

Staying Ahead of the Curve with Cutting-Edge Marketing Research

Investigate cutting-edge consumer marketing through the collaboration of companies, students, and university researchers

Under the influence of social media, relationships between companies and consumers can change in an instant. In these circumstances, the latest marketing theories also quickly become obsolete. This study has adopted the method of having students, who are the consumers, directly participate in resolving business marketing challenges. The perspectives and ideas of APU's diverse students are the wellspring of our strength for developing proposals. Companies get the latest consumer insights, students get opportunities for practical learning, and university researchers are able to achieve new integrations of theory and practice.



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"I will deepen my collaboration with various companies, listen carefully to their latest challenges, and continue my practical research together with my students."

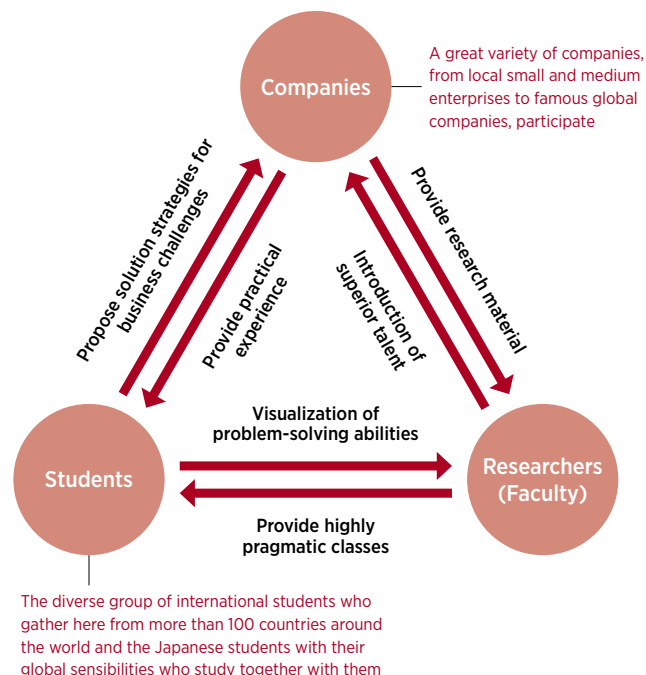
An essential approach to consumer marketing that continues to change

Due to the evolution of digital technology, consumer behavior changes rapidly. Information spreads in an instant via SNS, so it is no surprise that communication between consumers also influences the fates of companies and products. In this kind of environment, the perspective of a single marketing expert and existing theory alone are insufficient.

This study takes advantage of the diverse perspectives and experiences of APU's international students and Japanese students, which is what makes this study unique. In particular, APU's student body, more than half of which consists of international students from more than 100 countries, yields significant differences. For example, we can rapidly propose solutions to marketing challenges faced by Japanese companies aiming to expand abroad.

This research method adopts flexible approaches as called for by the circumstances. In large classes of more than 200 students, the students contribute various ideas, and by integrating and analyzing these ideas, we derive strategies for solutions. Additionally, in seminars, where students are few in number, we can undertake a deep analysis of a specific issue and develop a proposal for it.

It can be said that this type of method is an experiment that passes beyond the limits of conventional industry-academia co-operation.



Collaboration among companies, students, and faculty (researchers) generates unique proposals to address current marketing challenges.

Continuing to run together with companies and students in the fields of SNS marketing and consumer behavior analysis

This study has produced concrete results. For example, in working together with New Balance (New Balance Japan, Inc.), we developed a proposal using student perspectives to address the challenge of increasing brand awareness in Gen Z, and it was very well received. In a joint study with Oita Kotsu (Inc.), a bus company in Oita Prefecture, we presented a solution based on the values of young people to address the issue of procuring bus driving personnel. Our solution led to improvements in hiring. Also, Sanwa Shurui (Co., Ltd.), an Oita Prefecture company known for its *iichiko shochu*, etc., is facing challenges in expanding in Asia. Students from the target countries of Sanwa Shurui developed a highly effective proposal to address these challenges. On the other hand, we also have examples of issues we have tackled when foreign companies are expanding their business activities

in Japan. Furthermore, we have undertaken a wide variety of collaborations, ranging from local, small and medium enterprises to global companies.

I am aiming to collaborate with even more companies and organizations in the future. I believe that I can offer new ideas and insights in the fields of SNS marketing and consumer behavior analysis in particular.

Collaboration with New Balance, the global athletic shoe company. Photos of student discussions and presentations.

