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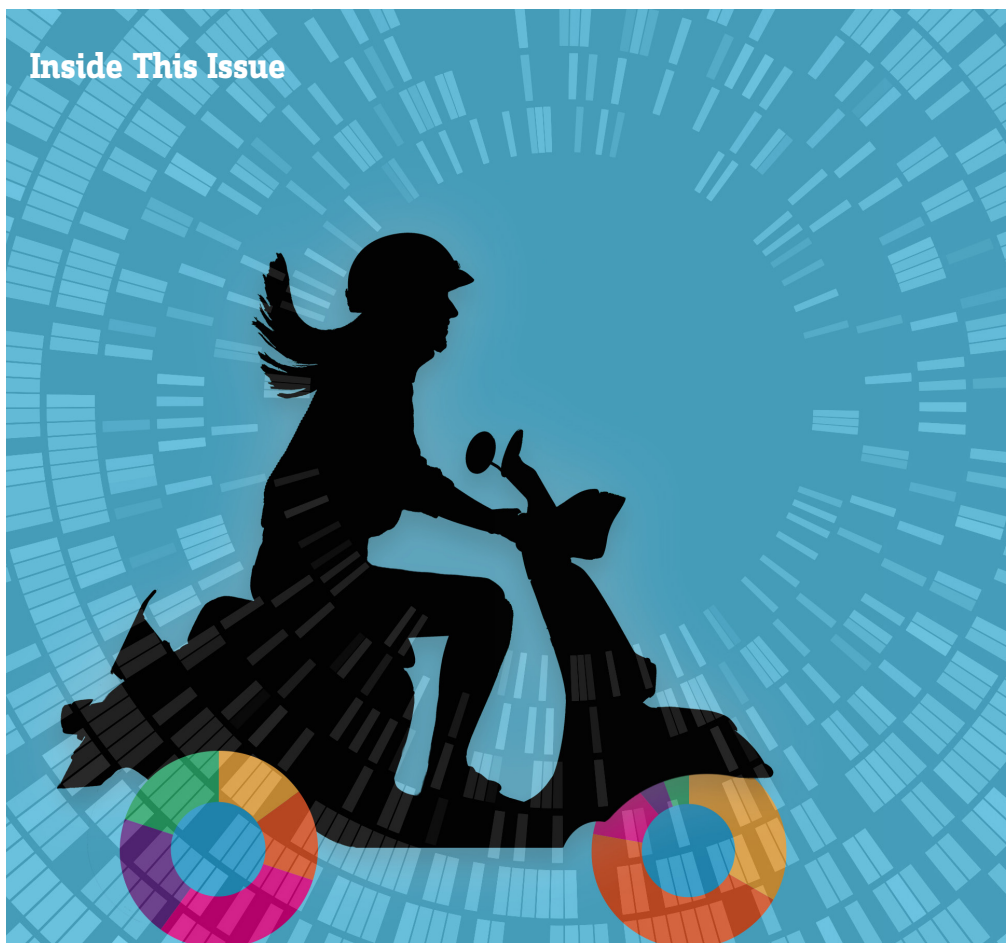


Content Marketing



Advanced Digital Marketing

Inside This Issue



5

DATA

Maintaining a Customer-First Mentality in the Face of Inflation

7

Tear Down This Data Wall

A new book in the seven big problems series makes the case for democratizing data to succeed in digital transformations.

10

Fields of Gold

Scraping web data for marketing insights.

12

The Marketer at the Privacy Table

14

Research Insights

Quick takes on new AMA research on how to make data work for you.

22

STUDY SPOTLIGHT

How Can Firms Make Influencer Marketing Work for Them?

Two recent *Journal of Marketing* articles reveal some surprising insights.

24

The Challenge of Keeping an Audience Engaged

How language shapes attention.



26

The Authentic Sweet Spot

How indulgent consumption can signal warmth.

SPRING 2023
VOL. 57 | NO. 2

MarketingNews

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Marketing News (ISSN 0025-3790) is published quarterly by the American Marketing Association, 130 E. Randolph St., 22nd Floor, Chicago, IL 60601.

Circulation: (800) AMA-1150, (312) 542-9000
Tel: (800) AMA-1150, (312) 542-9000

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**AMERICAN MARKETING
ASSOCIATION**



Maintaining a Customer-First Mentality in the Face of Inflation

Organizations that put their customers first tend to have an advantage over competitors. But, with the recent challenge of inflation, many organizations have not leaned on the functions closest to their customers – like marketing – to make key decisions in these volatile economic times.

BY JORIS ZWEGERS, NAN PETRELLA, AND IVY LI

The AMA and Kantar surveyed over 300 marketers to better understand how organizations have been affected by inflation. The results illustrate how companies and business leaders make tough choices, the role that marketing plays in these decisions, and the importance of having a customer-centric approach.

As high inflation rates continue to persist, many companies are grappling with increased costs and seeking ways to manage them. Overall, 92% reported that their organization has experienced cost increases in the past year, with 42% facing substantial increases.

These rising costs are forcing organizations to make difficult decisions on how to manage their expenses. While some are doing the best they can to manage costs internally, others are making choices that directly impact the customer – like increasing prices and reducing promotions.

Undoubtedly, customers are feeling the impact. The broader inflationary environment has resulted in a reported decrease in customer spending over the past 6 months that marketers expect to continue over the coming months. Outlook for the next 6 months is more negative than in years past, as demonstrated by the lowest Marketer Confidence Index (116) since the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic (111 in Jan 2021).

Interestingly, the marketing function has not been an essential decision maker in the actions that organizations have taken in response to inflation – even when it comes to those that directly impact the brand and the customer, for whom this is a priority issue.

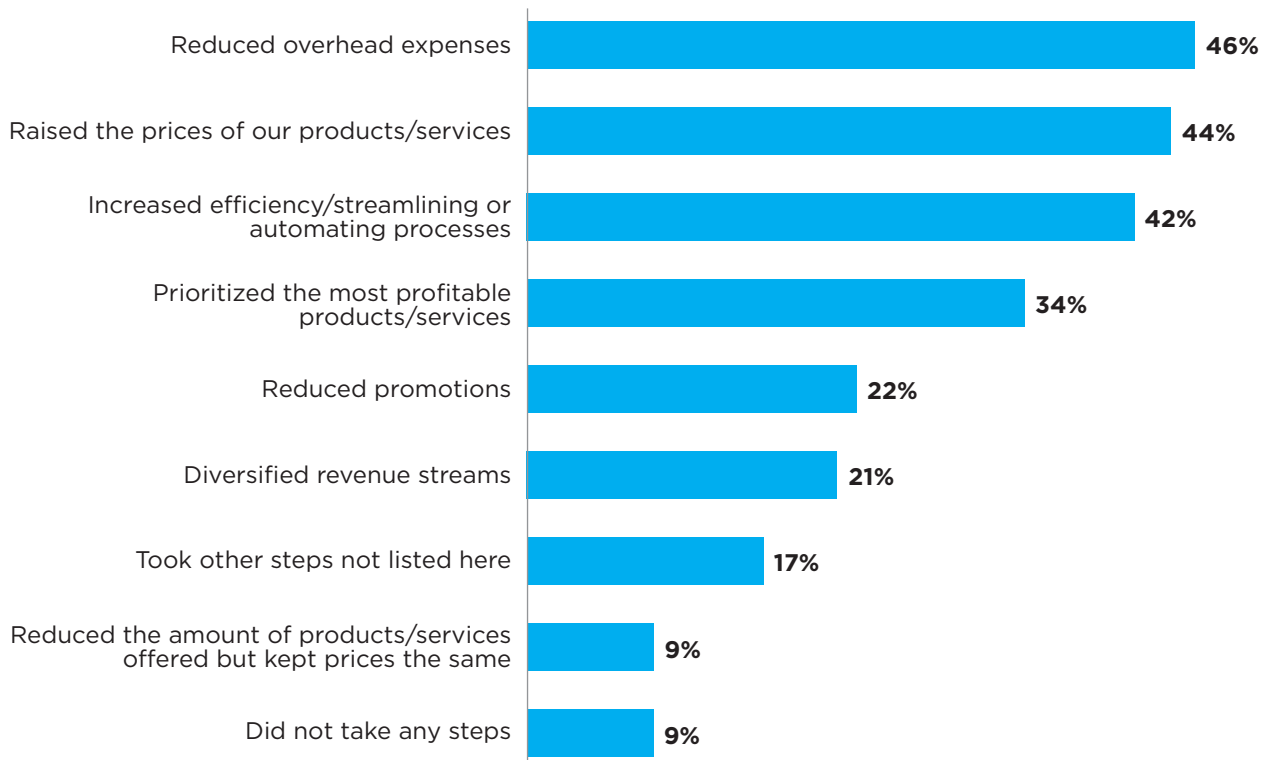
In fact, 56% said that marketing only had a minor role at best in these decisions, with 19% saying it had no role at all. In these instances, it is most likely general managers, finance, or operations making the calls.

To protect both the profitability of the business and the brand, organizations must balance the actions taken in response to inflation to ensure they are not threatening the current brand and value proposition offered to customers. Those who put customers first in times of inflation may be better equipped to capture the more limited customer dollars available through alternative solutions.

What Next?

With inflation expected to remain a key challenge for both organizations and customers for the next several months, marketers must ensure they are the advocate for the customer and that the impact of resulting decisions are well-understood across the organization, especially among decision makers in general management, finance, and operations.

WHAT STEPS DID YOUR ORGANIZATION TAKE AS A RESULT OF RISING COSTS/INFLATION?



While raising prices may be unavoidable in today's climate, there may be other creative ways organizations can reduce costs to keep profitability up – without making huge dents in customers' wallets.

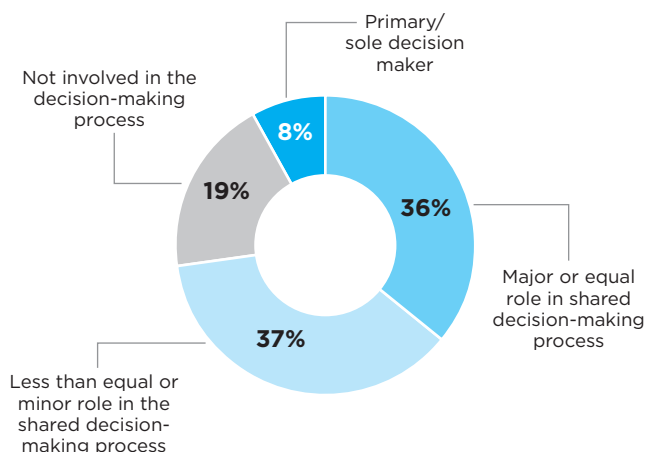
Marketers can use a customer-centric lens to provide critically important perspective on the broader landscape, informing on:

- What 'essentials' are necessary to keep in place
- What competitors are doing and how decisions made will affect perception and performance
- Creative alternative solutions to mitigate the problem at hand

At a minimum, marketers need to show their organization, especially the key decision makers, what the downsides of their actions will entail, based on data and scenario-driven thinking. The future health of their brand might very well depend on it. **MN**

Joris Zweegers is a Partner at the Consulting Division of Kantar. Nan Petrella is a Director of Brand Strategy at the Consulting Division at Kantar. Ivy Li is an Associate within the Brand Strategy practice at the Consulting Division at Kantar.

ROLE OF YOUR ORGANIZATION'S MARKETING FUNCTION IN THE DECISIONS/STEPS TAKEN TO COUNTER THE EFFECTS OF RISING COSTS/INFLATION



Tear Down This Data Wall

A New Book in the Seven Big Problems Series Makes the Case for Democratizing Data to Succeed in Digital Transformations

BY SARAH STEIMER

Last fall, federal rules took effect that required health care organizations to give patients unfettered access to their full health records — troves of information gathered and stored digitally. That meant patients could better understand their care, shop for services, and find their own opportunities to participate in research.

Barriers to better care, costs and research were knocked down when patient information was democratized. It was a major victory for proponents of data sharing, and it's likely to spur innovation in the sector. It suggests that others' digital transformations could benefit from collaborating through shared information — further breaking down silos within organizations.

At a time when only 11% of global chief marketing officers believe that they have completed their digital transformation, per a MediaSense survey, there's a good reason to believe that many organizations need to consider a new framework for implementing change. To tackle the challenge, professors Zeynep Aksehirli, Koen Pauwels, Yakov Bart and Kwong Chan wrote *Break the Wall: Why and How to Democratize Digital in Your Business*. It's the third book in the series *The Seven Problems of Marketing*, edited by Bernie Jaworski.



The authors have more than a century of combined experience around the topic. They're a multidisciplinary team of business professors in marketing and organizational behavior at Northeastern University; they've consulted with numerous companies; they've published research on metrics, big data, social media, mobile shopping behavior and more; they've written books on the methods and implementation of digital transformation; and they've interacted with managers, analysts and data scientists across four continents.

All this experience pointed to two central questions: How do companies "break the wall" in digital transformation? What does it mean to democratize digital data and insights and embed this learning into a company?

"It's time to look at it more holistically to see how it fits in with the rest of your organization," Pauwels says. "Study after study says a lot of these transformation projects start with very lofty, very ambitious goals and they fail to meet their objectives. It's really something that management and marketing and all the departments have to work together to do to reap the benefits."

Chapter 1 of the book begins with just such an illustrating story: The CEO of an unnamed company complains that his organization spent millions to hire the top data scientists and gather all their data — but he couldn't see the impact on the business. The problem, the authors identified, was that the scientists and managers weren't interacting; there was no close cooperation between business units and sharing of insights.

Yet after these groups began engaging with one another more closely, and top management began integrating the digital transformation into company strategy — after the process became democratized — only then could results be realized.

Vision and Strategy

Before an organization can even begin to undertake a digital transformation, managers need to outline what they hope to accomplish and how to get there. When it comes to the vision, the authors emphasize in the book that "digital transformation is an *organizational* transformation that changes how an organization *employs digital technologies*."

"When people are looking at digital transformation, if they focus just on the digital side and lose track of the transformation, it tends to be hollow and not reach its goals," Aksehirli says. "The idea of transformation in general has been very well researched, well tested. Instead of just focusing on the digital side, if you can shift the focus to the idea of changing the organization, transforming each person's responsibilities and perspectives, it goes much easier and much better for the organization."

"I always say I plan for a certain amount of time and then I predict it will take double that time. For any transformation project, that's a good rule of thumb."

KOEN PAUWELS

And with all that's known about organizational transformation, it's worth remembering that it will take each company a different amount of time to complete the work. ("In my work, I always say I plan for a certain amount of time and then I predict it will take double that time," Pauwels says. "For any transformation project, that's a good rule of thumb.")

Understanding that the time frame varies in the same way that culture varies across companies allows your vision to become unique to your organization. Copying another company doesn't make the vision specific to what your employees and customers need, nor will they feel loyal to the goals or compelled by the transformation.

Why Democratize?

When the focus is on the entire organization transforming, then every employee needs to play a role. According to Aksehirli, there are two primary reasons a company would want to democratize the process. First, it ensures better decisions are made when it comes to data because they have access to and training around the information.

"Most of the organizations we deal with are aware of data being collected at various departments," she says. "They're trying to store it, use it to the best of their abilities. But the differentiator for more successful organizations is that they can use that data to make better decisions — and decisions are not things that we do quarterly at a big scale. It's every employee every day, making small decisions to make the organization better or fulfill its mission."

Allowing any employee to access any part of the data collected by other departments, and knowing how to handle that data, is going to help them make better decisions, she explains.

Second, the open access to data naturally builds trust. It's not that everybody in the organization needs to know all the data — a customer service representative doesn't necessarily need to know daily sales data — but roadblocking access is an indication of distrust.

All that said, it's important that companies take a starting temperature before jumping into the

democratization. Should some departments already be working together to share data and collaborate, it can come off as uninformed if upper management mandates something that's been underway.

And before you do take down barriers to data access, take a beat to understand why those barriers existed in the first place. "Often [there is a] sort of mindless, 'Okay, let's try to collect as much data as possible without any concern for consumer privacy, let's try to share as much data as possible without setting protocols...' Well, often the barriers that were there before the digital transformation started were there for a reason," Bart says.

The Framework

The book offers a set of guiding principles for digital transformations, which takes inspiration from the biological concept of nested adaptive cycles: a model that tries to understand resilience in the natural world by looking at continuous and nesting adaptation cycles of species.

1. Initiation of change: Leaders must make the business objectives of a digital transformation clear throughout the organization, explaining why the change is happening and how it benefits everyone.
2. Implementation of change: The interaction between changes at different levels of the organization drives the true success of digital transformation, thus overcoming the gap between the current and desired status of the transformation.
3. Building resilience: This is the human element — individual and communal — that makes the change stick. It covers recruitment and training, along with how company culture influences how digital transformation can be approached, but also how the transformation will influence the culture.
4. Reconsideration and renewal: The vision for digital transformation only materializes when the entire organization comes together to institutionalize the changes.

The chapters describe each of the principles, and include stories and examples to illustrate how to successfully implement the framework.

The Big Takeaways

Each of the authors can identify what they think are some of the key takeaways from their research, experience and subsequent book. But the overarching theme comes down to awareness: of barriers, of roles, and of differences.

The authors urge companies to learn to understand the difference between barriers to adoption for technological

reasons versus human reasons: Is the slow uptake on the democratization of data a problem of access to information, software or hardware? or is it a matter of resistance among more senior employees or those brought in from acquisitions?

"Sometimes we confuse one for the other," Chan says. "Just talking to people can help us delineate the real reasons for a lack of change."

Understanding the role that individuals play in the transformation, and how it aligns with the vision, is an integral part of ensuring everyone contributes. But also understanding that the speed at which each person and department moves is crucial to avoid resentment or panic: Those working in smaller groups and who touch the outside world may recognize problems and solutions much faster than others, so firms should acknowledge that different gears move at different speeds — and everyone may have a different perspective that must be disseminated to the rest of the organization.

"It doesn't necessarily mean that the speed of digital transformation is determined by the slowest wheel, the

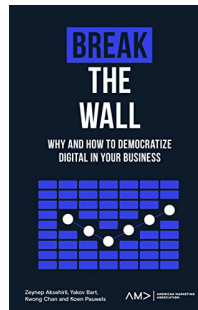
slowest team member," Bart says. "The 'move fast and break things' [mentality] pioneered by [Facebook founder Mark] Zuckerberg no longer applies to digital transformation, because we've seen too many organizations that are burning fast after moving fast. Yes, it's important to start looking at how your company must go through digital transformation as soon as possible, but this action bias that we often see perpetuated from the top when it comes to digital transformation — sometimes it really can

backfire, when it is done without setting proper goals for all members of the organization and setting proper speeds."

But the authors wouldn't be practicing what they preach if they, themselves, didn't democratize the data: the book provides the text from interviews with practitioners about their own organizations' digital transformations ("Recognizing how curious minds love deriving their own conclusions from raw data, we present these conversations here," they write in the book.) This way, the reader may draw their own, applicable conclusions — and sharing this knowledge with their organization could prompt others to impart their own experiences.

"These [lessons] are told by way of stories and interviews, and it could be a way to get your own organization to share information about the ways they use technology and have digitized their own work — which could be the best way to make the case," Pauwels says. "That will often resonate far better than just, 'this is better, faster, cheaper.' What's the story?" **MN**

Sarah Steimer is a freelance writer based in Chicago.



Fields of Gold

Scraping Web Data for Marketing Insights

BY JOHANNES BOEGERSHAUSEN, HANNES DATTA,
ABHISHEK BORAH AND ANDREW T. STEPHEN

The recent ruling of the Ninth Circuit in *HiQ Labs v. LinkedIn* underscores the importance of navigating the legal challenges when using web scraping to collect data for academic research. While it may be permissible to collect information from publicly available sites, researchers still need to be cautious about how they design their extraction software. For example, collecting information from publicly available

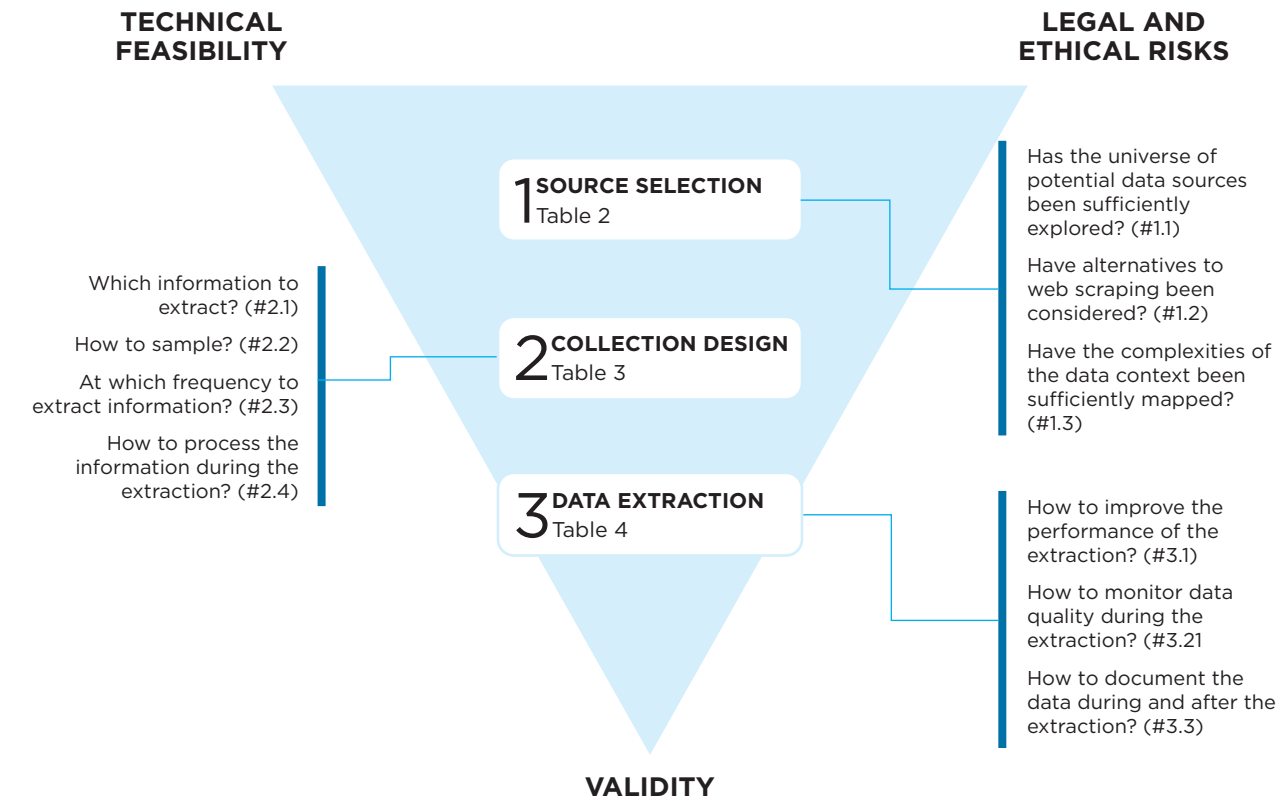
user profiles in some jurisdictions may trigger privacy concerns—and prompts researchers to anonymize their data already during the collection.

While legal aspects of collecting web data have received some attention in the recent past, it is not the only challenge researchers and managers face. Using scraping and application programming interfaces (APIs) to collect web data prompts a wide range of validity concerns, that – if unaddressed – may undermine the quality of the research. A *Journal of Marketing* article proposes a methodological framework, focused on enhancing the validity of web data, while balancing legal and technical concerns.

While marketing researchers increasingly employ web data, the idiosyncratic and sometimes insidious challenges in its collection have received limited attention. How can researchers ensure that the datasets generated via web scraping and APIs are valid? Our research team developed a novel framework that highlights how addressing validity

While marketing researchers increasingly employ web data,
the idiosyncratic and sometimes insidious challenges in
its collection have received limited attention.





concerns requires the joint consideration of idiosyncratic technical and legal/ethical questions.

Our framework covers the broad spectrum of validity concerns that arise along the three stages of the automatic collection of web data for academic use: selecting data sources, designing the data collection, and extracting the data. In discussing the methodological framework, we offer a stylized marketing example for illustration. We also provide recommendations for addressing challenges researchers encounter during the collection of web data via web scraping and APIs.

Our article further provides a systematic review of more than 300 articles using web data published in the top five marketing journals. Using our review, we devise a typology of how web data has advanced marketing thought. Understanding the richness and versatility of web data is invaluable for scholars curious about integrating it into their research programs.

Interested researchers can access the database developed for this review on our companion website at <https://web-scraping.org/>. This website also features additional useful resources and tutorials for collecting web data via web scraping and APIs.

Finally, we use our methodological framework and typology to unearth new and underexploited “fields of

gold” associated with web data. We seek to demystify the use of web scraping and APIs and thereby facilitate broader adoption of web data across the marketing discipline. Our Future Research section highlights novel and creative avenues of using web data that include exploring underutilized sources, creating rich multi-source datasets, and fully exploiting the potential of APIs beyond data extraction. **MN**

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READ THE FULL ARTICLE

Johannes Boegershausen, Hannes Datta, Abhishek Borah, and Andrew T. Stephen, “Fields of Gold: Scraping Web Data for Marketing Insights,” *Journal of Marketing*.

The Marketer at the Privacy Table

BY SACHIN GUPTA, PANOS MOUTAFIS AND
MATTHEW J. SCHNEIDER

Many executives and corporate administrators believe their marketing department should have a limited role when it comes to customer privacy. They believe the department should only manage customers' privacy perceptions and that actual data security decisions should be left to the information technology department, and privacy decisions should be made by legal.

However, marketing professionals bring practical knowledge and techniques to the data privacy discussion that can effectively limit the consumer information collected without impacting its usefulness.

The Exclusion Error

Excluding marketers from data gathering decisions can result in firms collecting too much information and increasing customer exposure risks. Consider the 2020 data breach at insurance software provider Vertafore. The information leak included license numbers, names, addresses, birthdates, and vehicle registration histories of about 27.7 million drivers in Texas. Had marketers been at the decision table from the beginning, Vertafore may have known that its insurance company clients did not need drivers' personal details to model risk and premiums.

Marketers can also provide firms valuable insights for decisions about protecting privacy after data have been gathered. For example, ACNielsen averages retail sales and prices across stores within markets, California legislators require household energy usage data to be grouped by at least 15 households, and Google aggregates its sponsored search data at the daily level—all partly for privacy reasons. But the aggregation can result in biased marketing activity estimates (Christen et al. 1997) and limit the companies' targeting capabilities.

Perception Good, Protection Better

Marketing researchers have offered insights into the effects of improved perceptions of privacy as well as ways to strengthen privacy protection (Table 1). They find that when firms improve perceptions of privacy, consumers express greater willingness to share data, trust their brand, and respond to marketing activities. To improve protection, firms can alter their data processing protocols to increase privacy while preserving insights. Marketing professionals can apply the techniques during data gathering, after data gathering, or both.

Tucker (2014) found that Facebook users were nearly twice as likely to react positively to personalized advertising after the platform gave them increased control over their personal information (i.e., enhanced perceived privacy). Martin, Borah, and Palmatier (2018) found that firms providing customers data transparency and control were not punished as severely upon breach as were less transparent firms.

Extensive literature (e.g., De Jong, Fox, and Steenkamp 2015) has offered randomized survey response techniques to elicit truthful answers, especially to sensitive questions. The methods influence respondents' beliefs about the privacy of their own answers and increase data



SELECTED MARKETING-FOCUSED DATA PRIVACY RESEARCH

GOAL	AFTER DATA GATHERING	DURING DATA GATHERING
PERCEPTION	1 Tucker 2014; Martin, Borah, and Palmatier 2018	2 De Jong, Fox, and Steenkamp 2015
PROTECTION	3 Zhou, Lu, and Ding 2020; Schneider et al. 2018	4 De Jong, Fox, and Steenkamp 2015; Gupta, Moutafis, and Schneider 2021

protection. Other research has explored approaches to alter data statistically after collection to reduce the likelihood of disclosing personal information while preserving insights. Applications include facial images (Zhou, Lu, and Ding 2020) and point-of-sale data (Schneider et al. 2018).

Finally, Gupta, Moutafis, and Schneider (2021) highlight the privacy benefits of edge computing, whereby firms do not transmit or retain sensitive information, minimizing data risks.

A Theoretical Take

Firms often alter customer data to increase privacy. Theorists consider “differential privacy” the gold standard. Analysts create differentially private data by introducing inaccuracies to limit the likelihood of disclosing an individual’s identity. But currently available differential privacy approaches can result in useless data for many practical marketing applications.

A new set of methods, such as shuffling algorithms and generative adversarial networks, allow data protectors to model marketers’ information needs explicitly in the protection process. Specifically, the models’ loss function embodies the desired insights and ensures that the randomly generated synthetic data do not lack valuable information. Schneider et al. (2018) demonstrate how analysts can preserve estimated price and promotion elasticity precision in a market response model applied to point-of-sale data. Zhou, Lu, and Ding (2020) show how firms can preserve useful consumer facial cues while transforming full facial images into contours.

Summary

Firms must consider how their marketers will use data before they set their privacy policy to maximize the data’s usefulness. And marketing effectiveness estimates are less biased when firms tailor their data protection to their marketers’ needs.

Brands benefit from improved customer privacy perceptions, and many make an intrinsic promise that their customers’ data are private. However, customers must not only perceive that their data are safe; their data must actually be safe. Marketing scholars and practitioners must therefore focus on helping firms protect their data without limiting usefulness.

Rather than be excluded from the privacy table, marketers should spearhead data protection and privacy efforts. Marketers not responsible for data protection might collect too much information, and data privacy decisions made without marketing might compromise valuable insights. Furthermore, marketers make their firms’ privacy promises to consumers and manage public relations after data breaches. Therefore, they are intrinsically motivated to uphold the brand promise. **MN**

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Research Insights

Quick Takes on New AMA Research on
How to Make Data Work for You

BY T.J. ANDERSON

How Are Health-Conscious Consumers Using Wearable Tech?

Smart wearable technologies such as smart watches, sleep monitors, and activity trackers provide users with large amounts of data on their personal physiological and cognitive attributes, such



as heart rate, physical activity, sleep habits, weight, and stress—but how does all this data help users improve their lives?

This study views smart wearable technologies as resources for agency (i.e., the ability of an individual to reflect on their circumstances, affect change, and act independently toward their own goals). In turn, agency forms a means for improving well-being. The study finds that consumers use smart wearable technologies in four different ways:

1. Self-improvement: Consumers use data from these devices to better understand their body and mind in order work on themselves. They can engage in

self-optimization, or simply seek to lead a better life.

2. Justification: Consumers use data, for example on poor sleep or other health issues, to engage medical professionals or seek support from family members.
3. Adaptation: Consumers use data from wearables to compare themselves with others or to cope with situational circumstances.
4. Activism: Consumers can use knowledge gained from wearables to change circumstances that have an effect on their well-being. Instead of simply working on themselves, consumers can also affect change in their surrounding contexts.

For managers and developers of smart wearable technologies, it is important to understand that these devices are used in various ways and to help users engage in all of these, depending on which type of well-being challenge they are facing.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Marketers should understand smart wearable technologies as resources that enable greater consumer agency.
- Consumer agency not only relates to individuals improving their physiological or cognitive attributes but also to engaging with their social and situational contexts.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE

Hannu Tikkanen, Kristina Heinonen, and Annika Ravalid (2023), “Smart Wearable Technologies as Resources for Consumer Agency in Well-Being,” *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 58 (2/3), 136–50.

Using Geospatial Data for International Marketing Research

Geospatial data sources cover ever more countries in increasing detail and are more readily available than ever before. OpenStreetMap, for example, is completely open-source and widely used,



and it continuously grows in depth and breadth of data provided. OpenStreetMap even provides the locations of individual road signs, trees, and park benches. But international marketing research has not yet fully embraced the opportunities of geospatial data. This article shows how geospatial data can contribute to international marketing research by providing detailed insights on, among other things:

- Individual locations of market players and, thus,

their dispersion, concentration, and (local) market dominance.

- Infrastructural conditions such as road surfaces, speed limits, and overall accessibility.
- Neighborhood characteristics that can be indicative of local consumer preferences, attitudes, and consumption behaviors.

To propel the adoption of geospatial data in international marketing research, this article provides a hands-on application that exemplifies geospatial data collection from OpenStreetMap, analytical methods, and means of visualization. Marketing managers and researchers alike can use this article to guide their geospatial data analyses.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Environments shape people and people shape environments; therefore, marketers should use geospatial data to analyze and understand their customer base.
- When entering a new market, marketing professionals can leverage geospatial data to optimize their location and branding by studying the local market, competition, and consumers.
- Marketers can also use geospatial data to analyze their own spatial footprint and opportunities for greater sustainability (e.g., greener parking lots).

READ THE FULL ARTICLE

Julian R.K. Wichmann, Thomas P. Scholdra, and Werner J. Reinartz, “Propelling International Marketing Research with Geospatial Data,” *Journal of International Marketing*, forthcoming. doi:10.1177/1069031X221149951

How Are Electric Vehicle Subsidies Affecting the Automobile Market?

Researchers examined whether purchase subsidies for electric vehicles (EVs) steered consumers away from outmoded technologies and accelerated the adoption of green technologies. In general, the authors found that subsidies strongly encouraged EV purchasing but had little effect on the purchases of traditional vehicles.

EV manufacturers’ marketing campaigns should target two independent consumer segments: those likely to purchase an additional vehicle and those who would not otherwise purchase a vehicle—especially those with higher environmental awareness in both segments.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- In general, purchase subsidies for electric vehicles strongly encourage electric vehicle purchases (i.e., the expansion effect) but have so far had little effect on traditional vehicle purchasing (i.e., cannibalization).
- The expansion effect of subsidies is larger in areas with more severe air pollution.
- Although subsidies have yet to yield the intended cannibalization in the market overall (especially when the market is still developing), cannibalization is beginning to manifest in some parts of the market, for example, in segments with higher income and education.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE

Xi Wu, Jing Gong, Brad N. Greenwood, and Yiping (Amy) Song (2023), “The Effect of Early Electric Vehicle Subsidies on the Automobile Market,” *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 42 (2), 169–86.

The Effects of Cultural Differences on Consumers’ Willingness to Share Personal Information

The authors use multilevel modeling on data collected from 15,045 consumers across 24 countries, finding that national culture has a direct effect on consumers’ willingness to share personal information (WTS). For example, consumers from countries that rank high on Power Distance are more likely to share personal information with firms. The authors demonstrate that national culture systematically moderates the relationships of both privacy concerns and perceived benefits with WTS.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- International cultural differences considerably affect consumers’ willingness to share personal information with firms.
- Marketers and managers need to consider these cultural differences and their effects on consumers’ willingness to share personal information when collecting consumer information.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE

Christopher Schumacher, Felix Eggers, and Peter C. Verhoef (2023), “The Effects of Cultural Differences on Consumers’ Willingness to Share Personal Information,” *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 58 (1), 72–89.



Foundation

The American Marketing Association Foundation (AMAF) champions individual marketers making an impact in our profession and community. We recognize marketing visionaries who have elevated the field, and we support the next generation of marketers who will transform the profession. Congratulations to our most recent award winners!

2023 Ric Sweeney Chapter Volunteer of the Year Award

The Ric Sweeney Chapter Volunteer of the Year Award recognizes and rewards outstanding professional chapter leaders whose contributions have added significantly to the American Marketing Association's goals.

WINNER:



Gina Bonar

AMA Cincinnati Chapter, CMO Roundtable Leader and VP, Programming for the Executive Marketer Community; Founder and Lead Marketing Partner, 5 Whys Marketing

2021-2022 Chapter Excellence Awards

The Chapter Excellence Awards (CEA) program was established in 1974 to recognize and reward AMA professional chapters' outstanding leadership, membership, programming, finance and communications achievements. Each summer, every chapter has the opportunity to submit a CEA entry, which serves as a critical historical record of chapter operations for the prior year that empowers future local leaders to build on past successes.

CHAPTERS OF THE YEAR

GOLD:

AMA Houston Chapter

SILVER:

AMA Chicago Chapter

BRONZE:

AMA Washington DC Chapter

TURN-IT-UP:

AMA Southern Connecticut Chapter

LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

AMA Cincinnati Chapter

AMA Lincoln Chapter

AMA Toronto Chapter

FINANCE EXCELLENCE

AMA Atlanta Chapter

AMA San Antonio Chapter

AMA Toronto Chapter

MEMBERSHIP EXCELLENCE

AMA Iowa Chapter

AMA Nashville Chapter

AMA Toronto Chapter

PROGRAMMING EXCELLENCE

AMA Cincinnati Chapter

AMA Iowa Chapter

AMA San Antonio Chapter

COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE

AMA Iowa Chapter

AMA Lincoln Chapter

AMA Toronto Chapter

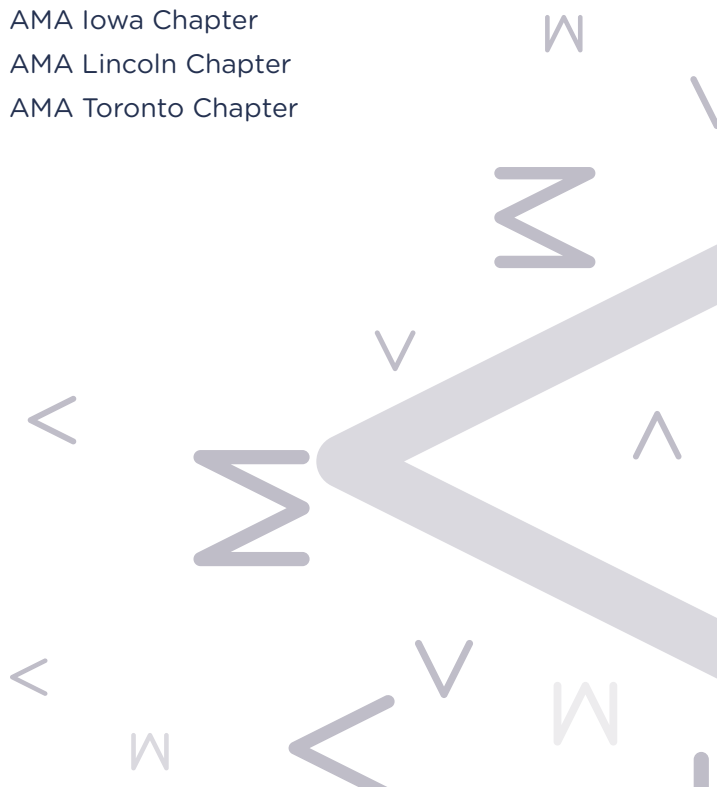
AMA Triangle Chapter

COMMUNITY OUTREACH EXCELLENCE

AMA Iowa Chapter

AMA Lincoln Chapter

AMA Toronto Chapter



Special Merit Awards

TURN-IT-UP HONORABLE MENTION

AMA Hawaii Chapter

LEADERSHIP SPECIAL MERIT

AMA Atlanta Chapter

AMA Nashville Chapter

AMA Triangle Chapter

FINANCE SPECIAL MERIT

AMA Iowa Chapter

AMA Lincoln Chapter

AMA Triangle Chapter

MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL MERIT

AMA Boston Chapter

AMA Cincinnati Chapter

AMA San Antonio Chapter

PROGRAMMING SPECIAL MERIT

AMA Atlanta Chapter

AMA Boston Chapter

AMA Lincoln Chapter

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIAL MERIT

AMA Cincinnati Chapter

AMA New Jersey Chapter

AMA San Antonio Chapter

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SPECIAL MERIT

AMA Nashville Chapter

AMA PDX Chapter

AMA Richmond Chapter

AMA Triangle Chapter

PLATINUM CLUB OF CONTINUING EXCELLENCE

AMA Atlanta Chapter

AMA Chicago Chapter

AMA Cincinnati Chapter

AMA Houston Chapter

AMA Iowa Chapter

AMA Triangle Chapter

Outstanding Academic Marketing Awards

2023 AMA-Irwin-McGraw-Hill Distinguished Marketing Educator Award

This award honors living marketing educators for distinguished service and outstanding contributions in marketing education.



WINNER:

Deborah J. MacInnis

Charles L. and Ramona I. Hilliard Professor of Business Administration and Emerita Professor, Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California

[!\[\]\(e474458956c9a37fbf9586ddb60a7fa1_img.jpg\) LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WINNER](#)

2023 William L. Wilkie “Marketing for a Better World” Award

This award honors thinkers who have significantly contributed to our understanding and appreciation for marketing’s potential to improve our world, and from whose work notable advances have ensued — in the mold of Bill Wilkie of the University of Notre Dame.



WINNER:

Clifford Shultz

Professor and Charles H. Kellstadt Chair of Marketing, Quinlan School of Business, Loyola University Chicago

[!\[\]\(7d1d6890825e83a6a4a51febe2dcc7f3_img.jpg\) LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WINNER](#)

2023 V. Kumar Doctoral Student Mentorship Award

This award recognizes scholars who have made significant contributions to the advancement of PhD students in marketing and have helped create a pipeline of marketing scholars who continue to contribute to the marketing discipline through their research, teaching and service.



WINNER:

James Bettman

Burlington Industries Professor of Business Administration, Fuqua School of Business, Duke University

2023 Robert Lusch Early Career Research Award

This award recognizes a scholar who has published an article early in their career in an AMA journal. The selected article pushes boundaries and introduces novel theories and/or conceptual frames to better understand consumers, markets and marketing actions.



WINNER:

Elham Ghazimatin

Assistant Professor of Marketing, University of Stavanger

Winning Article: "Mobilizing the Temporary Organization: The Governance Roles of Selection and Pricing," *Journal of Marketing* (2021)

2022 John A. Howard/AMA Doctoral Dissertation Award

With origins in the 1960s, this award recognizes excellent marketing doctoral dissertations.



WINNER:

Byungyeon Kim

Assistant Professor of Marketing, Carlson School of Management,
University of Minnesota

2023 Erin Anderson Award for an Emerging Female Marketing Scholar and Mentor

This award recognizes emerging female marketing scholars and mentors while honoring and celebrating the life of Erin Anderson. Erin was a widely respected mentor and scholar whose research made significant contributions to the marketing discipline.



WINNER:

Colleen M. Harmeling

Persis E. Rockwood Associate Professor of Marketing,
Florida State University College of Business

2023 AMA Fellows

The distinction of “AMA Fellow” is given to members of the AMA who have made significant contributions to the research, theory and practice of marketing, and/or to the service and activities of the AMA over a prolonged period of time.



Robin A. Coulter
University of
Connecticut



J. Jeffrey Inman
University of
Pittsburgh



**Richard G.
Netemeyer**
University of
Virginia



Mark B. Houston
Texas Christian
University



Sandy Jap
Emory University



William Qualls
University of
Illinois at Urbana-
Champaign

Call for Nominations

Know any outstanding marketers? Honor them for their achievements by recommending them for an AMA award. Nominations are currently open for:

- » **Charles Coolidge Parlin Marketing Research Award**
ama.marketing/Parlin
- » **Williams-Qualls-Spratlen (WQS) Multicultural Mentoring Award of Excellence**
ama.marketing/wqs
- » **Valuing Diversity PhD Scholarship**
ama.marketing/VDPHD
- » **Leonard L. Berry Marketing Book Award**
ama.marketing/BerryBook
- » **Robert J. Lavidge Global Marketing Research Award**
ama.marketing/Lavidge
- » **4 Under 40 Emerging Leaders Award**
ama.marketing/4Under40

How Can Firms Make Influencer Marketing Work for Them?

Two Recent *Journal of Marketing* Articles Reveal Some Surprising Insights

BY CHRISTIAN HUGHES



Influencer marketing is most effective when influencers retain creative control over their content, which increases trust and authenticity with their followers.

“Influencer marketing” refers to individuals receiving compensation from brands to post about a brand or product on social media. Influencer marketing is expected to grow to be worth \$21.1 billion in 2023, having quintupled in size over the last five years, and is now being used by governments, nonprofits, and firms across industries. Despite this ubiquity, however, many questions remain about the best practices for influencer content creation—that is, what they should post—and influencer followership—that is, what size influencer should be utilized for optimal engagement. Two recent *Journal of Marketing* articles seek to close this gap.

Influencers simultaneously manage relationships with the brands they are sponsoring and maintain authenticity and trust with their own follower base. Recent findings demonstrate that the content influencers create must be original to be effective. According to “Influencer Marketing Effectiveness,” by putting content into their own words, using critical verbiage, and using personalized methods to demonstrate their use of products in everyday life, influencers can improve credibility and effectiveness. Fine Leung, who coauthored the article with Flora Gu, Yiwei Li, Jonathan Z. Zhang, and Robert Palmatier, notes, “Good news for companies: increasing their influencer marketer budget can increase consumer engagement: a 1% increase in spend on influencer marketers can increase engagement by .46%.”

Another *Journal of Marketing* article, “Finding Goldilocks Influencers: How Follower Count Drives Social Media Engagement,” by Simone Weis, Alexander Bleier, and Alexander Edeling, discusses the use of “content customization,” whereby influencers can signal to their followers that they value their relationship. Weis said, “One of our most surprising findings is that we observed an inverted U-shape between follower accounts and absolute engagement with a post or a story that an influencer publishes on Instagram. So that means that at some inflection point, engagement decreases, and it might be bad having that many followers if the influencer or advertiser seeks to optimize engagement.”

The Role of Followership Size

Another question remains around the use of micro versus macro influencers for influencer marketing campaigns. While exact industry classifications vary, micro influencers are typically classified as influencers with a followership in the range of 10,000 to 50,000, whereas macro influencers have 500,000 followers or more. Some anecdotal industry evidence suggests that micro influencer campaigns prove to be an effective strategy; for example, Tom’s of Maine successfully utilized many micro influencers for a user-generated content campaign that encouraged their

Advice for Marketing Managers

- 1 POSTS THAT ANNOUNCE** new products diminish effectiveness. Firms should focus on existing products when engaging influencers.
- 2 LOOK FOR INFLUENCERS** who are original and use their own personal lives and voice to demonstrate and portray products in their post with an authentic voice.
- 3 WHEN CREATING CONTENT BRIEFS** for your influencer, tailor the voice to the individual; avoid standardized content.
- 4 KEEP YOUR GOAL IN MIND** as you determine whether to use micro or macro influencers, and both may be used in the same campaign; for example, a firm might use a few macro influencers at the beginning to create buzz and awareness for its campaign, then later use a large number of micro influencers to help spread the word and gain deeper engagement and conversations with consumers down the marketing funnel.

Advice for Influencers

- 1 INFLUENCERS WITH A** very high number of followers should look for other signals that can compensate for the negative signal of low tie strength. One way to do this is to customize content to different audiences.
- 2 POST FREQUENTLY ENOUGH** to establish yourself as a provider of updated and fresh information and so that followers feel a sense of intimacy and connection, but be aware that posting too much can be detrimental.
- 3 STRIVE FOR** the right balance of positivity; posts that are too positive will not be viewed as authentic.

followers to create and post their own content. Other evidence points to the benefits of the wide audience reach that can be generated through the use of macro influencers.

Practical implications of this research show that there are potential benefits and costs of both micro and macro influencers. First, the increase in perceived credibility generated by the endorsement of an influencer with greater followers, or macro influencer, can drive greater engagement. However, influencers with a high follower count (also known as “indegree”) may not have actual significant influence on their follower population because they don’t have the resources to engage their following, resulting in reduced follower engagement. In contrast, influencers with a moderate number of followers (~1.1–1.9 M) are optimal for having a large but still engaged audience. Leung further notes that firms are currently “allocating their budgets suboptimally; they could improve return on investment by 16%” if they were to invest more

**A 1% increase in spend on
influencer marketers can increase
engagement by .46%**

in influencers who are more original and have more followers. “Posts that announce new products diminish effectiveness. Firms should focus on existing products when engaging influencers,” Leung adds. Taking both studies together, influencer marketing is most effective when influencers retain creative control over their content, which increases trust and authenticity with their followers.

The influencer marketing industry continues to grow and bring new challenges for marketers hoping to harness the power of social influencers. Social influencers, unlike celebrity endorsements, combine earned and paid media, making them a challenging yet powerful tool for brands to target and reach high-value consumers. By striking the right balance of authentic content and influencers with an engaged audience, influencer marketing campaigns can produce great returns. . MN



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Simone Wies, Alexander Bleier, and Alexander Edeling, “Finding Goldilocks Influencers: How Follower Count Drives Social Media Engagement,” *Journal of Marketing*.



The Challenge of Keeping an Audience Engaged

How Language Shapes Attention

BY JONAH BERGER, WENDY W. MOE
AND DAVID A. SCHWEIDEL

Everyone wants to hold an audience's attention. Brands want consumers to watch their ads, leaders want employees to read their emails, and teachers want students to listen to their lectures.

Similarly, media companies want readers to consume more content. The reason is simple: The further down a news story readers read, the more advertising revenue that article generates; the longer audiences spend watching videos, the higher the rate brands can command. And the more a piece of content holds attention, the more consumers learn about the product, service, or issue discussed.

Why do some articles captivate readers and encourage them to keep reading, while others make them lose interest after just a few sentences? And how does the content (i.e., the language used) shape whether audiences stay engaged?

In a new *Journal of Marketing* study, we address these questions with a multi-method investigation. By utilizing natural language processing of over 600,000 reading sessions from 35,000 pieces of content, combined with controlled experiments, we illustrate how language holds attention.

Sustained Attention vs. Clickbait

It is important to distinguish sustained attention from other types of engagement. One way of measuring engagement is clicks, views, or other such metrics that measure how many people were exposed to a piece of content. While prior research has examined how headlines or advertisements attract attention, we wish to explore how the content is able to hold a reader's attention. Focusing on short-term metrics like views and clicks can lead to clickbait or headlines that attract attention, but it does not necessarily lead to content being consumed.

Companies like YouTube and Facebook use measures like "dwell time," or how long users spend consuming a piece of content, to better measure engagement, estimate relevance, and improve rankings and recommendations. A catchy headline might lead readers to click on a link, for example, but once they open the article, how much of it do they actually read? Do they stop after the first few sentences? Do they persist for most of the article? Holding attention refers to whether content retains the attracted attention, keeping audiences engaged.

Our study shows that language that is easier to process encourages continued reading, as does language that evokes emotion. But not all emotional language has the same impact. Instead, these effects are driven by the degree to which different discrete emotions evoke arousal and uncertainty. Consistent with this, we also learn that language that is anxious, exciting, and hopeful encourages reading, whereas language that is sad discourages it. A simulation highlights the implications of these findings for content recommendation algorithms trained to sustain attention.

Managerial Implications and Lessons

Our study offers four main lessons for chief marketing officers:

- It deepens understanding around what holds attention. While some research has examined what attracts attention or what drives word of mouth, there has been less focus on how language sustains attention or makes people consume more content once they have started. We demonstrate the important role of

emotional language and show how different linguistic features shape content consumption.

- Our findings help improve content design for advertisers, marketers, publishers, and presenters. Since content creators do not just want clicks, we show how simple shifts in language can encourage sustained attention. Further, while it is often assumed that certain topics are just better at keeping people engaged (e.g., celebrity gossip rather than financial literacy), we show how writing in certain ways can increase sustained attention, even for "less engaging" topics.
- The results highlight that what holds attention is not always the same as what grabs attention or encourages word of mouth. While more certain language can increase likes and shares, we show that emotions that make people feel certain are actually detrimental when it comes to sustaining attention. Although some have argued that content requiring more cognitive processing should increase clicks, we show that content that requires more processing has the opposite effect when it comes to holding attention. Retaining attention is a different type of engagement, and findings from one type of engagement may not necessarily carry over to others. Consequently, when developing content, managers should think carefully about which outcomes they care most about and design the content with that in mind.
- Because online content consumption has become a critical social issue, our findings have important social implications. Disinformation and hate speech have been linked to negative outcomes for individuals as well as society, and our results highlight language's critical role in this process. If angry and anxious content holds attention, as our simulation shows, training algorithms to maximize sustained attention may lead this content to be recommended, with potentially negative implications for consumer welfare. **MN**

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READ THE FULL ARTICLE

Jonah Berger, Wendy W. Moe, and David A. Schweidel, "What Holds Attention? Linguistic Drivers of Engagement," *Journal of Marketing*, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00222429231152880>



The Authentic Sweet Spot

How Indulgent Consumption Can Signal Warmth

BY ISHITA NAGPAL AND SHUYI HAO

Social media has become an integral part of our daily lives. From Facebook to Twitter and from Instagram to TikTok, social media has revolutionized the way we communicate, share information, and connect with others around the world. Globally, more than 4.26 billion people used social media in 2021, and that figure is expected to reach almost six billion by 2027, according to Statista. Enjoying free time, seeking inspiration, reading news stories, and the current trend of sharing daily consumption—especially indulgent consumption—are common motives for using social media. Even the most famous people in our society share daily consumption habits, such as basketball star LeBron James frequently using the hashtag “Taco Tuesday” on Instagram, going so far as to attempt to trademark the term, a recent New York Times article reveals.

Whether it’s making an extravagant purchase or giving in to a guilty pleasure or tempting treat, indulgent consumption is often framed as a negative action caused by lack of self-control. People who act in such a way face criticism or even derision for their decisions. But what if we changed our viewpoint and looked at indulgent consumption differently? What if we told you that many people interpret indulgent spending positively? That it provides a sense of warmth and accessibility? A newly published *Journal of Marketing Research* study shows just that.

The study focuses on the phenomenon of celebrities posting about indulgent consumption on social media, which has become a #hottrend on those platforms. The authors were curious whether indulgent consumption, despite its typically assumed negative signaling effect, might actually signal the opposite. Interestingly, they discovered that such consumption does indeed have a positive signaling effect because it indicates interpersonal warmth. For example, having a piece of cake may be a customer’s genuine preference, which signals truthful behavior.

Consumers believe that indulgent consumption is what people truly prefer, so when someone shares their indulgent treat or activity, it is seen as more authentic and genuine. Authenticity is the key to this positive perception. According to the research, people who post indulgent consumption content on social media are viewed as friendlier and more approachable than those who share their healthy eating and lifestyle choices. By honestly and authentically displaying their indulgent consumption preferences, influencers and brands can forge stronger connections with their audiences and project a sense of warmth and approachability.

In marketing and personal branding strategies, authenticity is crucial, and being open and truthful about one’s tastes and behaviors can promote greater engagement and interpersonal connections. Therefore, the next time you indulge in something you appreciate, don’t feel guilty or ashamed about it; instead, embrace it and authentically share it with others. Who knows...it might even aid in the development of closer bonds and impressions of kindness and approachability. **MM**

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READ THE FULL ARTICLE

Qing Tang, Kuangjie Zhang, and Xun (Irene) Huang (2022), “Indulgent Consumption Signals Interpersonal Warmth,” *Journal of Marketing Research*, 59 (6), 1179–96.

