

*Special Section***CONTEMPORARY MARKETING STRATEGIES AS  
COMMUNICATION TOOLS FOR MODERN RETAILERS****Special Section Introduction:  
Contemporary Marketing Strategies as  
Communication Tools for Modern Retailers****Henry W. L. Ho**  
**Timothy P. Brotherton**  
*Ferris State University*

---

Modern retailers are continuously searching for new and profitable opportunities, and retail marketing has changed significantly in the past few decades. For example, there has been a shift in paradigm from single or multi-channel retail to omni-channel retail (Mothersbaugh & Hawkins, 2016; Parsons & Descatoires, 2016). However, there are also several critical questions that have always challenged the retail marketers such as who to target, how to do so, when is the perfect time, and where is the right place to deliver goods and services to their customers.

The major aim of this special section is to provide a unique focus on the effective use of contemporary marketing strategies as communication tools for today's retail marketers in reaching customers successfully in the competitive environment. This special section embraces new shifts and trends within the retail industry in this turbulent market and takes readers on an exploration of marketing with unprecedented vitality and energy.

Bringing these changes in retail to an academic setting, researchers proposed that marketing educators should always assist their students to "think like marketers" in order to improve teaching and learning of marketing (Ali & Ho, 2007). One way of assisting our students to "think

**To cite this article**

Ho, H. W. L., & Brotherton, T. P. (2016). Special section introduction: Contemporary marketing strategies as communication tools for modern retailers. *Case Studies in Strategic Communication*, 5, 220-223. Available online: <http://cssc.uscannenberg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/v5art11.pdf>



like marketers” perhaps is to share the problems of today’s marketers with our students and make them research and analyze the problems followed by offering suggestions to resolve the problem faced by the marketers. Using case material in the classroom is one ideal problem-based learning (PBL) method of teaching and learning acknowledged by many students and educators in today’s higher education institutions (Ali & Ho, 2007; Yadav et al., 2007). Some of the benefits and characteristics of PBL include:

- Learning is driven by challenging, open-ended problems with no one right answer.
- Problems and cases are context-specific.
- Students work in small groups as self-directed, active investigators and problem-solvers.
- A key problem is identified, and a solution is agreed on and implemented.
- Teachers act as facilitators of learning, guiding the learning process and promoting an environment of inquiry (Krauss & Boss, 2013).

The implementation of PBL in today’s classroom allows marketing students to actively explore real-world marketing problems to develop deeper knowledge. Hence, the guest editors encouraged the submissions of teaching case studies in any of the topic areas relevant to this special section which can be used as a teaching tool in undergraduate marketing courses. The teaching cases aim to show the application of a concept to real-life situations that are faced by today’s marketers. Moreover, the teaching cases in this special section can be used by marketing instructors to assist their students in developing analytical thinking skills as well as problem solving techniques. In other words, the guest editors are encouraging the adoption of PBL in the classroom, which will make higher education teaching and learning more efficient.

This special section of *Case Studies in Strategic Communication* compiles a set of three case studies that examine the role of contemporary marketing strategies as communication tools for modern retailers. First, Flowers and

Sterbenk examine a situation where Ithaca, New York, used an unusual strategy to attract tourists to visit their city. Ithaca told tourists to go to Key West, Florida, during the winter. This counterintuitive approach likely generated a great deal of media buzz and positive word-of-mouth that did more to promote Ithaca than a traditional approach would have done. In the next case study, Peters and Kontor-Kwateng discuss a local advertising agency's new approach to promote KFC stores in Ghana. As the premier advertising agency in Ghana, Lowe Accra felt themselves well positioned to gain the KFC account and had a plan to succeed. In the final case study, Ward, Roy, and Edmondson explore the probable financial effects of CVS stores' decision to stop selling tobacco products and to promote a strict no-tobacco policy throughout its stores. Future implications are also explored.

The following scholars served as ad hoc reviewers for this special section. These ad hoc reviewers came from a variety of higher education institutions from four different countries. The guest editors value the skills and dedication of the reviewers and appreciate their contributions to the success of this special section.

Dr. Linda Butler, Ferris State University, USA

Dr. I-Chi Angela Chen, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia

Dr. Diane R. Edmondson, Middle Tennessee State University, USA

Dr. Indrapriya Kularatne, Otago Polytechnic, New Zealand

Dr. Cara Peters, Winthrop University, USA

Ms. Inna Piven, Unitec Institute of Technology, New Zealand

Dr. David Qian, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

Ms. Yvette Sterbenk, Ithaca College, USA

Dr. Cheryl B. Ward, Middle Tennessee State University, USA

The guest editors hope that this special section will inspire both marketing researchers and students' discussion, collaborative action, and research in our field. We urge readers to take seriously the claims made by these authors and respond to them in their own work. We see this as an ongoing process and we hope that this special section is just the beginning of a longer conversation within our community. We invite you, as readers, to participate in conversations about these ideas and use them to further research and practice in the field.

## References

- Ali, S., & Ho, H. W. L. (2007). Using assessment tasks to shift focus to learning rather than evaluating students. *Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge*, 10(2), pp. 269-274.
- Krauss, J. I., & Boss, S. K. (2013). *Thinking through project-based learning: Guiding deeper inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Mothersbaugh, D. L. and Hawkins, D. I. (2016). *Consumer behavior: Building marketing strategy* (13th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Parsons, A. G., & Descatoires, E. (2016). Retail marketing: A novel research agenda. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 24(2), 102-107.
- Yadav, A., Lundeberg, M., DeSchryver, M., Dirkin, K., Schiller, N. A., Maier, K., & Herreid, C. F. (2007). Teaching science with case studies: A national survey of faculty perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using cases. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 37(1), 34-38.
- 

**HENRY WAI LEONG HO, D.B.A.**, is an associate professor in the College of Business at Ferris State University (FSU) in Big Rapids, Michigan. Henry's research focuses on Customer Value Creation and Delivery in the B2B context, marketing in Asia, non-profit marketing, marketing education and teaching and learning in higher education. On top of book editing and contributing in book chapters, he has over 30 peer-reviewed publications in journals and conference proceedings. Email: HenryHo[at]ferris.edu.

**TIMOTHY PAUL BROTHERTON, Ph.D.**, is a professor in the College of Business at Ferris State University (FSU) in Big Rapids, Michigan. Tim's research focuses on Case Writing, Content Analyses, Consumer Routinization, and Human Flourishing in Advertising. In addition to his case-writing experience he is currently the editor of the *Journal of Critical Incidents*, a Society for Case Research publication. He also serves as a faculty advisor for the AMA Collegiate chapter at FSU and writes the Marketing Strategy Cases for the International AMA Collegiate Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.

---

[Editorial history](#)

Published October 21, 2016

Not peer-reviewed