

Rahul Suhag

Doctoral Candidate, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
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Education

Kenan-Flagler Business School, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill 2019 – present
Doctor of Philosophy, Quantitative Marketing
Advisor: Prof. Rajdeep Grewal

Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Indore (Exchange at FSFM, Frankfurt) 2011 – 2016
Integrated Programme in Management (MBA)

Research Interests

Substantive: Responsible Marketing by Brands, Marketing to Entrepreneurs, Live Streaming, Online Gaming, Social Responsibility, Business to Business Marketing

Methodological: Causal Modeling, Bayesian statistics, Machine Learning, Empirical Industrial Organization, Natural Language Processing, and Text Mining

Doctoral Dissertation

Topic: Marketing for Entrepreneurs

Committee: Rajdeep Grewal (Chair), Norris Bruce, Praveen Kopalle, Chris Moorman, Sriram Venkatraman

Dissertation Papers

Suhag Rahul and Rajdeep Grewal (2023) Rebranding and the Behaviors of Content Creators: A Study of Twitch Prime Becoming Prime Gaming – *under review at Marketing Science*

Suhag Rahul and Rajdeep Grewal (2023) Monetary and Non-Monetary Promotions for Entrepreneurial Buyers – *preparing for submission to Management Science by September 2023*

- Conference Presentations: ISBM Conference 2022, Marketing Science Conference 2023

Suhag Rahul and Rajdeep Grewal (2023) A Dynamic Model of Live Streamers' Strategic Choices and their Associated Consequences – *Data collected; working on the model specification*

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Other Papers

Suhag Rahul, Rajdeep Grewal, and Frank Germann (2023) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Sociopolitical Activism, and Economic Consequences: The Tucker Carlson Effect – *Invited for 2nd round review at Journal of Marketing*

- Won the best DEI paper award at Haring Symposium 2023, Indiana University
- Conference Presentations: DEI Marketing Science Conference 2023, Haring Symposium 2023, Winter AMA 2023, Marketing Science Conference 2022

Arunachalam S, Hariom Manchiraju, Praveen K Kopalle, and Rahul Suhag* (2023) Social Heart and Business Sense: Translating Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) into Gross Margin Premium per Mandatory CSR Law in India – *under review at Production and Operations Management* (* represents equal authorship)

Awards & Honors

Best DEI Paper Award at Haring Symposium, Indiana University	2023
Haring Symposium Fellow (Presenter)	2023
ISMS Doctoral Consortium Fellow	2023
AMA – Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium Fellow	2022
ISMS Doctoral Consortium Fellow	2022
Marketing Strategy Doctoral Consortium Fellow	2022
ISMS Doctoral Consortium Fellow	2021

Service

Reviewer AMA Winter Conference	2022
Reviewer AMA Summer Conference	2022
Reviewer AMA Winter Conference	2021
ISMS Marketing Science Conference Moderator	2020

Teaching Experience

Instructor, BUSI406: Principles of Marketing Instructor Ratings: 4.25/5.00 (34 students)	Fall 2021
Teaching Assistant, MBA: Leading and Managing Instructor Ratings: 4.90/5.00 (Cumulative)	Spring 2021 – Present

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Research Experience

Kenan-Flagler Business School, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill Graduate Assistant to Prof. Rajdeep Grewal	2019 – present
Indian School of Business, Hyderabad Research Associate with Prof. S. Arunachalam	2016 – 2019

Relevant Coursework

Marketing Courses

Marketing Theory I (Dr. Rajdeep Grewal, Dr. Katrijn Gielens and Dr. J.B. Steenkamp)	Fall 2019
Psychometric Modeling for Business (Dr. J.B. Steenkamp)	Spring 2020
Market Response Models (Dr. Katrijn Gielens)	Spring 2020
Marketing Seminar on Marketing Strategy (Dr. Tarun Kushwaha)	Spring 2020
Marketing Seminar on Innovation Research (Dr. Barry Bayus)	Spring 2020
Marketing Seminar on generating Research Ideas (Dr. Chris Moorman)	Spring 2020
Economics Models in Marketing (Dr. Rajdeep Grewal)	Fall 2020
Structural Models in Marketing (Dr. Sriram Venkataraman)	Spring 2021
Seminar in Quantitative Marketing (Dr. Allison Chaney and Dr. Tong Guo)	Spring 2021
Bayesian Dynamic Models Seminar (Dr. Norris Bruce)	Spring 2022
Empirical Marketing Models (Dr. Carl Mela)	Fall 2022

Methods Courses

Statistics	Spring 2018
Linear Algebra	Spring 2018
Data Analytics for Marketing	Fall 2018
Text Analysis and Natural Language Processing	Fall 2018
Advanced Microeconomics Theory	Fall 2019
Econometrics – Cross Sectional data	Fall 2019
Applied Econometric Analysis – Panel data	Spring 2020
Game Theory (Audited)	Spring 2020
Economic Perspectives on Strategic Management	Spring 2020
Empirical Industrial Organization I	Fall 2020
Machine Learning (Audited)	Fall 2020
Empirical Industrial Organization II	Spring 2021
Bayesian Statistics (Audited)	Fall 2021
Northwestern Advance Causal Inference Workshop	Fall 2022

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Computer Skills

R, STAN, STATA, Matlab, Python

Industry Experience

Manager, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Mumbai

2016

Oversaw the process of benchmarking digitalization of the bank with respect to competitors
Assisted the group head in allocating CSR investments with a focus on digital child education

Additional Information

Languages known: Hindi (Native), English (Fluent), French (Basic) and German (Basic)

References

Rajdeep Grewal

Townsend Family Distinguished Professor of Marketing and Area Chair of Marketing
Kenan Flagler Business School, UNC Chapel Hill
Email: Rajdeep_Grewal@kenan-flagler.unc.edu

Frank Germann

Viola D. Hank Associate Professor of Marketing and Department Chair of Marketing
Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame
Email: fgermann@nd.edu

Praveen K. Kopalle

Signal Companies' Professor of Management and Area Chair of Marketing
Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth College
Email: praveen.k.kopalle@tuck.dartmouth.edu

Selected Research Abstracts

Suhag Rahul, Rajdeep Grewal, and Frank German (2023) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Sociopolitical Activism, and Economic Consequences: The Tucker Carlson Effect – *Invited for 2nd round review at Journal of Marketing*.

Tucker Carlson gained popularity for his ideology and controversial statements that represent sociopolitical activism concerning Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Two of these statements prompted activist groups to call for brands to stop advertising during his Fox News show. To gauge the economic consequences of Carlson’s public stances on two prominent DEI-related sociopolitical issues—immigration (2018) and Black Lives Matter (2020)—we gather multisource data from Kantar Media and Nielsen TV, then apply a Bayesian synthetic difference-in-differences method to estimate impacts on his show’s advertising revenue and the supply-side drivers of that revenue. The results indicate that Carlson’s show lost advertising revenue in 2018 but not in 2020. According to mechanism analyses, following the 2018 event, the number of advertisements on Carlson’s show declined, along with the cost of advertising; remaining advertisers gained longer advertising windows during the show, but the longer windows did not mitigate the overall economic effect. A supplementary analysis shows that advertisers became more homogenous and politically aligned with Carlson’s ideology after the 2018 event, likely buffering advertising losses in 2020. That is, the cost of advertising decreased following the 2020 event, but revenues did not, because advertisers did not stop buying airtime. These findings highlight the need for advertising channels and brands to be more diligent in their selection of strategic media partners.

Suhag Rahul and Rajdeep Grewal (2023) Rebranding and the Behaviors of Content Creators: A Study of Twitch Prime Becoming Prime Gaming – *under review at Marketing Science*. JMP.

Rebranding in the digital realm helps providers enhance their brand identities, streamline services, and optimize user experiences. However, its impacts on user behavior, particularly on two-sided platforms, remains unexplored. Accordingly, the current study uses a real-world rebranding, of Twitch Prime to Prime Gaming, and related data reflecting live streamers’ behavior (i.e., airtime, the total time a streamer broadcasts in a month), and viewership (i.e., number of viewers and the total hours of content consumed in a month) to estimate average and individual treatment effects (ITEs) of rebranding (on airtime and viewership). The results reveal a negative influence of rebranding on streamer airtime but a positive impact on viewership. Substantial heterogeneity arises in streamers’ reactions, based on a projection of ITE scores on pre-rebranding channel viewership, chat volume between streamer and viewers, and revenue from subscription and tips. Results show that streamers with greater pre-rebranding viewership, chat volume, and revenue (subscription and tips) decrease airtime, whereas others increase airtime in a bid to attract more viewers. These findings help debunk the conventional belief that greater airtime implies higher viewership. By detailing the critical interplay among platform rebranding, streamer behavior, and associated changes in viewership, this study sheds light on the unintended consequences of rebranding, such as decrease in airtime. Managers can apply findings to encourage specific streamers to maintain the pre-rebranding level of content (airtime for livestreaming) on the platform and thereby maximize viewership.

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Suhag Rahul and Rajdeep Grewal (2023) Monetary and Non-Monetary Promotions for Entrepreneurial Buyers – *preparing for submission to Management Science by September 2023.*

Although sellers in business-to-business settings have many promotional options at their disposal, they often struggle to identify which strategy will work best for diverse buying firms. To establish the unique influences of different monetary and nonmonetary promotions on entrepreneurs' buying decisions, this study gathers data from an industrial equipment and tools retailer that conducted field experiments to estimate the sales impacts of its promotions. With a Bayesian doubly robust heterogeneous treatment effect model, estimated using additive regression trees-based causal inference model (i.e., Bayesian causal forest), the authors capture the conditional average treatment effect using regularization priors for nonlinear trends that can reveal even small effects and strong confoundedness. The analysis indicates considerable heterogeneity in small buying firms' responses to specific promotions; no single strategy has universal appeal. Entrepreneurs that exhibit higher purchasing frequency and volume tend to be more influenced by promotions; entrepreneurs that make more purchases respond negatively to lower value monetary promotions but appreciate high-value promotions. These insights underscore the need to tailor promotions strategically to match specific buying firms' preferences, as a way to optimize the impact of promotions.

Arunachalam S, Hariom Manchiraju, Praveen K Kopalle, and Rahul Suhag* (2023) Social Heart and Business Sense: Translating Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) into Gross Margin Premium per Mandatory CSR Law in India – *under review at Production and Operations Management* (* represents equal authorship)

In this research, we conduct analytical and empirical analyses to assess the impact of Indian government-mandated firms' corporate social responsibility (CSR) related investments on gross margins. Using a stylized analytical model, we theorize a positive relationship between CSR investments and gross margin $((\text{price}-\text{cost})/\text{price})$ and argue that advertising investments could enhance this relationship. In our empirical investigation, we evaluate the causal impact of CSR on gross margin premium, i.e., relative to the industry average. To get exogenous variation in CSR investments, we exploit India's 2013 CSR rule, which mandates certain companies to invest in CSR. Using difference-in-differences and regression-discontinuity methodologies, we find strong support for our gross margin proposition and the advertising expenditure conjecture. The key insight is that consumers reward companies with a gross margin premium that commit to socially responsible activities and use advertising investments to spread awareness about those activities. We discuss our study's implications for marketing literature that focuses on CSR and, for marketers and brand managers, the power of CSR to drive a marketing outcome that is of utmost importance to marketers.