JGM Special Issue: Call for Papers

The Influence of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) Technologies on Global Brands in Transforming Global Marketing

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The Influence of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) Technologies on Global Brands in Transforming Global Marketing

Several recent studies have shown a growing demand for the use of augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies to promote globally recognized products and services (Kshetri & Dwivedi, 2024; Fan et al., 2025; Sidorenko-Bautista et al., 2025). Gucci, for example, allows users to try on items, such as sneakers, virtually through its mobile app (Widyani, 2021). This is especially evident when comparing destination marketing campaigns, such as VisitScotland and Australia.com (Ferm & Thaichon, 2021; Jayawardena et al., 2023), which utilize 360-degree videos. IKEA uses AR through its IKEA Place app to help customers visualize how furniture will look in their homes (Ozturkcan, 2021).

Despite the potential of VR and AR for in-store and at-home applications, it remains unclear how technology will help advance global marketing campaigns (Jayawardena et al., 2023; Van Kerrebroeck et al., 2017; Feng & Mueller, 2019). Therefore, VR and AR promotional campaigns can be highly effective at attracting new customers. Researchers such as Zaman et al. (2025) and Vrontis et al. (2023) have studied how AR and VR marketing can enhance marketing campaigns in cultural contexts. Feng and Mueller (2019) found that AR marketing campaigns from more individualistic cultures include product information. AR marketing campaigns from collectivist cultures tend to allow users to interact with virtual AR content without manipulating it. The lack of multi-sensory control in the online environment makes AR even more suitable for the online environment, according to Rejeb et al. (2023). Essentially, such technologies facilitate customers' understanding of products and support their purchase decisions without requiring them to visit physical stores (Vrontis et al., 2021; Jayaram et al., 2015).

Numerous AR business innovation models have emerged in international marketing since 2008. For example, Rauschnabel et al. (2018) mentioned that augmented reality can enchant consumers with a fully immersive experience. In 2008, the automobile brand MINI simulated a 3D model of their car, displaying it on a screen while a white paper was placed in front of the user's camera. This was the first AR experiential marketing application, according to Carmingniani et al. (2011). As far as cultural influences are concerned, Feng & Mueller (2019) found that AR marketing tends to emphasize product information and individual control over the virtual content in individualistic cultures (e.g., U.S., UK), whereas collectivist cultures (e.g., China, South Korea) emphasize community participation and social elements within immersive environments. According to Van Kerrebroeck et al., (2017), VR video ads enhance consumer attitudes towards brands by creating narrative transportation and emotional connection. Especially in multinational campaigns, emotional storytelling helps bridge cultural and linguistic divides.

Immersive ads led by brand representatives or virtual guides may be more appealing to consumers in high-power-distance cultures (e.g., Asian, Latin American, and Middle Eastern markets). A low power distance culture (e.g., Scandinavia, the Netherlands) might prefer self-directed, user-controlled AR/VR interactions (Berger et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2018; McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, 2016; Vrontis et al., 2024). For example, Reinecke & Bernstein (2013) found that users from high power distance cultures preferred structured, guided content, which could be translated into a preference for more linear, immersive information and advertisements.

There may be resistance to immersive technologies in specific markets due to factors such as privacy concerns, unfamiliarity, religious or cultural values, or a preference for traditional shopping (Kolk, 2016; Kose et al., 2008). As Zenker & Kock (2020) observed, some users in high-context, collectivist cultures are less inclined to participate in solitary, individualistic immersive experiences, especially when these experiences lack a social component. According to Itani & Hollebeek (2021), immersive content that lacks cultural relevance or local storytelling nuances may be perceived as intrusive or misaligned with the interests of consumers. Hilken et al. (2017) found that early exposure to AR content increases perceived diagnosticity, allowing consumers to make more informed decisions. The effect is more pronounced in high-involvement purchases (e.g., furniture, electronics) and varies with users' digital literacy.

VR and AR video ads have increasingly shaped global marketing tactics, enhancing customer engagement, personalizing brand experiences, and providing immersive promotional content (Lo & Cheng, 2020; Jayawardena et al, 2023; Borsci et al., 2016; Singh, 2024). Additionally, marketers are supposed to know how to deliver distinctive and remarkable consumer experiences (Singh et al., 2023). However, there is little research on how VR and AR video ads are changing global marketing. Service providers must start considering digital media on a more comprehensive basis in a rapidly evolving digital environment (Chu et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2024). Using digital marketing communication changes how companies interact with their customers, enabling them to deliver enriched customer experiences and service-related information more effectively (Lo & Cheng, 2020; Chu et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2024). The use of AR in destination marketing provides more engagement and knowledge about the destinations. The ability of modern enterprises to recognize and identify early consumer behavior patterns in the context is critical to their success in the information age (Singh et al., 2024).

Digital video advertising is still in the progression and dissemination stage and has not matured yet (Quesenberry & Coolsen, 2019; Addo et al., 2022; Garganas, 2024). Immersive VR and AR technologies can enhance the vividness and richness of imagery in advertisements, thereby positively shaping consumer responses (Van Kerrebroeck et al., 2017; Leung et al., 2020). VR and AR are gaining mainstream attention, but we do not know much about how they are going to change global marketing, like enhancing brand storytelling (Song et al., 2020; Jayawardena et al., 2023), increasing customer engagement through immersive experiences (Xionghui et al., 2025), and giving you personalized or interactive ads in different markets (Ferm &Thaichon, 2021; Jayawardena et al., 2023).

Additionally, several studies have shown that VR and AR have the potential to influence policymaking, and they are rapidly emerging as powerful marketing tools for advertising that enable brands to reach a broader audience more effectively (Lin et al., 2020; Zenker & Kock, 2020; Itani & Hollebeek, 2021; de Lurdes Calisto & Sarkar, 2024). In order to advance scholarly understanding of AR and VR in marketing and to establish a solid foundation for systematic future research it is necessary to clearly articulate the specific promises and potentials of these emerging technologies. Thus, the purpose of this special issue is to provide perspectives, research ideas, and viewpoints to marketing practitioners and scholars to augment theoretical and practical insights from academics and business communities in order to promote innovative research focused on VR and AR-based global marketing strategies.

Proposed Themes for the Special Issue

AR and VR Technologies-based Platforms: Navigating Their Role in a Firm's Global Marketing Campaigns

This theme examines how AR and VR technology-based platforms play a vital role in enhancing a firm's global marketing campaigns (Ferm & Thaichon, 2021; Jayawardena et al., 2023; Vrontis et al., 2023; Zaman et al., 2025). Scholars, researchers, and practitioners have gradually documented the thoughtful influence of digital technologies on business restructuring (Athaide et al., 2025). Potential topics within this theme include the evolution of AR and VR technology-based platforms in businesses, firms' readiness for AR and VR technology-based platforms, and navigating the effectiveness of AR and VR in the marketing context.

Keywords: AR effectiveness, digital technologies, marketing campaigns, technology-based platforms, VR effectiveness.

Application of AR and VR technologies: Investigating their use to promote globally recognized products and services

Companies are utilizing AR/VR technology to enhance the visibility and global awareness of their products and services (Jayawardena et al., 2023; Van Kerrebroeck et al., 2017; Feng & Mueller, 2019). These are potential tools that businesses can utilize to enhance the customer experience (Wieland et al., 2022). In this topic, AR and VR technologies are being investigated for their impact on customer experience, purchasing behaviors, global marketing, promotional campaigns, and advertising products and services.

Keywords: Customer experience management, global marketing, promotional campaigns, purchasing behavior.

Influence of AR and VR advertising on consumer behavior: Leading decision-making across cultural and regional markets

Digital technologies, such as AR and VR, have an impact on consumer buying decisions (Vrontis et al., 2021; Jayaram et al., 2015). The emergence of these technologies is changing the digital spaces where companies engage with customers. Nevertheless, due to the digital transformation, the adoption of technology and customer journeys differ significantly across the global marketplace (Nam & Kannan, 2020). It then became essential to investigate the impact of AR and VR advertising on the consumer decision-making process in different cultures and geographical settings (Qin et al., 2021). Proposed topics for this theme include the impact of augmented reality on altering consumer behavior, exploring worldwide marketing trends in AR and VR advertising research, the blending of AR and VR as advertising media, unleashing the potential of AR and VR advertising, and investigating the impact of AR and VR advertising on decision-making in cultural and regional markets.

Keywords: AR and VR advertising, consumer behavior, customer journey, decision-making, global marketing trends.

Role of immersive advertisements in enhancing brand storytelling and customer journeys in diverse international contexts

This theme explores how AR and VR technology-based platforms hasten the role of immersive advertisements in creating richer brand narratives and consumer experiences across different global contexts. To enhance attitudes and promote desired behavior, marketing managers create experiences with brands that excite and captivate their customers in new and innovative ways. Because customers' experiences with brands are often influenced by their environments (Behl et al., 2024; Hudson et al., 2019), VR campaigns can create simulated and realistic worlds that surpass the limitations of the actual world. Through these VR experiences, customers can interact with places they can participate in (Deng et al., 2019). Some of the possible subjects in this category include cross-cultural branding effects on brand stories and consumer experiences in various international environments, as well as digital advertising.

Keywords: Immersive advertisements, AR and VR technologies-based platforms, brand storytelling, international contexts

AR and VR contents: Role in nurturing individualistic and collectivist societies

Individualism and collectivism have been studied extensively under cultural dimensions, having no connection to integrity. This theme explains how AR and VR technology-based platforms support individualistic and collectivist societies. This theme examines how AR and VR technology-based platforms interact with and influence individualistic and collectivist societies (Deng et al., 2019). Despite thorough research on individualism and collectivism, they are often considered distinct from one another, similar to integrity (Jayawardena et al., 2023; Chu et al., 2024). Immersive technologies can reaffirm, redefine, or challenge these cultural tendencies in virtual worlds. Some of the potential topics under this theme include: – How AR/VR experience strengthens personal expression in individualist cultures but establishes group identity in collectivist cultures, and the impact of virtual worlds on interpersonal values such as loyalty, honesty, and trust in different cultural contexts (Jayawardena et al., 2025)

Keywords: Individualism, collectivism, AR/VR experiences, different cultural contexts

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