

Editorial: *Marketing Challenges, Emotional Marketing, Optimizing Marketing for Maximum Trust with AI, and the Architecture of Human-AI Collaboration*



According to Cooper and Furnham (2026), organization's capacity to ensure meaningful connections' building and sustaining at work can be interpreted as one of the primary capabilities which can be cultivated in todays in flux BANI (brittle, anxious, non-linear, and incomprehensible) world. They demonstrated how important is to determine the assessment and development of connectedness as a core multidimensional concept, taking into account that connection performance effect is critical within the context of the new emerged paradox of technologically hyper connection, and psychologically under-connection.

A US national digital marketing agency founded in 2019, JSK Marketing, focused on increasing organizations' brand visibility and driving their influence by building strong authentic bonds with their audiences (JSK Marketing, 2025), identified prospects' types of psychological barriers as main reasons why customers don't buy a product or service (cynicism, skepticism, procrastination, and price). Because between genuine connection and subtle manipulation is a thin line which is brightly illuminated from the skeptical internet-savvy consumers' point of view, to any successful marketing campaign is essential to ensure the balance between rational appeal and emotional resonance (Forbes Expert Panel, 2024). Let us remember that some years ago more than 300 emotional motivators were identified by the reputed Harvard Business

Review which worked with experts in social science and anthropology, considering the important role (as the first step) played in creating an emotional connection in marketing by these emotional motivators (Anchor Digital, 2025; Magids, Zorfas and Leemon, 2015).

Recently, the senior editor of MarTech remembered us that human connection is becoming more valuable as automation scales, AI (which is everywhere in marketing and CX) being unable to replicate human connection, and human-AI collaboration being the future (Von Hoffman, 2026), humans ensuring new instructions or feedback injection, while AI is ensuring execution management. And as today consumer behavior is considered deeply psychological (being impacted by a set of emotional and cognitive triggers molding the outcome), there are opinions according to which to quickly understand consumer choice it is recommendable to use the following framework highlighting psychological forces driving these choices: *urgency created by scarcity*, *relevance created by personalization*, *safety created by trust*, *validation created by social proof*, *desire created by emotion*, *justification created by value consciousness* (Rusmanhaditakbir, 2026).

As shown by Together Agency (2026), brand's molding to truly connect and be remembered (memory being strengthened by emotion) involves to consider emotional marketing as exceeding a creative exercise (people relationships being built with feelings), and mixing not only consistent design and measurable strategy, but also behavioral insight and authentic storytelling, repeat behavior and long-term loyalty being increased by emotional attachment. Logic follows usually emotional responses happening instantaneously to justify people choice (and what resonates being shared by people), impulse being triggered by excitement, hesitation being reduced by trust, and commitment being encouraged by belonging, while risk sensitivity being increased by anxiety. That is why brands need to design for emotional impulse and rational reassurance, both being supported by messaging and experiences building.

Coming back to trust, it is worth noting that as underlined by Kal Gajraj (Forbes Expert Panel, 2026), audience trust fatigue is one of the marketing challenges leaders are facing today, being necessary to overcome trust fatigue with clear credibility, trust being earned through both transparency, and relevance. What presupposes to ensure messages' simplification, basing them on data and lived experience, as well as consistently impact showing.

Today's marketers need to pay attention to human biology, marketing being also emotional engineering grounded in it (not exclusively limited to communication), because it is important to create experiences that target audiences physically feel (not only notice), so as to ensure brands' competitive advantage. As capturing consumers' physiological energy (emotional intensity) that determines attention turning into action remains another current marketers' challenge (MarketingAgent.io, 2026), one of the most direct physiological measures of emotional arousal (known as having a central role not only in attention allocation and memory formation, but also in behavioral motivation – Lang, Bradley and Cuthbert, 1997) is provided by the so-called Galvanic Skin Response – GSR (or Electrodermal Activity – EDA). By answering

the essential question regarding how intensely did consumers react, the above-mentioned Galvanic Skin Response has transformed into a core component of neuromarketing, varying degrees of arousal (including indifference, excitement, anxiety, anticipation, or immersion) being experienced by consumers.

On the other hand, beyond well-known advantages (including by producing meaningful results based on its use in conjunction with other methods), GSR doesn't tell marketers if the emotion it registers is negative or positive (Dooley, 2026). In the same time, Dooley highlighted that customers can be helped to trust marketers (he gave Amazon as an example regarding how to enjoy high trust through CX), and marketing can be optimized for maximum trust with the help of AI (seeing where you are at the moment being the first step in increasing trust signals). He also underlined that trust needs to be understood before to be engineered. Also, among other aspects, Dooley showed that trust can be destroyed by fake scarcity, recommending as follows: to use scarcity wisely and ethically (knowing its power to drive instinctive purchases, which in some cases can lead to both customer satisfaction reduction, and higher rates of return on physical products); to be careful with urgency tactics because many of them can create anxiety (being necessary to have urgency without anxiety) rather than motivation, usually urgency becoming a way of invoking scarcity based not on quantity, but on time; to not fall into the false scarcity trap, and to have consciousness of three powerful customer behavior motivators: scarcity, urgency, and FOMO; to not forget that emotion and biases are often driving the choices of B2B buyers too.

It is also interesting to finally add two quotes:

- (Smith and Gryskiewicz, 2026): “Organizations that break through will not be the ones that chase better models. They will be those that fundamentally rethink the way work happens. Their advantage will come from the ability to design experiences that people trust, rely on, and choose to use. That is, the next frontier of AI will be about designing the architecture of collaboration—the systems that make intelligence understandable, governable, and usable at scale. It's a natural extension of what leading organizations have understood for years: Design is not a layer of polish; it's a key driver of performance;”
- (Edmondson, 2026): “The future belongs to organizations capable of continuous learning, rapid adaptation, and ongoing development of human capability alongside technological advancement. In the age of AI agents, the most valuable competitive advantage may be an organization's ability to convert knowledge into action, redesign work as conditions evolve, and strengthen uniquely human capabilities beyond the reach of technology alone.”

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