

Production and Operations Management Call for Papers
Special Issue: Transformative Marketing and Operations Management

Formal Submissions due: ~~August 31, 2021~~ Now Extended till: **October 31, 2021**

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Background

The continuous change in the environment, which is a hallmark of the operations management (OM) and marketing disciplines, is informed by academic research pursuits and real-world business developments. The future of marketing and OM thought and practice is expected to be shaped by three constituents – academic research, marketplace actions, and societal developments¹. In fact, the interaction between the constituents mentioned above is significantly adding up to an overall state of transformation in the field of marketing and OM, wherein consumers and firms constantly see changes in how they interact with each other through the various exchanges and how such changes are governing the operational issues and creating complexities in responding to the spillover of the changes².

As such, it is crucial to explore (a) how transformative forces including operations are impacting marketing, and (b) how the impact of marketing as a transformative force³ to operations is realized, in responding to theoretical, practical, and societal issues. This **transformative marketing** has been experienced across domains and sub-domains such as services operations, supplier management, customer experience, cutting edge technologies to name a few, and across tools and techniques such as AI, IoT, blockchain, etc. such that “for anyone who is not at the cutting edge of technology and lacks a crystal ball, it is hard to know how best to respond to this change—for academics for whom the vast array of new analytic tools is the most critical to learn, for managers how to adapt their firms to the changing landscape.”⁴

Thus, one can see that OM and Marketing are going to be evolving constantly and such a constant change will also affect other interrelated disciplines and domains. For example, consider the human assistant, Alexa: “If Alexa is accepted as the member of the family who knows the most about the weather, why not trust her suggestions for where to buy a car? In the future such apps and devices may thus be the ultimate market gatekeepers: the most successful firms may not be the ones who can develop the best products and services, but rather those who are most successful

¹ Kumar, V (2015), "Evolution of marketing as a discipline: What has happened and what to look out for," *Journal of Marketing*, 79 (1), 1-9.

² Kumar, V. (2018), “Transformative Marketing: The Next 20 Years,” *Journal of Marketing*, 82 (4), 1-12

³ Varadarajan, R. (2018). A Commentary on “Transformative Marketing: The Next 20 Years” *Journal of Marketing*, 82(4), 15-18.

⁴ Meyer, R. (2018). Reflections on “Transformative Marketing: The Next 20 Years”. *Journal of Marketing*, 82(4), 13-14.

in persuading WeChat or Alexa to recommend them.”⁵ According to Jeffrey Immelt, former CEO and chairman of GE, “Every time we drove a big change, I treated it as if it were life and death. If you can instill that psychology in your management group, you can get transformation”⁶.

Alibaba’s revenue increase was attributed to attracting more shoppers as well as its ability to deliver more relevant content to them. The company was able to accomplish this through mining the data on customer behavior. Ability to correctly mine customer behavior also changed merchants’ operational and pricing strategies as they were willing to pay higher prices if they know the ads are likely to draw in sales⁷. As a result, Alibaba is able to draw more dollars for the ads without increasing the cost. This mining of the customer data generates three market-based resources of major importance are a firm’s customer information *assets*, customer information analysis *capabilities*, and customer *knowledge*⁸.

From a marketing perspective, convenience and personalization is expected to determine the success of any business. It is becoming very clear that technology and operations are driving this change. For example, Tesla’s direct-to-consumer sales model to make the car-buying more convenient⁹, Spotify’s personalized playlist recommendations¹⁰, and Lego’s use of sugarcane as a sustainable alternative to plastic¹¹, are considered as the respective companies’ efforts to address evolving consumer needs.

In the process of transformative marketing’s role in OM, new age technologies (NATs) such as artificial intelligence (AI), robots, machine learning (ML), drones, Internet of Things (IoT), and blockchain are just the beginnings of an infrastructure whereby marketing is both experiential and instantaneous, a constant loop that marketers will be able to tap into to shift perceptions, provide goods and services and utilize consumers as yet another tool in their expanding repertoire. Moreover, consistent with the changes, firms are reworking on their practices such that they can rationalize the changes and update the processes and systems. More importantly, transformative marketing and OM will also change the organizational infrastructure in operations, resource management, and the way a firm looks at the future. Intelligent agent technologies (IATs), virtual reality, facial recognition, and geofencing are increasingly reshaping how companies interact with their customers and their stakeholders¹². How did we get here? Amazon, for instance, uses a

⁵ Meyer, R. (2018). Reflections on “Transformative Marketing: The Next 20 Years”. *Journal of Marketing*, 82(4), 13-14.

⁶ Immelt, Jeffrey R. (2017), "How I remade GE and what I learned along the way," *Harvard Business Review* (September-October), 42-51.

⁷ Wong, Jacky. (2017), “Alibaba Cashes in on Data Trove,” *Wall Street Journal*. August 18, B12.

⁸ Varadarajan, R. (2018). A Commentary on “Transformative Marketing: The Next 20 Years” *Journal of Marketing*, 82(4), 15-18.

⁹ Straw, John (2016), "How Tesla will change the car sales model..." *Disruption*, September 3, [available at <https://disruptionhub.com/disrupted-car-dealerships-tesla-will-change-car-sales-model/>].

¹⁰ Pasick, Adam (2015), "The magic that makes Spotify’s Discover Weekly playlists so damn good," *Quartz*, December 21, [available at <https://qz.com/571007/the-magic-that-makes-spotifys-discover-weekly-playlists-so-damn-good/>].

¹¹ Locker, Melissa (2018), "Here’s why Lego is swapping plastic for plants," *Fast Company*, March 1, [available at <https://www.fastcompany.com/40538201/lego-is-swapping-plastic-for-plants-with-new-sustainably-made-elements>].

¹² Kumar, V. (2021), **Intelligent Marketing: Employing New Age Technologies**, Sage Publications (forthcoming).

confluence of AI, robots, ML, drones, IoT, and blockchain to offer, deliver, and develop solutions that are already changing the business landscape. This is one example to note, how each technology in their own right – AI, robots, ML, drones, IoT and blockchain – will continue to foster firm capabilities to address the ever-growing information pool; and, how changes in the traditional marketing and operational practices will allow a firm to accept and adhere to the changes brought by the transformation.

What is the potential for new age technologies in marketing and operations? What strategies, capabilities and resources can we explore to prepare? How should a firm change their practices regarding customer operations, service operations, manufacturing and control, quality management and relationship enforcement such that the endogenous shock of transformative marketing can be accepted and taken forward? Further, by combining data across different social media platforms, extended physical and online network of relationships, firms can create value for their customers and stakeholders, and generate benefits for all the key stakeholders through the growth in business transactions. While firms have been applying new-age technologies to operations and marketing activities and business tasks in isolation, they have only recently begun to examine the integrated application of these technologies to marketing strategies and how delving deeper to the management of traditional practices to an acute level can affect firm performance.

Thus, this special issue stresses the need for exploring solutions (a) from an OM and marketing perspective for the issues in the interrelated domains as well as to help marketing and operations activities at a much-needed time for businesses to succeed, and (b) for the academic pursuit of knowledge to grow with rigor and relevance, such that transformative marketing and operations can yield theoretical, empirical and societal impacts.

Topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Applications of New Age technologies for implementing Transformative Marketing and Operations
2. How can the analysis of structured and unstructured data enhance marketing and operations functions in the digital era?
3. How technological innovations shape or influence customer engagement?
4. How customer experience at various touch points of the customer journey are influenced by service operations due to implementing new age technologies?
5. What factors drive the success of the reconfiguration of operations and marketing services due to the use of new age technologies?
6. How do changes in traditional operations and marketing practices (i.e., managing service failure, customer complaints) can provide firms economic and societal benefits?
7. How does transformative marketing influence a firm's capacity planning, production and delivery planning, and understanding of value of relationships with supply partners and intermediaries?
8. How do changes in services operations influence customer retention and firm profitability?
9. How to use augmented reality in product delivery and operation fulfillments?
10. How to link transformative marketing to operational sustainability?
11. How can Operations and Marketing strategies be effective with machine-human reconciliation?

12. How should small and medium enterprises prepare themselves in the era of transformative marketing and OM?
13. Linking transformative marketing to rapid innovation in the field of healthcare operations, supply chain design and network management.

We welcome submissions that examine research in the interface of marketing and operations. All submissions must have clear managerial contributions, must be built on rigorous research methods that serve as an appropriate framework to analyze decisions with robust data: analysis of data, mathematical analysis, analytical models, behavioral theories, etc. We expect the study to address a new (and potentially game-changing) phenomenon, with a sufficient level of rigor and relevance that is consistent with the high standard of the journal.

Please follow the detailed submission guidelines provided at http://www.poms.org/journal/author_instructions/.

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