental conditions.

Now it is known that there are no significant differences between each condition, all conditions can be merged. For the rest of this study, there will be no distinctions between the experimental conditions and the data will be treated as a whole. By merging the data, the research model can be tested. The results of these tests are presented in the next sections.

4.4. The influence of perceived social presence

A hierarchical (stepwise) multiple regression was run to test the research model and to predict continuous use intention from perceived social presence. The assumptions of linearity, independence of errors, homoscedasticity, unusual points and normality of residuals were met. The regression analysis revealed that perceived social presence explained was not a statistically significant predictor of continuous use intention ($\beta = -.038, p = .457$). However, when attitude towards the e-newsletter was inserted as the dependent variable instead of continuous use intention, perceived social presence seems to be a significant predictor of attitude towards the e-newsletter ($\beta = .158, p = < .0005$). Perceived social presence explained a high amount of variance in attitude towards the e-newsletter: 53% ($R^2 = .534, F(1,312) = 357.563, p < .0005$). So, there seems to be a direct relationship between perceived social presence and attitude towards the e-newsletter. Next, it is found that perceived social presence is the most important predictor of attitude towards the company ($\beta = .291, p = < .0005$). Here, perceived social presence explained 26% of the variance ($R^2 = .262, F(1,312) = 110.662, p < .0005$). Also, further investigation of the hierarchical multiple regressions revealed that perceived social presence significantly predicts perceived benefits/usefulness ($\beta = .401, p < .0005$), explaining 32% of the variance ($R^2 = .323, F(1,312) = 148.602, p < .0005$), perceived informativeness ($\beta = .559, p < .0005$), explaining 44% of the variance ($R^2 = .444, F(1,312) = 249.221, p < .0005$) and perceived entertainment ($\beta = .508, p < .0005$), explaining 43% of the variance ($R^2 = .431, F(1,312) = 236.404, p < .0005$). In conclusion: supporting evidence is found for the hypotheses H1, H7 and H8. See table 9 below for an overview of the regression analysis results.

Table 9: Regression analysis results of perceived social presence

	R^2	B	SE_B	β
<i>Variable: Perceived social presence</i>				
Continuous use intention	<i>n.s.</i>	1,375	0,267	-.038,
Attitude towards the e-newsletter	.534	0,177	0,034	0,158*
Attitude towards the company	.262	0,273	0,063	0,291*
Perceived benefits (usefulness)	.323	0,349	0,047	0,401*
Perceived informativeness	.444	0,486	0,043	0,559*
Perceived entertainment	.431	0,590	0,057	0,508*

* $p < .05$; B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE_B = standard error of the coefficient; β = standardized coefficient

4.5. The influence of perceived bi-directionality

To test the influence of perceived bi-directionality, another hierarchical (stepwise) multiple regression was run. It revealed that perceived bi-directionality significantly predicts continuous use intention, but with a negative coefficient ($\beta = -.105$, $p = .017$). Perceived bi-directionality explains a low amount of total variance (0,5%) in continuous use intention ($R^2 = .005$, $F(1,309) = 4.489$, $p = .035$). It also significantly predicts the attitude towards the e-newsletter ($\beta = .068$, $p = .011$), explaining the variance for 4,9% ($R^2 = .049$, $F(1,311) = 36.248$, $p < .0005$). Furthermore, significance was found for predicting the attitude towards the company ($\beta = .117$, $p = .050$), with an explanation in variance of 2% ($R^2 = .020$, $F(1,311) = 8.644$, $p = .004$), perceived benefits/usefulness ($\beta = .300$, $p = <.0005$), explaining its variance for 6,2% ($R^2 = .062$, $F(1,311) = 31.492$, $p < .0005$) perceived informativeness ($\beta = .193$, $p = <.0005$), explaining 2,6% of the variance ($R^2 = .026$, $F(1,311) = 15.122$, $p < .0005$) and perceived entertainment ($\beta = .267$, $p = <.0005$), explaining the variance for 4,9% ($R^2 = .049$, $F(1,311) = 29.527$, $p < .0005$). Therefore, the hypotheses H2, H3 and H4 are supported. Table 10 below presents the results of the regression analysis of perceived bi-directionality.

Table 10: Regression analysis results of perceived bi-directionality

	R^2	B	SE_B	β
<i>Variable: Perceived bi-directionality</i>				
Continuous use intention	.005	-0,098	0,037	-0,111*
Attitude towards the e-newsletter	.049	0,067	0,026	0,068*
Attitude towards the company	.020	0,097	0,049	0,117*
Perceived benefits (usefulness)	.062	0,229	0,041	0,300*
Perceived informativeness	.026	0,147	0,038	0,193*
Perceived entertainment	.049	0,272	0,050	0,267*

* $p < .05$; B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE_B = standard error of the coefficient; β = standardized coefficient

4.6. The influence of perceived benefits (usefulness)

Hypotheses H9 and H10 expect that perceived benefits (usefulness) positively influences the attitude towards the e-newsletter and the company. The hierarchical (stepwise) multiple regression indicated that the perceived benefits (usefulness) predictive value is non-significant

to attitude towards the e-newsletter ($\beta = -.035$, $p = .301$) and attitude towards the company ($\beta = .057$, $p = .465$). No evidence is found for the hypotheses H9 and H10, so they are not supported. For an overview of the regression analysis with perceived benefits (usefulness) as the variable, see table 11 below.

Table 11: Regression analysis results of perceived benefits (usefulness)

	R ²	B	SE _B	β
<i>Variable: Perceived benefits (usefulness)</i>				
Attitude towards the e-newsletter	<i>n.s.</i>	-0,045	0,044	-0,035
Attitude towards the company	<i>n.s.</i>	0,061	0,084	0,057

* $p < .05$; B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE_B = standard error of the coefficient; β = standardized coefficient

4.7. The influence of perceived informativeness

Looking at the variable perceived informativeness, the regression analysis revealed that it is a significant predictor for attitude towards the e-newsletter ($\beta = .235$ $p = <.0005$). The addition of perceived informativeness to the prediction of attitude towards the e-newsletter led to a statistically significant increase in R² of .091, $F(1,309) = 104.969$, $p < .0005$). Also, perceived informativeness predicts the attitude towards the company significantly ($\beta = .185$ $p = .027$), explaining the variance for 1,1% (R² = .011, $F(1,309) = 4.915$, $p = .027$). Thus, support is found for hypotheses H5 and H6. See table 12 below for the regression analysis results of perceived informativeness.

Table 12: Regression analysis results of perceived informativeness

	R ²	B	SE _B	β
<i>Variable: Perceived informativeness</i>				
Attitude towards the e-newsletter	.091	0,304	0,052	0,235*
Attitude towards the company	.011	0,200	0,090	0,185*

* $p < .05$; B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE_B = standard error of the coefficient; β = standardized coefficient

4.8. The influence of perceived entertainment

Perceived entertainment was entered into the hierarchical (stepwise) regression model as well. The results indicated that it is the most important predictor for attitude towards the e-newsletter, with a high standardized coefficient ($\beta = .607$ $p = <.0005$). It explained 13,7% of the variance in attitude towards the e-newsletter ($R^2 = .137$, $F(1,308) = 321.766$, $p < .0005$). No significance is found for its predictive value on attitude towards the company. Therefore, hypothesis H11 is supported and no support is found for hypothesis H12. Table 13 below presents the regression analysis results of perceived entertainment.

Table 13: Regression analysis results of perceived entertainment

	R^2	B	SE_B	β
<i>Variable: Perceived entertainment</i>				
Attitude towards the e-newsletter	.137	0,588	0,033	0,607*

* $p < .05$; B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE_B = standard error of the coefficient; β = standardized coefficient

4.9. The influence of attitude towards the e-newsletter

Finally, it is examined whether attitude towards the e-newsletter plays a role in the regression model. The regression analysis revealed that attitude towards the e-newsletter is a strong, significant predictor of continuous use intention ($\beta = .505$ $p = <.0005$). Attitude towards the e-newsletter explained 62,6% of the variance in continuous use intention ($R^2 = .626$, $F(1,312) = 522.946$, $p < .0005$). There seems to be a strong, positive relationship between the two variables. So, support was found for hypothesis H13. See table 14 below for the results of the regression analysis with attitude towards the e-newsletter as the variable.

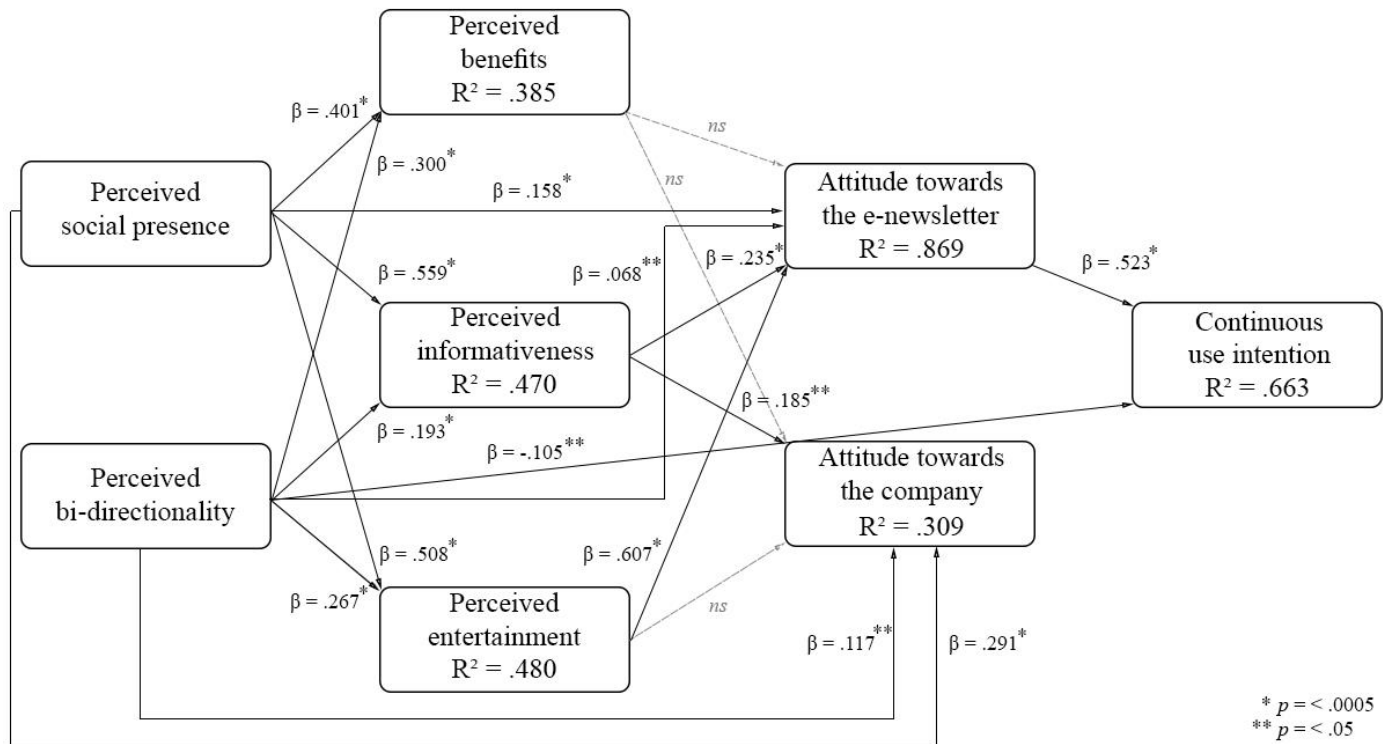
Table 14: Regression analysis results of attitude towards the e-newsletter

	R^2	B	SE_B	β
<i>Variable: Attitude towards the e-newsletter</i>				
Continuous use intention	.626	0,450	0,078	0,505*

* $p < .05$; B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE_B = standard error of the coefficient; β = standardized coefficient

For an overview of the hierarchical (stepwise) regression analyses with the corresponding variances for each variable, see appendix 12. The revised research model is presented in figure 3 below. In this model it can be seen which connections exist, with the corresponding β -values and R^2 -values of the dependent variables.

Figure 3: Revised research model



5. Conclusions

In this study the overall aim was to fill the gap in existing scientific literature by examining the effects of bi-directionality and social presence on e-newsletter effectiveness. On a more theoretical level, the study aims for a better understanding of the Media Richness Theory and how this theory can be connected to the concepts of social presence and bi-directionality. The results of this study will advance the understanding of the effects of social presence, bi-directionality, perceived benefits (usefulness), perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment on consumer attitudes and continuous use intention within an e-newsletter context. These effects are studied by performing experimental research and support is found for several hypotheses.

5.1. Summary of findings and discussion

In this section the findings of the experimental research are discussed. To start, it can be noticed that despite a large group of possible participants (65.483 people opened the e-newsletter) just 314 people participated in the study. It might be possible that the button to fill in the survey was not noticeable enough or the message was not persuasive enough for people to click on the button. However, designing an extremely large and persuasive button for filling in the survey would most likely have an undesirable effect on the participant's perceptions of the e-newsletter. 314 participants in this study can be considered as a relatively low response rate, it is sufficient enough to provide reliable results.

Looking to the descriptive data, there are differences between the perceptions of social presence and bi-directionality of intermediate vocational education and college/university participants. It seems that users with a lower educational level perceive a higher level of social presence and bi-directionality within the e-newsletters. It could be the other way around: users with a higher educational level perceive less social presence and bi-directionality within the e-newsletters.

In the next sections, each variable and the conclusions are presented. As there are no significant differences between the experimental conditions, all conditions are merged: the data is treated as a whole. An explanation of the non-significance between the experimental conditions will be given in section 5.1.1. and 5.1.2.

5.1.1. Perceived social presence

Various studies investigated the effects of social presence on attitudes (Barnes and Vidgen, 2014), perceived benefits/usefulness (Hassanein and Head, 2007; Karahanna and Straub, 1999) and perceived entertainment (Hassanein and Head, 2007). We can conclude that the same relations exist within the e-newsletter context. Perceived social presence can be seen as an important predictor of perceived benefits, perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment. Furthermore, it directly predicts the attitude towards the e-newsletter. There is no direct relation between perceived social presence and continuous use intention. However, attitude towards the e-newsletter is shown to be a very important predictor of continuous use intention.

In the pre-test it is shown that the manipulations had the desired effect: participants within the high level of social presence conditions perceived the level of social presence significantly higher than the participants within the low level of social presence conditions. Unfortunately, the results of the main study did not indicate significant differences between the experimental conditions. In short: the participants within the high level of social presence conditions did not perceive a higher level of social presence than the participants within the low level of social presence conditions. This means that the manipulations did not have the same effect as within the pre-test. A possible explanation is that some of the participants of the pre-test indicated that they were acting like a reviewer: looking longer and more thoroughly at the material. In a real-life situation - such as in the main study - they would most likely watch the e-newsletter for a shorter time-period and less thorough. Because of this, they might be less aware of the manipulation(s). This conclusion should make us extra cautious with interpreting results of earlier and future studies, which are often in a controlled and artificial setting. It might be possible that participants would react in a different way if they would be in a real-life situation.

5.1.2. Perceived bi-directionality

In the theoretical framework of this study the effects of bi-directionality were stated. Researchers concluded that bi-directionality has a positive impact on perceived benefits (usefulness) and perceived entertainment (Hausman and Siekpe, 2009). In turn, the authors argue that perceived benefits (usefulness) and perceived entertainment positively affect attitude toward the website and purchase/return intentions. Also, Jiang et. al. (2010) stated that bi-directionality can increase entertainment, and that there is a positive causal relationship between entertainment and purchase intention. Lee and Kozar (2012) concluded that bi-directionality

influences purchase intentions. Furthermore, a number of studies indicate that bi-directionality can increase consumer attitudes (Ko, Cho and Roberts, 2005; Liu and Shrum, 2002; Song and Zinkhan, 2008; Sundar, 2008; Yoo, Lee and Park, 2010).

The results of this study indicate that perceived bi-directionality is a significant predictor of the attitude towards the e-newsletter, attitude towards the company and continuous use intention but it only explains respectively 4,9%, 2% and 0,5% of the variance within the dependent variables. Nevertheless, supporting evidence is found that a higher level of perceived bi-directionality increases attitude towards the e-newsletter, attitude towards the company and continuous use intention of the e-newsletter. Perceived bi-directionality seems to be a good predictor for perceived benefits (usefulness), perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment as well. Therefore, the hypotheses that a higher level of bi-directionality increases the perceived benefits (usefulness), perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment of the e-newsletter are supported.

Although perceived bi-directionality seems to be a good predictor of the dependent variables, no significant differences can be found between the scores of the low level of perceived bi-directionality conditions versus the high level of perceived bi-directionality conditions. This means that - just as with perceived social presence - the manipulation(s) did not have the desired effect on perceived bi-directionality. Here we can also state the same conclusion: extra cautiousness is needed when interpreting results of studies on social presence and/or bi-directionality in an online environment which are in a controlled, artificial setting.

5.1.3. Perceived benefits (usefulness)

In this study it was expected that a higher level of perceived benefits (usefulness) positively influences the attitude towards the e-newsletter and the company. However, no support was found for these hypotheses. There were no significant differences in perceived benefits (usefulness) scores between the experimental conditions and the results indicated that perceived benefits (usefulness) has no influence on the dependent variables. Thus, it seems that both perceived social presence and bi-directionality has a strong positive relation with perceived benefits (usefulness), but in turn perceived benefits (usefulness) does not have any noticeable effects on attitudes or behavioral intentions. In conclusion we can state that in an e-newsletter context, the focus should not be on increasing the user's perceived benefits (usefulness) of the e-newsletter as it would lead to a more favorable attitude towards the e-newsletter nor a more favorable intention to continue using that e-newsletter.

5.1.4. Perceived informativeness

Perceived informativeness was also expected to be a mediating variable in the model. It can be concluded that a higher level of perceived informativeness positively influences attitude towards the e-newsletter. Furthermore, perceived informativeness seems to be a significant predictor of attitude towards the company. A higher level of perceived informativeness positively influences attitude towards the company. In contrast with perceived benefits (usefulness), perceived informativeness plays a significant role in forming the attitude towards the e-newsletter. Thus, focusing on increasing the user's perceived informativeness of the e-newsletter can increase the attitude towards that e-newsletter significantly.

5.1.5. Perceived entertainment

The theory already suggests that entertainment plays a role in affecting attitudes on websites (Hausman and Siekpe, 2009; Jiang et. al., 2010; Ko, Cho and Roberts, 2005). In this study, a same conclusion can be made for an e-newsletter context: a higher level of perceived entertainment positively influences the attitude towards the e-newsletter. Perceived entertainment seems to be a very strong predictor of attitude towards the e-newsletter. It can be concluded that the user's perceptions of entertainment of an e-newsletter is the most important factor in forming an attitude towards the e-newsletter. To be more precise: improving an e-newsletter to fulfill the needs for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment or emotional release will most likely have an effect on the user's attitude towards the e-newsletter.

5.1.6. Attitude towards the e-newsletter

In the theoretical background the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) was described. It suggests that a customer his/her behaviour is determined by his/her intention to perform the behaviour. This intention is, in turn, a function of a customer his/her attitude toward the behaviour. It can be concluded in this study that attitude towards the e-newsletter is a strong, significant predictor of continuous use intention. In other words, a more positive attitude towards the e-newsletter positively influences the intention to continue using the e-newsletter. When a more favorable attitude towards the e-newsletter is achieved, it is more likely that the user will have more favorable intention to continue using that e-newsletter as well.

5.2. Overall conclusion

Empirical findings indicate that both perceived social presence and perceived bi-directionality seem to play a significant role in forming the perceived benefits (usefulness), perceived

informativeness and perceived entertainment of an e-newsletter. The goal of this study was to find out what their effects are on consumer attitudes and continuous use intention. No strong direct effects can be noted of perceived social presence and perceived bi-directionality on attitude towards the e-newsletter and continuous use intention. However, two of the mediating variables seem to play an important role: perceived informativeness and perceived entertainment.

The attitude towards the e-newsletter is mostly affected by someone's perceived entertainment value of the e-newsletter. In other words: this study suggests that making the e-newsletter more entertaining (the ability to fulfill the needs for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment or emotional release) could result in more favorable effects on the attitude towards the e-newsletter. Also, perceived informativeness seems to play a noticeable role in forming an attitude towards the e-newsletter. Increasing the perceived informativeness of the e-newsletter could result in an increased attitude towards the e-newsletter. In the end, users with a more favorable attitude towards the e-newsletter are more likely to have a favorable intention to continue using the e-newsletter. This study has significant implications for companies: the findings suggests that providing an e-newsletter that users perceive as high in social presence and bi-directionality will influence their perceptions on informativeness and entertainment. In turn, a more informative and especially a more entertaining e-newsletter will generate more favorable attitudes and intentions to continue using that e-newsletter.

5.3. Limitations

This study is not without limitations. To start, the experimental e-newsletters were sent to 331.410 subscribers of Bruna. Of all those people 65.483 opened the e-newsletter. However, only 522 subscribers decided to fill in the survey. In the end, there were only 314 usable responses. Although this amount of data is enough to provide reliable results, more data was expected and with more data there would be more power in the study.

Another limitation that should be mentioned is the non-significance within the manipulation check. Although effort is made to design noticeable manipulations within the four versions of the e-newsletters, the participants of the experimental study did not perceive significant differences in levels of social presence and/or bi-directionality. This is in contrast with the pre-test, where the participants did perceive a higher level of social presence and bi-directionality within the corresponding experimental condition. A possible explanation of this limitation was given in section 5.1.1. The consequence of this limitation is that we do not know how we can

operationalize social presence and bi-directionality to such extent that it is actually perceived by users in a real-life situation. We do know now that within this real-life context social presence and bi-directionality might be perceived in a more unconscious way than within a controlled, artificial experimental setup.

Finally, it is reasonable to assume that other (e-commerce) markets might react differently to some of the variables used in this study. For instance, perceived entertainment might not be playing such an important role in business-to-business markets in comparison with the consumer markets.

5.4. Recommendations for future research

In this section recommendations will be given for future research in the context of e-newsletter marketing. In line with one of the limitations of this study, we advise further research to consider to what extent they could make the button more noticeable and persuasive, without affecting the participant's perceptions of the e-newsletter. Furthermore, it is important that new research in this field try to investigate how social presence and bi-directionality can be operationalized to such extent that it will be perceived by users of an e-newsletter in a real-life situation. In this study, the manipulations were small and not dominant. We suggest future research to design more noticeable manipulations of social presence and bi-directionality. Also, the difference between a controlled, artificial setting and a real-life setup can have significant implications for the results and conclusions. Extra cautiousness is advised when interpreting the results of studies which use controlled and/or artificial methods.

Moreover, we suggest future research to investigate if the results of this study are generalizable for other markets as well. Especially for business-to-business markets it could be possible that some of the variables play more or less of a role in forming attitudes and intentions.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Bi-directional and social presence operationalisations and main findings

Author(s)	Operationalized social presence and bi-directional features	Main findings regarding social presence and bi-directionality
Barnes and Vidgen (2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding images showing a wide range of people in informal settings • Adding more rich media 	The perceived social presence of the website significantly contributes to increased user satisfaction.
Ellis-Chadwick and Doherty (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send an email to the company • Unsubscribe feature (with feedback feature) 	Bi-directional features seem to be one of the most effective factors for developing sustained attention with an email message.
Hassanein and Head (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially-rich text and pictures 	Higher levels of social presence are shown to positively impact the perceived benefits (usefulness) and entertainment of commercial websites.
Hausman and Siekpe (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback features to get in touch with the company • Language options 	Positive impact on the evaluations of benefits (usefulness), informativeness and entertainment. In turn, it has positive effects on attitude toward the website and purchase/return intentions.
Jiang, Chan, Tan and Chua (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity for customers to submit product queries via a hyperlink • Live-chat communication with an employee through a “Contact us now” hyperlink 	Bi-directional communication can heighten affective involvement (increase entertainment and affinity) on functional product websites. Furthermore, there is a positive causal relationship between affective involvement and purchase intention.
Karahanna and Straub (1999)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire asking about the perceived social presence in emails: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Personal/impersonal ○ Sociable/unsociable ○ Warm/cold 	Perceived social presence within email has a positive relationship with the perceived benefits (usefulness) of email.

	○ Sensitive/insensitive	
Ko, Cho and Roberts (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback to the site • A contact form to contact the company directly • Customer discussion form 	A higher level of bi-directionality on a website generates more positive responses from customers, which leads to positive attitudes toward the brand and purchase intentions.
Lee and Kozar (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The website contains components to help the interaction between it and consumers • The website provides features for interactive communication between consumers, or between consumers and the online company 	<p>Interactivity significantly influence purchase intention.</p> <p>One major contributor to the significant influence of interactivity on purchase intention was the enhanced interactive communications between consumers and companies.</p>
Liu and Shrum (2002)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The possibility for giving instant feedback by sending an email or filling out a form on the company's website. 	Bi-directionality is positively related to user satisfaction and cognitive involvement.
Song and Zinkhan (2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email links, chat rooms, comment forms, toll-free telephone number, question and answer, bulletin board 	A higher level of bi-directionality increases the positive evaluation of a website. If consumers noticed the presence of a chatting function, they showed more positive attitudes towards the website, regardless of the speed of the response.
Sundar (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A form function allowing users to send an email directly • A button to interact with the content or message 	1: A higher level of bi-directional features within an advertisement leads to more positive evaluations of the advertised product. 2: A higher level of bi-directional features breeds more involvement, focusing user attention on content.
Yoo, Lee and Park (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity for users to talk back and provide feedback through the website 	Bi-directionality has a strong positive effect on hedonic value creation in online retailing environments. To enhance bi-

		directionality, e-tailers need to facilitate more two-way communication features such as instant chatting or a help line.
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Appendix 2: Condition 1 (high social presence/high bi-directionality)

Heerlijk luieren met een goed boek | Bekijk de [online versie](#) van deze actiemail

bruna



Bruna in de buurt



Marloes

"Kan ik iets voor u doen?"

Klik hier

om contact met mij op te nemen!"

Bruna cadeaukaart winnen
t.w.v. € 20,-?

Vul nu de enquête in
en maak kans!

Klik hier voor de enquête >



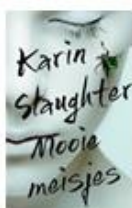
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Appendix 3: Condition 2 (high social presence/low bi-directionality)

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Appendix 4: Condition 3 (low social presence/high bi-directionality)

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om contact met ons op te nemen.

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Appendix 5: Condition 4 (low social presence/low bi-directionality)

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Appendix 6: Bruna landing page (customer service page)


GRATIS afhalen in de winkel

Mijn account ▾ Klantenservice Verlanglijstje 




Alle artikelen ▾ 



 **BOEKEN** **BLIYOO** **E-LEZEN** **COLLECTIES** **CADEAU** **KINDEREN** **KANTOOR** **ACTIES** **ZAKELIJK**

Bruna in de buurt

Selecteer jouw Bruna 

Home > Bruna klantenservice

KLANTENSERVICE

Veelgestelde vragen

Contactformulier: vragen of klachten

Bestellen, leveren en verzendkosten

Annuleren en retourneren

Vragen over een internetbestelling

Veelgestelde vragen over eBooks

Veelgestelde vragen over Bliyoo

Veelgestelde vragen over BrunaTablisto

Bruna cadeaukaart

OVER BRUNA

De Bruna organisatie

Bruna in de pers

Winkelruimte

Een eigen Bruna winkel beginnen

Vacatures

Contact

BRUNA WINKELS

Bruna winkel vinden

Openingstijden en servicebalies

Bestellen op de winkelvloer

Bruna klantenservice

Welkom op de pagina van onze klantenservice. Op deze pagina vind je uitleg over onze diensten, onze contactgegevens en een overzicht van de meest gestelde vragen aan de klantenservice (geen productinformatie).

Heb je na het lezen hiervan toch nog vragen? Uiteraard is onze klantenservice ook telefonisch bereikbaar. Op werkdagen van 9.00 tot 17.00 uur via 088 - 7800 600. Als je een vraag of klacht hebt dan kun je ook gebruik maken van ons [vragenformulier](#).

Zoeken

Het antwoord op uw vraag vinden.

Meest gekozen antwoorden

[Levertijd bruna.nl bezorging in winkel](#)

[Besteding Boekenbon](#)

[Op welke apparaten werkt Bliyoo?](#)

[eBook is opgeslagen als ACSM-bestand](#)

[Kan ik mijn Bliyoo-abonnement opzeggen wanneer ik wil?](#)

[Hoe kan ik mijn Bliyoo abonnement stopzetten?](#)

[Saldo digitale Boekenbon checken](#)

[Waarom kan ik bij Bliyoo niet lezen met mijn eReader?](#)

[Welk assortiment is verkrijgbaar in Bliyoo?](#)

[Wat is Bliyoo?](#)

[Hoe werkt het aanmelden voor Bliyoo?](#)

Appendix 7: construct items, scales, wordings, sources and reliability coefficients

Item	Wording	Source
<p>Perceived social presence (PSP)</p> <p><i>Scale: 7-point semantic differential</i></p> <p><i>Scale: 1: strongly disagree – 7: strongly agree</i></p>	<p>I find this e-newsletter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unsociable - sociable 2. Insensitive - sensitive 3. Cold - warm 4. Impersonal – personal 5. There is a sense of human contact on this e-newsletter 6. There is a sense of sociability on this e-newsletter 7. There is a sense of human warmth on this e-newsletter 	<p><i>Short and Christie (1976)</i></p> <p>$\alpha = 0.83$</p> <p><i>Gefen and Straub (2003)</i></p> <p>$\alpha = 0.80 - 0.90$</p>
<p>Perceived bi-directionality (PBD)</p> <p><i>Scale: 1: strongly disagree – 7: strongly agree</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The e-newsletter is effective in gathering visitors' feedback 2. This e-newsletter facilitates two-way communication between the visitors and the site 3. It is easy to offer feedback to the company by this e-newsletter 4. The company makes me feel it wants to listen to its customers 5. The e-newsletter gives users the opportunity to talk back 	<p><i>Yoo, Lee and Park (2010)</i></p> <p>$\alpha = 0.87$</p>
<p>Perceived benefits (PB)</p> <p><i>Scale: 1: strongly disagree – 7: strongly agree</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This e-newsletter provides me with the benefit of information about new products 2. This e-newsletter provides me with the benefit of special sales offerings 3. This e-newsletter provides me with the benefit of coupons or special discounts 4. This e-newsletter provides me with the benefit of information about different upcoming events 	<p><i>Wang et al. (2009)</i></p> <p>$\alpha = 0.88$</p>

<p>Perceived informativeness (PI)</p> <p><i>Scale: 1: strongly disagree – 7: strongly agree</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This e-newsletter is a good source of information 2. This e-newsletter supplies relevant information 3. This e-newsletter supplies timely information 4. This e-newsletter is a convenient source of information 5. This e-newsletter supplies complete information 	<p><i>Ducoffe (1996)</i></p> <p>$\alpha = 0.82$</p>
<p>Perceived entertainment (PE)</p> <p><i>Scale: 1: strongly disagree – 7: strongly agree</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. I find reading this e-newsletter fun to read 8. I find reading this e-newsletter entertaining 9. I find reading this e-newsletter enjoyable 10. I find reading this e-newsletter pleasant 	<p><i>Ducoffe (1996)</i></p> <p>$\alpha = 0.85$</p>
<p>Attitude towards the e-newsletter (ATE)</p> <p><i>Scale: 1: strongly disagree – 7: strongly agree</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am satisfied with the service of this e-newsletter 2. I feel comfortable in reading this e-newsletter 3. This e-newsletter is a good opportunity to spend my time 4. I would rate this e-newsletter as one of the best e-newsletters 	<p><i>Ko, Cho and Roberts (2005)</i></p> <p>$\alpha = 0.85$</p>
<p>Attitude toward the company (ATC)</p> <p><i>Scale: 7-point semantic differential</i></p>	<p>I find this company:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unappealing - appealing 2. Bad - good 3. Unpleasant - pleasant 4. Unfavorable - favorable 5. Unlikable - likable 	<p><i>Spears and Singh (2004)</i></p> <p>$\alpha = 0.97$</p>

<p>Continuous use intention (CUI)</p> <p><i>Scale: 1: strongly disagree – 7: strongly agree</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I intend to continue using this e-newsletter rather than discontinue its use. 2. My intentions are to continue using this e-newsletter than use any alternatives. 3. If I could, I would like to discontinue my use of this e-newsletter (<i>reversed item</i>). 	<p><i>Bhattacharjee (2001)</i></p> <p>$\alpha = 0.83$</p>
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Appendix 8: the questionnaire (in Dutch)

Geef uw mening over de Bruna nieuwsbrief!

Bedankt dat u de enquête wilt invullen. Wij willen graag uw mening weten over de nieuwsbrief die u zojuist heeft gezien. Hiermee kunnen we namelijk in de toekomst de nieuwsbrieven nóg beter op uw wensen laten aansluiten! Het invullen van de enquête zal ongeveer 5 tot 10 minuten van uw tijd in beslag nemen en alle gegevens worden anoniem verwerkt.

Mocht u vragen of opmerkingen hebben aan de hand van deze enquête, dan kunt u mailen naar nieuwsbriefonderzoek2015@gmail.com

Volgende pagina: De komende vragen gaan over de nieuwsbrief die u heeft ontvangen.

Deze nieuwsbrief is:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Stijf	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gemoedelijk
Ongevoelig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gevoelig
Koud	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Warm
Onpersoonlijk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Persoonlijk

Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens of oneens bent met onderstaande stellingen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Een beetje mee oneens	Niet mee oneens/ niet mee eens	Een beetje mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
Er is een mate van persoonlijk contact in deze nieuwsbrief	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Er is een mate van gemoedelijkheid in deze nieuwsbrief	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Er is een mate van persoonlijke warmte in deze nieuwsbrief	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens of oneens bent met onderstaande stellingen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Een beetje mee oneens	Niet mee oneens/ niet mee eens	Een beetje mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
Deze nieuwsbrief is goed in het verzamelen van feedback van de bezoekers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deze nieuwsbrief maakt wederzijdse communicatie mogelijk tussen de gebruikers en de website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Het is gemakkelijk om feedback te geven aan Bruna door middel van deze nieuwsbrief	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bruna geeft mij het gevoel dat het wil luisteren naar zijn klanten	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
De nieuwsbrief geeft gebruikers de mogelijkheid om iets terug te zeggen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens of oneens bent met onderstaande stellingen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Een beetje mee oneens	Niet mee oneens/ niet mee eens	Een beetje mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
Deze nieuwsbrief biedt mij de voordelen van informatievoorziening over nieuwe producten	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deze nieuwsbrief biedt mij de voordelen van speciale acties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deze nieuwsbrief biedt mij de voordelen van kortingen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Informatie over verschillende aankomende evenementen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens of oneens bent met onderstaande stellingen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Een beetje mee oneens	Niet mee oneens/niet mee eens	Een beetje mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
Deze nieuwsbrief is een goede bron van informatie	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deze nieuwsbrief geeft relevante informatie	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deze nieuwsbrief geeft informatie op het goede moment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deze nieuwsbrief is een handige bron van informatie	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deze nieuwsbrief geeft volledige informatie	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens of oneens bent met onderstaande stellingen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Een beetje mee oneens	Niet mee oneens/niet mee eens	Een beetje mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
Ik vind het leuk om deze nieuwsbrief te lezen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik vind het gemakkelijk om deze nieuwsbrief te lezen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik vind het plezierig om deze nieuwsbrief te lezen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik vind het aangenaam om deze nieuwsbrief te lezen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens of oneens bent met onderstaande stellingen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Een beetje mee oneens	Niet mee oneens/niet mee eens	Een beetje mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
Ik ben tevreden met de service van deze nieuwsbrief	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik vind het prettig om deze nieuwsbrief te lezen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik maak graag tijd vrij om deze nieuwsbrief te lezen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ik zou deze nieuwsbrief als een van de beste beoordelen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Geef aan in hoeverre u het eens of oneens bent met onderstaande stellingen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Een beetje mee oneens	Niet mee oneens/niet mee eens	Een beetje mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
Ik ben van plan om deze nieuwsbrief te blijven lezen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mijn intenties zijn om de volgende nieuwsbrieven weer te lezen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Als ik kon, dan zou ik graag willen stoppen met het gebruiken van deze nieuwsbrief	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ik vind Bruna:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Onaantrekkelijk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Aantrekkelijk
Slecht	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Goed
Onaangenaam	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Aangenaam
Ongunstig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gunstig
Onprettig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Prettig

Als laatst heb ik een paar demografische vragen. Deze vragen worden enkel gebruikt voor het onderzoek en zijn niet naar u persoonlijk te herleiden.

Geslacht

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Vrouw

Leeftijd:

Opleidingsniveau (bij meerdere: hoogste aanvinken)

- ☐ Basisschool / middelbare school
- ☐ LBO
- ☐ MBO of vergelijkbaar
- ☐ HBO / Universitair
- ☐ Anders

Hoe vaak hebt u de laatste 3 maanden iets gekocht bij Bruna? (Vul "0" in als u niets hebt gekocht bij Bruna de afgelopen 3 maanden)

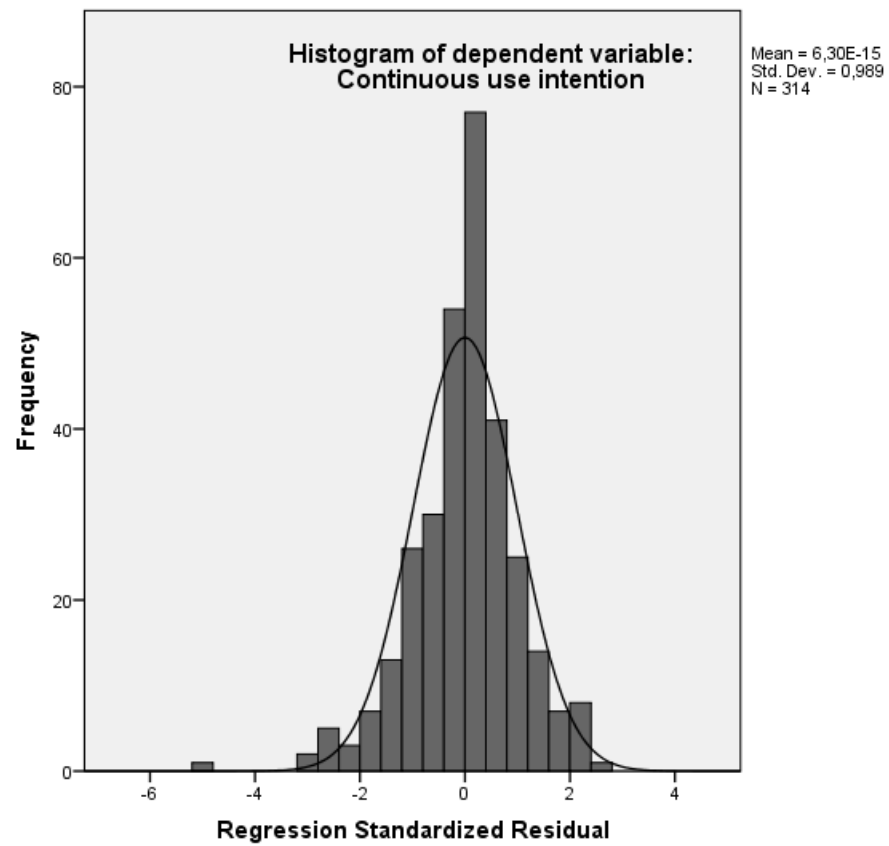
Hoe vaak hebt u de laatste 3 maanden contact opgenomen met Bruna? (Vul "0" in als u geen contact hebt gehad met Bruna de afgelopen 3 maanden)

In welke categorie valt u?

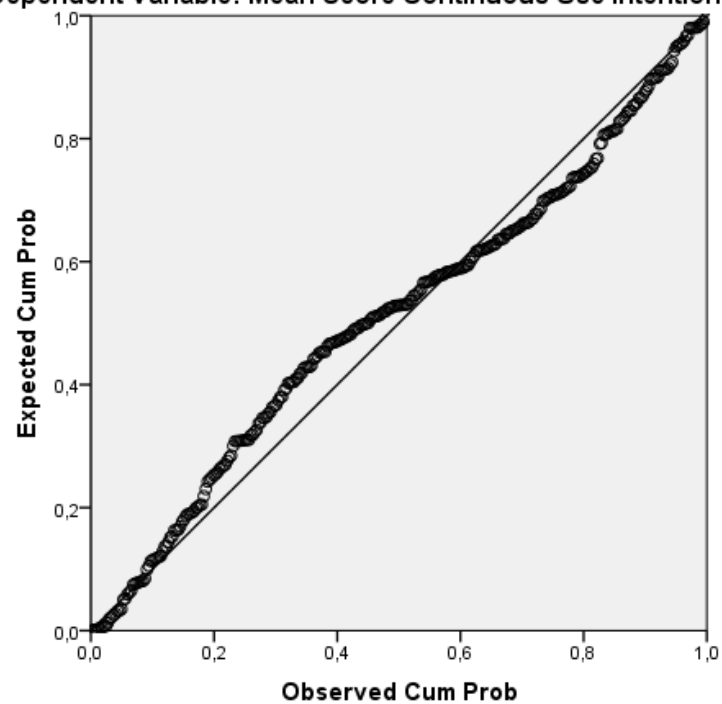
- ☐ Particulier eindgebruiker
- ☐ Zakelijk eindgebruiker

Vul hier uw e-mail adres in om kans te maken op de prijs!

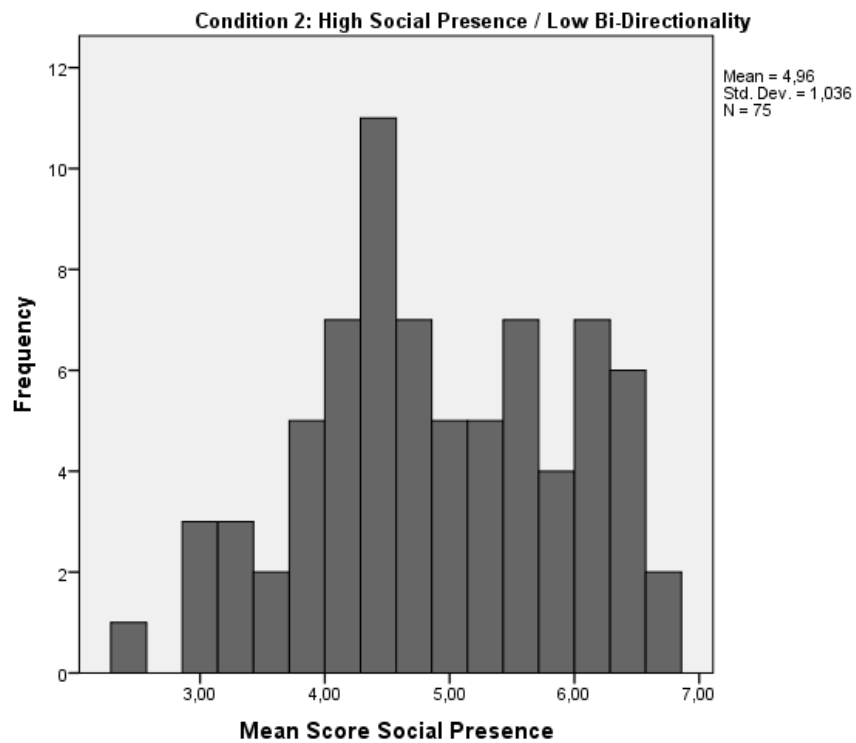
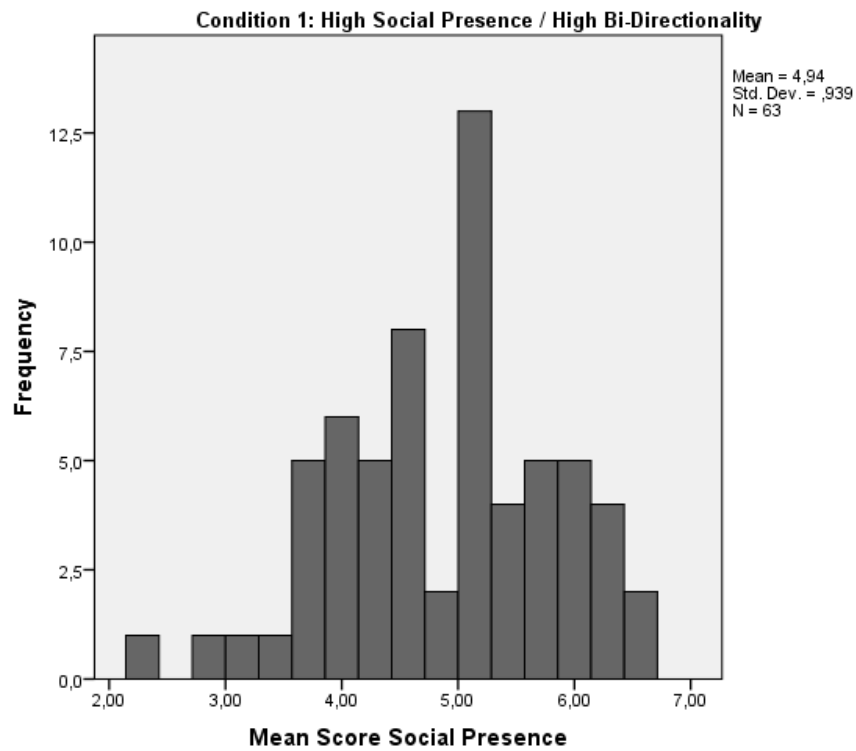
Appendix 9: Normality plots of the dependent variable

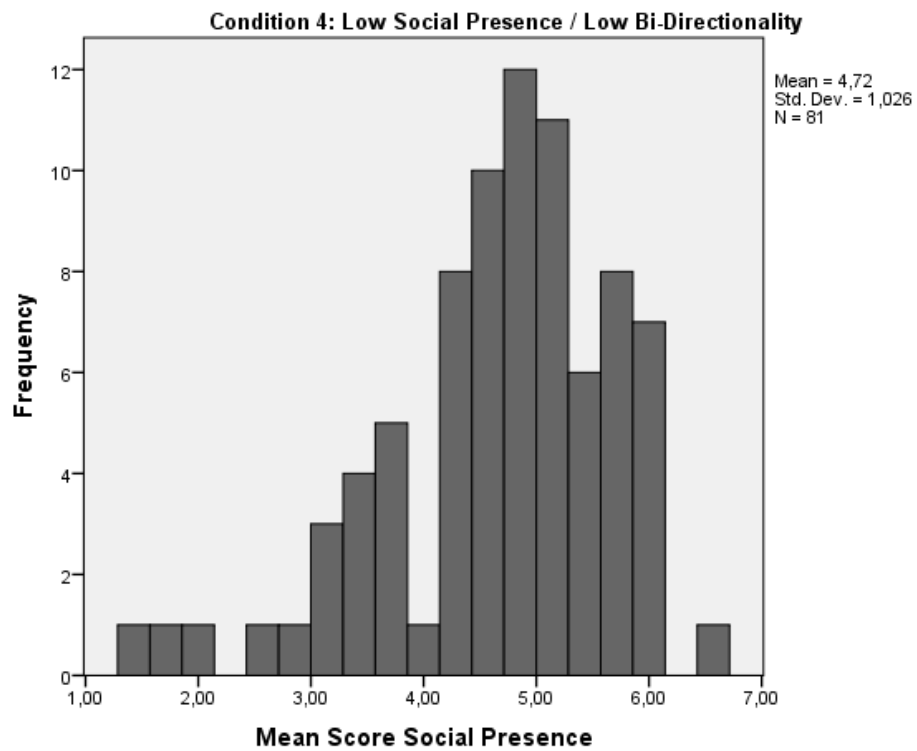
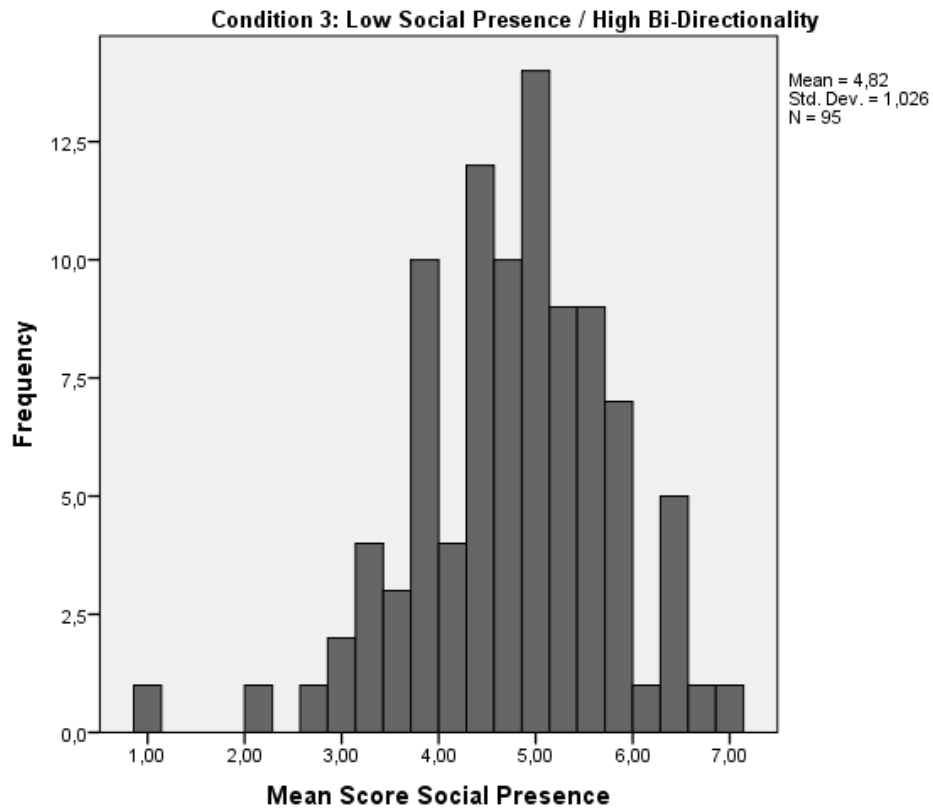


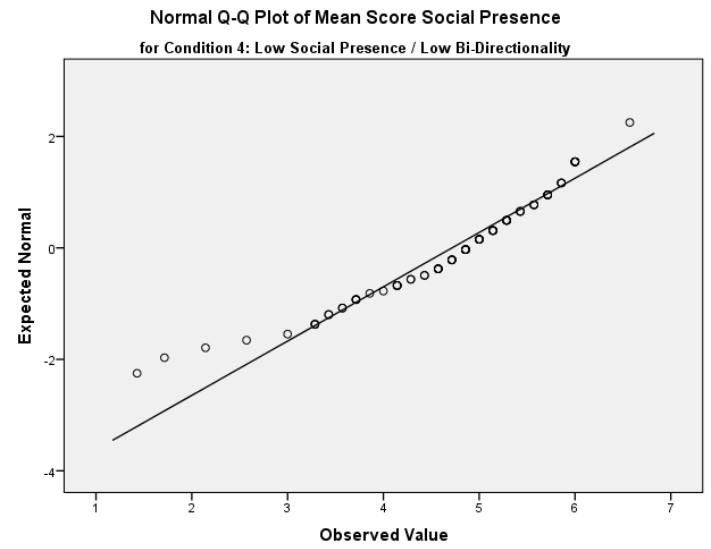
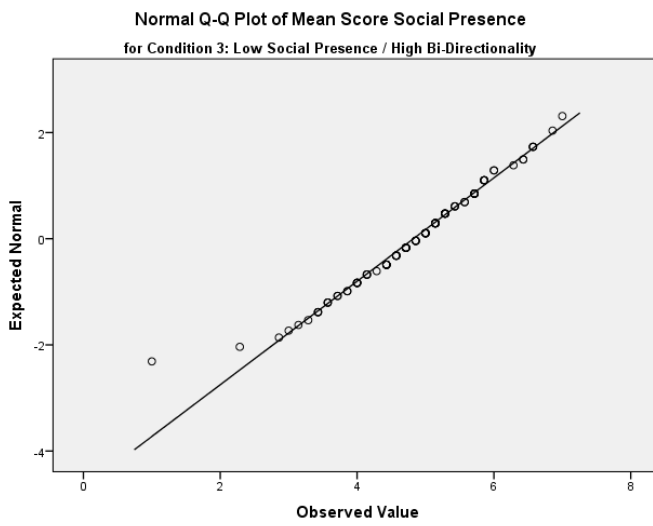
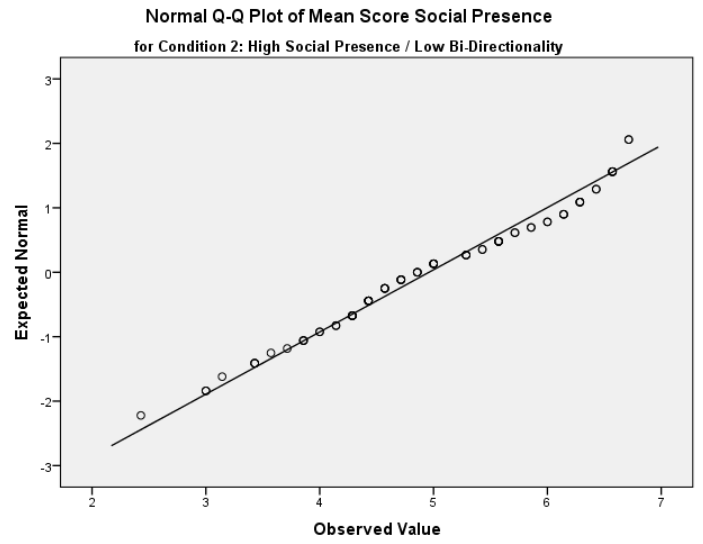
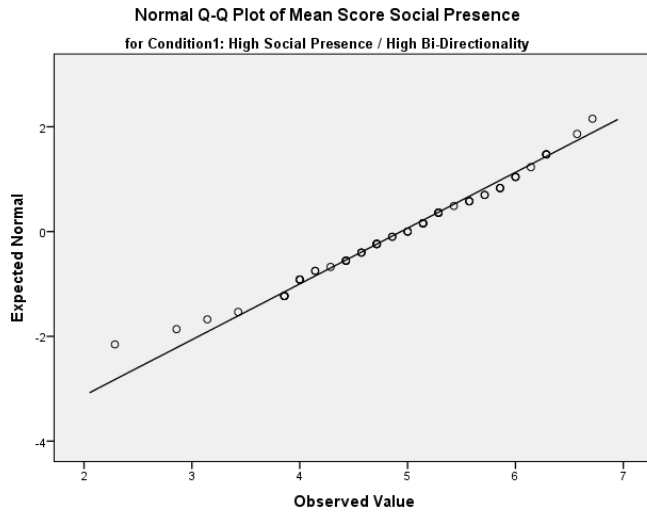
Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: Mean Score Continuous Use Intention



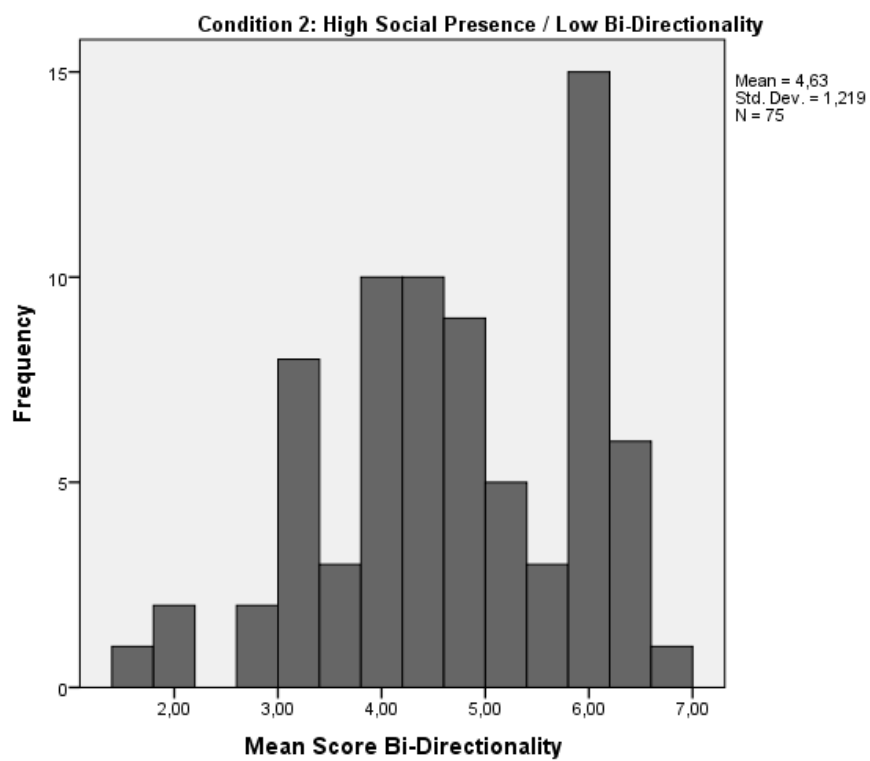
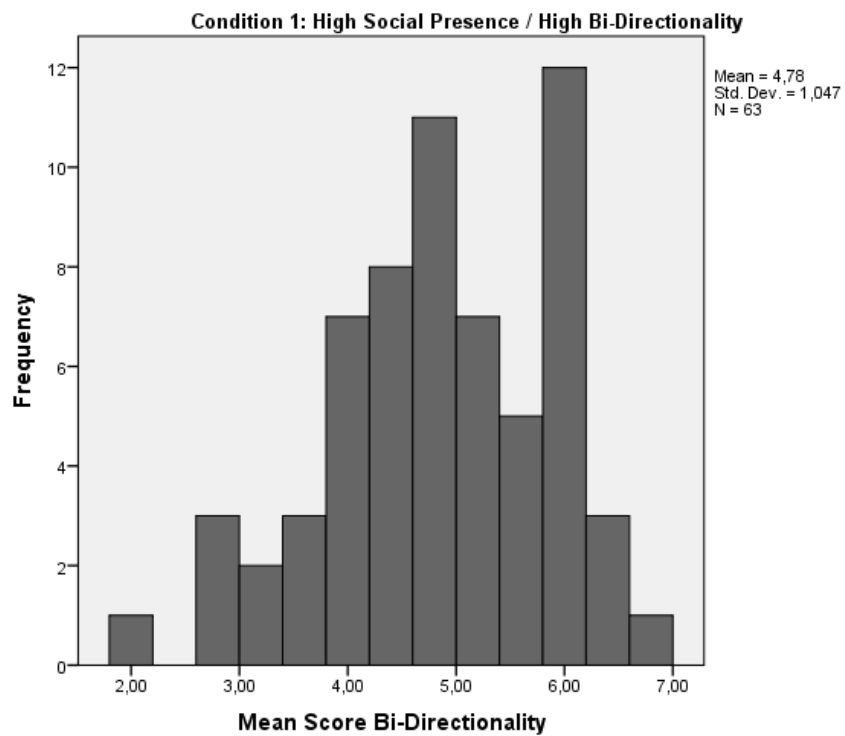
Appendix 10: Normality plots of social presence

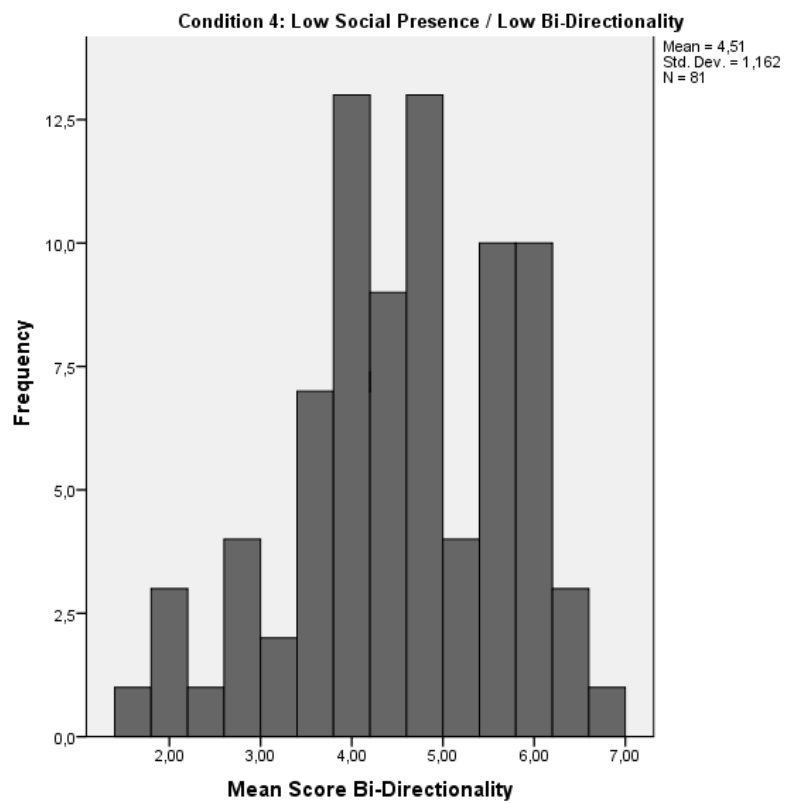
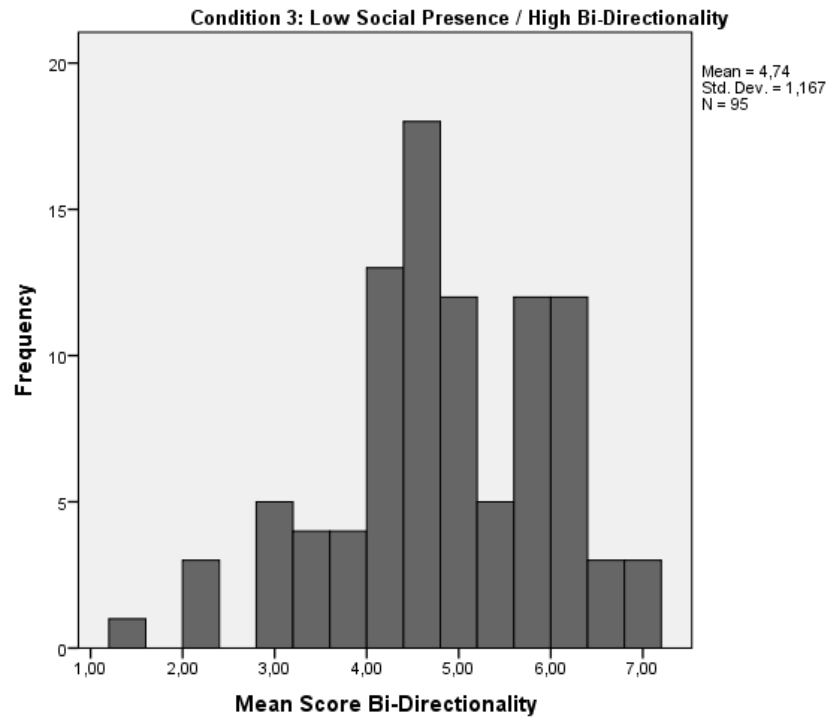


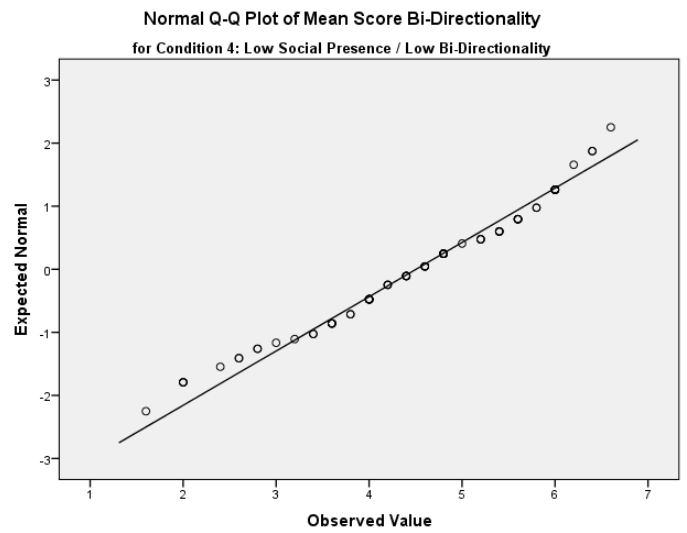
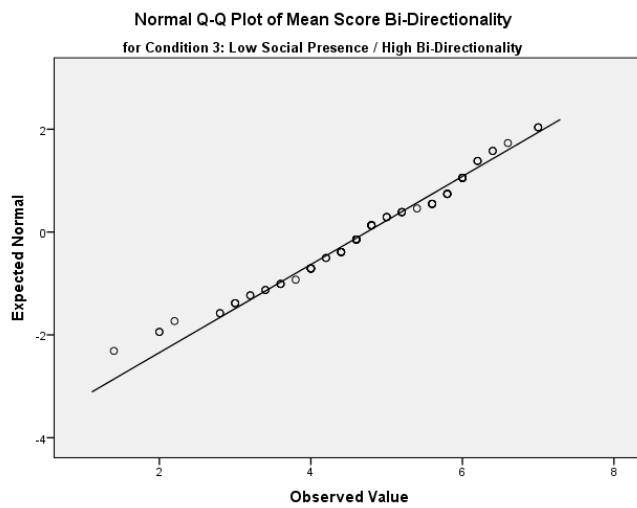
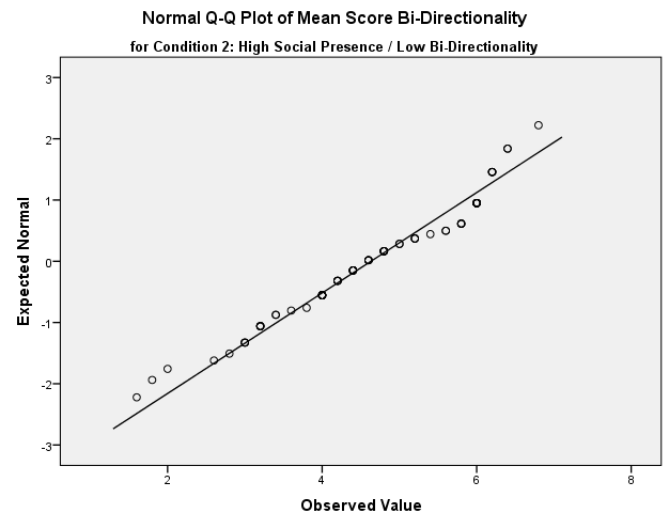
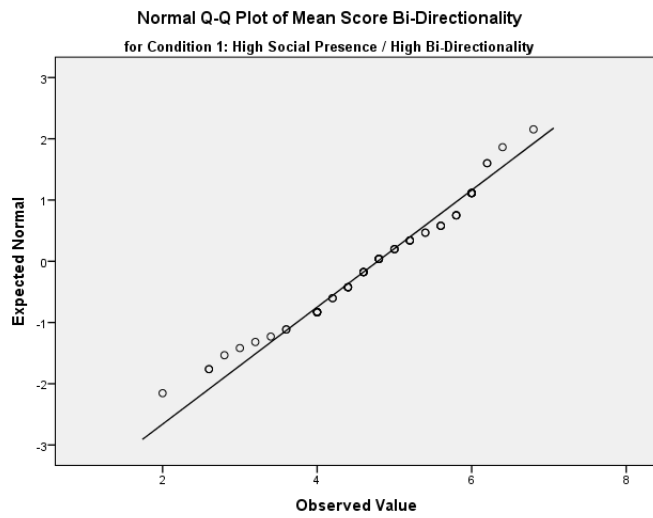




Appendix 11: Normality plots of bi-directionality







Appendix 12: Overview of the multiple hierarchical (stepwise) regression analyses

	R ²	B	SE _B	β
<i>Dependent variable: Continuous use intention (R² = .662)</i>				
Intercept		1,375	0,267	
Attitude towards the e-newsletter	.626	0,450	0,078	0,505*
Perceived informativeness	.644	0,143	0,077	0,124
Perceived entertainment	.650	0,157	0,067	0,182*
Perceived bi-directionality	.655	-0,098	0,037	-0,111*
Perceived benefits (usefulness)	.662	0,155	0,063	0,134*
<i>Dependent variable: Attitude towards the e-newsletter (R² = .869)</i>				
Intercept		-0,531	0,166	
Perceived social presence	.534	0,177	0,034	0,158*
Perceived bi-directionality	.583	0,067	0,026	0,068*
Perceived benefits (usefulness)	.640	-0,045	0,044	-0,035
Perceived informativeness	.731	0,304	0,052	0,235*
Perceived entertainment	.869	0,588	0,033	0,607*
<i>Dependent variable: Attitude towards the company (R² = .309)</i>				
Intercept		2,617	0,314	
Perceived social presence	.262	0,273	0,063	0,291*
Perceived bi-directionality	.282	0,097	0,049	0,117*
Perceived benefits (usefulness)	.298	0,061	0,084	0,057
Perceived informativeness	.309	0,200	0,090	0,185*
<i>Dependent variable: Perceived benefits (usefulness) (R² = .385)</i>				
Intercept		3,044	0,202	
Perceived social presence	.323	0,349	0,047	0,401*
Perceived bi-directionality	.385	0,229	0,041	0,300*

Dependent variable: Perceived informativeness
($R^2 = .470$)

Intercept		2,590	0,188	
Perceived social presence	.444	0,486	0,043	0,559*
Perceived bi-directionality	.470	0,147	0,038	0,193*

Dependent variable: Perceived entertainment
($R^2 = .480$)

Intercept		1,210	0,248	
Perceived social presence	.431	0,590	0,057	0,508*
Perceived bi-directionality	.480	0,272	0,050	0,267*

* $p < .05$; B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE_B = standard error of the coefficient; β = standardized coefficient