Editorial: Changing digital landscape and marketing transformation

Rajagopal

EGADE Business School,
Tecnologico de Monterrey,
Carlos Lazo, 100, Santa Fe 01389,
Mexico City, Mexico
Email: rajagopal@tec.mx

The rapidly changing digital landscape is constantly evolving and transforming marketing practices in developing economies. Firms in emerging markets are recognising the reasons for real-time growth with the rise of AI to adapt to new technologies and stay convergent with the changing consumer behaviours. Consequently, the core marketing practices are leaning towards increasing the application of multi-channel marketing, providing personalised experiences, and enabling data-driven strategies for precisely targeting the markets (Saura et al., 2024). Current trends of both customer-centric and industrial marketing firms demonstrate the application of new concepts by the firms including coopetition, agile strategies, crowd-based innovation, and prioritised customer engagement to thrive in dynamic digital environment. Dynamic coopetition is widely practiced by the firms in the services industry, specifically in the travel and tourism sector. It has grown as an interplay of the cooperative and competitive activities between firms such as Marriott hotels on the Booking.com platform (Nan et al., 2025). Besides the contribution of social media to collective intelligence, artificial intelligence and data analytics have been practiced by the firms as the core drivers of the strategic and tactical approaches to sustain and lead the market competitively.

The integration of digital information with augmented reality (AR) technology is used to synchronise it with physical environment to offer real time experience to the users. Such a blend of technology into the conventional computer aided platforms helps firms to increase customer satisfaction and competitiveness in business operations. AR technology combines real life with a super-imposed image or animation using the camera on a mobile device or through AR headsets and glasses by mixing graphics, sounds, haptic feedback, or even smell to the natural world as it exists to provide high satisfaction to the users. As a part of the wider extended reality (XR), the technology industry has doubled the global AR market size to penetrate the most profitable and visible segments of the e-commerce market in business-to-business and business-to-consumers market segments. The retail industry market coupled with AX and AR is expected to grow considerably over the years in future. Besides industrial and retail marketers, firms in consumer-to-consumer market segments such as May Kay Cosmetics, Avon, AliExpress, and eBay have gained popularity in global e-commerce and have driven the market towards mobile users through AI-supported applications. In addition to the online platforms on desktop and mobile devices, small e-commerce players and online retailers

Copyright © 2025 Inderscience Enterprises Ltd.

sell their products via mobile shopping applications as well as through social media platforms (Rajagopal, 2025).

The e-commerce industry is fraught with multiple challenges at a time when the global economy is undergoing significant changes as the macroeconomic factors due to politico-economic volatility have been unfavourable to the e-commerce companies. In addition, the increasing prevalence of artificial intelligence in the virtual retail environment poses challenges for e-commerce retailers to meet consumer expectations in terms of personalisation, self-services efficiency, and cyber security to protect personal data. Sales organisations have adapted to the digital landscape by harnessing tools like Internet, mobile, and email marketing campaigns. They employ digital marketing automation solutions to prospect targeted and personalised digital contents, demonstrating adeptness in utilising digital platforms that stay connected with customers beyond boundaries (Chaker et al., 2022).

In switching from shopping in physical stores to virtual retail outlets, consumers are gaining a wide range of benefits by embracing virtual retailing technology, such as quick comparisons on price and quality of products, online promotions, peer motivation on adapting to retailing technology, increasing shopping experience, and improving the perceived value. In a physical store, consumers derive motivation through sensory stimuli that reinforces the desire to shop. On the other hand, environmental stimuli are restricted to affecting vision or hearing in an online store. Peer interactions encourage customers to adapt to innovative retailing technologies like AR, quick response codes to obtain comprehensive product information, self-controlled checkouts, and managing product deliveries (Rajagopal, 2025). The digital communications through social media channels and blogs of customer communities have emerged today as the guiding tools for customers to make online shopping decisions such as choosing the shopping outlets that are less complicated, contain wide product portfolios, and are trustworthy (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). Virtual stores and e-commerce have grown faster along with transcending information and communication technology.

The salient contribution of AI to e-commerce during the 2020s includes application of AI-enabled personalisation by companies to reach new heights by using real-time data to tailor experiences across platforms from suggestive to dynamic pricing, voice commerce, and AR tools. These attributes of e-commerce have been supported with AI facilitating product visualisations, interactive shopping, and virtual try-ons. In the same period, generative AI became popular for creating content by allowing e-commerce businesses to use AI to generate product descriptions, which significantly helped firms to enhance customer support responses, and refine personalisation. The integration of AI with advanced augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR) and the metaverse allowed for immersive shopping experiences, where AI curates personalised product showrooms and virtual assistants guide users. AR is a combination of real and virtual worlds, which overlays digital content onto the physical world by blending the two seamlessly. Users experiencing AR with headsets can interact with both real and virtual elements simultaneously to make their experience dynamic and engaging. AR provides 3D object tracking as the AR systems can trace the path and integrate 3D objects into the user's environment, which allows immersive experiences. Combined with the geographic positioning system and remote location-based data, AI solutions provide contextually relevant information based on the user's location, which enables the firms to make appropriate decisions on consumer preferences, logistics, and delivery schedules. Devices like smart glasses enhance AR experiences by providing hands-free interaction and more

immersive visuals, while the simultaneous localisation and mapping (SLAM) technology helps AR systems in mapping the geographic environment and tracking the user's position within it, thus improving accuracy and interaction. Such contribution of AR has helped firms to improve live communication with the consumers to provide them with real-time and geographic-oriented solutions and co-create value in business. Cloud storage enables AR applications to store and retrieve data from the cloud providing complex but data-rich experiences (Rajagopal, 2025).

This issue of the journal includes five research papers addressing the attributes that influence artificial intelligence, marketing, customer engagement, and entrepreneurship. These research papers include diverse study areas representing emerging markets such as India, Nigeria, and Philippines. The papers included in this issue of the journal broadly discuss contemporary research on AI, consumer engagement, data analytics in marketing decisions, and influence of AI on the contemporary businesses. I hope the collection of research papers appearing in this issue will enrich the existing literature on the topic and stimulate future research.

References

Chaker, N.N., Nowlin, E.L., Pivonka, M.T., Itani, O.S. and Agnihotri, R. (2022) 'Inside sales social media use and its strategic implications for salesperson-customer digital engagement and performance', *Industrial Marketing Management*, Vol. 100, pp.127–144.

Lamberton, C. and Stephen, A.T. (2016) 'A thematic exploration of digital, social media, and mobile marketing: research evolution from 2000 to 2015 and an agenda for future inquiry', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 80, No. 6, pp.146–172.

Nan, Y., Liu, M.J., Luo, J. and Ye, D. (2025) 'Conceptualization of dynamic digital coopetition: evidence from hospitality platforms', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 126, in press, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2024.104036.

Rajagopal (2025) *Virtual Engagement: Managing Seamless Marketing with Technology*, Business Expert Press, New York.

Saura, J.R., Škare, V. and Dosen, D.O. (2024) 'Is AI-based digital marketing ethical? Assessing a new data privacy paradox', *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, Vol. 9, No. 4, in press, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jik.2024.100597.