Dr. Jing Ge
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Emerging Scholar Profile

Dr. Jing Ge is a postdoc researcher at the University of California-Berkeley, USA. Jing studies, writes and speaks about the language use by businesses and consumers on social media in the marketing context and explores how businesses can deploy social-media communication to enrich their marketing endeavours.

Jing was awarded a Ph.D. in the University of Queensland, Australia in 2016. Her PhD dissertation, "The use of humour for customer engagement on Chinese social media – a rhetorical perspective", focused on the tourism industry, and examined how destination marketing organizations (DMOs) engage consumers on social media through playful and creative language; how humour co-construction happens within firm-customer conversations; and how consumers are brought into such conversations, forming conversational networks. The aim of Jing's research (aside from intrinsic interest) has been to bridge the theory-practice gap in social media marketing. Her research responds to an urgent call to build theory in this area and to develop innovative methodological approaches that offer researchers and practitioners scientific knowledge and fundamental rules of marketing on social media.

Jing's most recent research looks at the dynamic and intricate conversational structures and the use of multimodal forms of language on social media. She explores how firm-customer conversations occur in an interconnected and multidirectory networked space and analyses communication patterns that emerge from these interactions. By applying a rhetorical approach to social media, Jing examines how business organizations deploy textual and visual language to develop persuasive posts and to co-create value with consumers. She also investigates the semiotics of emojis – the rise of visual language in the age of social media. Jing argues that although businesses need to shift their expertise and practices toward the data-driven approaches that form the basis of successful social media marketing, deriving actionable consumer insights is far more important than analysing large amounts of data. Given the sheer variety of verbal communication on social media, applying linguistic

analyses to consumer-marketer interactions can provide businesses with fundamental knowledge and rules both to accommodate and to anticipate and navigate consumer-dominated interactions on social media, she argues.

In her next phase of research, Jing plans to strengthen her expertise on language use and linguistic analysis on social media and further apply it to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in marketing communications. While AI is already recognized as an important potential force in marketing, she believes it will remain little more than a 'fancy concept' to scholars and a 'shiny new toy' for businesses if it cannot be used appropriately to identify and solve problems, gain consumer and business insights, and formulate and implement customised business strategies. The further development of AI tools and practices in marketing will require complex research to identify synergies among social-media afforded language, consumer online conventions, and social media cultures in specific contexts. The status quo – relying on natural language processing and programming by computer scientists – is not enough to apply AI in marketing and communication on social media.

Jing has published an academic journal article, book chapters, conference papers, and media releases on such topics as customer engagement, value co-creation, social media affordances from a marketing perspective, consumer culture on Chinese social media, and humour usage and brand humanization on social media. She has been interviewed by major business media, delivered guest lectures and presentations at various universities and professional groups, including at Stanford University. By doing so, Jing hopes that her research is able to generate a wider impact, offering benefits to different groups of audiences around the globe.

Jing has actively engaged in a variety of academic and industry activities. She was an invited reviewer for Annals of Tourism Research and the International Conference on Information and Communications Technology in Travel and Tourism (ENTER). She serves as a member of the Editorial Review Board for eRTR. Jing was also the co-chair of the PhD workshop at ENTER 2017. In addition to these academic activities, Jing is a committee member of Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), Northern California Chapter, and she recently ran the scholarship program for undergraduate, masters and PhD candidates. For Jing, this community involvement and contribution is a vital part of her personal and professional growth.

Jing received her undergraduate degree majoring in English from Dalian Foreign Language University, China. She received a Master of Marketing Management degree from the University of Canberra, Australia, where she received the Dean's Excellence Award. Jing

was awarded her PhD in Tourism Marketing and Marketing Communication from the University of Queensland, Australia. Furthermore, Jing was a visiting researcher at Stanford University and had research training on qualitative methodologies there with an official credit A.

Before pursuing an academic career, Jing spent close to 10 years working in the marketing industry, where she specialized in marketing communication and social media. The puzzles she encountered as a professional, such as why some online marketing campaigns were successful while others were not, encouraged her to undertake her master's degree. That, in turn, generated more questions about marketing and communication in social media, which motivated her PhD journey. Straddling the two worlds has been a joy and an advantage. "I am able to make my academic research have more influence and impact in industry," she says. "And what I learn in industry improves my academic research."

In her times away from research, Jing does long-distance trail running, drives high-performance cars on the track, does oil painting, and travels internationally.