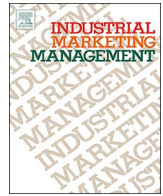




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Short communication

Introduction: Commentaries on the Citation Classics in *Industrial Marketing Management*

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In August 2018, *Industrial Marketing Management* published a special issue celebrating its Citation Classics, the top thirty articles published over the years as determined by citation counts. *Industrial Marketing Management* has emerged as the leading academic journal devoted to business-to-business marketing. A benchmark for leadership that is recognized in the academic community is citation count, as this is a measure of the usefulness of the articles the journal publishes to the academic community that the journal is serving. These thirty articles (the full list appears in [Lindgreen & Di Benedetto, 2018](#)) led the way in terms of citations and, by that measure, have been highly influential in the emergence of the business-to-business marketing literature.

Once the top articles were identified, several questions arose: Why were these the most influential articles? What were the research categories that were of most interest to business-to-business marketing scholars? And, what impact did the articles have? How was academic research influenced by these articles, and what has happened in the research categories since the publication of these articles?

The August 2018 special issue strove to answer the first two of these questions by identifying research patterns. As noted at that time, the thirty articles could be classified into research categories. From this, one can infer that these are the research categories that have garnered the most interest among those scholars doing work related to business-to-business marketing. These highest-priority research categories include supply chain, relationships and business networks, firm performance, value, goods-dominant/service-dominant logic, product innovation, Internet and high-technology markets, third-party logistics providers, and systems sellers/systems integrators. It was also noted that several of the articles made contributions to more than one of the above categories.

To answer the remaining questions (about impact on academic research and what has happened since the publication of these articles), the co-editors-in-chief turned to several of the authors of the Citation Classics and invited their commentaries and reflections. Specifically, we asked six teams of authors to provide their comments on how their research category has developed and matured up to the present day. The result is the special issue before you in this issue of *Industrial*

Marketing Management.

The first article, by Roderick J. Brodie and Helge Löbler, examines the evolution of service-dominant logic. The authors note how this literature has developed from the first research (which proposed a new perspective of markets based on service-dominant logic) to more recent articles (which show the evolution of service-dominant logic to paradigm status). The authors argue that service-dominant logic meets most of the conditions of a paradigm, yet there is still room for further development. The authors conclude by proposing avenues for future research that will lead to the acceptance of service-dominant logic as a unifying research paradigm.

Following this article is a presentation of an integrative framework of research on mapping value in business markets, authored by Andreas Eggert, Michael Kleinaltenkamp, and Vishal Kashyap. Here, the authors note that value has been inconsistently conceptualized in business-to-business marketing. Their framework recognizes different views on value (for example, who is the value beneficiary, what is the underlying value perspective or perception, and whether value is viewed in terms of transactions or relationships), and their framework seeks to integrate these views. The authors identify areas requiring further research such as the exploration of individual actors' value perceptions.

The third article, by David B. Grant, reviews the classic articles on outsourcing integration and third party logistics services. The author identifies topics that are covered in these classic articles, including supply chain integration, core competence, and value proposition implications. The article concludes with several implications for future research in this stream including horizontal collaboration among competitors and the role of emerging technologies such as block chain.

In the fourth article, Peter Naudé and Catherine Sutton-Brady explore the influence of the classic articles on relationships and networks in business-to-business marketing. This was a rich research category, comprising six of the thirty Citation Classics. The authors identify and integrate the topics, which have been included in these highly-cited articles. These topics include the effect of guanxi and personal relationships in Chinese business transactions, managing business networks, cooperative relationships, long-term buyer-seller relationship

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quality, customer relationship management, and value co-creation. The authors note that many of these articles were highly cited since they were among the first to be published on these topics, which soon attracted much research interest.

The fifth article, by Lisa M. Ellram and Monique L. Ueltschy Murfield, delves into the topic of relationships in supply chain management. The authors conducted a literature review of supply chain management research published in *Industrial Marketing Management*, identifying the recurring themes and research gaps. For example, almost three-fifths of supply chain management articles examined buyer-seller relationships and similar supply management topics. While these will undoubtedly continue to be important research topics, there are under-researched topics such as sustainability, logistics, and manufacturing innovation, which may be rich avenues for future research.

Finally, the last article, written by Sengun Yenyurt, Fang Wu, Daekwan Kim, and S. Tamer Cavusgil, studied information technology and other factors impacting business performance. This research category accounted for four of the thirty Citation Classics. The authors begin with a retrospective of the four articles, and add a literature review showing how the research on business performance has evolved since the publication of the classic articles. The authors identify

research gaps, but also under-researched factors that might be important determinants of business performance, as well as additional firm performance measures that could be examined in future research studies.

In sum, the August 2018 special issue, and this one, provide a unique perspective on the influence of *Industrial Marketing Management* on academic business-to-business marketing research. The earlier special issue identified which of the many research categories found in the pages of *Industrial Marketing Management* have been the most influential as judged by citations. In this issue, we invited top academics in each research category to reflect on the influence the Citation Classics have had on subsequent research initiatives in their respective research streams. As co-editors-in-chief, we are delighted to see how the articles published in these pages have continued to provide value to our readership. Enjoy this special issue!

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