eBook

How Psychological Principles Influence the Choices We Make.
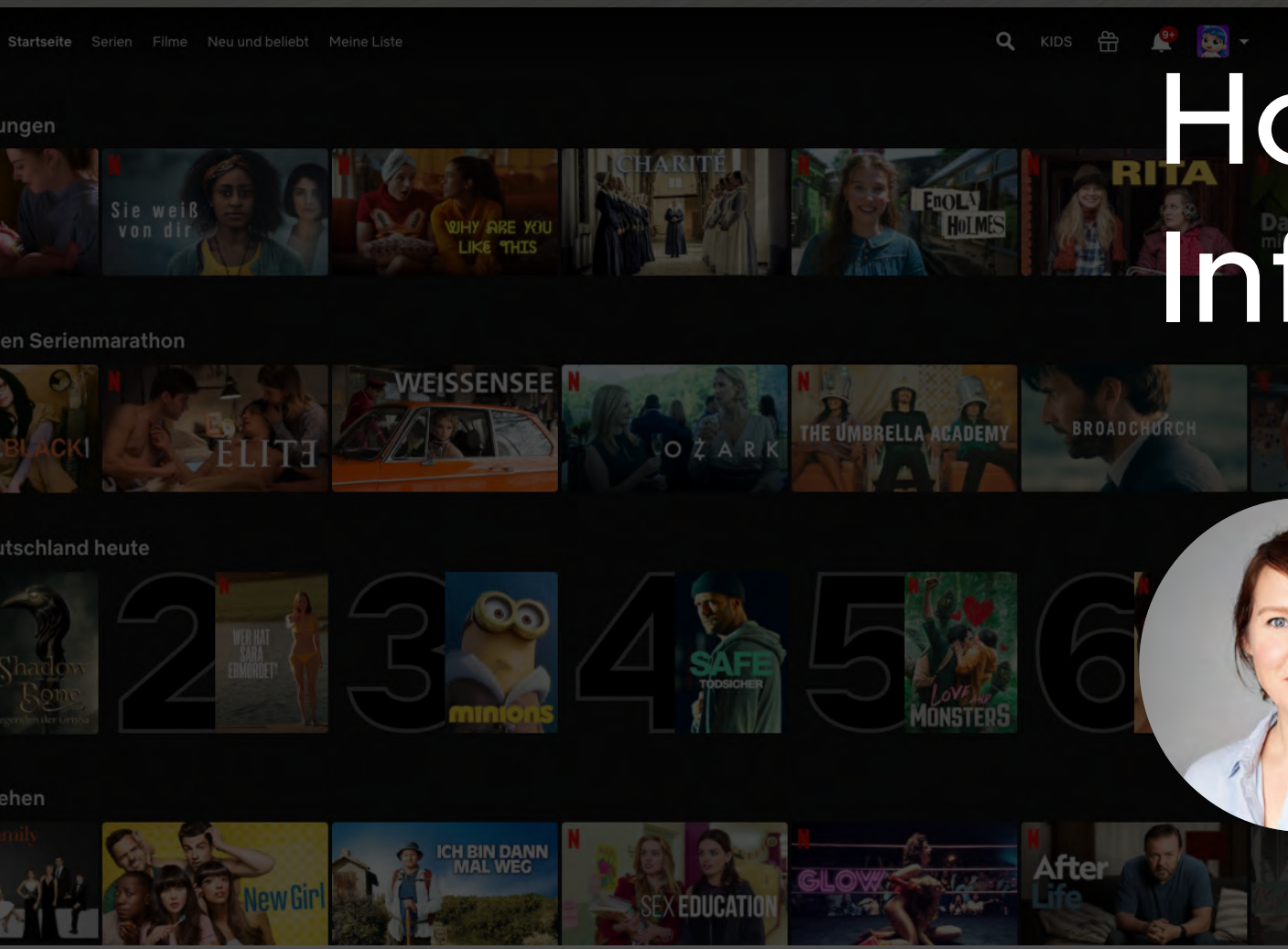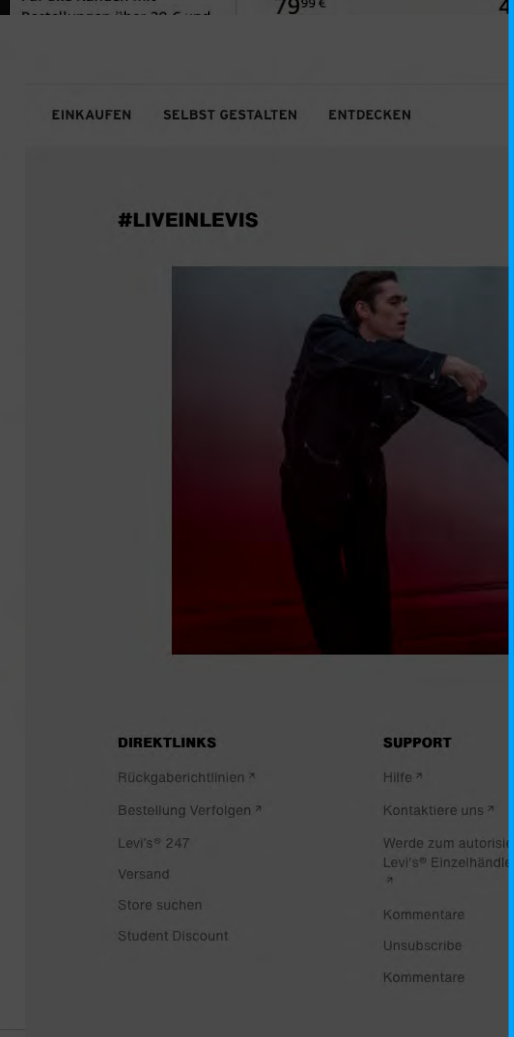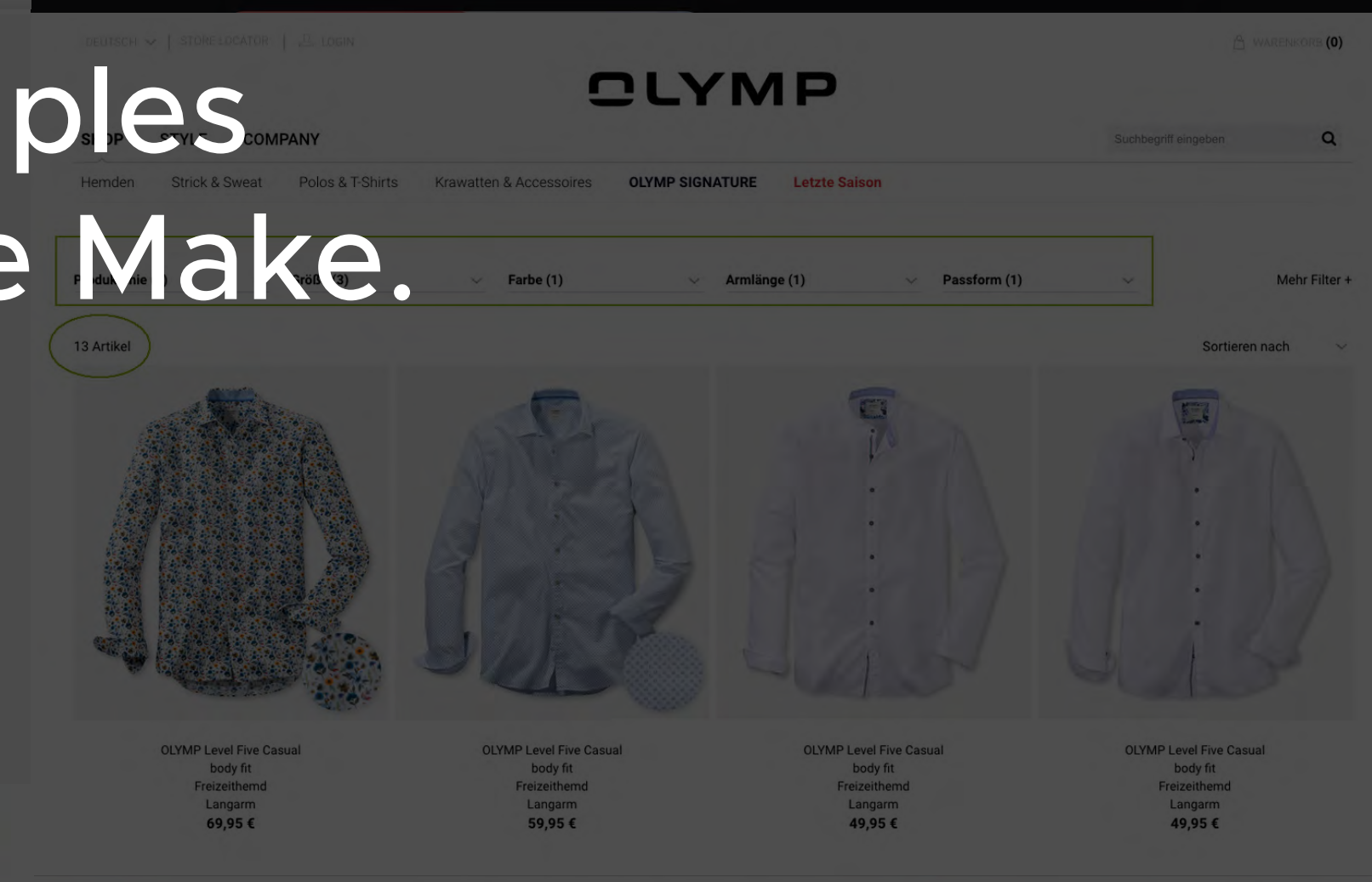
Stephanie Ebbert

User Experience Designer
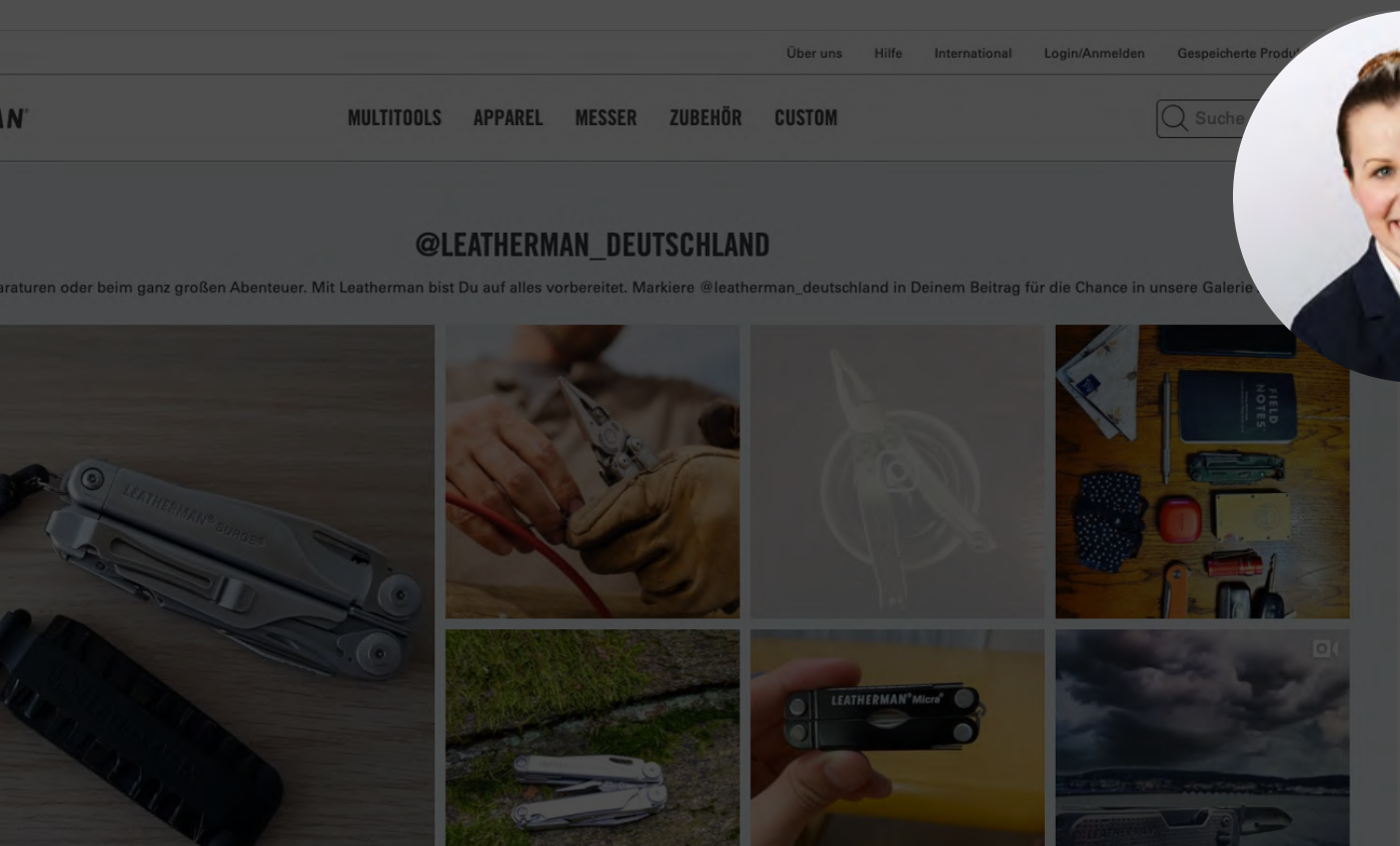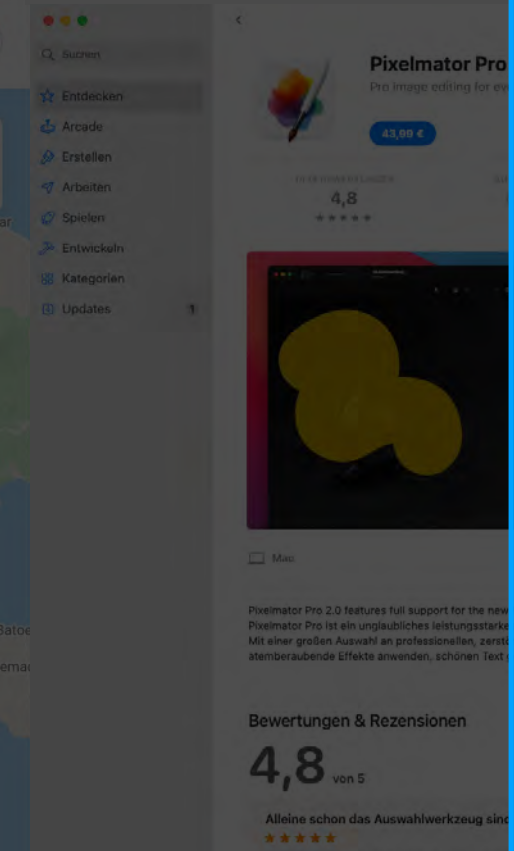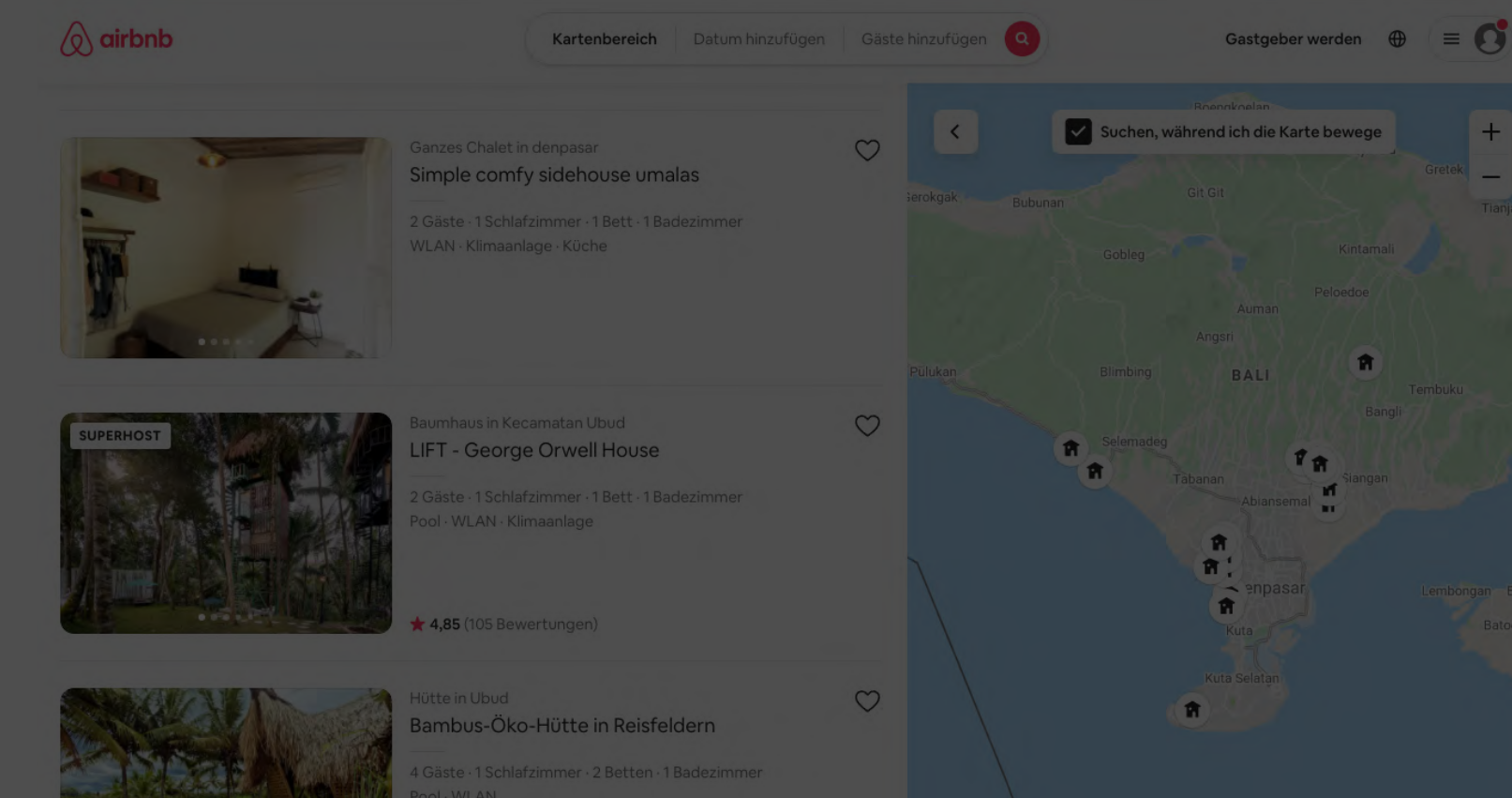
Pia Michaelis

Application Consultant

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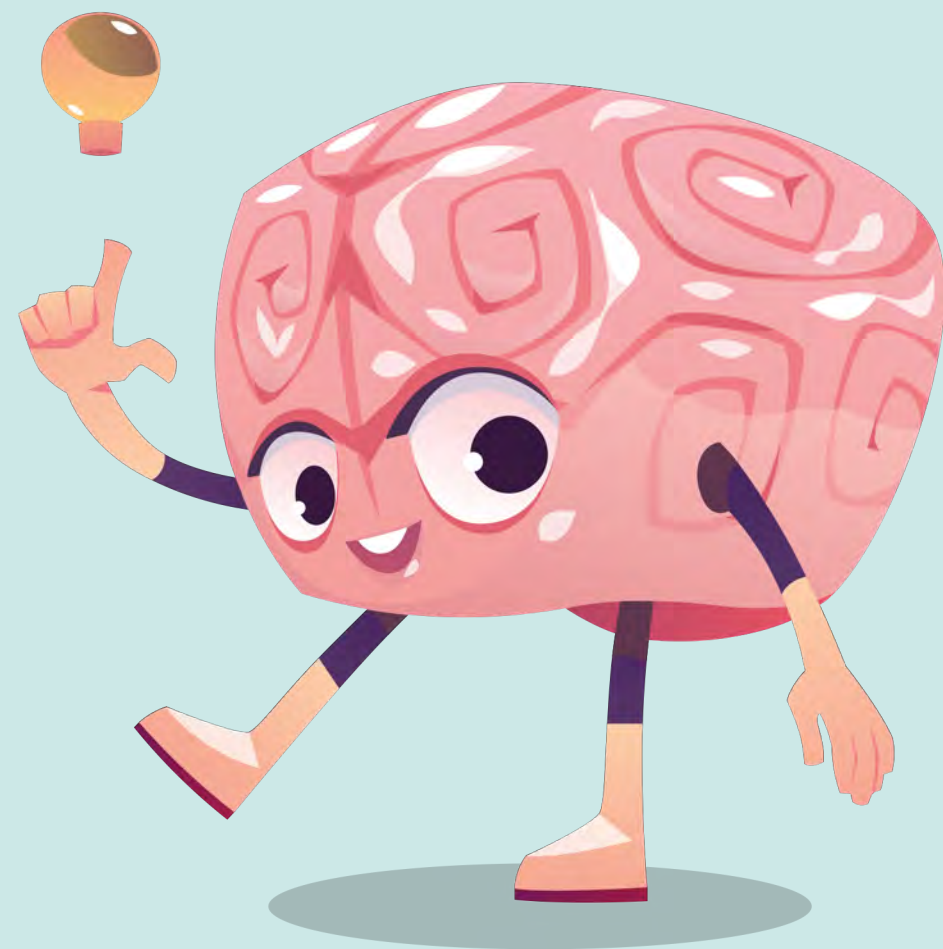
Psychologie, UX and Shopware

Jam Paradox

communicode AG

The Jam Paradox - The Agony of Choice

The jam paradox is not only found in e-commerce, but basically everywhere where the customer is faced with a large choice. For example, a very extensive menu in a restaurant or the variety of jams on store shelves can lead to decision-making difficulties. We take a closer look at the jam paradox and its effects on the purchasing behaviour of users in online stores.

The psychological principle

Operators of online stores want to offer their customers as much as possible to increase their sales. But many fail because of people's psychology. Simply offering a lot of products can lower the conversion rate and thus sales. How can this be? "Paradox of Choice" or "Jam Paradox" is what psychologists call this phenomenon.

Simply put, we find it difficult to make a decision when the choice is large or too large. It overwhelms us and we would rather make no decision than the wrong one.

# The Jam Experiment

The study was conducted by Sheena Iyengar and Mark Lepper (2000).

For the study, the psychologists set up two sales tables with free jam samples. At one time they offered customers 6 different types of jam, and at another time 24.

When 24 varieties were offered, 60% of passersby stopped and took advantage of the free samples. However, only 2% of them decided to actually buy a jar. The smaller selection of 6 different varieties attracted only 40% of potential buyers, but a full 12% ended up buying a jar of jam.

The study shows that the larger selection attracted more attention but was purchased less. In other words, variety ensured lower sales.

6 jams

24 jams

40%
sampled jam

60%
sampled jam

12%
bought jam

2%
bought jam
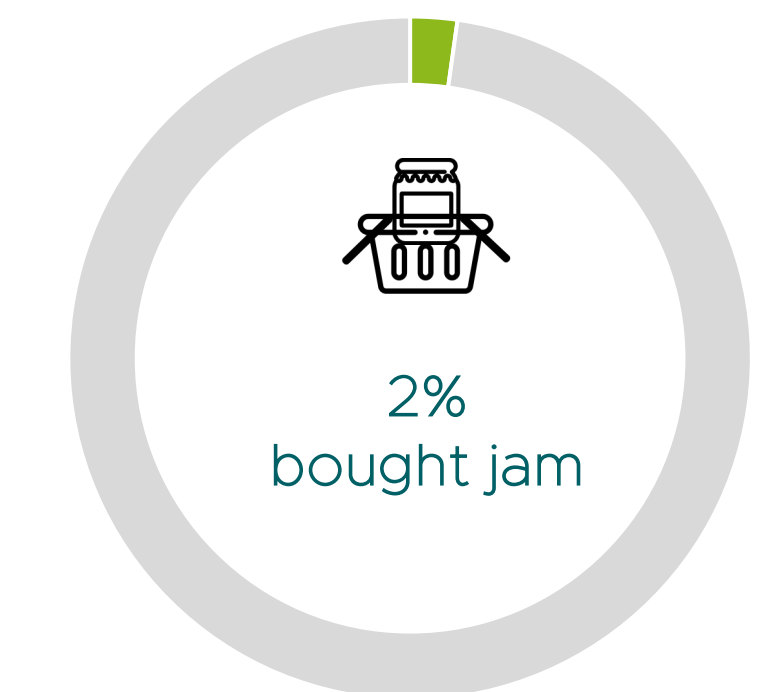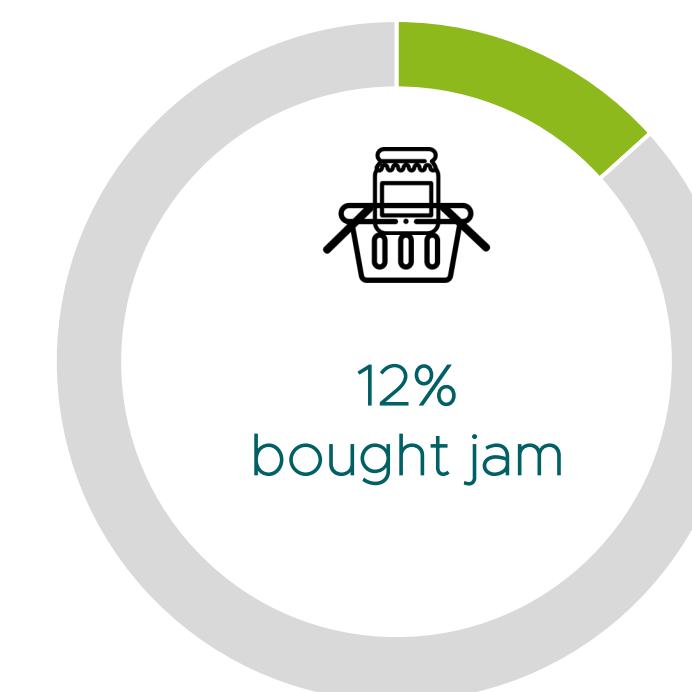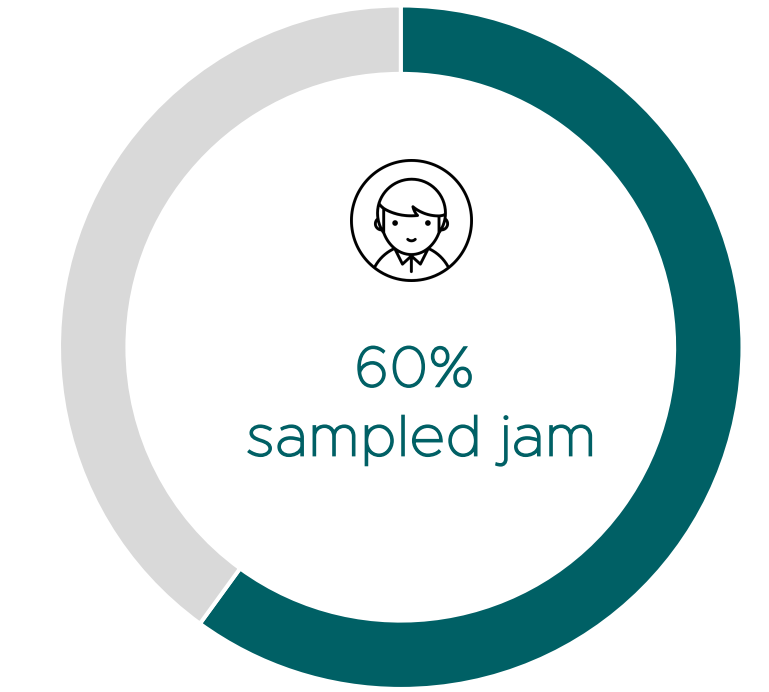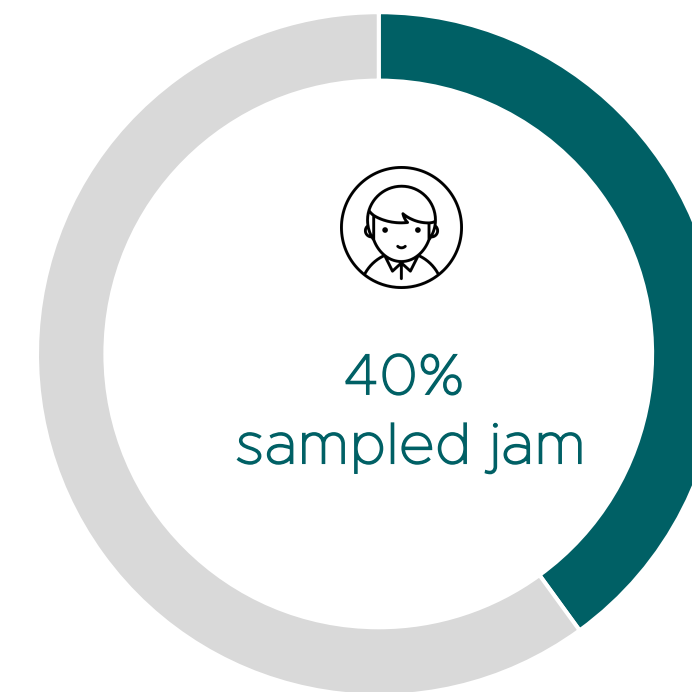
Psychology in UX: How Can Design Help Break This Logjam?

- **Reduce your offer on the home page to 4-5 products.** Users can easily process this amount of information (so-called chunks). Show more products only via the "Load more" button. This way, customers are in control.

- **Show variants** (color, size, product variations) **only on the product detail page.**

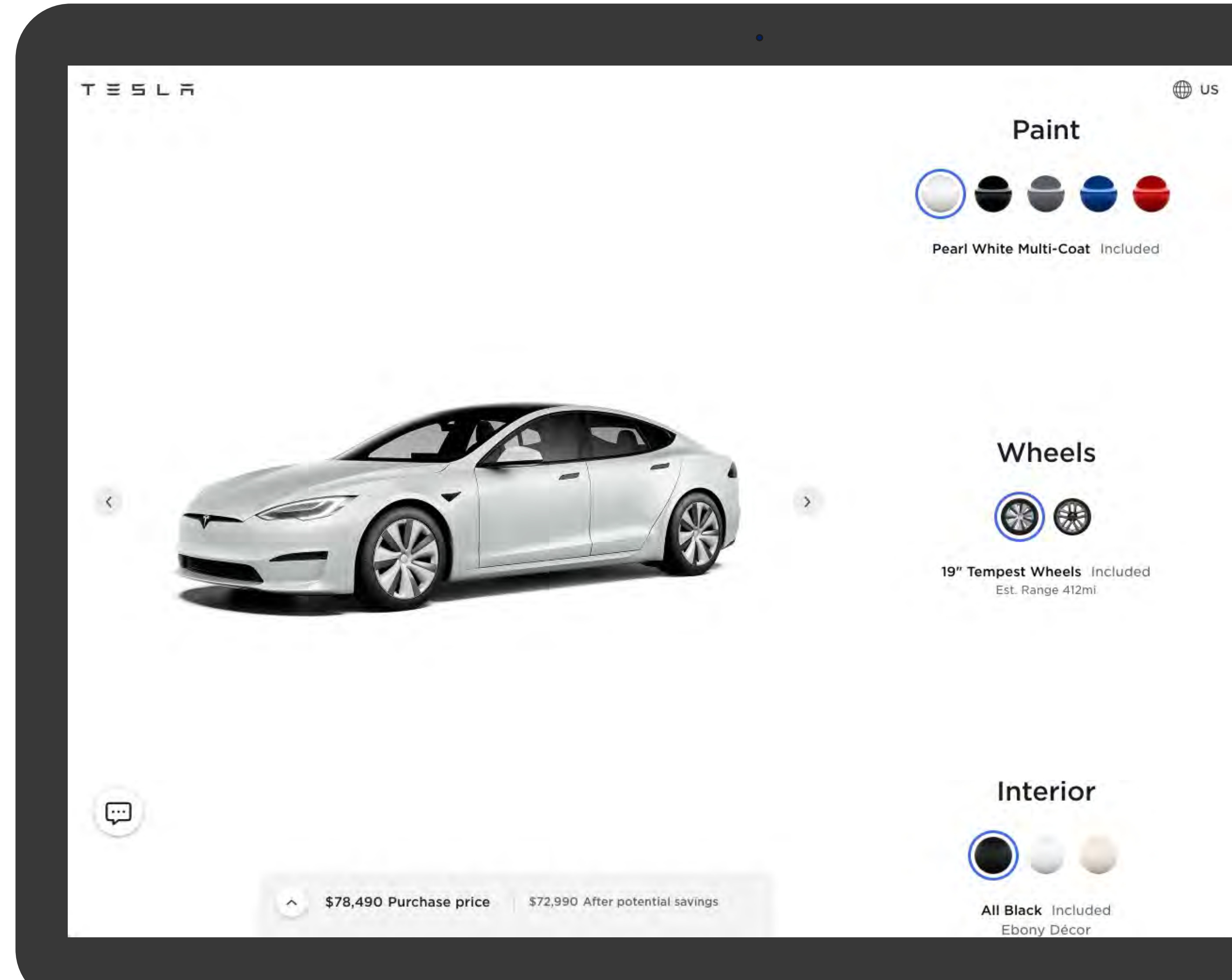**A good example for both is Tesla.**
They offer only a few models and ...
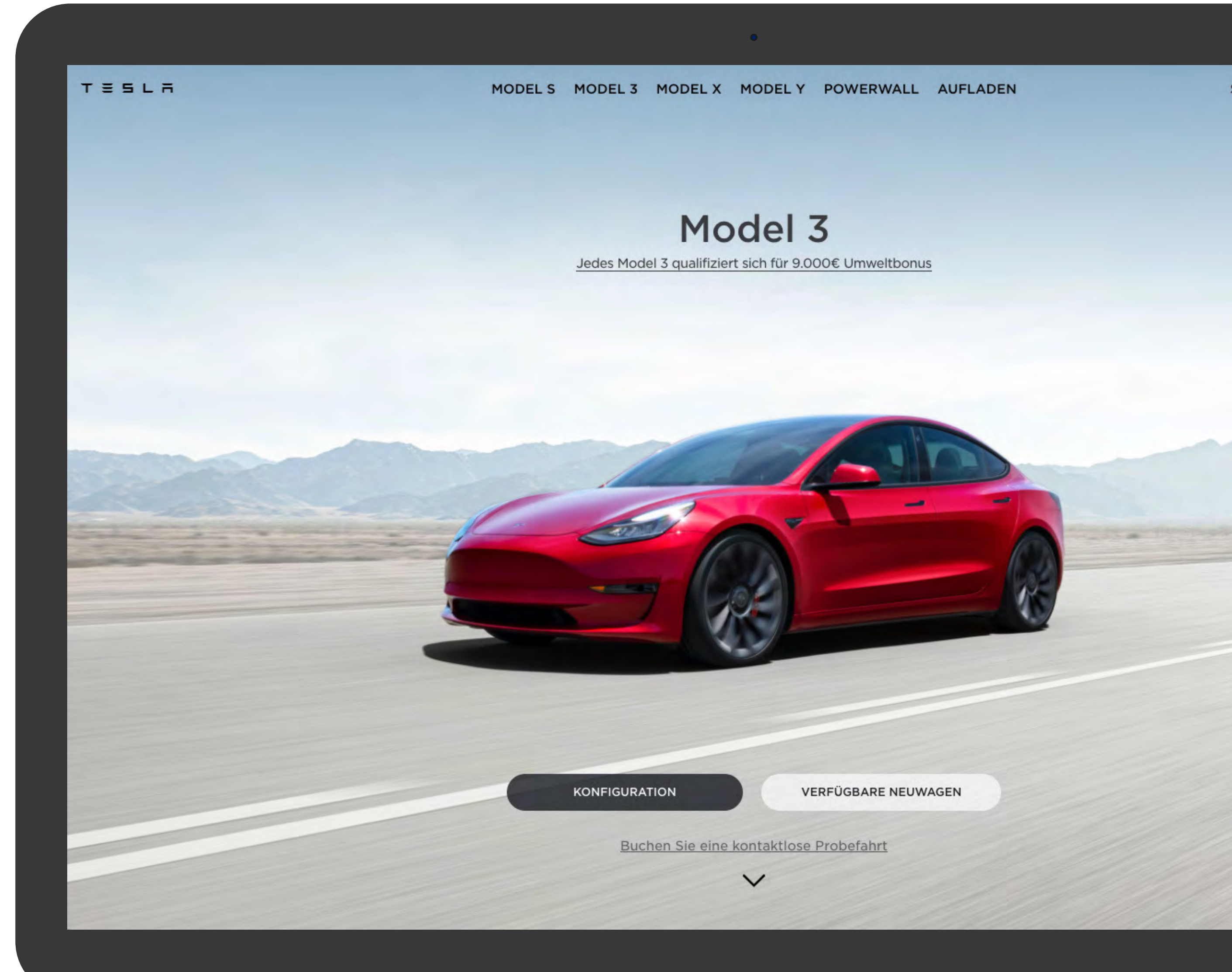
Psychology in UX: How Can Design Help Break This Logjam?

... variants are seen only in the next step and they are also limited.

They do not confront the customer with the paradox-of-choice problem. With just a few clicks you can buy an $80,000 car.
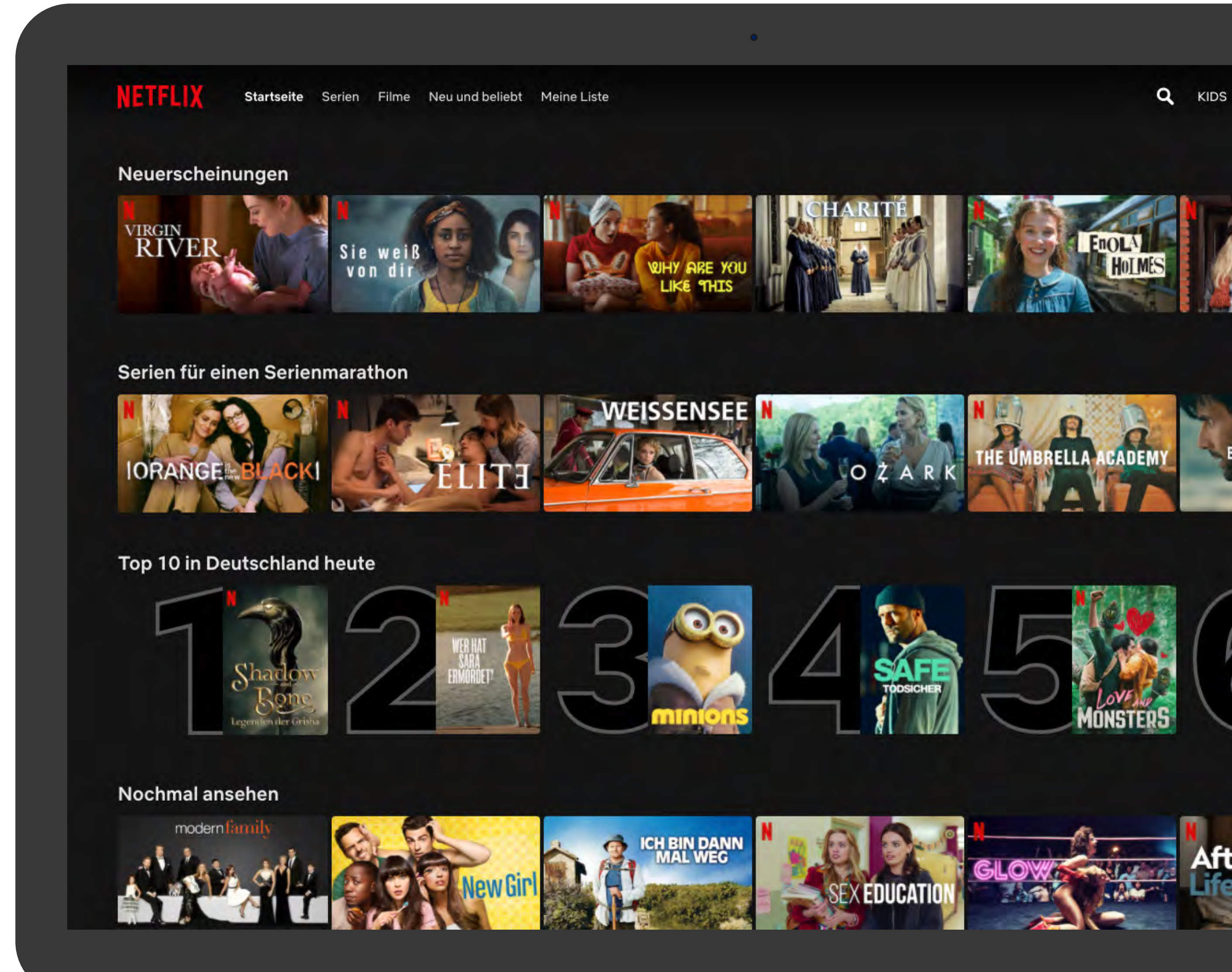
Psychology in UX: How Can Design Help Break This Logjam?

- **Highlight products**. What's your bestselling model or product?

- **Category technique**: it has been shown that people are more comfortable with categories than with choices. In fact, people are not as overwhelmed by categories because they intuitively help them organize their thoughts.

Netflix has perfected the principle of categorization. They manage to categorize a very large offer and personalize it according to their users' preferences.
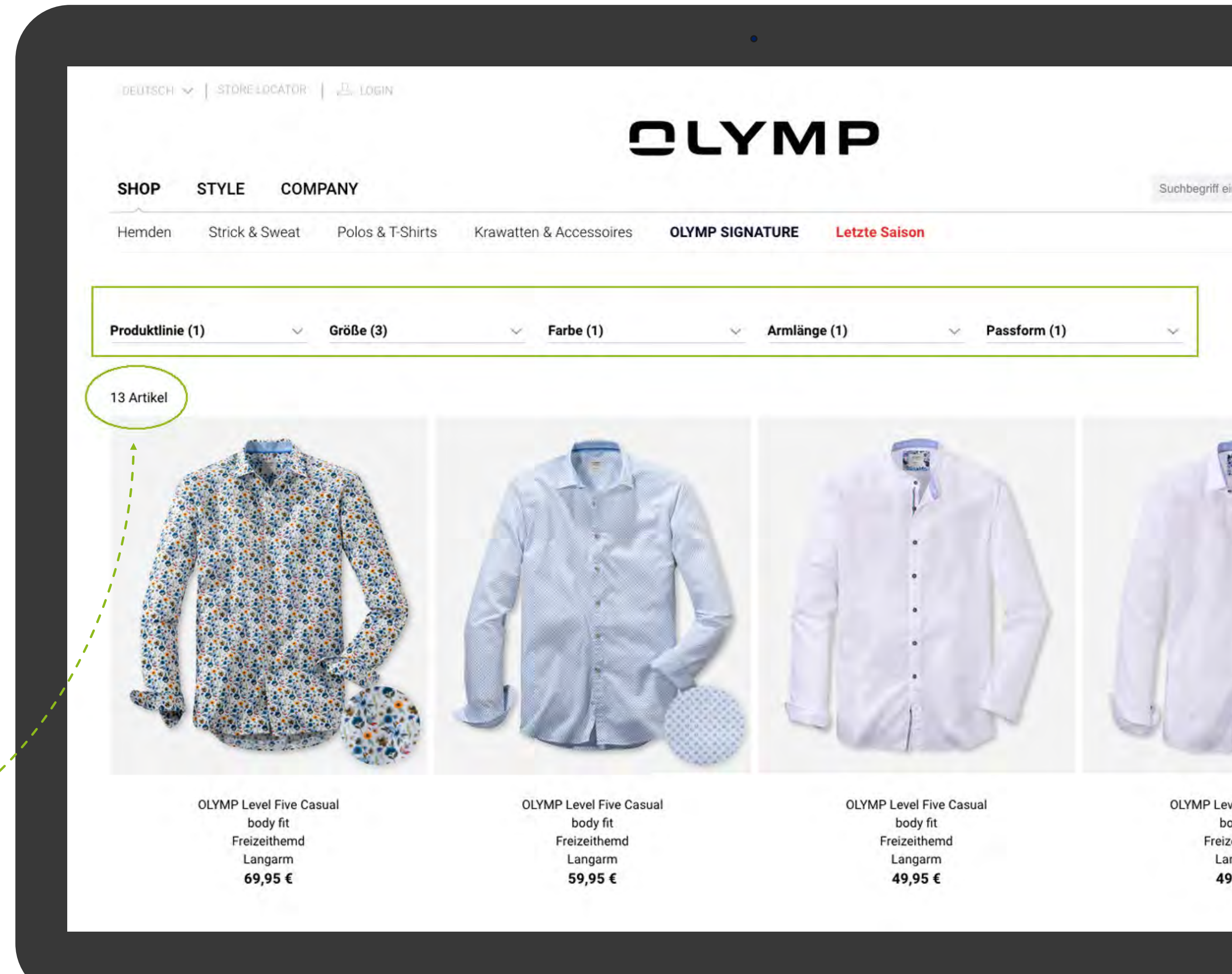
Psychology in UX: How Can Design Help Break This Logjam?

Use filters to narrow down the selection. Filters help shoppers reduce the initial large selection of products to a manageable number, so they can make choices that match their preferences.

For example, **our customer Olymp** offer users very good filters to quickly reduce the product selection.

Olymp has over 2000 shirts in the store. With just a few filters users can quickly reduce the product selection to 13 Shirts

Psychology in UX: How Can Design Help Break This Logjam?

Use filters to narrow down the selection. Filters help shoppers reduce the initial large selection of products to a manageable number, so they can make choices that match their preferences.
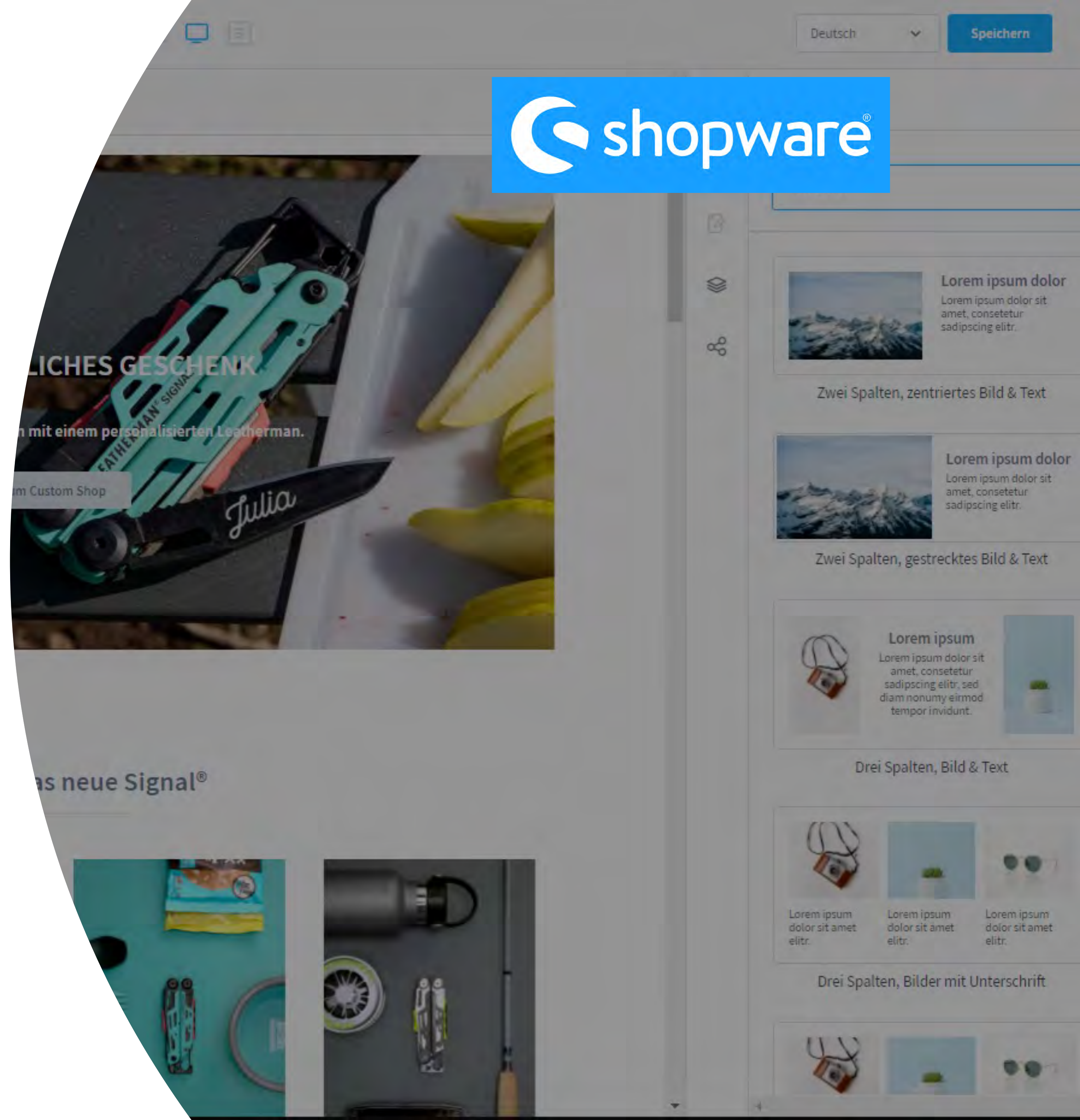
For example, **our customer Vorwerk** offers over **70,000 recipes** on their platform cookidoo. With a few filter settings you can reduce the selection to **14 recipes**. So, it is easy to choose what to cook today.
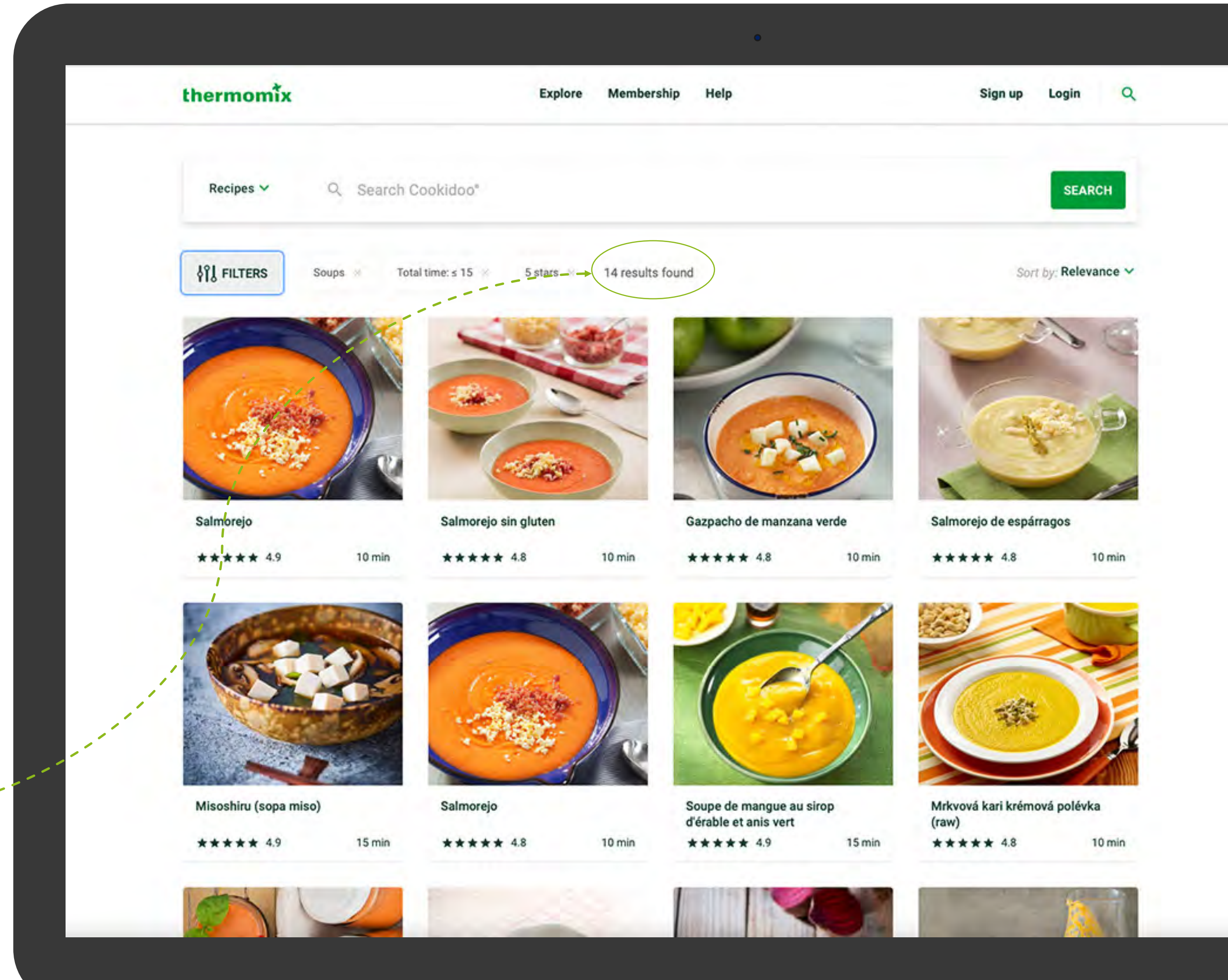
Implementation in Shopware

- Reduction of the offer

- Categorization

- Variants

- Highlighting products

- Filter

Implementation in Shopware
Reduction of the Offer

So that your customer is not already overwhelmed with the most diverse articles on the start page of your online store, Shopware offers the possibility to integrate article sliders into the start page design. These can be filled with an individual number of products.

This way, your customers can first be greeted with atmospheric images and selected articles when they enter your online store and take their time to find their way around.
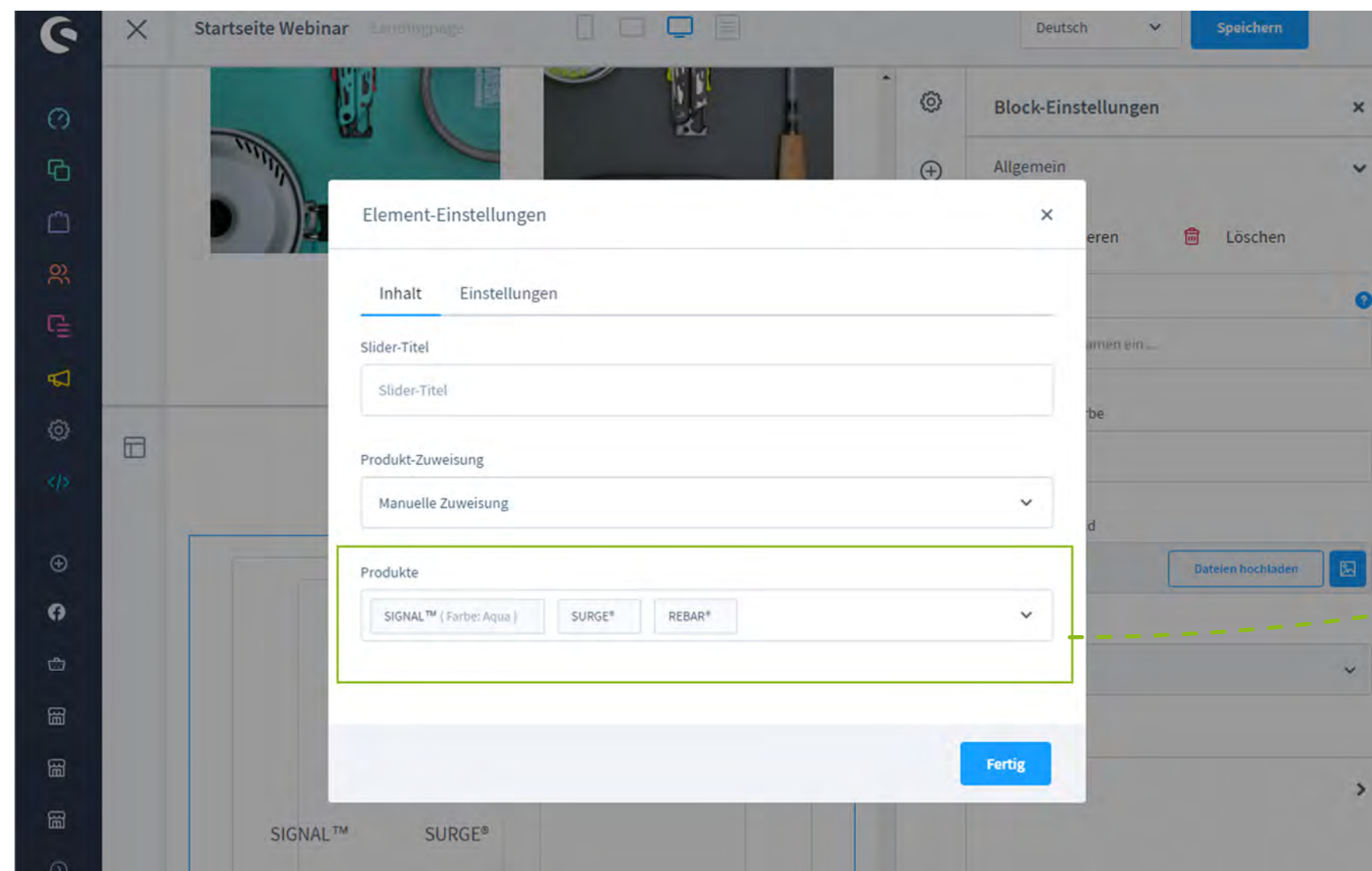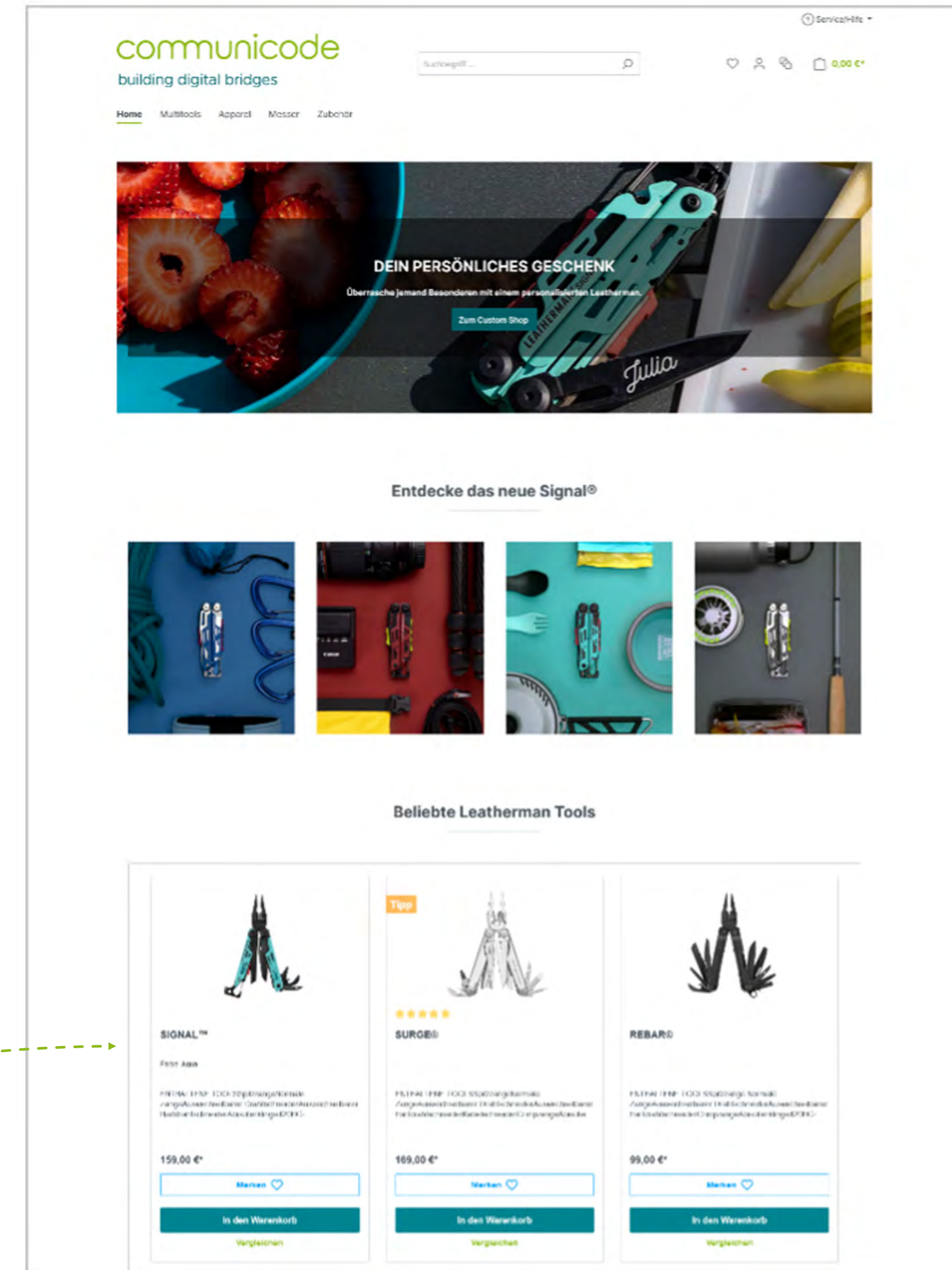
Integrate article slider into home page design with Shopware

Implementation in Shopware
Categorization

Another way to make it as easy as possible for your customers to find their way around your online store is to have sufficient and useful categorizations.

These can be created in the "Categories" tab.

New main categories or subcategories can be defined with just a few clicks. Assigning already existing store pages, such as article lists or landing pages, or creating new store pages is also possible in this tab.
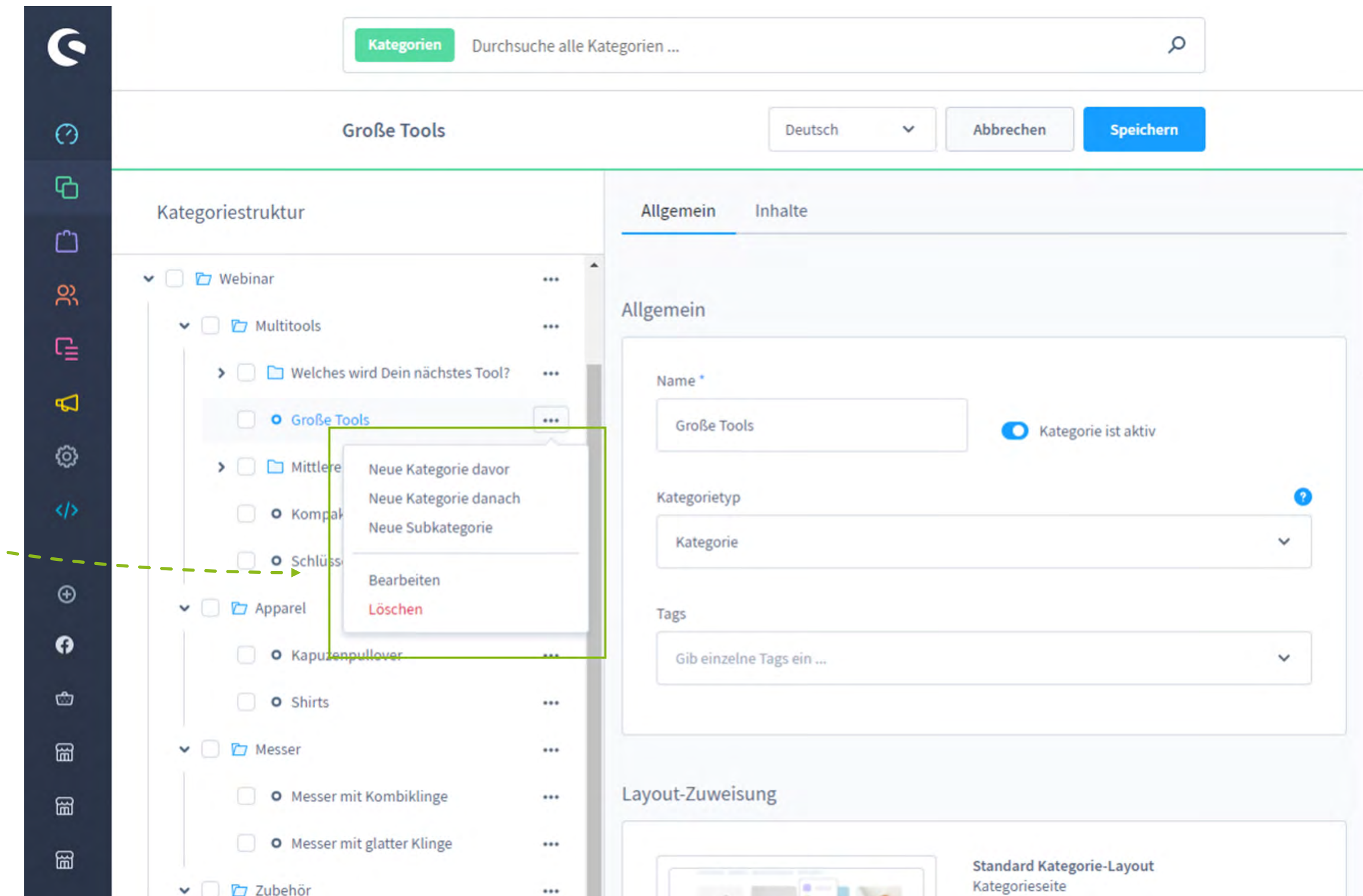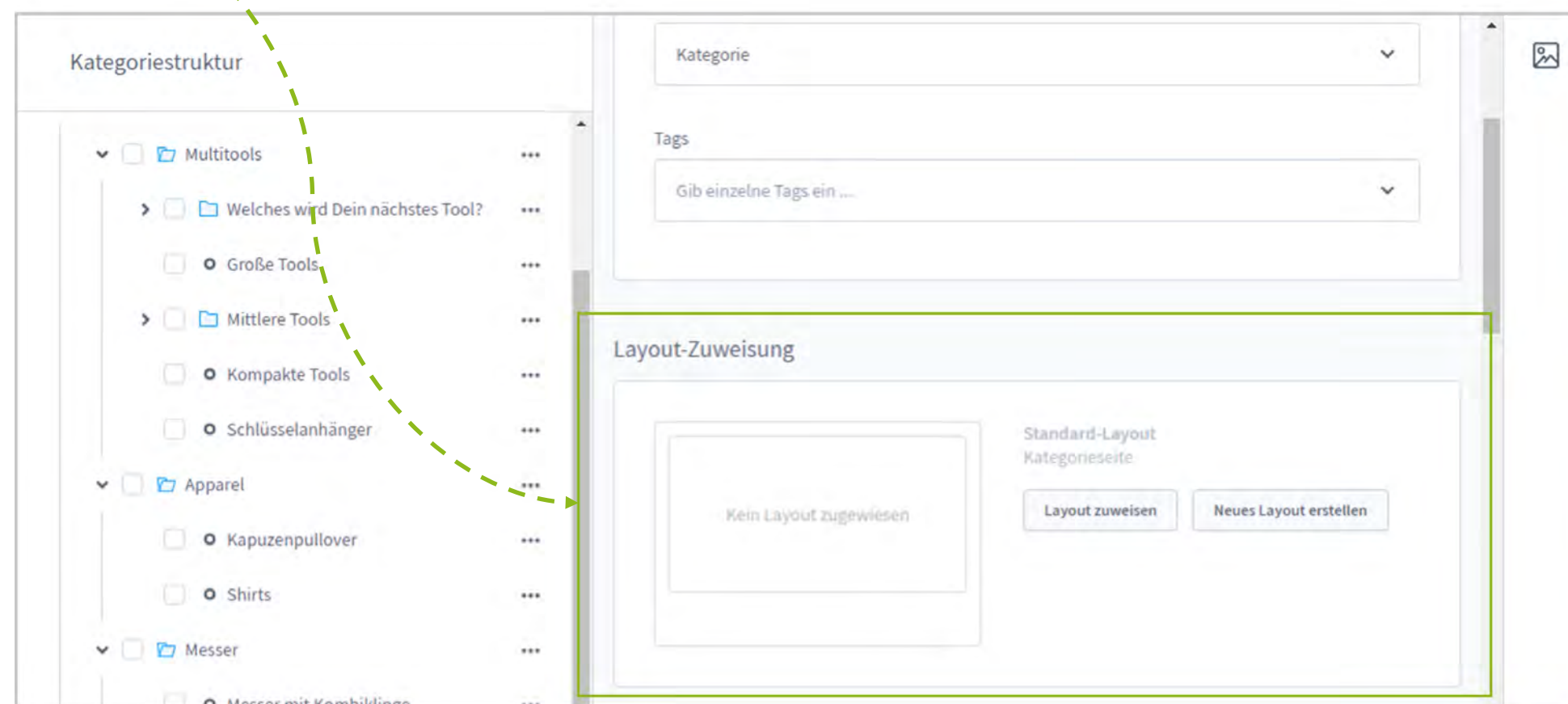
"Categories" tab in Shopware

Implementation in Shopware Variants

To be able to show your customers the variety of your products in a condensed form, additional variants can be assigned to an already created article in the Shopware backend in the "Products" tab.

In the edit mode of an article, already existing variants can be viewed, edited and new variants can be generated and assigned to the article.
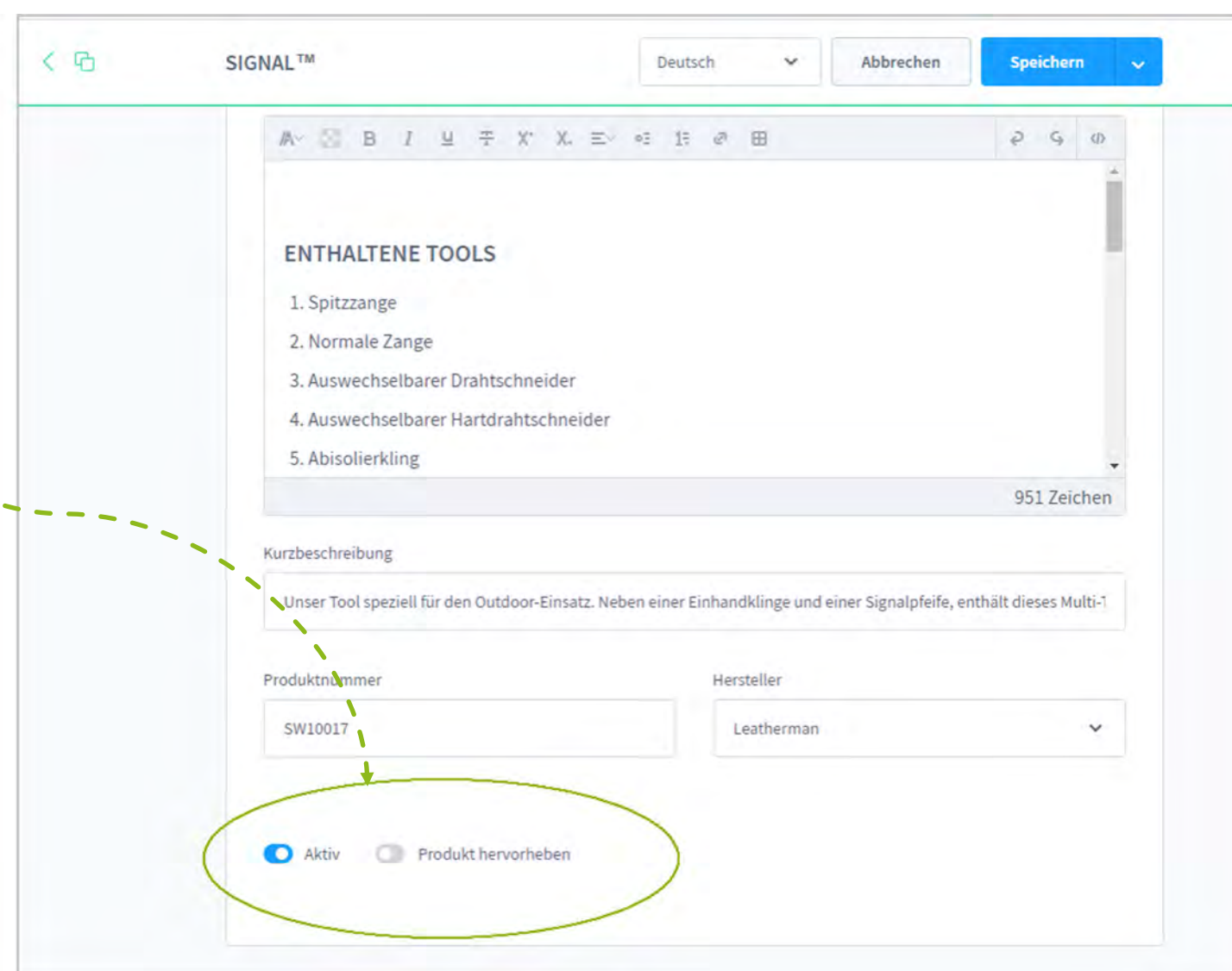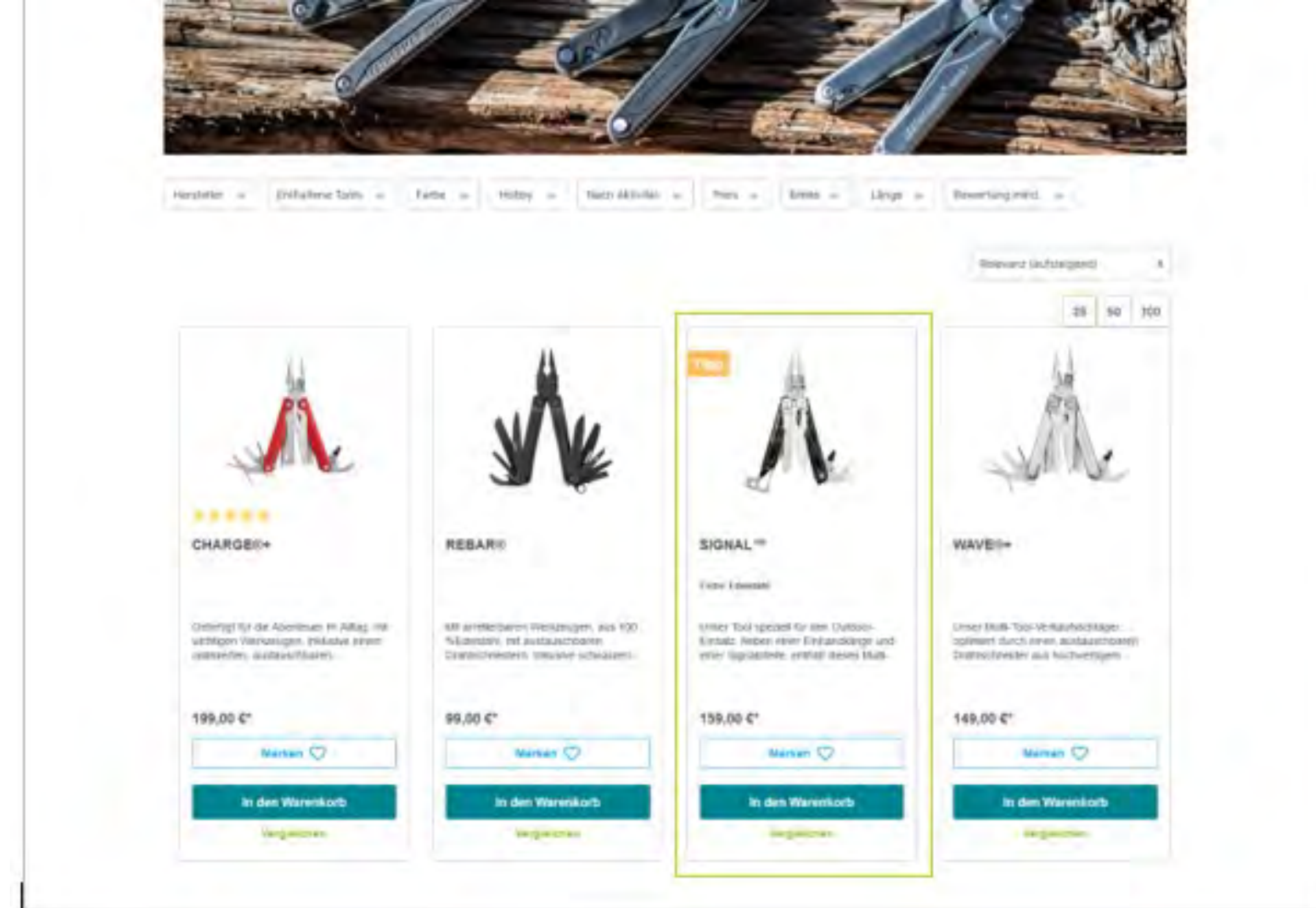

"Products" tab in Shopware

Implementation in Shopware
Highlighting products

In order to draw your customers' attention to special, seasonal products, for example, Shopware offers the option of highlighting these items.

Within the edit mode of a product, it can be marked as a product to be highlighted by moving the slider. The product is displayed in the frontend as soon as the change is saved.
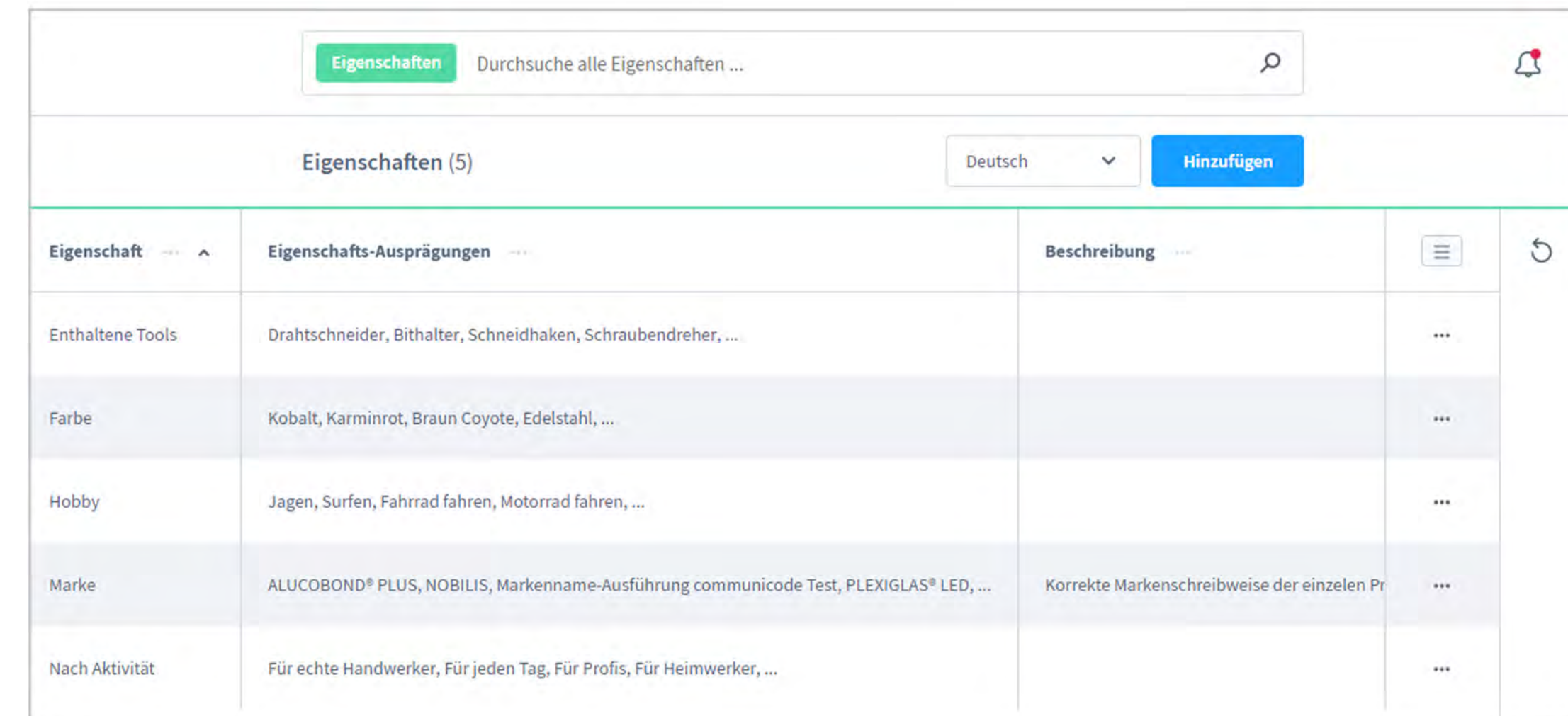
Highlighting a product

Implementation in Shopware
Filter

Sensibly created filters also help your customers to find their way around your range. This way, they can narrow down the selection of your products and only get the products that are relevant to them and their needs.
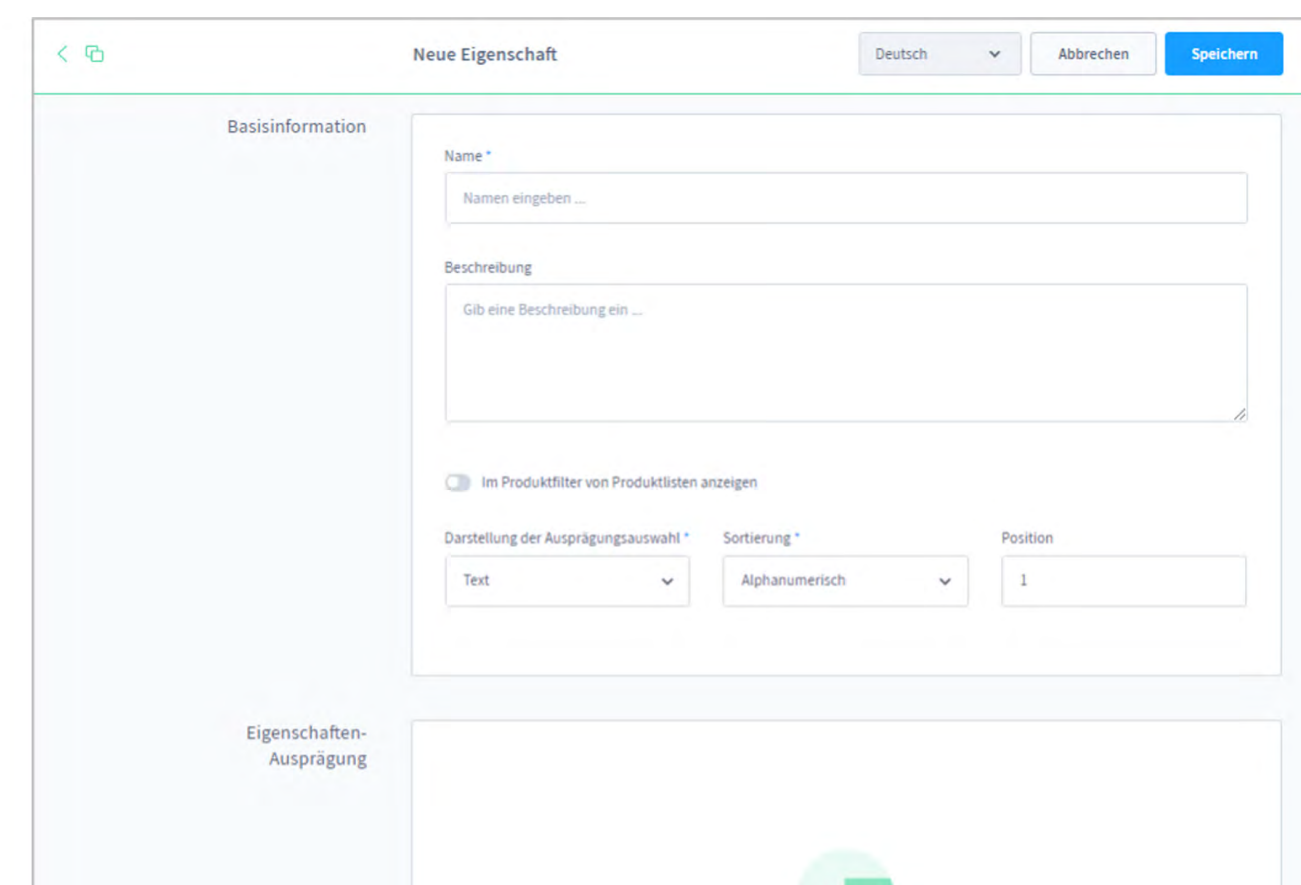
Shopware offers you the possibility to create individual filters for each item listing in the "Properties" tab and to fill these filter categories with different properties.

New filter categories or additional properties per filter category can be compiled with just a few clicks.

Create individual filters for each item listing
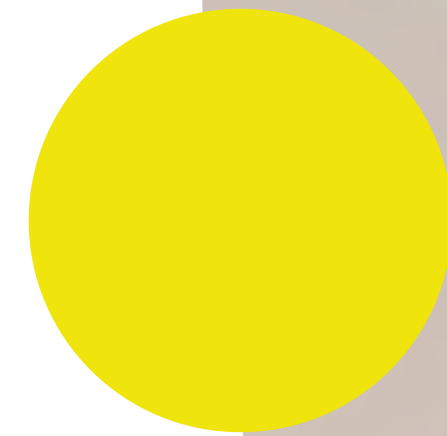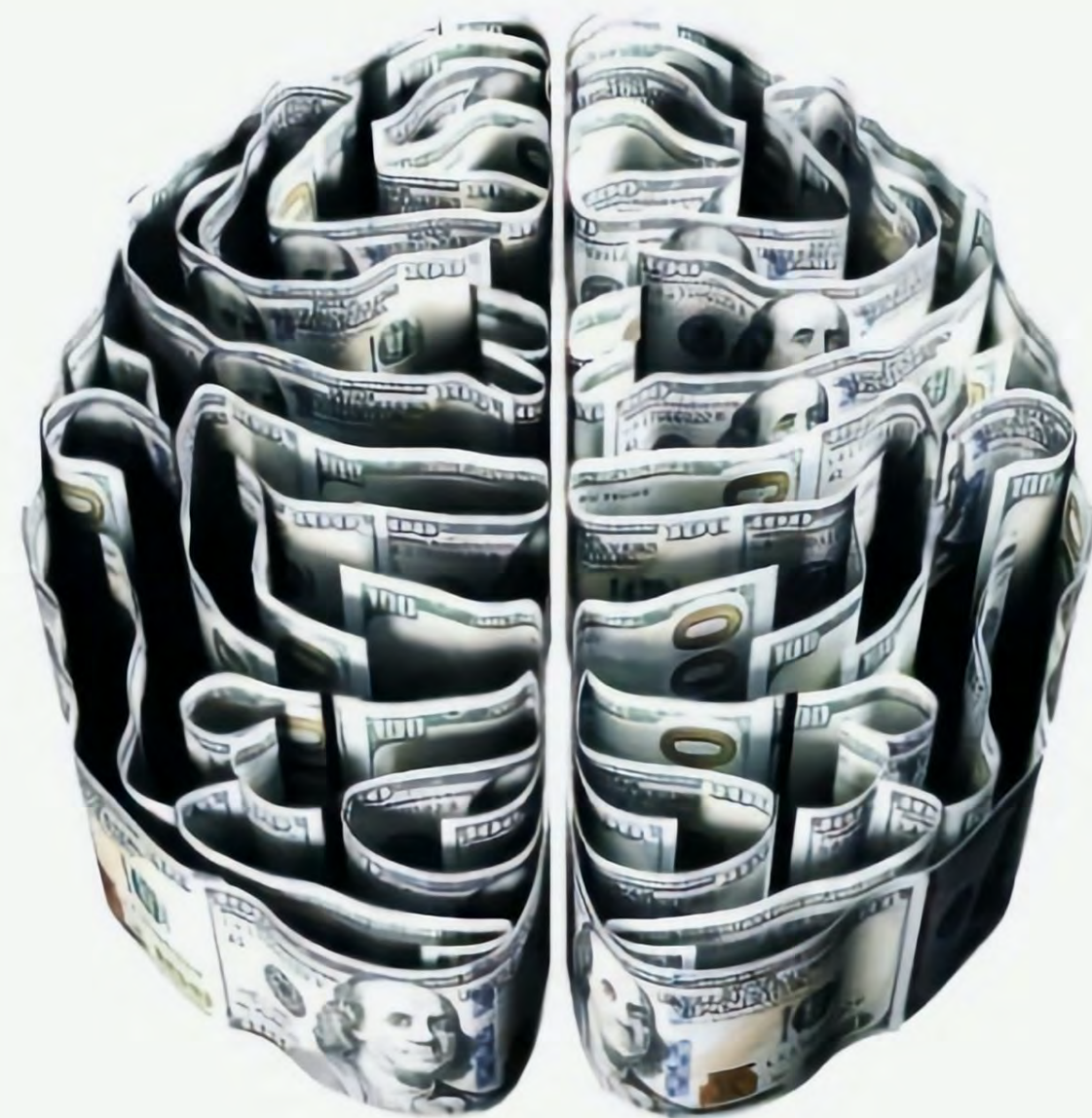
Psychologie, UX and Shopware

Human Memory

communicode AG

What impact does our memory have on our online shopping behavior?

In the first part of our article, we looked at the jam paradox and worked out how this psychological phenomenon influences our buying behavior and how it can be used productively in Shopware. Now we'll take a closer look at human memory and the important principles behind it. Because they also have an influence on the shopping experience in e-commerce and can be used in a targeted manner in Shopware.

The Psychological Principle

The ability to remember is better and more intensively developed in humans than in any other animal. We can remember many dates and events. Nevertheless, our memory does not work like a movie that we can simply rewind. Rather, the process of remembering is reconstructive and prone to errors and distortions.

Memory is simplistically divided into 3 sections:

- **Ultra-short-term memory** (filters our impressions**)**

- **Short-term memory** (intermediate storage for information, also called working memory)

- **Long-term memory** (stores memories long-term to lifelong)

Ultra short-term memory
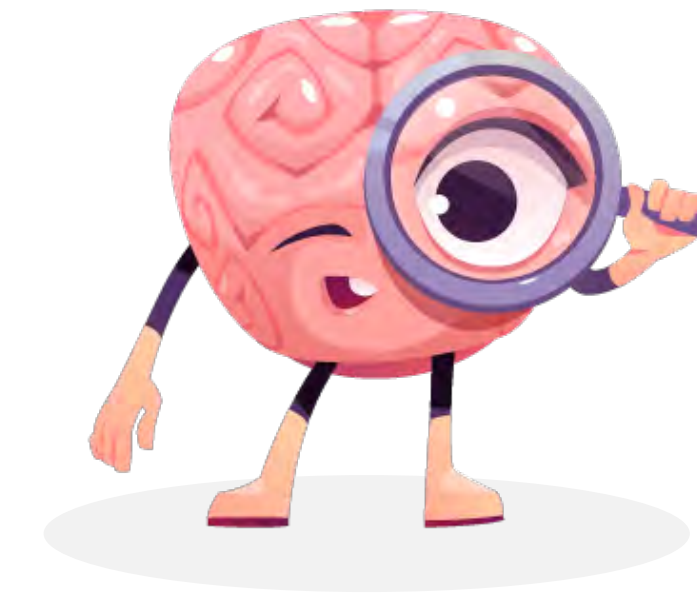
Working memory

Long-term memory

Psychology in UX:
How can Design Help Users Remember?

For our considerations on online shopping, short-term memory is particularly interesting because this is where the information is processed. Despite being so complex, working memory has a very limited capacity. The latest research suggests that we can only remember three to four knowledge units (called chunks) for a short time. And these quickly disappear again. Over a few seconds to minutes, we can remember, for example, a phone number, a product name or a specific piece of information.
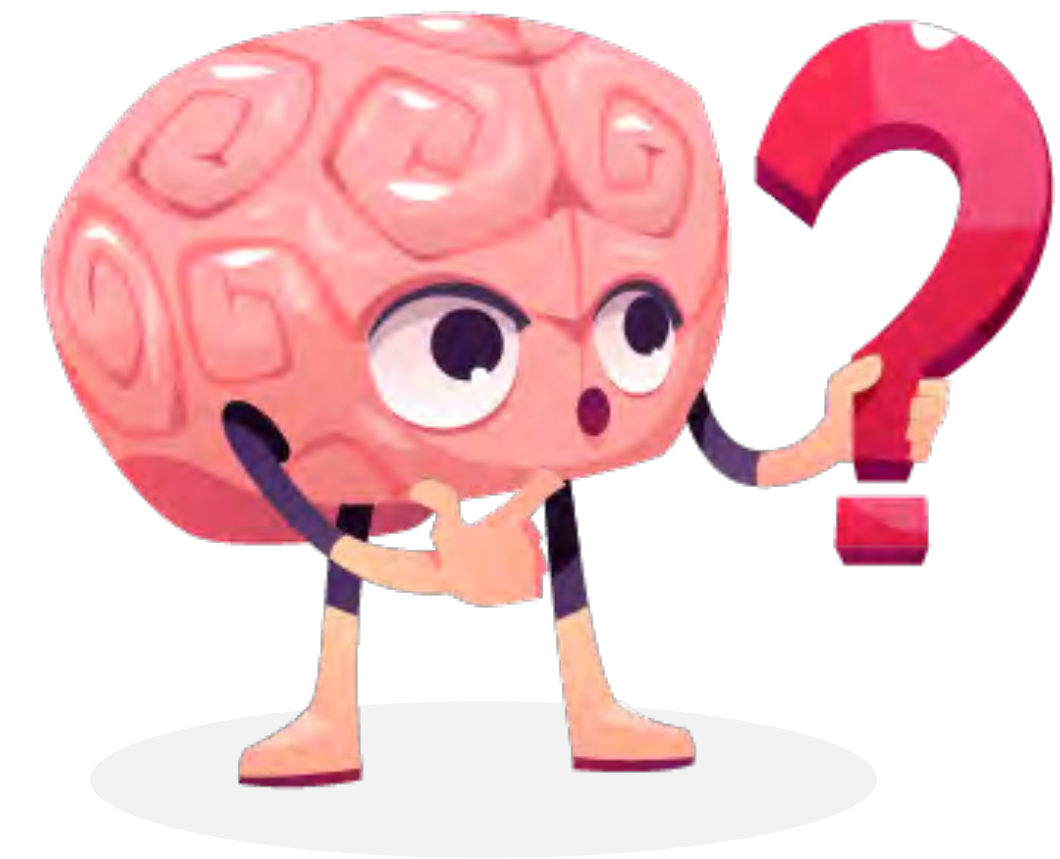
Psychology in UX:
How can Design Help Users Remember?

- **Comparison tables**: With the small amount of information that our short-term memory can cache, it is almost impossible to compare a product with more than one feature.

- **Shopping cart or favorites**: Often, the user does not even remember which product he has favorited or even had in his shopping cart before. What he doesn't remember, he can't buy.

- **Recently viewed items on the home page**: On the one hand, the customer then does not have to remember the items, and on the other hand, he evaluates things more positively if he already knows them. Recognition activates the brain's reward system.
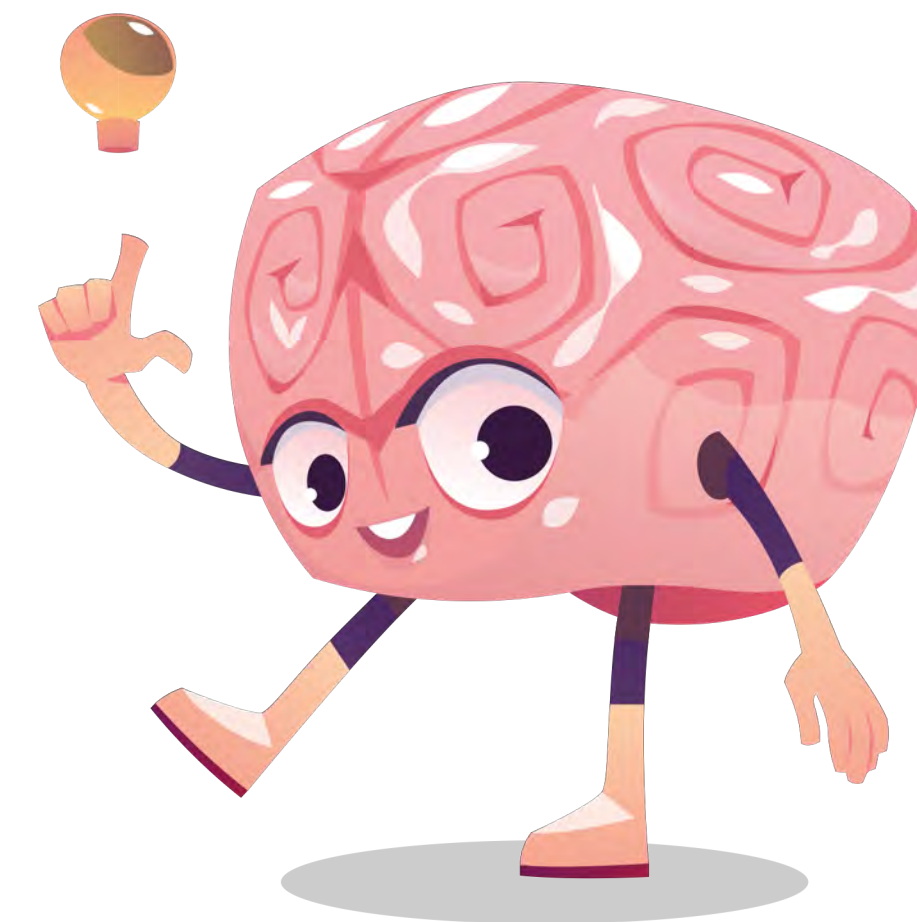
Examples

Our customer **thyssenkrupp** offers its users the possibility to compare up to 4 products
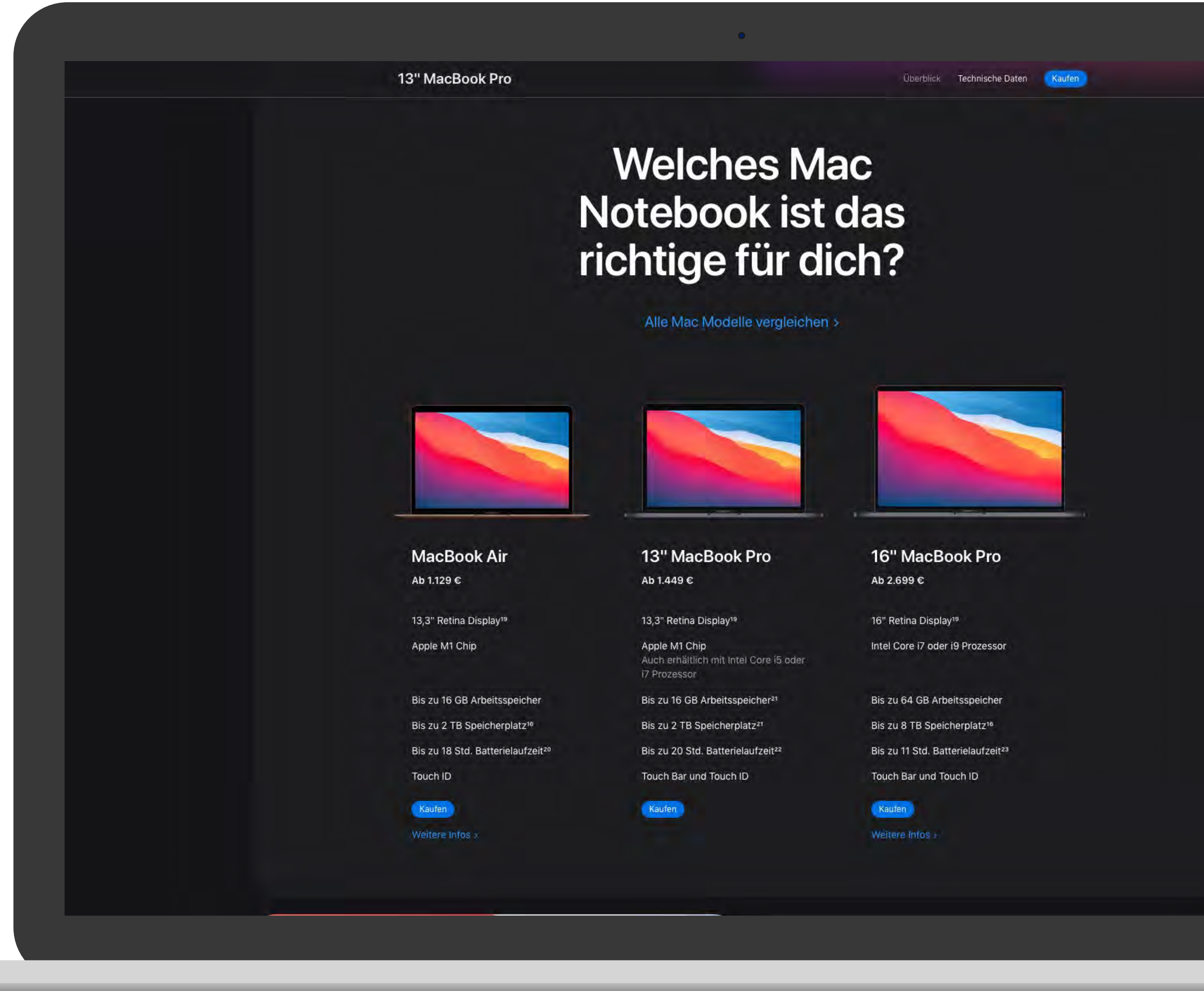
Examples

A lot of successfull brands also work with comparison tables such as apple.

Implementation in Shopware

With a few simple adjustments, you can ensure in Shopware that the biological hurdles of human memory do not have a negative impact on buying behaviour.

- Filter

- Comparison Tables

- Wishlist

- Recently Viewed Articles

- Guided Selling

Implementation in Shopware Filter

Sensibly created filters also help your customers to find their way around your offer. This way, they can narrow down the selection of your products and get only the products that are relevant to them and their requirements.

Shopware offers you the possibility to create individual filters for each item listing in the "Properties" tab and to fill these filter categories with different properties.

New filter categories or additional properties per filter category can be compiled with a few clicks.

Implementation in Shopware
Comparison Tables

The ability to compare products and see all the similarities and differences at a glance makes it easier for your customers to decide.

In the comparison table in Shopware, all properties that were stored in the backend configuration are compared with each other.

Comparison table created with Shopware

Implementation in Shopware
Wishlist

So that your customers don't lose sight of the products they like but don't want to buy right now, they can save them in their personal watch list.

When you click the "Remember" button, the items are added to the list and stored there until the customer actively removes them from his list.
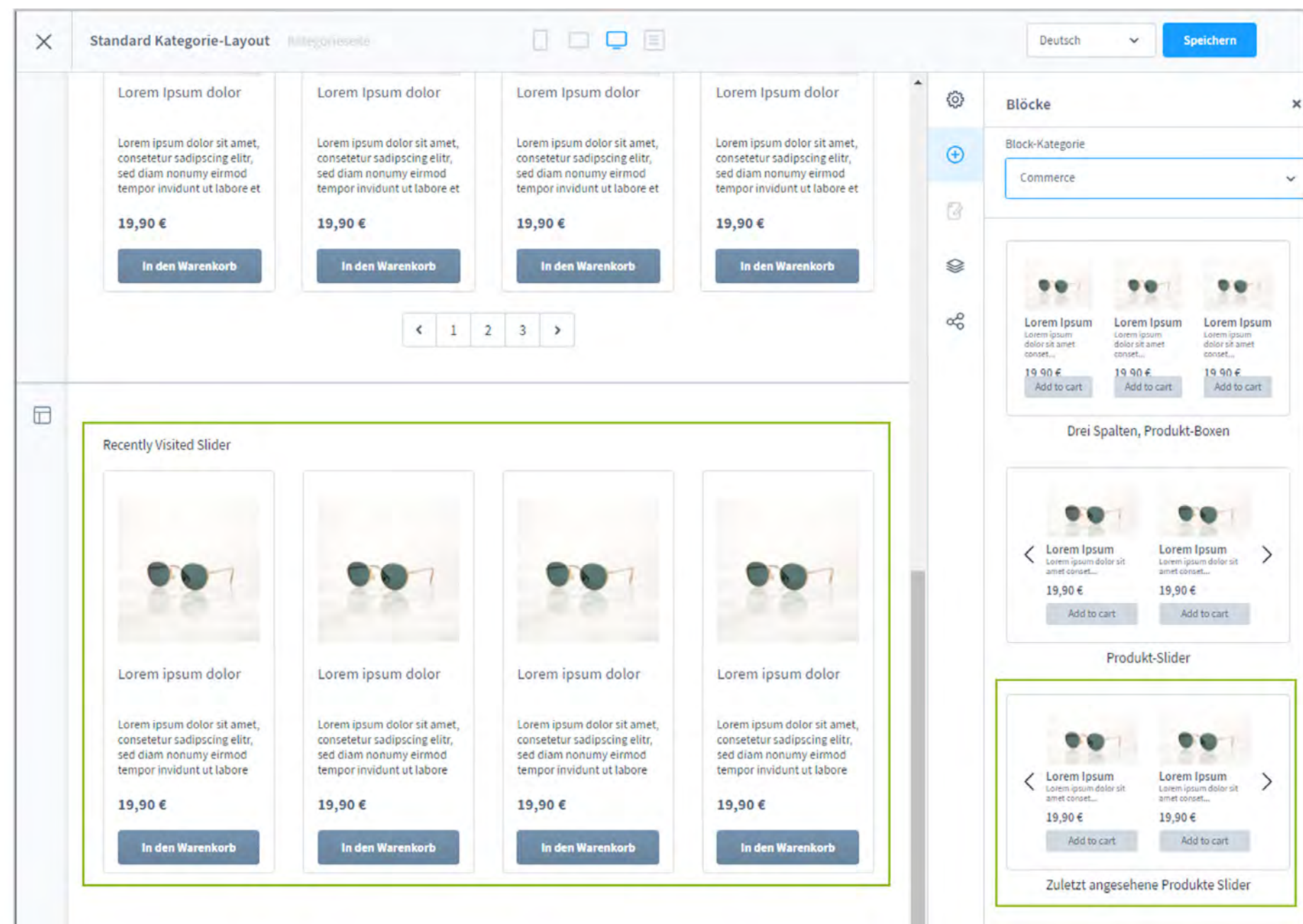
Implementation in Shopware
Recently Viewed Articles

Slider with "recently viewed items" can also be placed anywhere in the online store within Shopware.

This slider is an existing element that is present in Shopware Standard and can be inserted in the edit mode of the worlds of experience as often as desired and in different places.

For example, this slider can appear within the product listing or on the home page.
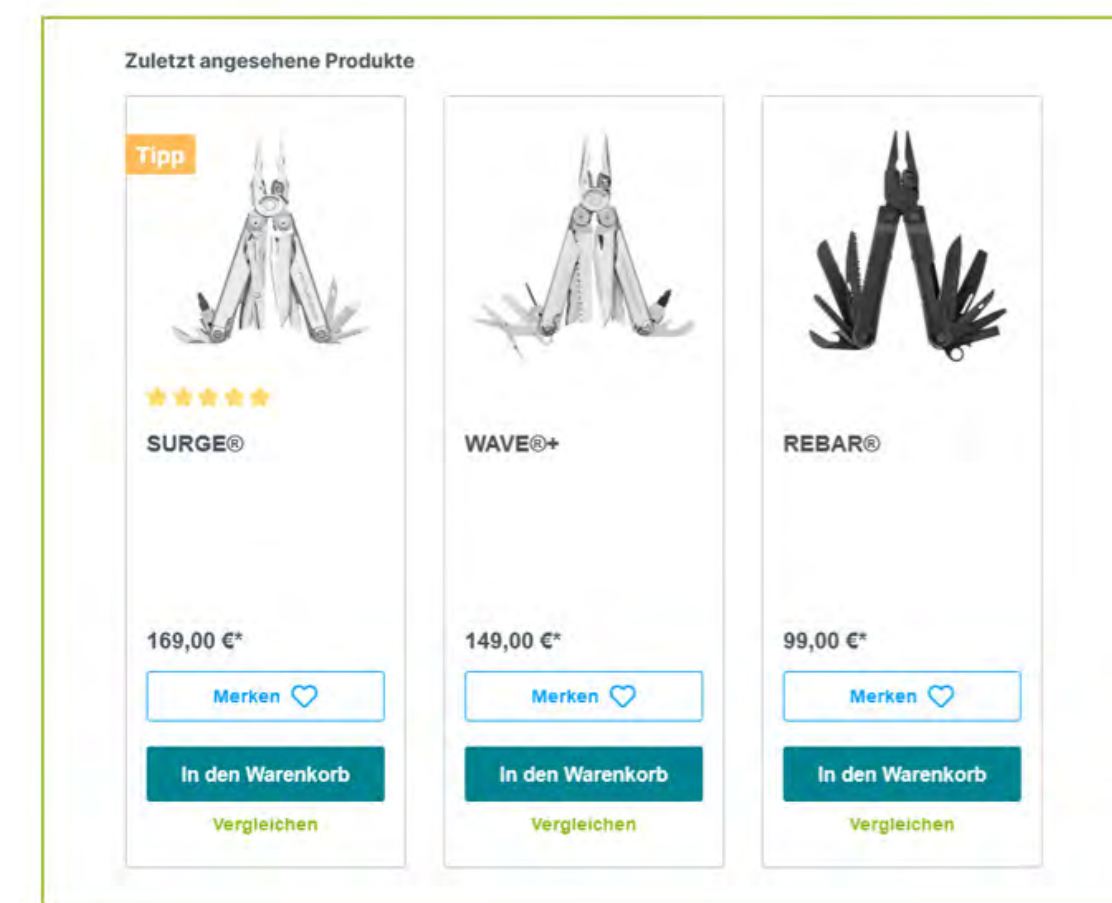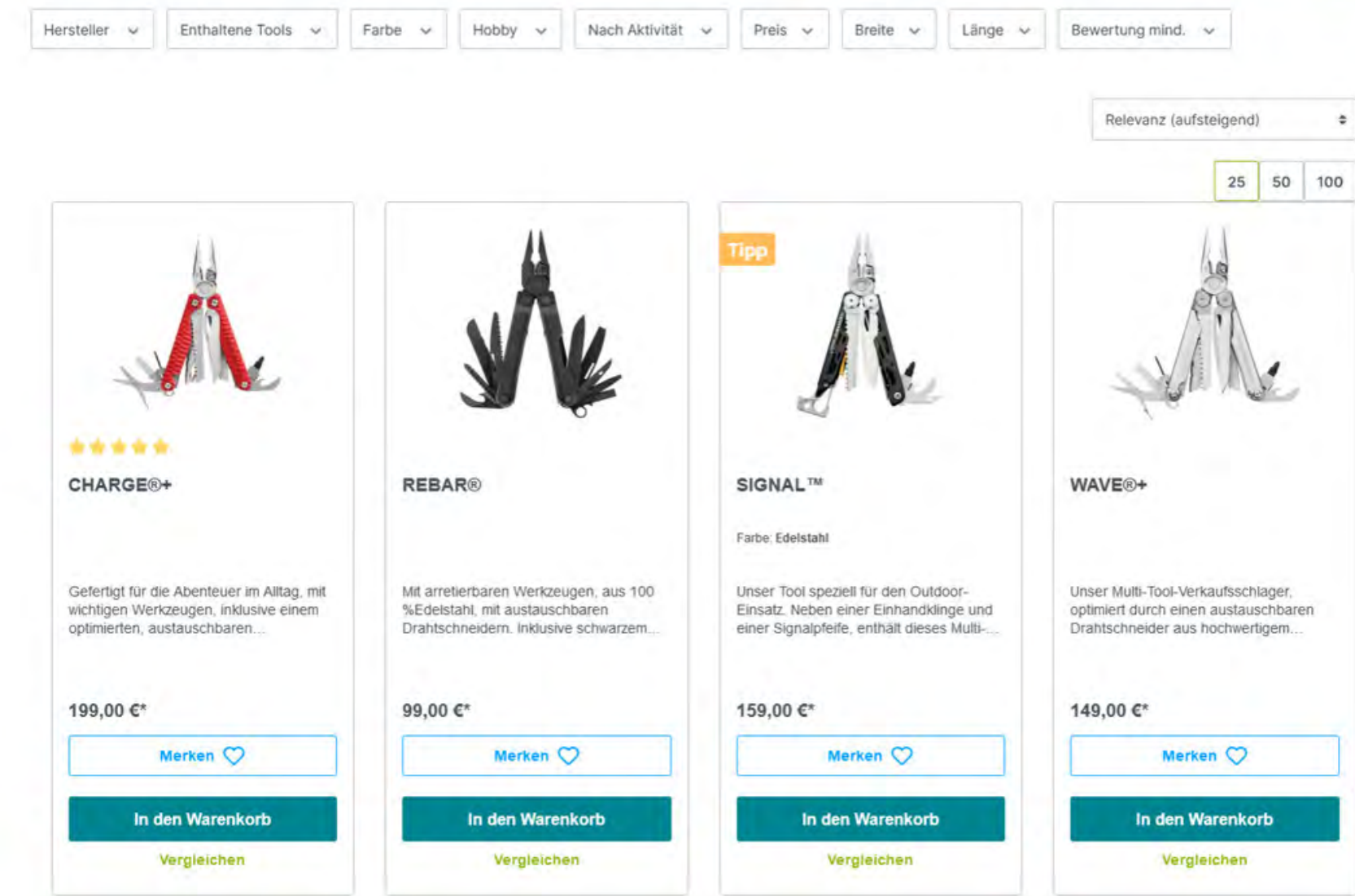
Psychologie, UX and Shopware

Social Proof

communicode AG

We Look at How Social Proof Influences our Shopping Behaviour

Since we have already pointed out above that the jam paradox and human memory can have a significant impact on our online shopping experience and purchase decisions, we would now like to examine the influence of our personal environment and society in general on our purchasing behaviour.

The Psychological Principle

The term *Social Proof* was coined by Robert Cialdini in his book Influence (1984). In our vernacular, social proof refers to informative social influence or social validation. The term describes the social phenomenon of people imitating the actions of others.

We know this from everyday life. We prefer to go to a restaurant that is already full than to an empty one. We buy the bestseller because others have bought it too. When others laugh, we laugh along with them. That's why comedy shows often laugh at the audience.

"As a rule, we make fewer mistakes when our behaviour is consistent with social "evidence." When many people do something, it's usually the right thing to do."

Robert Cialdini, Influence (1984)
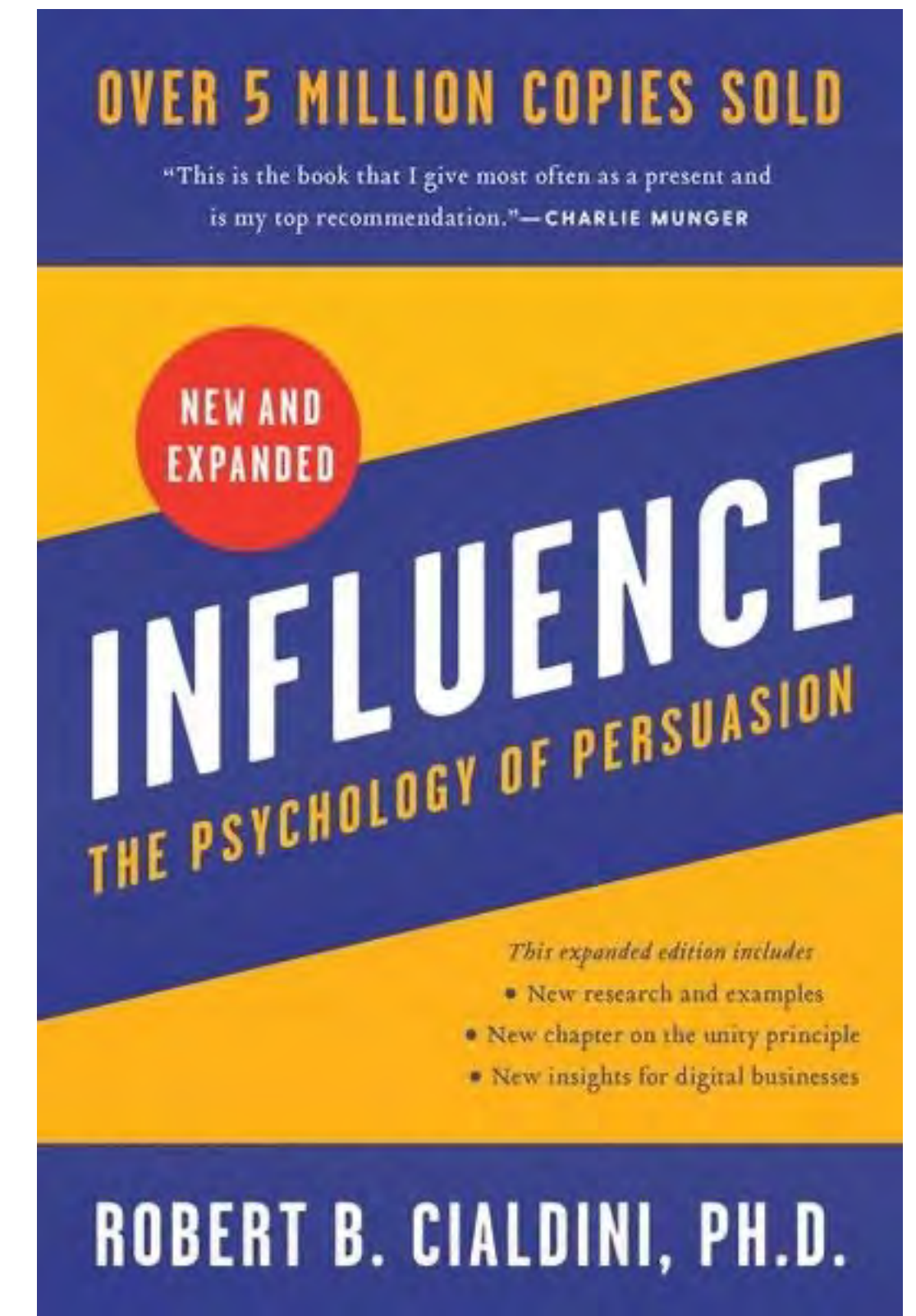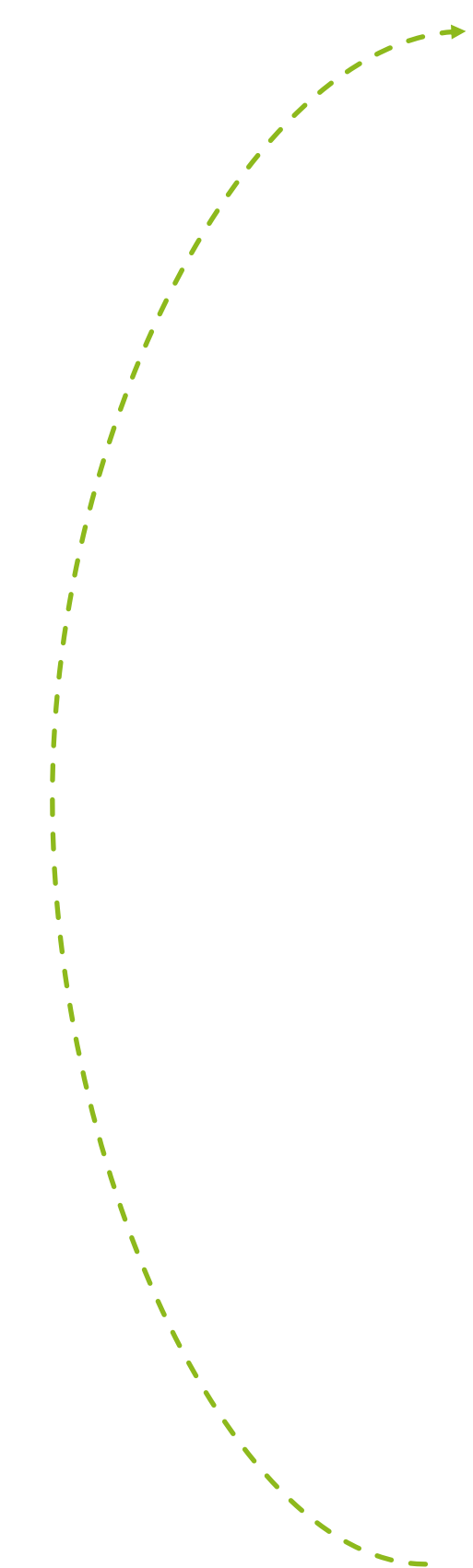
The title they gave the book is classic social proof. How could you go wrong investing in the book when 50-million had already done so?

Examples of Social Proof from History
Claqueurs and Mourning Singers

While social proof is a modern marketing term, the insights it provides are not new. As early as the 1840s, Parisian theatres and opera houses had so-called "claqueurs" who were hired to applaud, laugh, and praise performances. In this way, the audience was positively influenced and encouraged to clap and laugh along. This works not only for laughter, but also for crying.

In some countries, for example, there are still so-called mourning singers who perform the ancient ritual of professional mourning. They are asked to sing laments and cry loudly at funerals. In this way, they normalize the grief so that the relatives feel that they are not alone with their loss. Thanks to the laments, they also dare to cry and express their grief.

Moirologia by a graveside in Mani, Greece, 1962. © CONSTANTINE MANOS/ MAGNUM PHOTOS

Examples of Social Proof from History
Mariana Starke

The first rating system was invented in the early 19th century by the English writer Mariana Starke. She developed a pioneering travel guide to France and Italy. In it, she described the political situation in the country and gave practical tips for tourists. She also developed a rating system in the form of exclamation points to rate places of interest. This was the forerunner of today's star ratings.

Mariana Starke used exclamation marks as rating system in her travel guides ! ! ! ! !

Social Proof in e-commerce

No matter what the product, we feel much more confident in our purchasing decisions when customers in the same situation have made the same decision. Here are the **5 types of social proof**:

- Expert knowledge

- Prominent personalities

- Recommendations from friends

- Other users

- The behaviour of the masses
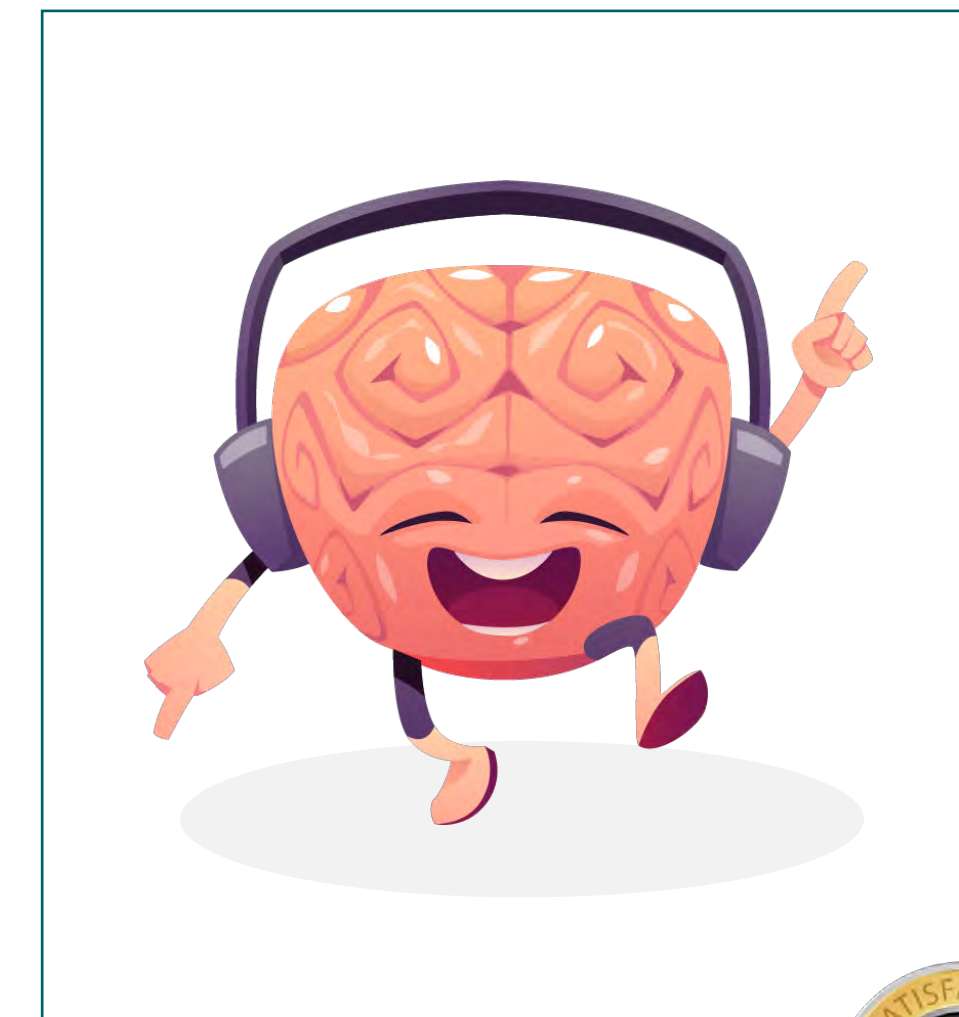
95% of people are copycats

Psychology in UX: How do You Use Social Proof Successfully?

Use reviews and ratings for products:

Ratings can be displayed in the form of stars on the product overview or on the product detail page in the form of reviews. You can also use reviews in search, for example, by filtering by them.

Psychology in UX: How do You Use Social Proof Successfully?

Use expert knowledge

With expertise, a review or a statement will have more value (and more impact). For example at Thalia, booksellers give book recommendations.

Psychology in UX: How do You Use Social Proof Successfully?

Use social proof through influencers or social media:

The more authentic the person embodies the product, the higher the credibility and authenticity for users.

Install an **Instagram feed** on the product detail page or home page: People copy other people's behaviour, especially if they are like them.
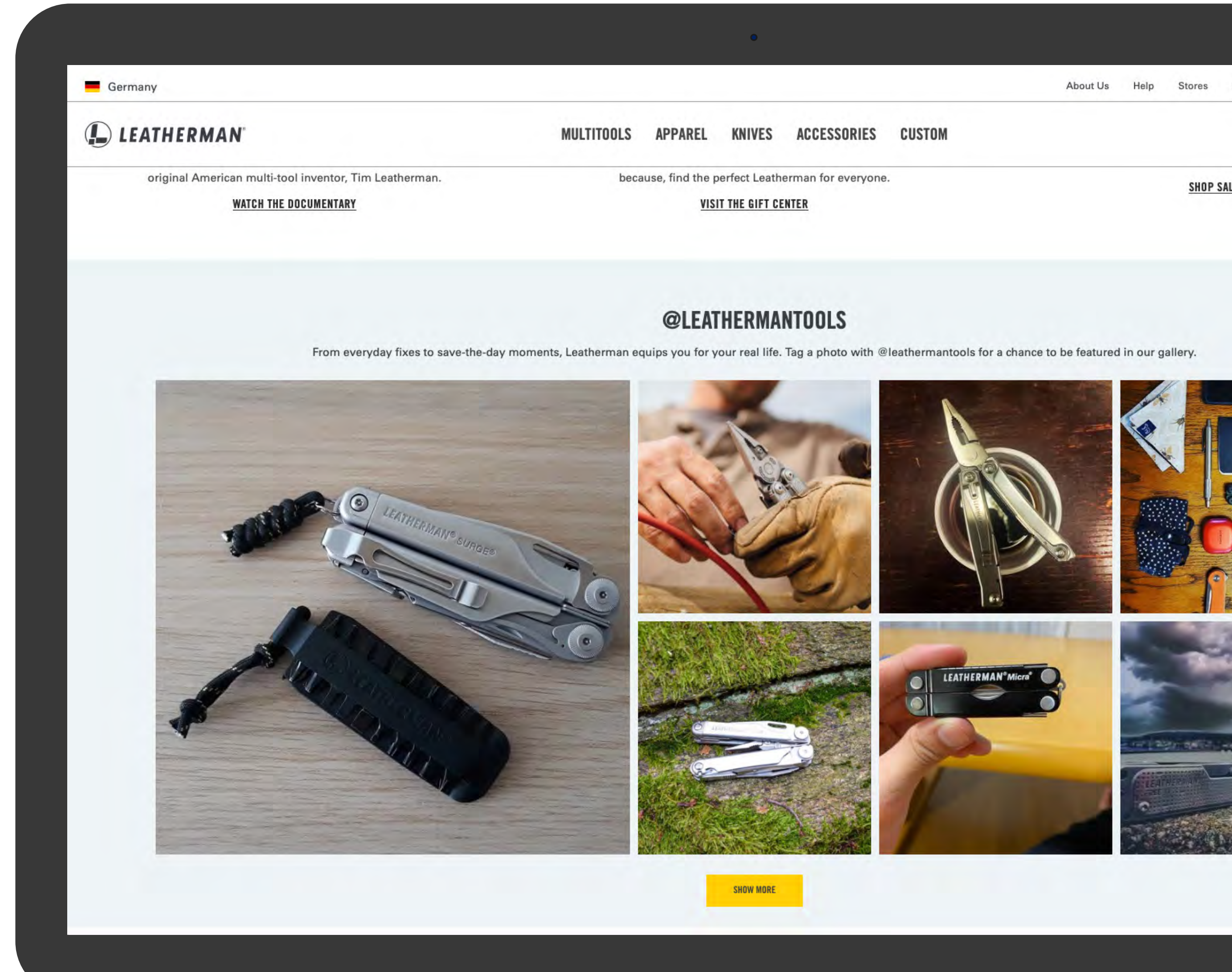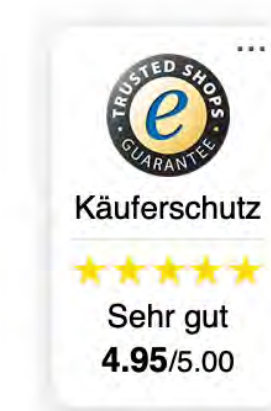
Psychology in UX: How do You Use Social Proof Successfully?

Show seals of approval and good test results of a product:

Seals can positively influence the purchase decision, because users trust expert knowledge.
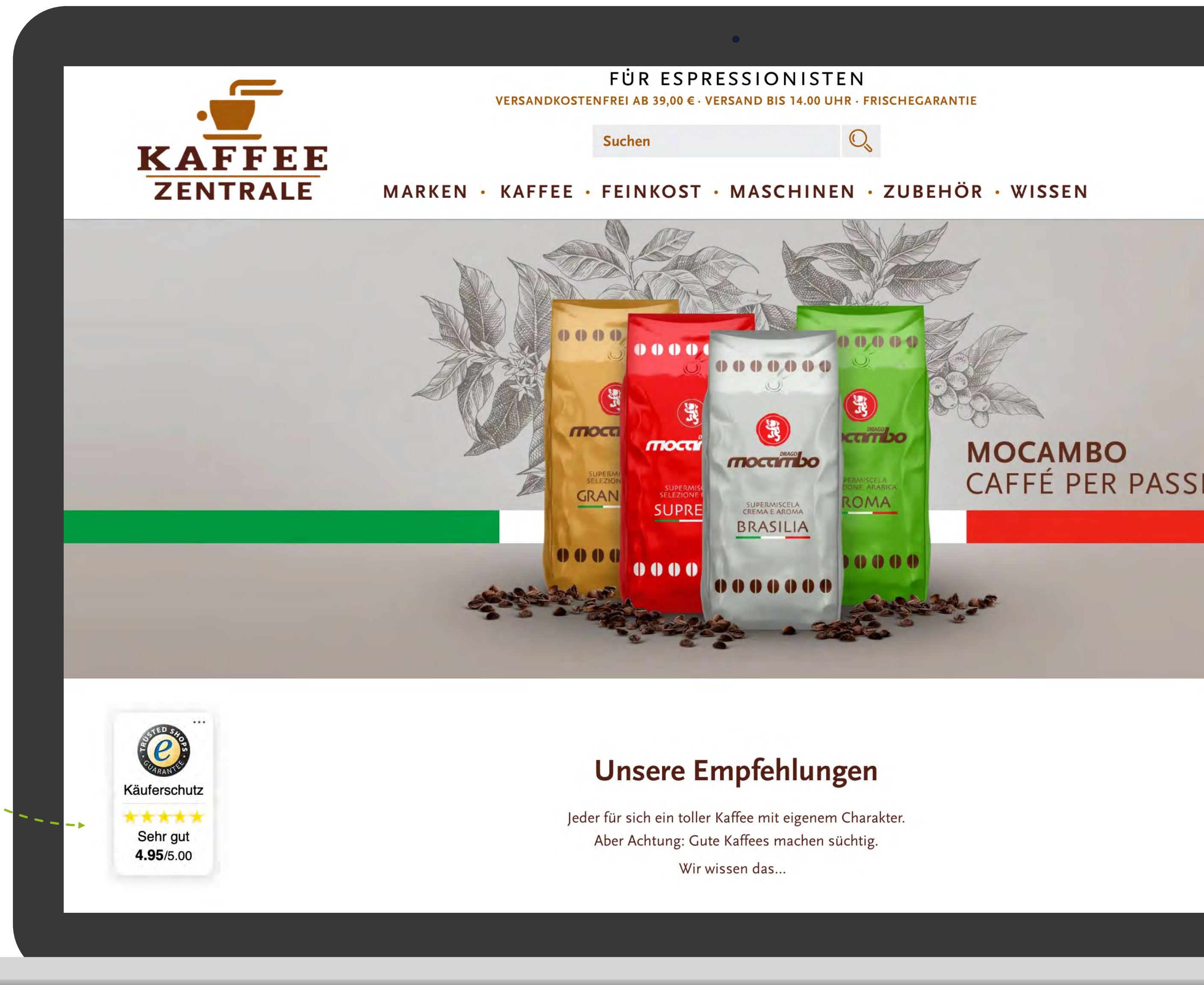
www.communicode.de

Social Proof

Social proof can be very effective. However, it should not be used unwisely. Due to the success of social proof, some stores and websites have overused it and complicated the interaction. As a result, the user experience suffers. Therefore, it is important to test and not just assume that every social proof feature is beneficial. For example, which social proof mechanisms increase conversion rates can be found out by A/B testing comment, rating and testimonial features. Usability tests can show whether social proof functions lead to a cluttered and confusing interface that distracts users too much instead of encouraging them to buy.
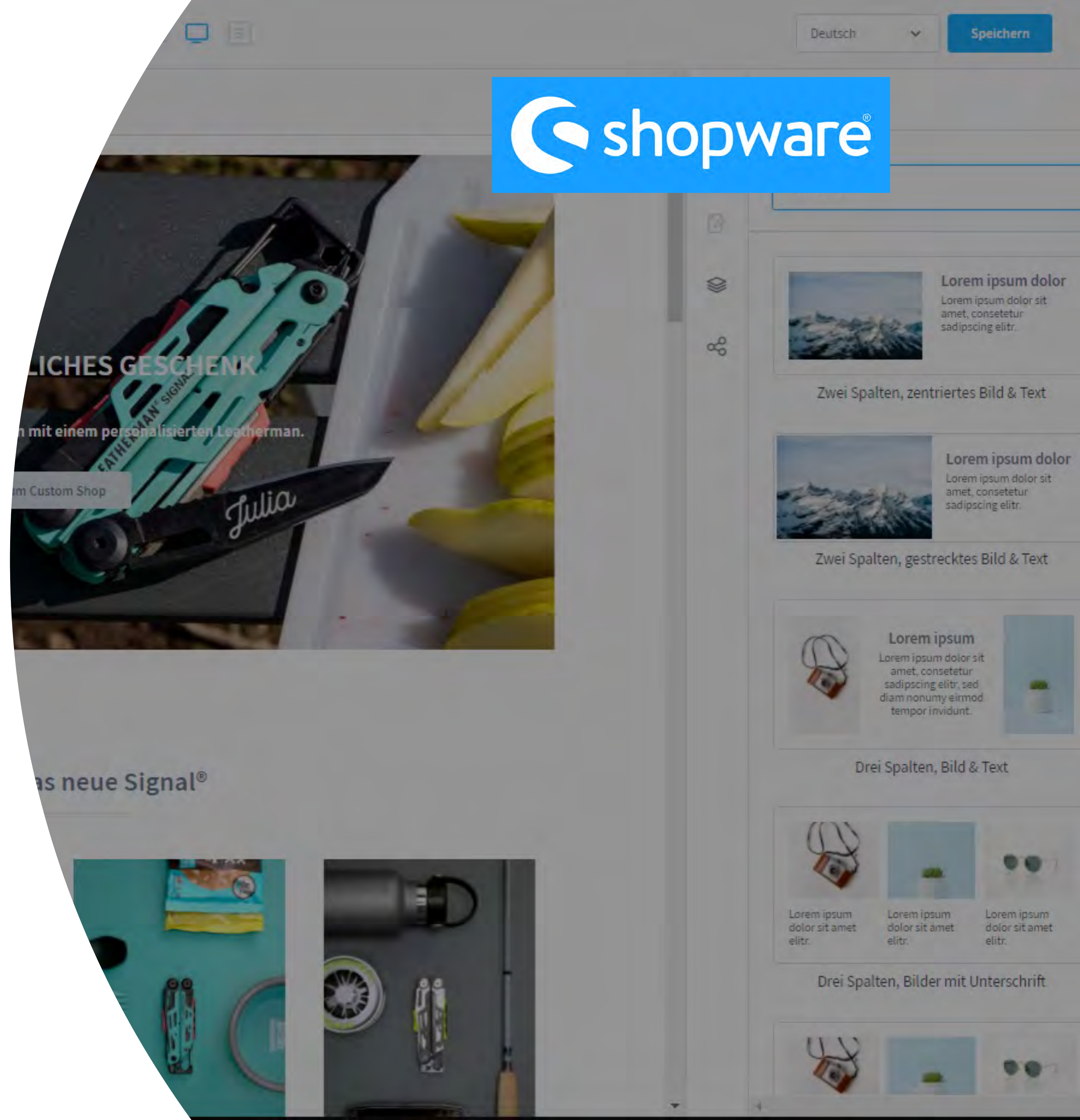
Implementation in Shopware

3 ways to implement Social Proof in Shopware

- Reviews

- Recommendations

- Embed Instagram Feed

Implementation in Shopware
Reviews

The reviews of other customers have a significant impact on buying behaviour. For this reason, Shopware offers your customers the possibility to rate their purchased products.

The customer can already see that a product has been rated and how these ratings turned out in the item listing. Of course, he can also filter the articles based on the ratings.

Implementation in Shopware
Recommendations

In addition to reviews of a product, your customer can also recommend a particular product to his contacts via social media.

To realize this, the plugin "Social Share Buttons (WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and more) for SW6" can be used. With the help of the plugin, it is possible to integrate ten different social media icons like Facebook, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Xing, LinkedIn as well as icons for emailing and printing into the online store.
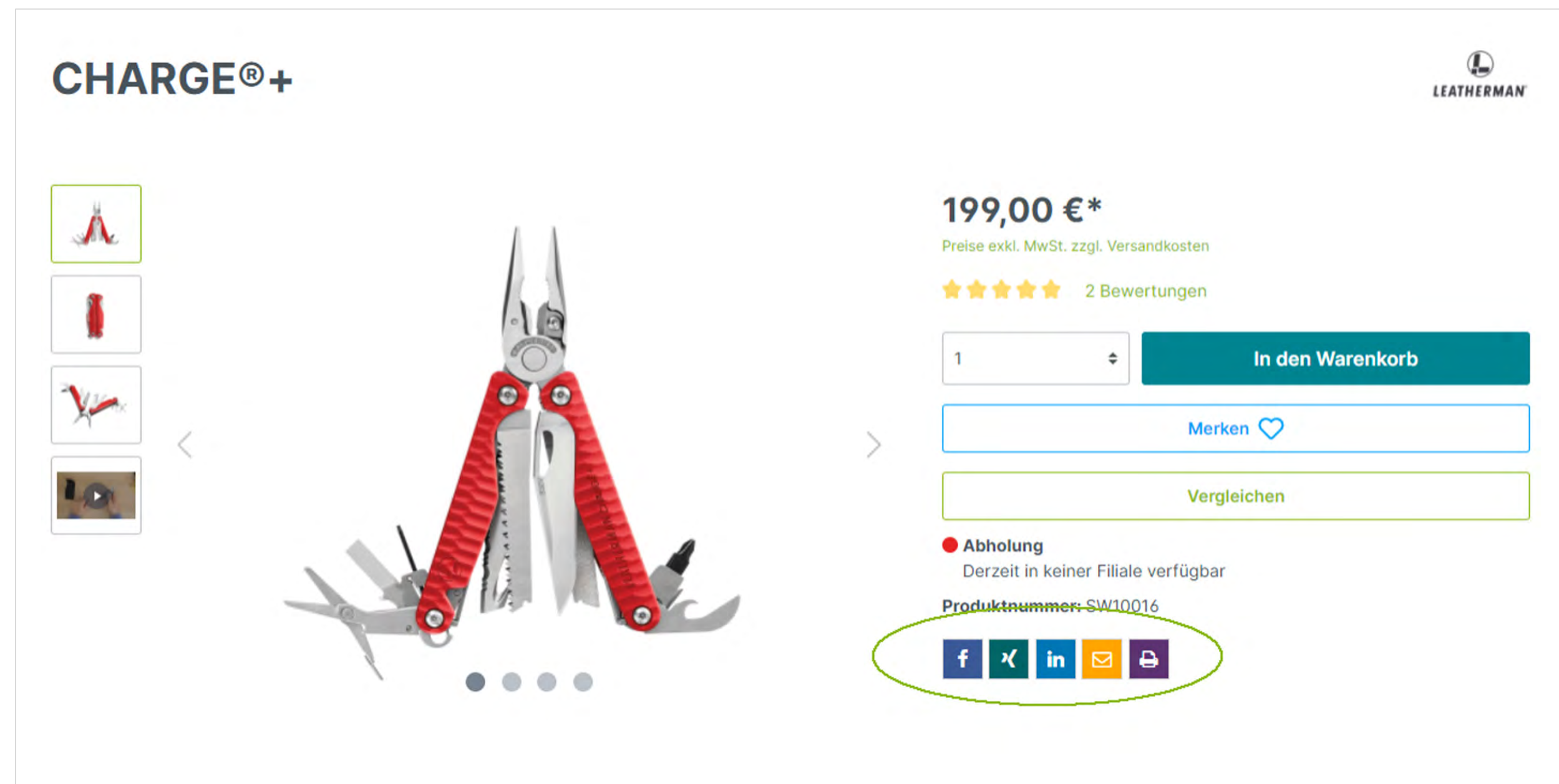
Social Share Buttons

Implementation in Shopware
Embed Instagram Feed

The integration of an Instagram feed can also strengthen the social proof.

Here, a plugin can be used to add this function to the online store. The plugin "Instagram Feed for Shopping Worlds - Grid" is recommended. With a few clicks, the feed of the Instagram channel is displayed on the home page or any landing page.
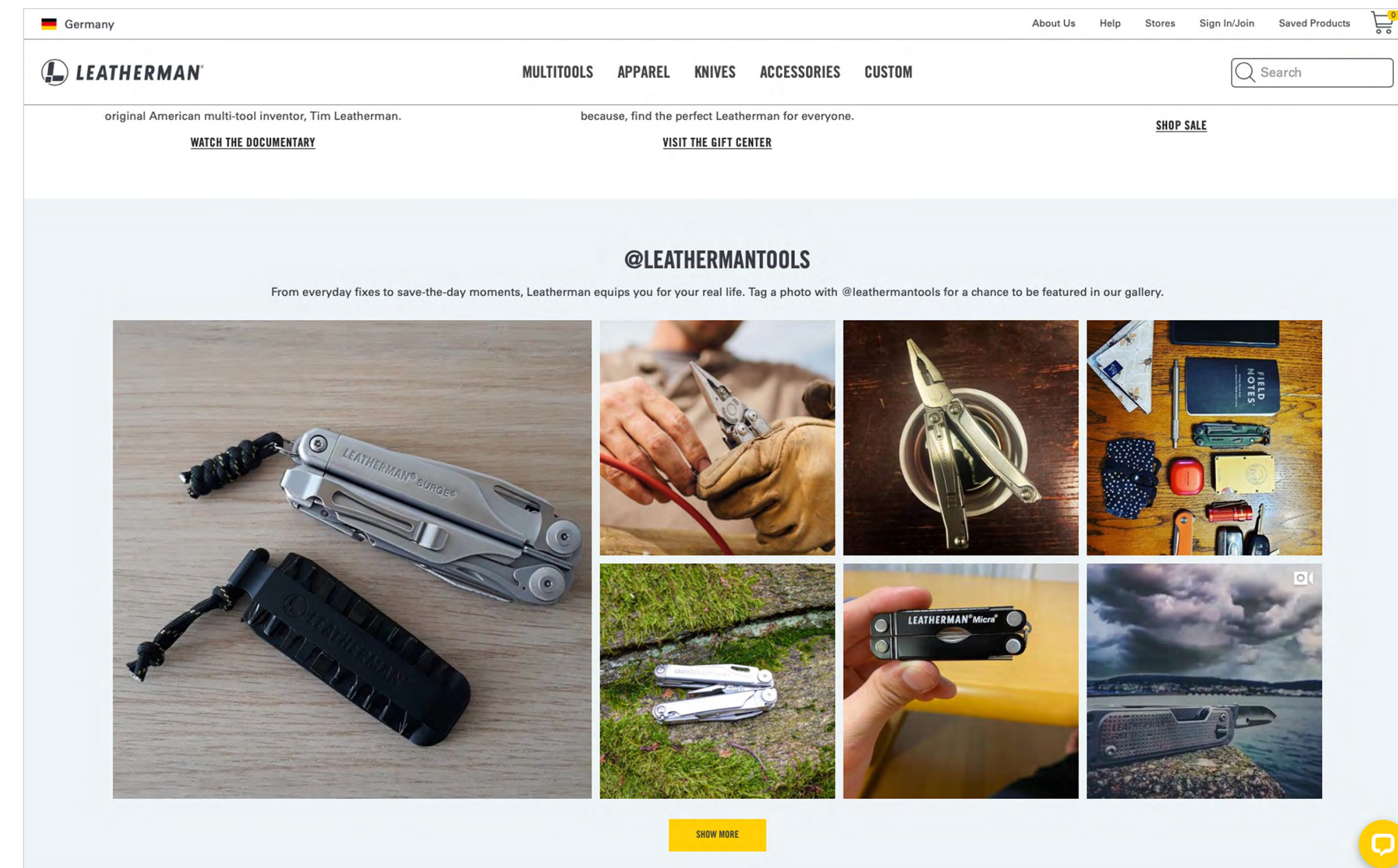
The feed of the Instagram channel is displayed on the home page

3 Psychological Principles That Influence the Choices We Make

We've learned about three principles of psychology that you can incorporate into your online store or your next marketing campaign to get the best results.

We hope this e-book gives you an idea how to implement these principles into **shopware** quickly and easily and use them to increase your conversion rate. More info can be found in the [Shopware 6 documentation](#).

Psychology can lead to great user experiences.

And great user experiences can lead to great results.

Jam Paradox

Human Memory

Social Proof

Who We Are

communicode is your creative full-service digital agency from the heart of the Ruhr area. Here, we live and work for a networked world in which e-commerce, communication and omnichannel solutions work as a digital unit. Collaboration and knowledge sharing are our credo. Use our know-how for your success.
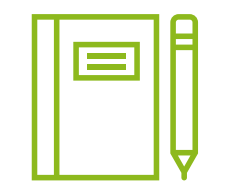
100
Employees

17
Years Experience

265
International Projects

communicode
building digital bridges