

# DEBATES IN MARKETING ORIENTATION

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BY

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

I learned about science from my father.

I learned about arts from my mother.

So, here we are!

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a small step for humanity,  
and a significant contribution to marketing.  
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# INTRODUCTION

## EXAMINING MARKETING ORIENTATION

Dear Reader,

Thank you very much for your interest in my work.

Our primary concern here is discussing the potential and problems of marketing orientation. As a successor of production, product and selling orientations, marketing concept (or as originally called 'customer orientation') is established over segmentation, customer needs, customer thinking and customer satisfaction (Malhotra, 2011). So, by referring to marketing orientation, one can consider organizations that heavily depend on marketing, the marketing concept (customer orientation) and organizations that implement the marketing concept.

Therefore, there are two dimensions within the title (*Debates in Marketing Orientation*):

- (1) Shaping or transforming businesses around customer needs (customer orientation, market orientation, marketing concept).
- (2) Referring to the dominance of marketing thought to become a customer-oriented marketing organization.

Challenges embedded in these dimensions remain as urgencies for brands. Due to complications and complexities of developments after the marketing concept, like societal concept and holistic concept and due to marketing concept's own implications and limitations, deeper and thought-provoking discussions about marketing orientation can motivate significant organizational practices and future research.

Therefore, this publication is timely because of the ever-changing nature of marketing, increasing dominance of marketing, and interdisciplinary studies in academia, business and life at large. For example, mergers between supply chain management and marketing, human resources and marketing, communication and marketing and entertainment and marketing increase urgency and dominance of marketing, therefore marketing orientation. Additionally, these mergers continuously generate debates and criticisms based on contributions from and out of the field of marketing.

## CONTRIBUTION OF THIS WORK

Academic and organizational needs on marketing orientation reveal a current urgency and difficulty of developing products that exceed customer expectations, the necessity of enriching lives of customers and an ongoing focus on experiential marketing.

The purpose of this book is to examine current fundamental problems and alternative solutions in marketing orientation, therefore customer orientation and the marketing concept through debates that support collaborations between academia and organizations to delight customers and develop superior brand equity.

Suitable for branding which embodies marketing and strategic thinking, the main strategies to delight target readers

throughout the book are delivering roots of business routine issues on the subject matter, offering a text that is above businesses and products, offering conceptions, recommendations and road maps that can be applicable to a wide set of circumstances.

Such strategic scope will introduce a variety of ideas associated with the following questions:

- How can academic and professional marketing perspectives be integrated?
- What are the main issues about analyzing and understanding customer needs?
- What are deepest roots of issues for organizations either which transform into or stay with customer orientation?

Debating is a method to look for answers. Considering the definitions by the American Marketing Association, marketing has evolved from being responsible from the flow of products and services from producers to consumers to being responsible from an organization and its contribution to society (Gundlach & Wilkie, 2010; Lusch, 2007). Debating through critical thinking was one of the driving forces behind this scientific progress. Instead of rigid debating or a competition of ideas, this text flows through research, evidence and dialogues. Moreover, sections include managerial implications (along with academic and social implications where suitable) to communicate that a strong theory is the one that generates a diverse set of practical applications.

So, the main contribution of this book is revealing sources of managerial and cultural tension that can occur while trying to implement customer-oriented business processes at a marketing organization.

Therefore, the positioning statement of this book based on its contribution to the marketing literature is to be a

significant reference about essential debates in marketing orientation for marketing practitioners, MBA and executive education attendees by discussing scientific, influential and credible perspectives from a research, evidence and dialogue-based approach, and by offering academic, managerial or social implications to inform and motivate target readers about the state of marketing orientation, urgency of marketing, customer orientation and readers' own personal roles in marketing progress.

## DEBATES

The debates are selected or created in terms of their likelihood to improve customer delight and brand equity, and there is also a set of thought-provoking questions to motivate readers for further engagement in problems and potential of the marketing orientation.

*Debate selection criterion 1:* Can decision alternatives for a debate in marketing orientation contribute to customer delight?

*Debate selection criterion 2:* Can decision alternatives for a debate in marketing orientation contribute to development of superior brand equity?

## TARGET READERS

Marketing science is evolving around concepts, debates and ground-breaking research. Positive consequences of disagreements can be richness in perspectives, strategy development and implementation. Consequently, the target audiences are selected according to the positioning statement and the related value proposition of this book. The primary audiences



are marketing practitioners, MBA and executive education students.

Throughout the text, there is a variety of viewpoints and their potential to influence the two increasingly becoming more difficult purposes of marketing and customer orientation, which are customer delight and superior brand equity. Therefore, target audiences, as decision-makers can draw insight with respect to organizational perspectives and commitment.

Additionally, this book or a selection of chapters could be used as a supplementary source at the following courses and training programs:

- Customer-oriented management;
- customer-focused innovation; and
- change management.

## MATCHING BOOK FEATURES AND READER BENEFITS

### *Key book feature 1:*

A complete volume about academic and managerial potential of detailed debates in marketing orientation that generate, direct and alter levels of customer satisfaction and brand equity.

### *Reader benefit 1:*

A guide to manage conflict at organizations while deciding on key strategic strategies to achieve customer delight and superior brand equity.

### *Key book feature 2:*

A research-based (evidence-based) approach to convince readers.

*Reader benefit 2:*

Having a significant set of discussions based on significant research, therefore, decreasing organizational subjectivity, and discovering publication ideas.

*Key book feature 3:*

A dialogue-based approach to avoid black-or-white divides and extreme conflicts between perspectives, because the titles and text do not force dichotomy.

*Reader benefit 3:*

Examining hybrid ideas and possibilities in between opposing views as well as developing academic skills such as advanced analysis, collaboration and tolerance.

*Key book feature 4:*

Delivering not only academic but also managerial and/or social implications.

*Reader benefit 4:*

Communicating the link between academic and professional work and discovering managerial problems.

# CHAPTER 1

## THE BRIDGE BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND PRACTICE

### DEBATE 1: IS THERE A BRIDGE BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND PRACTICE?

#### Why is This Tension?

Let's consider the roots of conflict and why divides between perspectives occur. Even earlier in marketing progress, conflict as a consequence of disagreement and tension (Anderson & Narus, 1990) has been thoroughly and scholarly examined especially in distribution channels (Frazier, 1983; Heide & John, 1988). Since the dynamics of academic contribution include tension as an accelerator of research productivity via detailed models, contradicting viewpoints and trade-offs (Palmatier, 2016), tension could generate transformative decisions.

A Civilized Tension between Academia and Practice  
(including Tension within Academia and Tension within  
Practice) Could be a Positive Source of Productivity or  
Creativity

Placing positivity at the core of marketing, the ‘positive marketing’ theory goes beyond the business-as-usual routine to engage in social issues (the other theories that examine social issues are cause, green, social, and societal marketing theories) where positivity of a marketing innovation is measured by its value for an organization, its customers, and society (Gopaldas, 2015). This urge to reposition marketing theory into the broad social aspects of life and business is also visible in the recent marketing definition proposed by the American Marketing Association (‘Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.’) (Gundlach & Wilkie, 2010) and in a recent categorization that pursues the replacement of the 4Cs with a more socially aware 4Ws (economic wealth, environmental wellness, social well-being and human wisdom) for a better world (Kotler, 2015). How can marketing alone resolve the major and enduring issues of the world and mankind? Do not we need contribution from a variety of fields, for instance, from fine arts, which is responsible for the development of experiential settings. Social concerns seem as a major influence that drives businesses and life at large; thereafter, business functions and related fields contribute to the social progress made.

The favourable outcomes of creative tension, positive thinking and an urge to socially verify marketing concepts for academicians and practitioners could be synchronized. How can one synchronize these elements in academia and business? How can one synchronize academia and business,