

Journal of Consumer Affairs Guidelines for Authors

- Manuscripts submitted to *JCA* are double-blind peer reviewed by the members of the editorial board and ad hoc referees selected by the editor or associate editor.
- There is no submission fee. There is no page charge for published papers.
- Acceptance of a manuscript for *JCA* publication gives ACCI the right to publish and copyright the material.
- The designated reference sources for *JCA* style are *The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th Edition*, and the *Merriam-Webster Unabridged Dictionary*.

WRITING FOR *JCA*

***JCA* contains scholarly research and professionally informed opinions that involve analysis of individual, business, and/or government actions that can affect the interests of consumers in the marketplace.** Topics must be addressed from the consumer's point of view but a variety of approaches are appropriate, including education, economics, nutrition, public policy, consumer psychology and marketing. However, *JCA* is not a journal of marketing management, broad economic theory or general consumer psychology. Our origins are with the consumer protection movement, and the focus for papers in terms of both research questions and implications must involve the consumers' interests. However, a study on what interests segments of consumers is NOT a study of the consumers' interests. We do not publish studies or findings if the primary value is for market segmentation or business management, nor do we have much concern for problems of profit maximization.

The "Bits, Briefs and Applications" section contains short research notes, applications, theoretical briefs, and individual commentary that are designed to assist consumer interest professionals, including public policy decision makers, researchers and educators. Manuscripts submitted to this section should not exceed 3500 words and must have pragmatic implications for consumers, educators, researchers, public policy makers or other consumer affairs professionals. These submissions should be sent directly to the associate editor in charge of the section. Appropriate articles for this section may include: (1) Practical applications based on new or existing theories/models; (2) Brief research findings related to consumer rights, education, policy and regulation; (3) Research reports that contribute to an understanding of consumer behavior; and (4) Comments and position papers on key issues in consumer rights, education, research, policy and regulation.

WARNINGS & CAVEATS

- 1. Manuscript readability is an important consideration for accepted papers.** Papers are meant to be read, not interpreted, and papers with incomprehensible prose tend to be rejected by reviewers and the editor.
- 2. Do not have a section heading of "limitations" or "future research."** Any research limitations impact how the study can be interpreted and what can be validly concluded from findings, so they should be integrated into any discussion of the implications or conclusions, or sometimes part of the explanation of the research method, but they are *not* to be in an added section or listed at the end. Similarly, as opposed to providing a section listing future research, incorporate relevant and interesting future research proposals in discussion sections where appropriate.
- 3. Reviewers often are antagonistic toward studies that use student samples.** This does not mean that all such papers are unacceptable; sometimes a study of students is appropriate for the topic studied, research stimuli used or cultural views the subjects embody. To some people, students are considered a vulnerable group for certain business practices, and as such are the focus of attention from consumer activists and government agencies looking at areas such as financial education, credit card marketing and the regulation of campus social activities. Still, the question for a student subject paper is whether the manuscript validly explains how it is an important study of a consumer segment or that the students are a valid surrogate for consumers as a whole. It can't be a study of students merely because they are available nor should it apply a research method selected to fit that availability, because all such studies will have reviewers recommending that it be rejected.
- 4. The importance of the research topic must be clear and well established in the literature review.** Neither a lack of previous specific studies nor a plethora of citations is justification for new research. Maybe no one has done it because it isn't interesting; prior studies could already have exhaustively covered the area. The literature review should assess the current state of knowledge and give a basis for any research questions or hypotheses. The existing literature is the basis for the research conducted, and the research questions set the stage for what is studied.

Electronic Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare two files in MS Word 2002 or 2003. (1) a 1-page file of the manuscript title page with the title of the paper, all authors' job titles and affiliations, contact author's address, phone and fax numbers and e-mail address, plus any acknowledgments; (2) a file with the full manuscript excluding the title page, deleting all Word tags identifying the author under "File" "Properties" and removing all reviewer information and comments from "Track Changes". • Send both files as attachments to "JCA edit @ auburn.edu" (with spaces removed), with the email message stating the following information: The material in the manuscript will not infringe upon any statutory copyright; The paper will not be submitted elsewhere while under <i>JCA</i> review; The consumer interest topic areas addressed in the manuscript. For submissions to “Bits, Briefs, and Applications,” the cover letter should indicate that the manuscript is less than 3,500 words in length and describe how the article has pragmatic implications for consumers, educators, researchers, public policy makers or other consumer affairs professionals. • The subject line of message should state "JCA submission" and the primary research method or analysis employed in the study (e.g.: survey; historical; qualitative analysis; SCF data). Papers for Bits Briefs and Applications should be sent to the section editor, Brenda Cude, at bcude@UGA.edu • The JCAedit address is to be used ONLY for submissions of manuscripts and not for preliminary inquiries on topics or other communications with the editor.
Abstract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All manuscripts must be accompanied by an abstract, not to exceed 100 words, including “Bits, Briefs, and Applications” articles.
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your manuscript should adhere to the guidelines listed below under TEXT FORMAT; REFERENCES; TABLE, FIGURE, GRAPH, AND CHART FORMAT; and GENERAL STYLE AND FORMAT.
Arrangement of manuscript components	<p>Manuscript components should be arranged as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title of article • Abstract • Text of article • Endnotes • Appendices • References • Tables and figures
Line spacing	Double-space all text, including endnotes and quoted material, except text that occurs with visuals (tables and figures) or in an accompanying note to a visual.
1st-level headings	Centered, all caps
2nd-level headings	Centered, headline-style capitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalize all words except prepositions & conjunctions that are 3 letters or less.
3rd-level headings	Left justified, headline-style capitalization, <i>italicized</i>
Block quotations	Double-space and indent entire quote 5 spaces from the left

- Notes**
- Use of notes for text explanations should be minimized
 - Number notes separately throughout the text, using superscript Arabic numerals.
 - Include all notes on a separate page entitled ENDNOTES, listed using the Arabic numeral (NOT superscripted) followed by a period.
 - Endnotes should be placed at the end of the main text, preceding the References page and any appendices.
- Tables, figures, graphs, and charts**
- Each table, graph, figure, or chart should be placed on a separate page and included at the end of the manuscript.
 - Omit all vertical lines.
 - Use superscripted, lowercase letters for notes to tables, and asterisks for statistical significance levels.

REFERENCES

- General guidelines**
- *JCA* uses the author-date system of documentation, with a few exceptions; for details, consult the *Chicago Manual*: "The Author-Date System: Reference Lists and Text Citations," sections 16.90-16.120 (pp. 616-624). See **Capitalization** and **Author names** sections below for further information.
 - Subtitles of books and articles must be included in the citation.
 - Authors should check a current issue of the *Journal* for specific examples on reference lists and citations, or consult the examples below.
- Capitalization**
- Use the headline style of capitalization for titles of books and articles.
 - Capitalize all words except prepositions and conjunctions that are 3 letters or less.
- Author names**
- Authors' full first names (NOT just initials) must be given unless the author is known by an initial or initials.
 - Omit comma between surnames and "Jr." or "Sr."
 - For a multi-author entry, only the 1st author's name is inverted (last name first).
- Journal entries**
- Crowne, Douglas P., and David Marlowe. 1960. A New Scale of Social Desirability Independent of Psychopathology. *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 24 (August): 349–354.
- Verton, Dan. 2001. Identity Theft Skyrockets, but Less Than 1% Occur Online. *Computer World*, 35 (7): 7.
- Moore, David J., Jerome D. Williams, and Williams J. Qualls Sr. 1996. Targeted Marketing of Tobacco and Alcohol Related Products to Ethnic Minority Groups in the U.S. *Journal of Ethnicity and Disease*, 6 (Winter/Spring): 83–98.
- Sexton, Donald E., Jr. 1972. Grocery Prices Paid by Blacks and by Whites: Further Findings. *Journal of Economics and Business*, 25 (1): 39–44.
- Articles or essays within a compilation or anthology**
- Milne, George R. 2001. The Effectiveness of Self-Regulated Privacy Protection: A Review and Framework for Future Research. In *Handbook of Marketing and Society*, edited by Paul N. Bloom and Gregory Gundlach (462–485). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Books**
- Bruner, Gordon C., II, and Paul Hensel. 1992. *Marketing Scales Handbook: A Compilation of Multi-Item Measures*. Chicago: American Marketing Association.
- Cox, Ted F., ed. 1967. *Risk Taking and Information Handling in Consumer Behavior*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press.
- Newspaper articles**
- Martin, William. 1989. Sun States Officials Believe Dreams Don't Have to Fizzle. *The Times* [Gainesville, FL], August 20.
- NOTE:** Omit page numbers for newspaper articles.
- Personal interviews**
- Bodinet, Elizabeth. 2001. Personal interview, March 5, Milwaukee, WI.

- Personal correspondence** Shanks, L. Edward. 1992. Telephone interview, July 23.
- Websites**
- Carter, Colin A. and Guillame P. Gruere. 2003. International Approaches to the Labeling of Genetically Modified Goods. *Choices*, second quarter.
<http://www.choicesmagazine.org/current/2003-2-01.htm>.
- General Election Online Voters' Guide. 2002.
<http://www.sos.state.us/elections/nov52002/guide/measures/m27.htm>.
- Whole Foods Market. 2002. Whole Foods Market Nationwide Survey Reveals More Than Half of American Have Sampled Organic Foods and That Food Labels Matter.
http://www.wholefoods.com/company/pr_organicsurvey.pdf.
- Do not put "Online at" if the URL given is clearly a website correlated to the reference source.
 - Do not put an access date for the website, unless there is no publication date given for the reference.
 - Following the URL, put a period after *htm*, *html*, *pdf*, etc.
- In-text citations (parenthetical citations)**
- Spell out the word *and* in a multi-author citation; do not use an ampersand (&).
 - For 3 or fewer authors, list all surnames.
Example: (Smith, Jones, and White 2003)
 - For more than 3 authors, use *et al.*
Example: (Wagner et al. 1991)
NOTE: Do not place a comma after *et al.* in the citation
 - If a direct quote is given, give the page number only—do not include "p." or "pp."
Example: (Rogers 1999, 213)
 - For a fuller discussion of in-text citations, see *Chicago Manual*, 15th ed., sections 16.107-120, pp. 620-624.
- General guidelines**
- When submitting a manuscript, figures, tables, etc., are placed on separate pages following the list of references at the end of each article.
 - To help the compositor, insert a centered statement in brackets IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING the paragraph which contains the first mention of the table or figure.
Example:

[Insert Table 3 about here]
- Images**
- While not needed for initial submission, be aware that high resolution images of figures, pictures or other illustrations other than tables will be needed for publication. Regardless of editorial decisions, publication will require availability of necessary images.
 - For publication, electronic illustrations, figures or photos would be in separate files with file names that reflect their status in the article (e.g. "Figure 2.tiff").
 - Images must have a minimum resolution of 300 dpi.
- Capitalization**
- The designation FIGURE or TABLE is in all caps, followed by an identification number (Arabic numeral); **all** figures and tables should be numbered, even if there's only one.
 - Capitalize titles, main columns heads, and 1st level spanner heads using headline-style capitalization.
 - Lowercase stub headings and 2nd level spanner heads (except the first word and any proper nouns).
- Footnotes**
- Use superscripted lowercase letters for footnotes to tables.
 - For information not specific to any particular part of the table, an author may provide a note (or notes), preceded by *Note(s):* [...].
 - Notes should be placed below the table and left justified.

- Titles**
- Titles should follow headline-style capitalization, and be italicized.
 - They should be follow one line below the table or figure designation.
 - Both the designation and the table should be left justified.
Example:
TABLE 1
How Front-Sided Health Claims Impact One’s Thoughts About a Product
- Probability/significance levels**
- Put all p-levels on one line.
 - Separate each p-level with a semicolon; do NOT place a period after the last p-level.
 - Lowercase and italicize *p*.
 - List p-levels according to the number of asterisks used, with the single asterisk level first, double second, etc.
 - Place probability notes following all other notes.
Example: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$
- “If a table contains notes on significance levels (also called probability notes), asterisks may be used as reference marks. **If two or three standard significance levels are noted, a single asterisk is used for the lowest level of significance, two for the next higher, and so on.**” (*Chicago Manual*, 15th ed., 13.49, p. 512)
- Total population or group amounts (*N*)**
- *N* (as in, a total or population group amount) is italicized in the text and tables of the manuscript.
 - When using lowercase “*n*” to refer to a portion or sample of the total group, it is italicized. “An italic capital *N* is used in many statistical tables to stand for the total group, or “population,” from which data are drawn...An italic lowercase *n* stands for a portion of the total group, or a “sample.” For example if *N* refers to the total number of subjects (of both sexes) in a study, lowercase *n* might refer to the number of females in the study.” (*Chicago Manual*, 15th ed., 13.5, p. 497)
- Callouts**
- In the manuscript text, figures or tables must be referred to by their label and number.
 - The word “Table” or “Figure” is capitalized when it precedes the identifying number, but not capitalized elsewhere.
Example: See Table 2.
As shown in Table 3, ...
These two tables illustrate...
- Equations**
- When an in-text equation is followed by a statement beginning with *where*, the word *where* is lowercased and is NOT followed by a comma.
 - The equation that precedes it may, however, be followed by a comma, when necessary to indicate that the following information is a subordinate clause.
- Percentages**
- In a span of percentages, use an en dash.
 - Do not repeat the % sign.
Example: 151–200%
NOT 151%-200%
- Numbers**
- Spell out numbers 1-9, unless the number refers to a percentage, measurement, or age.
 - For 10 and above, use Arabic numerals, unless the number begins a sentence.
- Flexibility:** “Many publications, including those in scientific and financial contexts, follow the simple rule of spelling out only single-digit numbers and using numerals for all others. This system should be used with flexibility so as to avoid such awkward locutions as ‘12 eggs, of which nine were laid yesterday.’ [...] Where many numbers occur within a paragraph or series of paragraphs, maintain a consistency in the immediate context. If according to the rule you must use numerals for one of the numbers in a given category, use them for all in that category. In the same sentence or paragraph, however, items in one category may be given numerals and items in another spelled out.” (*Chicago Manual*, 15th Ed., 9.6-9.7, p. 381)