It is a pleasure to announce the second volume in the Contemporary Research in E-Marketing series. Volume 1 in this series was released in 2004 and has been very well received. This volume builds on the intellectual capital of Volume 1 by a compilation of interdisciplinary papers on the topic of e-marketing. The Internet and the Web continue to evolve at a rapid pace. Examples of innovative applications of these technologies in the domain of marketing abound. E-marketing has become standard practice all over the world. This volume offers an exciting set of papers that use different perspectives, theories, and research methodologies to enrich the burgeoning e-marketing literature.

The first paper by Sanjeev Swami and Ram Krishna, “Evaluation of Web Sites on Information and Entertainment Properties: The Role of Involvement,” provides an excellent empirical examination of consumer involvement on how Web sites are evaluated. Web sites receive a continuum of visitors in terms of motivation. Some care deeply about the topic of the site and others are not so engaged. Swami and Krishna provide us with empirical data on the impact of involvement on online consumer behavior. Their results show that the consumer’s information and entertainment profiles significantly affect utilitarian and hedonic evaluations of involvement. They also find positive and significant relationships between the evaluations of involvement and affect toward the Web site.

Most people think that products sold on eBay tend to be low-value, low-price products that one would encounter in a yard sale. It would perhaps be very surprising to many readers to learn that eBay Motors is the largest part of the company with an annual sales of $7.5 billion. The second paper by Mark Sena and Gerald Braun, “An Examination of Consumer Behavior on eBay Motors,” studies transactions in this product category. The findings of their study suggest
that within selected data ranges, such factors as seller feedback ratings, number of pictures in item description, and seller type (dealer vs. individual) may affect the percentage of retail value that sellers are able to earn in eBay Motors auctions.

Too often, discussions of e-marketing are limited to examples from America or Europe. If we are to acknowledge the truly global nature of e-marketing, it is imperative that we learn about the best practices in other areas of the world. The third chapter by Sanjeev Swami is titled, “Job Search at Naukri.com: Case Study of a Successful Dot-Com Venture in India.” This chapter is an in-depth analysis of an Indian company that has successfully competed with Monster India to establish an online portal for job hunters.

Everyone agrees that providing customers with value is vital to the success of an online enterprise. Yet we know little about how one must design a Web site to maximize the consumer experience and to provide the greatest value. Thomas Porter fills this gap with his chapter, “User-Centered Design and Marketing: Online Customer Value.” Blending insights from marketing, consumer behavior, and human–computer interaction (HCI), Porter provides an incisive analysis of how Web design needs to be focused on the user. The model proposed in the paper based on means-end theory provides a theoretical explanation for linking Web site features and functions to perceptions of value by consumers.

Communication is central to every marketing effort. In today’s multifaceted technology environment, consumers are inundated with marketing communications from all sorts of advertisers on all sorts of devices. The chapter by Merrill Warkentin, Robert Moore, and Melissa Moore, “A Synthesis and Analysis of Behavioral and Policy Issues in Electronic Marketing Communications,” provides an interdisciplinary synthesis of recent research concerning emerging electronic marketing communications. The chapter explores how different levels of marketing information acquisition and integration could impact consumer perceptions and behaviors.

The next chapter by Shailey Minocha, Liisa Dawson, Ann Blandford, and Nicola Millard, “Providing Value to Customer in E-Commerce Environments: The Customer’s Perspective,” comes to us from the United Kingdom. Borrowing from the HCI literature and using intensive research, these authors provide us with a new way to understand online service quality and maximize the total consumer experience (TCE). Their framework of online service quality (E-SEQUAL) promises to have a major impact on the practice of e-marketing. This article also represents a truly remarkable collaboration with members of academia and industry.

Online brands help us make sense of the abundance of information online. Encountering a familiar brand online is akin to meeting a friend in an alien environment. Yet managing brands online provide unique challenges. In the chapter by Subir Bandyopadhyay and Rosemary Serjak, “Key Success Requirements for
Online Brand Management,” we learn about what the brand manager can do to manage brands online and integrate them with physical brands for a successful consumer experience.

Daniela Andreini’s chapter, “The Evolution of the Theory and Practice of Marketing in Light of Information Technology,” is a theoretical examination of the place of e-marketing in the marketing theory literature. This Italian author provides an exhaustive analysis of the different theoretical perspectives of e-marketing and then integrates it with the known theoretical frameworks in marketing.

The next chapter comes to us from Spain. The work of José Manuel Ortega Egea and Manuel Recio Menéndez, “The Internet and Global Markets,” is a theoretical overview of how the Internet is affecting global markets.

Online marketing research may well be the killer application that e-marketers have been waiting for. Online focus groups provide us with unique advantages. The biggest stated disadvantage may be that we lose body language and hence, an understanding of how things are said and not just what is said. The next chapter by Peyton Mason, Boyd Davis, and Deborah Bosley, “Stance Analysis: Social Cues and Attitudes in Online Interaction,” introduces us to the notion of stance and describes how we could measure this construct using multivariate techniques, using an ongoing example taken from an online financial focus group. They review differences in stance between online real-time focus groups and online chat, as well as between online and face-to-face focus groups; and finally, they proffer examples of stance analysis in two very different online focus groups: older adults discussing financial services and teenagers discussing clothes. Their work could very well be the missing piece in our understanding of online research and is a must-read for everyone interested in using the Internet as a research tool.

The next chapter comes to us from an Austrian author—Maria Madlberger—who provides us with a fascinating comparative analysis in her paper, “Application of Internet-Based Marketing Instruments by Multichannel Retailers: A Web Site Analysis in the United States and the United Kingdom.” Her findings are provocative. She found that the observed multichannel retailers still prefer “traditional” retail marketing instruments on their online shops and often do without innovative Internet-based marketing instruments such as personalization or content and information offering. Additionally, they did not find fewer-than-expected differences between the observed U.S. and U.K. retailers.

The next chapter comes to us from S. Ramesh Kumar, and his work, “The E-Mode of Brand Positioning: The Need for an Online Positioning Interface,” takes on the issue of the positioning of online brands. Drawing from global as well as Indian examples, Kumar provides us with potential positioning frameworks.
The chapter by Manlio Del Giudice and Michel Polski is titled, “Locked In By Services: Willingness to Pay More and Switching Behavior in a Digital Environment.” They discuss a dynamic model of cognitive and behavioral e-loyalty. Using results from an empirical study, their chapter focuses on the determinants of the switching behavior online and on the opportunity to change Web site usability using a powerful lock-in strategy.

The last chapter is by Peter O’Connor which comes to us from France. His paper titled, “A Comparative Analysis of International Approaches to the Protection of Online Privacy,” compares the self-regulation approach epitomized by the United States with the comprehensive omnibus legislative approach mandated by the European Union.

This collection of articles is expected to add to an already-considerable literature and to enhance our understanding of this intrinsically interdisciplinary and global phenomenon.

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