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Foreward
Fiona Cownie

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Foreward

Welcome to this special issue of *Journal of Promotional Communications*. The focus for the papers in this edition is Relationship Marketing and the strategies organisations are adopting to build relationships or engage their consumers. Relationship Marketing, emergent in the 1990s as a response to the particular demands of the service context, has established itself as a bedrock of the marketing and promotions discipline (Gummesson 2017). Recent attention on engagement (Vivek et al. 2012, 2014) has reinvigorated the discipline and marketers increasingly prioritise the ongoing interactions and connections they are able to forge with relational partners. Whilst trust and commitment continue to be the core conceptual building blocks of relationship marketing (Morgan and Hunt 1994) increasingly gratitude is seen as an area central to the ongoing reciprocal exchange which characterizes mutually beneficial relationships (Palmatier et al. 2009; Raggio et al. 2014; Cownie 2017). Key outcomes of relationship marketing can be broadly categorized into loyalty, co-operation and advocacy. Successful relational strategies will develop connections with partners which result in those partners intending to return with their business, working together in a co-operative manner to co-create solutions and talking positively about their experiences. The papers in this edition address these key issues, focusing in on trust (Dodd 2018; Bowditch 2018; Scott 2018), commitment (Baker 2018; Steer 2018), gratitude (Carolina 2018; Constantine 2018; Kelly 2018), engagement (Wright 2018; Gill 2018); loyalty (Harrison 2018) and advocacy (Scott 2018; Gill 2018). All papers are conceptual in nature. They present ideas and conceptual frameworks which could be empirically tested for their explanation of how relational strategies operate within the contexts being examined. Importantly this edition has been drawn together building on the work of a team of Relationship Marketing students. I would like to thank each and everyone for their contribution: James Harrison, Francesca Wright, Sim Gill, Iona Kelly, Chris Bowditch, Laura Dodd, Bella Constantine, Justin Baker, Megan Scott, Issie Steer and Sophia Carolina.

Dr Fiona Cownie

Editor, special edition on Relationship Marketing.

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