

Research Topics & Ideas: Marketing

About this document

This PDF contains 50 **marketing research topics** for dissertations and theses, organized into 10 areas of marketing, from AI, data and marketing analytics to tourism, hospitality and destination marketing. Each topic is written as a researchable question and linked to a completed dissertation (2022–2026, 24 universities), so you can see how it was studied in practice. Use it to shortlist marketing dissertation topics and thesis ideas, then narrow one down to your own population, setting and timeframe.

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AI, data and marketing analytics

1. How much of a personalization campaign's response is incremental rather than total?

See it in a real dissertation: [Three Essays on Data-Driven Personalization and Targeting for Marketing Interventions](#) · Ta-Wei Huang · Harvard University · 2025

2. How do audiences evaluate advertising once they know it was generated by AI?

See it in a real dissertation: [Generative AI in Marketing: Elaboration, Evaluation, and Advertising Value](#) · James Pulverenti · University of Rhode Island · 2026

3. Can you segment travel customers by what they click rather than what they say?

See it in a real dissertation: [Understanding customer behaviour using insights from heterogenous and complex Online Travel Agency clickstream data: a machine learning and Generative-AI approach](#) · Naami Sharma · Loughborough University · 2026

4. What stops a retailer sitting on plenty of customer data from using it?

See it in a real dissertation: [A Study of Data Science in the Clothing Retail Industry: Qualitative Approach](#) · Shek Chi Eric Chan · California Southern University · 2025

5. Can segmenting students raise attendance at an event they did not ask for?

See it in a real dissertation: [Market Segmentation to Improve Academic Event Attendance Intentions Among Undergraduate Students: A Theory of Planned Behavior Approach](#) · Francesca Dunlevy · University of Rhode Island · 2025

B2B, small business and entrepreneurial marketing

6. What marketing options remain to a very small producer with no marketing budget?

See it in a real dissertation: [Effective Marketing and Monetization Strategies Used in Small Independent Game Development](#) · Jessica Nicole Mobley · Walden University · 2025

7. How do owner-operators run data-driven client acquisition when the owner is also the analyst?

See it in a real dissertation: [Effective Data-Driven Marketing Strategies Used by Independent Insurance Agency Owners to Acquire and Retain Clients](#) · Yolanda Marie Gunn · Walden University · 2026

8. What stops B2B firms adopting social media marketing, separately from whether it works for them?

See it in a real dissertation: [Social media marketing adoption by business-to-business \(B2B\) organisations in Greece: a mixed method approach](#) · Maria Zoitsa Chroni · University of the West of Scotland · 2025

9. In what ways do B2B SMEs use social media for relationship maintenance rather than lead generation?

See it in a real dissertation: [How do business-to-business \(B2B\) small and medium-sized enterprises \(SMEs\) leverage social media for marketing and engagement?](#) · Saud Jawed · University of the West of Scotland · 2026

10. How far does e-service quality carry through satisfaction into loyalty for small online retailers?

See it in a real dissertation: [The nexus between e-marketing, e-service quality, e-satisfaction and e-loyalty: a cross-sectional study within the context of online SMEs in Ghana](#) · Frank Frimpong Opuni · University of Greater Manchester · 2023

Brand strategy and identity

11. What happens to a business's reviews when it signals its owner's identity?

See it in a real dissertation: [From Evaluation to Expression: Exploring Review Activism in Response to Ownership Identity Signals](#) · Davis Brown · Kennesaw State University · 2026

12. Do stated brand values change consumer choice, or only brand recall?

See it in a real dissertation: [Brands, values and consumers: the importance of values in consumer behaviour](#) · Ronald Voorn · University of Twente · 2022

13. How does a sports league's brand equity hold up in a market with no local team?

See it in a real dissertation: [Exploring the Premier League's brand equity in the Chinese market](#) · Bruce Cheng · Loughborough University · 2025

Consumer behavior and decision-making

14. How does a brand's social content turn sneaker culture into engagement?

See it in a real dissertation: [A Cult Classic: Sneaker Culture and Its Influence on Consumer Behavior](#) · Gianni Dejesus · University of Rhode Island · 2023

15. What does a brand's own marketing language do to public understanding of the problem its product addresses?

See it in a real dissertation: [A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Marketing of Merck & Co.'s Human Papillomavirus Vaccine Gardasil®](#) · Malika A Redmond · Georgia State University · 2022

16. What makes experiential programming feel worth its price to a luxury hotel guest?

See it in a real dissertation: [Perception of experiential value in luxury hotel settings: The case of experiential programming and impact on consumers](#) · Matthew Miller · Iowa State University · 2023

17. Do buyers of digital-only fashion believe they are acquiring ownership, access, or status?

See it in a real dissertation: [Will Digital Fashion Be the New Normal in the Metaverse Era: Examining Consumers' Perceptions of Digital Fashion](#) · Yanbo Zhang · Louisiana State University · 2023

18. How does review valence shape emotional response separately from its effect on purchase intent?

See it in a real dissertation: [How Product Reviews Impact Consumers' Judgments, Emotions, and Purchase Behaviors](#) · Daniel Katz · University of Chicago · 2024

Customer experience, service and loyalty

19. Which restaurant signals survive the move to a delivery app, where the dining room is invisible?

See it in a real dissertation: [The effect of restaurant cues on restaurants' delivery services](#) · Yiqi Wang · Iowa State University · 2022

20. Can influencer marketing work in a high-trust regulated category such as retail banking?

See it in a real dissertation: [The impact of influencer marketing in financial services: the case of banks in Pakistan](#) · Rizwan Tariq · University of the West of Scotland · 2026

21. What does a patient have to bring for co-created care to work?

See it in a real dissertation: [It Takes Two to Tango: The Overlooked Process of Co-creation in Services Marketing](#) · Natalie A. Marquart · West Virginia University · 2025

22. Does CRM investment show up in retention, or only in satisfaction scores?

See it in a real dissertation: [The impact of CRM as an effective marketing strategy on customer satisfaction and retention in luxury retail: a case study of Ozio](#) · Hassan Hassanein · University of the West of Scotland · 2026

23. Which persuasive moves does a consultant use when the outcome cannot be promised?

See it in a real dissertation: [Examining the Online Marketing of Sport Psychology Services by Certified Mental Performance Consultants: A Rhetorical Analysis](#) · Jaxson S. Judkins · West Virginia University · 2024

Digital and social media marketing

24. How does a social media campaign shift event attendance intentions among university students, and do awareness and interest move independently?

See it in a real dissertation: [Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing: An Experimental Inquiry on College Students' Awareness of, Interest in, and Intention to Participate in a Campus Recreation Special Event](#) · Kendra S. Bayne · Georgia State University · 2022

25. To what extent does social media marketing work in a sector where compliance rules constrain the claim before the creative starts?

See it in a real dissertation: [Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing in Healthcare](#) · Juliana Jepakogei · Illinois State University · 2024

26. What role does consumer trust play between a digital marketing tactic and a completed purchase, rather than a click?

See it in a real dissertation: [Trust in E-Commerce and Its Impact on Digital Marketing Strategies](#) · Akshay Tailor · Illinois State University · 2024

27. Which engagement signals on an influencer post predict a purchase, and which only predict more engagement?

See it in a real dissertation: [Unpacking Influence: Dissecting Engagement Drivers and Dynamics for Effective Influencer Marketing Strategies](#) · Nichole Santee · Louisiana State University · 2024

28. How far does an influencer's endorsement actually move a follower to buy?

See it in a real dissertation: [Digital marketing: A field research on purchase behavior under influencer effect](#) · Barış Türk · Graduate School USA · 2023

29. Why do audiences forgive some influencer transgressions and not others, and does the pattern differ by audience?

See it in a real dissertation: [The Role of Race in Consumer Responses to Social Media Influencer Transgressions](#) · Vannesia Darby · Kennesaw State University · 2026

30. What does a firm gain by replying to online reviews, and does replying change what later reviewers write?

See it in a real dissertation: [Firm-Customer Interaction Via Online Reviews: A Two-Step Analysis](#) · Qiuli Su · Louisiana State University · 2022

Higher education marketing

31. Does a centralized or a devolved marketing structure produce better enrollment yield in a university?

See it in a real dissertation: [Exploring the Impacts of Marketing Structure on Enrollment Yield in Higher Education](#) · Mark J. Gibson · Illinois State University · 2024

32. Which learner characteristics predict who benefits from gamification in marketing coursework?

See it in a real dissertation: [Enhancing Marketing Education Through Gamification: Learners' Characteristics and Motivation in Gamification Strategies](#) · Jagannath Kharel · Illinois State University · 2024

33. What marketing actually brings families to a public school district?

See it in a real dissertation: [Marketing Strategies to Increase Student Enrollment to Generate Revenue](#) · Jermaine R McCain · Walden University · 2026

34. What changes when current students help design their own college's recruitment marketing?

See it in a real dissertation: [Co-creating a student-centered marketing plan for a small liberal arts college: an action research study](#) · Allison Turcio · Northeastern University · 2023

35. Where do prospective international students build their shortlist, and do universities market to that stage at all?

See it in a real dissertation: [Value creation at the pre-selection stage of university study destination: Perspectives of academics, marketing professionals and students in UK HE](#) · Chandrani Samaradivakara · Lancaster University · 2026

36. How should a university recruit internationally when a single source market dominates enrollment?

See it in a real dissertation: [Investigating Enrolment Trends amongst Chinese International Students at UK Higher Education Institutions: A Model for Sustainable Marketing within a Post – COVID Environment](#) · Andrew Salmon · Birmingham City University · 2026

Retail, pricing and e-commerce

37. Which marketing mix choices matter for a single-location business competing mainly on proximity?

See it in a real dissertation: [Analysis of Bash Coffee's Marketing Mix Strategy in Strengthening Coffee Sales in Buraidah](#) · Kurniawan Arif Maspul · University of the People · 2022

38. Whose taste is built into the language used to sell violin strings?

See it in a real dissertation: [Investigating the Marketing Language among Online Retailers of Violin Strings to Determine the Implied Aesthetic](#) · Kira Kay Browning · West Virginia University · 2022

39. Does brand investment in retail banking show up in customer loyalty years later?

See it in a real dissertation: [The impact of branding on marketing of retail banking and its long-term effect on customer loyalty - a case study of brac bank Dhaka, Bangladesh](#) · Md Ruhul Amin Sardar · University of the West of Scotland · 2026

40. What does it take for an online retailer to become genuinely customer-centric?

See it in a real dissertation: [Maturity Model for Customer-Centric Approach in Enterprise: The Case of E-commerce and Online Retail Industry](#) · Soheil Zarrin · Portland State University · 2022

41. Did grocery markups rise faster than the costs behind them?

See it in a real dissertation: [Greedflation and Grocery Retail Conduct Evidence from Commodity-Like Product Markups](#) · Vanessa Adamandia Alwan · University of Chicago · 2026

Sustainability, ethics and social impact**42. What is the financial case for a circular-economy program, held apart from its marketing value?**

See it in a real dissertation: [The Impact of Going Circular: A Financial View of Circular Economy Programs in the ICT Industry](#) · Sydnei Murphy Creel · Harvard University · 2024

43. How does digital marketing keep small formal retailers viable against informal competition?

See it in a real dissertation: [The role of digital marketing in the sustainability of the formal retail sector in Flagstaff](#) · Zizipho Noqazo · Durban University of Technology · 2024

44. What marketing strategy serves an export-dependent manufacturing sector facing long-run decline?

See it in a real dissertation: [An effective strategic marketing framework for the sustainable growth of Pakistan's textile industry in the long run: Sarah textiles, Pakistan](#) · Farhan Ali Rind · University of the West of Scotland · 2026

45. How do under-resourced health campaigns find and share marketing assets across organizations?

See it in a real dissertation: [Utilizing Existing Resources to Support Health Communication Campaigns – A Marketing Resource Directory](#) · Shari McKenzie-Hicks · Georgia State University · 2022

46. Does knowing what fashion costs the planet change what a shopper buys?

See it in a real dissertation: [What's your fashion footprint? Understanding consumer behavior towards sustainable fashion](#) · Adanna Ogechi Ohaegbulam · Temple University · 2026

Tourism, hospitality and destination marketing**47. How do you market a medical tourism destination when the product being sold is a clinical outcome?**

See it in a real dissertation: [Marketing Strategies to Enhance Awareness and Attract International Patients in the Medical Tourism Industry of Trinidad and Tobago](#) · Natasha Rachel Rochford-Chance · Walden University · 2026

48. Can niche tourism products drive destination development in a region with no headline attraction?

See it in a real dissertation: [The role of niche tourism products in destination development](#) · Jane Ali-Knight · Edinburgh Napier University · 2026

49. What turns resident support for tourism growth into opposition?

See it in a real dissertation: [Synergies Between Residents: Evaluating Support and Concerns of Recreation and Tourism Economic Development within the Monongahela National Forest Region](#) · M. Martin · West Virginia University · 2023

50. How does a rural county market a season it cannot extend?

See it in a real dissertation: [Site, Seasonality, and Satisfaction: A Tourism Marketing Study in Pocahontas County, West Virginia](#) · Lillian E Oles · West Virginia University · 2024

How to turn a topic into your research question

A topic is a starting point, not something you can research yet. These four steps take you from a topic on this list to a focused question you can actually answer.

1. **Shortlist three, not one.** Pick three topics from this list that genuinely interest you and fit the access you have to people and data.

Recommended reading: [How to find and choose a dissertation topic](#)

2. **Read the dissertation behind each one.** Its literature review and its "recommendations for future research" section show you what is already known and what is still open.

Recommended reading: [How to find a research gap](#)

3. **Narrow it to your setting.** Name one population, one setting and one thing you will measure or explore. That turns a broad topic into a question you can finish.

Recommended reading: [How to write a research question](#)

4. **Line up your aims, objectives and questions.** Your committee will check that they agree.

Recommended reading: [Research aims, objectives and questions](#)

Work through these once and you will have a focused question rather than a broad topic, which is what the rest of your proposal is built on.