

RGC Ref. No.: <u>UGC/IIDS14/B03/18</u> (please insert ref. above)

**RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR**

INTER-INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (IIDS)

Completion Report
(for completed projects only)

<p><u>Submission Deadlines:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The unspent balance, if applicable, and auditor's report: within six months of the approved project completion date. 2. Completion report: within 12 months of the approved project completion date.

Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)

1. Project Title

A Symposium on Electronic Word-of-Mouth in China: Cultural and Linguistic Perspectives

中國電子口碑研討會：文化及語言的觀點

2. Investigator(s) and Academic Department(s) / Unit(s) Involved

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Dr. YANG Xin/ Assistant Professor	Marketing, HSUHK
Co-Principal Investigator	Dr. CHAN Haksin/ Associate Professor	Marketing, HSUHK
Co-Principal Investigator	Dr. XIE Tingting/ Assistant Professor	Marketing, HSUHK
Co-Principal Investigator	Dr. LI Dongmei/ Assistant Professor	School of Tourism Management, South China Normal University

3. Project Duration

	Original	Revised	Date of RGC / Institution Approval (must be quoted)
Project Start Date	2019/01/01	N/A	
Project Completion Date	2019/12/31	N/A	
Duration (in month)	12	N/A	
Deadline for Submission of Completion Report	2020/12/31	N/A	

Part B: The Final Report**5. Collaboration with Other Self-Financing Degree-Awarding Institutions**

	Name of Institution(s)	% of Participation	Distinctive Element(s) of the Institution in Responsible Project
Applying Institution	<i>N/A</i>		
Collaborating Institution(s) (If any) #	<i>N/A</i>		
Total:			

If no other eligible local self-financing degree-awarding institutions are involved, please input "N/A" in this table.

6. Project Objectives**6.1 Objectives as per original application**

1. To stimulate the development of new research ideas and the initiation of new research projects, especially on topics pertinent to eWOM in China.
2. To promote research collaboration between Mainland, Hong Kong, and overseas scholars, especially on topics pertinent to eWOM in China.
3. To disseminate latest research findings and insights on eWOM in China to scholars, students, and practitioners.
4. To provide a platform for scholars and practitioners to exchange ideas and initiatives on the effective management of eWOM in China.

6.2 Revised objectives : N/A

Date of approval from the RGC: _____

Reasons for the change: _____

6.3 Realisation of the objectives

(Maximum 1 page; please state how and to what extent the project objectives have been achieved; give reasons for under-achievements and outline attempts to overcome problems, if any)

This symposium has made a great progress to advance theory and practice pertinent to eWOM in China by bringing together experts from several emerging streams of eWOM research. This can be manifested by the achievements in the following.

This symposium has facilitated knowledge exchange between scholars and practitioners in the field through both keynote speeches and concurrent sessions. Over 150 participants attended the symposium and engaged in discussions to share insightful ideas and views. Some scholars established research collaboration on topics pertinent to eWOM. For example, a young scholar from Hainan University invited the PI to work together in a research paper on eWOM and the paper (Feng et al., 2020) was accepted by a SSCI journal. Meanwhile, we observed that several speakers showed interests to integrate new research ideas in their future research during their discussions with other audiences. This would further facilitate some potential collaborations among participants. Overall, the symposium has enhanced the collaboration between local and overseas academics on eWOM topics.

The PI (Dr. Morgan Yang) and one of the Co-PIs (Dr. Haksin Chan), collaborating with the *Journal of Global Marketing* (a well-known peer-reviewed marketing journal with more than 30 years of history), had successfully organized a special issue titled “Electronic word of mouth and online customer reviews: A cross-cultural perspective”. They served as guest editors of this special issue aiming to extend the eWOM topics in a cross-cultural context.

References:

Wenting Feng, Morgan X. Yang, Irina Y. Yu & Rungting Tu (2020) When positive reviews on social networking sites backfire: The role of social comparison and malicious envy, *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, DOI: 10.1080/19368623.2020.1775745

6.4 Summary of objectives addressed to date

Objectives	Addressed <i>(please tick)</i>	Percentage Achieved <i>(please estimate)</i>
1. To stimulate the development of new research ideas and the initiation of new research projects, especially on topics pertinent to eWOM in China.	✓	100%
2. To promote research collaboration between Mainland, Hong Kong, and overseas scholars, especially on topics pertinent to eWOM in China.	✓	100%
3. To disseminate latest research findings and insights on eWOM in China to scholars, students, and practitioners.	✓	100%
4. To provide a platform for scholars and practitioners to exchange ideas and initiatives on the effective management of eWOM in China.	✓	100%

6.5 Project progress

Original Implementation Schedule	Revised Implementation Schedule (Date of RGC's Approval)	Updated Progress
Recruiting student helpers Issuing call for papers	N/A	Completed
Confirmation of keynote speakers and guests	N/A	Completed
Design promotional materials	N/A	Completed
Printing of promotional materials	N/A	Completed
Promotion of the symposium Recruiting participants	N/A	Completed
Final confirmation of logistics for keynote speakers	N/A	Completed
Final confirmation of symposium arrangement	N/A	Completed
Editing and printing of symposium publications	N/A	Completed
Sending confirmation to the participants	N/A	Completed
Symposium held	N/A	Completed

6.6 Speaker(s)

Title / Name (Surname in Capital Letters)	Post / Institution	Title / Topic of Presentation / Course	Previous Research Links with Hong Kong Institutions (Nature and Date (Month / Year))
Prof. Minxue HUANG	Professor/ Wuhan University	Panoramic and prescriptive marketing model driven by big data in consumer market	Nil
Dr. Li HUANG	Assistant Professor/ Hofstra University	How broadcasting versus narrowcasting on social media affects consumer memory?	Nil
Dr. Yue WANG	Associate Professor/ The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong	Configuring products using user-generated content.	Currently employed at The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong

Title / Name (Surname in Capital Letters)	Post / Institution	Title / Topic of Presentation / Course	Previous Research Links with Hong Kong Institutions (Nature and Date (Month / Year))
Dr. Yu-Jen CHEN	Associate Professor/ Lingnan University of Hong Kong	The demand and supply of consumer communication on the Internet	Currently employed at Lingnan University of Hong Kong
Prof. Ji LI	Professor/ Shenzhen University	Symbiotic strategy of parasitism in the age of big data	Emeritus professor at Hong Kong Baptist University
Prof. Fue ZENG	Professor/ Wuhan University	Private messaging or public sharing in social media? Matching communication approach to message appeal for advertising effectiveness	Visiting scholar at City University of Hong Kong 7/07-7/08 and 7/09-12/10
Dr. Yulang GUO	Assistant Professor/ Guangdong University of Finance and Economics	Social crowding effect in eWOM: New findings based on context collapse theory	Nil
Dr. Feng WANG	Associate Professor/ Hunan University	Paradox of influential: Brand-and deal-content sharing of social hubs in friends network	Nil
Prof. Christy CHEUNG	Professor/ Hong Kong Baptist University	What we know and what we need to know about eWOM research: A review and research agenda	Currently employed at Hong Kong Baptist University
Dr. Kevin ZENG	Assistant Professor/ The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong	Digital opinion leadership: A collaborative co- creation perspective	Currently employed at The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
Dr. Rui CHEN	Associate Professor/ Xiamen University	The effects of menstrual cycle on women's self-disclosure behavior: The content analysis on individual's social media information	Nil
Dr. Tak HUANG	Assistant Professor/ The University of Hong Kong	Social crowding boosts brand attachment	Currently employed at The University of Hong Kong
Prof. David AHLSTROM (Professor; The Chinese University of Hong Kong) Prof. Zhiqiang LIU (Professor; Huazhong University of Science and Technology) Prof. Nan ZHOU (Professor; Shenzhen University)		Research perspectives and publication strategies: Advice from seasoned scholars	Prof. AHLSTROM is currently employed at The Chinese University of Hong Kong Prof. Nan ZHOU is an emeritus professor at City University of Hong Kong

Title / Name (Surname in Capital Letters)	Post / Institution	Title / Topic of Presentation / Course	Previous Research Links with Hong Kong Institutions (Nature and Date (Month / Year))
Dr. Morgan YANG	Assistant Professor/ The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong	<i>Journal of Global Marketing</i> Special issue: Electronic word of mouth and online customer reviews: A cross-cultural perspective	Currently employed at The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
Dr. Shen XU (CEO, Lady Britannia)		Digital marketing, content marketing, and social media marketing: Insights from successful practitioners	Dr. Shen XU got the Ph.D. degree in marketing from City University of Hong Kong
Mr. Edwin WONG (Founder & CEO, Cloudbreakr)		Face to face with successful practitioners: Brainstorming and dialogue	
Mr. Paul H. MEASOR (Commercial Director, foodpanda)			

- 6.7 Please provide details of the activities organized, including the theme / objectives of the activities, targeted participants, attendance, analysis of participants, e.g. country of origin, research background, etc., evaluation forms of the activities and a summary of the participants' evaluation. (Photos of the activities are preferred.)

A two-day symposium titled 'Word of Web and Digital Marketing in the Chinese Context' was held on 25-26 July 2019. This symposium allowed interested researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholders to share experiences, generate new insights, and conceive plans for collaboration.

Sixteen scholars from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and United States shared their recent research on such pertinent topics as user-generated content, social crowding effect in eWOM, research agenda on eWOM, digital opinion leadership, big data, and content analysis on individual's social media information. In addition, senior executives (e.g., commercial director from foodpanda) and experienced entrepreneurs from Hong Kong and Mainland China shared their practical insights on content marketing and social media marketing.

A total of 51 evaluation forms were collected from 150 participants. Of these replies, 90% rated the symposium good or excellent, and the majority found the presentations both up to date (94%) and informative (96%). In terms of the logistics, the respondents were generally satisfied with the duration (88%), the venue (98%), and the quality of catering (88%). The overall feedback was positive and encouraging.

Photos of the various activities in the symposium:



Welcome Message by Prof Simon HO (HSUHK)



Audience listening intently to the keynote speaker



Prof Christy CHEUNG (HKBU) sharing her latest research findings



Prof Bradley BARNES (HSU) presenting souvenir to Dr Feng WANG (Hunan University)



Prof David AHLSTROM (CUHK) giving a presentation on research perspectives and publication strategies



A sharing session with successful practitioners: Mr Paul MEASOR (Commercial Director, Foodpanda) (left), Dr Shen XU (Deputy General Manager, Suanier) (middle) and Mr Edwin WONG (Founder&CEO, Cloudbreakr) (right)



Dr Haksin CHAN (HSU) delivering the opening speech



Prof Fue ZENG (Wuhan University) discussing her work on advertising effectiveness



Prof Ji LI (HKBU) accepting a souvenir from Dr Lawrence LO (HSU)



Prof Minxue WANG (Wuhan University) speaking on Panoramic and Prescriptive Marketing Model



Dr Morgan YANG (HSU) and Dr Tingting XIE (HSU) (Co-Chairs of the symposium)



Prof Rui CHEN (Xiamen University) exchanging views with Prof Li HUANG (Hofstra University)



Attendees taking a tour of the University's Virtual Reality Lab



Dr Morgan YANG, Dr Tingting XIE and Mr Paul MEASOR (Commercial Director, foodpanda)

7. Research-Related Outcome

7.1 Potential for development into research proposal and the proposed course of action (Maximum half a page)

As mentioned in section 6.3, the PI and one of the Co-PIs (Dr. Haksin Chan) are editing a special issue related to eWOM in the Journal of Global Marketing (JGM). Meanwhile, the editor in chief of JGM invited the two guest editors to submit a lead article for this special issue. Now, this article is under review by JGM. In addition, the PI had accepted the collaboration with a symposium participant from Hainan University and published a paper on eWOM in Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management. In addition, the other Co-PIs also established some potential collaborations with symposium participants and it would be seeable to yield research proposals or research projects on eWOM in near future.

7.2 Research collaboration achieved (Please give details on the achievement and its relevant impact)

The PI has established several research collaborations with the keynote speakers and participants of the symposium. One keynote speaker from Xiamen University has invited the PI to work on a research project related to airline loyalty program, given that the PI has published several papers in the field. One participant (an assistant professor from Beijing Normal University & Hong Kong Baptist University United International College) plans to work with the PI to submit a research proposal on eWOM in 2021 for applying for the Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme.

The PI and one of the Co-PIs (Dr. Haksin Chan) are editing a special issue related to eWOM (titled “Electronic word of mouth and online customer reviews: A cross-cultural perspective”) in the Journal of Global Marketing (JGM). As of October 31, 2020 (submission deadline of the special issue), we have received 22 manuscripts from more than 50 authors of 15 nations and regions (including Algeria, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Mainland China, Czech Republic, Hong Kong, India, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, the United States). With all five continents represented, it is fair to say this special issue has attracted global attention from marketing scholars. Hopefully, it will generate more interest and make an impact on scholarship and practice when it is published.

7.3 Any new development and/or challenging research topic(s) has / have been identified and any new initiative(s) for future research has / have been inspired.

Electronic word-of-mouth is a timely topic relevant to consumer welfare. To further extend the impact of eWOM on consumer welfare, a guest speaker from HSUHK (Dr. Kevin Zeng) collaborated with the PI and the Co-PI (Dr. Haksin Chan) and submitted a FDS proposal (UGC/FDS14/B06/20) titled “The Polarizing Effects of Electronic Word-of-Mouth: Self-Promotion and Self-Protection Perspectives” in 2020. Moreover, the proposal was successfully approved by RGC with funding support this year (PI: Dr. Kevin Zeng; Co-Is: Dr. Haksin Chan and Dr. Morgan Yang).

8. The Layman's Summary

(Describe in layman's language the nature, significance and value of the research activities, in no more than 200 words)

Not only is China's 751 million online population massive—equivalent to that of America and Europe combined (Internet World Stats, 2017), but it represents a unique context germane to new theoretical insights into the eWOM area. Much of the extant eWOM theory is based on research conducted in a Western cultural context. Given their group orientation, Chinese consumers may seek and share eWOM with very different social motives. Second, the distinct features of the Chinese language naturally create new issues for eWOM. The unique traits of the Chinese culture and language have given rise to more nuanced eWOM behaviors than extant theory portrays.

To advance theory and inform practice, we obtained funding support from RGC for organizing a two-day symposium on eWOM. This symposium has facilitated knowledge exchange among scholars and practitioners. Experts in the field presented their recent research at the symposium, covering many important topics of eWOM such as eWOM for product design and digital opinion leadership. In addition, senior executives and experienced entrepreneurs from Hong Kong and Mainland China shared their practical insights on content marketing and social media marketing. This symposium fostered research collaborations between Mainland, Hong Kong, and overseas scholars in the field of eWOM.

Part C: Research Output**9. Recognized Conference(s) Paper(s) Related To This Project Was / Were Delivered (As Applicable)**

(Please attach a copy of each conference abstract)

Month / Year / Place	Title	Conference Name	Submitted to RGC <i>(indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)</i>	Attached to this Report <i>(Yes or No)</i>	Acknowledged the Support of RGC <i>(Yes or No)</i>
N/A					

10. Research Personnel Trained (As Applicable)

Name	Capacity
N/A	

11. Other Impact (As Applicable)

(e.g. prizes, collaboration with other research institutions, technology transfer, etc.)

The PI and Co-PI are serving as guest editors for a special issue on eWOM in the Journal of Global Marketing. Moreover, the editor in chief of the journal invited the two guest editors to submit a lead article for this special issue. Now, this article is under review by JGM.

In addition, the PI established specific research collaborations with keynote speakers and participants from Xiamen University, Hainan University, and Beijing Normal University & Hong Kong Baptist University United International College.

12. Statistics on Research Outputs

No. of outputs arising directly from this project	Peer-reviewed Journal Publications	Conference Papers	Scholarly Books, Monographs and Chapters	Patents Awarded	Other Research Outputs (please specify)	
					Type	No.
	1 under the first-round review at <i>Journal of Global Marketing</i> (Haksin Chan & Morgan X. Yang, Culture and Electronic Word of Mouth: Implications for Platform Design)	0	0	0		

13. Public Access Of Completion Report

(Please specify the information, if any, that cannot be provided for public access and give the reasons.)

Information that Cannot Be Provided for Public Access	Reasons
N.A.	