Christine Moorman & George S. Day

Organizing for Marketing Excellence

Marketing organization is the interface of the firm with its markets and where the work of marketing gets done. This review of the past 25 years of scholarship on marketing organization examines the individual and integrative roles of four elements of marketing organization—capabilities, configuration (including structure, metrics, and incentives), culture, and the human capital of marketing leadership and talent. The authors indicate that these four elements are mobilized through seven marketing activities (7As) that occur during the marketing strategy process. These activities enable the firm to anticipate market changes, adapt the strategy to stay ahead of competition, align the organization to the strategy and market, activate effective implementation, ensure accountability for results, attract resources, and manage marketing assets. How well the firm manages these seven activities throughout the marketing strategy process determines the performance payoffs from marketing organization. Future research priorities outlined for the elements of marketing organization, their integration, and their impact on the 7As offer directions for the study of organizing for marketing excellence.

Keywords: marketing organization, capabilities, structure, culture, marketing leaders, marketing talent, marketing metrics, marketing strategy, firm performance

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Over the past 25 years, there has been much progress in understanding the sources and benefits of marketing excellence. However, advances in knowledge are barely keeping up with profound transformations in practice enabled by the digitization of marketing activities, the emergence of deep marketing analytics, and the evolution toward more open, networked organizational structures. As the Marketing Science Institute priorities (2014, p. 7) summarize, "In a rapidly changing world virtually all marketers are reevaluating how they should do marketing. Different structures, new processes—everything is on the table."

Marketing excellence is a superior ability to perform essential customer-facing activities that improve customer, financial, stock market, and societal outcomes. Marketing organization plays a foundational role in the achievement of marketing excellence. In this article, we assess the state of scholarship on marketing organization and identify the most promising directions for future research to provide deeper contributions from these often unheralded elements.

We focus on four elements of marketing organization, collectively referred to as MARKORG—capabilities, configuration, human capital, and culture—that play the most important role in marketing excellence. We show how these four elements are mobilized through seven marketing activities (7As) that occur during the marketing strategy process. How well these seven activities are managed throughout the marketing strategy process determines the performance payoffs from marketing organization.

This view emerges from a review of the literature from 1990 to 2015 in *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Marketing Research*, and *Marketing Science*, supplemented by relevant work in strategic management and other marketing journals. We begin with a review of research findings on each MARKORG (see Tables W1–W4 in the Web Appendix). First is a firm's marketing *capabilities*, which are the complex bundles of firm-level skills and knowledge that carry out marketing tasks and firm adaptation to marketplace changes. Second, marketing *configuration* comprises the organizational structures, metrics, and incentives/control systems that shape marketing activities. Third, marketing leaders and employees are the *human capital* that creates, implements, and evaluates a firm's strategy. Fourth, by creating values, norms, and behaviors that facilitate a focus on the market over time, *culture* guides thinking and actions throughout the firm. Following our review, we identify future research priorities for each MARKORG element (see Table 1) and their integration.

Figure 1 is a road map of our article. We show that MARKORG facilitates marketing excellence through its influence on the seven key marketing activities (the 7As) in the marketing strategy process—anticipation, adaptation, alignment, activation, accountability, attraction, and asset management. Following the literature, the 7As are actionable meditating mechanisms through which the more intangible MARKORG exerts its influence on firm performance. We also observe that the connection between marketing organization

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TABLE 1
Marketing Organization: Research Questions and Future Research Priorities

Research Questions	Future Research Priorities
Marketing Capabilities for Marketing Excellence	
What are marketing capabilities?	• What is the nature of new capabilities in digital marketing, social media, and marketing analytics? • What is the nature of capabilities for developing market-based assets? • How are lower-level capabilities related to higher-level capabilities? • Does marketing lead marketing capabilities?
How are marketing capabilities measured?	• What are the comparative strengths and weaknesses of the five different capability measurement approaches? • Do measures of marketing capabilities triangulate? • How do marketing leaders measure marketing capabilities?
What is the contribution of marketing capabilities to firm performance?	• What are the relative performance effects of different marketing capabilities? • What influences the diminishing returns of market orientation and how do late adopters learn from early adopters? • What are the short-term and long-term effects of marketing capabilities on firm performance? • How do marketing capabilities influence performance? • Under what conditions do capabilities become complements or substitutes and how do firms vary in the ability to create complementarities?
How are superior marketing capabilities developed?	• How do firms decide which knowledge and skills are important and how much are they driven by firm objectives, competitors' actions, or consultant's advice? • How do firms use training to build capabilities? • How do firms build marketing capabilities by partnering? • Can marketing capabilities be protected from rivals?
How are marketing capabilities changed?	• How does a firm change marketing capabilities and the required resource configurations to move from offline to online marketing or from traditional to digital advertising?
Marketing Configuration for Marketing Excellence: Organizational Structure	
Does the marketing function contribute to firm performance?	• Are the contributions of the marketing function to firm performance generalizable to businesses in developed and emerging economies and to businesses of all sizes and sectors? • Do managers across different functions rate marketing's contributions similarly to the way marketers rate their own contributions?
How does the marketing function contribute to firm performance?	• Is there an integrative framework that explains marketing function's contributions to firm performance? • What explains the different growth rates for marketing department power? Are there natural inflection points in the process that reflect growth opportunities for marketing, such as firm entry into new markets or the hiring of a new marketing leader into the company? • As different parts of the organization assume market-focused activities, how does a strong marketing department hold its center?
How is the marketing organization aligned with firm strategy and market?	• How do intermediate organizational structure characteristics and specific types of marketing strategies influence the alignment of marketing organization with strategy and market? • How does organizational structure in marketing change over time? • How do firms build scalable, global resources and capabilities that can be adapted for local markets?

TABLE 1
Continued

Research Questions	Future Research Priorities
What are the role and impact of marketing in cross-functional relationships?	• Why is marketing's cross-functional role so mixed? Does research account for coopetition, the impact at each stage of the process, and the use of informants from different functions? • As organizations perform more work using electronic tools and geographically dispersed teams, how will these new cross-functional structures affect marketing's contributions? • How should digital and data specialists be integrated with marketing and with other functions of the firm? What structures facilitate optimal decision making so that these technical specialties help the company serve its customers more profitably and not serve the specialties' focused interests?
How should firms organize and coordinate marketing and sales?	• How should marketing and sales cooperate across the solution funnel? • How do marketing and sales cooperate effectively using these new digital and omnichannel strategies? • What are the most effective leadership strategies for coordinating marketing and sales?
Does outsourcing marketing affect firm performance?	• What is the impact of outsourcing marketing activities on firm performance? • What structural, legal, and relational approaches are most effective in managing high-dependency partnerships for new skills in social media and digital? • How does outsourcing as cocreation affect the novelty, speed, and effectiveness of marketing strategies? • How do firms protect their strategies and knowledge from spilling over to competitors when outsourcing?
Does a customer-based organizational structure affect firm performance?	• How does the transition from a product structure to a customer structure influence firm performance? • What is the most effective approach to transition to a customer-based organizational structure? • What is the impact of firm, industry, leader, and strategy factors in the transition to a customer-based structure?
Marketing Configuration for Marketing Excellence: Metrics Use	
What metrics do firms utilize?	• As marketing embraces digital, social, and mobile strategies, are traditional metrics being replaced by more sensitive process measures that can be observed online (e.g., referrals)? • Do firms use metrics that evaluate the speed of cash flows? • Do firms use metrics related to stock market performance? • How are metrics used in combination to make marketing decisions? • Are observational studies of managers using metrics different from managers' self-reports of metrics use?
Does the use of metrics contribute to firm performance?	• How does metrics use influence the nature and effectiveness of individual marketing decision making? • How do the most effective managers use metrics? • Do metric qualities (i.e., evaluative or diagnostic, short-term or long-term, and using objective or subjective information) moderate the impact of metrics use on the quality of individual decisions? • What are the costs and benefits of breadth versus focus in metrics use? • What is the ROI in building dashboards and training managers to use them? • Considering the dashboard, which metrics are most useful to have on a continuous basis and which are better evaluated less frequently? What number and sequence of metrics is optimal?
What factors influence use of metrics in firms?	• How does firm strategy influence the type and level of metrics use? • What individual marketing leader and employee characteristics influence metrics use? • What types of top management team (TMT) dynamics facilitate metrics use? Do metrics get used more when TMTs display a mix of cooperative and competitive dynamics? • What is the process by which metrics are adopted within companies?

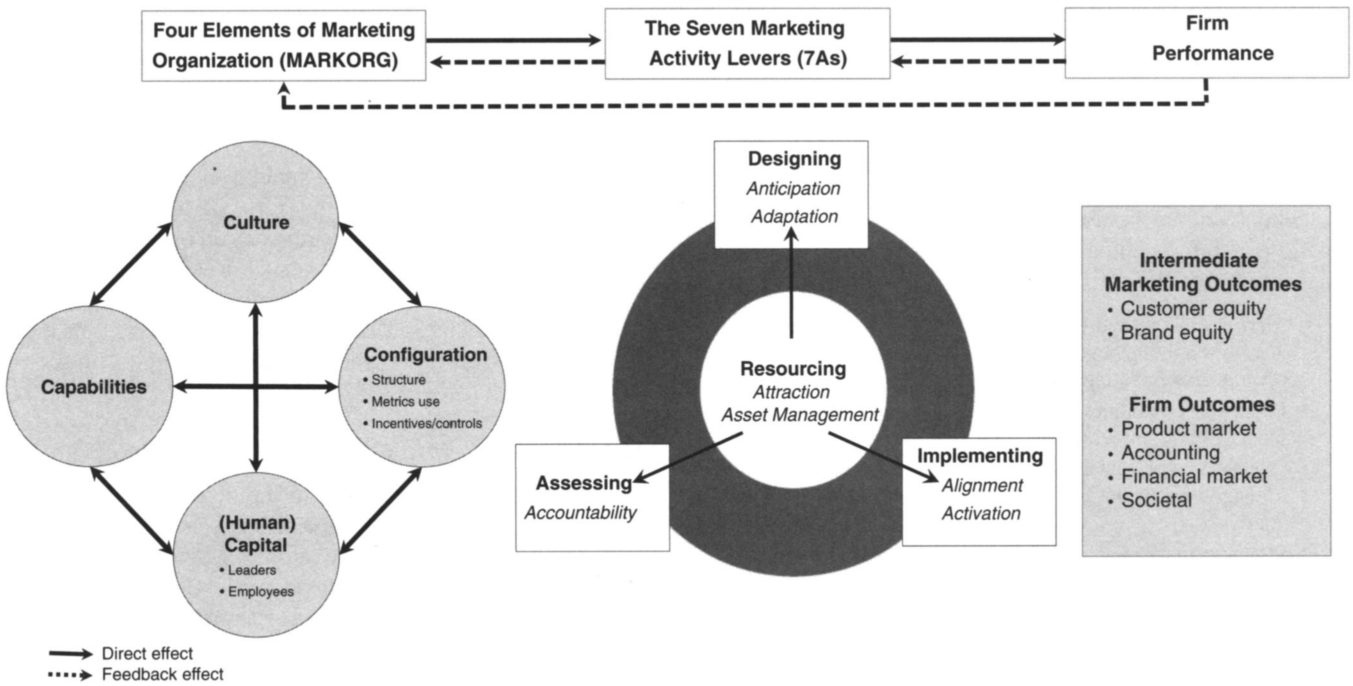
TABLE 1
Continued

Research Questions	Future Research Priorities
Marketing Configuration for Marketing Excellence: Incentives and Controls	
How do marketers misbehave?	• What methods offer an accurate and complete view of marketer misbehaviors in different roles? • What best predicts marketer misbehavior among alternative explanations in the extant literature?
How should marketing agents be aligned for firm performance?	• How do different incentive and control systems relate to one another, including whether they substitute, detract from, or complement one another? • Does aligning incentives with customer metrics (e.g., customer retention) reduce misbehavior? • How do incentive and control systems work when marketing occurs in open network structures where responsibilities are diffused? • Which incentives and controls should vary across markets and which should hold at standardized levels throughout the company? • How do some marketers and their firms resist the forces of self-interest? With what consequences both over the short and long run?
Human Capital for Marketing Excellence: Marketing Leaders	
Do marketing leaders improve firm performance?	• Does the presence of a CMO influence the value of a firm's market-based assets, including customer equity, brand equity, and knowledge? • Does the presence of a CMO in the TMT affect firm risk levels? • Does the presence of a CMO in the TMT play a critical defensive role in protecting firm cash flows from external threats?
What influences marketing leader effectiveness?	• What is the effect of organizational moderators associated with structure and culture on the CMO–firm performance link? • How do CMOs leverage their education and experience to influence firm performance? • How does a CMO's relationships with other C-suite members influence CMO contributions, and what CMO characteristics, roles, and actions make for successful long-term relationships?
How do marketing leaders improve firm performance?	• What activities do marketing leaders perform that influence firm outcomes? How much do these activities contribute to firm performance when managed by marketing leaders versus other areas of the firm? • What configuration of job description elements offers the greatest prospect for CMO performance impact? • Why is growth delegated to nonmarketing leaders and with what effect? How does growth strategy change when managed by a marketing leader?
What influences the appointment of marketing leaders?	• How does the match or fit between marketing leader characteristics and experiences and firm characteristics, strategies, and aspirations influence marketing leader appointment? • What influences the appointment of marketing leaders to roles including designations for "sales," "customer," "brand," or "growth," or adjectives such as "Chief," "Executive," or "Senior Executive"?
What is the marketing leader turnover rate and what factors influence it?	• What is the true rate of marketing leader turnover and how does this compare with other firm leaders? • How is CMO turnover influenced by firm performance changes, deviations from expected firm performance changes, and competitive rivalry? • How is turnover influenced by the various roles played and activities enacted by the CMO? • How does the fit or match between individual marketing leader characteristics and firm objectives or strategy influence turnover rates?
Human Capital for Marketing Excellence: Marketing Leaders	
Do marketing employee knowledge and experience contribute to firm performance?	• What skills does the marketer of the future need? • What research approaches and tools should be used to isolate the effect of marketing knowledge and experience? • Can we link individual marketing knowledge and experience to firm performance?

TABLE 1
Continued

Research Questions	Future Research Priorities
What is the impact of marketing training?	• What training tools (in person, computer-mediated, gamification, etc.) and training modes (experiential, case-based, lecture, etc.) work best in what situations and for which marketing employees? • What individual factors moderate the effect of marketing training? • How does training affect outcomes such as sales force hiring and turnover?
How does the management of frontline employees (FLEs) affect customers and firm performance?	• How do strategies reflecting different psychological, organizational, economic, and structural mechanisms work together to influence FLE performance? • What role does the firm's top marketing leader play in FLE–customer interactions?
What is the impact of employee satisfaction on firm performance?	• Is it employee satisfaction or the type of employee who is attracted to work for a certain type of firm that is responsible for the FLE–performance effect? • Does employee satisfaction influence extra-role and stewardship behaviors, burnout, and customer information–sharing behaviors? • Are employees more satisfied when they work for a firm with a strong brand? Does satisfaction inspired by brand produce different behaviors than satisfaction inspired by connection to a specific job or to the larger firm culture?
Organizational Culture for Marketing Excellence	
How has organizational culture been studied in marketing?	• What additional cultural values, behaviors, and artifacts play important roles in marketing strategies? • What is the nature of a firm's market-based asset–focused culture?
How is organizational culture measured in marketing?	• Can text analysis be used to measure organizational culture? • What novel artifact-based measures of culture should be developed in the field?
What is the contribution of culture to firm performance?	• Does the de-emphasis on competitor orientation endanger or facilitate performance effects of a market-oriented culture? • Does culture create market-based assets? • How does a market-oriented culture serve both its business-to-business partners and its ultimate end customers? • Can research separate the performance impact of culture from the contributions of firm leaders and firm strategy?
How should firms build and sustain a market-oriented culture?	• How do marketing leaders shape culture? • What is the emergent nature of cultural change? What begins the process and what are the mechanisms? • How is the firm's culture built from the enactment of marketing activities?

FIGURE 1
Marketing Organization and Firm Performance



and these activities is underdeveloped, which suggests future research opportunities.

Although the core of the model in Figure 1 is the MARKORG → 7As → firm performance path, we show additional linkages to capture the dynamic and iterative nature of the process. For example, although the effectiveness of MARKORG can enable or constrain the 7As, there is also an important "learn by doing" feedback loop in which the successful (unsuccessful) deployment of the 7As leads to strengthening (weakening) MARKORG. Positive feedback from performance outcomes nourishes MARKORG through reinvestment and affirmation; conversely, negative feedback may damage these marketing organization elements. Likewise, firm performance reflecting the presence of customer equity and brand equity, both intermediate marketing outcomes, can be further developed and deployed in the resourcing of the marketing strategy process. Finally, just as MARKORG is nested in the larger firm, the marketing strategy process is part of the larger, firm-level strategy process, which influences how the marketing strategy process unfolds.

Marketing excellence is a continuous process that leaves no room for complacency. It requires marketing leaders who can orchestrate the firm's capabilities, culture, employees, structure, metrics, incentives, and controls so that the entire firm continuously responds and adapts to marketplace challenges in a superior manner. Together, MARKORG and the 7As offer a new frontier for the study of marketing excellence that provides research-based evidence for investments in marketing excellence. The research priorities outlined for each MARKORG element, its integration, and the impact of MARKORG on the 7As offer future directions for the study of organizing for marketing excellence.

Marketing Capabilities for Marketing Excellence

This lens on marketing excellence focuses on the bundles of marketing skills and accumulated knowledge, exercised through organizational processes, that enable a firm to carry out its marketing activities. The concept of capabilities[1] came to the fore in the field of strategic management in the mid-1980s under the rubric of the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm (Wernerfelt 1984). In this view, firm resources include both assets and capabilities that are cultivated slowly over time. Management's task is to determine how best to develop, leverage, and improve these resources for competitive advantage. The development of the RBV paralleled an emerging consensus within marketing that the firm's market orientation is the coordinated application of interfunctional resources to create superior customer value (Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Narver and Slater 1990). Day (1994) proposed specific capabilities to be mastered by a market-driven organization and Hunt and Morgan (1995, 1996) formulated a "resource-advantage" theory to counter the constraining assumptions of perfect competition theory. Today, the RBV continues to play a prominent role in the marketing literature (Kozlenkova, Samaha, and Palmatier 2014).

We review what is known and still needs to be known about marketing capabilities by addressing five questions: (1) What are marketing capabilities? (2) How are they measured?

[1]For this review, we use "capabilities" and "competencies" interchangeably. Core capabilities are a subset of capabilities found at the corporate level. Distinctive capabilities make a disproportionate contribution to the firm's competitive advantage.

(3) What is the contribution of marketing capabilities to firm performance? (4) How are superior marketing capabilities developed? (5) How are marketing capabilities changed? Web Appendix Table W1 summarizes the literature relevant to these five questions and Table 1 lists future research priorities, detailed in the sections that follow.

What Are Marketing Capabilities?

There is a reasonable consensus in the literature that primary capabilities within the domain of marketing include the following (for full details and complete descriptions, see Web Appendix Table W1):

- Market sensing and knowledge management capabilities—notably including market orientation as the process of generating, disseminating, and responding to market intelligence.[2]
- Relational capabilities such as customer relationship management (CRM) processes of acquiring and retaining valuable customers and managing channel partnerships.
- Management of the brand asset and the leveraging of brand equity.
- Strategic marketing planning and implementation or, more generally, the architectural capabilities that direct and coordinate the deployment of task-specific capabilities.
- Specific functional capabilities related to the marketing mix (pricing, product line management, marketing communication, and sales).

Future research priorities. First, a new set of marketing capabilities have been introduced in the last decade that need to be examined in further research. We review a few here. For example, firm capabilities in digital marketing have not been studied. Is digital just a new channel or is it a distinctive capability? Firms are investing in and seek to leverage social media for competitive advantage (The CMO Survey 2016, p. 50). However, research has not yet documented capabilities for developing, integrating, and leveraging social media in marketing. Like digital marketing, marketing analytics operates under some older marketing research processes that involve the use of secondary data. However, "big data" expectations create pressure to make marketing analytics more central to marketing decision making. Given this, what are the features of an effective marketing analytics capability? We urge scholars to examine these newer capabilities and to identify other important new marketing capabilities that will likely emerge over the next decade.

Second, given that only Feng, Morgan, and Rego (2015) have examined firm capabilities for building market-based assets, such as brand, customer, and knowledge (Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey 1998), this question is an important research opportunity. Third, research should consider how lower-level capabilities (e.g., specialized marketing mix capabilities) relate to higher-level capabilities (e.g., architectural marketing capabilities). Is this accomplished through distinctive processes or do the higher-order capabilities require steps that call on the more specialized capabilities to be enacted? Relatedly, do specialized capabilities (e.g., channel management) need to operate at least at a moderate level for architectural capabilities (e.g., marketing implementation) to contribute?

Finally, many marketing capabilities require the coordination of different functions (e.g., CRM). Marketing's leadership of these capabilities remains an open question. As new cross-functional capabilities such as social media, marketing analytics, and omnichannel management emerge within firms, will marketing's influence shrink or will it become more influential by serving as the integrator of important cross-functional activities?

How Are Marketing Capabilities Measured?

Five methods have been used in the discipline to measure marketing capabilities. First, researchers measure firm spending to capture capabilities. For example, Mizik and Jacobson (2003) measure research and development (R&D) and selling, general, and administrative (SG&A) spending to derive a firm's capabilities for value creation or value appropriation. Second, researchers measure the effects of marketing actions to reflect capabilities. For example, Moorman and Slotegraaf (1999) measure a firm's marketing capability by its market share, and Johnson, Sohi, and Grewal (2004) measure a firm's relational capability by the effect of its relational knowledge stores on relational outcomes. Third, scholars examine the efficiency with which a firm converts resource inputs into performance outcomes—for example, marketing spending into sales (Dutta, Narasimhan, and Surendra 1999). Fourth, a key informant approach uses knowledgeable and experienced managers to rate (e.g., Homburg et al. 2012) or describe (Challagalla, Venkatesh, and Kohli 2009) their firms. Finally, benchmarking asks key informants to evaluate their firm's marketing capabilities relative to major competitors (Vorhies and Morgan 2005).

Future research priorities. Research in this area has received a great deal of attention in the last two decades. Thus, our first recommendation is for further research to compare the strengths and weaknesses of these methods. To highlight a few weaknesses, the first three approaches require firm-specific data that are not publicly available for private firms. However, even for public firms, only weak surrogates for marketing spending are usually available (e.g., selling, general, and administrative expenses; advertising), which creates error when measuring marketing capabilities. In general, secondary data are limited for understanding capability mechanisms, which is why scholars often perform primary research. A weakness of primary data, often in survey form, is that it is more difficult to collect over time, creating questions about causality (see Rindfleisch et al. 2008). Furthermore, informant ratings have their own challenges—informants may be influenced by experience, position, or whether they are focused on the firm relative to its goals versus relative to its competitors, which is one reason research often uses multiple informants. Benchmarking has also been criticized because it ascribes capability

[2]Capabilities related to the generation, dissemination, and responsiveness to market information often have not been viewed as capabilities but instead considered part of the firm's market orientation (Jaworski and Kohli 1993; Kohli and Jaworski 1990) or culture (Narver and Slater 1990). We believe that market orientation can function through both organizational elements, and thus, we review the market orientation literature in both the "Capabilities" and "Culture" sections.

strength to an industry optimum. However, as this is the essence of competitive advantage, the approach is theoretically consistent (Vorhies and Morgan 2005).

Second, research is needed to understand the extent to which these measurement approaches triangulate. We encourage researchers to use a multimethod approach to increase confidence in marketing capability assessments. However, because researchers use longer time series of data that enable them to rule out firm unobservables, such multimethod approaches must be timed around available secondary data (see Kumar et al. 2011). Researchers also should not overlook the tremendous insight that can accrue from observational and interview data—methods not often utilized to study capabilities in marketing.

Third, researchers should examine how, if at all, marketing leaders measure marketing capabilities. What influences whether and how measures are taken? Although the data required for a 360-degree view are seldom available to researchers, managers have this access. We recommend this triangulated view of capabilities to practice while also urging scholars to assess the current state of capability measurement in practice.

What Is the Contribution of Marketing Capabilities to Firm Performance?

Two meta-analyses examine this question. Krasnikov and Jayachandran's (2008) meta-analysis of the marketing literature finds that marketing capabilities make significant contributions to both revenue and profits. Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden's (2005) meta-analysis concludes that capabilities related to market orientation have a direct positive effect on financial, customer, innovation, and employee consequences.

In addition to their direct effects, marketing capabilities have important moderating and indirect effects. The most common moderating effect is the complementarity of marketing and R&D capabilities, meaning the synergistic effect from the combined presence of the two capabilities (Dutta, Narasimhan, and Surendra 1999; Moorman and Slotegraaf 1999). Likewise, marketing capabilities have been shown to improve the returns from other strategic actions, such as brand acquisitions (Wiles, Morgan, and Rego 2012), and to soften the effect of negative press releases on investor responses (Xiong and Bharadwaj 2013). Considering indirect effects, firm innovativeness mediates the effect of market orientation on performance (Han, Kim, and Srivastava 1998; Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden 2005).

Most assessments of performance effects use one-time cross-sectional samples. An exception is Kumar et al.'s (2011) study of the changing role of market orientation over eight years. Their results indicate that the effect of market orientation on sales and profits is positive across all time periods. However, the effect of market orientation on these financial outcomes diminishes over time, suggesting that the greatest benefits accrue to early adopters. This puts a premium on finding new capabilities, which we discuss in detail in a subsequent section.

Future research priorities. The core question of whether marketing capabilities have a performance effect has been answered with a resounding yes. Therefore, the field needs to move forward in several directions. First, research should examine the relative performance effects of different marketing capabilities. Instead, scholarship has focused on a subset of marketing capabilities (see Table W1 in the Web Appendix) or formed an aggregate measure of marketing capabilities (e.g., Vorhies and Morgan 2005). The field could benefit from a detailed assessment of the value of various marketing capabilities that also accounts for direct effects on the formation and functioning of higher-order capabilities which, in turn, have performance effects.

Second, we see opportunities to examine two different temporal dimensions of capabilities. Kumar et al.'s (2011) results regarding a diminishing effect of market orientation point the field back to the importance of protecting capabilities from imitation by competitors. If we approach their results from this perspective, what influences the diminishing returns or imitation rates, and how do the late adopters learn from early adopters? On the second temporal question, Feng, Morgan, and Rego (2015) find that short- and long-run marketing capabilities affect performance differently. Specifically, a firm's short-run market-based asset leveraging capabilities have no effect on firm performance, whereas long-run market-based asset building capabilities have a strong positive effect. Following their lead, we see an opportunity to study the short- and long-run effects of other marketing capabilities on firm performance.

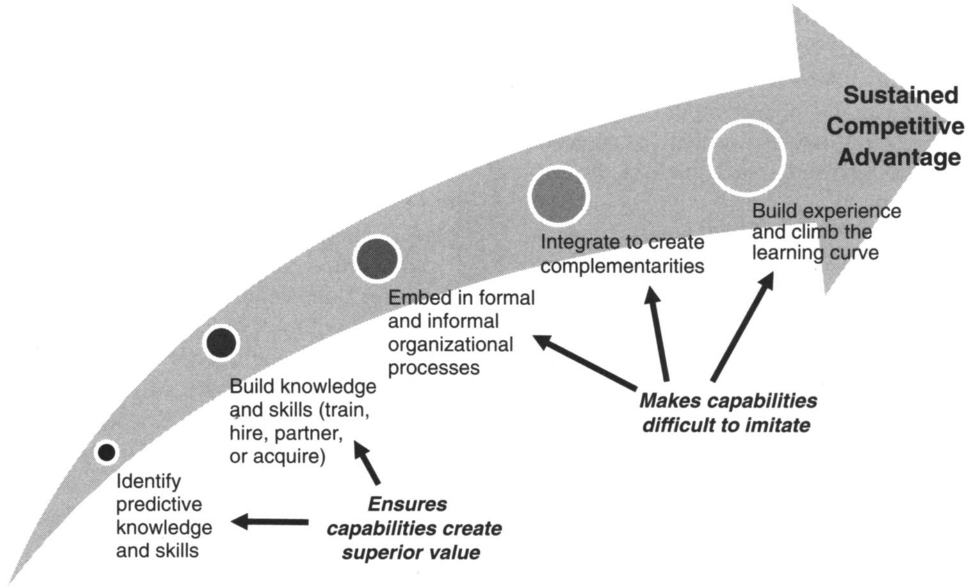
Third, Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden's (2005) meta-analysis shows that capabilities related to market orientation have important performance effects through their effect on innovation. However, we know very little about other marketing capabilities. Do marketing capabilities work through different mediators, such as employee outcomes? Research needs to document these intermediate stages so that scholars and practitioners know where to look for early performance effects.

Fourth, although the literature has documented the presence of marketing and R&D capability complementarities, we still do not have a good understanding of why these complementarities occur. Dutta, Narasimhan, and Surendra (1999) introduce marketing capabilities as an input to both R&D capabilities (i.e., the voice of the customer impact of marketing) and operations capabilities (i.e., a marketing learning curve). However, R&D and operations inputs are not used to determine a firm's marketing capability. A stronger conceptual treatment of these inputs and mechanisms would be a welcome addition to the literature. In general, understanding under what conditions capabilities become complements as well as firm differences in the achievement of complementarities would boost research and practice in this area.

How Are Superior Marketing Capabilities Developed?

Literature in this area examines the antecedents of superior marketing capabilities through two distinctive approaches. The first approach, which is more organizational, is built on Kohli and Jaworski's (1990; see also Jaworski and Kohli 1993) dissection of the drivers of market orientation as (1) top

FIGURE 2
Building Superior Marketing Capabilities



management's emphasis on the customer, (2) a high degree of interdepartmental connectedness, (3) a low (high) level of organization centralization and formalization for information acquisition and dissemination (information responsiveness), and (4) the use of metrics and incentives to reward employees for market-oriented behaviors. Ruekert (1992) was the first to add the importance of market-oriented training to the development of market orientation capabilities. Meta-analysis supports the role of these factors (Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden 2005). Feng, Morgan, and Rego (2015) adds that a strong marketing function influences the quality of a firm's capabilities for developing and leveraging market-based assets.

A second approach emphasizes sustained competitive advantage and increasing the inimitability of capabilities. These principles, which are drawn directly from research on the RBV of the firm, are often evoked as reasons why firms should invest in capabilities and why capabilities are a central part of business performance (Bharadwaj, Varadarajan, and Fahy 1993). Research has suggested that firms can learn new capabilities by benchmarking against successful competitors (Vorhies and Morgan 2005)[3] and by indirect or observational learning of competitors' practices (Banerjee, Prabhu, and Chandy 2015).

Future research priorities. Figure 2 depicts the process for developing superior marketing capabilities that we use to outline future research opportunities. The process begins by identifying which knowledge and skills are important to the firm's success. This understanding should come from careful consideration of the position the firm wants to occupy and the types of value it will offer customers. Research should consider how firms make such decisions and how much they are driven by firm objectives, competitors' actions, or consultants' advice.

In the second stage, the firm builds the required knowledge and skills through training, hiring, partnering, and/or acquisition (Capron and Hulland 1999). To our knowledge, training for marketing capabilities has not been addressed in the literature at all. This is an important gap given Ahearne et al.'s (2010) finding that salespeople with a learning orientation are more successful at adopting a new customer relationship system than salespeople with a performance orientation. Likewise, although we know that firms can develop new knowledge from network partners (Banerjee, Prabhu, and Chandy 2015; Johnson, Sohi, and Grewal 2004), research in marketing has not carefully addressed the process of partnering for digital, social, and mobile capabilities (see the "Does Outsourcing Marketing Affect Firm Performance?" subsection).

Later stages embed the new knowledge and skills into organizational processes (Grewal and Slotegraaf 2007; Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey 1999) and link the emerging capability to other capabilities (Dierickx and Cool 1989)—both of which hinder competitor imitation. The final stage accumulates experience, which drives down costs, improves effectiveness, and protects the firm from rivals. This idea is an important part of the strategy literature; however, whether it holds for marketing capabilities has never been investigated.

How Are Marketing Capabilities Changed?

There is an inevitable gap between the accelerating complexity of markets moving at Internet speed and the ability of even the most agile of firms to keep up. This is the province of dynamic capabilities that reflect "the firm's ability to integrate, build and reconfigure internal and external competences to address rapidly changing environments" (Teece, Pisano, and

[3]Importantly, although firms that perform closer to the industry benchmarks are identified by their superior performance, research has not identified whether using the benchmarking process leads to superior capabilities.

Shuen 1997, p. 516). Scholars have suggested that the ability to change capabilities reflects the firm's ability to learn (Slater and Narver 1995), its market orientation (Atuahene-Gima 2005; Kyriakopoulos and Moorman 2004; Morgan, Vorhies, and Mason 2009), its experimentation and partnering skills (Day 2011), and firm skills in resource reconfiguration (i.e., the ability to retain, eliminate, and acquire resources) and capability enhancement (i.e., the ability to retain, eliminate, acquire, and improve capabilities) (Morgan 2012). Other scholars have focused on domain-specific dynamic capabilities. For example, Palmatier et al. (2013) point to a firm's dynamic capabilities for managing evolving channel relationships, while Fang, Palmatier, and Steenkamp (2008) focus on dynamic capabilities that help reconfigure a firm's resources from offering products to both products and services.

Another literature focuses on the "microfoundations" of dynamic capabilities. This research stream aims to understand the relationship between enterprise-level and individual capacities (Helfat and Peteraf 2015; Teece 2007) for sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring capabilities. Felin et al. (2012) adopt a broad behavioral approach that accounts for individuals, processes, and interactions, as well as the structure and interactions between these elements. Felin et al.'s article, which we recommend to readers seeking a broad introduction to this topic, offers a review of the literature in strategy and the organizational sciences.[4]

Future research priorities. It is imperative that marketing contribute to this literature. First, new marketing capabilities are needed to fully utilize advances in marketing analytics, master the new social landscape of consumer behavior, and offer seamless omnichannel experiences. How does a firm change marketing capabilities and the required resource configurations to move from offline to online marketing or from traditional to digital advertising? As important as these changes are to contemporary marketers, we know very little about them and how they are ideally managed in firms. What are the biggest threats to their success? Looking at our review for the three other elements of marketing organization, we see opportunities to utilize insights about how to empower employees (Ye, Marinova, and Singh 2007) and use incentives, supervisory behaviors (Sarin, Challagalla, and Kohli 2012), and organizational culture (Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry 2006) in the capability change process.

We also urge marketers to contribute to the literature on the microfoundations of dynamic capabilities for several reasons. To begin, the structural-cognitive tradition in marketing is a strong platform on which to build (see Houston et al. 2001). Furthermore, marketing's strengths across individual, group, and firm levels and the field's regular use of multilevel data place it in a unique position to contribute. In addition, given that many marketers play critical roles in the implementation of marketing capabilities, we see an important opportunity to study how their microbehaviors contribute to firm capabilities. Relatedly, a great deal of marketing activity involves managing social activities within and between firms, such as communication, trust building, and social norms, which can also form microbehavior building blocks for capabilities.

[4]Marketing has not specifically pointed to "microfoundations" in the study of dynamic capabilities. We think this is, in part, due to the fact that marketing's disciplinary traditions have easily traversed the roles of people, processes, and structures. Research from the structural-cognitive tradition in marketing is a strong example (see Frankwick et al. 1994; Houston et al. 2001).

Marketing Configuration for Marketing Excellence

Configuration describes the organizational setting within which marketing capabilities are exercised and culture is activated. We examine three broad configuration topics: (1) organizational structure (Web Appendix Table W2A), (2) the use of metrics (Web Appendix Table W2B), and (3) incentives and control systems (Web Appendix Table W2C). Table 1 summarizes future research priorities.

Organizational Structure

Does the Marketing Function Contribute to Firm Performance?

There is agreement that a strong marketing function contributes to firm value. Primary research (Homburg et al. 2015; Moorman and Rust 1999) and secondary research (Feng, Morgan, and Rego 2015) support this view. Only Verhoef and Leeflang (2009) found no direct effect of marketing department influence on firm performance and instead reported that a firm's market orientation mediates its effect. However, a follow-up study across seven countries uncovered a direct effect of marketing department influence on business performance (Verhoef et al. 2011). The secondary data approach used by Feng, Morgan, and Rego (2015) examines marketing function power relative to other areas of the firm (see Web Appendix Table W2A). The authors find that marketing department power increased during 1993–2008 and that marketing department power has a positive effect on total shareholder returns.

Future research priorities. Given this history, future research should first focus on further establishing the generalizability of this finding. Verhoef et al. (2011) offer a critical advance in this regard. Extending this research to Asian, South American, and African companies in both developed and emerging economies would be an excellent addition. Likewise, it is important to examine the generalizability of the finding to businesses of all sizes and sectors, especially technology- and science-based sectors, in which marketing has historically played a weaker role. Second, Moorman and Rust (1999) test their model by sampling managers across marketing, R&D, finance, operations, and human resources. We encourage future researchers to consider this approach because it ensures that the effect is not due to marketers evaluating marketing. Feng, Morgan, and Rego's (2015) secondary approach also rules out this explanation.

How Does the Marketing Function Contribute to Firm Performance?

An array of mechanisms have been examined in the literature, all of which point to marketing actions that add value to the firm, including customer-connecting activities (Moorman and Rust 1999), involvement in key firm decisions and in carrying out critical marketing activities (Homburg et al. 2015; Homberg, Workman, and Krohmer 1999), performing market orientation activities (Verhoef and Leeflang 2009), and contributing to firm capabilities for long-run market-based asset building and short-run market-based asset leveraging (Feng, Morgan, and Rego 2015).

Future research priorities. Our first recommendation is to offer a deeper analysis of how the aforementioned mechanisms interrelate to influence firm performance. For example, do marketing department decision influence or marketing department knowledge and skills contribute to the formation of key marketing capabilities important to firm performance? Such an analysis could help marketing departments identify the most promising ways to contribute to firms. Second, although Feng, Morgan, and Rego (2015) show that marketing departments, in aggregate, are more powerful over time, we know very little about the different evolutionary paths of marketing departments, including departments that do not improve over time. Why do some departments fail to grow, whereas others rise or fall slowly or quickly? Are there natural inflection points in the process that reflect growth opportunities for marketing, such as firm entry into new markets or the hiring of a new marketing leader into the company?

Third, literature in this area has indicated the importance of maintaining a strong marketing department even as the firm nurtures its market orientation. However, research has not considered how this balance is achieved. Specifically, as market-focused activities are assumed by different parts of the organization, how does a strong marketing department hold its center?

How Is Organizational Structure Aligned with Firm Strategy and the Market?

This topic has been approached from a variety of angles. First, research has shown that an organization's structure (i.e., its formalization, centralization, and specialization levels) influences its ability to learn from and respond to the market—factors that should influence the firm's alignment with the market. Accordingly, firms high on these structure variables have lower market orientation levels (see Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden's [2005] meta-analysis) and make weaker use of market information (Moorman 1995) and marketing plans (John and Martin 1984).

Second, research examining how firm strategy and marketing organization interact to influence firm performance has produced three sets of findings. One set reports that the effectiveness of Miles and Snow's (1978) strategy types is influenced by the fit of strategy with firm structure and orientation (Olson, Slater, and Hult 2005) while a second set finds that these strategy types moderate the market orientation–business performance relationship (Matsuno and Mentzer 2000). A third set adopts the view that there is an optimal fit of a firm's strategy (type) and its marketing organization. Vorhies and Morgan (2003) find that similarity of the firm's strategy alignment to its structural and task characteristics relative to the top-performing firm in the industry predicts the firm's marketing effectiveness and efficiency.

Future research priorities. First, although early studies have demonstrated the importance of fit between the firm's strategy, structure, and environment, there are two challenges to the value of these findings. One challenge is that organizational structure characteristics may operate at too high a level to be useful to most marketing leaders. Researchers should consider more intermediate structures, such as customer segment units, product-market groups, or key account teams. The other challenge is that business strategy characteristics have centered on Miles and Snow's (1978) or Porter's (1980) conceptualization of business strategies. Distinguishing more marketing strategies may be useful. For example, strategies that offer customized and deep relational solutions, offer customization and scale through an online channel, or involve customers in cocreation might indicate the need for entirely different forms of marketing organization.

Second, this research leaves open the question of the evolution of organizational structure in firms. Research adopting a longitudinal structural-cognitive approach that documents the evolution of belief structures, relationships, and activities in organizations offers one promising avenue (see Frankwick et al. 1994; Houston et al. 2001). We recommend selecting important windows of strategic opportunity that require structure changes, such as the move to an open network or the adoption of social media.

Third, alignment among structure, strategy, and the environment is particularly challenging for firms operating in global markets. Research has found that marketing resource allocation levels should be standardized across the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Western European markets (Szymanski, Bharadwaj, and Varadarajan 1993), which would support more global organizational structures. However, the question of standardizing marketing strategies is more complex given that culture has been found to moderate the consequences of relationship marketing activities (Hewett and Bearden 2001; Samaha, Beck, and Palmatier 2014). Another tension is the need to develop resources that support firm efforts across markets (Morgan, Kaleka, and Katsikeas 2004) while also operating efficiently within markets. This tension between building scalable, global resources that can be adapted for local markets has received no attention in the literature.

What Is the Role and Impact of Marketing in Cross-Functional Relationships?

Although this question has been addressed in several ways, no conclusive answer has emerged. First, research has established that a market orientation requires cross-functional coordination (Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Narver and Slater 1990) and that marketing, as a function, contributes to this coordination (Verhoef and Leeflang 2009). However, marketing's role requires managing important cross-functional relationship dynamics (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé 1992). Specifically, research has also shown that marketing's influence on nonmarketers is stronger when marketers use more formal dissemination channels (Maltz and Kohli 1996) and that marketing's influence on engineers is stronger when marketers focus on goals that foster a nonfunctional orientation (Fisher, Maltz, and Jaworski 1997).

Second, new product research has found that marketing–R&D cooperation has a positive effect on the concept development, project development, and implementation stages of the new product development process, whereas marketing–sales cooperation influences only concept development and implementation (Ernst, Hoyer, and Rübsaamen 2010). This more specific finding runs counter to the more general finding from meta-analyses that cross-functional integration plays a very limited role in new product success (Henard and Szymanski 2001), with still other research suggesting that the need for formal integration between functions is more important when the firm lacks experience with the new product area (Olson, Walker, and Ruekert 1995) or when the focus is on the creativity of the strategy and not its market performance (Menon et al. 1999).

Future research priorities. First, why is marketing's cross-functional role so mixed? Following previous results, research needs to account for (1) the team's objective; (2) whether marketing's role is assessed at each stage of the process or on the final team outcomes; (3) whether measures of marketing's influence are taken from marketers, other cross-functional team members, and/or from superiors; (4) whether the team adopts horizontal versus vertical communication patterns (Griffin and Hauser 1992); and (5) the degree to which team members compete for resources even as they cooperate to achieve their objective (Luo, Slotegraaf, and Pan 2006). Once these components are accounted for, we will have a better understanding of whether and how marketing contributes to cross-functional teams. Second, how do new cross-functional activities that use web-based collaboration among geographically dispersed teams affect marketing's contributions? Will marketing's contributions be easier or more difficult to perceive in an e-environment?

Third, marketing has become one of the most technology-dependent functions in business. One forecast is that by 2017 the chief marketing officer (CMO) will spend more on digital technology than the chief information officer (CIO) (Arthur 2012). A certain consequence will be a profusion of specialist roles such as data miners, web designers, and digital privacy analysts. These new roles will necessitate team and cross-functional structures that combine these specialists with more traditional generalists. How should these specialists be integrated with marketing and other functions of the firm? What structures facilitate optimal decision making so that these technical specialties help the company serve its customers more profitably and not serve the specialties' focused interests?

How Should Firms Organize and Coordinate Marketing and Sales?

Research in this area has found that the location of marketing and sales is contingent on the size of the company, its global orientation, and its market orientation, while organization is influenced by the relatedness of marketing–sales activities (Workman, Homburg, and Gruner 1998). Homburg, Jensen, and Krohmer (2008) uncover five archetypal forms of the marketing–sales interface that vary according to sales versus marketing power, customer versus product orientation, short-term versus long-term orientation, types of structures, information sharing, and the role of different types of knowledge.

Future research priorities. Several forces press sales and marketing to work together more effectively. The first force is the increasing demand from customers for integrated solutions that extend beyond the product offering. Tuli, Kohli, and Bharadwaj (2007) point to the importance of relational processes that facilitate an understanding of the customer's requirements, customization and integration, deployment strategies, and postdeployment support. Coordinating marketing and sales activities across this "solution funnel" is an important challenge that should be studied in more depth. The second force is the need to coordinate the ever-expanding ways to connect with customers in today's omnichannel environment. For example, sales increasingly reaches customers first through digital tools designed by marketing. How do marketing and sales cooperate effectively using these new strategies? Third, leaders are impatient with balkanized approaches to delivering customer value. However, research has not fully explored effective leadership strategies for coordinating marketing and sales (e.g., Homburg and Jensen 2007).

Does Outsourcing Marketing Affect Firm Performance?

New product outsourcing announcements receive a positive response from the stock market (Raassens, Wuyts, and Geyskens 2012). Other research has pointed to important contingencies in the outsourcing–performance relationship, including the ease of evaluating the partner's performance in a sales force context (Anderson 2008) and the firm's general knowledge levels, tacit knowledge levels, and technological volatility in a modular technology system context (Stremersch et al. 2003; see Web Appendix Table W2A).

At a more general level, research has addressed the firm's choice between performing marketing activities on its own ("make") and outsourcing ("buy") using two approaches. Transaction cost tradition suggests that the outsourcing decision is based on the firm's transaction costs and that these costs are minimized by managing the external agent through ex ante controls to screen and select partners and ex post controls that train, socialize, monitor, and incentivize partners (e.g., Rindfleisch and Heide 1997). The relationship marketing tradition has examined trust, commitment, and relational norms that make partnerships more beneficial to the firm over the long run (Hunt and Morgan 1994; Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé 1992; Palmatier et al. 2006). This tradition has also documented that relationship building has a dark side in which trust creates vulnerabilities that partners can exploit (Grayson and Ambler 1999; Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé 1992). These "hidden costs of trust" (Selnes and Sallis 2003) can produce suboptimal partnerships when innovation is the goal (Noordhoff et al. 2011) or knowledge spillovers are possible. Finally, a subset of research has examined the influence of factors from both traditions (e.g., Heide, Wathne, and Rokkan 2007; Jap and Ganesan 2000; Wathne and Heide 2000).

Future research priorities. First, marketing has a long tradition of outsourcing activities such as marketing research (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé 1992) and advertising (Villas-Boas 1994) and an increasing tendency to outsource key innovation activities such as new product development (Carson 2007; Rindfleisch and Moorman 2001). However, most research does not examine the make versus buy choice but instead focuses on maximizing the effectiveness of the buy decision. Only a subset of research has examined the choice, which we recommend as a topic for further research.

Second, outsourcing may be a strategic necessity in new marketing areas, such as social media, for which many firms have limited knowledge and skills. What structural, legal, and relational approaches are most effective in managing these high-dependency partnerships (e.g., Palmatier, Gopalakrishna, and Houston 2006)? Third, as firms involve more external partners and customers, how does the firm protect its strategies from imitation? We know very little about this topic (for an important exception, see Stremersch et al. 2003). Fourth, an emerging form of outsourcing involves customer cocreation. How does outsourcing as cocreation affect the novelty, speed, and effectiveness of marketing?

Does a Customer-Based Organizational Structure Affect Firm Performance?

Many firms are shifting away from product or service groups to groups focused on specific customer segments. As defined by Homburg, Workman, and Jensen (2002), a customer-focused organizational structure uses groups of customers related by industry, application, usage situation, or some other nongeographic similarity to organize firm activities. Scholars have suggested that this structure improves knowledge of and commitment to the firm's target customers (Jayachandran et al. 2005), identification and exploitation of growth opportunities (Day 2006), and accountability for managing customer relationships (Shah et al. 2006). In the first large-scale study comparing firms using a product structure with firms using a customer structure, Lee et al. (2015) find that a customer structure increases firm coordination costs, which reduces firm financial performance *and* increases firm customer satisfaction, which in turn increases firm financial performance. However, the latter effect holds only for firms in industries in which competitors have not yet implemented similar structures or in which competitive intensity is high.

Future research priorities. First, how does a firm's change from a product structure to a customer structure influence firm performance? Ideally, this design would compare firms that do versus do not make the transition to resolve identification issues associated with the choice to transition. Second, research could offer insight into the most effective strategies for transitioning to a customer-based structure (for ideas, see Homburg, Workman, and Jensen 2000). Third, what is the impact of firm, industry, leader, and strategy factors in the transition to a customer-based structure? For example, perhaps it only works when a firm already has a market-oriented culture.

The Use of Metrics[5]

What Metrics Do Firms Utilize?

Research addressing this question has covered important descriptive territory. First, it examined the rate at which various marketing metrics are used. In the most comprehensive treatment of this topic to date, Mintz and Currim (2013) find that firms use more marketing metrics than financial metrics. Among the most commonly used marketing metrics are awareness (41% of firms), total customers (37%), and market share (28%), while the most commonly used financial metrics are total volume (units or sales; 43%), return on investment (ROI; 36%), and net profits (28%). Second, other research has studied the use of specific metrics, such as customer satisfaction metrics (Morgan, Anderson, and Mittal 2005), scanner data metrics (Bucklin and Gupta 1999), or mindset metrics (Srinivasan, Vanhuele, and Pauwels 2010). Third, research has described metric use as part of a firm's capability for using market information (Moorman 1995; Vorhies and Morgan 2003). Fourth, studies have examined the use of marketing performance measurement systems (Homburg, Artz, and Wieseke 2012; Morgan, Anderson, and Mittal 2005; O'Sullivan and Abela 2007).

Future research priorities. First, as the field embraces digital, social, and mobile strategies, the nature of metrics use needs to be reexamined to determine whether traditional metrics are replaced by more sensitive process measures that can be observed online (e.g., referrals). Second, although we theorize that market-based assets such as strong brands and customer relationships influence speed of cash flows, we do not have any research documenting whether firms use these metrics. Third, although scholars have investigated the impact of marketing on stock market-based metrics and have even advocated doing so to "nail down marketing's impact" (Hanssens, Rust, and Srivastava 2009, p. 115), we know of no academic research examining use of these metrics within companies.[6] Fourth, studies have focused on individual metrics use. As marketing strategies are integrated across areas of the firm and across traditional and digital strategies, it is important to consider whether and how metrics are used jointly. Finally, studies have tended to use self-reports of metrics use. Observational studies of managers using metrics or metric reports in a marketing simulation game could offer reinforcing or new insights.

Does the Use of Metrics Contribute to Firm Performance?

Research has observed a positive direct effect of the number of marketing and financial metrics used by a firm on its marketing mix, customer outcomes, and profitability

[5]This section examines how marketers use metrics, not how the metrics in incentives and controls influence marketer behavior, which we investigate in the next section.

[6]A Towers and Watson executive compensation study finds that only 3% of senior managers' performance contracts use stock market indicators (Smith and Stradley 2010).

(Mintz and Currim 2013). At the overall system level, research has documented that use of a strong marketing performance measurement system predicts firm performance and chief executive officer (CEO) satisfaction (using primary data) and return on assets and stock returns (using secondary data) (O'Sullivan and Abela 2007). Likewise, studies have shown that the comprehensiveness of a marketing performance measurement system impacts a firm's market alignment and market knowledge, which in turn influences its profitability and market performance (Homburg, Artz, and Wieseke 2012). The system does not have a direct effect on firm performance.

Future research priorities. First, extending Homburg, Artz, and Wieseke's (2012) focus on organizational mediators, we need insight into how metrics use influences individual marketing decision making, including the decision-making processes activated and trade-offs manifested when marketers use different types of metrics. For example, Armstrong and Collopy's (1996) study shows that manager exposure to competitor-based metrics (e.g., market share) hurts firm profits by stimulating short-term thinking and a competitive, as opposed to a customer, focus. Relatedly, Lehmann and Reibstein (2006) classify metrics as evaluative or diagnostic, short-term or long-term, and as using objective or subjective information. Do these types moderate the impact of metrics use on the quality of individual decisions? Second, how do the most effective managers use metrics? If this is discoverable, we can design decision support systems to deliver metrics to other managers in these same ways.

Finally, while scholars advocate for the use of dashboards (Lehmann and Reibstein 2006; Pauwels et al. 2009), research has not yet demonstrated that dashboard use improves firm performance—indeed, O'Sullivan and Abela (2007) observe no relationship! Therefore, we need research that documents the ROI in building dashboards and training managers to use them. Research should then consider how to design dashboards for optimal performance. Which metrics are most useful to have on a continuous basis and which are better if evaluated less frequently? What number and sequence of metrics is optimal? Likewise, prior research has outlined the link between customer metrics and firm performance (Gupta and Zeithaml 2006) and chains of marketing productivity (Rust et al. 2004). However, these linkages have not driven the design of dashboards for marketing decision making.

What Factors Influence the Use of Metrics in Firms?

Mintz and Currim (2013) examine a wide-ranging set of antecedents (see their Table 5). One dominant antecedent is the firm's market orientation, which influences its use of marketing metrics (not financial metrics) (Mintz and Currim 2013). Another set of antecedents focuses on marketing research metrics use, which is influenced by the relationship between the providers and users (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé 1992); the formality of the channels used to disseminate metrics (Maltz and Kohli 1996); and the technical quality, presentation quality, actionability, confirmatory nature, and political acceptability of results (Deshpandé and Zaltman 1982). A third set of antecedents focuses on the organizational buy-in (Lilien, Roberts, and Shankar 2013) and resource commitments (Menon et al. 1999) to metrics. Finally, firms operating in more turbulent environments also report higher use of metrics (Mintz and Currim 2013).

Future research priorities. First, strategy should drive metrics' use. However, research on this issue is limited. Mintz and Currim (2013) show that business-to-customer firms use more metrics, whereas services firms use fewer metrics. However, we do not know whether firms focused on breakthrough innovation, which is difficult to evaluate, use fewer metrics or whether firms with a deeper digital strategy use more metrics. Second, what individual marketing leader and employee characteristics influence metrics' use? Mintz and Currim (2013) find only that quantitative background has a positive effect on financial metric use. Considering the effect of the leader/employee's organizational identification or their learning versus performance orientation may be fruitful directions. Third, what types of TMT dynamics facilitate metric use? Do metrics get used more when TMTs display a mix of cooperative and competitive dynamics (Luo, Slotegraaf, and Pan 2006)? Finally, we do not have an understanding of the process by which metrics are adopted within companies. From prior research, we know that metrics should not be viewed merely as tools of financial accounting or marketing engineering but as innovations that diffuse in a company. We need research to offer insight into that process, its challenges, and its successes.

Incentives and Controls

Bergen, Dutta, and Walker (1992, p. 1) note that "agency relationships pervade marketing." These agents are external partners acting on behalf of the firm or leaders and employees acting on behalf of shareholders. Controls and incentives shape agents' behavior to align with principals. In this section, we highlight agency problems documented in the literature and offer insights into how marketing excellence can be furthered through the use of controls and incentives. Web Appendix Table W2C summarizes this literature.

How Do Marketers Misbehave?

The topic of marketer misbehavior has a long history in marketing. Several key themes have emerged. First, research has classified the ethical principles used by marketers (e.g., Ferrell and Gresham 1985; Goolsby and Hunt 1992) and types of opportunistic behavior, including whether it is active versus passive and the result of current or changing conditions (Wathne and Heide 2000). In terms of empirical research, research has found misbehaviors associated with errors of both commission and omission and that marketers are more influenced by principles when making ethical judgements (deontological reasoning) than by consequences (teleological considerations) (Hunt and Vasquez-Parraga 1993). Distinguishing high- and low-stakes opportunity, Jap et al.

(2013) find that high-stakes (low-stakes) opportunism occurs when relationship rapport is low (high).

Second, research has documented specific types of intentional marketer misbehaviors, including gaming, smoothing, focusing, and inaccurate reporting (Jaworski and MacInnis 1989); marketing researcher misbehaviors, such as research integrity, fair treatment of clients and vendors, and confidentiality (Sparks and Hunt 1998); opportunism in marketing partnerships (e.g., Murry and Heide 1998); and myopic responses to stock market pressures (Mizik and Jacobson 2007; see Table W2C in the Web Appendix).

Future research priorities. First, marketing has a high level of perceived misconduct. Therefore, we urge scholars to document whether this reputation is deserved by developing methods to document a full range of these behaviors for marketers in different roles. Second, research has offered limited insights into the reasons for these misbehaviors. Transaction cost scholars focus on opportunism that arises from self-seeking, whereas research in the marketing–finance interface focuses on the temptations of short-term rewards—both are premised on hidden-action models in economics that assume self-interest, incomplete information, and environmental uncertainty. Other scholars have suggested that weak organizational culture (Hunt, Wood, and Chonko 1989), lax social norms (Dunfee, Smith, and Ross 1999) or weak professional norms (Jaworski and MacInnis 1989) are the culprit. Pitting these alternative explanations against one another in an empirical test would lead to a better understanding of marketer misbehavior.

How Should Marketing Agents Be Aligned for Firm Performance?

The literature has examined a range of solutions (see Web Appendix Table W2C). One stream of research has focused on the broader control system to ensure that an agent acts in the firm's best interest, and it includes ex ante and ex post control strategies,[7] formal controls (on inputs, process, and outputs) and informal controls (related to self, social, professional and cultural factors), process versus outcome controls, and behavior-based versus outcome-based controls. A second stream of literature has focused exclusively on reward structures, including individual versus group rewards and single-period versus multiperiod rewards (for a detailed discussion of findings, see Web Appendix Table W2C).

Future research priorities. We see several challenges and opportunities. First, there is very little integration across the different literature streams in this area. Understanding how different incentive and control systems relate to one another, including whether they substitute, detract from, or complement one another would be useful. Second, there is a general view that aligning incentives with customer metrics (e.g., customer satisfaction, retention) should reduce misbehavior, and many firms are adopting this approach. However, we need research that documents this payoff and points to challenges.

Third, how do incentive and control systems work when marketing occurs in open-network structures in which responsibilities are diffused? Current research has shown that how a firm manages its downstream customer partners depends on the governance mechanisms it has deployed in managing its upstream supplier relationships (Wathne and Heide 2004) and that the customer orientation of a business-to-business platform is contingent on firm dependence on its customers (Chakravarty, Kumar, and Grewal 2014). Fourth, research has focused on marketers' misbehaviors and opportunism. How do some marketers and their firms resist the forces of self-interest? What consequences result over both the short and long run? Research examining marketers who do not succumb to ethical temptations is an important opportunity.

Finally, as firms expand globally, which incentives and controls should vary across markets and which should hold at standardized levels throughout the company? On the one hand, what are the costs of standardization when global systems challenge local cultural norms and expectations? On the other hand, what are the costs of adapting incentives and controls to local conditions, including employee dissatisfaction? Does increased global employee movement, system transparency, and communication make these adaptation costs more likely?

Human Capital for Marketing Excellence

Human capital is a key force in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of marketing strategy (Hunt 2000). Both marketing leaders (Web Appendix Table W3B) and employees (Web Appendix Table W3A) are crucial operatives in marketing's contributions. Yet research on this topic in marketing has been uneven, with more research focusing on marketing employees. However, the emergence of the CMO role has led to renewed interest in the contributions of marketing leaders.

Marketing Leaders

Do Marketing Leaders Improve Firm Performance?

Initial research found no effect for the presence of a marketing leader in the firm's TMT. Nath and Mahajan (2008) make this conclusion after examining the impact of a CMO in the TMT on firm sales growth, Tobin's q, market share, return on assets, and return on sales. Boyd, Chandy, and Cunha (2010) observe a heterogeneous effect for the appointment of a CMO on firm stock returns, with 46% of firms showing a positive effect and 54% a negative effect. Neither study corrects for endogeneity in the choice to appoint a CMO.

Two recent studies that resolve the selection problem offer a more positive view. Homburg et al. (2014) find that a CMO increases the likelihood of new venture funding by 46% and that this effect is stronger for CMOs with more education, marketing experience, and industry experience—all of which are viewed as contributing to the legitimacy of the new

[7] This is a large body of literature. As such, we review only a handful in Web Appendix Tables W2A (see outsourcing question) and W2C and recommend research by Weitz, Anderson, John, Heide, Palmatier, Ganesan, Jap, Wathne, Scheer, and Ghosh as well as an excellent review paper by Watson et al. (2015).

enterprise. Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal's (2015) tour de force of empirical models concludes that the presence of a CMO in a firm's TMT improves a firm's Tobin's q.[8]

Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal (2015) argue that accounting-based measures such as ROI are unlikely to reflect the expected long-term effects of marketing leadership. They also argue that outcomes such as market share or sales growth should not be used because they are not goal agnostic. Both reasons might explain why Nath and Mahajan (2008) do not show the effect of the CMO. Instead, Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal (2015) recommend the use of Tobin's q because it is less subject to tax manipulation and it is also goal agnostic—meaning that firm valuation is assessed on cash flows, not on sales or market share. However, q is a capital market measure that may reflect and promote real earnings manipulations (Mizik 2010). This is all the more reason to study outcomes using a panel structure so that such manipulations either wash out in the model or are detected by the firm-specific model parameters.

Future research priorities. Research to date has focused on broad capital market measures such as Tobin's q, accounting measures of profits, or sales growth. Future studies could first examine whether the presence of a CMO influences the value of a firm's market-based assets, including customer equity, brand equity, and market knowledge. Second, following Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal's (2015) recommendation, does the presence of a CMO affect firm risk levels? Third, does the presence of a CMO on the TMT affect cash flow vulnerability—the least well-understood of Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey's cash flow effects (see Frennea 2015)? Does the CMO play a critical defensive role in protecting firm cash flows from external threats?

What Influences Marketing Leader Effectiveness?

Research has examined firm, industry, and individual-leader factors that moderate the marketing leader–firm performance effect. Nath and Mahajan's (2008) null effect for the performance effect of the CMO in the TMT is not influenced by firm strategy, industry concentration levels, or whether the firm has an outsider CEO. In a follow-up article, Nath and Mahajan (2011) find that the impact of CMO power on firm sales growth and return on sales converts a null effect for CMO power into a positive effect when the TMT is segmented and thus likely to benefit from the integrative perspective of a marketing leader. At the same time, the null effect becomes negative when the firm uses a strategy of unrelated diversification, which would presumably benefit less from this integrative perspective.

Boyd, Chandy, and Cunha (2010) find that a powerful customer compromises marketing leader discretion and weakens the leader's contributions to firm performance. This negative effect is weaker when marketing leaders have more role experience or more firm experience, when firm scope and firm size are small, or when firm performance is strong. Homburg et al. (2014) find that the positive venture-funding effect of a CMO is stronger when the CMO has a master's of business administration degree from a prestigious university as well as more marketing and industry experience. Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal (2015) observe that the positive effect of CMO presence on firm performance is stronger when the company has strong sales growth and weaker when the CEO has a long tenure and firm size increases.

Future research priorities. First, research has not examined the effect of organizational moderators associated with structure and culture on the CMO–firm performance link. From literature on market orientation and organizational market information processes, we might expect CMOs operating in more externally focused cultures (which empower leaders who are the vanguard of customer focus) or less bureaucratic structures (which facilitate the flow of information) to make stronger firm contributions. Of course, these same organizational factors may influence marketing leader selection, so care must be taken in the identification of these effects. Second, while we know that education and experience are important, research has not offered insight into how CMOs leverage them to influence firm performance.

Third, we know that CEO tenure dampens the CMO's contributions to firm performance on capital market measures (Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal 2015). However, research has not examined a CMO's relationships with the chief financial officer, chief information officer, and chief technology officer—leaders who control financial, digital, and technology assets critical to marketing success. Further research should consider how these internal relationships influence CMO contributions and what CMO characteristics, roles, and actions make for successful long-term relationships with other members of the TMT.

How Do Marketing Leaders Improve Firm Performance?

The literature offers three answers to this question. The first focuses on the activities that marketing leads. Piercy (1986) examines whether the chief marketing executive is responsible for 20 different marketing activities (see also Homburg et al. 2015; Homberg, Workman, and Krohmer 1999). Second, Boyd, Chandy, and Cunha (2010, p. 1163) theorize that marketing leaders perform three external roles—an informational role that identifies "new opportunities for the firm to pursue and threats to guard against," a decisional role that determines "the level and type of investments to be made in activities associated with the marketing function," and a relational role that "develops and manages a firm's relationships with external stakeholders." Third, research has proposed that marketing leaders perform a critical internal role that activates employees by stimulating an employee-organizational identification process (Wieseke et al. 2009) or by facilitating employee internalization of the firm's brand identity (Morhart, Herzog, and Tomczak 2009).

Future research priorities. First, we see an opportunity to offer a more complete view of the activities marketing leaders perform that influence firm outcomes. These might include market orientation activities and mainstream

[8]Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal (2015) also offer a good overview of the modeling issues that confront researchers working on marketing strategy problems; we recommend this article to young scholars.

marketing strategy actions (e.g., targeting) as well as digital, social, and marketing analytics–based activities. Research needs to shed light on how much these activities contribute to firm performance when managed by marketing leaders versus other areas of the firm. Second, Jaworski (2011) argues that there may not be a universal job description for marketing leaders. Instead, requirements depend on the CMO's different roles, the short-term or long-term impact, and whether that impact is on thinking or actions. Research should consider the combination of these elements as different "pathways to impact" as Jaworski suggests, and it should formally investigate whether certain combinations are more effective than others.

Third, research has not examined the role of marketing leaders in effectively leading growth initiatives. The CMO Survey (2016) shows that marketing has responsibility for innovation in only 28.6% of firms, which indicates that marketing leaders are not playing an important role in growth. Why is growth delegated to nonmarketing leaders and with what effect? How does growth strategy change when managed by a marketing leader?

What Influences the Appointment of Marketing Leaders?

Nath and Mahajan (2008) find that CMOs are more likely to be present in firms with stronger innovation, differentiation, and corporate branding strategies; as TMT marketing experience increases and TMT general management experience decreases; and when the CEO is an outsider. Homburg et al. (2014) replicate some of these effects in start-ups and find that firms with a stronger innovation strategy and CEOs with marketing experience are more likely to have a CMO. In contrast, firm differentiation strategy and CEO start-up experience have no effect. Finally, among new predictors, chief financial officer presence, demand instability, firm age, and product introduction increase, and industry legitimacy and complexity decrease, the likelihood of a CMO.

Future research priorities. First, research has not examined how the match or fit between marketing leader characteristics and experiences and firm characteristics, strategies, and goals influence marketing leader appointment. We think it is very likely that firms are attracted to appoint marketing leaders who are more different from the firm on the assumption that differences may produce the greatest opportunities for growth or change. However, these differences can make it challenging for the CMO to lead effectively. Matching models used in economics would be useful tools to investigate which types of matches produce the greatest likelihood of appointment and the strongest performance effects (e.g., Fox 2010).

Second, the nature and scope of marketing leader appointments is very diverse, reflecting different types of roles and responsibilities. However, research, in general, has not investigated this diversity of appointments. Opportunities include understanding why marketing leaders are appointed to roles that reflect "marketing and sales"; have designations for "customer," "brand," or "growth"; or use terms such as "Chief," "Executive," or "Senior Executive."

What Is the Marketing Leader Turnover Rate, and What Factors Influence It?

Future research priorities. Although marketing leader turnover is often reported to be higher than that for other leaders, no research has addressed this topic. Therefore, our first direction is to determine the true rate of marketing leader turnover and how it compares with other leaders. How much CMO turnover is voluntary versus involuntary? Second, how is CMO turnover influenced by firm performance changes or by deviations from expected firm performance changes? Relatedly, what types of firm performance changes are most predictive of CMO turnover—growth, sales, profits, or earnings performance? Third, is CMO turnover affected by the nature of competitive rivalry in an industry? Specifically, when the firm is in a head-to-head battle with a competitor, does the competitor's marketplace outcome increase CMO turnover? Fourth, how is turnover influenced by the various CMO roles and activities, which limit or enable the CMO's ability to make contributions? Finally, how does the fit or match between marketing leader characteristics (e.g., education, experience) and firm objectives and strategy influence turnover rates?

Marketing Employees

Do Marketing Employee Knowledge and Experience Contribute to Firm Performance?[9]

Web Appendix Table W3B summarizes this literature, which is mixed for marketing experience and more positive for marketing knowledge. Marketer experience level improves decision quality in less programmed areas (Perkins and Rao 1990) but reduces the number of competitors identified by managers (Clark and Montgomery 1999) and the use of financial metrics (Mintz and Currim 2013). Surprisingly, breadth of experience does not improve marketer creativity (Andrews and Smith 1996). The two major studies addressing marketer knowledge have found that the accuracy of frontline employee (FLE; Homburg, Wieseke, and Bornemann 2009) and salesperson (Mullins et al. (2014) knowledge improves performance outcomes. Other research has examined the effect of knowledge variants—emotional intelligence (Kidwell et al. 2011) and the accuracy of intuitive judgements (Hall, Ahearne, and Sujan 2015)—both of which have positive effects on sales performance.

Future research priorities. First, although nearly everyone agrees that new knowledge and skills will be important for marketers operating in a digitally interconnected world, there is little agreement about the specific knowledge and skills required. Second, what research approaches and tools should be used to isolate the effect of marketing knowledge and experience? Experiments offer one solution, as does the use of a range of measures (e.g., self, superior, and peer ratings) in

[9]This is a broad topic in the marketing literature. For brevity, we focus on four topics that are part of the MSI priority and that we think are most valuable to practitioners (see Table W3B in the Web Appendix).

field studies. Another strategy is to isolate an outcome over which marketing employees have control and measure the effect of their knowledge and experience. Third, and relatedly, what is the contribution of individual marketing knowledge and experience to firm performance? The literature has, in general, related *individual* knowledge, skills, experience, and training to *individual* performance. In sales settings, these individual outcomes can be aggregated to firm performance. However, this is more difficult to do in other marketing settings, in which marketers' individual contributions link to collective outcomes.

What Is the Impact of Marketing Training?

The literature offers a mixed view of this topic. On the one hand, training for new product decisions (Bolton 2003), advertising allocations (Hutchinson, Alba, and Eisenstein 2010), and ethics (Sparks and Hunt 1998) does not work. On the other hand, creativity training does seem to work (see Web Appendix Table W3B). Likewise, sales training improves trade show performance (Gopalakrishna and Lilien 1995), but other research has shown important contingencies. For example, Kalra and Soberman (2008) find that training salespeople to "beat the competition" does reduce competitors' profits but also reduces company profits. Kumar, Sunder, and Leone (2014) find that sales training has a positive, nonlinear effect on the value of the salesperson to the firm, as measured by customer lifetime value. Salespeople are, however, differentially responsive to task-related and growth-related training, which means that firms should use information about these "types" to use training to maximize firm profits. Finally, Morhart, Herzog, and Tomczak (2009) find that managers can be trained to enact the behaviors associated with brand-specific transformational leaders.

Future research priorities. First, research should offer a meta-analytic view of training for critical marketing skills to gain insight into which training tools (in person, computer mediated, gamification, etc.) and training modes (experiential, case based, lecture, etc.) work best in which situations. Second, what individual factors moderate the effect of marketing training? We know that employee performance (Godes 2003), learning versus performance orientation (Kohli, Shervani, and Challagalla 1998; Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar 1994), and whether the training is growth or task oriented (Kumar, Sunder, and Leone 2014) are important; what other motivational factors are important to training? Third, does training affect outcomes such as likelihood of hiring and turnover? If so, these outcomes should be included in the ROI of training.

How Does the Management of FLEs Affect Customers and Firm Performance?

Research in this area has focused on how service quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1985) and sales outcomes break down due to poor management of FLEs. Research has identified the importance of supportive physical surroundings (e.g., Bitner 1992) and the negative effect of employee burnout (Singh 2000), role stress, and role ambiguity (e.g., Chan and Wan 2012; Hartline and Ferrell 1996) on how well employees contribute. Other research has pointed to the use of strategies such as improving coworker feedback (Jaworski and Kohli 1993), involving employees in managing change (Ye, Marinova, and Singh 2007), and encouraging supervisors to shift between an outcome and process focus depending on the FLE's orientation (Sarin, Challagalla, and Kohli 2012). Research examining the effect of customer orientation—the belief that the organization should place customers' interests first in all decisions—has found that this trait reduces job stress and increases job engagement, which, in turn, increases employee performance and reduces turnover (Zablah et al. 2012).

Future research priorities. Research has produced a range of important findings, but very little integration. We see an opportunity to consider how strategies reflecting different psychological, organizational, economic, and structural mechanisms may or may not work together to influence FLE performance. Another direction involves examining the role of marketing leaders in the effectiveness of FLEs. Most research in this area has examined the employee's immediate supervisor. This makes sense, but what role does the firm's top marketing leader play in FLE–customer interactions?

What Is the Impact of Employee Satisfaction on Firm Performance?

Research on the service-profit chain has found that employees' actions and satisfaction influence customers' actions and satisfaction, which, in turn, improves financial performance (Heskett et al. 1994). Empirical studies have offered strong support for the core tenets of this view, with important conceptual refinements. For example, research has shown that investments in employees have a positive effect on customer perceptions of employees and that these perceptions increase customer purchase intentions, purchase, and retention (Kamakura et al. 2002). Likewise, employee satisfaction has a direct effect on bank revenues and moderates the relationship between a bank's investments in technology and revenues (Dotson and Allenby 2010).

Future research priorities. First, research has yet to parse out whether it is employee satisfaction or the type of employee who is attracted to work for a certain type of firm that is responsible for the FLE–performance effect. Second, research has not fully exposed the types of behaviors that arise from employee satisfaction. Does employee satisfaction increase extrarole and stewardship behaviors and/or diminish burnout? Alternatively, research could examine how satisfied employees share customer information vertically and horizontally as well as how often they take the initiative to solve customers' problems.

Third, research has documented a connection between a firm's employees and brands. Siranni et al. (2013) find that brand evaluations and brand equity both increase when there is alignment between employees and brand personalities. Tavassoli, Sorescu, and Chandy (2014) find that CEOs who work for strong brands accept lower pay. Future studies could examine other aspects of the brand–employee relationship. For example, are employees more satisfied when they work for a firm with a strong brand? Does satisfaction inspired by brand produce different behaviors than satisfaction inspired by a connection to a specific job or to the larger firm culture?

Organizational Culture for Marketing Excellence

How has Organizational Culture Been Studied in Marketing?

Forms of culture. Research in marketing has studied three different forms of organizational culture (see Web Appendix Table W4). The first views culture as "the pattern of shared values and beliefs that help individuals understand organizational functioning and that provide norms for behavior" (Deshpandé and Webster 1989, p. 4). Norms, which are shared beliefs about appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, and mental models, which are shared simplifying belief frameworks (Day and Nedungadi 1994), are often classified together with values.[10]

A second form of organizational culture views culture as behaviors. Narver and Slater (1990, p. 21) define market orientation as "the organization culture that most effectively and efficiently creates the necessary behaviors for the creation of superior value for buyers and, thus, continuous superior performance." A third form of organizational culture is represented by cultural artifacts that "include stories, arrangements, rituals, and language that are created by an organization and have strong symbolic meaning" (Homburg and Pflesser 2000, p. 450). For example, in Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry (2006), artifacts are often brought in from field visits to create a shared understanding of the market.

Content of culture. The marketing literature has studied six types of cultural content. First, market-oriented culture has been described in two ways. Narver and Slater (1990) focus on three behaviors reflecting a customer orientation, competitor orientation, and interfunctional orientation, while Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry (2006) focus on values and norms that support the market as the firm's raison d'être, collaboration, respect/empathy/perspective taking, keeping promises, openness, and trust. Second, Deshpandé, Farley, and Webster (1993, p. 27) focus on customer orientation as "the set of beliefs that puts the customer's interest first." Third, the competing values framework identifies four cultures that arise from the intersection of an internal or external orientation and informal or formal processes (Moorman 1995). Fourth, Tellis, Prabhu, and Chandy (2009) focus on six qualities of a culture of radical innovation (see Web Appendix Table W4). Fifth, studies have examined a culture focused on employee learning and development (Hurley and Hult 1998). Sixth, research has examined firm-level equivalents of Hofstede's national culture measures (Wuyts and Geyskens 2005).

Future research priorities. Research in this area has noticeably slowed. One reason for this is that the connection between culture and marketing performance is rather distal. We offer two recommendations to make the effect more proximate (for a complete list, see Table 1). First, what additional cultural values, behaviors, and artifacts play important roles in marketing strategies? Values that prioritize the long run over the short run or product-market performance over stock market performance may be useful directions. Second, given the importance of market-based assets, we recommend the development of theory about a firm's market-based asset-focused culture. This culture would emphasize developing, leveraging, and improving a firm's intangible assets (customer relationships, brands, and knowledge) that arise from the commingling of the firm and the marketplace (Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey 1998, p. 4).

How Is Organizational Culture Measured in Marketing?

Most research has used surveys of key informants (see Web Appendix Table W4). For example, Tellis, Prabhu, and Chandy (2009) use a large-scale survey to measure six cultural attitudes and behaviors across 17 countries. An exception is Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry (2006) who use a multimethod approach.

Future research priorities. Although a multimethod approach offers the most valid way to measure organizational culture, this may not be possible when a large sample of firms is studied. In this case, multiple informants can increase confidence in survey results or a select set of case studies can be used to complete the cultural portrait emerging from a survey. Given the role of language as a cultural artifact, text analysis can also be used to measure culture (see Yadav, Prabhu, and Chandy 2007). Although the use of text analysis to measure culture is intriguing, care must be taken to capture text that is a valid indicator of culture and does not serve a public relations objective. Finally, we see an opportunity to develop stronger artifact-based measures of culture. These artifacts may be reflected in the organizational reporting structure; in job descriptions; and in the design of websites, customer service operations, products, and services. Many of these artifacts are visible to us as researchers, and we urge scholars to examine these tangible manifestations of culture for novel insights.

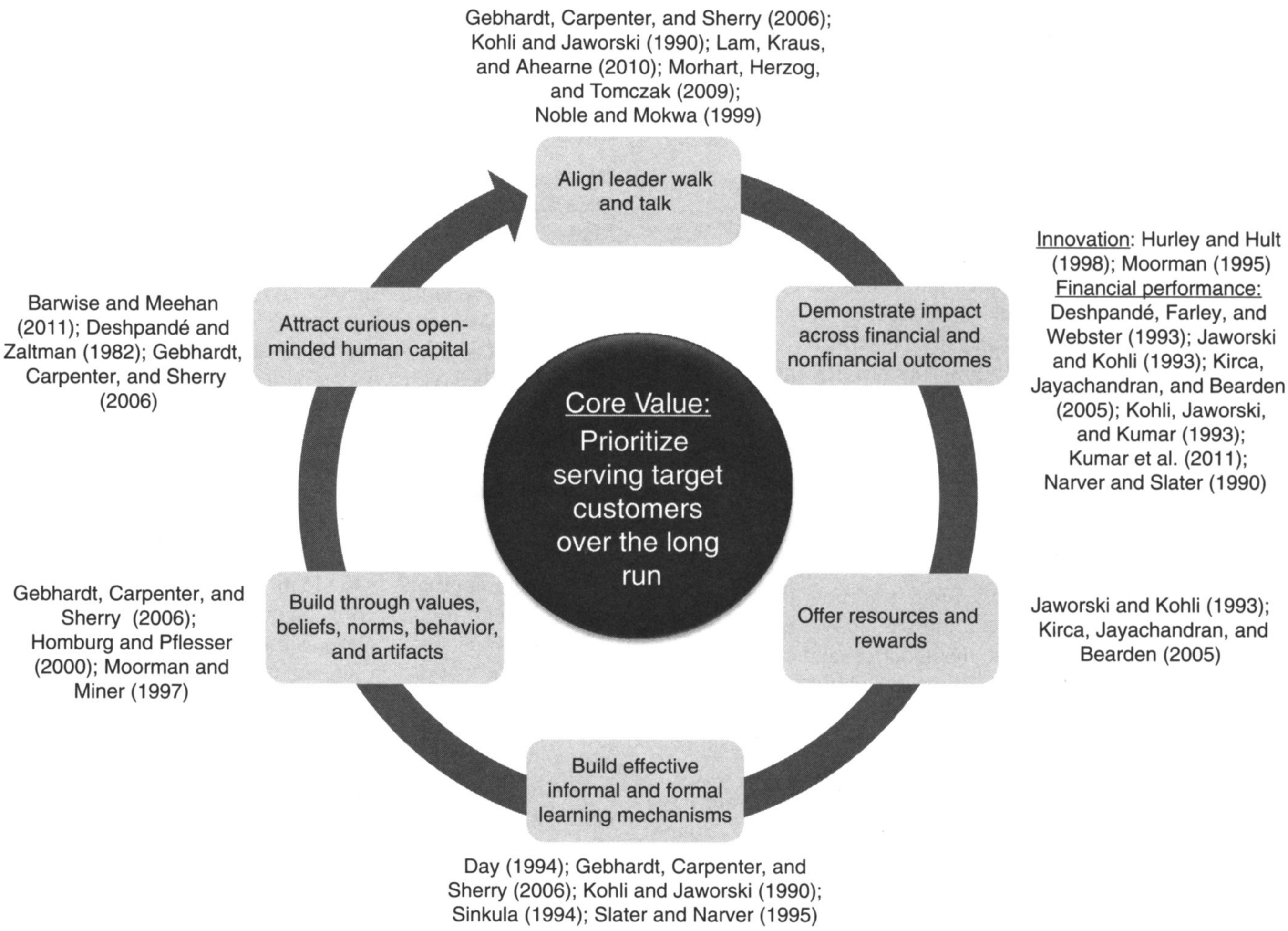
What Is the Contribution of Culture to Firm Performance?

A modest stream of research examines the performance effects of culture. Findings have indicated that an innovative culture increases firm financial performance (Rubera and Kirca 2012; Tellis, Prabhu, and Chandy 2009) and cultures with different competing values influence firm information outcomes and relationship outcomes (see Web Appendix Table W4). A customer-oriented culture has a positive effect on financial performance (Deshpandé, Farley, and Webster1993). A market-oriented culture improves market performance (Homburg and Pflesser 2000), financial performance (Narver and Slater 1990), and innovation outcomes (Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden 2005).[11] Han, Kim, and Srivastava (1998) also find evidence of a market orientation–innovation–performance chain. These results dispel the view that a market-oriented culture might

[10]Other research in marketing has separated values and norms as distinctive forms of culture that should be measured independently (Homburg and Pflesser 2000).

[11]This meta-analysis includes market-oriented culture (Narver and Slater 1990) and market-orientation processes/capabilities (Jaworski and Kohli 1993).

FIGURE 3
Building and Sustaining a Market-Oriented Culture



dampen firm innovation because customers are unable to describe unmet needs or because it induces a narrow focus on current customers (Christensen 1997).

Future research priorities. First, the term "customer-centricity" has increasingly supplanted market orientation when referring to culture. In this view, less consideration is given to the "competitor orientation" as a feature of market-oriented culture (Narver and Slater 1990). Does this de-emphasis endanger the performance effects of market-oriented culture, or does it unleash an even stronger performance effect? Both outcomes are possible. On the one hand, a lack of focus on competitors might mean the firm loses sight of its differentiation from competitors or is eclipsed by competitors leapfrogging ahead. On the other hand, a weaker emphasis on competitors may enable firms to give full attention to serving their customers (Rindfleisch and Moorman 2003). As Jeff Bezos (2009) noted, "When given the choice of obsessing over customers or obsessing over competitors, we always obsess over customers. We pay attention to what our competitors do but it's not where we put our energy.... It's not where we get our motivation from."

Second, Tony Hsieh (2010, p. 15), the CEO of Zappos, has stated, "Your culture is your brand." The idea that culture can produce powerful market-based assets, such as brands, is not a controversial idea. However, no research has demonstrated this connection empirically.

Third, the literature on market-oriented culture has not considered how the firm serves both its business-to-business partners and its ultimate end consumers. It ignores this dual-customer status and has not addressed how firms can keep their cultures focused on both "customers" to maximize performance. Fourth, a key challenge in this area is separating the performance impact of culture from other contributing forces, such as the leaders who help create it and the strategy that carries its values, norms, and artifacts. To that end, a longitudinal view of culture and other contributing factors may provide insights into the distinctive role of culture on firm performance.

How Should Firms Build and Sustain a Market-Oriented Culture?

Leadership commitment and behavior modeling are crucial to any change initiative. Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry

(2006) observe a four-stage organizational change process led by a group of leaders, which they liken to a political revolution. Lam, Krauss, and Ahearne (2010) identify a social learning process in which middle managers and work-group expert peers serve as top managers' envoys and role models of market-oriented behaviors to FLEs. Relatedly, Hartline, Maxham, and McKee (2000) find three "corridors of influence" used to disseminate a customer-focused strategy to employees.

Figure 3 synthesizes other factors observed in the literature. First, the firm needs to attract managers and employees whose curiosity and open-mindedness provide a powerful combination for generating valuable customer insights. Second, aligning leaders' "talk" and "walk" is critical because a market-oriented culture can only be built on leadership commitment. Third, demonstrating the rewards of a market-oriented culture to leaders and employees motivates further adoption. Fourth, offering resources to support and rewards to motivate improves adoption; fifth, aligning cultural indicators ensures consistency. Finally, firms need effective informal and formal learning systems to disseminate successes and lessons throughout the organization.

Future research priorities. First, we know that leaders shape the culture. What are the most effective actions, and how should they be adapted to the historical and competitive realities of the firm? Second, cultural change is usually viewed as a deliberate process (Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry 2006), but it could also be an emergent process. If so, what begins the process and the activities that occur? Research in the structural-cognitive tradition could aid in tracing the emergence of belief change in the organization (Hutt, Reingen, and Ronchetto 1988). Third, research should consider culture as an outcome of marketing activities. Specifically, how is the firm's culture built from the enactment of marketing activities over time? Such activities house implicit values, beliefs, and norms and operate through artifacts.

Integrating the Four Elements of Marketing Organization

One of the oldest ideas in marketing and strategy is the importance of integration or fit among organizational activities. Although we acknowledge their interactions in Figure 1, our treatment of the four elements of MARKORG does not deeply consider how these elements influence one another. This is also a fair reflection of the marketing literature. Conceptual advances have been either macro in orientation, such as how structure might be subsumed in culture (Day 1990) and how activities and information should be aligned (Gulati 2009), or more micro in orientation, such as how employees should be managed or rewarded (see Web Appendix Table W3B). One promising start was Kohli and Jaworski's (1990) conceptual dissection of the drivers of a market orientation, which includes senior management's commitment, interdepartmental dynamics, and configuration elements such as the level of structure and the use of incentives to reward employees for market-oriented behaviors. The cumulative research on this issue (captured in Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden 2005) affirms the importance of these factors but has yet to grapple with how these elements effectively integrate for marketing excellence. This section offers a set of basic questions and our initial answers on this topic to promote further research in this area.

How Does MARKORG Integration Enable Marketing Excellence?

One approach is to treat each MARKORG element as an *integrating force* for the alignment of the other elements. Marketing leaders are *integrating agents* that facilitate coordination by directing the development or deployment of capabilities, the selection of metrics and incentives, the cultivation of cultural values, and the design of structure. A market-oriented culture reflects *integrating values* that align mindsets, motivations, and behaviors to a set of deeply held values. A firm's marketing capabilities are *integrating processes* that facilitate coordination by dictating action steps, communicating cultural values, and producing organizational structures to get work accomplished. *Integrating configurations* such as organizational structures and control systems coordinate action by directing attention and facilitating information flows.

Another approach is to identify *integrating mechanisms* that influence the selection or operationalization of each MARKORG element. The *voice of the customer* serves as an integrator that drives fundamental strategy decisions and aligns people, processes, and structure around the customer (Griffin and Hauser 1993). The *customer value proposition* serves as an integrator because it sets the strategic direction regarding target markets, the offering, and the firm's competitors. The *business model* integrates the organization by aligning firm choices in capabilities, partnerships, and strategies to create customer value, capture economic value, and protect that value from competitors (Porter 1996). Finally, *marketing doctrine*, defined as a "firm's unique principles, distilled from its experiences, which provide firm-wide guidance on market-facing choices" (Challagalla, Murtha, and Jaworski 2014, p. 1), may serve as an integrating mechanism by guiding the selection of people, capabilities, reward systems, and even structures.[12] These integrating forces and mechanisms require theories that account for how the four MARKORG elements work together to enable marketing excellence. We urge scholars to offer frameworks that account for these integrative activities.

How Does MARKORG Link Across Organizational Levels for Marketing Excellence?

Our review treats the higher-level constructs of capability, configuration, and culture at the business unit level, while human capital resides with individuals. How are these levels aligned to enable excellence? Several *integrating directions* are possible—top-down (from the TMT to the rest of the firm), bottom-up (from employees up the chain), or middle-

[12]The MARKORG also influences doctrine and goals. For example, Challagalla, Murtha, and Jaworski (2014) suggest that marketing doctrine arises when marketing's authority and activities are more diffused and decentralized (as opposed to centralized in a function).

out (from middle managers that create and socialize change). The study of these different directions, which fits within the emerging study of microfoundations in the field of strategy (Teece 2007), raises several provocative questions for marketers, including (1) How is dispersed marketing information and knowledge aggregated within firms and embedded in capabilities (Krush, Sohi, and Saini 2015)? (2) How is a market orientation shaped by the actions of the leadership team to induce interfunctional coordination? and (3) How can the marketing and sales functions be aligned to leverage their respective skills (Homburg and Jensen 2007), and what happens when they are combined into a single, commercial function?

How Does MARKORG Link Across Organizations for Marketing Excellence?

Firms and their marketing activities are increasingly nested and executed within networks of channel partners, alliances, and stakeholder arrangements (Achrol 1991; Webster 1992). In the relational view of the firm (Dyer and Singh 1998), these networks and relationships are the unit of analysis to be managed. Insights are needed into how to coordinate and align MARKORG across such arrangements. For example, how do firms use their partners to extend the reach of their market intelligence capabilities? How are divergent structures and cultures aligned? Research should investigate the types of integrating mechanisms that work most effectively in these settings.

Marketing Organization Contributions to Firm Performance

The Role of the Seven Marketing Activities (7As)

The effect of MARKORG on firm performance is often indirect and difficult to observe. These elements have to be mobilized and then converted into activities that marketers deploy to generate firm performance results. Reviewing the literature, we observe seven activities or action levers (7As) that perform the translational work of marketing organization on performance. Figure 1 highlights the mediating function of the 7As. The 7As include marketing contributions to *anticipating* marketplace changes; *adapting* the firm to such changes; *aligning* processes, structures, and people; *activating* efficient and effective individual and organizational behaviors; creating *accountability* for marketing performance; *attracting* important financial, human, and other resources; and engaging in *asset management* that develops and deploys marketing assets.

Activities are the basic ingredients of organizations and are central to strategy, beginning with value chain analysis and strategy maps (Porter 1996) and advancing to the contemporary view that organizations are systems composed of choices of activities that interact to create a competitive advantage (Zott and Amit 2010). The field of marketing treats the concept of activities very loosely, with the activities ascribed to marketing mostly confined to the "Four Ps." This narrow view fails to capture many of the vital marketing roles emergent in the literature on marketing organization (summarized in Web Appendix Table W5). It also limits the menu of action levers marketing leaders consider, which diminishes marketing's contributions.

The 7As perform their important functions within the marketing strategy process, which begins with *designing* strategic choices regarding where to play and how to win, then proceeds through *implementing* strategy decisions and *assessing* results. Supporting this process is a *resourcing* cycle in which marketing and nonmarketing resources are acquired, developed, and deployed in the process. This cycle iterates so that assessment and resource outcomes drive future design and implementation activities. We nest the 7As within this familiar marketing strategy process but emphasize the 7As because they are clear, value-adding activities that marketers should perform in the marketing strategy process. The 7As serve as a theoretically grounded description of the marketing activities needed to advance marketing excellence.

Next, we review the literature for each of the 7As, with an eye toward describing how the four elements of marketing organization contribute to the quality of these activities (for a detailed summary, see Web Appendix Table W5). In addition, we offer questions to facilitate further research for each activity.

How Does MARKORG Influence the Design of Marketing Strategy?

Marketing strategy design involves the choice of markets, value propositions, and business models. MARKORG shapes strategy design through two marketing activities. First, when performed effectively, *anticipation activities* provide an early and accurate understanding of external threats and opportunities so the firm can serve the market better than competitors and even mold the market to its advantage. Second, an increasingly volatile, complex, and ambiguous business world requires that marketers continuously adapt their organization to stay competitive. *Adaptation activities* enable changes in firm strategy and organization.

Anticipation Activities

Early market sensing allows the firm to prepare for the future ahead of competitors. How does MARKORG enable such anticipation activities? Research has indicated that market orientation capabilities should improve firm anticipation, including early market entry (see Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Srinivasan, Lilien, and Rangaswamy 2002). Cultural values focused on the customer emphasize regular collection of related information (Deshpandé, Farley, and Webster 1993), and a cultural "focus on the future" increases the likelihood of introducing radical innovation (Yadav, Prabhu, and Chandy 2007). Configuration choices about market-based reward systems increase attention to the acquisition, dissemination, and use of market information (Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden 2005), while employee knowledge about customers improves customer management (Homburg, Wieseke, and

Bornemann 2009) and account profitability (Mullins et al. 2014) (for details, see Web Appendix Table W5).

Future research priorities. First, there is a need to understand the informational role that marketing leaders play in generating growth opportunities (Boyd, Chandy, and Cunha 2010). What are the traits and behaviors of marketing leaders who effectively perform this role? Second, can employees and leaders be trained to anticipate effectively? Third, what are the optimal organizational structures for facilitating anticipation?

Adaptation Activities

How does MARKORG enable adaptation activities? Scholars agree that market learning capabilities are a critical input to adaptation. However, agreement ends there. Research has adopted one of two approaches for other capabilities important to adaptation. Day (2011) focuses on two key learning tools—adaptive market experimentation (targeted experiments for trial-and-error learning) and open marketing (utilizing partners' resources for transformation). Other research has focused on more general firm adaptation capabilities (resource reconfiguration and capability enhancement; Morgan 2012) and strategic flexibility capabilities (Grewal and Tansuhaj 2001). Cultural elements are also important to adaptation, including a firm's willingness to cannibalize current offerings or empower product champions (Tellis, Prabhu, and Chandy 2009). In the structure area, a cross-functional key account management structure is the most responsive to market changes (Homberg, Workman, and Jensen 2002) while customer-oriented structures are more important in highly competitive industries (Lee et al. 2015). Finally, marketing leaders help bring about the change to a market-oriented culture and the introduction of new programs and strategies (see Web Appendix Table W5).

Future research priorities. An important challenge to adaptation is that organizations are not naturally designed for the simultaneous exploitation of current strategies and the exploration of new strategies (March 1991). One promising approach is research on ambidexterity that recommends separating the marketing organizational elements of new ventures from the firm's existing businesses (O'Reilly and Tushman 2004). We add that utilizing structures based on customer segments (Lee et al. 2015) may guide the firm through adaptation given that customer relationships can provide stable cash flows while offering insight into customers' unmet needs and adjacencies. What types of incentives and metrics are best used to counterbalance the emphasis on current performance with commitments to future opportunities? Are the CMO effects observed by Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal (2015) stronger in more turbulent markets? If so, what leader behaviors produce positive outcomes in such trying times? Finally, regarding the supportive role of culture, are there bridging values, such as respect and perspective taking (Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry 2006) or flexibility (Grewal and Tansuhaj 2001), that help firms change?

How Does MARKORG Influence the Implementation of Marketing Strategy?

Implementing a marketing strategy involves the choice of marketing programs and the deployment of marketing resources (Slotegraaf, Moorman, and Inman 2003). MARKORG influences this stage through *alignment* activities that link and coordinate the firm's processes, structures, and people to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing strategies as well as through *activation* activities to motivate and inspire individual and organizational behaviors.

Alignment Activities

Alignment is facilitated by several configuration elements—adopting a key account management structure (Homburg, Workman, and Jensen 2002); strengthening cooperation between marketing, sales, and R&D (Ernst, Hoyer, and Rübsaamen 2010); and improving marketing's knowledge and skills to connect the customer to other functions (Moorman and Rust 1999). The coherence of market-oriented values, norms, behaviors, and artifacts aligns through hiring, training, and rewards (Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry 2006). Alignment is also aided when marketing leaders stimulate firm-employee identification (Wieseke et al. 2009) and when employees match brand personalities (Siranni et al. 2013).

Future research priorities. Is alignment between the people and the firm's processes and structures best achieved by hiring employees for fit or training for fit? What are the best metrics for diagnosing alignment problems? Are metrics such as employee satisfaction an early signal of lack of alignment in people and structure? More research is needed on integrating capabilities such as CRM, brand management, and new product development, which require aligning different functions to work together toward shared firm outcomes (Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey 1999).

Activation Activities

How does MARKORG enable activation activities that motivate and inspire individual and organizational behaviors? Underlying cultural values such as the idea that the firm's raison d'être is to serve the market (Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry 2006) and that employees are responsible for firm success (Homburg and Pflesser 2000) influence a key form of activation—market-oriented behaviors among employees. The effect of these values is mediated by the presence of cultural artifacts including stories, physical arrangements, and rituals that keep this aspect of culture in the forefront of day-to-day activities. Research has also shown that movement toward a market-oriented culture is intrinsically motivating for employees (Gebhardt, Carpenter, and Sherry 2006). Other employee traits also fuel activation, including the individual employee's trait of customer orientation (Zablah et al. 2012).

Marketing leaders play a prominent role in stimulating and socializing employees (see Web Appendix Table W5). This exciting area of research uncovers the types of behaviors (transactional vs. transformational; Morhart, Herzog, and

Tomczak 2009) as well as the effect of matching traits and behaviors (charisma and organizational identification; Wieseke et al. 2009) on employee identification and brand championing outcomes. Marketing leaders can also leverage a range of incentives and controls to motivate and inspire individual and organizational behavior. For example, market orientation is fostered by stronger behavior-based evaluations, market-based reward systems, and professional controls.

Future research priorities. Research is needed to understand employee-level customer orientation ex ante so that firms can screen on this trait. In addition, we know that organizational structure influences communication flows (Menon and Varadarajan 1992) and belief systems (Houston et al. 2001). What are the best mechanisms for translating these information outcomes into motivated leaders and employees? Finally, incentives and controls have been investigated for their impact on goal achievement, such as reaching quota (Chung, Steenburgh, and Sudhir 2014) or winning a contest (Lim, Ahearne, and Ham 2009), and on curbing free-riding (Toubia 2006) or opportunism (Heide, Wathne, and Rokkan 2007). What is the effect of such incentives on extrarole employee behaviors (e.g., representing the brand), positive word of mouth, and employee tenure levels?

How Does MARKORG Influence the Assessment of Marketing Strategy?

Accountability Activities

Marketing strategies emerge from a continuous learning process, with the assessment stage signaling the end of one cycle and a look ahead to the next development cycle. The bridge to the next cycle is a monitoring and control system to compare the realized performance with objectives and to learn what needs to change in the future. This process involves *accountability* activities that manage responsibility for firm performance. MARKORG has important effects on this aspect of strategy through configuration elements, including building a strong marketing function (Verhoef and Leeflang 2009), through the use of incentive and control systems that influence decision-making criteria (Hauser, Simester, and Wernerfelt 1994), and through the use of metrics that offer performance feedback information (Mintz and Currim 2013).

Future research priorities. First, research has shown that telling managers they will be called on for their opinions leads them to emphasize information that is more acceptable to their superiors rather than the most accurate information (Brown 1999); thus, accountability is likely to require a more nuanced approach. What structural and cultural elements play a supporting role in furthering accountability? Second, with regard to structure, how should accountability for cross-functional activities be shared to maximize marketing excellence? Third, managers and employees are likely to vary in terms of the extent to which they are responsible for and are motivated by accountability. Vetting candidates for this trait should boost firm accountability. Fourth, how should marketing leaders manage the delivery of immediate financial results without jeopardizing longer-term customer and product-market outcomes? How can accountability for societal consequences be incorporated (Wilkie and Moore 2007)? One solution is to develop deeply held values around either conscious capitalism (Mackey and Sisodia 2014) or a purpose-driven business that guide the firm to be accountable to a range of stakeholders.

How Does MARKORG Influence the Resourcing of Marketing Strategy?

The marketing strategy process is fueled by firm resources—including human, financial, knowledge, brand, and customer assets—and related capabilities (Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey 1998). These resources both enable and constrain firm choices (Morgan 2012). We use the term "resourcing" to convey that managers make decisions about which resources are important and how resources will be developed and leveraged in the marketing strategy process.[13] Excellent marketing organizations do so by directing MARKORG to enable the *attraction* of resources and *asset management* activities that fully develop and effectively deploy marketing assets.

Attraction Activities

A handful of studies have examined how the MARKORG elements are successfully mobilized and deployed to attract resources. Research has shown that experienced marketing leaders help attract firm venture capital funding (Homburg et al. 2014) and that customer and competitor orientations influence initial public offering outcomes (Saboo and Grewal 2013), while firms with stronger brands attract higher-quality employees (Luo and Homburg 2007) at lower pay (Tavassoli, Sorescu, and Chandy 2014), and firms with strong relational capabilities attract good partners (Johnson, Sohi, and Grewal 2004).

Future research priorities. It is difficult for external audiences such as potential investors, partners, and employees to fully appreciate the value of a firm's MARKORG. Which signals of firm marketing organization prowess should a firm send to outside stakeholders to increase its attractiveness as an investment (see Moorman et al. 2012), employer, and partner? What criteria do stakeholders use to evaluate the quality of MARKORG and decide whether to engage the firm? Attracting internal resources is also critical because it endorses the importance of the function and improves the odds that marketing activities will succeed. Yet little is known about how individual, organizational, and influence-strategy factors predict a marketing leader's success in attracting resources within the firm.

Asset Management

MARKORG influences asset management. Market orientation capabilities facilitate strong customer relationships and

[13]Intermediate firm performance outcomes, such as customer and brand equity, then reenter the process for use in future cycles of the marketing strategy process.

employee outcomes (Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden 2005). For configuration, a strong marketing function improves the firm's long-term development and short-term leveraging of market-based assets (Feng, Morgan, and Rego 2015). In the area of human capital, firms with CMOs have a higher Tobin's q (Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal 2015), and satisfied marketing employees create satisfied customers (Kamakura et al. 2002).

Future research priorities. Future studies should address why the marketing organization often fails to facilitate the development and leveraging of market-based assets. One reason is that marketing performance systems do not include metrics that measure the quality of a firm's market-based assets or their cash flow effects (Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey 1998). A second reason may be that firms lack metrics for evaluating the quality of their capabilities for developing and leveraging these market-based assets. Third, firms often lack capabilities for these critical activities, and so brands, customers, and knowledge are not managed as powerful assets.

Toward Marketing Excellence

The MSI priorities indicate a discontinuity in the practice of marketing. The marketing discipline will either respond to growing demands and opportunities or surrender these responsibilities to other areas of the firm. Four elements of MARKORG—firm capabilities, configuration, human capital, and culture—and their integration contribute to marketing excellence. These elements are critical precursors of seven key marketing activities (7As) that enable marketing excellence: anticipating market changes; adapting marketing strategy to remain competitive; aligning internal processes, structures, and people around this strategy; motivating and inspiring people to activate this strategy; ensuring that the strategy is accountable; attracting key resources to the firm; and developing and leveraging marketing assets. Our review offers future research priorities on the four elements of marketing organization, their integration, and the 7As to drive the field forward into a new era of marketing excellence.

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