The key themes of papers in this issue focus on online shopping behaviour, rural and emerging markets, customer-oriented strategies, counterfeit luxury brands, supplier performance, and transformational branding.

The first three papers of this issue focus on the burgeoning industry, rural segment, and emerging market. Alonso and associates examine key areas related to the craft brewing industry from the perspective of operators of micro and small craft breweries, and propose a framework based on the resourced-based theory of the firm and the theory of innovation. Their study finds product and service quality, knowledge, reputation, and expertise are the key strengths, while creating new recipes and innovation. The following paper by Sahney and Parida explores the Indian rural market. Qualitative insights from the stakeholders enlist and rank the key aspirations of Indian rural customers. The findings would help marketers and business organisations build appropriate market strategies to tap the market. In the next paper, Brooksbank et al. examine the usage of conventional strategic marketing practice, as it relates to developed markets, within groups of higher and lower performing manufacturers in the emerging market of India; comparing it against that of their counterparts in the developed market of the USA.

The prevalence of online shopping is reflected throughout the next three papers in this issue. Won and colleagues apply the model of goal-directed behaviour as a research framework to investigate the consumers’ behavioural intention to purchase sporting goods online. The results revealed that attitude, subjective norm, positive and negative anticipated emotions had significant influences on the consumers’ desire to buy sporting goods online. Their study also suggests benefit and gender-based targeting strategies in marketing sporting goods online. Next, Wong et al. identify the shopping motivational values of online and offline Malaysian shoppers, and examine if there are differences between the shopping motivational values based on shopping channel, gender, and age group. The results indicate that there is an overall predisposition for respondents of both genders and age groups to place importance on the shopping motivational values when shopping offline. In the following paper, Hussain and colleagues examine whether advertising type (static or dynamic) and appeal (emotional or rational) moderate the relationship between web banner advertising frequency and consumer attitudinal response. The results suggest that if the communication objective is to generate brand attitude, different strategies can be adopted depending on the banner advertisement type and banner advertisement appeal.

Prompted by the recent advances in logistics and supplier performance, Cao et al. investigate the role of post-purchase logistic services on customer satisfaction and future purchase decision. Conducted across China and Taiwan, the authors find that customer service is the most significant factor among the examined antecedents for online shoppers in China, whereas the return service is more important for shoppers in Taiwan. In addition, customer satisfaction plays a stronger positive role for online shoppers in Taiwan as compared to their counterparts in China. Referring to the supplier performance Sukoco et al. investigate the mechanism that enable firms to transform social capital into relationship performance and propose that the relationship learning could mediate the impact. The study reveals that cognitive social capital has a positive influence on the level of relational social capital in terms of the buyers-supplier relationship.

Moving onto customer-oriented strategies in the hospitality industry, Harvelia and Harvelia examine the strength and significance of the path coefficients in a customer-oriented strategy model.
satisfaction model consisting of various customer-centric measures for different types of ski resort customers in Canada. The research pinpoints the differences in the strength and significance in the relationships between customer-centric measures between for four different types of ski resort visitors, i.e. day, weekend, and ski holiday visitors as well as season pass holders, which has significant managerial implications for the marketing practice of the ski resort. In the following paper, Fatma et al. examine the influence of perceived corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the hotel industry. The findings show that consumer perception of CSR activities positively influences consumer identification with the company, and identification positively results in customer satisfaction and loyalty.

What factors motivate people to go for regular medical check-up (MCU)? Maulana and Pradana suggest that consumer segmentation for regular MCU behaviour should not be based on socio-demographics, but rather on behaviour – preventive vs curative stage. Their study finds that regular MCU as preventive action is not as well accepted as the other ways with which people are familiar regarding health-related activities (e.g. eating a healthy diet, regularly exercising, obtaining sufficient sleep and rest, increasing consumption of supplements such as vitamins and honey, and avoiding cigarettes).

The counterfeit luxury market expanded exponentially over the years and is detrimental to the global businesses and development of national economies. Koay develops an integrated research model that combines neutralisation theory and perceived risk theory to explain consumers’ purchase intention towards the counterfeit luxury goods. The denial of responsibility, denial of victim, performance risk and social risk deemed to be the significant predictors of consumers’ purchase intention towards counterfeit luxury goods. The findings would add valuable insights into the ongoing research stream of luxury counterfeit.

Finally, our industry spotlight paper is presented by Lau and Lim who demonstrate how brand transformation of a B2B brand has created value to the target audience as well as elevated the brand to greater heights in terms of business value and quality of relationship with customers. In particular, the brand transformational journey of Fagedala, a B2B brand is examined and described to demonstrate how it has garnered significant business success since embarking on the initiative in 2013. The authors show that Fagerdala is a practical example of a B2B company which demonstrated that a comprehensive and impactful branding initiative involves transformation, often is underlined by an innovation mind-set. This success story of Fagerdala attests that superior brand performance can be achieved through the integration of brand orientation and brand innovation.

Once again, we hope that this issue has provided interesting insights to stimulate future research. We thank the reviewers and EAB for their timely reviews and contribution to the APJML; and we thank the authors for submitting manuscripts of exceptional calibre.

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