

Online-offline integrated shopping experience: An exploration of effective implementations of advanced technologies in the physical store environment

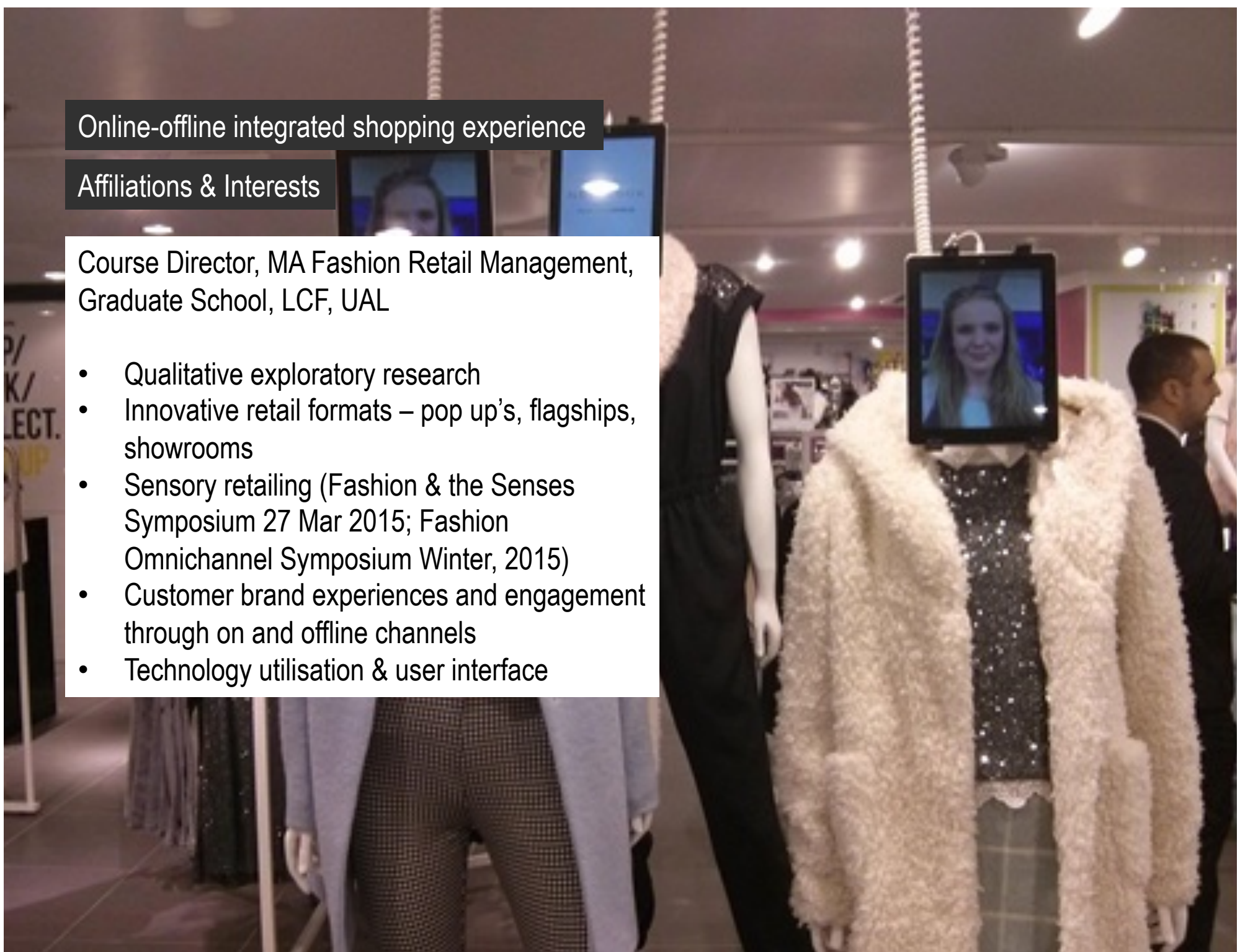
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Online-offline integrated shopping experience

Affiliations & Interests

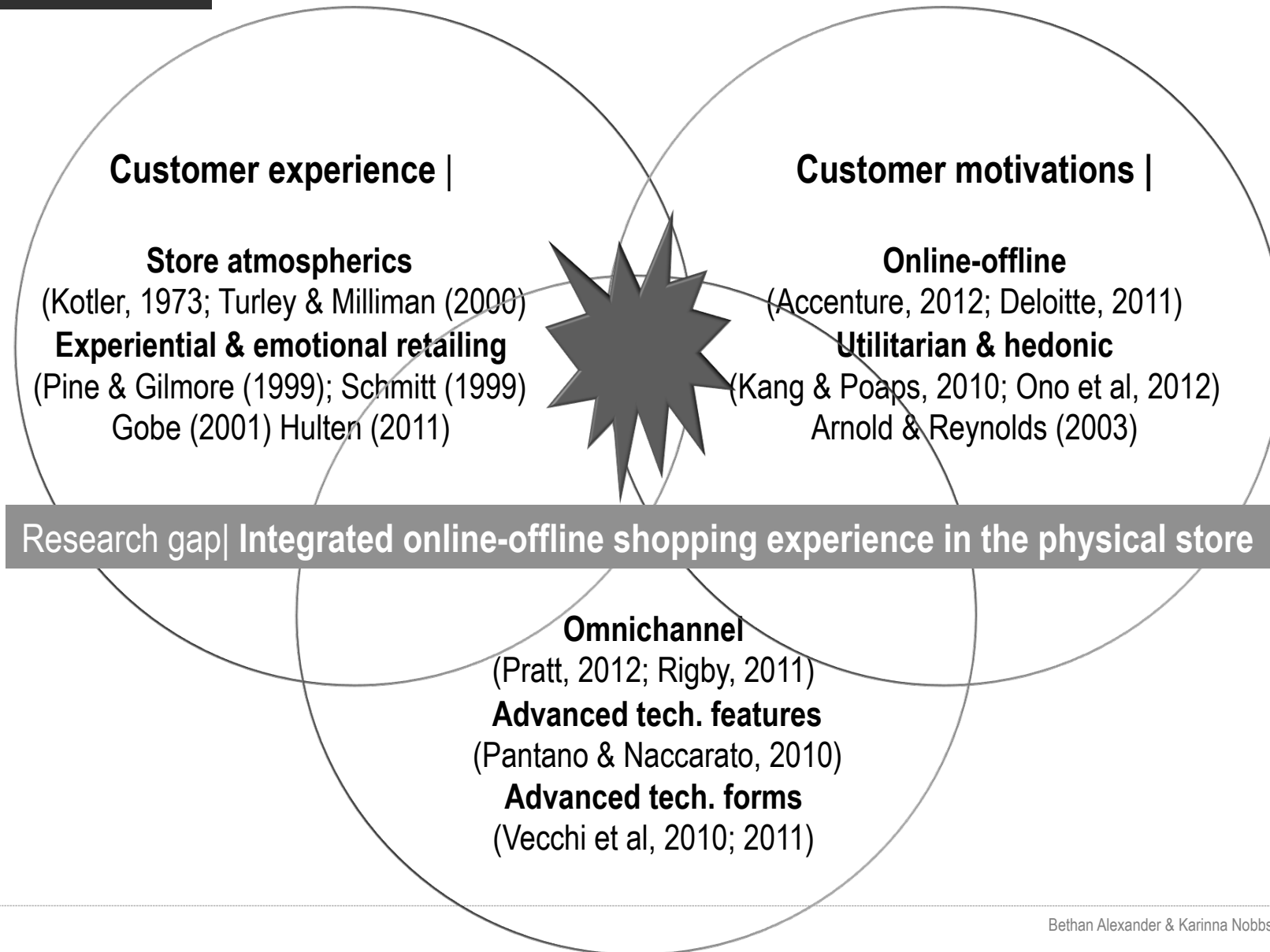
Course Director, MA Fashion Retail Management,
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- Qualitative exploratory research
- Innovative retail formats – pop up's, flagships, showrooms
- Sensory retailing (Fashion & the Senses Symposium 27 Mar 2015; Fashion Omnichannel Symposium Winter, 2015)
- Customer brand experiences and engagement through on and offline channels
- Technology utilisation & user interface



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Research Context



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Key findings

- **Physical store environment**
 - Coherent store design, utilising multi-sensory approach positively impacts shopping experience.
 - Tenuous relationship between being perceived as tech. store & implementing range of tech. (5 cases did not feature 5 key tech.: AR, digital screens, RFID, mobile, Wifi)
- **Customer motivations & impact of tech. on shopping process**
 - Browsing interests & idea shopping most prevalent motivation
 - Online research essential step in shopping journey, yet retailers inconsistent in linking digital shopper journey inside physical store.
 - Variable impact of advanced tech. on consumer shopping process:
 - Need recognition – tech. provided little information on new arrivals
 - Product search – dubious usability, poor encounters. Mobile main tech. used to merge online/offline, but mainly used for browsing not purchasing
 - Purchase – little impact, but contactless payment desired
- **Holistic Experience**
 - Hedonic motivations have to be supported with inspirational & decorative variables inside store; mobile is important as connector of research online and purchase offline
 - Efforts to implement tech. but integration missing. Omnichannel concept not verified

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Implications | future research

- Research gap evidenced – how advanced tech. inside physical store affects the shopping experience
- Conceptual framework provides viable starting point towards the formulation of the key aspects which create an integrated online/offline experience.
- Research highlights complexity of maintaining consistency & functionality across atmospherics, multi-sensory & technology
- “Showrooming” behaviours prevalent with mobile playing critical role in linking on/offline – opportunities for further integration & research on role & impact of mobile as an experiential moderator of the integrated online / offline environment
- What is actual *usefulness* of in-store tech? Further research to fully verify role of tech. as supporter of shopping process needed
- Future - the model needs to be tested using quantitative means to refine the variables which comprise the integrated experience.
- Model also needs to be dynamic enough to adapt to future technology innovations



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Recommendations for retail management

- Opportunity to integrate online & offline experience across all levels of fashion retail – even for those retailers perceived as being ‘technological’
- Opportunity to integrate mobile further as the ‘glue’ to providing holistic online/offline experience and step to realising omnichannel
- Opportunity to utilise technology to enhance stages of buying process, e.g. use of technology touchpoints to provide store plan, information on new arrivals; product specifications; self service transactions etc.
- Merging of online & offline world is complex and multi-faceted – consideration of who is responsible key.

