

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT: SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW, SOMETHING BORROWED, SOMETHING BLUE?

Session Chair

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Abstract

During the 1970's and 1980's logistics courses gradually faded from the marketing curriculum landscape. Suddenly in the late 1990's logistics or more specifically supply chain management has once again become a "hot" topic for marketers. In his book, From Mind to Market, Roger Blackwell argues that for firms to be successful in the next century, they will need to refocus their thinking about supply chains. "Rather than building and operating their supply chains from manufacturer to market, the best firms in the next century will form their supply chains from the mind of the consumer to market, creating chains based on consumers' needs and wants." In essence, the concept of supply chain is being replaced with the idea of a demand chain. Blackwell goes on to note that these new "supply/demand chains" are already "several generations evolved from the traditional business-school model of supply chain management. They truly an integration of logistics and marketing principles "In the new millennium, no retailer, manufacturer or wholesaler will be strong enough to win the on its own. The fight for dominance in the marketplace will be fought between alliances of supply chain members. Competitive dominance will be achieved by the entire supply chain, with battles fought supply chain versus supply chain"(Blackwell). Certainly Blackwell sees the need for marketing educators to incorporate this idea into the marketing curriculum.

Meanwhile, James Heskitt, W. Earl Sasser, and Leonard Schlesinger see the same type of battle shaping up in services. In their book, The Service Profit Chain, they argue that for firms to be successful in the new millennium they will need both a market(customer) focus to determine what services customers want and an operation focus to best deliver the services. In essence, they argue that service marketers must compete based on well they can determine which services are wanted and how well they can deliver/supply them.

This special session presents, discusses, and

debates several important questions pertaining to supply chain management. First, is supply chain management simply logistics repackaged or a completely new idea? Second, should marketing departments develop supply chain management courses? Third, what topics are appropriate for a supply chain management course and how should the course be taught? Fourth, should services oriented marketing programs have a course in services logistics, service profit chains, or service supply chain management?

The presenters represent an intriguing mix for the discussion and debate of these issues. Professor James Cross provides an historical perspective. He was trained in channels of distribution and logistics at the University of Minnesota in the late 1970's and early 1980's. At the other end of the spectrum, Michael Mejza is 1998 graduate of the University of Maryland's logistics program. He minored in marketing. Thomas Boyt's was trained in services marketing at the University of Oklahoma, which also had a strong logistics program. Michael Mejza and Thomas Boyt are team teaching a required course in supply chain management in UNLV's new MBA program. Given the emphasis on services in the Las Vegas' economy, their focus is on services logistics/services profit chains. Jack Schibrowsky, Wisconsin 1988, rounds out the panel. Jack is currently the chair of the department of marketing and has a national reputation in the area of marketing curriculum issues and the AACSB. He provides both a curricula perspective and an administrator's perspective to the discussion.

While much of the current marketing education interest is on electronic commerce and the Web, the basic marketing concept of finding unmet wants and needs and filling them is still the dominant principle of the marketing field. The value and future of the internet as a marketing tool is predicated on its ability to provide a better supply chain. We believe this is an important and timely topic for marketing practitioners and educators.