



# **Contemporary Research in Irish Marketing**

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## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Is the Irish Market Ready to adopt Mixed Martial Arts as a Mainstream Sport? A Quantitative Approach.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>GAA Footballer's Consumption of Sport Supplements in their Pursuit of Masculinity. An Exploratory Study .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>My Starbucks Idea: An Exploration of Customer Loyalty on Proprietary Social Media.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>The Development and Application of a Brand Analysis Framework within the Irish Automotive Sector .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Cause the Bars Don't Struggle and the Struggle Don't Stop. Cultural Capital in the Irish Hip-Hop Subculture .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Exploring Peoples' Attitude Towards Online Video Advertisements Among the 18- 30 Year Old Segment .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Is to be Safe, to be Sorry? – Considering Personal Safety Needs in Gap Year Destination Selection.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Impact of Fear Appeals on Young Irish Drivers.....</b>	<b>10</b>



## Introduction

Welcome to this fourth edition of Contemporary Research in Irish Marketing from students of the B Sc Marketing at DIT. These abstracts of their work illustrates the range depth and rigor which characterizes the research undertaken by one hundred students every year.

Often their first in-depth engagement with marketing research and practice comes with their final year dissertation task. The dissertation allows the students to define, shape and research a marketing issue in great depth, using leading-edge theory to formulate a research question. This question is examined 'out there' in the word of marketing industry practice and consumer reality through the use of appropriate research methods. Such an engagement with research defines and differentiates these graduates and the 'black book' ensures that graduates have demonstrated the core marketing competences needed at the highest level.

Students have provided a summary or abstract of his or her work in their own words. Their academic supervisor is also listed. If you are interested in any particular work you should contact myself or the staff member concerned. Details can be found on <http://www.dit.ie/marketing/staff/>

This year themes focused on areas such as cultural capital, proprietary social media, sport, identity and consumption and innovations in brand analysis frameworks.

I hope you find the students' work stimulating and interesting.



Roger Sherlock,  
Head of Department of Marketing Studies,  
DIT College of Business,  
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# **Is the Irish Market Ready to adopt Mixed Martial Arts as a Mainstream Sport? A Quantitative Approach.**

**Author: Stephen Brooks**

**Supervisor: Dr Anthony Buckley**

## **Abstract**

This dissertation examines the impact of the brand management of a fast growing international sport and whether or not this has resulted in mixed martial arts being accepted to date.

Branding theory suggested that organisations can position a product and appeal to different segments in different markets. Despite the huge investment in branding, a common agreement on what exactly a brand is has been difficult to reach. It involves the design and execution of marketing activities to build, measure and manage brand equity.

Brand management in sport is very important as organisations seek to nurture a long term relationship with their customers (fans) and build their brand equity over time. Aided by globalisation and technology, consumers can have access to their favourite sports teams and stars regardless of their geographical location.

Brand loyalty is essential in the sports market, it delivers a steadier following even when the core product fails, such as when a team has a losing season. Fans dedicate their time and effort into supporting their teams and show an unconditional love.

This study approaches the subject of analysing the impact of the branding activities of an international sports organisation and the readiness of the Irish market to adopt it as a major sport. The organisation chosen for the study is UFC, the Ultimate Fighting Championship.

The research question is hypothesised as follows: Is the Irish market ready to adopt Mixed Martial Arts as a mainstream sport? The research design consisted of the quantitative analysis of an online survey. The analysis provides conclusive evidence of that the UFC's brand management activities have impacted on the adoption of mixed martial arts in Ireland. The outcome is consistent with the literature which holds that successful brand management activities improve brand loyalty and equity.

Overall, however, there is no evidence to suggest that the Irish market is ready to adopt mixed martial arts as a mainstream sport to rival GAA football, Soccer or Rugby. Therefore the hypothesis contained in the research question is refuted. Although growing in popularity there are still many hurdles to overcome before Ireland is ready to adopt mixed martial arts.



# **GAA Footballer's Consumption of Sport Supplements in their Pursuit of Masculinity. An Exploratory Study**

**Author: Gavin Eiffe**

**Supervisor: Gerry Mortimer**

## **Abstract**

The main reason of this study was to explore why Gaelic footballers are consuming sport supplements throughout Ireland. Throughout rural and big town clubs along with Inter-county teams, there has been an increase in players participating in gym work and consuming sport supplements.

This research exploratory and includes a qualitative approach based on semi-structured interviews with six Gaelic footballers who consume sport supplements.

This research is critical for the understanding of why Gaelic footballers are partaking in gym activities and thus consuming sport supplements. The reason being is that there have been very few studies which exist that surround the current body of knowledge and supplement use of Gaelic footballers.

# **My Starbucks Idea: An Exploration of Customer Loyalty on Proprietary Social Media**

**Author: Ciara Fitzpatrick**

**Supervisor: Dr Etain Kidney**

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research study was to explore the link between proprietary social media and customer loyalty. The media landscape has changed significantly over the past few years. Businesses are no longer relying on traditional media practices to get their message across to consumers. Instead many are adopting social media strategies to connect with their customers and improve sales. Social media has given consumers the opportunity to let businesses know what they want. Social media provides a business and its customers the chance to co-create value. This study researches this modern marketing phenomenon.

According to many academic researchers, businesses connect with their customers to satisfy their needs as by doing so should lead to some form of customer loyalty. However, as yet no academic researcher has addressed the possible connection between a business' proprietary social media and the loyalty of their customers. A content analysis was performed on Starbucks' proprietary social media website; My Starbucks Idea to explore the connection between the business' proprietary/owned social media and the loyalty of their customers.

The first part of this research study contains reviews of the academic literature surrounding the concepts of social media and customer loyalty. Starbucks' proprietary social media website, My Starbucks Idea, was used to collect the needed data for this research. The data showed that on proprietary social media, businesses have the opportunity to engage with their customers and co-create value. The research also gave evidence to suggest that by working together with their customers and working towards satisfying their needs, businesses may be able to create and maintain some form of customer loyalty through the use of proprietary social media.

# **The Development and Application of a Brand Analysis Framework within the Irish Automotive Sector**

**Author: Tony Jameson**

**Supervisor: Dr Anthony Buckley**

## **Abstract**

Customer retention is very important for dealers in the motor industry. It is therefore important for the dealers to provide a good experience for their customers. Research strongly supports the view that maintaining existing customers is more cost effective than obtaining new ones. Providing an experience which the customer appreciates involves the development of trust and satisfaction which can then lead to loyalty and repurchase intention.

In this research we investigate the level of loyalty which exists in the Irish motor industry and attempt to develop a framework which will allow for the prediction of future loyalty levels amongst the consumer population. To achieve this objective, existing frameworks involving five brand constructs; brand experience, brand trust, customer and brand satisfaction, brand loyalty and repurchase intention were extracted, modified and combined in the hope of developing an overall 'Brand Analysis Framework'. This new framework could then be used by marketing management, manufacturers and dealerships to develop and implement a more effective marketing strategy designed to build strength in key brand construct areas. If successful, the Brand Analysis Framework' may assist in improving customer acquisition and retention strategies.

To achieve this objective, a snapshot of current loyalty levels of three well-known car brands was first examined. Each car brand was chosen to represent a different segment of the market. Data was collected through qualitative and quantitative methods for both car buyers and industry representatives. The data was analysed using descriptive analysis, factor analysis and linear regression using SPSS.

A detailed profile of 'loyal' and 'non-loyal' buyers was produced. Demographically and socio-economically the groups were different, but they showed a strong similarity towards their chosen brands in terms of the brand constructs. The analysis of individual loyalty and repurchase intention within each car brand further confirmed the similarity across segments.

In conclusion, the 'Brand Analysis Framework' was developed and provided an overall index for each brand construct as well as an overall index score for 'loyal' and 'non-loyal' buyers. The results however were disappointing in their ability to discriminate significantly between buyers of the different brands.



# **Cause the Bars Don't Struggle and the Struggle Don't Stop. Cultural Capital in the Irish Hip-Hop Subculture**

**Author: Eimear Kelleher**

**Supervisor: Dr Paddy Dolan**

## **Abstract**

This research study delves into the underlying notions of authenticity in relation to hip-hop music and how fans in Ireland both create and use cultural capital within their subcultural group. This study is similar to that of Bennett (1999) who investigated the hip-hop culture in Newcastle Upon-Tyne. It is also comparable to the work of Thornton (1995) who explored the concept of cultural capital within the club music scene.

With emphasis on social class, fans' perceptions on the authenticity of hip-hop music were the main focus of this dissertation. The secondary aim of this study was to uncover how such fans develop and deploy notions of cultural capital. Literature on music and subculture were reviewed in order to form the basis of this study. The demographic for this research was male-orientated from the ages of 22 to 28. The research concentrated on this category, as hip-hop fans, like artists, are predominantly young males.

Qualitative research was undertaken to derive insight on fans' attitudes toward social class in hip-hop music and their process of constructing capital. Three in-depth interviews were conducted and I also embarked on an ethnographic study. The primary objectives of this study were to discover how Irish hip-hop fans merit rappers with credibility and how they obtain capital and use it to place themselves in a cultural hierarchy.

The process of coding data was employed to generate data on this topic. The major findings among the sample studied include rawness, relevance, commercialisation, popularity and personal preferences. The participants within this study were incredibly passionate about the overall genre of hip-hop and were also involved in the Irish scene. Participants acknowledged the role of social class in hip-hop music yet they agreed it was no longer an essential element when defining authenticity. They also accredited scene involvement and various forms of knowledge as the chief factors that comprise cultural capital





# **Exploring Peoples' Attitude Towards Online Video Advertisements Among the 18-30 Year Old Segment**

**Author: Sebastian O' Sullivan**

**Supervisor: Donncha Ryan**

## **Abstract**

The way companies advertise is changing. Some forms of traditional advertising aren't as popular as they once were as new forms of rich media are being used to improve a company's interaction with consumers through advertisements. Consumers like having more control of what they watch as they can avoid things that they have no interest in.

The fastest growing form of advertising in this current time is online video advertising. This study explores peoples' attitude towards online video advertisements among 18 to 30 year olds. The theoretical framework used is the Theory of Reasoned Action, which needed a quantitative approach for it to be used.

Online questionnaire surveys were used to gather the required information and several data analysis techniques such as exploratory factor analysis and two step cluster analysis were used to interpret the data. By gaining a better understanding of peoples' attitude towards online video advertisements, knowledge about their future intentions can also be acquired.



# **Is to be Safe, to be Sorry? – Considering Personal Safety Needs in Gap Year Destination Selection**

**Author: Adam Ryan**

**Supervisor: Dr John Byrne**

## **Abstract**

The consideration of personal safety needs when making a decision on gap year destination, and the influence professional sources providing travel safety information have on the desirability of a gap year destination were studied in this dissertation. A sample of 176 respondents was collected and appropriate data was analysed using the McNemar's Test to discover if there were statistically significant differences in respondent desirability of destinations between before and after they were exposed to Foreign Travel Information provided by a professional source.

The results allowed for the acceptance of the null hypotheses H0-1, H0-2, and the alternative hypotheses H1-3, H1-4, which confirmed that the decision criterion safety has an effect on the desirability of a travel destination only for Irish females between the ages of 20 and 24, and that professional sources which provide travel safety information have an effect on the desirability of a travel destination again, only for Irish females between the ages of 20 and 24.

Although it was identified that females did consider personal safety when making a decision on gap year destination, it was evident that the criterion's importance relative to the other two decision criteria of enjoyment and affordability was very low. The lack of influence the Foreign Travel Information had on male respondents' decision of gap year destination makes one wonder what sources of information they actually value.

Simple statistical analysis of data generated from the sample indicated that the communication of travel experiences was very important to respondents, and also that it served as quite a jovial pastime. Recommendations for future research in this area are discussed, as present evidence is not ample enough to make any claim.

# **Impact of Fear Appeals on Young Irish Drivers**

**Author: Geoffrey White**

**Supervisor: Laura Cuddihy**

## **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to investigate the effects of fear appeals on young Irish consumers. The focus of the study is on drink driving fear appeals in particular.

Popular issues as the necessary degree of fear is addressed along with more unknown issues such as the effect of disgust in a fear appeal.

A number of insights are gained in to fear appeals based around drink driving with an aim at giving some depth in to what makes fear appeals work more effectively in general.

