



**50 giving stories shared as part of
The Marketors' Trust's 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2026**

No 36: Backing fresh research on trust, brands and AI



Marketing's biggest questions are changing fast. What makes people trust a brand, and what happens to that trust when artificial intelligence starts shaping what we see and hear? These are exactly the questions a small Marketors' sponsorship has been putting to some of the brightest young minds in the country.

For each of the past two years, the Worshipful Company of Marketors, with funding by The Marketors' Trust, has sponsored MSc students at Cranfield School of Management, one of the UK's leading business schools, with an award of £500. Guided by Professor Stan Maklan, a Freeman of the Company, the project began when the then Master asked for research that would be genuinely relevant to the City of London. The students chose trust as their theme.

In 2024, two students examined trust in financial services. The following year the work broadened to ask how AI-led search is changing the way people trust brands across different sectors. This year it narrows again to a sharply current question: how AI-mediated communications affect brand authenticity. In every case the students hand the Company a management summary and present their findings in person. Last autumn, some forty Marketors and guests came to hear them, and the research now lives on the Marketors' website.

For the students, it is about far more than the money. The prestige of the award, the chance to test their ideas on experienced Marketors who act as research participants, and the recognition that

comes with it all give young scholars the confidence, exposure and credit to launch their careers. For the Company, it is a direct line to fresh thinking on the issues shaping marketing's future.

It is a small sum with a long reach. For £500 a year, The Marketors' Trust helps launch a career, produces research the whole profession can learn from, and keeps one of the oldest questions in marketing, whether people trust us, firmly in view as the answers grow more complicated.

Website: cranfield.ac.uk

How to give

Every gift, at whatever level, helps secure the Trust's grants, awards and care for the next fifty years.

To give, go to: <https://www.marketors.org/the-marketors-trust/support-ways-to-give>

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