



Editorial: “Evidence-based Marketing”

As we close the year with 12 experiential learning projects, we highlight the surging demand for advanced statistical modeling. Our student teams have delivered predictive models of demand, choice, and loyalty exceeding 80% to 90% accuracy.

This rigor is exemplified in our spotlight on the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (NJ DCF), where a Rutgers-developed structural model accounted for 83.2% of the variance in foster parent recruitment intent. The findings prove that altruism and transparent communication—backed by data—drive real-world outcomes. Yet, data alone is not enough if we treat intuition as a luxury. The best marketers use intelligence to validate hypotheses, but rely on intuition to formulate them: Tech enabled, human powered.

In our Academic Corner, Dr. Can Uslay warns against “Marketing AI-opia,” cautioning that brands obsessing solely over human buyers remain blind to autonomous AI purchasing agents acting as commerce gatekeepers.

These are two vital perspectives explored in this issue: balancing human insight with empirical data, and optimizing for both human buyers and algorithms. We invite you to read on and join the debate.

Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Francisco J. Quevedo".

Francisco J. Quevedo
Executive Director

Feedback: From our Clients

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

PHILIP MURPHY
Governor
TAHESHA L. WAY, ESQ.
Lt. Governor

CHRISTINE NORBUT BEYER, MSW
Commissioner

Section 2.5: Statement of Assurances	
The following are <u>required</u> mandates for research studies funded by DCF, involving DCF data and/or access to DCF-related populations. <u>Please initial next to each item</u> to indicate that you have read and understand the requirements:	Initial
The Principal Investigator(s) and research team agree to furnish DCF a copy of the findings, conclusions, final report, and/or journal articles at least 30 days prior to publication or dissemination for review and comment. (Note: This does not imply you need DCF's permission to publish your results, only that you must first furnish DCF a copy for purposes of review and comment.)	A
If anyone representing DCF serves as a co-author on the work product, the product will need to be reviewed by DCF Executive Staff and approved by the Department's designee, as determined by the Commissioner. This review process must occur prior to publishing or disseminating the product. Sufficient time must be allotted for this review process.	A

NJ DCF: Publication review requirements and statement of assurances for research using DCF data.

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BIG THANKS to Rutgers Business School, S. Chan Choi, Francisco J. Quevedo, Peter Weedfald, David Reich, David W. Stewart, Shiv Gupta, Lisa Routel, Steven Jagger, Peter Fasano, David Dominik, Ray Katz, PJ Mullen, Joanna Seddon, Frank Findley, Lee Hornick, Erich Decker-Hoppen and all of our participants! #marketingevents #marketingaccountability

Marketing Accountability Standards Board
MASB Summer Summit 2026
Growing Enterprise Value by Building Brand Experiences

RUTGERS
Rutgers Business School
Newark and New Brunswick
AUGUST 5-6

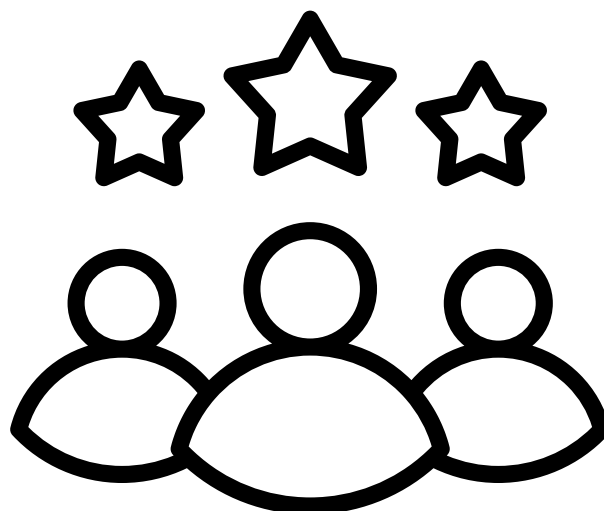


MASB & RBS: Recognition for our team and all participants at the MASB Summer Summit 2026.

Hi Francisco,

Just to let you know that I keep getting positive comments about the event on Friday. The quality of your presentation and practicality were right on point for the target audience. Seeing the Bove Auditorium almost at capacity was a great feeling. The value that the workshop brought to all attendees was right on brand for RBS as a business community partner. It was a pleasure to collaborate with you and the center. I look forward to future opportunities to leverage my community network for the greater good of RBS and NJ.

Client Feedback: Strong praise for the workshop's quality, impact, and community value.



The CM3A at Work: Fall 2026 Projects

This is the first time we extend our projects beyond the classroom as Independent Study experiences.

Businesses (6):

Delintt Frontier: <https://delinttfrontier.com/>

PeakFoods: <http://www.peakfoods.com/>

GetWhenApp: getwhen.app

Sketch to Growth: <https://www.sketchtogrowth.com/>

Patria Station Café: <https://patriastationcafe.com/>

Voyvelle: <https://www.instagram.com/voyvelle/>

**RUTGERS-NEWARK****School of Arts and Sciences**

Nonprofits (6):

LAEDA: <https://laeda.com/>

Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board: <https://thegrwdb.org/>

VAEA: <https://vaearts.org/US/>

Vital Start: <https://vitalstarthealth.com/>

Somerset County Foodbank: <https://www.somersetfoodbank.org/>

RU Department of Urban Education: <https://sasn.rutgers.edu/urban-education>



The Venezuelan American Endowment for the Arts
Fondo Venezolano Americano para las Artes



Thank you for giving our students the opportunity to learn experientially, and kudos to the teams for their fine work.





Spotlight: *Evidenced-based Management at the New Jersey DCF*

The systemic contraction of public foster care pools presents a significant challenge to child welfare administrations across the United States. This study analyzes the specific case of the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (**NJ DCF**), which experienced a structural drop in its active resource parent pool from approximately 13,000 to 3,000 households over a ten-year period. While this contraction was initially driven by positive administrative outcomes—specifically a strategic shift prioritizing kinship placements—the remaining pool has become insufficient to absorb a growing proportion of children diagnosed with complex medical, behavioral, and developmental special needs.

To systematically address this crisis, the **NJ DCF** approached the **Rutgers Business School** for support. The result was a data-driven model for Foster Parent Recruitment, which puts the DCF among a handful of leading state organizations which apply statistical modeling in the US.

This paper introduces the empirical structural model, which was validated via multiple linear regression on a diagnostic survey sample. The framework evaluates how operational inputs—comprising financial support, structured training, and organizational backing—influence the long-term decision to foster. Crucially, the model demonstrates that this relationship is heavily mediated by the quality of public information and communication infrastructure, and moderated by an individual's underlying disposition to help. The predictive capacity of the data-driven framework accounted for **83.2%** of the variance in fostering intent. The findings prove that financial stipends do not serve as primary motivators but function as essential operational mitigators. Instead, altruistic disposition and clear, transparent institutional communication are the primary drivers of recruitment velocity. This study builds upon these insights by presenting a comprehensive strategic map and annualized operating plan designed to transition child welfare agencies from transactional processing units into relationship-driven stakeholder networks.

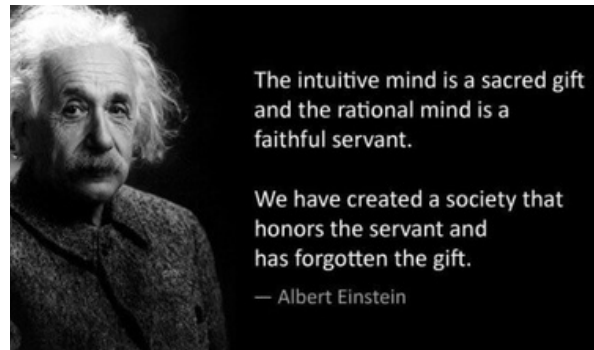
This paper will be presented at the APHSA National Human Services Summit, in June 2027, in Kansas City, MO: <https://aphsa.org/national-summit/>.

CM3A Tips: From Our Posts**TIP: Don't choose between intelligence and intuition, use both.**

Use intuition to spot the opportunity and data to validate it. In marketing, the best ideas often begin with a gut feeling, but strong decisions come from testing that instinct against real evidence.

TIP: Trust your intuition, but back it with data.

Gut feelings can guide great decisions, but intuition alone can also mislead us. Before acting, ask yourself: Does the evidence support what my instincts are telling me? The strongest decisions combine human judgment with reliable, data-driven insights.

**TIP: Turn your hunch into evidence.**

Before making an important decision, test your assumptions with data. Statistical models can help businesses, nonprofits, and government organizations identify patterns, validate strategies, and make decisions with greater confidence.

➡ Follow CM3A on social media for more marketing insights, practical tips,

**@rcm3a**

**Rutgers Center of
Marketing Advantage,
Advancement and Action**

**@RutgersCm3a**

The Academic Corner: The 21st-Century Blind Spot: Are You Suffering from Marketing AI-opia?

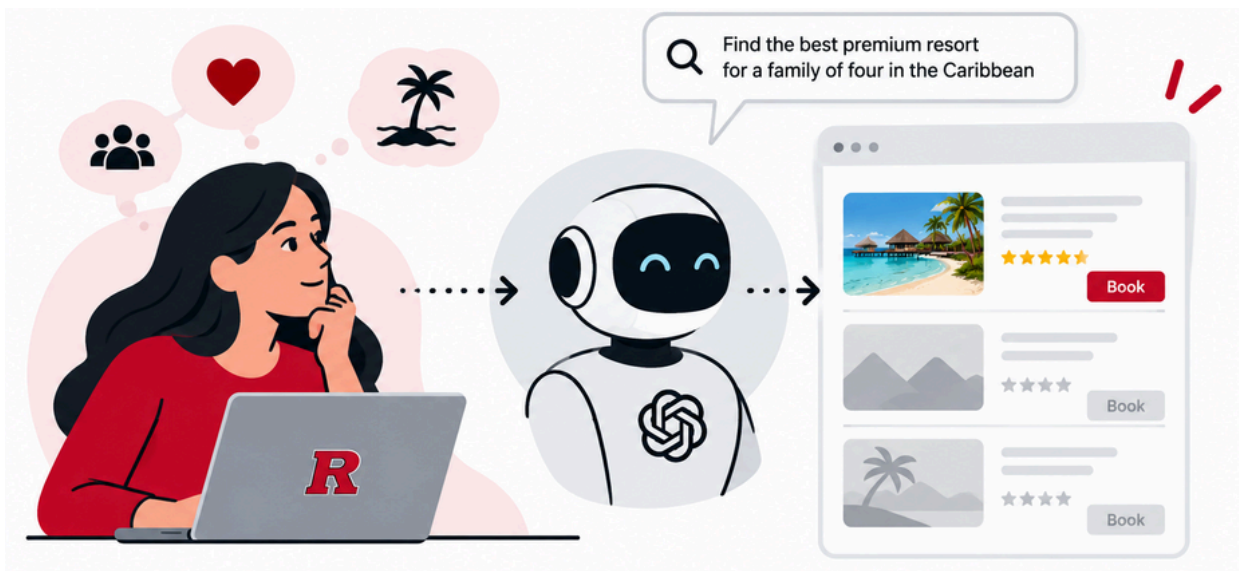
by Can Uslay, Ph.D.

In 1960, Theodore Levitt revolutionized corporate strategy with “**Marketing Myopia**,” one of the most reprinted articles of all time that remains a staple in Harvard Business Review’s 10 Must Reads on Marketing. Levitt famously warned that the American railroads and Hollywood studios faced obsolescence because they assumed they were in the train and film businesses, rather than the transportation and entertainment businesses, respectively. They were myopic: they focused entirely on their product and lost sight of the customer.

Today, the C-suite is committing a parallel, equally fatal error. But the blind spot has evolved. Modern marketing departments are not ignoring the customer; rather, they are obsessing over the human customer while remaining entirely blind to the algorithmic ones.

I call this “**Marketing AI-opia**”.

As generative AI transitions from a simple chat interface to an autonomous purchasing agent, the fundamental intermediaries of discovery are being transformed. Yet, brands continue to optimize exclusively for human eyeballs, relying on traditional Search Engine Optimization (SEO), visually stunning UX, and highly emotional copy. They are failing to recognize that Large Language Models and autonomous AI agents are rapidly becoming the **primary gatekeepers of commerce**.



The data is already revealing the cracks in the traditional marketing funnel. For major e-commerce giants and digital retailers, a rapidly growing share of referral traffic is no longer coming from a Google search bar or a social media ad. It originates directly from ChatGPT and other conversational interfaces.

When a consumer prompts an AI to “book the best premium resort for a family of four in the Caribbean,” or “find the most durable winter boots under \$150,” the AI agent bypasses the brand’s visual marketing entirely. The algorithm scrapes the web, compares the metadata, and delivers a localized, logical recommendation. The traditional AIDA consumer journey: **Awareness, Interest, Desire, Action**, is not just short-circuited; it can be entirely outsourced. It is now possible and increasingly likely for a consumer to outsource each of these phases to a bot. An autonomous agent can detect a household need, evaluate alternatives, and execute the final purchase action without the human consumer ever being aware the product existed in the first place.



This shift has resulted in a critical strategic mismatch: brands are currently pouring millions of dollars into trying to emotionally persuade web-scraping bots that physically cannot “feel” a thing.

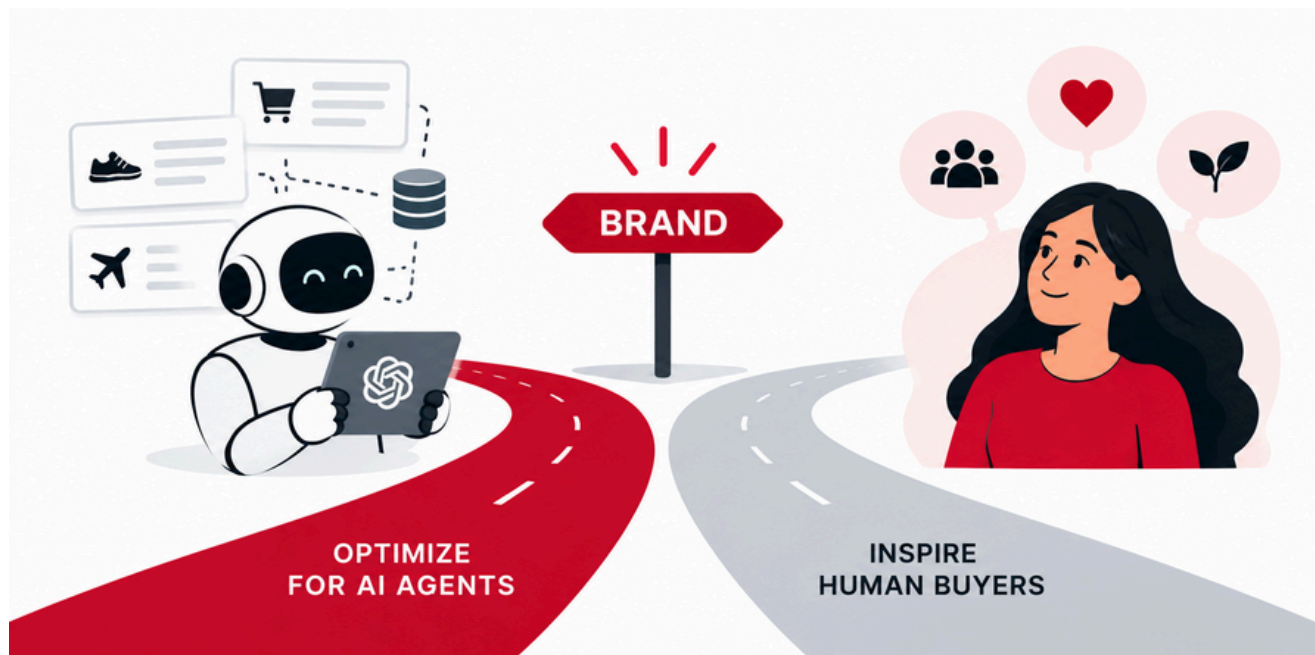
Marketing executives are caught in a category error. They are utilizing the deeply-human tool of emotional resonance against cold, logical APIs. Conversely, they are still trying to sell human buyers on raw logic and feature-comparisons, failing to realize that humans are increasingly offloading logical price-arbitrage to their AI assistants.

If your marketing department is spending **90%** of its budget on visual design and emotional storytelling, but your fastest-growing segment of inbound traffic is a fleet of autonomous, data-scraping AI bots, your capital allocation is fundamentally misaligned with reality.

We are entering an era of algorithmic orchestration rather quickly. The next major battles for market share will not be won strictly through traditional SEO or billboard campaigns. They will be won through Agent Engine Optimization (AEO), structuring backend metadata, APIs, and dynamic pricing strictly for bot consumption.

Simultaneously, as the internet floods with synthetic content and automated bot negotiations, brands will need to figure out how to command a premium for verified human empathy and authenticity. The traditional marketing funnel is not totally obsolete; however, it has certainly bifurcated.

At the **Center for Marketing Advantage, Advancement, and Action (CM3A)**, we are currently developing a diagnostic framework to help executives navigate this exact bifurcation. The brands that survive the next decade will be the ones who cure their Marketing AI-opia today, realizing that in the 21st century, you must be just as fluent in persuading the algorithm as you are in persuading the human.





F.Y.I.: Rutgers News and Upcoming Events

Oct. 9 — 5th Annual Rutgers NeuroAccessibility Summit | 9 AM–4 PM | College Avenue Student Center

Oct. 13 — Creating Accessible Content | 12–1:30 PM

Oct. 15 — Alternative Formats: Expanding Access and Empowering Choice | 1–1:30 PM

Oct. 16 — Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series: Exploring the NADSP Revised 2026 Code of Ethics | 10 AM–12 PM

Oct. 16 — NJ Monuments to Migration and Labor Conference | 10:30 AM–5:30 PM

Oct. 20 — Creating Systems Change to Advance Disability Inclusion | 10–11 AM | Virtual

Oct. 20 — From Conversion to Compliance | 2:30–3:30 PM | Virtual

Nov. 13 — 8th Annual RBS Marketing Summit | 8:30am to 3:30pm EST | 1 Washington Park, 7th Floor Event Space

Spring 2027 — Marketing Career Day | Date TBA | 100 Rockafeller Rd., Livingston Campus



Why Partner with Rutgers CM3A?: Because Rutgers delivers!

This is how an IBM SPSS output tables looks as a result of data-driven modeling. The summary table indicates the predictive ability of the model, in this case **89.6%**, and in plain English, the cleanliness of the data; Anova reflects the probability of the process and the output being in error, converting the 0.001 into an 0.1% risk rate; and the coefficients reflect the weight of the independent variables and their statistical significance. The reliability of the scale (Alpha) in this case was **96.4%**.

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	.483	.290		1.663
	Q8: How does the Agent evaluate the Hotel's rooms?	.619	.130	.932	4.773
	Q9: How does the Agent evaluate the Restaurant?	-.870	.134	-1.251	6.476
	Q10: How does the Agent evaluate the Hotel's location?	-.650	.191	-1.175	3.409
	Q11: How does the Agent evaluate the Hotel's rates?	.692	.144	1.462	4.813
	Q1: Does the Agent know the Hotel?	-.174	.063	-.315	2.779
	Q2: Does the Agent receive communications from the Hotel?	-.581	.123	-.581	4.728
	Q3: Has the Agent seen any ads or posts from the Hotel?	1.853	.311	1.657	5.949

a. Dependent Variable: Q5: Has the Agent booked pax with the Hotel?

Model Summary^a

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.896 ^a	.803	.748	.254	2.106

a. Predictors: (Constant), Q3: Has the Agent seen any ads or posts from the Hotel?, Q11: How does the Agent evaluate the Hotel's rates?, Q1: Does the Agent know the Hotel?, Q2: Does the Agent receive communications from the Hotel?, Q9: How does the Agent evaluate the Restaurant?, Q8: How does the Agent evaluate the Hotel's rooms?, Q10: How does the Agent evaluate the Hotel's location?

b. Dependent Variable: Q5: Has the Agent booked pax with the Hotel?

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.964	36

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.573	7	.939	14.590	<.001 ^b
	Residual	1.609	25	.064		
	Total	8.182	32			

a. Dependent Variable: Q5: Has the Agent booked pax with the Hotel?

b. Predictors: (Constant), Q3: Has the Agent seen any ads or posts from the Hotel?, Q11: How does the Agent evaluate the Hotel's rates?, Q1: Does the Agent know the Hotel?, Q2: Does the Agent receive communications from the Hotel?, Q9: How does the Agent evaluate the Restaurant?, Q8: How does the Agent evaluate the Hotel's rooms?, Q10: How does the Agent evaluate the Hotel's location?

This is what our clients get, proof, scientific validation, after three project phases:

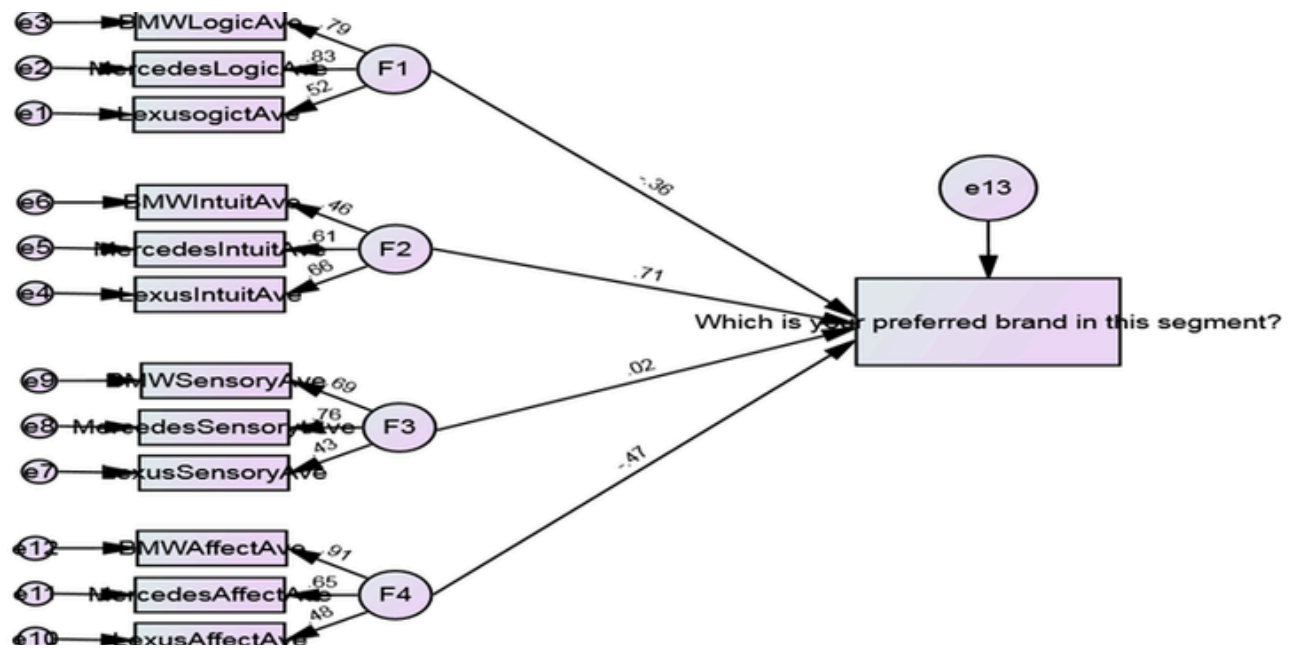
- ✓ Discovery: to understand your needs.
- ✓ Due diligence: to learn their business and market dynamics.
- ✓ Deployment: to recommend or execute the right strategy.

Feedback: Please send us your comments and events via cm3a@business.rutgers.edu

The RBS Center for Marketing Advantage, Advancement, and Action (CM3A)

<https://www.business.rutgers.edu/cm3a>

The graph below is the product of **SEM Path Analysis** (SEM stands for Structural Equation Modeling), which is generated by IBM Amos and reflects the tested model showing cause and effect.



Let's connect via:



Feedback: Please send us your comments and events via cm3a@business.rutgers.edu

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