Exploring effects of consecutive construal level primes

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How we construe our environment is flexible and variant. When you plan to buy a laptop within the next months, you generally adopt an abstract, high construal level and focus mainly on central product attributes (e.g. system properties). When you are finally making the choice ‘here and now’ you adopt a more concrete, low construal level and put more weight on peripheral attributes (e.g. color or warranty). Construal level not just shapes the weight consumers put on certain product attributes, it also influences how consumers categorize, evaluate and behave towards different objects. It is therefore advisable to prime a construal level that favors the product or service you want to sell.

Construal levels are related to many aspects of our daily lives, e.g. psychological distance, novelty and regulatory focus. Therefore, construal level primes happen frequently and involuntarily. This raises following questions: If a consumer is primed with the ‘right’ construal level, how long does it last? How does a high (low) construal level affect reactions towards subsequent construal primes?

Aim of the thesis is to explore this questions by reviewing literature and conducting an empirical study. Another aim is to identify and test traits which might influence how easily a person can switch construal levels. The thesis will also derive implications for research and marketing practices.

Introductory literature:

