EDITORIAL PREFACE

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It is a great pleasure and honour to introduce the inaugural issue of the International Journal of Online Marketing (IJOM) to academic societies and scholars in the field of marketing. Although it is a huge challenge to introduce a new journal to the world, the IJOM has a great potential and will help online marketing (as a new marketing phenomenon and philosophy) to grow in a very dramatic and dynamic way.

The International Journal of Online Marketing (IJOM) is an applied research, refereed, international journal that provides complete coverage of the opportunities, challenges, and current trends encountered by researchers and practitioners in the field of online marketing. The journal offers an important and critical platform for researchers, practitioners, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and educators to present and discuss their experiences and perspectives on important issues and current trends related to marketing activities and research in an online context. The International Journal of Online Marketing (IJOM) publishes original research papers, case studies, conference reports, management reports, book reviews, notes, and commentaries on all aspects of online marketing.

With the intention of positioning the IJOM as one of the most valued and respected journals within the field of online marketing, a group of highly precious scholars have agreed to join the IJOM editorial board. I am honoured to have two associate editors: Prof. J.J. Asongu (American Academy of Business and Public Policy, USA) and Dr. Riyad Eid (Wolverhampton University Business School, UK). I'm also delighted and honoured to have high character group of International Review Board members consisting of high profile academic researchers and professionals from 15 different countries all over the world that are actively researching the field of online marketing. The IJOM was not going to exist without the endless efforts, enthusiasm and commitment of IJOM editorial board and IGI dedicated staff.

The mission of the International Journal of Online Marketing (IJOM) is to provide broad and comprehensive international coverage of subjects, issues and current trends relating to all areas of online marketing. Emphasis is highly placed on publishing research articles, case studies and book reviews that seek to connect theory with application, identifying best practices in online marketing. In this respect, the journal links both theoretical and practical approaches of online marketing to make a proactive contribution to the field.

This inaugural issue includes five manuscripts. The lead article, written by Stuart J. Barnes and Jan Mattsson, discusses segmenting brand value perceptions of consumers in virtual worlds. This paper examines the spectrum of perceptions of consumers of four major real-life brands (Armani, Dell, Mercedes and Hublot) that have established operations in Second Life. A survey was conducted using an avatar survey bot (n=1,039). Using the FIMIX-PLS procedure, an axiological measurement instru-
ment for brand value and formative modelling techniques, the authors identified segments of consumers with different perceptions of value for each brand. The analysis shows a clear difficulty in establishing emotional rapport with consumers in Second Life.

The second article, written by Vrontis and Melanthiou, tries to explore the different factors influencing online shopping using three airline company websites as an indicative example. The results show that airline companies appear to perform relatively well on issues of website best practices.

The third article of Simeon and Sayeed presented and extended a proven framework for examining the strategic orientation of winery web sites. By treating winery web sites as intensive information environments the paper shows how they can have a strategic impact on perceptions. Using a modified AIPD framework and statistical analyses, the paper shows how certain California wineries are able to fully project the wine tourism experience online while targeting strategic perception goals that are effective at building virtual brand equity and boosting winery visitations at the same time.

The article of Millman and EI-Gohary considers the concept of innovative marketing within the context of micro firms, exploring how such firms marketing activities and practices can take advantages of the new digital media. Within the article, factors that influence a micro firm’s innovative activities are examined; the development and implementation of new digital media in the firm’s marketing practice is explored. The findings show that in practice much of the marketing activities within micro firms are driven by incremental innovation.

The intention of the article of Riyad Eid and Emrys Hughes is to presents empirical research that investigates the factors driving and inhibiting the online social networks usage. It gives a brief overview of the academic literature on the diffusion of online social networks. The findings show that online social networks in general and facebook in particular will become an extremely important marketing tool in the future.

Finally, I would like to thank all the inaugural issue authors for submitting their high quality articles to the IJOM and very much appreciate the IJOM editorial board support and commitment as we endeavour to make the IJOM one of the most valued journals in the field of online marketing.

Hatem El-Gohary
Editor-in-Chief
IJOM

Hatem El-Gohary is the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Online Marketing (IJOM), Associate Editor of the The International Journal of Customer Relationship Marketing and Management (IJCRMM) and the UK Director for the Institute for Research on Global Business (IRGB - UK). He have more than 18 years of experience in academia, worked as the marketing Director of a multinational company as well as a marketing consultant for a number of national and multinational companies. His research interest include: Electronic Marketing, Electronic Business, Electronic Commerce, Internet Marketing and Small Business Enterprises. He has published several articles and book chapters and presented several research papers in various international conferences. He holds a PhD, MSc, MRes, PGDip, BSc as well as PGCHE. He is also a Certified E-Marketer (CeM), an AABPP Fellow, HEA Fellow, CIM member (MCIM) and has a significant record of experience in voluntary work in Egypt and the UK. With regards to awards and honours Dr. El-Gohary won: the Routledge Best Paper Award 2007, The American Academy of Business and Public Policy Best Paper Award 2009, the Ideal Student for Cairo University Award 1992, the Ideal Student for Cairo University Business School Award (twice for the years 1991 and 1992) as well as The SLED Best New Mentor Award 2007.