

**Announcement of a Special issue Marketing ZFP – Journal of Research and Management
Engagement Platforms and Engagement Practices in Networks**

Guest Editors

- **Roderick J. Brodie** (University of Auckland, New Zealand, r.brodie@auckland.ac.nz)
 - **Julia A. Fehrer** (University of Bayreuth, Germany, julia.fehrer@uni-bayreuth.de, University of Auckland, j.fehrer@auckland.ac.nz)
 - **Herbert Woratschek** (University of Bayreuth, Germany, h.woratschek@uni-bayreuth.de)
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In today's markets, where borders between customers and micro entrepreneurs get blurred and the world has become a global bazaar due to technological developments and social media, engagement among customers and brands has increased and became an important source of resources for companies. In the contemporary business environment, the facilitation of customer engagement has developed into an important concept of scholarly and practitioner interest (e. g., Brodie et al. 2011; Van Doorn et al. 2010; Jaakkola and Alexander 2014). Increasingly, companies are successfully intertwining the customer's activity of engaging with their economic-oriented marketing strategies. For Amazon, Booking.com, Airbnb and various other platform businesses customer engagement is central to assure trust, credibility and relevance of their services (Parker et al. 2016). Reflecting these increasingly dynamic and interactive business environments, engaged customers are central to the firm's competitive advantage (Kumar and Pansari 2016) and have been identified as a tier-one research priority for 2014–2016 of Marketing Science Institute (Marketing Science Institute 2014) complemented by special issues on customer engagement in leading marketing and service research journals.

An important recent development in engagement research is the increasing recognition of the need to extend the conceptual domain of engagement beyond customers and consider multiple heterogeneous stakeholders, including firms, employees, suppliers, distributors, government, the media, and the general public (Chandler and Lusch 2015; Storbacka et al. 2016). In today's networked age, the majority of the fastest growing business actors in the global economy, leverage their heterogeneous actor networks (Wharton 2016; Fortune 2015) and provide engagement platforms for their actors to connect (Breidbach et al. 2014; Breidbach and Brodie 2017). Platform ecosystems such as Ebay, Etsy, and Amazon led the way, and now traditional retailers and manufacturers are following. Walmart just recently bought Jet.com, an online wholesaler platform for \$ 3 billion in cash and \$ 300 million of Walmart shares to compete with Amazon. Other manufacturers, such as Gopro opened their system boundaries in order to encourage external developers to use their infrastructure. In short high performing businesses show platform properties and facilitate practices through which actors engage with one another in a broader network (Breidbach and Brodie 2017). However, to date there has been little research examining *engagement practices in networks* and *engagement platforms in broader service ecosystems*.

The purpose of this *special issue* is to bring together high quality contemporary research *on customer and actor engagement in networks addressing the challenges of engagement practices and engagement platforms in a multi-actor setting*. We are open to both conceptual and empirical manuscripts that fit the scope of the Special Issue, and welcome submissions using different methodological approaches. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Engagement platforms supporting multiple actor engagement
- Engagement practices and the process of engagement in service ecosystems
- Business models enabling engagement practices
- The role and position of business actors in facilitating actor engagement

- Drivers and dynamics of actor engagement in emerging networks
- Stimuli of engagement behaviours and engagement connectedness in network settings
- Antecedents and consequences of actor engagement in emerging networks
- Value creation mechanisms resulting from engagement practices
- Technologies and innovations leveraging customer or actor engagement
- Methods (e. g. text mining, data mining) to get insights into engagement behaviour and engagement practices based on real-time data (e. g. social media data, CRM data)
- Information strategies, risk strategies and governance on engagement platforms
- Influence of social norms/institutions for engagement practices and engagement platforms
- (Inter-) cultural influence on engagement practices
- Branding process of engagement platforms
- Platform design and its influence on actor engagement
- Customisation on engagement platforms
- Designing customer (actor) journeys on engagement platforms

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Submission

Deadline: October 15, 2017.

Please submit the manuscripts to Herbert Woratschek (h.woratschek@uni-bayreuth.de) and Julia Fehrer (j.fehrer@auckland.ac.nz).

More information for authors and reviewers under: www.marketing-zfp.de.

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