Special track proposal for IMP2026 conference

Title: Artificial Intelligence in Challenging or Enhancing Resilient Business Relationships and Networks

Co-chairs

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Description and justification of the theme

Artificial intelligence (AI)—including machine learning, generative AI, decision support, intelligent automation, and data-driven analytics—is reshaping inter-organizational relationships, resource integration, and network governance across industries. From supplier selection and joint development to platform ecosystems and solution co-creation, AI increasingly acts as a boundary-spanning, sense-making, and coordinating mechanism among firms and other actors.

This special track aims to advance understanding of how AI can contribute to or threaten sustainable business networks and relationships—both conceptually and practically. We seek to integrate AI research with the IMP tradition of interaction and resource exchange, encouraging studies that critically assess and investigate how intelligent technologies transform collaboration, governance, and value creation.

This special track invites contributions that deepen the IMP community's understanding of how AI interacts with the structures and processes of business markets and networks. It aims at linking the dynamic influence of AI technologies on business with the IMP tradition of studying Actors–Resources–Activities (ARA), relationship dynamics, and network effects. We welcome multi-method, interdisciplinary, critical, theoretical, and empirical works.

Anticipated contribution might relate to following topics (not exhaustive)

- AI and relationship dynamics: trust, power, dependence, reciprocity, and conflict when decision-making is augmented or delegated to algorithms.
- AI as an actor/resource in networks: rethinking ARA when models, data, and platforms participate in activities and resource combinations.
- Exploring how AI-driven HRM practices (actor-oriented) reshape inter-organizational learning, collaboration, and resilience.
- Interactive dynamic capabilities under AI: theorizing and testing how AI catalyzes interfirm sensing–seizing–transforming and the co-development of routines that reconfigure resource interfaces and address resource deficiencies (scarcity, quality, availability) in business networks.

- Generative AI in B2B: implications for knowledge sharing, co-creation, solution selling, and boundary objects (prompts, prototypes, digital twins).
- Network orchestration & governance: algorithmic intermediation, platform rules, data rights, and standards shaping multi-party collaboration.
- Purchasing & supply relationships: AI in sourcing, supplier development, risk sensing, and sustainable procurement; effects on negotiation and fairness.
- Innovation and co-creation: AI-enabled R&D partnerships, ecosystem innovation metrics, and learning across organizational boundaries.
- Markets-as-networks under AI: emergence of new actor roles (model providers, data brokers), reconfiguration of channels, market shaping.
- Methodological advances: social network analysis with AI, agent-based network models, simulation studies, design science, and process studies.
- Ethics, responsibility & dark sides: bias, opacity, surveillance, deskilling; implications for legitimacy, accountability, and compliance.

Types of submissions

We encourage diverse formats that align with the conference's general author guidelines. For formatting & length**,** please follow the IMP Conference Author Guidelines**.** Please add "IMP-AI Track" on the title page to aid routing.

Related works

Baabdullah, A., Alalwan, A., Slade, E., Raman, R., & Khatatneh, K. (2021). SMEs and artificial intelligence (AI): Antecedents and consequences of AI-based B2B practices. *Industrial Marketing Management*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2021.09.003.

Chatterjee, S., Chaudhuri, R., & Vrontis, D. (2022). AI and digitalization in relationship management: Impact of adopting AI-embedded CRM system. *Journal of Business Research*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.06.033.

Chen, L., Jiang, M., Jia, F., & Liu, G. (2021). Artificial intelligence adoption in business-to-business marketing: toward a conceptual framework. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*. https://doi.org/10.1108/jbim-09-2020-0448.

Gaczek, P., Leszczyński, G., Wei, Y., & Sun, H. (2025). The Bright Side of AI in Marketing Decisions: Collaboration with Algorithms Prevents Managers from Violating Ethical Norms. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-24. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-025-06083-w

Gaczek, P., Leszczyński, G., & Mouakher, A. (2023). Collaboration with machines in B2B marketing: Overcoming managers' aversion to AI-CRM with explainability. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *115*, 127-142. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2023.09.007

Habel, J., Hartmann, N., Kwiatek, P., & Mcfarland, R. (2025). A Theory of Artificial Communication Intelligence in Sales. Available at SSRN 5579596.

Han, R., Lam, H., Zhan, Y., Wang, Y., Dwivedi, Y., & Tan, K. (2021). Artificial intelligence in business-to-business marketing: a bibliometric analysis of current research status,

development and future directions. *Ind. Manag. Data Syst.*, 121, 2467-2497. https://doi.org/10.1108/imds-05-2021-0300.

Gligor, D., Pillai, K., & Gölgeci, I. (2021). Theorizing the dark side of business-to-business relationships in the era of AI, big data, and blockchain. *Journal of Business Research*, 133, 79-88. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.04.043.

Keegan, B., Iredale, S., & Naudé, P. (2023). Examining the dark force consequences of AI as a new actor in B2B relationships. *Industrial Marketing Management*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2023.10.001.

Kot, M., & Leszczyński, G. (2022). AI-activated value co-creation. An exploratory study of conversational agents. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *107*, 287-299. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2022.10.013

Kot, M. T., & Leszczyński, G. (2020). The concept of intelligent agent in business interactions: is virtual assistant an actor or a boundary object?. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *35*(7), 1155-1164. https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-10-2018-0291

Moradi, M., & Dass, M. (2022). Applications of artificial intelligence in B2B marketing: Challenges and future directions. *Industrial Marketing Management*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2022.10.016.

Tunisini, A., Harrison, D., & Bocconcelli, R. (2023). Handling resource deficiencies through resource interaction in business networks. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 109, 154–163. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2022.12.016