Theme: Transformative times for Fashion Marketing + Consumption: new horizons in fashion and marketing research through the lens of consumption.

As a field of research, fashion marketing is still relatively young, but is now firmly established as a vibrant research discipline with a critical mass of research activity (Barnes, 2013). As we move into the next phase of fashion marketing research, the industry is faced with a whole range of issues from international politics, sustainability to changing consumers and the ever-evolving nature of retail. Advances in information communication technology and the rapidly changing global economy have significantly changed consumer perceptions and their consumption behaviours, making it an increasingly volatile and competitive industry. This transformative climate has encouraged the development of new retail, merchandising and consumer marketing strategies, as brands compete to maintain their market position (Armstrong, Rutter, Helberger, and Tombrey, 2016). This new world of fashion marketing gives rise to new issues that are of interest for research, questioning and understanding. Likewise, how individuals shop, consume and purchase fashion has been the subject of much research inquiry.

This special issue aims to fuse fashion marketing and consumption theory. It considers the impact of contemporary issues and challenges that face fashion marketing, through the lens of consumption.

The fashion industry is undergoing a profound evolution where criticism has been replaced by some optimistic views of fast-fashion brands, as they become more sustainable and ethical in their strategy and supply chains (Armstrong, Rutter and Blasquez, 2016). That said, sustainability and the circular economy remain a critical challenge for the industry especially given the rise of the ‘ethical’ consumer who’s ideals and consumption decisions are heavily influenced by the need to be sustainable and principled (Gowerek et al, 2017; Henninger et al, 2016)

Fast fashion is rooted in consumption; it is about generating interest, excitement and serving the need for newness amongst fashion consumers keen to adopt new trends or simply ‘consume’ something new (Barnes & Lea-Greenwood, 2010) yet these opposing forces in consumption behaviour (McNeill & Moore, 2015; Park et al, 2018). Can the need for newness ever align with the growing need to consume in a sustainable way? What does fashion consumption look like in an era when ethical or sustainable consumption is considered to be mainstream rather than niche?
Coinciding with the exponential rate of consumer’s adoption of digital coupled with raised expectations of consumer experience, further combined with emphasis on and scrutiny of price, quality and the personal touch has significantly influenced fashion consumption. Unpredictability in the retail sector and the pendulum view of whether bricks and mortar have had its day versus more consumers searching for the holy grail of experience has led brands both online and offline scratching their ‘phygital’ heads on where to target their budgets. The so-called democratisation of luxury (Silverstein and Fiske, 2003; Hennigs et al, 2013; Barnes & Lea-Greenwood, 2018) combined with explosive online sales with premium brands such as Chanel exploring online digital flagships, and the legacy of Karl Lagerfeld, has collectively changed the luxury landscape and as the global market for luxury declines, luxury brands face challenges on how to evolve. Who are there new customers? What experiences are they searching for? How can luxury fashion brands remain relevant in this new landscape?

Fashion brands are responding with new and innovative business models, big data converge with microscopic consumer insights to generate source differentiation and push the limit of end-to-end product development processes (Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company, 2017). The dramatic growth of social media has not only effected businesses, but also created platforms for global interactions of people and brands through a plethora of social media platforms (Colliander and Dahlén, 2011; Cho et al., 2014). Blockchain is well discussed in the industry publications, but not yet researched empirically through a fashion consumption lens. This call for papers presents an opportunity to explore and consider the impact of Blockchain on the fashion industry and consumption experiences. Fusing this with luxury fashion brands, LVMH has developed a system to authenticate merchandise using blockchain technology, while adversary Kering is advising a non-profit with a similar goal (O’Connor, 2019). What will the future of fashion marketing and consumption look like with the adoption of Blockchain? What will be the impact of this new research agenda for fashion marketing? What other digital considerations are important to interrogate so that we may understand how the future consumers will consume?

**Objective and Potential Topics**

This special issue aims to bring together current research and critical thinking around the future voices of fashion research. Our aim is to bring together cutting edge research that expands the frontiers of collective fashion research theoretically and empirically - what have these significant and transformative changes in the fashion landscape led us to know about the new fashion consumer and what is the impact of this on fashion marketing and consumption?
This call for papers takes a multi-disciplinary approach that draws from a plethora of academic territories and theory. The aim is to interrogate contemporary issues in new and meaningful ways through the broad lens of fashion marketing and consumption. Taking a new view of contemporary issues that fall predominately under retail; technology; luxury and sustainability (or a fusion approach), what research methodologies can be used to lend new insight into these areas? What consumption or consumer behaviour theoretical constructs can be used to examine these issues to lend new understanding to fashion marketing and consumption?

This special issue seeks to expand our understanding of fashion marketing and consumption, and to extend theoretical and managerial insights into how such contemporary issues can be researched, explored, examined and understood. This review suggests that that there are four key interesting, relevant and critical areas of focus that this special issue is interested in exploring and investigating further. As such we invite conceptual papers and empirical research that falls under one of (or the intersections between) four main transformative territories within fashion marketing consumption research: 1) Sustainability; 2) Digital; 3) Fashion Retail; and 4) Luxury.

Thus, we encourage papers that examine novel phenomena, employ original methodologies, and offer interesting theoretical and empirical contributions to these research themes. It is through this call that we hope to bring new understanding and insight into these contemporary issues and examine new horizons in fashion marketing and consumption.

Topics that are of interest for this special issue include (but are not limited to):

- Consumer behaviour and psychological perspectives of fashion
- Social networking
- Cross-cultural issues in digital fashion branding
- Digit digital atmospherics
- Digital marketing
- Marketing communications strategy
- Digital communications used to promote sustainable fashion
- Engagement with fashion marketing, social media
- Consumer loyalty and fashion
- Digital integration and application in sustainable fashion brands
- Fashion retail
- Retail atmospherics
- Retail Flagships, digital flagships
- Consumer experiences, experiential marketing in fashion
- Fast fashion and digital acceleration
• Fashion Sustainability
• Digital Storytelling in fashion
• Digital fashion films and photography used within fashion marketing
• Marketing communications in digital fashion
• Social, legal and ethical perspectives in digital fashion branding
• Digital contemporary issues and challenges in the fashion industry
• Artificial Intelligence and fashion

**Key Dates:**
19th June 2019: CFP announced

2nd September 2019: full papers to be submitted (*earlier submissions are welcomed*)

18th October: authors notified of review outcomes

12th November: Author Resubmission

**11th December: final decision on resubmitted papers**

**Guest Editors:**
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Professor Liz Barnes, University of Manchester
Bethan Alexander, UAL: LFC
Charlotte Rutter, UCA.

**References:**


