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**The role of neuromarketing, sales psychology and event marketing in the
B2B customer journey: an empirical study**

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Abstract

This thesis examines the use of psychological mechanisms from neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing in B2B marketing along the customer journey. Based on a qualitative content analysis of expert interviews and an online survey, it was found that these principles are applied across the Pre-Sales, Sales, and After-Sales phases, often without strategic systematization. The combined application of these disciplines enhances emotional resonance, trust, and customer loyalty. However, there are deficits in theoretical grounding, cross-departmental alignment, and effectiveness measurement. The study develops an integrated effect model and presents actionable recommendations for implementing psychological principles in B2B communication. By addressing a research gap, this work contributes to the theoretical foundation and provides direction for future research and practical application.

1 Introduction

Rapid technological developments, high market transparency, and saturated markets are forcing companies to systematically incorporate emotional and psychological factors into their marketing and sales strategies alongside rational arguments. Traditional marketing approaches view decision-making processes as a linear, conscious weighing of rational criteria. Findings from neuroscience and behavioral economics show that consumption and investment decisions are significantly influenced by unconscious, emotional, and social processes (Damasio, 1994, p. 174; Kahneman, 2012, p. 45; Plassmann, Ramsøy & Milosavljević, 2012, p. 25). This dynamic affects not only consumer goods markets (business-to-consumer, B2C), but increasingly also investment goods markets (business-to-business, B2B), which are characterized by complex, multi-stage decision-making processes, high risks, and long-term business relationships (Kenning & Linzmajer, 2011, p. 215).

In this context, neuromarketing has established itself as an interdisciplinary field of research that combines insights from neuroeconomics, cognitive science, and marketing to better understand and specifically influence unconscious decision-making processes (Hubert & Kenning, 2008, p. 272; Zurawicki, 2010, p. 15). While it has already been used successfully in the B2C sector to optimize advertising materials, packaging, and store designs, its application in the B2B sector has been relatively little researched to date, even though emotional heuristics, cognitive biases, and multisensory stimuli also play a central role here (Plassmann, Ramsøy & Milosavljević, 2012, p. 27; Dimoka, 2010, p. 51).

In addition, sales psychology and event marketing offer further perspectives on how business decisions can be influenced psychologically and experientially. Sales psychology examines the cognitive and emotional mechanisms in direct interaction between sales staff and customers and illustrates how trust, sympathy, framing effects, and social proof influence the sales process (Cialdini, 2001, p. 75; Lambrecht & Winter, 2010, p. 41). Event marketing complements these approaches with multisensory experience spaces in which brands are emotionally charged and sustainably anchored through direct encounters, staging, and social interactions (Schmitt, 1999, p. 28; Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, p. 112).

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical foundations of the work, explains the origins, definitions and mechanisms of the three disciplines, and concludes with a presentation of their synergies, differences and interactions along the customer journey. Chapter 3 describes the methodological approach of the empirical study. Chapter 4 presents the results, Chapter 5 analyzes them in an integrative context, Chapter 6 discusses the findings in light of the research, and Chapter 7 concludes with a summary and outlook.

1.1 Relevance of the problem

The relevance of this work lies in the growing importance of psychological and neurocognitive mechanisms for the analysis and control of business decisions. Technological advances, particularly in functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), electroencephalography (EEG), and eye tracking, enable the precise measurement of both conscious attitudes and implicit reactions and emotional activations (Lee, Broderick, & Chamberlain, 2007, p. 200; Plassmann, Ramsøy, & Milosavljević, 2012, p. 25). These methods are well established in B2C marketing, but are rarely used in B2B.

Research shows that even in complex organizational contexts, business decisions are not free from emotions, social norms, and cognitive biases (Dimoka, 2010, p. 375; Kenning & Linzmajer, 2011, p. 114). In buying center structures, where several decision-makers with different roles, interests, and information processing styles are involved, mechanisms such as framing, anchoring effects, and trust signals play a decisive role. Event formats in analog, digital, or hybrid form create immersive interaction opportunities that provide emotional security and support purchasing decisions in the long term (Zanger, 2004, p. 87; Kumar & Sundaram, 2021, p. 17).

Against this background, a systematic investigation of the effects and interactions of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing in B2B marketing is necessary. The aim is to analyze these disciplines not in isolation, but within the framework of an integrative impact model along the customer journey.

1.2 State of the research and research gap

Research into neuromarketing focuses largely on consumer markets. Studies analyze the effect of colors, language, packaging, and advertising formats on the decision-making behavior of

individual consumers (Plassmann, Ramsøy & Milosavljević, 2012, p. 24; Morin, 2011, p. 132). In B2B marketing, there is a lack of systematic studies that incorporate neuroscientific findings into communication between companies.

Sales psychology is well established in theory and has been shaped primarily by the work of Cialdini (2001, p. 95), Kahneman and Tversky (1979, p. 263) and Lambrecht and Winter (2010, p. 48). However, the focus has so far been on personal customer consulting, while the connection with neuropsychological or staged communication formats has hardly been researched.

Event marketing is an established discipline, but research has mainly focused on image effects and brand staging in B2C. Its role in B2B marketing, especially in building trust, interacting with stakeholders, and addressing multiple senses, is increasingly recognized but still underrepresented in scientific research (Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, p. 114; Lindstrom, 2010, p. 59).

This thesis closes this research gap by integrating neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing in B2B marketing. The aim is to systematically describe their interrelationships, test them empirically, and derive concrete recommendations for action.

1.3 Objectives and research question

The aim of this thesis is to analyze how neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing influence decision-making processes in B2B marketing, both individually and in combination. Central psychological and neurocognitive mechanisms will be identified, theoretical overlaps will be highlighted, and the specific contributions of the individual disciplines along the customer journey will be systematically analyzed.

This objective gives rise to the central research question:

“How do neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing influence decision-making processes in B2B markets, particularly along the customer journey?”

To answer this research question, four theoretical assumptions are formulated to serve as guidelines for the investigation.

- **A1:** Neuromarketing techniques influence decision-making behavior in a B2B context by specifically activating unconscious cognitive and emotional processes at relevant touchpoints along the customer journey.
- **A2:** Sales psychology plays a central role in building trust and influencing negotiation outcomes in B2B relationships, especially in the personal contact phase along the customer journey.
- **A3:** Event marketing contributes to increasing brand awareness and intensifying customer loyalty in the B2B market by setting emotional anchor points in the after-sales phase and enabling a multisensory approach.
- **A4:** The integration of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing creates synergistic effects in B2B marketing that increase the effectiveness of marketing measures compared to isolated approaches.

The assumptions form the basis of the work and structure both the theoretical and practical analysis in the B2B context.

1.4 Limitations and scope of master thesis

This master's thesis focuses on the application of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing in the B2B marketing of European companies. The geographical focus is on Europe, as cultural differences in decision-making behavior outside Europe are based on other rationales. The focus is on neuropsychological influencing factors such as emotions and biases, psychological principles such as reciprocity and scarcity, and experience-oriented forms of communication that are realized through corporate events or hybrid formats. Only current approaches are examined, including digital and analog formats as well as technologies up to the year 2023.

B2C-specific causal relationships are not part of this work, as the focus is explicitly on decision-making processes and psychological influencing factors in the B2B sector. Intercultural analyses outside Europe are also not taken into account in order to control for cultural variables in decision-making. In addition, long-term effects in the sense of longitudinal analyses are excluded, as the empirical study represents a snapshot and does not provide for long-term observations.

1.5 Procedure and research design

This work pursues a qualitative and exploratory research approach. Due to the limited research available to date in the field of psychologically based communication in the B2B environment, a theory-based, yet inductively open approach was chosen. The aim was to gain new insights into implicit mechanisms of action, subjective assessments, and experience-based behavior in corporate practice.

The empirical study is based on a methodological triangulation design within qualitative social research. Guided interviews were conducted with a total of six experts from the fields of marketing, sales, event management, and business management. In addition, an open online survey was conducted, targeting a broader, thematically relevant group of individuals in B2B companies. Both data sources were systematically evaluated and merged in terms of content in order to identify both individual perspectives and overarching patterns.

The empirical triangulation was supplemented by a theoretical perspective expansion. Relevant concepts from neuroeconomics, social psychology, communication science, and brand research were taken into account in order to classify the three disciplines examined in a differentiated manner and to provide a scientifically sound basis for their mechanisms of action.

The analysis focuses on the question of how neuromarketing-related, psychological, and experience-oriented measures along the customer journey are effective. The aim was not only to identify individual effects, but also to illustrate the interaction and strategic integration of these disciplines in an organizational context.

The data was evaluated according to the principles of qualitative content analysis. Both theoretically derived categories and inductively developed categories from the empirical material were used. The analysis was carried out using QCAmap software to ensure transparency, traceability, and systematicity.

The thesis follows a consistent structure. The theoretical foundations form the starting point for the methodological implementation. This is followed by the presentation of the empirical results and their integrated evaluation in the context of the research question, as well as the derivation of recommendations for action.

2 Theoretical foundations

This chapter describes the theoretical foundations that are central to understanding this study. The focus is on the three disciplines of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing. These have become increasingly important in current marketing research and, especially when used in combination, open up new approaches to the effective design of decision-making processes in B2B marketing (Nguyen & Simkin, 2022, pp. 45–46).

The selection of these perspectives is based on the scientifically supported assumption that decisions between companies are not made exclusively on a rational basis. Research findings show that emotional, social, and cognitive mechanisms play a significant role in decision-making (Kenning & Linzmajer, 2011, p. 214; Lindstrom, 2010, pp. 34–35). Neuromarketing proves that unconscious stimuli and neurobiological processes shape the perception and evaluation of offers (Plassmann, Ramsøy & Milosavljević, 2012, pp. 19–20). Sales psychology examines how individual perceptions, heuristics, and interaction dynamics influence purchasing decisions and provides practical strategies for everyday sales (Cialdini, 2001, p. 75). Event marketing complements this view by designing physical and digital experiences that promote trust, emotionally charge brands, and support long-term customer loyalty (Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, pp. 111–112; Schmitt, 1999, pp. 27–28).

The chapter is structured according to a logical sequence of content, progressing from the individual to the collective experience. First, the origins, theoretical foundations, and psychological mechanisms of neuromarketing in the B2B context are presented. This is followed by an analysis of sales psychology with a focus on cognitive biases, emotional appeal, and behavioral patterns in B2B sales processes. Event marketing is then described as the third discipline, with a particular focus on conceptual distinctions, principles of effectiveness, and B2B-specific areas of application. Finally, the three approaches are combined in a joint impact model in relation to their synergies, differences, and interaction along the customer journey, each within the context of their B2B application.

This theoretical basis forms the conceptual foundation for the empirical investigation and provides guidelines for analyzing application potential and success factors in B2B marketing.

2.1 Neuromarketing: Origin and definition of the term

Neuromarketing developed in the early 2000s when neuroscientific methods were first used specifically to examine economic decision-making processes. This interdisciplinary field of research expands classic marketing models with findings from neuroeconomics, cognitive science, and psychology in order to understand decision-making behavior in a more differentiated way and influence it in a targeted manner (Hubert & Kenning, 2008, p. 272). The focus is on analyzing the unconscious, emotional, and cognitive processes that shape the perception and evaluation of brands, products, and messages.

The definitions of the term vary slightly, but emphasize similar core aspects. Zurawicki (2010, p. 8) understands neuromarketing as the use of neuropsychological methods to analyze consumer decisions. Damasio (1994, p. xii) argues on the basis of his research that human decisions are not primarily controlled by rationality, but are based on emotional processes. He thus contradicts the assumptions of rationalistic models and provides a theoretical basis for why neuromarketing relies on emotional triggers in practice. Plassmann, Ramsøy, and Milosavljević (2012, pp. 19–20) add to this perspective by defining neuromarketing as the targeted application of neuroscientific findings to marketing questions in order to better understand, predict, and control behavior. Morin (2011, p. 133) further differentiates between scientifically oriented consumer neuroscience and a more practice-oriented neuromarketing approach, illustrating the breadth of the field.

The methodological foundations are crucial for distinguishing it from traditional market research. Methods such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), electroencephalography (EEG), and eye tracking enable the objective measurement of responses to marketing stimuli. Brain activity, eye movements, and skin conductance can be measured precisely. While conventional methods such as surveys primarily capture conscious self-reported information, neuroscientific methods provide direct access to unconscious reactions (Lee, Broderick & Chamberlain, 2007, p. 200). Technological advances, including mobile EEG headsets and compact eye-tracking systems, have made these methods increasingly practical for companies of all sizes, thereby expanding their scope of application.

2.1.1 Distinction between neuromarketing and traditional marketing

The emergence of neuromarketing marks a paradigm shift in marketing research. While traditional approaches are based on rational decision-making models, neuromarketing focuses on emotional, intuitive, and unconscious influencing factors (Kenning & Plassmann, 2005, p. 345).

Classic models such as AIDA (Kotler & Keller, 2016, p. 183) or the Customer Decision Journey (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016, p. 70) assume that consumers act rationally, make conscious decisions and can justify them well. The corresponding market research tools, such as standardized interviews or focus groups, are based on this assumption. Neuromarketing, on the other hand, builds on the realization that a significant portion of human decisions are made automatically and emotionally (Damasio, 1994, p. xii; Kahneman, 2012, p. 20).

Kahneman's model of dual information processing provides the theoretical basis for this. It distinguishes between a fast, intuitive System 1 and a slow, analytical System 2 (Kahneman, 2012, p. 45). While traditional marketing primarily addresses System 2 and relies on rational arguments, neuromarketing focuses on activating emotional and unconscious processes via System 1, which have been proven to have a significant influence on decisions (Plassmann, Ramsøy & Milosavljević, 2015, p. 22).

There are also clear differences in methodology. Traditional market research relies on verbal self-reports that reflect consciously considered impressions, while neuromarketing uses physiological and neural measurements. Methods such as fMRI, EEG, or skin conductance measurements make it possible to record reactions independently of language or conscious control, thereby reducing distortions caused by social desirability, for example. Technological advances, such as mobile EEG systems, are expanding the possibilities for recording emotional reactions in real time and with high precision (Khondakar et al., 2024, p. 6).

The focus of the findings also differs. Traditional research asks what customers like, while neuromarketing analyzes why certain neural activation patterns arise and how they influence decisions. This shifts the focus from description to explanation. Both approaches complement each other, as neuromarketing reveals the implicit mechanisms that often remain hidden in traditional studies, thereby opening up new potential in the B2B sector (Lee, Broderick & Chamberlain, 2007, p. 200).

2.1.2 Neuroscientific mechanisms in the decision-making process

The central foundation of neuromarketing is the realization that human decision-making behavior is largely determined by unconscious, emotional, and cognitive processes (Kahneman, 2012, p. 21; Plassmann et al., 2012, pp. 19–20). Modern neuroimaging methods such as fMRI, EEG, and eye tracking make it possible to visualize these processes and link them to perception, evaluation, and decisions (Lee et al., 2007, p. 200).

Emotions play a central role, as Damasio's somatic marker hypothesis illustrates. It describes how physically anchored emotional signals serve as orientation markers that facilitate complex decisions (Damasio, 1994, pp. 166–167). Without these markers, people find it difficult to choose between options for action, even when all rational information is available. Neurobiological studies show that structures such as the amygdala, orbitofrontal cortex, and insula are crucially involved in the processing of emotional stimuli (Bechara et al., 1999, pp. 295–296).

Cognitive biases are another key mechanism. Behavioral economics research, particularly by Kahneman and Tversky, identifies the anchoring effect, loss aversion, and confirmation bias, among others, as widespread influencing factors (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979, pp. 274–275; Kahneman, 2012, p. 81). These are based on heuristics, i.e., mental shortcuts that facilitate decision-making but can also lead to systematic misjudgments. Neuroscientific studies locate such processes primarily in the limbic system and the ventromedial prefrontal cortex (De Martino et al., 2006, p. 688).

Multisensory stimuli play an equally important role. The brain integrates visual, auditory, haptic, olfactory, and gustatory signals into an overall impression. Colors, contrasts, and shapes influence attention and recognition (Wedel & Pieters, 2008, p. 6), music affects emotional centers (Brattico et al., 2011, pp. 142–143), haptic elements such as surface texture promote trust (Peck & Wiggins, 2006, pp. 37–38), and smells directly activate the limbic system. Studies show that combining multiple sensory channels is particularly effective in amplifying emotional responses and promoting brand loyalty (Lindstrom, 2010, pp. 34–35; Spence et al., 2014, p. 332).

The reward system, consisting of structures such as the nucleus accumbens, ventral tegmental area, and orbitofrontal cortex, also influences expectations and willingness to act. Positive

incentives such as exclusive benefits or discounts can activate these areas and thus increase the likelihood of purchase (Knutson et al., 2007, p. 147).

These findings are linked to economic models in neuroeconomics, which describes economic behavior as not exclusively rational, but rather as the result of emotional and unconscious processes (Glimcher & Fehr, 2014, p. 10). This provides the theoretical framework within which neuromarketing develops its strategies.

2.1.3 Significance and application of neuromarketing in a B2B context

The transfer of neuroscientific findings to B2B marketing is becoming increasingly relevant, particularly as a result of the digital transformation. A recent analysis by Ramos, Oliveira, and Sousa shows that neuromarketing is becoming increasingly important in the B2B environment and is receiving additional impetus from new digital opportunities.

For a long time, business decisions in B2B were considered primarily rational and fact-based. However, research by Kenning and Linzmajer shows that emotional, intuitive, and social factors also play a central role here. This is particularly true in complex decision-making situations with high risk, such as strategic partnerships or investments in capital-intensive goods. In such cases, emotional heuristics are just as decisive as performance indicators or price structures. Trust in a brand, personal relationships, and positive previous experiences can be decisive factors, as Eggert and Fassott as well as Kumar and Sundaram have found.

Neuromarketing offers concrete solutions for these situations, as it identifies unconscious influencing factors and integrates them into the communication strategy in a targeted manner. Methods such as storytelling, consistent visual design, and the use of credible references create emotional security and strengthen brand loyalty. These effects are particularly relevant because B2B purchasing decisions are often made in so-called buying centers, where different roles are represented. Technical users value functionality and security, while those responsible for economic decisions often derive emotional security from brand awareness or positive references, as Dimoka and Eggert and Fassott show.

Trust is therefore a central issue in B2B marketing. Neuromarketing can not only promote trust on a communicative level, but also support it neuropsychologically. Consistent brand management, recognizable design elements, and social proof in the form of testimonials or case

studies reduce uncertainty in complex decision-making processes, as Dimoka and Zanger explain.

Recent developments combine neuroscientific methods with big data and artificial intelligence. AI-supported eye-tracking evaluations and predictive analyses enable more precise adaptation of content along the customer journey. At the same time, multisensory design concepts are gaining in importance. The consistent integration of visual, auditory, and haptic elements at key touchpoints such as company websites, presentations, trade fairs, and customer events increases emotional activation and recognition, as Lindstrom and Hede and Kellett show.

Neuromarketing should therefore not be seen as a supplementary option in B2B, but as a core strategic tool. It combines scientifically sound findings with market-oriented practice, increases the effectiveness of communication measures, and creates a basis for the transition to other disciplines that focus on direct customer interaction. This is where sales psychology comes in, with its focus on interpersonal dynamics and communicative principles in sales situations.

2.2 Sales psychology: Origin and definition of the term

While neuromarketing primarily focuses on unconscious neurobiological mechanisms, sales psychology concentrates on psychological factors that influence decision-making behavior in sales situations. It is an interdisciplinary interface between applied psychology and economics that examines how perception, emotion, motivation, and social influences shape purchasing decisions. The aim is to use these findings in a targeted manner to effectively design sales processes (Kroeber-Riel & Gröppel-Klein, 2013, p. 30).

The roots of sales psychology lie in consumer research and advertising psychology in the 1920s. Early works by Walter Dill Scott and Edward Strong laid the foundation for the systematic investigation of psychological factors influencing sales (Scott, 1915; Strong, 1925). In the following decades, concepts from behavioral psychology, psychoanalysis, motivation research, and cognitive psychology were integrated. An important impetus was provided by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which made it clear that human behavior, including purchasing decisions, is strongly driven by emotional and social needs (Maslow, 1943, p. 370).

Today, sales psychology encompasses a structured understanding of the mechanisms that influence decision-making processes in sales situations. In addition to classic factors such as sympathy, trust, and communication quality, the design of hybrid forms of interaction, which

are gaining in importance as a result of digitalization, is increasingly becoming the focus of attention. In the B2B sector in particular, digital sales channels enable new forms of customer engagement, but at the same time require a deep understanding of psychological principles in order to build loyalty and trust even without a physical presence (Chakraborty & Biswas, 2022, p. 106).

2.2.1 Psychological principles in the sales process

Sales processes are complex communication situations in which buyers and sellers are equally subject to cognitive, emotional, and social influences. Sales psychology identifies key principles that have a lasting impact on decisions and can be used in a targeted manner to increase the effectiveness of sales (Kroeber-Riel & Gröppel-Klein, 2013, p. 35).

One key principle is reciprocity. People tend to return favors they receive. Even small gestures such as product samples or exclusive consultations can reinforce feelings of appreciation and increase willingness to buy (Cialdini, 2001, pp. 17–18).

Social proof is another decisive factor. Individuals orient themselves toward the behavior of others in order to reduce uncertainty. Positive reviews, references, and recommendations create trust, especially for complex or high-priced offers. This principle is also becoming increasingly important in the digital B2B environment, as online references and user reviews are increasingly influencing purchasing decisions (Cialdini, 2001, pp. 117–119; Chakraborty & Biswas, 2022, pp. 106–107).

The emotional relationship between buyer and seller also has a strong influence on decision-making. Trust, empathy, and sympathy increase confidence in the purchase decision. In consulting-intensive or long-term business relationships, a positive relationship can be the deciding factor, even if two offers are comparable in terms of their rational advantages (Lambrecht & Winter, 2010, pp. 41–42).

Scarcity influences the perception of an offer's value. Products or services that are presented as limited or time-bound appear more attractive. This effect is based on loss aversion, i.e., the tendency to weigh potential losses more heavily than gains of equal magnitude (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979, pp. 265–266).

Authority reinforces a salesperson's persuasiveness. Technical expertise, industry knowledge, and a professional demeanor increase credibility and thus the impact of recommendations (Cialdini, 2001, pp. 208–209).

The wording also plays a role. Framing influences how offers are perceived. For example, a price reduction can be formulated as a saving or as the remaining amount to be paid, which elicits different emotional responses (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981, pp. 454–455).

Storytelling and vivid language are other effective tools. Stories generate emotional resonance, increase comprehensibility, and promote memory retention. Neuroscientific findings confirm that emotionally charged content remains in the memory longer than purely factual information (Damasio, 1994, pp. 167–168).

These principles illustrate that purchasing decisions in sales are not made exclusively on a rational basis, but are influenced by an interplay of psychological mechanisms.

2.2.2 Sales psychology in a B2B context

B2B decisions have long been considered purely rational and focused on maximizing economic benefits. However, research shows that emotional, social, and cognitive factors also play a central role in corporate procurement processes (Kenning & Linzmajer, 2011, p. 214; Rackham, 1988, pp. 22–23).

A key feature of B2B sales is the greater complexity of purchasing decisions. Decision-making cycles are longer, investment sums are higher, and several players in the so-called buying center are involved in the selection process. These conditions make the process more strategic, but not free from psychological influences. In situations involving uncertainty, limited comparability, or internal conflicts of interest, decision-makers often resort to emotional heuristics (Weinberg, 2015, pp. 48–49).

Building trust is one of the most important psychological success factors in B2B. Personal relationships, perceived competence, and consistent communication are particularly important for products and services that require explanation. Salespeople who present complex content in an understandable way while conveying emotional security and professional authority lay the foundation for long-term customer loyalty. With advancing digitalization, digital trust indicators and positive online experiences are emerging as additional influencing factors.

Research shows that these factors significantly determine the stability and success of B2B relationships (Kumar & Sharma, 2023, p. 59). This phenomenon is described in psychology as cognitive facilitation through social proximity and can be observed at both the individual and group level (Lambrecht & Winter, 2010, pp. 41–42).

Cognitive biases also have an impact in the B2B environment. The anchoring effect shapes price negotiations when initial price offers set the framework for all further considerations. Loss aversion means that advantageous changes of supplier do not take place because the perceived risk is considered too high. Confirmation bias is particularly effective in hierarchical organizations when decision-making bodies prefer information that supports existing beliefs and ignore contrary evidence (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979, pp. 265–266).

Social proof also has a strong effect in B2B markets. Reference projects, case studies, and recommendations from comparable companies create trust and can tip the scales. In highly networked industries, such mechanisms gain additional persuasive power when emotional arguments such as innovation leadership or reliability are combined with rational value propositions (Goldstein et al., 2008, pp. 133–134).

Framing effects also influence how offers are perceived. Different ways of wording a price reduction change the emotional evaluation, even though the economic value remains the same (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981, pp. 454–455). Professional sales teams use such fine-tuning in a targeted manner to steer the perception of offers.

The principles of sales psychology are therefore also effective in B2B. Precisely because decisions here are often considered particularly rational, they are susceptible to implicit emotional and cognitive influences. The systematic application of these findings makes it possible to build trust, optimize lines of argumentation, and control perception processes.

2.3 Event marketing: Origin and definition of the term

Event marketing developed in the 1980s and 1990s, when companies began to use events not only to present products, but also to showcase their brand identity. The shift from a seller's market to a buyer's market and the increasing sensory overload in traditional communication channels led companies to increasingly seek emotional differentiation strategies (Zanger, 2004, pp. 26–27; Kirchgeorg, Jung & Klante, 2005, pp. 19–20).

In the decades that followed, event marketing developed from a supplement to traditional measures such as advertising, sponsorship, and public relations into an independent strategic instrument of corporate communication. The aim is to design brand experiences in a targeted manner in order to build customer loyalty, brand strength, and trust (Zanger, 2004, pp. 24–25; Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, pp. 111–112). In an increasingly digitalized world of communication, events offer the opportunity to create authentic and distinctive brand encounters that stand out from the flood of information in traditional channels, according to Hede and Kellett (2021, pp. 78–79).

Bruhn (2010, p. 53) defines event marketing as the planned and targeted staging of events to achieve corporate communication goals. In contrast to traditional advertising formats, which are mostly based on one-way information transfer, event marketing relies on direct interaction and multisensory design. Research findings show that this form of experience staging leads to more intense emotional bonds and longer-lasting memories (Schmitt, 1999, pp. 27–28; Getz & Page, 2022, pp. 211–212).

Today, event marketing is a central component of live communication. Companies take on the role of active designers and hosts in order to bring brand values to life through dramatic and emotional design elements (Zanger & Sistenich, 1996, pp. 33–34). The targeted use of light, sound, spatial design, language, and social interaction creates stimuli that can surpass conventional media formats in their intensity. (Lindstrom, 2010, pp. 34–35; Bruhn, Manfred & Hadwich, 2010, pp. 142–143; Hede & Kellett, 2021, pp. 79–80).

2.3.1 Conceptual classification and differentiation of event marketing

Event marketing differs significantly from related communication tools. Sponsoring describes the financial or material support of external events, while event marketing is based on company-owned formats with controlled content that are specifically designed to achieve defined communication goals (Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, p. 112).

There are also clear differences between event marketing and trade fairs and exhibitions. Trade fairs are primarily product-oriented and focus on the exchange of factual information. Event marketing, on the other hand, pursues an emotional presentation that appeals to several senses and creates a holistic brand experience (Zanger, 2004, pp. 26–27). This approach is closely linked to live communication, which relies on direct encounters and personal interaction (Zanger & Sistenich, 1996, p. 34).

A theoretical basis is provided by Schmitt's concept of experience marketing (1999, pp. 27–28). It describes five dimensions of experience – sensory perception, emotional activation, cognitive involvement, physical action, and social connection – and shows that events that address several of these levels promote deeper brand loyalty. Multisensory brand management supports this approach. Studies show that simultaneously addressing different senses increases emotional activation and improves memory performance (Lindstrom, 2010, pp. 34–35; Hede & Kellett, 2021, pp. 78–79).

Furthermore, event marketing is closely linked to customer experience management. Events are central touchpoints along the customer journey where positive emotions are generated, relationships are deepened, and brand perceptions are strengthened (Bruhn, Manfred & Hadwich, 2010, pp. 142–143; Getz & Page, 2022, pp. 211–212). Psychological processes such as emotional conditioning, affect transfer, and social identification ensure that positive emotions from the event experience are unconsciously transferred to the brand (Schmitt, 1999, p. 29; Zanger, 2004, p. 28).

2.3.2 Event marketing in a B2B context

In the B2B sector, event marketing has become way more important strategically over the last few years. This is mainly because markets are getting more complex, decision cycles are longer, and there are more people involved in the buying process (Kirchgeorg, Jung & Klante, 2005, pp. 19–20; Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, pp. 111–112).

Compared to traditional advertising and sales channels, events in B2B offer direct and personal encounters with customers, partners, and stakeholders. This not only conveys information, but also builds trust, which is considered a key resource. Research shows that B2B decisions, even if they are based on economic criteria, are not made exclusively on rational grounds. Emotional and social factors have a stabilizing and differentiating effect on the decision-making process (Kenning & Linzmajer, 2011, p. 214).

Corporate events such as conferences, customer forums, roadshows, or innovation events create opportunities to not only present products or services, but also to bring corporate values, expertise, and corporate culture to life. Schmitt (1999, pp. 27–28) shows that emotional activation, knowledge transfer, and social belonging are combined to strengthen loyalty.

In buying center structures, event marketing offers the opportunity to address different target groups such as technical users, specialist decision-makers, and management in parallel, but with differentiated content and formats. This clarifies functional requirements while at the same time creating emotional security and social confirmation (Kirchgeorg, Jung & Klante, 2005, pp. 21–23). Testimonials, peer dialogues, and interactive formats further reinforce this effect.

Long-term customer loyalty, which is often more important in B2B than short-term deals, is promoted by regular, authentic, and value-consistent events. Studies show that positive experiences during such events are transferred to brand perception through emotional conditioning and affect transfer (Zanger, 2004, pp. 27–28; Bruhn, Manfred & Hadwich, 2010, pp. 142–143; Schmitt, 1999, p. 29; Lindstrom, 2010, pp. 34–35).

Another advantage is the reduction of perceived risks. Since B2B decisions often involve high investments and long-term commitments, live experiences, product demonstrations, and open question and answer sessions help to reduce uncertainty. Events also serve as social validation spaces where customers experience a sense of belonging to a competent and trustworthy community (Zanger & Sistenich, 1996, p. 34).

The digital transformation has permanently changed B2B event marketing. Hybrid formats, virtual product presentations, VR demonstrations, and interactive webinars increase reach and interactivity. These formats are now considered a strategic tool for strengthening target group loyalty (Kumar & Sundaram, 2021, pp. 15–16). In addition, AI-supported applications enable more efficient planning, more targeted addressing, and more precise measurement of success through data-based analyses (Müller & Peters, 2024, pp. 45–46).

Event marketing thus complements the psychological mechanisms of neuromarketing and sales psychology by creating experiential spaces in which rational, emotional, and social factors interact. This makes complex offerings emotionally accessible, reduces decision-making barriers, and builds trust as the basis for sustainable business relationships (Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, pp. 111–112).

2.4 Synergies, differences and interaction between the three disciplines in a B2B context

The concepts of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing presented in the previous chapters show that these disciplines should not be viewed in isolation when analyzing

and designing B2B marketing processes. Despite their different theoretical origins, there are overlaps in content, methodological differences, and strategic links. In complex decision-making processes, an integrative understanding of these approaches opens up new perspectives for research, marketing, and sales (Kenning & Linzmajer, 2011, p. 214; Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, pp. 111–112). The aim of this chapter is to systematically analyze these synergies, differences, and interactions, to identify their respective strengths, and to illustrate their interplay along the customer journey. Studies show that the integration of different marketing disciplines is crucial for creating consistent customer experiences and thereby achieving competitive advantages (Nguyen & Simkin, 2022, pp. 45–46).

2.4.1 Synergies and interfaces

Neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing are based on the shared understanding that business decisions are not solely rational, but also influenced by emotional, social, and cognitive factors. This emotional dimension is now considered a key success factor for sustainable competitive advantages in B2B (Kenning & Linzmajer, 2011, p. 214; Lindstrom, 2010, pp. 34–35).

A central link between the three disciplines is the building of trust. Neuromarketing provides scientific evidence that trust can be anchored in the brain through recognition, consistency, and emotional activation (Plassmann, Ramsøy & Milosavljević, 2012, p. 24). Sales psychology complements this with practical strategies that use empathy, social skills, and clear argumentation to strengthen trust in direct customer contact (Cialdini, 2001, p. 75). Event marketing reinforces this effect through authentic experiences in which personal encounters and credible brand presentations deepen trust (Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, p. 111; Schmitt, 1999, p. 29).

Another interface is the targeted creation of emotional resonance. Neuromarketing proves that unconscious emotional reactions significantly influence the evaluation of offers. Sales psychology focuses specifically on emotional appeal, for example through storytelling or individual conversation techniques. Event marketing combines both approaches by dramaturgically designing emotional and multisensory experiences that remain permanently anchored in the memory (Schmitt, 1999, pp. 27–28).

In addition, all three disciplines address unconscious preferences and decision-making patterns. Findings on anchoring effects or loss aversion from sales psychology can also be found in

neuromarketing-based pricing and in the dramaturgy of event staging (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979, pp. 265–266).

The effect along the customer journey illustrates the complementary potential of these approaches. Neuromarketing shows its strengths in the pre-sales phase when it comes to the initial perception and evaluation of brands. Sales psychology is particularly effective in the sales phase, where personal interactions and negotiations are at the forefront. Event marketing can accompany all phases by building trust, strengthening customer loyalty, and shaping brand perception in the long term. Research shows that strategically linked disciplines create more consistent customer experiences and improve decision-making quality (Nguyen & Simkin, 2022, pp. 45–46). The most important synergies can be systematically summarized in a diagram (see Figure 1).

Synergies and interfaces

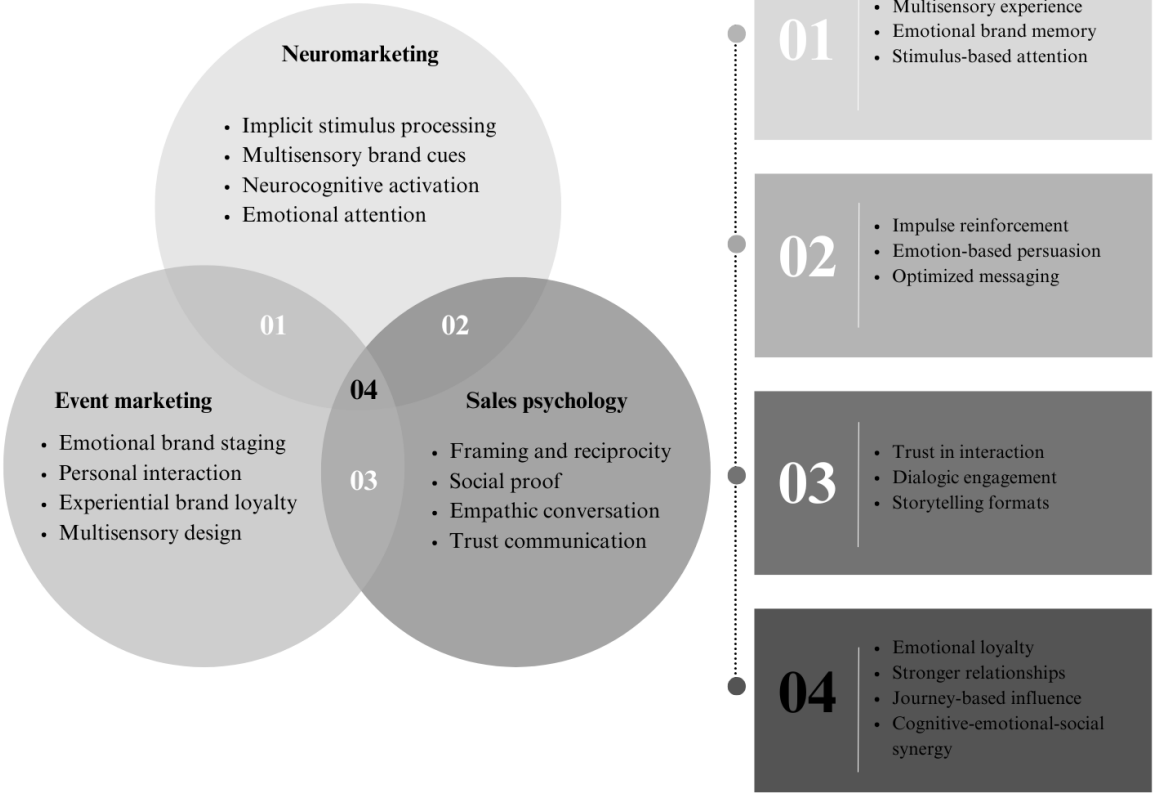


Figure 1: Synergies and interfaces between the three disciplines

(Own illustration based on section 2.4.1)

2.4.2 Differences in methodology and application

Despite some overlap in terms of content, neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing differ significantly in terms of methodology, application focus, and strategic orientation in B2B marketing.

Neuromarketing primarily uses quantitative, technology-based methods to measure unconscious responses to stimuli. Imaging techniques such as fMRI, EEG, eye tracking, and skin conductance measurements provide objective data on neural activation and emotional responses. These approaches require a high level of technical expertise and are cost-intensive (Plassmann, Ramsøy & Milosavljević, 2012, pp. 19–20; Khondakar et al., 2024, pp. 5–6). Sales psychology, on the other hand, is based more on qualitative methods such as conversation techniques, observation, and the analysis of nonverbal signals. Its strength lies in its direct application in personal sales conversations. Event marketing combines qualitative and quantitative evaluation tools, such as visitor surveys, interaction rates, or post-purchase analyses, with the creative design of experience-oriented formats (Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, pp. 111–112).

The temporal effect also varies. Neuromarketing has a particularly strong effect in the first moment of perception, for example when looking at packaging or digital content. Sales psychology exerts its influence during direct interactions by building trust and guiding decisions in real time. Event marketing aims for medium to long-term effects, as multisensory experiences strengthen emotional bonds beyond the time of the event (Schmitt, 1999, pp. 27–28; Hede & Kellett, 2021, pp. 78–79).

The areas of application are also clearly defined. Neuromarketing is primarily used in the conception phase to optimize communication tools and product designs. Sales psychology is crucial in direct customer contact, for example in presentations, negotiations, or key account management. Event marketing serves as a platform for addressing multiple stakeholders simultaneously and is particularly suitable for products that require explanation, where trust and brand image must be conveyed in addition to information (Kirchgeorg, Jung & Klante, 2005, pp. 21–22).

Strategically, neuromarketing is often anchored in market research and communication planning, sales psychology in operational sales, and event marketing in communication policy and, increasingly, in strategic relationship management (Nguyen & Simkin, 2022, pp. 45–46).

To illustrate these differences, a tabular comparison systematically summarizes the methodological foundations, objectives, typical forms of application, and contextual characteristics of the three disciplines (see Table 1).

Comparison of key features of neuromarketing, sales psychology and event marketing in the B2B context			
Criteria	Neuromarketing	Sales psychology	Event marketing
Theoretical basis	Neuroscience, cognitive psychology	Social psychology, communication psychology	Communication science, experiential marketing theory
Objective	Attention modulation, emotional activation	Building trust, influencing decision-making	Brand loyalty, emotional differentiation
Typical methods	fMRT, EEG, eye tracking, stimulus-response testing	Framing, reciprocity, social proof, psychological interaction	Multisensory staging, personal interaction, narrative design
Use in B2B	Design of visual material, campaigns, product presentations	Consultative selling, negotiation, key account management	Trade fairs, brand experiences, customer events, relationship work

Table 1: Methodological differences between neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing in the B2B context

(Own illustration based on Mayring, 2015; Plassmann et al., 2015; Bruhn & Holzer, 2015)

2.4.3 Common impact model along the customer journey in B2B marketing

The analysis shows that neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing are complementary approaches whose potential is best realized when considered together throughout the customer journey. In B2B, this journey comprises three key phases: pre-sales, sales, and after-sales.

In the pre-sales phase, neuromarketing influences unconscious perception through visual, emotional, and multisensory stimuli, for example in digital presentations or on company websites (Plassmann, Ramsøy & Milosavljević, 2012, pp. 24–25). Event marketing can play a supporting role here, for example through digital kick-off events that sharpen the brand image and establish initial emotional bonds (Hede & Kellett, 2021, pp. 78–79).

The sales phase is characterized by direct customer contact. Sales psychology is crucial here, as it builds trust, structures arguments, and uses psychological effects such as anchoring effects or loss aversion to position offers convincingly (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979, pp. 274–275).

Neuromarketing can support this phase with optimized sales arguments and visual design elements. Event marketing reinforces the purchase decision through exclusive workshops or live demonstrations.

In the after-sales phase, the focus is on customer loyalty. Event marketing creates physical or virtual meeting places that promote loyalty and trust, for example through customer forums or community events. Neuromarketing can increase the emotional impact of post-purchase communication, while sales psychology exploits potential through targeted conversation techniques in upselling or cross-selling (Bruhn & Holzer, 2015, pp. 111–112).

The combination of these disciplines enables a consistent and holistic customer approach that addresses cognitive, emotional, and social factors in equal measure. The impact model developed here provides a practice-oriented basis for designing integrated marketing strategies in B2B and for specifically applying psychological mechanisms in real decision-making processes (see Figure 2).

	PRE-SALES	SALES	AFTER-SALES
NEUROMARKETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual stimuli (colors, shapes, eye-catchers) • Subconscious activation through multisensory design • First emotional anchoring of the brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimized visual sales materials (e.g., slides, demos) • Brain-compatible argument structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotionally attuned follow-up communication • Brand reinforcement through recognition effects
SALES PSYCHOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional framing in messaging • Attention control through stimulus design • Creating relevance through psychologically tailored messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building trust through empathy, reciprocity, social proof • Use of framing & loss aversion • Addressing decision heuristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship-building via ongoing contact • Cross-/upselling with tailored offers • Psychological continuity of trust
EVENT MARKETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital expert events and kick-off sessions • First emotional brand contacts • Creating a positive expectation climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live demos and interactive formats • Personal encounters and experiential staging • Exclusivity to support decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer forums, community events • Long-term loyalty through shared experiences • Appreciation through direct engagement

Figure 2: Integration of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing along the B2B customer journey

(Own illustration based on Plassmann et al., 2012; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Bruhn & Holzer, 2015)

The theoretical principles outlined in Chapter 2 form the conceptual foundation of this paper. Building on these findings, Chapter 3 examines the extent to which these assumptions can be supported by empirical data and what synergies arise from practical application.

3 Methodology of the empirical study

The empirical investigation in this thesis is based on a qualitative research design with methodological triangulation. The aim is to analyze the effects of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing in B2B marketing and to understand how they interact. Since there are only a few systematic studies on this topic to date, an exploratory approach makes it possible to capture implicit knowledge, behavior patterns, and experiences of specialists and managers working in relevant areas of B2B marketing (Flick, 2018, p. 45).

The research design combines guided expert interviews with an open online survey. This methodological triangulation combines depth of content with empirical breadth and increases the validity of the results by comparing different perspectives (Flick, 2018, p. 191). The evaluation is deductive-inductive: First, central categories are derived from the theoretical framework of the study and supplemented with categories obtained inductively during the analysis process (Mayring, 2015, pp. 64–70).

All participants were informed about the objectives, procedure, and data protection and gave their written consent. Anonymity and confidentiality of the data were guaranteed throughout the entire research process.

3.1 Research design and methodological principles

The research design is qualitative and exploratory in nature, with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of the application and interconnection of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing in B2B marketing (Flick, 2018, p. 45). The focus is on the individual experiences, assessments, and decision-making processes of specialists and managers from marketing, sales, event management, and corporate management.

The research paradigm is predominantly inductive, but contains deductive elements. The starting point is the theoretical concepts presented in Chapter 2, from which an initial category system is formed. This is expanded and adapted in the course of the qualitative evaluation in order to identify new patterns and correlations from the data material (Lamnek & Krell, 2016, p. 362).

The methodological triangulation comprises two forms of data collection: guided expert interviews and a qualitative online survey with open-ended questions (Flick, 2018, p. 191). The combination of both methods increases the depth of detail and diversity of the perspectives captured. Qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2015, pp. 64–70) forms the methodological basis of the evaluation and ensures methodological rigor and consistency of content through transparency, traceability, and theoretical saturation (Steinke, 2012, p. 319).

3.2 Triangulated qualitative research design and implementation

The triangulated research design combines two complementary forms of data collection to capture psychological mechanisms in B2B marketing in a differentiated manner. The guided expert interviews provide in-depth insights into individual experiences and decision-making logic, while the open online survey captures a broader spectrum of assessments from a heterogeneous target group. This combination corresponds to the principle of internal triangulation, which increases the gain in knowledge through the use of multiple qualitative methods (Flick, 2018, p. 191).

3.2.1 Expert interviews with B2B professionals

The guided expert interviews form the core of the data collection. They enable the recording of explicit specialist knowledge and implicit rationales for action in dealing with neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing from the perspective of experienced practitioners. This format combines structured questions with openness to in-depth inquiries, thus enabling systematic and flexible data collection (Helfferich, 2011, p. 177; Bogner, Littig & Menz, 2014, p. 13).

3.2.1.1 Selection of interview partners

The interviewees were selected based on theoretical sampling, which focuses on relevance to the research question (Flick, 2018, p. 164). The aim was to include participants whose expertise could make a substantial contribution to answering the research question and who would contribute to achieving theoretical saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 2008, p. 61).

The sample comprises six specialists and managers from marketing, event management, sales, and business management, consisting of two managing directors, two event managers, and two

sales employees. This composition ensures a balanced distribution of functions and diverse perspectives on the integration of psychological factors in B2B marketing. Recruitment was carried out via personal contacts, LinkedIn networks, and targeted direct approaches.

The interviews took place between June 12 and July 8, 2025, lasted between 30 and 60 minutes, and were conducted exclusively online via video conference. With the consent of the participants, all interviews were recorded in full and transcribed to enable a thorough evaluation (Meuser & Nagel, 2009, p. 467).

3.2.1.2 Development of guidelines and implementation

The interview guide was developed based on theory from the research questions in Chapter 1 and the theoretical foundations in Chapter 2 (Mayring, 2015; Flick, 2018). It was divided into five topics: professional background, use and perception of neuromarketing in B2B, application of psychological principles in sales, use of event marketing in B2B, and assessment of synergies, success factors, and challenges along the customer journey. In-depth questions enabled the exploration of new topics that arose during the interviews (Helfferrich, 2011, p. 177).

The interviews were conducted by the author to ensure consistency in the approach. The principles of active listening were observed and a professional atmosphere was created (Helfferrich, 2011, p. 183).

3.2.1.3 Evaluation using qualitative content analysis

The interviews were evaluated using Mayring's qualitative content analysis (2015, pp. 64–70). The category system was initially based on the theoretical foundations from Chapter 2 and was supplemented with inductively derived subcategories during the analysis. The transcripts were coded using QCAmap software, thematic clusters were formed, and these were continuously compared with the source material. The focus was on content patterns, argumentation structures, and recurring contexts.

3.2.2 Open online survey with B2B professionals

The qualitative online survey supplemented the expert interviews in order to gain additional perspectives from the B2B environment and validate the patterns identified in the interviews (Flick, 2018, p. 191).

3.2.2.1 Target group and concept

The target group comprised specialists and managers from marketing, sales, event management, and corporate management in the B2B sector. Recruitment was carried out via professional networks, personal contacts, and topic-specific forums. Care was taken to ensure a heterogeneous composition in terms of company size, industry, and position in order to reflect different perspectives (Flick, 2018, p. 148).

The questionnaire comprised 37 items and was implemented using the UmfrageOnline.com software. The focus was on open-ended questions, supplemented by individual items on 5-point Likert scales for comparative relevance assessment. The structure was based on the three areas of investigation and focused on their possible links along the customer journey.

3.2.2.2 Implementation

The survey was conducted online from June 25 to July 12, 2025. A total of 54 people took part. Only data sets in which more than 50% of the questions were answered were included in the evaluation. This resulted in 25 usable results for analysis. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and the survey was distributed specifically via relevant professional networks.

3.2.2.3 Evaluation using qualitative content analysis

The open responses were evaluated using qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2015, pp. 64–70), based on the procedure used for the expert interviews. Coding and categorization were performed using QCAmap. The results were compared with the interview data to identify similarities and differences.

3.3 Methodological triangulation and integration of results

Methodological triangulation combines detailed insights from the expert interviews with a broader, cross-sector overview from the online survey. Both data sets were evaluated on the basis of a uniform category system that was theoretically sound and inductively expanded during the analysis process.

Despite different organizational backgrounds, there were clear overlaps in content. In both surveys, participants emphasized the relevance of psychological factors such as trust, emotional security, and social relationships for decision-making processes in B2B marketing. At the same time, deficits in the practical implementation of psychologically sound approaches became apparent, often due to a lack of expertise or limited resources.

The integration of both survey forms enabled a well-founded validation of the results and a differentiated view of the research topic. On this basis, the empirical results are presented in Chapter 4.

4 Results of the empirical study

The empirical results are based on six guided expert interviews and 25 evaluable responses to an open online survey. Both data sources were evaluated according to the principles of qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2015). The category system was first developed deductively from the theoretical foundations in Chapter 2 and then expanded inductively in the course of the analysis.

The coding was carried out separately for each source in order to highlight specific perspectives and identify similarities and differences. The coded data was used to form core thematic dimensions in which the results of both forms of data collection were integrated and presented in a comparative manner.

The results are presented according to the three central fields of investigation: neuromarketing in a B2B context, psychological principles in sales, and event marketing in the B2B sector. Within these subject areas, the expert interviews are presented first, followed by the results of the online survey and finally an integrative analysis.

4.1 Neuromarketing in B2B

Building on the theoretical foundations of neuropsychological mechanisms in marketing (see Chapter 2), we investigated the extent to which neuromarketing is known, accepted, and strategically used in a B2B context. The aim was to capture both concrete application experiences and the general perception of the concept.

The results show that the term neuromarketing is familiar to different degrees in both data sources. While some respondents provide detailed descriptions and specific examples of its use, others express uncertainty or lack of knowledge. At the same time, there are numerous overlaps with psychologically influenced communication and sales practices, which, however, are rarely explicitly referred to as neuromarketing.

4.1.1 Results of the expert interviews

The interviews make it clear that although the term is familiar in B2B, it is rarely used systematically. Many companies implicitly use elements of neuromarketing without declaring

them as a separate strategy. One interviewee put it this way: “We don't do anything under the term neuromarketing, but we do it anyway” (interview).

This discrepancy between low theoretical anchoring and practical application is also reflected in the industry's perception. “I think 99% of B2B people don't even know what it is. I assume we do it unconsciously” (interview).

The statements refer less to neural mechanisms and more to emotional effects, intuitive communication, and psychologically influenced relationship management. One expert emphasized: “B2B decisions are never made purely rationally because people buy from people, not companies from companies” (interview).

At the same time, some respondents describe neuromarketing as theoretically interesting but difficult to grasp. “The idea of targeting specific areas of the brain sounds exciting, but we currently lack the resources and expertise to do so” (interview). This points to an awareness of the potential of neuroscientific findings, but also reveals a lack of expertise and limited resources as major obstacles.

In summary, it appears that neuromarketing in B2B currently exists more as an experience-based set of methods that is used on a situational basis. The main problem lies less in its relevance than in a lack of conceptual clarity, limited theoretical translation, and a lack of strategic anchoring.

4.1.2 Results of the online survey

The anonymous online survey reveals a much broader spectrum of opinion than the expert interviews. While some participants do not indicate any specific knowledge, others have a basic or even in-depth understanding. The definitions range from simplified descriptions “marketing on a subconscious level,” (TN) to precise formulations with reference to neurobiological processes “neuromarketing examines how the brain reacts to advertising and products in order to understand what motivates people to buy,” (TN).

Concrete application experiences are mentioned more frequently in the online survey than in the interviews. Examples range from presentation design to the use of eye-tracking technologies: “Our customer presentation was optimized with eye tracking to trigger attention and emotional responses” (TN). “Optimization of presentations and pitches – insights from

neuromarketing can be used to design content in such a way as to strengthen attention, trust, and emotional attachment to business customers” (TN).

Similar to the interviews, however, implementation barriers and knowledge gaps are also emphasized here: “Many marketing or sales teams have no training in neuroscience, which makes implementation difficult” (TN). “So far, the tool as such is not being used consciously. Awareness of neuromarketing is very low” (TN).

Overall, the online survey reveals a broader spectrum of knowledge and assessments. Alongside complete ignorance, there are well-founded views based on practical experience. This suggests that neuromarketing is not yet widely established expertise in B2B, but is actively used and recognized in specific areas.

4.1.3 Integration of the results

A comparison of both sources shows that neuromarketing is present in B2B in terms of content, but that the terminology used is inconsistent. Both experts and online participants recognize psychological influence mechanisms in the marketing and sales process, but differ in terms of depth, language use, and operationalization.

The interviews highlight the implicit use of neuropsychological principles without explicitly referring to them as neuromarketing. Practice is more experience- and trust-based, with a lack of resources and the limited transferability of scientific findings cited as obstacles.

The online survey shows a broader spectrum – from ignorance to clear definitions and concrete application examples such as eye tracking or emotionally designed presentations. At the same time, a lack of training and low company-wide awareness are also evident here.

Overall, both data sources highlight the growing potential and latent connectivity for neuromarketing in B2B. While the interviews focus more on intuition and personal experience, the online responses sometimes introduce technical approaches. This opens up prospects for a future connection between theoretical concepts and practical implementation.

4.2 Sales psychology in B2B

While neuromarketing in B2B tends to be implicit and conceptually vague, this section focuses on deliberately applied psychological principles in sales. The aim is to examine the extent to

which psychologically influenced communication and behavior patterns are used in a targeted manner to shape sales situations and develop customer relationships. This includes measures to build trust, steer decision-making processes, and add emotional appeal to complex offerings. Sales psychology combines neuroscientific principles with practical implementation in sales conversations.

Even though B2B decisions are often made in several stages and are based on rational reasoning, the results show that emotional and psychological factors still play a significant role in the purchasing decision. As before, the evaluation follows a separate presentation of the expert interviews (4.2.1) and the online survey (4.2.2), as well as an integrative analysis (4.2.3).

4.2.1 Results of the expert interviews

The interviews make it clear that psychological principles are highly important in B2B sales, even if they are rarely explicitly mentioned. They are often used intuitively and based on experience to shape customer conversations, decision-making processes, and relationship management. The establishment of trust was cited as central to successful B2B relationships. Unlike in B2C, where emotional impulses often have a short-term effect, trust in B2B is the result of long-term interaction and a decisive factor in closing deals. “Trust plays the biggest role,” summarized one expert.

In addition, the interviewees emphasized the need for a consistent customer perspective. This is not just a matter of factual arguments, but also of how needs are addressed – through language, demeanor, and the structure of the argument. One respondent succinctly stated: “The food doesn't have to taste good to the chef, but to the guests. [...] I never see my own benefit as the main focus” (interview).

Several respondents described their role not primarily as salespeople, but as solution providers. One interviewee put it this way: “I offer solutions based on the motto ‘Your problem is my problem’ and accompany the customer from start to finish” (interview).

“Reading” the customer – i.e., recognizing and classifying verbal and nonverbal signals – was highlighted as a key competence: “The most important thing is to understand and be able to read your customers” (interview).

In summary, it is clear that psychological principles in B2B sales are less a formal methodology than a lived practice. They are based on experience, situational adaptation, and a clear customer focus, without necessarily resorting to theoretical models.

4.2.2 Results of the online survey

The online survey confirms the high relevance of psychological principles, but at the same time makes it clear that in many cases these are used consciously and strategically. Several participants described the targeted use of mechanisms such as framing, reciprocity, loss aversion, and social proof, both in personal conversations and in written communication. "Framing: clearly present the time losses or risks that arise if no decision is made. Reciprocity: small concessions strengthen loyalty. Social proof: mentioning other projects convinces decision-makers" (TN).

Such statements demonstrate a methodological understanding that goes beyond mere experience. Many respondents consciously distinguished between rational and emotional-psychological arguments and described this combination as an integral part of successful sales strategies: "Objective, rational arguments are important for technical evaluation. However, the final decision is often influenced by emotional factors such as brand image, appearance, or trust in our innovative strength" (TN).

This view was repeated several times and indicates that emotional and psychological factors are considered a distinguishing feature, especially in markets with comparable offerings: "A factual, rational approach opens the door to the customer. However, the decision is usually made for emotional reasons" (TN).

In addition, frequent reference was made to the integration of psychological strategies in sales training, offer design, and argumentation structures: "In our communication, we make targeted use of psychological principles such as social proof, framing, and reciprocity" (TN). In some cases, explicit reference was also made to theoretical models, such as the principles of Robert B. Cialdini: "Social proof and the other six sales arguments according to Robert B. Cialdini" (TN).

Overall, the responses show a growing professionalization and systematization of psychological approaches in B2B sales. Even without in-depth psychological training, many respondents have a clear awareness of the emotional complexity of purchasing decisions.

4.2.3 Integration of the results

A comparison of the two data sources shows that psychological sales principles are recognized by both groups as an essential component of professional customer interaction. Common focal points are trust, emotional appeal, and situation-appropriate communication. Differences exist primarily in the precision of terminology and methodological foundations.

The experts described psychological mechanisms predominantly in an implicit and experience-oriented manner. Personal attitude, relationship building, and intuition were at the forefront. Psychology appears here less as a clearly named instrument and more as an integral part of professional sales competence.

The online participants, especially those with a sales background or training experience, on the other hand, more frequently use precise terminology and refer to specific models. Terms such as framing, reciprocity, social proof, and loss aversion were specifically linked to examples.

A key difference lies in the degree of formalization: while the experts tend to take an individual approach, online respondents report standardized procedures and structured forms of application – for example, in presentations, offer documents, or conversation guides. Both groups emphasize that rational arguments are indispensable in B2B, but are not sufficient on their own. Decisions are made based on a mix of factual and emotional factors. Psychological principles aren't seen as manipulation, but as a way to better address customer needs and build strong relationships.

Overall, we see a picture of dual strength. Intuitive experience and theory-based approaches complement each other and open up potential for thoughtful, strategic sales behavior.

4.3 Event marketing in B2B

Events, trade fairs, and personal encounters play a central role in B2B marketing. They enable intensive experiences, direct interaction, and a multisensory approach. In markets with long decision-making processes, complex services, and low emotionalization, events offer the opportunity to build trust, emotionally charge brands, and strengthen personal relationships.

Based on theoretical approaches to brand perception, multisensory experiences, and social influencing factors (see Chapter 2), this study examined the functions that events fulfill in B2B communication and how they can be used strategically. The focus is on the extent to which

events serve as a platform for psychological principles such as emotional differentiation, targeted brand staging, and social confirmation of brand promises.

The presentation follows the structure of expert interviews (4.3.1), online survey (4.3.2), and integrative analysis (4.3.3).

4.3.1 Results of the expert interviews

The interviews show that event marketing plays a central role in B2B for customer loyalty, brand perception, and trust building. Large events such as trade fairs and smaller, target group-specific formats are used strategically, but differ in function and psychological impact.

Several respondents emphasized the importance of emotional experiences and personal encounters as a unique selling point compared to other communication channels. “We create an environment that is unique as an event. These are things that people remember for a lifetime. Event marketing can therefore be incredibly sustainable and, in my view, plays a leading role among communication channels” (interview).

The long-term impact of well-designed events is reflected in their memorability, emotional anchoring, and lasting connection to the experience. Trade fairs primarily serve to enhance brand presence, present products, and acquire new customers, while smaller internal or exclusive formats are used specifically to build trust and maintain existing relationships. “Trade fairs are used for product presentations, brand staging, and new customer acquisition. We tend to maintain existing business relationships through smaller, internal events” (interview).

Some experts pointed to the internal benefits of events, such as employee retention and location loyalty. Appreciation, a sense of community, and identification were cited as key psychological functions. “Internal events, employee events – of course appreciation, employee retention, etc. External events are forward-looking for our organization” (interview).

The measurability of success was viewed critically. Feedback mechanisms exist, but clear metrics for measuring success are often lacking. Nevertheless, there was agreement that well-planned events create strategic added value, especially for emotional positioning and public image. “The press tends to write about negative things. There aren't many platforms to present yourself in a positive light. That's where conscious event marketing and inviting important people come into play” (interview).

Experts see event marketing less as a direct sales tool and more as a strategic experience format for strengthening trust, brand identity, and relationships.

4.3.2 Results of the online survey

The survey results confirm the high relevance of live events and trade fair formats in B2B marketing. Many participants emphasized the emotional added value of physical events in terms of trust, customer loyalty, and brand presentation.

A frequently mentioned aspect was the multisensory experience of products and brands as an advantage over digital formats: “Emotional brand loyalty is created through impressive, multi-sensory experiences – for example, through innovative technology, a personal welcome, a pleasant atmosphere, lighting, sound or haptic elements” (TN). “Live events are indispensable for our industry in order to see, feel and test the quality of the products” (TN).

Personal encounters were described as an indispensable part of customer communication: “Physical events are becoming more valuable because they are rare and emotional. Personal networking, on-site brand experiences, and direct contact with decision-makers are becoming more exclusive and targeted” (TN).

Several participants said they were using differentiated event strategies, including exclusive customer events, innovation forums, and co-creation sessions: “We are focusing specifically on high-quality formats such as trade fairs, exclusive customer events, innovation forums, and interactive technology workshops. Formats that enable personal experiences with our brand, such as vehicle demonstrations or VIP events at pilot projects, are particularly effective” (TN).

The mention of success factors such as experience-oriented product presentation, exclusivity, personal relevance, interaction, and emotional brand presentation illustrates the strategic use of psychological principles. “These elements create a high level of identification with the brand, strengthen customer loyalty, and trigger clear purchasing impulses – even in the B2B environment” (TN).

Digital and hybrid formats were described as range extenders that complement physical events but cannot completely replace them: “Digital and hybrid formats significantly extend the reach, but do not replace the emotional impact of physical live experiences. The future lies in the intelligent interaction of both worlds” (TN).

4.3.3 Integration of the results

A comparison of the two data sources reveals a consistent assessment: physical events are of central importance in B2B for brand loyalty, emotional positioning, and relationship building. They are understood as strategically embedded, multisensory experiences that trigger specific psychological effects.

The experts emphasize the long-term nature of such experiences, whose effects only become apparent in customer behavior after some time. Large events such as trade fairs serve primarily for representation and acquisition, while smaller, exclusive formats are more focused on personal relationship management.

The survey supplements this view with specific success factors and specifically planned event formats. The psychological levers mentioned were multisensory experiences, exclusivity, personal relevance, and dialogue orientation.

The difference between the two groups lies in the degree of formalization: experts rely more on experience-based assessments, while some survey participants report systematically planned event strategies. There is agreement that physical events can be supplemented by digital or hybrid formats, but not completely replaced. Event marketing is understood in B2B as a strategic experience space that specifically activates psychological principles and links them to brand values. Both perspectives illustrate a growing professionalization and a clear awareness of the psychological impact of such measures.

Overall, the results show that event marketing in B2B is not seen as pure staging, but rather as a strategically designed experience space in which psychological principles are specifically activated and linked to brand values. A parallel analysis of both data sources reveals increasing professionalization, differentiated formats, and a growing awareness of the psychological impact of events. The central levels of impact can be clearly illustrated in a functional model (see Figure 3).



Figure 3: Effects of event marketing in the B2B context

(Own illustration based on Bruhn & Holzer, 2015; Hede & Kellett, 2021)

Figure 3 illustrates three key areas of impact for event marketing in a B2B context: the emotional, social, and communicative levels. At the emotional level, the focus is on multisensory stimulation and real interaction, which leads to strong emotional anchoring of the brand and long-term memory effects. The social level emphasizes building trust through personal contact, strengthening customer relationships, and creating shared experiences that promote a sense of community. The communicative level describes the importance of real-time feedback, mutual communication, and informal knowledge exchange in order to anchor the brand in the customer's environment in the long term. Together, these effects complement the mechanisms of neuromarketing and sales psychology and provide a comprehensive framework for how event marketing can be used effectively along the customer journey. In the following section, these effects are analyzed in more detail and their practical significance is discussed.

4.4 Summary presentation along the customer journey

Empirical analysis shows that psychological mechanisms shape all three phases of the B2B customer journey. Neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing interact across phases and contribute to attention, trust, and loyalty with different focuses. Interviews and online responses point to a consistent pattern. Companies combine multisensory stimuli,

personal communication, and staged experiences to influence perception and decisions. These measures are often used intuitively and are only partially embedded in a structured framework.

The following figure illustrates the theoretical impact model developed in section 2.4.3 based on the empirical results. It shows the respective focal points and psychological functions of the three disciplines along the customer journey.

	PRE-SALES	SALES	AFTER-SALES
NEUROMARKETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional priming through color, imagery, and multisensory design Increased subconscious attention and brand recall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual stimuli support pitch impact and decision orientation Reinforcement of brand value through targeted design elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional reactivation via brand cues in follow-ups Strengthening of mental brand presence
SALES PSYCHOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust building via message framing and authority cues Subtle application of consistency and relevance principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of heuristics: reciprocity, social proof, anchoring Empathy and mirroring as trust-enhancing techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loyalty through empathic communication and feedback loops Reinforcement of value through continuity cues
EVENT MARKETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch events and digital fairs for emotional engagement Early-stage positioning through brand storytelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactive demos and workshops as persuasive platforms Personal exchange facilitates decision readiness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusive formats (e.g., appreciation events, user communities) Emotional anchoring and relationship deepening

Figure 4: Integrated representation of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing across the B2B customer journey

(Own illustration based on Plassmann et al., 2012; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Bruhn & Holzer, 2015)

In the presales phase, the focus is on initial perception and positioning. Respondents describe the use of emotionally designed communication tools and event formats to generate attention and build positive preconceptions. Elements of neuromarketing such as color design, imagery, and emotional language are used, mostly without explicit mention. The experts surveyed also emphasize that multisensory experiences prepare consumers for a stronger bond with the brand and provider even before direct sales contact.

The sales phase is characterized by the direct sales process. Here, trust-building communication and structured conversation techniques are particularly effective. Psychological principles such as framing, reciprocity, and social proof are mentioned in the statements as deliberately used means of reducing uncertainty and steering decision-making processes. Presentations, live

demos, and smaller customer-specific formats combine rationally comprehensible arguments with emotional relevance. Understanding customer needs and reading nonverbal signals are described as key success factors.

In the after-sales phase, the focus shifts to long-term loyalty. The results show that companies rely on continuous communication and exclusive, relationship-oriented event formats to achieve this. Appreciation, personal proximity, and recurring experiences stabilize trust and increase the willingness to engage in cross-selling and upselling. Neuromarketing contributes to the emotional charge of follow-up communication, while sales psychology adds depth to relationships through empathetic interaction.

Overall, it can be said that psychological mechanisms along the customer journey should not be understood as isolated individual measures. Impact is created through systematic linking across all phases. Companies that consistently combine emotional appeal, trust-based interaction, and experience-oriented formats are perceived as more reliable and relevant throughout the entire customer cycle.

The results presented show how psychological mechanisms are used in B2B marketing along the customer journey. In the following chapter, these findings are analyzed in an integrative manner, reflected upon with regard to the interactions between the three disciplines, and supplemented by key success factors and challenges in B2B marketing.

5 Integrative analysis of results

The empirical findings from Chapter 4 illustrate that psychological principles in B2B marketing do not act as isolated influences, but are intertwined in many ways throughout the entire customer journey. Neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing do not unfold their effects in clearly separated fields of action, but rather reinforce each other, are integrated across phases, and are often combined intuitively. The qualitative content analysis shows that these disciplines are particularly effective when they are consciously linked and strategically deployed in the pre-sales, sales, and after-sales phases.

In the pre-sales phase, multisensory events, attention-grabbing communication stimuli, and pitch presentations serve to establish emotional anchors and create initial points of contact. Elements of neuromarketing such as color design, visual stimuli, and narrative techniques are combined with emotionally charged event formats to create memorable and convincing first contacts.

The sales phase is characterized by the close integration of sales psychology and event marketing. Mechanisms such as framing, reciprocity, and social proof are used not only in personal sales conversations, but also in interactive events and presentations to strengthen trust and accelerate decision-making processes. Neuromarketing complements this approach by activating unconscious perception and decision-making mechanisms through the targeted design of multisensory and emotionally appealing presentations.

In the after-sales phase, elements from all three disciplines come together. Event marketing and neuromarketing create experiences that promote appreciation, emotional attachment, and long-term customer loyalty. At the same time, sales psychology is also used here, for example in the form of targeted reactivation measures, personalized offers, and empathetic, relationship-oriented communication that further builds trust after the contract has been signed.

The integrative analysis shows that companies are particularly successful in B2B marketing when they use psychological mechanisms systemically rather than individually. These mechanisms are embedded in a consistent customer journey and are tailored to each phase and its objectives. Many of the practices identified, such as the use of framing, multisensory design, or reciprocity, are not always consciously based on theoretical concepts, but are often based on

practical intuition. At the same time, it is becoming clear that more and more companies are beginning to reflect on these mechanisms, structure them, and operationalize them strategically.

The holistic linking of psychological mechanisms not only enhances brand experiences, but also improves connectivity to emotional, relational, and cognitive decision-making factors on the customer side. It forms the basis for the following sections, which analyze in more detail the interconnection of the three disciplines, success factors, and barriers, as well as the measurability of psychological effects in B2B marketing.

5.1 Interactions and mutual reinforcement between the three disciplines

The empirical results show that neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing do not operate in isolation in the B2B context, but interact in multiple ways and reinforce each other. While they are often treated as separate disciplines in theory and research, practice reveals dynamic overlaps and situational combinations that depend strongly on context, target group, and phase of the customer journey.

Neuro-scientifically informed stimuli such as colors, imagery, and visual structures are often integrated into events to subconsciously influence brand perception. These elements of neuromarketing only unfold their full effect in conjunction with the emotional architecture of event formats, for example through multisensory settings, targeted lighting moods, or narrative dramaturgy. One expert summed it up as follows: “These are things that stay in people's minds for the rest of their lives” (interview).

Sales psychology principles such as framing, reciprocity, and social proof also carry over into event formats. Participants in the online survey reported that they consciously use psychological mechanisms in presentations, pitch situations, or customer events, for example by highlighting reference projects, using precise wording, or incorporating interactive elements. The effect of these principles is particularly strong when they are embedded in a positive and trusting relationship climate. “In our communication, we make targeted use of psychological principles such as social proof, framing, and reciprocity” (TN).

Many of the measures examined have an impact on several levels simultaneously. A customer event not only fulfills sales- or image-oriented functions, but also activates unconscious neural stimuli, facilitates social comparison processes, and creates opportunities for trust-building

interactions. Sales also benefits when events are designed to support the use of psychological sales techniques, for example through personal consultation in an informal setting.

A key finding is that the three disciplines are most effective when used in an integrated rather than additive manner. An event can generate attention on its own, but when it is also designed with neuromarketing principles and moderated with psychological techniques, it becomes an experience-oriented communication platform that addresses multiple levels of the customer relationship: perception, emotion, trust, and decision-making. “Emotional communication creates a basis for relationships, while factual arguments tend to serve as confirmation” (TN).

This observation applies across all phases of the customer journey. In the pre-sales phase, neuromarketing generates attention through emotional stimuli that are brought to life in event formats and pitch presentations. In the sales phase, personal consultation and psychological sales strategies are combined with socially validating formats such as reference narratives or co-creation situations. In the after-sales phase, events secure emotional loyalty, while sales psychology strengthens trust and continuity and neuromarketing promotes long-term brand recall.

The results clearly show that the strategically integrated use of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing is particularly effective in B2B marketing. When used in combination, these disciplines generate emotional depth, social connectivity, and cognitive salience throughout the entire customer journey. The following model systematically summarizes the empirically identified interaction effects and mutual reinforcements.



Figure 5: Integrated interaction model of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing in the B2B context

(Own illustration based on expert interviews and online survey data)

The figure illustrates how neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing mutually reinforce each other and form an integrated psychological communication logic. It serves as the foundation for the following discussion of success factors and practical challenges.

5.2 Challenges and success factors in the B2B context

The results show that using psychological mechanisms in B2B marketing offers great potential, but practical implementation faces structural, cultural, and knowledge-related challenges. At the same time, clear success factors promote and reinforce their targeted use.

A major challenge lies in the limited awareness and lack of theoretical foundation of many psychological concepts in everyday B2B life. The term “neuromarketing” was described in several interviews as ‘unknown’ or “vague,” even though individual elements such as color psychology, attention control, and multisensory stimuli are used deliberately. One manager

summed this up succinctly: “The idea of targeting specific areas of the brain sounds exciting, but we currently lack the resources and expertise to do so” (interview).

Sales psychology is also often applied intuitively, without the underlying knowledge being systematically anchored. As a result, individual experience dominates, while a company-wide understanding is often lacking. In the online survey, one participant pointed out: “The question is rather where an experienced salesperson does not use it” (TN).

Another obstacle is the lack of internal integration between marketing, sales, and event management. Although all three disciplines address psychological effects, in many companies they operate separately, with distinct budgets, target systems, and communication strategies. This fragmentation hinders the integrated implementation of psychologically sound measures along the customer journey. Several interviews emphasized that strategic coherence and clear interfaces are often missing.

On the other hand, clear success factors can be identified. The conscious linking of psychological mechanisms with experience-oriented formats is particularly effective. When companies combine neuromarketing with multisensory design, sales psychology with principles such as framing or reciprocity, and event marketing with personal proximity and staging, the result is a communication effect that is cognitively understandable, emotionally charged, and socially connectable. One respondent summed it up as follows: “Experience-oriented product experiences, exclusivity and personal relevance, interaction and dialogue instead of one-way communication, and emotional staging of the brand are particularly effective” (TN).

Other keys to success include a willingness to reflect, interdisciplinary teams, and strategic openness to new approaches. Companies that view psychological principles not as tools for manipulation but as aids to better understanding customer relationships create a basis for sustainable differentiation. One expert put it this way: “The most important thing is to understand and be able to read your customers” (interview).

In summary, it is clear that the successful use of psychological disciplines in B2B marketing requires more than individual tools or methods. It requires organizational learning, cultural openness, and strategic integration. Where these prerequisites are met, companies can not only build attention and trust, but also shape long-term customer relationships that are both rational and emotional. This raises the question of how the impact of these measures can be measured

and evaluated using appropriate success criteria, which will be examined in the following section.

5.3 Measurability and success criteria for marketing measures in B2B

The measurability and evaluation of psychologically based marketing measures in B2B is relevant both scientifically and for strategic control, budget responsibility, and proof of effectiveness. The empirical results paint an ambivalent picture. Many companies use psychological mechanisms such as events, multisensory stimuli, or trust-based communication strategies, but rarely have systematic tools for monitoring success.

This problem has been clearly identified by several experts. Although selective feedback mechanisms such as participant surveys, digital response metrics, and lead tracking are used, these tend to be superficial and focus on short-term, predominantly quantitative results. One expert put it this way: “The success of events is difficult to measure. We can see whether people come or whether conversations take place – but whether this actually leads to a decision is often unclear” (interview).

The online survey also made it clear that psychological effects such as trust, sympathy, or emotional brand loyalty are difficult to translate into key performance indicators (KPIs). The long-term effects of emotional communication often only become apparent after a delay and indirectly in customer behavior. This observation points to a methodological challenge. Psychologically effective measures cannot be reliably measured using classic success metrics such as conversion rates or immediate sales figures. Instead, they have an impact on higher-level targets such as brand loyalty, trust, repurchase probability, or recommendations. However, these are rarely clearly measurable, as they arise from the interaction of numerous communicative and organizational factors.

Despite these limitations, qualitative success criteria can facilitate the evaluation of psychological marketing measures. These include the emotional anchoring of brand images, the quality and depth of personal customer conversations, responses to event formats, and repeated interest through follow-up contacts. One respondent summarized: “We use feedback discussions after events, but ultimately it's often nuances that make the difference – and those are difficult to capture” (interview).

The results clearly show that evaluating psychologically effective marketing measures in B2B requires an expanded success system. In addition to classic KPI-based control mechanisms, a combination of qualitative surveys and implicit success signals is necessary to comprehensively capture and sustainably leverage the potential of emotionally based marketing strategies. Chapter 5 illustrates that the combination of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing offers considerable potential, but that its impact can only be fully exploited through targeted integration and clear strategic control. Building on these findings, Chapter 6 critically interprets the results in the context of existing research and derives key theoretical and practical implications.

6 Discussion and implications

This paper has demonstrated how psychological mechanisms in the form of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing are used specifically along the customer journey in the B2B sector and what levels of impact they have. The qualitative content analysis of expert interviews and online surveys enabled an in-depth examination of the practical application, perception, and strategic integration of these disciplines. The results illustrate that psychological mechanisms in B2B marketing do not only have a selective effect, but rather a cross-phase and cross-disciplinary impact. Although they are rarely systematically anchored, they often unfold their effect in an intuitive manner.

The analysis focuses on the insight that attention, trust, emotional differentiation, and relationship management in a B2B context cannot be achieved through rational arguments and functional product advantages alone. Rather, emotional, cognitive, and social components act as integral parts of a successful customer approach, especially in a market environment characterized by information overload, growing interchangeability, and declining decision-making certainty.

The evaluation shows that the integrated use of the three disciplines examined, i.e., the conscious combination of multisensory brand staging, psychologically sound sales interaction, and emotional event design, can make a significant contribution to sustainable customer loyalty. At the same time, it became clear that the practical application of these principles is strongly influenced by individual experience, limited resources, and a lack of institutional anchoring. The existing gap between intuitive use and systematic application points to a central need for action, both for companies and for the further scientific development of the disciplines in the B2B sector.

Chapter 6 therefore discusses the implications derived from the results in several steps. First, the methodological boundaries and limitations are reflected upon (6.1). This is followed by a theoretical classification of the findings within existing lines of research (6.2). Building on this, the theoretical implications (6.3) and practical conclusions (6.4) are elaborated before the chapter concludes with specific recommendations for action for companies (6.5).

6.1 Limitations and methodological reflection

Like any empirical study, this paper is subject to certain limitations that must be critically reflected upon in the interests of scientific transparency. These limitations relate to the design of the survey, the methodology chosen, and the transferability of the results.

A first limitation arises from the sample structure. The study is based on six expert interviews and 25 usable responses from an online survey, which were selected and analyzed taking into account qualitative quality criteria. The number of interviews was determined according to the principle of theoretical saturation, but the scope is nevertheless limited and does not allow for generalizable statements about all B2B marketing managers. In addition, the participants in the online survey work exclusively in the B2B sector. This is in line with the research perspective, but limits the scope of the content, as no comparative perspective from the B2C sector was taken into account.

When evaluating the online survey, it should also be noted that some of the responses were taken from partially completed questionnaires, which were nevertheless included in the analysis after a threshold of more than 50% of the questions had been answered. Although this allowed additional data to be obtained, there is a certain degree of selectivity, particularly with regard to the depth and differentiation of the responses. The conscious decision to only consider cases that contained a substantial amount of text mitigates this limitation, but does not eliminate it entirely.

On a methodological level, the decision to use Mayring's qualitative content analysis with the support of QCAmap software has specific advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, this method enables a structured, rule-based, and theory-supported evaluation of qualitative data. The combination of deductive and inductive category systems is particularly advantageous, as it takes into account both theoretically derived categories and those that emerge from the data. On the other hand, the method depends on the quality of the transcripts, the consistency of the categories, and the researcher's interpretation skills. There is a particular risk of selective or overinterpreted coding in open, semi-structured interview formats and open online questions, where there is no standardization of depth or context.

Another point concerns the researcher's dual role as data collector and interpreter. Despite careful transcription, systematic coding, and documented decision-making steps, a subjective

element of interpretation remains, which is considered inherent in qualitative research. The present results should therefore be understood as hypothesis-generating. They confirm and expand the assumptions formulated in Chapter 1, but primarily provide exploratory findings that can serve as a basis for further, quantitatively verifiable studies.

Despite these limitations, the work offers a validated, theory-based, and content-rich analysis. The combination of triangulated data sources, a deductive-inductive category system, and a focus on recognized analytical methods ensures a high degree of transparency, traceability, and scientific relevance.

6.2 Interpretation of the results in the context of the research literature

The results can be linked to existing research in several ways. They support numerous theoretical assumptions while revealing aspects that remain underexplored regarding the psychological impact of integrated marketing in the B2B sector.

A key finding is that neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing are not perceived as strictly separate disciplines in practice, but are increasingly being combined and used intuitively. This observation is consistent with the work of Häusel (2012) and Scharf (2019), who point to overlapping psychological mechanisms in communication, decision-making behavior, and brand perception. While research on neuromarketing has so far focused primarily on the B2C sector (see Plassmann et al., 2015; Morin, 2011), the present findings show that emotional activation, multisensory design, and other psychological effects also play an important role in the B2B context, even if they are not explicitly referred to as such.

The importance of trust and psychological proximity as key decision-making factors in B2B is confirmed by empirical data. Interpersonal communication, credible problem-solving orientation, and long-term relationship management are highlighted as key success factors. These findings are consistent with classic findings from sales psychology (see Eggert & Fassott, 2003; Rackham, 1988). The idea expressed several times in the study that decisions in B2B are “emotionally supported” or “interpersonally secured” points to the tension between rational reasoning and emotional triggers, which is also discussed in studies on decision-making heuristics in organizational purchasing behavior (see Kahneman, 2012; Flint et al., 2002).

Particularly noteworthy is the role of event marketing as an emotional medium for brand identity, differentiation, and customer loyalty. While the literature often reduces event marketing in B2B to trade fairs and product presentations (cf. Kirchgeorg & Jung, 2004), the present findings illustrate an expanded function of events as a relationship experience and trust platform. This view is supported by concepts of brand experience (cf. Schmitt, 2012), which analyze the effect of immersive brand presentations on an emotional and social level. The importance of atmosphere, interaction, and exclusivity as influencing factors highlighted in the analysis underscores that events in B2B not only promote information transfer, but also symbolic communication and emotional bonding.

It is also striking that the results of this work transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries. Neuromarketing does not work in isolation in the area of brand perception, but merges with elements of event design. Sales psychology is not only effective in direct customer conversations, but also in the design of presentation formats and settings for customer events. This integrative effect of various psychological principles has hardly been systematically investigated in research to date, which underscores the need for interdisciplinary perspectives.

Empirical data also show that psychological principles are often applied intuitively and based on experience. This contrasts with theoretical models, which often assume standardized applications. Practice reveals a heterogeneous and sometimes unsystematic approach that offers links to research on implicit knowledge (see Polanyi, 1966) and experience-based decision-making.

Overall, the results confirm central theories of psychological marketing effects, but expand them through context-specific differentiations that are specific to the B2B sector. The observation that psychological principles interact across disciplinary boundaries and are increasingly applied in an integrated manner represents an important contribution to the scientific advancement of this field of research and has both theoretical and practical relevance.

6.3 Theoretical implications

The empirical results of this study provide valuable insights for the further development of theoretical models in psychology-based B2B marketing. They not only confirm central assumptions of existing theories, but also expand them to include context-related and phase-specific aspects that have often been only marginally considered in previous research. In

particular, the combination of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing offers relevant approaches for theoretical modeling.

The results illustrate that psychological principles are not additive in B2B marketing, but rather structurally integrated and effective across different phases. This contradicts the frequently encountered separation of functional communication areas such as advertising, trade fairs, or sales, and argues in favor of a systemic framework in which emotional, cognitive, and social influencing factors not only exist in parallel, but also reinforce each other. Classic models of the customer journey (e.g., Kotler et al., 2021; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016), which distinguish between attention, decision, and post-purchase behavior, could be supplemented by psychological layers of influence, as identified in this study along the pre-sales, sales, and after-sales phases.

The observed intertwining of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing suggests that these should not be understood as competing approaches, but rather as complementary perspectives on the same basic psychological mechanisms. Theories on brand perception (e.g., Keller, 2013), decision psychology (e.g., Kahneman, 2012) and multisensory brand management (e.g., Schmitt, 2012) gain explanatory power when reinterpreted in the context of organizational purchasing decisions in B2B. The results of this study illustrate that emotional stimuli, implicit perception, trust, and socially validated interaction are not only influencing factors in consumer behavior, but also significantly shape decision-making architecture in professional environments.

In addition, the findings highlight the role of implicit knowledge and experience-based action. While many models view strategic communication as a rationally planned process, the present results show that psychological principles are often applied intuitively and based on experience in B2B. This argues for greater consideration of concepts such as “tacit knowledge” (Polanyi, 1966) or “practice-based theory” (Reckwitz, 2003), which describe how knowledge is translated into actions without being explicitly formulated.

The identified tension between rational argumentation and emotional impact points to a theoretical gap. While many B2B models assume a predominantly rational decision-making process, the results of this study show a clear presence of emotional, social, and atmospheric influencing factors. This highlights a need to supplement classic utility models with concepts

such as dual-process theory (Kahneman, 2012), which integrates cognitive and intuitive processes.

In conclusion, there is a clear need to model psychological effects in an interdisciplinary manner rather than separating them into different disciplines. The boundaries between marketing communication, sales, and event design are becoming increasingly blurred, which has both practical and theoretical implications. Future models should jointly map emotional experience dimensions, cognitive decision-making processes, and social interaction patterns throughout the entire customer journey.

The results of this study confirm key theoretical concepts, but also expand them to include new perspectives on the interlinking of psychological principles in organizational decision-making processes. They thus contribute to the further development of an integrated, psychologically sound B2B marketing theory.

6.4 Practical implications

The results of this study can be translated into concrete action plans for business practice in several respects. They show that psychologically based marketing strategies are particularly effective in a B2B context when they are strategically integrated, used in a targeted manner, and anchored in specific phases along the customer journey.

A key practical implication arises from the realization that neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing should not be viewed as isolated measures, but rather as complementary elements of a coherent model of effectiveness. Companies that consistently embed these mechanisms in their communication strategy, event design, and brand narrative can achieve stronger emotional anchoring, greater trust, and higher brand differentiation. One interview participant summed this up as follows: “Our goal is to win customers emotionally, not just with facts, but through a holistic experience” (interview).

The empirical results clearly show that multisensory events have a particularly strong impact on the quality of business relationships. The decisive factors here are not the size or scope of the event, but rather the perceived closeness, relevance, and exclusivity. Companies should therefore invest in formats that enable direct dialogue, personal encounters, and emotional engagement. One participant in the online survey commented: “Holistic thinking and emotional staging are crucial for making a lasting impression” (TN).

Furthermore, the analysis shows that many companies already use psychological mechanisms without being aware of their theoretical basis. This opens up two potential opportunities: On the one hand, existing measures can be optimized through targeted reflection and training, for example through training courses for sales teams on how to deal with decision-making architectures or through a more conscious design of touchpoints in the trade fair and event sector. Second, the results can be used to derive systematic approaches for an integrated communication strategy in which neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing are understood as complementary components of a uniform impact model.

The surveys repeatedly revealed a gap between theoretical knowledge and practical applicability. Several participants pointed out that “the translation of neuroscientific findings into concrete measures in B2B is often lacking” (TN). This underscores the need to develop application-oriented tools such as practical guidelines, industry-specific best practice examples, or modular training concepts. “Understanding customer behavior and deriving measures based on it” (TN). “Neurologically and psychologically adapted marketing measures to increase the effectiveness of campaigns” (TN).

These statements make it clear that it is not psychological concepts that are lacking acceptance, but rather that their concrete potential for implementation in practice is often insufficiently exploited. Companies that take this step can not only increase their external impact, but also integrate internal processes more efficiently by aligning sales, marketing, and event planning with a common impact model.

Overall, it is clear that companies in the B2B environment communicate particularly successfully when they understand psychological principles and interdisciplinary approaches as a strategic mindset and integrate these into a differentiated, cross-phase customer journey that takes cognitive, emotional, and social factors into account in equal measure.

6.5 Practical recommendations for companies

The analysis of qualitative data from expert interviews and online surveys shows that psychological principles in B2B marketing not only have theoretical potential, but are already being applied in many cases. However, their use is often unsystematic, experience-based, and without methodological foundation. The results provide concrete recommendations for action

on how companies can strategically integrate these findings and use them effectively along the customer journey.

1. Identify and systematize psychological mechanisms

Success factors such as trust, emotional brand loyalty, multisensory appeal, and reciprocity are often used intuitively in practice, but rarely consciously reflected upon or documented. Companies should conduct an internal assessment: Which psychological principles are already being used and with what degree of success? Based on this, it is advisable to develop a company-specific impact profile that serves as a strategic orientation framework.

2. Promote interdisciplinary collaboration

The impact of psychological communication unfolds at the intersection of sales, marketing, and event management. Companies should form interdisciplinary teams that combine neuromarketing knowledge, sales experience, and design expertise. This allows consistent measures to be implemented and a common understanding of target group psychology to be developed.

3. Anchor emotional experiences along the customer journey

Emotional loyalty in B2B is not created by individual measures, but by a consistent sequence of touchpoints. Companies should systematically use emotional communication in all phases of the customer journey – from the initial contact to consultations and after-sales measures. One survey participant summed this up succinctly: “Understand customer behavior and derive measures based on it” (TN).

4. Use events strategically

Events in B2B offer high emotional impact potential. Successful events are characterized by a sense of closeness, relevance, and interaction. Companies should not only organize events operationally, but also see them as a strategic means of customer retention and define clear impact goals, such as strengthening trust or emotionally differentiating the brand.

5. Ensuring that theory can be translated into practice

A key finding of the study is the challenge of transferring psychological concepts into everyday business operations. Companies should use practical formats that make this knowledge

applicable, such as training courses for sales teams, guidelines for event planning, or workshops on developing psychologically sound communication strategies. Setting up internal competence centers can help to anchor knowledge in the long term.

6. Measure impact systematically

Evaluating psychologically sound measures requires a broader understanding of success. In addition to traditional metrics, qualitative indicators such as customer feedback, emotional response, and relationship quality should be taken into account. Appropriate tools such as structured feedback meetings or follow-up analyses help to visualize impacts and manage them strategically.

These six recommendations illustrate how companies can systematically integrate psychological principles into B2B marketing. The focus is on a strategic understanding of psychological communication that combines neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing across all phases—with the aim of building trust, strengthening emotional bonds, and positioning brands in a way that sets them apart from the competition. The following figure summarizes the six key recommendations for action and illustrates how they are interrelated.



Figure 6: Strategic steps for integrating neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing in the B2B context

(Own illustration based on empirical findings and chapter 6.5)

The previous chapters have brought together theoretical foundations, empirical findings, and practical implications. The concluding Chapter 7 summarizes the key findings of this work, reflects on them in light of existing research, and provides an outlook on further research and application areas.

7 Conclusion and outlook

This paper examined the extent to which psychological principles from the fields of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing are used in B2B marketing along the customer journey, what effects they have, and what challenges exist in their practical application. The aim was to create an empirically grounded and theoretically informed basis for an integrative understanding of psychologically effective communication in a B2B context.

Based on a differentiated theoretical foundation and supported by a qualitative content analysis of expert interviews and online surveys, it was demonstrated that psychological mechanisms are not a marginal phenomenon in B2B marketing. Rather, it became clear that they are consciously or unconsciously effective in all phases of the customer journey and already play a central role in many companies. At the same time, it became apparent that their practical implementation is often intuitive and rarely systematically embedded in theoretical models or strategic target systems.

The work thus closes a significant research gap. First, it contributes to the understanding of the use of psychological principles in the B2B sector, which has been little researched in comparison to B2C. Second, it provides a cross-phase analysis of psychological communication along the customer journey. Third, it considers neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing as integrated and mutually reinforcing approaches for the first time.

Chapter 7 summarizes the key findings of the study (7.1), reflects on the contribution of the work to theory and practice (7.2), and derives possible research approaches for future work (7.3).

7.1 Summary of key findings

Empirical research has shown that psychological principles play a significant but often underestimated role in B2B marketing. Neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing are not regarded as clearly separate disciplines in practice, but are combined intuitively and contextually. This combination unfolds its effect along the customer journey, particularly in the pre-sales, sales, and after-sales phases, specifically addressing cognitive, emotional, and social processes in the decision-making behavior of business customers.

In pre-sales, multisensory stimuli, atmospheric staging, and symbolically charged brand messages are mainly used to attract attention and create emotional anchors. Neuromarketing-based design principles such as colors, shapes, language, and visual elements are combined with emotionally designed events. In the sales phase, personal contact is paramount. Psychological principles such as framing, reciprocity, social proof, and trust building are consciously used in sales talks and customer interactions. Events support this phase through interactive and experience-oriented formats that promote trust and accelerate decision-making processes. In the after-sales phase, it becomes apparent that emotional bonds are strengthened through exclusive event formats, appreciative communication, and continuous relationship management.

A key finding is that psychological principles are often successfully applied in B2B without being explicitly identified as such. This implicit use indicates to a solid body of empirical knowledge, but at the same time reveals a lack of theoretical foundation and strategic systematization. The evaluation of the interviews and the online survey makes it clear that the potential of psychological communication is not being fully exploited due to a lack of clear guidelines, internal knowledge transfer, and an integrated strategy.

The effectiveness of psychological measures does not depend solely on individual techniques, but on their integration into a consistent, phase-specific communication design. The coherence of communication across different touchpoints is crucial. Companies that consistently apply psychological principles throughout the customer journey achieve a higher emotional response, more sustainable customer loyalty, and stronger differentiation of their brand perception (see interview, TN).

The results also show that there is considerable interest in practical and scientifically sound concepts in B2B marketing. This applies both to the development of internal expertise and to the development of methods for measuring psychological effects. Psychological communication requires a strategic approach based on trust, empathy, and emotional connectivity.

The findings largely confirm the initial assumptions formulated in Chapter 1.3. In particular, the assumption that psychological mechanisms influence all phases of the B2B customer journey was strongly supported by both expert interviews and survey data. The assumption that their application is often intuitive rather than systematically anchored was also confirmed,

underlining the need for strategic integration. However, the expectation that neuromarketing is already systematically applied in B2B contexts was only partially validated, as its use is frequently implicit and not explicitly recognized as such.

In summary, this study shows that psychologically based marketing in B2B is not only possible but already common practice, albeit often unsystematic. The central contribution of this study lies in its empirical foundation, structured analysis, and theoretical classification of these previously largely intuitive principles of effectiveness.

7.2 Contribution of the thesis to theory and practice

This work contributes to the further development of theory and practice in B2B marketing by empirically investigating and systematically analyzing psychological principles of action not in isolation, but in their cross-phase and cross-disciplinary connections. It shows that neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing do not occur as separate approaches in practice, but rather draw on common psychological mechanisms that reinforce each other.

On a theoretical level, the study shows that concepts such as framing, heuristics, and emotional stimulus processing play a key role not only in consumer goods marketing (B2C) but also in the B2B sector. This finding is relevant insofar as many of the existing models have been developed primarily from a B2C perspective, and their transferability to complex, multi-stage B2B decision-making processes has only been considered to a limited extent. The results suggest that classic utility models, such as those described by Kotler and Keller (2021), should be expanded to include dimensions such as implicit brand perception, multisensory experiences, and interactive trust building. This creates a theoretical framework that integrates emotional, social, and cognitive factors more strongly and describes the decision-making architecture in the B2B context in a more differentiated way.

The study offers concrete practical applications. It shows that psychological principles are already being used in many areas, for example in trust-based sales talks, emotionally designed events, and multisensory brand experiences. At the same time, it becomes clear that these measures are often unsystematic and not embedded in a consistent communication and sales model. This is where the study comes in, providing a structured impact model that locates psychological principles along the customer journey and facilitates their integration into business processes. The recommendations for action are based on empirical findings and show

how neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing can be combined to achieve a holistic, psychologically sound customer approach. In addition, the work provides practical approaches for training, internal knowledge transfer, and measuring the success of psychological measures.

Overall, this work contributes both to the theoretical refinement of existing research approaches and to the derivation of practical strategies. It broadens our understanding of the psychological dimension in B2B marketing and provides companies with a solid framework for leveraging psychological mechanisms in a targeted manner and integrating them into their long-term strategies.

7.3 Future research approaches

This study has identified key links between psychological principles and their application in B2B marketing. It became clear that neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing are closely intertwined along the customer journey, but in practice are often applied intuitively, in a less systematic manner, and not always consciously. These findings provide impetus for further scientific discussion and open several avenues for future research.

An initial research approach emerges from the theoretical foundation and model development. While the study demonstrates that psychological mechanisms are effective in B2B, there are currently no integrative models that systematically describe and operationalize this effect. Future research could expand existing customer journey models to include psychological dimensions, for example by integrating multisensory brand management, emotional decision-making processes, and trust-based interactions into a unified frame of reference. The development of interdisciplinary models that view neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing not as isolated disciplines but as complementary approaches appears particularly valuable.

Further research is needed to investigate implicit patterns of action and experience-based decision-making logic. Many of the measures used in practice are based on intuition and experience without being systematically reflected upon or empirically tested. Qualitative case studies or ethnographic analyses could provide valuable insights into how psychological principles arise and are applied in everyday business life. Interdisciplinary approaches from

organizational research, psychology, and communication science could further consolidate the theoretical foundations in this area.

Furthermore, the measurability of psychological effects is a relevant field of research. The study has shown that companies find it difficult to accurately assess the success of emotional communication, trust-building measures, or multisensory stimuli. Future studies could develop tools that combine qualitative and quantitative indicators, for example through feedback analyses, behavioral data, and psychometric methods. A particular focus on long-term effects such as customer loyalty or recommendations could provide additional insights here.

The context of other industries and markets also deserves more attention. This paper focuses on B2B companies where event marketing plays a role. A targeted expansion to other industries, company sizes, or international markets could increase the generalizability of the findings. It would also be useful to examine the perspective of the customer side, for example through interviews with decision-makers on the client side.

Overall, this study shows that psychologically based marketing in B2B is not only possible, but also a key success factor in an increasingly complex, competitive, and relationship-oriented market environment. The combination of neuromarketing, sales psychology, and event marketing enables companies to go beyond purely rational arguments and build deeper, emotional bonds with business partners. At the same time, it is clear that this potential has not yet been fully exploited due to a lack of theoretical systematization and measurable success criteria. Future research is therefore needed to further validate and deepen the findings and translate them into practical tools in order to make the psychological dimension of B2B communication strategically usable. This work has contributed to making the previously largely implicit psychological mechanisms in B2B marketing visible, structuring them, and establishing them as strategically relevant success factors for research and practice.

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9 Appendix

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Appendix A - Use of ChatGPT (OpenAI)

The AI tool ChatGPT (OpenAI, GPT-4, 2025) was used exclusively in a supportive role during the preparation of this thesis. At no point was the tool used to generate original scientific content or to formulate research findings. The author remains solely responsible for all academic content, interpretations, and conclusions.

The tool served exclusively as a supportive assistant for linguistic optimization and language refinement, the clarification of terminology and theoretical distinctions, structural suggestions for tables, models, and visualizations, the summarization and paraphrasing of the author's own content drafts, as well as for checking the logical flow and consistency of the argumentation.

All content created with the assistance of the AI was critically reviewed, validated, and, where necessary, revised by the author. The usage of ChatGPT is disclosed here in accordance with the guidelines for good academic practice at HNU.

Appendix B - Expert Interviews

B.1 Interview Guide (PDF)

B.2 Data (Raw data and coding files)

B.3 Transcripts (Full transcripts of all interviews)

Appendix C - Online Survey

C.1 Questionnaire (PDF)

C.2 Data (Raw data and coding files)

C.3 Survey Answers (Full anonymized responses)

Affirmation

„I hereby confirm that I have authored this thesis independently and without illicit assistance from third parties and using solely the aids mentioned. The thoughts that were retrieved directly or indirectly from other sources are marked as such. The work was submitted or published so far in same or similar form of no other test authority.”

Nattheim, August 8, 2025

Place, Date

HabeuSulker

Signature