

# Qingli Zeng

Ph.D. in Marketing, SMU, Singapore

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## Education

**Singapore Management University**, Singapore  
Ph.D. in Business (Marketing)

Aug. 2020 — Aug. 2025

**ShanghaiTech University**, Shanghai, China  
Bachelor of Science: Computer Science  
Minor in Finance

Sept. 2016 — July 2020  
Dean's List 2017

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## Research Overview

- **Substantive:** Digital Marketing, Live Streaming, E-commerce, Reviews, Sustainability
- **Methodological:** Empirical Modeling, Unstructured Data Processing, Natural Language Processing, Automated Video Analysis, Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Artificial Intelligence

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## Papers under Review and Working Papers

- **“Exploring the Role of Image Distinctiveness in Online Search Behavior”**  
with Sandeep Chandukala, Ernst Osinga, and Shane Wang  
*Status: Revise and Resubmit at Production and Operations Management*
- **“Shared Experience Matters: Impact of Anchors’ Voice Characteristics on Viewer Engagement in Live Streams”**  
with Sandeep Chandukala, Hai Che, and Lifeng Yang  
*Status: Under Review at the Journal of Marketing*

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## Work in Progress

- **“Analyzing Cross-Platform Online Reviews with Topic Modeling and Large Language Models: Insights into Market Uncertainty and Rating Bias”** (Working Title)  
with Sandeep Chandukala, Ernst Osinga  
*Status: Data Analysis*

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## Conference Presentations

- Image Distinctiveness ISMS Marketing Science Conference, June 2024
- Role of Anchor Emotions on Audience Engagement and Revenue ISMS Marketing Science Conference, June 2023

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## Research Grant

- Exploring the Role of Image Distinctiveness in Online Search Behavior, ASEAN Business Research Initiative (ABRI), CKGSB and SMU, S\$7,800

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## Scholarships and Awards

- Dr. Srinivas K. Reddy Research Award, Singapore Management University 2024
- AMA Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium Fellow 2024
- ISMS Doctoral Consortium Fellow 2024
- Doctoral Fellowship, LKCSB, Singapore Management University 2020 - 2024
- Dean's List, ShanghaiTech 2017

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## Teaching Experience

- Instructor, Singapore Management University  
– Undergraduate: Marketing Analytics ( August 2024)
- Teaching Assistant, Singapore Management University

- Undergraduate: Marketing Analytics (2022 - 2024)
  - \* Guest Lecture on Programming and Data
- Undergraduate: Marketing Strategy (2024)
- Postgraduate: Business Analytics (2022)
- Postgraduate: Consumer Analytics (2021)

## Skills and Certificates

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- **Certificates:**

- Google Data Analytics Professional Certificate
- British Council: Effective Communication Skills
- SMU: Effective Communication Skills for Graduate Instructors

- **Languages:** Chinese, English

- **Programming Languages:** R, Python, C++, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, MatLab, Rust, MySQL

- **Software:** Microsoft Office, Stata, SPSS, Tableau, Z-Tree, C-Tree

## Abstracts

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- **“Exploring the Role of Image Distinctiveness in Online Search Behavior”**

This study examines how image distinctiveness—the extent to which an image stands out from others in its context—influences consumer attention and engagement on online platforms. Grounded in the Theory of Visual Attention (TVA), we argue that distinctiveness guides users’ attention differentially by user type and acquisition channel. We develop a novel metric for image distinctiveness based on informativeness and similarity, validate it via a survey, and test it on clickstream data from a Southeast Asian real estate platform. Using 2,927 images across 8,073 search sessions by 1,252 users and Gaussian copulas to address endogeneity, we find that image distinctiveness increases click-through rates (CTR). Specifically, new users from platform-initiated channels exhibit a 69.84% increase in CTR when distinctiveness rises from the 25th to the 75th percentile, while returning users from user-initiated channels show minimal sensitivity. This research advances TVA by linking image distinctiveness to attention mechanisms, introduces a versatile distinctiveness metric, and offers practical strategies to optimize engagement by aligning visual content with user behavior and browsing contexts.

- **“Shared Experience Matters: Impact of Anchors’ Voice Characteristics on Viewer Engagement in Live Streams”**

Live-streaming viewership growth has resulted in anchors and platforms constantly looking for ways to provide more engaging experiences to their viewers. The success of the live-streaming platform relies on the viewers’ interactive behavior captured through non-monetary (chat) and monetary (gifts, tips, and subscriptions) contributions toward the anchor and the platform. An important aspect of the anchor’s interaction with the viewers is the implicit persuasion through vocal tones. In this research, we provide a unified framework that captures the impact of not only the anchor’s vocal characteristics, but also the sentiment of the viewers and the dynamics of the live-streaming video on channel engagement and contributions on the platform. We capture the interplay of audio characteristics, viewer sentiment, and propose a measure for video dynamics using audio mining technology and data from a large live-streaming platform. We find that while the anchor’s audio characteristics of positivity increase viewers’ subscription behavior for new and existing subscriptions, it does not directly impact chat engagement. In addition, the beneficial (detrimental) impact of the anchor’s positivity (stressed tone) is heightened when within-scene video dynamics are low (high) or when across-scene dynamics are high. We also find other various factors that lead to increasing viewers’ engagements in chats do not necessarily increase subscription likelihood. Implications of our study to anchors and live streaming platforms are explored.

## Dissertation Committee

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