Developing, Disseminating, and Utilizing Marketing Knowledge

The American Marketing Association’s Task Force on the Development of Marketing Thought, organized in late 1984, has completed six position papers on how the marketing discipline develops, disseminates, and utilizes marketing knowledge. This article summarizes these position papers and the Task Force’s recommendations to the AMA. Though the recommendations have been submitted formally to the AMA, many of them are directed also to marketing faculties of business schools, as well as to marketing practitioners. This interim report is intended to foster discussion and debate among marketing professionals interested in the advancement of marketing knowledge.

The manner in which knowledge about business and management is developed, disseminated, and utilized has become the subject of increasing scrutiny over the years. Questions have been raised about whether what is researched and taught in schools of business and management is appropriate and useful, especially in an era of escalating international competition.¹ The discussion about the role of these schools is probably more intense than at any time since 1959, when the Ford and Carnegie Foundations issued their reports calling for (and leading to) substantial reforms in business education (Gordon and Howell 1959; Piersson et al. 1959).

As concern has escalated about the role of business schools, so has concern about the research and teaching of marketing faculty. The Ford and Carnegie reports (and the research funding that Ford provided) stimulated considerable development of marketing knowledge. During the 1960s and early 1970s the field of marketing burgeoned with new (though commonly borrowed) theories, methods, and models. During that time, both “management science” and “consumer behavior” were introduced and grew to become part of the mainstream of the discipline. By the late 1970s marketing had become more self-reflective about its direction and accomplishments in developing marketing knowledge. In 1977, the American Marketing Association and the Marketing Science Institute formed a commission to assess the effectiveness of research and development for marketing management. The commission’s final report concluded that research in the field “has had relatively little impact on improving marketing management practice” (Myers, Massy, and Greyser 1980, p. 280).

This self-reflective mood has continued to the present time, with conference sessions, articles (e.g.,
Anderson 1986; Arndt 1985; Brinberg and Hirschman 1986; Hirschman 1986; Leone and Schultz 1980), and books (P. Bloom 1987) regularly examining the nature and value of the knowledge development process in marketing. In late 1984, seeking to stimulate more self-reflection, the American Marketing Association formed the Task Force on the Development of Marketing Thought. The mission of the Task Force was to “assess the appropriateness of how the discipline [of marketing] develops, distributes, and utilizes marketing knowledge, with particular attention to the knowledge that emanates from academic theory and research.” Steve Brown, then the President of the American Marketing Association, also asked the Task Force to make recommendations that “have actionable implications for the discipline as a whole and for the American Marketing Association.” Recommendations to the AMA were to be directed to their “existing major activities—publications, conferences and special programs (e.g., consortia) as well as potential activities [it] should initiate.”

The purpose of this article is to summarize and report the initial assessments and recommendations approved to date by the Task Force on the Development of Marketing Thought. The structure of the report reflects the current position of the Task Force on selected relevant issues, rather than the sequence of recommendations submitted to the AMA. The assessments and recommendations are presented in an order that seems logical to the Task Force, but without all the descriptive detail or underlying activities that form the foundation of the assessments and recommendations. A broad range of issues is discussed and the assessments are constructively critical. Though the marketing discipline has made many advances in recent years, our interest is in how even greater advances can be fostered in the future. During our deliberations, we uncovered and developed an array of issues and possibilities. Because we found the process to be provocative and stimulating, our report was written to encourage thoughtful readers to consider, discuss, and debate the issues on how marketing can improve its generation, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge.

An initial position paper internal to the Task Force addressed the question of who uses marketing knowledge. The objective of that paper was to help the Task Force avoid a myopic view of knowledge generation and use in marketing. Hence, this report begins with a discussion of the constituencies of marketing knowledge. The second section examines some structural impediments to the development and dissemination of knowledge by marketing academicians. The role of doctoral programs in the development of marketing knowledge is considered next, followed by issues related to career development for marketing academicians. Then a discussion of the need to develop communication linkages between the various constituencies of marketing knowledge is followed by recommendations on the role of the AMA publications in facilitating the dissemination of knowledge. Finally, the recommendations made to the AMA are summarized. During the Task Force’s deliberations, several other ideas surfaced. Some have been implemented by the AMA and others are in the process of being implemented by the Task Force.

The Constituencies of Marketing Knowledge

If we consider marketing in its broadest sense, the constituencies of marketing knowledge include many types of organizations and virtually all individuals—as consumers and also as members of groups. As a first step in assessing how marketing knowledge currently is developed and disseminated and how this process might be improved, we identify five constituencies. Though they are not homogeneous in outlook or behavior, each constituency represents a distinctive perspective on marketing and the value of marketing knowledge. In addition, marketing knowledge is disseminated by and to each of these constituencies in very different ways.

Academic Constituents (Researchers, Teachers, Students)

The academic constituency bears a heavy responsibility for defining and shaping what is known about marketing, for pushing forward the “frontiers” of knowledge, for communicating what is known to the other constituencies, and for taking a leadership role in the application of publicly available knowledge to improve marketing performance. For convenience, researchers and teachers can be separated into three groups. First, the researcher-academics develop and test new marketing knowledge or principles, though
the knowledge they develop varies in applicability. They use established marketing knowledge as input to their research and in the development of teaching materials. Second, the teacher-academicians use marketing knowledge in their teaching, but are less interested than researcher-academicians in developing it. Third, the consulting academicians rely on established marketing knowledge and may develop new knowledge for clients, but generally do not share it with the discipline via publication.

Students also differ. Undergraduate and MBA students, who want to become managers, need articles and books that describe the current level of marketing knowledge and the application of such knowledge to marketing problems. In contrast, doctoral students, who are being trained as researchers and as disseminators of marketing knowledge, have knowledge needs and intellectual uses parallel to those of the academicians.

More than any other constituency, academicians are dedicated to communicating new knowledge publicly through published books and articles. The most prestigious forms of communication are the refereed scholarly journals, but universities also recognize high quality teaching and publication in business/practitioner journals. The relative importance of the latter two activities varies among schools. Sources of knowledge used by academicians and students include conferences, scholarly journals, working papers, books, and some managerially oriented periodicals. Many academicians also learn from contact with managers and with members of the other marketing constituencies.

Managers of Enterprises (Practitioners, Executives, Marketers)

The role of managers is to bring goods and services to the market in such a way that customers are satisfied and organizations achieve their objectives. Organizations and individuals in this constituency differ widely in their practice of marketing and their attitudes toward marketing knowledge. Some managers consider themselves marketers and depend on their marketing skills, whereas others are not traditional marketers of their services or products but may use the elements of marketing to achieve their goals. Likewise, some managers use marketing research to make short-term tactical decisions, with little accrual of marketing knowledge, whereas other, more philosophical managers use research as a longer range tool to develop a body of marketing knowledge that can be applied strategically in many situations. Finally, some managers both develop and use marketing knowledge found in public, often scholarly forums, whereas other managers concentrate on proprietary knowledge.

In the course of their work and continuing education, managers learn about marketing and how to do their jobs better. However, with the exception of the relatively small number of managers who speak at conferences or write articles, most managers do not communicate their knowledge directly to the world outside their firm and may even be actively discouraged from doing so by organizational policy. As managers share knowledge with their colleagues and sometimes with sympathetic academicians, some of their knowledge may filter indirectly to the larger marketing community. Besides intraorganizational word of mouth, key sources of knowledge used by managers include conferences and executive education programs, business journals and periodicals, consultants, internal documents, and, in the case of business researchers, some scholarly journals.

Public Policy Makers

Elected officials, political appointees, and career bureaucrats can have a powerful influence on marketing. Because of their leverage on marketing, actual and potential, it is important that government officials be well informed about the marketing process and the state of marketing knowledge. Such awareness is particularly important when the education of public policy makers has been in disciplines not traditionally appreciative of marketing knowledge (e.g., economics, law). The role of public policy makers in communicating marketing knowledge is limited. Though they learn much in the course of deliberations, they generally refrain for political reasons from sharing their knowledge fully and publicly. Sources of knowledge used by public policy makers include testimony and reports by managers and academic experts, news media, lobbyists, and constituents.

Special Interest Groups

Some special interest groups may be hostile to marketing—or to some segments of marketing. Other groups may support marketing but use knowledge selectively on the group's behalf. Regardless of their perspective, special interest groups have a need for marketing knowledge and principles objectively presented. Special interest groups frequently publish reports and use direct mail to communicate their point of view, but their audience tends to be limited to public policy makers and sympathetic supporters. Sources of knowledge used by special interest groups include the public press, commissioned studies, and supportive materials from managerial and academic sources.

Customers (Buyers and Users of Consumer or Industrial Goods and Services)

All individuals, whatever their career and ideological positions, are buyers and users of goods and services.
Some people are highly skilled customers; others are very unskilled. In the long-run interests of a productive market system, it is important that buyers have sufficient marketing knowledge to make informed decisions. A steady flow of marketing knowledge organized for customer use is essential. The role of customers in producing marketing knowledge, unfortunately, is much like the role of laboratory animals in experiments: they are observed, interviewed, and counted. Perhaps marketing would benefit if the customer constituency had a less passive role. Sources of knowledge used by customers include information generated by sellers, buyer-oriented publications, and the media.

**Summary**

Five groups are identified as the constituencies of marketing knowledge. In many ways, marketing as a discipline does not communicate very well with most of these groups. Within some groups (e.g., researcher-teachers), communication vehicles are available for disseminating marketing knowledge. For other groups, either because they are very fragmented (e.g., consumers) or because they choose not to divulge information that has competitive value (e.g., business practitioners), little or no intragroup dissemination of knowledge occurs on a formal basis. Intergroup communications are primarily through the research journals and are limited in readership and readability. Over time, barriers to the widespread dissemination of marketing knowledge have evolved. Some of these barriers have become institutionalized so that they not only prevent communication efforts, but also hinder the development of marketing knowledge. The next section assesses the impact some of these barriers have had on the development of marketing knowledge.

**Structural Impediments to the Development and Dissemination of Marketing Knowledge at the Academic Level**

This section examines some key limitations in the efforts of the marketing discipline to develop and disseminate marketing knowledge. The Task Force identified five key structural impediments that must be removed or moderated in their impact on the marketing discipline. We briefly describe each major impediment without examining all causally related factors, then offer recommendations.

**Insufficient Resources Are Being Invested in Marketing Knowledge Development**

Evaluation of the current situation suggests that much too little effort is directed to systematic development of marketing knowledge. Consider, for example, the lack of systematic funding for marketing knowledge development. An increasing amount of research is emerging from the Conference Board, Advertising Research Foundation, and similar organizations. However, most public knowledge development in marketing is sponsored by colleges and universities in the form of released time and other kinds of support for faculty research. The researcher-teachers involved tend to combine teaching, service, and consulting activities with their research time. Thus, their available research time is limited at best and is sacrificed if demands arise in other areas of activity.

Beyond the universities, very little funding support is available for knowledge development in marketing. An agency providing this type of support is the Marketing Science Institute, but its member companies represent a small portion of the Fortune 500 and it is constrained in the size of its grants. Though some individual business firms support applied research efforts, they are not organized for the purpose of furthering knowledge development for its own sake. In marketing, virtually no support is provided by government agencies similar to NSF or NIH.

**Problems Hamper the Communication of Ideas and Findings**

Several problems are related to the leading research journals in marketing. First, the current review and decision system used by the leading research journals in marketing is likely to be creating barriers to the long-term development of marketing knowledge. Prominent among the concerns here is the nature of the feedback provided by reviewers, including both the bases on which evaluation is done and the appearance of an adversarial system in many instances. As an indication of the costs that may accrue through journal communication barriers, a recent finding indicates that 66% of all authors in the *Journal of Marketing Research* have written just one article for that journal (Peterson 1985). Primarily, this statistic relates to the role of dissertation research in marketing, in that many researchers' major research effort culminates with the doctoral dissertation.

A second problem is the nature of a researcher-teacher's contribution to knowledge over time. As their age and experience increase, academicians provide fewer contributions to the research journals. Among the possible reasons for this behavior are:

1. A sense that the rewards for research and publication have been less than expected or are simply insufficient to justify additional effort.
2. A cumulative frustration with the competitive review processes of the major journals of the field.
3. An increased need or desire for outside income during the middle years of one’s career.

4. An increased capability to undertake activities that hold higher personal value (e.g., teaching, consulting, administrative positions) than does research and writing.

A third major problem is a potential lack of receptivity to innovative ideas in marketing academia. One major cost of the low proportion of persons contributing articles is that, over time, the written record of the field tends to reflect only a narrow set of possible ideas and perspectives. In turn, this narrowness can inhibit the acceptance, development, and dissemination of new ideas and perspectives in marketing.

Fourth, the body of knowledge provided via academic journals is characterized by low participation and contribution by practitioners. One reason is that much of the most innovative and interesting research conducted by practitioners is proprietary. A second reason is that there is no reward system in the practitioners’ world that compensates for the time and effort required for publication in academic journals. Some practitioners do contribute potential marketing knowledge in the form of personal interviews, case histories, speeches, and articles in trade journals and books. Much of this raw material (based primarily on personal experiences) should be evaluated in terms of its generalizability, but the process of good scholarship can result in useful learning.

Overall, far too few practitioners are making any effort to develop and share generalizable knowledge with the field in general. Though it is interesting and instructive to note that many major article contributions in marketing have come from practitioners, more are needed. Forces working against the codification and dissemination of marketing knowledge by practitioners constitute a major hindrance to the long-term development of knowledge in marketing. An effort both to identify specific impediments and to provide encouragement for further participation by practitioners seems warranted.

**The Allocation of Time and Effort by Leading Contributors May be Insufficient**

This assessment is narrower in scope and explicitly recognizes the potential for significantly greater contributions from persons already recognized as having made important contributions in the past. Once these initial research contributions have been recognized, the key organizations in the field are likely to request such individuals’ involvement in supporting further research activities. Many leaders of marketing thought feel a personal responsibility and desire to respond positively to these requests, which they perceive as an honor and sign of recognition. Consequently, over time the effort devoted to service activities tends to grow as a thought leader matures in our field. Many of those who formerly have been the most active contributors to knowledge become heavily involved in reviewing papers, judging competitions, suggesting revisions to articles, and managing conferences, often after only a few years of research productivity.

The time spent in such activities undoubtedly benefits the development of knowledge, but it may not represent the best use of human resources toward that end. Consider, for example, that approximately 80 to 85% of the papers reviewed for leading journals are judged unworthy of broader dissemination. The effort expended on such papers adds no incremental knowledge in the published literature and, presumably, does not add significantly to the knowledge of the reviewers themselves.

Because in many cases this service time is replacing research time, a further analysis of the tradeoff appears desirable. If such service activities are truly important to the development of the field, perhaps they should be used explicitly as criteria for assessment of the individual’s productivity/contribution in addition to the quantity (and impact) of that person’s published research. Alternatively, perhaps it would be better to revise the system of participation in publication management and review activities so that the most productive researchers are encouraged to pursue research and writing to a greater degree. Either of these options suggests that further attention must be given to the process of knowledge development, the operation of the system for producing it, and the key roles that individuals can and should play in this system.

**The Efficiency or Productivity of Development Efforts Appears Low**

The degree of activity devoted to knowledge development in marketing appears to be high in relation to the actual level of contributions. For example, a journal acceptance rate of 15 to 20% may suggest high quality standards, but it also means that 80 to 85 of every 100 submissions are rejected as not providing sufficient contribution to warrant publication. Though such efficiency ratios appear to be common for innovative processes in general, the great majority of articles being written in marketing are not truly innovations. Hence, the low acceptance rate raises two very different issues: (1) are useful papers being rejected when they should be accepted and (2) is the average quality level of work in our field simply too low at present?

The first question calls for a consideration of publication processes, standards, and journal position. If the quality of papers were to improve significantly, for example, it is important that our journals publish all papers meeting the standard of quality—even if the
acceptance rate were to rise dramatically above its present level. Similarly, the issue of appropriate "fit" between a quality paper and the array of journals also warrants further attention.

The second question pertains to the research producers and whether the time and effort currently being devoted to writing papers in marketing should be reallocated significantly toward new topics, fewer articles, higher quality levels, or some combination of these factors. The Task Force members agree that the "publish or perish" syndrome clearly has a major role in both stimulating effort and directing it toward short-run payoffs. In addition, perceptions are that the advisory role of senior faculty has declined and hence many current research undertakings represent less cumulative effort than may be desirable. Similarly, the developmental role of working papers appears to have declined. Today many papers are sent for journal review without critique by anyone, either at the author's institution or elsewhere. Such a paper has not been revised as it could have been, has not benefited from friendly or supportive criticisms and advice, and is likely to contribute less than it would if more care had been taken in its developmental stages. Also, this type of submission often places a heavier burden on the reviewers than is reasonable for the author to expect.

Beyond these particular points, the doctoral programs in the field clearly have a crucial role. They not only provide the level of training that will help to determine research quality, but also provide important socializing influences that underpin the beliefs, opinions, and activities of emerging contributors to the field.

**Incentive and Reward Systems Have Institutionalized a Restrictive Approach to Knowledge Development**

An examination of the incentive system for the development of marketing knowledge leads to some interesting conclusions. First, our universities deserve much credit for their support of research. This support clearly generates a high proportion of the total activity devoted to public sharing of knowledge in marketing. Given the source of this support, it is perhaps not surprising that much research is theoretical or methodological in orientation.

The system, however, does truly deserve its appellation "publish or perish." It produces some very strong and undesirable incentives toward knowledge development on the part of young academicians: it is extremely short-term in orientation, is almost entirely peer-oriented, and is strongly directed toward achieving a maximum number of publications as a means to the end of promotion. This incentive system discourages risk-taking in the development of new ideas, discourages investment in long-term projects on significant issues, and instead encourages minor improvements in established ideas. The result is something like "knowledge creep" rather than "knowledge spurt."

Further, the short time horizon, strong peer orientation, and thrust toward quantity versus quality of publications frequently lead to a skewed treatment of topics and issues and, over time, a skewed view of the essential nature of the field itself. It is probably fair to say that the current system has led to conditions under which a significant contribution to knowledge is not at the forefront of most participants' thoughts as they engage in the research and publication process.

**Recommendations for Removing Impediments to Knowledge Development**

Two key elements underlying the assessments of structural impediments are the perspectives and efforts of academic contributors in the field and the important role of the journals and conferences as outlets for research efforts. Subsequent sections of this report provide additional assessments and recommendations in the pertinent domains. However, four specific recommendations emerge from the preceding assessments of structural impediments to the development of knowledge in marketing.

1. **The AMA should develop a large-scale funding source for support of faculty research in marketing.** Over the long term, this is probably the most significant forward step the AMA could take. Faculty released time, summer support, and direct research funding for major projects (including research team, multiyear, multiple-university, and/or industry-academic cooperative projects dedicated to key marketing issues) are all significant needs in our field. The best means for development of this funding are not clear, but several options warrant consideration. One is *cooperative actions* with the Marketing Science Institute, the 4A's Educational Foundation, or other marketing organizations. Another is a *major foundation program* over a multiple-year period (the Ford Foundation program, for example, had a striking impact on marketing and other fields of business education). A third option is the *development of an AMA Research Foundation*, constituting a small practitioner contribution toward support of basic research in marketing. A fourth option is a *dedicated government program* for support in this area. The National Science Foundation would be a natural source but, institutionally, may not be a feasible agency. The Department of Commerce seemingly would be an appropriate body in which to house this program.

2. **Efforts should be made to revise the "costs" borne by authors and reviewers within the journals.** One of the significant costs encountered by knowl-
edge contributors is due to the general tendency of journals to require multiple revisions of a paper prior to its publication. Not only do these revisions and attendant written comments involve further expenditures of time and effort on the part of both reviewers and authors, but they often introduce elements of adversarial relations in what could and should be essentially a cooperative and supportive process for the development and dissemination of knowledge in marketing. Revisions obviously are crucial in improving the quality of disseminated thought in our field, but the costs associated with this process must be reduced when possible.

Our primary recommendation toward this end would not only reduce these costs (easing the route to publication by prospective authors), but also tend to introduce different perspectives and nuances on a particular topic as it is presented within the pages of our leading journals. We strongly recommend that the role of “commentaries” be substantially increased in both the Journal of Marketing and the Journal of Marketing Research.

Commentaries by an expert in an area should be invited when deemed appropriate and comments by readers should continue to be encouraged. Further, it is our impression that a significant number of papers undergo one or more revisions, requested primarily to remove the objections of one or two reviewers who feel strongly about the issue. At times particular discussions are reworded to incorporate the reviewers’ contradicting views with those of the author. In such cases, considerable author and reviewer time and energy are expended (frequently with acrimony!) but the audience is never afforded the opportunity to recognize the debate or to weigh the validity of the two opposing positions. Under these circumstances, we recommend that the author be allowed to present his or her original thesis and that the reviewer be invited to provide his or her brief commentary to be run in conjunction with the article itself. Not only would this approach serve to highlight some fundamental points, it might also increase the interest level in (and readership of) particular articles.

3. We should search for means by which current research projects and consulting activities can contribute better to the development of knowledge in the field. This recommendation is much more controllable than the first two and could be implemented in the short term through conferences. In most cases, under current policy, a paper published in a conference proceedings is ineligible for journal publication. This policy reduces the attraction of conferences for researchers aspiring to journal articles and leads to a perverse situation in which much of the best work in the field is deliberately not presented for discussion and feedback at the leading AMA conferences. Revision of current policy on “double publication” warrants further discussion within marketing.

With respect to research and strategy applications in marketing, we recommend that some portion of major conferences be devoted to encouraging the development and presentation of “consulting applications” papers. Under this approach, the conference would welcome joint papers by academicians and practitioners reporting on studies or approaches they have tried within the real world of business. Failures as well as successes would be welcomed, as would new ideas and “think pieces.” If quality control became a major concern, discussants could be given a somewhat more prominent role and their comments could be published adjacent to the papers.

This route would be useful, for example, in renewing the significance and impact of the AMA Summer Educators’ Conference as well as in providing an outlet for researchers who are particularly attracted to marketing applications in which theoretical tests are not central. Over time, the encouragement of this branch of work might bring additional research funds into university marketing departments, where they could be used to support doctoral programs and other more basic projects on knowledge development.

4. The AMA should continue its activities in support of workshops, consortia, etc., but should increase its efforts to make the “contents” readily available to nonparticipants. The recent increase in AMA support of special workshops and consortia is a positive step toward supporting the development of knowledge. The support structure for reaching different classes of nonparticipants in these activities, however, might be improved. Videotapes of key presentations are one option. Computerized access to papers is another. At the other technological extreme, a centralized source (the Marketing Educator, for example) could easily provide a listing of available working papers, announce the availability of papers delivered at various conferences, or indicate that copies of overheads or slides used by speakers (especially those from industry not presenting full papers) are available from the speakers directly. The demand for such information by the academic community is potentially large and practitioner members of AMA are also likely to find it of value. Concurrent efforts to serve the needs of both groups, perhaps by means of a modified set of vehicles, should be undertaken.

Summary

For some time, thoughtful persons have been privately and publicly expressing concerns about the amount, direction, and contribution of research in marketing. In this section we assess several key im-
pediments to knowledge development and suggest some means for improving the quality and impact of research in our field. We must find ways to support knowledge-generating research in terms of financial and time resources. Moreover, we must improve the ways in which current research results are disseminated. An assessment of the crucial role of doctoral programs in the generation and dissemination of marketing knowledge is summarized in the next section.

The Role of Doctoral Programs in the Generation and Dissemination of Marketing Knowledge

The training of PhDs in marketing is central to the generation and dissemination of marketing knowledge. If PhDs in marketing are to be effective, a well-qualified pool of candidates must be available to fill teaching and research positions. Doctoral training must produce candidates who have adequate conceptual, methodological, application, and verbal and written communications skills. This section describes assessments and recommendations related to doctoral training. To develop these assessments and recommendations, the Task Force used two surveys, special sessions at two Winter Educators’ Conferences, and extensive discussions among themselves and others.

Doctoral Programs Have Not Been Able to Meet the Demand for Qualified Marketing Faculty

Numerous articles have documented the shortage of faculty to fill positions in business schools. However, aggregate statistics may obscure the complexity of the supply-demand relationship for marketing PhDs. The Task Force surveyed the schools nominating Fellows for the 1986 AMA Doctoral Consortium. Respondents at 65 schools reported that 112 faculty positions were available versus 150 PhD candidates planning to seek faculty positions for fall 1987. Furthermore, only 70 of the 112 reported that openings were for assistant professors.

The inconsistency between the aggregate statistics and the results of the Task Force survey can be resolved if we recognize that a limited number of schools emphasize hiring research-oriented faculty. These institutions typically have doctoral programs in marketing and consequently are represented in the survey. For these institutions, the number of candidates applying for faculty positions seems to be adequate for the openings available. However, the competition among these institutions for the “best and brightest” new PhDs is intense.

Another category of schools is not represented by the AMA Consortium Fellows. These schools do not offer doctoral training, but instead focus on undergraduate and master’s programs in business. At these institutions, teaching often is given priority and the demand for qualified marketing PhDs is likely to exceed supply. Moreover, this imbalance may not be easily overcome. Because of the research orientation in doctoral programs, increasing the number of marketing PhDs will increase the competition for positions at the research-oriented schools. Research-oriented PhDs are less likely to seek positions at schools with heavy teaching loads and few resources for research.

Marketing Has Not Been Able to Attract the Best-Qualified Individuals Into Doctoral Programs

Several factors contribute to the problem of attracting well-qualified individuals into doctoral programs. One reason for the limited applicant pool is a misunderstanding of the opportunities for PhDs in marketing. Individuals interested in conducting theoretical research may perceive that the research done by marketing academicians is strictly applied and entails answering mundane questions. Consequently, graduate students desiring to conduct basic/theoretical research rarely consider a marketing PhD. This misconception occurs despite the fact that marketing academicians ask the same basic questions about behavior that are asked by other social and behavioral scientists.

Conversely, individuals who are interested in practical marketing problems, such as MBAs, often are unaware of the opportunities afforded by pursuing a PhD. The work of a marketing academician may be dismissed as “ivory tower” and having little relevance to the real world when, in fact, some marketing academicians do focus on translating theory into practice. Thus, we find a general need to dispel misconceptions about academic careers in marketing so that more people will consider applying for marketing doctoral programs, and so that those who do apply will have appropriate expectations about the demands and opportunities for PhDs in marketing.

A second problem is related to the concentration and composition of the current applicant pool. A second Task Force survey revealed that the majority of applicants (both U.S. and foreign) to and graduates from doctoral programs were concentrated in a few of the largest doctoral programs. This concentration in a small number of programs implies that well-qualified individuals are rejected because of the limited space in these doctoral programs. These individuals might be welcomed in other doctoral programs if they were to apply to them.

Further, the survey indicated a high proportion of international applicants (57.7%) and presumably significant, if not proportional, representation of such individuals in doctoral programs. This finding suggests
that a number of doctoral recipients will return to their
country of citizenship each year. Hence, the number
of graduates overstates the number of qualified PhDs
available to fill positions in the United States and
Canada.

There is Considerable Variation in Training of
Doctoral Students

Responses to a Task Force survey question asking for
the philosophy underlying each school’s doctoral pro-
gram suggest that all programs attempt to provide
training in conceptualization, methodology, applica-
tion, and communication. However, because of fac-
tulty interests, some schools provide greater depth of
training in one or more of these skill areas and em-
phasize certain approaches to conceptualization and
methodology, whereas other doctoral programs strive
to differentiate themselves by stressing a balanced
and interdisciplinary approach to all four areas. Further,
some doctoral programs encourage early and exten-
sive involvement in teaching whereas others discourage
candidates from teaching.

The survey of doctoral programs also indicated that
schools differ significantly in their program require-
ments: doctoral-level seminars in marketing, research
methodology, and minors. This variation in doctoral
training is probably a product of many factors, in-
cluding faculty size and areas of expertise and the rapid
expansion of the marketing literature. Though it is
neither possible nor desirable to standardize doctoral
programs, some mechanism for sharing information
about how different schools are structuring their pro-
grams and the successful components of doctoral pro-
grams would be useful to both applicants (in selecting
the program best suited to their needs) and the schools
themselves (in making informed decisions about how
to structure their programs).

Many Doctoral Students Experience Difficulty
in Completing Their Dissertation Before
Leaving the Doctoral Program

The Task Force survey indicated that 48% of doctoral
candidates leave the program without all degree re-
quirements satisfied, usually because they have failed
to complete their dissertation. At least three factors
appear to contribute to the high rate of ABD (“all but
dissertation”) candidates. First, the structure of doc-
toral programs may foster a “leaping over hurdles”
mentality by focusing attention on achieving good
grades in courses and passing written and oral qual-
ifying exams. This mentality may result in an empha-
sis on comprehending and internalizing the thoughts
of others and the neglect of such skills as questioning
and creativity that are central to developing an orig-
inal piece of research. Because a dissertation requires
an extended period of self-structured effort, an instru-
mental motivation toward knowledge may be inade-
quate to sustain doctoral candidates.

Second, on average, doctoral programs provide 3.5
years of funding at a reported average of $9000 a year
(1986), exclusive of any tuition stipend, yet it takes
an average of 3.93 years to complete all degree re-
quirements. The correlation between the number of
years funded and the percentage of students leaving
with their degree is significant (r = .55). Further, many
survey respondents indicated that financial pressures
caused candidates to take faculty positions before
completing their dissertations.

Finally, because of the timing of the AMA Sum-
mer Educators’ Conference in August, candidates start
interviewing at the beginning of their dissertation year.
As a result, many of them have only a vague disser-
tation plan when they must subject it to scrutiny and
criticism. Further, they typically spend most of the
fall and sometimes the winter participating in job in-
terviews. The pressure may distract candidates from
their main task, demoralize them about their disser-
tation topic, and generally cause them to lose mo-
mement at a critical time.

New PhDs in Marketing Often Have Difficulty
Sustaining a Research Career After Assuming
a Faculty Position

A major problem facing young faculty members who
do complete their PhD is sustaining a research career.
Several factors may contribute to this problem. First,
these individuals may not have had enough experience
initiating research in their doctoral programs to be
confident of their ability. Second, junior faculty may
have limited access to necessary research resources.
Finally, junior faculty typically must devote a large
portion of their time to course preparations, which re-
duces the time and energy available for research. The
need to allocate considerable time to teaching is a
product of both the lack of teaching training and the
multiple course preparations required by the hiring
schools.

Many Doctoral Programs Do Not Provide
Formal Training in Teaching

When asked to comment on the weaknesses of their
doctoral programs, respondents to the Task Force sur-
vey most frequently mentioned the failure to train
doctoral candidates to become teachers. In some pro-
grams, doctoral candidates neither teach nor receive
any instruction in teaching practices. Other programs
require or allow students to teach but without supervi-
sion or formal training. Even candidates who do teach
typically teach undergraduates and commonly lack the
managerial experience, knowledge, or the pedagogi-
cal skill to handle demanding MBA classes. This lack
of teaching training in doctoral programs simply shifts
this training to the new PhD’s first job, where it may inhibit launching a research career.

**There is Some Demand for Programs Designed to Assist Individuals Who Hold PhDs in Marketing-Related Disciplines and Who Are Interested in Joining a Marketing Faculty in Learning About Courses and Research Issues in Marketing**

Marketing has a close relationship with several other disciplines and consequently many leaders in marketing have had their formal training outside the field itself. Typically, when individuals trained in another discipline enter marketing they must invest significant time to learn relevant teaching materials and research problems. In the extreme, such individuals may obtain a second PhD. An alternative to a second PhD is a postdoctoral program such as the one offered by Carnegie-Mellon University. This program funds postdoctoral students for a two-year period in exchange for teaching one section of undergraduate marketing principles per semester. The students have the opportunity to attend marketing PhD seminars and to initiate a research stream in marketing. By 1986, four individuals had participated in the program and three of them had subsequently taken tenure-track faculty positions in marketing departments.

A Task Force survey assessed the receptivity of doctoral program directors to such programs and obtained a mixed response, with slightly more than half indicating some support and the remainder opposing the idea. Many supporters suggested that individuals selected for a postdoctoral program be recruited only from disciplines allied to marketing because such individuals would already be trained in research methods suitable for marketing. Opponents expressed concern that individuals from other fields would lack a genuine interest in marketing and would return to their original discipline as soon as marketplace conditions made it feasible to do so. Opponents also reasoned that individuals unable to find positions in their own field would be among the least talented in their discipline and therefore would also be marginal performers in marketing. A final concern was that a brief program could not fully acquaint individuals from other fields with the content of marketing and business. The Task Force view is that it is unlikely that large numbers of individuals will have the skills and desire to undertake a shift from a related discipline into marketing. However, the number of such individuals may be sufficient to support several additional programs.

**Recommendations to Improve Doctoral Education in Marketing**

Recommendations 5 through 12 are directed to the AMA and recommendations 13 through 18 are addressed to individual institutions and scholars.

5. **The AMA should devote some resources to improving the image of the field of marketing in general and stimulating interest in marketing doctoral programs among qualified individuals.** The AACSB has developed materials to promote faculty careers in business. These materials are an excellent starting point; however, they should be supplemented in several ways. A pamphlet providing more detail on doctoral programs in marketing would be a useful supplement to the AACSB brochure. In addition, the image of academic research in marketing could be broadened by seeking press coverage for theoretical developments (tied to basic areas) emanating from marketing scholars. An article discussing careers for marketing PhDs, placed in a widely read publication such as the *Wall Street Journal*, might help to stimulate greater numbers of applications to marketing doctoral programs. Finally, lobbying efforts directed at individuals in opinion-leading institutions such as NSF and the Department of Commerce could increase awareness that marketing faculty do scholarly research. This awareness might encourage funding for such research as well as for training PhDs and postdoctoral students.

6. **The AMA should serve as a clearinghouse for information on doctoral programs in marketing.** Though the AMA would work out the specifics of the data to be collected from doctoral programs and the manner of presentation, the Task Force offers several suggestions. Information about doctoral programs could be collected on a regular basis and should emphasize description rather than promotion. It might include a description of the program philosophy and requirements, as well as the name and phone number of the coordinator for the school’s doctoral program in marketing. In addition to describing the specific doctoral programs, the AMA could provide an overview of the field and a summary of the types of research done by marketing PhDs (perhaps drawing from the promotional materials mentioned in recommendation 5). All schools offering doctoral degrees in marketing could be requested either to distribute the AMA brochure to doctoral program applicants or to inform such applicants of how they can obtain the information from the AMA.

7. **The AMA should develop and distribute a set of descriptive guidelines for typical components of doctoral programs in marketing.** A set of descriptive guidelines for the typical components of doctoral programs in marketing would be useful to doctoral directors and might help reduce any excessive variation in the training marketing PhDs receive. These guidelines would outline the goals of doctoral programs (e.g., competence in conceptualization, methodology, application, and communication) and would specify the program components likely to facilitate achieving these goals. Hence, the guidelines would suggest the type
of course work that is fundamental to becoming a marketing scholar, offer ways to involve students in research before they begin their dissertation, and provide strategies for preparing students to teach. We emphasize that these guidelines would not be an attempt to standardize marketing doctoral programs. They would address only typical components of doctoral programs in marketing. Individual doctoral programs would continue to be adapted to their particular set of circumstances.

8. **The AMA should sponsor more events that help socialize doctoral candidates to an academic career and that offer opportunities to present and receive feedback on early research and career developmental efforts.** Currently the major doctoral-student-oriented activity sponsored by the AMA is the Doctoral Consortium. This consortium exposes the attending doctoral candidates to the leading faculty and research in the field, facilitates networking with candidates at other schools, and motivates candidates to do research by giving them role models. The consortium is an excellent experience for doctoral candidates, but it cannot serve all candidates and all purposes. Only a small portion of all doctoral candidates are selected to attend the consortium and the focus is on learning about and reacting to faculty research. Conferences are needed that reach more doctoral candidates and at which candidates can present their own research and critique the research efforts of their peers. Small regional conferences are recommended, such as those held annually at Indiana University (Albert Haring Symposium) and the University of Houston (Southwest Marketing Symposium).

In addition, special efforts should be made to encourage the submission and presentation of papers by students at AMA Educators' Conferences. Possible approaches include student paper tracks and a best student paper award.

9. **The AMA should further explore postdoctoral programs for individuals holding PhDs in marketing-related fields who want to shift their teaching and research to marketing.** The success of the Carnegie-Mellon postdoctoral program (albeit on a small scale) suggests that such programs may be effective in increasing the number and quality of marketing faculty. The AMA should explore the extent of demand for such programs and perhaps work with a small number of universities to implement them. The AMA's role would primarily be to publicize postdoctoral programs. However, it might also encourage federal agencies to offer training grants to help fund the programs.

10. **Periodically, the AMA should hold a consortium of directors of marketing doctoral programs.** A consortium of directors of doctoral programs would facilitate the collection and exchange of the information discussed before. Such a meeting might be scheduled to coincide with the AMA Winter Educators' Conference so as not to conflict with the Doctoral Consortium, the editorial board meetings, and recruiting activities that traditionally have been held at the AMA Summer Educators' Conference.

11. **The AMA should attempt to forecast the long-term market for marketing PhDs.** There is a danger that in response to the current market situation, in which demand exceeds supply, marketing doctoral programs may initiate strategies that eventually result in supply exceeding demand. It would be challenging but worthwhile to examine census data trends, the age mix of present marketing faculty, and other factors affecting demand in an effort to make the field aware of the long-term as well as the short-term needs for marketing PhDs.

12. **The AMA should study the desirability of changing the Summer Educators' Conference to the fall or winter time period.** A major advantage of this scheduling change would be that doctoral students would have several additional months to develop research ideas before being thrust into job-search activities. Also, if students have been able to satisfy their committees with a research proposal, many of the operational procedures of their research can be worked on and developed while they are involved in campus interviews. This change would benefit the advancement of marketing knowledge through better doctoral dissertation research. Moreover, it is anticipated that more doctoral students would complete degree requirements before beginning a job.

13. **Marketing faculties and faculty members at individual institutions should initiate or increase efforts to enhance understanding of the field by building links with basic disciplines on their campuses.** The image of marketing in general and marketing research in particular is most likely to improve if faculty in related disciplines have positive interaction with the marketing faculty and students on their campuses. This interaction can be fostered by activities such as joint seminars, requiring doctoral candidates to include nonbusiness faculty on their dissertation committees, and sharing working papers.

14. **Directors of doctoral programs should examine their curricula and consider whether or not their programs would benefit from modification.** The assumption is not that all doctoral programs will or should employ the same curriculum, but that all doctoral programs should share the goal of training candidates to have mastery in conceptualization, methodology, application, and communication. By examining points of difference and commonality between schools' doctoral programs, a program director may gain a perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of his or her
own program. We suspect that this reflection process itself would prove useful. Of particular importance is ensuring that doctoral programs include components that help candidates develop the creativity needed to design research. Several strategies may help achieve this objective: ensuring that faculty provide research role models by demonstrating enthusiasm for and commitment to their own research, providing resources for research, facilitating the presentation of work in progress, providing opportunities for joint research with faculty, and encouraging students to initiate ideas for joint research with faculty. Above all, schools should seek to adapt their programs to their own constraints and to achieve excellence along at least one dimension.

15. Doctoral programs should make every effort possible to provide four years of adequate funding for candidates. Given the strong correlation between the extent of funding offered and the likelihood that candidates leave the program with a degree, candidates should receive a level of funding that enables them to stay on the campus for the full four years. The fourth (dissertation) year funding warrants special attention to reduce the attractiveness of going on the job market early. Part-time teaching appointments for fourth year doctoral candidates might be one way of increasing funding.

16. Marketing faculties in general and directors of doctoral programs in particular should cooperate with AMA efforts to collect information on marketing doctoral programs. It is important for marketing faculties and doctoral program directors to adopt a cooperative attitude toward AMA efforts to collect information on doctoral training. Completing surveys promptly and accurately consumes time. Moreover, some individuals may view divulging information about their doctoral program as only serving to strengthen competition from other institutions in attracting well-qualified doctoral students. However, improving doctoral training enhances the pool of applicants for faculty positions at one’s own institution.

17. Institutions seeking to expand their training of marketing faculty should explore the possibility of a postdoctoral program. The need for postdoctoral programs is limited. However, such programs may be well suited to the desires and focus of a small number of schools. In implementing a postdoctoral program, three ingredients seem crucial to success: (1) postdoctoral candidates should learn about marketing through teaching, (2) senior marketing faculty should help match the research interests of the candidates with marketing issues and problems, and (3) each candidate should be assigned a mentor who helps introduce that individual to people in the field.

18. The hiring school should assist new faculty in learning how to teach effectively. Because the PhD is primarily a research degree, doctoral programs may be unable to provide adequate teaching training. Hence the hiring school may need to assume some of the burden of training new faculty to teach. Marketing departments might assist new faculty by giving them course outlines, lecture notes, opportunities to observe established successful teachers, and constructive teaching critiques (using devices such as videotaping) as well as, perhaps most importantly, assigning a “coach” who will meet with them on a regular basis during their first year to discuss teaching strategy and ways to overcome teaching problems. The hiring school also should create an atmosphere of cooperation rather than competition in teaching. Established teachers should be rewarded when they share their materials with new faculty. Finally, the hiring school can reduce the likelihood that the research careers of new faculty will become stalled by limiting the number of different course preparations assigned in their first few years.

Summary

Effective development and dissemination of marketing knowledge in the long run depend on a set of well-trained individuals capable of and interested in doing research in marketing. Primarily, these individuals will come from doctoral programs that have stressed the development of adequate skills in conceptualization, methodology, application, and communications—all crucial to knowledge-developing research. This section addresses issues relevant to ensuring an adequate supply of applicants to these programs and issues of providing the technical and professional training for doctoral students.

However, three to four years of study in a doctoral program is not sufficient to prepare people for these important tasks. Evidence abounds that too many doctoral degree recipients do not fully realize their potential or fully utilize their training. Among the several personal and institutional reasons for this situation is the fact that hiring institutions do not adequately foster early professional development in new assistant professors. The next section addresses this concern.

"Bombs," "Burnouts," and "Bigamists" in the Career Cycles of Marketing Academicians

Too many marketing academicians fail to produce the level of scientific and scholarly research output needed to advance the development of new knowledge about marketing phenomena. Indeed, the marketing discipline will not achieve the desired major advances in knowledge development unless and until marketing
academicians begin to sustain longer and more productive research careers. Like other academic disciplines, marketing has its share of “bombs,” people who quickly drop out of research (often with great anger or frustration) and fail to realize the potential they displayed while still in their doctoral programs or in their first teaching positions. Further, marketing has a more serious problem than some disciplines in its relatively large number of “burnouts” and “bigamists” occupying senior faculty positions. Too many experienced marketing academicians are “burnouts,” exhausted by heroic labors early in their careers and now devoting only low levels of time and energy to research pursuits, perhaps because they feel they have already “paid their dues” and need no longer suffer the painful trials and tribulations of the “publishing game.” Finally, some marketing academicians retain their deep love for research, but feel the pull of competing attractions. These “bigamists” find that their devotion to their school, profession, and business contacts—and the administrative, editorial, and consulting positions they accept—leaves little of themselves for research. They feel torn by their conflicting commitments. As a result, their research suffers.

The large number of bombs, burnouts, and bigamists threatens the research productivity of the marketing discipline in the following ways.

1. **Limited leadership.** Often the older “masters” withdraw before they can help the younger “apprentices” mature, thereby impeding the development of an ever-increasing cadre of productive marketing scholars.

2. **Limited programmatic research.** Promising programs of research are sidetracked or abandoned before they reach fruition.

3. **Limited credibility with external constituencies.** Marketing remains a field of study scorned by its parent disciplines and by the major foundations and funding agencies. The absence of active, experienced scholars carrying the marketing “banner” can only exacerbate this situation.

4. **Limited aspirations.** With so many doing so little, it takes less to be considered productive in marketing than in some other disciplines. Thus, low levels of research productivity become self-reinforcing. This problem is intensified by the imbalance in the supply-demand relationship for marketing academicians.

To begin to address these problems, the discipline needs a better understanding of their dimensions and causes. In this section, several hypotheses about the origins of this situation are proposed. Then recommendations for extending the productive research careers of marketing academicians are offered.

**Hypotheses About Causes**

Though lacking well-documented evidence to attest to the seriousness of the situation, we feel confident in offering the following assessment: The marketing discipline produces far too many bombs, burnouts, and bigamists. To remedy this situation, persons concerned with the development of marketing knowledge first must understand the causes of career difficulties in the field. Some hypothesized causes follow.

**Bombs.** The word “bomb” is intended to convey the sense of something that falls from great heights to great depths. In other words, use of this term connotes early failure (as in a new play that “bombs” on Broadway). Often this failure is accompanied by an emotional explosion (as with an aerosol spray bomb) or carries a feeling of desperation (as with a long pass thrown late in a football game by a quarterback whose team is losing).

In many other disciplines, difficulties in finding employment lead promising scholars to drop out of the academic world. For such premature failures, the intellectual fires are never even given the chance to burn. In marketing there have been enough academic positions to allow many promising scholars to start their careers, yet in our discipline many such careers abort in flight, detonate prematurely, explode in flames, or fizzle out with a feeble splutter. These bomblike tendencies have the effect of sending talented people off to careers involving little scholarly research (both inside and outside academia). Such bombs in marketing seem to be associated with at least six factors.

1. **Weak doctoral training.** Doctoral students in marketing often do not receive the training and methodological grounding needed to prepare them to conduct independent research (see the preceding section). In some cases the reason is the nature of the doctoral program and in other cases doctoral students sacrifice such training in favor of doing teaching. This sacrifice may be encouraged by their schools because of shortages of qualified full-time marketing faculty. In a sense, some schools help to perpetuate the shortage of marketing scholars by asking doctoral students to teach extensively, thereby setting them up for bombing.

2. **Starting job-hunting too soon.** The aggressive manner in which many schools pursue graduating doctoral candidates leads many students to interview for jobs at a time when their dissertations are still at a very preliminary stage. Though students may get good ideas for their dissertations during this interviewing process, it tends to slow them down at a crucial point in their doctoral research. If job interviews took place five or six months later, students might find the job search less disruptive and could begin their research careers more smoothly. In contrast, under the present system, poor matches between schools and
candidates tend to occur—greatly increasing the chances for bombs—because of the difficulty of determining whether a candidate's research interests are a good fit for a particular school.

3. Taking a job before completing the dissertation. The aggressive and early job market also leads doctoral candidates to accept offers of employment before they can be sure when they will complete their dissertations. Many candidates underestimate the substantial time required for completion and begin their first jobs while still facing many unfinished dissertation tasks. The simultaneous demands of a new job and a dissertation can lead to a host of problems with professors, colleagues, administrators, students, family members, friends, and others. Even after the dissertation has finally reached closure, the experience may leave a trail of mistrust, resentment, and frustration that makes it difficult to launch a productive research career (i.e., the potential is present for a terminal case of "postdissertation paralysis"). In addition, the time "lost" in completing the dissertation may place added pressure on the new faculty person to achieve tenure and promotion. It also lead indirectly to a lowering of tenure requirements.

4. Taking on heavy teaching responsibilities immediately. Many new academicians feel eager to display what they know in the classroom. Hence, they may cheerfully volunteer to teach a demanding doctoral seminar in their area of specialization or to put together a new elective course that students want but nobody else cares to teach. Moreover, some schools are overly demanding in what they expect from junior faculty in the classroom. Additional and unneeded effort spent on teaching reduces the amount of remaining time available for launching a productive research program. Some synergies may occur (especially when teaching doctoral seminars), but they usually do not compensate fully for the enormous opportunity costs incurred in the push toward pedagogy. This point is not intended to downplay the importance of good teaching, but to emphasize that teaching duties can be assigned in such a way as to foster both good teaching and good research.

5. Doing too much consulting, text writing, or administrative work. Some beginning faculty want to have it all and therefore convince themselves that they can do it all. Sometimes they are even encouraged (or pressured) by senior faculty to try to accomplish everything at once—including consulting, writing textbooks, or even assuming administrative duties. Again, the time needed to launch a productive research program inevitably is sacrificed. The individual fails to achieve the research productivity needed to attain promotion and tenure and effectively "drops out" as a contributor to marketing knowledge.

6. Facing accelerated tenure schedules. Good research takes time to conceptualize, execute, and disseminate. Schools that make tenure decisions after only four to five years do not provide adequate time for a young academician to establish a successful program of creative, rigorous research. These "short-fuse" schools may set people up for bombing out. At best, they only encourage "quick-and-dirty" research intended to add lines to resumes, sacrificing quality for quantity. Though such an approach may prevent bombing, it may also increase the likelihood of a subsequent burnout (as scholars grow weary of making only the most minor contributions).

   **Burnouts.** "Burnout" refers to the human situation, analogous to breakdowns in electrical appliances, wherein after a period of productive use the system overheats and self-destructs. In short, those marketing academicians fortunate enough to win job security by making their way successfully through the tenure process often find that the superhuman exertions needed to win promotion have left them in a state of complete physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion. Thus spent, they cannot sustain the intellectual energy needed to carry their research forward to the next stage of their academic careers. In an ironic sense, their research productivity is self-immolated on the fires of their own ambition. Though the experience of some letdown after persevering through the rigors of the tenure-review process may be inevitable, this problem often is exacerbated by some or all of the following eight factors.

   1. The sadomasochistic review process. Somewhere in the umpteenth repetition of the helpless, hapless, and hopeless experiences in the review process, many people just get sick and tired of the whole dreary mess. They grow weary of being treated like children by their own anonymous colleagues, whom they themselves treat like children in turn. They dimly sense that the whole process is fundamentally unfair and gradually succumb to a deeply painful existential angst.

   2. Textbook disparagement. As a way of increasing the impact of their work (as well as making money and possibly avoiding the review process), some senior people turn to writing books. This experience can be rejuvenating for those whose efforts are positively received, but may bring additional frustration as colleagues often downplay the contribution of textbooks or nonrefereed research monographs.

   3. Frustration over negligible impact. Older researchers sometimes become upset when they see that their own early work is forgotten and that younger generations are "reinventing the wheel" while failing to give them credit. Thus, they sense that, even when their discoveries are published, the duration of their influence is extremely short. This situation may be due partially to nonprogrammatic research efforts, but
its impact on the original researcher is nevertheless real.

4. Becoming obsolete. Ultimately, part of one’s original training becomes increasingly dated, another part is forgotten, and other parts are unused. Having grown discouraged, some individuals fail to keep up with the latest theories or methods and eventually become conceptually or technically obsolete.

5. Limited funding for research. Unlike many other disciplines, marketing has very few sources of research funding (see the section on structural impediments). Marketing academicians therefore have limited opportunities to engage in certain types of research or to address certain research problems. For some marketing academicians, limited resources preclude addressing the more elaborate and more costly research areas that are urgently in need of investigation. For others, lack of funds prevents them from attaining the recognition and trappings afforded those successful in the art of “grantsmanship.” Without the opportunity to build their own research programs, many turn to other challenges such as consulting, executive teaching, and administrative service (discussed under “Bigamists”).

6. Diminished collegial encouragement for research. The fact that “everybody’s doing it”—slipping away from research and focusing on other challenges—sustains a self-reinforcing cycle.

7. Misplaced rewards. Meanwhile, the job market offers endowed chairs and higher salaries to some marketing academicians, many of whom are only moderately productive as researchers. Such opportunities indirectly influence expectation levels as people find they can obtain pay raises while expending only modest amounts of energy and time on their research.

8. Changed personal priorities. All of the preceding “causes” make it difficult for an intelligent person to regard a heavy commitment to research as a very rational decision—especially when one has growing children and many bills to pay. Not surprisingly, the shifts in personal priorities that accompany progress through the family life cycle lead to divided loyalties that result in a lesser emphasis on research and knowledge production.

**Bigamists.** Here, “bigamist” refers to those academicians who maintain a love for research even while drastically increasing the amount of time devoted to other pursuits. Paradoxically, their success as researchers attracts additional opportunities and imposes further responsibilities that threaten to crowd out the research endeavor itself. Activities competing for devoted attention include consulting, executive teaching, and administrative, professional, or community service. In effect, participation in these activities acts as one or more “extra marriages” that dilute the commitment to research. Ultimately, academic bigamists fail to attain the contributions they could make to marketing knowledge if they were more intellectually monogamous.

The causes of bigamy probably are related to the psychological makeup of individual academicians (e.g., their need for approval, achievement, motivation, and so on). The overall shortage of professional talent in marketing probably also contributes to the situation, as too few talented, conscientious people are available to fill leadership positions. At a minimum, the following three factors appear especially threatening.

1. Consulting. As a person’s research reputation spreads and as former students attain management positions that enable them to pay for outside help, calls presenting consulting opportunities multiply. Many academicians find the challenges and financial rewards of consulting too tempting to resist and cut back their research activities accordingly. Some marketing academicians are able to discover productive synergies between their research and consulting pursuits. In many cases, however, the claim that consulting provides insights into research may be little more than an ex post facto rationalization. In reality, relatively few examples of consulting-inspired research are published in the marketing literature. Perhaps many consulting applications are simply too mundane to interest the academic community or perhaps publication outlets for certain useful types of applications research are not currently available.

2. Executive teaching. In part because of the demographic trends associated with the baby boom, many business schools have turned to executive teaching programs as additional sources of income. Along with various private and in-house management training opportunities, these programs provide lucrative alternative uses for the time of academic researchers, especially as they begin to reach the level of full professor (when their mature appearance and distinguished demeanor presumably appeal to the seasoned business veteran). However profitable, such teaching opportunities appear to have little beneficial effect on the research process. They simply compete for the researcher’s scarcest resource—time.

3. Administrative service. With early success and tenure, the academician’s administrative duties, editorial responsibilities, requests to participate on committees, invitations to join task forces, and so forth begin to increase rapidly. Many ambitious individuals find they just cannot say “no”—especially if they perceive that their future promotions and salary increases will be affected positively by having a good service record. Soon they find themselves in a variety of service roles, having little time and a diminished appetite for research. (As one example, see the discussion of
the opportunity cost associated with placing leading researcher-academics in charge of the editorial review process.)

**Recommendations to Enhance the Career Development of Marketing Academicians**

Many of the actions needed to stimulate longer and more productive research careers for marketing academicians are presented in preceding sections. Some of those recommendations are repeated here for emphasis and several new recommendations are added. Because the recommendations follow logically from the preceding discussion of causes, they are given without additional discussion under headings based on three well-known slogans.

19. **Ban the bomb.**

- Encourage more independent thinking in doctoral programs. Discourage excessive teaching by doctoral students. Provide beneficial doctoral course work and a required research experience.
- Schedule faculty recruiting activities later in the year to discourage an early start. This change can be accomplished by changing the timing of the AMA Summer Educators' Conference, by conducting the recruiting activities at another time (e.g., the AMA Winter Educators' Conference), or by not inviting candidates for campus interviews until their dissertation proposals have been defended.
- Discourage doctoral candidates from taking positions before they have completed their dissertations.
- Give new faculty members teaching assignments that allow a reasonable distribution of time between research and teaching. Provide some mechanism to assist and facilitate the transition from doctoral student to faculty member.
- Discourage consulting and textbook writing by junior faculty members.
- Foster the view that tenure is something that enables one to sustain a research career at a given university, rather than a hurdle that once overcome enables one to decrease research effort and productivity. In conjunction, strengthen tenure requirements in terms of the quality and impact of research activities and study the benefits of lengthening the time before junior-faculty tenure decisions are made to six years or longer.

20. **Only you can prevent forest fires.**

- Make the journal review process more fair, prompt, and compassionate. Toward this end, reevaluate the editorial policies of AMA journals.
- Recognize the value in scholarly books and other longer works that preserve high academic standards.
- Take further steps to honor the masters in our discipline by awards and other symbols of recognition and respect. For example, institute an AMA Fellows Program or a Marketing Hall of Fame to honor long-term contributors.
- Encourage senior faculty to take advanced seminars to keep current. Provide release time or other incentives for them to do so. Universities as well as the AMA could sponsor imaginative programs to further this end.
- Develop major sources of funding for research in marketing to provide the means for many marketing faculty to conduct more meaningful research.
- Place more emphasis on developing a supportive and scholarly environment at individual schools. Such an environment should encourage and reinforce faculty interest in and desire for research and scholarly pursuits.

21. **Keep the home fires burning.**

- Enforce limits on consulting by faculty members. (For example, many universities specify that consulting must occupy no more than one day a week.)
- Establish publication outlets for dissemination of knowledge derived from consulting applications.
- Regard executive training as a substitute for teaching assignments and adjust the manner of compensation to reduce its effect as a distraction from research. An alternative is to treat executive training programs as consulting and to include them in the limits imposed on consulting.
- Reward administrators, editors, major association office holders, and other major service contributors with paid sabbaticals consisting of a semester or an entire year off to pursue research and only research. The AMA and others could sponsor such awards.
- Spread editorial, administrative, committee, and other duties over a larger number of people. Limiting the number of editorial boards upon which a person can serve is one option, as is greater use of **ad hoc** reviewers. However, this recommendation must be executed in a way that does not dilute standards of quality for such activities; difficult tradeoffs may be involved.
Summary

Ultimately, bombs, burnouts, and bigamists appear because, as a discipline, we call them forth. Collectively, we fail to approach our work with the kind of moral resolve that can sustain us through a lifetime of rejections, disappointments, and frustrations. We desperately need some sort of spiritual center that can help us feel good about the kind of research we do. Toward that end, we must find, elevate, and proclaim whatever is noble, worthwhile, and profound in the development of marketing thought.

Improving the Dissemination of Marketing Knowledge

A natural linkage is readily apparent between developing and maintaining research-oriented people and providing mechanisms for disseminating research results. In the preceding sections, assessments and recommendations address some impediments and limited outlets for the dissemination of marketing knowledge, along with some apparently counterproductive reward structures in both academia and business organizations. In this section, two additional issues in the dissemination of marketing knowledge are discussed.

Primarily, marketing knowledge is developed somewhat formally by academic researchers and commercial marketing researchers or consultants and more experientially by "practitioners" or users. Knowledge developed by academic researchers tends to be disseminated to the discipline through research journals or academically oriented conferences. However, knowledge generated by commercial marketing researchers and practitioners tends not to be widely disseminated except by sporadic word of mouth.

Another concern is that users of marketing knowledge normally are unable or do not have the means to communicate their knowledge needs to researchers, particularly academic researchers. Hence, gaps in the store of marketing knowledge, as identified by users, are infrequently communicated to researchers. Further, there is little generalizable, accumulated marketing knowledge to be disseminated to marketing's constituents. Available marketing knowledge is infrequently reviewed and accumulated, and the scope and boundaries of the available knowledge are rarely delineated.

This section identifies dissemination gaps within the marketing discipline in general and the American Marketing Association in particular. Opportunities for narrowing some of these gaps then are described. Finally, a set of recommendations for converting some of these opportunities into communication bridges for improving the dissemination of marketing knowledge is provided.

The Role of AMA Publications in Dissemination

The situation. Currently, the AMA publishes three journals: the Journal of Marketing, subscribed to by about 30% of the professional members but by less than 50% of the educator segment, the Journal of Marketing Research, subscribed to by about 19% of the professional members, and the Journal of Health Care Marketing (American Marketing Association 1985). The association also publishes the Marketing News, circulated to all members, the Marketing Educator, circulated to the educator members, and the Collegiate Edition of Marketing News, circulated to student members.

The AMA sponsors symposia, workshops, and specialized newsletters to provide means of communicating information to and from the membership and to the marketing discipline in general. The Education Division sponsors two programs that foster communications between academicians and business executives: The Faculty Fellowship Program and the Executive Fellowship Program. The Faculty Fellowship Program places academic members with companies for a one- to two-day stay to learn about the company and its marketing operations. The Executive Fellowship Program places business executives on college campuses for a one- to two-day stay to interact with faculty and students. Both of these programs are limited in scope, usually with less than 10 individuals participating in each program per year.

Overall, the AMA membership is diverse in orientation toward marketing and toward the development, dissemination, and utilization of marketing knowledge. This diversity is a strength and an opportunity in that both researchers and users of marketing knowledge belong to the same organization. However, in general, the dissemination of marketing knowledge does not operate at anywhere near a desired level. Further, many members of the AMA and the discipline in general do not regularly participate in the available communication opportunities.

Communication gaps. The five constituencies described before are the target audiences for marketing knowledge. In many ways, marketing as a discipline does not communicate very well with these groups. For some groups—for example, academic researchers—communication vehicles are available for disseminating marketing knowledge. For other groups, either because they are very fragmented (e.g., consumers) or because they choose not to divulge information that has competitive value (e.g., business practitioners), there is little or no intragroup dissemination of knowledge on a formal basis. Intergroup communications are primarily through the research journals and are limited in readership. Formal com-
communication between academic researchers and business practitioners or students is limited. Though general marketing textbooks serve this purpose to some extent, these books may be up to 10 years removed from the knowledge development. Moreover, general textbooks tend not to delineate the scope and boundaries of current knowledge. Instead they attempt to provide “general principles,” some of which may not be valid either because of recent research results or because they have not been subjected to the scrutiny of systematic validation.

Communication gaps within American Marketing Association. The AMA comprises business practitioner members, academic researcher-teacher members, and college student members. To serve these varied members, the AMA has developed newsletters, seminars and conferences, and other methods of communication tailored for their special needs. Unfortunately, while striving to serve its membership, the AMA has erected institutional barriers that block communications between academicians and business practitioners. Further, by being classified as students, doctoral candidates may receive communication vehicles that are not suitable for their orientation and role as future knowledge developers and disseminators.

Though information about noneducator-oriented conferences appears in the Marketing News prior to the conferences, information about the Summer and Winter Educators’ Conferences appears only in the Marketing Educator. This segregation of conference information not only makes it difficult for noneducators to learn about the educator conferences, but even makes it difficult for educators themselves to receive timely information about the educator conferences. As the Marketing Educator is published only three times a year, lead time often is not sufficient for appropriate announcements or calls for papers. Moreover, brochures announcing the educator conferences are mailed only to educator members, further exacerbating this communication problem. Some practitioner members interested in attending the conferences receive no registration or hotel information. Some educator members classified as practitioner members similarly do not receive these brochures or the Marketing Educator.

Statements about positioning of AMA journals. The 1985 Strategic Assessment of the American Marketing Association, prepared by the members of the 1984–1985 Strategic Planning Committee, provides the following positioning statements for the principal AMA journals.

Journal of Marketing
Statement of Mission: The editorial goal of the Journal of Marketing (JM), a national quarterly publication, is to serve as a bridge between the scholarly and the practical, each of which has a vital stake in what’s happening on the other side.

Primary Reader Target: Thoughtful marketing practitioners and educators concerned with marketing theory and practice.

Journal of Marketing Research
Statement of Mission: The Journal of Marketing Research (JMR) is a quarterly journal striving to publish the best manuscripts available dealing with research in marketing and with marketing research practice. JMR is a scholarly and professional journal. It does not attempt to serve the generalist in marketing management, but it does strive to appeal to the professional in marketing research.

Primary Reader Target: Technically oriented marketing researchers and marketing educators concerned with marketing research. In this context, “technically oriented” includes but is not limited to quantitative treatments.

The positions of JM and JMR are discussed also in editorial statements by Cunningham (1982) and Churchill and Perreault (1982). Cunningham recognized the AMA policy that JM “is to serve as a bridge between the scholarly and practical,” but he acknowledged “that each editor is responsible for interpreting that objective in a manner that will be most productive for the marketing discipline.” Cunningham then indicated his own views about the appropriate content of JM:

The Journal of Marketing is dedicated to publishing the highest quality manuscripts available. If a manuscript does not develop new theoretical material, suggest new concepts or methods, or help advance the current level of marketing practice, it will not be published. The Journal of Marketing must present new ideas to its readers rather than parading before them old ideas dressed in new clothing . . .

The Journal, of course, will continue to publish theoretical manuscripts. Good theoretical work is valuable in itself and eventually leads to more effective management practice. The Journal will also solicit papers that can help marketing executives identify new problems or solve existing ones.

He described a broad range of topics that are appropriate for JM articles and suggested the JM “serves a segmented market; thus individual articles may not be of interest to everyone.”

Churchill and Perreault attempted to position JMR with respect to JM:

As peer publications of the AMA, JMR and the Journal of Marketing must work together to ensure that the AMA’s publications provide readers with the highest quality information about new and emerging developments in marketing thought and practice. Though both journals seek to achieve this common goal, the focus of the two journals is different. The Journal of Marketing is concerned with the total field of marketing. As a result, it appeals to readers who are interested in developing a better understanding across the many facets of the discipline. JMR, in contrast, is the major journal of research in marketing. Its more narrowly defined focus implies that readers interested in research findings and research methods should expect to find state-of-the-art depth in this
journal. Within its defined focus, the journal’s objective is to provide balanced coverage of the different topics important and relevant to the discipline.

They then indicated the high quality standards that are appropriate for JMR articles:

As the major journal of marketing research, JMR also has the responsibility and challenge of establishing and maintaining high standards for the field. . . . Articles that justify publication in JMR should be based on the highest standards of scholarly inquiry, and the depth and completeness of thought and conceptualization that this implies.

Perceived positioning of publications. The AMA journals have a vital role in the dissemination and creation of marketing knowledge. Because of the efficiency and accessibility of print media, it is unlikely that any other information transmission vehicle such as audio or video recordings will be as effective in serving the knowledge-dissemination function in the near future. However, the principal AMA journals (Journal of Marketing and Journal of Marketing Research) are not realizing their full potential in terms of knowledge development and dissemination because the function and target audiences of the journals are not well defined. In other words, the journals are not clearly “positioned.” Consequently, their editorial direction is inconsistent. This inconsistency results not only in some duplication of efforts, but also in the systematic exclusion of some articles that could be important in developing knowledge. In addition, the present journals do a poor job of disseminating knowledge to undergraduate and MBA students and to practitioners.

The Journal of Marketing Research (JMR) is targeted clearly to a narrow segment of academicians, PhD students, and market researchers whereas the AMA “newspapers”—Marketing Educator and Marketing News—are targeted clearly toward marketing academicians and the broad AMA audience consisting primarily of practitioners, respectively. However, the positioning of the Journal of Marketing (JM) is and has been unclear. Though JM has a broader audience than JMR, it seems to be “less desirable than the perceived best journal” for both academic and managerial market segments. Many academicians perceive JM as a lower quality but more managerially oriented journal than JMR. The general AMA membership also perceives JM as lower in quality; however, they do not perceive it to be significantly more managerially relevant than JMR.

The positioning of JM and JMR seems to have been debated actively within the AMA. Rather than being resolved at a policy level, however, the positioning direction has been determined by the values and orientations of the various editors. Each JM and JMR editor has selected a position (not always clearly stated) and differences have arisen over time because of the idiosyncratic values of the specific editors. For example, some JM editors view JM and JMR as equivalent in terms of quality standards and content.

The Marketing News (MN) has an important role in disseminating information about AMA activities and programs, but neither academicians nor practitioners believe that MN disseminates marketing knowledge. Many of the articles are written by vendors of marketing services who are attempting to promote their consulting activities. Hence, much of the editorial content is really publicity and practitioners’ thoughts that have not been tested through a formal review process. In fact, the distinct lack of rigor and clarity may actually impede the dissemination of knowledge by misleading unsophisticated readers into thinking that articles in Marketing News are describing the state of the art in marketing. Finally, the Marketing Educator addresses some pedagogical issues confronted by academicians, but is not widely read and serves a limited role in knowledge development and dissemination.

In summary, JM and JMR have extremely significant roles in the cumulative development of marketing knowledge—roles that extend beyond issues of knowledge dissemination to a broader audience. However, the present focus (or lack of focus) of the journals results in the following undesirable situations.

1. A lack of published journal articles describing state-of-the-art marketing research written in a form accessible to marketing undergraduates, MBA students, and thoughtful executives—articles that can be used in a classroom or executive education setting and that make practical knowledge accessible to more members of the marketing community. Such a task is performed by the Harvard Business Review (HBR), but is not even addressed by JM. JM and JMR are not now serving as a bridge between practitioners and academicians. Such a bridge remains a critical, unsatisfied need in the marketing literature.

2. A lack of published journal articles that review past research and integrate that research to provide new conceptualizations of marketing issues. Though few articles of this type are published in JMR, the preponderance of O’Dell Award articles fit this category, attesting to the importance of conceptual and review articles in knowledge development and dissemination.

3. A lack of articles proposing new ideas and approaches to marketing problems. No journal emphasizes creativity, novelty, or potential theoretical impact of an idea in its review process. Both JM and JMR emphasize methodo-
logical rigor and thoroughness of conceptual development. There seems to be no outlet for a novel viewpoint that has not yet stood the test of time, but could initiate a fresh and perhaps revolutionary perspective.

4. A bias in the present criteria for JM and JMR articles toward empirical rather than conceptual articles.

Some of these issues may be responsible for the low circulation of JM and JMR even among academic AMA members.

Opportunities for Narrowing the Communication Gaps

The gap between the academic researcher and the applied researcher or research director is probably the narrowest of the various gaps between and among the five constituencies of marketing knowledge. However, the gap between the academic researcher and any of these groups is large because the research journals that publish the research reports of these individuals are less likely to be subscribed to or read by other academic or practitioner groups. Hence, a publication vehicle is needed that (1) translates some of the pertinent research reports into more understandable, application-oriented reports and (2) publishes descriptive types of research reports.

One approach to narrowing the gap between the problem-oriented academic researchers and the applications-oriented researchers or managers is to establish a mechanism whereby the latter group can develop a priority list of research needs. That is, these practitioners need to be able to communicate to the academic researchers problems that need research-based solutions. Another approach to narrow the gap is to have joint academic-practitioner conferences or workshops that focus on research and problems common to the interests of these groups.

To begin to communicate to public policy makers, special interest groups, and consumers would require a different type of effort. Because these constituencies of marketing knowledge do not normally join a formal marketing organization such as the American Marketing Association, the normal communication vehicles of the AMA will not reach these groups. However, some effort is needed to establish the legitimacy of marketing knowledge generated by marketing researchers—at a minimum, some formal publicity efforts. For example, publicity releases highlighting conference papers are produced routinely by the American Psychological Association and to some extent by the American Economics Association. The New England Journal of Medicine routinely releases information for the general public about its research articles. Though the AMA does provide highlight articles about its conferences or chapter meetings in the Marketing News, it does not attempt to broaden the dissemination of these reports to a wider population. Some general releases to the public about new research findings might help to widen the acceptance of marketing research. Finally, some efforts are needed to establish specific communications with governmental officials.

Recommendations to Improve the Dissemination of Marketing Knowledge

Efforts to narrow the gaps between different constituency groups of the AMA and the academic marketing discipline should center on developing different types of communication vehicles to disseminate marketing knowledge and information.

22. Efforts should be made to enhance interactions between academicians and practitioners at conferences and other face-to-face organized meetings.

- To encourage academicians to attend and participate in noneducator conferences:
  —Provide written proceedings of these conferences to enhance rewards desired by some academicians for making presentations.
  —Make special efforts to invite academicians to appear on programs.
  —Appoint academicians to conference planning committees.
  —Mail conference notices to academicians who ask for such notices, have attended the particular conference in the past, are on the program, or have expressed an interest in the conference.
  —Develop a conference pricing policy that recognizes the limited travel funds available to academic members from their universities. (Some practitioner members assume that academicians have sufficient consulting funds to pay their way, but that perception is usually not correct.)

- To encourage practitioners to attend and participate in educator conferences:
  —Do not require a written version of their presentations, but ask them to tape and transcribe the presentations for inclusion in the conference proceedings.
  —Invite practitioners to appear in selected sessions.
  —Mail conference notices to practitioners who ask for such notices, have attended the particular conference in the past, are on the program, or have expressed an interest in the conference.

- Sponsor a series of academician-practitioner workshops. An initial step might be to organize
a small workshop with senior marketing executives and leading academic researchers. Such a workshop could seek to establish research priorities for marketing and training priorities for students in marketing.

- To help academicians and practitioners communicate more easily:
  — Prepare attractive, informative audiovisual materials.
  — Communicate without escaping into the relative security of technical or business jargon.
  — Use a clear, well-organized, concrete, and vivid writing style.

- Provide a mechanism for helping practitioners learn some of the technical language of marketing researchers. Such a mechanism might be a glossary of terms, a development session at practitioner-oriented conferences, or some formal tutorial activity. (Many academicians, primarily nonresearchers, would also benefit from such efforts.) If gaps are to close or narrow, both groups must make efforts to build the bridge(s).

23. The American Marketing Association should develop a public relations function for the Association and for the marketing discipline in general. Efforts should be made routinely to provide summaries of papers presented at conferences to the general media and to provide general highlights of research results to the press. Further, the AMA needs to establish some liaison with public policy makers to help them recognize that marketing research provides legitimate and useful information for the development of public policy. Moreover, as discussed in the section on doctoral training, such efforts also should attempt to attract people to study marketing.

24. Begin a new journal directed toward disseminating marketing knowledge primarily to practitioners and students and secondarily to academicians. The following comments summarize the Task Force's discussion of a new journal; however, a more detailed review should be undertaken by an appropriate committee. The new journal, perhaps entitled Marketing Management (MM), would emphasize dissemination of knowledge to practitioners, PhD and non-PhD students, and academicians. It would serve as a common reservoir for information to be shared by the three segments. It would have quality standards similar to those of HBR and considerably higher than those of trade journals such as Advertising Age and Business Marketing. Some journals with a narrower audience that attempt to serve this role are Journal of Advertising, AMA's Journal of Health Care Marketing, and Journal of Retail Banking. The proposed new journal would be the AMA's flagship publication to its principal constituency—practitioners in general and specifically line managers, in addition to market researchers. The AMA must be careful in positioning this new journal so that JM's readership and role are actually enhanced.

Articles would undergo a formal review process, but the review would emphasize evaluative criteria different from those of JM or JMR. Specifically, MM papers would be judged on the degree to which marketing thought is presented accurately, thoroughly, and in a form that could be used by practitioners and students as well as by academicians teaching those audiences. The content would be of three types: (1) well-written reviews that summarize present knowledge but do not attempt to create or test new theories, (2) articles written by renowned practitioners summarizing their views about their area of expertise, and (3) reports on the results of case studies involving novel techniques or approaches to marketing management problems. When controversial issues are addressed, both sides would be presented. Some titles of articles that might appear in MM are:

- Is Market Share Really that Important to Business Performance?
- Controlling the Channel: Alternatives to Vertical Integration
- How to Motivate Salespeople to Work Smarter
- Pricing Services and Products: Differences and Similarities
- Effective Use of Humor in Advertising

The journal might also include a digest or bibliography of recently published marketing articles, similar to the literature review currently published in JM.

The Task Force strongly suggests that active participation by academicians and a formal review process including academicians are important to provide quality control of articles accepted for publication. On the basis of the authorship of journals serving missions similar to that of HBR, we anticipate that most of the articles would be written by academicians who have meaningful contacts with practitioners through their consulting and executive education activities. We believe that if the new journal relied solely on practitioners for editorial direction and content, it would be less likely to achieve the goal of disseminating knowledge to practitioners, students, and academicians. Articles written primarily by consultants who are presenting their ideas and techniques to solicit new clients must be avoided.

The new journal would require a significant investment by AMA. To ensure high quality communication, a full-time managing editor is needed. In addition, the design and graphics should be appealing.
The production must be attractive if it is to reach a management audience. However, the number of subscriptions to the journal is likely to be high—perhaps one to two times higher than that of *JM*. In addition, there may be significant opportunities for advertising revenue.

A critical issue that should be addressed is the need to provide incentives for academicians and practitioners to submit articles to *MM*. The editor would need to emphasize submissions actively. Perhaps the initial articles would be solicited from noted academicians and practitioners to legitimize the journal in the academic community. If the journal is able to become the *HBR* for marketers, getting a sufficient manuscript flow should not be a problem. Perhaps initially the journal could also include revisions of appropriate articles appearing in less widely circulated publications.

25. Develop an editorial policy that clearly positions *JM*, *JMR*, and the new journal in terms of audience, content style, and criteria for evaluation and require journal editors to comply with the stated policy. Specifically, *JM* should be positioned as a vehicle for communicating innovative ideas and concepts to academicians and thoughtful practitioners. One potential positioning is summarized in Table 1; however, the Task Force recognizes that the ultimate positioning should await more input and review. *JMR* would focus primarily on empirical tests of theory and methodological articles, whereas *JM* would focus primarily on reviews, conceptual analyses, and theoretical articles. Some theoretical articles might be published in *JMR* if they were very rigorous and comprehensive (such as meta-analyses, papers on the philosophy of science, or elaborate mathematical modeling efforts). *JM* might publish some empirical papers that present interesting descriptive information suggesting new theoretical directions. Both journals would have high quality standards, but they would emphasize different criteria. *JM* would place more emphasis on originality, conceptual development, and creativity of ideas whereas *JMR* would place more emphasis on methodological rigor. This positioning of the three journals would parallel the three domains of knowledge discussed by Brinberg and McGrath (1985): substantive (*MM*), conceptual (*JM*), and methodological (*JMR*).

26. Increase the number of commentaries and book reviews in the journals. In each of the journals, commentaries and book reviews would have a larger role. However, the nature of these knowledge-dissemination vehicles would differ across journals. In *JMR* and *JM*, commentaries would arise from the review process and would focus on alternative interpretations of theory tests, appropriateness of methodologies, or al-

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<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
<th>Potential Positioning of AMA Journals</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mission</strong></td>
<td>JMR: Theory testing, methodological development</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td>Practitioners: Market researchers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Academicians: Methodological researchers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Students: PhDs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>Methodological developments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Empirical studies, testing theories</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Literature reviews, meta-analyses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reviews of research-method books</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reviews of conceptual books and textbooks</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Criteria for Review</strong></td>
<td>Methodological rigor, thoroughness of review, conceptualization, or empirical test</td>
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ternative views about proposed theories and conceptualizations. Commentaries in *MM* would be written largely by practitioners discussing the merits and applicability of information presented in the articles. Efforts should be made to have the commentaries appear in the same issue as the article. *JMR* would contain reviews of methodological books, *JM* reviews of text-books and conceptual books, and *MM* reviews of trade books.

**Summary**

It seems clear that the AMA journals primarily serve one marketing constituency—academicians. However, given that less than 50% of AMA academic

| TABLE 2 |

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Summary of Issues and Recommendations</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Insufficient resources devoted to marketing knowledge development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1, 20. Develop a large-scale funding source for support of faculty research in marketing.</td>
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<td><strong>Demand for PhDs in marketing exceeds supply (not enough people generating and disseminating knowledge)</strong></td>
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<td>5, 13, 23. Develop a program to improve the image of marketing in general and stimulate interest in marketing doctoral programs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9, 17. Encourage individuals with PhDs in related fields to consider academic careers in marketing and provide opportunities for postdoctoral training for interested individuals.</td>
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<td>6, 16. Provide a clearinghouse for information on marketing PhD programs.</td>
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<td>11. Attempt to forecast the long-term market for marketing PhDs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Too many promising research careers end prematurely</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>7, 10, 14. Improve training of doctoral students by facilitating the review of programs and the exchange of information between programs through a periodic meeting of doctoral program directors and the publication of descriptive guidelines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12, 19. Conduct faculty recruiting activities later in doctoral students’ academic careers and discourage candidates from taking positions before they have completed their dissertations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Provide four years of funding for marketing PhDs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18, 19. Provide some teaching experience for PhD candidates, though the amount of teaching should not be excessive.</td>
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<td>8. Sponsor events that help socialize PhD students into the research development and dissemination process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Help launch the careers of newly hired PhDs by reducing teaching loads, providing assistance in acquiring teaching skills, and having senior faculty support junior faculty as mentors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19, 21. Discourage consulting and textbook writing by junior faculty.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Premature termination of the research careers of marketing academicians who have been tenured</strong></td>
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<td>2, 21, 26. Reduce the costs of the review process to both authors and reviewers. Encourage commentaries and stronger editor control and discourage negative, nonconstructive reviews. Reduce the number of required article revisions.</td>
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<td>20, 21. Provide additional honors and rewards for senior researchers.</td>
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<td>20. Offer opportunities and encourage senior faculty to keep current by taking advanced seminars.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Senior faculty do not devote enough time to generating knowledge</strong></td>
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<td>21. Enforce limits on consulting by faculty members.</td>
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<td>21. Reward faculty members who take administrative service assignments with paid sabbaticals for research.</td>
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<td>21. Spread service duties across a larger number of faculty.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Restrictive approach to knowledge development, risky innovative ideas, long-term projects, lengthy publications (books, monographs), and reports of knowledge gained through consulting experiences are discouraged</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>25. Emphasize the criterion of innovativeness in the review process of at least one journal (perhaps <em>JM</em>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. Emphasize idea generation, theory development, and substantive breadth in PhD programs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7, 13. Provide training in basic disciplines during doctoral program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3, 22. Provide a communication outlet for academicians to report on insights gained through consulting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Increase the attention paid to quality rather than quantity of contributions in the faculty review process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6, 7, 10, 16. Improve training of doctoral students by facilitating the review of programs and the exchange of information between programs through a periodic meeting of doctoral program directors and the publication of descriptive guidelines.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The dissemination of marketing knowledge is extremely limited</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Develop a journal directed toward practitioners—especially marketing managers.</td>
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<td>22. Encourage practitioners to attend academician-oriented conferences and academicians to attend practitioner-oriented conferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Undertake a publicity program to disseminate new marketing research findings in general readership media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Publish information about all meetings, conferences, and workshops (academic and practitioner) in <em>Marketing News</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Make the contents of workshops, consortia, etc. more readily available to nonparticipants.</td>
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members subscribe to the more general *Journal of Marketing* (American Marketing Association 1985), the dissemination of marketing knowledge seems to be extremely limited. Further, new marketing knowledge that is publicly disseminated is limited primarily to the published research of the academic researchers. Little effort has been made to broaden the dissemination of new knowledge to the many other constituencies of marketing knowledge—in particular, academic teachers, students, and managers. The need for a new “practice-oriented” marketing publication is apparent.

A positioning strategy is needed for the AMA journals to widen the “market” coverage of knowledge dissemination to reach more constituents. In addition, as initially noted in the section on structural impediments and expanded on here, there is a need to improve communications about knowledge development from practitioners and consultants to other marketing constituents. Mechanisms for communicating marketing knowledge to constituents outside academia and business practitioners also are needed.

The AMA should establish a strategic planning priority to improve the dissemination of marketing knowledge to all constituents (users). Clearly, not all communication gaps can or ought to be bridged. However, we have a unique opportunity to improve the development, dissemination, and use of marketing knowledge because both researchers and practitioners belong to the same organization. The communications gap between academic researchers and practitioners is a problem of both attitudes and practice by the two groups of members. Further, this communications gap is a major impediment to the dissemination of marketing knowledge.

**Discussion and Conclusions**

Table 2 provides an organizing scheme that puts the preceding assessments and recommendations into perspective. The recommendations offered to address various aspects of each problem are listed (along with their corresponding numbers in the text). Thus, Table 2 conveys the way in which a particular problem is manifested. For example, solutions to the problem of insufficient efforts in developing marketing knowledge come from removing structural impediments, improving doctoral training, facilitating academic career development, and improving knowledge dissemination. During the Task Force’s many discussions, this pattern frequently recurred as the various issues were considered. We hope that this interactive nature of the problems and their solutions is conveyed in the summary.

This report addresses a wide range of issues and concerns related to developing and disseminating marketing knowledge. At this point, little attention has been directed to the third element of the Task Force’s original assignment: how the marketing discipline utilizes marketing knowledge. The earlier commission concluded that marketing research has had relatively little impact on improving marketing management practice (Myers, Massy, and Greyser 1980). Perhaps one reason for this relatively inconsequential impact of research in marketing on marketing practice is the ineffective way information and knowledge are communicated to and among the various constituencies of marketing knowledge. In retrospect, given that the communications function is a major component of marketing management, the discipline has not practiced what it preaches. The premier professional association in marketing, the AMA, must address this problem.

However, an equally important reason for the apparent low impact of research in marketing is the haphazard and often inconsequential effort to develop marketing knowledge. The discipline, the AMA, academic institutions, and the practitioner community all share the blame for this assessment. We simply put too few resources into the effort of developing a common body of marketing knowledge. Further, somewhat myopically, we seem more intent on discouraging researchers from pursuing knowledge-developing research than in rewarding such efforts.

As pointed out at the beginning of this report, we recognize that the marketing discipline has come a long way since 1959. Nevertheless, the Task Force believes that our self-evaluation of how marketing develops, disseminates, and utilizes marketing knowledge indicates that, as a discipline, we still have a long way to go. We encourage discussion and debate about the many issues addressed in this report, as well as the many issues that remain to be examined. If we have raised the consciousness of the marketing discipline about these issues, this report has accomplished its purpose. If we have ignited even a tiny spark of excitement about the tremendous intellectual potential that awaits exploration by scholars, researchers, and thinkers in the field of marketing, we have exceeded our most optimistic goals.

**REFERENCES**


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