APPLIED ACADEMIC RESEARCH GRANT.
Research priorities 2024-2025

The Australian Marketing Institute and ANZMAC ([Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy](#)) have allocated funds to provide a number of research grants that are applicable for industry-based research. A goal of the AMI is to provide direction and support for research involving marketing academics in Australia, and to encourage collaborations between academics and industry.

The pandemic brought on by COVID-19, supply disruptions, national tensions, drive for a low carbon future and increasing adoption of digital technology, have wrought incredible change to the global economy. This will have long-term effects on consumer behavior, the marketplace, branding and communication strategies, market regulation and public policy, global business and more.

A key component of the Australian Marketing Institute's (AMI's) charter is to facilitate relevant research for the advancement of marketing practice that will have a beneficial impact upon business, consumers and society as a whole. Whilst companies pursue their own company specific marketing research, there is a need and gap for high quality basic research on current marketing practice issues. With this in mind, we have identified several important research topics for 2024-2025. These have been selected from topics on the current Marketing Science Institute research priorities list that was developed in consultation with senior marketing professionals within business, government and the NFP sector.   We have refined these topics for the Australia and New Zealand marketplace.

We look forward to supporting research on the chosen topics and will be looking to provide funding and/or foster collaborations between our member companies and academics working on these topics.

First a summary list of the Research Topics is presented, then each topic is 'unpacked' and detailed in a set of practical questions. A panel consisting of 5 experienced industry academic practitioners will review grant applications in July 2024 and inform successful applicants by the end of August 2024.

For any further information please send an email to amianzmacgrants@ami.org,au

AMI Research Topics

- **DELIVERING CUSTOMER VALUE.**
  The first principle of marketing is the principle of customer value. A top priority for marketers is to understand and map the customer journey and then to identify the benefits the firm can provide that customers are willing to pay for. Strategies to prioritize customer value at all touchpoints during the omnichannel customer journey and macro trends influencing customer decision making are of particular interest

- **THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF MARTECH AND ADVERTISING**.
  Fueled by media convergence, consumption of information across multiple platforms and devices, increased viewer information and targeting capabilities, and rapid changes in the markets for advertising, the rules of media- buying and customer analytics continue to evolve and change. Technology offers customers an array of new ways to interact with firms, fundamentally altering the purchase experience and raising concerns about data privacy. The key goal is to create a single trustworthy vision for the firm across the channels.

- **TOOLS FOR CAPTURING INFORMATION TO FUEL GROWTH.**
  Emerging technologies, data sources and analytical techniques offer marketers new ways to observe and understand consumer behavior, enhance customer experience and sustain profitable growth.

- **THE RISE OF OMNICHANNEL PROMOTION AND DISTRIBUTION.**
  As with communication channels, retail channels are changing. Retail is omnichannel—an integrated experience across the online-offline worlds. This omnichannel viewpoint enables firms to have more options for reach and to create new business opportunities; manage brand experience and promotion across the customer journey and manage distribution and demand across channels.

- **INNOVATION, NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND COMMERCIALIZATION**
  Adapting to disruption and sustaining profitable growth will require companies to innovate new product and service offerings and efficient processes for bringing these to existing and new markets.

- **MARKETING's ROLE WITH ESG (ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL, AND GOVERNANCE) ISSUES**
  Research is needed to inform companies' efforts on the ESG issues, which many consumers are concerned about.

1. DELIVERING CUSTOMER VALUE

The first principle of marketing is the principle of customer value. A top priority for marketers is to understand and map the customer journey and then to identify the benefits the firm can provide that customers are willing to pay for. Strategies to prioritize customer value at all touchpoints during the omnichannel customer journey and macro trends influencing customer decision making are of particular interest.

Aspects to consider:
- How does the increasingly complex technological, promotional, and advertising ecosystem affect the customer journey?
- How should the communication message vary across the conversion funnel and communication channels?
- Is it possible to construct an integrated customer experience with a single view across devices?
- What is the role of aggregators and other 3rd party players in delivering the customer experience? How will privacy regulations affect this? Which "ID" wins? Is there a single source of truth?
- How will the sharing economy affect customer experience and behavior (e.g., tipping for service)?
- How does this journey differ when the customer is a buying group rather an individual consumer? What are the key differences in customer journeys in the B2C vs B2B worlds?
- Trust is more important than ever between marketers and their customers. How can the firm ensure trust is maintained during the customer journey? What is the relationship of trust to ROI?
- What are the most effective strategies to drive deeper, lasting customer engagement/loyalty with the firm?
- What is the relationship between privacy protection and customer loyalty and customer experience strategies?
- How will consumer behavior change in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath?
- With rapid disruption in markets, traditional categories are changing. How do you determine who is a competitor? Who is in the consideration set? How important is platform marketing?
- How should firms cope with small new entrants threatening market share?
- How is customer behavior the same or different in global emerging markets?
- How do we keep a focus on long-term value creation in a data-driven world? Will new sources of data and analytics (e.g., AI and machine learning) make this better or worse?
- What is the most effect way to conduct account-based marketing in the face of new online technologies?

2. THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF MARTECH AND ADVERTISING

Fueled by media convergence, consumption of information across multiple platforms and devices, increased viewer information and targeting capabilities, and rapid changes in the markets for advertising, the rules of media- buying and customer analytics continue to evolve and change. Technology offers customers an array of new ways to interact with firms, fundamentally altering the purchase experience and raising concerns about data privacy. The key goal is to create a single trustworthy vision for the firm across the channels.

Aspects to consider:

- Can we find a better way to measure brand value and brand health using new data sources? How does brand value link to revenue?
- How do you measure social influencer impact? What should the firm's strategy be vis-à-vis their relationships with influencers, are they "paid," "owned," or "earned"?
- What is the value of sponsorships and optimal digital/social/traditional advertising spend?
- How important is top-of-the-funnel data? Do well-known brands need to invest in general brand advertising and TV?
- How is the value of brand affected by the practice of micro-targeting and personalization? If the offer is entirely personalized, what is the meaning of the brand?
- As products become more commoditized in mature markets, how can brand differentiation be achieved through customer experience?
- How should campaigns and messages (e.g., branding) be integrated across platforms and devices?
- What approaches should be used to develop automated/programmatic campaigns with real time data?
- How do you solve the problems of attribution?
- What is the effect of cord cutting, ad blocking and walled gardens (e.g., on Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat) on media strategy?
- How can artificial intelligence (AI) be used for better advertising (and customer) engagement?
- As media become increasingly fragmented, how should one maintain reach? How should firms trade off reach versus targeting in advertising and promotion?
- How can you unify the data across different media venues and different sources? What are the harmonizing techniques?
- What can we learn about the human/tech interface when voice-activated interaction (e.g., Alexa) becomes the norm? How does this process change customer behaviour?
- How do technologies help integrate customer value and brand?
- Does personalization matter and, if so, when? Can we "over-target"?
- GDPR and the increasing importance of customers' privacy, what is the appropriate tradeoff between privacy and personalization, and what are the ethical ramifications of customer data collection and use? How will regulation/compliance affect marketing?
- How important is subscription marketing? What are the optimal ways to market "AAS" (as a service)-offers? How many subscriptions will consumers tolerate, and under what circumstances? What is the right trade-off between self-service and personal channels?

3. TOOLS FOR CAPTURING INFORMATION TO FUEL GROWTH

Emerging technologies, data sources and analytical techniques offer marketers new ways to observe and understand consumer behavior, enhance customer experience and sustain profitable growth.

Aspects to consider:

- What are the best practices in capturing exposures across platforms and devices, and how should this information be used to drive sales?
- Which Key Performance Indices (/metrics should be used to guide marketing strategy?
- How can manufacturers cope with limited customer data when selling through retail channels? For example, what information can be used to set and control consumer pricing when not a retailer?
- What strategies exist to facilitate integration across the information landscape to create actionable data? How should firms manage their business when partners do not share data?
- How can continuous experimentation be implemented and used across channels?
- What are the implications of differences between active and passive data collection? Sometimes the consumer acts directly (e.g., search, product questions), other times there are indirect measures (from security cameras, facial recognition, IoT). How should we treat these data differentially.
- Assessing causality. Measurement Approaches and Methodologies to Drive Insights
- What "moments" in the data signal special engagement or behavioral changes and opportunities (e.g., new adopters)?
- Marketing mix modeling (MMM) of store-level data may be used because it falls into a "trap of convenience." Are these the appropriate metrics or are they only predicting short-term sales? It's a simple and appealing model, but are we missing something?
- How can a marketer attribute and apportion outcomes to various causal factors?
- How and when should a marketer use AB testing? Is it possible to scale such testing across multiple channels and periods?
- What is the ideal approach to integrating marketing mix and attribution with causal levers and experimentation, including field experimentation?
- What are the current best practices in machine learning and large data to inform marketing decision making? What approaches exist to capture and analyze non-structured data such as video, voice, and text in order to improve firm communications and the customer experience?
- How can data and tools generate insights that can be used to delight the customer? For example, even with abundant data, the customer experience in online retail is still not flawless.
- What advances exist in using neuroscience and biomarkers to understand customers? When should insights from neuro supplement or replace traditional approaches? What are the ethical implications of such research compared to other methods?

4. THE RISE OF OMNICHANNEL PROMOTION AND DISTRIBUTION

As with communication channels, retail channels are changing. Retail is omnichannel—an integrated experience across the online-offline worlds. This omnichannel viewpoint enables firms to have more options for reach and to create new business opportunities; manage brand experience and promotion across the customer journey and manage distribution and demand across channels.

Aspects to consider:
- How does omnichannel retailing interact with the purchase funnel, and what are the implications for promotional strategy?
- Data collection has to be integrated across channels so that the firm has one view of the customer, but who owns this data? What are the strategic ways to use this data and balance the power across partners in the channel? What is the role of regulation here?
- What are the benefits/weaknesses of the new direct-to consumer trends for start-up and legacy brands?
- How do consumers form platform and channel preferences?
- Which is the right channel, right content, and right time to reach a customer? How do consumers think about channels (e.g., given Facebook and Instagram)?
- As demand becomes more fragmented with a larger number of retailers, how should retailer and manufacturer partnerships evolve?
- What analytics are needed to make sense of omnichannel promotions and sales?
- What strategies are needed to create a seamless purchase and support integration across carts, agents, and devices?
- How should firms adjust to a digital payment world?

5. INNOVATION, NPD AND COMMERCIALIZATION

Adapting to disruption and sustaining profitable growth will require companies to innovate new product and service offerings and efficient processes for bringing these to existing and new markets.

Aspects to consider:
- What are the new business models affecting marketing (e.g., the sharing/gig economy, new distribution channels, subscription services, "as a service" offers, etc.)?
- How important is product innovation? Should it be internally driven (as a function of R&D) or in response to market led customer mining (or some optimal combination)?
- What is the tradeoff between innovation and strengthening the base?
- How should firms realign for innovation and faster go-to-market?
- Should consumers be involved in the co-creation of product and content and, if so, how?
- What does "experience innovation" look like?

6. MARKETING'S ROLE WITH ESG (ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL, GOVERNANCE) ISSUES

Research is needed to inform companies' role that marketing plays in supporting sustainability promoting inclusion and diversity, both in their own operations and in understanding and meeting the needs of various constituents. Researchers must also consider potential biases in their theories, research designs and explanatory models— especially as these inform AI algorithms and corporate decision making that may have unintended consequences or perpetuate existing biases that harm specific groups.

Aspects to consider:
- What is the impact on the company of its position on sustainability, cause marketing and responsibility?
- Should brands take a stand? How does "purpose marketing" affect consumer decision making?
- Is ESG becoming politicised as part of the political polarization that is occurring in countries such as the USA but also may be nascent here in Australia?
- What is the responsibility of marketing in creating sustainable and society-relevant marketing strategies?