
AMA-SUSTSIG: Spring 2026 Newsletter

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Sustainable Marketing and Innovation

Newsletter

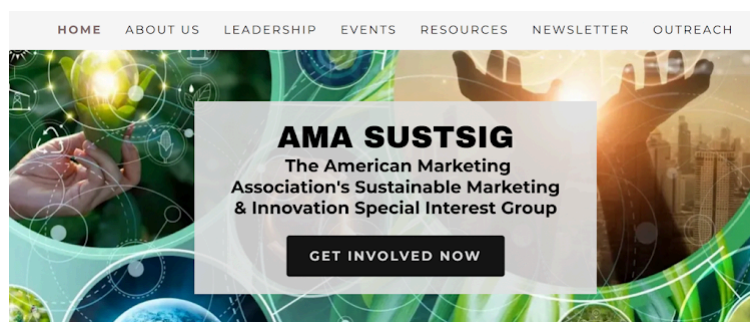
Spring 2026

SUSTSIG: The AMA Special Interest Group for Sustainable Marketing and Innovation

Welcome to the Spring 2026 Newsletter

As we reach the midpoint of the spring semester, our community is balancing the steady momentum of teaching and research with exciting opportunities for scholarly engagement. We are especially excited to report from the events that took place at the American Marketing Association Winter Academic Conference 2026 in Madrid, which featured an outstanding session on Delivering Sustainable Marketing in 2026. Organized by the Sustainable Marketing SIG, the program included a Special Session dedicated to advancing cutting-edge research and practice in sustainability, as well as a joint reception that provided space for meaningful connection and collaboration. We look forward to strong participation from our community as we continue shaping the future of sustainable marketing scholarship and highlighting our upcoming events.

With our new website now live, we invite you to explore the updated design and features: [visit the homepage clicking this link](#) and see what's new.



Latest News

SUSTSIG Special Session & Reception at Winter AMA 2026

At the American Marketing Association Winter Academic Conference in Madrid, the Sustainable Marketing SIG hosted a highly engaging Special Session titled *Delivering Sustainable Marketing in 2026*. Moderated by Ludovica Scalco, the session brought together distinguished panelists Sarah Whitley, Jonathan Knowles, Aruna Tatavarthy, and Karen Page Winterich for a forward-looking discussion on the evolving role of marketing in advancing sustainability.



Panelists examined how organizations can move beyond symbolic commitments toward measurable impact, highlighting emerging research on consumer behavior, accountability, and systems-level change. The conversation emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, rigorous metrics, and actionable frameworks to ensure that sustainable marketing delivers both societal and organizational value. The session sparked thoughtful dialogue among attendees and reinforced the SIG's leadership in shaping the future of sustainable marketing scholarship and practice.

SUSTSIG once again partnered with DocSIG to host a social reception to foster networking among doctoral students and faculty.

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Upcoming Events

2026 AMA Marketing and Public Policy Conference

Join us in Ottawa, Ontario, on May 16-18, 2026, for a special session hosted by the AMA SUSTSIG. The special session titled "Different Perspectives on Sustainable Marketing", organized by Ludovica Scalco, will showcase cutting-edge research advancing sustainable marketing from multiple perspectives, featuring Aya Aboelenien (HEC Montréal), Russell Belk (York University), Lorena García Ramón (University of Northern Colorado), and Corinne Hassler (University of Kentucky). The session will examine how sustainability is defined, communicated, and enacted across markets—from reshaping the meaning of sustainability in fashion, to post-ownership and the sharing economy, to recognition of gaps in access to essential resources such as water, and the design of prosocial ambassador programs. Together, these perspectives will illustrate how marketing practices can foster more inclusive, responsible, and effective sustainability outcomes. The session will conclude with a forward-looking discussion on research priorities and how marketing scholarship can better inform managerial and public policy decision-making.

2026 Macromarketing Conference

The Macromarketing Society invites scholars to attend the 2026 Macromarketing Conference, which will take place June 14–17, 2026, in Denver. The conference marks the 50th anniversary of macromarketing scholarship, commemorating the first macromarketing seminar held in Boulder.

Hosted on the campus of the University of Denver, the conference will begin with an Early Career Seminar on Sunday, June 14, offered in a hybrid format. A key feature of this year's program is the Sustainability and Climate Action track, which will include plenary presentations by Jag Sheth of Emory University and Dana Alden of the University of Hawaii.

2026 AMA Summer Academic Conference

During the 2026 AMA Summer Academic Conference in Denver, CO, July 24-26, our SUSTSIG members, Crystal Reeck and Neil Bendle, will organize a roundtable focusing on Sustainability, Marketing, and Innovation.

The upcoming panel session will feature Amit Bhattacharjee (University of Colorado Boulder), Anders Gustafsson (BI Norwegian Business School), Xiaoxu Wu (Colorado State University), and Daniel Zane (Lehigh University). The discussion will examine how climate change is reshaping consumers' lives and the modern marketplace, and consider how marketing must evolve in response. Panelists will offer brief reflections on sustainability before engaging in a broader conversation about its implications for research, education, industry practice, and public policy.

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Selected Call for Papers

Journal of Consumer Behaviour

Innovating Sustainable Behaviour and Consumption through AI: Future Opportunities and Challenges

[Submission Window: March 1, 2026 - April 30, 2026](#)

Journal of Marketing

Society's Challenges: Analyzing Trade-Offs and Advancing Solutions to Society's Challenges Using an Integrated Multiple Stakeholders Perspective

[Submission Deadline: May 1, 2026](#)

Journal of Consumer Marketing

Crafting Shape in a Fluid World: The Intersection of Marketing and External Forces

[Submission Deadline: August 15, 2026](#)

Journal of Sustainable Marketing

Aisles and Platforms to Ecosystems: Rethinking Retail for a Sustainable Era

[Submission Deadline: September 1, 2026](#)

Psychology & Marketing

Impactful Research: Advancing Practical and Societal Relevance

[Submission Deadline: September 15, 2026](#)

Journal of Business Research

Reframing Corporate Social Responsibility in an Age of Polycrisis

[Submission Deadline: September 30, 2026](#)

Special Issue Spotlight

Global Sustainability and Innovation in International Marketing - Journal of International Marketing

SUSTSIG continually monitors efforts to advance research on sustainable marketing and innovation worldwide; in this issue, we ask Prof. David A. Griffith (Texas A&M University), Prof. Cheryl Nakata (University of North Carolina at Greensboro), Prof. Ayşegül Özsumer (Koç University) and Prof. Göksel Yalçınkaya (University of New Hampshire), guest editors of the special issue “Global Sustainability and Innovation in International Marketing” (Journal of International Marketing), to share useful insights for prospective authors.

What motivated the call for papers, and what do you see as still missing in the existing literature?

The special issue is motivated by the rapid rise of sustainable innovation as a core element of global marketing strategy and by the fact that we still know too little about the mechanisms linking sustainability-oriented innovation to consumer behavior, firm performance, and societal outcomes across diverse international contexts. Existing work has built a strong foundation on topics such as circular economy business models, responsible innovation, and climate action in global supply chains, but it remains fragmented and often focused on single markets or narrow aspects of the marketing mix rather than integrated, cross-country, and theory-building perspectives in international marketing.

Outside of those topics noted in the CFP, deeper insight is needed into how sustainable innovations influence MNE/Exporting firm strategy and performance, consumer behavior, and brand loyalty across cultural and institutional environments, as well as how firms balance global standardization and local adaptation of sustainable offerings. The literature also lacks robust metrics and methodologies to evaluate the effectiveness of sustainability initiatives in international marketing and to link marketing actions to both business outcomes and broader societal well-being. In doing so, we see considerable opportunity for work that leverages diverse methods and data sources, including qualitative, mixed-method, and secondary/archival designs (e.g., text, ESG, or digital trace data), to uncover underlying mechanisms and boundary conditions in cross-national settings.

What types of submissions are you particularly interested in receiving?

The special issue welcomes conceptual, empirical, and methodological papers. We are agnostic to the type of submission. We do ask that the works submitted directly address “Global Sustainability and Innovation in International Marketing” – building on the rich international marketing literature.

Do you have any advice for early-career scholars who are considering submitting to the special issue? What should they focus on in particular?

Ensure tight fit with the special issue theme by clearly framing your contribution around global sustainability and innovation in international marketing rather than generic sustainability or innovation topics. Explicitly position your work against the gaps in the international marketing literature. It is also important to align the paper’s framing, constructs, and contribution with the Journal of International Marketing’s audience by clearly articulating how the study advances international marketing theory, not only sustainability or innovation debates more broadly.

Choose a focused, theory-driven question and design that can be executed within your resources (e.g., a well-structured cross-country survey, multi-country experiments, or secondary data), and be explicit

about how your context and methods address specific international marketing questions. When possible, highlight how your findings speak to both managerial and policy relevance by clarifying how MNEs, exporters, NGOs, or policymakers might use your insights to design and scale sustainable marketing innovations across countries.

Pay attention to methodological rigor and clarity: clearly articulate constructs, justify cross-national sampling and measurement equivalence where relevant, and show how your data allow you to speak to mechanisms (not just correlations) linking sustainability-related innovation to marketing phenomena and performance outcomes.

If possible, take advantage of informal feedback from colleagues who can offer insights into your work well before the submission window (August 1–September 30, 2026). Use that feedback to sharpen positioning, theory, and contribution before sending your paper to the *Journal of International Marketing*.

[Click here to learn more about the special issue](#)

Selected Research Spotlights

[Bollinger, B., Kronthal-Sacco, R., & Zhu, L. \(2026\). Sustainable Product Profit Potential and Availability. *Journal of Marketing*, 90\(2\), 50-72.](#)

Abstract. Consumers have become more interested in purchasing products produced using more sustainable practices, with much of the recent growth in consumer packaged goods within the United States from products with clearly labeled sustainability claims on their packaging. However, many categories have low levels of sustainable product market share, with substantial geographic variation. The authors assess the role of demographic variables in the availability of sustainable products, after controlling for their relative “profit potential” (determined by quantity, price, and price elasticity). To estimate profit potential, the authors estimate product and county-specific demand elasticities for seven consumer packaged goods subcategories in the grocery and mass merchandiser formats. A meta-analysis of the estimates shows that the relative profit potential of sustainable products increases with income and Democratic vote share. These variables predict greater sustainable product availability than would be expected from their higher profit potential. The fraction of the county that is white does not significantly impact profit potential but leads to higher sustainable product availability. Our findings provide evidence that managers likely use simple demographic heuristics to make product stocking decisions (supported by a separate survey of retailers) that do not necessarily reflect preferences for sustainable products and their profitability.

[Paul, I., Mohanty, S., & Parker, J. R. \(2026\). The impact of green energy production on healthiness perceptions and preferences. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 52\(5\), 980-999.](#)

Abstract. This research finds that products that have been produced using renewable (“green”) energy, and labeled as such, are perceived to be healthier and, consequently, are more likely to be purchased than otherwise identical products produced with non-green or conventional energy. The effect of green energy production on the perceived healthiness of food products is found to be driven via perceived contagion: Consumers believe that the “good for you” essence of green energy is transferred to the food product during the production process, thereby rendering it healthier and more preferred. Evidence for this relationship is found across eight studies (N = 1,762) using a variety of common food products. Alternative accounts are assessed and ruled out, and it is also found that the impact of green energy production on preferences is moderated by consumers’ health orientation. These findings contribute to the growing literature on the broader topic of sustainability initiatives and research examining the complexity and nuances of consumer responses to sustainable products and initiatives.

[Amaral, C., Kolsarici, C., Ikonen, I., & Robitaille, N. \(2025\). Practice Paper—AI-Driven Behavioral Nudges for Organizations: An Integrative System for Sustainable Resource Management. *Marketing Science* 0\(0\).](#)

Abstract. In today's business environment, organizations face increasing pressure to manage resources efficiently while meeting financial and sustainability goals. This paper presents a novel integrative approach that combines artificial intelligence-driven forecasting with behavioral interventions to help businesses optimize energy consumption under critical peak pricing schemes, reduce costs, and align with sustainability initiatives. We conducted a multiphase longitudinal study with large organizations leveraging neural network time-series modeling to improve peak energy demand predictions and behaviorally informed communications leveraging planning prompts to enhance compliance with curtailment recommendations. The proposed intervention reduces energy consumption during critical peaks by 42%, yielding average net annual savings of approximately \$230,000 per organization. Through a nationwide rollout, we estimate that hourly peak-period carbon dioxide emissions could be reduced by approximately 6,500 tonnes, equivalent to roughly 1 million Canadian households' daily energy consumption. The results demonstrate significant financial savings and reduced environmental impact, benefiting organizations, regulators, service providers, and society. We contribute to research on resource management, systems thinking, and nudging in an organizational context by aligning technological tools with human processes. This work offers a practical, business-oriented solution to real-world challenges, creating value for multiple stakeholders and positioning firms for long-term success in an increasingly resource-constrained world.

[Borau, S., & Mai, R. \(2025\). The gender paradox in pro-environmental engagement: Actionable insights for cause-related marketing and social advocacy campaigns. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 1-26.](#)

Abstract. The growing gender polarization in consumers' pro-environmental engagement—with women more engaged than men—suggests that organizations should consider gender a key criterion when targeting their cause-related marketing and social advocacy campaigns for environmental causes. However, multilevel analyses of 11 behavioral interventions across 63 countries (N = 56,582) reveal that relying on gender alone is insufficient and can even backfire, uncovering a surprising paradox: The gender gap in pro-environmental engagement widens among liberal consumers, in societies with higher gender equality, and cultures emphasizing care over competition. These gender paradoxes emerge when identities and societal contexts intersect, revealing why interventions ignoring such complexities can fail. Results show that a collective action framing is effective across several identity combinations, while a negative emotional appeal can backfire, particularly among conservative men in gender-equal countries. A web-based tool helps marketers and policymakers select effective environmental interventions across intersecting individual and country-level factors, enabling targeted advocacy and cause-related marketing.

[Bublitz, M. G., Peracchio, L. A., Davis, B., Du, K. M., Escalas, J. E., Gallo, Í., ... & Wiener, H. J. \(2026\). We'll Stand by You: Understanding Community-Based Philanthropic Giving. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 45\(1\), 50-69.](#)

Abstract. The established academic conceptualization of philanthropy is the gifting of monetary resources to nonprofit organizations. The authors extend and broaden this understanding of philanthropy by examining a fuller spectrum of ways philanthropic givers support nonprofits. In this research, the authors sought out and partnered with experienced philanthropic givers and advisors, including foundation leaders, who prioritize supporting community-based nonprofits. Because community-based nonprofits are proximate to both the inequities in the communities they serve and promising solutions for addressing those inequities, research provides evidence that these nonprofits have the potential to transform communities and create positive impact. The authors found that their research partners' philanthropic giving involves resourcing and building relationships with community-based nonprofits by offering them funding plus other forms of support, including the givers' time, connections, and expertise. The authors build on these findings by constructing a broadened framework for philanthropy that

integrates insights gleaned from their research partners and academic research on philanthropy. The authors explore the policy implications of community-based philanthropy and call on researchers in marketing to further investigate and advance knowledge about philanthropic giving.

Hüttl-Maack, V. et al. (2025). Using Sustainability Signal Portfolios to Effectively Communicate Holistic Sustainability Strategies to Consumers. *Journal of Sustainable Marketing*, 6(2), 302-371.

Abstract. The successful implementation of sustainable business strategies necessitates a well-aligned communication concept for conveying product sustainability to consumers. However, communicating product sustainability is challenging due to the high-noise environment filled with complex information. Although companies typically use signal portfolios (i.e., sets of multiple signals) to communicate product sustainability, prior research has mainly examined the effects of individual signals on consumers. Signal portfolios can vary in how holistically they cover different sustainability-related product attributes. While research indicates that the greatest improvements in a company's actual sustainability performance can be achieved through holistic sustainability strategies, it remains unclear whether consumers recognize and value signal portfolios that reflect such approaches. Across three studies, we find that consumers perceive holistic signal portfolios as more sustainable than selective portfolios. This has positive downstream effects on purchase-related variables. Our research advances the understanding of holistic sustainability signal portfolios as a crucial component of sustainable marketing and business strategies.

Selected Spotlight Interview

Karen P. Winterich



How did you first become interested in sustainability, and how has your thinking evolved over the course of your academic career?

While I'm really passionate about sustainability now, I have to be honest that it wasn't strategic. I started out working in prosocial behavior, primarily monetary donations, as well as moral behavior, which led to some initial work on sustainable behavior, including donation of goods. My interest really increased when I was asked to develop an undergraduate course on sustainability marketing in 2012. I did a lot of reading to find course materials, and I remember reading articles and making notes in the margins about potential research questions. Recycling was initially top of mind, but I now give more consideration to how meaningful the impact could be, focusing on reuse and repair. I also focus more on strategies that can encourage sustainable behavior without consumers necessarily thinking about the behavior as sustainable.

What are the central questions driving your current research projects?

A lot of my interests have to do with extending product life or giving new life to products or materials. Product life could be extended by repairing products, reusing products, or finding new uses for existing products. Product life doesn't have to be extended by the current consumer if it is extended through use by other consumers, as long as a consumer sees value in the product and makes choices to extend its life.

Your work suggests that consuming less can enhance both consumer and planetary well-being. What psychological shifts are necessary for people to see "less" as "more"?

Many consumers will likely be resistant to the idea of less, but perhaps we can shift the focus to emphasizing quality activities that bring us longer-term joy rather than the quantity of things that bring short-term happiness. It may sound naively optimistic, but shifting people to focus more on how we live and connect (with others and nature) and less on what we own could be transformative. I'm always encouraged by my students who do a Nature Deficit Disorder exercise for a week each semester: they go outside, without being on technology, for 30 minutes per day, and otherwise try to limit time on technology throughout the day (like a digital detox). Few are excited at the thought initially, but the majority report meaningful benefits after trying it and many share that they hope to either implement some changes permanently or repeat the exercise on their own.

What advice would you offer early-career researchers interested in the intersection of consumer behavior and climate mitigation?

It's great to see the passion for conducting research in this area. I would encourage researchers to seek a specialization within this area so they do not hinder themselves by being too broad. There are a myriad of areas within climate mitigation, and it will still be critical for researchers to develop an area of theoretical expertise. However, they should also read broadly, looking beyond marketing and consumer psychology to ecology, climate science, and other related fields to consider new perspectives. And always network—or more simply, just talk to a variety of people both in and outside of your focal area of research. This can be as simple as attending climate events on campus to connect with others with similar interests but perhaps a new perspective.

[Click here to learn more about K.P. Winterich](#)

Call for Sustainability Marketing Syllabi

We are currently developing a repository of syllabi and teaching cases related to sustainability, marketing and innovation. The purpose of this initiative is to create a shared academic resource to support teaching, curriculum development, and pedagogical innovation in this area. The repository will be made available on our website in the near future.

Faculty members who are willing to contribute syllabi, teaching cases, or other instructional materials are warmly invited to share them. Please send any materials you would be willing to include in the repository to our email.

[Click here to send your teaching materials](#)

To receive regular updates, latest news, announcements from SUSTSIG and join the conversation, please:

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