

The (Authentic?) Past in Marketing: A Conceptual Review and Future Research Agenda

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Abstract

This paper offers a conceptual contribution by 1) delineating different conceptualisations of the past in marketing; 2) relating these to the concept of authenticity; and 3) developing a future research agenda that allows important theoretical boundary-crossing between these research streams. We start by reviewing how marketing literature has conceptualised the past by delineating the literatures on: individual and socio-cultural nostalgia, retro brands, heritage and vintage. We analyse these concepts by exploring their ontological dimensions ('what is the past?'), epistemological dimensions ('how can the past be studied and understood?'), and the axiological dimensions ('what kinds of value are created by the past and how?'). On this basis we identify and relate the literature on authenticity to the various past-related marketing concepts and offer five avenues for future research to inspire much-needed theoretical and methodological cross-fertilisation.

Keywords: *Nostalgia; Authenticity; Past*

Track: Marketing Strategy & Theory