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## Editorial

## Transforming marketing education: Historical, contemporary and future perspectives

Welcome to this Special Issue on Marketing Education. From the initial call for papers associated with the 2017 ANZMAC conference, this special issue grew to attract international authors to tackle the topic of the future of marketing education. Marketing education is at an intersection where digital technologies, wide-scale social and financial disadvantage, industrial demands and the opening of educational systems to market dynamics are changing the practice and promise of higher education—and the very nature of operations (Levine, 2018). The papers in this special issue show authors not only responding to these challenges but also presenting new perspectives and suggestions for change.

To ensure that the high standards set by the *Australasian Marketing Journal* are maintained, all submissions were desk-reviewed by the Editor-in-Chief before forwarding to the Guest Editors to ascertain their relevance to the theme of the special issue and their academic rigour. Once this process was completed, successful submissions were sent to at least two reviewers who undertook a blind review of the papers. The invited commentaries were also blind-reviewed. The reviewers and authors are to be commended for working within tight time frames.

The papers in this Special Issue are of two types: (1) competitive papers, received as a response to an open call for papers and (2) invited perspectives. The invited commentaries are aimed at promoting discussion and critique of the marketing education academy.

The first invited paper of the Issue is by Morris Holbrook. He has given us an insight into his personal journey from MBA, then to a PhD candidate and thence to becoming a leading contributor to the marketing academy and the profession. He argues that the business “school has devolved toward a lower level of academic excellence, an abandonment of scholarly values, an unfortunate anti-intellectualism, and a betrayal of its commitment to the advance of business- or marketing-related knowledge for its own sake.” However, all is not lost, as Professor Holbrook also makes some achievable suggestions for improvement, alongside providing his wisdom for those of us still creating change in our academy.

The second perspective is from a Millennial student, Ms Dang Hong Hai Nguyen, currently a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne, who has given us her view on the challenges and opportunities associated with digital education, especially when it is designed for digital natives. She argues that using non-educational digital technologies and platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are counterproductive, and that universities should move away

from the ‘work-ready’ graduate model in a world where meaningful work is increasingly for the privileged in our societies.

In the third perspective paper of the issue, Rachel Pollack presents her views on the promises of MOOCs on the democratisation of education and information. She demonstrates that MOOCs tend to be used “mostly by those already advantaged in terms of education and socio-economic status.” She also argues that the instructional quality of MOOCs is unlikely to meet the needs of education—although they can provide information. She argues that MOOCs are an incomplete learning experience and they do not reduce global inequalities of access.

The fourth, perspective, paper is by Mark Uncles, who takes a hard look at the Australian education industry and the challenges faced by the academy in delivering quality education in a rapidly changing business landscape.

Uncles, writing both as a marketer and as a deputy dean (education) at a leading Australian business school, applies a customer value approach to highlight new opportunities for students and educators, particularly in relation to value-in-development, value-in-delivery and value-in-consumption. He also explains how we now have the data to measure these sources of value and therefore it is easier to adopt an evidence-based approach to management of, and innovation in, education. This offers the prospect of new-found relevance for the discipline in that marketing concepts and principles are becoming highly applicable in the context of higher education.

In applying the customer value approach, Uncles identifies many similar concerns to those raised by Holbrook, but he draws different conclusions about the state of higher education today and its likely evolution over the next few years. To use a medical analogy, both authors see signs of illness in the condition of business education (e.g. fears about the industrialisation of higher education), but Uncles reports signs of robust health too (e.g. gains from technology-enabled teaching and learning). Maybe it depends where we choose to look for evidence. For Holbrook the prognosis is not encouraging, particularly as his 7-point plan directly challenges the direction that business education has taken in recent years. The prognosis from Uncles is more upbeat and optimistic, in that he sees new opportunities emerging and these have the potential to enhance the educational experiences and outcomes of an ever-growing number of students across the globe. Undeniably, changes will continue to be disruptive and, whilst many students and providers will gain, others may be disadvantaged. That is typical of any market disruption. But for all these changes there are

new ways to apply marketing concepts and new ways to deploy our marketing analytics toolkit.

### The changing landscape of higher education

The advent of the Internet has changed the nature of higher education (Wegerif, 2018). No longer are students lined up neatly in classrooms to receive wisdom from their teachers. The Internet has permitted free-range education where students can choose what they want to learn, whether they want to learn it and how they want to learn it (Williams, 2017). This is a challenge to the Academy as they need to reconsider what teaching is and how they might participate in fostering the future. There is a worldwide trend towards MOOCs, although to a greater or lesser degree these are still a resource-intensive, 'first world' capability with very few large-scale organisations having the capacity to engage effectively (Latchem, 2018). In this issue, Pollock's article illustrates some of the dilemmas that are still being faced by institutions when they engage with enabling education and information on a massive scale. Those seeking to engender equality might consider the impact of technology on freedom and the availability of education to those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Diversity and inclusion are important considerations from our class 'rooms' to society (Gertz et al., 2018).

Increasingly, higher education institutions are being held to account for the outcomes they produce in their student bodies (both by students and industries, by the way of satisfaction scores and employment) (Runté and Runté, 2018). However, while there is a consensus that students are underprepared in terms of workforce skills, there is an insufficient investment made to close the gap. Principally this has to do with the widening gap between life skills and education that appears to be moving at a more rapid rate than ever before. A student would need to be a perpetual student (while working part time in relevant employment) graduating somewhere around their 35th birthday in order to have sufficient skills to deal with modern workforce requirements. It is physically impossible for a student to gain (in 4 years or less) the skills they need to keep up with the rapidly changing world. Lifelong learning in these circumstances becomes a real need, but the likelihood of students being able to afford to invest is becoming relatively lower over time (Marginson, 2018). Universities, focusing on education, are unlikely to fill skills gaps. They are likely to fill knowledge gaps but knowledge is no longer enough and universities are not (usually) funded to teach skills. Partnerships with technical and vocational institutions may be the way of the future in order to deliver both skills and knowledge to employers via graduating students. Micro credentials, potentially delivered via MOOCs, may become the way of the future. Students may concurrently learn skills and knowledge but via different pathways.

Globally, government policies are creating a competitive environment that universities are struggling to keep up with (Marginson, 2018). New Zealand, for example is an exemplar in 'free' and liberal education. Australia is in deep competition with the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Hegemony changes among these three points of the compass dependent on government policies. Australia celebrates Brexit and Trump with higher levels of international enrolment: but don't get excited as it will only last until the next election! Competitive advantage is being redefined. Institutions throughout the Asia-Pacific are emerging and the quality of these institutions is growing rapidly. Concomitant to this growth are ways to assure quality, and Australia leads the way in terms of quality assurance processes that are nationwide and apply to all institutions regardless of its focus (i.e., TEQSA). Other accreditation requirements (e.g., AACSB, EQUIS) are also growing but with globalisation of higher education markets and international competition for students, there is room in the

market for an institutional and international quality assurance procedure that works in various settings: something that goes *beyond compliance* and genuinely assures *quality of education*.

### The contemporary marketing curriculum

Changes in the higher education landscape challenge marketing educators to innovate and refresh our program and curriculum designs such that they remain contemporary, relevant and impactful. As marketing educators we must practice what we preach—that is, to recognise the importance of partnerships and the roles of stakeholders (students, industries, the profession, and beyond) in co-creating learning quality and the learning experience in the classroom. Over the past decades, we have catered to the needs of the millennials, who are tech-savvy, networked, and demanding in terms of authenticity, speed, and instant access to information, through new delivery modes and platform integrations, such as on-line education (Peltier et al., 2003), application of web 2.0 technology (Granitz and Koernig, 2011; Lowe and Laffey, 2011), virtual reality (Halvorson et al., 2011), flipped classroom (Green, 2015; Shih and Tsai, 2017) and asynchronous learning (Northey et al., 2015) with varying degrees of success. Moving forward, the academy is required to play a leadership role in shaping our future directions and endeavours to invigorate the curriculum, particularly with the increasing voice and influence of Generation Z or the iGeneration. Students of the iGeneration growing up with their smart phones will not only expect to have instant access to on-demand information, but also heed the advice of friends and their social media contacts to a greater degree than that from organizations or authority figures (Schneider, 2015). Also, they will not memorize anything that can be found on Google (Willer, 2015). We envision the future of marketing education will allow iGenerations to have an even greater engagement in developing the content of the marketing curriculum, how it is structured and delivered, and the extent to which it can bridge the gaps between theory and practice. In the words of Nguyen in this special issue, students should be empowered "with the capacity to flexibly reprogram their skillsets for the changing nature of work, and play an active role in envisioning new (non)work realities ... of their education."

Nevertheless, we expect the relationship-marketing and partnership approach to education (Clayson and Haley, 2005) to remain essential in marketing education. In addition to pursuing stronger student engagement and active learning strategies, marketing educators must learn to balance the need for research-led education and the incorporation of industry inputs and practices in the curriculum. Deeper and sustained industry partnerships allow for differentiation in teaching and learning through the creation of authentic learning environments for students. Industry-relevant education as a result of university–industry collaboration can facilitate knowledge exchanges, stimulate students' curiosity and interests by giving them meaningful exposure to the complexities of contemporary business practices, and ultimately better prepare students for the workforces (Ankrah and Omar, 2015). Importantly, marketing curriculum must be well-aligned with the expectations and standards set by professional bodies, so that students have the opportunity for further professional development and can be recognised for their achievement of excellence post-university education (e.g., Certified Practising Marketer status set by the Australian Marketing Institute, Chartered Marketer status from the Chartered Institute of Marketing in the UK, or the Professional Certified Marketer program by the American Marketing Association). Finally, we must take advantage of the interdisciplinary nature of marketing and its influence on business in the modern world. Issues such as big data, cyber security, and artificial intelligence present the academy with significant opportunities to re-vamp the marketing curriculum, demonstrate the agility and en-

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