

## Moving beyond and moving on

It is my pleasure to introduce this special issue by co-editors James E. Richard, Anita Radon, Archana Kumar and Patrali Chatterjee. Just about two years ago Dr Kumar invited me to the American Collegiate Retailing Association (ACRA) conference. *JRIM* sponsored a small prize for best paper in this area and then we invited those papers and others to the special issue. We have all been pleased with the results and with the strength of the papers, the broadness of the topics covered, the far-reaching nature of their contribution and the international character of their research venues. I also enjoyed participating in ACRA and seeing the interesting work being done in this area. If you have not attended the conference, it is quite unique in terms of involving practitioners to interact with academics and I would certainly give it a try.

I really could not have a better “farewell” issue to help with editing, for this is the last issue that will be published with me as editor-in-chief. I welcome Jack Schibrowsky from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, as incoming editor, effective January 1, 2018. I want to thank Jack for taking on this role and for his tireless service to the Editorial Advisory Board during the past six years of my editorship.

We have all worked together to make *JRIM* a journal of which we can be proud. Our citations, downloads and influence continues to grow, and we are on pace to make our goals in terms of how we are listed, indexed and ranked by others. This issue embodies what I have tried to do with the journal, which is, to think beyond what we see today and to create a research focus for the future. The many review pieces we have had that set out ambitious research agendas have helped build our reputation, as have “thought” pieces that have challenged our conception of interactive marketing.

I sincerely thank all the Editorial Advisory Board members, our dedicated reviewers, our patient and understanding authors and the administration at St. Edward’s University for supporting me in this effort. The past six years have not only helped improve my understanding of the work in this field but also allowed me to interact with many international authors and to create lasting friendships. It is really quite fitting that this last issue has such an international flavor, as I am delighted to have so many professional relationships in so many different areas of the world. I wish I could mention all your names but there is not enough room. Simply, thank you all.

I note that when this Journal was created, it had direct marketing in the title. We have lived through much change in marketing and can now truly say that all marketing is interactive and digital in nature and involves direct communication with the customer. Our Journal has a strong impact because our work is relevant. We can be proud of what we have done.

However, I will say that more work waits for us. I personally would like to see more research on content marketing, more of an emphasis on the strategic nature of the internet and interactive and digital marketing and more work on search and mobile marketing. Certainly, the area of gaming needs to be explored in more depth as well.

To return to our particular subject, the aim of this special issue is to go beyond e-commerce marketing to further develop our understanding of how digitalization affects consumption patterns and business logic in a retail context. Certainly, retailing is undergoing many changes right now, many of them brought about by the rise of e-commerce. These articles help us



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understand the challenges that face retailers in the future as they grapple with creating meaningful experiences for their customers.

### *Articles*

The special issue contains six articles. The authors come from a wide range of countries, which provides a strong international perspective to this special issue. The first paper, “Need for touch and two-way communication in e-commerce” has a North American flavour and is written by Sujin Yang, Yun Jung Lee and Zachary Johnson. It examines the influence of the need for touch (NFT) on loyalty intentions. The inability to touch products is a commonly stated reason for consumers to not purchase them online. In addition, the authors also investigated the effects of synchronous and asynchronous communications with sellers and the relationship between NFT and loyalty intention.

The second paper “Using rich media to motivate fair-trade purchase” continues with the North American perspective. Tae-Im Han and Leslie Stoel explore the use of rich media and information characteristics to motivate purchase behaviour for fair-trade products. They find that although sales of fair-trade products and ethical consumption continues to grow globally, consumer’s lack of product knowledge inhibits growth to wider mainstream markets. The authors also examine the effectiveness of social media to motivate fair-trade product purchase.

The third paper, “A QoS sensitive model for e-commerce customer behavior” comes from the Middle East (Iran). S. Alireza Hashemi Golpayegani, Hod Ghavamipoor and Maryam Shahpasand examine the potential for a Quality of Service sensitive customer behaviour model (QoS-CBMG) for e-commerce websites which can be used to provide discriminating service levels to customers. The authors develop an innovative QoS-sensitive model which can help fine tune an e-commerce website’s QoS depending on customer’s real-time website activity.

The fourth paper “C2C value creation: social anxiety and retail environment” comes from Europe (Finland). Larissa Carine Braz Becker and Cristiane Pizzutti. The authors challenge the widespread belief that positive C2C interaction (especially in an online environment) always adds value. They investigate the effect of social anxiety levels (defined as the discrepancy between a person’s self-image and his or her desired image) on the perceived benefit of C2C retail interaction in both offline and online environments.

The fifth paper, “Impulse buying tendencies among online shoppers in Sweden” is written by Maria Ek Styven, Tim Foster and Asa Wallstrom. The authors find evidence from their exploratory research that impulsive consumers are driven by hedonic shopping motivation, that is, the pursuit of fun, novelty and excitement. This hedonic motivation in turn leads to a higher incidence of “window shopping” behaviour and subsequent cart abandonment.

Our sixth paper, “The digitization of health care retailing” is the kind of conceptual piece that has helped put us on the map. Mark Rosenbaum put together an international team consisting of German Ramirez, Karen Edwards, Jiyeon Kim, Jeffrey Campbell and Marianne Bicklet to help us get all perspectives on this important issue.

This article offers insights into the impact of digitization technology on consumer goods manufacturers and retail organizations. The authors suggest that digitization in health care retailing will soon entail the employment of digitization technology to offer consumers personalized product offerings and recommendations based on their internal biomarkers. Imagine submitting saliva or hair samples and receiving customized vitamins to begin to understand the effect of digital technology on health retailing in the future?

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Please contact our special issue guest editors below if you have any questions or comments on these articles. I would like to particularly thank James Richard for taking the lead role in this process. I am delighted that as a result of this process he has deepened his commitment to *JRIM* and agreed to be the co-associate editor for Asia, along with Dr Hugh Pattinson. It has been a great adventure, but it is time to move on to my own research and other professional priorities. It is nice to know the journal will be in good hands. I look forward to contributing to the conversation of the journal myself in the not too distant future.

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**Debra Zahay**

*The Bill Munday School of Business, St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas, USA*