The 20th Economic International Conference
Challenges and Opportunities for a Sustainable Development
Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava, 2024

Marketing Management: A sustainable evolution

A semi-structured literature review

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Agenda

Are marketing manager roles in jeopardy?

Methodology of the literature review

Evolution of marketing thought and practice

Role of marketing managers and impact on company performance

Opportunities for a sustainable future

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Are marketing managers in jeopardy?

Rich history

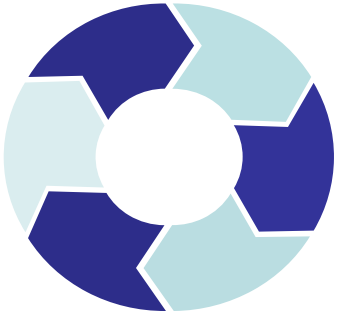
Existing as a form of commerce for over 10,000 years, **marketing thought started to appear before 1800** and the term **"marketing" was first used somewhere between 1906 and 1901**.

First marketing management theories appear in the second half of the last century.

Role under analysis

There's **no one size fits all** when it comes to the role of a marketing department **and no standard job description** for a marketing manager.

An unclear role starts a chain effect that leads to confusion, pressure to perform and, ultimately, myopic management.



Performance scrutinized

The performance of marketing managers and their departments **is still put under the microscope**, but scientific literature demonstrates that **having a powerful marketing departments leads to several types of benefits** for an organization (financial, reputational and culture-related)

Sustainable evolution

In a context where pressure is constantly added to the marketing function, some driven also by technological advancements, marketing theory needs to be advanced to **understand how the marketing manager role must evolve to have a sustainable future**.

(Jones & Shaw, 2014; Bartels, 1976; Kotler, 2010; Jaworski, 2011)

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Web of Science* title + keywords + abstract: ‘marketing manager’ or ‘marketing management’ or ‘role of marketing’ or ‘marketing management evolution’

English and Areas: ‘Business’, ‘Management’, ‘Economics’

2010-2024

Abstract & conclusion content analysis

2010-2024

*Accessed on March 15th, 2024

(Snyder, 2019)

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Evolution of Marketing Thought and Practice

Timeline	Proeminent Theme(s)	Predominant Methaphor	Triggers for the Themes
1936-1945	Illuminating marketing principles and concepts	Marketing as applied economics	• Understanding of marketing principles through case studies • Need to comprehend government legislation and trade regulations • Marketing research topics and implications for marketing practice
1946-1955	Improving marketing functions and system productivity	Marketing as managerial activity	• Accountability of marketing functions and system productivity to marketing theory and science • Focus on the growth of marketing discipline • Identification of marketing functions and deciding on the definition of marketing
1956-1965	Assessing marketing mix impact	Marketing as a quantitative science	• Focus on the marketing theory development • Transition into analytical studies • Interest in statistical quality control
1966-1975	Uncovering buyer and organizational processes	Marketing as a behavioral science	• Need for establishing clear agendas for the marketing discipline • Articles highlighting directions for further research • Spotlight on marketing practice through *JMs "Applied Marketing" section*
1976-1985	Crafting market/marketing strategy	Marketing as a decision science	• Refocus to a "scholarly professional journal" through editorial policy changes • Emphasis on theory development and understanding market structure • Outlook toward the use of quantitative techniques in marketing

(Kumar, 2015)

Evolution of Marketing Thought and Practice

Timeline	Proeminent Theme(s)	Predominant Methaphor	Triggers for the Themes
1986-1995	Identifying market/marketing contingencies	Marketing as an integrative science	• Use of sophisticated empirical techniques • Emergence of conceptual frameworks of marketing phenomena • Use of interdisciplinary knowledge
1996-2004	Customer profitability studies and resource allocation efforts	Marketing as a scarce resource	• Developments in database technology • Ability to capture individual customer data • Analyses performed at the individual level
2005-2012	Marketing accountability and customer centricity	Marketing as an investment	• Technological advancements • Deeper customer insights to aid marketing initiatives • Marketing investment activities directed at the customer level
Emerging (2013-present)	Marketing at the core and new media influence	Marketing as an integral part of the organization	• Changes in media usage patterns • Focus on marketing efficiency and effectiveness • Firm value generated by engaging stakeholders of the firm

(Kumar, 2015)

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Marketing Schools of Thought

The Macromarketing School (1964-1965)	**What impact can marketing have?**	**1**		
		2	**What kind of moral issues can marketing managers face?**	**The Consumerism School (1971-1972)**
The Systems Approach (1960-1970)	**How should we analyze marketing performance?**	**3**		
		4	**What are our buyers thinking and doing?**	**The Buyer Behavior Theory (1960-1970)**
Strategic Planning (1970-1980)	**How can we place marketing tactics under a broader strategy?**	**5**		

(Bartels, 1976; Sheth & Gardner, 1982)

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Points of pressure for marketing managers

Unclear role & main responsibilities

The marketing manager role can be different depending on the type of company or industry and it is heavily influenced by the perspective, knowledge and experience of the CEO.

Confusing conceptual definitions

We can think about marketing as a management philosophy, but also as a clear organizational function or a set of activities to be performed. Employees can have a hard time understanding the difference.

Everybody does marketing

We are living in a reality where the organizational expectations are that marketing is everyone's responsibility and that any employee can/should be an interface with the clients. This expectations dilute the role of the marketing department.

Push to prove impact on company performance

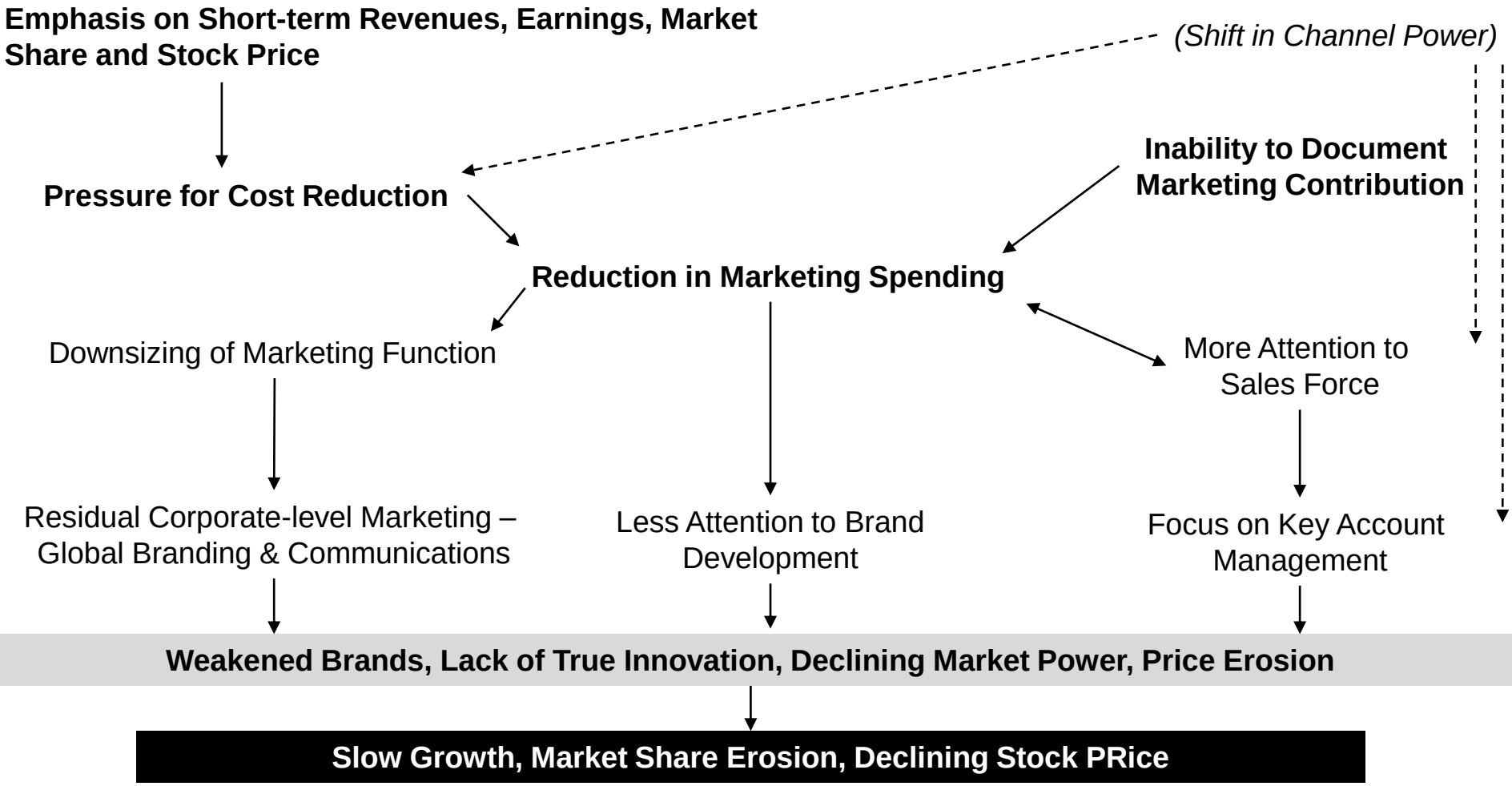
Technological advancements help marketing managers better understand the results of their activities, but this adds pressure to prove return on investment, even though marketing managers are not alone in the TMT.

Short-term thinking

Pressure to increase short-term profit leads to myopic management and, unfortunately, the marketing department is one of the firsts to get budget cuts.

(Bartels, 1976; Sheth & Gardner, 1982)

Impact of short-term thinking on company performance



(Webster, Malter, & Ganesan, 2003)

Benefits of powerful marketing department

Type of Benefit	Main findings
Financial Benefits	The role of the marketing department (bigger or smaller) **directly influences the performance** of an organization (Tuzovic, Wirtz, & Kuppelwieser, 2013)
	Marketing strategy, marketing capabilities and resources, but also positioning advantages, **are strongly correlated with organizational performance** (Morgan, 2012)
	As the power of the marketing manager increases, **sales also increase** (Germann, Ebbes, & Grewal, 2015)
	When a company hires a marketing manager, it believes **that it will improve the organization's results** (Germann, Ebbes, & Grewal, 2015)
	The value of the marketing department is strongly correlated with the degree to which it succeeds in developing the organizational knowledge and skills necessary to connect customers with an organization's products and services, thus **generating financial results** (Moorman & Rust, 1999)
Reputational or organizational benefits	The strength of a marketing department **is positively correlated with the company's ability to build long-term sustainable assets that produce important short-term income**, but also with its **attractiveness to potential new employees** (Feng, Morgan, & Rego, 2015)
	The strength of a marketing department is **positively associated with the organization's ability to attract capital through external financing**, with the **potential to attract experienced and cheap human resources**, and with the **ability to attract partners leading** (Moorman & Day, 2016)
	A strong marketing department will be **better positioned to drive innovation and customer focus** (Moorman & Day, 2016)

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The roles of the marketing manager in strategic change

Marketing change agency	Pilot	Advisor	Expert	Synergist
Marketing manager's position in strategic change	Proactive in content and process	Reactive in content and process	Content-driven	Process-driven
Marketing manager's perspective on strategic change	Hybrid – inside-out and outside-in	Outside-in	Outside-in	Inside-out
Marketing Manager's dynamic capabilities in strategic change	*Sensing* Identify market opportunities Internalize the customer and competitor perspective Reflect on the brand concept *Seizing* Address latent consumer needs Activate a wide spectrum of resources Capture value in the internal processes *Reconfiguring* Reposition the brand Transform the customer experience	*Sensing* Anticipate market trends Provide information Infuse knowledge and new ideas	*Sensing* Scan the market Interpret information Generate information *Seizing* Mobilize various resources Develop market offers Develop successful business models	*Seizing* Communicate with internal stakeholders Coordinate actions Create synergies *Reconfiguring* Change the value proposition Transform the organization structure

(Kirova, 2023)

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Current challenges and future research directions

Current challenges

Re-evaluating the role of the marketing manager

Further developments in terms of digitalization

AI

Supra-specialization and siloing

Future research directions

Is there an integrative framework that explains marketing function's contributions to firm performance?

As different parts of the organization assume market-focused activities, how does a strong marketing department hold its center?

What configuration of job description elements offers the greatest prospect for marketing manager performance impact?

Can we link individual marketing knowledge and experience to firm performance? (not only for marketing employees?)

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