

## **EDITORIAL**

Dear Readers,

This special issue belongs to the Annual Conference- “Innovating for Impact: Digital Technologies for Public Administration, Engineering Application, Environmental Protection, Sustainable Business Operations and Healthcare” organized by Confab 360 Degree in collaboration with Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Dubai Campus; Rushford Business School, Switzerland; and European Global Institute of Innovation and Technology, Malta. The conference was organized on February 19 and 20, 2025, at Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Dubai Campus. The chief patron(s) of the conference were Prof. (Dr.) S. Sudhindra, MAHE, Dubai; Prof. (Dr.) Tufail Syed; Prof. (Dr.) Padmakali Banerjee; and Prof. (Dr.) Nishu Ayedee. The patron(s) of the conference were Prof. (Dr.) Anuj Kumar, Prof. (Dr.) S.K. Pandey, Prof. (Dr.) Sunitha Prabhuram, Prof. (Dr.) Alok Satsangi, and Prof. (Dr.) Kanika Gupta. Prof. (Dr.) Anuj Kumar also chaired the Editorial Board of the conference.

The Annual Conference was a vibrant gathering of ideas, innovation, and global academic collaboration. With over 400 research papers submitted from scholars and professionals around the world, the enthusiasm for sharing cutting-edge insights was truly inspiring. After a careful review process, 160 papers were selected for presentation across various tracks during the two-day event held at the Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Dubai Campus. The conference welcomed more than 400 participants, including authors, co-authors, and delegates, who engaged in meaningful discussions around the role of digital technologies in shaping the future of public administration, engineering, sustainable business, environmental protection, and healthcare. **From among the presented works, four exceptional papers were chosen for inclusion in this Special Issue of the *Indian Journal of Marketing*.** These papers reflect a truly international outlook, with contributions from authors based in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Malta, Dubai, and India. Each paper offers fresh perspectives on how technology is transforming the marketing landscape across sectors and geographies.

### **About the Papers:**

#### **“Is AI-Powered Education Sustainable and Marketable in UK Higher Education? Exploring Opportunities and Challenges in Assessment Through the Lenses of Staff and Students”**

The focus of this paper was on checking the application of AI-powered education in UK higher education and its implications on assessment. The paper identified both the challenges and the benefits of aligning AI in higher education practices and urged policies and training to embed AI responsibility institution-wide.

#### **“The Diffusion of Predictive Analytics for Innovative Interactive Marketing Strategy in International E-Fashion Commerce”**

This research paper explored the factors prompting the diffusion of predictive analytics (PA) in international e-fashion companies. A typology of motives, advantages, and diffusion challenges was provided, and recommendations on overcoming them were provided to PA executives.

#### **“Gender and Proximity Marketing : Concept, Antecedents, and Effects”**

The purpose of this paper was to conceptualize the interplay between proximity marketing, CRM strategy, as well as advertising. This paper aimed to investigate the moderating effects of demographic variables (gender) on the linkage of the effectiveness of proximity marketing with its antecedents. The results urged location-based campaigns with information and gender-sensitive personalization, while noting the limited effects of customer orientation.

## **“Consumers' Decision-Making and Role of Social Media Influencers in the UK Hotel Industry”**

The prime focus of this paper was to examine the role of social media influencers in shaping consumer decision-making within the UK hotel sector. It aimed to explore how influencer marketing interacted with consumer psychology and digital behaviour, with particular emphasis on trust, authenticity, and perceived expertise. The study recommended partnerships and user-generated content to improve credibility and conversions.

Together, these papers reveal how digital technologies are re-wiring marketing and decision-making through AI-enabled assessment, data-driven forecasting, location-aware personalization, and influencer-led trust building. Across contexts, effectiveness depends on ethics, privacy, and credibility—implemented via institutional policy, robust analytics frameworks, gender-aware design, and transparent creator partnerships.

### **About Confab 360 Degree, Delhi, India**

Confab 360 Degree is an ISO: IAF certified company known for organizing global international conferences, training programs in various research areas, patent and copyright conclaves, global immersion, and corporate trainings, etc. Confab 360 Degree is a training partner of Management & Entrepreneurship and Professional Skills Council (MEPSC), and AICTE has also approved its research training programs. Confab 360 Degree has organized conferences in Dubai, India, Malaysia, Vietnam, Spain, the United Kingdom, etc.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Prof. (Dr.) Nirmalya Bandyopadhyay, Editor-in-Chief (EiC) of *Indian Journal of Marketing*, for his expert guidance and final review of the selected papers. His thoughtful feedback and editorial insights played a pivotal role in maintaining the academic rigor and quality of this Special Issue. We are deeply appreciative of his support in ensuring that the published papers align with the IJM's scholarly standards and thematic coherence. We hope this Special Issue offers our readers fresh perspectives and thought-provoking insights into the evolving landscape of digital marketing and innovation. May the published papers serve as valuable resources that inform, inspire, and ignite further scholarly inquiry.

Wishing you all a very Happy Diwali (Indian festival of lights)! May the festival of lights bring joy, prosperity, and happiness to your lives!

### **With Best Wishes, Guest Editor (s)**

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