

The Power of Marketing and Technology Integration: A Solution for Addressing Environmental Issues or Social Challenges in Underserved Communities

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Project Description:

Over the years, researchers and practitioners have acknowledged the significant impact of combining marketing and technology (Capon & Glazer, 1987; Song, Droge, Hanvanich, & Calantone, 2005). By harnessing the capabilities of technology, marketers are empowered to collect critical insights about their consumers, such as their behaviours, preferences, and interests. These insights are instrumental in shaping marketing strategies, targeting specific demographics, and customising marketing endeavours. Furthermore, technological advancements have facilitated the automation of various marketing processes, enabling marketers to concentrate on strategic initiatives and enhance marketing communications, notably on platforms like social media. This has become increasingly relevant in today's fast-paced technological landscape, as both organisations and governments integrate new technologies into their marketing efforts to boost both effectiveness and efficiency (Davenport, Guha, Grewal, & Bressgott, 2020; Katsikeas, Leonidou, & Zeriti, 2020; Sinkovics & Sinkovics, 2020). For example, Grewal, Hulland, Kopalle, and Karahanna (2020) highlight how six emerging technologies, including healthcare technology, artificial intelligence and robotics, the dark web and chatbots, mobile and social technology, in-store technology, and legacy technology, are redefining marketing activities.

Moreover, the fusion of marketing and technology is crucial in addressing environmental and social challenges, especially in underserved communities. For instance, a body of research has demonstrated the effectiveness of social media in promoting green marketing and sustainability (e.g., Lu & Miller, 2019; Minton, Lee, Orth, Kim, & Kahle, 2012; Pittman & Abell, 2021). Additionally, the concept of smart cities (which includes automated walkways, electric vehicles, and driverless cars) suggests that marketing technologies can effectively disseminate information about smart city initiatives, thereby facilitating their adoption in communities that need them the most (e.g., Bennett & Vijaygopal, 2018; Bennett, Vijaygopal, & Kottasz, 2020; Vijaygopal, Bennett, & Savani, 2021).

This PhD research project explores how organisations and governments leverage new technologies to shape their marketing activities, focusing on tackling environmental issues and social challenges within underserved communities.

The project proposes several potential research avenues:

- Examining the effects of wearable health technology on consumer behaviour in underserved communities, particularly how such technology can foster healthier lifestyles and lessen environmental footprints.
- Investigating the role of marketing communications in promoting sustainable transportation options, like automated walkways and electric vehicles, and their impact on underserved communities.
- Studying the marketing strategies surrounding eSports events and gaming products and analysing their relationship to social changes amongst the youth.
- Assessing the benefits and challenges of cutting-edge technologies (personal robots, real-time response systems, and the metaverse) in promoting inclusivity within smart cities.
- Exploring the application of AI and robotics in marketing to encourage sustainable consumption and address social challenges such as healthcare, education, and employment in low-income communities.
- Analysing how mobile and social media can be utilised to increase environmental awareness and encourage sustainable practices in underserved areas.
- Investigating the potential of in-store technology and marketing to promote sustainable consumption and tackle social challenges, including access to healthy food, education, and job opportunities.

Proposals extending beyond these topics are welcome, provided they present innovative ideas at the intersection of new technologies and marketing to address environmental and social issues in underserved communities. The proposed research may adopt qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methodologies from various theoretical backgrounds. Proposals that introduce transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches or novel theories and methodologies are particularly encouraged. We seek theoretical and methodological innovations with the potential to influence marketing, technology management, and policymaking.

About the Supervisors:

Gordon Liu: His current research focuses on providing insights into how businesses can leverage technology to improve their marketing strategies, innovate more effectively, develop competitive products, and manage their supply chains more efficiently, achieving sustainable growth in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Yue Meng Lewis: research interests : Sustainability in esports including business models, fan experiences, professional careers development, and policies; application of new technology in gaming and marketing; Corporate sustainability and HR practice; International communication strategy.

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