

**JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY OF MARKETING
SCIENCE SPECIAL SECTION ON:
MARKETING/LOGISTICS INTERFACES**

Special Section Editor's Comments

At a special session conducted during the Academy of Marketing Science's 1988 spring meeting presentors and discussants examined why an historical split appears to have developed between the disciplines of marketing and logistics. The thrust of the discussion was to explore ways to put logistics "back" into the mainstream of marketing. From the discussion a proposition evolved—namely, that logistics never was a part of marketing and only given the events of the 1980's is the integration of marketing and logistics both timely and desired.

To be sure, early marketing scholars understood the importance of physical distribution to the practice of marketing. Arch W. Shaw (1916) was the first of many authors who conceptualized the interrelation of demand creation and physical supply. In fact, Shaw was the first author to use the term "physical distribution." Years later, Fred Clark (1922) even wrote a chapter titled "Physical Distribution." However, the more common treatment of physical distribution was passive. Discussion of transportation and storage was limited to a description of facilitating functions necessary to support the process of marketing. In short, physical distribution was treated in the context of a necessary, but secondary, aspect of marketing support. The illusion that physical distribution was once firmly positioned in the marketing discipline resulted from two somewhat different activities.

The first activity was the occasional article or book in the marketing literature that embraced physical distribution as a vital dimension of marketing performance or warned of the consequences of its neglect. Paul D. Converse's "The Other Half of Marketing" (1954) and Peter F. Drucker's, "The Economy's Dark Continent" (1962), were examples of such warnings. Alderson's *Marketing Behavior and Executive Action* (1957), and Staudt and Taylor's *A Managerial Introduction to Marketing* (1965) were prime examples of attempts to integrate physical distribution into strategic marketing. Despite these and a few other authors' efforts to integrate, the disciplines proceeded for several decades without substantial synergism.

The second stream of activity was the relatively late maturity of integrated physical distribution. In 1988 the primary professional association, the Council of Logistics Management (formerly the National Council of Physical Distribution Management) held its Silver Anniversary meeting.

One of the primary objectives of the founders of CLM was to establish a forum to help foster and promote the development of the fledgling physical distribution discipline. This was only 25 years ago. To a significant degree, the Council was a splinter organization that grew out of the American Marketing Association. While the discipline originated around the integration of activities related to finish goods distribution, the concept was quickly expanded to also embrace procurement and materials management. For several decades, professional development focused on improving the efficiency of the value-added flow from material sourcing to finished product distribution. To acknowledge this development, the Council officially changed its name in 1985 to the Council of Logistics Management. Historically the Council has concentrated on developing the overall efficiency of the value-added process. Only recently has attention moved to interface opportunities such as customer service.

Events of the 1980's have combined to make the coordination of the marketing and logistics timely. First and foremost, deregulation has repositioned free market incentives into the logistics sector. Second, the unprecedented rate of computer and information technology development has made new and unique solutions to old and pressing problems commonplace. Third, the information age is forcing organizational restructuring as firms become flatter, span of control broadens and partnership alliances become commonplace. Finally, the relevant arena for businesses during the late 1980's and for the foreseeable future has become global. These events combined to attract managerial alternatives to the importance of logistical competency to marketing strategy.

For the past several years, the Academy has taken a leadership role in developing a positive interface between marketing and logistics relationship and management practice. A basic belief exists among a group of marketing scholars that logistics performance can be exploited as a dimension of marketing strategy.

Once the door is open, the ideas flow rich. This special section contains five varied articles competitively selected from a field of 15 qualified manuscripts. The presentation is initiated by Mentzer, Gomes and Krampf in a discussion of the fundamental importance of physical distribution to the marketing concept. This is followed by Rinehart, Cooper and Wagenheim's discussion of the role of customer service in integrating transaction creation and fulfillment. These two lead articles highlight the potential synergism of logistics and marketing.

The final three articles develop specific aspects of the marketing and logistics interface. Tucker and Myers detail the

role of logistics in the process of innovation. Droge and Germain relate organizational structure research to logistical performance. Finally, Granzin and Bahn relate logistics and the consumer. Each of these articles examine new dimensions of the rapidly emerging marketing and logistics interface and serve as examples of the potential of such a union.

To assist in the process of article selection, all papers were subjected to triple review. The following individuals served as reviewers:

Dr. Pat Calabro
University of Texas—Arlington

Dr. Martha Cooper
The Ohio State University

Dr. Robert Cook
Central Michigan University
Dr. James Stock
Michigan State University

Dr. Raminahan Pisharodi
University of Michigan (Visiting)

Dr. Walter Zinn
University of Miami

Dr. Paul Zinszer
Syracuse University

These reviewers provided a great deal of constructive help to authors of all articles submitted. Many articles that could not be accepted given the limited space of this special section will ultimately appear in print in part due to the comprehensive review provided by these seven professionals.

My special thanks goes to Patricia Daugherty, who helped coordinate all of the detail that goes into a special section. Appreciation is also extended to Irene Lange and William Darden and their staffs who jointly handled this manuscript for the Academy. Our joint hope is that the materials presented will help facilitate more meaningful teaching and research related to the marketing/logistics interface potential.

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