

“Papa Putz” Meets Influencer Marketing: FHWien der WKW and MCÖ Visit XXXLutz

The evening combined insights into a FHWien der WKW business field project for XXXLutz with a discussion of advertising characters, influencer marketing, and credibility.

Vienna, October 16, 2026 – On October 12, 2026, FHWien der WKW and Marketing Club Österreich (MCÖ), together with XXXLutz, hosted a club evening on the future of testimonial marketing. Industry experts discussed the role of familiar advertising characters and influencers in brand communication and what makes them credible. A business field project commissioned by XXXLutz and carried out by FHWien der WKW students offered insights into the collaboration between the university and the company.

Students Developed Marketing Concepts for XXXLutz

Following welcome remarks by Sieglinde Martin, Head of Department of Communication at FHWien der WKW, and Niko Pabst, Vice President of MCÖ, Thomas Saliger, Head of Marketing and Company Spokesperson for the XXXLutz Group, and Christof Sauke, Academic Expert & Lecturer at FHWien der WKW, opened the program. Using the “Familie Putz” characters as an example, they discussed the impact of brand endorsers in advertising and presented a business field project focused on marketing a new XXXLutz merchandise store. As part of the project, FHWien der WKW students addressed a specific brief from the company and developed marketing concepts.

“The students brought valuable ideas to the table through their outside perspective. Their ideas combine ingenuity and strategic insight with a sound understanding of our brand—and stand out for their professional execution,” says Thomas Saliger, Head of Marketing and Company Spokesperson for the XXXLutz Group.

The Credibility of Advertising Characters and Influencers

Thomas Saliger, Kerstin Haberfellner of Nespresso, Ilja Jay Lawal of the agency FOLLOW, and Hubert Wolf, known as “Papa Putz,” then discussed current developments in testimonial marketing. They focused on changing expectations of brand endorsers and the importance of recognition, authenticity, and a long-term connection to a brand. “Papa Putz” represented one of Austria’s best-known examples of long-term testimonial marketing. The panel also explored the opportunities and challenges of working with influencers. Birgit Schaller of FHWien der WKW moderated the discussion.

“When companies come to us, they often already have a list of names in mind. Our first task as an agency is to take a step back and ask whether a brand endorser is needed at all, and for what purpose. That is not always the answer people want to hear, but it is the more honest one. The strongest partnerships we have developed at FOLLOW came about because there was a genuine fit between the person and the brand,” says Ilja Jay Lawal, CEO of the agency FOLLOW and a graduate of FHWien der WKW.

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“In the age of digitalization and AI, credibility and trust are central issues in marketing and advertising. Brand endorsers make an important contribution in this area. That is why we were particularly keen to examine testimonial marketing from different perspectives—whether traditional approaches or influencer marketing,” says Sieglinde Martin, Head of Department of Communication at FHWien der WKW.

Thomas Schmidt, Head of Marketing & Sales Management Study Programs at FHWien der WKW, hosted the evening. Following closing remarks by Regina Loster, Managing Director of MCÖ, guests took the opportunity to exchange ideas and network over food and drinks.

“The combination of fresh perspectives and the experience of a brand like XXXLutz, which has helped shape testimonial marketing in Austria for decades, made this evening particularly interesting for me. It is about learning from successful concepts while also discussing how testimonial marketing can work in the future,” says Regina Loster, Managing Director of Marketing Club Österreich.

[About Business Field Projects in Marketing & Sales](#)

About Marketing Club Österreich (MCÖ)

For nearly 70 years, Marketing Club Österreich has been the platform for marketing and communications professionals in Austria. Around 1,300 members benefit from more than 40 events a year, continuing education opportunities, networking, legal services, discounts on industry events, and the MCÖ podcast. Its focus is on knowledge sharing, the exchange of ideas, and current topics in marketing and communication.

www.marketingclub.at

Images:

FHWien der WKW and XXXLutz explored testimonial marketing at the Marketing Club Österreich club evening. The photo shows, from left to right: Niko Pabst (MCÖ), Kerstin Haberfellner (Nespresso), Hubert Wolf (aka “Papa Putz”), Birgit Schaller (FHWien der WKW), Ilja Jay Lawal (FOLLOW), Regina Loster (MCÖ), Thomas Saliger (XXXLutz), Stephan Bauer (aka “Putzi Putz”), and Sieglinde Martin, Thomas Schmidt, and Christof Sauke (FHWien der WKW).

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Discussing the future of testimonial marketing were Kerstin Haberfellner (Nespresso), Hubert Wolf (aka “Papa Putz”), Birgit Schaller (moderator, FHWien der WKW), Ilja Jay Lawal (FOLLOW), and Thomas Saliger (XXXLutz), from left to right.

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FHWien der WKW – University of Applied Sciences for Management & Communication

FHWien der WKW is Austria’s leading university of applied sciences for management and communication. Its Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programs offer over 2,900 students a practical academic education. Two-thirds of the lecturers come directly from the business world. The close cooperation with local companies in teaching and research prepares students optimally for their careers. Since its foundation in 1994, FHWien der WKW has already produced more than 16,800 graduates.

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