



Analytics in the Classroom

2023 Annual Spring Conference Proceedings

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*Annual Marketing Management Association Spring Conference
March 9-10, 2023, Virtually*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Marketing Management Association is proud to present the Annual MMA Spring Conference! As we begin the shift to an annual online spring conference that highlights research in marketing and marketing education, I want to thank everyone who contributed to making this conference a huge success. As in previous years, we find that the submissions to the conference were quite inspiring! The range and depth of the analysis that was conducted in submitting refereed and position papers, as well as panel sessions, were beyond our expectations and we know the conference will be the talk of marketing educators for weeks to come.

We are very thankful to all the scholars who submitted position and competitive papers as well as volunteered for special sessions and panels. We are ever so grateful to all the reviewers. The reviewers are listed later in the proceedings. In addition, we could not have had the conference without the track chairs, listed separately in this publication, who help with the smooth coordination of panels and presentations. Special thanks to Becky Hochradel, Proceedings Editor, for assembling all the material into these conference proceedings, and to **Leila Samii**, MMA Webmasters, for keeping the website up-to-date.

We also want to acknowledge our amazing Silver Sponsors **Management by the Numbers** and **Interpretive Simulations**. They again provided interesting sessions that highlight tools that can help our classrooms. Please take the opportunity to visit the websites of these sponsors/exhibitors who offer us great ideas, tools, and training to improve our effectiveness in the classroom. They help to keep the price of MMA conferences a tremendous value for everyone, as well as offering attendees many resources that assist with marketing education.

We also want to recognize our four **Best Track Paper honorees**. The winning papers was selected prior to the conference and the authors are listed in these Proceedings. Without you we could not put on this conference and so we thank you for your participation and welcome you again next year! Your works will inspire many.

Many thanks to everyone involved with the conference! We hope you enjoyed lots of stimulating conversation, learned a few new ideas, and met some fellow scholars who share your passion for the marketing discipline! Mark your calendars for the 2022 MMA Fall Educators' Conference. It will be held in-person, September 27-29, 2023 at the Drury Plaza Hotel in Orlando, FL!

Takisha S. Toler, Conference Program Chair

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Date

Thursday, March 9th

Time

1:00 - 1:50 pm CST

Presenter

Peter Zinman, Manager of Business Development

BEST PAPER AWARDS

Consumer Behavior Track

Winner:
SP23CP-CB05

The Efficacy of Different Threat Levels in Anti-Vaping Public Service Announcements

James Mark Mayer, Ball State University
Rachel Landis, Ball State University

Marketing Communications & Promotions Track

Winner:
SP23CP-CP01

Social Media Inputs and Metrics: A Framework for Social Media Use and Purchase Intention

Tuba Bingol, Nichols College
Leila Samii, Southern New Hampshire University

Marketing Education Track

Winner:
SP23CP-ME03

The Self-Discovery Activity: Using Self-Expansion to Foster Personal Brand Development

Brian A. Vander Schee, Indiana University
Rebecca A. Van Meter, Ball State University
Josh T. Coleman, Missouri State University

Marketing Ethics, Sustainability, & Public Policy Track

Winner:
SP23CP-ES01

What “Tweets” can Mean for CSR

Kristina Harrison, University of Southern Mississippi
Lei Huang, SUNY at Fredonia

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ii
EXHIBITORS and SPONSORS..... iii
CONFERENCE COMPETITIONS and AWARDS..... iv
MARKETING MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OFFICERSv
CONFERENCE PROGRAM COMMITTEE.....v
CONFERENCE PAPER REVIEWERS..... vi
CONFERENCE SESSION CHAIRS vii
CONFERENCE ATTENDEES viii
TABLE OF CONTENTSx
REFEREED PAPERS1
EXTENDED ABSTRACTS19
POSITION PAPERS64

Application of Agile Concepts to the Sales Function to Improve Performance

*George B. Krueger, University of Wisconsin-Platteville
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ABSTRACT

The concept of applying Agile concepts to the marketing function is widely accepted. The case is made for application of Agile concepts to the sales function, specifically, the sales process, sales cycle and customer service. A Sales Agility Model Construct is presented to guide to the implementation of Agile concepts in sales. The antecedents of leadership, employee, team and organization factors create the environment under which sales agility is executed in the sales process, sales cycle and customer service. Successful application of Agile concepts can enable sales and marketing teams to respond effectively to changing market conditions to improve sales performance.

INTRODUCTION

Agile emerged in 2001 to improve the process of developing software. Agile concepts and methodology have evolved to cover multiple processes, practices and tools across business functions that focus on improving organizational performance and customer satisfaction. Agile has been applied to the marketing function, most notably in promotion. The opportunity is to apply Agile concepts and methodology to the sales function to improve performance.

Organizations that are Agile focus on delivering value to customers. Profits are a result of delivering value. Agile organizations focus on small cross-functional, self-led teams that work for short time cycles. These teams operate horizontally and value competence over authority (Denning, 2020a).

Agile concepts are applicable to the sales function. This paper will present Agile concepts, how Agile is being utilized beyond software development and present a model to apply Agile concepts to the sales function. The Agile concepts will be specifically applied to the sales process, sales cycle and customer service aspects of the sales function.

DEFINITION OF AGILE

The Agile Manifesto is made up of 12 major principles and was developed in 2001 (Agile Marketing Manifesto, 2020). The 12 major principles are:

1. customer satisfaction
2. change is inevitable
3. deliver software that works
4. daily cooperation & communication
5. motivated teammates
6. face-to-face communication
7. if the product/service works, you can gauge your progress
8. constant workflow
9. attention to technical details and design
10. get it done fast
11. self-managing teams
12. receive feedback and adapt to change

These concepts are applicable to the sales function due to the focus on customer satisfaction, focus on results, communication and adapting to change.

BENEFITS OF AGILE

Agile organizations exhibit continuous delivery of products and services where the process is measured in hours, not months (Gothelf, 2014). The key to success is rapid iterative optimization and action. Agile firms highly value focus on the customer, flexibility and rapid decision-making, rather than relying on traditional bureaucracy (Eldermir, 2017). The focus is on people over process. Customer feedback is utilized to continuously improve and adapt to the current situation. Work is broken down into small discernible segments and the effort to achieve the objectives of the project is broken down into short time periods called sprints. The purpose of the sprints are to obtain rapid feedback and adapt quickly. This agility creates competitive advantage. The team is dedicated, focused, learns continuously and achieves the objectives (Brower, 2019).

Swaminathan & Jain (2012) found significant benefits for software development. They postulated that there is opportunity to improve business performance through applying Agile throughout the firm and for various project situations. Agile firms focus on collaboration, lean mentality and the customer. The focus is on creating value for the customer by utilizing feedback and reflection (Dingsøyr et al., 2012).

APPLICATION OF AGILE CONCEPTS TO BUSINESS STRATEGY

Denning (2020b) presented three core principles of business agility: profits are the result of delivering value to customers, profits are not the goal, a commitment to getting work done in small self-organizing teams so as to draw on the full talents of those doing the work; and a network of competence rather a steep hierarchy of authority. Kuusinen & Väänänen-Vainio-Mattila (2012) found that the user experience can be negatively impacted if sales is working in a traditional hierarchy model rather than Agile. The issue is to change how the organizations “thinks”, rather what it “does. These core principles of business agility have the potential to increase the performance of the sales function by focusing on value to the customer.

A key aspect of Agile is the mindset that it is incorporated into organizational culture rather than a top-down organizational strategy. The concept behind Agile in sales is that the sales function uses Agile concepts to engage the full talents and capabilities of employees. All strategies and goals are customer-centric and focus on adding value and creative innovation for the customer. Transparency and continuous improvement of products, services and work methods are valued and ideas that offer value for the customer are embraced. Performance is enhanced when Agile concepts are incorporated into the culture of the organization (Kalaiganam et al., 2020).

Deloitte, (2021) identified agility as one of their 7 key current marketing trends. Agile marketing strategies lead through the customer, collaborate on channel strategy design, and rapidly prototype to launch new offers utilizing customer feedback. Successful agility leverages customer relationship management systems and can enable marketing teams to respond effectively to changing market conditions.

Kalaiganam et al. (2020, p.36) defined marketing agility as “the extent to which an entity rapidly iterates between making sense of the market and executing marketing decisions to adapt to the market.” They also postulated that marketing agility works best when market response is highly unpredictable. Customer response, market conditions and competitive actions can be difficult to predict. This unpredictable environment enhances the results of Agile concepts and methodology where speed and effectiveness of response can create competitive advantage.

The 3rd Annual State of Agile Marketing Report (Agile Sherpas, 2020) found the use of Agile is accelerating with 41% using Agile and of non-users, 42% plan to adopt it. 74% of Agile marketers were satisfied. 67% of Agile marketing teams have been practicing Agile for at least 3 years. The report stated that the most significant barriers to implementing Agile was lack of training or knowledge about Agile approaches and the current marketing process was working at a satisfactory level. The use of Agile concepts in marketing is widely accepted.

THE CASE FOR AGILE IN SALES

According to the 3rd Annual State of Agile Marketing Report (Agile Sherpas, 2020), 52% of Agile marketers reported that sales was using Agile methodology. The Agile concepts of delivering value to customers, small self-organizing teams and a network of competence fits the sales function. Indeed, sales organizations may display aspects of Agile without focusing on Agile overtly. The application of Agile concepts as an applied strategy has the potential to improve sales results and customer satisfaction.

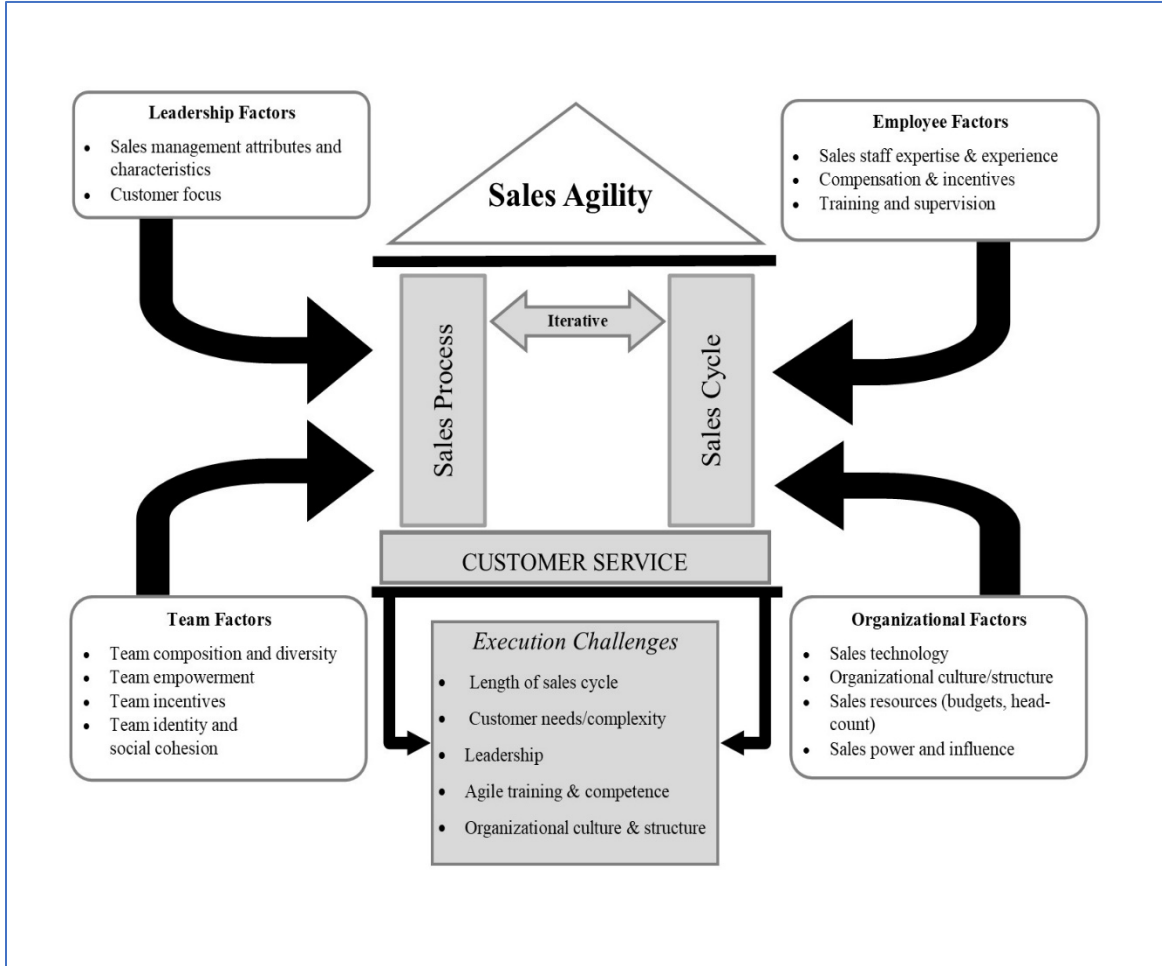
SALES AGILITY MODEL CONSTRUCT

The Sales Agility Model Construct (Figure 1.) builds on the Marketing Agility Model Construct presented by Kalaignanam et al., in Volume 85 (2020) *Journal of Marketing*. This model presents the pillars of the sales process and the sales cycle that lead to acquisition of a customer. The successful outcome of the iterative and related sales process and sales cycle leads to maintaining and servicing the business through customer service.

The antecedents of leadership, employee, team and organization factors create the environment under which sales agility is executed in the sales process, sales cycle and customer service.

Figure 1.

Sales Agility Model: Constructs, antecedents, and execution challenges (Kalaignanam et al., 2020)



Agile Applied to the Sales Process

The sales process is a set of steps that the salesperson progresses through to acquire and retain a customer. The steps of the process are:

- Preparation
- Introduction
- Customer Needs
- Features & Benefits
- Customer Concerns
- Close
- Follow-up

The sales process is a logical series of steps to manage a sales call (or series of calls) with a customer. The sales process can follow a logical progression that is focused and orderly or it may be haphazard and widely varied. Variance in the sales process may be caused by length of the sales cycle, complexity of the purchase, competitive actions, market changes, customer needs, customer culture, product attributes, risk of purchase by the customer, size of purchase by the customer and other influences that are outside of the salesperson's control. The key to success is to be prepared for a logical execution of the sales process, but also be prepared for the sales process to proceed in unanticipated directions.

There are multiple opportunities to apply Agile concepts to the sale process to improve sales results and customer satisfaction. There is opportunity for Agile principles to create value based on improved communications, feedback from customers, speed of response, focus on the customer and meeting customer's needs more effectively than the competition.

Agile Principles Applied to the Sales Cycle

The sales cycle is the process for a customer to purchase a product/service from initial contact to actual purchase and delivery of the product/service. The sales cycle is unique to every industry and business. Generally, the sales cycle will proceed through the customer's purchasing process which typically includes:

- Initial Contact
- Customer Specifications,
- Bid or Proposal,
- Negotiate
- Purchase (after purchase the relationship moves to the customer service process)

Products/services that are routinely purchased in a brief amount of time are deemed short sales cycle. Products/services that are purchased over an extended period of time are called long sales cycle. For example, a short sales cycle would be where a retailer is purchasing a product to resell with little risk over a 30-day period. The same retailer purchasing a product with considerable risk and investment would likely use a long sales cycle that may take 6 months to complete.

Focus on the customer is a key Agile concept that should be applied throughout the sales cycle. Focus on the customer has the potential to build a positive relationship through each step of the customer's sales cycle. KPI's provide data for the specifications, negotiation and purchase. Teamwork aids building the relationship, especially where service is an aspect of the purchase. Communication is key to providing value to build trust and meeting the customer's needs. Finally, continuous learning can create competitive advantage through responding to customer needs and building value.

Agile Principles Applied to Customer Service Process

When the sales process and sale cycle result in a customer order the customer service process is initiated. The customer service process will vary depending on the specific customer needs. For relatively simple and routine products (such as restocking a retailer) the process can be as simple as reordering the products on a consistent basis. For complex products the process may be very complicated. For example, if the product is customized, each order will need to be specifically handled according to the specifications of the order.

The customer service process is:

- Orders
- Fulfillment
- Support
- Feedback (KPI's)
- Billing
- Payment

The customer service process provides a plethora of opportunities to build competitive advantage by applying Agile concepts. The customer service process generates data through the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system which can be used to build competitive advantage. KPI's for orders, fulfillment, support, feedback, billing and payment should be monitored in the ERP system and then communicated to the customer support team. Teamwork along with continuous learning can enable the customer support team to respond to issues and opportunities to build the business with customers.

EXECUTION CHALLENGES

The length of the sales cycle may affect the selection of relevant of Agile principles. Products/services with short sales cycles may benefit from Agile principles that focus on iteration, speed, communications, continuous learning and teamwork. Long sales cycle products/services may benefit more from customer feedback and waterfall techniques that follow a more logical and structured purchasing process (Hacker Noon, 2020). Agile concepts need to be adapted to the specific sales cycle and situation for each customer.

Customer complexity can create communication and execution challenges. Customers with complex needs and/or complex organizational structures can be difficult to deal with from a sales perspective. There may be multiple influencers and decision-makers, some with conflicting needs. The products may be high-risk for the customer, thereby increasing scrutiny. There may be complex purchasing processes. There may be extended lead times along with customized products or services. Complexity can create execution challenges.

A lack of leadership may cause challenges with execution. Sales managers may not value Agile concepts or view the concepts as another management fad that will soon fade from view. Sales managers may be resistant to change and view their current sales strategies as effective. Salespeople may not want to change their approach to customers that has been successful in the past. The pressure for short-term sales results may create resistance to Agile concepts that take time to implement and do not show immediate benefit. The lack of leadership may also be related to organizational structure and culture issues. Effective leadership is vital to the successful implementation of Agile concepts to improve sales results.

Limited sales training resources may reduce the effectiveness during implementation of Agile principles. Sales management may lack the training and commitment to implement Agile principles effectively. The lack of sales training resources may be due to leadership issues, pressure for short-term sales results or apathy about a new strategy to improve sales effectiveness. Effective training is a key aspect of successful implementation of sales agility strategies.

FURTHER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES WITH AGILE CONCEPTS IN SALES

There are multiple opportunities for further research on the application of Agile concepts in sales. More research is needed on organizational structure and culture effect on the implementation of Agile concepts. Research on employee, team and leadership factors is also indicated.

The sales process and sales cycle are related in the application of Agile concepts. Further research on the application opportunities to the sales process and sales cycle could illustrate strategies to improve KPI's. Additional research is needed on the application of Agile concepts for varying lengths of sales cycles.

Sales training appears to be an area that could benefit from more research on the application of Agile concepts. Research on training strategies, resources and results of training has the potential to further evaluate the effectiveness of implementing Agile principles.

A case study on the application of Agile concepts to the sales function would provide real-world information on the return-on-investment of applying Agile concepts. The effects of the application of Agile concepts to data analysis, sales cycle, sales process and customer service could be measured through the KPI's of the business.

CONCLUSIONS

The case for Agile in sales is compelling. The Agile concepts of delivering value to customers, small self-organizing teams and a network of competence fits the sales function. Indeed, sales organizations may display aspects of Agile without focusing on Agile overtly. The application of Agile concepts as an applied strategy has the potential to improve sales results and customer satisfaction.

The Sales Agility Model Construct presents the pillars of the sales process and the sales cycle that lead to acquisition of a customer. The successful outcome of the iterative and related sales process and sales cycle leads to maintaining and servicing the business through customer service.

Agile has been widely adopted in marketing. Successful application of Agile concepts in the sales function has the potential to leverage customer relationship management systems and can enable sales and marketing teams to respond effectively to changing market conditions.

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THE DISRUPTION OF COVID-19 ON BLACK CONSUMERS' CLEANING AND DISINFECTING CULTURE: AN EXAMINATION OF THEIR PERCEPTIONS, SENTIMENTS, AND MOTIVATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the behavior of Black consumers in an area where COVID has changed the consumption game: Cleaning and Disinfecting (C&D) products. This study aims to illuminate the little-known C&D culture of Black women, the impact of COVID on their buying behavior, and their perceptions, motivations, and sentiments regarding C&D.

INTRODUCTION

For decades, Black consumers have been consistently overlooked and omitted by firms that do not see them as a priority demographic (McKinsey Quarterly, 2021; Stewart III, 2022). Although affected by certain costs and mounting debt, Black consumption is growing and provides a number of opportunities for companies, provided those companies take the time to figure out their needs. A study conducted by McKinsey (2021) found that Black consumers are willing to shift approximately \$260 billion – about 30% of their aggregate spending to companies that can better deliver what they need. This also includes a willingness, on the part of Black consumers, to pay up to 1.2 times more for products and services that align with their needs and preferences (McKinsey Quarterly, 2021).

This is an open invitation for companies to compete and better meet the needs of Black consumers (McKinsey Quarterly, 2021). However, it is crucial that companies learn their needs first, especially in a COVID environment. Critics may contend that COVID is no longer a major issue given the availability of vaccines and medications; however, the lingering impact of COVID and how consumers clean and disinfect still exists. Therefore, this position paper explores the behavior of Black consumers in an area where COVID has changed the consumption game: Cleaning and Disinfecting (C&D) products. Pulling from the motivation-need theory, this research would illuminate the little-known C&D culture of Black women, the impact of COVID on their buying behavior, and their perceptions, motivations, and sentiments regarding C&D.

HOW COVID CHANGED C&D CULTURE IN THE U.S.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (2020), “cleaning and disinfecting (C&D) involves the use of physical or chemical processes to reduce, remove, inactivate, or destroy pathogenic microorganisms. C&D procedures are essential in controlling the spread or transfer of microorganisms between animals, between locations, or to people. The potential for spread or transfer of microorganisms can occur from the direct or indirect contamination of equipment, facilities, vehicles, people and the movement of animals or animal products” (p.1). The act of cleaning is a ritual in itself. It is also viewed as a behavior that is repetitious and predictable, but COVID has added a new dynamic and motivation when it comes to cleaning.

The pandemic increased consumers' penchant for cleaning and disinfecting (Brady, 2020). Since the start of COVID, household cleaning products had become the linchpin for consumers. They were a primary defense in the arsenal of survival tactics. Hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes and sprays were the constant companions of consumers. These products provided a need for safety and a sense of psychological security and control during a period of unknowns (NCSolutions & Dupree, 2020). Whether it is wiping down the baskets at grocery stores, putting on hand sanitizer after pumping gas, or wiping down countertops in their homes; cleaning products had become a mainstay of consumers' disinfecting and cleaning routine. Consumers were adopting cleaning as more of a routine grounded in

Table 1. Changes in C&D Spending Due to COVID-19

Percent Change in Average Daily Cleaning Supply Spending vs. Pre-COVID Buying*

CATEGORY	PREPAREDNESS BUYING PERIOD (2/24/20 – 3/10/20)	EXTREME BUYING PERIOD (3/11/20 – 3/21/20)	HOME CONFINED BUYING PERIOD (3/22/20 – 8/31/20)**	TOTAL COVID-19 BUYING PERIOD (2/24/20 – 8/31/20)**
HAND SANITIZER	▲ 450%	▲ 158%	▲ 923%	▲ 838%
BAR & LIQUID SOAP	▲ 70%	▲ 166%	▲ 58%	▲ 65%
ANTISEPTICS & DISINFECTANTS	▲ 181%	▲ 216%	▲ 38%	▲ 61%
HOUSEHOLD CLEANING	▲ 141%	▲ 219%	▲ 32%	▲ 52%
BLEACH	▲ 84%	▲ 293%	▲ 22%	▲ 43%
GLOVES	▲ 32%	▲ 215%	▲ 20%	▲ 35%
DISH DETERGENT	▲ 32%	▲ 190%	▲ 13%	▲ 25%
CLEANING IMPLEMENT & SUPPLY	▲ 15%	▲ 68%	▲ 21%	▲ 24%
CLEANING PAD SPONGE & CLOTH	▲ 21%	▲ 97%	▲ 17%	▲ 22%
LAUNDRY DETERGENT	▲ 17%	▲ 125%	▼ 7%	▲ 3%
TOTAL	▲ 61%	▲ 164%	▲ 23%	▲ 34%

*2/24/19 - 8/31/20
 **Measured through August 2020



safety and wellness (Stankiewicz, 2021). Black consumers comprise 14% of the U.S. population but attribute to almost 15% of the total spending for C&D products (Nielson, 2018).

COVID helped a number of C&D brands. In May 2020, Clorox had increased its production of disinfectant products by 40%, despite the demand for some of their disinfectants sky-rocketing to 500%. Lysol’s revenue increased over 50% in the first quarter of 2020. Smaller C&D manufacturers, such as Seventh Generation, delivered 63% more product in the first half of 2020 than in 2019. They also saw demand spike by 300%-400% at the height of COVID (Gao, 2020). Sales for P&G’s disinfectant spray, Microban 24, intensified as panicked shoppers grabbed any virus-killing cleaner when competitors such as Lysol and Clorox were nowhere to be found (Terlep, 2020). Table 1 highlights the changes in C&D spending and buying.

BLACK WOMEN CONSUMERS AND THE C&D CULTURE

Black women consumers wield significant purchasing power for marketers. Within the 18-34 age group, they are the primary wage earner and head of household, thus making critical purchasing decisions (Grace, McCaskill, & Roussel, 2017). The majority of them enroll in college immediately following high school (64%) and 23% over age 25 have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher. Fourteen percent have annual incomes of \$50,000 or higher with the highest income levels concentrated within the 35-49 age group (Nielson, 2017).

C&D for Black women has generational and traditional factors. It evokes certain sentiments and associations for them: a therapeutic ritual, continuing traditions that were commenced by their ancestors, fighting germs and diseases, and eliminating stereotypes and tropes that were established during slavery and shown in the media. For Black women, weekend cleaning was established as a way to escape traumatic periods in time, such as racism and provide a tradition for future generations to follow. Today, weekend cleaning has a deeper meaning as a way to give Black women a sense of nostalgia of their childhood and normalcy, thus resulting in happy sentiments while cleaning (Bendarski, 2020).

For decades, Lysol and Clorox brands were perceived as the culture staple for Black households, cultivating the “Black experience” because it was passed down for many generations. Pine-Sol has also been a cleaning staple in Black homes for generations and plays a role in the Saturday morning cleaning routines for Black consumers. During COVID, Pine-Sol leveraged this through promotional campaigns targeting Black women. These campaigns were

designed to spotlight the sentiments and celebrate the nostalgia that is felt when thinking of Saturday mornings at home with family and the pride that comes from having a clean home (Bednarski, 2020).

Despite the cultural aspect for Black women and C&D, marketers should not use this to perpetuate stereotypes and tropes of Black women and their C&D culture. Black women are not out here just washing floors. Pine-Sol, a cleaning staple in Black households, has been harshly critiqued in the past for ad campaigns that critics felt perpetuated a stereotyped version of Black women, gleefully washing floors and just generally cleaning their homes. Playing with the image of Black women happily engaging in menial work and the selection of certain actresses for these commercials bolster mislabeling, skewed associations, and faulty perceptions of Black women (Bednarski, 2020).

POSITION OF THE RESEARCHERS

Although brands such as Pine-Sol have conducted research on Black consumers, greater marketing research needs to be done in reaching and understanding this segment, particularly in areas such as the COVID impact on their buying behavior. From a marketing context, Black consumers want a connection that underscores in-depth and unbiased research of them, is thoughtful, and authentic (Nielson, 2022). Their loyalty hinges upon brand perception that is culturally relevant, socially conscious, authentic, and responsible (Beaman, 2018). This study is designed to address these needs and illuminate the little known C&D culture among Black consumers in a meaningful way. This research will further support why they should be a priority demographic for companies.

To achieve these objectives, the researchers are utilizing a qualitative approach in which they have conducted interviews of 51 Black women consumers regarding the impact of COVID on their buying behavior of C&D products, their C&D culture, and their motivations, sentiments, and perceptions regarding C&D. The researchers have completed data collection and are currently in the data analysis phase. They are utilizing a cross-case pattern analysis approach. Although all of the data has not been analyzed, the researchers take the position that elements of the motivation need theory will be present along with cultural considerations already contained in the literature. However, the researchers contend that other considerations and factors may also be present given the impact of COVID on Black consumers.

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A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF BLACK AMERICAN AND GHANAIAN CONSUMERS' SENTIMENTS, PERCEPTIONS, AND BEHAVIORAL INTENT REGARDING THE CONSUMPTION OF CLEANING & DISINFECTING PRODUCTS IN THE COVID ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

While most brands declare that Black consumers are critical to their growth and cultural relevance, earning Black consumers' business can prove challenging as Black people globally become more gnostic of how brands are targeting them. But how does this discriminating palate among Black consumers apply to the consumption of cleaning and disinfecting (C&D) products in a global COVID-19 environment? With the use of qualitative interview data and advertising media, this study seeks to examine and compare Black American and Ghanaian consumers' sentiments, perceptions, and behavioral intent regarding the consumption of C&D products in the COVID environment.

INTRODUCTION

Black buying power in the United States is estimated to grow to 1.98 trillion by 2025. Mediums utilized to connect with this segment include television, magazines, and radio (Nielson, 2022). Black women are leading this growth as the majority of them go to college immediately following high school, serve as the primary decision makers for household purchases, and have seen a 9% growth in their income since 2005 (Nielson, 2017). While most brands declare that Black consumers are critical to their growth and cultural relevance, earning Black consumers' business can prove challenging as Black people globally become more gnostic of how brands are targeting them (Nielson, 2022). But how does this discriminating palate among Black consumers apply to the consumption of cleaning and disinfecting (C&D) products during a time where a global pandemic has boosted product scarcity and the need for any product that kills the COVID-19 virus?

With the use of qualitative interview data and advertising media, this study would examine and compare Black American and Ghanaian consumers' sentiments, perceptions, and behavioral intent regarding the consumption of cleaning and disinfecting (C&D) products in the COVID environment given the historical linkage of these two groups, the return to the African diaspora, and the continued relevance of COVID-19. Ghana, which falls in the middle income tier, also has a progressive economy and health system and a preference for foreign products (Opoku & Akorli, 2009; Yendork & James, 2020). For this study, 50 Black American women and 50 Ghanaian women consumers would be interviewed. During the interview process, they would be shown two advertisements with messaging aimed at product attributes for a C&D American brand to compare perceptions, sentiments, and behavioral intent regarding the purchase of an American brand and how impactful the advertisements are across cultures. Although behavioral intent differs from actual actions, there is reason to believe that the tested advertising does play a role in the increase of consumers' intentions after exposure. With an increase in intentions, a C&D focused company can utilize this research for new and ongoing promotional strategies both domestically and globally (Close Scheinbaum, O'Guinn, & Semenik, 2022).

BLACK AND GHANAIAN CONSUMERS AND THE C&D CULTURE

Black women consumers wield significant purchasing power for marketers. Within the 18-34 age group, they are the primary wage earner and head of household, thus making critical purchasing decisions (Grace, McCaskill, & Roussell, 2017). The majority of them enroll in college immediately following high school (64%) and 23% over age

25 have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. Fourteen percent have annual incomes of \$50,000 or higher with the highest income levels concentrated within the 35-49 age group (Nielson, 2017).

C&D for Black women has generational and traditional factors. It evokes certain sentiments and associations for them: a therapeutic ritual, continuing traditions that were commenced by their ancestors, fighting germs and diseases, and eliminating stereotypes and tropes that were established during slavery and shown in the media. For Black women, weekend cleaning was established as a way to escape traumatic periods in time, such as racism and provide a tradition for future generations to follow. Today, weekend cleaning has a deeper meaning as a way to give Black women a sense of nostalgia of their childhood and normalcy, thus resulting in happy sentiments while cleaning (Bendarski, 2020).

In the Ghanaian culture, women are on the rise in terms of independence and higher education. However, Ghanaian women are still defined as wife, mother, and supporter in this male dominated society despite their educational and career accomplishments. When a woman works, it may be only to support the income of the husband and to take care of miscellaneous fees related to the needs of the children or the household in general (Gilliam & Talpade, 2021).

In a hand hygiene study conducted by Oppong, Yang, Aponsem-Boateng, and Duan (2019), Ghanaian women are more likely to carry hand sanitizer and wash their hands than their male counterparts. Compared to Black women, Ghanaian women also see cleaning as an important and traditional ritual due to the diseases that are prevalent in their community. Weekend cleaning also occurs. The first Saturday of each month commenced National Sanitation Day in Ghana. "President John Dramani Mahama on November 1, 2014 declared every first Saturday of the month to mark the National Sanitation Day in response to the 2014 Ghanaian cholera outbreak. The day is to be used for a voluntary clean-up exercise for all Ghanaian residents in an effort to reduce unsanitary conditions that breed diseases and cause injuries" (Okyere, 2015).

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING DURING COVID

Since the start of COVID, household cleaning products have become the primary necessity for the survival tactics of US citizens. Hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes, and sprays are constant companions, providing a sense of psychological security and control during a period of uncertainty and fluidity (NC Solutions & Dupree, 2020). Whether it is wiping down the baskets at grocery stores, putting on hand sanitizer after pumping gas, or wiping down countertops in their homes; cleaning products have become a staple in routine behavior (Stankiewicz, 2021). Due to COVID, cleaning has become synonymous with a critical domain of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: safety. Added safety and security matters to Black Americans who were disproportionately victims of COVID-19. Brands such as Lysol and Clorox are seen to be the cultural staple of Black households as they are part of the "Black experience" because they were passed down for many generations. Products such as Pine-Sol have been a mainstay in Black homes for generations as part of their Saturday morning clean routines (Bednarski, 2020).

In Ghana, there were already a significant number of deaths every year from infectious diseases, such as lower respiratory infections, which ranks as the third leading cause of death and diarrheal diseases, which is the eighth leading cause of death (Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, 2022; Tseklevs, 2020). Like the U.S., greater cleaning and disinfecting activities were encouraged or mandated to mitigate deaths in Ghana at the height of COVID. The government developed a national program to disinfect marketplaces in urban regions at the peak of the pandemic due to their role in spreading COVID-19 among citizens (Asante & Mills, 2020). Educated Ghanaians can also afford preventive measures such as sanitizing products at higher rates (Yendork & James, 2020).

POSITION OF THE RESEARCHERS

The researchers take the position that parity would exist in C&D consumption habits across cultures; however, a divergence regarding behavioral intent is likely. The researchers contend that Ghanaian consumers would perceive the product contained in the advertisement media with a higher level of positive sentiment. In fact, the researchers posit that Ghanaian consumers would have a sense of pride because they would feel proud and inspired to utilize the foreign company's products due to perceived quality and the social relevance associated with consumption (Zeally, Wollan, & Bellin, 2018). The consumption of foreign goods is regarded as a status symbol for elite and affluent Ghanaian consumers (Opoku & Akorli, 2009; Sy, 2022).

Perceptions among Black American consumers would be fueled primarily by what they are already familiar with: their safety and their wellness. Familiarity, existing awareness, and known associations would be key for them. Therefore, they would indicate a stronger sentiment for the C&D products that they have used and passed down for generations. This would result in a lower behavioral intent after exposure to the advertisement media.

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE ADJUNCT PROFESSOR FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE ADJUNCT LEAD AND THE ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

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ABSTRACT

The role of the adjunct lead instructor and adjunct professor are seldom viewed in combination. However, the two positions are intertwined in various ways and ultimately serve the students of numerous educational institutions. The adjunct lead is the individual who oversees one or more adjuncts for a given college or university. This individual may be a director or a professor at the college or university. The adjunct professor is a part-time instructor who guides students through a course. The adjunct lead and the adjunct instructor are presented with numerous challenges and benefits for their roles in higher education. The adjunct lead may oversee multiple professors along with their own academic responsibilities. The adjunct instructor works part-time and often teaches to share areas of professional knowledge with their students. Indeed, seventy-three percent of faculty serve as an adjunct or contingency faculty. There is a need to investigate further how the relationship between these two critical positions must work together for the good of students and academic institutions.

INTRODUCTION

The critical role of the adjunct lead and the adjunct professor in today's educational system can be gratifying. However, it can also be very challenging. There are numerous benefits and detriments for the adjunct professor and the adjunct lead, who oversees one or more adjunct instructors.

THE ADJUNCT LEAD

The lead individual for the adjunct professor team plays a vital role in the college or university. This individual might oversee a role in recruiting potential adjuncts or provide onboarding, training or continuing oversight once an individual is hired (Dailey-Hebert et al., 2021). The adjunct lead may be a professor or a director at a given university or college. No matter the title, the adjunct leader will act as the overseer once an adjunct begins their new role.

Benefits

Working with adjuncts can be very rewarding. These talented individuals often bring various professional and career-tested skill sets that support the academic areas they are instructing (Supplee & Gardner, 2009). Traditionally, an adjunct is less expensive than a full-time faculty member because they are not offered full-time faculty benefits, which helps the lead with cost-effective alternatives for the university. For these reasons, the adjunct leader can utilize talented professionals that are often self-directed and lighten the load of full-time faculty.

Furthermore, Beam et al. (2006) indicate that individuals overseeing adjunct positions can benefit from involving adjuncts in course development and additional learning activities. For example, an adjunct may have recent experience in research or published a paper relating to the course they are instructing. This type of participation may allow the adjunct lead to involve these part-time professors in the classes, thus providing a greater sense of ownership and a lower workload for the adjunct leader in terms of course development.

Detriments

Working with adjuncts can be very challenging. Because of the lack of connection to a given university or college (Rosenblum & Rosenblum, 1990), an adjunct may not feel the same level of commitment or ownership as a full-time

or tenured track professor. Indeed, an adjunct may drop a course mid-term, which places additional burdens on other instructors or the adjunct lead.

Additionally, Beem et al. (2006) indicate that “adjuncts often function as add-ons, rarely interacting with faculty or receiving much constructive feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching. These people are completely isolated” (Section: A National Survey). This perception may provide additional challenges to an adjunct lead who may already be coordinating multiple adjuncts and numerous other responsibilities to the university or college for which they work. Furthermore, the adjunct leader may find that there are minimal resources for adjunct instructors, often leaving these part-time faculty members with limited support and feelings of disconnection (Rosenblum & Rosenblum, 1990).

THE ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

The adjunct professor is an individual that is academically and professionally qualified to teach in a specific area of specialization (Nica, 2018). The adjunct is a part-time teaching staff member who often leads one or two courses for a particular college or university. The adjunct instructor may work remotely, on campus, or in a hybrid format, which combines campus and online instruction. The adjunct professor signs limited contracts to teach for specific courses or time frames. Universities often use adjuncts as a way to support their existing faculty. However, Kirshstein (2015) suggests that a college or university with too many part-time faculty can cause issues for students aspiring to graduate levels of education. Indeed, too many part-time adjuncts can provide logistical challenges such as timely evaluation, limited supplemental training, and reduced professional development for colleges and individual departments (Dailey-Hebert et al., 2021).

Adjunct professors teach for various reasons. An adjunct instructor may teach out of financial necessity (Ahmed, 2016), out of a passion for education, or to support existing income. Additionally, these part-time instructors may desire to teach while pursuing full-time career opportunities. No matter the reason, an adjunct instructor can be a vital addition to any university or college.

Adjuncts are required to fulfill various responsibilities. For example, these part-time professors interact in online discussion boards, lead virtual collaboration sessions, and assign supporting videos or additional reading materials. Just as full-time instructors, adjuncts administer exams, hold office hours, and prepare for presentations, group activities, residencies, and open discussions.

There are 522,807 adjunct professors in the United States (Adjunct Professors, 2022). The average adjunct professor is 45 years old (Adjunct Professors, 2022). Additionally, the majority are male; 51% and 69.5% of adjuncts are white. The percentage of men versus women in adjunct positions has maintained relative stability between 2010 and 2019. Comparatively, according to The Chronicle of Higher Education, adjunct faculty are likely to have a master’s degree, be over 40, and teach one to two courses at an institution. Adjuncts are also slightly more likely to be female. Even though nearly 60 percent make less than \$3,000 per course, two-thirds say they are satisfied with their roles (Characteristics of Adjunct Faculty, 2018).

The highest demand for adjunct professors is currently in Phoenix, AZ, with 31 job openings. The highest average salary for an adjunct is found in Rhode Island at \$129,569 (Adjunct Professors, 2022). Additionally, adjunct professors are 82% more likely to work at education companies than private companies” (Adjunct Professors, 2022). Furthermore, 73% of higher education instructors are adjunct or contingency faculty (American Association for University Professors, 2014).

Benefits

Working as an adjunct professor can allow an instructor to learn about various academic institutions. Additionally, working as an adjunct can enable individuals to supplement their substantial income while giving back to their community (Beem et al., 2006). Furthermore, adjuncts can gain valuable experience in their teaching roles, have more flexible schedules than full-time professors, have fewer responsibilities, and may be afforded increased opportunities. Finally, adjuncts may have specific expertise, allowing universities to add courses they might not otherwise be able to offer (Beem et al., 2006).

Detriments

The detriments for the adjunct professor include low pay and lack of commitment to a given workload (Beem et al., 2006). An adjunct lacks job security and often faces uncertainty on an ongoing basis. Indeed, adjuncts assist by teaching additional courses as enrollment increases and are not guaranteed work when enrollment levels decrease. Due to the nature of the job, adjuncts are often provided with little to no notice when accepting a class. They may not

benefit from talking to a previous professor or receiving extensive training from a university (Gelman et al., 2022). Additionally, adjunct instructors are not provided employment benefits such as insurance and 401K plans, which are part of the package offered to a full-time assistant professor. Furthermore, adjunct faculty often are not provided office space which may or may not be an issue for those teaching remotely.

CONCLUSION

As previously stated, the roles of an adjunct leader and adjunct faculty are critical to higher education. While both of these positions come with advantages and disadvantages, it appears that the adjunct model is here to stay. Indeed, in the marketing field, we often utilize adjunct leads and professors. Therefore, as marketing educators, we need to understand their challenges and rewards and how the two might work together to improve the educational experience and learnings for our students.

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MARKETING THE ACCOUNTING MAJOR: THE IMPACT OF JOB-SPECIFIC MESSAGING ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT INTEREST

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Accounting Departments at American colleges and Universities have been having increasing difficulty attracting majors. One of the causes that has been identified is negative student perceptions of jobs in the Accounting field, leading to few students feeling like the major would lead to careers they would not enjoy and/or would not match their skills. In this paper, we explore these perceptions and experimentally test whether a marketing intervention—“advertising” different careers can potentially improve attitudes, perhaps leading to increased applications. We find that a marketing effort communicating a “day-in-the-life” of certain Accounting careers can indeed improve student perceptions.

Concern over the attraction of high-quality students to accounting as a major and a career is not a recent trend. Accounting Departments at American colleges and Universities have been having increasing difficulty attracting majors. One of the causes that has been identified is negative student perceptions of jobs in the Accounting field, leading to few students feeling like the major would lead to careers they would enjoy and/or would match their skills.

We investigated, in an experiment, if these perceptions could be overcome with job-specific descriptions of different accounting careers. We randomly assigned 219 first- or second-year students to one of three experimental conditions. Each was based on a real-world accounting testimonial vignette from the American Institute of CPAs “CPA Profiles” page.

In the “tax” condition, respondents read: As a Senior Tax Associate, Riley's responsibilities include the preparation of tax returns of varying complexities. These can be in a corporate setting or individual income tax returns. Riley also performs tax research and tax consulting. "There's a real satisfaction in doing the job right for my clients," says Riley. "They count on my accuracy and knowledge, and I use my training to deliver for them!"

In the “auditor” condition, respondents read: Working for the federal government, Riley tracks down ways to save taxpayers money. When the federal government wants someone to audit defense contracts and make sure Uncle Sam (and, by extension, all Americans) are getting what was paid for, they send in Riley. It's serious stuff – assignments are so high-level, actually, that Riley sometimes can't even discuss them with friends. “If you find something huge that's unallowable in a contract and save the taxpayers millions of dollars,” Riley says, “That's a win!”

Finally, in the “forensic” condition participants read: As a forensic specialist at AMERILINK LLP, Riley gets to do many things. Working with a wide variety of clients means embracing Riley's inner “Sherlock Holmes” and tracking down evidence of fraud one day and assigning a monetary value to a company the next. Riley enjoys diverse challenges, but the most exciting part of the job is testifying as an expert in court. “Some people would not want to be in that kind of situation [testifying in a courtroom]. I'm like, sure, I'll sit here and be questioned by an attorney for an hour!” says Riley.

Across a range of dependent variables found that at least rooting students with a “day in the life” type career to mentally try on is a key intervention. At a Gestalt level, even the least attractive job (Tax) improved on baseline perceptions. Other jobs have even more potential. The Forensic position had the most overall appeal, but the Auditor position intervention performed quite well. Thus, we find that a marketing effort communicating a “day-in-the-life” of certain Accounting careers can indeed improve student perceptions. We do need to caveat these findings by noting that this was one university, with an uneven demographic final sample (e.g., more females) and that at best, it was

exploratory in nature. That being said, it does show potential exists for a path to using marketing/advertising efforts to expose students—across the university, not just in business schools—to job outcomes that can in fact change the negative baseline assumptions of the major that so many seem to have.

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CONCEPT OF WISDOM IN UNDERGRADUATE MARKETING COURSES

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

A marketing course is different from some other courses. It requires a creative and introspective understanding of marketing issues, and it involves a tolerance for ambiguity. Undergraduate marketing students do not always appreciate this intense, immersed creativity.

An area of the social sciences that has been concerned about how to get individuals, in any field, to use their own immersed creativity to come up with unclearly defined solutions, is the field of wisdom. A leading wisdom theorist, Sternberg (2003, p. 181), viewed the heart of wisdom to be concerned with how individuals develop immersed creative decisions. This article is concerned with how to get students to develop immersed creative decisions in an introductory marketing course. Initially, some theory directions, from psychological wisdom, are considered. These directions are used as a partial basis to consider how to stimulate marketing students to develop a greater appreciation for creative immersion. The directions provide a partial basis because other areas that are related to psychological wisdom are included in the suggestions provided by the article.

Two very different directions became popular about psychological wisdom. One was from Baltes and his coauthors, such as Baltes & Saudinger (1993). These researchers found wisdom to be a form of expertise that individuals acquired with practice and experience. Another central theory of wisdom was from Sternberg (2003), and it incorporated a general “balance theory.” Sternberg (2003) argued that wisdom is not about maximizing one’s self-interest, or the self-interest of another, but about balancing the different self-interests of others in the context of the situation. A wise decision seeks a “common good.”

Sternberg went beyond his “balance theory,” in his contributions about wisdom. Sternberg (2003) developed a theory of “wisdom, intelligence, and creativity, synthesized.” In this article, and in others, he emphasized the unique roles of the three components, wisdom, intelligence, and creativity. For example, he argued that wisdom can involve creativity. However, he explained that creatively insightful thinking is more at the heart of wisdom. Sternberg gave strong attention to how wisdom, intelligence, and creativity are different. However, they are interrelated, and he wrote, “but there is more to each of these constructs than just successful intelligence. What is that something more?” What is “more,” or how can someone interrelate the development of wisdom, intelligence, and creativity, about marketing, in an introductory class, is at the foundation of the contribution of this article. How can a marketing instructor or professor stimulate students to integrate each of the areas of wisdom, intelligence, and creativity, in an introductory class, and develop an interest in showing insightful thinking about marketing issues? A few themes about how to develop an integrated sense of wisdom, intelligence, and creativity, about introductory marketing issues, are considered below.

One consideration for integrating such areas, as wisdom and creativity, and improving students’ creative immersion with marketing concepts, involves getting students “to try.” Sternberg (2003, p. 188) wrote, “Wisdom is not just a way of thinking about things; it is a way of doing things. If people wish to be wise, they have to act wisely, not just think wisely. We all can do this. Whether we do this is our choice.”

If we “all” can do this—how? In part, this abstract suggests, is to get students to get immersed in different discussion boards, small creative assignments, and even by asking them to come up with some ways that they will analyze different marketing concepts. Use a strong sense of humor in emails and discussion boards. It is key, though, that all individuals “try” to become immersed in the process of solving marketing problems.

Another consideration is for students to develop expertise “about what we do not know.” Although Sternberg (2003) argued that creativity is not the same as intelligence or wisdom, he explained that creativity is important to wisdom, and it facilitates the synthesis of observations that underlie intellectual growth. Wisdom indeed involves “what we do not know,” and “what we are not sure that we know.” Marketing courses must provide students with the

collective wisdom to provide answers that are not easily known. To provide expertise that uncovers “what we do not know,” marketing courses should embrace the importance of a tolerance for ambiguity. Many students have come from other introductory courses which had more emphasis on “right or wrong” answers. The professor or instructor should be a “role model” leader to develop a setting to course embrace tolerance for ambiguity. She or he should think of creative ways to be approachable to students in the class, and directly work with them to use creativity to come up with marketing solutions.

Furthermore, marketing courses should involve “relevant others.” Sternberg’s (2003) balance theory of wisdom stressed “practical intelligence.” His theory centered on the practical problem-solving involved in meeting intrapersonal, interpersonal, and extra personal interests and concerns. Similarly, marketing courses often use team projects. Care should be given to think of ways that team members can work together. Often, professors and instructors place members into teams and do not give much thought about how members should work together. Instead, give early emphasis about how team members can develop working relationships with each other. Get different team members to complete creative parts of different marketing assignments, so they can show them to others in the team.

Finally, marketing courses should embrace a component of psychological wisdom, “intrinsically motivated behavior.” In marketing decision-making, wise action is practically the same as self-determination empowerment. Wisdom “rolls with the punches.” There are no right or wrong answers in marketing. Students often remark about how different firms can come up with very different marketing strategies and “right answers” more depend on the enthusiasm of members of the firm to carry out marketing decisions.

In an early study developed by this paper’s author, numerous different qualities of a consumer’s intrinsically motivation were measured and compared with each other. Among areas, the following dimensions were examined: pure enjoyment, perceived competence, self-determination, curiosity, and a sense of challenge. Each of these dimensions were so highly related with each other that they could not be empirically separated. They formed a single higher-order dimension.

This finding, about the extreme degree of overlap of these dimensions, is very important for teaching an introductory marketing course. A marketing professor or instructor should attempt to involve students through each of these different dimensions. Make the course “fun.” Have emails that show humor. The marketing professor should attempt to make a student feel more challenged, by using a sense of humor. Reach each student individually, as much as possible, and show a sense of self-determination. The student will find the material to have personal relevance. Make comments in discussion boards, and through assignments, that “build up a student’s perceived competence.” Always make students feel a sense of challenge. In other words, “do everything”—use each of these different intrinsic motivation dimensions because they holistically make students wiser.

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FEAR APPEAL EFFICACY IN YOUNG-ADULT TARGETED DATA PRIVACY PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Data privacy, and the protection of consumers' information online, has become an increasingly important topic to American public policymakers and other stakeholders. One potential way to increase awareness and behaviors around this issue is through the use of advertising, and a common executional element in advertising in such a situation is a fear-based appeal. We conduct an exploratory experiment to investigate how effective a fear-based appeal is in increasing young American adults' emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral intent measures which suggests that while a fear-based advertisement might have some effect, it appears challenging to provoke the attitudinal and behavioral changes desired to better address this issue.

Being connected is part of human nature and social media has made staying connect easier for millions of Americans. However, every time a new social media account is created, a specific list of information is given to the company about the individual making the account. The more accounts that one individual has, the more personal information they are providing to these companies and, unfortunately, potentially to online hackers. This can lead to a waterfall effect, as once someone has hacked into an account, they have access to all personal information that was used to create that account, which can then be used to hack into more personal accounts and in some cases can be used to steal the individual's identity. This highlights how crucially important it is to understand what data is being collected by social media sites and what privacy policies are in place to protect those data.

A natural thought in terms of what type of advertising might work in this setting is a fear appeal. There are marketing studies going back as far as 1953 that have used fear appeals, and many of these studies have had contradictory results on how much fear is required in order for the advertisement to be effective (with some supporting higher, and some supporting lower).

This study's purpose is to examine the efficacy of fear-based appeals in advertising which will give more of an insight on how beneficial similar advertisements could be to increase awareness on data privacy issues. We conduct an exploratory experimental study examining the following two research questions:

*Is a fear-based appeal effective in encouraging consumer concerns about their data privacy?
If so, what level of fear would be most effective, low fear or high fear?*

We conducted a between-subjects experiment with 134 undergraduate students randomly assigned to one of three different ads purportedly from the Office of Information Security at the college that the students attended. The control ad suggested that data privacy is important, but did not contain any fearful messaging. The low fear ad used the same image as the control ad, but suggested that there was a possibility of negative outcomes if data privacy was not taken seriously. Finally, the high fear advertisement identified one of the individuals in the image as a target, had an additional image in the corner that suggested someone was watching the target's online movement, and used more fear-inducing language than the low level to encourage individuals to protect their data. We measured resultant attitudinal, emotional, and behavioral intent variables.

The overall findings from this study are important to consider for future research using fear advertising to encourage others to look deeper into data privacy and how social media sites are using their data. Interestingly, negative emotion increased as fear level increased (in other words, the higher the fear level, was the more negative emotion was felt by participants). This effect is important because emotions can often be an important target for marketers who might hope they influence behaviors. This would seem to suggest that higher threat ads might be more effective overall at getting respondents to worry about data privacy. One caveat is that it makes sense that one negative emotion (increased fear) might trigger the participant to feel other negative emotions.

While emotions might suggest that high fear appeals are working, other dependent variables like Attitude toward the Ad and intent to change behavior suggest that perhaps the fear level isn't actually making much of a difference. Despite feeling more fear (confirmed in manipulation check) and more negative emotion overall, attitudes toward the ad and behavior intent did not significantly vary between levels. However, the negative emotion dependent variable did actually show significant differences. This finding suggests that perhaps participants saw the higher-fear ad, felt the negative emotions, but then it simply didn't translate over to attitudinal or behavioral intent.

One possible interpretation is that perhaps participants are so numb, so comfortable with using social media accounts that despite feeling negative emotion, it simply did not translate into attitudes or behavioral intent. Or, if fear usage is high, individuals can be more defensive when shown a high fear ad. Also, perhaps there is a psychological defense mechanism / self-enhancement bias at play here, like respondents acknowledging it's fear-inducing but then saying "it won't happen to me."

A potential issue is that if high-fear respondents felt the fear, but didn't even feature a change in Aad or a behavioral intent variable in a study, then it might be even harder to get them to change in real-life. This study's key takeaway is probably that public policymakers have a severe uphill battle in front of them to get college-age individuals to actually take action in terms of data privacy.

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THE SELF-DISCOVERY ACTIVITY: USING SELF-EXPANSION TO FOSTER PERSONAL BRAND DEVELOPMENT

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Establishing a personal brand is an essential component for career readiness and professional success. Marketing students often do not have formal instruction in personal branding. Grounded in self-expansion, the Self Discovery Activity engages students in self-reflection and self-assessment, building a foundation for developing a personal brand. This two-part written assignment includes completing the Enneagram Personality Assessment. Research regarding the perceived effectiveness of the Self Discovery Activity took place in a hybrid graduate marketing management course ($n = 80$) taught over eight weeks. Survey results indicated that students found the activity contained self-expansion characteristics, which connect with students in a personally meaningful way. Survey results also indicated that student thought the activity was effective and recommend it for future use. The results of the pre- and post-test analyses provided evidence for an increase in personal growth motivation and self-awareness. These elements foster developing a personal brand.

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MEASURES OF CONTENT DISCONTINUITY IN ORDERING MULTIPLE-CHOICE EXAM QUESTIONS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The effects of the order in which multiple-choice questions appear on exams has been the focus of considerable published research. Summarizing the results of six content order studies, Sue (2009, p. 32) concluded “...empirical examinations of the effect of scrambling the content order of multiple-choice questions on a student’s performance on the exam indicate mixed results.” (p. 34) Sue’s own study compared two exam forms: “one form contained questions in the same content order in which the material was covered during the semester and the other form contained the same questions in a randomly scrambled order” (p. 35) She found, “...exam scores do not appear to be affected by the order in which the questions are presented in the exam.” (p. 40) McLeod, Zhang, & Yu (2003) administered partially randomized exams with questions ordered by text chapter but randomized within each chapter and exams with all questions randomly ordered and found the difference in mean exam scores to be statistically insignificant.

Vander Schee (2009) found no significant difference in exam scores between “forward” ordered questions (i.e., “questions appeared in the same order that material was presented in class,” p. 24) and randomly ordered and “reverse” ordered questions, respectively. Baldwin, Pattison, & Toolson (1989) compared exams where “all questions were first ordered by chapter and, secondarily, within the chapter” (p. 87) with exams with randomly ordered questions and found, “The main effect of topical sequencing was not significant...” (p. 89) Marso (1970) studied the effect of order according to ascending difficulty, order of class presentation, order converse to course presentation, and random ordering and concluded that, “...one need not be greatly concerned with arranging test items by difficulty, in order of class presentation, or by similarity of content covered...” (p. 117) In contrast, Balch (1989) did find the mean score of sequential order (76.86%) “to be significantly better than [where items were randomly ordered within each chapter but otherwise remained grouped together within the chapter (72.22%) and to be “marginally significantly, $p < .10$ ” (p. 76) higher than the mean score of random order (73.19%). Baldwin and Howard (1983, p. 92) found, “Students taking the ordered [as the topics appeared in the text] version of the exam scored significantly higher than did the students taking the scrambled [completely randomized] version of the exam.” Taub and Bell (1975) found that students taking exams with questions in “...the sequence in which topics were presented in the lectures and the text” (p. 58) on average scored a statistically significant 1.4 points higher than students taking randomly ordered exams, a material difference relative to the overall mean of 26.95.

Dickinson (2018b) studied three orderings purposely designed to partially limit content discontinuity. The orderings were applied to questions within each textbook chapter with the chapters appearing on the exams in the same order as in the text. Across samples of questions from banks accompanying six textbooks, based on scores for questions from individual chapters, there was no consistent pattern of one ordering receiving higher mean scores than the other orderings (Dickinson (2018a).

Toward the purpose of the present study, none of the research cited above reports an empirical measure of content (dis)continuity. Following are described two straightforward measures of content discontinuity. The measures are particularly applicable—but are not limited to—where questions are drawn from published banks of multiple-choice questions.

Consider multiple-choice questions appearing in published ordinal positions 1,2,3,4,5,6 for a given chapter, i.e., the sequential order column in Table 1. There are 720 (=6!) possible orderings of the six questions. One of those is presented as “ordering one” in Table 1. The question in the fifth position in the question bank appears as the first question on the exam.

One measure of the discontinuity of ordering one is that 5 appears before 1 and 2 and 3 and 4; a total of 4 reversals from the original sequence. Question 4 in the sequential order appears before 2 and 3 and 1 and after 5; also a total of 4 reversals. Across the six questions there is a total of 18 reversals which is the reversals measure of discontinuity.

That question 5 in the sequential order appears first in ordering one is a move of 4 positions. Question 4 in the sequential order is moved 2 positions to its position as the second question in order one. In ordering one the six questions are moved a total of 12 positions which is the displacements measure of discontinuity. To capture both properties of ordering one, the two measures may be added to yield a summed measure of discontinuity equal to 30. The three measures are highly, but not perfectly, correlated: reversals~displacements (0.925), reversals~summed (0.988), and displacements~summed (0.973)

Sequential Order	Ordering One	Reversals	Displacements
1	5	4	4
2	4	4	2
3	2	3	1
4	3	2	1
5	1	4	4
6	6	0	0
Total		17	12

Dickinson (2018b) investigated the effect of three different orderings of nine questions on multiple-choice exams. “The three different orderings were specifically designed to maintain at least some degree of continuity of content....On balance, the rationale of the design [was] to discourage cheating while exposing all students to only limited degrees of discontinuity.” The three orderings and their reversals and displacements counts are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Three Orderings and Their Reversals and Displacements Discontinuity Measures

Sequential Order	Order One	Rev	Disp	Order Two	Rev	Disp	Order Three	Rev	Disp
1	6	5	5	5	4	4	2	1	1
2	7	5	5	4	4	2	1	1	1
3	8	5	5	3	4	0	4	1	1
4	9	5	5	2	4	2	3	1	1
5	1	4	4	1	4	4	6	1	1
6	2	4	4	9	3	3	5	1	1
7	3	4	4	8	3	1	8	1	1
8	4	4	4	7	3	1	7	1	1
9	5	4	4	6	3	3	9	0	0
Total		40	40		32	20		8	8

Source: Dickinson (2018b)

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EXPLORING TESTIMONIAL EFFICACY IN VAPING ADS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Vaping has become a worldwide phenomenon, and young consumers of these products are of concern to health professionals and public policymakers. Vape companies (e.g., JUUL) often use messaging touting their products as effective cigarette cessation devices. One obvious issue of great interest to these public health groups and e-cigarette/vape policymakers would be to understand what types of advertising work especially well with different consumer groups. In this article, we consider the efficacy of two advertising dynamics that appear often in current pro-vaping messaging—(1) the use of consumer testimonials, and (2) the type of message (e.g., informational vs. emotional) in the message—and how effectively they appeal to a college-aged young adult audience.

A testimonial is, per Merriam-Webster, “a first-hand authentication” with roots in the Latin *testis*, translated as “witness.” Testimonials are a very common form of advertising and are often effective at persuasion, and certain dynamics like the testimonial coming from a the right source for an audience can heighten their efficacy. Testimonials can have different message elements used. For instance, a testimonial could feature a very rational message or a much more emotional one. While rational messages may appeal to an audience’s desire to get accurate information and strong arguments, an emotional message might better achieve matching that audience member’s personal style and might trigger a meaningful emotional response in the viewer. Finally, one aspect that might interact with the efficacy of these messages is the audience member’s gender. Males and females, for instance, have been found to exhibit processing differences when viewing advertising, and also have some differing attitudes regarding vaping as well.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the potential effect of the interplay of message type (rational and emotional) and testimonial presence, or lack thereof, with participants’ gender in vaping advertising. Our sample consisted of web participants (n=229) recruited through an undergraduate research participant pool at a large midwestern-United States university. The design for this study was a 2 (message format: testimonial vs. non-testimonial) x 2 (message type: emotional vs. rational) with gender as a measured variable. The independent variables were manipulated using various aspects of the advertisement.

Overall, our findings suggest that there are indeed important differences in the efficacy of testimonial and non-testimonial vaping advertisements, which are themselves interacting with the type of message (rational vs. emotional) and the gender of the advertisement viewer. While males overall seem more receptive to vaping advertising, there are specific combinations that can largely erase that difference with females. This serves to illustrate the challenging job that anti-vaping efforts would have to do—these advertisements using these techniques seem at least moderately effective, and if a brand like JUUL simply committed to a large advertising spend and rotated the use of these techniques they could effectively communicate with a wide audience of younger consumers. So how can health advocates or public policy officials combat this? We believe most obviously they could simply seek the near-or-fully-complete ban of vaping advertising, akin to the restrictions on the cigarette industry after the landmark Master Settlement Agreement between the tobacco industry and the majority of American States. Short of that, we believe that we add to the literature showing how effective a comparison of vaping vs. smoking can be. Cigarettes never had a “boogeyman” to say “we are healthier than this!” but they provide exactly that for vaping. While consumers might be looking at vaping for pleasure, to fit in with others, etc., that piece of logic—it’s better than cigarettes—allows a comparison that isn’t even relevant for many consumers, but seems effective.

Is vaping actually better than smoking? The jury is out. However, this is not a medical treatment device—it’s a nicotine delivery system. We suggest that regulators and health officials seek to somehow ban/eliminate this comparison completely from vape consumer communications. This study is only one examination of a very important issue, and given that it is a single study, with one brand, a single manipulation of each key variable, and a relatively

homogeneous group (college students at a Midwestern U.S. university) we do not wish to overstate the external validity. More research is needed into these and other appeal types, executional elements, and message frameworks and it will be important to better understand these dynamics of vape advertising in order to potentially combat them.

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WHAT “TWEETS” CAN MEAN FOR CSR

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The main point of this research is to understand what consumers say about CSR activities and CSR fraud and what this means for their attitudes toward firms. This not only fills a gap in the literature for delving deeper into CSR and CSR fraud aside from the correlations found in past research (Harjoto, 2017; Hu, Dou, & Wang, 2019; Liao, Chen, & Zheng, 2019), but the findings also offer very practical recommendations for firms on how to handle their communications based off what is said about them over social media. This research utilized an experimental design, which created a controllable environment and eliminated confounds, such as prior beliefs about a firm or other pre-existing factors. Because of the methodology, the researchers were able to isolate what someone really means when they make a statement about a firm based on either the positive or negative tone and the emotionality or rationality behind the statement. The findings offer both theoretical and practical implications. Different consumer orientations toward CSR after fraud events lead to different types of strategies and consumer reactions based on the type of CSR used (Corporate Social Performance vs. Corporate Operating Performance) (Harrison & Huang, 2022). Also, there are different consumer reactions to CSR activities based on their individual CSR orientations in conjunction with the type of CSR used. Thus, various elements drive consumer attitudes toward CSR. Marketing managers will want to predict what drives attitudes towards CSR specifically, aside from individual differences (Kolodinsky et al., 2010). Information that is available to marketers, such as public statements made about a firm over social media, could be analyzed to help elucidate how consumers feel about a firm's CSR use. Thus, to test this, an experimental design of simulated tweets was created, and later analyzed for emotionality/rationality and positivity/negativity. Then participants were surveyed for beliefs in the appropriateness of CSR used as well as their attitudes towards a firm that uses CSR. The findings offer both theoretical and practical implications.

The following hypotheses were offered:

- H1: The relationship between the valence of tweet on CSR and the strength of CSR beliefs is moderated by the character of tweet.
- H2: The relationship between the valence of tweet on CSR and the strength of CSR beliefs is moderated by the type of CSR activities.
- H3: The relationship between the valence of tweet on CSR and the confidence in a firm is moderated by the character of tweet.
- H4: The relationship between the valence of tweet on CSR and the confidence in a firm is moderated by the type of CSR frauds.

One thousand one hundred and fifty-four participants (46.9% males; Mage = 30.7 years, SD=13.01) were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). To trigger a tweet, each participant (PP) was randomly presented by a scenario description about a fictional financial institution, ABC Firm, who promised to engage in different types of CSR activities (COP vs. CSP) (Harrison & Huang, 2022). After that, the PP was asked to write a simulated tweet about his opinions on the ABC Firm's CSR activities followed by rating his overall CSR beliefs. Then, the PP read the second part of the scenario description where ABC Firm turned out failing to keep their words that led to CSR frauds to the public (Harrison & Huang, 2022) followed by writing a simulated tweet about his opinions on the ABC Firm's wrongdoing (or fraud). Finally, the PP was asked to assign a numeric point (between 0 and 100) to indicate his confidence on ABC Firm in the market.

All but H2 was supported. This research demonstrated how tweets evaluated based on tone (valence and character) coupled with the CSR type and the related CSR fraud can subsequently impact their CSR beliefs and confidence in the firm. Largely, we found that tweet valence (positive or negative) impacts the beliefs that firms should engage in CSR. If potential consumers are tweeting very positive things about a firm's CSR activities and then there is a subsequent related fraud that has to do with the CSR, we find that there is a stronger belief by individuals that firms should not be engaging in CSR activities. Additionally, we found that the valence of the tweets moderated by the tweet's character or tone impacts the consumer's belief in firms engaging in CSR activities. Utilitarian and negative tweets lead to a

higher belief that the firm should not engage in CSR compared to utilitarian and positive valence tweets. This finding both supports the ranking of importance of business responsibility as well as cognitive appraisal theory – individuals rationally evaluated the CSR fraud, appraised the cause as potentially the fault or negligence of the firm, and then determined that the firm is unable to meet basic business responsibility requirements and subsequently had higher beliefs that the firm should not be engaging in CSR activities. Therefore, in some situations, especially after a fraud and related negative buzz, firms may want to back off of broadcasting their CSR activities. Also, tweet valence increases confidence in firms while tweet valence moderated by the fraud type (CSP fraud vs. COP fraud) decreases confidence in firms. Negative utilitarian tweets lead to less confidence in firms while positive utilitarian tweets lead to more confidence in firms, which can be explained through cognitive appraisal theory. Negative tweets with CSP fraud lead to less confidence in firms and positive tweets with CSP fraud leads to more confidence in firms. CSP appears to be a strong moderator possibly because of the “heinous” nature of CSP frauds but if an individual had already made a positive tweet, they may really believe in the firm’s ability to recover. CSP is seen as the more “genuine” and “sincere” of the CSR types and individuals may categorize firms engaging in this as more sincere than other firms (Harrison & Huang, 2020).

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OPTIMAL ORDERINGS OF MULTIPLE-CHOICE EXAM QUESTIONS WITH CONDITIONS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Instructors may wish to administer multiple-choice examinations where the questions do not appear in the same order for all students. One objective in doing so is to discourage students copying answers from students seated nearby (Balcy 1989, p.75). “Teachers who give multiple-choice tests often use alternate forms (i.e., different orders of the same items). This procedure is probably effective in discouraging students from copying answers from their classmates.” (Balch 1989, p. 75) Recently, the property of content (dis)continuity has been added to the mix of considerations when ordering questions on multiple-choice exams. That is, the extent to which the content of questions corresponds to the order in which the content was presented in the course.

Where different orderings are to be used for a given exam administration, there should be interest in making the different orderings of comparable continuity so that examinees are not differentially (dis)advantaged due to any content discontinuity effect. Similarly, instructors might wish to maintain comparable content continuity across exams within a given semester or exams across semesters. Questions, of course may be ordered in many different ways: 720 (=6!) for six questions, only five of which share minimal discontinuity. Table 1 presents those five ways. The present study describes two complementary conditions intended to serve a specific purpose, while preserving minimal and equal discontinuity.

Table 1: ORDERINGS OF SIX QUESTIONS HAVING EQUAL SUMMED DISCONTINUITY MEASURES (=4)

Re-ordering	Reversals	Displacements	Summed
1-2-3-4-6-5	2	2	4
2-2-3-5-4-6	2	2	4
1-2-4-3-5-6	2	2	4
1-3-2-4-5-6	2	2	4
2-1-3-4-5-6	2	2	4

In Table 1, “reversals” are the number of times for any pair of questions, their positions are reversed from the original sequential order “Displacements” are the count of positions a question is displaced from the original sequential order. The respective measures are tallied for each question and then summed across the questions. The reversals and displacements measures may be added together to yield an overall “summed” measure.

For all of the five re-orderings in Table 1 the first two questions in the original sequential order are present in the first three questions of each re-ordering. To a student glancing at another student’s exam it may not be readily apparent that the overall orderings of questions on the respective exams are different. The re-ordering conditions presented here are intended to make it more obvious that the respective re-orderings are different.

The first of the re-ordering conditions is that the first two questions not be first or second in the original sequential order. 288 of the 720 possible orderings of six questions satisfy this constraint (none of those in Table 1). Table 2 presents seven orderings that satisfy this first condition and also have the lowest summed discontinuity among the 288 possible re-orderings meeting that condition.

TABLE 2: RE-ORDERINGS OF SIX QUESTIONS WHERE THE 1st AND 2nd QUESTIONS IN THE ORIGINAL SEQUENCE DO NOT APPEAR IN EITHER OF THE FIRST TWO POSITIONS

Line	Re-ordering	Summed Discontinuity
1	3-4-1-2-5-6	16
2	3-4-2-1-5-6	18
3	4-3-1-2-5-6	18
4	3-4-2-1-6-5	20
5	3-4-1-5-2-6	20
6	3-5-1-2-4-5	20
7	4-3-2-1-5-6	20

A second condition signaling that exams are of different question orderings is that some minimum number of questions be moved from their original sequential positions. Requiring that at least three questions be so moved; 704 of the 720 possible re-orderings of six questions meet this condition. There remain, though, the overall objectives of minimizing and equalizing content discontinuity. Table 3 presents 14 re-orderings of six questions that satisfy the second condition and also that have the minimal possible summed discontinuity under that condition.

TABLE 3: RE-ORDERINGS OF SIX QUESTIONS WHERE AT LEAST THREE QUESTIONS ARE MOVED FROM THEIR ORIGINAL SEQUENTIAL ORDER POSITIONS

Line	Re-ordering	Summed Discontinuity
1	1-2-3-5-6-4	8
2	1-2-3-6-4-5	8
3	1-2-4-3-6-5	8
4	1-2-4-5-3-6	8
5	1-2-5-3-4-6	8
6	1-3-2-4-6-5	8
7	1-3-2-5-4-6	8
8	1-3-4-2-5-6	8
9	1-4-2-3-5-6	8
10	2-1-3-4-6-5	8
11	2-1-3-5-4-6	8
12	2-1-4-3-5-6	8
13	2-3-1-4-5-6	8
14	3-1-3-4-5-6	8

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MTABS ANALYSIS OF 2X2 CROSS-TABULATIONS IN *JAME*: A CASE STUDY

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Cross-tabulation and the usually accompanying chi-square test of independence is one of the most widely employed types of analysis in marketing research and in the social sciences generally. Recently, a procedure for assessing the reliability of that analysis has been introduced. The Moves To and Beyond Significance (MTABS) procedure (Dickinson 2016) frequently finds the statistical test to be unreliable. In the present study MTABS is applied to several cross-tabulations published in a single article in the *Journal for Advancement of Marketing Education (JAME)* with the purpose of illustrating selected possible MTABS results.

Cross-tabulation analysis is a staple of marketing research: “A cross-tabulation...is easily the most widely used data analysis technique in marketing research...” (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010, p. 362); “Cross-tabulation is widely used in commercial marketing research...” (Malhotra 2012, p. 452); “Among the most common types of bivariate analysis in marketing practice is the cross-tabulation of two nominal variables.” (Feinberg, Kinnear, & Taylor 2013, p. 427). Empirical surveys support that observation: Of 20 types of statistical analysis published in major advertising journals from 1980 through 2010, cross-tabulation was the fourth most frequently used. (Yoo *et al.* 2015, p. 554); Khang *et al.* (2016) surveyed 16 journals from 1963 to 2014 for international advertising-related articles, finding 373 that used statistical analysis. “...descriptive statistical analysis, such as frequency (26.0%) and mean (13.1%), was most frequently applied in international advertising research over the years, followed by chi-square (12.7%)...” (p. 562); That popularity holds in the *Journal for Advancement of Marketing Education*;; Holmes (2016), Juric, Polonsky, & Mankelov (2004), Swanson (2020), Till, Zdravkovic, & Morrison (2010). Often accompanying published cross-tabulations is the chi-square (χ^2) test of independence of the two variables comprising the cross-tabulation (Malhotra 2012, pp. 454-455; Guenther 1965, pp. 187-193; Siegel 1956, pp. 104-111). The density function of the chi-square distribution is given by Morrison (1967, p. 10). In practice, though, it is Pearson’s (1900) approximation to the chi-square distribution that is used.

MTABS is a procedure for assessing the reliability of the chi-square test of independence that often accompanies cross-tabulations. It is a form of sensitivity analysis. It examines “what if” an observation within the cross-tabulation is moved from one cell to a different cell. More specifically, what is the effect on the p-value. Depending on the moved observation, the p-value may decrease, i.e., move **To** significance, or the p-value may increase, i.e., move to **Beyond** significance.

The *JAME* research providing the cross-tabulations for this report is from Swanson & Davis (2020, S&D). The purpose of the research was to provide, “...current information on how marketing is understood by Generation Z undergraduate students...[and to identify] what the term *marketing* means to Generation Z undergraduate students.” (S&D, p. 26) “...undergraduate students (n=1,027)...provided their personal definitions of marketing as well as a discussion of their provided definitions” (S&D, p. 26) Responses were coded into 14 identified categories, e.g., product, sales, advertising, customers etc. (see S&D, Table 1, p. 30), 3,768 units were definition-based and 6,480 were discussion-based (S&D, p. 29) Students were classified as business majors or non-business majors, For each of the 14 marketing categories, its mention or not was cross-tabulated with business or non-business major. This was done for definition-based counts, discussion-based counts, and total counts, yielding 42 cross-tabulations and accompanying chi-square test of independence (S&D, Table 3, p. 31). “There were few statistically significant [p<.05] differences identified...” (S&D, p. 28)

Each of the 42 cross-tabulations in S&D’s Table 3 (p. 31) was MTABS analyzed. That procedure yields the number of observations, also stated as the percent of total observations, that must be moved between two cells within the cross-tabulation to lower the p-value to significance (the “T” in MTABS) and the number and percent to raise the p-value beyond significance (the “B” in MTABS). No particular p-value benchmarks are specified with results being produced for a wide range of p-values. For the present study, the traditional benchmarks of 0.05 and 0.10 are used

(Lehman, Gupta, & Seckel 1998, p. 381). All cross-tabulations reported here—original and MTABS—satisfy the requirement that no expected cell counts be less than 5 (Acker *et al.* 2013, p. 431; Feinberg, Kinnear, & Taylor 2013, p. 429; Yates 1934, p. 217).

Among the very few statistically significant difference between business majors and non-business majors is the presence of “media” in the student discussions ($p=.04711$). The MTABS-movement of 2 observations (0.195 percent of the 1027 total observation) between cells of the 2x2 cross-tabulation yields a p-value of .108. The movement of 7 of the 1027 observations (0.682%) yields a p-value of .508. A second example is for the marketing category of “pervasive” in student discussions. The original significant p-value of .046, becomes $p=.126$ with the movement of 2 (0.195%) observations and becomes $p=.542$ with the movement of 6 (0.584%) observations.

Of 42 original p-values, 37 were greater than or equal to 0.05. Across all of those 37 insignificant results, it takes the MTABS-movement of less than 1 percent of the total 1027 observations to yield a p-value less than .05. That is, the movement of less than 10 of 1027 observations to conclude a statistically significant difference. Three of the 42 cross tabulations are equivocal in that their p-values fall between the two traditional benchmarks for significance, 0.05 and 0.10. For those cross-tabulations, it takes the MTABS-movement of 2, 2, and 1 observations, respectively to realize a p-value less than .05 and the movement of 1, 1, and 1 observation, respectively, to realize a p-value greater than or equal to .1.

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SOCIAL MEDIA INPUTS AND METRICS: A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND PURCHASE INTENTION

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Social media trends keep changing and different factors might play role to create closer relationships with users on social media platforms. Brands try new tactics to reach a wide range of consumers through social media apps. TikTok is still one of the most important video sharing apps for marketing and Shopify's partnership with TikTok is a smart move. (Hootsuite, 2023). Companies like Amazon gives fun and unique shopping experiences with Amazon Influencers who can livestream on Amazon and earn commissions (Amazon live, 2023). Nike increases awareness with user generated content and repost customer photos wearing Nike shoes. It is expected that marketers will continue to leverage shoppable posts and Instagram storefronts as retail platforms giving right user experience since consumer clicks keep increasing (Influencer Marketing Hub, 2022).

Hu, Zhang and Wang (2019) found that consumers trust influencers on app usage. Social media influencers can be effective on app usage of consumers through endorsement posts. They help to promote app adoption as app providers work with them for promotion. Social influence theory supports that one's behavior can change by an influencer, and this can make that person feel like they are closely connected to the society (Kelman, 1958). If an influencer is liked and knowledgeable about automobiles, consumers trust the influencer and their expertise (Breves et al., 2019). The fit of influencer for brand product can led consumers to believe influencers' trustworthiness and expertise. Social media usage could be a strong factor on e-WOM activities in Poland, Turkey and China. Chinese travelers engage with WeChat due to need of self enhancement. Storytelling might help to encourage customers to share on WeChat to spread positive e-WOM (Chu, Lien & Cao, 2019). Social media WOM impacts purchase intention for luxury brand products. Consumers who recommend luxury brands on social media are likely to purchase them (Park, Hyun & Thavisay, 2020).

Companies communicate with their customers by using Facebook and Instagram and this yields a positive impact on the purchase intention of consumers. Results showed that Instagram BGC is more effective than Facebook BGC for social media users on e-WOM, consumer behavior and purchase intention (Poulis et al., 2019). Sports brands fans and followers for Nike and Asics are found to engage content willingly and these contents are more popular than contents created by sports brands (Geurin et al., 2017). Findings of Djafarova & Rushworth (2016) showed evidence that many users of Instagram are young women aged 18 to 30 and purchase behavior of young female users are affected by celebrities on Instagram. Bloggers, YouTubers and non-traditional celebrities and Instagram celebrities are accepted more credible than traditional celebrities as they become more powerful. For Japanese professional sport brands, entertainment value of social media pages impact brand related social media engagement positively by having positive effect on online brand community identification (Yoshida et al., 2017). Brand related social media engagement influences brand loyalty positively. If consumers are loyal, the possibility of buying products of brands might increase.

In the exhaustive literature review, there was no apparent connection to social media factors; brand influencers (BI), consumer generated content (CGC), brand generated content (BGC) on brand engagement (BE), brand loyalty (BL) for purchase intention. This paper is intended to conceptualize a holistic view of social media inputs to increase purchase intention through metrics. WOM, Social Influence Theory are analyzed to recommend social media inputs that impact purchase intention including brand influencers, brand generated content, consumer generated content with brand engagement and brand loyalty. The framework we created can be a guide for brands and marketers to set better strategies and make better decisions. Focusing customers and understand which content they create, why they engage, which influencers they follow and why they work with brands through social media can help to go to next level and analyze customer purchase intentions.

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THE INFLUENCE OF REGULATORY FOCUS AND EVALUATION MODE ON CONSUMERS' DECISION MAKING

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of people's regulatory orientation on their sensitivity to the context effects driven by evaluation mode. Using regulatory focus as a theoretical underpinning, three experiments were performed.

The results demonstrate that people primed with promotion focus purchase the option than those with prevention focus if separate evaluation (SE) is presented. In joint evaluation (JE) mode, the opposite pattern is observed. When consumers encountered a choice which involved trade-offs between desirability and feasibility, such as when choosing between two alternatives, a high risk, high return option and a low risk, low return option, people displayed different choice patterns depending on their regulatory focus

When promotion orientation is activated, people display a greater susceptibility to an attractive but also risky (extreme) option. On the other hand, when prevention orientation is activated, people tend to avoid an extreme option. Instead, they pursue a low risk, low return option or opt not to choose any option.

Taken together, JE mode is effective in facilitating promotion-focused people to select an attractive but extreme option while it leads prevention-focused people to choose a compromise option. The findings also show that a high return, high risk option is not favored even by promotion-focused individuals when it is presented by itself.

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THE EFFICACY OF DIFFERENT THREAT LEVELS IN ANTI-VAPING PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In this study we explore college students' reactions to different threat levels in anti-vaping public service announcements (PSA). Threat appeals have historically been used to combat risky consumer behavior (e.g., smoking), but research is conflicting on what threat level is optimal. We find that high threat level, and the negative emotions it provokes, most influences behavioral intent while not hurting attitudes toward the public policy organization.

Vaping is a worldwide health crisis that is affecting youth and young adults, including college students. This audience is an important one for vaping companies given the traditional age range (18-22) and the increasing purchasing power they exhibit after graduation. In this study we explore college students' reactions to different threat levels in anti-vaping public service announcements (PSA). Threat appeals have historically been used to combat risky consumer behavior (e.g., smoking), but research is conflicting on what threat level is optimal.

This paper set out to test the efficacy of different threat levels in anti-vaping public service announcements (using fictitious ads we created, purportedly from the truth initiative organization). Overall, in a between-subjects experiment (n=207) analyzing the effects of a no threat, low threat, and high threat condition on a variety of attitudinal, emotional, and behavioral intent variables, we found the high threat appeal to be much more effective than the low-level and control. We found that the threat levels did affect negative emotions. If producing negative emotions was a desired outcome, the high threat ad certainly did a better job of that than the low threat ad, which was statistically equivalent to the non-threat control. Looking at the attitude towards the organization and the attitude toward the PSA, there were no significant differences, with the high threat directionally better at producing positive perceptions of the truth initiative. Given that the high threat in both cases produced higher and statistically equivalent as the low, it would appear that there wouldn't likely be any penalties for doing a high threat versus a low threat advertisement. It could be that overall, since vaping is looked at as a negative phenomenon, ads that more harshly criticize it actually are more acceptable.

Finally, looking at the behavioral intent, there was a significant difference between the threat levels. The high threat levels motivated more people to change their behavior than the low and control ad. While running our analysis, we also found that low threat motivated people more than the control ad. So, in terms of intent, adding some kind of threat is better than no threat. Since the high threat level motivated more people to change their behavior, this might be the best choice for a group like Truth Initiative to use since they ostensibly are trying to get people to stop vaping. However, we did not actually track behavior, and it's important to note that behavioral intent does not necessarily equate with behavior.

The results show that high threat levels appear to be better performers in this specific context, with this specific sample. Threat efficacy has, as discussed, been contentious but at least in this context it appears to be a relatively straight-line increase in overall ad efficacy correlating positively with threat level. There doesn't appear to be downside to the high-threat appeal.

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UNWASHED, UNWORN, UNETHICAL? EXPLORING CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF RETURN CONTEXT ETHICALITY

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Products returned by consumers have significant impacts on the sales and bottom line of retailers. Research to date has focused on identifying demographic and personality factors of frequent returners, or identifying the optimal level of “toughness” retailers should include in their return policies. Both approaches ignore the role consumers’ attitudes, motivations and thoughts play in return behavior. The current research will study consumers’ ethical judgements of product return situations. How well do consumers evaluate the ethicalness of different return situations? We will study this in two different return situations by examining the influence of several different predictors on respondents’ ethical evaluations.

Respondents disposition towards planned, potentially deceptive returns, or their *return orientation*, will influence their ethical evaluations. More specifically, respondents who rate high on the return orientation scale are more comfortable with buying a product with the intent of returning it.

H₁: Return orientation will positively predict ethicalness ratings.

According to the Oxford dictionary, morality describes an individual’s values of conduct in a given situation. Consumers’ *morality* in part will determine their code of conduct when it comes to product return behaviors, depending on how fair or unfair the situation seems. Rotman et al. (2018) find that whether consumers view a brand as helpful or harmful, in part dictates the morality shown by consumers.

H₂: Morality will positively predict ethicalness ratings.

In moral philosophy, *deontology* represents an approach based upon universal moral rules, where each consumer has a responsibility to care for other entities (Barnett, Cafaro & Newholm, 2005). Barnett *et al.* (2005) suggest consumers can often adopt an individualistic-mindset when thinking about consumption, and it may be necessary to recall consumers’ attention to their place within their social network and broader culture to combat individualistic behaviors.

H₃: Deontology will positively predict ethicalness ratings.

Based on 16 one-on-one exploratory in-depth interviews with college-age consumers prior to the main study of the current research, participants identified generation as an important distinction in return behavior. Several respondents remarked that older consumers are more likely to get receipts when making a purchase, which makes returning products easier for them.

H₄: Generation will positively predict ethicalness ratings.

Who consumers fault for a product return, or their blame attribution, can also impact their ethicalness ratings. Rosenbaum et al. (2017) found that blaming a product return on the prices of the store was a common rationalization used by fraudulent returners to justify their behaviors.

H₅: Blame attribution will positively predict ethicalness ratings.

We followed a cross-sectional research design to collect our data from US consumers. We constructed an online survey in Qualtrics that contained our focal constructs, and collected our data through a Qualtrics panel. Our survey included two return situations, and respondents were randomly assigned to one of the two scenarios. Our sample size consists of 210 US consumers. 41% of our respondents were male, while 59% were female. The average age of our respondents was 42.3 years of age. 29% of our respondents classified themselves as members of the Baby Boomers cohort, 31% as members of the Generation X cohort, and 40% as members of the Millennials cohort.

To test our hypotheses, we utilized multiple regression analyses. In *Model 1*, we included the focal constructs of return orientation, morality, deontology, generation, and blame attribution. The R^2 change of .59 was statistically significant ($p = .00$). Return orientation ($\beta = .25, p < .01$), morality ($\beta = .52, p < .01$), generation ($\beta = .19, p < .01$), and blame attribution ($\beta = .19, p < .01$) were significant predictors in *Model 1*. Deontology showed a marginal influence on ethicalness ratings ($\beta = .13, p < .10$). In *Model 3*, we included the focal constructs of return orientation, morality, deontology, generation, and blame attribution. The R^2 change of .39 was statistically significant ($p = .00$). Return orientation ($\beta = .18, p < .05$), morality ($\beta = .48, p < .01$), and blame attribution ($\beta = .19, p < .05$) were significant predictors in *Model 3*. The regression analyses performed show that the predictors of respondents' ethicalness ratings vary by return situation. Respondents relied on more predictors to judge the ethicalness in Return Scenario 1 (the return scenario with fewer issues) than Return Scenario 2. Return Scenario 1 supports $H_1, H_2, H_4,$ and H_5 , and marginally supports H_3 . Return Scenario 2 supports only $H_1, H_2,$ and H_5 . In both scenarios, respondents' evaluation of the morality present in the return scenario was the strongest predictor of ethicalness ratings. Further, for Return Scenario 1, significant differences exist in ethicalness ratings by generation. On average, respondents from the Baby Boomer generation ($n = 35$) rated Joe's behavior as the least ethical ($\mu = 3.13, \sigma = .96$), followed by respondents from Generation X ($n = 30; \mu = 3.53, \sigma = 1.11$); and respondents from Generation Y rated Joe's behavior as most ethical ($n = 40; \mu = 3.75, \sigma = .83; F = 4.00, p < .05$).

The results of our research indicate consumers and retailers are not on the same page when it comes to evaluating product return situations, and sheds light on why optimized return policies do not always work- they assume consumers and retailers see return situations the same way. The current research finds that respondents rely on more predictors to evaluate the ethicalness of a product return situation when the hypothetical customer has violated fewer aspects of the retailers' return policy. In contrast, when more violations have occurred, respondents rely on fewer predictors. Further, respondents' ratings favored the consumer, seeming to allow one 'free' violation of the return policy. Although respondents' generational cohort only predicted ethicalness ratings in return situation 1, members of the Baby Boomer generation evaluated the return situations the harshest, whereas members of Generation Y were the most forgiving. For retail managers, the results of this exploratory study suggest consumers are inconsistent in their ethical evaluations of different types of product return situations.

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IMPACT OF PERSONALIZED MARKETING IN CONSUMER ATTITUDE IN NEPAL

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This research paper's primary goal is to demonstrate how personalized advertising affects consumer attitudes. Numerous aspects, including tracking technologies, AI-based solutions, segmentation, and targeted advertisements, might have an impact on a customer's attitude. Additionally, this study project takes into account the role that targeted advertisements have in fostering positive customer attitudes toward the brand. The research is supported by academic studies and empirical data on how consumers respond to personalized advertising. Following academic and empirical reviews, hypotheses, conceptual frameworks, and research procedures are outlined. The goal of the study's conclusion is to demonstrate the impact that personalized marketing has had on Nepalese consumers' attitudes.

In traditional advertising term mass media was frequently used to describe TV and print advertising—and even posters and billboards. They were all media designed for mass communication of the same message, which was generally one size fits all. Today, while there are several flavors of the Wall Street Journal and CNN in different regions, print and TV have struggled to deliver any kind of customized media experience to consumers. Without customized media, of course, there was no customized audience and, therefore, no advertising that could be customized to even a small audience—let alone to an individual (Nesamoney, 2015). Traditional mass media simply could not deliver any form of personalization. This was primarily due to three reasons: Traditional mass media is not interactive and therefore has no way of registering user preferences, interests, etc., to personalize media or advertising, there was no way to transmit or publish customized content to each user in a scalable and cost-effective manner. While some forms of data existed in cable set-top boxes and the cable distribution systems, the proprietary systems and heavy regulations around the cable industry have generally prevented the data from being used. With digital media, none of these limitations exist. With digital media, we are able to record and easily access user preference data. What's more, the amount of finer-grained data related to preferences and interests has grown rapidly. In addition, new kinds of data, like data about a user's environment, thanks largely to the use of mobile devices and social media are adding a wealth of data that can be used to make digital advertising smarter and much more relevant to each user.

Personalized advertising is a strategy by which marketers leverage data and analytics to deliver personal experiences to customers and prospects. The goal of personalized advertising is to communicate with users on an individual level and to speak directly to their interests. As part of a brand's personalization strategy, it can lead to more revenue and better customer relationships (Alonso, 2021). Over the years, as technologies have improved, users have discovered more opportunities to deliver improved customer interactions. The biggest change in consumer behavior also has been a greater willingness to share personal information. Social media has accelerated this trend, and people now share online anything and everything, including who their friends are, their likes and dislikes, where they live, where they've visited, what they've said, and what they've watched. This is a big cultural and perhaps generational shift in thinking to a general openness to sharing personal information in return for a more personalized experience (Nesamoney, 2015). With personalized experiences, each user is served dynamic content using an algorithm that leverages behavioral targeting and predictive analytics. The tech used may vary based on the type of digital property, user intent, and the desired action. In an age of technology empowered mass customization, consumers progressively expect to put their own characteristics on the things they purchase and the brands they want. Marketers considered personalization nowadays as the new paradigm. Creative ideas and attractive images are no longer enough as an advertising strategy, the irrelevant ads are the result for one size fits all.

Thanks to online tracking technology, marketers no longer have to rely on assumptions about consumer behavior. Instead, they can deliver ads targeted specifically to individuals based on their behavior online (Reczek, 2016). In a 2019 Personalization Development Study (Clinehens, 2019), Monetate outlined the ROI (Return on Investment) of personalized marketing where they found Personalized marketing drives growth, 93% of companies with an "advanced personalization strategy" saw revenue growth. Only 45.4% of companies without a personalization strategy saw equivalent growth. The higher the investment, the better the returns, Companies with ROI of 2x or more said personalization made up at least 20% of their marketing budget. Personalization drives long-term customer value,

brands that had the highest personalization ROI (3x or more) focused on loyalty as their top KPI (Key Performance Indicators). Companies with lower ROI targeted short-term measures like average order value. It's clear there's evidence supporting personalization. It compels customers to act, and they're actively asking for more. In a recent study, Infosys found that 31% of customers wish their experiences were "far more" personalized. (Clinehens, 2019).

Personalization isn't about getting your customer's first name right then spamming them with impersonal ads. As Seth Godin says "[Personalization] is a chance to differentiate at a human scale, to use behavior as the most important clue about what people want and more important, what they need." True personalization is deeply understanding your customer's journey. Once you know what they need, you can serve them the right message at the right time, and drive business results. According to Grieve, 76% of consumers today expect personalized experiences, which could include (but is not limited to) engagement over their preferred contact method, account type or status, and product recommendations based on purchase and search history. Additionally, 71% of customers expect companies to collaborate internally so they don't have to repeat themselves (Grieve, 2022). But although consumers like it when advertising is geared towards them, there are still privacy concerns related to targeted advertising and customer behavior tracking.

While studies on personalized marketing have been conducted in a group of countries, a study on Nepal has not been conducted. The difference between developed and developing markets is one of the clearest divisions in worldwide marketing. Personalized advertising still occurs and affects consumer attitudes even in less developed nations, although it lacks the scope and level of development found in more established economies. However, the impact of personalized marketing on customer attitude in a developing nation like Nepal is notably missing from the literature currently accessible. Research on developing nation is limited to nonexistent, and the attitudes of their consumers regarding personalized marketing vary greatly to developed nations. Furthermore, there hasn't been much research on how customers in nations with certain economies feel about personalized advertising. This study will fill in this gap in the literature. This paper presents an exploration of how personalized advertising is impacting the consumer attitude in a developing country like Nepal where in majority basic needs are priority and luxurious goods have difficult time thriving in the market. The goal is to provide an introduction on how people in Nepal view personalized advertising, it's impact products and ROI.

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WHERE DID YOU GO? PRELIMINARY SOLUTIONS FOR DECREASED POST-COVID STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND PERFORMANCE

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In September 2022, the Sales classes at a large AACSB accredited university reverted from an online format necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic to in-person lectures. This paper explores the reduction in student attendance and performance of post-covid, in-class students compared to pre-covid in-class students and proposes preliminary solutions for these outcomes.

The instructor had taught Sales in-person for many years, utilizing various experiential pedagogical techniques to keep students motivated, attending class, and optimizing their academic performance. Previous student attendance was excellent, with an average lecture turnout rate of between 71-75% (over fifteen class iterations). In the last complete, in-class iteration prior to the pandemic, the average attendance rate for three sections of approximately ninety students each was 71.6 %. Students were evaluated by two multiple choice / short answer midterms (30 and 40 percent respectively) and an individual project (30 percent) which included a presentation. The average final grade was 75.31 %. These pre-covid results were consistent with earlier iterations of the class and the instructor anticipated similar student attendance and performance for the post-covid, in-class iterations of this course. This time, however, things were different. For each of the instructor's three class sections, even though attendance in the first few weeks of the semester was excellent, (about 90 percent), as the semester progressed, fewer and fewer students attended in-class lectures. Specifically, for the last few lectures, student attendance bottomed out at approximately 20-25% and the average class attendance was only 65.2%. This was unexpected because the class sizes had actually dropped from 90-120 students to 60 students per section, a fact that the instructor had assumed would enhance student engagement, and motivation to attend classes. Even more concerning, the student average final course grade dropped to 71.4 %. This reduced attendance- reduced performance effects were not entirely unexpected as the instructor's previous research had uncovered a similar result for her online classes, (Saber 2021). Prior to the 2021 study, however, the instructor had assumed that attendance did not significantly impact performance, both because of the mixed support for this relationship in the literature, (e.g., Dolnicar et al., 2009 compared to Massingham & Herrington 2006) as well as because the instructor had not previously fully considered this issue. After the results of the Saber, 2021 study and the noticeable drop of both attendance and final grades in the current semester, the instructor decided to revisit these relationships using three GLM procedures as follows.

First, the data from the three in-class pre-covid sections was analyzed using a GLM, confirmed for normalcy. Here, there was a significant between subject effect for student attendance and student performance, $F(1, 267) = 113.79$, $p < .001$, indicating that as the number of classes attended increased, students' final course grades also increased. Next, a GLM analysis for the three in-class, post-covid, sections was completed. There were significant between subject effects for attendance and performance, $F(1, 168) = 122.36$, $p < .001$, also indicating that for the post-covid time period, as student attendance increased, student final grades also tended to increase. A final GLM was utilized to determine if there were also differences in the attendance / performance relationships between the pre- and post- covid time periods. It was found that for the combined data, as attendance increased, performance also tended to increase, $F(1, 434) = 8.10$, $p < .001$. In addition, the results showed a significant between subject effect for pre- or post- covid time periods, $F(1, 436) = 17.00$, $p < .001$. Students in the pre- covid condition tended to have better final course grades than those students in the post-covid sections.

A number of questions arise from these results. First, why did student attendance and performance decrease in the post covid in-class sections compared to the pre-covid classes? Second, how could these undesirable decreases be eliminated? In order to get some insight into this issue, students were asked to provide their opinions about reasons for lecture attendance/ non-attendance as part of a class activity. Preliminary results indicated that student reasons for non-attendance tended to fall into three general categories: difficulty getting to class (long commute), no grade incentive to attend in-person and student expectations of similar performance whether attending the lecture or not. Students also

described why they actually did attend in-class lectures, and these reasons generally included usefulness of in-class content, networking with other students (seeing their friends) and a preference for face-to-face, more experiential learning. While considering the data, the instructor noticed an interesting pattern where junior students (years 1 and 2) would tend to describe reasons to not attend, whereas more senior students (years 3-5) would describe reasons to attend. The instructor wondered if the year of program impacted attendance and performance and if also other factors such as student demographics (e.g., sex, age, department of study), instructor teaching evaluations, course time of day and classroom location would impact these results. The instructor also recognized that the qualitative student attendance / nonattendance reasons would need to be statistically confirmed in order to develop data-supported solutions for these issues. These issues will be addressed in future research.

Even though additional research is needed to confirm these findings, preliminary solutions to improve student in-class attendance and related academic performance can be suggested, based on existing research and the instructor's prior experience. First, as an external motivator, class participation / attendance grades could be helpful in ensuring optimized student turnout. If students' final grades partially depend on attendance, they may be more likely to come to classes. Second, students should be exposed to the research that demonstrates the positive relationship between attendance and final grades, as this may motivate them to attend the lectures, (Saber, 2021) Finally, if it is pedagogically appropriate, a group project could be utilized in the class to encourage student networking to find available and preferred group members and also work on / organize the projects during and after the class meetings. These group activities would be facilitated by class attendance thus students might be more motivated to attend. Clearly, the appropriateness and efficacy of these suggestions needs statistical confirmation however these may be a good place to start to address the performance / attendance reductions that were found here. Additional limitations of this research include the fact that different course content and class sections may generate varied results and the results may not be generalizable to other instructors, classes, students, or academic levels. Finally, as earlier discussed, the preliminary solutions described above will need to be statistically supported. Despite these limitations, this study suggests that post-covid in-class students are not performing as well as their pre-covid, in-class counterparts, thus solutions need to be identified and tested to rectify these results.

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INSIDE THE MARKETING INTERNSHIP: THE COMPARISON OF STUDENT AND EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVES AND EVALUATIONS OF INTERNSHIP PERFORMANCE

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Internships have become prevalent in business schools as a way of expanding student experiential learning beyond the classroom. Over 72% of AACSB accredited institutions offer internships as part of their degree program (Delcours et al., 2018). Research on student internships have examined different perspectives toward, and expectations of, the internships from multiple stakeholders including students, employers, and the universities. The majority of student internship research looked at the perspective of the students, concluding the students largely found the internship experience to be favorable and that it enhanced their education (e.g., Dommeyer et al., 2016; Gupta et al., 2010). On the contrary, some research solely focused on the perspective of employers (Rothman, 2017; Swanson & Tomkovick, 2011) concerning the importance of various skills and qualifications. Swanson and Tomkovick (2011) surveyed marketing managers found that the employers rated good communication skills, positive attitude, and willingness to learn as three most important factors. In addition, communication skills and decision-making abilities were also rated highly by employers according to Rothman (2017).

Despite a significant amount of research on various stakeholders' perspectives on student internships, there is still limited research that specifically compares how students and employers (supervisors) evaluate the actual performance in an internship with the exception of Marks and colleagues' (2018) internship research. They found that both students and supervisors (employers) generally gave favorable ratings on students' performance in the internship. However, there were still areas of difference. For example, students rated their computer skills lower than the employers rated them on the same attribute. Moreover, students' self-evaluations of their ability to problem solve, take initiative, and work in a self-directed fashion were higher than the employers' ratings. The authors concluded that these were opportunities for further training and preparing students to be ready for their future careers. They also pointed out that there was a need for more research in understanding the difference in supervisor's evaluation and student's self-evaluation of the internship performance. This research aims to extend the existing research by comparing students' and supervisors' (employers') evaluations of various important skillsets in internships. Specifically, we focus on teamwork, professionalism, the ability to integrate academic learning with practice, communication skills, and overall satisfaction.

Undergraduate students and their internship employers were invited to complete a survey regarding an internship experience that was fulfilled during the fall 2019 and spring 2020 for a Midwestern university. The survey asked the students to rate the extent to which the internship contributed to five different areas in their professional development: teamwork, professionalism, ability to integrate academic learning with practice, communication, and an overall satisfaction. Employers rated the students' performance on the same constructs. The two survey datasets were matched by student name to create a matched pairs configuration, which was tested for the differences between students' self-perceived measure of their professional development versus the employer's assessment of the student's performance. After aligning the data by student name, 70 pairs of usable records (70 students and 70 employers) remained for analysis.

The results showed there was a significant difference in the student-employer rating on teamwork. Interestingly, the students rated their learning and teamwork professional development lower than the employers' rating of the student's ability on this concept. The employer rating was very positive for the students' performance, yet the student's rating, while also highly rated, reported receiving a lower level of professional development from the experience. The

remaining constructs: Professionalism, integrating academic learning with their work, communication (written and verbal), and overall satisfaction, were not significantly different. The student's self-rating of these professional development items were very close to the employer's rating of the student's overall performance, both ratings falling between four and five on a five-point scale.

Internships, especially those that are directly related to the field, have been found to benefit students in both short-term and long-term career goals. To date, there is still limited research that compares student's self-rating to the supervisor's rating of the internship performance. This project found that students and employers had the same perception toward the performance of the internship (i.e., professionalism, ability to integrate academic learning with practice, communication, and overall satisfaction) except for teamwork skill. Overall, students reported receiving significant professional development values from the internship experience. Similarly, employers reported all students performed very well, suggesting that the professional development received by the students was noticed by the employer-raters. These findings are consistent with Gupta and colleagues (2010) and adds additional data to illustrate the perceptions between students and their employers for the internship experience.

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OPTIMIZING SALESPERSON PERFORMANCE: A FLOW THEORY PERSPECTIVE

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

A sample of 125 salespeople from 13 countries was surveyed to assess the effects of flow on salesperson performance. Salespeople achieve the flow state when their skills match the challenges of the sales situation, and the challenge/skill balance is high. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses followed by a cluster analysis indicated that there was a significant difference in sales performance among salespeople with different levels of the flow state. The article concludes with managerial implications and directions for future research.

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SUPPORT, FIT, AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS: DEVELOPING A HOLISTIC VIEW OF MARKETING STUDENTS' SENSE OF BELONGING

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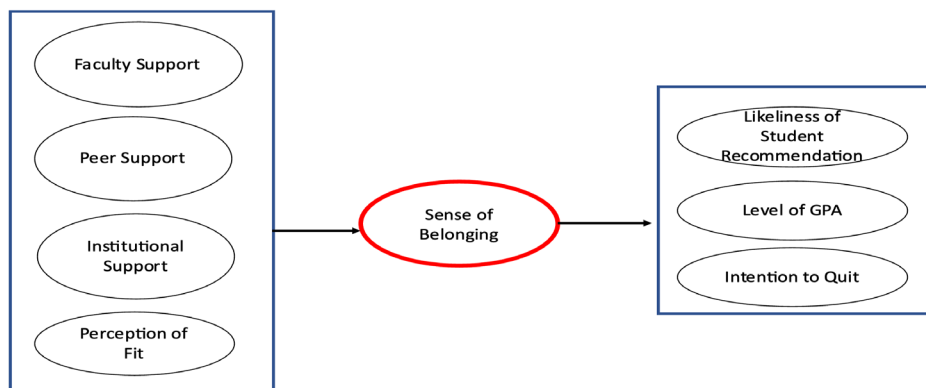
EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Over the past few years, a growing body of research has highlighted the importance of sense of belonging among undergraduate university students. Sense of belonging is defined as the feeling of being welcomed, accepted, and supported within a community (Walton & Cohen, 2007). A strong sense of belonging has been associated with stronger academic performance, retention, and overall satisfaction (Good et al., 2012).

The objective of the study is to examine the sense of belonging of undergraduate marketing majors—specifically the factors that contribute to the sense of belonging, such as academic and social support and the feeling of fitting in with the business college community. The study also seeks to understand how the sense of belonging among marketing majors may influence academic performance, retention, and overall satisfaction with their university experience. By examining these factors, the study hopes to shed light on the importance of sense of belonging for undergraduate marketing majors and provide recommendations for marketing departments to improve the sense of belonging among their students.

Based on a comprehensive literature review, we developed the conceptual model of Sense of Belonging displayed in Figure 1, proposing that support (faculty, peer, and institutional) and perception of fit influence marketing students' sense of belonging, which in turn affects students' academic performance (GPA), intention to quit and likelihood to recommend the program to others. This model forms the basis for the hypotheses that we tested in this study.

Figure 1. Sense of Belonging Conceptual Model



To test the model and hypotheses, we conducted an online survey of students taking courses at a business college at a large public university, yielding the responses of 526 marketing majors. We employed Hayes's (2013) PROCESS Macro (Model 4) with 5000 bootstrapped samples with a 95% confidence interval. The results indicate that faculty support, peer support, institutional support and fit have positive and significant effects on students' sense of belonging. The results also indicate that a higher sense of belonging has a positive and significant effect on student

recommendations and a negative effect on intention to quit studies. Surprisingly, the results indicate that sense of belonging has no significant effect on GPA. Furthermore, the mediation tests reveal that faculty support, peer support, institutional support and fit affect student recommendations and intention to quit through the mechanism of sense of belonging.

The study's results indicate that students should be encouraged to engage in activities that help them feel a greater connection to the academic community. Research that proves this connection should be shared with students to encourage them to engage in extracurricular and other school-related activities that align with their interests and values. More research should be conducted to identify which types of activities have the most positive impact and on which groups of students. Greater research focus should also be placed upon peer-to-peer support, given its role in fostering sense of belonging and fit. How can students best support one another, and how can they be encouraged to do so? Which peer-to-peer factors best produce a feeling of fit?

The findings in this research are of particular importance to college and university administrators. With declining numbers of high school student populations and an increasing number of post-pandemic high school students considering alternatives to college (Binkley, 2023), higher education institutions need to pay more attention than ever to attracting and retaining students. With students' sense of belonging so closely related to their decisions to recommend their institution to others and whether to stay there themselves, colleges and universities need to better understand the factors driving students' sense of belonging. How can they make students feel welcome, cared about, and supported from the moment they put down their financial deposit through to graduation?

The generalizability of this study is enhanced by the large number of marketing majors we surveyed through this study. However, future research using representation from other institutions is recommended. Further research could consider incorporating additional measures, such as well-being and other measures of satisfaction, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the potential outcomes of sense of belonging. Qualitative research methods, such as focus groups, are recommended to examine the experiences of marginalized groups that might experience support and fit differently from other students. Despite these limitations, our findings highlight the importance of promoting sense of belonging among marketing majors and provide a foundation for future research in this area.

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ACROSS THE UNIVERSE: CREATING EQUITY THROUGH CLIENT PROJECTS IN MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

When students attend a college or university, their primary goals are job acquisition and career readiness (Astin, Astin & Lindholm, 2011). For many students, this is attained through internships and networking outside of the classroom (Platform, Polls, & Market, 2017; Rutschow & Taketa, 2019). However, for students who are working to put themselves through school and/or support their families, taking time out of their current job to do an internship or attend networking events may not be realistic. Most internships are unpaid and studies have demonstrated that there is significant inequity in who is able to attain a paid internship. Racial and ethnic minorities as well as women and first-generation college students are less likely to have paid internships (Collins, 2020). This underrepresentation in paid internships can lead to more time taken to find a first job, lower starting salaries and lower overall satisfaction (Gault, Redington & Schlager, 2000). In class course embedded projects are a way to bridge this gap and provide students with real-world experience, career skills and overall confidence before entering the job market (Scribner, Baker & Howe, 2003). The subject of client or work-based learning has been researched thoroughly (De los Santos & Jensen, 1985; Clark & Whitelegg, 1998; Swan & Hansen, 1996; Bravo, 2018), however most of this research is siloed within a certain course or subject. In order to create more equity among university students, it is imperative to offer this opportunity, not just to certain students in specific programs, but to all students. This also offers an opportunity for faculty to work in a more interdisciplinary way, as they could work with the same client on multiple facets of the company in different courses.

In order to demonstrate the benefits for students, the current program was assessed. There were 218 total responses from students who completed a semester long project in a variety of subjects including English, Marketing, Engineering, Service Operations, Strategic Management, Childhood Studies, Political Science, Finance and Math. Projects focused on many topics including time series analysis, social media/website content creation, risk analysis, research and development, strategic planning and brand awareness. Just over half of participants were female (52%) while roughly 1/3 were first generation and/or low income and 81% worked while going to school. When asking students what specific soft and hard skills they improved during their projects, most participants saw significant improvement in all important soft skills. The skills with the most improvement included research (85% saw improvement), leadership (84%), critical thinking (83%), computer and technological skills (82%) and teamwork (81%). When asked what they learned, the most common response from students was professional or career related skills based on the specific project they did (22%). Next, students learned about relevant things they would need to know on the job market (19%). Other important things students learned or gained included research or data analysis skills (17%), Team work (12%), and Presentation skills (9%). Notably, many students referenced learning or understanding what jobs in certain fields actually entail, as well as what they need to succeed in working in their chosen field or starting their own business.

When asked how much students enjoyed working on these projects 86% of students enjoyed working on the client project. Participants were also asked how beneficial they thought working on their client project was. Again, the majority of students, 83%, found working on this type of project to be beneficial. There was no significant difference between courses or professor in terms of how beneficial the project was ($p=.24$). Prior to the project students were asked "how do your qualifications compare to others?" Before the project 7.3% said much more qualified and 49.5% said somewhat more qualified. After completion of the client project, when asked the same question, these numbers increased, with 9% feeling much more qualified and 60.1% feeling somewhat more qualified. Upon completion of the course project, 87% of students felt ready for the workforce with only 1.5% feeling very unready for the workforce.

The results of this study provide preliminary evidence that working on client-based projects across disciplines can provide more opportunities for all students. Students felt more prepared for the workforce and gained soft skills as well as specific career skills. Students felt the projects were beneficial and made them more qualified as well. Notably,

these findings were consistent across disciplines, professors and types of projects. This demonstrates the benefits of client projects regardless of course, as well as presents important opportunities for students. As participants highlighted, they were able to network and learn more about career options, as well as understand what real jobs will entail and what skills are actually needed. Part of educating young people is allowing them to enter the job market more prepared and confident. This should occur regardless of gender, race, income, family educational background or major. Providing more ways for more students to gain relevant career skills can level the playing field and open doors for all students, allowing them to succeed.

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THE “BIG QUIT” PHENOMENON FOR WOMEN IN SALES AND MARKETING: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Using a qualitative, phenomenological lens, female sales and marketing professionals who transitioned positions in 2021 or 2022 were interviewed regarding their experiences during what researchers and the media call “the big quit.” This economic trend exhibited employees who, en masse, voluntarily resigned from their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The phenomenon was regarded as a single event rather than a change driven by multiple underlying trends and themes. To better understand the motivations behind this phenomenon for women in marketing and sales roles, in-depth interviews were conducted with ten participants, interview transcriptions were reviewed, and themes emerged from the data. The interviews revealed trust, belongingness, and growth as the primary motivators for these women to change roles. The authors recommend ways organizations can foster trust, belongingness, and growth to retain women in sales and marketing roles. The impact of these factors on the future of marketing education is also explored.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is undeniable. The socio-cultural changes are so profound that the virus continues to create a “new normal” (Anderson et al., 2021, para. 5). This paper underscores this and its impact on female sales and marketing professionals. The article and research attempt to understand the motivation behind choices made by female sales and marketing professionals when deciding to leave positions during this time, identified as the “big quit” or “great resignation.” Ultimately, this research helps workplace leaders and academics understand what female sales and marketing professionals value in their positions to improve retention.

In 2021, 48 million U.S. citizens left their jobs; in 2022, 46.6 million left their positions, and according to the early 2023 data and despite 2023 inflation, the great resignation is still ongoing (Richter, 2023). The U.S.’s “quit rate” attained a 20-year high in November 2021; a Pew Research Center survey found low pay, low advancement opportunities, and feeling disrespected at work as the top reasons people quit (Parker & Menasce Horowitz, 2022). Those without an undergraduate degree (34%) are more likely than those with an undergraduate degree or more education (21%) to say the pandemic impacted their decision (Parker & Menasce Horowitz, 2022). The study also found that, for the most part, men and women offered similar reasons for quitting. One analysis found that 80% of people who quit their roles in search of greener pastures, especially those who switched industries, regretted the job switch (Jackson, 2023).

According to a World Economic Forum (2022) article, women leaders were, during the Big Quit, quitting their jobs in record numbers. The wake of mass departures left companies struggling to understand how to retain talent. One driver of the decision to quit is that women recognize that the pre-pandemic pay and working conditions accepted are no longer acceptable (Segal, 2022). A research study from Gotara (2022) found that 50% of women in STEM careers are prepared to quit, and 56% indicated they were prepared to do so in the next three months. The main reasons for leaving their employers the women reported included: (a) Non-supportive managers (27%), (b) Lack of opportunities for promotion (18%), (c) Lack of recognition (12%), (d) Lack of communication (12%), (e) Lack of remote work opportunities (10%), (f) Being overworked (9%), (g) Not being heard (6%), and (h) Low or non-competitive compensation (6%) (Gotara, 2022).

“There is a growing annoyance with work tasks that add no value to our lives.” Klotz (2023). After working from home during the pandemic, people recognized they could be more efficient with their time and create a better work-life balance. Time spent commuting was replaced with activities like exercise, childcare, and home maintenance (Federal Reserve Bank, 2022).

As people returned to the office, they brought new habits and expectations. The increased cost of living has made the monetary value of people’s time even more striking. This newfound understanding pushed firms to consider how they make their employees’ lives rich outside of work while still getting their jobs done. Companies are experimenting with meeting-free days, half-day Fridays, and different time-saving strategies to meet employee demands (Liu, 2022).

With a tight labor market, workers have plenty of power, allowing them to change personal priorities, question company approaches, and redefine the value of their jobs. This selective literature review builds a case for our methodology which hopes to fill some of the perceived gaps in those that quit, resign, and stay in their organizations.

For this study, the authors used a transcendental phenomenological approach to understand the experience and perceptions of participants, seeking to understand the underlying structure of the experience. Transcendental phenomenology studies the lived experience of participants, allowing for the development of perspectives, including external, physical, and isolatable stimuli. In transcendental phenomenology, the researcher brackets understanding or pre-conceived ideas, as the purpose is to move beyond everyday experience to a state where everything is perceived freshly, as if for the first time (Moustakas, 1994).

Transcendental phenomenology clarifies the assumptions in which human understanding is grounded and investigates how knowledge comes into being. The process of transcendental phenomenology includes bracketing out one's experience, collecting data from people who have experienced the phenomenon, and analyzing the data by reducing it to significant statements or quotes to combine them into themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). The researcher then develops a textural description of what the participants experienced and a structural description of how they experienced it in terms of conditions, situations, or context. Questions examined include:

1. What was your experience during your recent job switch?
2. What motivated the switch in positions?
3. What position did you leave, and what position did you go to?
4. Did switching make a difference? If so, how?
5. What or who influenced your decision to switch positions?
6. What part, if any, do you think the pandemic played in your decision to leave your old position?
7. Do you have any regrets about leaving your position? If so, what do you regret about it?

The population studied are adult female sales/marketing professionals with at least a 4-year college degree. The specific sample being studied is ten adult female sales/marketing professionals who left their positions in 2021 or 2022. None were coerced to participate, and their responses have been documented for us to learn from their lived experiences.

Based on the information uncovered in these interviews, it is evident that female employees in sales and marketing roles, need trust, belonging, and growth to achieve job satisfaction. Organizations that prioritize these needs are more likely to retain their female employees and benefit from their contributions over the long term.

Furthermore, marketing educators have an essential role in preparing students for successful marketing careers by emphasizing the importance of these needs and providing exercises that help students develop the skills necessary to meet them. Fostering a workplace environment prioritizing employees' need for trust, belonging, and growth is crucial for retaining top talent and achieving long-term success in the marketing sector. By emphasizing these needs in marketing education and providing exercises that help students develop the skills necessary to meet them, we can better prepare the next generation of marketers for successful careers prioritizing employee well-being and organizational success.

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FROM CLASSROOM TO CAREER: CLOSING THE AWARENESS GAP WITH CLIENT-BASED PROJECTS FOR CAREER-READINESS COMPETENCIES

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Conventional educational approaches, like lecturing, have resulted in a disparity between classroom teachings and industry expectations. It is essential for educators to know what employers are looking for when hiring new employees, considering the goal of marketing education is to prepare students for jobs in the field. The most important skills that employers cite, in addition to subject knowledge, are teamwork, problem solving, communication, proactivity, and leadership (NACE, 2021). There is also an increasing focus on soft skills, also known as power skills or durable skills, to add value beyond artificial intelligence, show adaptability, work and communicate across diverse teams, innovate, and think critically (Udemy Business, 2022).

Career readiness, as defined by the National Association of College and Employers (NACE), includes eight core competencies: career and self-development, communication, critical thinking, equity and inclusion, leadership, professionalism, teamwork, and technology (2021). A unique challenge is that students perceive themselves to be more career ready than employers do, rating their own competencies significantly higher (Gray, 2022). McKinsey and Company conducted surveys of 18,000 people in 15 countries, focused on defining the skills needed in the future world of work (Dondi et al., 2021). Dondi et al., (2021) found that to be successful across all sectors, workers must be adaptable in order to contribute value, leading to an increased demand for technological, social and emotional, and higher cognitive skills. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that universities and colleges build self-leadership skills like self-confidence, risk-taking, and grit as well as interpersonal skills like negotiation, empathy, and collaboration into curriculum.

One of the most valuable and high-impact approaches to developing these critical skills is using experiential learning in the classroom which is defined as “the study of learning through action” (Payne et al., 2011, p. 206). Client-based projects (CBPs) are a subset of experiential learning that allow students authentic connection between the “real world” and their class concepts. Shanahan, Palmer, and Salas (2021) uphold the benefits of CBPs for multiple stakeholders (student, client, instructor, and university). Across their combined decades of teaching experience, the authors of this paper have observed how effective CBPs can be at helping students build career-ready competencies through analyzing and addressing client challenges and managing complex team projects; hence, CBPs are the primary focus of this research.

This mixed method study, conducted at four U.S. universities, investigated the potential impact of CBPs on students’ self-perceived career readiness competencies. A multidimensional measurement device was used to evaluate participants’ perspectives on the significance of NACE’s eight Career Readiness Competencies. Participants were asked to rate how crucial they believed the NACE competencies were for college graduates to successfully enter the workforce. In addition, the participants were asked to assess themselves on the same eight competencies using a five-point Likert-like scale. The pre-CBP survey took place at the beginning of the term, while the post-CBP survey was administered after the student presentations to the client. To gain more comprehensive and qualitative feedback, open-ended questions were included in both surveys.

The authors hypothesized there would be a significant difference in their perception of their own competency and career readiness before versus after a CPB classroom experience. Additionally, the authors hypothesized there would be no significant difference in how students rated perception of the importance of career readiness competencies pre and post their CBPs.

Study results support the researchers' hypotheses; findings showed that student perception of the importance of these NACE essential skills remained consistent before and after the CBP, and students rated themselves higher on six of the eight core competencies post-CBP as compared to pre-CBP. Further, in open-ended questions, participants provided their insights into how the CBP enhanced their professional preparedness. By employing keywords-in-context and word repetition analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2023, p. 2), the authors discovered two main themes: skill development and engagement.

The results of this study underscore the authors' experiences that CBPs are a powerful, effective tool for transforming students into marketing professionals. As a result, the authors are developing a framework illuminating the productive relationship between CBPs and career readiness competency development. Ultimately, the goal is to prepare students to meaningfully contribute to and positively impact their workplaces and industry post graduation.

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THE GREAT NEED FOR NO-HARM GUARANTEES: AN INSTITUTION BUILDING TOOL

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Public trust in institutions is essential for a well-functioning society; however, according to opinion polling, the legitimacy of institutions has been in steady decline over the past few decades. For example, government, banking, healthcare, and higher education are all institutions that have experienced a decline in public trust. As institutional trust declines, marketers in these sectors face decreases in brand image and consumer confidence. Multiple reasons explain why trust in institutions is eroding, including a rise of political polarization, social media disinformation, corporate political advocacy, and corruption. This study proposes that service failure-recovery strategy (SFR) can also be a cause of institutional mistrust. The SFR field has long been interested in how SFR interacts with perceptions of trust but has yet to examine trust from an institutional level. This study provides a high-level conceptual framework of the SFR literature and an empirical study that investigates various SFR strategies and their impact on institutional trust.

In this study, an empirical model of SFR and institutional trust is conceptualized and empirically evaluated within healthcare, “big tech,” and transportation institutional contexts. In these service contexts, consumers often derive value in complex intangible benefits. However, intangible benefits may not be immediately visible and are challenging for consumers to quantify. Further, the presence of information asymmetry, especially in expert services like healthcare, poses a challenge for consumers in accurately assessing risk, particularly in physical harm contexts. As a result, consumers may heavily rely on institutional trust as a guiding factor in their decision-making process. Consequently, as institutional trust erodes, market inefficiencies may occur when there is a misalignment of customers’ perception of risk and actual risk involved. Marketers in these institutional contexts must seek effective strategies to rebuild institutional trust and recalibrate risk perceptions. In the field of SFR, and more broadly in the marketing field as a whole, there has been little research examining institutional trust from a customer perspective. This study makes a considerable number of contributions to service failure-recovery and institutional trust literature.

First, this study conceptualizes customer trust at the micro, meso, and macro levels and identifies the causes of institutional trust. These contributions expand the current understanding of trust dynamics within service ecosystems and provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing institutional trust from a customer perspective. Furthermore, this research identifies a previously undefined cause of institutional trust, ‘buyer beware,’ shedding light on an institutional strategy that pushes risk onto customers and how this practice has impacted customer’s perceptions of risk and trust in institutions. In addition, this study advances the service guarantee literature by describing how service guarantees positively impact institutional trust in service ecosystems, categorizing the different types of service guarantees, and labeling a previously undefined service guarantee; the no-harm guarantee. The proposed empirical model advances the field by investigating the differential effects of proactive SFR strategies (buyer beware vs no-harm service guarantees), on institutional trust, revealing the role of service guarantees in aligning customer’s perceptions of risk with actual risk. Finally, the managerial implications section discusses the ethical implications of service guarantees and how they contribute to equity and equality of outcomes.

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BOOSTING LEARNING OUTCOMES IN THE DIGITAL ERA: AN INTER-DISCIPLINARY APP PROTOTYPING (IDAP) APPROACH

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Knowledge about customers and technologies is one of the key success drivers for today's companies. This knowledge is derived by gathering and sharing information through inter-disciplinary collaborations (Salojärvi et al., 2015). Thus, inter-disciplinary collaborations lead to the development of products and services that deliver on the promise of maximizing customer value. Additionally, inter-disciplinary collaborations support the co-creation of hard and soft skills. This contributes to enhancing the success of both, individuals and companies.

A successful collaboration requires the mutual understanding of the requirements and needs of each party, e.g. individual or department. Students should therefore be given the opportunity to acquire the required skills as part of their education. However, most university curricula today do not offer courses that cover cross-functional topics. Therefore, teaching tends to take the form of clearly delineated silos by subject rather than bringing together related disciplines. Nevertheless, acquiring the required skills as the prerequisite for efficient inter-disciplinary teamwork should not be postponed until entering the workforce. It is therefore imperative to teach students about the importance of inter-disciplinary teamwork and to ensure they develop the skills needed to succeed in inter-disciplinary work. This is why the corresponding teaching concepts need to be revised.

The Inter-Disciplinary App Prototyping (IDAP) project seeks to break down disciplinary boundaries and to foster inter-disciplinary collaboration. The IDAP project merges curricula of computer science and marketing study programs. In setting up a joint digital marketing and mobile technologies lecture, we established teams with students from both study programs. The teams were given the opportunity to work in joint teams to develop a mobile application that tackles a given business challenge. Therefore, the IDAP project incorporates both experiential learning theory as well as connectivism learning.

After completion of the app prototypes, the project was evaluated based on Post-Project Review Reports that the students submitted at the end of the course. As a result, first, we concluded that the special learning approaches of experiential and connectivism learning provide a close to real-world learning experience. This experience initiated learning outcomes which traditional methods of teaching tend to miss. Second, we proved that cross-curricular teaching approaches boost the development of crucial people-related and conceptual/thinking skills such as problem solving, communication, and time management. Third, it reveals that digital tools like Microsoft Teams, Slack, or Zoom improve inter-disciplinary collaboration. To sum up, the implementation of cross-curricular teaching approaches results in multifaceted positive outcomes and is therefore highly recommended.

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OPTIMIZING SALESPERSON PERFORMANCE: A FLOW THEORY PERSPECTIVE

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

A sample of 125 salespeople from 13 countries was surveyed to assess the effects of flow on salesperson performance. Salespeople achieve the flow state when their skills match the challenges of the sales situation, and the challenge/skill balance is high. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses followed by a cluster analysis indicated that there was a significant difference in sales performance among salespeople with different levels of the flow state. The article concludes with managerial implications and directions for future research.

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THE BENEFITS OF SERVICE-LEARNING IN MARKETING COURSES

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POSITION PAPER

There is a growing interest among marketing faculty to find ways to engage students in classwork. As such, service-learning has received attention as a means for engaging Gen Z students. Academia has been criticized for (1) a lack of curricular relevance, (2) a lack of faculty commitment to teaching, and (3) a lack of responsiveness to broader public needs, and one reason service-learning is receiving attention is that it addresses these three concerns (McIntyre et al., 2005). Service-learning is “a pedagogical technique combining academic learning with community service” (Klink & Athaide, 2004, p. 145) and this type of learning is a win-win for both students and community partners. For instance, students gain experience applying knowledge learned in the classroom to an actual client (also referred to in this paper as a community partner). From the perspective of the community partner, valuable work and creative insights are gleaned from bright students eager to put their classroom knowledge into practice.

The underlying goals of service-learning education include developing a sense of civic responsibility and a commitment to the community. Research illustrates several benefits of service-learning for students. To name a few, service-learning builds practical skills such as (1) team work, (2) leadership, (3) personal motivation, (4) creativity, (5) communication, and (6) diversity awareness. Service-learning has received praise from several constituencies in academia because this teaching method integrates meeting community needs with conscious educational growth and development among students (McIntyre et al., 2005).

Marketing is well-suited for service learning, particularly due to the changing landscape of marketing and the technological tools widely available today. New technologies are entering the marketplace at such a rapid pace and “artificial intelligence (AI), big data, blockchain data systems, robotics, and drones are transforming the way marketing is conceptualized and implemented in organizations” (Ferrell & Ferrell, 2020). In addition, social platforms have revolutionized marketing and tools vary along a continuum from networking to media to entertainment (Lebow, 2022). Gen Z has grown up with such tools, and are accustomed to emerging new platforms and communication styles (Lebow, 2022). Thus, students in this generation have much to offer community partners who may be struggling to understand or utilize emerging marketing tools. Therefore, community partners, particularly non-profit organizations with minimal marketing budgets, greatly benefit from students’ work for their organization.

Likewise, students greatly benefit from work with the organization by applying textbook knowledge; but more importantly, such work offers the opportunity to practice soft skills. Soft skills are growing in importance among younger generations who often rely on texts and virtual communications to interact with peers. According to Riley and Nicewicz (2022), soft skills are even more imperative to students studying marketing, as roles within the field require a variety of social, behavioral, and interpersonal communication skills. For instance, students must learn the nuanced facets of business etiquette such as active listening, networking, text and e-mail etiquette, emotional intelligence, team building tactics, creative problem solving, and conflict management / resolution (Black et al., 2021; Kelley, 1992; Wolff & Moser, 2009). These practical and personal skills are not only necessary, but essential for job performance success, especially in marketing roles that involve interactions with many business partners (Black et al., 2021; Kelley, 1992). While soft skills are often intangible in nature, it is important that faculty aim to make such skills more concrete and measurable and emphasize the need for learning these skills (Riley & Nicewicz, 2022). As Gen Z learners enter the workplace and strive for preparedness and success, it is critical they find a balance between their innate technology adoption and navigating real-world interactions (Riley & Nicewicz, 2022).

In bringing together both textbook knowledge and soft skills, this paper proposes a service-learning model to address the current skills students need for the workplace. This model has been applied in an Integrated Marketing and Brand Communications undergraduate class. The model utilizes a 5-step process: (1) Present a Client Problem, (2) Group Idea Generation, (3) Idea Selection, (4) Implementation and Assessment, and (5) Presentation and Evaluation. Constructivist learning theory is used as the foundation for providing students with an immersive social experience. Utilizing this learning theory as a framework, students form groups and act as a small agency providing marketing

expertise to the community. Overall, learning outcomes for students include: (1) gaining experience utilizing soft skills in a small team environment, (2) applying textbook knowledge to address the needs of one client during the semester, (3) providing actionable recommendations to the client, and (4) practicing consulting and relationship management skills.

In summary, service-learning is a teaching method utilizing experiential learning which integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience for students, to teach the importance of civic responsibility, and to strengthen communities by bringing students and organizations together (Geringer et al., 2009). Service-learning projects allow students to learn important lessons in a low-stakes environment before transitioning to careers, providing students with practical experience while also serving as a means for polishing soft skills. In addition, research shows that service-learning positively influences the future volunteering propensities of students (Burns, 2011). Service-learning prepares students to become responsible community members, and increases career confidence and readiness by providing opportunities to practice hard and soft skills.

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FOCUSING ON THE CUSTOMER: WHEN CUSTOMERS DON'T HAVE A CHOICE

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POSITION PAPER

Public utilities and government agencies face an ongoing challenge of meeting customers' expectations. In these instances, clients do not necessarily choose the agency as their service provider. In these instances, the provider is chosen for the customer. In the more common for-profit service provider/customer interactions when customers are able to choose their service providers, meeting customers' expectations takes concerted effort and reinforcement of standards. We understand how service providers must deal with customers' desire for immediate resolutions to issues, unpredictable temperaments, and diverse personalities. Now introduce a scenario where customers feel 'locked in' to the service provider without options, and the challenge to meet these customers' expectations increases. The key question is how service providers of public utilities and government agencies can engage service encounters that result in consistently leaving the customer with a positive impression.

Bruce Chew and William Eggers, both Directors at Deloitte consulting, wrote a perspective piece on customer satisfaction in government (Chew & Eggers, 2021). They reference the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI)'s most recent report that shows citizen satisfaction with government customer services is at its lowest level since 2007. Chew and Eggers (2021) believe that if steady improvement is not going to cut it, what agencies need is a transformative breakthrough that delivers radical government customer service improvement. They state that agencies need to rethink their approach to customers, or even who their customers are. Agencies may need to reorganize to better deliver a leading customer experience. This reorganization will allow them to respond to customer needs. Chew and Eggers (2021) suggest leadership think beyond their walls to consider the range of stakeholders that can help reimagine the customer experience. This type of breakthrough change is possible. Chew and Eggers (2021) outline four areas that organizations should consider when working to improve customer satisfaction:

Let's examine each one of these recommendations and walk through what this would look like in an environment where the organization chooses the customer. While working with the Georgia Department of Revenue in fall of 2022, I was tasked with the challenge of helping the organization transform their customer experiences and position themselves as an organization with customer satisfaction as one of their top priorities. Let's examine these four recommendations in the context of the Georgia Department of Revenue.

First, *Think from the customer's perspective*. Let's ask questions that put our attention on the recipient of our customer service. How do I want to be treated when it is time to renew my license? Do I desire to go through this process completely online? What are my expectations when I need to pay my property taxes? The tag office is a solid 20-minute drive from my house. With rising gas prices, is it worth paying the extra \$2.00 processing fee to mail in my property tax payment, pay online, or take my payment to the property tag office? The close to 1,000 Georgia Department of Revenue employees are also all Georgia residents who are required to pay taxes and motor vehicle fees, hence being on the recipient end of the service provided by their employer. Using candid first-hand employee experiences as a starting point of capturing service quality information, the GA DOR is able to constantly evaluate areas of improvement.

Second, *Move from transactions to experiences*. When customers interact with the GA DOR, it is usually thought of as a task to check off one's "To Do" list. The mindset of the customer is to pay the bill and be done with it. The customer's desire is to do this as quickly and efficiently as possible. When there are more steps to the process than expected, or the time that it takes to complete the steps takes longer than expected, customer satisfaction is predictably lowered. Customer-facing representatives need to communicate the entire process of resolution with customers. When they do so, they are taking ownership of not just the part of the process they are responsible for, but also what other representatives will be responsible for. Upon problem resolution after this multi-step process, customer-facing representatives should circle back to the customer to ensure that the entire experience results in customer expectations being met. Again, this requires a shift from focusing on a single interaction/transaction with the customer to a more holistic experience perspective.

Third, and related to point two, *Think about touchpoints across silos of the organization*. This refers to the adage, “The buck stops with me.” Customer-facing employees must take ownership of the customers’ entire experience with the Department of Revenue and go beyond the transaction that the customer has with he/she as an individual representative. James Dodkins (2015) in his book, “Foundations for Customer Centricity”, advocates that organizations need to examine processes and ask, “Does this process contribute to the delivery of customer success and what the customer really needs?” He states, “everyone in a process, no matter what department, should be targeted and rewarded on the delivery of customer success. Then all of a sudden everyone is working together to make the customer happy instead of against each other to help their department ‘win’.” Dodkins advocates, “If customers can see and feel that everybody at every point cared and was trying to do the right thing, they become very forgiving.” He describes how all employees should be focused on a successful customer outcome (SCO). He states, “Every employee’s job is to deliver the successful customer outcome (SCO), every support staff’s job is to aid other employees in the SCO delivery, therefore everything you do should be aligned to delivering customer success.” When there is buy-in across all units, the focus changes from an inwardly focused department-oriented environment to a truly customer centric ecosystem. In James Dodkins “all in” approach to organizations, the inner circle consists of those employees who are actively involved in delivering customer experiences. Dodkins advocates that these are the most important employees in the organization because they hold the most influence. Everyone outside of delivering customer experiences is in the outer circle, having a support role to the inner circle employees. Teams within the organization can be organized as customer experience teams. For this type of organizational structure to work, there must be an environment of trust and support.

Fourth, *Take a new approach to information*. Throughout the Department of Revenue, there are access points to an abundance of data. To improve customer satisfaction, these touch points must be captured and routinely analyzed. While challenging, the goal is to embrace the information, positive and negative, and use it to bring about transformative change. In sports, it is absolutely critical that players watch film to observe what they did right, and what they can improve on. While not the most pleasant experience, getting feedback on areas in need of improvement is key. This is applicable across numerous scenarios. At the end of every semester, students complete course evaluations where they share feedback on the course and on my instruction. I can ignore their feedback or embrace it. I have found that while acknowledging the positive can be flattering, it is the critical feedback that has allowed me to get better at what I love doing, connecting with students in the classroom, and witnessing when light bulbs click in my students’ understanding of marketing. Government agencies and not-for-profit organizations need to have individuals dedicated to continual process improvement. Integrating this process improvement into employees’ individual growth plans to become more effective is beneficial to the organization as a whole.

Implementing GA Department of Revenue policy around these four considerations will make it clear that customer satisfaction is embedded in the daily responsibilities of each GA Department of Revenue employee. As employees are recognized for process improvements, and rewarded for efforts that lead to sustained change, this will have an indirect effect on customer satisfaction. Chew and Eggers (2021) reference the standard premise that employees who are satisfied are more likely to satisfy their customers. They state, “The need for a transformative breakthrough applies to internal support too. More satisfied employees tend to create more satisfied customers.” Transformative change should be the goal in the quest for customer satisfaction in organizations like the GA Department of Revenue.

Dodkins (2015) acknowledges that true customer centricity is a decision. As organizations like the Georgia Department of Revenue make the choice to engage in transformative customer service, their levels of customer satisfaction will improve. This organizational transformation will require a commitment from its employees to embrace the choice as well. As opposed to the gain being measured in dollar value, we understand that the intrinsic value of enhancing quality of life is one for which a price tag does not exist.

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MANAGING ALLIANCES IN GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION

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POSITION PAPER

The study will be conducted in the global higher education industry. The primary reason for choosing to study this industry is due to the universities' common practice of forming collaborations to use the operating assets (e.g., faculty, facilities, networks, etc.) of other universities to gain access to markets while avoiding large capital outlays. Such relationships involve at least two schools where the two collaborate to deliver educational material to students. The fact that an 'entrant' university must use another university to service its students provides the right conditions for the horizontal nature of these alliances. Given the current financial constraints many schools have been experiencing, the practice is common and not expected to decrease anytime soon.

This institutional reality leads us to our first research question: how is the use of these alliances helping universities compete in the global marketplace over time? In previous studies, entrants were found to view alliances as an important mode of entry/expansion, and a viable alternative to vertical integration, in particular when there are significant governmental constraints on vertical integration in the target country. These types of alliances are favored when the target country partner's expertise is not too great and when the entrant has relatively little previous market presence. However, what has not been studied and what we are proposing to determine is: how do these alliances lead to greater competitiveness in the marketplace?

This research also proposes to investigate how horizontal distribution alliances (HDAs) are structured and managed. Therefore, our second research question is: what is the most effective work structure for horizontal alliances? From AACSB, we know that eight major levels of collaboration exist for schools; what is unclear is the effectiveness of each of these types of collaboration and which are most able to meet the needs of the two schools.

The first contribution will be determining how horizontal alliances are helping schools compete in the global higher education market. The industry has dealt with some very specific operational and financial shocks to its system, including decreases in funding of public institutions as well as cuts in donations to both public and private schools.

The second contribution comes from understanding the work-team structure of alliances that allow members to coordinate the two (in bilateral agreements) institutions involved in the partnerships. Gaining insights from personal interviews with the work team members will allow us to determine the optimal structure as well as distinguish the effects of multicultural influences on the management of the alliance.

While the study is confined to the higher education industry, we believe that many of the alliance findings can be extended to other industries, namely those that have similar alliance structures: pharmaceuticals, automobiles, consumer packaged goods, etc. Many leaders, whether in the education industry or not, would be particularly interested in the proposed research results. The research findings can then be developed as teaching material for leaders contemplating the use of international horizontal alliances.

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EXPLORING CONCERT TICKET PURCHASE INTENTION AMONG INTERNATIONAL K-POP FANS

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POSITION PAPER

The popularity of Korean pop music (K-pop) has expanded beyond East Asia. Starting from a small music agency, it turned into a global phenomenon with a unique competitive advantage (Gupta, 2022; Cheing, 2018). Growing rapidly in Southeast Asia, Europe, North and South America, and Africa, K-pop has generated multiple chart-topping hits worldwide by groups such as BTS, Blackpink and Stray Kids (Zhao, 2021). Its successful entry into the global market is attributed to its media-friendly nature, systematic integration of production systems that engage experts from each field, trendy music style through sophisticated acoustics, colourful performances, talented artists, charming image, extraordinary choreography, and collaboration with famous artists from other countries (Kanozia & Ganghariya, 2021; Sim et al., 2017). The buying decision of overseas K-pop fans remain underexplored despite the often-sold-out attendance at major concerts, a remarkable achievement considering the challenges in entertainment marketing. This paper explores the concert ticket purchase intention of K-pop fans outside South Korea.

K-pop has avid fan bases around the world. For instance, BTS fans are known as the ARMY to differentiate them from other K-pop fans. K-pop fandom levels range from new to super passionate followers, and each fanbase is assigned distinctive nicknames. To connect with their fans and reduce the language barrier, K-pop artists perform in contemporary genres using unique concepts and often integrate English lyrics (Bang et al., 2021; Park, 2020). This results in a high emotional appeal among international fans who value relatable content from artists who can engage and build bonds with them, often through social media platforms (Singer & Hidayat, 2021; Yoon, 2019).

In marketing literature, music has been cited as one of the factors influencing purchase decisions through mood, tempo, pitch and peripheral persuasion cues, thus affecting a consumer's involvement level with a brand (Ryu et al., 2020; Alpert & Alpert, 1990). The origins of consumer brand attachment derive from the marketing literature of attachment theory. Brand attachment represents a consumer's solid emotional connection with a brand, perceiving the brand as an important part of their self-extension to individuals, places, and possessions (Malar et al., 2011; Escalas 2004), develop commitment (Charton-Vachet & Lombart, 2018), disseminate positive word-of-mouth (Kwon & Mattila, 2015), and willingly pay a premium price for the brand (Orth et al., 2012). Common measurements include resonance, passion, degree of connection, companionship, and love.

A celebrity brand is defined as a publicly known persona whose status comes from his/her ability to be known by a consumer base as distinctive. Celebrities can be thought of as a brand as they are professionally managed, have a consumer base, and signal some expected quality and revenue generation ability (Thomson, 2006). In the past 15 years, the study of consumer attachment to celebrity brands has progressed based on the inherent psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence (A-R-C). Autonomy represents an individual's freedom and feeling that their actions are self-initiated. Relatedness signifies the sense of connection with others and competence indicates an individual's predisposition to achieve a sense of accomplishment (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

Purposive sampling was used in this study. Fans in North America and Europe who had purchased K-pop concert tickets in the previous 12 months were approached through online fan sites. Their attachment was rated according to the popular "fandom" levels: Bandwagon, Newbie, Koreaboo, Superfan, Average, Sasaeng, Fake, Thirsty, AMBBY, and Crackhead. Each fandom level corresponds to their degree of attachment bonds to the celebrity brand. Through qualitative semi-structured interviews, the fans were asked about their purchasing intention. Early findings revealed that the primary reason for purchasing concert tickets is an emotional connection to the celebrity brands. Superfans, who are typically single women in their mid-30s with moderate incomes, have the highest tendency to go to concerts every chance they get. Interestingly, most would rather go with friends or other Superfans, willingly purchasing premium tickets and would not hesitate to spend extra on accommodation and travel costs. Koreaboo fans, made up of mostly young female Gen-Zs are the next most likely attendees but were hindered by the costs of the tickets, as well as the additional costs of travel for those who live far away from major concert venues.

The relatedness component of the A-R-C psychological needs presents the strongest factor in K-pop concert purchase intention. Other purchase intention factors include peer influence, love of the energetic music rhythm, and the high level of satisfaction from being treated as a fan. International marketers and industry stakeholders should continue to sustain customer relationship-building strategies in this growing segment of K-pop fans outside South Korea. The online concert ticket purchasing experience could be improved to reduce frustration, as some shows could sell out in less than two minutes. An opportunity arises for K-pop promoters in underserved markets where costs restrain purchase intention. Certain demographic segments such as Delulu fans, who are mostly between 12-15 years old, were excluded from research. Future research could also explore the concert ticket purchase intention of K-pop fans in regions outside North America and Europe.

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MARKETING STRATEGY FOR INTERNATIONAL MBA STUDENTS: THE STUDENT ATHLETE

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POSITION PAPER

This paper highlights the steps an international student is planning to take in the endeavor to find employment opportunities as a marketing specialist. In the following, the student will be referred to as the 'candidate.' Currently, they are in the process of finishing their MBA at the University of Findlay. Prior to that, they have spent time studying towards their undergraduate degree in Germany and the US. Swimming has played a major role in the candidate's life for the past two decades, and consequently this sport has shaped them in many aspects. Where applicable, the lessons learned through being an athlete will be utilized in their undertaking to find work in the US.

The candidate has a BSc in business administration from Mars Hill University and is pursuing their master's in business administration (MBA) from the University of Findlay. In addition to their undergraduate degree, the candidate further possesses knowledge in the field of science and engineering through studying industrial engineering for two years at the University of Karlsruhe of Applied Sciences in Germany. Those years in higher education provide the candidate with strong foundations in data analysis, financial topics, marketing, economy and econometrics, and mathematics as well as an understanding of rudimentary principles of engineering in the fields of electrical engineering, information technology, technical mechanics, and the scientific disciplines of physics and chemistry.

Their work experience as a research assistant at their current university honed their skills in written and verbal communication, and further strengthened their ability to think critically and to solve problems. In addition, the candidate has been and still is a competitive swimmer in their 17th season, which includes a five-year career in collegiate athletics. Through this time, they have learned countless lessons of dedication, commitment, time management, and creative problem-solving. These factors along with adaptability and resilience provide the candidate a unique perspective into the field of marketing and will help them to be a competitive job candidate.

The candidate will utilize their knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and coordinate them with their formal education, professional experience, and athletic involvement at aiming for employment in the field of marketing. Those attributes will be coordinated to best align with the target industry in an effort to differentiate themselves from the competition. The following sections will include individual strategies for the four P's of marketing.

Product: The candidate has a Bachelor of Science in business administration as well as foundational knowledge in fields pertaining to the discipline of engineering and is currently working towards their MBA. After graduation, the objective is to find a position as a marketing specialist. The candidate's differentiation strategy is comprised of the unique combination of their educational background in engineering and business administration, as well as them being a five-year collegiate athlete. With soon to have completed two degrees in business and paired with knowledge in engineering, the candidate is well prepared for a career in marketing through extensive knowledge of statistical analysis, scientific strategies (CareerProfiles, n.d.), leadership, and marketing, amongst others (The Princeton Review, n.d.). What the candidate needs in-field involvement, they make up for in the differences and transferability of their abilities. This in combination with the perseverance and creativity gained from being an athlete, sets the candidate apart (differentiation) from other candidates entering the job market in this field.

Price: With the goal in mind to reach employment sooner than later, the candidate will follow a penetration strategy. The projected yearly salary for marketing specialists in Ohio who have a master's degree or MBA, and who have less than a year of experience within the field, is between \$62,437 and \$83,904 (Salary.com, 2022). Due to the lack of field experience and the lack of a marketing focused degree, as well as them being an international applicant, the candidate's differentiation strategy will target life experiences, and continued education, and aims at the lower level (entrance) of the pay scale.

Place: The candidate will utilize niche marketing in Ohio with the Columbus region and encompassing zones to start in small, and after that medium as well as large cities with emphasis on retail, consumer experiences, hospitality,

as well as universities and colleges.

Promotion: The candidate will utilize a network strategy on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and professional networking sites such as LinkedIn, CareerBuilder, indeed, and Glassdoor. Further, the candidate will attend job fairs, conferences, and career-related seminars as well, to create a strong network of connections and contacts. They will also contact friends and family members who already are in the desired career segments. Additionally, the candidate will leverage their extensive network of fellow athletes they have built up during their time in sports.

The candidate is seeking employment as a marketing specialist. To achieve this goal, they will utilize the following distribution strategy. Going forward, the two crucial steps towards receiving an offer of employment are networking and job research. The process starts with the updating of the candidate's resume and cover letter. Following that, job research and active networking will be conducted. Job research will for once be done through perusing websites of specific businesses, looking for open positions, as well as unsolicited applications. Further, companies of interest will also be called, and the candidate will be a walk-in to some of them as well in the endeavor to get to know what employees are looking for, to inquire if there are positions available, and to introduce themselves and hand in their application and resume. Job search on online platforms will be the next step. Here, the candidate will browse common application sites like indeed.com, or careerbuilder.com, and field specific platforms like marketinghire.com.

Networking, as the second crucial step towards getting a job, will be conducted through personal contacts, i.e., friends, family, fellow athletes, etc., through attending job fairs, through social media, and through using LinkedIn. Job fairs offer the possibility to personally connect with businesses and exchange contact information, resumes, etc., but most importantly, it gives the candidate the chance to make a first impression in-person, which other forms of connecting with a company oftentimes do not allow. Social media, like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter will aid the candidate in displaying and advertising their abilities, to build their personal brand, as well as it makes the candidate more visible and gives them the chance to personally interact with the companies, they intent to work for (Weiler Reynolds, n.d.). A strong social media presence also allows the candidate to present themselves as a leader (Castrillon, 2021). Following these steps will allow the candidate to get to know about the right companies and make application decisions to the right positions, which eventually leads to employment.

Finding employment is harder for international applicants than it is for domestic candidates. Different cultures or language barriers are partially responsible for that; however, costs associated with working visas, which are laid on the companies, are certainly the biggest contributor. Considering this, international applicants oftentimes must settle for lower wages than domestic candidates to remain competitive, even though their qualifications are equally, or even better in some cases. Though, being an athlete has the chance to compensate for those disadvantages as sports teaches individuals virtues and values that are of high importance to employers. Time management, commitment, teamwork, or the ability to not lose sight of the goal are only an excerpt of what athletes gain from being on the field, in the pool, or in the weight room every day.

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WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT? ASSESSING WORK READINESS IN NEW BUSINESS GRADUATES

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POSITION PAPER

Considering the primary goal of business education is to prepare students for the workplace, it is important to understand what skills employers are looking for when hiring new business graduates. The National Association of College and Employers (NACE) reports that the ability to work in a team, analyze and solve problems, communicate, take initiative, and lead, in addition to content knowledge are the most important qualities that employers seek in new employees (National Association of College and Employers [NACE], 2021). Unfortunately, some employers claim that college graduates are not job-ready when they enter the workforce (Garner et al., 2019). This can be a big problem for employers considering the demand for workers. Employers want employees to come into the workplace ready to perform.

The problem is that while employers say students are not as competent in the areas they need to be, students, in general, believe they are prepared. In a 2021 NACE study, Gray (2022) reports a major gap between student perceptions of their own proficiencies and employer rated recent grad proficiencies across most of the career readiness competencies. Work readiness emerged as a concept in 1997 when Gardner and Liu studied performance requirements and new hire preparedness. Work readiness is defined as the extent to which graduates possess the attitudes and attributes that prepare graduates for success in the workplace (Caballero & Walker, 2010). Multiple researchers believe that work readiness is predictive of a graduate's job performance, success, and promotion and career advancement potential, (Caballero, Walker, & Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, 2010; Gardner & Liu, 1997).

Caballero, Walker, and Fuller-Tyszkiewicz identified the attributes and characteristics of work readiness in their 2010 study. They identified ten broad work readiness categories including; motivation, maturity, personal growth/development, organizational awareness, technical focus, interpersonal orientation, attitudes to work, problem-solving, adaptability, and resilience. In a pilot test to develop a scale to measure work readiness, the original ten categories were collapsed into four final factors; personal characteristics, organizational acumen, work competence, and social intelligence.

Educators are tasked with preparing students with both the relevant knowledge and competencies needed to succeed in the workplace. Most business schools and faculty wince at the idea of college as merely job training and have been criticized for being too focused on academic rigor and less on job readiness (Garner et al., 2019). Faculty are challenged with the demands to meet accreditation standards along with stakeholder expectations. According to Avolio, Benzaquen, and Pretell (2019), in order for business schools to remain relevant, faculty must address sustainability, social responsibility, diversity, technology, and globalization to name a few. With only a small amount of hours each week for class, faculty constantly question where to devote classroom time.

Business education should provide a foundation of business knowledge and skills within a broad, liberal education. Expanding the knowledge of business to include different values, cultures, and business practices helps develop students as ethical leaders for a global society. Business education, when designed correctly, can supplement the critical reasoning skills and educational breadth requirements of a liberal education (Stewart, 2010). Students benefit from coursework in psychology, sociology, anthropology, and humanities to gain the insights necessary to develop the disciplined perspective they will need in future business situations and new contexts (Colby, Ehrlich, Sullivan, & Dolle, 2011).

Existing literature has not fully explored the value of general education to employers and hiring managers and its contribution to work readiness in new business graduates. The proposed study will survey employers, specifically hiring managers, using the work readiness scale developed by Caballero, Walker, and Fuller-Tyszkiewicz in 2011, along with seniors who will be graduating in May. Employers and faculty will complete a survey using a Likert scale to indicate their perception of importance for each of the scale items listed on the Work Readiness Scale. Faculty will also be

surveyed to gain a better understanding of their perspective on student readiness. The university seniors will complete the Work Readiness Scale. The results will be used to determine if there is a disconnect between the three groups.

One of the challenges with this research is the vastness of skills and competencies needed in industry today, especially when comparing small businesses to corporate organizations. Another challenge with this research is comparing the different business majors, where different skill sets are needed. Lastly, a challenge is removing the potential biases that each of the survey groups may have on the scale items. Faculty may believe they are teaching a concept, but the students may not be learning the concept as well as the faculty perceive and students may over exaggerate their own abilities.

Future research could investigate whether certain general education courses contribute more or less to work readiness. For example, does a course in college algebra contribute to the problem solving category of work readiness more than a foreign language course? Along that same line of research, a study could assess the impact of general education courses on the work readiness of other professional graduates, such as education, law, or engineering. This research should also be extended to other locations to determine if location, size, or reputation of the university affects the perception of work readiness in new business-liberal arts graduates.

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MARKETING BRAND MEANINGS IN INSTAGRAM: THE CASE OF SPANISH QUALITY CHEESE LABELS

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POSITION PAPER

Food-related research has identified a wide range of meanings embraced by food, some being related to identity, culture, production, and consumption (Hall and Mitchel, 2000), food as symbol of social status (Frochot, 2013) or sustainability (Everett and Aitchison, 2008), to name but a few. Existing research, nevertheless, has paid less attention to the relationships between local (food) products and social media, which were mostly focused on the case of wine (Canovi and Pucciarelli, 2019), leaving room to further explore this potential and engage with customers through social media marketing (Li et al., 2021). As a matter of fact, the use of social media, to communicate and market food heritages and practices, has proven to be crucial for protecting and promoting the tangible and intangible meanings attached to cuisine (i.e., Fusté-Forné and Filimon, 2021; Lee et al., 2014). One of the most used tools are visual images (i.e., Frochot, 2013; Ingrassia et al., 2022), Instagram being a good example of how social media become a vehicle for communicating brand meanings, stimulating food-based cultural identity and, ultimately, creating value for the cheese brands' stakeholders, within a marketing framework.

We analyze the role of social media as a marketing strategy used by local food producers to promote their brands and associated meanings and culture. With a special focus on Instagram and cheese brands, this research aims to identify most prominent 'cheese meanings' in social media and how they contribute to enhance a 'sense of place', among others.

Building on a qualitative framework, ten official Spanish cheese quality labels with active Instagram accounts were analyzed (N=2,229 pictures posted in Instagram in the period 2014-2020), and six main visual categories with their meanings were identified: product (38.6%), natural heritage (10.1%), socialization and status (9.1%), cultural heritage (8.3%), experiential events (6.0%), and miscellanea (28%). In addition, twenty-four mutually exclusive sub-categories were also defined. Findings also show that cheese brands' marketing promotes both the consumption of cheese and the desire to visit its place of origin; brands rely mostly on their own promotion efforts, rather than the promotion made by others; solidarity items have a scarce presence indicating that sustainability and social issues need more visibility in social media. Overall, findings indicate that an enormous potential exists to better reflect cheese as a local identity factor and enhancer of a destination's attraction. From this perspective, this research could expand the understanding of cheese-based social media marketing by intertwining it with food(cheese)-based tourism as a factor of destination marketing.

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THE EFFICACY OF HUMOR IN ANTI-CHILDHOOD OBESITY ADVERTISING

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POSITION PAPER

Obesity has become a troubling medical issue over past decades, and the rise of childhood obesity is perhaps its most unfortunate aspect. Estimates suggest that one of every eight children is obese and that obese children are more likely to be obese later in childhood and all the way up through adulthood.

Childhood obesity can lead to negative physical outcomes, but also mental ones. Childhood obesity can lead to negative self-concept and also lead to stigmatization; with such negative outcomes, childhood obesity has been heavily combatted with advertising by public policy groups and the medical field. The jury is still out on what the most effective executional elements to use in childhood obesity advertising would be. Recent research has found that negatively toned advertising is not as effective as positively-valenced ads in combatting childhood obesity and one aspect that could be utilizing to make an ad both positive and memorable is humor. While humor can have a decidedly negative or disparaging aspect, we would assume that *prima facie* this would not be an effective choice. Rather, we were interested in exploring positively-toned humor.

Obesity is technically the medical term but various terms have been (and could be) used in obesity-reduction advertising. Academic studies have produced conflicting results as to what term is better accepted by obese individuals. Various studies have explored the use of the term “obese” versus “fat” (and others), but we theorized that “higher weight” might be a more acceptable term that either since it’s not the medical term nor a negatively-viewed term that might cause offense.

Humor is a very common executional element that can often produce positive advertising outcomes, but also certainly can provoke backlash and negative outcomes if employed poorly. Generally speaking, humor has mixed effects on advertising outcomes but remains a popularly used technique. There are different types of humor (and underlying theories of humor) but it seems obvious that the humor should be a positive, affective type versus a dark, disparaging one, but less obvious would be if the humor should generate from the child (e.g., the child joking) or from perhaps a parent (e.g., the parent making a joke).

Our sample consisted of online participants recruited by Survey Sampling International (SSI). The experimental survey was prepared utilizing Qualtrics Survey Software. Participants were instructed “Below there is an idea that an advertising agency has for an advertisement for an organization that fights childhood obesity. After you have had a few moments to look at this advertisement, the “forward” button will appear at the bottom, left-hand side of the page. You can then click on this button to move forward and answer questions.” The stimuli were variations of a fictitious public service announcement (PSA)-type advertisement purportedly from an agency called Children’s Health Foundation.

The independent variables were manipulated using various aspects of the advertisement. First, we manipulated the adjective in the headline of the advertisement. The headline, in large bold font, either featured a descriptor of (1) “higher weight,” (2) “fat”, or (3) “obese.” There was a basic control advertisement, an ad featuring a child with his mother holding their noses with a testimonial from the mother describing how they were trying to get her son healthy by eating better since “being (adjective) stinks worse than broccoli gas does!” The testimonial from the son simply said he was getting healthy, with the same joke, but did not feature any imagery of the mother.

Thus, the design was a 3 (headline adjective: fat vs. higher weight vs. obese) x 2 (models: child only vs child with mother) between-subjects study with a control advertisement with no humor and no models. We fielded it with a sample from Dynata (previously Survey Sampling International).

We are in the process of formally investigating results. Preliminary manipulation checks suggest the humor was operationalized well, with no interaction effect with model type. The key findings are that the humor does indeed

provide superior attitudinal, emotional, and behavior results versus a non-humorous control advertisement, but that “higher weight” is much more effective than “fat” or “obese” as a descriptor. Furthermore, humor that was attributed to the child was preferred over humor from the mother.

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I AM WHAT I POST? EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF STATUS CONSUMPTION IN THE SOCIAL CUSTOMER JOURNEY

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POSITION PAPER

The concept of “keeping up with the Joneses” has long penetrated and affected the customer journey of consumers alike. Historically, envy spurred consumer spending and can take credit for supporting a great deal of modern consumerism (Matt, 2013). One origin story of the phrase dates to 1913, in a comic strip titled, “Keeping Up with the Joneses, created by Arthur R. Momand, depicting a social climbing family who struggled to “keep up” with their neighbors. Today, consumers struggle to keep up with their followers or influences on social media platforms. The traditional customer journey has implemented status as a byproduct of the consumption stage pre web. Past studies have examined the conspicuous display of status using automobiles (Shukla, 2008), watches (Phau et al., 2009), clothing and sunglasses (O’Cass and Frost, 2002), and handbags (Grotts and Johnson, 2013). However, with the advancement of the internet, influx of social media influencers, and the frequency of posting to social media platforms, consumers can not only utilize products for status in the consumption stage of the customer journey but can utilize the appearance of status by posting to social media with products associated with status. Thus, this paper aims to explore a new phenomenon of status consumption and social media studying the allusion of status as a byproduct to posting on social media. This study attempts to fill the gap in literature by exploring the impact of posting products associated with status to personal social media pages, specifically Instagram.

The emergence of social media started as a unique way to connect with friends, family, and build community. Today, as each social networking platform has monetized, there has been a strong shift from networking to an advertising and shopping platform with extensive reach, low financial investment, and high return on consumer awareness. Customers choose to purchase products and services for many reasons. However, the customer travels through a process when deciding how to purchase a product or service. Several models have been developed over time on the topic of the customer decision journey. Most models illustrate some version of the pre-purchase stage, the purchase stage, and the post-purchase stage (Hanlon, 2019). The EBM model categorizes consumer decisions into three categories (Kalotra, 2022). The categories include psychological factors, personal factors, and environmental factors (Kalotra, 2022). The decision process will continuously change over time (Valentini, Montaguti, & Neslin, 2011). This means that today, customers purchase differently than customers did 10 years ago or even 20 years ago. The internet, technology, and social media have transformed the way customers travel through the purchase process. Further, the consumer decision journey continues to evolve to now include status consumption through social media. Status consumption is the “process of gaining status or social prestige from the acquisition and consumption of goods that the individual and significant others perceive to be high in status” (O’Cass and Frost, 2002, p. 68).

Like most things, change is inevitable. Change happens constantly in our world and in business. The way consumers shop, and the journey consumers take has changed (Hamilton, Ferraro, Haws, & Mukhopadhyay, 2020). Consumers have different tools to use during the shopping process (Forbus, 2020). Today, these tools include a strong presence of social media. Over its relatively short lifespan circa 1997, social media has changed and morphed from its original purpose (Hanlon, 2019). Social media has been around for decades, but the major platforms began to develop in the late 1990’s. First with the failed venture, sixdegrees.com, then followed by the successful launch of MySpace in 2003 (Hanlon, 2019). This quickly accepted form of community was replicated by more attempts for applications of user generated content and the concept of electronic word of mouth (Voramontri & Klieb, 2018). Social media has now shifted into an advertising and branding avenue. What began as a way to connect with family, friends, to meet new people, and network with others now has evolved to tools capable of immense impact on both the consumer side and brand side of the customer journey.

With the evolution of the consumer journey and dynamic changes associated with social media, this study intends to explore the impact of the appearance of status without the purchase stage in the customer journey. A major challenge

for marketers today consists of understanding how social media and the digital world influences the purchase journey of the consumer (Voramontri & Klieb, 2018). This study will add to the dynamic body of literature on status consumption and social media marketing. Historically, the customer journey did not include social influences. However, the customer journey today is impacted by those who interact with the decision maker in one or more phases of the journey shedding light on the desire of consumers to post indicators of attaining status (Hamilton, Ferraro, Haws, & Mukhopadhyay, 2020).

Together, the social customer journey and implications of posting on social media makes possible the perception of consumers adopting the allusion of status, without the need to physically purchase status laden items. The theoretical concept of symbolic self-completion, coined by Wicklund and Gollwitzer (1981), implies that consumers define themselves by using indicators of attainment. This study seeks to fill the gap in status consumption literature by exploring the possibility that due to social media posting, consumers do not need to purchase the product to benefit from status associations, they merely just need to post photos to their Instagram pages with the products.

This study will employ new methodology proposed by the Sage Handbook of Social Media Research Methods (2016). Instagram was selected as the social media platform for study due to its personal reputation for higher engagement with brands and its reputation as being the most visual social media platform in the world (Sloan and Quan-Haase, 2017). The researchers will categorize, count, and code, images available on public social media accounts of Gen Z consumers ages 18-24 due to their potential purchasing power, while the reach of Gen Z consists of people within the age group of 11-24 (Singh, Katoch, & Singh, 2022). Gen Z has grown up with the evolution of social media, this group spends a substantial portion of their day on technology and social media (Singh, Katoch, & Singh, 2022). Therefore, this age group has an immense connection with social media and this group's shopping behavior is demonstrated through social media (Singh, Katoch, & Singh, 2022). A goal of 6,000 public posts has been set to evaluate their hashtag usage. Hashtags have been found to show distinct meaning and usage patterns on Instagram enabling its ability to be a strong research platform. The persistence of posting, visibility, searchability, and interpretability all provide rich information ripe for viewing the human experience (Sloan and Quan-Haase, 2017).

Historically status consumption could only manifest in the post purchase stage of the customer journey however, due to the dynamically increasing use of social media as a means of status consumption it is important to explore the impacts of posting is being on the customer journey. The results of this study have implications for both academics and industry professionals alike. This writing reflects the early stages of a continued study on the consumer journey, social media, and practical implications of posting is being, a phrase coined by the researchers. Data analysis will begin with a review of current literature, and an analysis of content related to status consumption within social media platforms. Through analyzing content posted on Instagram, findings may demonstrate an important gap in literature to be explored of an impactful consumer touchpoint in the post web customer journey.

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THE INFLUENCE OF IMPERMANENCE AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE ON CONSUMER WELL-BEING

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POSITION PAPER

The Buddhist teaching on impermanence describes the fact that all things arise and pass, and that all things are changing in nature. Hence, for Buddhists, striving to own or control things that one can hold on perpetually is futile in the end (Mick, 2017). The current research intends to explore to what extent consumers are aware that everything is in flux; how this awareness and acceptance of impermanence impacts the consumer's perceived scarcity, peace of mind, and overall well-being.

Past research argued that impermanence awareness can lead to heightened stress and anxiety, thus decreasing the degree of happiness (Lindsay & Creswell, 2019). Impermanence acceptance, on the other hand, recognizes the transitory nature of all life experiences, including suffering, allowing an individual to endure or even embrace pain and loss. In addition, impermanence acceptance views all impermanence and vulnerability of life with heightened clarity, and thus does not reject or suppress any negative experiences but channels them to personal growth (Kumar, 2005). Therefore, the following hypotheses are developed:

H1a: Impermanence awareness is negatively related to consumer well-being.

H1b: Impermanence acceptance is positively related to consumer well-being.

Peace of Mind (PoM) measures the experiences of inner peace with harmony. Cultivating impermanence, according to Buddhist psychology, can provide people with confidence and peace when things change, or unexpected life events occur (Hanh 1999). When people come to realize and accept the normalcy of change in every aspect of life, they will be more in harmony with the natural order of the interdependent and changing flow of life, including living, aging, and dying (Coleman & Jinpa 2008; Fernandez-Campos, Roca & Yaden. 2021). Thus, we propose

H2a: Impermanence awareness is negatively related to consumer peace of mind.

H2b: Impermanence acceptance is positively related to consumer peace of mind.

Consumers experience resource scarcity, namely "a discrepancy between one's current level of resources and a higher, more desirable reference point." (Cannon, Goldsmith, & Roux, 2018) in their daily lives. Recognizing the changing nature of all things, one may be more sensitive to any type of resource scarcity. On the other hand, those who embrace Buddhist teachings on impermanence advocate against having or controlling because it is deemed futile and can cause suffering. With a lower or no desire for resource ownership, they are less likely to develop a sense of scarcity. One may further believe the current predicament of lack of resources is temporary and can pass thus developing hopes for relief in the future. Thus, we hypothesize:

H3a: Impermanence awareness is positively related to consumer-experienced resource scarcity.

H3b: Impermanence acceptance is negatively related to consumer-experienced resource scarcity.

A total of three hundred and twenty-seven individuals from the USA participated in this study through Amazon Mechanical Turk (63.3% female, mean age of 36.44, 76.1% white, and 59.3% employed). Amazon credit was provided as a reward for filling out the questionnaire. The measures of impermanence awareness and impermanence acceptance are developed by Fernandez-Campos, Roca, & Yaden (2021). The measures of dependent variables, including consumer well-being, consumer peace of mind, and the experienced resource scarcity measures are all adapted to established constructs developed and used by previous research. General demographic control variables are measured including age, gender, ethnicity (white and non-white), SES, and status of employment (employed and unemployed).

Correlations and regression analyses were conducted to understand the relationships among the measured variables and to test the hypotheses. Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to test all the hypotheses, with all control

variables (age, gender, ethnicity, SES, and employment) entered in Step 1, and impermanence awareness and impermanence acceptance entered in Step 2.

Impermanence awareness and acceptance showed no correlation to each other ($r=-0.08$, $p=0.16$), showing that the two variables are discrete measures of an impermanence mindset. Regression analyses show after controlling for all the demographic variables, impermanence awareness is negatively associated with consumer well-being ($\beta=-0.17$, $p=0.06$) and consumer peace of mind ($\beta=-0.17$, $p=0.06$) but positively associated with consumer experienced resource scarcity ($\beta=0.31$, $p<0.001$). Impermanence acceptance is positively associated with consumer well-being ($\beta=0.16$, $p<0.001$) and consumer peace of mind ($\beta=0.40$, $p<0.001$) but negatively associated with consumer-experienced source scarcity ($\beta=-0.14$, $p<0.001$). Therefore, all hypotheses are supported.

Our research sheds important light on understanding how two brand-new psychological dimensions in consumer research — impermanence awareness and impermanence acceptance, play a role in consumer well-being and happiness. Current consumer psychology relies predominantly on several established streams, including cognitive psychology, social psychology, and behavioral decision theory (Mick, 2017). This paper contributes to the current literature of consumer wellbeing by introducing the concept of impermanence from Buddhism and revealing the two distinct dimensions of impermanence. It further establishes the associations between impermanence and several important constructs related to consumer wellbeing. This paper offers a fresh perspective on understanding important consumer issues and has broadened the theoretical frameworks to include alternative approaches that are better known to explain and solve these issues.

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WEB3 IN HIGHER EDUCATION: APPLICATIONS FOR MARKETING STUDENTS

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POSITION PAPER

Web3 may be in a lull, but it is not dead. It will revive. Students and faculty need quality education about the tools, or they will learn the hard way and may fail. Leadership in higher education is critical today because of the rapid movement to decentralized processing platforms.

Web1 was about creating digital content in one direction, similar to a broadcast model using web pages and email. Web2 was transforming the conversations to user-generated content and platform-centric.

Web3 is on the verge of dividing up the conversations by communities or sub-connections with the addition of commerce and transparency. Who remembers the start of AOL? If so, we are now in the “dial-up” phase of Web3.

Web3 is an open movement in an ownership economy. To broadly decentralize the internet, tools allow for individual ownership of identity and data. So, what are the main trends facing Marketing Educators who need to understand and teach this content? Here are some of the main factors to consider.

1. We are in the early days, called the Wild West times of Web3/Crypto. Thought leadership is at a premium. The Renaissance and now are transformative times, and there is a sociocultural transformation. Ledger-based technology (i.e., contracts) allows for new ways of ownership is the new technology, similar to the printing press and how it changed the world. It made the world hierarchy flatter. In Web2, consumers have outsourced their identity to a few companies (Google, Apple, Facebook, etc.). Permissionless protocol requires a smart contract. In Web 3, code is replaced with community.
2. Three main platforms: Bitcoin, Ethereum, and Solana.
3. DAO. Think of Clay. One can build ANYTHING. One person can build it. Examples here:
DAO = Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (5-10 years from the mainstream).
 - a. US Constitution DAO- Sotheby’s auctioned off The US Constitution. \$20 million was raised by a group of individuals formed to buy it, but a billionaire outbid this group.
 - b. PizzaDAO was a centralized DAO, and became the world’s biggest pizza party.
4. What is blockchain? A block is stored information. Ex. Block 145. They are connected. It is like a storage unit with information inside. No one person has the key to all of the blocks.
5. Tokens: They can be earned, bought, sold, or traded.
6. The Crypto Social Media Platform of choice is Discord, with Twitter in second place for discussions.
7. What about the NFT secondary marketplace? There is a secondary market for NFTs, but not every transaction awards the creator. There are workarounds so that the creator does not get paid. This space is full of landmines. When one buys an NFT, it is more than an image; it is whatever the community decides it should/could be. It is collectibles such as things like Beanie Babies. Token-gating or setting up exclusive access, is the next level of this ledger technology.
8. The Metaverse is where we can live, work, interact, and play, from anywhere and at any time. One can have the same memories of the experience in real life. For example, job postings in the Metaverse include: Explorer/Tour Guides, Advertising Experts, Graduate school lecturer, Brand Storytellers, Digital fashion Advisors, coaches, and police, etc.
9. Gartner’s Technology Innovation curve shows that we are very early for cryptocurrencies and wallets. It is about two years away, so consider 2025 when it will become more mainstream.
10. What is an NFT? How can professors teach students the basics of it? A digital asset that one can buy, sell or trade with cryptocurrency and lives on the blockchain. What makes NFT’s valuable? The value of an NFT is subjective based on supply and demand, marketing (hype) community, and FOMO.

Four kinds of NFTs

PFPs (profile picture) and avatars, collectibles, music NFT, and gamified NFT

Class Project Example: 10K project. Attributes to consider for a student’s NFTs

- Number of traits
- Rarity
- Total number of NFTs (scarcity)
- Price

- Randomness
- Inclusiveness

Here is an example of how to create 10,000 different images for NFT's: Eleven backgrounds, 14 skin tones, 27 clothes, 25 hairstyles, 23 facial features, 13 face accessories, 17 pairs of earrings, 15 necklaces, nine mouths, seven lip colors, and 28 eye combinations would make 10,000 NFTs.

Students of marketing know how to influence. For example, in gaining and sustaining a community, they can do the following activities:

- Build a substantial audience of supporters.
- Create and instill trust and be transparent.
- Show the community why they should be excited to participate.
- Advance the mindset of those who do not want to understand this concept.
- Research who is already in that space and tactics that work.

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INTRODUCING SILO THINKERS TO A HOLISTIC MINDSET IN ANALYTIC APPLICATIONS

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POSITION PAPER

Developing modern analytical business leaders can prove challenging. The University of Tennessee recently invested in murals across the state. The campaign entitled “Everywhere you look, UT” aims to spread awareness to Tennesseans through things its citizens and visitors value, such as historic downtown buildings, water towers, barns, and, most notably, silos. The most prominent example of the campaign is close to our UT Martin campus: a 65-foot-tall UT-orange mural on a grain bin, a silo. We recently saw this silo mural on my drive to work. It’s influential, well-placed, crisp, and recognizable, with the Tennessee orange logo popping off the weathered galvanized tin grain bin. The perfect advertising medium flanked by corn fields to boost the awareness of the state university and its rural reach. The university for every Tennessean. As we passed the grain bin landmark, we immediately thought—now, if we could just get our students’ minds out of there! The markedly successful, playfully ironic campaign begs an important question: how do business educators get our students out of a silo mindset?

Data-driven decision-making and quantitative justifications are somewhat new to our undergraduate students. As a result, we have noticed that they tend to avoid relying on solid analytics when making decisions and instead provide justifications that lean on feelings and intuition. Even when our students have numeric decision-making tools to make integrative decisions, they often shrink into their disciplinary silo and avoid leveraging those data to make a call. We wonder if today’s marketing major feels the quant wave that will wash over their career. In the realm of analytical applications in the classroom, how can we best train students to become holistic thinkers, so they become adept at capturing the big, multi-disciplinary, cross-functional picture instead of sitting inside their silos?

In a Harvard Business Review podcast entitled “Best Practices for Data Analytics,” Tom O’Toole, the executive director of the Program for Data Analytics at Kellogg and clinical professor of marketing at Northwestern, provides a multi-scenario analysis of ideal analytics practices in business. He warns that actual data science can’t happen in a silo. Instead, he suggests an integrative approach within organizations across areas, operations, and processes are best. If, as educators, we know that organizations function best in an integrative analytical world, our best approach with students should include encouraging and, more directly, training them to understand key analytics both within their major and those outside their major.

The basis for our future study will include quantitative and qualitative data from undergrad students enrolled in an undergraduate capstone course that employs an integrative business simulation within multi-disciplinary student groups. The simulation provides standardized quantitative metrics across four main areas that the student groups ideally use to make integrative decisions: Finance (profitability, leverage, and stock price), Production (ranks, contribution margin, item costs, plant utilization, and days of working capital), Marketing (market share in units and %, price determinants, brand awareness, and sales rep accessibility levels), and Research & Development (automation and employee productivity). Each multi-discipline team makes decisions across multiple rounds to maximize performance as measured by the following: cumulative profit, market share (% and units), stock price, market cap, ROE, ROS, ROA, and Asset Turnover.

Traditionally, students in this course have informally expressed their resistance to using numbers to make decisions. More specifically, they resist working outside their discipline to help drive organizational decisions for their simulated company. For example, it is common for marketing and management students to generally be more resistant to utilizing analytics than accounting or finance students. However, most business majors seem resistant to learning or using metrics from a function outside their major. While the simulation is valuable and provides the necessary data to support integrative, analytical decision-making, the silo mindset prevails. Student groups normally self-select to their disciplines, and the metrics that their function would most readily rely on are the ones they examine and understand. As a result, groups often relegate questions to one group member who can answer from the respective discipline instead of demonstrating an integrative, data-driven rationale to reach conclusions.

Glassdoor (2021) lists “Analytical Thinking and Complex Problem-Solving” as the top quality of successful new hires in business. Our reliance on data to make decisions will only increase. Likewise, the ability to integrate concepts in decision-making settings can provide students with a competitive advantage. To tear down the silos built through the classroom-only higher education experience, we are becoming more reliant on simulations, community service projects, and other experiential learning tools. Fewer silos mean that students can push their boundaries past their formal major into other areas to recognize opportunities or outside areas of interest, all while maximizing their contribution to any organization.

To understand how to approach the pedagogical changes necessary to minimize students’ silo mindsets, they will answer the following questions: 1. How well do you know analytical tools/metrics within your major? (e.g., for a marketing student: brand equity, CLV, or market share %), 2. How well do you understand analytical tools/metrics in other disciplines? (e.g., for a marketing student: ROI, ROA, Asset Turnover). Next, the instructor will lecture on the silo vs. the holistic mindset. Including examples of holistic, routine, data-driven decisions that entry-level employees make will be essential. The instructor will then introduce the students to all metrics used in making analytical decisions within the simulation. Quantitative assessment through quizzing/assignments could provide specific feedback on their comprehension of the metrics and how they are calculated, applied, and used in decision-making.

A focus on integrative thinking in partnership with a quantitative decision-making approach can help to prepare our students for their first jobs. It can also fundamentally shape how they build their networks with business program colleagues outside their major. Ideally, anything we can do to tear down the silos will help students develop a more holistic mindset.

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NUMBER OF TRANSACTIONS IN THE FIRST HOUR: AN EARLY INDICATOR OF DAILY SALES PERFORMANCE FOR INDEPENDENT RETAILERS

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POSITION PAPER

Locally owned and operated companies, such as clothing boutiques, gift shops, flower shops, and book stores, have a substantial impact on the community in which they are located. They are, however, particularly vulnerable to the potentially detrimental effects that the economic climate as a whole can have. For instance, in order to battle inflation, business owners may regularly embrace flexible employee work schedules in order to maximize the effectiveness of their overall operational expenditures. But, in order to be able to construct a schedule that is both flexible and productive for employees, it is necessary to have some level of foresight into the daily performance of business. For instance, if the owners or managers of a store are able to forecast that a particular day will be very busy, they may need additional temporary assistance either with delivering customer service or simply with maintaining the store.

In order to facilitate the goals of this strategy, a statistical model of daily sales has been built. We collect daily sales data from a nursery store that is independently owned. The information regarding each transaction is recorded by the shop using the check-out system provided by Square. Each transaction contains specific information such as the date and time it took place, the amount paid, and the name of the item that was purchased. We are able to perform an hourly calculation of the number of transactions in addition to a daily calculation of the total number of business dealings. For instance, on September 7, 2022, there was only one transaction throughout the first business hour. Because buying plants is a seasonal activity, we use the month and the day of the week as dummy variables in our analysis. Poisson regression is utilized given that the sales transaction is a count data point.

The findings indicate that an early predictor of the daily performance of sales can be the number of transactions that took place during the first hour of business. There is a positive correlation between the performance of the first hour of operation and the performance of the sales on the same day.

According to the findings, the sales performance for the same day may also be predicted based on the number of transactions that took place during the second or third hour of the same day. The managers of the retail chain are able to receive feedback on the performance of the sales in the first hour, which allows them to swiftly establish a flexible work schedule across the various store locations.

The information collected from a single nursery store was used for this investigation. In further studies, it will be possible to conduct the same analysis on various sorts of establishments, such as those selling clothing and books, grocery stores, and even giant box stores.

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN CAREER BUILDING THROUGH DIVERSIFICATION: FINDING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH BUSINESS FOCUSED STUDY ABROAD

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POSITION PAPER

The environment in today's workforce activities has definitely undergone a revolutionary change. Whether it is employers or employees, the human resource management situation is challenging, perhaps more challenging than businesses have been used to for several decades. Businesses are faced with "quiet quitting" (Madell, September 22, 2022), "great resignation" (Parker and Horowitz, March 9, 2022) "quiet firing" (Comaford, October 16, 2022) and employees are inflicted with lack of "work-life balance" (Lupu and Ruiz-Castro, January 29, 2021). Why did this happen? Because people have become demotivated and businesses have not found new solutions. A potential solution for employees or former employees, basically the workforce, for financial growth could be diversification – looking for pursuing new product opportunities in new markets (Ansoff, 1957).

Quiet quitting is doing the bare minimum at work so employees can pursue a better work-life balance (Madell, September 22, 2022). "... Pew Research Center survey finds that low pay, a lack of opportunities for advancement and feeling disrespected at work are the top reasons why Americans quit their jobs last year," reported Parker and Horowitz (March 9, 2022). Quiet firing is "where a boss removes responsibilities, status, connection to others, and more, in an attempt to get the employee to quit" (Comaford, October 16, 2022).

Ansoff (1957) wrote, diversification is "a simultaneous departure from the present product line and the present market structure ... diversification generally requires new skills, new techniques, and new facilities. As a result, it almost invariably leads to physical and organizational changes in the structure of the business which represent a distinct break with past business experience." In the context of this paper, the individual is the organization. Therefore, new perspectives on the part of the individual are paramount for diversification.

From the employee viewpoint, advances in Artificial Intelligence developments and applications can be a serious threat to meaningful employment in the very near future for large number of employees. "By 2030, 45 million Americans could lose their jobs to AI automation, representing about one-quarter of the workforce," wrote Kolmar (Feb. 7, 2023). Therefore, current employees and potential employees would need to develop alternative plans for continued, stable and sustainable income generation.

Younger generations do not appear to accept the work culture that earlier generations put up with, who either due to self-motivation or due to financial necessity. Perhaps the wide availability of affordable social media allows the younger generation to acquire confidence or hopes or both to pursue personal aspirations. They also develop access to support groups for encouragement to determine the course of their lives,

One way both parties can improve their state of affairs would be through jointly organized onsite benchmarking in short-term business-focused study abroad programs. Through such short-term customized business-focused study abroad programs, participants can learn about alternative management solutions, markets, product, and even different usages for the same products. There is opportunity therein to observe different approaches, different reactions and responses, and resultantly develop novel ideas for improving productivity. They can also explore ethnic markets comprised of expatriates from their home country.

At the same time, current and potential employees can explore a meaningful alternative for income generation. For example, due to technology development gaps between nations, products at different levels of technology can be traded across countries. Additionally, there can be price differences for the same product across countries that can be used as an opportunity for trade between countries. Biyani (September 22, 2022) provides a list of 82 business operations that

entrepreneurs can explore abroad. Several of these from the list could be explored as an alternative income stream generative plan in a foreign country. However, it is imperative that one knows the target country for business and operations and it is invaluable to build a network there. Short-term business-focused study abroad programs would be a way to explore opportunities and build networks.

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TEACHING ANALYTICS IN ONLINE FORMAT: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

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POSITION PAPER

When I joined University of Georgia as an assistant professor, I was appointed to teach digital marketing analytics. Digital marketing analytics is an elective 4000-level course for students who are juniors or seniors. I had almost no teaching experience at that time and preparing for every session of the course was taking me a lot of time. Although I would spend so much time preparing the lectures, I noticed that students get bored easily and are not engaged with the class materials especially when it comes to Google analytics.

Different active learning techniques have been explored in the previous research (e.g. Armbruster et al. 2009; Bransford et al. 1999; Prince 2004). These methods include encouraging students to interact with the material, pausing and asking them questions, motivating students to work together in groups or discuss case studies. Another important aspect of teaching a social science course is integrating technology with the course materials and helping students with the hand-on experiences (Hanover Research 2013). Teaching courses with dynamic curriculum such as digital marketing analytics requires a deep integration of innovation and creativity with teaching methods (Sivakumar 2018).

These techniques could be helpful when teaching in-person but after the start of pandemic back in March 2020 and the shift of classes to online format, engaging students with the class material became even more challenging. And, that's when I had to come up with a different engagement technique.

Brief context of the situation: One of the biggest challenges that I had in my class was keeping students engaged when teaching Google analytics. Google analytics is a tracking tool by Google that helps businesses track any users' interactions on their website. Although it has a user-friendly interface, getting familiar with the tool and being comfortable with it can take some time.

I noticed most of the students in my class are aware of the importance of Google analytics and very eager to learn the tool, but only few of them have some amount of exposure to a tracking tool. And that's why I started coming up with group activities related to the concepts I teach every session. Dividing students to random groups and asking them to finish an activity with their group members is a great way to engage students in the in-person sessions. Also, I could walk around and check on each group to see if they have any questions. I implemented this technique on my in-person classes before the start of pandemic and it had a great impact on engaging students with the class material specially the Google analytics part.

The shift of classes to the online format with the start of pandemic made this implementation challenging. Although I could divide students to random breakout rooms in Zoom, there was no guarantee that they are engaged with the activity, and also there was not enough time for me to join every breakout room to check on them. So, most of the students would end up not engaging with the activity or not asking their questions.

Solution or recommended course of action: To prevent both Zoom fatigue and increase the student's engagement with class activities, I decided to break down the activities to small ones and give students a bit more time to finish it. In addition, I would note down all the steps with detailed instruction of what they need to do in their breakout rooms. These adjustments were extremely helpful in increasing the students' engagement with both the activity and their group members. Although they would do a fewer number of activities than the in-person sessions, they could be more engaged with the hands-on experiences of Google analytics. And that is the main goal when teaching Google analytics to make sure students are comfortable using the tools interface.

Challenges: One of the main challenges can be how to break the regular class activities to smaller ones that can still have some learning values to students and also interesting enough to keep them engaged. The other challenge is joining the breakout rooms and checking on the students. When breaking down the activities, they would need less time to be completed since they are becoming much simpler than their regular versions. In such case, it might be challenging

to join all the breakout rooms within the time they are working on the activity, and it can lead to some groups not asking their questions and preventing them from making progress in the activity.

Suggestions for future research: One area of improvement can be finding an effective way to engage each individual student. Dividing them into breakout rooms does not guarantee that every student in the group will participate and engage with the activity the same as others. There might be some students that carry the burden of others and coming up with a solution to engage each and every student with the activity can be left for the future research.

The other area of improvement can be how to motivate students to follow you when you are working with Google analytics. It has been cases that I go to different reports in Google analytics or create a dashboard... but there are only few students who follow my instructions and do the same on their part. Coming up with such solution would be great.

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PEDAGOGY VS. ANDRAGOGY: DEVELOPING PROFESSIONALS IN THE CLASSROOM

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POSITION PAPER

Traditional education such as lecturing has left a gap between what is taught in the classroom and what is expected from industry. In the traditional “banking” concept of education, the instructor deposits information and students receive and memorize that information (Freire, 2020). Most people are familiar with the term pedagogy, which focuses on teaching children and centers learning on the essential stages that a child must accomplish before being able to move on to the next stage. This type of learning refers to activities where the instructor transfers knowledge to students through typically passive strategies such as lectures, research papers, and individual assignments.

Fewer people are familiar with the term andragogy, which focuses on teaching adults and centers learning on the necessary skills or knowledge to further personal and professional development. Andragogy is built around learner autonomy and promotes self-directed learning and personal freedom rather than teacher authority. According to Pratt (1993), there are the two implicit principles of learning under andragogical theory. First, knowledge is not passively received; rather it is actively constructed by the learning. Second, learning is interpreted, integrated, and transformed by one’s experiential world through an interactive process.

Marketing faculty members who strive to educate and prepare marketing students for the reality of the workplace should replace pedagogical methods like banking knowledge or information transferal with andragogical problem-based, experiential, and active learning methods. Relinquishing control that is easily found in traditional lecture, the instructor no longer makes deposits of information into students in which they receive, file, and store these deposits (Freire, 2020). Instead, the instructor engages in a dialogue with students, who are no longer passive participants, but co-investigators, jointly responsible for learning together.

The authors propose that a philosophical shift to andragogical principles when teaching college students would improve the outcomes and student experiences. In particular, client-based projects (CBPs) provide a particularly relevant and effective way of both deepening marketing knowledge and better preparing students for their first industry jobs. CBPs have been recognized for their value as an experiential learning device and as a way to increase critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

A preliminary study was conducted at four regional universities (two public and two private) in the United States during the spring 2022 semester. The study was conducted in thirteen upper-level marketing and communications courses. A multidimensional measurement device was used, intended to assess participants’ perspective on the importance of the eight Career Readiness Competencies developed by the National Association of College and Employers (NACE). Participants were asked to consider each competency, along with the definition, and rate each in terms of how essential these skills are for college graduates, in general, to successfully enter a workplace. A five-point likert-like scale was used from 1-not essential to 5-absolutely essential. Participants were also asked to rate themselves on the eight Career Readiness Competencies on a five-point likert-like scale ranging from 1-not at all proficient to 5-extremely proficient.

After the survey was administered, the data was analyzed to assess the differences of students’ perceived NACE competencies pre-CBP compared to post-CBP. A series of t-tests were used to assess any significant differences between groups. For the eight essential skills, there was no significant difference between the pre and post tests for any of the essential skills. This means that students rated the importance of the eight NACE essential skills similar on the pretest as they had on the post-test. For the self-rating, there was a significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test for six of the eight NACE competencies including: Critical thinking; Communication; Leadership; Professionalism; Career and self-development; and Equity & inclusion. In other words, the students rated themselves

higher after the CBP than before. There was not a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test for the self-rated teamwork skills or the technology skills.

CBPs are an excellent method to increase experiential learning and connect the institution with the external business community, and are in keeping with active, andragogical principles. Students develop critical career readiness competencies, which the authors argue can improve not only the students' job prospects but also their enjoyment and content application. CBPs can result in a trove of social media-friendly narratives for recruitment, particularly relevant as universities face increasing pressure to provide value and impact. That said, CBPs are challenging to implement successfully. Simply providing students with a "real-world" client is not enough. Effective CBP-based courses take preparation and intentionality.

Faculty should first recognize that institutional hurdles may exist and should be considered before incorporating CBPs into courses. A flexible, entrepreneurial culture is necessary for encouraging faculty creativity and providing the autonomy needed to solicit clients and adjust mid-stream, as necessary. Pedagogically speaking, there must be recognition that career readiness is not mutually exclusive with academics and is not just the job of the career services department. Specifically, an evaluation of institutional, programmatic, and course-level outcomes may be needed.

Further, CBPs require significant faculty flexibility and dedication to developing student career competencies as well as identifying and managing external clients. Finding and matching potential organizations to appropriate courses can be time-consuming. Working with a real client places pressure on the quality of output delivered by the students, with higher stakes than traditional individual papers and exams. As such, the process is more iterative with students usually asked to do multiple rounds of revision. This means CBPs take a considerable portion of the semester, which can be challenging while simultaneously teaching course content. Additionally, it is vital to adequately plan for the unexpected and for student work to need more revision than anticipated. Given the inflexible nature of the semester schedule, building in a buffer of time for an additional round of revision or rehearsal is vital.

It is clear that the skill set required by faculty who choose to run CBPs is vast, and in some cases, may be quite different from the faculty's strengths and background. The authors have each benefitted from their years in the marketing industry, but not all faculty have those experiences upon which to draw. Before faculty can guide students in developing their career competencies, they must candidly assess their own. Departments may consider holding faculty training or offer co-teaching/shadowing to help those without professional industry experience to level up skills such as client management. Another option is industry externships, where faculty can observe and learn in a professional setting, as well as stay current in the field. Similar to gaining university buy-in on career-focused outcomes for students, institutional support is needed for faculty who seek this unique form of professional development.

Marketing students today need to graduate with content knowledge, but they also need the ability to work in a team, analyze and solve problems, communicate, take initiative, and lead (NACE, 2021). Students are not getting these career-readiness skills through traditional lectures in the college classroom. This position is supported by a 2021 NACE study which reports a major gap between student perceptions of their own proficiencies and employer rated recent grad proficiencies across most of the competencies required for career readiness (Gray, 2022). Marketing faculty who incorporate experiential learning, specifically client-based projects, into their courses give students the opportunity to walk into the course as a novice and walk out as a professional.

While this paper addresses the value and benefits for client-based projects in building career-readiness skills in the context of marketing education, it has several limitations. First, the chosen methodology is limited based on the four authors' classroom experiences. Therefore, there may be a possible bias toward recent client-based projects rather than older projects. Second, the study is limited by its relatively small sample size and its specific context. Specifically, the research is based on the marketing students within the field of business and communications in small to medium sized regional universities in the upper Midwest and Northeast of the United States. We encourage further investigation in other regions of the United States, in other countries, and with students representing culturally diverse populations. Future studies could also replicate our study in other business-related courses.

While there are significant challenges, the authors posit that client-based projects (CBPs) provide a particularly relevant and effective way of both deepening marketing knowledge and better preparing students for their first industry jobs. With the learner at the center and using andragogical principles, marketing faculty who incorporate client-based

projects into their courses give learners the opportunity to walk into the course as a student and walk out as a professional.

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CRYPTO CASES FOR MARKETING EDUCATION

Mary Beth McCabe, Point Loma Nazarene University

POSITION PAPER

What companies are thriving in crypto economy? On Feb. 7, 2023 a Bored Ape Yacht Club NFT sold for the equivalent of \$1.31 million (NFT, 2023). Who says crypto is dead? Because the transactions lives on the blockchain, this is transparent and you can look it up to confirm.

Crypto Case studies are being written and used by academics who understand the Web 3.0 space. Basically, they are built on “smart contracts” whereby the concepts of decentralization, distributed ledgers and token-based economics replaces the currencies that our institutions have relied upon for centuries. Ironically, the need for data security, scalability and privacy for users has been brought about by the large tech companies, many of which are using these tools now. Decentralized, peer to peer, contractual privacy by choice was called Web 3 by ETH’s Gavin Wood in 2014 (Wiles, 2022).

Here are some case studies you can use in your marketing classes, and ask students to find the marketing lessons surrounding these and other cases you create.

Case 1: Gary Vee

Gary Vee’s community will hold a Mega event in May 2023, bolstered by his NFT community. He has transitioned from selling wine as a family business to being a social media influencer. His event in Indianapolis requires a Web 3 ticket. Expect a lot of hype, racing analogies as the Indy 500 is there. On the platform OpenSea, look for VeeFriends and see that he has a community created by Gary Vaynerchuk. It’s an NFT project around meaningful intellectual property and an extraordinary community. Based on the price of Ethereum, at \$1665. to a \$1. US, he has raised more than 100 million as of Feb, 2023.

Case 2: Duolingo

Duolingo helps to learn a new language through a mobile device, making it fun and accessible. Duolingo unlocks badges when you get to a certain level. Students can watch a video (YouTube 2023) to see how it works with a chatbot, using a mobile device. It’s a community of learners who pay a monthly subscription to access the highest content without ads. They earn loyalty points. Unlocking badges moves the user from Web 2 to Web 2.5, and close to Web3. Earn 33XP today to stay on track, where XP is the Duolingo currency.

Case 3: NBA Top Shot

With this NFT collectible, you can own video highlights of your favorite moments with your favorite players. It’s more than trading cards (a la baseball cards). Valuation has risen and plummeted and will continue like the stock market. The money that has traded in the past two years for these is worth more than the franchises themselves. Learn more at the NBA’s own news feed. It’s a real time feed of updates, pack drops, new features, challenges and key information for the global community of collectors that like the brand NBA. Fans can own their favorite NBA memories. \$1 Billion revenue by 500,000 traders. They don’t need a crypto wallet. It is a starting point for the sports industry. The top price paid for a LeBron James 2020 NBA finals NFT was \$230,000 as of 2022.

Other NFT cases of interest to marketers:

- LIT Project Two: Motion. NFT is a Gif. Expression is the linked to the price of the NFT. Robert Dinero’s facial expressions. See the photos of him and purchase the NFT.
- Jackson on Chain NFT: paint and the canvas fills up. You end up with a finished picture. Every time someone finishes a module on a course, they get a chance to earn points.
- Two Degrees NFT: if global warming reaches 2 degrees above average, this NFT will burn itself.
- Close Up toothpaste advertiser: immortalize your love on the blockchain, City Hall of Love at Decentraland. They get a marriage certificate sent to your wallet. Closeup toothpaste is creating this. City of Love, MetaMask wallet.
- Starbucks (token) loyalty program, Odyssey: They created a waitlist. Integrate in their existing loyalty. Nowhere do they mention NFT. No wallet needed. (Journey stamps, experiences)

- Cryptokitties NFT: because cats were popular back in 2017. They broke Ethereum. It was a fun game if you liked kittens, perhaps.
- POAPS (Proof of Audience Participation) NFT: replaces your old memory box with tickets, boarding passes, etc. Now you have a digital version of the ticket stubs. You can send it to a wallet or keep off the wallet.
- Bored Apes Yacht Club (BAYC) NFT: What they did worked as it's well-known example. Crypto dudes were the segment focus. Alt coins crowd was the behavior targeted. Aped into the coin, mooned, super rich, super bored, on a yacht to have a party. This was in line with the culture they were already talking about. The heroes were the dudes. The audience identified with the apes.

Crypto case studies can have a strong impact, surpassing other qualitative research (Gillham, 2000 p.101). In such a situation, the learning happens from specific facts, where there is no question about what happened as it is historical data. In presenting the facts, some generalizations can be made, since there is proof of what occurred, instead of a hypothesis.

Marketing Students can learn how to build a community around Web 3.0

- Create a strong audience of supporters.
- Build trust and be transparent (not butterflies and rainbows)
- Show them why they should be excited to be in your community.
- Change the mindset: Research who is already in that space and tactics that work.

Simons (2009) has tackled common misconceptions and addressed the questions often raised by students about writing case studies, including the motivation for creating them. However, when it comes to reliability, there is nothing better than having students create their own case studies like these. Students learn best from evidenced based activities such as writing cases themselves and sharing these lessons with peers.

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SEARCH FOR CAREER OPPORTUNITIES: NETWORKING STRATEGY

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POSITION PAPER

In today's highly competitive and uncertain world of employment, networking is a lucrative strategy to discover opportunities. Over 70% of job openings are filled through networking, many even before they are advertised (Wright, 2017). This paper explores networking and presents an athlete's incremental efforts in using the strategy towards the goal of meaningful employment.

Stringer (2020) lists the following factors to highlight the benefits of sharing knowledge with others: sharing knowledge leads to finding better ways of doing things; it builds a community and learning culture; it helps in retaining knowledge; it creates a feel-good factor; and it leads to collaboration and collective knowledge. In other words, sharing knowledge means to collaborate, to build alliances with each other.

Collaboration eventually leads into the creation of alliances, which are built by partners. The Harvard Business Review (Moss Kanter, 1994) calls being a 'good partner,' which is necessary to form a lasting and mutually beneficial alliance, a "key corporate asset," as this leads to the company having a "collaborative advantage," as meaningful and effective alliances provide the company with significant edges over their competition.

Throughout a multiple yearlong study of the HBR (Moss Kanter, 1994), they "uncovered three fundamental aspects of business alliances:

- They must yield benefits for the partners, but they are more than just the deal. They are living systems that evolve progressively in their possibilities. Beyond the immediate reasons they have for entering into a relationship, the connection offers the parties an option on the future, opening new doors and unforeseen opportunities.
- Alliances that both partners ultimately deem successful involve collaboration (creating new value together) rather than mere exchange (getting something back for what you put in). Partners value the skills each brings to the alliance.
- They cannot be "controlled" by formal systems but require a dense web of interpersonal connections and internal infrastructures that enhance learning."

The foundation of all of this is networking, which is "the process of making connections and building relationships" (Columbia University, n.d.). Just by the nature of it, however, this involves approaching new people, which is not that easy for many individuals.

Sharing information could get you into disadvantages and increases the chances of others to succeed, i.e., a shift in power from you to them. This is significant as we all are competing for the same resources of prestige, money, and success, which means that the other person we could share the information with is the competition. The positive outcomes, however, outweigh the negative sides of having to contact strangers many times. Valuable connections "can provide you with advice and contacts" (Columbia University, 2017), and hence open the doors for a great number of career opportunities.

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EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: USING REAL-LIFE ORGANIZATIONS TO ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING

*Dennis Sandler, Pace University
Mary Long, Pace University*

POSITION PAPER

Tell me and I forget, Teach me and I remember, Involve me and I will learn. ~ Benjamin Franklin, 1750

Involving students in real-life organizational problems is one way to improve the learning experience. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) outlines 6 high impact practices (HIPs), which are related to student learning and retention. “High-Impact Practices (HIPs) demand considerable time and effort, facilitate learning outside of the classroom, require meaningful interactions with faculty and students, encourage collaboration with diverse others, and provide frequent and substantive feedback. Participation can be life-changing” (Kuh, 2008). Two of these HIPs are Service Learning and Research with Faculty. The use of experiential learning in marketing has been reported in the literature (Billiot, 2014). The fast pace of change in the marketing environment, especially digital technologies, makes this an important issue. This panel will consider university attempts to incorporate these into their students’ experience.

Pace University is a large, urban university located in New York. It has developed a “Pace Path”, which all first-year students follow. This guides them through their undergraduate program so that they are able to integrate experiences inside and outside the classroom -- including professional work in fields related to the student’s career goals. The Pace Path incorporates academics, experiences such as internships and client consulting, and mentorship with faculty, alumni, and other students.

Courses use outside organizations as cases for students to work on. Pace has a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) which provides in-depth and confidential one-on-one business advisement, training and research to help small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs launch or grow their business, all at no cost to clients. This center, funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Although the SBDC is staffed by certified full-time business advisors, students (guided by faculty) can do marketing research and act as consultants for these businesses as part of course work. This requires a client who is willing to meet with the students at the beginning of the semester to provide background information and outline the research objectives. Students work as teams, with the best team presenting to the client at the end of the semester. Client projects have been run successfully both in online and in-person classes for undergraduate students in Consumer Behavior and Advanced Marketing Management.

There is also a student chapter of the American Marketing Association at the university, which has established a consulting group to work with outside clients. Students can also participate in a Case Competition run by the AMA each year, preparing a marketing plan for an outside sponsor of the competition. Pace has a program to bring Norwegian students to Pace for one year to complete their degrees; one of their requirements is to develop a marketing plan for a Scandinavian company to enter the US market. Pace has an advertising team which participates in the National Student Advertising Competition, organized by the American Advertising Federation. These students take 2 semester-long courses, working on a client project. All of these experiences give students hands-on experience with real-life organizations to help solve marketing issues.

Student evaluations of these learning experiences are very positive. The output of these projects have been used in interviews by students to showcase their skills. The panel will discuss these and other examples of universities working with outside organizations to address marketing problems, giving students the opportunity to apply material learned in the classroom. Increased use of marketing organizations for student projects, and the reporting of these experiences, will support faculty efforts to enhance student learning.

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CONTESTING MARKETING MYOPIA: MARKETING ADVISORY BOARD AS A CATALYST FOR CHANGE IN THE MARKETING PROGRAM

Michael Wiese, Point Loma Nazarene University
Christina Kalberg, Point Loma Nazarene University
Jamie Hess McIlwaine, Point Loma Nazarene University

POSITION PAPER

Theodore Levitt (1960, 1975) coined the term “marketing myopia.” His “manifesto” called for business leaders to look at their firms and their industries as if looking through “a window” and not “a mirror.” Levitt (1975) summarizes that “they (industry leaders) thought they were looking out the window at the customer, but it was actually a mirror reflection of their own product-oriented biases rather than a reflection of their customer situations.”

There may be a tendency, even among marketing educators, to become myopic. Academics may or may not be current to the market dynamics shaping the relevancy of marketing education. Programs can fall behind the needs of the marketplace if committed academics are not engaging with practitioners of marketing. In 2009, David, Reibstein, George Day and Jerry Wind, in an article in the *Journal of Marketing* suggest that a widening divergence between marketing academics and practitioners “has become detrimental to the long-term health of the field.” In the call to action, the authors challenge educators about “the inward-looking mind-set” and suggest that the “history of the discipline endorses interactions with practitioners.”

In an attempt to “not be myopic,” marketing educators at Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU) formed a Marketing Advisory Board (MAB) in 2016. This initiative was born in a time when the undergraduate Marketing program needed rejuvenation. Placement rates and academic performance scores suggested program improvement. With new leadership in the faculty, the team took steps to connect with the San Diego marketing community. It was quickly determined that the Marketing program did not have a strong reputation.

A body of knowledge has established the benefits of a business and professional school advisory board (Mello, 2019, Penrose, 2002). Benefits come to the students through guest speakers, improved curriculum (Taylor, Marino, Rasor-Greenhalgh, & Hudak, 2010) and by contributing to “community-responsive, cultural competent” professionals (Community-Campus Partnership for Health, 2012). There are also benefits linked to the assessment of student-learning (Robertson & Beck, 2003, Penrose 2002, Henderson, 2004). Business schools are the academic unit most likely to sponsor advisory boards. (Mello, 2019, Benigit et. al, 2011; Hicks, et. al, 2011), although much of the literature regarding effectiveness is found in the health sciences and communications. What seems to be missing in the literature is the use of advisory boards to inform specific academic programs, instead of the unit, such as a business school (Olson, 2008). An interesting study looked at the use of an advisory board to guide topics in a Marketing Management course (Rapert, 2017).

Over the last few years, the MAB at Point Loma Nazarene University has grown to 33 members who actively represent the marketing profession in San Diego and beyond. The group meets three times a year to inform faculty of market needs, analyze course offerings, provide advice for reforms, network with students and critique student work according to industry expectations. The input of the MAB has shaped the following.

- curriculum changes and course material
- the development of a curricular and co-curricular map
- the creation of a unique problem-solving model (UCAM standing for Uncover customer problem, Connect insights to understand customer problem, Activate marketing solutions and Measure results)
- the implementation of a portfolio development and review process

There is both quantitative and qualitative evidence from MAB members of important advances in the program and job placement and student exit scores have improved, although these results are not a direct result of the MAB. Improved outcomes for the Point Loma Nazarene University Marketing Program include:

- 1) Evidence of improved student learning in outcome assessment scores
- 2) Positive evaluation for external relations in the ACBSP accreditation process
- 3) Enlarged internship opportunities for students
- 4) Improved job placement statistics
- 5) Strong participation of local firms in the Marketing Internship and Job Fair
- 6) Creation of one-on-one mentor relationships between students and marketing professionals
- 7) Increased professional engagement with students as class visitors, judges in competitions and guests in the Marketing Club and the new AMA student chapter.

A few quotes from MAB members attest to these outcomes:

I have repeatedly heard from our clients that they want recent graduates with great attitudes, who can think and solve problems and have some basic marketing skills. Evidence that PNLU is solving this is that clients are hiring marketing professionals and are asking me to connect them with PNLU students.

I cannot even imagine the amount of bureaucracy there is in developing a new class or entire program but even so, the MAB will give recommendations and within months, I already see movement within the marketing department to reflect it. It is truly astonishing! Some immediate examples that come to mind include the push for UX/UI and including modern marketing tools in classes. In addition, I see more real life projects (the best being where students collaborate with active companies to give them real strategies to roll out). Amazing!

I have witnessed changes to curriculum; addition of content and courses relevant to today and future industry trends. Focus on writing aptitude paired with interpersonal skills that empower students to be ‘coachable’.

Challenges of having a MAB include the significant time commitment required to recruit, engage with and manage the board. Initially, there was the reality that the faculty had limited relationships with local marketing professionals. Significant time networking with professionals was required. Identifying persons for the MAB who understand the unique culture and ethos of Point Loma Nazarene University was also important. The other challenge is that faculty members must be willing to get out of the personal silo and work as a team. The faculty must be open to change and willing to consider the input, even criticism, from the practitioner market. PLNU has been fortunate to have a faculty that does not want to be myopic and are willing to put in the extra time to improve the program.

The paper and panel at MMA is a call for marketing professors and departments to “look out the window” at the changing business environment and to not be myopic as we prepare our students for the dynamic market of the future. A conversation, among marketing educators, will help discern if a MAB has, or should have, broad appeal. Expansion of the experiment of a Marketing Advisory Board is called for to test whether or not this concept adds value to Marketing programs represented in the Marketing Management Association.

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