

## **Foreword**

Recent years have seen an ever increasing interest in the phenomenon of brands. A great number of books and articles have been published focusing on as various subjects as brand value, brand meaning, brand awareness or brand communities. Despite the numerous and widely different approaches to brand research and management, there seems to be general agreement on one point: strong brands are a major asset to any business firm. The questions what constitutes a strong brand and how brand strength is to be measured, however, has stirred a hefty discussion in literature.

With his research work presented in this book, Martin Walser has made a very interesting contribution to this discussion. Based on a description of the history of branding and the functions of brands in modern economies he first compares the various conceptional approaches to the brand phenomenon and develops a definition that perfectly fits the purpose of his research.

**Prof. Dr. Hans Mühlbacher**

## **Preface**

This doctoral dissertation is the result of an investigation into the nature, measurement and formation of brand strength. It is an attempt to consolidate a fragmented field of research and to advance our knowledge, by providing one of the few empirical studies examining models of brand strength formation. This work would not have been possible without the help of a number of people.

Thanks must go to my dissertation adviser, Hans Mühlbacher, for his willingness to chair my “dissertation-committee”. Through numerous discussions, he provided me with detailed feedback, sound advice and helped to find my way out of a “maze of problems”. Not least, I am very grateful to him, for being allowed to use the infrastructure at the department of Marketing, University of Innsbruck.

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Martin G. Walser