

FUNDAMENTALS **OF** BUSINESS MARKETING RESEARCH



DAVID A. REID, PhD
RICHARD E. PLANK, PhD

*David A. Reid, PhD
Richard E. Plank, PhD*

Fundamentals of Business Marketing Research



*Pre-publication
REVIEWS,
COMMENTARIES,
EVALUATIONS . . .*

"This book's extensive review of the area of business-to-business marketing is a useful tool for academics who are interested in the subject. It would also be a great reference or text for a graduate course in business-to-business marketing."

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*Assistant Professor of Marketing,
Penn State, Erie*

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Christian Homburg, PhD
*Professor of Marketing
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Fundamentals of Business Marketing Research

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David A. Reid, PhD
Richard E. Plank, PhD



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Series Preface

It is a pleasure to announce the establishment of the Foundation Series in Business Marketing. This book series fills a critical void in business-to-business marketing knowledge especially when no resources currently available address the needs of business marketing practitioners and academics looking for breadth and depth of coverage on various issues of research, practice, and education. Books published in this series will foster our understanding of business marketing phenomena and managerial practice around the globe. These books will focus exclusively on topics in business marketing combining impeccable relevance with rigor—and thus aid in cutting-edge knowledge development.

The following are the inaugural two books:¹

- *Fundamentals of Business Marketing Research*: A comprehensive look at the literature of the business marketing area over the past twenty-five years. All areas under the general model of business marketing are examined in depth with an eye toward future research and implications for business marketing practice.
- *Fundamentals of Business Marketing Education*: An in-depth examination of business marketing education at all levels of university instruction (undergraduate, graduate, executive, MBA, and doctoral studies). Issues covered include course content, pedagogy, and policy. An informative discussion on the nature and content of business marketing textbooks is also included.

These two books provide unprecedented point-of-use access for those individuals who want to do research, enhance managerial practice, and/or teach in the various business marketing areas. These volumes were intentionally created to provide a *unique* resource guide to be used by both business marketing research professionals and business marketing educators.² It is my hope that these and subsequent

books will provide increased access for all scholars and practitioners of business marketing.

*J. David Lichtenthal, Series Editor
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NOTES

1. Only these two inaugural books on basics of business marketing research and business marketing education will be anthology based from the *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*. All subsequent works will be original, “first time ever” publications.

2. Both books may be useful *across* branches of the marketing discipline (e.g., although the comprehensive research volume is targeted at researchers/practitioners, a broad-minded individual may very well find the discussion in the education volume about marketing textbooks very useful. Likewise, a business teaching professional or practitioner may find content about models of business marketing management that are examined in the research volume easy to tweak for managerial or classroom purposes.

Introduction

J. David Lichtenthal

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Academic research in industrial/business-to-business marketing has grown considerably since the last major review of the field in 1978. The paper by Reid and Plank examines a total of 2,194 academic articles published in various sources from 1978 through 1997. The purpose of the examination was to assess the progress that has been made and provide both researchers and practitioners with summaries of the field for both future research and practice.

The work reviewed includes some 1,288 empirical articles (where some type of data was collected) and 906 nonempirical articles. In general most of the empirical work was survey based. The articles are segmented into seven broad topics, labeled strategy, organizational buying and purchasing, marketing sciences, product, pricing, channels, and promotion.

The strategy literature is spotty, but reflects the tremendous changes that are going on in the environment and how firms are dealing with these changes. Much of the work provides normative insights into strategic alliances and partnerships and is also beginning to assess the supply chain perspective. International perspectives have been very narrow in scope, however. Marketing to government is almost nonexistent, and the role of marketing in the firm with regard to other functions has provided both descriptive and some managerial best practices, especially with regard to marketing and R&D within the new product development process. Research in organizational buying has seen a number of theoretical perspectives, but only a limited amount of programmatic testing of theory. There are many reviews available, which all point out similar problems with the research stream, but only minimal movement in solving those problems. Purchasing management, on the other hand, is much more pragmatic. The research clearly points to the changing nature of the

purchasing function within firms and explores the issues with internationalizing the purchasing function as well as performance evaluation models. Purchasing is becoming more strategic and competitive advantage driven, more aggressive and proactive in dealing with suppliers, more aggressive within their firms in providing cross-functional leadership and more technologically competent. Buyer-seller relationship perspectives have also been researched, especially within the past ten years and this literature, while mostly theoretical, is beginning to provide some managerial insights.

Marketing sciences deal with market research practices, forecasting, and the use of computers and modeling in business marketing. Much of the research discussions has focused on academic research problems, primarily on getting better response rates to questionnaires, and defining of problems researching business marketing. There is some interesting work being done on customer assessment, especially value assessment, and market estimation. Forecasting research has been limited, while market segmentation research has gotten more pragmatic and user-friendly for the practitioner. Research in computers and decision support primarily provides ideas for potential usage, but there is little on enterprise resource planning systems or front- and back-end information systems and support.

Product research has been prolific, especially the new product development work. Much of the work in new products provides significant normative insights. At this point there is general agreement on a series of factors that are likely to contribute to new product success: superior unique product, well defined prior to undertaking development, synergy of technology, quality of technology execution, marketing synergy and quality of marketing activity execution, and general market attractiveness. Work is beginning on defining behaviors and outcomes at different stages of the new product development process. Other significant areas of research include work on eliminating products from the product offerings, and some very preliminary work on product bundling and unbundling. The notion of building brand equity and its importance in business markets has also had some preliminary work. Business marketing services and the service product mix research is limited.

Pricing has had limited effort and provides minimal guidance for the practicing professional. Two exceptional articles on pricing deal with the role of pricing and how it works within the marketing mix

and the first attempt at process mapping the price-setting process, both of which provide significant insights to the practicing business marketer. Some preliminary work has been done on the area of value pricing and the notion of supply chain pricing.

Distribution research includes the topics of channel management and logistics. Much of the distribution research focuses on the role of distributors and their problems; some has examined the use of manufacturers' reps and agents. Much of this work is normative and provides insights for firms on using these categories of middlemen. The relationship of distribution partners is changing as more companies adopt some notion of supply chain management and research indicates that higher levels of communication and cooperation between partners lead to better relationships. Little is covered in this review on logistics because that area has some very specialized journals and readers are urged to consult those journals which provide excellent insights on the newer logistics processes that are being used successfully to lower cost and improve customer satisfaction and retention.

Marketing communications research is primarily directed toward the sales function. There is limited work in advertising, almost none in sales promotion, with the exception of trade shows, and none in public relations. The work on trade shows is very insightful and provides useful managerial insights. Very little work addresses the function of inside sales. The work in sales performance is beginning to be more specific in terms of addressing the behaviors that salespeople must do. Learning and knowledge have been shown to be important in sales performance and some preliminary work has suggested that solutions and getting information to frame those solutions are much more predictive of sales performance than the actual presentation style or skills. Some preliminary work in team selling has provided some interesting insights while there is also some interesting and informative work on key account selling. Sales training research is not particularly informative. Much work has been done on sales motivation and rewards that provides the reader with normative advice. Salesperson performance and evaluation research has shown the advantage of a composite system where both outcomes and behaviors are measured and rewarded. Sales force deployment has seen some significant research. Unfortunately, there is limited research on the role of sales forces and changes over the next ten to twenty years.

In summary, academic research has evolved over the past twenty years and provides useful insights to both practitioners and researchers. Some areas are clearly underresearched and it cannot be said that any particular area is overresearched or void of future benefit from well-executed research. In order to be more productive, both as a theory development exercise as well as to provide more managerial support, future research needs to be more cognizant of the rapid change in worldwide business patterns and the impact of these changes on business marketing practices.

***SOME SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO MOST
EFFECTIVELY READ AND USE
THIS COMPREHENSIVE LITERATURE REVIEW***

The following are some suggestions to help guide the reader to get the most value from this literature review. The authors organize the research reviewed into twenty-eight distinct topics grouped into seven major categories: business marketing strategy, organizational buying behavior, and purchasing management, marketing sciences, product, pricing, distribution, and promotion. Tables 3 and 4 provide a general overview of the articles contained in the database used in writing this paper. Specifically, Table 4 provides an indication of the amount of research activity in each of the twenty-eight topical areas. Taken together, these two tables quickly reveal interesting patterns in terms of research design and statistical techniques employed as well as the level of coverage given to a particular area. Reading a work of this size might seem a daunting task and one might erroneously forego the opportunity herein.

For *someone new to the field*, reading the entire article will provide an in-depth look at the field of business marketing over a twenty-five-year period. This is its most active research period, since World War II. Before World War II, textbooks and management reports provided such coverage (e.g., Copeland 1924, 1930; Mehren 1930; Elder 1935) to mention only a few. After World War II, textbooks continued to provide considerable academic and applied coverage (Alexander, Cross, and Hill 1956; Wilson 1968; Hill, Alexander, and Cross 1975; Webster 1984; Hutt and Speh 1981, 1996; Anderson and Narus 1999). Industrial marketing has been around for more than 160 years (Frederick 1934) and studied academically for quite some time, as

this review demonstrates, along with the appearance and survival of the four aforementioned research outlets dedicated to research in this area. The introduction of the paper provides a real sense of the topical breadth and depth of the field of business marketing. The reader can gain an understanding of what it means to conduct good research in a business marketing context as well as the difficulties one often encounters. The article also provides an understanding of topical areas and issues in need of further research and exploration. While the field of business marketing has surely come of age, many research opportunities and challenges remain in terms of concept development, methodology attunement, and enhancement to business marketing practice.

More *experienced practitioners and researchers*, having read the introduction, may want to go directly to specific topical areas of interest. Each provides a review of the important literature organized by specific streams of research within that topic and closes with a discussion highlighting research questions needing further study. Attention is called to problems in each topical area, both in the extant literature and by omission. Comparison of related areas may also prove fruitful to experienced researchers interested in issues of topic integration. Table 5 provides a quick summary of the authors' views on shortages and surpluses in the various topical areas. This can help experienced researchers as well as doctoral students looking for possible research areas.

Finally, the *references alone may provide the practitioner and academic reader alike with one of the most extensive bibliographies ever compiled* of the business marketing literature. This set of references should help researchers and practitioners needing background materials as they begin their own research or business application requirements, or to address the research opportunities and questions identified in this paper.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE COMMENTARIES AND REPLY

Our discipline, if it is to remain relevant, must periodically reflect upon and summarize its intellectual and practical accomplishments. Our history is an important guide for shaping and defining the future of the discipline (Lichtenthal and Beik 1984). Let us take a closer

look at the commentaries on Plank and Reid's literature review, and then their reply.

Spekman cogently argues for relevancy in our discussions and writings. There is a greater need for dialogue between practitioners and academicians. He feels that we have not had enough impact in influencing managerial action or strategic thinking. Furthermore, he states that as researchers, it is best that we are not limited by our initial discipline of training, professorial title-content, or departmental affiliation. After all, most business problems are not as neatly bounded and compartmentalized. Regarding the review itself, Spekman feels that more could have been done with regard to evaluating the tone, direction, and quality of past research and where it probably needs to go. Furthermore, he states that the twenty-eight categories themselves might have been further rarified and that we have not yet reached closure in many topical areas. Spekman offers his view of the future—one that foresees an alliance of global networks and a constellation of cooperation among firms that, at their core, are flexible creative learning organizations. These organizations are seen as boundaryless, implying less hierarchy, reduction in functional silos, and decentralization. The network is the dominant function and information is a shared asset. The single firm is no longer a relevant level of analysis (the extended enterprise is) and individual compensation is tied to both network and firm performance. He closes by noting that we cannot afford to hide behind a narrow definition of our field by ignoring the multidisciplinary, cross-functional, interfirm problems we face. We must attempt to push traditional research boundaries to study at the “fuzzy” nexus of disciplines, organizational boundaries, and levels of analysis.

Woodside feels that the Reid and Plank review, in the spirit of *sensemaking*, enables the reader to see the complexity of the business-to-business marketing (BBM) literature and helps the reader label, store, and retrieve pieces of the literature in a benchmark manner. He notes the meta-attributes of BBM research include positivistic view, some pretesting and questionnaire revision reflecting fifteen to forty constructs within eight to fifteen pages, typically mailed to one executive per firm in a sample of 500 to 2,000 firms with a response rate less than 30 percent with the use of multivariate data analysis, path analysis, or structural equations. Data from both sides of the buyer-seller dyad are rare. Woodside states we can no longer justify

continuing the use of one-side, one-shot, close-ended mail surveys, given the Reid and Plank (RP) call for longitudinal programmatic research. There is a need to overcome the structural biases (dissertation emphasis on multivariate data analysis with fieldwork and alternatives are not as viable to organizational structures and policies at most research universities), thereby fostering more meaningful *BBM process* research so that it will not be seen as less viable or glamorous. Woodside suggests employing multi methods to achieve both confirmation and diversity in the behavioral data as collected in/from their natural environment. The benefits he suggests may include noting *processes at the heart of BBM research*, so that an *element of time would no longer be missing* in most work, and since any one method has limitations, the use of two or more can offset if not compensate for biases resulting from any one.

Wilson aptly points out that our relevancy and contributions will have to increase, and perhaps abruptly. He notes that we need not quibble over what the Reid and Plank review did or did not do or if it left out a favorite paper that someone else might see as key. Rather, their accomplishment is in their assembling a starting point for anyone interested in pursuing research in business marketing. Theirs is “yeomen’s service,” and in great measure, as Wilson notes.

Wilson admonishes that we need to assess the impact of digital marketing in the guise of e-business, Internets, Extranets, Intranets, and electronic networks in general. One example is online bidding in larger buyer and supplier relationships. Another form of value-creating networks is the market maker function, which he believes will diminish in importance and value as more items move to a bidding model. Marketers will become less important, possibly an unnecessary cost to the firm. As well, he indicates that there will be shrinking importance and influence given to marketing. Wilson sees a paradigm battle emerging: bidding model versus relationship model approaches. Bidding models will likely be used when process value creation is *not* a significant factor and product value is. This reduces the importance of marketing’s current roles. In a high process value situation, marketing’s roles are key and this battle will be fought as buyers try to use bidding models to lower costs. Hence, marketers must find ways to develop process value within their networks. Wilson envisions other changes as well. Communications will be revamped and may include fewer salespeople functioning differently. World Wide

Web communication will be integrated with more traditional forms. The marketing group will be marginalized if we do not lead the transition by redesigning the big traditional business to a digital business. Transaction platforms facilitate buyer and seller doing business on a specialized customer-by-customer basis. Overall, however, Wilson states that alliances are the fibers that weave value-creating networks together when distributing/selling directly to the buyer. Traditional channels must become Web-based if they are to survive as well.

Reid and Plank make several observations in their reply and I encourage the reader to look at their remarks directly. Reid and Plank in their reply respond to the concerns voiced in the commentaries of Professors Spekman, Wilson, and Woodside. Their theme and hope throughout their reply is that their review will create an active, ongoing dialogue—one that includes both academics and managers. Without this dialogue between academic and business, they question whether business marketing academics will be able to justify their contributions in the future. They conclude their reply by calling for the creation of a task force to ensure that future research is addressing the right problems.

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Business Marketing Comes of Age: A Comprehensive Review of the Literature

David A. Reid
Richard E. Plank

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The study of business marketing as a distinct subject matter has had a surprisingly long history. For example, the first casebook dealing with industrial marketing was Copeland (1930) and an early textbook strictly on industrial marketing was Frederick (1934). Academic research on the subject was relatively sparse until 1972 when *Industrial Marketing Management* was introduced as a peer-refereed journal specifically for industrial marketing. Since that time academic research within the context of industrial and business marketing has continued to progress. The last comprehensive review of the field was Webster (1978a). Hence, the focus of this review is on industrial/business marketing research that was published from 1978 through 1997.

Despite Fern and Brown's (1984) challenge, industrial marketing, or business marketing as it has come to be known, continues to grow as a specific subdiscipline within marketing. Since 1978, almost 2,200 articles dealing with business marketing have been published in the selected refereed academic outlets included in this review. Currently, there are close to a dozen business marketing textbooks in print, the most recent being Anderson and Narus (1999), compared to only two major U.S. textbooks in 1978: Hill, Alexander, and Cross (1975) and Corey (1973). There have also been a number of books targeted to executives on various aspects of business marketing (e.g.,

The authors would like to thank the editor, J. David Lichtenthal, and the three anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments and contributions to this paper during the review process.

Patti and Kennedy 1991; Messer 1992; Sherlock 1992; Skinner 1995; Yovovich 1995; Peck 1997; Bly 1998; Silverstein 1998).

Given the tremendous growth in the business marketing literature since 1978, it seems only appropriate to ask

- how much progress has been made in understanding the nature of business marketing,
- what specific areas of business marketing have been studied the most, and
- how much progress has been made with respect to theory development regarding the positive and normative dimensions of business marketing practices?

This paper presents a comprehensive review of the academic literature on business marketing from 1978 through 1997. During this time period there have been a number of reviews that have addressed specific areas within business marketing; most of these have focused on organizational buying behavior. Recently, a series of reviews have examined the contributions of *Industrial Marketing Management* (LaPlaca 1997), *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing* (Johnston and Lewin 1997), *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing* (Lichtenthal, Wilson, and Long 1997), and *Advances in Business Marketing and Purchasing* (Plank 1997). Each provided useful insights but was limited by its focus on only a single publication source. Thus, there remained a need for a more integrative and comprehensive review. Toward that end, we have developed a database and analyzed a total of 2,194 articles from twenty-three key marketing journals, five sets of academic proceedings, and twelve scholarly books. Table 1 provides a complete list of the sources used for this review and indicates the first year that a particular reference appeared in the database. Basic information on each article entered into the database includes the topics addressed and whether the article was empirical or nonempirical. For empirical articles, information was also collected on research design used, sampling results, type of respondents sampled, and statistical analysis techniques used.

While the intent in compiling the database for this review was to be as inclusive and comprehensive as possible, limits had to be set to keep what was already a daunting task from becoming an impossible one. Thus, not all possible publication sources were included in the

TABLE 1. List of Reference Sources and Number of Entries and Year of First Publication

Source	n	%	Year
<i>Academy of Marketing Science Annual Proceedings</i>	58	2.6	1978
<i>American Marketing Association Summer Educators' Conference</i>	80	3.6	1978
<i>American Marketing Association Winter Educators' Conference</i>	19	<1	1989
Association for Consumer Research Annual Conference	15	<1	1980
<i>Business Horizons</i>	20	<1	1981
<i>California Management Review</i>	4	<1	1980
<i>European Journal of Marketing</i>	78	3.6	1979
<i>Harvard Business Review</i>	21	<1	1978
<i>International Journal of Research in Marketing</i>	24	1.1	1984
<i>Industrial Marketing Management</i>	815	37.1	1978
<i>Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science</i>	36	1.6	1979
<i>Journal of Advertising</i>	3	<1	1979
<i>Journal of Advertising Research</i>	3	<1	1980
<i>Journal of Business</i>	4	<1	1978
<i>Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing</i>	31	1.4	1991
<i>Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing</i>	164	7.5	1986
<i>Journal of Business Research</i>	82	3.7	1978
<i>Journal of Consumer Research</i>	2	<1	1980
<i>Journal of Marketing</i>	102	4.6	1978
<i>Journal of Marketing Research</i>	40	1.8	1978
<i>Journal of Product Innovation Management</i>	90	4.1	1984
<i>International Journal of Purchasing and Materials Management</i>	186	8.5	1978
<i>Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management</i>	130	5.9	1983
<i>Management Science</i>	13	<1	1979
<i>Marketing Science</i>	10	<1	1984
Society for Consumer Psychology Conference	2	<1	1990
<i>Sloan Management Review</i>	13	<1	1978
Misc. Book Chapters and Articles	132	6.0	1978
Total	2,194		

Note: Year indicates the first year the publication is used for the database. 1978 was the first possible year; the latest is 1991, the year the *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing* was first published.

database. Among those not included were journals focusing on specialized areas such as logistics and physical distribution, health care, public relations, direct marketing, and international business. Difficulty in obtaining access to many of the overseas publications also resulted in the work included in the database being primarily from American publications. However, the database does include two of the most prominent European journals: *European Journal of Marketing* and *International Journal of Research in Marketing*. The large and growing number of association proceedings also meant difficult choices had to be made. As can be seen from Table 1, only the proceedings of the three largest U.S. marketing groups plus the Society for Consumer Psychology were included. Books of articles, as opposed to textbooks, which were completely excluded, were also entered on a selective basis. Included were books such as those representing compilations of articles from various special academic business marketing meetings and the *Advances in Business Marketing* series. Excluded were trade books and articles from trade publications such as *Business Marketing Magazine*.

The review begins with a summary profile of the database that provides information on the number of articles from each publication source, the number of articles per year, and a descriptive breakdown of the articles in terms of empirical versus nonempirical methodology, research design, and major statistical techniques. Articles in the database were classified into twenty-eight specific topics and the breakdown by topic is presented. For discussion purposes within this article, the twenty-eight topics are grouped into seven major topic areas. These seven major topic areas reflect those major headings used in business marketing textbooks in discussing the subject. The categories are reported in the following order: business marketing strategy, organizational buying behavior and purchasing management, marketing sciences, product, pricing, distribution, and promotion. An assessment of the major themes, major individual contributions, and future trends is provided for each area. Suggestions for needed research for each area are also provided.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATABASE

As previously mentioned, a total of 2,194 articles dealing with business marketing were identified by examining the publications

listed in Table 1 for the years 1978 through 1997. An article was defined to be a business marketing article if it dealt primarily with an issue within the context of business marketing or employed a sample of primarily firms from business markets. Thus, as an example, sales articles that dealt with industrial selling or whose samples were industrial salespeople were included. On the other hand, if an article dealt with selling, but used retail salespeople as its sample population, it was excluded. Each of the authors had to agree that a particular article qualified in order for it to be included in the database. The database itself was compiled over a number of years.

Not surprisingly, *Industrial Marketing Management* contributed the largest number of articles (815). The *International Journal of Purchasing and Materials Management* was second with 186 articles. A relatively recent journal, *The Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, first published in 1986, contributed 164 articles. As would be expected, *The Journal of Consumer Research* and the annual proceedings of the Association for Consumer Research did not contribute very many articles. The same was true for general business/managerially oriented scholarly journals such as *Business Horizons*, *California Management Review*, *Harvard Business Review*, and *Sloan Management Review*.

Table 2 shows the number of articles by year published. The field of business marketing, after having 104 articles published in 1978, experienced a significant decline in the number of articles published for the years 1979 through 1984. Research activity increased in 1985 and has averaged over 125 articles per year for 1985-1997. As shown in Table 2, the peak years during the period under review were 1997, with 170 articles, and 1990, with 167. It should be noted that six journals were all started during the time frame of this review: *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*, *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, and *Marketing Science*. Hence, some of the more recent increases in activity are, in part, because of increased opportunities for publishing business marketing articles.

Table 3 provides a numerical summary of the database. Of the 2,194 articles, 1,288 are empirical in that they collected data and report the findings. The remaining 906 are nonempirical articles and can be viewed as falling into three broad categories: reviews, new or

TABLE 2. Number of Publications by Year Published

Year	Number of Publications	% of Total
1978	104	4.7
1979	61	2.8
1980	73	3.3
1981	72	3.2
1982	71	3.2
1983	63	2.9
1984	84	3.8
1985	104	4.7
1986	108	4.7
1987	104	4.7
1988	95	4.3
1989	92	4.2
1990	167	7.6
1991	108	4.8
1992	135	6.2
1993	124	5.6
1994	164	7.5
1995	149	6.8
1996	146	6.7
1997	170	7.7
Total	2,194	
Average per year	110	

revised theoretical perspectives, and normative works aimed at managers. An overwhelming number of the nonempirical pieces were normative in nature. There was also a total of nineteen academically oriented review pieces. These reviews were very focused, mostly in the area of organizational buying behavior.

Of the 1,288 empirical articles, 79.9 percent used a survey research design. Survey research designs were defined as studies where data was collected by administering a questionnaire by mail, telephone, or through personal interviews. There were fifty-four reported experiments, most of which used student subjects, twenty-four content analyses, primarily in the promotion area, 110 case studies, most of which utilized one to three cases, and forty-nine studies based on secondary data. A total of twenty-two articles involved the use of multiple de-

TABLE 3. Statistical Review of the Database

Total Articles	2,194
Empirical Articles	1,288
Nonempirical Articles	906
<i>Research Designs Utilized</i>	
(1) Survey or interview	1,029
(2) Experiment	54
(3) Case study	110
(4) Content analysis or other observation	24
(5) Multiple design	22
(6) Secondary data	49
<i>Statistical Techniques Used in Analysis</i>	
(1) Descriptive statistics	703
(2) Exploratory factor analysis	126
(3) Cluster analysis	37
(4) Regression (parametric)	194
(5) Correlation, all types	201
(6) ANOVA	129
(7) Perceptual mapping	2
(8) Multidimensional scaling	8
(9) MANOVA	55
(10) CFA and LISREL	97
(11) ANCOVA	4
(12) MANCOVA	6
(13) t-test	109
(14) F and Z tests	66
(15) General nonparametric testing	94
(16) Discriminant analysis	54
(17) Canonical correlation	10
(18) Conjoint analysis	16
(19) Logistic regression and log linear analysis	25
(20) All others not otherwise classified	143

signs that could not be simply classified into one of the previous areas.

As shown in Table 3, descriptive statistics (54.5 percent of the empirical articles) were the dominant form of statistical analysis employed. It was interesting to find that descriptive statistics were not employed in all the empirical studies, especially since one would expect them to be used to describe the sample population for external validity purposes. Other than descriptive statistics, the four most commonly used statistics were correlation (15.6 percent), parametric regression (15 percent), analysis of variance (10 percent), and exploratory factor analysis (10 percent). Structural equation modeling was used in 7.5 percent of the studies, with many of those instances representing confirmatory factor analysis. The great majority of structural equation modeling occurred after 1990. The “all others” category in Table 3 consisted primarily of instances of the use of coefficient alpha as a measure of internal consistency and other more specialized types of analyses.

Scales were often used, but factor structures and other measures of scale validity and reliability were not always reported in earlier articles, leaving the reader to assume the scale performed as had been reported in previous research. Recent articles, however, were more consistent in their reporting of this information. Given recent advances in structural equation modeling and the use of these techniques to ascertain measure validity, this trend is likely to continue.

Table 4 lists the number of articles by topic area. Each article was classified into a topical category with the possibility that an article could be included in one, two, or three topic areas depending on the breadth of the article and its focus. A total of 240 articles fit into three topic areas, 797 articles had a two-topic area focus, and 1,157 articles were focused on a single topic. Articles were assigned to a topical area using the following approach. In compiling the database, each was read and examined by both of the authors as well as graduate assistants. Each reader categorized each article and where there was agreement, the article was entered into the agreed-upon category(s). When there was a lack of consensus, the authors met to examine the article and resolve the issue.

As Table 4 shows, the most studied area was organizational buying behavior with 448 articles followed by strategy and planning (332) and general sales management (296). Other areas that had a fairly large number of articles included new product management and de-

TABLE 4. Number of Articles by Topic

Topic	n	% of Total (3,471)
Advertising	58	1.7
Sales promotion	50	1.4
Public relations	9	<1
Promotion	65	1.9
Marketing research	110	3.2
Forecasting	38	1.1
New product management and development	255	7.3
Personal selling	242	7.0
Sales training	35	1.0
Sales motivation and compensation	100	2.9
General sales management	296	8.5
Purchasing management	253	7.3
Computers in business marketing	29	<1
Decision support and management science	58	1.7
Organizational buying behavior	448	12.9
Product management	89	2.6
Pricing	73	2.1
Business services marketing	82	2.4
Channel management and administration	135	3.9
Logistics and physical distribution	22	<1
International business marketing	125	3.6
Marketing to governments	11	<1
Market segmentation	64	1.9
Market planning and strategy	332	9.6
Marketing and other functions	67	1.9
Ethics in business marketing	18	<1
Buyer-seller relationships	268	7.7
Other	141	4.0

Note: Grand total (3,471) exceeds total number of articles as 1,157 articles covered on topic, 797 articles covered two topics, and 240 articles covered three topics.

velopment (255), purchasing management (253), and personal selling (242). The areas with the fewest articles were public relations (9), marketing to government (11), and marketing ethics (18). Other areas not well represented were logistics and physical distribution (22),

computers in business marketing (29), sales training (35), and forecasting (38). In some cases the limited number of articles in an area may be due to the existence of specialized journals for these topics (e.g., *Journal of Logistics and Physical Distribution* and *Journal of Forecasting*), while in other cases it may be that there is limited interest or the topic is perceived as not being unique to business marketing. Since, as previously noted, many specialized journals and proceedings were not included in the database, these areas may be limited simply because of this.

A total of 130 articles had topic areas that could not be classified into the existing database typology. These included some important new areas such as internal marketing, quality, and generalized discussions of business marketing that did not readily fit any category.

In the sections that follow, the twenty-eight topic areas are grouped for discussion purposes into seven research areas. This grouping is clearly one of convenience; as with any such effort not everyone will agree with all of the groupings. The classification scheme used reflects the categories typically used in business marketing textbooks. No statistical analysis of the classifications was intended. Each research area's topics are discussed as to the direction of the field and the nature of the research. The first research area, labeled strategy, includes market planning and strategy, marketing and other functions, ethics, international, marketing to governments, and general business marketing. The second area is organizational buying and purchasing. This includes the topics of organizational buying behavior, purchasing management, and buyer-seller relationships. The third area, marketing sciences, includes market research, forecasting, computers in business marketing, decision support and management science, and market segmentation. The fourth area, product, includes new product management and development, product management, and business services. The fifth area is pricing. The sixth area, channels, includes channel management and administration, logistics, and physical distribution. The last area, promotion, includes advertising, sales promotion, public relations, general promotion, personal selling, sales training, sales motivation and compensation, and general sales management.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a general overview and assessment of the field. For people new to the field it provides a comprehensive assessment of the field and offers suggestions for needed research. For experienced researchers with a defined focus in the

field, it provides insights into areas they may not be familiar with and identifies additional research opportunities.

MARKETING STRATEGY

We begin the review with the area of strategy and its associated topics. This section is divided into the following categories: business market planning and strategy, international business marketing, marketing to government, marketing and other functions, ethics, and general literature.

Business Market Planning and Strategy

The planning and strategy research includes a number of clearly identifiable streams. One major stream consists of papers calling for more strategic planning in business markets and looks at general strategy issues. For example, Schanck (1979) discussed the need for a more strategic orientation. Hakansson (1980), building on the Industrial Marketing and Purchasing Group (IMP) research, suggested that buyer needs and supplier strategies be considered in developing strategy. Dawson (1980) called for developing internationally based business marketing strategies. His early piece foresaw the increasingly global environment of business competition and the need to integrate a firm's business activity globally to achieve competitive advantage. Coe (1981), based on a sample of 209 respondents, described the use of strategic planning concepts by business marketers. In light of all the changes that have been taking place in strategic planning, it is interesting to note that there has been no follow-up to this study.

Another example of work in the general strategy area is Hutt and Speh (1984) who developed the concept of the marketing strategy center and stressed the interdisciplinary role that the marketing group played in industrial organizations' development of strategy. This important work is, in fact, a forerunner of the notion of supply chain management, with the marketing group playing an important role as a creator of interfunctional as well as cross-company value. Turnbull and Valla (1986), building on work done by the IMP group, called for the use of an interaction approach to developing strategy. The interaction approach takes a very cross-functional perspective. Kerin and

Harvey (1987) applied game theory to strategic marketing thinking, indicating the potential usefulness of that paradigm for strategic planning. In another important piece, Hakansson and Snehota (1990) argued that marketing strategy cannot be done solely from the perspective of a single firm. They argued that it is really dependent on a number of significant issues, such as suppliers and wholesalers, and therefore requires what they call a network concept. In essence, Hakansson and Snehota (1990) state that strategy needs to be developed from the perspective of the supply chain. Their perspective of networks is similar to the Japanese concept of Keiretsu. However, the culture of business in Japan is very different from most other economies with respect to the relationships between firms and networks and they are therefore likely to operate somewhat differently in Western cultures. Network marketing is examined in a book of readings edited by Iacobucci (1996). The collected works in the Iacobucci text focus on defining the concept of networks, describing various network examples, and providing methodological devices for doing research on networks. The new world order suggests that network-linked organizations are the emerging organizational form. Berling (1993) makes a similar case, arguing that what is emerging from a strategic perspective is an emphasis on building relational advantages, partnerships, alliances, and networks to further competitive advantage.

A number of other topics related to general strategic marketing have also been addressed. For instance, Slater (1993) provides normative advice for competing in what he calls high-velocity markets, markets that change rapidly. This is similar to what D'Aveni (1994) refers to as hypercompetitive markets.

Taking a unique perspective, Barius (1994) discusses the use of the concept of simultaneous engineering in marketing. He argues that many marketing activities can be done simultaneously, much as in engineering, to speed the product to market and provides a case study as an example. Juttner and Wehili (1994) argue for merging marketing thought with a competence-based perspective. Borrowing from recent strategic management literature, the authors frame the development of a competence-based marketing strategy model. Taking somewhat narrower perspectives, Polonsky (1995) provides an argument for using stakeholders to define environmental strategy, while Frank-

wick et al. (1994) examine the impact of organizational beliefs and their changes on strategy formulation.

A great deal of the work in the strategy area has centered on portfolios and their usage by business marketers. In an early example, Boyd and Headen (1978) discussed the idea of defining and managing the product portfolio. Fiocca (1982) provides a discussion of account portfolios and Yorke and Droussiotis (1994) provide an empirical study of usage from the perspective of customer satisfaction. Finally, Turnbull (1990) provides a review article examining the use of portfolio planning models in buyer-supplier relations.

Competitive intelligence usage and other perspectives on defining competition have also attracted considerable attention. Zinkham and Gelb (1985) provide an empirical examination of how business marketers practice competitive intelligence, while Jain (1985) provides a normative discussion of how to go about doing competitive analysis. From a more theoretical perspective, Sheth (1985) describes the determinants of competitive structures in business markets. Oral and Reisman (1988), using a relatively small sample (twenty-seven respondents), focused on actually measuring industrial competitiveness. Lastly, Ramaswamy, Gatignon, and Reibstein (1994) developed a model of competitive marketing behavior in business markets.

The use of various accounting-related techniques, in reference to either strategy development or measurement of success, has also been discussed. As noted by Rayburn (1977), the interface of marketing and accounting has a rich history. Examples of this research include Kortge (1984) and Powers (1987), who examine the use of breakeven analysis; Brown (1979), who looked at life cycle costing; Stevenson, Barner, and Stevenson (1993), who examined activity-based costing; and Morgan and Morgan (1980), who looked at cost controls used by firms. Wagner and Hall (1991) provide a discussion of lease accounting as a business marketing strategy. More recently, Gagne and Disenza (1995) provide an excellent discussion of target costing. This phenomenon occurs in the automobile industry, as well as others, and involves the buyer and seller setting target prices that usually decrease over time as both parties make attempts to lower the selling price (in essence, this is basically a form of negotiated pricing). Other work of interest includes work on national account marketing (e.g., Stevenson and Page 1979; Stevenson 1981) and the use of social auditing for marketing managers (Kizilbash et al. 1979). Surprisingly,

there is only one article on risk analysis in strategic planning in a business marketing context (Shah and LaPlaca 1981).

The evaluation of marketing activities has also been investigated in the business marketing strategy literature. An article by Lambert and Sterling (1987), for instance, provides some interesting insight on the kinds of profitability measures that business marketers use. About 78 percent of the respondents used profitability reports by product line, but only 66 percent by product and only 20 percent by customer or channel of distribution. Full absorption costing was used by 76 percent of the respondents, but only 17 percent of the firms adjusted their results for inflation or replacement costs. Along the same lines, Jackson, Ostrom, and Evans (1981) examined measures used to evaluate business marketing activities. Gross (1985), on the other hand, provides a general framework for measuring marketing productivity. Hooley and Jobber (1986), based on results from 1,775 respondents, defined five common factors that contributed to the success of top-performing firms. The five factors that were consistent with the top seventy-three high-performing firms were (1) a relatively high customer orientation, (2) the ability to respond flexibly to environmental changes, (3) a proactive planning process, (4) an emphasis on product differentiation, and (5) very tight control over the marketing function and tactical activities.

One of the most influential pieces of research in this area is the modeling work done by Choffray and Lilien (1978) on measuring industrial response. Their model, consisting of four submodels—awareness, acceptance, individual evaluation, and group decision making—has generated a great deal of testing within each submodel area.

Cressman (1995) provides an interesting framework for diagnosing marketing activities. The author argues that because many organizations are under pressure to reduce costs the real risk they face is that personnel reductions and other cost-cutting measures may significantly reduce competitiveness. The author provides a process using value chain analysis to assess contributions of marketing staff to adding value for the company's customers and thus tries to ensure that cuts made in staff focus on only non-value-adding activities.

Other contributions to the strategic literature include the many articles that describe strategic issues in either a specific industry, company, or part of the world (e.g., Hallen and Johnson 1985; Lamb 1990; Weinrauch et al. 1991). Within this area, high-technology mar-

keting has seen a number of research contributions. They include Samli and Wills (1990), who provide a general discussion of strategic issues in high-technology marketing; MacInnis and Heslop (1990), who provide a discussion of how to plan in a high-technology environment; and Traynor and Traynor (1989), who examine the marketing approaches used by high-technology firms.

A classic article by Jackson (1985) provides an interesting discussion of buyer-seller relationships and the notion of switching costs as an important element in strategy development. Burger and Cann (1995) provide the only explicit general discussion of postpurchase strategy in the literature, although Samli, Jacobs, and Wills (1992) do provide a discussion of pre- and postsale services. These authors provide lists of about seven different pre- and postsale services that are important in international business. For presale activities they include such activities as identifying key services, assisting in international financing, and planning electronic data interchange (EDI) systems. For postsale activities they include training, technical assistance, maintenance and repair, and suggestions to generally minimize post-sale risk.

Finally, there has also been limited discussion of the use of strategic alliances. Examples of this work include Sethuraman, Anderson, and Narus (1988), who used social exchange theory to examine the determinants of partnership success and advantage; Bucklin and Sengupta (1993), who studied successful comarketing alliances; and Walters, Peters, and Dess (1994), who provided some guidelines for making alliances work.

Summary of Planning and Strategy Research

While the strategy literature in business marketing is quite broad, it is also quite uneven. A variety of issues have been examined but there is little consensus on many issues and even less programmatic work. Most of the work has tended to be conceptual in nature. Empirical work has been primarily descriptive and has yielded some insight into how firms deal with some aspects of strategy.

The work in the strategy literature reflects the tremendous changes that are going on in the environment and how firms are dealing with them. Discussions of strategic alliances and partnerships demonstrate the increase in these kinds of arrangements that are occurring. Achrol

(1991) argues that with an increasingly turbulent environment the necessity for changes in organizational forms is a forerunner of changes in strategic orientation. Work on networks and a broadened view of supply chain strategy have suggested new approaches to strategy and its formulation (Turnbull and Valla 1986; Hakansson and Snehota 1990). The concepts of switching costs, which can be linked to the work of Williamson (1979), and transactions costs also provide an important thread for the practitioner as they can be used to think through strategic issues as well as the obvious tactical usages of the concepts in focusing marketing activities. As technology continues to play a more important role in everyday life, high-technology marketing will continue to be an important context for examining strategic as well as tactical issues. Measures of marketing performance and models of strategic marketing response will probably need to be reformulated to take into account networks as more and more companies take this perspective in various industries.

The strategic planning literature as exemplified by work in such journals as *Long Range Planning* and *Strategic Management Journal* is quite broad. While much of the work in these journals focuses on financial dimensions, using secondary data, in examining performance, mergers, and acquisitions, behavioral issues of interest are also explored that may be useful in understanding strategy in business markets.

In light of the research to date, many questions regarding marketing strategy in business markets remain unanswered. Among them are the following:

- What long-term strategic advantages accrue to a firm's adopting a supply chain focus?
- What activities and processes performed within the firm contribute to sustainable competitive advantage and under what conditions?
- What role does creativity and creative thinking play in developing successful strategic plans?

International Business Marketing

The international aspects of business marketing have a fairly extensive research history. Research in this area can be grouped into

five categories: exporting, international strategy, countertrade, specific country or area studies, and marketing functions.

As a mode of entry, exporting is considered the easiest way to get into international markets; hence, it is not surprising that this area has been examined in some detail. An early article by Gronhaug and Lorentzen (1982) empirically documented basic export strategies in business markets with regard to distribution channels and partner choices.

However, there has been very limited examination of export performance of business marketers. Koh and Robicheaux (1988) took a broad view and examined export performance as a function of overall export strategies. Using a sample of 233 U.S. firms, they found that export pricing and going directly to the buyer had the biggest impact on export performance. McGuinness and Little (1981) examined the influence of product and firm characteristics on exporting of new products, whereas Samiee and Walters (1990) examined only firm characteristics such as size on both export planning and performance. McGuinness and Little found that certain product characteristics had an impact on export performance, but that firm characteristics were more important. Samiee and Walters looked at firm characteristics in more detail and found that planning, attitudes, and information gathering on the part of the firm had the most impact.

Attitudes toward exporting have also received only limited attention in the business marketing literature. Johnston and Czinkota (1985) examined them among high-technology companies. Their study was very narrow: three industries and only firms with sales of \$50 million or less. They collected 301 responses and found attitudes varied across the industries and, as expected, companies having more favorable attitudes toward exporting were generally more successful. More recently, Axinn et al. (1995) looked at the attitudes toward exporting of smaller industrial firms in a longitudinal study. They found a relationship between export intentions on the part of managers and their belief in its value. They did not, however, find any relationship between export intentions and actual exporting practices. The research addressing export attitudes in business may possibly reflect a belief that business marketers' attitudes are not all that different from those of consumer goods marketers when it comes to exporting.

Among the other aspects of exporting that have been examined, Klein, Frazier, and Roth (1990) used transactional cost theory to ex-

amine channel integration in international markets, focusing on exporting. Bello and Verhage (1989) defined the export tasks. They then looked at size and distance factors and the impact of those factors on whether or not an exporter will assign some export tasks to the middleman used in the process. As Bello and Verhage (1989) expected, larger exporters do more tasks themselves relative to the distance involved (the greater the distance, the more likely these tasks are done by the exporter). In general, exporters have a desire to control those tasks which offset the higher costs of completing the tasks. From a normative perspective, Seringhaus (1987) examined the practice of using trade missions to assist in export market entry. Finally, Turnbull (1990), using the IMP case format, studied the role of personal contacts in industrial export marketing. His examination of primarily British companies found personal contacts to be very important.

International strategy has also had only limited discussion in business marketing literature. Dawson (1980) suggested a normative framework for setting business marketing strategies within multinational settings. Dawson identified five models of industrial development. He then suggested that companies wishing to do business in a country must align their strategies with the nature of development in the country, be systemic in their approach, be socially conscious, be adaptable, and have policies that reflect interregional differences—and at the same time preserve national identity and culture.

Only two empirical papers have attempted to examine general strategic performance. Fraser and Hite (1990) examined the general impact of strategic orientation on performance in global markets using a sample of 110 medium-size companies. They argue that their results suggest that the general relationship of market share to profitability, identified in the Profit Impact of Market Strategy (PIMS) studies, does not appear to exist across international markets. But they note that marketing mix variables of product, sales force, and advertising appear to be related to international performance. Samiee and Roth (1992) looked at the impact of marketing standardization on performance. What they found was that marketing standardization by a firm had no statistical impact on a firm's profitability.

Of the literature included in this review, only one empirical study was found that addressed entry mode choice. In the study, Erramili and Rao (1993) used transaction cost analysis as the theoretical basis for trying to understand how service firms made entry decisions. The

authors note that service firms may choose between full control modes of entry, such as a wholly owned operation or various forms of shared control such as a joint venture or licensing and franchising. They found that service firms tend to enter sharing control with partners when asset specificity is low and that this tendency increases when country risk is high and when the firms are smaller and have fewer resources.

Few attempts have been directed at the use of market segmentation in the development of international markets. An early study by Chiesl and Lamb (1983) looked at how business markets were segmented internationally. Plank (1985a) provided a normative approach that suggested an additional level of segmentation using the country as the basis. Frear, Alquire, and Metcalf (1995) also looked at country as a basis of segmentation using a sample of 135 firms representing forty-two countries. The authors clustered the countries into groups, something that has been done for years in the academic literature, but their approach was to use the sourcing strategies to do the clustering. What was not done, but might be interesting, is to compare sourcing strategies of firms operating in specific countries with the development level of that country, thus tying the idea of Dawson (1980) into this methodology. Schuster and Bodkin (1987) investigated exporters views of segmentation. Using a small sample of sixty-eight respondents from the state of Virginia, they found that 72 percent do differentiate between domestic and foreign in terms of marketing mix, but only 22 percent differentiate between countries. This suggests that the sophistication level of this sample was relatively low.

One of the more extensive streams of research in the international area of business marketing has been countertrade. Shipley and Neale (1987) provide an empirical examination of barter and countertrade activities. Using a U.K. sample they found fifty-seven companies out of 217 who responded from a sample frame of 1,000 who did countertrade. Of those fifty-seven, a total of thirty-five did international countertrade, twenty-two did domestic countertrade, and no companies did both. Respondents reported the biggest benefit of countertrade was that it allowed entry into difficult markets. The biggest drawback was companies often had no use for the goods they had to take in countertrade deals. Okoroafo (1994), on the other hand, provides a normative model for implementing countertrade. Palia and his colleagues (1992, 1993; Palia and Shenkar 1991; Palia and Yoon

1994) have empirically documented countertrade practices, mostly in Asian countries. Finally, Forker (1992) and Pearson and Forker (1995) have examined the role of supply management in the countertrade process. Although this material is enlightening, it may be of diminishing value given recent trends. There is growing anecdotal evidence in the trade press that suggests that countertrade is ceasing to be an issue in many markets. This includes trade press articles that report on the dissolution of major Fortune 500 companies' countertrade departments and reports by many observers that countertrade is just not much of an issue. Even the requirements that a certain percentage of exported goods have local content, laws that were in effect in many countries, seem to be lessening due, perhaps, to the many trading blocks that are growing in importance and lowering barriers within their own borders. Whether or not countertrade continues to be important is certainly an empirical question, and dissolution of countertrade departments in some companies may just be a recognition that the job is better done with a different administrative structure.

Another area that has been examined in some detail in the international business marketing literature is the marketing activities within specific country or area markets. Most of these studies are very specific and normative in tone. Examples of these include Herbig and Palumbo (1993), who examined aftermarket distribution in Japan; Tsurumi (1982), who examined business marketing systems in Japan; Oikawa and Tanner (1992), who examined the impact of Japanese culture on business relationships with them; Wortzel (1983), who examined marketing to developing Asian countries; Hill (1980), who discussed doing business in Eastern Europe; Domenski and Guzeh (1992), who examined organizational buying in Poland; and Mafi and Carr (1990), who provided some guidelines for doing business in Iran. Other research (Chang and Ding 1995; Davies et al. 1995) has examined the impact of culture on organizational buying behavior of business relationships in China. Work by Spekman (1991) examined U.S. buyers' relationships with suppliers from the Pacific Rim countries, outlining some of the problems of importing and negotiating with companies from this part of the world. While in a slightly different twist, Banting, Beraco, and Gross (1991) examined and compared organizational buying in capitalist versus socialist states and found the process much different under state ownership. From the European side of things, Roos, Veie, and Welch (1992) re-

ported on a case study of how equipment is purchased in Czechoslovakia while Dion and Banting (1990) and Saghafi, Sciglimpaglia, and Withans (1995) examined empirically NAFTA and the EEC and the impact of those trade blocs on business marketing activity.

There have also been a number of articles that have examined functional issues as they relate to the international context with perhaps the most work focusing on the purchasing area. For example, Carter and Narasimnan (1990), Monczka and Trent (1991), Monczka and Trent (1992), and Hibbert (1993) have all discussed some aspect of global sourcing. Empirical examinations of various aspects of global sourcing have been done by Ford (1984); Haugland (1990); Min and Gale (1991); Gulbro and Herbig (1995); Levthesser, LaBahn, and Harich (1995); and Thorelli and Glowacka (1995). This work points out the increasing importance of worldwide sourcing to meet needs of what are increasingly global company operations. It also points out the increased emphasis on global strategic orientation, even by companies that would not be considered large multinationals. There have also been many discussions of the cross-cultural aspects of this type of work (e.g., Chiesl and Knight 1981; Ghauri 1988; Kaynak 1989; Kaynak and Kuchukemiroglu 1992). In general, this work points out the problems associated with attempting to do global sourcing and the general associated problems with a global strategic orientation.

There has also been a number of studies that have looked at specific aspects of marketing activities. For example, both Cavusgil (1988) and Weekly (1992) discuss issues with regard to pricing. Hill and Allaway (1993); Samli, Wirth, and Wills (1994); and Honeycutt and Ford (1995) all discuss issues on managing sales forces. The use of trade shows has been examined by Bello and Barksdale (1986), who empirically examined exporting at trade shows, and by O'Hara, Palumbo, and Herbig (1993), who discuss the use of trade shows outside of the United States. In the new product development area, Chakrabarti, Feinman, and Fuentesvilla (1978) empirically examined differences in product innovation internationally. Results of their research, which examined 500 randomly selected innovations, indicated that the United States, as compared to Great Britain, West Germany, France, Japan, and Canada, had more innovation, but no real advantages over other countries in time to market, profitability, or other measures of success. More recently, Kleinschmidt (1994) has also reported on new product development. He compared European

versus North American companies on new product development processes and results. He found them to be somewhat different and suggests that at least some of the variance is likely to be explained by cultural/national conditions. A number of research projects have also looked at international ramifications associated with various distribution and logistics issues. Murphy and Daley (1994), for example, look at the special logistics issues when doing international sourcing. Wetzels et al. (1995) examined the measurement of service quality in international distribution channels. Fram (1992) as well as Cavusgil, Yeoh, and Mitri (1995) discuss how to select foreign distributors. The latter authors discuss how to make these decisions using expert systems technology. In more of a theory testing paper, Johnston et al. (1993) examined interfirm power in Japanese distribution channels. Finally, Lilien and Weinstein (1984) have also used the Advisor program to examine marketing expenditures in an international setting.

One final international area that has not received any significant attention is that of legal issues in international marketing. This is surprising given that different countries have very different legal and regulatory systems that require very different approaches to various business practices. One interesting paper in this area is by Breitenbach (1995), who examines the issue of resolving international business disputes, most of which deal with very fundamental buyer-seller issues. He provides a practical framework for purchasing to examine and attempt to resolve these disputes. A second paper by Harvey (1987) examines the problem of product counterfeiting. While most of the counterfeiting problems seem to involve consumer products, industrial products also face problems with this, especially in such areas as parts supply.

Summary of International Research

International marketing has taken on greater importance in the academic world over the past twenty years in keeping with the increased global competition. This is evidenced by the increase in academic journals dealing with international business and that more journals are actively encouraging internationally based research for submissions. There also appears to be an increase in academic partnering across international boundaries.

In summary, many areas in business marketing have been examined in an international context. However, for much of this research, the international dimensions have been incidental to the major work being done in the topic area. Several areas that are international in character have had extensive work, such as countertrade, exporting, and linking marketing practices to success in international markets. Most of the work, however, has been either descriptive or is in the very early stages of development. The normative work has tended to be very narrow in focus.

Clearly more research within an international framework is needed. Research and anecdotal trade information tells us that doing business internationally is quite different from doing business in the United States. Differences exist in cultures, business processes, business customers, distribution channels, and expectations.

However, caution needs to be used, as research processes may require significant changes due to the many problems, such as language and country infrastructure, that confront those doing international research. Psychological variables, for example, pose a special problem for the researcher. Just because a variable exists in the language does not mean that it is a concept understood by the respondent. Thus, caution with scales used to measure psychological variables must be advised.

Given that the globalization of business is becoming a reality, suggested research questions in need of attention include the following:

- What is the impact of global sourcing on business marketing activities, both normatively and positively?
- How will global sourcing impact the sales process and the strategic sales planning process?
- What normative issues face firms when attempting to do business in an economic community such as the European Union?
- How do different legal systems, principles, and legislative laws across political boundaries impact business marketing activities?

Marketing to the Government

This area has had almost no activity. There were just eleven references to marketing to government buyers. Work has been done in bid-

ding (Boughton 1994, 1997; Gordon and Welch 1978), market research for government markets (Vest 1986), the defense industry buying process (Schill 1980), and the nature of competition in government procurement (Entrikin and Peterson 1981). Other papers of note include Goretsky (1986), who provides advice on market planning for government procurement, and Sheth, Williams, and Hill (1983), who discuss general similarities and differences between government and business procurement. Despite a lack of research on selling to the government, there are a number of books available to interested readers that may generate some possible research avenues. Among these are Bauer (1994); Sullivan (1997); Worthington, Goldsmith, and contra Alston (1998); Estell (1991); and Fishner (1989).

Given the importance of governmental agencies to business markets, there are many interesting questions that could and should be examined, including these:

- What are the similarities and differences in marketing activities in dealing with governmental versus commercial markets?
- What are the key marketing processes within the firm that contribute to success in governmental markets?
- Within open bid processes, what processes and activities contribute to successfully obtaining a bid while at the same time maximizing realized revenue?

Marketing and Other Functions

Research examining the role of marketing/purchasing and other functions in the firm can be divided into three groups. The first examines such issues as marketing and other functional areas such as R&D, production, and engineering. A significant proportion of the work in this area has centered on the relationship between marketing and R&D. The second deals with the purchasing function and its role with engineering, manufacturing, and in new product development. The final group addresses the notion of cross functionality in general.

The notion of the interface between marketing and R&D is an old one. For example, a classic work by Berenson (1968) examined this issue in detail, specifically developing a model to assist in the transfer of R&D findings to the marketplace. He suggested four organizational mechanisms: project team, product manager, functional grouping of resources, and some combination of these as the means for an

organization to structure its operations to improve the R&D interface and ultimately the transfer of R&D to the marketplace.

Souder (1981) provided empirical evidence of the disharmony between marketing and R&D. An empirical piece by Gupta and Wilmon (1988) examined the idea of credibility leading to cooperation in the R&D/marketing interface. Using a small sample (seventeen firms), Moenaert and Souder (1990) studied the use of external information by both R&D and marketing personnel. Gupta, Raj, and Wilemon (1985) investigated the R&D and marketing interface within a high-technology context. Lucas and Bush (1988) explored the impact of personality on the R&D/marketing interface. In a conceptual piece, Wilson and Ghingold (1987) argue for linking market needs and R&D by, among other things, a better interface, which they argue will improve the firm's marketing efforts. New and Schlacter (1979), also a conceptual piece, suggest that earlier marketing appraisals of R&D projects could result in the earlier abandonment of bad projects, suggesting that marketing research and market studies would lead to more effective R&D from a market perspective.

A number of research projects have studied R&D and marketing within the context of new product introductions. Souder (1988), for example, empirically examined how to manage the interface of R&D and marketing throughout the new product development process. Work by Hise et al. (1990) examined marketing and R&D interaction and found that the better the interaction, the more likely the firm was to be successful with the new product introduction. A recent normative piece by Moenaert and Souder (1990) provides an information transfer model for integrating marketing and R&D personnel in the new product development process.

There has, of course, been a fairly good amount of interface research beyond just marketing and R&D. Early work by Taylor and Anderson (1979), for instance, suggested the use of goal programming to facilitate the interaction between marketing and the production planning process. This particular research is evident in the operations literature on production planning that occasionally examines how to get other significant functions involved in the production planning process. There is also some discussion of this particular interface in the forecasting literature. In addition, there is ample evidence, both anecdotal and scholarly, that companies are essentially achieving this using very different approaches. For example, Just-In-

Time II (JIT II), which involves having a supplier's employee on the buyer site to coordinate inventory and production with the supplier's production, is becoming far more common. Electronic data interchange (EDI), which links the material requirements planning (MRP) systems of the buyer and supplier firms, can do the same thing but without the direct use of personnel. Both techniques result in the coordination of production and marketing for production planning purposes, using the customer as the bridge.

Lancaster (1995) provides an interesting review of some of the literature on the production/engineering interface and offers normative guidelines for its coordination. Other work has addressed conflicts between engineering and marketing (Weinrauch and Anderson 1982), the sales and production interface (Clare and Sanford 1984; Konijnendik 1993), and the marketing and manufacturing interface (Crittenden, Gardiner, and Storm 1993).

Most of the research on functional interfaces has been descriptive or normative in nature. A noteworthy exception is a study by Hallen, Johanson, and Seyed-Mohamed (1993). Using social exchange and contingency theory, the authors examine the technology adaptations that firms make to achieve a fit between the firm's products, processes, and procedures. While they specifically studied the adaptation across the relationship between firms, their research also has connotations for within-firm analysis. They found that customer technologies matter and that the relationships differ based on the kind of technology. Customer technology, therefore, needs to be considered in marketing efforts and intrafirm relationships need to recognize this and address it.

Three articles in the business marketing literature addressed the interface of purchasing and other areas. Dale and Cunningham (1983) examined the purchasing/manufacturing interface in the make or buy decision. Using a case study methodology, they outlined the complexity of this decision, the large number of people and organizational functions that need to get involved, and the accounting methods that need to be used. Anklesaria and Burt (1987) looked at personal factors and their impact on the purchasing/engineering interface. Williams, Giunipero, and Henthorne (1994) found that building cross-functional linkages between marketing and purchasing is currently being done by managers with good results. The academic and trade literature provides ample evidence that, in many firms, pur-

chasing is getting more involved in the new product development process at a much earlier stage and working more closely with engineering, manufacturing, and R&D.

The final area of research takes a more macro view of cross-functional efforts in organizations. Lim and Reid (1992), Cespedes (1994), and Hutt (1995) are all examples of this type of research. Of these, Hutt (1995) offers a more theoretical perspective, while both Lim and Reid (1992) and Cespedes (1994) have a more pragmatic, normative focus. All three papers point out the need to understand how to better integrate functions in the organization.

Summary of Marketing and Other Functions Research

The relationship of marketing and other functions has taken on a new urgency over the past fifteen years. As technology such as EDI continues to expand in use, the need to examine how work gets done within and across organizations will increase. Most business marketing thought within organizations has focused on the interaction of marketing and R&D. The consensus of this research and the normative advice is that improved linkages lead to better new product activities.

The interface of marketing and purchasing has also been examined but has not been explored thoroughly to date. The increase in partnering-type activities, and closer working relationships between suppliers and distribution partners and buyers and sellers in general, calls for a greater understanding of ways to coordinate work across functional boundaries as well as across organizations. An issue that clearly needs better delineation is what exactly is meant by the supply chain. Is it just the interface of purchasing and suppliers with logistic activities serving as the synergizing factors? If it is, then the interface considerations are fairly straightforward. If, however, the supply chain is viewed as the entire process from the supply of raw materials through the distribution channel to the customer, then the interface considerations are far more complex. At its most complex level, one could conceive of strategic issues involving one supply chain pitted against another, which, given the competitive advantage available through purchasing and distribution, is easily conceivable. Currently the perspective in supply chain research seems to be leaning toward that of

the network perspective rather than a firm perspective in an effort to understand that complexity.

Additional research questions that need to be addressed include these:

- What specific change orientations produce better cross-functional cooperation?
- Under what conditions do cross-functional activities produce superior performance?
- What changes need to be made to motivational systems as well as corporate culture to ensure cross-functional activities contribute value?
- What is the continuing role of information technology applications such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems and how can they be used to better facilitate improved cross-functional as well as cross-company process improvements?
- What sorts of cross-functional configurations have the greatest impact on organizational value?

Ethics

There has been a great deal of research examining business ethics. Most of this research has appeared in a specialized journal on ethics or in general marketing journals. However, this research has typically not been in a business marketing context. In the journals included in this review, only fourteen articles dealing with ethics in a business marketing context were found. Most of these articles were primarily survey-based empirical studies that attempted to define and/or describe managers' ethical or lack of ethical behavior. For example, Rudelius and Buchholz (1979), Browning and Zabriskie (1983), and Forker and Janson (1990) all examined ethical behavior in organizational buying. Rudelius and Buchholz (1979), using a sample of purchasing agents, attempted to determine which situations were perceived as ethical dilemmas. Both Browning and Zabriskie (1983) and Forker and Janson (1990) used self-report studies to investigate which kinds of ethical problems were being violated the most. With National Association of Purchasing Management (NAPM) sponsorship, the latter study was able to be far more inclusive. Results of this broad study indicated most firms did have ethics policies and that they did seem to be a deterrent to major problems. Most respondents,

NAPM members, felt that only advertising specialties and business lunches were ethical, but that buyers admitted to accepting other kinds of “favors” from sellers. A more narrowly targeted study by Dempsey, Bushman, and Plank (1980) examined buyers’ perceptions and use of personal inducements in the buying process, while Turner, Taylor, and Hartley (1994) looked at ethics policies and the acceptance of bribes and other gratuities. Only one study (Trawick et al. 1991) has examined the influence of buyer ethics on the actual buyer-seller dyad.

As is discussed in the sales research portion of this paper, ethics in selling has received considerable attention. Examples from the sales area include Trawick, Swan, and Rink (1988) who looked at back door selling as an ethics problem as well as Trawick and Swan (1988) who examined the ethical issues involved in the use of personal inducements. In a related area, Weeks and Kahle (1990) studied the impact of salespeople’s social values on their work effort.

There have been only a few normative articles on ethics in business marketing. In an early piece, not specifically tied to practices in business markets, Lantos (1987) equates ethics with morality and provides a defense of the free-market system. He argues that absolute standards as opposed to relative ones are a more defensible approach to setting ethical standards. More recently, Gundlach and Murphy (1993) have argued for a set of ethical and legal foundations that underlie relationship marketing and the link of ethics to legal development. From an ethical perspective, they suggest three foundations of ethical exchange: equality in exchange, the notion of keeping a promise, and the dual morality of duty and aspiration. They then argue that the dimensions of ethical exchange include trust, equity, responsibility, and commitment.

Summary of Ethics Research

Ethical issues in business markets continue to be unexplored terrain. What is interesting about the business marketing ethics literature (and generally sets it apart from the consumer marketing, general marketing, and business ethics literature) is its emphasis on the buyer and buyer ethics. This focus is noticeably absent from discussions of ethics in other business areas that invariably focus on the firm or marketer and not the consumer. In fact, little has been written about the

responsibilities of the customer other than in ethics research in business markets.

The major weakness in the ethics research is the lack of any international perspective. There is a great deal of anecdotal data that doing business in different parts of the world requires, among other things, adherence to somewhat different ethical standards. Companies with a great deal of international/multinational experience have reported such differences in the trade press, and an examination of the many “doing business in” trade books suggests there are different ethical standards and rules in different parts of the world. More research is needed to document these purported differences and to examine how they impact on doing business. Additionally, research might also want to consider these questions:

- What corporate and individual values contribute to ethical and unethical behavior?
- What cultural values lead to different ethical orientations in different parts of the world?
- Are ethical values moving more closely together worldwide or are they separating further?
- Are business buyers more ethical than end consumers?

Miscellaneous

The miscellaneous research category includes material that because of the broad focus could not be easily categorized into other areas. Thirty-one articles were assigned to this category.

One set of papers in this area dealt with business marketing in general. One such example is Webster's (1978a) early review of business marketing. In his review, Webster pointed out that more research on business marketing was needed and that given business marketing's unique aspects, research on business marketing would continue to grow. Judging from the almost 2,200 articles that have been published since that review, his prediction was correct. A distinctly opposite view was offered by Fern and Brown (1984) who argued that business marketing was not a separate area of study. It is interesting that while their paper generated a good deal of discussion, it generated little in the way of published rebuttals (Cooke 1986).

Another general business marketing article that is noteworthy, is one by Giunipero, Crittenden, and Crittenden (1990) that explored

how to market to nonprofit organizations and examined the buying behavior of those organizations. No other work was found in the business marketing literature reviewed that dealt with nonprofit organizations. Nonprofits offer interesting business-to-business research opportunities because of the many differences that exist between them and for-profit organizations.

There were also a number of articles that dealt with organizational issues. Among these, Ames (1978), for example, presents a very general discussion of maintaining a management ethic in the process of managing a business-to-business firm. Only one article discussed the notion of internal marketing within business-to-business firms (Harrell and Fors 1992). Herbig and Shao (1993) explore the Keiretsu concept and its applicability to American firms. Finally, both O'Neil and LaFiel (1992) and Morgan and Piercy (1992) discussed various aspects of quality management as it applies within the business-to-business sector.

Articles addressing business marketing education were also assigned to the miscellaneous category. Examples of work in this area include empirical pieces by Plank (1982) and Messina, Guffrida, and Wood (1991) that examined business marketers' views of what was needed for entry-level business marketing positions. Taking quite a different perspective, Wills (1984) discussed the marketing of a business school to industry. On a more micro level, Lichtenthal and Butaney (1991) examined how business marketing was taught at various institutions.

Environmental marketing was also the subject of a number of papers. Both Peattie and Ratnayatan (1992) and Apaiwongse (1994) discuss "green marketing." Both authors see that environmental awareness and sensitivity can provide a potential competitive advantage to a firm. Langrehr, Langrehr, and Tatreau (1992) looked at buyers' perceptions of recycled products. Apaiwongse (1993) provides an interesting study of market reactions to EPA policies. While the sample was somewhat small (forty-two companies), it provides insight into how companies deal with this regulatory agency. There is a great deal of activity on environmental marketing in other literatures in marketing, notably marketing and public policy and in the consumer behavior arena. There is also a great deal of anecdotal evidence in the trade press in this area. For example, ISO 14,000, a new international quality standard for firm environmental management, has

been recently discussed in the business marketing literature (Miles 1997). Yet, there is much more interest in environmental management in the business press, especially in the European Common Market where the environment is a much bigger political issue.

Finally, some other areas that have been touched upon in the literature include how to hire a consultant (de Monthoux 1978; Basham 1983), entrepreneurial aspects (Murray 1981; Morris and Trotter 1990), and marketing in high-technology environments (Meldrum and Millman 1991; Meldrum 1995).

Summary of Miscellaneous Research

This category provides a number of interesting topics, none of which has been well developed. One would have expected issues relating to business marketing education to have received considerably more attention than they have. Given the unique aspects of business marketing, the limited familiarity with business marketing of most students, and the limited time devoted to business marketing in most curricula, business marketing academics and managers must give greater attention to this situation. Likewise, while high-technology marketing has been discussed in the area of new product development and in advertising, little general work is evident.

Some interesting questions relating to the literature in this area might include the following:

- How can we better educate undergraduate students about business marketing given their limited exposure to business-to-business firms and products?
- What impact will ISO 14,000 and similar environmental issues have on marketing activity over time?
- Do nonprofit organizations differ from for-profit firms in their response to different marketing activities?
- What constitutes high technology and what does it mean to market to businesses who are high-technology businesses?

ORGANIZATIONAL BUYING

This part of the manuscript reviews the literature on what is termed organizational buying. This comprises three major sections: purchas-

ing management, organizational buying theory, and finally buyer-seller relationships. The work on purchasing management generally focuses on the work that the purchasing function does in the organization. Organizational buying behavior focuses on the theoretical attempts to understand how organizations buy and includes a detailed review of the many reviews in this area. Finally, the buyer-seller relationships segment reviews the literature that focuses on the buyer and seller as the unit of analysis.

Purchasing Management

In general, purchasing has drastically changed as a function within organizations and the purchasing management literature confirms that trend. Historically, purchasing was treated as a distinct, strategically insignificant, separate function. Purchasing function was not as sophisticated and for the most part was not viewed as an important function. As the purchasing and business marketing literature documents, this view began to change in the 1970s. Many companies, especially those in manufacturing, recognized that a very high proportion of the cost of goods sold was in the cost of purchased goods and services. The realization that small decreases in those costs led directly to improvements in profitability caused a reassessment of the strategic value of purchasing.

Changing nature of purchasing. The reformation of the purchasing function has been addressed in a number of articles. Blenkhorn and Banting (1978) recognized early on the changing nature of industrial purchasing in organizations and suggested a broadening of the concept and application from a functional nonproactive one to a more proactive one focusing on interfacing with other functions in the organization. From this beginning the idea of reverse marketing has evolved, championed by Leenders and Blenkhorn (1988). Reverse marketing promotes a proactive purchasing organization that engages in marketinglike activities when approaching and developing relationships with vendors. Kralyic (1983), in a classic piece, had much the same idea, suggesting that purchasing must broaden out to truly become more of a supply management function with strategic importance rather than just a mere tactical function.

Reck and Long (1988) provided the first explicit discussion of the view of purchasing as a major competitive weapon. Their work, based

on interviews with fifteen firms, defined four stages from passive to integrative that firms go through in utilizing purchasing for strategic competitive advantage. Watts, Kim, and Hahn (1992), likewise, examined how to link purchasing to corporate competitive strategy.

The work of Reck and Long (1988) spurred others to explore the strategic aspects of purchasing (e.g., Rajagopal and Bernard 1993; Davis 1993; Dumond 1994). Burt (1989) looked at managing product quality through strategic purchasing. Oumil and Williams (1989) introduced the concept of market-driven procurement. Freedman and Cavinato (1990) examined how to fit purchasing into a strategic role in the firm. Hines (1995), in line with the current discussions of network competition, addressed network sourcing—the set of linkages that can lead to one supply chain network competing against others. Reverse marketing as a competitive strategy continues to be an important topic (Biemans and Brand 1995). The most recent work by Carter and Narasimhan (1996) documents the strategic nature of purchasing activities and the impact of purchasing decisions on overall corporate performance.

Another, similar theme that has evolved is that of partnerships and strategic alliances. Much of the work in partnerships and alliances has been from the perspective of manufacturer distributor/channel member relationships; however, an extensive research base has evolved for partnerships and alliances as viewed from the buyers' perspective. Spekman (1988) discussed how buyers should select sellers for long-term relationships. Ellram (1991) provided a general set of guidelines for the development and implementation of purchasing partnerships. Gentry (1993) argued that buyer-seller alliances often are based on the significant advantages to be gained in the logistics area, specifically transportation. Graham, Daugherty, and Dudley (1994) empirically assessed the long-term impact of purchasing partnerships. They found partners in longer relationships reported better opportunities to implement their strategies.

International issues. International issues have been a major subject of investigation in the purchasing management literature. Monczka and Giunipero (1988) provided some empirical evidence on organizational structure and international purchasing in a small sample of companies. Monczka and Trent (1991, 1992) outlined how to develop and execute a global sourcing strategy. Min and Galle (1991) provided empirical evidence of the variety of international purchasing

strategies as practiced by U.S. multinational firms. Frear, Metcalf, and Alguire (1992) surveyed international purchasing activities and generally defined the nature and scope of those activities. Birov and Fawcett (1993) surveyed firms in the United States to document their perceptions of the benefits, requirements, and challenges in international purchasing. Finally, Alguire, Frear, and Metcalf (1994) examined the determinants of particular global sourcing strategies.

Performance evaluation. Research has also addressed the performance evaluation of purchasing organizations and suppliers. Evaluation has evolved to match changes in the nature of the purchasing function. Dummond (1991) empirically identified how changes have impacted performance measurement and the decision-making process. Chao, Scheuing, and Ruch (1993) have further enlightened this process by looking at the incidence of the various perspectives to performance evaluation.

Evaluating and selecting vendors has generated even more research. The studies, as a whole, suggest that firms are looking at these decisions from different perspectives than in the past and using different costing assumptions. Navasimhan (1983) developed a model of supplier selection. Smythe and Clemons (1993) provided a total cost supplier selection model using a case study to illustrate their approach. Biggs, Thies, and Sisak (1990) empirically examined the cost of ordering, which is one driver toward reducing supplier bases, and examined suppliers within the framework of multiple product/service purchases rather than a specific one. Holmes (1991) and Ford et al. (1993) looked at lease versus buy and make versus buy decisions. Ellram (1992, 1993) looked at the total cost of ownership (TCO) model and the function of cost reduction. Ellram defines TCO in relation to life cycle costing. She argues that there are three general components of TCO—pretransaction costs, transaction costs, and post-transaction costs. Purchase price is a part of transaction costs, but there is effort and cost prior to and after the purchase. From a purchasing management perspective, the argument is that TCO is a more appropriate decision-making model since it incorporates all the costs over the life of the item being purchased. Cavinato (1991) went a step further by examining total cost advantages from an interfirm supply chain perspective. Cavinato presents a leading-edge view and illustrates the perspective utilized by many world-class companies. In line with this approach, both Gagne and Discenza (1992) and Lere and

Saraph (1995) examined the concept of activity-based costing and argued it is the best way to truly measure TCO. Williams, Lacy, and Smith (1992) looked at the concept of value analysis and noted how creative that technique has become as applied to vendor selection. Value analysis is part of the continuous improvement mentality that is driving not only JIT-oriented firms, but most firms interested in the quality revolution (Perry and Perkins 1992; Carter and Narasimhan 1994). The newest issues that have been developed are the concepts of target costing and target pricing as applied to the purchasing function (Newman and McKeller 1995). Target costing and target pricing are terms used interchangeably and describe a pricing process where the buyer and seller jointly determine selling price in a negotiation process. The target generally refers to a targeted cost/price agreement over a specified time frame, usually with cost or price decreasing as a result of buyer and seller reducing the costs.

The supplier performance measurement literature provides a number of articles on vendor relationships with suppliers. Billesbach, Harrison, and Croon-Morgan (1991) provide empirical evidence of supplier performance measures in JIT-oriented companies. Thompson (1990, 1991) provides an overall method for vendor profile analysis and a model for scaling evaluative criteria to do performance evaluation of suppliers. Watts and Hahn (1993) documented the increased use by vendors of supplier development programs targeted at supplier performance enhancement. Examples of the kinds of proactive activities that vendors are resorting to are presented in a model of how to evaluate supplier overhead allocations (Landeros, Reck, and Griggs 1994), the use of supplier capability surveys (Presutti 1991), and the employment of the quality function deployment (QFD) process to evaluate and select suppliers (Ansari and Modarress 1994).

Purchasing's relationship to other functions. Another fairly well-developed area is the relationship of purchasing to other functions within and outside of the firm. One example is in the area of new product development. Doulatshahi (1992) and O'Neal (1993) studied concurrent engineering and purchasing's role in cross-functional teams both within the firm and on teams involving suppliers. Williams and Smith (1990) and Mendez and Pearson (1994) examined the role of purchasing in new product development and identified the importance of early supplier involvement in the process. In an interesting and related piece, Hakansson and Eriksson (1992) documented

the use of supplier networks in the development of innovations and found support for the use of suppliers in the innovation process.

Finally, there are a number of articles in the literature that point to specific activities that suggest changes in purchasing's orientation and management. Ellram and Pearson (1993) looked at the overall role of the purchasing function in the development and use of cross-functional teams. Trent and Monczka (1994) identified five critical success factors in developing and operating effective cross-functional sourcing teams: organizational resources to commit, supplier participation, team authority, team effort, and team leadership. Giumipero and O'Neal (1988) outlined various obstacles to procurement in a JIT environment. Plank, Reid, and Bates (1994) discuss the increased use of barter and the rise of specialized barter intermediaries. Coleman and Mcknew (1990) provide a model for order placement and sizing that illustrates the increasing use of sophisticated heuristics and management science methods in purchasing. In the same vein, there is empirical evidence of the increased use of computers in purchasing, including EDI (Plank et al. 1992). Finally, Williams (1995), in a conceptual piece, talks about the notion of the learning organization and how it applies to the supply management function, arguing that being a learner is imperative for the twenty-first century.

Summary of the Purchasing Management Literature

The purchasing literature is broad and comprehensive. Many of the changes evident in the business world are reflected in the purchasing management literature stream. Unfortunately, little of what we know about how purchasing does its job is explicitly incorporated into the organizational buying behavior literature.

Examining the academic purchasing literature suggests the following very important trends of interest to business marketers:

- Purchasing has become more professional, more strategic, and more focused on generating competitive advantage.
- Purchasing has become more aggressive, proactive, and sophisticated in its approach to sourcing and supply management. This has resulted in a greater emphasis on target pricing, total cost of ownership (value in use), and more explicit measurement schema to evaluate supplier performance.

- Purchasing has become more aggressive in providing leadership for cross-functional and even multiple company teams in order to achieve competitive advantage contributions.
- Purchasing has become much more technologically driven, using computers and other technology to drive the purchasing function and process, and is forcing suppliers to go in that direction as well or get left behind.

However, numerous changes taking place in purchasing organizations have either not been addressed or only minimally addressed. For example, while purchasing credit cards have been in use for years, there has been virtually no discussion of them in the literature. Integrated supply marketing, JIT II, barter, and target pricing are concepts that leading-edge organizations are adopting or experimenting with, yet the purchasing management literature has little or nothing to say about them.

Purchasing and supply management has taken an aggressive stance and made great strides with respect to improving purchasing processes and practices. A major contributor to these advances has been the National Association of Purchasing Management and its concerted efforts to advance the field. The end result of these efforts is that in many ways purchasing and supply management thinking is leading its marketing counterparts. Despite the best efforts of the Institute for the Study of Business Markets, there is no organizational effort on the business marketing side of the equation that matches the efforts being put forth by NAPM and its vast membership to advance the field of purchasing and supply management. If the business marketing community is to keep pace with its purchasing counterpart, then a much more aggressive approach will be needed to address the many questions that remain unanswered. Among these are questions such as these:

- What purchasing practices and procedures are most indicative of the way the organization is likely to value a marketing offering?
- Is there some typology of how a buying firm defines value?
- What is the impact of reverse marketing and how do markets respond to companies who practice reverse marketing?

- What impact does and should the firm's supplier evaluation system have on how the in- or out-supplier plans and manages its marketing processes?
- How do/should marketers proactively use their knowledge of purchasing activities in their marketing activities?

Organizational Buying Behavior

Organizational buying behavior (OBB) is the broadest and most researched area in business marketing. In the eighteen years covered in this review, there were a total of 411 articles that dealt with OBB in some fashion.

The literature on OBB is not only very broad but also unique because of the many review articles that have provided comprehensive assessments of the research over the years. There have been a total of twelve review articles (Sheth 1977; Wind 1978a,b; Bonoma and Zaltman 1978; Ferguson 1978; Thomas and Wind 1980; Johnston 1981; Johnston and Spekman 1982; Kennedy 1982; Smith and Taylor 1985; Spekman and Gronhaug 1986; Johnston and Lewin 1996). Each has provided valuable insights and suggestions to improve our understanding of OBB and the growth of research in this area. Thus, rather than replicating their efforts, we will discuss each review and draw from them an overall picture of the state of our knowledge of OBB.

Sheth. Although the first of the reviews (Sheth 1977) falls outside the stated time frame of this paper, we have included it because it offers a concise picture of where OBB research stood in the 1960s and 1970s and serves as a useful backdrop for assessing what has happened over the past eighteen years. Sheth (1977) organized his review around the decision-making process. He examined the decision-making process from economic, organizational, and behavioral perspectives. In addition, he suggested research on individual, organizational, and situational correlates of buying decision making. In summary, his assessment of the field at that time was that

- the field was very rich, and we knew more about organizational buying than we did about end consumers in some respects;

- that “a remarkable degree of parallel research, thought, and discovery exists between organizational and household buying behavior”;
- most researchers were preoccupied with descriptive models of the decision-making process;
- market segmentation theory was not used in business markets to the extent it was in consumer markets;
- that very few field experiments had been done—most research, in terms of methodology, was either narrative, descriptive, or a case study; and
- that three very weak areas in need of further study were the impact of situational correlates on decision making, the impact of organizational structure on the purchasing function, and the impact of marketing communications on the decision-making process.

In closing, Sheth identified the following four distinct trends he felt would characterize future OBB research: the emergence of a consumer-oriented marketing approach in business marketing, the emergence of a new self-identity for purchasing as a separate and distinct function from manufacturing, the likelihood of increased regulation and enforcement of business marketing practices, and the emergence of a more cross-cultural orientation to purchasing with the growth of global organizations. In retrospect, Sheth’s assertions have proven very accurate. The first three are clearly representative of current practice, and while the last trend has not been the subject of much research, the movement toward global purchasing solutions is gaining momentum in a number of major worldwide businesses, such as automobiles.

Wind. Evidence of the interest and growth in OBB research is reflected in the fact that in 1978 alone there were four reviews of the literature (Wind 1978a, 1978b; Bonoma and Zaltman 1978; Ferguson 1978). Wind (1978a), in his first of two reviews of the field, even went so far as to call for the establishment of OBB as a separate discipline. His review was divided in five sections that examined research traditions in the field, the substantive findings, methodological approaches, conceptual and methodological issues, and provided suggestions for future research.

Wind suggested that several changes were occurring in research traditions. There was a movement away from simple task and nontask

models toward the development and testing of more complex buying behavior models. The unit of analysis was moving from individual respondents to buying centers or dyads. Like Sheth (1977), he also saw increasing emphasis on the organizational buying decision and the adoption process. A fourth change was a developing research focus on interorganizational issues such as reciprocity, bargaining, and negotiation. He also noted increased efforts to develop models of buyers' responses to industrial marketing activities, such as proposed by Choffray and Lilien (1978). The final change he identified was an increase in segmentation research efforts.

Wind suggested the field's substantive findings could be summarized into the following categories: the nature of buying centers and their relationship to the type of purchase, the average size of buying centers, types of buying centers, and the relationship of price to product complexity in purchasing. He also noted that, at that time, most organizations did not single source and purchasing behavior was clearly linked to the rewards perceived by the buyer. Research also pointed out that buying criteria used by buying group members reflect the group's task and nontask goals as well as their perceptions of the relevant organizational, social, and environmental variables affecting the buying situation.

From a methodological standpoint, Wind argued that the differences between academic and industry research are sharper in the organizational buying arena than in consumer behavior. Industry often pioneered the new methodologies. He also observed that OBB researchers could not necessarily use the same methodologies used by their consumer buying behavior counterparts. In addition, he identified and discussed issues and differences in problem definition, research design, and data collection associated with research in OBB.

The fourth section of Wind's review dealt with conceptual and additional methodological issues, including the unit of analysis, the object of analysis, the definition of variables, and the time dimension. Unit of analysis problems centered around identifying relevant respondents, determining the multiperson dependent variable, accounting for multiperson independent variables, and developing organizational measures. At that time, as he notes, the general question of the object of the analysis had received little attention. He suggested three major considerations relative to the dependent variable—a shift from single product to multiproduct or assortment, a focus on organiza-

tional buying activities, and the consideration of the entire buying process including both pre- and postbuying activities. These concerns parallel changes occurring in consumer research during the same time period. Wind also discussed measurement of variables and the concept of organizational psychographics, a topic that to date has remained relatively unexplored. Finally, he noted that most organizational buying studies were static and cross-sectional, and suggested that studies be more dynamic.

Among his suggestions for future research, Wind argued for improving the quality of work in the field and for stronger definitions of theoretical and operational variables. He also pointed out that too much research represented one-shot studies and that more replication and programmatic research was needed. Areas cited that were in need of research were the buying center, buying situations, forecasting OBB, institutional and government markets, and interorganizational issues. He also suggested future research needed to consider new research designs, borrowing from other fields when appropriate.

Wind's (1978b) second review focuses on the buying center. While primarily written for an academic audience, the article is useful to managers initiating research for management purposes. Wind specifically noted that, as of that point in time, there had been relatively little research directed at understanding the buying center. Reasons were that the original buying center definition was somewhat ambiguous and there were methodological difficulties associated with research focused around this concept.

On the conceptual side, problem areas included issues surrounding buying center involvement, buying center formation and structure, issues relating to single versus group decision-making models, and single versus multiple decisions. It is interesting to note that while progress has been made in some of these areas (e.g., buying center involvement and buying center formation and structure), little progress has been made in addressing group decision making and single/multiple decision contexts.

Methodological issues relating to buying center research discussed by Wind include cross-sectional versus longitudinal research designs, lab versus real-world studies, observation versus survey, experimentation, and single versus multiple respondents. He concludes his methodological discussion by suggesting a need for more longitudinal work, laboratory work for better control, observation and experi-

mentation, and multiple respondent data collection. With respect to the latter, he notes that analytical procedures to handle the inherent problems of multiple respondents have to be developed. Wind concluded that while the buying center is a viable concept, research priorities have yet to be defined.

Bonoma and Zaltman. Bonoma and Zaltman (1978) provide a very different type of review. Their paper is a report of a workshop they were involved in and presents some of the issues and findings discussed. The authors organize their discussion around a two-by-two grid of organizational locus of industrial buying influences. The horizontal axis differentiates within organization and between organization issues. The vertical axis distinguishes within the purchasing department and between purchasing and other departments/environment issues. Using this grid, four OBB scenarios emerge:

1. *The Purchasing Agent:* Factors in buying dealt with intra-organizational and intradepartmental issues and research (e.g., social factors, decision strategies, bidding rating systems, and risk avoidance)
2. *The Buying Center:* This addressed interdepartmental and intra-organizational research issues (e.g., the nature of the buying center, how it is structured, influence patterns, gatekeeping, and organizational climate)
3. *Professionalism Among Purchasers:* This was concerned with intradepartmental and intraorganizational issues (e.g., face-to-face communication, status, and reciprocity)
4. *Organizations and Environment:* This focuses on interdepartmental and interorganizational issues (e.g., technology, nature of suppliers and/or business, government influences, and reciprocity).

As with previous reviews, methodological and conceptual considerations in OBB were also discussed by Bonoma and Zaltman. These were similar to those identified in other reviews and included such issues as ill-defined organizations, changes occurring in organizations, the relationship between consumer and industrial buying behavior, defining the unit of analysis, appropriate methodology to use in studies, the problems of time and shifting of groups within the buying process, and measures to use in market segmentation. Finally, the au-

thors noted the limited generalizability of the research as well as the limited training and support for industrial buying behavior research compared to consumer research.

Ferguson. Ferguson's (1978) review was positioned as an update of an earlier review by Webster (1969). Ferguson began his review by reassessing the field's shortcomings as noted in the Webster review. These shortcomings included a lack of replication, clear hypotheses, and careful data collection; a lack of programmatic research; and the small number of studies. His conclusion was that, despite some progress, these shortcomings continued to persist.

Ferguson focused specifically on the issues of research techniques, communication, decision making, and models of OBB. In his assessment of OBB models, he suggests that of the various models, Brand's (1972) model that utilized the BUYGRID model of Robinson, Faris, and Wind (1967) was the most significant. Interestingly enough, this particular work has not been followed up by any of the authors who actually tested BUYGRID. Ferguson further notes the models of Sheth (1973), Webster and Wind (1972), and Stiles (1972) had not had much impact at that time.

Thomas and Wind. Thomas and Wind (1980) provide a review similar in design to that done of Wind (1978a). However, what differentiates their review from others is their effort to provide a complete and definitive summary of the substantive findings of the research at that time. They divide their review, which focuses only on the academic literature, into three areas: the buying center, the organizational buying process, and factors affecting either the organizational buying center or the overall process. They conclude with an extensive discussion of methodological and conceptual issues, similar to that of Wind (1978), but with slightly greater scope and detail.

Thomas and Wind point out that, despite familiarity with the buying center, there continued to be little known about its composition, determinants, changes in usage, and the nature of the influence patterns. The research showed that buying centers have multiple participants that may change with the situation, participants often come from different functions and different organizational levels, and individuals play different roles and differ in importance depending upon the conditions and marketing stimuli involved.

Their discussion of the buying process, with results from more than thirty studies, highlights five different conceptualizations of the

buying process in organizations (Robinson and Faris 1967; Ozanne and Churchill 1971; Webster and Wind 1972; Bradley 1977; Wind 1978). All of these have been the subject of further study, with the exception of Bradley's four-step government buying model. Key findings of organizational buying processes studies indicate the process is complex, difficult to model, differs by product and industry, and differs across buying situations. Areas of study for which there was only limited work at that time included identification of needs (Von Hippel 1978), evaluation of alternatives (Wildt and Bruno 1974; Scott and Wright 1976; Wind, Grashof, and Goldhar 1978), purchase decision ("How Industry Buys Chemicals" 1979), and postpurchase evaluation (Lambert, Dornoff, and Kernan 1977).

Twenty-six articles were identified as dealing with factors affecting the buying decision process. These were divided into four categories—personal factors, interpersonal factors, organizational factors, and interorganizational factors—with interpersonal factors accounting for the greatest number of articles. Wind and Thomas suggested that, in addition to these factors, the effects of a firm's marketing variables, the marketing strategies of competitors, and environmental factors should be included in future comprehensive studies/models of OBB.

Johnston. Johnston's (1981) review begins with an examination of the breadth of OBB research. He suggests that the complexity of the organizational buying process has limited research and that work in OBB needs to be better integrated into marketing theory. While changes are occurring, Johnston argues that four assumptions normally underlie organizational buyer behavior research. The first is that "[i]ndustrial buying behavior may be studied *separately* from selling behavior or actions taken by a separate individual or *individuals* in the firm." This assumption has led to the examination of individual variables as opposed to the alternative of a dyadic or systems perspective. The second assumption is that "[t]he appropriate way to approach and model industrial buying behavior is through a stimulus (S)-response (R) view of cause and effect." He saw this assumption as inaccurate and inappropriate and suggested that a more accurate and appropriate approach would be a "transactional" one, such as a dyadic model. The third assumption was that "[t]he key theoretical processes occurring in industrial buying behavior are rational decision making, including decision optimization, strategic choice processes and infor-

mation processing.” Johnston points out that there is nothing inherent in the industrial purchasing process that would make it purely rational. The final assumption is that “[t]he industrial buying process takes place over time and is a logical, chronological series of well-planned and executed stages of rational decision making.” He takes issue with this assumption as being reductionistic and points out that studies have not demonstrated this to be true.

Johnston’s review of the literature is organized around the industrial buying process, the unit of analysis, and models of industrial buying. Despite numerous attempts at defining the steps or stages involved in the buying process, he points out that research has failed to support this contention.

Johnston provides a rigorous analysis of the unit of analysis, examining research from the perspective of the firm, the purchasing manager, other individuals within the buying organization, the dyadic paradigm, and the systems perspective. He notes that while useful for macrosegmentation purposes, the firm as the unit of analysis obscures the fact that people drive the organization and its decisions. The most common unit of analysis has been the purchasing agent. Research has been devoted to assessing the involvement and influence of others in the purchasing process, including problems of measuring individuals’ influence and their roles. Work at the dyadic or systems level of analysis, at that point in time, was primarily conceptual in nature.

The final portion of Johnston’s review focuses on the fourteen complex models of buying behavior (Robinson, Faris, and Wind 1967; Robinson and Stidsen 1967; Howard and Morgenroth 1968; Wind and Robinson 1968; Saleh et al. 1971; Webster and Wind 1972; Sheth 1973; Hakansson and Ostberg 1975; Wilson 1975; Bonoma, Bagozzi, and Zaltman 1977; Calder 1977; Spekman 1977; Choffray and Lilien 1978; Johnston 1979). He concludes his discussion of OBB models by suggesting that each of the existing models is not without problems and that systems models offer the greatest promise for capturing the actual dynamics involved in organizational buying.

Johnston and Spekman. Johnston and Spekman (1982) offer a more limited review of the literature. Sensing a lack of purpose and direction in OBB research, they propose an integrative approach to OBB. Their approach takes a decision system perspective based on a conceptual model proposed by Kickert and van Gigh (1979). Kickert

and van Gigh argue that a decision process model consists of three components: a subsystem, an aspect system, and a phase system. These are essentially a set of objects, the relationships between the objects, and an environment. Within the organizational buying process, Johnston and Spekman suggest the subsystem consists of individuals, buying centers, functional departments, small business units (SBUs), and the like. The aspect systems are the issues, topics, tasks, and decisions. The phase system is the time phase of the decision process. Existing research is then examined within the proposed framework. In summarizing the research, they note that more work is needed on the multiperson nature of the buying process, variables relating to the buying center and the procurement decision process, the relationship between organizational decision processes and structure, and how decision processes flow through an organization. They conclude with a call for methodological triangulation (i.e., using multiple methods to attack the same problem).

Kennedy. Kennedy (1982) provides a review of the literature from a predominantly British perspective. Her review, in addition to American-based research, includes numerous European works and sources, including several doctoral dissertations, not covered in other reviews. She points out that there has been no study that has attempted to describe buying behavior across all sectors of British industry. In essence, she suggests that a major problem is that the descriptive work at that time had not been done on a large enough scale. Additional weaknesses included the lack of replication across a range of sectors, the exploratory nature and subjective results of much of the research, and a lack of research on locus of buying responsibility.

Smith and Taylor. Smith and Taylor (1985) also provide a European perspective. Building on work by another European author, van de Most (1976), they suggest the literature has the following four orientations—multiphased decision procedure, decision making unit or buying center, different purchasing situations, and risk and organizational decision making. Their discussion of multiphased decision procedures, buyer center, and purchasing situation is similar to what has been discussed in earlier reviews. The unique contribution of their review lies in their detailed discussion of organizational decision making and risk.

Smith and Taylor point out that research into decision theory has generated a vast literature, much of which has focused on quantitative

models. However, much of the quantitative work has not been fruitful. They suggest the reason for this is because many of the assumptions underlying the quantitative models are suspect. To illustrate this they use the notion of a rational man as an example and point out the problems with definition and how that impacts model building and performance. They argue that qualitative decision modeling, which deals with behavioral processes, may be a more fruitful vein of research and provide a discussion of some of the critical decision process research. In particular, they suggest a model by Thompson and Tuden (1959) as being quite useful for distinguishing between different decision situations and their implications for choice activities and apply it to organizational buying decisions. Thompson and Tuden's model combines beliefs about causation (certain or uncertain) and preferences about possible outcomes (certain or uncertain) to yield a two-by-two grid. The resulting four decision situations are termed *computation* (certain beliefs, certain outcomes), *compromise* (certain beliefs, uncertain outcomes), *judgment* (uncertain beliefs, certain outcomes), and *inspiration* (uncertain beliefs, uncertain outcomes). The model suggests that in situations where there is little uncertainty about causation or preferences of outcomes, the decision is mechanical and merely involves choosing the appropriate technique. However, it is the three other situations, the authors argue, where qualitative models have much to offer. As evidence of this, they note that McMillan (1980) has attempted to categorize the many models using this framework. The authors summarize their review by noting that because business marketing is so complex, complete models may be too complex to be of use to managers. They argue that simplified models such as the one they propose, while not providing the full solution, will be of greatest use to managers.

Spekman and Gronhaug. Spekman and Gronhaug's (1986) review provides a succinct discussion of the conceptual and methodological issues in buying center research. The first set of issues they address is concerned with developing the buying center concept. They suggest that buying center definition should be done in formal organizations but note that the actual buying center may or may not be a formal part of the organization. With respect to buying center boundaries and their domain, they argue that the challenge facing researchers is to identify the composition of the buying center over time and the ties between the members.

The next set of issues they examine deals with structural considerations of the buying center. Research findings, they note, would seem to indicate that structural variables are viable constructs for measuring buying center influence and communication networks and that buying center composition, structure, and information processing capabilities will vary with situational factors. However, they argue that research has been plagued with methodological problems such as the use of objective versus subjective measures, use of respondents versus informants, data aggregation issues, and the question of formal versus informal buying center structure.

The final set of issues they examine involves process issues in buying center research. Their discussion of process issues is divided into three components—power and conflict, decision making, and communications. In assessing the buying center literature on power and conflict, the authors point out that research in this area needs to develop better scales and to incorporate the use of multiple respondents in research designs. The buying behavior literature has not captured the ties between power and conflict that are evident in the more general organizational studies. Summarizing issues in decision making, the authors argue that the debate regarding the number of steps is purely academic since evidence would seem to suggest the number of steps is a function of the decision context and various idiosyncratic factors. In spite of this, they point out that three subprocesses capture the essence of organizational decision making—problem recognition, screening of alternatives, and selection. With respect to the debate regarding whether buying decisions are iterative or sequential, the authors suggest that research seems to indicate that iterative is clearly a better descriptor of most industrial buying decisions. Research on the choice or selection phase of organizational buying has been hampered, they note, by researchers' reluctance to utilize multidisciplinary and multiperson choice approaches in their research methods. Finally, they point out that research on communication flows has failed to formally incorporate network analysis in its efforts to understand the informal communication flows that are so important in organization buying decisions.

Scott and Webster. Scott and Webster (1991) provide a very detailed review of the OBB literature. The authors state their goals as being to characterize the work, note other streams of research that can add to the literature, and promote theory building and testing. Despite

the amount of research that has been done, they point out that the field is far from having a solid set of “middle range” theories and that conceptual models far outdistance the capacity to test them and establish them.

The authors begin with a discussion of the definitions and an overview of the field and suggest that the changes currently taking place may profoundly shift the focus of the field. Similar to other reviews, they look at approaches to the study of OBB, decision process models, comprehensive models and the resultant research they generated, and decision-making unit research. Perhaps one of the most interesting and unique aspects of their review is their discussion of interaction and relationship models. Beginning with the general notion of dyadic models, they go on to discuss the International Marketing and Purchasing (IMP) model, models based on channel relationships, buyer-seller relationship models, models of selling effectiveness, negotiation models, exchange models, adoption and diffusion models, decision system models, and script theory. They conclude that an interaction perspective, although poorly defined at this point in time, offers a very viable framework for capturing the dynamics of organizational buying and selling.

As with other reviews, the authors provide an assessment of the methodological issues confronting OBB research. In particular, they raise a number of questions concerning the validity of work based on methods suggested by Silk and Kalwani (1982). Newer measurement techniques and statistical analysis techniques, however, may effectively address these issues. In summary, they suggest that research in OBB should focus on integrating, extending, and testing propositions derived from existing conceptualizations rather than continually attempting to develop new conceptual models. They assert that changes in the business climate need to be reflected in how OBB is viewed and studied.

Johnston and Lewin. Johnston and Lewin (1996) review 165 articles that deal with OBB from six major journals and provide a suggested framework for future research. In the first part of their review they summarize and compare the three models of Robinson, Farris, and Wind (1967); Webster and Wind (1972); and Sheth (1973), noting the many similarities between them, and offer a composite model. Based on these models, they identify the following nine sets of constructs that affect OBB—environmental characteristics, organiza-

tional characteristics, group characteristics, participant characteristics, purchase characteristics, seller characteristics, conflict/negotiation, informational characteristics, and process or stages. They extend the original models by incorporating four additional constructs that have been found to impact OBB and capture the dyadic or network/systems perspective. The constructs include role stress, decision rules (intrafirm level constructs), buyer-seller relationships, and communication networks (interfirm level constructs).

Next, Johnston and Lewin examine the research relating to each of the thirteen constructs. The most frequently used construct, purchase characteristics, was addressed in sixty-seven of the articles, while the least frequently used construct was role stress with only six articles. They then examined the forty-four articles that were empirical, outlining when a particular construct was used and the statistical significance of the findings. Of the 263 separate statistical tests, most were significant at the .05 level and only twenty-seven were nonsignificant at the .10 level. They note that constructs such as characteristics of the purchase, organization, or environment have been used primarily as independent variables, while constructs such as group characteristics and decision processes/stages have been used primarily as dependent variables. Constructs, such as buyer-seller relationships and communications networks, have been used equally as dependent and independent variables.

To put into perspective what has been learned over the period covered in their review, the authors develop a framework that provides a macro view of OBB. In their framework, risk plays a central role. They argue, based on their reading of the literature, that much of the variation in OBB is related to the levels of risk associated with a given purchase situation. Using the notion of a risk continuum, they posit that as the risk associated with an organizational purchase situation increases, the buying group changes, members of the buyer center tend to be more educated, more experienced, and have more motivation. Likewise in this situation, proven products and solutions will be favored, information search will be more active, conflict within the buying firm increases, formal decision rules may be abandoned or changed, role stress will increase, and interfirm relationships will be more important. In concluding, the authors suggest that a meta-analysis could provide further insights into the research and that additional

research is needed on role stress, external environment, and communication networks.

Summary of OBB Reviews. Taken together, the reviews provide a fairly comprehensive picture of the field of OBB and offer numerous insights and suggestions for future research. Their coverage in many cases reaches far beyond the stated scope of their review, thus putting things into unique historical perspective. However, there are several streams of literature that have not been addressed in the reviews and there are a number of topics that have received very little research. Moreover, the years 1993 through 1995 saw some very interesting contributions to the OBB literature, which the reviews did not address (Johnston and Lewin's [1996] review did not include literature published after 1993).

Among the neglected topics, and perhaps the most important, is the lack of any detailed discussion and/or integration of the purchasing management literature into OBB theory. As discussed in the section on purchasing management in this review, there is a great deal of research as well as numerous case studies on purchasing management that can offer much to researchers in business marketing in general and OBB in particular. As an example, how does the recent purchasing trend in most businesses toward developing vendor rating systems (Lindquist and Crow 1985) affect the research and findings on industrial buyer complaining behavior (e.g., Trawick and Swan 1981; Barksdale, Powell, and Hargrove 1984; Hansen, Powers, and Swan 1997)? In a developed vendor rating system complaining becomes "automatic," in that the vendor receives regular reports on its performance. Thus, the issue for the buying firm becomes what needs to be monitored and what are the standards.

There have been several noteworthy recent studies. Among these, Barclay (1992) examined the issue of outcomes and their subsequent effect on decisions, providing an interesting process perspective. His propositional model focuses on the outcomes of the organizational buying approach and how those outcomes might affect future decisions. Brown (1995) provides some new insights into how being the in/out-supplier impacts organizational buying attitudes. His conceptual model tests whether or not buyers cognitively address in-suppliers and out-suppliers differently. Michaels, Dubinsky, and Rich (1995) provide an interesting empirical examination of the components of buyer motivation, tackling it from a somewhat different per-

spective than previous research. The authors use expectancy theory and examine seven individual characteristics and four organizational characteristics for their impact on how buyers form expectancies, instrumentalities, and valences toward pay, promotion, recognition, and rewards. From results of the regression analysis on data from 330 NAPM buyers, the authors found they could predict instrumentality and valences. For instrumentality, the main drivers were organizational commitment of buyer and supportive leader behavior. Michaels, Kumar, and Samu (1995), using a very behaviorally oriented approach, looked at activity-specific role stress in purchasing. They identified five distinct areas where stress comes into play in purchasing positions. The five areas were supplier relations and sourcing, core buying activities, source to scrap analysis, inside-outside decisions, and tooling activities. Research by Heide and Weiss (1995) examined switching behaviors in high-technology markets, such as computer workstations. In general they found what might be expected: of sixteen hypotheses tested, eleven were supported; buyers used closed consideration sets (no new vendors) when switching costs were higher. In general, the concept of switching costs has had very limited coverage in the decision choice literature of OBB.

Summary of Organizational Buying Behavior Research

Summarizing the vast amount of OBB literature is a difficult task. Scott and Webster (1991) provide perhaps the best assessment of the field by noting that conceptual development has been paramount in the field while empirical testing has not. As they rightly point out, there are more than enough conceptual models and what is needed now are efforts to integrate those models and to do more rigorous testing. This, in essence, reflects what Johnston and Lewin (1996) attempted to do in their review.

In assessing the OBB literature, one glaring weakness is the general lack of integration of the purchasing management literature into the organizational buying literature. With only a few exceptions, such as research on make or buy decisions, the findings of purchasing management have not been considered. As shown earlier, complaining behavior research clearly needs to consider the purchasing management literature. Most purchasing agent behavior has been studied from the perspective of personality, other psychological constructs

(e.g., motivation, risk), or a sociological group perspective (e.g., roles). But what individuals in purchasing and their departments actually do, how they see their work, and how they manage their operations have not been integrated into our understanding of how organizations buy. In fact, behaviors, or what is actually done in general, have received only limited attention and even that has been very narrow and focused on the decision or stages of the buying process. Obviously, work by the IMP in Europe and work by people such as Vyas and Woodside (1984) are examples of a tradition where identifying actual behaviors of buying group members provides insight on how the process works. Another very related issue is the emergence of purchasing as a major strategic player in the firm and, thus, the notion that industrial buying decisions can be of great strategic importance to the firm. Some of this has come through the buyer-seller literature (especially within the partnership alliance literature), but not in the general buyer behavior literature.

Another weakness in our understanding lies in the context of international buying behavior. Not only have we not examined the trends leading to global purchasing as a managerial issue, but we have not examined the nature of buying in different cultures. For example, no one seems to have examined the impact of culture upon how buying is done from any perspective (Hofstede 1980).

Sheth's (1977) comments concerning a lack of research in the area of services procurement continue to be true. Research has also been very limited or nonexistent on institutions, in general, and on non-profits and government buying.

As with many of the other topical areas reviewed in this paper, there is a distinct lack of programmatic research in OBB. Of the 411 articles in this review of OBB, 219 are empirical. This work is, for the most part, scattered across a great many topics and few authors have conducted more than one study in a particular area. Notable among those authors who have done more programmatic research are Wesley Johnston, Jagdish Sheth, Robert Spekman, Frederick Webster Jr., Yoram Wind, and Arch Woodside.

Despite repeated pleas in previous reviews, there continues to be a need for agreement as to what are the areas most in need of research and which areas offer the greatest likelihood of increasing our overall understanding of OBB. A model for this kind of effort is readily found in the IMP group and their work on buyer-seller relationships.

IMP research provides an excellent example of the kind of progress that can be made by combining multiple talents and resources toward pursuing a unified goal.

In general, we concur with Johnston and Lewin (1996) that the field has enough models and that further testing is needed. We also feel there have been enough reviews of OBB suggesting things that need to be done. It is time to address these issues. As with most areas in business marketing there is little programmatic research and even less replication. Examining buying, within the context of buying, rather than within a buyer-seller dyad or even network perspective, is needed and offers great value.

The focus of our research needs to be on the definition and determination of value by the buying firm and buying center members. At best, value has been indirectly examined in all of the research done on how organizations buy; it needs to be explicit and the focus of a research stream.

Reddy (1991) has suggested five ways of how valuing is done by customers: value analysis, value engineering, use value, value in use, and perceived value. He suggests that customers use one or more of these ways of valuing to ascertain the value of a particular offering. Anderson, Jain, and Chintagunta (1993) took a slightly different perspective and identified nine different methods of customer value assessment: internal engineering assessment, field value-in-use assessment, indirect survey questions, focus group value assessment, direct survey questions, conjoint analysis, benchmarking, compositional approaches to valuing, and importance ratings. They also provide some evidence of what companies actually do through a small sample field study.

It seems to us that all of our research in OBB, while informative of the process and providing insight into the how and the who of the decision, falls short on the why. It is our belief that value is the concept that defines the why of the purchasing decision. Given the importance of value in furthering our understanding of OBB, further research is needed to address the following:

- How can knowledge of a company's value orientation be used to construct a value proposition by the marketer?
- How are total overall cost or lifetime cost value orientations manifested within the firm and how can the marketing firm recognize and market to this orientation?

- How can the marketer change the value orientation of the buying firm?
- How is the value orientation formed during the buying process and when can the marketer have impact on that process?
- How can value orientation be incorporated into existing major frameworks of organizational buying?

Buyer-Seller Relationships

In recent years, interest and research on buyer-seller relationships in the United States has surged. In distinct contrast to this recent surge, Europeans, especially those involved in the IMP group, have been exploring the buyer-seller perspective since the early 1970s. Research in buyer-seller relationships overlaps many areas (e.g., sales, OBB, and purchasing) and includes a variety of topics (e.g., dyads, alliances, and partnerships). Relationships can be at an individual level, such as between a buyer and a salesperson, as well as at an organizational level, such as between a manufacturer and a distributor. Different theoretical perspectives such as agency theory (Bergin, Dutta, and Walker 1992), transactional cost analysis (Lothia and Krapfel 1994), equity theory (Evans 1981; Lucas and Bush 1983), social psychology (Bonoma and Johnston 1978), and network theory (Hutt and Reingen 1987; Bristor and Ryan 1987; Hakansson and Snehota 1993; Hines 1995) have also been brought to bear on the problems of understanding relationships. The discussion of the relationship research is divided into the following sections—buyer-seller dyads, IMP research, general relationship theory, alliances and partnerships, channel relationships, buyer-seller models.

Buyer-seller dyads. In the United States, 1978 seems to have been a pivotal year for buyer-seller research, with the publication of several articles suggesting that examining the buyer-seller dyad was more appropriate than just examining buyers or sellers separately. Bonoma and Johnston (1978), for example, suggested that a dyadic or systems approach to examining buyer behavior (i.e., person-to-person or organization-to-organization) would provide more insight into the outcomes of the purchasing process. They also argued that the major factors which influence the industrial buying process are social ones. Wilson (1978) provided a dyadic model and argued that in order to understand the decision processes of buying centers, one

must understand the interaction of the multiple participants in the buying center, as well as their interactions with sellers. A number of other authors have also provided dyadic models, including Bonoma, Baggozi, and Zaltman (1978) and Hakansson and Wootz (1979). LaGarce and Prell (1978) also provide a dyadic model, but cast from a slightly different perspective that they term *transactional marketing*. Transactional marketing, as they define it, refers to the incidence of an agreement of exchange between parties, as opposed to the actual exchange. The authors take more of a systems approach in their discussion of the many factors that impact on the process and lead to their definition of a transactional agreement.

IMP research. The IMP's research program is conducted by a loosely formalized group of researchers spanning a number of European countries and representing many institutions who have chosen an interaction perspective to coordinate their research efforts. The hallmark of the IMP research model, besides the nature of the model, is that the methodology used involves mostly qualitative methods and case studies.

The IMP approach has been discussed in depth by Turnbull and Valla (1985). As they point out, it has four major elements—the interaction process, the interaction elements, i.e., buyers and sellers, the interaction environment, and the atmosphere of the interaction parties' relationship(s). Metcalf, Frear, and Krishnan (1992), in their discussion of the IMP approach, note that four elements are exchanged by a buyer and seller—a product or service, money, information, and sociality. In examining product/service exchange, Metcalf, Frear, and Krishnan (1992) point out, that in terms of product importance there are many product service characteristics but only a few, such as importance, complexity, and novelty, have been examined. Information exchange includes such issues as the quantity, quality, type, and process of information exchanged. Social exchange is defined as referring to the interpersonal relationships among the employees who belong to the respective firms' buying and selling centers involved in the exchange and encompasses issues such as trust and empathy. These factors lead to two outcome variables: cooperation and adaptation. Cooperation is defined as “the extent to which the work of the buyer and seller is co-ordinated,” while adaptation refers to “the extent to which the buyer and seller make substantial investments in the relationship.” Metcalf, Frear, and Krishnan (1992) developed measures

for the five variables of social exchange, product exchange, information exchange, cooperation, and adaptation. Data collected from the aircraft engine industry provided a weak but acceptable measurement model fit in support of their general model.

The IMP group's model and efforts have generated a considerable number of publications. Among these are three edited books by Hakansson (1982), Ford (1990), and Moeller and Wilson (1995) that discuss aspects of the model or present various studies based on the model. The list of articles includes Cunningham (1980), Campbell (1985a,b), Turnbull (1990), Yorke (1990), Paliwoda and Bonaccorsi (1993), and Pardo, Salle, and Spencer (1995). These articles have typically involved small sample (with one to thirty-five respondents) case study approaches and employed primarily interviewing for data collection. Turnbull, Ford, and Cunningham (1996) provide a detailed review of the IMP research program.

General relationship literature. There has been a considerable amount of discussion over the past few years about relationships and what is referred to as "relationship marketing." While there are differences of opinion as to what they mean, both Gronroos (1990) and Gummesson (1994) suggest a broad view of relationships and relationship marketing and see them as being a network phenomenon that includes the basic notion of a dyad. This view is reflected in Anderson, Hakansson, and Johanson (1994), who provide a conceptual model of dyadic relationships with networks. Johanson and Mattson (1985) and Thoreli (1990) also discuss the notion of networks and dyads. Morgan and Hunt (1994) provide a specific theoretical perspective, that of trust and commitment as antecedents to relationships in markets. Evans and Lashin (1994) provide another perspective—a pragmatic input-output model with an assessment component. This component includes not only customer feedback but benchmarking of both the company and its competitors. Bergen, Dutta, and Walker (1992) provide a more theoretical discussion of agency theory as it applies to relationships. The classic and oft-quoted work by Dywer, Schurr, and Oh (1987) presents a discussion on the formation of relationships, primarily buyer-seller, but one that is also applicable in distribution channel relationships. They argue that relations are formed and go through a series of stages, awareness, exploration, expansion, commitment, and finally dissolution. Another interesting theoretical model is by Mintu (1989), who conceptualizes relationships in terms

of dyadic communications. Dahlstrom, Dwyer, and Chandrashekar (1995) use transaction cost economic theory to examine the impact of aspects of environment and structure on performance in exchanges. In the business marketing literature, a very comprehensive paper by Wilson (1995) provides a particularly useful theoretical perspective. Wilson argues that there are five stages in the relationship development process—partner selection, defining purpose, setting relationship boundaries, creating relationship value, and relationship maintenance. This model is an extension of the four-stage model developed by Borys and Jemison (1989). Wilson further argues that there are thirteen critical concepts that drive and define relationships. These are reputation, performance satisfaction, trust, social bonds, comparison level of alternatives, mutual goals, power dependence, technology, nonretrievable investments, adaptations, structural bonds, cooperation, and commitment. He argues that the various concepts vary in importance at different stages of the relationship process.

In general, what we mean by relationship marketing is somewhat mixed. It appears most people define it from the perspective of developing longer-term relationships with customers. This differentiates it from marketing when one defines marketing from the perspective of relational exchange that can be long or short term, as noted by Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987).

Empirical efforts at defining types of relationships have been extremely limited and have only recently started to receive more attention. Many authors, such as Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987), have suggested that buyer-seller exchange relationships can be looked at as a continuum ranging from pure transactions to pure relationships. Yet, research has yet to address in great detail how to identify and define relationship types.

One effort is by Cannon and Perreault (1994). These authors begin by examining major general theories of buyer-seller relationships, social exchange, transaction costs, relational contracting, and the IMP model. Cannon and Perreault then attempt to integrate these approaches and provide twelve constructs that they argue can be used to define relationship types. They then developed a series of scales, measured the variables using customer data collection only, provided measure validation, and using cluster analysis developed eight clusters or relationship types. These they defined as market exchange, bare bones, contractual transaction, custom supply, operationally

linked, collaborative, mutually adaptive, and customer is king. Their discussion provides a number of interesting points on why such relationships occur and also addresses the normative question of which one relationship is best. An important empirical point they make is that only 24 percent of the relationships described in their sample were single-source relationships, and even in the collaborative relationships within their sample only 34 percent were single source.

Iacobucci and Ostrom (1996) provide another perspective for addressing these questions. These authors argue that relationships are not just business-to-business, but involve individual-to-individual, and individual-to-business as well. Using a sample of ninety-eight MBA students, they defined three sets of relationships. While it is difficult to ascertain validity of the work outside of the research sample, these authors bring to the topic area a number of very important points. First of all, business relationships can and need to be defined at different levels. Organization-to-organization definitions are critical to our understanding of buyer-seller relationships, but organizations consist of people and those people have relationships as well. Thus, relationships need to be understood at both levels. There also needs to be a recognition that individuals drive the organizational relationships and the constraints to those relationships such that the intersection of at least two types of relationships, organization-to-organization and individual-to-individual, is important. Iacobucci and Ostrom (1996) offer very important insights into the definition of buyer-seller relationships as well as the different levels and can serve as an excellent foundation for future and continuing research in this important area.

Alliances and partnerships. There is a great deal of normative work on what strategic alliances and partnerships are, how to develop and maintain them, and what they mean from a strategic perspective. Most of this work deals primarily with the development of alliances and partnerships. Examples of this research in the business marketing literature include both Ellram (1991) and Rognes (1995). There is a great deal of work extolling the virtues and discussing the strategic implications of partnerships. For example, Anderson and Narus (1991); Cardozo, Shipp, and Roering (1992); and Stafford (1992) examine partnerships/alliances as strategy. Kanter (1994) does much the same, pointing out that collaboration provides a competitive advantage when done correctly. Dunn and Thomas (1994) and Hardy and McGrath (1994) provide general discussions of how to go about partnering.

Other papers of interest include Stuart and McCutcheon (1995), who provide an empirical examination of the problems people face in establishing alliances; Johnson (1995), who defines an empirical taxonomy of disturbances to relationships; Landeros, Reck, and Plank (1995), who provide a model for maintaining existing partnerships; and Perrien, Paradis, and Banting (1995), who provide empirical examination of dissolving relationships. Ellram (1995) provides an empirical examination of the various pitfalls and success factors in buyer-seller partnerships. Narus and Anderson (1995) discuss how to use teams to manage collaborative relationships, while Frear and Metcalf (1995) examine technology network alliances. Varadarajan and Cunningham (1995) provide an excellent review paper that examines the various conceptual foundations of strategic alliances and partnerships and attempts to synthesize them. The paper focuses on discussing what is an alliance, the motives for entering into one, their forms and scope, the drivers, internal and external, which influence their formation, when do they work, the role of marketing in developing and maintaining alliances, and the costs or limitations to participating in alliances. The authors also identify interesting research questions.

Channel relationships. The channel literature has produced a number of competing but similar models of long-term relationships from somewhat different theoretical perspectives. Anderson and Narus (1984, 1987) and Anderson and Weitz (1987) provide models that are based on social exchange theory. Trust and communications are fundamental components of both models that seek to understand what makes relationships last or fail. Heide and John (1992) use institutional economics, transaction cost analysis, and power dependence theory to develop a theoretical model of channel relationships. Weitz and Jap (1995) provide a useful and very comprehensive review of channel relationship research. The authors begin by pointing out, as did Macneil (1980), that channel relationships are rarely, if ever, discrete transactions and thus relationships may be more important in this arena than in buyer-supplier transactions, which have a higher likelihood of being discrete. They then provide a succinct history of channel research, noting the movement from vertical marketing systems and authoritative control to more conventional channels with contractual and normative control mechanisms. Based on a thorough review of existing empirical research, the authors suggest proposi-

tions dealing with the selection of channel partners, relationship development, communication, norms, conflict management, communication, and the role of personal relationships in boundary-spanning situations.

Buyer-seller models. The buyer-seller literature has produced a number of models over the years and a great deal of empirical testing of various aspects of buyer-seller relationships. Wren and Simpson (1996) offer an instructive review. They discuss Anderson and Weitz (1992); Mohr and Nevin (1990); Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987); Ganesan (1994); and others and argue that research has not been evolutionary and is disjointed as a result. In examining five major models, Weitz (1981); Campbell (1985); Dwyer, Shurr, and Oh (1987); Williams, Spiro, and Fine (1990); and Ganesan (1994), they note that all the models include factors related to the salesperson, buyer, interaction, and outcomes. Yet, as they point out, there is little overlap among the constructs. As an alternative, Wren and Simpson (1996) offer an integrated model that synthesizes the major models. Their model includes salesperson characteristics from the selling performance literature, customer characteristics from the OBB literature, an interaction environment that includes structure and communication variables, and interaction outcomes.

Summary of Buyer-Seller Research

The buyer-seller literature, whether in general terms, geared to buyer-supplier relationships, or to channel of distribution relationships, has seen tremendous growth. Not only has there been substantial theory building efforts, but a great deal of normative literature has also been developed from many disciplines, including marketing, management, public administration, and others. The recent review article by Wren and Simpson (1996) correctly described the progress in buyer-seller relationship research as being not only nonevolutionary but scattered and disjointed. Truly, there is a need for more evolutionary work. Much like the comments made by Johnston and Lewin (1996) regarding industrial buying behavior, the number of theories being put forth in buyer-seller relationships clearly exceeds the amount of empirical testing being done. Defining and describing relationship types represents a major research area that has received limited attention. However, these efforts have been noteworthy and

hopefully portend continued effort to define the nature of relationships. Some suggested areas for future research include the following research questions:

- What kinds of relationships are there and how should they be empirically defined?
- How can we better measure the relationship as a whole?
- What is the link between the type of relationship a buyer and seller have and the skills needed by both parties to start or maintain that relationship?
- How are marketing and/or buying skills, behaviors, and outcomes affected by the nature of the relationship?
- Are some types of buyer-seller relationships generally more value producing than others?
- How can marketers be proactive in generating relationship type change rather than just accepting the relationship as determined by the buyer?

Summary of Organizational Buying Research

Organizational buying research represents perhaps one of the broadest areas in business marketing research and, as argued in this review, includes purchasing management, OBB, and buyer-seller relationships. Because it represents such a vast amount of literature, summarizing it is a daunting task. Despite its breadth, there are trends apparent.

First, there is little integration of the purchasing management research with research done in either of the two other areas. While there has been discussion of the changes being affected in purchasing, they have had little impact on recent conceptual or empirical research.

There is greater level of congruence between OBB research and buyer-seller research. One only needs to examine the recent reviews by Johnston and Lewin (1996) of OBB and Wren and Simpson (1996) of buyer-seller relationships to see the similarities. It is also clear, from the work done over the years, that in both areas there has been much more conceptual work than theory testing. Much of the theory testing that has been done has been on the OBB side.

While the work of the IMP group was discussed in this review, their efforts have not been widely discussed or integrated into aca-

demographic research efforts here in the United States. This may in part be due to the fact that most of the IMP's research has either appeared in European journals or a limited number of books that may not be widely available. Given that the IMP has generated a considerable amount of insightful work over the past twenty years, researchers in the United States need to capitalize on their efforts.

An important key to organizational buying and perhaps to the integration of the work in this area is customer value. The concept of customer value pervades the trade literature. Yet, other than the work of Anderson, Jain, and Chintagunta (1993), there has not been much conceptual development or empirical effort. Key questions still remain as to how industrial buyers define value, how value drives their decision process, and how value should be factored into marketing decisions. For example, should value be defined only from the perspective of the buying firm, the perspective of shared value in the dyad, or in some broader fashion such as a supply chain perspective?

Finally, whether we examine the exchange process from the perspective of the buyer, seller, dyad, or network, additional research is needed in the area of relationships. It is surprising that despite all the research to date, we still know very little about relationship types. Work by Cannon and Perreault (1994) and Iacobucci and Ostrom (1996) provide us with a starting point by suggesting that relationships can be defined in terms of who is involved (i.e., individual or organization). Additional research is also needed to better delineate the stages involved with different types of relationships as well as identifying appropriate marketing activities given different types and stages of relationships.

MARKETING SCIENCES

In this section, business marketing literature on four topics—market research, forecasting, market segmentation, and computers and decision support—will be discussed.

Market Research

Market research is used here to refer to literature on the practice of market research by business marketing firms as well as the literature assessing the market research practices of academics in business mar-

kets. While a variety of topics are addressed in this area, there are clearly two major themes in the literature—surveys and survey response rates and research methods, measurement, and statistics. Not discussed here is the general use of information and the use of systems to integrate information. These topics will be discussed under computer usage, information systems, and decision support later in this section.

Surveys and response rates. The first major theme deals with survey research and aspects of improving response rates to mail surveys. The work can be divided into two types: qualitative articles, which are either prescriptive or review articles, and quantitative articles, which generally test one or more factors and their impact on response rates. Qualitative work includes Pressley (1980); Gentry and Hailey (1981); Zdep (1986); Jobber (1986); Walker, Kirchmann, and Conant (1987); and Jobber (1990). Jobber's (1990) article provides a fairly comprehensive review of the response literature.

Quantitative articles were far more numerous and include Hansen, Tinney, and Rudelius (1983); Skinner, Dubinski, and Ingram (1983); Jobber and Sanderson (1983); Clark and Kaminski (1988); Murphy, Dalenberg, and Daley (1990); Durhan and Wilson (1990); London and Donmeyer (1990); Karimabady and Brunn (1991); Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch, and Webb (1991); Faria and Dickenson (1992); Kallis and Giglitrano (1992); Chawla, Balahrishnan, and Smith (1992); Paxson (1992); Ford, McLaughlin, and Williamson (1992); Armstrong and Yokum (1994); Haggett and Mitchell (1994); Chawla and Natarajan (1994); Kalafatis (1994); and Greer and Lohtia (1994). A review paper by Balabanas and Schlegelmilch (1996) not only reviews the findings but also provides results of a survey of market research managers and executives in Great Britain as to what works or does not work. The quantitative articles suggest the following factors have a positive impact on response rates: sponsorship of the research, interest in the topic being researched, number of contacts and prenotification, type of postage, and monetary and nonmonetary incentives. Factors such as anonymity and nature of the cover letter appear to be inconclusive.

Research methods. A second major theme in the research literature is the analysis of various research methodologies, predominantly in measurement and statistics, that are applied to business marketing. While primarily of importance to academic researchers, most of these

ideas are applicable and important to managers. Work in this area has addressed measuring and modeling organizational purchasing influences (e.g., Silk 1982; Moriarty 1982; Kohli and Zaltman 1988; Kumar and Dillon 1990), intercoder reliability (Adele, Hughes, and Garrett 1990), adaptive survey research designs (Singh, Howell, and Rhoads 1990), and the use of conjoint analysis (Green and Srinivasan 1990). Some of these ideas are extremely important to the practice of academic research, the issue of multiple buying influences and how to combine those responses to truly reflect the purchasing decision is still one that is unresolved. Some authors, notably Wilson, Lilien, and Wilson (1994) have constructed their research to examine as the unit of analysis the decision-making group. They prequalify the group, put them into a decision-making lab exercise and then measure the output and thus avoid the problem.

Among some of the other themes that exist in the literature, an old and ongoing argument centers on the use of salespeople to gather and/or participate and assist in the market research process. Moss (1979), Grace and Pointon (1980), and Festervand, Grove, and Reidenback (1988) have argued strongly for the use of salespeople as part of market research/intelligence gathering. Lambert, Marmostein, and Sharma (1990) provide evidence of the relatively extensive use of salespeople and how they are actually used.

As might be expected, there are numerous normative pieces on how to conduct market research. Penn (1978) described problem formulation. Cox and Dominguez (1979) outlined the key issues and procedures in designing a research project. Wallace (1984) and Welch (1985) provide discussions of qualitative research in general and focus groups, respectively. At a broader level, Nauman and Lincoln (1989) suggest using systems theory as a basis for conducting market research, and Gross (1985), in a particularly insightful piece, outlines the critical uses of research in business marketing. Finally, empirical work by Schlegelmilch, Boyle, and Therivel (1986) and Schlegelmilch and Therivel (1988) reports on the usage of marketing research in different types of industrial firms.

Other research literature. Where and how to get information has also been the subject of some study. Comer and Chakrabarti (1978) profiled the information industry for business marketers. Fries (1982) discussed library resources. More (1978) empirically examined the

uses of primary and secondary data, specifically in new product projects.

Competitor and customer analysis have also been addressed. Brock (1984) and Grawbowski (1987) outlined some practical approaches to competitor analysis, while Keep, Omura, and Calantone (1994) discussed what managers should know about competitive technology. Sinclair and Stalling (1990) provide a case study on the use of perceptual mapping as a tool for customer and competitor analysis. There are competitor analyses in the practitioner literature that are much more developed than any of the work cited here.

Customer analysis, compared to competitor analysis, is more thoroughly developed in the business marketing literature. Canning (1982) described how to do a value analysis of a customer base, while Meredith (1993) described a customer evaluation system. In line with Canning (1982), Anderson, Jain, and Chintagunta (1993) presented an instructive analysis of the methods and usage of customer value assessment. Their state of the practice study illuminates the customer assessment practices of leading-edge companies. Campbell and Cunningham (1990), using a European database, examined the use of customer analysis across 300 companies. More recently, Mehr (1994) discussed focusing on large prospective customers and Perkins (1993) examined how companies measure and use customer satisfaction.

There has been a limited amount of fragmented literature on market and sales potential analysis. Chakrabarti and Morgan (1981) looked at estimating potential for aftermarkets. Kendall and French (1991) examined forecasting potential for new industrial products. A key piece of research in this area was Brown, Lilien, and Ulvila (1993), who did a state of the practice study and outlined current practices and new methods for estimating business markets.

Finally, the marketing research literature has also looked at how research can solve or deal with particular issues such as new product testing (Acito and Hustad 1981) and measuring firm image (Sims 1979). A substantial amount of this work has been in the area of market segmentation methods. Chiesl and Lamb (1983), Woodside and Wilson (1986), and Sinclair and Stalling (1990) provide typical examples of this stream of work. Chiesl and Lamb, for example, provide a research methodology for segmenting international markets, using Japan as an example. A particularly interesting piece of work in this area is one by Gensch (1984), who explores targeting the switch-

able industrial customer. This particular work showed how some advanced research methodology could lead to strategic choices that were very profitable for a company in the long run. Switching costs, as defined by Jackson (1984), have received almost no explicit attention in the literature. This is somewhat surprising in that Williamson's (1975) work on transaction costs implicitly incorporates the notion of switching costs and his theoretical orientation has been utilized fairly extensively in a number of research areas in business marketing.

Summary of Market Research

The business marketing literature has seen significant effort in areas of market research. As noted previously, the primary area is that of increasing return rates for mail surveys. Since much of the research done by both academics and practitioners involves the use of surveys, the improvement of survey response rates is a laudable effort. The research, while mixed, does suggest methods to improve response rates and thus make samples potentially more valid and less biased. There have been a number of review articles that provide succinct guidance on getting better response rates and all have been quoted in this paper. However, there are a number of issues that have not been examined in depth, but probably need to be. New technologies such as the Internet and the ubiquitous use of fax machines have not been explored in detail as to their use as survey delivery mechanisms. Research in these areas is only just beginning and both media represent other methods besides that of mail for getting survey responses.

There has been some discussion of how to collect data from multiple respondents. This has come about as researchers have recognized the complexity of organizational buying processes and have documented the notion of buying groups or centers, both formal and informal, and which typically consist of more than one person. While we know we have a problem both conceptually and methodologically in addressing the issue of multiple respondents, there is no readily apparent solution. For example, if we collect data from multiple respondents using key respondents and exhaustive snowballing we run into nonresponse problems as well as issues regarding how to combine the data. If we go to a laboratory method and put the groups together prior to the decision and then have them do some exercise, then exter-

nal validity is suspect, regardless of whether the example is real or hypothetical.

Doing research internationally and dealing with the impact of culture on research methods and measures need to be better developed. There is very little guidance available in this area. Some work has been done by Triandis, Bontempo, Leung, and Hui (1990) in the psychology literature and by Yu, Keown, and Jacobs (1993), who examined the cross-cultural implications of attitude-type survey research. There are perhaps other examples, but the work is really fragmented. There is some agreement as to the validity of translation and back translation as a method, but recent work by Plank (1998) argues that these methods will not guarantee measure validity. Finally, while not in the literature to date, the federal government is transforming the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system into the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The impact of this transformation should be of real interest to industrial market researchers. Questions of note for future research on market research in business markets include these:

- How should multiple responses in group decision-making situations be handled?
- What procedures are needed to ensure that cross-cultural and cross-language questionnaires are comparable?
- Will new technologies such as the Internet provide accurate and usable research?
- Will the NAICS system enable better, more usable data for developing market and sales potentials?
- How can financial modeling and other tools be integrated to facilitate more accurate market and sales potentials?

Forecasting

Forecasting applied specifically to business marketing is yet another area that has not received considerable attention. A total of only thirty-five articles were identified that dealt with some aspect of this topic. Despite the low number of articles, there are several distinctive research tracks in the literature.

By far the major track of research on forecasting deals with the problems of new product/service forecasting. There is a great deal of

evidence to support the conventional wisdom that forecasting new product/service sales and success is much more difficult than forecasting for existing products or services. Little and More (1978), in a nonempirical work, address sales forecasting errors for new product projects. Numerous studies (e.g., Choffray, Lilien, and Yoon 1989; Scott and Kaiser 1984; Gartner and Thomas 1993; Beardsly and Mansfield 1978; Woodside, Sanderson, and Brodie 1988; Thomas 1985) have consistently pointed out the difficulties with forecasting new product/service introductions.

A large track also exists on specialized forecasting techniques or forecasting in specialized markets. Specialized forecasting techniques such as the use of scenario analysis (deKluyver 1980), the use of multiattribute value analysis to improve forecasting accuracy and the probable success of the products (Keeney and Lilien 1987), and judgment modeling techniques in new product situations (Scott and Kaiser 1984) have all been explored. Oren and Rothkopf (1984) develop a very general and simple market dynamics model. In a nonempirical piece, Walton (1979) compared the forecasting techniques of opinion versus regression.

The markets and situations addressed include the solid state industry (Brown 1978), the telephone market (McCrohan 1978), demand for a recycling plant (Petty and Pointon 1979), forecasting in a developing country (Brasch 1978), commercial construction (Rosenberg 1982), jobs to order (Rudelius, Willis, and Hartley 1986, 1990), improving salespersons' forecasts (Cox 1989), and improving high-tech forecasting (Wheeler and Shelley 1987).

Another track consists of general normative forecasting articles. Gross and Peterson (1978) examined ways to deal with the human aspects of forecasting. Herbig, Milewicz, and Golden (1993) discuss the do's and don'ts of sales forecasting. Cleary and Lanford (1978), at a more micro level, address the specific issues of technology assessment-referencing work by the economist Henry Adams and the law of acceleration as a means to understanding some of these issues. Buttner and Lanford (1980) address the basic issue of what to forecast within a technological environment. A final normative article on forecasting offers advice on using futures analysis and linking it to planning and strategy (Michman 1987).

A minor track in the forecasting area deals with forecasting accuracy. Most of the extensive body of research in this area is not busi-

ness marketing specific. Business market articles include an examination of the accuracy of new product performance and forecasting (Choffray, Lilien, and Yoon 1989; Little and More 1978), evidence on the accuracy of new services forecasting (Woodside, Sanderson, and Brodie 1988), and the effectiveness of sales forecasting methods (Rothe 1978).

Summary of Forecasting Research

While some aspects of forecasting in business markets have received considerable attention in the literature, many areas remain unexplored. Almost no work has been done on the accuracy of various techniques or in comparing techniques in terms of their usefulness in different situations, although Schnaars (1984) and similar articles do provide some general and valuable insights. Forecasting for new products/services is by far the most researched area, followed by forecasting in specialized markets or situations. Yet many fundamental questions remain unanswered. For example, basic issues such as the forecasting techniques most commonly used by business marketers, how longer-term forecasts can be made more accurate, and the role and use of technology in improving forecasting remain unanswered. An extensive base of literature on forecasting in general appears in such journals as the *Journal of Business Forecasting* and the *Journal of Forecasting*, which were not part of this review.

Given the evolution of shorter product and technology life cycles and the need to operate in more hypercompetitive businesses (D'Aveni 1996), research addressing the following questions may prove useful:

- Can forecasts be combined and new computer technology be utilized to routinize standard forecasting problems?
- What techniques or combination of techniques will lead to more accurate technological forecasts?
- How can the various resources, e.g., sales and marketing people, customers, secondary data, and systems, be combined to provide more accurate and timely forecasts?

Market Segmentation

There has been a considerable amount of research on market segmentation. Over the years covered in this review there have been a to-

tal of sixty-one articles on the topic. Five of these are reviews that provide a good overview of the issues. Thomas and Wind (1982) draw and discuss empirical generalizations based on the research. Cheron and Kleinschmidt (1985), in addition to reviewing the literature, provide a framework for segmenting markets. Plank (1985b) discusses the value of the academic segmentation research to business marketers. He concludes that while providing some interesting usages of statistical techniques, it would be difficult for managers to use the research to date because it fails to provide any guidance as to implementation. Cross and Rudelius (1993) provide a brief review of both the practical and theoretical trade-offs in market segmentation. Most of their discussion centers on understanding the role of various costs to the firm when making segmentation decisions. Finally, Wind and Thomas (1994) examine both theory and practice and provide a set of interrelated questions that managers must ask themselves in making segmentation decisions.

Based on these reviews

- market segmentation, as a concept, is still much less prevalent in business markets than consumer markets;
- the concept is used less often even though the potential for its use is at least as great as it is in consumer markets; and
- much of the work done in business market segmentation has tended to concentrate on the technology of market segmentation rather than the actual usage and advantages gained from segmentation.

In general, the reviews cited previously provide an excellent overview of the segmentation literature in business marketing. Consequently, the remainder of this section will focus on interesting findings, specific applications, and advances in market segmentation. Gensch (1984) and Gensch, Aversa, and Moore (1990), for example, provide case study evidence on using switching costs to understand segments of industrial customers. As they point out, success at segmenting markets has clearly played an important role in the overall success of the company.

Rangan, Moriarty, and Schwartz (1992) provide guidelines for segmenting markets in mature industries. They argue that it is important to examine customer behavior for trade-offs between price and

service. Using a single company and 174 national accounts, they empirically derived four distinct segments using twelve behavioral variables, including price and service requirements.

Laughlin and Taylor (1991) discuss the need to segment based on homogeneity of response to marketing stimuli. They develop a segmentation scheme that uses response to marketing stimuli to segment markets based on customer concentration and product customization. In general, the argument has been raised that behavior-based segments are more useful than product-based segments (Dibb and Simkin 1993).

Griffith and Pol (1994) used a combination of industrial demographics to showcase their usage in microsegmentation applications. They used a combination of SIC codes, sales, market share data, and geographic data to segment markets. In an interesting application of statistical/computer technology Fish, Barnes, and Aiken (1995) demonstrate how neural nets can be used in segmentation studies.

Finally, Wind and Thomas (1994) note five questions that need to be posed:

- Should the market be segmented?
- How should the market be segmented?
- Which segments are to be selected?
- How should resources be allocated to segments?
- Can the strategy be implemented?

This final paper provides an excellent guideline for the practicing manager.

Summary of Market Segmentation Research

Market segmentation efforts in business markets continue to lag behind those of consumer markets. While Wind and Thomas (1994) were able to provide some excellent normative advice for segmenting business markets, the reviews of the segmentation literature clearly indicate that much remains to be done. Little progress has been made in identifying additional segmentation bases and moving beyond the more macro levels of segmentation. For instance, developing segmentation studies around the increasingly important concept of relationship marketing might prove to be a potentially powerful segmentation base/variable. The type of relationship a buyer wants with the

seller suggests differences in service requirements, handling, selling, and service. Therefore, using the terminology of Laughlin and Taylor (1991), it would be expected that relationship types really impact how a company reacts to various marketing stimuli. Such research may be fruitful and provide more guidance for practicing managers.

Some interesting research questions might include the following:

- How can a firm incorporate field experimental segmentation research into their new product/service introductions?
- How should value be defined for purposes of segmenting business markets?
- How should relationships be defined for purposes of segmenting markets?
- How useful is the concept of switching costs for purposes of defining and segmenting markets?

Computers and Decision Support

Research in business marketing on computer usage, the development of management science models and decision support systems has been sparse. Only seventy-four articles have been written that deal with some aspect of this topic. Most of the research in this area consists of descriptive and normative work in the area of expert systems and work dealing with the use of information—how to get it and how to use it. The remainder of the work is spread across a number of topics and is primarily descriptive or normative.

The topic of expert systems in business markets has been discussed by Steinberg and Plank (1990); Stevenson, Plath, and Bush (1990); and Metzger and Goudhi (1993). In all cases the articles suggest areas where expert systems can be applied and how best to use them. To date, no empirical work has examined the actual implementation of expert systems in business marketing.

A number of authors have dealt with information collection and dissemination in a context other than marketing research. A classic article by Goretsky (1983) presents a general framework for information required for strategic planning, while one by Benjamin (1979) examines the general management of business information.

There are a number of other interesting articles on the use of information support for sales management related to this area. Stone and Good (1994) provide some empirical evidence on the use of informa-

tion support for sales managers. Jagetia and Patel (1981) discuss how to develop an end-use intelligence system. Samli and Mentzer (1980) provide guidance on how to develop a general market information system. Meredith (1989) provides normative advice on using databases. Bolfig and Schmidt (1988) discuss how to use expert database services. Binetti (1980) illustrates the use of online information to aid in the new product development process. Finally, Van, Doris, and Stidthey (1990) provide some advice on how to develop a database for sales leads.

Empirical work on computer usage in business marketing is meager. Research on the usage of computers in distributor marketing (Narus and Guimaraes 1987) and the increased usage of laptop computers by industrial salespeople (Moncreif, Lamb, and McKay 1991) are the exception. One general nonempirical paper on using personal computers to automate marketing activities provides an overview of using personal computers for business marketing applications (Manssen 1990).

Articles on management science models in business marketing are also sparse. Both Webster (1978b) and Brandi (1978) discussed the potential benefits of the application of management science to business marketing problems, with Brandi specifically focusing on simulation as a tool. Work by Lilien (1979) on modeling the marketing mix generated some discussion (Farris and Bussell 1980; Lilien 1980). There is also a general discussion of computer models with a case study by Arinze (1990). Choffray and Lilien (1982) have also written about a decision support model they developed for industrial product design. Steckel (1988) briefly described Pioneer, a decision support model for general industrial product planning. While not included in this review, the journal *Interfaces* provides a rich source of literature on the application of management science and similar tools to business problems, in general. An illustration of this is a piece by Gensch, Aversa, and Moore (1990) which outlines the impact of using advanced segmentation techniques on overall corporate profitability.

The implications of electronic data interchange (EDI) for business marketers has been addressed by Barrier and Morris (1987), while the impact of EDI in specific functions such as sales has been examined by Hill and Swenson (1994). The work by Barrier and Morris (1981) is somewhat unique in that it concerns the transfer of informa-

tion between two or more companies, not just the use of information by one company. As is noted later in the purchasing management and buyer-seller literature discussions, changes are occurring in the fundamental approaches to how business is conducted and these changes are being driven in part by the availability and use of technologies like EDI.

Summary of Computers and Decision Support Research

As noted above, research in this area has been extremely limited. There was a brief flurry on computer expert systems and some attempts at computer models such as CALLPLAN (Lodish 1971). Bettis-Outland and McFarland (1998) review in detail the research activity in this area, which encompasses sales force size modeling, resource allocation, sales force performance, and compensation.

While the trade press has had numerous articles on sales automation and technology-enabled sales, there has been only limited academic research. Academic literature provides little descriptive or prescriptive information, much less assistance to firms in helping them determine when and what they should do in their sales automation activities. Among the basic questions that remain unanswered are these:

- What kinds of sales automation projects are likely to provide the highest returns?
- How will these systems impact the actual sales process?

Summary of Marketing Sciences Research

The marketing sciences area has had mixed coverage. In the market research area, a significant amount of work has addressed issues in doing survey research and in improving response rates to questionnaires. Much of the work that has been done is useful to both academics and those in industry. Efforts have also been directed at addressing the methodological issues confronting business marketing researchers. There have also been a number of useful normative pieces on both doing and using marketing research, as well as work on conducting industry, competitor, and customer analysis. Of particular note in the area of customer analysis is work by Anderson, Jain, and Chintagunta (1993) that provides valuable insight into how the customer values an offering.

Forecasting issues, as they relate to business markets, as well as computers and decision support systems have received very little attention. Research on the latter could significantly benefit from an examination of best practices in industry. The Internet and its application and use by business marketers has also been overlooked.

Market segmentation, on the other hand, has received a fair amount of research attention. It continues to be important for both marketing academics and managers alike. Recent work by Wind and Thomas (1994) offers useful insights into its importance and how it can be done. The focus in much of the recent work has shifted away from showcasing statistical techniques to how it can be used to better the firm's products and services. However, while progress has been made, much needs to be done to better business marketers' understanding of segmentation and the value of doing segmentation research.

PRODUCT

This part of the review deals with research on both product and service issues in business marketing. It begins with a review of the new products literature in business markets and then reviews the product management literature. Finally, the services and services marketing literature in business markets is examined.

New Product Development and Diffusion

New products have received considerable attention in the business marketing literature. The work falls into two major areas, namely, new product/service and process success and adoption and diffusion theory in new products/services and processes.

New product/service and process success. Within the new product literature there are a number of different streams of research. One includes the normative modeling efforts that focus on identifying how to develop new products successfully. For the most part these are not based on broad empirical knowledge, although some of this work does include case studies as examples. One example is Banting (1978), who provides a case study on an unsuccessful innovation and some lessons from the failure. More typical of the normative studies

is Merrifield (1978), who provides a model for industrial project selection and management. Lucas and Bush (1984) provide a general set of guidelines for marketing new industrial products, and Bingham (1988) suggests a new product development model. Dundas and Krentler (1982) develop a critical path model for introducing new industrial products. Ford and Ryan (1981) provide a general method for taking technology to market by understanding the technology life cycle. More (1984) provides guidance on how to improve the adoption rate of new high-technology products. Work by Rochford (1991) discusses generation and screening of new product ideas, while Vesey (1992) argued for the importance of speed to market and provides guidelines for speeding the product development process. Cooper (1988) suggested that predevelopment activities determine new product success and outlined those activities.

Related to these, there have also been a number of normative articles on some specific aspect of marketing within a new products/services context. For example, Rangan, Menezes, and Maier (1992) focused on issues involved in channel selection for new industrial products and offered a framework for making channel decisions. They identified eight generic channel choice factors, provided a three-step method for deriving and analyzing the factors, and illustrated the use of the framework in a business marketing application. Bello and Barczak (1990) looked at trade shows as a vehicle for improving company new product development efforts and offered guidelines on how they might be used. Dolan and Mathews (1993) looked at the research side of the equation and provided guidance on using customers for beta testing new products. A final example of this type of work is McKeown (1990), who looked at how to get new products from new technologies and focused on the problem of going from abstract research to a marketable commodity.

Activities that lead to successful new product innovation have been studied extensively. A particular stream of literature begun by Cooper (1975) has generated well over 100 articles, most of which are empirical. Much of the work by Cooper and colleagues has been summarized in Cooper (1990, 1992), Cooper and Kleinschmidt (1995), and John and Snelson (1988). The work of Cooper is based on three major empirical studies employing similar methodology. Using a variety of data collection methods, respondents in the studies were asked to evaluate successful and unsuccessful new product introductions on a

number of attributes. The attributes were factor analyzed and then cluster/discriminant analysis was used in examining those activities that contributed to effective new product introductions. Cooper and colleagues identified eight key factors that contributed to the success of a new product:

1. Superior product with unique benefits to the customer
2. Well-defined product and project prior to undertaking development
3. Technological synergy
4. Quality of execution of technological activities
5. Quality of other predevelopment activities
6. Marketing synergy
7. Quality of execution of marketing activities
8. Market attractiveness (Cooper and Kleinschmidt 1990)

Montoya, Weiss, and Calantone (1994) arrived at similar conclusions in their meta-analysis.

Cooper and colleagues' empirical work, based on a project labeled NewProd, resulted in over twenty different articles, and led to Cooper (1990) developing the Stage-Gate System Product Innovation Process. The Stage-Gate System argues that the new product development and commercialization process consists of a series of six stages from idea to full market launch and that prior to entering each subsequent stage a gate or hurdle must be passed. New product research has tended to focus on process as a whole rather than recognizing that different criteria are likely to impact the success or failure of a project at different stages.

One area that has attracted considerable attention is that of time as it relates to the new product development process. Vesey (1992) discusses speeding product development time to market, and Kortge and Okonkwo (1989) argue for simultaneous product development in order to reduce the failure rate. Mabert, Muth, and Schmenner (1992) provide six case studies on how to collapse new product development times. Hultink and Robben (1995) examined the relationship between a company's time perspective and how it measures new product success. Nijssen, Arbouw, and Commandeur (1995), using a small sample of forty-one companies, examined how companies accelerate the new product development process. Taking a broader

perspective, Karagozoglu and Brown (1993) examined the overall time-based philosophy of a company and its relationship to its management of the new product development process. The other major issue of time deals with first-mover advantages or, in other words, when it is appropriate to be first or later in entering new markets. The great majority of this work has been done in consumer markets, but Yoon and Lilien (1990) provide an example of a study done in business markets and the work of Von Hippel (1978, 1988) on lead user analysis is also instructive.

Other aspects of the new product development process have also been studied. Haley and Goldberg (1995), using a sample of sixty-six firms, discuss how to use financial tools and examine the effect of these tools on various aspects of the new product development process. How firms integrate customer requirements into the product design process was the subject of a small-sample (twelve) study by Bailetti and Litua (1995). McGuinness (1990) and Rochford (1991) examine new product idea generation and screening, the latter using a small response set of twenty-nine high-technology firms.

Work by Cooper and deBrentani (1984) and deBrentani and Droge (1988) suggests decision support systems of various types for use in new product processes. Choffray and Lilien (1986) present a decision support system for evaluating new product launches. The NewProd system of Cooper (1992) has been developed into a decision support tool. Taking a slightly different perspective, Keeney and Lilien (1987) examine how to use multiattribute value analyses to design new products. An early article by Howell (1980) suggests how to use the learning curve approach in designing and launching new products. Comer, O'Keefe, and Chilenskas (1980) provide an interesting discussion of the general problem of technology transfer from the government laboratory to business markets. This particular topic has been very important lately, given the change in world politics and the decline in the importance of defense markets. Much of what has been written on technology transfer is primarily in engineering and science-related publications.

Another topic of research has been the use of either external or internal parties in the design, development, and launching of new products. Studies of external parties have focused on the use of customers to help develop new ideas (von Hippel 1978) and, more recently, use of lead users in the product innovation process (von Hippel 1986; Ur-

ban and von Hippel 1988; Herstatt and von Hippel 1992). Similarly, Cardozo, Smith, and Viswanathan (1988) examined how to identify early adopters for novel products and Foxall (1989) generally examined the notion of user-initiated product innovations.

Internally, Rochford and Wotruba (1993) discuss the role of the sales force in new product development. Atuahena (1995) examines the role of purchasing in new product development, something the purchasing literature, both academic and managerial, has also dealt with. John (1984), using a small sixteen firm sample, examines how experienced innovators organize for innovation. Rochford and Rudebusch (1992) examine how using cross-functional ideas affects new product development, whereas Littler, Leverich, and Bruce (1995) specifically examine the factors that lead to collaboration in new product development. Griffin and Hauser (1992), more specifically, examine cross-functional communication patterns among new product teams. Griffin and Hauser (1996) also review the general literature on integrating R&D and marketing in new product development and suggest a number of research hypotheses. The concept of venture teams and venture departments as keys to new product development have also been discussed (Fast 1978, 1979a,b; Bingham and Quigley 1989) from both a conceptual as well as normative perspective. Interestingly, the business marketing literature has generated only one empirical examination of the use of venture teams or departments, namely, Barczak and Wilemon (1992), who used a sample of 114 to examine new product teams and what makes for a successful new product team leader.

Diffusion research. Diffusion research has been extensively reviewed by Rogers (1995). While diffusion theory underlies virtually all of the new product research efforts, it is not represented to any significant extent in the business marketing literature.

Diffusion of innovations theory generally concerns itself with the communication process regarding new ideas. As Rogers (1983) has stated, diffusion concerns itself with an innovation that is communicated over time among members of a social system. Marketing represents a small portion of research in this area. Much of the marketing-related research has focused on the individual, especially on the consumer goods side of things. The trend in the business marketing research, however, appears to be moving to more of an organizational focus.

Kennedy (1983) provides a review of diffusion theory from a business marketing perspective. The focus of her review is primarily on organizational, environmental, and individual variables that influence adoption. She argues that marketing theory has typically focused on adoption from an economic perspective. Theory in marketing needs to incorporate a multidisciplinary approach to better explain and predict adoption behavior. A similar argument has been made by Tigert and Farivar (1981) and Bass, Krishnan, and Jain (1994) based on the Bass model (Bass 1969). Another review of the diffusion literature is provided by Ray (1988). In compiling his review, he focuses on a number of industrial processes over time. He concludes that the introduction of a new technology usually leads to improvements that widen its adaptability and make it more efficient.

Frambach (1993) offers not only a review but a model of organizational adoption and diffusion of innovations as well. Frambach argues for a model of diffusion that integrates both the demand and supply aspects of diffusion and incorporates the concepts of networks and buyer-seller dyads into diffusion research. His argument is reflected in work by a number of authors. For example, More (1986) explicitly examined developer/adopter relationships and provided a framework that incorporated the dyad consisting of three subprocesses: development, adoption, and interfacing. Foxall (1988), using the IMP group methodologies, examined manufacturer and user-initiated process innovation as well as vertically integrated user-initiated product innovation. Freeman (1991) discussed networks of innovators. Midgely, Morrison, and Roberts (1992) examined the impact of network structures on industrial diffusion processes.

Adoption. Research in diffusion theory is spread across a number of different disciplines and has also focused on specific industries. One area that has attracted a considerable amount of research is the study of adoption. An early example of work in this area is one by Hayward, Allen, and Masterson (1977), who developed a technique called innovation profiles for use in predicting capital goods adoption. In an industry-specific study, Hayward (1978) developed profiles of adopters of flour milling innovations. In a later piece, Hayward and Masterson (1987) studied innovation of capital goods in the flour milling and baking industries and provided sales management implications.

Cohn (1980) examined managerial attitudes toward adoption and found that CEO attitudes were not related to adoption. Rabino (1983) used the notion of concept evaluation in discussing how marketers could facilitate the adoption of image systems used by art and production directors. More (1984) provided a planning framework for improving adoption rate. Robertson and Gatignon (1986) provided research propositions for organizational adoption and the effects of competition. Rosen, Schnaars, and Shani (1988) examined the impact of setting industry standards on diffusion within an industry. They argued that setting standards reduces risk of failure but also increases the risk of collusion and inefficiencies on the part of competitors. Rosenberg (1988) looked at the role of research industrial product diffusion. Harrer, Weijs, and Hattrup (1988) explored the role of change agents in a case study of irrigation equipment used by farms. Day and Herbig (1990) furnish a discussion of how the diffusion of industrial products differs from retail products. Their results suggested three fundamental differences—funding commitments, time orientation, and risk. Sinkula (1991) explored factors influencing the organizational adoption of scanner-based research methods. He argued his findings were largely in agreement with the general findings discussed by Rogers (1983). Gauvin and Sinha (1993), working with a sample of 8,000 firms, looked at the adoption of computer technology. Their model of the adoption process for computer technology adds the concept of opportunities for adoption and portrays it as a two-stage process, with adoption being a function of both opportunities and innovativeness. Their findings, when compared to a single-stage logit model, suggest the two-stage model is more robust.

In a particularly interesting piece, Herbig (1991) develops a cusp catastrophe model of industrial innovation and offers a number of testable hypotheses. Catastrophe theory argues that phenomena are discontinuous and this methodology provides a method for developing and testing models that have as their assumption discontinuous relationships among variables. Kauffman and Oliva (1994) offer a solid review and example of how this method works. To date, this perspective has received only limited application in marketing (Wind 1979; Plank 1981).

International aspects of diffusion. There have also been several papers that have addressed international aspects of the diffusion of innovations. Chakrabarti, Feinman, and Fuentesvilla (1978), for example, used a country orientation to examine how different countries

compare in their ability to innovate and diffuse innovations. Abu-Ismaïl (1982) looked at diffusion in Kuwait. Phillips, Calantone, and Lee (1994) examined the variables of perceived ease of adoption, perceived utilities, behavioral intention, and cultural affinity in the adoption of mining technology in China. While there are some questions on measurement and scaling, the overall model fits were good and support the notion of the impact of culture on technology transfer.

Summary of New Product Research

This area has been very prolific, primarily driven by the work of Cooper and colleagues, but many other researchers have also made a significant impact. However, this area suffers from problems similar to those in the sales performance literature. Recent work by Cooper (1990) on the Stage-Gate model has pointed out that new product development is a process that occurs over time. Most of the early research and much of the continuing research examines from a cross-sectional perspective the impact of various issues on the overall success of a particular product or project. However, as the Stage-Gate process argues, different activities are likely to be more or less important at different points in time and are likely to have differential impacts at different points in time. There is a need to understand how the process impacts the output, which is different from the focus of the input-output research that has typically characterized this area. Limited work has examined specific parts of the new product process, but this work has been very narrow in scope and does not connect to the entire process. Readers should again be cautioned that much of the work on new products in business markets appears in a wide variety of journals, including those of management and engineering, and that while there appears to be a great deal of overlap, some interesting perspectives appear in other literatures not covered in this review. In addition, continued work on the diffusion of innovations paradigm also crosses many disciplines and is broader than the limited coverage in the business marketing literature. Based on the foregoing discussion, some suggested research questions follow:

- How does the degree of technology impact on the new product process and the degree of product success?
- Does the level of technology in the product/service or marketplace impact on the type of activities, behaviors, and skills necessary to successfully introduce a new product?

- What stages require which skills and activities on the part of the marketer to be successful?
- Under what conditions is it viable to introduce suppliers of products/services into your new product development process and when should they become involved?

Product Management

The industrial product management literature has been relatively narrow in scope. Some significant work has been done examining the problem of weak products and how to eliminate them from the product mix. There have also been some efforts at modeling general product management. Industrial branding has been virtually ignored and only one paper (Easton 1978) has looked at packaging.

Weak products and their elimination has been examined at length in a series of studies by Avlonitis (1982, 1983, 1984, 1985a,b, 1986a,b, 1993). His work is based on two different data sets. The first data set deals primarily with the product elimination process in firms—how the process is managed, who makes the decisions, how weak products are identified, and what major factors are considered in the decision to eliminate. His latest work (1993) represents a second data set reporting factors managers consider in deciding to drop a product. Vyas (1993) provides a holistic view of the complexity of the product elimination process using a case study format, whereas Saunders and Jobber (1994) document the strategies used by companies to both simultaneously delete one product and launch its replacement.

There is a small and mostly dated stream of research dealing with industrial product managers, most of which use a comparative format with consumer product managers. Kelly and Hise (1979) and Cummings, Jackson, and Ostrom (1984) document some of the differences between the job functions. Eckles and Novotny (1984) focus on the industrial product manager, empirically defining their authority and responsibilities with a sample of ninety-two product managers. Dawes and Patterson (1988), using a sample of 163 respondents, examined the performance measurements of industrial and consumer product managers. Finally, Lysonski and Woodside (1989), using boundary role theory, examine conflict resolution and performance

of industrial product managers using a sample of sixty-nine managers.

The general product management area includes a number of papers with somewhat different perspectives. Rao (1981) presented an early dynamic industrial product modeling article. Steckel (1988) presented Pioneer, a decision support system for industrial product planning. Jackson and Shapiro (1979), as well as Clark and Fujimoto (1990), provide general discussions of the problems of product management and offer normative guidance on how to effectively manage the process.

A number of authors, most notably Yelle (1980), Swan and Rink (1980), and Thorelli and Burnett (1981), have examined life cycles as a factor in product management. The latter used PIMS data from 1,148 businesses. More recently, Popper and Buskirk (1992) have discussed the technology life cycle as it relates to business markets, noting among other things the time shrinkage of the life cycle.

Another area that has received some research focus is the bundling/unbundling of product offerings. Such bundling and unbundling of products is very common in certain businesses, such as computers, where the sales force may actually bundle or unbundle based on their perceptions of the customer and the customer reactions to a product offering. System integrators, as an example, are companies that actually provide different bundles of hardware/software. Often a salesperson of a major supplier, such as IBM, may unbundle some of their components and bundle another company's products to provide a better fit for the customer or to conform to the customer specifications. Wilson, Weiss, and John (1990), for example, look at both bundling and unbundling of products within multicomponent systems, such as a computer network system that may have many different pieces of hardware and software. Using mathematical modeling they develop a model for bundling and unbundling that considers system integration, optimality and modularity, and whether the system conforms to open standards. Paun (1993) provides a set of normative standards for determining when to bundle or unbundle products.

Brand equity, a major issue in consumer markets, has received limited attention in business markets. Saunders and Watt (1979) used a case study to determine if brand names could differentiate identical industrial products and found some examples where this has occurred. Sinclair and Seward (1988) used 368 respondents to examine

the effectiveness of branding a commodity product. This paper examined branding practices in a very narrow product category, building products, and queried both manufacturers and retail distribution outlets. While there was thought to be extensive branding benefits, as perceived by both the manufacturer and the retail outlet, only a few companies realized any benefits. Using a sample of 135 companies in the United Kingdom, Shipley and Howard (1993) found that brand names are extensively used and thought to be valuable. More recently, both Mudambi (1995) and Kim et al. (1995) have suggested the need to rethink the industrial branding process. In particular, Kim et al. provide a model with propositions that suggests how brand equity is built and proposes that, in some instances, brand equity may be as important in business markets as it is in consumer markets. The use of cobranding, a subject of growing interest in consumer markets, has not to date been examined in business markets.

Summary of Product Management Research

Other than the product elimination research there has been very little programmatic research in the product management literature. There has been minimal work dealing with the people involved in product management and exactly what the job entails. Much more needs to be done to define the product management process, and the skills/competencies needed to do the job, as well as work examining best practices in product management. As noted, the notion of the bundling and unbundling of product offerings is a very basic strategic question that is only now being addressed in some fashion. Also noted is the potential importance of brand equity, something that is very important in consumer markets and needs to be examined in business-to-business markets.

Given the preceding comments, the following questions need to be addressed:

- How important is brand equity in business markets? If so, how can it be developed and managed?
- What are best practices in product management in business markets?
- What impact, if any, are advances in computer tools having on product management?

- What is, or should be, the role of product/brand managers in business marketing?
- What is the role of cobranding in business markets?

Services

Industrial services and/or service businesses is but a small niche in the overall arena of service businesses. Most of the service literature concerns itself with consumer products. However, industrial services can mean both a service business or the idea of service that accompanies or augments the product that is marketed. It is the latter that appears to be important in business markets since organizational buyers are generally perceived as being much more concerned with the service aspects of the products they buy than the typical consumer. The service literature in business marketing can be divided into four major areas. The first area deals with services as a strategic and a competitive weapon, both within a services business framework, but primarily as an augmentation to the product offering. A second smaller area deals with new service development. The third area, which is equally small, deals with professional services. Finally, there is a much larger area that deals with the importance of customer service, service quality, and other tactical issues of making service happen. Each of these areas will be discussed in the following.

Gronroos (1979) was the first to suggest a theory for marketing industrial services. Likewise, Jackson and Cooper (1988) have argued that there are some unique aspects to the marketing activities of industrial services. The remainder of the work is primarily normative, with the only empirical effort being by Kyj (1987), who examined how companies use customer service as a competitive tool.

Roscitt and Paret (1990) argue for a model of strategic service management, pointing out the importance of service strategy as a competitive weapon. Both Wagner and LaGarce (1981) and Wagner (1987) make similar arguments. Cooper and Jackson (1988) take a marketing orientation approach, arguing that companies in the service sector need to be service marketing oriented. Samli, Jacobs, and Wills (1992) discuss the presale/postsale services that are generally needed to be competitive in an international marketing environment.

With respect to new service development, deBrentani (1991, 1995) has been the primary advocate of the need for research on new indus-

trial services. Utilizing the research methodology pioneered by Cooper (1975) in examining new product success and failure, deBrentani has examined the factors that lead to the success and failure of new product services. Another interesting small sample study was done by Woodside, Sanderson, and Brody (1988) who looked at testing the acceptance of a new industrial service—a wool testing service in New Zealand.

In terms of the marketing of professional services, Gummesson (1978), in an early piece, has suggested a theoretical approach to the marketing of professional services. He defines professional services and identifies eight components that fit into three broad areas: inputs/resources, process/operations, and end product output. He essentially argues that services can be defined as an input-process-output phenomenon. Yorke (1990), using the IMP group approach to research, develops a model for services marketing. More recently, Bostrom (1995) provides a large-sample (398 respondents) empirical study of professional services. His approach is interesting because, in effect, he tries to ascertain what makes for a good customer of a service. Within a very narrow context, users of architectural services in Sweden, he found that architects consider people who cooperate with them to have a high degree of knowledge, to possess good relational characteristics such as trust and honesty, and to value and understand good architectural work.

The final and largest area of services research centers on efforts examining various aspects of customer service. Two important empirical pieces are Day and Barksdale (1992) and Morris and Davis (1992). The former examines how firms select a professional service. The latter looked at how firms measure and manage their customer service operations. The only other empirical piece by Morris and Fuller (1989) examined how CPA firms price their services. A number of other conceptual and managerial pieces also deserve mentioning. Gummesson (1981), following up on his theory article, developed a concept called marketing cost as applied to service firms. What he basically does in this article is take into account the fact that professional service providers play dual roles: service provider and marketer. Thus, he argues those costs must be properly apportioned. Tinsley and Lewis (1978) provide a set of normative guidelines for the general evaluation of industrial services for buyers of those services. McGuire (1986) discusses how to develop customer service

policies. Coppett (1988) takes the concept of a marketing audit and discusses how to audit your customer service activities. Lynn (1986) provides a discussion and an example of segmenting a business market for a professional service. Cohen and Lee (1990) examine the importance of using spare parts and after-sales service activities to keep in touch with your customers, while Szmigin (1993) discusses how to manage the quality of your business services.

A limited number of articles have also addressed quality and its measurement. Babakus, Pedrick, and Richardson (1995) is an example of the use of SERVQUAL to measure service quality. Holmlund and Kock (1995) took a somewhat different perspective to the same topic by defining the dimensions of quality. Wetzels et al. (1995) used both SERVQUAL and a conjoint exercise to examine service quality. Kasper and Limmink (1989) examined perceptions of after-sales service quality among two groups, the service managers and the customers, and pointed out the need for objective measures of service quality. From a normative perspective, Moore and Schlegelmilch (1994) discuss how to improve service quality in business markets in general. As with the consumer services literature there is a great deal of debate on the SERVQUAL measure. The purchasing literature on evaluating suppliers seems to support the need for the development of specific measures used by the buyer to evaluate suppliers. When the supplier is a service, the evaluation schema developed by the customer, to the extent that it is used, becomes the de facto measure of service quality. The purchasing literature, however, is not well developed in this area (see Tinsley and Lewis 1978 for an early work). The managerial literature provides many case studies of supplier evaluation schemes, but unfortunately most of them deal with products.

However, the literature would seem to suggest that the customer evaluation schema becomes the measurement tool and the content of that schema is relevant, not a generalized measurement schema such as SERVQUAL. The extent to which a generalized schema, such as SERVQUAL, fits the customer evaluation tool, the more relevant it becomes.

Summary of Services Research

The services research agenda really breaks down to two issues, those of how to manage a service business (where the offering is a

pure or mostly service offering) and the notion of the role of service in the product offering. The research in both areas is fragmented. Additional research is needed in order to assess the usefulness of SERVQUAL business markets. The fact that measurements of SERVQUAL are very mixed in terms of reliability and validity means additional research is warranted.

As has been suggested, many purchasing departments establish formal measures of supplier performance. These are, in essence, the value measures for the buying firm. Whether a marketer is dealing with products or services, the job is to comply with the necessary performance measures or to change them. Among the many potential research topics in the services area in need of additional research are the following:

- What is the relationship between product, service, quality, price, and value? In other words, what is the relationship of these constructs in business markets? Does it vary across products and services? If so, why?
- How should companies go about developing a service quality measure?
- How does one develop brand equity in service businesses? Is it a different process than in product businesses?
- Is there a methodology for assuring an optimal product/service mix? In other words, what drives the product/service mix?

Summary of Product/Services Research

Product research has had a significant amount of effort devoted to the new product area. Cooper and colleagues have had a twenty-year research program that has provided a great deal of insight into factors that impact on the success or failure of industrial products as a whole. His recent Stage-Gate model suggests that different factors are going to vary in importance at different stages of the process and that the rules for moving from one stage to the next differ. This suggests additional research is needed to examine the linkage of factors to process stages.

Timing and new product introductions is another area that has received some attention, but it is an area from which few conclusions can be drawn. A basic question companies face is whether to be first

in the market. There has been some excellent and important work in the area, but further refinement is needed to provide normative advice to managers.

Product management research has been even more limited. And although there are many areas that could benefit from additional research, three in particular stand out. The first is that of product life cycle, especially as it relates to product elimination. Given the recent environmental concerns as they relate to many products, this area clearly warrants additional attention. The second area that would benefit from additional research is the bundling and unbundling of products and services. Work is needed to understand bundling and unbundling as it relates to buyers' assessments of the value of a firm's market offerings. Finally, the third area centers on the general value of branding, brand names, and brand equity in business markets. This area has been fruitful in consumer products marketing, where the value and the changes in the value of brands and brand names is clearly evident. As noted earlier, other than a few studies, this entire area remains unexplored in business markets.

Services as an area of research has had a strong movement toward becoming a separate field of marketing study over the past fifteen years. Much of the research, however, has focused on consumer services and marketing to consumers.

The business marketing literature on services has seen some attempts at theoretical development but most of the empirical work has been primarily descriptive. As noted in the previous discussion, service measurement seems to be fairly well refined to the extent that industrial buyers have developed formal supplier evaluation schema and many of these have service measure components. However, given the increasing importance of augmented products and the move to a more service-oriented economy, much more research is needed in this area.

PRICING

Pricing issues continue to be a major concern for many firms in business markets. Yet the pricing area has received relatively little research attention. Only seventy-three articles have had some sort of pricing orientation. In this section, selected empirically based articles are examined first followed by a discussion of selected normative efforts.

Empirical Studies

Price/quality has been the focus of a limited number of studies. White (1978) examined how purchasing agents viewed the price–perceived quality relationship. In a similar vein, Lambert (1981) examined price as a quality cue in organizational buying. He found, as did others before him, that no such clear relationship exists. However, one wonders if the same results would be obtained in today’s business market environment considering the movement toward single-source buying, strategic buyer-seller alliances, and much more proactive and better trained buying teams. Increasingly the comment is being heard in the trade journals that quality in today’s business environment is a must in order to even be considered by a vendor.

In terms of price-setting issues, Long and Varble (1978) studied purchasing’s use of flexible price contracts. Jackson and Ostrom (1979) looked at life cycle pricing, a practice that one would expect to be more prevalent today. An interesting study by Plinke (1985) examined the pricing decision for capital goods, with specific emphasis on modeling the psychological variables as well as the cost accounting approach. Morris (1987) assessed the use of separate prices as a marketing tool. More recently, Shipley and Bourdon (1990) explored how distributors price products in competitive markets and Morris and Fuller (1989) examined the pricing of an industrial service, specifically the pricing of CPA accounting services.

Global pricing issues have been explored in three empirical articles. Abratt and Pitt (1987) examined pricing practices in two industries in South Africa. However, the external validity of their findings to other countries and industries has not been demonstrated. In another interesting international effort, Farley, Hulber, and Weinstein (1980), in a case-based study, looked at price setting in two European industrial companies.

Competitive bidding, an important pricing topic, has received few empirical efforts. Boughton (1987) provides a general look at the overall competitive bidding process. Williams and Sagarbakhshi (1988), taking a slightly different focus, examined competitive bidding in both the Department of Defense and in the private sector. They found a number of differences in the processes across the two business sectors.

Normative Studies

The number of normative pricing articles far exceeds that of empirical articles and covers a broad variety of pricing issues. Jain and Laric (1979) and Canum and Morgan (1991) provide a general framework for making strategic pricing decisions. A piece by Laric (1980) tried to define pricing strategies.

A number of studies have focused on the customer in price setting. Shapiro and Jackson (1978) and Jackson (1980) examine the process of pricing from the perspective of meeting consumer needs and the risk element that pricing represents to the parties. Forbes and Mehta (1981), in a classic article often quoted in segmentation work, examined the notion of value to the customer and pricing from a value-to-the-customer perspective. In more recent work, Thompson, Coe, and Lewis (1994) provide more detail on value computations while Kortge and Ikonkwo (1993) offer additional insights into perceived value and how to use it in pricing.

Specialty pricing situations have also received some attention. Boughton (1984), for example, examined closed bid pricing. Cavusgil (1988) examined export pricing. Weekly (1992) discussed the nature of pricing in foreign markets. The nature of pricing in the high-technology product and service market is looked at in Grunenwald and Vernon (1988). Aranoff (1995) discusses the issue of transfer pricing problems, with specific discussion of the impact of demand on the actual transfer price. He basically contends that transfer pricing between divisions is a peak load problem and thus pricing is subject to the demand state. This is the only discussion of transfer pricing.

Since the early classic on lease pricing by Anderson and Lazer (1978) and Anderson and Bird (1980), there has been little documentation on the use of leasing in business markets, a practice that is heavily used. Smith and Nagel (1994) provide an interesting and useful article on the finances of leasing and examine the use of financial analysis as a tool in developing lease prices that meet profit objectives.

From a normative standpoint, three additional articles are worth mentioning in detail. First is one by McGrath (1991) who provides a list of ten timeless truths about pricing. He argues pricing is only one part of the overall revenue-generating strategy and has to be carefully

tied to market share strategy. He notes that pricing always involves cost, is always related to performance, must be segment based, and is related to the investment in brand equity. He also notes that pricing must take into account distribution dynamics, cannot be overly complex, that its impact must be measured, and that the implementation of pricing plans requires salespeople with good negotiation skills.

The second, by Woodside (1994), provides the first attempt at developing a pricing process map. This causal map examines the factors that drive the pricing decision as well as the impact of price on the company, market, and competition. Woodside argues that using such a model allows the user to understand multiple pricing goals, factors that impact directly and indirectly the setting of price, feedback loops and their impact on performance, and organizes the pricing process so continuous learning occurs. He then provides a case study on pricing a new industrial product in New Zealand and how the use of the model increases our understanding of the process.

The third article of note is by Kijewski and Yoon (1990), who take the idea of a price performance curve and broaden it to a market-based price performance analysis. This is essentially value-based pricing and they demonstrate the algorithm using hypothetical data from the computer microprocessor industry. Finally, it should be noted that several very interesting articles by Irv Gross have addressed value pricing and are available from the Institute for the Study of Business Markets at Penn State.

Summary of Pricing Research

In summary, pricing continues to be an area in need of research. Historically most of the writing on pricing has come from the economic literature and been theoretical in orientation. Much of the literature on consumer pricing in business journals is behavioral and perceptual in its approach to understanding pricing. On the other hand, organizational buyers and buying processes are typically thought of as more rational. However, that rationality is not always economic in nature or completely financially based. In fact, understanding the concept of value, both from an academic perspective as well as a practitioner perspective, is one of the major struggles all people involved in business marketing face. The few studies that have been

process and case based (Farley, Hulbert, and Weinstein 1980; Woodside 1994) have shown this.

A major trend in business is value-based pricing (e.g., Anderson, Jain, and Chintagunta 1993). The value being discussed, however, may not be just for the buyer or seller, but for the entire supply chain. The supply chain can be viewed not only as a logistics concept or as another term for value chain but as a strategic concept where competitive advantage comes from the members of the supply chain, not the individual firm. This, however, is a difficult concept in practice for most firms. Ethnographic process-oriented approaches to this problem seem to be the most appropriate research perspective at this time, not only to understand how it might work, but also how to get companies to think in those terms. This trend appears to be just beginning.

Work also has to be done within a process framework to understand special pricing problems, such as how to use leases, how to bid, and what the unique problems are in pricing in specialized markets. Pricing is a strategic undertaking and the process needs to be better understood. The notion of processes is rapidly becoming the way practitioners think about how they do their jobs and the newest text in business marketing (Anderson and Narus 1999) has a decidedly process and value framework.

Pricing processes and the impact of price as it relates to organizational buying processes is critically underresearched. The organizational buying literature has typically given buyers a listing of attributes and asked them to order these attributes in terms of importance (see Wilson 1994 for a review) and, in most cases, pricing has not been the most important factor. For example, Dickson (1966), Lehman and O'Shaughnessy (1974), Dempsey (1978), Lehman and O'Shaughnessy (1982), Evans (1982), and Wilson (1994) have all examined price as an attribute and found it not to be the most important. Wilson, based on her data, even suggests price is becoming less important. However, recent quasi-experimental research reported by Donath (1998), on research conducted by James C. Anderson and James Thompson, indicates that buyers still use initial purchase price as a major determinant of their decision making. The issue, of course, is what are the value mechanisms buying group members use and how does that relate to how pricing should be conducted by the firm. As noted by Anderson, Jain, and Chintagunta (1993), all value thinking eventually is reduced to monetary terms; the question becomes

how that is computed. Wilson (1994) is probably correct that purchase price may not be a very important factor in many cases; however, Donath (1998), reporting on Anderson and Thompson, is obviously also correct in that there are many situations where price is the primary factor. Future research has to determine how value is computed and when purchase price is likely to be the surrogate used for value.

We suggest that it is reasonable to assume that price, both in the short or long term, can serve as an underlying fundamental definition of value for purchase situations. However, the exact way in which a particular firm calculates values may take many forms. Companies may also consider all direct and indirect costs, short term and long term, to determine value (value in use or lifetime overall cost). They may also focus on some other attribute, such as quality, for instance, that is not necessarily a price-related variable. They may also choose to take a supply chain perspective.

Among the many questions and issues related to pricing in business markets that need to be examined, the following offer some useful avenues for further research:

- How can and should companies react to target pricing initiatives?
- How can marketers change the price objective of the customer from initial price to long-term overall price or life cycle cost?
- How does consideration of supply chain partners affect the pricing process in a firm?

DISTRIBUTION

This section is divided into two parts. The first will deal with channel management—the management of the buying-selling system—in business markets. The second will deal with logistics in the management of physical distribution systems.

Channel Management

The channel management literature has four main thrusts. One focuses on industrial distributors, a second smaller one focuses on man-

ufacturers' reps and agents, and the remaining two deal with the behavioral aspects of channels and general channel management.

Distributors. The work on distribution as an institution and the management and problems of distribution in business writings is limited. Michman (1980) pointed out a number of general trends including evidence of consolidation in distribution. The author also noted changes in selling, service requirements, and the problems of small distributors in competing in some markets. In an empirical piece, Narus, Reddy, and Pinchak (1984) identified typical problems industrial distributors face. Inventory return policies were the biggest and most consistent manufacturer-distributor problem. In a similar but more narrowly focused empirical piece, Shipley (1987) examined problems that distributors of engineered products in England have with their manufacturer partners. He found the biggest problems involved deliveries, pricing policies, the existence of house accounts, competition, poor planning and working relationships with the manufacturer, and poor sales support by manufacturer salespeople. A more recent case study in the British Chemical Industry examined the advantages and disadvantages of distribution (Brown and Herring 1995). The authors suggest that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages except for high-technology and/or high-volume customers and with a small number of customers buying commodity products. Such advice appears pretty consistent with what is generally practiced. While there are other contributions, most are very narrow in focus and tangential to the problems of distributors.

Manufacturers' reps and agents. The work on manufacturers' reps or agents is even more limited. An early work by Sibley and Teas (1979), based on responses from 202 manufacturers' reps who belonged to state associations of manufacturers' reps, examined factors differentiating good from bad relationships between a manufacturer's rep and the principal. The authors found that the most important variable was sales support on the part of the manufacturer followed by communication and organization by and between the representative and the principal. Bellizzi and Glacken (1986) describe how a manufacturer can build a better rep organization. They provide guidelines that include developing a long-term commitment, providing good training and orientation, making it easy for reps to make money, and being honest with reps, among others. In a similar but more narrow piece, Mehr (1992) provides advice about how to find reps, suggest-

ing a matching process and using customers or potential customers to help identify the best potential representatives.

Behavioral issues. The behavioral aspects of channels have a long and rich history, dating from the 1960s and the work of Louis Sten and his doctoral students. Much of the early work focused on conflict and its resolution as well as power and its use and abuse. More recently, Frazier (1983) has presented more of a process framework, suggesting that interorganizational exchanges can be framed in terms of an initiation process, an implementation process, and a review process. The Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987) relationships model takes a somewhat similar perspective.

While behavioral literature and empirical testing has continued to expand, the focus has shifted to the increasing complexity of the models tested rather than new theoretical perspectives or constructs. The work is characterized by a broad variety of sampling frames and contexts. Ford (1978) used scenarios to examine what factors led to stability in channels. He found that power and clear role expectations were the biggest contributors to channel stability. In another early study, Sibley and Michie (1981), using a sample from the farm equipment industry, found that using noncoercive sources of power was much more likely to result in high dealer performance than using coercive power. A more recent study by Frazier and Rody (1991) suggested the use of reciprocity in terms of influence and found support for different sources of power. A study of franchisees and franchisors in the fast-food business (Dant and Schul 1992) indicated problem solving to be the most general model of conflict resolution. Purohit and Staelin (1994), utilizing a student sample in a simulation, found support, in terms of power usage, for a relational model of behavior with asymmetrical power relationships and increased usage of rewards, promises, and information as noncoercive strategies.

New types of models are also being developed. Weitz and Jap (1995) state that relationship management in distribution channels is no longer a power and conflict issue as such, but more of an issue of relationships between firms based on contractual and control systems. These authors suggest a set of factors that lead toward the changes in interest and propose a schema for researching channel relationships based on contractual and normative control mechanisms.

Distributor motivation has also received some attention. Rosenbloom (1978), in a normative piece, suggests how to motivate distrib-

utors by identifying their needs, offering support, and providing leadership. Such advice is probably as true today as it was then. Shipley (1984), in an empirical study, found more similarities than differences in the motives of U.S. versus U.K. distributors. McGrath and Hardy (1989) provided case studies of how to support and motivate distributors. The authors found that different sizes of distributors had different needs and wants and therefore should be motivated differently. The differences were very significant. For example, the larger distributors neither needed nor desired manufacturer training or lead generation, whereas smaller distributors valued these factors highly.

There has also been some work in channel partnerships. The most important is by Anderson and Narus (1990), who developed a complex model of working partnerships. They found that higher levels of communication and cooperation among the partners lead to more trust and reduced conflict, thus increasing the parties' satisfaction with the relationship. Much of the research on buyer-seller relationships, while not in the context of a principal and an intermediary, applies to work in the channels area. And, in fact, while we have not been explicit in our discussion of buyer-seller relationships in that section, the work of Weitz and Jap (1995) is applicable to how those relationships, i.e., supplier to a manufacturing company supplying a production part, may be categorized also. Obviously there are a number of competing theoretical paradigms.

Channel management. The general channel management literature has been fairly prolific. There have been several discussions of channel design and management (McGrath and Hardy 1987; Powers 1989) and problems that can arise (e.g., Hlavacek and McCuiston 1983; Moriarty and Moran 1990; Cespedes and Corey 1990; McGrath and Hardy 1992).

Three articles are of particular note. Rangan, Menezes, and Maier (1992) provide a comprehensive set of guidelines for channel design. They list eight generic channel functions (product information, product customization, product quality, lot size, assortment, availability, after-sales service, and logistics) and discuss the importance of each function within direct or indirect channels. They also stress two other issues, adaptability and constraints, that are critical in channel design. A second interesting and valuable article, especially for managers, is one by McGrath and Hardy (1987). They identify six critical pitfalls (bypassing channels, oversaturation, too many links in the chain, new

channels, cost cutters, and inconsistencies) that almost always lead to conflict and suggest ways to avoid each pitfall. The final paper of note is by Mohr and Nevin (1990), who develop a theoretical approach to understanding communication in marketing channels. They postulate that channel structure, climate, and power conditions, when combined with communication strategies, lead to qualitative outcomes such as coordination, satisfaction, and commitment, as well as better performance.

Summary of Channel Research

Progress has been made in understanding channels in the past twenty years, but there remain a significant number of unanswered questions. While there is evidence that behavioral models have increased in complexity, the empirical research continues to be fragmented; there is little evidence of multiple context studies. Behavioral measures have improved, but there is little research to show for it. The recent work in partnerships appears promising and reinforces findings from previous studies such as, for example, the finding that communication and noncoercive power are conducive to trust among the parties and lead to more satisfaction on the part of both parties.

There is limited work on distributors or other marketing intermediaries and almost nothing on manufacturers' reps. There are some good managerial discussions on channel management, but a limited amount on the selection of channel partners. Again, as with the behavioral stream, much of this is informative, but so fragmented as to be difficult to offer much guidance to managers.

Channel management still requires a great deal of descriptive work. Work in the area of defining distribution partners, such as distributors' and manufacturers' sales agents, is minimal. The behavioral issues are well researched, although, as noted earlier, are narrow in scope and context. The work on partnerships provides interesting insights about the makeup of channel relationships. There is good normative material on how to think through the channels of distribution problem, but little empirical work that actually supports the issues raised.

Among the additional questions in need of research are the following:

- How have channel responsibilities among channel members evolved over the past decade and how are they likely to continue to evolve?
- How will the continuing use of technology, such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) programs and Internet efforts, impact on traditional channel relationships?
- What kinds of conflict within distribution channel relationships are negative and are there any positive aspects to channel relationship conflict?
- How does use and abuse of power in distribution channels lead to intermediate outcomes, such as trust between partners, and how does that impact on the quality of the relationship and the ultimate satisfaction of the parties in the relationship?
- Should principal-distribution relationships be empirically defined differently than buyer-seller relationships?

Logistics and Physical Distribution

As noted earlier, logistics and physical distribution are more specialized fields of inquiry and have a number of targeted journals that tend to be the primary outlets for this research. Consequently, not much is published in the general business marketing literature. Of the eighteen articles on this topic found in the business marketing literature, six provide some particularly useful insights. Terplitz (1982) provided an early look at the shifting of inventories from manufacturer to middleman and suggested a system view to determine location and amount of inventory. Stock and LaLonde (1978), in an interesting buyer behavior-oriented research study, examined how shippers buy from among transportation alternatives. The authors provide a switching model for changing from common to contract carriers. The work definitely is a forerunner of the more contemporary outsourcing and third-party supplier idea. While not explicit, the notion of switching costs was inherent in their work. In a study of transportation brokers, Johnson and Schneider (1995) examine the outsourcing of logistics and argue for the general importance of this type of service. There are many companies, typically referred to as third-party logistics companies, that will provide a variety of services within an outsourcing framework. In a more specialized work Mentzer (1986) provides normative advice on how to systematize problems associated with empty back hauls to pro-

duce less empty back hauls and thus lower total logistics cost. This is a historic problem in transportation: a firm ships a truckload out and then has to get the rolling stock (tractor and trailer) back; obviously, the firm wants to generate revenue on that return trip.

In a different vein, Tinsley and Ormsby (1988) provide the first and only article in the business marketing literature on the nature of Distribution Resource Planning (DRP) and its importance to business marketers. The authors explain the interface between manufacturing, distribution, and marketing and discuss linkages to Material Resource Planning (MRP) systems. In the recent academic and practitioner literature in computing, a major focus has been on the development and use of so-called enterprise software packages, i.e., software that provides the backbone for all other software to integrate into. DRP is more generally a part of ERP. A major goal of the software is to assist in this process within the company and often across the supply chain. On a broader level, Hise (1995) examined international logistics strategies as elements for competing in time-compressed environments. Clearly with the obvious rise of more international competition and more companies doing international business, logistics takes on a decidedly international and strategic orientation in order to be competitive.

Summary of Logistics and Physical Distribution

As noted earlier, most work in this area appears to be published in specialty journals. However, the work noted earlier clearly indicates the importance of this area of marketing. Time and place utility for most consumers comes from the logistic activities of firms. It appears that information technology and other types of technology have had a tremendous impact on the logistics activities of many firms and this is reflected to some extent in the literature reviewed here but is much more evident in the specialty academic and practitioner outlets for logistics.

The following are likely research questions that may be of interest to business marketing professionals and researchers:

- How can logistics thinking help create synergy in buyer-seller relationships?
- How can logistics activities and planning best be integrated into business marketing planning?

- How can creative marketers use logistical advantage to create competitive advantage?
- How can third-party logistics activities best be coordinated to achieve superior supply chain integration?

Summary of Distribution Research

While distribution is an important issue in marketing regardless of whether it is consumer or business-to-business, it has generally had less coverage in business marketing literature than other topical areas. This is perhaps due in part to the availability of specialty publications in this area.

Behavioral channel issues, on which there has historically been much research, have progressed only slightly since the early work dating back to the 1960s and 1970s. Some more complex models have been presented and newer measures developed, but the research has continued to be fragmented. Most promising in this area is the work on partnerships. An additional theoretical perspective, that of communication and its role in the channel, has room for much development and testing. Conflict, and subsequent good and bad outcomes, needs more study, as does the role of power, sources, and types in channel relationships. Literature on motivating partners from the perspective of the manufacturer is also somewhat fragmented.

Literature on logistics in business marketing publications is minimal, but much progress has been made in identifying best practices. Over the past twenty years much has changed in how leading-edge companies handle their inventory issues, how they handle materials, how they use transportation, and how logistics functions are integrated within the firm and between firms to form a more competitive system. Logistics is moving rapidly toward a supply chain or value chain framework as more companies recognize the value of integrating their time and place utility activities with those of their supplier and distribution partners. The concept of supply chain management has the ability to integrate distribution and logistics, but even that concept has several different perspectives which are not in agreement.

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

This final review section deals with the topics within the area of promotion. We begin by examining the work done in advertising, sales promotion, public relations, and general promotion. We then examine the selling and sales management literature that has been done in a business marketing context.

Advertising

The topic of advertising includes work that generally encompasses the use of some paid medium other than salespeople to deliver messages. Not surprisingly, the work in this area follows much of the work done in consumer advertising studies. The research in advertising appears to be somewhat sparse and not at all programmatic. Several basic streams of work are evident in advertising research.

Advertising performance/effectiveness is the basic theme of about fourteen articles—almost all empirical. This work is only minimally programmatic, with many issues being addressed, including copy and layout (e.g., Bellizzi and Mohr 1984; Soley 1986, 1990; Chambley and Sandler 1992; Bellizzi, Minas, and Norvell 1994), comparative advertising (e.g., Stevenson and Swayne 1984, 1988; Swayne and Stevenson 1987), headline type (Soley and Reid 1983), print advertisement readability (Clark, Kaminski, and Grown 1990), humor in business advertising (McCullough and Taylor 1993), use of color in print ads (Huang 1993), advertising in supplier directories (Lehman and Steckel 1985), and advertising in high-technology industries (Traynor and Traynor 1989). Of this work, that by Stevenson and Swayne and Soley and colleagues is clearly the most programmatic.

Advertising budgeting practices have been studied by a number of authors (e.g., Blasko and Patti 1984; Lynch and Hooley 1987, 1989). This appears to build, at least in part, on work done by Lilien and colleagues (e.g., Lilien et al. 1976; Lilien and Little 1976; Lilien 1979) on the ADVISOR budgeting and performance model. This particular model is unique to the business marketing arena but follows in principle similar models developed over the years for consumer advertising budgets.

Ad testing has also been addressed in business markets. Work by Abeele and Butaye (1980) dealt with pretesting; Wilson, Bennett, and

Couchman (1985) looked at the overall effectiveness of advertisements; and Zinkhan (1986) discussed the various methods of copy testing. The paper by Zinkhan is most notable for its normative perspective. The author argues that the type of commercial, degree of risk, and objective of the commercial dictate the appropriate copy test. While consumer copy testing techniques cannot be used without caution, research seems to indicate there is some overlap, such as attitude toward the ad and the context.

Normative papers include work by Burke et al. (1990), who discuss the development of expert systems in advertising design; Bellizzi and Hite (1986), who talk about how to improve copy; Hunmer and Ruppert (1988), who discuss how to select an advertising agency; Maizel (1988), who specifically examines how to use cooperative advertising in commodity markets; and Bellizzi and Lehrer (1983), who generally discuss how to get more from business advertising investment. Probably the most comprehensive statement on creating business advertising is that of Rogers (1995). This particular article not only provides an excellent pragmatic normative overview of advertising creation but also offers testable hypotheses. Unfortunately, most of these remain untested. The most recent and comprehensive normative statement and review of various advertising issues is offered by Lichtenthal and Ducoffe (1994). Again, this article provides some excellent material for developing and testing specific hypotheses relating to the advertising process in business markets.

In addition to this work, only limited attention has been given to women and minorities in business-to-business advertising (e.g., Easton and Toner 1983; Stevenson 1991). One area that has received surprisingly limited discussion is that of advertising strategy. Only one paper by Glover, Hartley, and Patti (1989) examines the issue—their paper takes a very narrow scope and looks specifically at how advertising message strategies are set.

Summary of Advertising Research

In summary, the work in the area of business advertising lacks any clear programmatic direction. While some work has been done in the area of advertising effectiveness that has provided normative direction, there is very little that could be considered a cohesive stream of research. Most advertising research continues to be focused on end

consumers. While there have been several papers that furnish some normative insights into the practice of advertising in business markets, little is known, even from a descriptive perspective, about how the work is actually done. One wonders, as Paustian (1996) so aptly put it, why business-to-business advertising is the black sheep of marketing communications. This is especially puzzling given that it is estimated that in 1995 total marketing communications expenditures were \$138 billion. Of that, business-to-business advertising is estimated at \$51.7 billion or 37.4 percent of the total expenditures (Paustian 1996). Kosek (1996), providing more detail, notes that the average business-to-business advertising budget was \$4.6 million, although the figure ranged considerably by industry. Given these expenditures, the research and publication activity in this area is clearly insufficient. At a minimum, given the level of business-to-business advertising expenditures and the pressure to justify marketing expenditures, research is needed in assessing the contribution of business advertising expenditures to the goals of the organization and their impact/fit with other promotional efforts such as selling.

Of interest is the recent growth in what is called integrative communications. While this work strictly focuses on advertising, and mostly in consumer markets, and generally ignores the sales communication process, the concept of integrating all communications makes sense from a pragmatic perspective. Some interesting research questions dealing with advertising in business markets might include these:

- Using experimentation, what are the costs and benefits of integrative communications in business markets?
- How can business-to-business advertising be made more efficient and how can we better measure efficiency and effectiveness?
- How can we better integrate advertising and selling in business marketing efforts?
- How is electronic commerce likely to impact on both the role of business advertising and how it relates to the rest of the marketing mix?

Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is typically considered a supplementary promotional tool covering a wide range of activities such as trade shows,

catalogs, personal inducements, contests, ancillary materials, and trade advertising. Standard consumer sales promotion tools such as coupons and tent sales are rarely, if ever, used by business marketers and have limited applicability (Plank and Fernandes 1985; Cooke and Marian 1992).

The work in sales promotion focuses on two primary areas: personal inducements and trade shows. Personal inducements refers to the practice of using business lunches, specialty advertising, sporting and entertainment tickets, gifts, and other items to support buyer-seller relations (Dempsey, Bushman, and Plank 1980). Work in this area derives from, among others, Webster and Wind (1973), who called it aggrandizement, and Halvorson and Rudelius (1977), who specifically examined business lunches. Much of the work in personal inducements has been descriptive with only limited instances of work of a prescriptive nature. Madden and Caballero (1987) and Cooke, Smith, and Van Doren (1989), for example, have both examined and prescribed how to use specialty advertising. Finn and Moncreif (1985) empirically examined entertainment, while Hite and Bellizzi (1987) examined entertainment and gifts. Trawick, Swan, and Rink (1989) and Bird (1989) examined aspects of gifts and gift giving. Plank and Greene (1987) examined the usage of inducements from the perspective of the giver (i.e., the salesperson/management) rather than buyers. Plank and Greene (1990) subsequently argued that this practice needs to be incorporated into theory development in organizational buying/selling. Later work by Plank, Reid, and Greene (1992) also reviewed the literature and offered managerial suggestions for both sides of the exchange.

Plank, Reid, and Greene (1992) estimate \$60 billion of personal inducement usage within the United States, suggesting that these activities are fairly pervasive. The current status of personal inducement activities is probably best indicated by Pye (1995). Her analysis points to increasing resistance to these activities, but plenty of usage just the same. There are few theoretical articles dealing with personal inducements. Strutton, Pelton, and Lumpkin (1995) have examined the notion of inducements as ingratiating behaviors in sales, building on one of the influence mix categories developed by Spiro and Perreault (1979). This particular line of research provides a theoretical perspective for understanding this activity, as was noted by Plank and Greene (1990). However, in spite of the obvious research activity,

there has been little theoretical linkage of these activities to organizational buyer behavior theory or to buyer-seller relationships. In fact, business marketing textbooks generally do not discuss this area of sales promotion or these issues.

Trade shows, like personal inducements, received virtually no academic study prior to the 1980s. However, there are now over twenty-five references to research on trade shows. The research increase parallels statistics from the Trade Show Bureau (1994) that show usage increasing as companies realize the value of the medium. The literature on trade shows generally consists of either empirical pieces or primarily descriptive or prescriptive pieces dealing with how to use trade shows. Most of the literature is primarily U.S. based, but a significant number of pieces have been written about doing trade shows in foreign locations or for exporting (e.g., Bello and Barksdale 1989; O'Hara, Palumbo, and Herbig 1993). Examples of prescriptive pieces include Bonoma (1983), Hawes (1984), Bellizzi and Lipps (1984), Sahsi and Perretty (1992), and Shoham (1992). These prescriptive pieces all suggest that trade shows are very useful promotional devices for business marketers when properly managed.

A number of empirical articles stand out for their contribution to our knowledge about trade shows. Young (1987) provides a good picture of the breadth of trade show practice. Work by Kerin and Cron (1987) examined aspects of financing and the performance of trade shows, while Gopalakrishna and Williams (1992) examined the planning and performance assessment of exhibitors. Kijewski, Yoon, and Young (1993) provided evidence on how exhibitors actually select trade shows. Lilien (1983) empirically derived the trade show decision process. Bello and Barksdale (1989) examined how companies use trade shows for export. Bello (1992) also examined trade show buyer behavior and provided managerial implications based on his findings. Tanner and Chonko (1995) examined the development of trade show objectives and how shows are managed and staffed. In addition, there have been several review-oriented papers (e.g., Witt and Rao 1989; Kijewski 1990; Rosson and Seringhaus 1995).

Trade show research to date has provided researchers and managers alike with numerous normative and prescriptive insights. The research clearly demonstrates that trade show usage is broad and comprehensive, crossing all industries, and is used by both large and small companies. The art of selecting and operating during trade

shows appears to be well developed by the larger firms and those firms with a great deal of experience.

Few companies seem to have a handle on the value or return for their dollars spent at trade shows. This appears to be because of the difficulty of identifying and tracking the impact of the impressions made during the show and the lack of cooperation among various members of the firm in getting this done. However, Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995) and Gopalakrishna et al. (1995) have developed modeling techniques that provide tremendous insight into the value of trade shows. In fact, Gopalakrishna et al. (1995) provide a method to compute the ROI for a single product in a single trade show, considering both direct and indirect effects. Their methodology, while not inexpensive, provides a model for trade show managers to use in assessing their own trade shows' effectiveness.

Beyond the areas of personal inducements and trade shows, three other sales promotion articles are also of particular interest. The first, Glover (1991), examines the attitudes of medical supply distributors toward manufacturer promotions. Although narrow in scope, the research points out that in choosing forms of sales promotion both the customer and the distribution partner need to be considered. Two other articles examine the value of direct mail promotions. One, by Chakrabarti, Feinman, and Fuentesvilla (1981), is a normative piece that discusses the targeting of technical information to organizational positions, i.e., people in the buying center by title. The other, by Vredenburg and Droge (1987), discusses the value of company newsletters and magazines.

Summary of Sales Promotion Research

In summary, research into sales promotion has dealt heavily with both the use of trade shows and personal inducements as techniques. Our knowledge of trade shows is becoming well developed both descriptively and prescriptively. Little or no research has examined the value and impact of brochures or the general use of sales incentives to either company or distributors' salespeople. Theory development and linkages of business-to-business promotions and the notion of integrated marketing communication is minimal. The use of personal inducements is well documented, but little or no work has really examined whether or not they are useful and why. While some progress has

been made in the area of sales promotion, in general, theoretical linkages and theory building are in their infancy. Some interesting questions might include these:

- What effect will the new technology have on traditional sales promotion activity such as catalogs?
- What are best practices of business marketing companies in using electronic commerce for sales promotion activities?
- What is the value of trade shows, under what conditions, and how can we get more value from this activity?
- How can we better integrate and measure the added value of sales promotion activity?

Public Relations

Virtually no work has been done in assessing the role of public relations as it relates to business marketing. There is one nonempirical descriptive article by Williams (1983) and a major review piece by Williams and Gopalakrishna (1994), but no attention has been paid to how it does or should fit into the overall promotional mix in business markets. Some research on corporate image has been conducted. Dowling (1986) wrote a general piece on how to manage corporate image. Vos (1987) is somewhat more explicit, describing how to build an image for a service firm. And Sims (1979) has the only empirical piece that deals with measuring the image of a firm and is a good example of how to conduct research in this area.

Three other articles are of interest. The first, by Tongren (1979), examines the use and power of public relations in the selling of nuclear power. The second, by Rabino and Moore (1989), discusses the management of new product announcements in the computer industry. And, finally, in a more general piece on products, Williams (1988) writes about the benefits of product publicity.

Summary of Public Relations Research

In summary, little is known about how business marketers handle their public relations, and there is little theory building in this area. Basic issues of similarity/difference with publicity in consumer markets and what, if any, emphasis is put on the use of public relations

techniques have not been explored. Perhaps this is a reflection of marketing in general, which seems to treat public relations, at best, as a distant cousin. In fact, public relations is seldom the major thrust of articles in marketing journals, is rarely part of any marketing curriculum, and seems to have been ceded to communication or journalism departments at many universities. How much money business marketers spend on public relations, how important it is to them, and how they integrate it into their promotions mix are mostly unknown. Clearly, this is an area in need of further research. Some interesting questions might include these:

- What are the costs and benefits of public relations campaigns? How does one measure those costs and benefits?
- How should public relations be integrated into overall promotional planning in business markets?
- What is the current state of public relations best practices among business marketing companies?
- What is the role of the public relations function in handling crises?

General Promotion

General promotion includes promotional techniques as well as discussions of promotional strategy and the integration of various promotional techniques. These articles typically address multiple promotional elements as opposed to the previous promotion articles that addressed one particular element. Several small thematic areas of research are evident.

The first and most commonly researched topic here is telemarketing. Coppett and Voorhees (1983); Moncreif, Lamb, and Dielman (1986); and Moncreif et al. (1989) provide normative advice on how to use telemarketing to supplement the sales force, while Marshall and Vredenburg (1988) and Zibrun (1987) provide empirical support for how to do that.

The next area focuses on comparing the effects of different promotional elements. Indicative of this research is Parasuraman (1981), who did an early comparison of the relative importance of different promotional tools. He found peer recommendations and personal selling to be the most important, followed by trade shows. Park, Roth,

and Jacques (1988) examined, within a single company advertising program, the impact of advertising and promotion from the perspective of direct communications effects and indirect sales-facilitating communication effects. Their findings suggest that direct communication effects are perceived to have the smallest market impact. From a more normative perspective, Powers (1989) discussed conditions under which increasing sales promotion versus adding salespeople is the most appropriate strategy. Ghingold (1988), in a normative work, attempted to bridge theory and practice in the sales/promotion allocation decision.

There have been two general theory/review articles. Schurr (1982) suggested ways to develop marketing communications theory. Galper and Lilien (1982) presented a review of the field with suggestions for future research.

Interestingly, word of mouth has been addressed only by Wheeler (1987), who specifically looked at referrals between professional service providers. Other than the articles mentioned, using and managing word of mouth has not been addressed during the time frame included in this review.

Two other neglected areas are lead tracking and direct mail. Despite its importance, only Gwynn (1987) has discussed lead tracking. His paper demonstrates how to use a survey methodology to develop and handle sales leads. Only Sims and Brown (1979), who talked about increasing the role of direct mail in marketing strategy, and Hozier and Robles (1985), who examined direct mail response factors for an industrial service, have dealt with direct mail. Only Lichtenthal, Sikri, and Folk (1989) have examined teleprospecting.

An important piece of work that defies easy categorization is one by Yoon and Kijewski (1995) on the brand awareness to preference link. While this study was done in a very narrow industry, semiconductor manufacturing, it provides the first empirical work on linking how much awareness is necessary (about 10 percent) before meaningful additions can be made to brand preference. Their rather simple model basically states that communication activities lead to brand awareness which leads to brand preference and finally brand choice. The findings suggest the minimum amount of awareness building that must be done prior to any significant sales results. Another important, although controversial, finding is that brand awareness programs tend to yield increasing returns to scale over time, not decreas-

ing as is normally found. Perhaps this was because brand awareness in general was so low for most brands studied.

Summary of General Promotion Research

In summary, it appears that, while widely accepted, the idea of integrated communications has attracted little research attention. For example, the only major empirical piece that examines the synergy of the various promotional activities is Moriarty and Spekman (1984). They found that different information sources have more or less value and importance at different stages of the purchasing process. In addition, they found interactions among the sources that, as they note, “provides compelling evidence for a comprehensive promotional plan that includes several different communications vehicles.” While there have been some discussions of various additional communication/promotion issues, the coverage has been limited on several important topics, such as the use of telemarketing, and completely missing on others, such as direct mail as a communication tool. Theory building articles in this area are virtually nonexistent. As with almost every other area, there appears to be no programmatic research.

Interesting questions for future research include these:

- What have we learned about telemarketing that may be applicable to the new forms of electronic commerce?
- What are best practices in lead tracking and how does it contribute to better selling and company performance?
- When is direct marketing, in any of its forms, appropriate and how is it best done?
- How do the various promotional elements in a business-to-business marketing communication mix interact?
- Under what circumstances do certain combinations of promotional elements provide better responses and better meet promotional goals?
- How powerful are word-of-mouth activities in business-to-business activities, where do they occur, and how can they be harnessed to get positive benefit and minimize negative effects?

Personal Selling

The literature on personal selling in business markets, as in consumer markets, is extensive. The most frequently researched area in sales over the past twenty years has been that of sales performance.

Sales performance. Based on the framework of Walker, Churchill, and Ford (1977), Churchill et al. (1985) provide a meta-analysis of some 116 studies on sales performance. They examined empirical findings on the impact of aptitude, skill, motivation, role, personal factors, and organizational environmental factors on performance—identifying 1,653 separate findings in the six categories relating to sales performance. Many of these findings were based on industrial sales data. However, the percentage of actual business-to-business selling studies examined was not provided. While the authors are careful to point out the limitations of meta-analyses, the findings indicate that no single variable accounts for a very large proportion of the variance in performance. Role variables had the strongest association; organizational and environmental factors the weakest. However, when accounting for sampling error, the *real variation* rankings were personal factors, skill, role variables, aptitude, motivation, and organizational/environmental factors.

A second major stream of research on sales performance is based on the modeling work of Weitz (1981), later expanded by Weitz, Sujan, and Sujan (1986). Their theoretical perspective, commonly referred to as adaptive selling, emphasizes the importance of the sales process and argues for adaptiveness as a framework for examining the process. Weitz and his colleagues suggest a contingency framework and define sales effectiveness across customer interactions as a function of the salesperson's resources, the nature of the buying task, the customer-salesperson relationship, and interactions among these variables. A follow-up conceptual article (Weitz, Sujan, and Sujan 1986) reconceptualizing adaptive behavior and its relationship to knowledge and motivation led to some significant empirical work on the impact of knowledge on both adaptive selling and sales performance. Empirical adaptive selling research has examined psychological adaptiveness (Goolsby, Lagace, and Boorum 1992), counselor selling or overall adaptation (DeCormier and Jobber 1993), communication style (Miles, Arnold, and Nash 1990; Mayo, Lee, and Reck 1991; Bowers and Rich 1991), and the impact of organizational char-

acteristics on the adaptiveness of the sales force (Vinh and Verbeke 1993). However, an overall conceptual framework for what is meant by adaptiveness is still not apparent from the literature.

Sales behaviors have been studied for their link to sales performance. Lamont and Lundstrom (1974), Moncreif (1986), and Weilbaker (1990) used the types of sales behaviors performed to differentiate sales positions, while Behrmann and Perreault (1982) developed a behaviorally oriented measure of sales performance. A number of authors (e.g., Chonko 1986; Bartkus, Peterson, and Bellinger 1989; Lavenka and Jung 1991; Roberts, Lapidus, and Chonko 1994) have examined salesperson effort as it relates to aspects of sales performance. Roberts, Lapidus, and Chonko (1994), in particular, found strong evidence that sales effort impacts on sales performance. Their measurement of sales effort was a general three-item scale measuring the quantity of the work performed. Research on sales performance by Plank and Reid (1994) expanded on the concept of sales behaviors as playing a pivotal role in understanding sales performance. They identify two major types of sales behaviors, customer interaction and noncustomer interaction, and note that the quality of performance of those sales behaviors may be more important than how often they are performed.

Trust has always been thought to be a very important factor in sales performance. Prior to the 1980s no empirical work had investigated the relationship between trust of the salesperson and sales success. The last twenty years, however, has seen work by Schurr and Ozanne (1985); Swan and Nolan (1985); Swan, Trawick, and Silva (1985); Swan and Trawick (1987); Swan et al. (1988); Hawes, Mast, and Swan (1989); Henthorne, LaTour, and Williams (1992); and Bejou, Wray, and Ingram (1996)—all examining various aspects of trust within the buyer-seller dyad. Findings from this research clearly demonstrate the importance of trust in effective buyer and seller relationships. It should be noted that the trust literature spans at least ten disciplines and that much of the work in other disciplines, such as management and social psychology, overlaps and adds to what we know about trust in the selling environment. Interested readers should review a special issue of the *Academy of Management Review* (23[3], 1998) for additional literature on trust within and between organizations and for examples of the linkages suggested earlier.

Learning/knowledge. Work in the area of salesperson learning/knowledge includes scripts (Leigh and McGraw 1989), declarative knowledge (Szymanski 1988), client evaluation cues (Szymanski and Churchill 1990), customer knowledge acquisition (Weitz 1978; Lambert, Marmorstein, and Sharma 1990; Gordon et al. 1993), and knowledge of the customer's customer (Smith and Owens 1995). The findings from these studies suggest that salespeople with more knowledge, broader scripts, and more developed evaluation schema are more successful.

Work has also examined the notion of working smarter versus harder and efficiency and effectiveness from a knowledge perspective (Sujan, Weitz, and Sujan 1988; Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994). Only limited work, however, by Gengler, Howard, and Zolner (1995) and Plank and Greene (1996), using personal construct theory as a theoretical basis, has looked into the why of knowledge development. Work by Knowles, Grove, and Keck (1994) on signal detection theory, another theory of perception, and by Nickels, Everitt, and Klein (1983) on neurolinguistic programming (NLP) may also prove useful in understanding the role of learning/knowledge.

Research (e.g., Johnston, Hair, and Boles 1989; Ingram, Schwepter, and Hutson 1992; Morris, LaForge, and Allen 1994) has also studied the reasons salespeople fail. Both Ingram, Schwepter, and Hutson (1992) and Morris, LaForge, and Allen (1994) found overlapping behavioral causes of failure. Despite its obvious value, this area remains relatively unexplored.

Influence and persuasion. Despite its obvious importance, surprisingly little work has addressed the general topic of influence and persuasion in business-to-business sales and, specifically, their impact on sales performance. The most significant research on influence was by Spiro and Perreault (1979). They identified types of influence strategies (specifically, expert, legitimate, referent, ingratiation, and impression management) and examined the mix of specific types used by salespeople in different situations. The research indicated that salespeople used different combinations of these influence types and that other situational variables, such as personal relationship, type of product/service, and purchase type, influenced how the influence types were combined. While offering interesting opportunities for additional research, this area has failed to attract any further research efforts.

Work on persuasion has not fared much better. Funkhouser (1983) presented a theoretical perspective referred to as the action theory of persuasion that was defined as “a process of information management aimed at engineering those decisions,” the decisions being the actions by the persuader. Schmitz (1995) suggested the elaboration likelihood model. The elaboration likelihood model argues that high or low consumer involvement dictates or drives the degree of elaboration of processing a consumer is likely to use for purchase decision making. This particular model has been extensively used in consumer behavior studies, but only Schmitz applied it to business marketing situations. In general, the impact of persuasion and influence has been assumed but has not been the focal point of sales research.

Integrative selling. Recent research in business-to-business sales has focused on sales teams, teamwork, and coordinating sales efforts in general. Cespedes (1992) argued that the increasing use of key account selling, team selling, and the like makes coordination an important issue. Based on a cross-sectional study of salespeople and managers in four companies, he found that factors such as the complexity of the sale and the length of product life cycle drive coordination issues. He suggests three sets of sales coordination issues that deal with the sales/account personnel, the nature of the control systems, and the environment of the sale. Cespedes, Doyle, and Freedman (1989) provide some case histories on team selling and the general problem of coordination. El Ansary, Zabrishke, and Browning (1993) have also empirically examined teamwork. Their work, done with paper wholesaling sales forces, found two significant dimensions: strong salesperson manager participation and strong customer support. Both Smith and Barclay (1993) and Moon and Armstrong (1994) have ongoing major research efforts into team selling based on conceptual models they have developed.

It should be noted that team selling and teamwork can have somewhat different meanings. Team selling can merely refer to the salesperson as the quarterback of the sales team or selling center of the organization. This view is reflected in work by Hutt, Johnston, and Ronchetto (1985), who develop the concept of a selling center and its relationships with the customer buying center. Sales teams can also refer to the teaming of salespeople in different companies to formulate a solution for the customer, a practice that has a long history in

the computer business. Key or major account selling is also often associated with team selling research.

Key account systems, where major or key accounts are assigned to specific salespeople or groups of salespeople, are fairly common. However, while clearly important, key/major accounts have received little research attention in the academic journals. In business markets, both Barrett (1986) and Pardo, Salle, and Spencer (1995) have examined key account selling, the former making a case for the customer-driven nature of why key account selling works, namely, that customers require it, and the latter in a case study format showing how it may be effective. Interested readers should be aware of the work done in Europe, specifically Great Britain, in this area; a good starting point is Milman and Wilson (1995).

In summary, it is clear that coordination, team selling, teamwork, and key account research is still in the early stages of development. Other than some descriptive work, some very imaginative and potentially fruitful theorizing, and a large amount of anecdotal data from industry journals, little is known about what works or why. As a consequence, little normative guidance is available.

Sales theory development. In addition to the aforementioned work, there have been a number of proposed models of selling. Williams, Spiro, and Fine (1990) extend and rethink a communication interaction model first developed by Spiro, Perreault, and Reynolds (1977). This model notes that most communication research in sales has emphasized content, but that communication code (verbal and nonverbal expressions), communication rules (pertaining to structure and content), communication style, and matching and adapting to the buyer are also important. Plank and Dempsey (1980) adapted the Webster and Wind (1972) organizational buying behavior model and applied it to organizational selling, arguing that salespeople needed to understand facets of organizational buying behavior in order to sell to organizations. Finally, a model by George, Kelly, and Marshall (1986) focused on the selling of services.

There has been little written on the relationship of sales planning and similar activities to sales performance. In their conceptual model of sales performance, Plank and Reid (1994) note noncustomer interaction sales behaviors, including planning and managing time, are very important to sales performance. Yet, empirical work in this area is extremely limited. Only Weeks, Chonko, and Kahle (1990) provide

some indication of the impact of salespeople's time use on performance.

Women in sales. Women in business-to-business sales has also been the subject of several studies. Traditionally, industrial sales has been a male-dominated profession; however, research by Swan and Futrell (1978), Kennedy and Lawton (1990), Schul and Wren (1992), Jolson and Comer (1992), and Siguaw and Honeycutt (1995) has documented an increase in the number of women in industrial sales as well as some gender differences in performance.

Other personal selling research. Perhaps because of the supposed "rational" buyer view of organizational buying behavior, only limited research has examined emotions and the use of emotion in business-to-business sales. Shoham and Friestad (1993) discuss this in a more abstract fashion while Wagel (1985) is more explicit in a normative piece on using humor in selling.

Finally, Narus and Anderson (1986) provide an interesting and informative empirical piece on industrial distributor selling, examining both inside and outside salespeople. Their findings indicate the inside salesperson, as anecdotal information suggests, is very important and used in many industries.

Summary of Personal Selling Research

The literature on personal selling is extensive and diverse. At the same time, research in this area is changing. While sales performance continues to be an important topic, the focus is moving toward examining sales processes and linking the behaviors involved to performance. A salesperson-oriented, single-actor methodology, rather than a dyadic one continues to dominate in the research. However, there is increasing literature on the dyadic approach. In addition, analysis has moved from simple linkages of such personal variables as skill and personality to performance to analysis that recognizes the role and importance of mediating and moderating variables such as sales situation and sales behaviors.

Another change is the growing use of integrative selling. Such issues as selling centers, teamwork within the selling center, and the forging of teams of competing companies to better meet customer needs, are clearly ones that managers are grappling with in today's business markets. While some early and important descriptive work

has been done, as well as a few normative efforts, programmatic research in this area remains to be seen.

There have been some important advances in theory development. The basic models of Walker, Churchill, and Ford (1977) and Weitz (1981) and colleagues have set the stage and recent efforts to integrate these models have provided additional insights into the behavior-performance relationship. Theory building has also emerged in the areas of scripts and knowledge and their relationship to performance. While there are many issues covered in this research area, there are some very basic questions that still need examination. Adaptive selling is an important construct, but it has never been comprehensively defined. At a macro level, it can be described as the ability of the salesperson to adapt to the needs of the person or firm they are selling to. At a micro level, however, the answer is not as clear. For example, what is it that is being adapted? Is it communication content, communication style, formulation of the benefit package, some combination, or something else? A clearer theoretical definition of adaptive selling should also result in better measures of the construct.

Research is also needed in defining what is meant by a relationship and the level at which it is being viewed (e.g., salesperson-buyer level or company-company level). A salesperson can have a relationship with the buyer, for example, and the two companies as well can be said to have a relationship. Recent empirical work by Iccobucci and Ostrom (1996) represents a first effort at addressing these issues. Work is also needed to address the stages involved in relationship development (Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh 1987; Wilson 1995) and how they impact sales performance.

Other issues that seem appropriate to address are the notions of value selling and value-added selling that are so common in the managerial trade literature. The notion of value and how buyers judge the value of an offering is the most critical component for the marketing of business-to-business goods and services. Value-added selling, in our estimation, addresses how we convince the buyer that things other than the basic product or service have value and should be considered by the buyer when purchasing the product or service. At a very simple level, the salesperson can sell based on price, the basic product, or service and attempt to upgrade the buyer's perception of value by selling additional services, or by pointing out other issues that provide value to the buyer. This kind of conceptualization may be

valuable in future sales performance research since the skills and behaviors needed to bring to the situation may differ.

Some interesting questions might include the following:

- What traits, abilities, and skills link to the behavior-performance model and thus can predict sales success within that theoretical perspective?
- How does the relationship between buyer and seller moderate or otherwise impact on what it takes for successful selling?
- What kinds of behaviors, rather than traits, are most predictive of selling performance?
- How does the channel arrangement, direct or indirect, impact on the overall sales effectiveness of a company sales force?
- What is the role of creative thinking in sales performance?
- How can salespeople best identify both the value orientation of the buyer and the most effective value proposition to present to the buyer?

Sales Training

Sales training as an area has had only limited coverage in the academic literature. Most of the work on sales training has been done by nonacademics and has been published in two managerially oriented, nonacademic journals (*Training and Development Journal* and *Training*) that, as previously noted, are not included in this review. The academic work in this area can basically be grouped into descriptive empirical studies and prescriptive nonempirical studies.

Descriptive empirical studies are quite common. Erffmeyer, Russ, and Hair (1991) documented how companies assess their need for training and how they evaluate the training results. Honeycutt and colleagues (e.g., Honeycutt, Ford, and Tanner 1994; Honeycutt and Stevenson 1989; Honeycutt, Howe, and Ingram 1993) assessed who does sales training, how sales training programs are evaluated, and the shortcomings of sales training programs. Peterson (1990) examined sales managers' perceptions of the effectiveness of various sales training methods. He found that well-conceived objectives, relevant content, appropriate techniques, trainer skill, and who is trained were all factors that led to successful sales training. Russ et al. (1989) examined the usage and perceived effectiveness of high-tech approaches to sales training. In a slightly different twist, McQuiston and Walters

(1989) looked at the evaluative criteria of industrial buyers and drew implications for training from that analysis. Finally, Puri (1993) identified managements' perceptions of where sales training is weak. Implications of these findings for sales training were:

1. the need to establish formal sales training programs,
2. training programs must be geared to customers,
3. managing time and territory is critical,
4. relating to customers is important, and
5. product knowledge, while important, needs to be integrated with sales situations.

With respect to the fifth point, what Puri seems to be suggesting is that knowledge is not much use unless salespeople are trained in how to use it.

There are only a few prescriptive nonempirical articles on sales training. Dubinsky (1981) addressed the impact of sales training on sales performance. He suggested that the psychological impact of sales training needs to be investigated as well as the salesperson's productivity. Kaminski and Clark (1987) addressed the readability of sales training manuals while Kortge (1993) made an argument for linking sales training to the product life cycle.

Summary of Sales Training Research

The academic business marketing literature does not adequately reflect the importance of sales training. This is a research area that needs more attention. There have been no attempts at theory development or establishing linkages between sales training and other aspects of sales or the promotion/marketing mix. Well-documented case studies are also lacking. The major storehouse of literature is contained in the yearly papers written by members of the Professional Society for Sales and Marketing Training (SMT), which documents some aspect of training among member companies. Currently those reports are stored in the Business Research Library at Indiana State University. Not only is this material useful in terms of understanding the training function as it occurs in industry, but many of the techniques and ideas discussed are applicable to academic class-

rooms. Given the state of affairs, the following questions warrant further consideration:

- What do we mean by effective sales training?
- How do we define and measure sales training goals?
- What are current best practices in sales training?
- What kinds of sales training bring the most dividends to a company and when and under what conditions?

Sales Motivation and Rewards

Most of the research dealing with motivation and rewards in sales/sales management is based on the theoretical framework developed by Walker, Churchill, and Ford (1977). Their work was based on that of Campbell et al. (1970), who built on the expectancy motivation theory developed by Vroom (1964). Thus, the major theme throughout this literature is the use of expectancy motivation theory as the motivational base.

The original work by Walker, Churchill, and Ford (1977) argued that motivation was linked to performance, which was linked to rewards, which, in turn, affected the satisfaction of the salesperson. Satisfaction, as well as the performance-reward relationship, subsequently feed back to motivation. Motivation, as they saw it, began with effort expended by the salesperson that was predicted by an expectancy theory framework. The authors developed a series of propositions relating to the various aspects.

Most of the propositions developed by Walker, Churchill, and Ford (1977) have subsequently been tested, at least in part, within the context of business-to-business sales. Sager and Johnston (1989); Ingram, Lee, and Skinner (1989); and Bushaw and Grant (1994) have all examined the notion of work or organizational commitment within the Churchill, Walker, and Ford (1977) framework. LaGace (1990) dealt with salesperson socialization, while Kohli and Jaworski (1994) examined the idea of co-worker feedback and its impact on role perceptions, performance, and satisfaction of salespeople. Comer (1985) examined sales managers within the framework. Dubinsky, Yammerino, and Jolson (1994), on the other hand, looked at the impact of closeness of supervision on salesperson performance within the framework. Finally, Futrell (1980) examined differences between salesmen and saleswomen in relation to job satisfaction. The few studies that have deviated from

expectancy theory perspective include Berl, Powell, and Williamson (1984) and Shipley and Kiely (1988), who have examined sales motivation and rewards using the Hertzberg two-factor theory of motivation. Berl, Williamson, and Powell (1984) used Maslow's hierarchy to understand motivation in the sales setting.

A number of authors have attempted to provide normative advice on motivation practices. Demarjian (1984), for example, argued for a multidimensional approach. He develops what he refers to as the MADAM-T model to provide sales managers with a monitoring device to evaluate their subordinates' state of motivation in a dynamically changing environment. The argument is that the sales manager can then tailor motivation techniques on a more individualistic basis rather than relying on a single technique to motivate all salespeople. Berry and Abrahamsen (1981) discuss how motivational techniques should vary across three different types of salespeople. Their argument is that all salespeople fall into three groups and that within these groups salespeople are motivated in the same manner. Related to motivation, Abratt and Smythe (1989) surveyed a small sample of companies and came up with a description of sales incentives programs in use.

There has been a number of discussions on the nature of compensation or reward systems. A number of studies have examined compensation plans within the framework of either reward valences or monetary incentives (Churchill, Ford, and Walker 1979; Dubinsky and Ingram 1983; Tyagi and Block 1983). Darmon (1982) argued for the need to link compensation plans to the objectives of both management and salespeople. Cespedes (1990) discussed the design compensation plans. Wotruba, Macfie, and Colletti (1991), building on Cespedes, empirically examined various types of sales force recognition plans.

Summary of Sales Motivation and Rewards Research

Much of the work in the area of sales motivation and rewards has not been done within the context of business-to-business sales, and thus is not within the boundaries of this review. It is clear from the literature that salespeople need to be motivated to increase effort, that the motivation is or can be controlled by sales management to some degree, and that the resulting improvements in performance and satisfaction lead to lower turnover rates, reinforced motivation, and in-

creased effort. One neglected area is research that assesses and addresses the quality of the salesperson's effort. Both Sujan, Weitz, and Sujan (1988) and Plank and Reid (1994) have argued that effort, in and of itself, is not sufficient and that quality of effort is likely to have a greater impact on effectiveness. The recent research by Kohli and Jaworski (1994) on impact of co-workers is important for the new team selling orientations that are taking place. Overall, we know a lot more about motivating and compensating salespeople effectively than we did twenty years ago, but there is much to be dealt with.

This area has been well researched, mainly from the perspective of expectancy theory. A number of areas such as role conflict and role ambiguity and the problems with those issues (e.g., stress and propensity to leave) have been explored in considerable detail. However, as with other sales research, this area also suffers from a lack of a process perspective. A classic work by Cron (1984) on the sales career life cycle and work on stress and burnout by Sager (1994); Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads (1994); and Verbeke (1997) provides insight into the time and process aspects of the phenomenon.

Compensation is still an issue for most companies—how much to pay salespeople, what is too little and what is too much, and how much does one have to pay to attract the kinds of people who will do the job well. There is a tremendous literature in management and psychology that deals with this issue in various contexts, but the anecdotal literature from the trade press still indicates that there are more questions than answers. Only limited research has been done on how we reward teams and when it is appropriate. But as sales becomes more complex, more team selling is bound to evolve, making this a very relevant question. Additional issues in need of research include the following:

- When is a team approach appropriate? What are best practices with regards to sales teams?
- How effective and appropriate are various types of sales contests in the longer run, and what are best practices?
- How can job analysis and job descriptions reduce role conflict and ambiguity, and how could they, how are they, and how should they be done?
- What kinds of guidelines should be used to determine the most appropriate forms of compensation to use in specific situations?

General Sales Management

General sales management includes work addressing the planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of a firm's sales force. One general review exists, that of Johnston and Boles (1994), and readers are urged to review that, as it is insightful. Topics discussed by Johnston and Boles include the link of organizational buying to sales management; selection and training; evaluating and compensating salespeople; effects of supervision, primarily on role perceptions; and a brief review of sales performance and the buyer-seller interface.

Salesperson performance and evaluation. A major topic of study in sales management has been how to evaluate the performance of salespeople. There have been essentially two areas of inquiry. One is the empirical examination of how sales management is conducted and what impacts on how it is done, and the other is prescriptive work aimed at providing guidance to practicing sales managers.

The primary empirical contributions revolve around the work of Anderson and Oliver (1987), Oliver and Anderson (1994, 1995), and Cravens et al. (1993), who examine the issue of evaluating sales performance using outcome or behaviorally based evaluation systems. Their work is in line with the increasing trend in sales performance to focus on behaviors as mediators of sales performance. While their work primarily represents descriptive or theory-driven efforts to understand the system types and when they are used, it is also potentially very prescriptive. Their findings indicate that decisions about evaluation, supervision, and compensation are all interrelated. Obviously, the cultures of companies are both impacted by and/or represented by the evaluation systems. Some companies are outcome control oriented, others are behaviorally oriented, and many are hybrids of both types. It is reasonable to suspect that hybrid systems are likely to be the most effective for many firms.

As would be expected, the evaluation system, coupled with supervision and compensation, has an impact on the amount and character of effort expended. The choice of evaluation systems, combined with supervisory styles and compensation plans, also clearly impacts the salesperson selection process, as different people are likely to prefer different processes and work better in one or the other. Oliver and Anderson (1995) stop short of suggesting any particular system or combination and instead suggest that many variables are likely to moder-

ate the effectiveness of the performance evaluation system used. While this is true, normatively, those factors may be grouped around the notions of efficiency and effectiveness. As has been shown by consulting company research, some businesses are more responsive to efficiency and others are more responsive to effectiveness (DeVincentis and Kotcher 1995). This is, in fact, in line with and supported by recent work on sales culture and managing that culture by Jackson and Tax (1995).

In addition to the work specifically dealing with evaluating sales performance, there have been a number of articles that have taken a broad perspective of sales management as it relates to evaluation. Jackson, Ostrom, and Evans (1982) looked at evaluating business marketing activities that included some basic sales management functions, while Johnston and Shields (1983) examined specifically the evaluation of new salespeople. A descriptive view was also provided by Jackson, Keith, and Schlacter (1983), who looked at current sales evaluation practices across various types of companies. In an early article, Futrell and Schul (1978) examined the relationship of sales management control to performance. Later work by Futrell, Parasuraman, and Sager (1983) examined sales force evaluation through an expectancy framework. Taking a slightly different perspective, Patton and King (1985) examined the use of human judgment models in the evaluation process. More recently, Jackson, Schlacter, and Wolfe (1995) reexamined the findings of the study done by Jackson, Keith, and Schlacter (1983). They found substantial differences, namely, lesser use of sales as a base, more use of profit, and some substantial decreases in the use of qualitative factors such as planning ability or time management. Their study also incorporated measures that were not included in the previous study, such as selling expense versus budget, overall expenses, resourcefulness, and team playing, which had substantial indications of usage in the evaluation process.

As one would expect, there are a number of primarily normative papers. Berry (1987), for example, provides guidance for computing performance ratios. Boles, Donthu, and Lohtia (1995) provide an example of how to use data envelopment analysis (DEA), a newer statistical technique to perform sales force evaluation. DEA is an operations research methodology that computes a single efficiency rating from multiple inputs and outputs. In effect, it allows the creation of a

single comparative efficiency measure within the bounds of Pareto optimality. The authors show how the technique can be used to compare a group of salespeople against one another and, using the concept of sensitivity analysis, show how managerial recommendations can be developed. Muczyk and Gable (1987) provide a comprehensive discussion of the development and use of a performance appraisal system. Locander and Staples (1978) provide an excellent discussion of using behaviorally anchored rating scales, an important methodology in behavioral performance systems.

Other sales management issues. Another interesting stream of research concerns the allocation and the use of resources. Included are topics such as routing salespeople, determining sales force size, allocating sales calls, defining sales territories. Historically, there has been a lot of literature on defining the size of the sales force and routing consumer goods salespeople. These topic areas have been subjected to numerous model building exercises. Yet, very little research on those topics has been in business marketing (Ferguson 1980; Meridan 1982). However, led by David Cravens, Raymond LaForge, and their colleagues, there has been an extensive discussion of the general problem of sales force deployment (LaForge and Cravens 1982; Cravens and LaForge 1983; LaForge, Young, and Hamm 1983; LaForge, Cravens, and Young 1986; Cravens and LaForge 1986; Cravens et al. 1990). This work has suggested four types of models—single factor, portfolio, judgment based, and empirical—as methods for account effort allocation. Models that incorporate multiple factors would seem to be most useful. The movement toward more behavioral kinds of performance analysis, most of which have never been incorporated in most quantitative models, argues in favor of the multiple factor models.

Very little has been done in the areas of hiring and firing of salespeople. Given the attention this topic receives in the trade/managerial journals, one would expect a large research base. Most of what has been done appears in the personnel journals and in many of the mainstream psychology journals rather than marketing-oriented journals. Of the work appearing in the business marketing journals, early discussions by Darmon and Shapiro (1980) suggested that recruitment of salespeople was important. Johnston and Cooper (1981) looked at the sales force selection process using a case study approach. They found that, using conjoint analysis, they could model the rankings of

the specific sales manager with some accuracy. They also found that at different phases of the hiring process, different factors were emphasized and that hiring was an iterative, not perfectly sequential, process. On an international note, Avlonitis, Boyle, and Kovremenoc (1986) empirically examined the matching of salespeople jobs using a European sample. Glisan and Hawes (1990) recognized the importance of creativity in selling and discussed how to select creative salespeople. Using a fairly diverse sample, Dubinsky and Ingram (1983) examined first-line management qualifications. An interesting discussion from the management side was offered by Guest and Meric (1989), who examined the selection criteria used for promotion from selling to first-level sales management using a sample of Fortune 500 firms. Other articles of interest include one by Munson and Spivey (1980) on selection processes that meet the federal guidelines for employment practices and a recent piece by Swift, Wayland, and Wayland (1994) on the impact of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 on hiring and supervision practices of sales managers. Finally, Sager (1990) provides an empirical piece on the topic of retaining salespeople.

While currently a popular topic, the relationship between sales and leadership has received limited attention over the years. Early work by Lysonski and Johnson (1983) used role theory to examine boundary spanning by the sales manager. Hite and Bellizzi (1986), Hite (1990), Butler and Reese (1991), and Dubinsky et al. (1995) have looked at one or more leadership theories and empirically tested the fit. The previously mentioned conceptual piece by Jackson and Tax (1995) on managing sales culture also provided some insights into the limited sales leadership literature.

Summary of General Sales Management Research

The sales management area encompasses a great many topics that have received varying levels of attention. Evaluation systems have received broad coverage. The study of behavioral versus output systems continues to be an interesting and important research stream. Sales force deployment has moved in a new direction with the recognition of the overlap of many issues. However, many areas remain underresearched. There has been little done in the employment area or in the various aspects of sales management performance. Very little has been done using international perspectives or international

samples. Exceptions are Hill and Allaway (1993), who empirically show how companies manage foreign sales forces; Honeycutt and Ford (1995), who provide some normative guidelines for managing an international sales force; and Edwards, Cummings, and Schlachter (1984), who discuss employment appraisal from an international perspective. However, Cravens and colleagues have done some work in the area of international sales management, mainly testing concepts developed in the United States and in other countries, and continue to do so (e.g., Cravens et al. 1992; Babakus et al. 1996). First-level sales skills and behaviors have received almost no research, other than some empirical work on what companies look at for promotion. Issues involved in restructuring the sales force, something that is becoming far more common as the pace of change in the marketplace has increased, have been mostly ignored. The impact of the whole quality movement has also been ignored in the sales literature. Only one general paper (Ellis and Raymond 1993) has discussed sales force quality and there has been nothing to date on total quality management (TQM) and selling (it should be noted that at the time this paper was being written a special issue of the *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* was being planned on this topic). Sales force automation, seemingly very important, has had some limited discussion in the general sales literature, but not to any extent within the context of business markets. Of the few articles on sales force automation, Hill and Swenson (1994) looked at the impact of electronic data exchange on the sales function and several articles dealt with expert systems. Despite the vast amount of literature to date on general sales management, there continue to be numerous research opportunities in this area. The following questions should be of interest to researchers:

- What are current best industry practices in sales performance and effectiveness evaluation?
- How do significant others such as inside sales and technical people affect the sales process and how should they be integrated into the sales management process? Any best practices?
- What leadership models are being used by business marketers in the sales management function and how much thought has been given by the firm in this area?
- How do the field sales manager and senior sales management best institute change?

Summary of Marketing Communications Research

As would be expected, given the importance and the amount of money spent on sales, communication issues in business marketing have tended to focus around the sales function. Progress has been made in understanding sales performance, clearly a very difficult area. Progress has also been made in understanding the motivation of salespeople and, to some extent, managers (at least within an expectancy theory framework): the remainder of the sales and sales management field is much weaker. There has been almost no research in the areas of sales training, TQM, and the application of the quality philosophy to sales and sales management. Work in sales and sales management has not been process driven, either in academic research, or business practice.

Work in public relations, as previously noted, is basically nonexistent. Advertising and sales promotion have received some attention. Both topics provide rich descriptive work, if not theory. Sales promotion research has focused primarily on trade shows and the use of personal inducements in the sales process. Advertising, while studied more broadly, suffers from a lack of programmatic research.

While progress has been uneven, marketing communications research has made substantial contributions to our understanding of business marketing. The vast number of descriptive works provides a solid foundation upon which to build theory.

SUMMARY

Over twenty years have passed since Frederick Webster (Webster 1978) asked the question "Has industrial marketing come of age?" Our answer, were he to ask this question today, is a resounding yes! Business marketing now has three journals devoted to the field, two more than was the case in 1978. Major conferences now regularly have dedicated tracks on business marketing. In addition, there have been several special conferences devoted exclusively to business marketing and business marketing has its own special interest group within the American Marketing Association. The number of people publishing has also increased, with over 100 authors who have published at least three articles in the field. The increased research has

also increased the subject's stature and presence in undergraduate and graduate course offerings at many colleges and universities.

As with marketing in general, business marketing spans many topical areas. Throughout our analysis we have provided suggestions for future research and made comments on the state of research on business marketing. Table 5 summarizes the field's shortages and surpluses based on the literature reviewed and the authors' interpretation of that literature. As shown in the table we feel there are far more shortages than surpluses in our understanding of business marketing, despite the significant advances made in the field in the past twenty years. We do not believe that we are generally at the stage where we have tested one or more particular theories extensively enough that further research could not yield additional insights and knowledge.

While there is considerable breadth in extant research, the limited amount of programmatic research has left many areas vastly underexplored. Even in those areas where there has been considerable programmatic research, such as expectancy theory in sales management, topics such as role issues and sales behaviors continue to have many unanswered questions.

Research Issues

The field has clearly taken many great strides since 1978. In compiling the database of business marketing literature for this study, a total of 2,194 articles were identified, and of those 1,288 were found to be empirical. With respect to empirical research, a number of methodological issues need to be addressed. For example, despite repeated calls over the years for more longitudinal studies and varied data collection methods, empirical research continues to be dominated by cross-sectional survey designs, mostly collected using the mail questionnaires. Few efforts have been made in using or developing other methods of obtaining data or conducting research. Also, much of the research has assumed a "black box" or input-output type of perspective when in fact a time-based, process perspective may have more accurately captured the true nature of the phenomenon being studied. Little headway has also been made in the area of multiple respondent data collection and analysis that is so crucial to expanding our understanding of organizational buying behavior and buyer-seller relationships. Over the years, the reviews of OBB, in particular, have

TABLE 5. Research Shortages and Surpluses

Shortages	Surpluses
<i>Methodological Issues</i>	<i>Methodological Issues</i>
Programmatic research	Static cross-sectional research
Longitudinal research	"Black box" research (in general)
Experimental research	Organizational buyer behavior models
Multiple sample research	"Black box" sales performance research
Sample reporting	"Black box" new product/service research
Validation of measure reporting	Mail survey response
Process-oriented research	
Middle range theory testing	
International research	
International research methodology	
<i>Topical Issues</i>	<i>Topical Issues</i>
Industrial response modeling	Trade show descriptives
Strategic alliances	Countertrade descriptives
Intraorganizational coordination	
Interorganizational coordination	
Best practices in countertrade	
International ethics perspectives	
Teaching business marketing	
JIT II, barter, and target pricing	
Impact and effectiveness of integrated supply	
Best practices of supplier evaluation	
Defining buying value	
Defining business-to-business relationships	
Value definition for services and service	
Using segmentation	
Evaluating segmentation alternatives	
Using alternative survey collection techniques	
Sales automation	
New product process	
People aspects of product management	
Value and pricing	
Pricing process	
Supply chain management	
Distribution alternatives	
Empirical support of distribution alternatives	
Impact of advertising	
Integration of advertising and other promotion	
Public relations	
Impact of catalogs and other sales promotion	
Marketing budget to performance relationship	
Behavioral aspects of sales performance	
Sales training impact and process	
Linkage of skills to sales behaviors to performance	
Best practices in sales compensation	
Using technology to market	
Team selling and teamwork in selling	
Sales leadership	
Integrated aspects of sales management	

repeatedly pointed out various methodological problems. The problems identified have been remarkably similar from review to review. Yet most of these problems, as their continuing reappearance in the reviews over the years would suggest, have not been addressed. Existing research notwithstanding, it can certainly be questioned whether one truly understands how a firm made its purchase decision, when several people were involved, but only one person's perceptions were obtained for the study. Similarly, can we truly understand buyer-seller relationships by talking to only one of the parties involved in the relationship? What is the effect of this "missing information" on the results we have obtained to date? This situation is further exacerbated by the lack of replication efforts, which makes these questions extremely difficult to answer and also makes it difficult to draw many cause-and-effect inferences with any degree of confidence. And while many acknowledge these points, the fact remains that these issues continue to be ignored. These are challenging issues but certainly issues that, once addressed, will have a significant impact on the advancement of the field of business marketing.

It was somewhat surprising and frustrating that many of the earlier empirical articles we examined failed to report adequately specifics on the sample frame and respondents, thus making it difficult, if not impossible, to judge the external validity of the particular research. Scaling problems were also present and continue to persist. Many multiple-item scales are used without adequately addressing reliability and validity issues beyond coefficient alpha, and in some cases even that information is not provided. Thus, the reader has no way of assessing the validity of the scale or whether it is actually measuring the same construct(s). Such problems make comparisons between studies questionable. Recent work has been much better and, as was noted, may be due to the large increase in the use of structural equation modeling reported in the past ten years that deals with reporting scaling results.

Theory building efforts have also been mixed. Only limited success has been achieved in developing midrange theory, which essentially offers a theoretical perspective that provides for prediction and explanation of a limited, but well-defined range of phenomena (e.g., Walker, Churchill, and Ford 1977). In some areas, such as OBB, we have seen numerous models and theoretical perspectives proposed but few that have received any significant empirical testing. However,

in other areas, such as advertising, the work has been mostly descriptive and/or normative in nature.

Perhaps one of the most serious problems in the field, in general, is the lack of programmatic research. Much of the research to date consists of “one shot” studies, with little or no follow-up work, and few linkages to other areas. Of course, notable exceptions do exist, such as Robert Cooper’s and colleagues’ work in new products, George Avlonitis’s work in product elimination, the IMP’s work in buyer-seller interaction, and the work by many authors in sales management based on Walker, Churchill, and Ford’s (1977) model—all are models of what programmatic study should be.

Marketing Planning and Strategy

Planning and strategy research. Most of the work on business marketing strategy has been fairly descriptive. One of the most interesting and provocative pieces is the modeling done on industrial response by Choffray and Lilien (1978). In our opinion, expansion of this work is long overdue. The opportunity exists to use our improved modeling techniques gained over the past twenty years to expand and improve on that model.

Strategic alliances have been increasing in both number and scope. The literature on strategic alliances, in general, is growing rapidly. Results from this research need to be integrated into the business marketing literature since many of the strategic alliances occurring are in business markets.

Marketing and other functions research. This area has traditionally examined the relationship of the marketing function with either production, engineering, or R&D in attempting to market a product/service. Much of this research has been done in the area of the new product development process. There is also a developing stream of research in management that has taken a broader, more general view, of cross-functional issues. This work needs to be further developed in the context of business markets and marketing. Much of the research in other disciplines, notably management, deals with the issues of integrating business functions. As technology, such as EDI, continues to expand in use the need to examine how work gets done within and across organizations will increase. The increase in partnering-type activities and closer working relationships between suppliers and

distribution partners calls for a greater understanding of ways in which to coordinate work across functional boundaries, both within and between companies. These changes in the way businesses operate point to increasingly boundary-less companies as well as increasingly fuzzy boundaries between companies. All portend the need to better understand how to work across functions and to better integrate those functions within and across companies.

Ethics research. Business marketing researchers should be commended for examining the ethics of buyers in detail. However, one of the major weaknesses in the ethics research to date is that it has focused almost exclusively on U.S.-based samples and as such lacks a global perspective. There is a great deal of anecdotal data that suggest that doing business in different parts of the world requires, among other things, adherence to somewhat different ethical standards. Companies with a great deal of global experience have reported such differences in the trade press and the multitude of “doing business in” trade books clearly note the differences in ethical standards and rules in different parts of the world. Given the global nature of business marketing, more research is needed to document these purported differences and to examine how they impact businesses and their decision making.

International research. Global marketing has taken on greater importance in the academic world over the past twenty years. This is evident by the increase in academic journals in the field. In fact, there are currently at least ten journals that are explicitly international marketing journals. Many more journals are actively seeking research dealing with an international issue or involving data collection from more than one country. However, there continues to be only a limited amount of research on partnering across country boundaries by faculty in our discipline.

The business marketing literature has examined a wide range of international marketing issues. However, we believe future international research should focus on examining the differences in various aspects of the marketing process in differing international venues. For example, how is selling different in different societies and cultures? Is there a need to focus on different sets of behaviors to get the selling job done well, or is there a generalized set of behaviors that when done well lead to selling success in all cultures? Additional areas of study might include new product acceptance, how organiza-

tions determine the value of an offering, and technology acceptance. The global nature of business markets means that important marketing questions in the future need to be examined using a cross-cultural research framework. However, caution needs to be used in conducting this research as research processes may require significant changes due to the many problems, not only with language, but with country infrastructure, and other cultural and personal variables. Psychological variables may pose a special problem for this kind of research. Just because a variable is in the language does not mean that it is a concept understood by the respondent. Caution with scales used to measure psychological variables must be observed.

Marketing to the government. As has been noted, this is an area that is almost barren of academic research. This is amazing considering that sales to the government represents a significant amount of business in business markets. Why then has this area been ignored? Is it because of difficulty in obtaining data or is it because the issues are ill-defined or not of interest to academic researchers? Given some of the unique aspects associated with marketing to government and governmental purchasing procedures, this area would seem to offer an unlimited number of research opportunities.

Miscellaneous research. This category includes research that did not readily fit into a category. Included here is a very important area—educational issues relating to business marketing. Unfortunately, despite progress in getting business marketing classes offered by more colleges and universities, a question that still needs to be addressed is how best to educate business students about the nature of doing business with other businesses. At most schools, the only exposure to business marketing is in the business marketing class. Most marketing classes continue to focus exclusively on consumer goods. Organizational buying behavior, if included, is still only a single chapter in the typical consumer buying behavior text. While several articles have discussed business marketing education issues, clearly more needs to be done.

As was noted previously, nonprofit marketing has been almost completely ignored in the business marketing literature. A fundamental question perhaps is whether nonprofit marketing in business markets is different from nonprofit marketing in consumer markets.

Organizational Buying and Purchasing Research

Purchasing management research. One interesting observation about the purchasing management literature is that it has rarely been explicitly incorporated into the organizational buying theory literature. There are certainly examples of its incorporation, but for the most part integration efforts have been limited.

Our view of this literature is that most of the academic purchasing literature seems to be lagging the professional managerial literature. Reviewing the professional managerial literature provides the reader with a great deal of insight into the kinds of changes that are taking place in purchasing organizations—changes that have either not been addressed or receive limited discussion in the academic literature. Examples of these areas include integrated supply marketing, JIT II, barter, and target pricing. While leading-edge organizations are adopting or experimenting with these areas, the academic purchasing management literature has had little or nothing to say about them.

Business marketers seem to be lagging their purchasing counterparts. Purchasing (or sourcing and supply management, as it is now being referred to) and purchasing practice appear to be more forward thinking. If business marketers are to keep pace, they need to understand not only how companies think through decisions from a behavioral perspective but also the processes and mechanisms they employ. Understanding how the purchasing process defines value for the individuals as well as the organization is the crux of understanding how to market to an organization.

Organizational buying behavior research. In line with Johnston and Lewin (1996), we feel that the field of OBB has enough models and that now the emphasis needs to shift to testing the models. Unlike most areas in business marketing, OBB has been reviewed a number of times over the years. Year after year, these reviews have pointed out similar problems that need to be addressed. What we need to do now is to finally address the issues/problems that the reviews have consistently pointed out.

As with most areas in business marketing there is little programmatic research and even less replication. Examining buying, within the context of buying, rather than within a buyer-seller dyad or even network perspective, has value and will continue to have value.

Research needs to focus on the definition and determination of value by the buying party. At best, value has been indirectly examined in all of the research done on how organizations buy. Our argument is that it needs to be explicit and the focus of a research stream rather than the limited attention it has received to date. Reddy (1991) has suggested five ways of how valuing is done by customers: value analysis, value engineering, use value, value in use, and perceived value. He suggests that customers use one or more of these ways of valuing to ascertain the value of a particular offering. Anderson, Jain, and Chintagunta (1993) took a slightly different perspective and identified nine different methods of customer value assessment: internal engineering assessment, field value-in-use assessment, indirect survey questions, focus group value assessment, direct survey questions, conjoint analysis, benchmarking, compositional approaches to valuing, and importance ratings. They also provide some evidence of what companies actually do through a small sample field study.

It seems to us that all of the research in OBB, while informative of the process and providing insight into the how and the who of the decision, falls short on the why. A focus on value may finally yield greater insights into the why of the purchasing decision.

Buyer-seller relationships research. This is clearly the growth area in business marketing research. Numerous authors have over the years advocated the dyad or even the network as a unit of analysis. Unfortunately, the unit of analysis for most research continues to be only one piece of the dyad or network. With the growing emphasis on cultivating relationships rather than transactional exchanges, the use of dyads and even networks to understand marketing exchange is increasing.

The marketing literature, especially over the past few years, abounds with references to relationship marketing and its importance. However, exactly what the concept entails and what the marketing implications of it are remain less than clear. Definitions vary, with most people defining it simply as developing longer-term relationships as opposed to transactional exchanges. Work is also needed in addressing the types of relationships that are commonly encountered and their implications for business marketers.

Marketing Sciences

Market research. The business marketing literature has seen some significant effort in areas of market research. As noted previously, the

primary area is that of increasing return rates for mail surveys. Since much of the work by both academics and practitioners concerns itself with surveys, the improvement of survey response rates is a laudable effort. The research, while mixed, does suggest methods to improve response rates and thus make samples potentially more valid and less biased. There have been a number of review articles that provide succinct guidance on getting better response rates and all have been quoted in this paper. However, there are a number of issues that have not been examined in depth that probably should be. For example, newer technologies such as the Internet and fax machines have not been explored in detail as to their usage as survey delivery mechanisms. Research in these areas is only just beginning and both media represent other methods besides mail questionnaires for getting survey responses.

There has been some discussion of how to collect data from multiple respondents. This has come about as researchers have recognized the complexity of organizational buying processes and have documented the notion of buying groups or centers, both formal and informal, which typically consist of more than one person. While we know we have a problem both conceptually and methodologically, there is no readily apparent solution. For example, if we collect data from multiple respondents using key respondents and exhaustive snowballing we run into nonresponse problems as well as combination issues. If we go to a laboratory method and put the groups together prior to the decision and then have them participate in an exercise, external validity is suspect, regardless of whether the exercise is real or purely hypothetical.

Doing research internationally and dealing with the impact of culture on research methods, measures, and such needs to be better developed. There is very little guidance in this area for either the academic or practitioner. Some work has been done by Triandis et al. (1990) in the psychology literature and by Yu, Keown, and Jacobs (1993), who examined the cross-cultural implications of attitude type survey research. There are other examples, but the work is really fragmented. There is some agreement as to the validity of translation and back translation as a method, but recent work by Plank (1998) argues that may not be enough to guarantee measure validity. Finally, while not in the literature to date, the federal government is revamping the

standard industrial classification (SIC) system. This will be of real interest to industrial market researchers.

Forecasting research. As has been noted many times in the literature, forecasting is a very important process for most business marketing companies. However, most forecasting literature appears in specialty publications, and for the most part is not specific to problems and contexts with the business marketing domain. The general literature (e.g., Schnaars 1984) provides guidance on the effectiveness of forecasting methods in various situations. However, forecasting methods, in general, have poorer success when change takes place and/or the time factor is increased. This portends increased emphasis on this important area since change in business contexts is more rapid and the need to look further ahead, even in the short term, is more evident today than ever before.

Computers and decision support research. As has been seen in this review, this area remains almost nonexistent. There was a brief flurry on computer expert systems and some attempts at computer models such as CALLPLAN (Lodish 1971). Bettis-Outland and McFarland (1998) review in detail the research activity in this area, which encompasses sales force size modeling, resource allocation, sales force performance, and compensation. Despite its importance, there is almost nothing on sales automation. While the academic literature says little about it, *Sales and Marketing Management* has provided many examples of how companies use computers for sales automation and a major trade organization exists that is dedicated solely to sales automation. Academic literature, however, provides little descriptive or prescriptive information, much less assistance, to firms in helping them determine when and what they should do in their sales automation activities.

The area of market segmentation has seen some significant and important work, driven by reviews (Wind 1978; Plank 1985). The linkage of the segmentation technology to how companies actually become more efficient and effective needs to continue to be developed. It is curious, but not unexpected, that experimental work has not been done in this area. Field experiments would provide a great deal of knowledge to the participating firm and force them to truly evaluate their marketing programs.

Product/Services

New product research. This area has been very prolific, primarily driven by the work of Cooper and colleagues, but many other researchers have also made a significant impact. However, this area suffers from similar problems as the sales performance literature. Recent work by Cooper (1990) on the Stage-Gate model has pointed out that new product development is a process that occurs over time. Most of the early research and much of the continuing research examines cross-sectionally the impact of various issues on the overall success of a particular product or project. However, as the Stage-Gate process argues, different activities are likely to vary in importance and have differential impacts at different points in time. There is a need to understand how the process impacts the output, not just the input-output research that has primarily characterized this area. There is limited work examining specific parts of the new product process, but this work is mostly narrow in scope and does not connect to the entire process. Readers should again be cautioned that much of the work on new products in business markets appears in a wide variety of journals from both the management and engineering disciplines, and that while there appears to be a great deal of overlap, some interesting perspectives appear in other literatures not covered in this review. In addition, continued work on the diffusion of innovations paradigm also crosses many disciplines, not just the limited coverage in the specific business marketing literature.

Product management research. Other than the product elimination research there has been very little programmatic research in the product management literature. There has been minimal work dealing with the people involved in product management and exactly what the job entails. Much more needs to be done to define the product management process, the skills/competencies needed to do the job, as well as best practices. As noted in the review, the notion of the bundling and unbundling of product offerings is a very basic strategic question that is only now being addressed in some fashion. Also noted is the potential importance of brand equity, something that is very important in end consumer markets and which needs to be extensively addressed in business-to-business markets.

Services research. The services research agenda really breaks down to two issues, those of how to manage a service business (i.e.,

the offering is a pure or mostly service offering) and the notion of the role of service in the product offering. As suggested previously, the notion of value as perceived by the buyer is going to be key in these kinds of businesses and certainly with service as an added value or necessity for a product offering.

The research in the area is fragmented. Much of the SERVQUAL research, we would argue, may not be relevant to business markets unless it is directly applicable to the way the buyer values the offering. The fact that measurements of SERVQUAL are very mixed from a reliability and validity standpoint highlights this issue, among others. As has been suggested, many purchasing departments should establish formal sets of measures of supplier performance. These are the value measures for the buying firm, and whether a marketer is dealing with products or services, the job is to comply with the necessary performance measures or to change them.

Pricing

Pricing research. Pricing still remains probably the least researched of the traditional four P's and probably the least understood by both researchers and practitioners. With reference to the notion of value as noted in the discussion of personal selling and organizational buying, business markets are faced with the issue of price as a definition of value and concurrently face the problem of how to compete on other aspects of value or against competitors who compete on a different value basis. The work by Woodside (1994) is pathbreaking and interesting and can be extended to examine price as value and to include nonpricing value issues.

Channels and Logistics

Channel management research. Channel management still requires a great deal of descriptive work. Work in the area of defining distribution partners, such as distributors' and manufacturers' sales agents, is minimal. The behavioral issues are well researched, although, as noted earlier, are narrow in scope and context. The work on partnerships provides interesting insights about the makeup of channel relationships. There is good normative material on how to think through the channels of distribution problem, but little empirical work that actually supports the issues raised.

Logistics and physical distribution research. This area has little specific research in the business marketing literature. However, as noted previously, it is the subject of a great deal of research effort that appears in very specialized journals. The end consumer in an exchange, whether a business or an individual, derives time and place utility in large measure from the activities of logistics and physical distribution (or materials management from a buyer or purchasing perspective).

Promotion

Advertising research. As noted previously, advertising appears to be the black sheep of business marketing, despite as noted by Pau-tian (1996), the substantial amount being spent on it. There has been comparatively little research and what exists has not been of a programmatic nature. Advertising performance, at a micro level, has received considerable attention, while an important area like advertising strategy has received almost none. Little is known about how advertising impacts the buying process. While it is assumed that business advertising facilitates the sales effort, there is little empirical evidence to support that assumption, let alone the magnitude of the effect if it does hold true. No comprehensive model of advertising from a business marketing perspective exists. Research has provided some insights into how advertising works and *Business Marketing* (1987) published the Advertising Research Foundation research on the impact of business-to-business advertising, but we are missing a theoretical perspective to test and truly understand how and why advertising affects purchase decisions.

Of interest is the recent growth in what is called integrative communications. While this work strictly focuses on advertising and ignores the sales communication process, the concept of integrating all communications makes sense from a pragmatic perspective and business marketers need to heed this perspective in terms of linking their various promotional messages together.

Sales promotion research. Research on sales promotion has been very narrowly focused on primarily personal inducements and trade shows. Most of the personal inducement work has been descriptive and has used either salespeople and managers or purchasing personnel as respondents. No work to date has used other buying center

members. Trade show research has been mostly descriptive but has also provided some theory as to why and how trade shows work.

Other than those two areas, other aspects of sales promotion have been ignored. There have been virtually no attempts at even defining the nature of various sales promotion tactics. Likewise, while it is recognized that many business marketing firms make extensive use of catalogs, research has scarcely addressed this area. No work has been done defining the use of new technologies on catalog or other sales promotion activities. As has been suggested, the notion of integrated communications has been argued at length in the advertising and communications literature, but little has been published on what that means for business marketers.

Public relations research. Advertising's role as the black sheep of business marketing is certainly preferable to public relations' role. If one were to judge the importance of the subject by the amount of research on the topic, then public relations would appear to be the least important area. There has been virtually no research on public relations in business markets. Obviously, there is much work that could be done in the public relations area that would be of use to business marketers. Fundamental research on public relations activities used by business marketers and how it is done would be useful. The crisis literature has focused mostly on consumer markets, but problems also occur within business markets and no work has been done examining how companies deal with these kinds of crises.

General promotion research. General promotion spans a broad number of areas but is almost entirely devoid of the integrated communications perspective that is so commonly discussed in the general advertising literature for consumer markets. As with most areas, some topics have tended to receive a considerable amount of attention while others have received none. In the case of general promotion, telemarketing has been extensively researched while lead tracking and direct marketing have had minimal coverage. As with almost every other area, there appears to be no programmatic research.

Personal selling research. In general, this area has had a significant amount of research over the years. The most researched area is clearly that of sales performance. Yet, as was shown in Churchill et al.'s (1985) meta-analysis, there has been only limited success in predicting sales performance. Research in the area of sales performance is just beginning to move from a "black box," or input-output,

approach to more of a process orientation. However, almost all of the work to date continues to be cross-sectional in nature. Sales has long been recognized to be a process. What is needed to truly understand sales performance are research programs that explicitly recognize that sales performance occurs over time. Work done by the IMP group in understanding organizational buying also provides insights into the nature of successful selling.

Although there has been a considerable amount of research on sales performance, there is still considerable debate as to the definition of performance. Walker, Churchill, and Ford (1979) provided benchmark theoretical definitions that distinguished between performance and effectiveness, but as Bodkin (1990) notes, there are many different measures of sales performance and most continue to be fraught with difficulties. Research has also not addressed factors outside a salesperson's control and how they impact on performance.

Research is slowly starting to address issues of sales coordination, teamwork, and key account management. Sales planning, sales force automation and technology, and women in sales remain virtually ignored. Of these areas, it is extremely puzzling that given all the attention the trade press has paid to sales force automation that academic research has so completely ignored it and its potential for dramatically changing the nature of selling.

One other issue that seems appropriate to address is the notions of value selling, value-added selling, and the like that are so common in the managerial trade literature. The notion of value and how buyers judge the value of an offering is the most critical component for the marketing of business-to-business goods and services. Value-added selling, in our estimation, addresses how do we convince the buyer that things other than the basic product or service have value and should be considered by the buyer when purchasing the product or service. At a very simple level, the salesperson can sell based on price, the basic product, or service, upgrading the buyer's perception of value by selling additional services or other issues that provide value to the buyer. This kind of conceptualization may be valuable in future sales performance research since the skills and behaviors needed in each situation may differ.

Sales training research. Sales training represents another area of business marketing research that has received very little attention in the academic literature. What research that has been done in business

marketing has been descriptive or prescriptive with no real efforts to understand cause-and-effect relationships in the sales training context. Given the large sums of money invested in sales training and its hoped-for positive impact on sales performance, additional research in this area is clearly needed. Fundamental questions—like “How effective is most sales training?”—still remain unanswered. The literature gives no particular indication whether it is or is not effective. Researchers have yet to develop measures of training effectiveness.

Sales motivation and rewards research. This area has been well researched, mainly from the perspective of expectancy theory. A number of areas such as role conflict and role ambiguity and the problems with those issues (e.g., stress and propensity to leave) have been explored in considerable detail. However, as with other sales research, this area also suffers from a lack of a process perspective. A classic work by Cron (1984) on the sales career life cycle and work on stress and burnout by Sager (1994); Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads (1994); and Verbeke (1997) provide insight into the time and process aspects of the phenomenon.

Compensation is still an issue for most companies—how much to pay salespeople, what is too little, what is too much, and how much does one have to pay to attract the kinds of people who will do the job well. There is a tremendous literature in management and psychology that deals with these issues in various contexts, but the anecdotal literature from the trade press still indicates that there are more questions than answers. Only limited research has been done on how we reward teams and when is it appropriate, but as sales becomes more complex, more team selling is bound to evolve, making this a very relevant question.

General sales management research. This area has produced a wide variety of research topics and perspectives. Areas that have had some research include performance evaluation, leadership issues, supervisory issues, and sales force deployment. Most of these areas, and in fact all that have been discussed previously, are highly inter-related.

The movement toward more behavioral performance evaluation also suggests more of a process orientation. This notion of behavioral performance evaluation versus just outcome evaluation offers some very specific payoffs for managers that they cannot get from output evaluations. If a salesperson does not make quota, that is all the infor-

mation a manager would receive. But, if a manager can tie behavioral evaluation to quota or other output performance measures, then the knowledge of those linkages can be used in improving specific behavioral performance and subsequently improved output performance.

The work by Cravens and colleagues on sales force deployment is exemplary in terms of both collaboration among many people and programmatic research. Their recent work using an Australian sample is also a good example of an integrative view of sales management practices. Leadership represents an area that has not had very much research activity and is ripe, not only for more empirical work, but for greater integration as a focal point in the sales management process.

As noted previously, almost nothing has been done on hiring and firing. There is, however, a long history of research in the personnel literature on hiring. Relating to sales and behaviors, there is a very specific literature in the personnel and psychology areas that deals with the linking of behavioral skills back into the hiring process. Interested researchers can start with Rollins (1989), Rollins and Fruge (1992), Esque and Gilbert (1995), and Guinn (1998). Finally, it should be noted that sales management is a process that is broad in conception. It includes not only outside salespeople, who are almost always the focal point of most research, but inside sales technical people, telemarketers, and other people within the firm who support the sales process. Research needs to recognize this complexity and respond to it. This suggests that the field critically evaluate the concepts of performance and effectiveness and redefine them to recognize the strategic and tactical aspects of sales performance, the time and process element, and the fact that many people other than salespeople impact the overall sales success.

Limitations

Finally, we are well aware that every research project has its limitations and ours is no exception. We are certain that some readers will point out that there are articles or areas that they consider extremely important that we did not discuss or did not discuss in sufficient detail. However, with a project of this magnitude and a field as broad as business marketing, this is something that is unavoidable. And while we attempted to include as comprehensive a set of publications as possible, there are some who will no doubt feel that this journal or

that proceeding should have been included. As with any major undertaking, hard decisions had to be made in order to keep the project manageable while at the same time providing the needed depth and breadth of coverage. We feel that the tradeoffs we have made were appropriate.

Conclusions

Industrial/business marketing has definitely come of age. However, while the subject from a research perspective is no longer an infant, it is clearly a long way from maturity. Having spent an enormous amount of time reading and sifting through the business marketing literature and then rereading and organizing it for this review, we conclude by offering the following more generalized observations and suggestions to our present and future colleagues:

- More programmatic research by teams of researchers: The rare instances of programmatic research that have been done have been quite fruitful.
- More process-oriented research and more longitudinal research: This will require more emphasis on more exploratory research and methods other than surveys.
- More multiple sample research, with adequate reporting of scales where appropriate: Most research reported in the literature contains only one data set. Senior researchers, especially, should concentrate on multiple sample research.
- More emphasis on international research: While there is a similarity to business done worldwide, there are also obvious differences. More research and thinking needs to be done on the impact of culture and other variables distinct to different areas of the world and the impact of those variables on doing business in those countries.
- More emphasis on integrative research that looks at several related issues at once: We are not suggesting that researchers completely discontinue examining smaller pieces. However, we are suggesting integrative research incorporating findings from several individual research projects should be used, especially when multiple factors are at work. One can almost think of it as a regression problem, where different answers are obtained from multiple regression versus several simple regressions.

- Key topics in need of further research are as follows:
 - Defining value from the buyers perspective
 - Defining business relationships
 - Methodology improvements and measure validation
 - International issues, both measures and methodology and substantive issues
 - Integration of promotion with major efforts in the sales management area
 - Testing of existing OBB and buyer-seller models
 - Defining processes in business marketing and determining best practices
 - More industrial response modeling

Obviously there are many other topics that are both important and appropriate. We hope that our review will spur continued efforts at improving our understanding of business markets. We are confident that the next twenty years will yield answers to most of the questions we have posed.

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A Commentary on Business Marketing: A Twenty-Year Review and an Invitation for Continued Dialogue

Robert E. Spekman

INTRODUCTION AND THE CALL FOR DEBATE

David Lichtenthal, Editor of the *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*, asked that I consider responding to Plank and Reid's review. I said yes, with full knowledge that the paper I would review was in excess of 180 pages and examined over 2,000 references. I am happy to have the opportunity to comment on Reid and Plank's manuscript for several reasons. First, as a researcher who has toiled in the business-to-business marketing field for more than twenty years, I have thoughts and opinions about what we have learned over the years and the future direction of the field. Second, the authors are well-known to me and I feel obligated to work with them to help accurately synthesize the literature they have painstakingly collected and reported on. Their task was quite daunting and their thoroughness is impressive. This commentary is intended to complement the insights revealed in the review and clarify some of its implications. Third, the discipline is, I believe, at a turning point and the time is ripe for a dialogue that might move our field forward. I remain frustrated and somewhat incredulous that in twenty years our field has not made sufficient gains in influencing managerial action and strategic thinking. We must continue to improve the rigor of our scholarly inquiry; we must attempt to improve the relevance of our work; and we need to become more diligent in our efforts to conduct research that is useful to managers. If we do not raise the rigor and relevance of our research, business-to-business marketing research will remain in the shadows of work done in the areas of strategy and management.

Peter Drucker (1954) spoke of the importance of marketing to business thinking and its pervasive role in strategy developing. He stated, "Marketing is so basic that . . . it is not a specialized activity at all. It is the whole business seen from the point of view of its final result, that is, from the customer's point of view" (p. 37). More recently, work by Jaworski and Kohli (1990) and Narver and Slater (1990) argue about the importance of becoming a marketing-oriented company and the need for managers to become market focused. Their empirical work reveals positive correlations linked to higher returns and a marketing orientation. Yet, the majority of business-to-business research does very little to tie strategic thinking and marketing. Even more problematic is the observation that, for the most part, business-to-business marketing scholars do not conduct research that reflects the changing demands of competition that will continue to drive business during the new millennium. For example, an observation by strategy scholars in the late 1970s was that marketing should be relegated to a secondary role charged with the implementation of plans that were typically made at higher levels of the organization. Webster (1994) took a giant step forward when he proclaimed marketing's coming of age and emphasized the linkage between marketing strategy and strategic planning. Yet, the role played by marketing is still unclear. Recall that Michael Porter's early work (1980, 1985) has a very strong marketing flavor; yet, this work is touted as seminal in the strategy literature. Not only have we watched some of our conceptual domain fall into the strategy area; we do very little to solidify the ties between business-to-business marketing thought and the development of business strategy. Consider, for example, buying center research. It is important but does little to advance the development of enterprise-wide thinking.

My goal is to stimulate debate among those of us who conduct business-to-business research. Through this debate, I believe I can create an opportunity to challenge my colleagues to redouble their effort and to think differently about the contribution they will make to the discipline. I have become quite cynical about our ability to engage in meaningful research that provides guidance for the practicing manager. Two recent events have given me pause to reflect on the quality and impact of research in business-to-business marketing.

One summer I participated in an Internet-based conversation among my colleagues on business-to-business topics. This global conversa-

tion was orchestrated by the University of Manchester Institute of Technology and allowed for the participants to set the agenda as to what topics would be covered. A rather elaborate protocol was established and interested parties could “go live” at a certain time to begin this global conversation on shared research interests, other topics, questions, and the like. To my chagrin a rather lengthy discussion was devoted to the differences between consumer and business-to-business marketing. I was surprised (to put it mildly) that we would spend time on this topic given the range of other issues one could examine. I wondered whether our sense of identity had not yet become established and we needed to justify our area of study as unique and worthy of inquiry. As a doctoral student in the early 1970s I remember engaging in that discussion and now I ask myself, Why bother? Recent business marketing texts (e.g., Anderson and Narus 1999; Hutt and Speh 1998) do not find it necessary to distinguish our discipline from the research conducted by our consumer marketing brethren. I do not wish to belabor the point other than to say that I was disappointed at the banality of the discussion given the challenges business marketers face competing globally.

The second encounter occurred in June 1999 at the relationship management conference held by Jag Sheth at Emory University. I attended to speak about my research in the area of supply chain management and supply chain partnering. Several colleagues spoke about the fact that since they were professors of marketing they could not engage in research that either sat at the nexus of disciplines or was not directly marketing in focus. Again, I could not believe what I heard. Perhaps I have a warped view of the world; I am fortunate to be on the faculty at the Darden Graduate School of Business where I am a professor of business administration. In the past I had not thought a great deal about my title but at that conference it became quite apparent that my colleagues felt that they lacked the “license” to work at the fuzzy boundary of their discipline because the work would be seen as out of bounds. It would be nice if business problems were so easily compartmentalized and categorized by functional areas. Unfortunately, reality does not present itself so neatly packaged.

In part, I have suggested that business-to-business marketing is in need of a reexamination and the review by Reid and Plank presents a wonderful opportunity to begin that reexamination in earnest. This self-appraisal is warranted for reasons beyond the twentieth year re-

view. I have implied that a portion of the academic work to date has not always focused on important business issues nor has it contributed to our understanding better the problems managers face. Clearly, there has not been a meaningful dialogue between the academics and practitioners. In addition, there is a need to develop more rigorous approaches to our craft. The methods employed in a number of the empirical studies lag behind the sophistication of research conducted in consumer behavior. Moreover, I believe that we have been our own enemies; we have not challenged ourselves nor have we set goals in pursuit of answers to key business problems. Instead, we bemoan the difficulty in getting access to companies and samples of business people. We complain about the expenses associated with conducting field experiments. Our reference point becomes the work of consumer behaviorists who rely on college behavioral labs where students are required to participate in a number of studies as a requirement for the course.

This commentary is intended to be provocative, to challenge and to prod us to think differently about the scope and domain of business-to-business marketing as reviewed by Reid and Plank. To that end, this commentary will begin with a critique of the work reviewed by Reid and Plank. Then, the challenge of the new competition will be presented and the implications for business-to-business marketing research will be discussed. Finally, there will be a set of questions and potential research topics that I believe should drive future academic inquiry if we are to contribute to both management practice and scholarly inquiry.

***A CRITIQUE OF THE PROCESS:
THE VIEW FROM 30,000 FEET—
DATA, INFORMATION, AND KNOWLEDGE***

To begin, the authors have done a laudable job collecting the massive amounts of information they do summarize. There is no question that this has been a Herculean effort. However, an opportunity was missed and the review offers far less than the 200 pages would imply. The authors conduct the review process in a fashion that presents data. That is, articles tend to be summarized and listed in a “he says, they say, she says” fashion that does little to integrate and synthesize

among the different articles. If one were to use an example from the burgeoning literature on knowledge creation (e.g., Davenport and Prusak 1998), data are the straightforward reporting of events. Here, it is merely the listing of the article and the summary of the contents therein. While this reporting is useful, it does not provide any insight regarding the value of the contribution made, nor is there any interpretation of the points made by the authors. We know only who wrote what, when, and what the key points were.

Information is the reporting of the data in another format. It is categorized or somehow manipulated to add meaning to the reader. Unlike the literal reporting of the array of articles and the content, there might be an analysis that attempts to group similar papers and discusses the advances made over time from one or another stream of research. In another instance, the authors could have pursued streams of research in which research questions are replicated, sets of variables examined in different contexts and different environments, and/or an attempt made to generalize findings in order to establish a set of accepted principles about certain phenomena in the field.

Last, knowledge adds further insight to the review and incorporates the expertise of the authors to derive either basic truths about the concepts relevant to the discipline or to make statements about how different approaches (rival hypotheses) vie for hegemony in the field. The authors could have also spent time discussing what is not yet known in the field. To their credit, they attempt to get beyond the reporting of data but the attempt is weak at best. It is here that one of my disappointments lies. The authors missed an opportunity to go beyond a review of the literature and take a position related to the tone, direction, and quality of past research. This effort could have helped future researchers to learn from the past, incorporate key findings and methods, and propose a future research agenda that is focused on key problems and issues. Although this suggestion might be viewed as too bold an undertaking or even arrogant, the field would benefit greatly from an attempt to synthesize and integrate the fragmented literature into a more meaningful set of common themes and consistent findings. This point will be addressed shortly and the point made will be illustrated.

Simple Pictures Are Best

Think of an attempt to capture the essence of close to 2,200 articles in a review of literature. There is a great deal of information that could have been arrayed in a more parsimonious fashion. Tables would have helped to summarize articles and demonstrate the intellectual linkages among different streams of research. In addition, text could have focused on common themes and/or on the essence of certain debates. The authors rely on data tables to report the facts: so many articles from so many journals, with so many of these being empirical pieces using statistical tests. Again, this is important to know but does not carry the review far enough. Moreover, such a strategy reflects a basic weakness in the review process. Merely listing the set of articles does little to help the reader cut through the noise of individual papers to reveal trends, themes, debates, etc.

If there are a relatively large number of unrelated studies, attempting to summarize the full set of papers dilutes the power of concentrating on major themes that have carried the discipline over the years. The authors attempt this in their Table 4 where articles are sorted by topic of inquiry. They might have taken sorting tasks a step further and culled articles into “buckets,” or research streams, thereby eliminating the single paper or set of papers that do not converge. For example, the channel management topics could be sorted into several streams of research: power and conflict, channel partnerships, and channel management. Articles in logistics and transportation that address questions related to these topics should be included. For instance, research that examines outsourcing of logistics services could fit the general area of channel partnerships. Research that answers questions about work flow, inventory levels, and/or other aspects of physical distribution should be excluded since these papers do not have a conceptual tie to the larger research stream as delineated earlier. When examining topics in physical distribution and where logistics is just a contextual issue and the work fits a particular bucket (because of the conceptual issues under inquiry), it is legitimate to include these papers thereby ignoring the context.

This alternative approach focuses on a smaller number of research streams, and/or competing paradigms, and traces their development over time. Admittedly, there is some loss of information because the review is not exhaustive. Yet, there is greater depth of coverage given to the major research streams. Given that the business-to-business lit-

erature is fragmented, this approach has merit in that it allows us to concentrate on the more influential pieces of research and ignores work that contributes at the margin.

Suppose the authors attempted to chart the evolution of streams of research to understand what has been learned over time or what advances had been made as the literature grew. Table 6 illustrates the kinds of questions one might ask in pursuit of that end. To begin, it might be more useful to limit the research topics to those that comprise a unitary stream of research—i.e., a body of related studies that converge on a similar set of research questions or attempt to explain a similar phenomenon. In this fashion, work that has stood the test of time is highlighted. One can now examine the maturation of thought and the contribution to theory and/or practice over time. Note that the objectives are to bring bodies of similar work together, understand how that research has advanced, delineate and operationalize the key variables, enumerate the major findings/approaches that have guided

TABLE 6. Questions to Guide the Literature Review Process

Research Topic	Questions to Address
<i>Criteria for Inclusion of a Research Topic</i>	
Does there exist a body of literature that can be traced over time?	Has the work been conceptual only? If some is empirical, what has been investigated? What parts of the “model” have to be explored?
Are there common threads? Do the concepts, variables, measures, show a relationship?	Are there key variables that have been examined? What are the findings?
Is the work considered meaningful? That is, has the work made a difference?	Is there any attempt at replication? If so, what has been found? Has there emerged a dominant paradigm? What is it?
	What has happened over time? For example, is the work in the first decade different in focus/scope than the second decade? What might explain this difference?
	What are the key findings? Is there universal support or is there a debate?
	Are there gaps in the literature? That is, are there questions that have not been addressed? Why are the answers important to know?
	What are the implications for future researchers?

the research effort over time, and make explicit what the implications are.

Implications and Lessons Learned

One of the major benefits of a literature review is the ability to collect in one place papers and articles on a single topic, or set of related subjects, and present in a succinct and cogent fashion the key points learned over a period of time. From this synopsis and integration we gain insight into a set of findings that have been tested and replicated. If results appear to consistently hold over time and across different contexts, we can begin to extract principles and/or fundamental relationships that can guide managerial action, empirical testing, and conceptual development. We can begin to generalize and expect that certain relationships will carry the day. For example, from the findings in organizational buying behavior (OBB) we would expect that under conditions of higher uncertainty, more people take an active role in the decision-making process, the evoked set of potential suppliers is broadened, and a wider array of decision attributes are considered by the buying center Decision Making Unit (DMU) members. Moreover, the implications for both the incumbent and “out vendor” are more clearly understood relative to how each should approach the buying organization, what the buyer’s receptivity to new information is, and, to some degree, what the key decision attributes are likely to be. Unfortunately, the Reid and Plank review fails to delve into the literature to that level of detail. With respect to OBB research, we are presented with the following observations:

- The literature in OBB and procurement management has very little overlap.
- There is congruence between the buyer-seller and OBB literature. Yet, OBB has engaged in research that has done more theory testing.
- IMP researchers have gained little attention in the United States.
- We have not fully explored customer value and the need to better understand its effect on organizational buying decision-making processes.

Again, I remain frustrated at the authors’ ability to underwhelm the reader with observations that are both not very substantive and not

very helpful in piecing together the contribution made in the area of OBB over the past twenty years. To be sure, there is far more to the contribution gained from work in the area of OBB, for example, than the authors convey. Given that they were simply reporting on the content of the material it is not unexpected to find the summary of such a review to be superficial as well. I admit that it is easy to be critical of this review; I did not spend the months compiling the articles and sifting through the journals. However, if we are to learn from the process and provide a framework for future research, we must also be willing to examine with a critical eye the effort. The authors do not carry the process to its logical and most beneficial end. Our field cannot advance without a more critical appraisal of the work to date and a more insightful attempt to distill the value gained and the knowledge captured.

What the Future Holds

While the literature review should look retrospectively and help us understand the contribution made to date, the review process should also look to the future. The review should attempt to direct future research projects by showing the gap between the extant work and the demands of the future. We examine relevance by asking the question, Are business-to-business researchers examining problems facing tomorrow's managers? We cannot fall into the trap of the scientist/researcher who sees something in reality and wonders if it works in theory. We must be sensitive to the changing demands of global competition and should propose a research agenda that helps us better understand the set of factors and issues that affect managerial action. Although Reid and Plank propose a series of future research questions and topics deserving of examination, it is not clear what their vision of the future is. Why ask the question if there is little appreciation of a future state?

What follows is one vision of the future and a proposed set of research questions that merit examination in the business-to-business area if the field is to continue its growth and contribute to both theoretical advancement and managerial relevance.

THE NEW COMPETITION

The term *the new competition* is taken from work by Michael Best (1990) in which he describes the manner in which firms have begun to compete. This view is shared by others (e.g., Moore 1996) and suggests that firms will no longer compete as they have in the past. The new competition embodies global networks of cooperating firms at the core of which are flexible, creative learning organizations. Several key points are implied here:

1. Firms compete as constellations of cooperating companies typically along a value chain or a supply chain. These extended enterprises are comprised of firms that come together in a collaborative manner to achieve goals that each would have difficulty accomplishing alone. These organizations acknowledge that their ability to bring value to the marketplace is partly a function of their ability to leverage the complementary skills/resources of their network partners.
2. Boundarylessness becomes the critical attribute for the firm.
3. In addition, an enterprise-wide view of the firm must exist. Silo (functional) thinking must give way to a recognized interdependence among functions so that managers work in concert to bring innovation to the marketplace.

Each of these three points will be discussed and then the implications for business-to-business marketing will be presented.

Networks of Cooperating Firms

While the IMP research tradition has spoken about networks and the interplay among firms, the issues here extend beyond the scope of their work. The scope is expanded to include an understanding of alliances, joint ventures (JVs), and mergers and acquisitions where companies come together for a number of reasons (e.g., access markets and/or technology, lower costs, achieve scale and/or scope). More important, the focus is not on exchange per se; rather, the issues under investigation relate to bringing value to the marketplace and the advantages of one form of joint action over another.

For example, one area in which networks add value is their ability to facilitate innovation. In the recent past, as firms innovated they typ-

ically asked questions related to make versus buy. The traditional wisdom was to keep the innovative process well under the corporate umbrella. To look externally was often viewed as a mark of weakness or managerial failing. Under the new competition, one reframes the question and the relevant issues converge on the merits of make, buy, or borrow. As part of the decision calculus managers must address also whether the innovation, or innovative process, is more conducive to one form of interfirm relationship or another. One could form a JV to jointly contribute resources to engage in discovery; one might seek a licensing alliance; or one might find that there are other forms of JVs in which the technology-acquiring firm takes an equity stake in the other firm. In other instances, managers might consider only supply chain relationships and their ability to leverage the skills of other partners to bring value to the marketplace. Each alliance form holds different implications for the sharing of tacit information, the scope of the technology sharing, the expectations held of the partners for continuity of the relationship, and the level and complexity of resources shared.

In the *Trillion Dollar Enterprise*, Freidheim (1998) builds the argument for a firm with \$1.0 trillion in sales. While such a firm does not exist, the truth is that such a company can be illustrated by the array of cooperating firms that come together to drill for oil in the North Sea or the Gulf of Mexico. This virtual company combines the skills and assets of all the firms that participate in the venture and when added together the sales of all partners equal about \$1.0 trillion. We can envision such a network of firms and appreciate the magnitude of issues related to coordinating the activities required. However, the managerial processes are quite different from managing a traditional hierarchical business. Business-to-business markets should be concerned with problems and challenges inherent in these managerial processes.

A network approach to management directly challenges the traditional wisdom since one cannot easily or effectively control a network of firms. These firms simultaneously cooperate but maintain their autonomy. Hierarchy is less meaningful because firms interact across boundaries such that chains of command have little meaning. The term *network* implies a relatively loose (as compared to a rigid hierarchy) collection of cooperating firms that bring value to the marketplace. What is unique to the governance structure of these net-

works is that while firms might work together to achieve a common objective or set of goals, each still maintains its autonomy and is ultimately driven by its own agenda and its own self-interests. Herein lies the tension that is inherent in managing across a network of companies. Despite these tensions, examples of global networks abound. Shipping, oil and chemicals, airlines, and telecommunications are but a few of the business sectors in which networks are an essential ingredient for competitive success.

Success in a global market comes less from an ability to capture market share and more from an ability to create capabilities/skills that surpass those of one's competitors. Given high levels of environmental turbulence, rapidly changing technology, and the need to access and put into use knowledge that has a limited shelf life, firms must quickly assemble portfolio partners who can work together to address the complexities of an uncertain world. Networks allow firms to leverage the complementary, albeit critical, skills of their partners. Networks are nimble and are able to respond quickly to change. Nimble and responsive are not adjectives that typically describe the large, often bureaucratic firm that has dominated the corporate landscape. Networks encourage their members to access their core skills and areas of differential advantage and focus energy on what they do well. By focusing on their core capabilities partners can populate the network with partners who provide complementary capabilities.

The benefits that accrue to network members are many and have been adapted and summarized in Table 7 (see Human and Provan 1997). Despite the costs associated with maintaining one's involvement in a network, the benefits appear to outweigh both the real costs and the opportunity costs associated with foregoing other relationships. The gains run the gamut from exchange-related activities to the transfer of information and knowledge, to positive reputational effects. Members also gain from transactional outcomes as delineated in the following. There are additional transformational gains that result from how members relate to one another. For instance, in some networks firms work with competitors and begin to realize that they can cooperate and compete without fear of expropriation of their trade secrets and other proprietary information. Members soon become comfortable with the duality of network membership—one can cooperate with one's competition.

TABLE 7. A Summary of Outcomes Gained from Network Participation

Outcome Gained	
Direct transactions among network members	Business—related to buying and selling among members Information—acquisition of new techniques and procedures Friendship—build personal relationships and trust Competencies—learn new skills and capabilities
Credibility	Through network gain size that affords recognition and legitimacy that a single firm might not have.
Access to resources	Through network gain scale and scope that leverages network beyond the single member. Benefit from new markets, new ideas, and establishing new contacts.
Financial performance	Sales are enhanced through the membership.

Networks emerge for many reasons. One reason converges on the establishment of standards and the need for firms to align around competing paradigms/designs, gain a critical mass, and be able to have their standard emerge as the dominant design. Gomes-Casseres (1994) describes the alignment of networks around the competing RISC architectures. To some extent these competing networks look like competing solar systems. In the center of this solar system sits the company that either leads the effort or developed the technology. This strategic center (Lorenzoni and Baden-Fuller 1995) serves to guide and select membership; the other partners “revolve” around this strategic center. The firm at the center must possess certain competencies if it is to effectively leverage the skills of its partners.

Standard-setting efforts affect the marketplace in a number of ways (Shapiro and Varian 1999). First, standard setting expands the value proposition available to customers by facilitating the compatibility among different suppliers whose components must now work together. In this manner, it also reduces uncertainty by ensuring that emerging technology will be less likely to stray away from the standard. Given the fact that competing suppliers conform to the standard, switching costs are reduced because buyers are less likely to purchase a proprietary system. Moreover, the emergence of a standard tends to focus competition more on price and less on the features

that competing designs have. Last, given the compatibility among components, buyers are more likely to purchase in a mix-and-match mode as opposed to buying systems. Clearly, the setting of standards increases the total size of the market and competitors now fight for market share. With competing designs firms fight to win the evolving market and some will be winners and others will be out of the game for a long period of time.

A second reason is a response to global scale as is required in the telecommunication and airline industries where the competitive focus has shifted from national or regional customers to those who can provide seamless service to global customers. A number of airline alliances are based on an ability to achieve seamless, global travel. During the mid-1990s in the ocean shipping industry SeaLand and A. P. Moller¹ competed in a number of markets and shared resources. Both were motivated to better utilize their assets to achieve a global presence. It would not be uncommon, for example, for the two firms to compete for freight that would eventually sail on the same ship.

The third reason can be explained by the convergence of technologies that have previously been discrete. With the convergence of voice, data, and video and/or bioengineering and other very new approaches to drug development and genetic research, it is clear that one company lacks the requisite range of experience or expertise. To fill that void firms must rely on their partners to supply the missing part of the technology puzzle. These technology networks fill gaps in emerging fields of inquiry where solutions cross “academic” boundaries. The common theme among these three explanations is that networks provide seamless coverage and lay a foundation from which a dominant competitive position can be achieved.

To be sure, the gains achieved through these networks come at a cost. There is a loss of autonomy and managers are limited in their ability to act independently. Decision making can bog down since one partner cannot act unilaterally without consideration for the others. As would be expected, network members demand a voice and wish to participate in decisions that affect the network. Formal hierarchy and the traditional chain of command no longer make sense. Managers must now rely on their partners’ commitment to similar goals and objectives to achieve their individual, albeit complementary, outcomes. Trust replaces hierarchy; strict rules and other formal control mechanisms are replaced by a governance structure that val-

ues consensus or other joint decision-making processes. Organizational boundaries no longer distinguish among firms. Fixed boundaries are replaced by specialization where firms concentrate on what they do well and rely on others to furnish noncore activities that taken together bring value to the marketplace.

Networks Breed Boundaryless Organizations

As organizations redefine themselves and concentrate on their core capabilities, a natural consequence is that traditional boundaries that once separated one firm from another hold little meaning. As information passes freely from partner to partner and the relevant level of analysis shifts to the entire cooperating value chain (or network), it becomes less important to define the firm as a stand-alone entity. Functions and knowledge are now distributed throughout the network and are shared across the entire constellation. Partners who previously were separated geographically are now in constant contact. Time and distance are less relevant and are easily compressed through information technology such as the Internet.

The term *boundarylessness* implies organizational redefinition along several dimensions. In order to fully accomplish the goals and objectives of these burgeoning network-based organizations several barriers must fall. Should any one remain, the network suffers and the espoused benefits will be diminished. First, the traditional hierarchy in which decision making is centralized and all information is funneled to the top of the firm must give way to flatter structures in which information flows to the point where it is needed and employees are empowered to act on "local" decisions.

Second, functional silos must fall and firms must adopt an enterprise view that does not get embroiled in turf battles and does not perpetuate self-serving behavior. Individual pockets of power and control perpetuate the old model of organizations. Functions, disciplines, and business units work together and in synch to create value for the marketplace. Third, the network view must become the dominant level of analysis whereby entire supply chains, value chains, or constellations of cooperating companies combine their unique skills to bring differential advantage to the marketplace. Fourth, boundarylessness enables the merging of different cultures and collapses the distance that geography and national differences traditionally foster.

Boundarylessness recognizes the value of diversity and employs conflict resolution mechanisms to incorporate the best qualities of these different cultures to build a stronger, more cohesive network.

The rise of the Internet adds to the complexity and presents both challenges and opportunities for the business-to-business marketer. While some speak of the Internet as an alternative channel of distribution and even as a possible strategy to lessen dependence on one's distributors (Fein and Jap 1999), the ability of the Internet to collapse both distance and time has profound implications for the virtual corporation and the nature of competition. Also at issue here is the nature of relationships between firms and trading partners. While the Internet acts as a lubricant to stimulate trade among firms it also can commoditize relationships and affect the nature of close ties among firms. To be sure, an understanding of the effect of the Internet on business-to-business marketing is still in its infancy. However, the dollars at stake run into the hundreds of billions! The estimates of the size of business-to-business transactions over the Internet are ten times those of the consumer marketplace.

The lack of research notwithstanding, the key to success is boundary permeability and information symmetry. Information flows easily across boundaries and it is shared openly and is widely available. Two questions arise as to what is internal and what is external to the firm and where does one draw the line between what is "mine" and what is "yours." For instance, transnational teams might comprise members from different partner companies who meet to discuss new technologies or the establishment of standards. Membership might include suppliers, customers, regulators, and others who have a stake in the outcome. Crossing functional boundaries is challenging enough; imagine the changes needed for managers to be comfortable in these more fluid organizations where information is treated as a common asset and flexibility and responsiveness are the rule and not the exception.

What Boundarylessness Means

Boundarylessness carries certain connotations. A key issue is that information does not reside at the highest level of the organization. Data and information are available to those who are empowered to make decisions. While certain information is held privy by virtue of

its sensitivity or potential competitive implications; for the most part, information is a shared asset. As information is shared, skills and competencies are no longer found resident only in particular parts of the business, such that problems are viewed only from the perspective of one discipline or function. This does not mean that specialists have no place in the networked organization. What it means is that there are certain kinds of knowledge that are needed firm-wide and all must have access. A second-order effect is that as information is more widely available, certain parts of the firm (or network) lose power since they no longer control information.

Enterprise-Wide Thinking

It stands to reason that there must be alignment between the enterprise view of the firm and the manner in which information is shared, the degree of participative decision making, and how people are compensated. Systems and processes should support the effort as well. Rewards should be performance based and should have both an enterprise and network component. Training and the acquisition of new skills should be rewarded and cross-functional experiences and horizontal exposure encouraged. The entire system must be in synch such that each part is supportive of the other. One cannot talk of enterprise-wide thinking and have reward structures that encourage a silo mentality. Yet, it is not uncommon to find that goals across functional units do not fully support each other. We have witnessed instances where economic value-added (EVA) processes have steered managers to support their own business unit to the detriment of the overall enterprise.

Over the years some headway has been made. Research has focused on the degree of cooperation and the sources of conflict across functional areas as firms engage in new product development (e.g., Cooper 1975, 1988; Souder 1981). In addition, others have alluded to the natural tensions that pervade the interaction between marketing, manufacturing, and other functional areas (Reukert and Walker 1987). When Shapiro and his colleagues (1992) stapled themselves to an order they highlighted the need for enterprise-wide thinking, and brought attention to the problems that arise when a silo mentality exists.

AREAS OF RESEARCH FOR THE FUTURE

Refining and Revalidating Questions from the Past Twenty Years

As companies learn to cooperate more and engage in activities that shift the level of analysis from the stand-alone firm to the network or supply chain, the focus of business-to-business marketing must shift as well. Customers now interact with constellations of companies, each of whom brings some portion of the total value desired by the customer. For instance, Sikorsky is in the process of building a new generation helicopter with five other partners, each of whom manufactures and then ships separate modules to be assembled by Sikorsky in Connecticut. In general, this example captures the essence of the new competition. The single firm is no longer the relevant level of analysis for Sikorsky and its partners now compete against Boeing and Bell in the United States and a newly formed alliance in Europe (i.e., Daimler's aerospace company, DASA, and the French helicopter producer, Aerospatiale) plus a handful of other helicopter producers located in Italy, Britain, and Russia. Moreover, the delivery, warranties, and service/maintenance must be performed seamlessly as though there were just a single company interacting with the customer base.

Despite the new competition and the demands it places on business-to-business researchers, we still have not reached closure on a number of research topics. There are a number of basic questions that still must be examined to provide further insight into the more fundamental aspects of business-to-business marketing. A set of representative topics follows. Note that in the past twenty years we have, in many instances, only uncovered the tip of the research iceberg.

- How can we better understand the decision processes of complex organizations? How can business-to-business marketers affect the process? It should be recognized that the decision-making process might entail multiple firms as well. OBB can become a cross-boundary phenomenon and we do not have well-developed tools or techniques to address this reality.
- Also, how can marketers develop and implement marketing-mix strategies that combine functional units to bring a total array of value-adding activities to the marketplace? Again, we have tra-

ditionally examined processes inside the single firm. We are not fully prepared to shift our level of analysis to the network.

- What methods, techniques, and processes can improve our ability to design and implement more efficient and effective models of segmentation? The work by Wind and Thomas (1980, 1994) and others who attempted early on to capture the state-of-the-art is ready for an update and a revalidation. The current mantra is “build relationships, get intimate with your customer.” Better and more precise models of segmentation drive resource allocation decisions. These decisions are a first step in determining segment profitability and, then hopefully, customer profitability. We should bring insight to the discussion around where an additional marketing dollar should be spent for optimal utilization.
- Within the single firm, how are DMU decisions made and do we accurately reflect the trade-offs, power attempts, political infighting, and other subtle attempts to influence the final procurement decision? Given the multiperson nature of business-to-business decision making, additional work is needed to improve our ability to capture the interplay among different functional managers as each vies to control critical input to the buying process. I have always been less than satisfied with the aggregation of individual scores to reflect buying center measures. For instance, what does consensus and the lack of consensus among respondents mean?
- As companies attempt to become more market focused, business-to-business marketers should begin to benchmark processes and begin to document exemplars (i.e., best in class) from which other firms can learn (see, for example, Day 1999). We are often unable to answer questions related to best-in-class performance.
- Implementation is where the “rubber meets the road.” We need to engage in research that assists business-to-business marketers to better integrate activities of the different functions that must be coordinated to satisfy customers’ requirements.
- Managing and coordinating across functional units is complicated by the fact that many businesses compete on a global basis. How do business-to-business marketers coordinate across the globe and across functions? Silo thinking must be removed from the lexicon of organizations that compete in the twenty-

first century. Very little of the business-to-business research to date deals with these issues and even less research attempts to deal at a global level.

- Over the years, the mix of GE's businesses reveals that it has become more a service company than a manufacturing company. So, too, have we witnessed a similar shift in business-to-business marketing on two levels. First, services now comprise a large part of business-to-business activity. Second, a growing proportion of value-added attributes are related to intangible and ancillary services such as information and technical support, financing, logistical support, and the like. Business-to-business marketers should devote energy to understanding better the role of service as part of the overall product offering.

These questions/issues are reflective of the fact that business-to-business marketers still have not addressed fully all the issues that have occupied a fair amount of the work over the past twenty years. To advance the discipline we need to replicate studies and build a set of measures that are part of a programmatic research program. As Reid and Plank suggest, the field would benefit greatly from methodological improvements and validation of measures. The list presented here merely adds credence to many of the points made by the authors in their review.

Questions for the New Millennium

In light of the new competition, business-to-business marketers must engage in research that reflects the observation that single firms often must partner to bring value to the marketplace. As companies outsource functions and begin to focus on core competencies, there are a number of activities that must be performed in the delivery of value but lie outside the skill set or competencies of the single firm. When Boeing built the 777, it engaged in concurrent engineering with key suppliers to design and build the first plane in history to go from computer screen to first flying copy. Recall the 777 earned over-water certification before it flew for the first time. While this might be a special example, it does reflect that firms do partner to bring value to the marketplace and that the nature of competition must capture the extended enterprise. The ability to raise the level of analysis from the single function to the extended enterprise becomes critical.

Based on this example, there are a number of questions that warrant examination by the business-to-business marketer:

- How do firms cooperate to deliver value, share resources, and also temper the natural tendency to act in their own self-interest? Coordinating across functions within the firm is difficult enough; coordinating across organizational boundaries is more complicated. How does a firm coordinate across boundaries to present a single face to the customer and deliver seamless service?
- In a channels context, one appreciates the problems in delivering a full set of value-added services. That is, some components of value are resident in the product produced by the manufacturer and some are contributed by the channel. If we now shift to an extended enterprise that comprises the entire value chain, the challenge is even more daunting. How do business-to-business marketers provide insight to determine which partners contribute to the value equation? And, who benefits from the value produced, in what proportion? Also, how is the entire value chain examined to determine relative competitive advantage? What methods and approaches become relevant? That is, now the selling center extends across organizational boundaries; some firms are invisible to the buyer while others are the primary contact. For instance, Dell's on-site service and repair is not provided by Dell directly; it is furnished by an IBM, TRW, or Xerox repair person. FedEx and UPS have become the virtual logistics carrier for many Internet marketers who provide the seamless and timely delivery for their Internet partner.
- For the buying organization, the study of OBB might now extend to a constellation of firms that cooperate in the procurement and manufacturing/assembly of products (or services). We are now forced to examine buying centers that extend across functions within firms and across firms. How do business-to-business marketers reflect the complex interplay of cross-functional and interfirm decision-making processes? Such a task raises the level of complexity associated with an examination of shared decision making to a new height. What can the business-to-business marketer learn from those who do work in the areas of networks and other methods that account for a large number of actors across different organizations who play a role in key decisions?

- The role of the coordinating firm, or systems integrator,² becomes more important. In one of its major divisions Boeing's cost of goods sold exceeds 75 percent of the value of the final product! In a number of instances one firm is responsible for organizing and coordinating the efforts of others who combine skills/competences and resources to either buy or sell to other trading partners. What is the role of the systems integrator? What are the skills needed by these firms that serve as the contact point for others to rally around? Are the systems integrators the new channel captains? There is an Internet term, *infomediary*, that reflects a similar notion. Here, a company, like FreeMarkets, serves as an intermediary between the buyer and a number of prequalified sellers to conduct an auction for the right to furnish parts and components. GE, for instance, links suppliers through a similar process and will buy \$1 billion in 1999. Relationship management takes on a new meaning with so many partners on both the buying and selling side.
- While such a process lowers total costs of procurement 5 to 50 percent for GE, there are other issues to consider. Reid and Plank talk about the importance of the Internet and the need for business-to-business marketers to understand more about the massive changes it has brought to the process of business-to-business marketing. To be sure, the successes attributed to Cisco Systems and Dell are worthy of investigation and business-to-business marketers have much to learn. However, there is a darker side and we have not yet addressed whether the Internet commoditized relationships between buyers and sellers to the point that work done by Jackson (1985) and Landeros and Blenkhorn (1988) becomes less relevant. What are the implications of the Internet and do we fully understand the pros and cons of its use? We argued that the relevant level of analysis has shifted from the firm to the extended enterprise. Given that a number of firms combine to serve the marketplace, how are notions of customer loyalty measured? Who is the beneficiary of such loyalty? Does the individual firm or does the extended enterprise benefit? What does this mean, and does the question of who owns the customer take on new meaning?

The position taken here is that the role of the business-to-business marketer has now grown from managing and/or coordinating marketing activities with the related functional units within the firm that together deliver value to managing a complex interaction of business units and separate firms that taken together comprise the extended enterprise. It is this entity that, in many instances, brings value to the marketplace. Business-to-business scholars can provide invaluable insight and knowledge if they can assist managers to understand better the competences needed to coordinate and organize these separate firms to bring value to the marketplace. We are witnessing a changing paradigm where the marketing function has been supplanted by the cross-disciplinary team that is, in many instances, supplanted by the interfirm network. This network could be a supply chain, a channel of distribution, a group of companies that share a community of interest around a technology or a standard. In any case, the facile business-to-business researcher should be able to deal at several levels of analysis and should appreciate the changing competitive landscape whereby the \$1 trillion firm, albeit virtual, is more a reality than a myth.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The objective of this commentary has been to stimulate thinking and to help us reflect on the future of business-to-business marketing research. Reid and Plank provided a jumping-off point for this discussion and enabled me to build on their review of the past twenty years in business-to-business research. I believe that they have cast too wide a net to be fully useful in capturing central themes that will drive the research forward. I have probably cast too narrow a net and have limited my remarks to research topics that reflect the reality of the new competition. As with all debate, the answer lies somewhere between these two positions. Nonetheless, there are fundamental issues that must still be resolved if business marketing academic researchers are to make relevant and rigorous contributions to both theory and practice.

It is certain, however, that research in business-to-business marketing will need to be more strategic in its focus and move away from the set of tactical concerns that appear to exemplify many of the articles mentioned in the review. In addition, our research will need to become more managerially useful as we have often trailed practice. Our guidance to the practitioner has been minimal at best and I would conjecture that many business people do not read our journals. Finally, we will have to exhibit greater rigor and methodological sophistication in the way we frame our empirical studies, the manner in which we collect our data, and the tools and techniques we use to test our models. While I caution against throwing the baby out with the bathwater, we must also attempt to push the traditional research barriers and continue to study at the “fuzzy” nexus of disciplines, organizational boundaries, and levels of analysis.

Business markets are complex, subject to high degrees of uncertainty, and are global in scope. Our work must mirror the reality we face. We must explore problems, design studies, and improve the reliability/validity of our measures so that we can build theory and contribute to practice in a meaningful way. We cannot lament the problems associated with gaining access to large corporations or the expense associated with data collection. More important, we can ill afford to hide behind a narrow definition of our field of marketing and ignore the multidisciplinary, cross-functional, interfirm nature of the problems we face. Business problems are not easily compartmentalized and we must attempt to align our research with the scope of the problems we encounter.

One response would be the use of cross-disciplinary teams. The ability to attack messy problems with a variety of tools encourages the convergence of different perspectives and hopefully a triangulation of methods. The outcome is that partnerships among academics can go a long way to improve the quality of work done. My main concern is that our work rise above the parochial view of a marketing department that devalues work that is not cast in the traditional mold of business-to-business marketing-related research. This commentary has encouraged work that broadens the definition of legitimate business-to-business research. We have offered a view of business-to-business theory and practice that goes way beyond the boundaries of the firm and reflects the rigorous demands of the extended enterprise as a response to the new competition.

NOTES

1. SeaLand had been sold to the parent company of A.P. Moller.
2. The term is used to connote the efforts of one firm to organize, coordinate, and integrate the efforts and capabilities of others to deliver value. The term is less intended to reflect the traditional view of a "general contractor" since the context is less transactional and more one of the extended enterprise.

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Commentary: Thoughts on the Future of Business Marketing

David T. Wilson

INTRODUCTION: THE PAST

David Reid and Richard Plank have performed yeomen service to the business marketing profession in reviewing and summarizing twenty years of literature. Nevertheless, when one covers so much material I am sure that each reader will find some fault with the review, as a favorite paper may be left out of the review or the organization is not as the reader would have done. Our minor quibbles with the review do not change the fact that Reid and Plank (RP) have assembled a starting point for anyone interested in pursuing traditional research in business marketing. The RP review describes how we have emerged as a discipline over the years. The literature summarized in the Webster and Wind book (1973) and Webster's review (1978) would have been a good predictor of the future research done in the current review time period of 1978 to 1998. The main changes in the research studies reflect our methodology becoming more sophisticated and our theories more elegant. We continued with business as usual over the life of the RP review. They have performed a major service to business marketing in organizing our historic literature. However, a scholarly review of the 1998 to 2018 period will likely find that the literature in business marketing will not represent a continuation of the literature of the RP review. We are entering a period in which business-to-business marketers in industry and in academics will be challenged to justify our contributions to our respective organizations. The digital marketplace will push all of us to redesign our research programs. The rapid transition of the business-to-business from a business as usual to digital net driven will change how firms interact. *Business Week* (January 17, 2000) notes, "Total sales using B2B e-commerce have exploded from almost zero a few years ago to

\$114 billion today according to Goldman Sachs & Co. And Deloitte Consulting LLC estimates that 91 percent of U.S. businesses will do their purchasing on the net by the end of next year. Some 31% do so now.” The Boston Consulting Group, Inc., estimates that e-business could increase manufacturing productivity by 9 percent in the next five years. Other estimates on the reduction of costs of doing business range from 2 percent on coal to 39 percent in electronic components (*Business Week*, January 17, 2000). The economics of e-business are pushing firms to adopt the paradigm. E-business will change our research agenda.

Business marketing is a big umbrella under which scholars representing multiple research areas are sheltered. We have narrower interests than just “business marketing.” When we declare our interests for the American Marketing Association Special Interest Groups (SIGs) most of us likely have trouble keeping to three groups. We each have loyalties to several business research areas. The wide range of topics covered in the review makes my point. There are twenty-seven topic areas plus a catchall “other” area. The largest topic, organizational behavior, represents only 12.9 percent of the papers in the review. Most of our work has been highly focussed on the narrower topics of the multiple fields that together make up business marketing. As we move to the twenty-first century business marketing will meet its greatest challenge. Corporations are redefining their business models in response to the threats or the opportunities inherent in dealing with Web-based competition. Traditional business marketing approaches will not fit into the new digital model. Both corporate business marketers and academic business scholars need to shift to a digital perspective.

Most of our research has tended to be more micro in its focus. I will argue that the changes and challenges of a digital world require us to become more strategic in our research perspectives if we are to be relevant in the future. First we examine a present with which we are all familiar. Next we briefly look at the transition we are all facing. Then we look to the future, which keeps changing at a rapid rate, with the objective of raising some research and teaching challenges we all face.

THE PRESENT

Publishing the review at this time is fortuitous as it raises the past to our collective consciousness and challenges us to meet the future. I

believe that the whole profession of business marketing is being challenged to prove its value to the firm. The rest of this brief commentary is devoted to making the case that we need to rethink business marketing and its role in the firm. My basic premise is that digital marketing in the guise of e-business, electronic data interchange (EDI), Internets, Extranets, Intranets, and electronic networks is going to fundamentally change how we do business-to-business marketing. The market may split into two main methods of doing business. The online auction will be one method of doing business. Both Ford and General Motors are exploring online bidding as a means of reducing their costs of basic materials. On November 2, 1999, the Ford Motor Company announced a joint venture with Oracle Corporation to develop AutoXchange, an automotive e-business integrated supply chain business that will facilitate Ford's \$80 billion in annual purchases from its more than 30,000 possible suppliers. The vision is to extend the concept to the purchases of Ford's \$300 billion supply chain. The concept is that the firm bundles all of its purchasing of basic materials such as steel and enhances the volume by having their suppliers add their steel needs to the amount put out to bid. Ford and Oracle will create the first online automotive network. It will be the world's largest business-to-business electronic network. Ford expects large reductions in the cost of materials and increased operating efficiencies through an Internet supply chain. The ultimate vision is to link the customer to this value chain and reduce Ford's time to market and move the business to building automobiles that have been sold before they are assembled. The goal may be a Dell Computer direct business model. One can imagine a future where the consumer buys a car online before it is built and the value-creating network is informed of the parts needed for delivery to the assembly plant. The cost structure will be quite different from the current model of buying a car from the dealer's inventory.

The press release stated:

The AutoXchange will allow Ford and its suppliers to capture savings through more strategic sourcing of vehicle components, and eventually automate the entire purchasing process. Taking advantage of the inherent cost savings associated with Internet-based transactions, the new model initially will promote procurement efficiencies and allow Ford's purchasing profession-

als to focus on product quality, supplier competitiveness and performance, and time to market. (Ford Motor Company 1999)

Online bidding will work for supplies that do not need a great deal of technical support on-site or require close working relationships between buyer and supplier. If the core product is standardized it will be easier to use this bidding model. If there is variance between the suppliers in their technical skills and ability to be a good partner, then the model may be more difficult to implement. Nevertheless, Ford seems to be envisioning both a bidding model and creating a massive value-creating network reaching to the final buyer of automobiles.

The other method is the formation of value-creating networks that link firms together to produce a product or service. The networks go by many names: value chains, supply chains, market chains, and value-creating networks. Again, the network can be characterized as a set of alliances or relationships that link the capabilities of firms together such that higher value is created than if the firms are linked in a traditional market relationship. Underlying this alliance network is an electronic network that manages information and communication between the network partners.

The driver of the network method is value creation at the consumer level. Value is created by linking the key firms in the network in deep relationships that help reduce duplication of activities, improve communications, improve designs, and reduce time to market. Dell Computer is an excellent example of a value-creating network as it links their supply network tightly to the customer network through the network. Dell has moved beyond assembling computers to being a value-creating partner to their key accounts. For example, it costs about \$300 to load the average computer with software once it is received by the purchaser. Dell at the factory will load and configure the machine with the buyer's software and any other software needed for \$30. This value-added service expands the value Dell can provide to the customer.

Another form of the value-creating network is the market maker. Chemdex describes itself: "[A]s a net market maker, Chemdex unites the life sciences *enterprises*, *researchers* and *suppliers* to streamline business processes, enhance productivity and reduce costs" (Chemdex Web site 1999). Chemdex claims to have the world's largest online marketplace of lab supplies. They organize the market by linking suppliers, buyers, and enterprises to improve business processes, en-

hance productivity, and reduce costs. Chemdex redefines the traditional value chain by providing the business customer a one-stop-shopping experience.

In the electronic bidding model, the market maker model, and the value creating network the role of marketing is diminished or disappears. It was predicted in a special supplement of *The Wall Street Journal* (1998) that by 2007 100 percent of business-to-business transactions will be done over the Web. You can set your own level of Web penetration and timing, but the basic fact is that we marketers are not as important in these three main paradigms as we are now in the traditional paradigm. A marketer is an unnecessary cost in a bidding model. The marketing tasks of need development and understanding remain in the network model but are likely done by others in the relationship model. The engineers and product planners working in the partner firms will be the generator of customer needs and they will address these needs in their day-to-day interaction with the partner's staff. One of the benefits of Web-based sales is the total costs of sales are reduced. As sales increase the main costs are scaling up the site to handle the traffic. Dell has grown their Web-based sales from \$1 million a day to over \$30 million a day. The costs are scaling the site versus hiring and training expensive telephone salespeople. Relationship management will be performed by "salespeople" who may not sell in the traditional sense but will present to manage the relationship and to provide value to the partner.

Figure 1 depicts how value can be created through product value and/or through process value creation. Process value creation is delivered when the partners work together to reduce transaction costs or product or service development costs. Some products or services add significant value to the buyer's product and there may be a variance in the ability of the suppliers to deliver the value. Bidding models will likely be used when process value creation is not a significant factor. In the high product value situation the low bidder may not get the bid if there is variance in the level of product value delivered by individual suppliers. In the high/high case it is likely that relationships will develop to exploit the process value opportunity. The battle of the paradigms, the bidding model versus relationship model, will be fought as buyers will try to use bidding models to lower product costs. The marketer's challenge is to find ways to deliver process value within the value-creating network.

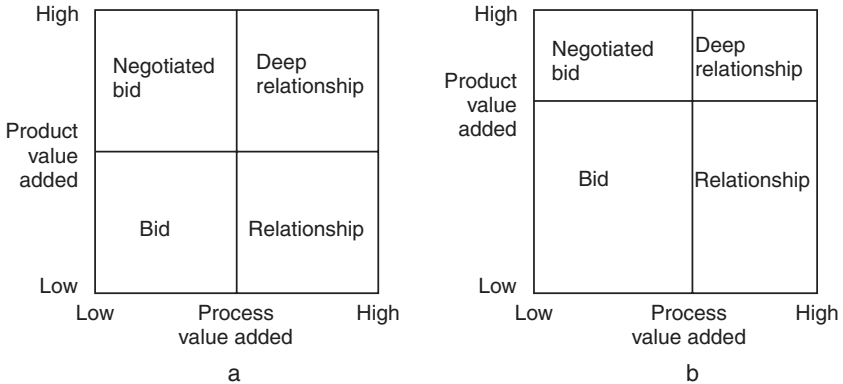


FIGURE 1. Relationship Between Product and Process Value

If buyers are able to push the boundaries as in Figure 1b then marketing will shrink in importance as salespeople are not needed in a bidding model. Marketing will shrink in its influence within the firm. We may still be charged with need development and segmentation issues. The sad truth is that today in many firms marketing does not always contribute to needs analysis and new product development. If we do not become familiar with designing, gathering, and analyzing information from the Web we will become less relevant to developing the business design.

There will be business-to-business firms that will operate in the traditional way but they are likely to be smaller firms filling niche needs. Marketing is usually not strong in the smaller firms, as the sales function tends to drive the business. The sad fact is that in many business-to-business firms marketing is secondary to technology and product development in driving the firm in the marketplace. There are many outstanding marketers in business marketing, but for the majority of the firms the marketing group members have emerged from technical or sales backgrounds with little formal training. They are intelligent people who learn on the job. The Institute for the Study of Business Markets has seen an increase in the number of firms seeking to lift the level of their business marketing skills.

Given the possibility of major movement into digital business, what should be marketing's role in this dramatic change? Obviously, we cannot continue with business as usual as many marketing activi-

ties will disappear. Our communication programs will need to be revamped. Will we need as many salespeople? Our communication program will likely be a blend of Web-based communications supported through traditional media. New product development will become more of a joint effort with the customer. In the deep relationships of JIT II the supplier is a partner in the product development process from the very start of the process. The result is a faster process and usually a lower-cost product, as the supplier can shape the design for easy manufacturing, thereby lowering costs. We need to do research to understand how the role of business marketing changes as we move to a digital model.

TRANSITIONS

Redesigning the business model of the firm from a bricks-and-mortar business design to a net-based business design is the challenge of every business-to-business firm. The marketing group will be marginalized in the transition if they do not lead the transition. Marketing should take the lead in the creative destruction of the firm. The creative destruction of the firm means we figuratively tear down the bricks and mortar of the current firm and reconstruct the firm as a digital firm. Marketers are well placed as firms' windows to the world to drive the changes needed to be a competitor over the next twenty years.

We are venturing into a rapidly changing environment but one where the marketing basics still apply. E-business is still about segmentation, needs generation, value creation to meet the needs, and the delivery of the promise that we make to the customer. Marketers should become the advocates for understanding and creating customer value. We need to broaden our view to become the strategic experts on value-creating networks and relationships. The logistics group has made the supply chain their domain. The movement of goods is an essential part of any value-creating network. The understanding of the firm's position on the value chain and its ability to change that position needs to become the domain of marketing.

Leading the redesign of the firm into a digital business is marketing's new role in the firm. The number one question in business today is, "How do you move a big successful traditional business into a digital business?" Creating an answer to this question is urgent as the

Internet breaks down the traditional barriers to entry. Having a strong brand, channel preeminence, market presence with a strong sales organization, and cash flow was usually enough to keep potential competitors from your markets. In a digital world Web-based firms have established significant positions. A critical step seems to be aligning the firm with an e-sophisticated partner. For example, General Motors has partnered with America Online to sell cars on the net. The Ford Motor Company has partnered with Yahoo to personalize online services for Ford vehicle owners. Ford will create a joint venture with Oracle Corporation to link 30,000 suppliers to Ford's purchasing system (*e-commercetimes*, January 11, 2000).

Figure 2 describes the basic infrastructure of the Internet. A host of "enabler" companies make the software, hardware, tools, services, and transaction platform that operates the e-business system. The first step is attracting customers to your e-business site. The content generation, management, and delivery can be outsourced to specialist firms. The task is to assemble, aggregate, and normalize product information from supplier databases and present it in a customized form to the customer. The Internet allows the marketer to customize

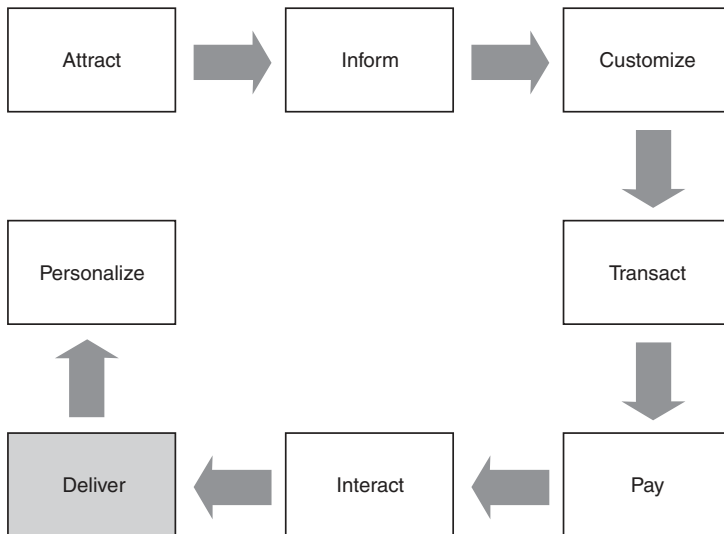


FIGURE 2. The Activities Behind E-Business (Source: Adapted from Sawhney and Davis, 2000.)

the offering to each customer. An intelligent agent can elicit information from the customer that is passed on to special software called configuration engines which, using rules and digital logic, can present options to the customer that can be built and delivered.

A transaction platform facilitates the buyer and seller doing business together. Multiple sophisticated platforms cover a wide range of transactions, from catalogs, auctions, exchanges, bidding, and barter. Paying for the goods is easy if the customer is well-known and a current customer, as it will be business as usual. A number of credit underwriting engines will allow transactions with firms with which the seller has not previously transacted business. The interact step is the follow-on services that customers need ranging from order status updates and live online customer service to problem solving.

Order fulfillment can be done using the current system or through outsourcing to a supply chain management system. Personalization is created through capturing information on the needs and interests of the customer each time that customer visits the Web site. Data warehouses can be mined for patterns of purchase behavior. Permission marketing can be used with the customer's permission to gather data that will fine-tune the site to the customer's needs.

Building an e-business system requires time, commitment, and partners who become part of your value-creating network.

THE FUTURE

I have focused on the changes that are happening in business-to-business marketing at the firm level because it should shape our academic research agenda. Addressing interesting and important problems is an important goal for a research program. There are some wonderful opportunities to do exciting and challenging research. Most firms are learning by doing as they move toward a digital business design. Marketers need to be a part of the business design team to ensure that the Web solution addresses the target segment's needs.

Research in alliance management will contribute to our understanding of how to build effective alliances. It is estimated that about 60 percent of alliances just stagger along, not reaching their full ability to contribute value to the partners (*Business Week* 1999). Alliances are the fiber that weaves value-creating networks together.

How to map value chains and a firm's position within the chain is another important research topic. Where and how is value created and how does value move through the chain or network to the customer? There is little research done in marketing on value chains. E-business changes the value chain as market makers insert themselves between the buyer and seller. The buyer gains as more firms bid on its business, pushing prices lower. The marketer's direct contact with the buyer is weakened as the market maker has the direct contact with the buyer. Lowering the price to the buyer creates value. Anderson and Narus (1999) have organized their book on business marketing around value and its influence in business marketing. Their book is an important step forward as it focuses on value creation, one of the enduring core concepts of business marketing. Business marketers are about the recognition and creation of value for business customers and eventually consumers as we are in a derived demand market.

Going toward a net business design that is radical may be impossible in traditional firms due to human and organizational barriers to change. It may be necessary to create a new business that challenges the traditional business and its competitors. Only a strong leader at the top of the firm can drive the change of the magnitude needed to redesign the firm. Jack Welch, CEO of General Electric, is committed to making GE into a digital business and is personally pushing the changes. The change teams work on thirty-day reporting deadlines on each project. Speed is essential, as Internet time is not the same as the traditional business time. Researchers must shift their time perceptions to match Internet time.

Those firms which sell through channels must face the channel challenge. The channel challenge is best illustrated by comparing the Dell direct model against the Compaq business model (Figure 3). Dell sells the product before it builds it, thereby reducing inventory and improving cash flow. Having only eight days of inventory, Dell can take a new technology to market faster than its competitors, who may have seventy to eighty days of inventory in the channel. The channel network that Compaq built over the years was an important competitive strength until Dell's direct design changed the economics of the competing business models. A strength may become a handicap when a digital competitor attacks the market.

Changing to a direct model is difficult for any firm, as one needs the current channel partners during the change but the partners resent

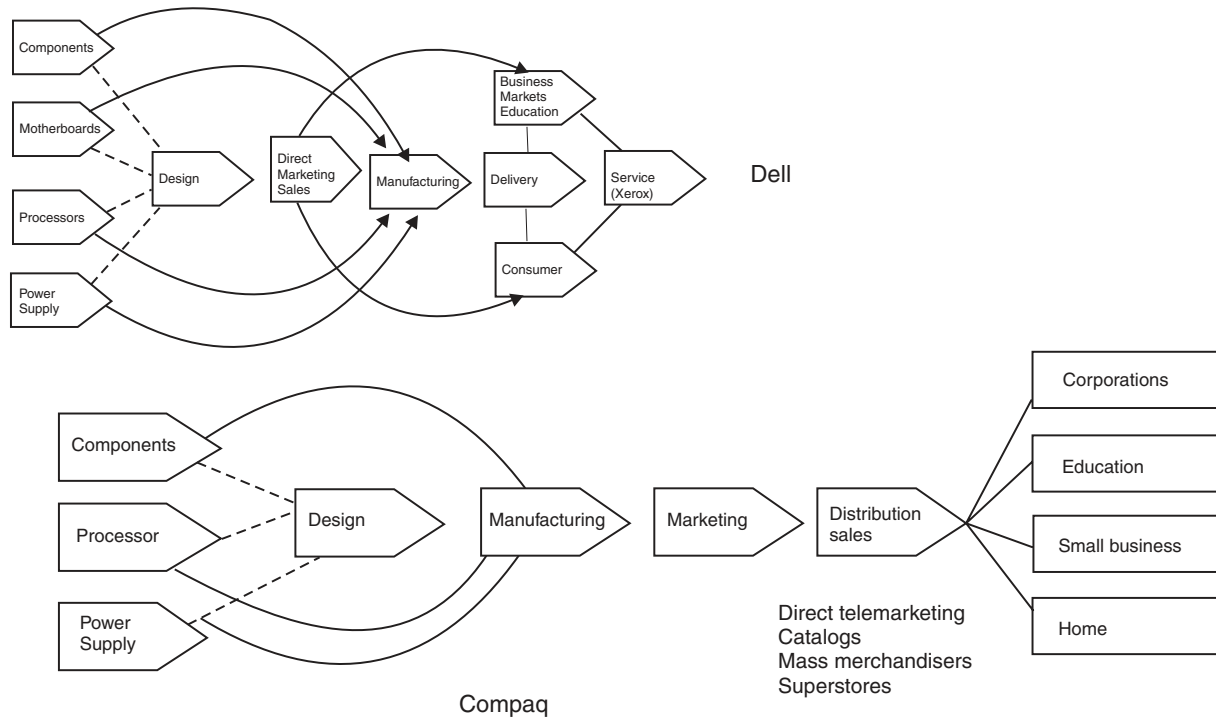


FIGURE 3. Building Toward Enacted Value Chain: Dell Computer and Compaq Computer

the direct competition and put pressure on the firm not to go direct. This dilemma is an interesting and important research topic. We can study this problem at multiple levels but need to take a strategic perspective as it takes us into business design.

Traditional channel systems are facing Web-based competitors who sell direct. The solution is for the traditional channel to become Web-based. However, this may be difficult as a Web-based firm does not have the talent, experience, and culture and would not likely hire the type of person who would join a Web start-up. Alliant Food-service, Inc., is a \$6 billion-plus distributor of food and supplies to restaurants, hotels, hospitals, and other institutions. They were being challenged by a Web-based start-up that was positioned between the customer and the distributor. Alliant saw this firm as a threat that over time could offer restaurants the ability to compare competing distributor prices over the Web, thereby commoditizing (disintermediating) the entire channel. After study by a team of consultants Alliant decided to spin out a new company that would be essentially independent of Alliant. The new firm, called Thesauce.com, would offer the customers a choice of distributors complete with price lists from which to buy food and supplies. A chat room will let customers rate suppliers and their products. Advertising space would be sold to food suppliers. To keep Thesauce.com arm's length from Alliant and reduce conflicts of interest, Thesauce.com was funded outside of Alliant. This was necessary to ensure the other distributors that they will be treated fairly by Thesauce.com. This example illustrates the dramatic changes that are taking place in the channel domain. Sometimes you may have to attack your own business to survive.

John Sviokla states, "the Internet is rapidly changing technology: We're in the early color-TV days, and most managers are still radio listeners" (Hammonds 2000). The problem is that many managers in business marketing are not Internet ready, but the managers who are ready are driving the rate of change. Not only are businesses struggling with making the change to a digital world, we as scholars and teachers are facing the same challenges. We need to learn how to do research in this new marketspace. What problems are important and interesting is your choice, but if we as business marketers do not stake out a domain we may be constrained by our colleagues in strategy who may claim the big issues as their domain. The logistics group has made the supply chain their domain. Marketers need to make the

value chain or value-creating network our domain. It involves the study of value creation across the network and the links between core capabilities and value creation. Alliances, relationships, and partnerships are the building blocks of value chains or value-creating networks. The study of value-creating networks fits our domain as we have historically studied channel systems.

We need to drive the new digital business model into our curriculum. Most of our schools have an e-commerce or e-business course in which we address digital marketing issues. This approach is a patch that does not fully address the need to expose all of our students to digital business. E-business courses are limited to a small proportion of our total student population, which implies that e-business is different from business. We need to address, where appropriate, digital business issues in every course that we teach. We have begun introducing e-business concepts into our core courses and individual faculty are starting to raise these issues in their classes. Business marketers need to be on the forefront in introducing e-business issues into the curriculum.

We need to consider how our research can reflect the important and interesting challenges of e-business. As the new digital-based business models become more common, to what extent will other business areas subsume business marketing activities? For example, in a deep relationship the product planners who work for the supplier are located in the buyer's plant and in their day-to-day activities perform many salesperson functions. Another example is Web-based buying replaces salespeople. As more firms move to a direct model channel structures will change. I feel quite comfortable in predicting the sales force, channel strategies, and communication programs will be dramatically changed over the next few years. We need to take the lead in studying these changes.

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Sensemaking About Business-to-Business Strategies and Relationships: A Commentary on Reid and Plank's Review

Arch G. Woodside

Retrospection is one of the properties of sensemaking. Retrospection happens implicitly, as unintended thinking, or explicitly, in the form of active thinking. Focusing active thinking to retrospect about what we really know and do not know about business-to-business marketing helps to identify small, subtle features and relationships that can have surprisingly large effects (as noted by Weick 1995, p. 52, and found by Hall and Menzies 1983, and Hall 1984, 1999). Reid and Plank's review serves well in forcing active thinking about what we really know and do not know about business-to-business strategies and relationships. While not deep, their coverage of relevant literature from 1978 through 1997 is broad and useful for developing a sensemaking perspective.

This commentary focuses on two issues. First, what are the main contributions of Reid and Plank's review? Second, what needs more emphasis in the review or is left out of the review that needs our attention?

THE MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS OF REID AND PLANK'S REVIEW

Reid and Plank's (hereafter R&P) review is valuable reading particularly for (1) identifying and indexing twenty years on literature on business-to-business marketing and (2) describing research shortages and surpluses in business-to-business marketing topics. Agreeing with Schank's (1990) proposal that data finding, data manipulation,

and comprehension are three principal dimensions of intelligence, R&P's review helps to improve our search techniques and ability to label and mentally index while reading business-to-business marketing scientific reports. Regarding finding data stored in our memories, Schank (1990, p. 224) advocates, "Higher intelligence depends upon complex perception and labeling." R&P's review helps to increase the reader's ability to see the complexity of the business-to-business marketing literature and helps the reader label, store, and retrieve pieces of this literature in a workbench manner. These contributions serve us well for reaching Weick's 1979 (p. 261) recommendation on how to achieve deep understanding: "Complicate yourself! . . . The importance of complication is difficult to overemphasize."

Mostly the R&P review answers the questions of where to look and what you should expect to find in the scientific business-to-business marketing literature. Because so many business-to-business marketing information seekers are new to the field and have little knowledge of what is available, answering such questions is a worthwhile contribution.

R&P's choice of labels in Table 5 is appropriate for implying the need to move away from the overreliance on business-to-business marketing surpluses, such as "static [one-shot] cross-sectional research" using mail survey responses. This nondynamic research design is the dominant logic applied in scientific business-to-business marketing research. A substantial majority of scientific business-to-business marketing empirical studies include the following characteristics:

- A positivistic theoretical view of how fifteen to forty-five unobservable constructs perceived to be relevant in business-to-business marketing relate together
- Some amount of pretesting and revision of a questionnaire containing 100-plus, individual, closed-ended rating questions to measure fifteen to forty-five unobservable constructs
- An eight- to fourteen-page, mainly closed-ended questionnaire
- Mailed to one executive per firm in a sample of 500 to 2,000 organizations
- Achieving a response rate of less than 30 percent following a second mailing of the questionnaire to nonrespondents of the first mailing

- Extensive multivariate data analysis of responses
- A path analysis or structural equation model testing the hypothesized proposed theoretical view

This dominant logic includes instructions in the questionnaire to answer the questions as they relate to the respondent's firm or to a successful relationship regarding the respondent's firm with a customer firm or a supplier firm. The collection of data from both buyers and sellers participating in the same relationship or multiple parties participating in multiple-interacting relationships is rare.

This rarity of collecting data from more than one side of a two-sided or multiple-sided relationship across several time periods is disappointing—given that academic conferences on relationship marketing are held annually in North America and Europe. Yet, some exceptions can be examined, for example, von Hippel's (1986) case studies on lead users of novel industrial and medical products in the United States, and Biemans (1989, 1991) network research on innovating and adopting new medical equipment in the Netherlands.

How much knowledge, understanding, and insight have we achieved following the more than thirty years of applying the dominant research approach in business-to-business marketing? Given that the initial two generalized observations concluding R&P's review call for more programmatic research on longitudinal business-to-business marketing processes, the implied answer to the question is not enough to justify the continuing use of one-sided, one-shot, closed-ended mail surveys.

The good news is that several early empirical studies are available that illustrate research methods useful for longitudinal research of business-to-business marketing processes. These studies all suggest that particular streams of behaviors observed in business-to-business marketing processes depend on several contingencies—such as the presence or absence of third parties in the marketing adoption of new medical equipment (see Biemans 1989). Howard and his associates pioneered applications of “decision systems analysis” (DSA) of industrial marketing processes (e.g., see Capon and Hulbert 1975; Howard and Morgenroth 1968; Hulbert, Farley, and Howard 1972; Howard, Hulbert, and Farley 1975). DSA represents one category of mapping implemented strategies (see Huff 1990).

Additional business-to-business marketing process research includes Montgomery's (1975) "gatekeeping analysis" in examining a buying committee's adoptions and rejections of 124 products in a business-to-business marketing setting. Morgenroth's (1964) binary flow charting of pricing decisions is a classic contribution in the business-to-business marketing literature. Morgenroth (1964) and Howard and Morgenroth (1968) develop an artificial intelligence (AI) system of how managers think, decide, and act across two levels of distribution in pricing a commodity product and under dynamic pricing decisions of larger and smaller competitors. Such process research provides insights into business-to-business marketing subtleties, nuances, outcomes, and revisions in the decisions and behaviors that make up business-to-business relationships.

Because of its focus on processes and its use of a triangulation of research methods (i.e., direct observation, document analysis, and multiple face-to-face interviews with several persons at several organizational levels), Pettigrew's (1975) study of an "industrial purchasing decision as a political process" is a seminal contribution to the subtleties and nuances occurring often in business-to-business marketing. More recently, Woodside (1996) describes the rationales and decision/behavior processes involved in rejecting superior new technologies by manufacturers and their business customers (cf. Christensen 1997).

Several possible reasons may occur in concert to limit the applications of process research in business-to-business marketing. First, the study of business-to-business marketing issues may be less glamorous and have less appeal for most doctoral students compared to consumer marketing studies. Second, most marketing doctoral students may perceive a requirement to demonstrate the use of multivariate analysis methods in their dissertations—methods receiving more attention in the training of these students than ethnographic and AI simulation methods. Third, organizational structures at most research and teaching universities in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia are conducive to pole-length, mail survey studies, but not to ethnographic paradigms of direct research—that is, being "in the field" using triangulation methods to collect process data for three months or longer (see Sanday 1979; Van Maanen 1979). Consequently, most business-to-business marketing process research stud-

ies are limited to a handful of doctoral dissertations—one or two appearing once each year or less often.

The structural biases against doing business-to-business marketing process studies might best be overcome by a concerted application of several actions. First, read the classic and recent literature on (inter)-organizational process research (e.g., Arnould and Wallendorf 1994; Denzin and Lincoln 1994; Hirschman 1986; Howard et al. 1975; Van Maanen's 1979 special issue of *ASQ*; Weick 1995; Workman 1993; Woodside 1994). Second, because a characteristic of business-to-business marketing process studies is long periods of on-site, direct observations, academic scholars should consider concentrating teaching responsibilities when possible to permit periods of three months or longer in the field. While not ideal, going into the field in the summer months is one way to implement this action (e.g., see Woodside and Samuel 1981). Third, adopt R&P's prime observation concluding their review: "More programmatic research by teams of researchers is needed. The rare instances of programmatic research that have been done have been quite fruitful." Fourth, seek funding and help in gaining cooperation from firms for participating in process studies of national trade organizations, for example, in the United States, the National Association of Purchasing Management.

WHY PROCESS RESEARCH?

Process research extends beyond the long-time dominant logic in business-to-business marketing studies of having one decision maker per firm self-report beliefs using mostly concept-based, closed-ended rating questions. Process research studies usually employ multiple methods to achieve both confirmation and diversity in collected data. A hallmark characteristic of particularly insightful process research is collecting behavioral data via direct observation as the behavior occurs in natural environments, preceded and followed by interviewing the multiple participants engaged in the behavior. This approach may be followed by asking the participants to read and comment on the researcher's draft "thick description" (see Geertz 1973) of the process, as well as subsequent revisions of the thick description. See Hirschman (1986) for an exposition of this approach; Morgenroth (1964) for a research example in industrial pricing; and Woodside and Sam-

uel (1981) for an application in organizational buying behavior. Thus, process research often includes direct observation of specific meetings and decisions, multiple interviews of the several persons before and after behavioral events, and revising thick descriptions based on reviews of drafts by participants in the behavior processes being studied.

Embracing such process research is recommended for several reasons. First, the telling biases and limits in answering questions (see Ericsson and Simon 1980) and asking questions (see Tanur 1992; Schwarz 1999) are documented well. Second, processes through several weeks, months, and years represent the heart and soul of business-to-business marketing and business relationships—how can we continue to use such ill-suited tools as rating instrument data from self-reported, single-person-per-firm mail surveys? Direct observation is a necessary requisite for achieving deep understanding of behavior and decision processes.

Third, a sense of time is missing from almost all scholarly business-to-business marketing research; yet business-to-business marketing decisions and events are processes occurring through days, weeks, months, and years. The current dominant logic in business-to-business marketing research fails to capture and report the stream of behaviors through time.

Fourth, any one research method has strengths and limitations. Fortunately, the limitations of one method are often overcome by the strengths of a second method. Process research is suited particularly well for implementing multiple data collection methods. The continued use of the one-person-per-firm mail surveys in business-to-business marketing research is analogous to searching under a street lamp for an object lost in an unlit alleyway. A better way is to equip ourselves with several alternative tools and begin new searches.

COVERAGE OF KEY FINDINGS

While R&P's review is useful in its breadth of coverage, not enough depth is reported on methods used in the reported studies, what was found, and why the studies are particularly useful. To cite an example, R&P report, "Paun (1993) provides a set of normative standards for determining when to bundle or unbundle products." Describing the prime normative standard for each approach would en-

rich the review. R&P cite the study by Day and Barksdale (1992) on how firms select a professional service provider without any information on how firms do it. With a few exceptions, most pages of R&P's review fail to report the key finding of the studies cited.

One approach to achieve such a goal is to organize summaries of the literature on specific topics in exhibits. Each exhibit might include a limited number of lines for topic, key propositions, method, key findings, and a primary conclusion. While granting that space is limited in broad reviews, more knowledge and insights could have been packed into space taken by R&P's review.

THEORETICAL PROPOSITIONS ON RELATIONSHIPS AND STRATEGIES

What nuggets of wisdom about business-to-business relationships and strategies do we learn from the research spanning twenty years that is reported in R&P's review? R&P report very few nuggets. In part, this is due to lack of focus on reporting the key findings in the cited studies. Certainly, useful propositions for improving sensemaking in theory and applied business-to-business marketing strategies can be found in the literature reviewed by R&P.

Here are a few nuggets of useful sensemaking from the literature cited in R&P's review. First, prospector strategies focusing on new product development work well in achieving high performance, even though most business-to-business firms do not adopt such strategies. Being the "low cost" supplier is not enough for high performance; customers' primary drivers for buying always involve more than cost savings. Identifying and working closely with lead users is a useful step toward achieving a prospector strategy. Firms offering new products based on superior new technologies have the highest returns on investments. However, implementing such high-tech strategies also results in failure when such firms do not design the new products with specific customers in mind; and when they focus on marketing such new-tech products to big customers whom the marketers find most attractive, rather than smaller customers whom prefer the new technologies.

INTEGRATIVE RESEARCH: A VALUABLE RECOMMENDATION

Another valuable concluding observation made by R&P is the need for “more emphasis on integrative research that looks at several issues at once.” Forrester (1961) founded rigorous integrative research involving business-to-business marketing. The lack of “systems thinking” (see Senge 1990) and the lack of simulation testing of business-to-business marketing-customer systems are telling weaknesses in the literature reviewed by R&P. However, the core theory and the basic tools for integrative research relevant to business-to-business marketing are available elsewhere (e.g., see issues of *Human Systems Management*, an integrative-focused academic journal; Alpha/Sim software applications at <www.alphatech.com>; Hans Thorelli’s <www.intopia-inc.com>; Weick 1995).

The widespread human tendency is toward oversimplifying and being overconfident that our simplified views of what has happened and what will happen accurately reflect reality (see Gilovich 1991; Plous 1993; Senge 1990). Researchers and strategists in business-to-business marketing are not immune to these two tendencies. Embracing systems thinking (Senge 1990), strategy mapping (Huff 1990), and building/testing simulation models of business-to-business marketing-customer systems is useful advice.

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Reply to the Commentaries: Business Marketing Comes of Age

David A. Reid
Richard E. Plank

When we first started the process of writing the review, two of the many objectives we hoped to accomplish were to stimulate greater discussion of the issues facing the field and to encourage research that would address these issues. We are pleased to see that the discussion has begun with the commentaries of such recognized and respected business marketing scholars as Professors Spekman, Wilson, and Woodside. Their efforts and contributions to the field over the years are far too numerous to detail and certainly beyond the scope of this paper. In more ways than one, each has significantly contributed to legitimizing and promoting business marketing as a respected academic field of study and made significant contributions through their extensive research to our understanding of business marketing.

Before we respond to their comments, we would like to reiterate that our major purpose in writing our review was to broadly assess the current state of academic research in business marketing by examining a twenty-year period of research activity. As researchers in the field we had often discussed and were frustrated by the lack of a unifying framework or research agenda in business marketing and wondered whether the research that was being done was having any impact on the practice of business marketing. We were basically, as Professor Woodside puts it in his commentary, engaging in the act of "sensemaking." While there had been reviews of certain research areas such as organizational buying behavior and reviews of research from different publications such as *Industrial Marketing Management* and the *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, a global assessment was still missing. As we mention in the review, the time frame chosen was based on the fact that the last comprehensive review was that of Webster (1978). We started compiling the data long

before we decided to tackle the enormous task of doing a twenty-year review. In fact, the compiling of the information used in writing the article itself stemmed initially not from the purpose of doing a review, but from our shared interest in the field and a desire to develop a detailed bibliographic database. We started that database over twelve years ago and even today continue to add to it. The decision to do the review came much later. Organizing the material and writing the actual review itself ended up being a three-year process.

When we began the process we knew it was going to be a difficult task and were obviously somewhat concerned with whether the effort would result in a publishable manuscript. Reactions from our colleagues were mixed, with some strongly encouraging us to pursue the project and others suggesting they had grave concerns about our sanity for even contemplating such a project. They say that hindsight is twenty-twenty and that sometimes it is difficult to see the forest for the trees. If ever there was a project where these two sayings were apropos, this is it. Would we do it again? Maybe. Would we do it differently? Probably. Are we glad we did it? Absolutely!

Throughout the remainder of this paper we will address each of the commentaries. Each takes a slightly different tack, with Professors Spekman and Wilson providing an interesting discussion of business marketing in the future. We conclude our reply by building on the views of the future by Professors Woodside, Spekman, and Wilson and by sharing our views of business marketing in the years to come.

REPLY TO PROFESSOR WOODSIDE'S COMMENTS

A project of such enormity and scope as a twenty-year review of a field presents a tremendous challenge. If the field is one that has seen a considerable amount of research activity and consists of a wide range of topics such as business marketing, the challenge is how to organize the information and at what level of detail to address it. As we mentioned earlier, twenty-twenty hindsight and the forest for the trees are apt analogies for the project at hand and with respect to these problems.

Drawing on social psychology literature, Professor Woodside examines our review from the perspective of "sensemaking." His approach in his commentary is what has made Professor Woodside's research so interesting over the years. Throughout his career, he has had

the ability to see and do things differently and has drawn extensively on concepts from a wide range of academic disciplines in his research. We can think of no better term for describing what we were attempting in reviewing the literature for a twenty-year period.

As Professor Woodside notes, our coverage of findings was more in terms of breadth than depth. Given the sheer volume of articles covered in the review, attempting to try to address the key findings in each article would have lengthened the article considerably. Examining in greater detail the methods used in the various studies, what was found, and each study's usefulness would certainly add value and insight. One of the valuable contributions of our review, as Professor Woodside notes, is that we have identified and indexed the literature. Thus, other scholars could address the issue of depth by examining each of the twenty-eight categories separately. While some areas, as we point out in our review, such as organizational buying behavior, have been the subject of much scrutiny, most would benefit from this type of assessment. Indeed, if we never take stock of where we stand in a particular area of research, how can we know which areas are in need of further study? Unfortunately, this is the case for most of the twenty-eight areas discussed. This is yet another reflection of the lack of a clear research agenda for the field as a whole or the individual subject areas.

In line with our call for more programmatic research on the longitudinal processes that characterize much of business marketing, Professor Woodside points out a number of articles that illustrate research methods for examining these processes. He goes on to assess why we have seen so little process research. We agree with his assessment but would add that another factor weighing heavily against this type of research is the tenure and promotion process itself. Both longitudinal and process studies by their very nature take time and the tenure clock at most universities is fairly unforgiving. High-quality research studies may be valued but quality may not always be able to compensate for a lack of quantity. Too many institutions are still focused on how many articles the tenure candidate had rather than the quality of those articles or whether they made substantive contributions to the field of study. Even after tenure, while quality may play a greater role in promotion, the quantity issue is still a factor. So while he provides excellent suggestions for how to overcome the structural

biases he identified, the tenure and promotion process is likely to continue discouraging longitudinal research.

REPLY TO PROFESSOR SPEKMAN'S COMMENTS

Professor Spekman takes us to task on a number of issues of omissions and missed opportunities. Many of the points he brings up would certainly have strengthened our review. The devil is in the details, so they say, and we struggled with the level-of-detail issue throughout the writing of the review. For example, Professor Spekman faults us for not delving deeper into the organizational buying behavior (OBB) literature, yet of all the research in business marketing, this is the one area that has received the most scrutiny over the years. As we point out in our review, since 1977 there have been twelve OBB review articles, the most recent being that of Johnston and Lewin (1996). As we state in the review, with so many excellent reviews of the OBB literature, two of which were co-authored by Professor Spekman—Johnston and Spekman (1982) and Spekman and Gronhaug (1986)—we simply felt it would be redundant to do yet another. Perhaps we could have done more with the findings from the various OBB studies over the years, but again, as we did in the review, we would suggest the reviews have already done a very thorough job in that respect.

As we see it, while our review may not have totally met his expectations, our review and his commentary have brought to the forefront a host of opportunities for current and future business scholars. The organizing framework and comprehensive bibliography we have provided will clearly facilitate researchers in addressing the omissions cited by Professor Spekman. Among the opportunities for future research studies are those areas he cites as deficiencies in our review:

- Grouping similar papers from the twenty-eight topical areas identified and examining the specific advances in that topical area that have been made over time
- Examining instances where research questions are duplicated or where sets of variables are examined in different contexts and environments

- Focusing on the findings related to a particular phenomenon in an attempt to identify generalizable acceptable principles
- Examining the intellectual linkages between different streams of research

Each of these areas could easily provide the material for multiple papers, with each focusing on a particular topical area or phenomenon. It is certainly telling that despite 900-plus nonempirical articles that discussions such as these have yet to take place. As a field, we have failed to periodically take stock of what has been done, what we know, what questions remain unanswered, and what questions should be pursued.

The lack of these kinds of studies and the general lack of studies reflecting Professor Woodside's notion of "sensemaking" is perhaps why Professor Spekman continues to wonder whether we are having the "right" discussions. It is because we share his frustration concerning the rehashing of old issues, the narrow focus of the field, and the overall limited gains in influencing managerial thinking that we were willing to take on the challenge of twenty years of research. So while we may not have addressed all of Professor Spekman's concerns, we have provided the catalyst for what already is generating a much-needed dialogue and a call for action. We feel as keenly as Professor Spekman does that we need to challenge ourselves and establish goals that, while difficult, will help in answering key business problems. This can only happen if we begin to have the meaningful dialogue between academics and practitioners that Professor Spekman rightly points out has been missing.

If we look at the purchasing profession, we see a much greater dialogue occurring between the academic and practicing community. This is largely due to the efforts and support of the National Association of Purchasing Management. Its closest counterpart on the marketing-side, the American Marketing Association, has in our opinion done much less to foster closer ties between marketing academics and practitioners. The Institute for the Study of Business Markets (ISBM) and the Center for Business and Industrial Markets (CBIM) have both made inroads in fostering more business involvement, but much more is needed if we are to have a meaningful dialogue with business. We are entering a period, as Professor Wilson astutely points out in his commentary, where we will be challenged to justify

our contributions. If we do not find ways to improve the level of dialogue between academics and managers, our research will continue, as Professor Spekman points out, to lag behind practice. Whether we are able to justify our contribution will in large part depend on how we respond to the challenges and problems identified in our review and in the commentaries in this book.

Professor Spekman's view of the future is based on the new competition described by Michael Best (1990). It consists of a world dominated by networks of cooperating firms characterized by a value chain or supply chain focus, enterprise-wide thinking, and boundarylessness. While we agree with Professor Spekman's view, the fact of the matter is that we have been heading down this road for some time. We may not have made this point as forcefully in our review as Professor Spekman does in his commentary, but at a number of points we discuss the growing importance of value/supply chains, relationships and networks, and the cross-functional nature of business in the future. In our work with purchasing operations of large, primarily manufacturing, multinational firms we clearly see their attempts at redefining how they do business and their experimentation with and development of various network combinations. Taking a supply chain perspective, supply matrix management focuses on linking together many heterogeneous business operations to improve the individual business efforts of the firms in the matrix. What we find particularly discouraging, as is echoed in Professor Spekman's comments, is that while all of this is happening, our field has failed to resolve many basic questions. His list of what he calls "a set of representative topics" is not new and reflects many of the points made in our review. Addressing them will clearly require a more concerted and coordinated effort than the past twenty years has seen. As we point out in our review and Professor Woodside echoed in his commentary, many of these problems, while difficult for one or two researchers to grapple with individually, could be more easily tackled by a team or teams of researchers.

The leftover research questions from the past and the questions Professor Spekman poses for the new millennium clearly represent tremendous challenges. We doubt whether the field will be able to successfully address these challenges unless we put forth a more organized effort than we have in the past. Reviews pointing out what needs to be done have often failed to have any impact on a field. As

we point out in our review, the organizational buying behavior has been characterized by numerous reviews over the years and each has more or less reiterated the same set of problems. If the dialogue started with our review and these commentaries is to be successful in moving the field forward, we must attack these questions in an organized fashion. With the existence of three established groups that are committed to business marketing—the Institute for the Study of Business, the Center for Business and Industrial Markets, and the American Marketing Association’s Business Marketing Special Interest Group (B2BSIG)—one or a combination of these should step forward and lead this effort. One need only look at the results of research efforts by the Industrial Marketing and Purchasing Group to see the power of focused attention and organized efforts.

REPLY TO PROFESSOR WILSON’S COMMENTS

Professor Wilson takes a somewhat different tack in his commentary. Rather than focus on, or as he puts it, “quibble” over what our review did or did not do, he chooses to cast an eye toward the next twenty years—1998-2018. As he sees it, the past twenty years have been business as usual but the next twenty will be anything but, if we are to continue to justify our contributions and existence. His premise is that digital marketing is going to fundamentally change the way we do business marketing. As he sees it business marketing may actually split into two methods of doing business—one being the online auction and the other being the formation of value-creating networks of firms. His views are consistent for the most part with both Professor Spekman’s and ours. They are also consistent with the business marketing trade press as well. There have been numerous articles discussing digital marketing’s role in *Advertising Age’s Business Marketing* (e.g., Freeman 1999; Clark 2000; Obrecht 2000). However, our academic literature remains virtually silent on the subject. As we point out in our review, the use of computer and technology in business marketing has received very little attention. A search of the literature yielded only five articles in business marketing dealing specifically with the Internet (Courtney and Van Doren 1996; Samli, Wills, and Herbig 1997; Honeycutt, Flaherty, and Benassi 1998; Boyle and Alwitt 1999; Lancioni, Smith, and Oliva 2000).

As Professor Wilson points out, the recent emergence of the online auction is already having a major impact on how organizations buy and on buyer-seller relationships. As more and more firms shift to this method for buying supplies that do not require much technical support or a close working relationship, what are the implications for sales and other facets of marketing? This is exactly what executives are asking in their conversations with one another. If we are to be part of the dialogue we must address these types of issues.

Reflecting both Professor Spekman's and our views, Professor Wilson sees value-creating networks as the other major method by which firms will operate in the future. Underlying these networks in whatever shape or form they may take will be an electronic network that links them together. Again, while work is progressing on networks, the academic research on the information technology role in business is rather limited. In fact, Bondra and Davis (1996) suggest that marketing's slow embrace of information technology has been a delaying factor in the evolution toward the "totally wired" or "intelligent" enterprise.

Professor Wilson foresees a battle of the paradigms between a bidding model on the one hand and the relationship model that will be decided on the level of value creation. As he aptly points out, the outcome will have significant ramifications for marketing, sales, and the firms involved. His comments on the shrinking influence of marketing and the disappearance of many marketing activities should serve as a wake-up call with respect to the importance and need for research focused on value creation and delivery and the impact of e-business on marketing in business markets.

BUSINESS MARKETING IN THE FUTURE

So what then is the likely future of business marketing? Professors Spekman and Wilson provide interesting views of the future. Professor Spekman takes the broader perspective, talking about the future in terms of "the new competition." Professor Wilson takes a more narrow view and sees the pivotal influence on the future being digital marketing. Each paints a picture of the future that we feel is quite accurate.

In his commentary, Spekman faults us for not sharing our view of the future of business marketing. One of the dangers of spending

three years studying the past and over 2,000 articles is that you become too focused on the past. However, in our defense, the major purpose of any review is to examine what we know or do not know, what has been done, and what needs to be done. We feel in that respect that we were successful. But as we have said repeatedly throughout this paper, our review was meant to be a starting point for an ongoing discussion. So in that spirit, we hope to address our omission in this section of our reply and build on the vision proposed by Professors Spekman and Wilson.

As we see it, value, changing business relationships, and technology and the information superhighway will be the dominant sets of drivers of change in business markets. The changing nature of relationships is reflected in Professor Spekman's "new competition" and value, technology, and the information superhighway are consistent with Professor Wilson's digital marketing perspective.

Value

While the concept of value has been bandied about for years, considerable confusion regarding the concept remains. Business and academic researchers continue to struggle with how to define and assess value. Recent work by Anderson and Narus (1998), Woodruff (1997), and Parasuraman (1997) has done much to help clarify and focus attention on customer value. Coming to grips with these issues will take center stage in the future as firms find they have done, in many cases, all they can on the cost and quality side of the equation. In fact, cost pressures over the years combined with technological advancements have driven cost down to the point that in many firms and industries there are few options left for further reductions. Similarly, continuous improvement and quality initiatives have resulted in such improved levels of quality across firms that it no longer provides the competitive advantage it once did. Thus, in the face of increasingly demanding customers and the maturing of many markets, firms are and will continue turning their focus to delivering superior customer value as the primary means of achieving competitive advantage. Coupled with the growing emphasis at many firms in reducing their supplier base and the movement toward single/sole sourcing, delivering superior customer value will be the deciding factor in which firms are successful in retaining their customers. As Woodruff (1997) points out, the

shift to customer value will require substantial change in the way firms manage, especially in terms of organizational culture, structure, and managerial capabilities. To successfully compete on superior customer value, Woodruff (1997) states that firms will need to develop “tools for customer value.” Key among these tools will be methods for identifying what customers value, how to deliver that value, and how to determine customers’ assessments of value received. In fact, according to Kalakota, Oliva, and Donath (1999), the key asset for firms in the third millennium will be deep and insightful knowledge of their customers.

While there is a developing body of research addressing customer value, each of the above areas offers numerous research opportunities at both the strategic and tactical levels. For example, development of a valuation schema that classifies the ways in which buyers assess value could provide tremendous insight and serve as a guide for both strategic and tactical marketing decisions. Some buying firms’ decisions may be driven entirely by initial purchase price, while others may be based on direct costs, total cost of ownership, or factors other than cost. Understanding how buying firms assess value would assist selling firms in their decisions about which business to pursue and how to pursue it.

Relationships

The nature of business relationships, which has already changed so much over the past twenty years, will change even more dramatically in the next twenty years. The importance of these changes is clearly demonstrated in a 1999 special issue (Vol. 28 No. 5) of *Industrial Marketing Management* devoted entirely to managing business relationships and networks. Möller and Halinen (1999) state in the lead article of that issue that we are moving into a network era. As they see it, the future will see more firms forming RandD networks, deep supplier networks, and competitive coalitions. These changes they see as being driven by the globalization of competition, technological complexity and change, increasing interdependence and connectedness, and electronic interfaces and markets. The webs of relationships will include suppliers, customers, competitors, and noncommercial players, and managing these relationships and networks will present key managerial challenges for firms in the future. It is interesting to note

that in some ways these networks are similar to the *keiretsu* and *chaebol* of Japan and South Korea.

One area where these challenges are already starting to manifest themselves is in the area of supply chain management. Business marketing activity is evolving into what is more accurately described as a supply matrix in order to reflect the vertical and horizontal integration that is occurring within the supply and value chains of firms. The supply chain concept depicting single entities or a single path of activities fails to capture the complexity involved in the development and operation of these supply matrices of the future. In line with this, we will see continued movement toward the single source partnership relationships that have been expanding in the past ten years. The common practice of splitting the business among several suppliers will continue to shrink in the future.

Technology and the Information Superhighway

Advances in technology and the information superhighway are and will continue to require managers to rethink the way they do business. This will become even more of a challenge in the future as the pace of change and innovation continue to accelerate. E-business, which is the term currently in vogue, is clearly going to account for an enormous amount of activity in business markets in the future. According to figures cited by Professor Wilson, the approximately 31 percent of firms doing their purchasing over the Internet currently accounts for \$114 billion worth of business, and it is estimated that over 90 percent will soon be doing their purchasing over the Internet.

As more firms interact with one another via the Internet, what will the impact be on the personal relationships that are often an important part of conducting business? Are the face-to-face interactions going to disappear as some people think? Will the role of the traditional outside salesperson disappear as some have suggested? We believe that e-business will be an enabler of value, not necessarily the driver of value. So in situations where personal relationships and traditional salespeople add little perceived value, we are likely to see those relationships shifted to the Internet. However, in situations where personal relationships are seen as adding value to the overall relationship, the face-to-face contact will remain an integral part of doing business.

The e-era has brought to the forefront such concepts and acronyms as e-customer relationship management (eCRM), customer interaction centers (CIC), database marketing (DBM), enterprise marketing automation (EMA), marketing encyclopedias, enterprise portals, and enterprise relationship management (ERM). These concepts will have a significant impact on the way in which marketing is done in the future. Yet, surprisingly, our academic research remains almost silent on all of these concepts. Even an older concept/technology such as sales force automation (SFA) has attracted only limited attention despite its far-reaching implications for sales force management and selling.

Implications for Research

So what does this all mean for academic research? We will begin with some suggestions for the process. Our friend and colleague Dr. Irwin Gross, back in his ISBM days, used to talk about the process of doctoral research and the need to have groups of students do research together in order to attack complicated problems. We think it is time to encourage more group research both during the doctoral process and beyond. The Marketing Science Institute regularly announces research agendas focused on key problems and provides funds for research addressing those issues. Professor Robert Monczka at Michigan State University and the Center for Advanced Purchasing Studies (CAPS) program at Arizona State are examples of group research in purchasing, although more limited in terms of participation. Another potential model of what can be done can be found in a research project conducted a few years ago by Richard Volsky and Elizabeth Wilson that examined the forestry industry and brought together researchers from a variety of schools. To address the bigger, more complex, and frankly more interesting problems confronting business marketing today and in the future, we need to attack them in a much more organized fashion than we have in the past and to do this we need to develop an infrastructure that facilitates more coordinated and focused efforts.

It is time to develop an agreed-upon prioritized research agenda and to facilitate, encourage, and coordinate collaborative research efforts. The ISBM, CBIM, and the B2BSIG should work together to provide the structure for this process. Perhaps individuals could be

drawn from each of these groups along with some at-large representatives to form a special task force charged with addressing this whole endeavor. We need to involve as many individuals as possible without regard to university affiliation and we need to substantially increase the involvement of business in the process to stay focused and relevant. Working together to tackle the problems that are too big for any one of us, we can forge very powerful relationships that will truly extend our knowledge and our impact on practice.

What should the research agenda include? How to come up with an answer to this question will be the first major challenge confronting the aforementioned task force. As our review and the commentaries of Professors Spekman, Wilson, and Woodside clearly point out, there is no shortage of areas/problems in need of research. In our review, we identified what we felt were the shortages, surpluses, and problems in business marketing research and offered numerous research questions in need of exploration. In broad terms, the areas we identified as needing research included these:

- Greater emphasis on strategic issues facing business marketers: We have focused too much attention on the tactical and neglected the bigger context in which these tactical decisions are made.
- Better definition and measurement of value are needed.
- Better definition and measurement of relationships: We need more research into the types of relationships, their workings, their problems, their benefits, and their impact on marketing practice.
- E-business: What is being done? How and what will its role and impact be? What is its impact on organizational and personal relationships?
- Applicability: How well do our existing theories and assumptions fare in the context of a network and alliance-based world?

Assigning priority to these issues, further developing them, and deciding where they fit into the business marketing research agenda for the future will be part of the challenge facing the task force and all of us in the future.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As mentioned earlier, when we began the process of writing our review, we were truly engaging in the process of “sensemaking,” as Professor Woodside so aptly put it, and clearly still are. The dialogue begun with our review and continued in this book we hope will encourage greater “sensemaking” in our field and will yield research that addresses the issues confronting our discipline and business.

Business marketing is going to change dramatically in the future and we cannot continue to do business as usual. The dialogue has begun, the challenge issued, and the outcome is up to us to determine. We look forward to working together with you in moving our field forward.

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Book Review: *Cabell's Directory of Publishing Opportunities in Marketing*

(Eighth Edition). David E. Cabell and Deborah L. English, editors; Brooke S. Abernethy, Assistant editor. *Beaumont, TX: Cabell Publishing Company, 2001.*

J. David Lichtenthal

Presenting the latest descriptive compilation of published journals in marketing, this directory helps authors select journals likely to consider publishing their manuscript based on the topic. This volume provides a “first glance assessment” of the kind of commitment required in time and effort based on the detail of the review procedures and process. If given by the editor, the *Directory* also provides the complete set of manuscript guidelines.

Within the industrial marketing area per se, full coverage is given to the *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*, *Industrial Marketing Management*, and the *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*. This coverage is placed in the topical area “Marketing Theory and Applications.” There are also more than twenty journals listed under the heading of “Purchasing and Materials Management,” with more than thirty in the area of “Transportation and Physical Distribution.” Many journal titles are listed more than once, which can have a positive effect if actively managed. This overlap allows for maximizing the likelihood of finding more outlets while forcing the consideration of more journals that will also be deemed superfluous. As well, many journals are inherently interdisciplinary. Finally, many journal titles, although not nominally or inherently business-to-business, have coverage of marketing mix and behavioral issues. Given the growing de-

mand for business-to-business literature, perhaps the time has come for Cabell's to add this topic to its list.

This directory, formerly in three volumes (the management area is now separate), is a standard reference for any department of marketing. It provides a comprehensive collection detailing publication-related information covering more than 160 journals appearing alphabetically. This directory characterizes each journal entry by approximately twenty-five attributes. This "manual" would help would-be authors seeking publication outlets as well as subscribers needing professional literature to keep abreast of their fields of interest.

Cabell's Directory lists the following information, if given (information supplied voluntarily by either the journal editor or publisher), for each publication in this typical order:

Of assistance to both aspiring authors and subscribers:

- Journal name
- Editor name(s), address, phone and fax(s), e-mail and WWW (if given)
- Circulation data: frequency of issue, copies per issue, subscription price, and sponsorship
- Manuscript topics
- Mission of the journal
- Subscription price

Of assistance primarily to aspiring authors for manuscript preparation and perspective during the review process:

- Publication guidelines
- Manuscript length
- Manuscript style
- Manuscript preparation
- Number of required copies
- Disk submission and format
- Type of review
- Number of external and internal reviewers
- An acceptance rate
- Time required for a review
- Reviewers' comments (if any)
- Fees charged (if any) to review or publish
- Percentage of invited articles
- Rules regarding reprints and copyrights

To help in selecting those journals which are most likely to publish your manuscripts, the index classifies journal titles into twenty-five different topic areas. In addition, the directory provides information on the journal's review process characteristics. To further assist you in organizing and preparing your manuscripts, the directory includes extensive information on style and format of most journals. If a journal has its own set of guidelines, a copy is published in the directory. Also, each entry indicates the use of a standard set of publication guidelines, such as the *Chicago Manual of Style* or *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

The directory can also help scholars scan for journals in cognate disciplines of management/strategy, applied behavioral sciences, decision sciences, public policy, as well as applied statistical sciences. A summary index in the back provides in summary form multiple listings for many journals sorted by topic: Advertising and Promotion Management; Business Education; Business Information Systems; Business Law; Public Responsibility and Ethics; Direct Marketing; Global Business; Health Care Administration; Labor Relations and Human Resource Management; Marketing Research; Marketing Theory and Applications; Nonprofit Organizations; Office Administration and Management; Operations Research and Statistics; Organizational Behavior and Theory; Productions/Operations; Public Administration; Purchasing and Materials Management; Sales and Selling; Services; Small Business Entrepreneurship; Strategic Management Policy; Technology/Innovation; Transportation/Physical Distribution.

This directory focuses on journals in the specialized area of marketing, while other directories focus on management, accounting, economics, and finance. The decision to place journals in the respective directory is based on manuscript topics selected by the editors as well as the journal's guidelines for authors. The most current information can be found at <www.cabells.com>. There is a log-on registration procedure.

Cabell's Directory of Publishing Opportunities in Marketing is required reading for junior faculty members and doctoral/master's students concerned with finding suitable publication outlets for their work. Veterans will find it useful for refreshing their perspective and learning about the newest entrants to the discipline. There is a narrative section, "How the Directory Helps You Publish," that contains helpful hints for choosing a journal by exploring the relationships be-

tween theme, readership, methodology, acceptance rate, manuscript topics, review process, submission, and reviewer comments. A section titled “What Is a Refereed Article?” emphasizes the blind review process and the use of external reviewers. Seasoned faculty members will find it useful for expanding their publication base options both within the discipline and in allied areas. Business professionals may also use this volume to shop for quality sources of information regarding an ever-expanding base of broad and focused periodicals within and related to marketing. The mere increase in the incidence of sources is testimony to the ever-growing intellectual diversity and expanding boundaries of the field.

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