

Creator Economy SIG Special Session

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Cite as:

LI Jiewei, ASENOVA YANA, Peggiani Gloria, Huber Amelie, Beichert Maximilian (2026), Creator Economy SIG Special Session. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 55th, (133942)

Paper from the 55th Annual EMAC Conference, Bath, United Kingdom, June 2-5, 2026



Abstract

In today's digital age, user-generated content platforms anchor the creator economy, shaping how consumers find entertainment, information, and opportunities to engage with commerce. These platforms have become the primary arenas where cultural trends emerge, attention is allocated, and communities form at scale.

“How does NIL Policy Reform Reshape Creator Monetization in Collegiate Sports” by **Jiewei Li** (University College London), and Daniel Ershov (Imperial College London). This research explores how the NCAA NIL policy impacts the advertising behavior of college athletics. The preliminary findings reveal that athletes with higher initial visibility and engagement levels disproportionately capitalize on the opportunities provided by NIL policy reform.

“From Posts to Profits: Investigating the Financial Performance Impact of Social Media in the Service Economy” by **Yana Asenova** (Kuehne Logistics University), Christian Barrot (Kuehne Logistics University), and Jan U. Becker (Kuehne Logistics University). This study advances marketing theory by demonstrating how digital customer touchpoints impact firm outcomes in the service economy, while also providing practical guidance for managers seeking to develop effective social media strategies.

“Revisiting (In)Congruity: How Influencers' Style shapes Marketing Effectiveness” by **Gloria Peggiana** (Politecnico di Milano), Lucio Lambertia (Politecnico di Milano) and Koen Pauwels (Northeastern University) proposes that congruity within the content itself – specifically, the alignment or misalignment between an influencer's established communication style and the style of their sponsored posts – plays a critical role in shaping follower reactions. Using a mixed-method approach that combines secondary data analysis with controlled experiments, they examine how this content-based congruity influences users' perceptions and key engagement metrics.

“What Makes Virtual Influencer Posts Effective: Real-World Evidence from Instagram” by **Amelie Huber** (Technical University of Munich), Janina Garbas (ESCP), Maximilian Beichert (Bocconi University), and Jochen Hartmann (Technical University of Munich) presents a large-scale analysis of virtual influencer (VI) content performance on social media. Drawing on a dataset of more than 10,700 Instagram posts from over 80 VIs, enriched through multimodal image and text analytics, the study introduces a multidimensional human likeness framework encompassing visual, behavioral, and linguistic cues.