



## **JCR Call for Papers:**

### **“The Future of Brands in a Changing Consumer Marketplace”**

**Special Issue: August 2021**

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Due to changes in technology, media, and consumers, the consumer marketplace is rapidly evolving. Today, there are new ways for consumers to search for information; receive information from online and offline retailers and marketers; and interact with brands. In recent years, brands have gone from being defined and managed by brand strategists in fairly stable, somewhat unified and enduring ways to being negotiated, contested, fluid and dynamic, with brand meaning often dependent on consumer context and audience. Consumers are empowered to influence, dispute, aggregate, and even create brands as never before.

As the marketplace changes, questions of how consumers and brands interact arise. While there is no question that some brands will rise while others fall (think Warby Parker and GE), there are many questions about how brands overall will exist and function for consumers and what the future of consumer relationships with brands will look like. What will be the meaning, roles and influence of brands as consumers navigate the new marketplace?

The purpose of this special issue is to encourage and feature cutting-edge research on the conceptual and practical implications of consumer behavior within the changing marketplace for brands and branding. We are interested in insightful, impactful research on brands in terms of their meaning and relationship to and influence on consumer behavior and marketplace phenomena. Topics of interest for this special issue include (but are not limited to):

#### **Consumer Brand Knowledge and Relationships:**

- What do consumers expect from brands now? How do they view brands and branding differently than in the past?
- What is the effect on consumer-brand relationships when brand meaning is dynamic and negotiated in often competing spheres of influence?
- What are new ways brands gain and lose meaning, particularly in mediated environments (such as Amazon)?

#### **Consumer Well-Being and Brands:**

- What is the importance of brand purpose to consumers? How do consumers interpret and respond to new forms of brand activism, such as digital activism and in spheres such as politics and retail?
- How do brands and cultural meanings interplay in turbulent political, economic and environmental conditions?
- How can brands thrive by enhancing consumer well-being and environmental sustainability?

### **Consumers' Social Media and Brands:**

- How do digital communications and social media impact consumer-brand interactions and relationships? How do they impact brand communities?
- How do consumer to consumer collaborative platforms impact brand interactions and relationships?
- How are today's media smart consumer influencers shaping market tastes, brand preferences and brands in new ways?

### **Consumers' New Technologies and Brands:**

- How do branded search engines and brand aggregators impact brand relationships?
- How are brand relationships altered when brought to life with virtual or augmented reality?
- What is the impact of artificial intelligence on brands? How are the new automated market influencers altering the brand landscape? How is the Internet of Things altering brand relationships?
- How is brand meaning affected when consumers co-create in entirely new ways, such as producing branded products themselves (e.g., with a 3-D printer)?

We look forward to receiving rigorous research that provides novel insight about the consumer relevance of brands. The research may be empirical (including experimental, qualitative, or econometrics) or conceptual. All submissions should include research that builds on past research to provide new understanding of brands and consumers.

**To be considered for this Special Issue, all submissions must be received on or prior to February 2, 2020 by 12 midnight Eastern Standard Time** and must be marked as targeting the Special Issue. Authors of manuscripts that are offered a revision opportunity should plan to be able to prioritize revisions within fairly tight frames. Our goal is for the Special Issue to appear in the August 2021 issue.