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Brand communities on social media are increasingly important to marketers. However, very little is known about what makes firm-initiated social media brand communities (SMBCs) successful. Higher education marketing is no exception. Universities today use social media to engage with students and to manage brand visibility. Whilst much of the research on brand community and social media marketing focus on commercial brands, university-initiated SMBCs may operate differently due to the existence of physical communities and reciprocal relationships.

Drawing on theories of social identity and identification, this research aims to understand how university-initiated SMBCs can facilitate students’ engagement and influence the nature of the student-university relationships. To achieve this aim, a mixed methods approach that consists of netnography and survey will be employed. Specifically, the research seeks to develop a framework that will allow higher education marketers and student affairs practitioners to build theoretically informed social media relationship marketing strategies and to measure the success. The research will also make theoretical contributions to the higher education marketing, social media marketing, brand community and customer engagement literature.

Date: Wednesday, 22 July 2015
Time: 11:00am—12:00pm
Venue: BUSN201 (Case Study Room)
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