Possible Master Thesis Topics in Entrepreneurship and Marketing

🧭 1. Venture Creation & Business Models

1.1 The Logic of AI-Driven Startups

Background: AI startups often build products before clear customer problems are defined, relying on technology-first logic.
Research Question: How do AI-driven startups evolve their business model logic from technology orientation to market orientation?
Method: Multiple case study of Nordic AI startups (interviews + secondary data).

1.2 Micro-Entrepreneurship and the Rise of One-Person Digital Businesses

Background: Tools like Shopify, Gumroad, and ChatGPT are enabling "solo founders" to build scalable businesses.
Research Question: What strategies allow one-person digital businesses to achieve growth and legitimacy?
Method: Qualitative interviews with solopreneurs + thematic analysis.

1.3 Business Model Experimentation and Investor Perception

Background: Startups frequently pivot, but frequent pivots may signal instability to investors.
Research Question: How do early-stage investors interpret business model experimentation in startup pitches?
Method: Mixed methods — survey + content analysis of pitch decks.

1.4 Opportunity Recognition on Digital Platforms

Background: Online communities (Reddit, Product Hunt, Indie Hackers) are new arenas for discovering opportunities.
Research Question: How do entrepreneurs identify and validate opportunities within digital community platforms?
Method: Netnography + semi-structured interviews.

📣 2. Marketing, Branding & Digital Influence

2.1 Building Trust in the Age of AI-Generated Content

Background: Consumers struggle to tell what's real or automated. Startups need trust signals more than ever.
Research Question: How do startups build and maintain trust when using AI-generated marketing content?
Method: Comparative case studies of early-stage startups using AI tools.

2.2 Authenticity vs. Performance in Entrepreneurial Branding

Background: Founders today act as influencers, balancing personal storytelling with professionalism.
Research Question: How do entrepreneurs construct authenticity in personal branding online?
Method: Social media discourse analysis + in-depth interviews.

2.4 The Shift from Funnels to Flywheels

Background: Marketing automation tools claim to replace linear funnels with self-reinforcing customer loops.
Research Question: How does adopting a "flywheel" model change startup customer acquisition and retention strategies?
Method: Case comparison of startups using HubSpot, ActiveCampaign, etc.

🌱 3. Sustainability & Circular Entrepreneurship

3.1 Scaling Circular Startups: From Prototype to Production

Background: Many circular startups stall after early success due to system-level barriers.
Research Question: What are the key enablers and blockers when scaling circular business models?
Method: Comparative case studies (Sweden/Scandinavia).

3.2 Communicating Impact: Beyond Greenwashing

Background: Consumers distrust vague sustainability claims. Startups face credibility challenges.
Research Question: How can startups communicate sustainability without triggering greenwashing skepticism?
Method: Content analysis of sustainability communications + experimental survey.

3.3 Investor Perspectives on Impact Startups

Background: Investors increasingly demand both returns and impact — but what do they actually prioritize?
Research Question: How do early-stage investors evaluate impact-driven startups compared to profit-maximizing ventures?
Method: Survey and/or interviews with Nordic investors or incubator mentors.

3.4 Circular Innovation in Local Manufacturing

Background: Urban manufacturing and local production are re-emerging with sustainability narratives.
Research Question: What new business models are emerging around local, circular production?
Method: Exploratory qualitative study (case-based).

🤖 4. AI, Data & Automation in Entrepreneurship

4.1 The Entrepreneur–AI Collaboration

Background: Entrepreneurs now use AI tools for ideation, copywriting, and design — changing their workflow.
Research Question: How does AI use affect the creativity and decision-making of early-stage entrepreneurs?
Method: Diary study + interviews with founders using AI daily.

4.2 AI-First Startups: Patterns and Pitfalls

Background: AI-first ventures face unique challenges (model access, regulation, data).
Research Question: What distinguishes the growth patterns of AI-first startups from traditional digital startups?
Method: Secondary data + case study synthesis.

4.3 The Productivity Paradox of AI Tools

Background: Entrepreneurs adopt AI to save time, yet often end up working more.
Research Question: Does AI actually increase entrepreneurial productivity — or just expand workload complexity?
Method: Mixed methods — productivity self-tracking study + qualitative follow-ups.

4.4 Ethical Boundaries in Automated Marketing

Background: Startups can now automate persuasion at scale.
Research Question: How do entrepreneurs define and negotiate ethical boundaries when using AI in marketing?
Method: Interview-based qualitative study.