

CALL FOR PAPERS

SMA ORLANDO

2026



**NOVEMBER
4 - 7, 2026**

Location

**HILTON ORLANDO
LAKE BUENA VISTA**

Submission Deadline
MAY 1, 2026



Brand Loyalty or Belief Loyalty: Consumer Ideologies in the Land of Loyalty Legends

Orlando, the land of loyalty legends - home to Disney World, Universal Orlando, and iconic destinations that inspire deep emotional connections between consumers and brands – provides the perfect place to explore what happens when consumers hold loyalty to their favorite brands and to their personal beliefs.

Brand loyalty refers to consumers repeatedly purchasing products from a specific brand even in the face of competitive efforts. With consumers experiencing a depth of choices like never before, brand loyalty has never been more essential. Strong brand loyalty drives retention, enhances positive word-of-mouth, reduces marketing expenditures, and strengthens a brand's long-term profitability.

Yet, consumers are loyal not only to brands – they are loyal to ideologies. Ideologies represent the set of beliefs and values that are held by a group within society. Consumers have ideologies on a variety of aspects in life such as political ideology (e.g., views on governance and social issues), gender ideology (e.g., beliefs about gender roles and identities), and religious ideology (e.g., Christianity, Judaism, Islam), among many others.

As the world experiences increased controversy and divide, brands are placed in the predicament of taking a forward-facing position on social issues or intentionally remaining neutral. While consumers hold loyalty to both brands and their ideologies, this raises a compelling question for academics: What happens when a consumer's ideological beliefs do not align with the stance – or silence – of a brand to which they are otherwise loyal?

This year's theme invites researchers to examine the tension, misalignment, and interplay of brand loyalty and belief loyalty, and to explore their implications for consumer behavior, brand decision making, consumer experience, customer retention, and long-term loyal outcomes.

The conference welcomes submissions across all areas of marketing, with a particular encouragement for research that considers consumer ideologies, brand loyalty, and their downstream consequences. Contributions outside of the theme that advance marketing theory and practice are equally encouraged.

We look forward to seeing you in Orlando!



2026 SMA Program Chair

SMA 2026

Research Tracks & Track Chairs

This year's conference offers a variety of tracks related to the 2026 theme along with traditional research areas. Please note, to receive the best conference paper or best paper in track awards, a full paper must be submitted for review. In addition, at least one author must be registered for the conference and attend the Friday awards luncheon.



Artificial Intelligence and Marketing

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Public Policy and Marketing

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Branding and IMC

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Marketing Strategy

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Marketing Education

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Digital Marketing

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Sales

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The Experience Economy

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Sensory Marketing

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Influencer Marketing

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Services Marketing

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Luxury Consumption

Aisha Ghimire
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Retailing

Ganga Hewage
The University of Memphis
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Special Sessions / Panel Discussions

Linda (Joie) Hain
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Hospitality, Tourism & Sports Marketing

Wei Wang
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Marketing Futurology & Philosophy Track

Michael Hyman
President of the Institute for Marketing
Futurology and Philosophy
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Doctoral Student Research

**Winner will receive Mathew Joseph Award
Jamie Grigsby
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SMA 2026

Teaching and Dissertation Tracks & Track Chairs



Distinguished Teaching

Mark Wolters

The University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

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Innovation in Teaching Competition

Larry Neale

Queensland University of Technology

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Teaching Moments

Michelle Sullivan

East Tennessee State University

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Jen Riley

Vanderbilt University

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Dissertation Competition

Lou E. Pelton

University of North Texas

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SMA

38th Annual Doctoral Consortium

We continue the SMA tradition of providing an engaging, memorable, and rewarding experience for all. We have amassed an amazing set of scholars in the field ready to impart their wisdom, with an exciting, two-day interactive program that doctoral students will not want to miss! The program provides engaging, fun lunches and breaks, as well as other excellent opportunities to network with one another and with both emerging and eminent marketing scholars across the two days. More details will be available soon, but the program includes many top academics in the field providing excellent, timely teaching, research/analytical, and publication advice. One interesting session we offer is called Speed Doctoring, in which highly-qualified scholars and fellow students provide useful feedback to all Consortium Fellows on their dissertation ideas. Also, the Meet the Editors session, which is wrapped into both the consortium and conference, will include editors and representatives from a large number of major worldwide journals, providing excellent publishing advice.

This year, the 38th Annual Doctoral Consortium takes place on November 4-5, 2026, in conjunction with the SMA annual conference (which runs November 4-7) at the Hilton Orlando Lake Buena Vista in Orlando, FL. As this year's co-program chairs, we welcome both nominators and nominees to consider nominating an excellent doctoral student to represent your program at our exciting and action-packed consortium. We invite doctoral program coordinators or other faculty to nominate students, or students can apply directly to represent their program as a 2026 SMA Doctoral Consortium Fellow.

Please submit your CV, 200-word bio, and your picture to Professor Hopkins at cdh0059@auburn.edu by September 30th, 2026. Students interested in applying or being nominated, please do so as soon as possible to save your place! (Spots are limited, so do not wait until the last minute!).

Your SMA Doctoral Consortium Chairs.



Pia A. Albinsson

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Sharon Beatty

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Christopher Hopkins

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Hotel Reservations



Host hotel for the SMA Conference, the Hilton Orlando Lake Buena Vista puts you right in the middle of the action at Walt Disney World®. Steps from Disney Springs®, attendees can enjoy dozens of restaurants, live entertainment, and nightlife perfect for networking and unwinding after sessions. The newly renovated, AAA Four Diamond hotel features modern rooms, spacious meeting space, on-site dining and bars, resort-style pools, and complimentary Disney transportation — making it easy to balance learning, connecting, and a little Florida fun.