

Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science

Call for Papers for a Special Issue on

Consumer Journeys: Developing Consumer-Based Strategy

Edited by Rebecca Hamilton and Linda L. Price

Consumers undertake many journeys in pursuit of large and small life goals and in response to various opportunities, obstacles, and challenges. Consumer journeys may foreground consumption experiences such as when consumers take steps to choose products, brands, or technologies, engage in online or offline retail experiences, and use products and services. However, consumers take other journeys that don't have consumption as their goal, but nonetheless implicate brands, technologies, products, and services. For example, a cancer patient and family members undertake a journey that may involve a complex network of brands, technologies, and services. Beyond understanding provider–consumer touchpoints, it is vital to understand the complex emotional and experiential journeys consumers engage in with the help of brands, technologies, products, and services.

In this special issue of the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* (JAMS), we will publish papers that help organizations understand their consumers' journeys. Marketers who understand consumer journeys can develop more effective consumer-based strategy whether they are marketing products, services, or behavior change, whether their organization is for profit or not-for-profit. We are interested in both qualitative and quantitative papers that examine journeys to consume as well as journeys that significantly implicate consumption of products and services as partners on an important life journey.

For example, a consumer's journey to first purchase may look a lot like the traditional attribution funnel, involving stages of awareness, interest, evaluation, commitment, and referral. Do consumers feel and behave differently during each of these stages? Papers in this special issue might examine whether the journey develops differently when consumers use mobile devices instead of other channels. Other papers might examine whether there are points along the journey where consumers are nudged more by contextual cues. How do product lines, bundling, and pricing strategies shape the consumer journey? Papers may examine how the consumer's relationship with the organization, such as a health care provider, retailer, or service provider, develops over time. How does social media interaction with other consumers influence behaviors at each stage of the consumer journey?

Taking a broader perspective, papers could investigate consumers' journeys to transform themselves through improved diet, exercise, or lifestyle and examine the consumption partners they bring along on their journey—perhaps a Fitbit, club membership, personal coach, and new food and restaurant choices. Other goals that motivate consumer journeys may be finding a home, connecting with a community, finishing a bucket list, or creating a meaningful life. When consumers envision a goal as a journey it may change how they approach obstacles and setbacks and how they mark progress.

We posit that important strategic insights can be uncovered by moving from a marketer focus on specific consumer touchpoints with the firm, to understanding how these touchpoints connect to the consumer's journey. We hope that you will contribute your insight to understanding consumer journeys by submitting your work to this special issue.

Papers targeting the special issue should be submitted through the JAMS submission system (www.edmgr.com/jams) and will undergo a similar review process as regularly submitted papers. Submissions for the special issue begin February 1, 2017, with the final deadline for submissions being July 1, 2017. Questions pertaining to the special issue should be submitted to the JAMS Editorial Office.

In addition to the JAMS special issue, there also will be a small Thought Leaders' conference on the same topic in Amsterdam, May 19-21, 2017, hosted by Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam. Due to the limited size of the venue, the conference is by invitation only, and interested researchers should submit proposals or abstracts to the JAMS Editorial Office (jamsed@uw.edu) no later than February 1, 2017 (proposals will be accepted on an ongoing basis). Attending the conference and/or submitting a manuscript to JAMS for publication consideration are independent activities; authors are welcome to engage in one or both of these activities.

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