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## **Editorial**

The advancement in technology has drastically changed the way we communicate with the consumers. For instance, the Internet has provided an enormous growth in the volume of information that are available for anyone to use. The first explosive growth of this information came when society entered the Web 2.0 era. The current Web 3.0 has driven this growth to an even greater height.

In this new environment, companies are continually searching for ways to connect their brands to consumers. The new media enabled by the Internet facilitates communication between companies and consumers, as well as among the consumers themselves. Various threats and opportunities for companies have arisen due to the increase in consumers reporting and/or interacting about their consumption-related experiences on the Internet. The primary focus of this Special Issue is on “Communicating with Consumers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”. We hope that you will find this collection of research helpful and stimulating.

In this Special Issue of AJBR, we present five selected papers. The first paper, by James E. Richard and Sarita Guppy, investigates the influence of Facebook social applications and activities on consumers’ purchase intention. Specifically, they investigate whether the “like” button, location based check-in service, posting of comments and the “share” button on Facebook influence consumers’ intentions to purchase a product through the Facebook platform. Analysing the data of 216 responses collected through an online survey, the authors found support for the important role of most applications on consumers’ purchase decision. The finding that anonymous comment postings have no significant impact on purchase intention is consistent with previous research results – friend reviews are trusted more than anonymous reviews.

In the second paper, Halimin Herjanto and Sanjaya S. Gaur explore the infrequently researched domain of romantic travellers’ negative word of mouth. The authors examine romantic travellers’ cognitive dissonance and its impact on their tendency to spread negative word-of-mouth, as well as its effect on travellers’ intentions to recommend and revisit. They analysed 123 negative reviews of Asia’s top 10 hotels for romance on the Tripadvisor website. The results showed that the classic factors – physical environment, physical goods, staff and personnel, and customer expectations – are major contributors to romantic travellers’ cognitive dissonance and willingness to recommend.

The importance of the customer self-congruity is highlighted in the next paper, by Lystia Hapsari and Michael Adiwijaya, who examine the impact of customer self-congruity towards brand relationship quality and brand loyalty. Using structural equation modelling on the survey data of 100 customers of MANGO - an international fashion brand, the authors found support for the direct impact of self-congruity on brand loyalty. The paper showed that there is no impact of self-congruity towards brand relationship quality, and no impact of brand relationship quality towards brand loyalty. Helpful indicators for future research studies are also suggested by the authors.

The fourth paper, from Lin Yang, Kim-Shyan Fam and James E. Richard, addresses the issues of why information about products, brands or organisations is generated

among consumers on the Internet, and what influences the initiation of online word-of-mouth from the sender's perspective. Based on 18 interviews with consumers, the authors present key factors – customer satisfaction, loyalty, perceived value and affective commitment – that influence consumers' engagement of online word-of-mouth communication. The paper also reveals the impact of personal cultural orientation on this communication.

The final paper in this Special Issue is by Tamás Brányi, László Józsa and Andrea Sólyom, and looks at the positive influence of a number of power elements on the supply chain. The paper describes these elements by surveying 221 medium to large domestic and international firms in Hungary. The authors conclude that supply chain members interact for as long as the competitiveness of the whole chain is advantageous for all members.

We take this opportunity to thank all the reviewers who offered their time and effort to take part in the review process for this special edition.

Lin Yang  
Kim-Shyan Fam  
*Guest Editors*