

Business Marketing in Master's Programs: A Part of the Fabric

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ABSTRACT. In response to the challenge issued by Narus and Anderson (1998) to rethink the role of business marketing in an MBA curriculum, we propose the rationale, methodology, and philosophy for integrating business marketing into the fabric of a graduate business program. There are many reasons for business marketing knowledge being important to MBA graduates, not the least of which is that the majority of them will work in firms whose primary customers are other organizations. In this article we demonstrate theoretical and marketplace rationale for repositioning business marketing in the MBA curriculum. We propose a template to guide the process including key business market and business marketing concepts that we believe should be part of the fabric. Finally, we detail the experiences of one school's journey in moving in this direction. doi:10.1300/J033v14n01_04 [Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <docdelivery@haworthpress.com> Website: <<http://www.HaworthPress.com>> © 2007 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]

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Eight years ago, Narus and Anderson (1998) conducted a baseline study of the state of business marketing at the master's level. They found, among other things, that:

- Business marketing had a difficult time gaining traction at many schools;
- Faculty tended to teach business marketing from a functional perspective with few focusing on emerging or cross-functional issues; and,
- Popular course materials were often over 10 years old.

Playing on *Quo Vadis?* In the title to their article (where do we go from here?), Narus and Anderson offered a number of suggestions as to how to grow and enhance the place of business marketing in master's-level programs. In one of their main challenges, Narus and Anderson state that "scholars and administrators need to re-think the role of business marketing in their school's curriculum . . . they need to find ways to integrate key business marketing paradigms into master's students' core courses" (p. 86).

In this article, rather than re-visiting the "state of business marketing in master's programs," we accept Narus and Anderson's challenge. We argue that there is a need to position business marketing differently—not as a course but as part of the fabric of MBA and similar programs.¹ Our objective is to demonstrate this need, as well as provide a framework for those schools and programs interested in moving the place of business marketing in this direction. We draw heavily, but not exclusively, from our experiences at the Ivey Business School (Ivey) where we have been actively working over a number of years to make business marketing a part of the school's fabric.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. First, we define what we mean by being part of the fabric, and propose some indicators that could confirm that this is indeed the case at a given school. Then we outline the legitimate drivers of this need to incorporate business marketing into the fabric of master's level programs. Next, we argue that certain business market and business-marketing foundation concepts should be extracted from specialized elective courses in business marketing and incorporated into the core program. We also argue that a process should be

developed to link these core concepts with more complex and cross-functional business market and business marketing issues. As an example, we discuss how business marketing is integrated into Ivey's MBA program through curriculum, course offerings, teaching, and materials development. We conclude by highlighting a number of enablers that allow a school to move in the direction we are advocating and with some ideas on how to sustain the momentum of this change.

PART OF THE FABRIC

What exactly is meant by being part of the fabric of a master's program? To us, a behavior, concept, or topic is part of the fabric when it is ingrained throughout a program. It is introduced early and reinforced often across a wide swath of activities undertaken by all students. In this way, students build on their early exposure to deepen their understanding in a variety of contexts. In essence, this early exposure becomes a lens through which to assess new situations and environments.

For example, *behaviors* that are part of the fabric at some schools include teamwork (where everything is done in diverse teams) or decision making (where cases in every class require students to make a decision). *Concepts* that are part of the fabric might include incremental and/or sensitivity analysis (that can be raised in finance, operations, marketing, and accounting), while *topics* might include globalization or outsourcing (that can impact all business disciplines).

We argue that for *business marketing* to be part of the fabric, key or foundation business market and business marketing concepts and topics need to be introduced in the core of the program while more complex issues, topics, and concepts need to be distributed throughout the program in non-marketing core courses as well as in both marketing and non-marketing electives. We emphasize that the familiarity with business markets is as important as familiarity with business marketing. By the former, we mean understanding a *context* within which business takes place. By the latter, we mean understanding marketing in such a context. To be part of the fabric means that *all* students incorporate these key concepts into their decision-making processes where appropriate, and that students develop an equally strong appreciation for both consumer and business markets. By *all*, we mean all—not just students with an interest in marketing.

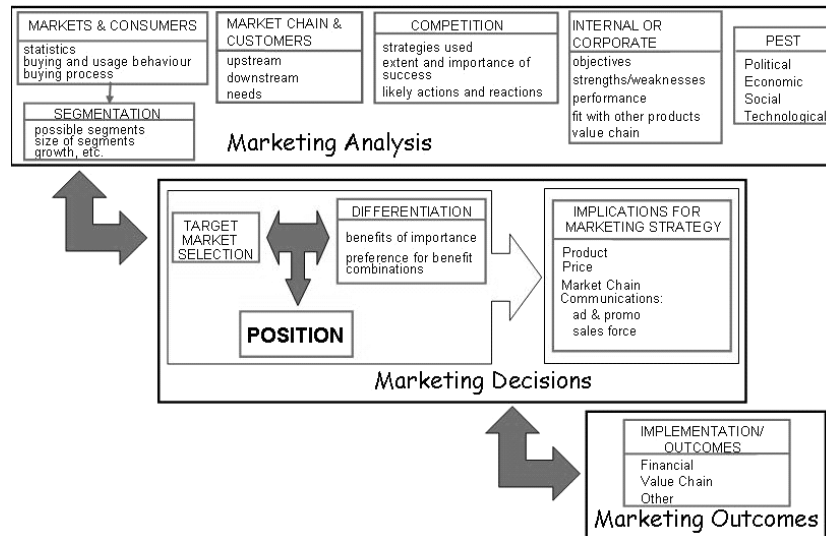
What might be evidence of a school that has made business marketing a part of its fabric? First, the marketing core course, typically in the first

year of a two-year program, would contain cases, discussions, lectures, and decision frameworks that cross both consumer and business situations. For example, at Ivey we use a relatively generic framework to help students make effective marketing decisions (see Figure 1). Since the framework includes reference to “markets & consumers” and to “market chain & customers,” and contains concepts relevant to both markets, it can be applied to either business or consumer contexts. Depending on the situation in any given case, certain areas of the framework can be emphasized over others. From the outset, students see that marketing is about business customers as much as it is about consumers.

Second, content in the marketing core course would be explicitly designed to encompass the key concepts associated with business markets and business marketing. In addition, a significant effort would be made to highlight the linkages between these business marketing topics and those covered in related core courses including: Strategy, Operations, Information Systems, and Organizational Behavior. In a typical school, where courses across disciplines are highly independent, this can be as simple as a matrix highlighting linkages between the active scheduling of topics and the design and delivery of team-taught sessions.

Third, the philosophy that business marketing is part of the fabric would be recognized in the language of the program. The language

FIGURE 1. Framework for Marketing Decisions



would not be: “If you are interested in business marketing, take the Business Marketing course.” It would be more along the lines of, “If you are interested in business marketing, you will be exposed to this in a number of core courses. You should consider electives such as Service Operations, Entrepreneurial Marketing, Supply Chain Management, or Biotechnology, and if you want to really drill down, take the Sales Management and Business Marketing courses.”

Finally, there would be faculty within marketing and beyond who would visibly embrace business market contexts. This would be evidenced by their background and research interests. Ideally, they would have worked in organizations before becoming faculty members, and they would bring an interest in research and teaching in business markets to their academic careers. For example, professors interested in purchasing/supply chain management could take a distinct business marketing perspective in their courses and research (e.g., Leenders and Blenkhorn 1988). This would enable students interested in business markets and business marketing to consult with a variety of faculty as they work their way through the program.

WHY SHOULD BUSINESS MARKETING BE PART OF THE FABRIC?

There are a number of drivers that are pushing business marketing toward being part of the fabric as opposed to being simply a course offering. Some of these drivers are quite practical (e.g., there is less room in shortened master’s programs) while others are more philosophical (e.g., concern on the part of MBA Program directors that their students are graduating without an appreciation of what constitutes over half of all economic activity). Ultimately, since a primary goal of master’s programs is to provide a management orientation that will sustain students in their careers, the key question to ask is whether business marketing is part of *what every manager needs to know*. If so, then it should be part of the fabric. If not, it should be left as an optional course. Though we recognize that this article may be preaching to the converted, we strongly believe that every manager needs to know something about business markets and business marketing.

What’s driving this perspective? We see three broad areas: Importance of the subject area, impact after graduation, and constrained curriculum opportunities. Each of these will be discussed in turn. The argument supporting the importance of business marketing to business starts at the

macroeconomic level—we all know the statistics. Quite simply, “Purchases by organizations . . . account for more than half of the economic activity in industrialized countries such as the United States, Canada, and France” (Dwyer and Tanner 2006, p. 8). Individual companies spend billions annually on products and services. General Motors, for example, spends more than \$70 billion annually on industrial products and services. Their 1,350 buyers each spend more than \$40 million annually (Hutt and Speh 2004). In emerging areas like e-Commerce, B2B activity dwarfs B2C. Forrester and Gartner estimate that B2B e-Commerce is 10-15 times greater than B2C e-Commerce (Kotler 2003, p. 42). This argues that students graduating from master’s-level programs without knowledge of how these pervasive business markets work, how these purchases are made, and how to market to such organizations are missing something.

This is accentuated by the fact that entering students carry with them consumer-oriented biases since they have spent most of their lives describing and experiencing marketing in these terms. For this reason, we need to have all students engaged in learning about business markets and business marketing to dispel the notion that business marketing is traditional “smokestack” or industrial marketing based on derived demand and the classification of goods. In fact, it can be argued that many of the truly dynamic aspects in business today are firmly grounded in business markets (e.g., outsourcing, supply chain management, e-Commerce, globalization of business services).

We also argue that the post-graduation impact of business market and business marketing knowledge is significant and traditionally underestimated by students. Most students graduating from master’s programs begin their careers with business-to-business firms, rather than with consumer goods companies (Dwyer and Tanner 2006). Many work in business services such as investment banking and information systems or strategy consulting where their firms face the same underlying issues as players in traditional business markets. Students who understand business markets can have a more informed conversation with recruiters and be more effective on the job.

Students with a business markets background are also better prepared for the “surprise” factor when that they find themselves in investment banking or consulting jobs spending time partnering, developing new business, selling, and maintaining relationships with business clients. We often hear back from graduates in these careers about the importance of understanding business marketing concepts. This argument is also made in descriptions for Business Marketing courses. For example, Web sites show Kellogg recommending Business Marketing for “students

pursuing careers in management consulting and financial services,” and Harvard suggesting its course as “useful if you expect to work in consulting, venture capital, or investment banking.”

It could also be argued that MBA graduates of all stripes will be involved on cross-functional teams focusing on business market opportunities (Ryans et al. 2000). This cross-functional involvement may extend right out to the customer as people in finance, logistics, supply chain management, information systems, and so on become permanent or temporary members of business development or customer teams. Knowing not just business markets, but business marketing will enhance graduates’ abilities to contribute to seizing these opportunities.

Our final reason as to why we think it is important for business marketing to be part of the fabric has to do with the time and space realities in master’s level program curriculum. Three trends are converging to squeeze many subject areas, including business marketing. First, there is a trend towards shorter MBA, EMBA, and other master’s programs. For example, in Canada, several schools have reduced program length to 12-16 months. Master’s programs of less than two years in duration are also popular in Europe. An implication of this trend is a reduction in the number of electives available to students which, in turn, leads to a reduction in the probability that students will take a business marketing elective.

There has also been a renewed call for more career-focused master’s programs where students choose their specialization early. Much like the trend to reduced-length programs, this trend channels many students away from a business marketing elective as it may not be clearly linked to a career. Though students focusing on marketing can still be exposed to business markets and business marketing in depth, many “less fortunate” MBAs will leave with almost no appreciation of the area. Finally, there is a growing knowledge base in all areas of business. Many subject areas, concepts, and topics are competing for a voice in the master’s level curriculum. With many schools having undergone curriculum reviews in recent years, those interested in business marketing need to develop a strategy to make themselves relevant. For us, being part of the fabric is the only route to relevancy.

BUSINESS MARKETING FOUNDATIONS IN THE MASTER’S CORE

The need to ensure that all master’s level students receive grounding in business market and business marketing concepts is clear. In order to

speak with a persuasive voice, proponents of including business marketing issues in the curriculum need to focus their requests. To us, this means the introduction of key business market and business marketing concepts early, as part of the core, with elaboration being done through cooperation with other subject areas and through elective offerings.

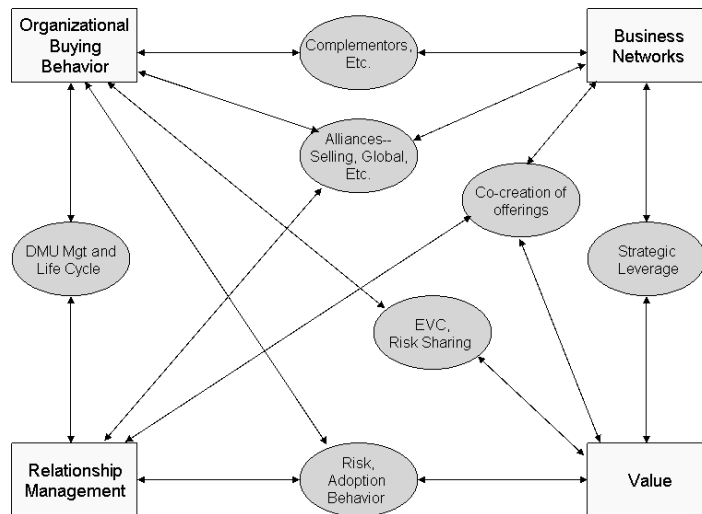
But what are the key business market and business marketing concepts relevant to all master's students? Narus and Anderson (1998) list over 40 topics that were covered in master's level Business Marketing courses. In a similar vein, reviews by Plank (1982), and Reid and Plank (2000) highlight several themes relevant to business-to-business marketing, and many business marketing texts (e.g., Hutt and Speh 2004; Bingham et al. 2005) take an exhaustive, topical approach to the subject. But in these long lists of concepts, which are the key ones that "*every manager will need to know*" about business marketing?—regardless of whether he or she holds a job in marketing.

To address this question, it is useful to divide all marketing decision-making situations into either business marketing or consumer marketing settings. When faced with these different decision-making environments, educators need to identify the different concepts that managers need that are either *unique* to business markets, or that express themselves *differently* in business versus consumer markets. Figure 2, though not exhaustive, is indicative of what such an analysis produces.

Figure 2 identifies four "pillars" of business marketing: Organizational Buying Behavior, Relationship Management, Value, and Business Networks. We argue that foundation concepts like these need to be part of the lexicon of master's students as they progress through their studies and their careers. If done correctly, this inculcation will naturally lead student curiosity to explore other concepts or topic areas that flow from these pillars (e.g., co-creation of offerings, economic value for the customer [EVC]), risk and adoption behavior)—the ovals in Figure 2.

The foundation for all marketing activity, whether it is consumer or business marketing, is the understanding of customer behavior. *Organizational Buying Behavior* (OBB) has long been recognized as a cornerstone in understanding business markets (Robinson, Faris, and Wind 1967). Every business marketing text devotes a significant amount of space to describing OBB processes (see for example, Bingham et al. 2005; Dwyer and Tanner 2006; Hutt and Speh 2004). Although part of this text space is often allocated to describing how OBB is distinct from consumer behavior, most of it is used to convey a collective understanding

FIGURE 2. Key Concepts in Business Markets and Business Marketing



of the OBB topic. This knowledge base is inevitably expanding as OBB continues to be a focus for research (see for example, Woodside 2003; Park and Bunn 2003).

The inclusion of *Relationship Management* as one of the pillars of business marketing recognizes that much of the activity in business marketing is the result of longer-term interaction between customers and suppliers; the relationship is the foundation for exchange. This recognition occurred in business markets earlier than in consumer markets and was captured in Webster's (1992) discussion of the changing role of marketing inside corporations. His article highlighted the evolution of relationships between organizations over time, and documented the need to evolve behaviors and strategies accordingly. Relationship management researchers have been active in understanding specific aspects of buyer-seller relations (e.g., Jackson 1985; Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh 1987), describing the range of possible relationships (e.g., Kanter 1994) and developing theory (e.g., Morgan and Hunt 1994). In contrast to relationship management in consumer contexts, relationships in business markets tend to be more complex and dynamic. As a result, these relationships are often at the core of business marketing strategy.

Over the past fifteen years, *Value* has emerged as a new cornerstone of marketing. Pre-1990, marketing was defined as "satisfying needs and

wants through an exchange process” (e.g., Kotler 1985). More recent definitions include *value*, describing marketing as “creating, offering, and freely exchanging products and services of value with others” (Kotler 2003). Pennsylvania State University’s Institute for the Study of Business Markets (ISBM), through discussions with its membership, placed value at the center of its understanding of business-to-business marketing when it created its “Value Delivery Framework” (Oliva 2001). ISBM’s position was strongly influenced by Anderson and Narus (2004) who have argued persuasively that value should be the major concept by which business markets are analyzed and understood. Their text, aimed at master’s-level business students, provides an analytical framework for determining value, which rests on extensive management practice and research (e.g., Anderson and Narus 1995, 1996, 1998). A recent flurry of research on value in business markets confirms the centrality of value to the understanding of business marketing (e.g., Ehret 2004; Ulaga 2003; Sharma et al. 2001).

The final foundation concept in Figure 2 is recognition of the pivotal role of *Business Networks* in business marketing. Unlike the other pillars, the network’s importance to business marketing has no real analog in consumer marketing. (Certainly, channels are considered in consumer marketing contexts; however, exchanges between a manufacturer and a distributor or retailer are in fact business-to-business interactions.) This is where it becomes clear that business marketing is complicated and that understanding, organizing, and dealing with this complexity is necessary. Researchers have described business networks under a variety of labels including market chains and webs (Ryans et al. 2000), supply chains (Houlihan 1985), and value chains (Porter 1985). All descriptions, however, focus on the ever-increasing number of interactions and interdependencies that impact business market management as a result of trends towards various forms of outsourcing and partnering. Ryans et al. (2000) describe a market web in which the strands of the web represent the network of various forms of relationships (e.g., buyer-seller relationships downstream, supplier relations upstream, and influence relationships with entities that do not directly buy or sell the product in question) and alliances (e.g., co-marketing, learning) for a focal company. They argue that market webs are value-creating systems in which the development and evolution of particular strands (relationships) is a strategic exercise. Anderson and Narus (2004) use a similar description in their *Business Market Management* text and in earlier research (Anderson, Håkansson, and Johanson 1994).

Touching on the major concepts or pillars of business marketing in the core curriculum of a master's level program is necessary given the importance of these concepts in these students' future careers. Exposure to them in the core Marketing course creates the opportunity for enriched discussions in subsequent classes, whether in the Marketing discipline or elsewhere. In these latter classes, new concepts can emerge based on earlier understanding of the foundational pillars. Several of these second-tier concepts are illustrated as ovals in the links between pillars in Figure 2. For example, a case about new technology adoption can be used to highlight a link between the value concept, organizational buying behavior, and relationship management (how can the seller most effectively communicate EVC concepts within the customer's buying group in order to generate willingness to adopt a new product and to pay for some of the value created?). Similarly, value creation can have implications throughout the business network. There are issues of what Ryans et al. (2000) call *strategic leverage*—apportioning value created at the customer level throughout the channel serving the customer, so that there are net positive payoffs for adoption at each level. These cross-pillar issues do not arise solely in Marketing courses. They can be present in discussions in courses on Operations Management, Strategy, Entrepreneurship, or Management Behavior, for example. The net effect of these discussions is twofold: The pillars of business marketing are better understood as the concepts are woven more tightly into the fabric of the MBA experience, and valuable new business-marketing concepts emerge.

**WEAVING BUSINESS MARKETING
IN THE MBA PROGRAM FABRIC:
ONE APPROACH**

In this section, we describe efforts made at Ivey² over time to weave business marketing into the MBA program fabric. Consider this as a brief case study of one approach to integrating the four pillars and associated concepts into the fabric. Our goal is to allow the reader to generalize our specifics to their situations.

Because of Ivey's general management focus, a typical class is aimed at making a set of business decisions; not just tackling a narrow functional issue. In so doing, the analysis and discussion in one course commonly draws upon concepts from other courses. For example, the Ivey case Gino SA (Deutscher and Yang 2002) describes a channel management

challenge faced by the China manager of a European manufacturer of burners (which fire boilers for domestic, commercial, and industrial segments). Gino sells its burners through three distributors to OEMs in China. The trigger issue in the case is a proposal from a large OEM to buy direct. As discussion of the case evolves, it becomes apparent that this is more than a “marketing” problem. Solving it calls upon skills that students have developed in Operations (there is a decision to be made about building and operating a warehouse for the distributors), Management Accounting (regarding a dramatic misalignment between strategic priorities and incentives for selling to the three segments) and Organizational Behavior (analysis of power and dependency in the channel).

This general management platform sets the stage for recognizing interdependencies among concepts and for moving concepts from business marketing into the core of our program. There is a natural need to do so. The platform also encourages team teaching across areas, which ensures that business marketing concepts do move across the core.

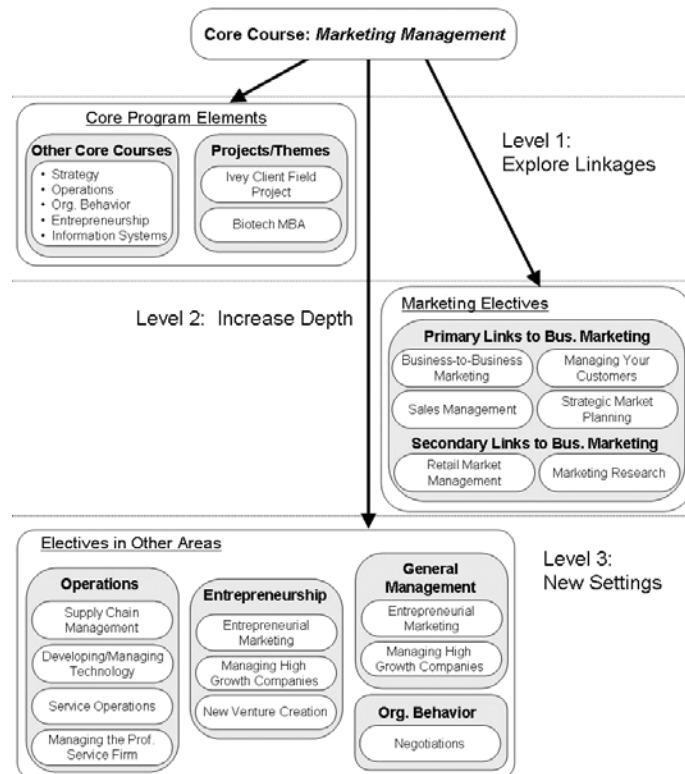
Figure 3 portrays Ivey’s MBA curriculum through the lens of business marketing. To establish business-marketing concepts in the fabric of a program, we argue that they should appear explicitly at three levels as shown: In core program elements (in Marketing as well as other courses and projects); elective courses within the Marketing area; and electives outside the Marketing area.

Core Courses

Marketing Management is a 30-session required course that is taught in the first year of Ivey’s MBA Program. Its central objective is to help provide an answer to “What does every manager need to know about Marketing?” Business marketing is a key part of the answer. This is reflected in the explicit selection of case, reading and lecture material for the course. About 40% of the content is related to business marketing (25% products, 15% services). While this representation could still be viewed as low given the impact of business marketing on the economy, it is relatively high compared with other programs. In terms of business marketing content, the emphasis is on the four pillar concepts—Organizational Buying Behavior, Relationship Management, Value, and Business Networks.

There are several *other core courses* in our curriculum that incorporate business marketing concepts. In these courses and projects, students explore linkages between one another or more of the four pillars. For example, the Strategy course includes a significant section on in-

FIGURE 3. Flow of Business Marketing Concepts from the Core to the Rest of the Curriculum



dustry and competitive analysis, which complements the coverage of Business Networks in the core Marketing course. The Operations area group covers areas such as supply-chain management (Business Networks), customer service (Relationship Management), and technology management (Value) that are important in business marketing. In the Organizational-Behavior core course, the business marketing case Alto Chemicals Europe (Kashani, IMD 1995) is used to drive a discussion of change management and implementation challenges that result from a refocused go-to-market strategy. The discussion incorporates analysis of Organizational Buying Behavior, Value, and Relationship Management (This case is co-taught with the Marketing area group). As a final

example, the Information Systems area group, in its coverage of purchasing and managing technology, reinforces Marketing's Organizational Buying discussions.

Also, at the core of the program, a major effort is made to ensure that all Ivey MBA graduates have an experience applying their MBA learning in the field before rejoining the workforce. Working in teams of four or five students, they spend approximately 300 hours in diagnosing, analyzing, and addressing an important strategic issue for a client company. More than half of these projects typically involve a marketing issue, and the great majority of these involve firms competing in business markets.

Marketing Electives

The second level of Figure 3 deals with electives offered by the Marketing area group. Here is where more depth is added to the business marketing concepts introduced in the core course.

Business-to-Business Marketing. This second-year elective typically attracts 20-30% of the MBA class. It is positioned as the one elective course that focuses exclusively on marketing to businesses. The course is organized around three modules: Understanding organizations as customers; creating customer value through an integrated marketing strategy; and managing marketing outcomes. The course is primarily case-based, exploring a wide variety of industries including industrial manufacturing, telecommunications, software, consulting, and financial services.

Other Marketing Electives. Electives that are most closely linked to business marketing topics include Managing Your Customers, Sales Management, and Strategic Market Planning. Managing Your Customers explores customer acquisition, valuation, and retention—topics of high salience to business marketing. The Sales Management course offers students the opportunity to reinforce topics suggested by Figure 2 such as selling teams, global selling alliances, co-creation of offerings, Relationship Management, Value, and Organizational Buying Behavior (management over long sell cycles of the customer's buying decision-making unit, i.e., all individuals who could potentially influence the decision). Classes in the Strategic Market Planning course are very often based on companies and industries whose customers are other businesses. The emphasis here is on application of a strategic planning process (Ryans et al. 2000), which was originally developed in collabora-

tion with several companies in technology-intensive industries. Virtually all of Ivey's MBAs take at least one of these four electives.

Business marketing issues are also pursued, to a lesser degree, in electives such as Retail Market Management and Marketing Research.

Electives in Other Area Groups

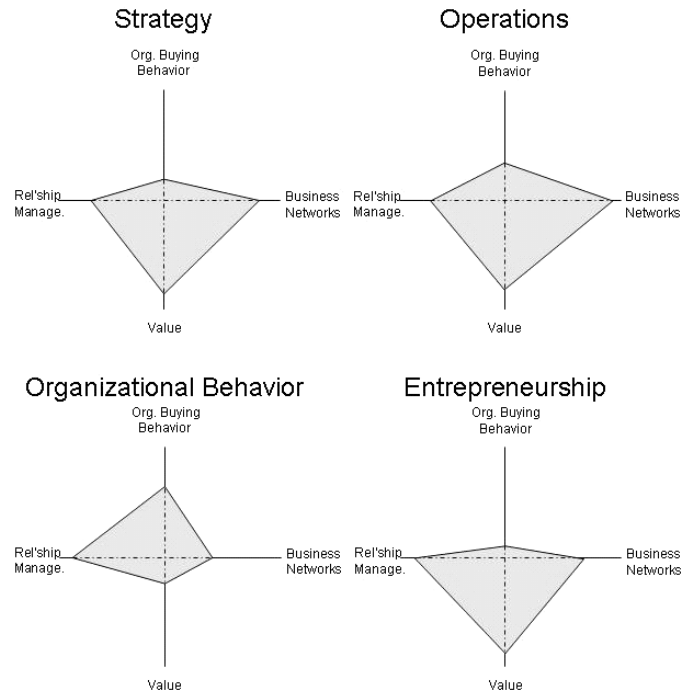
The third level of Figure 3 portrays examples of non-Marketing elective courses that contribute significantly to the appreciation of MBAs for the world of business markets. These courses position the key business market and business marketing concepts in new settings. In Operations, for example, courses in Purchasing and Supply Management, Management of Services, Developing and Managing Technology, and Managing Professional Service Firms all have material that is very pertinent to business markets. Figure 4 attempts to show how disciplines beyond Marketing place relative emphasis on the four pillars of business marketing. In the figure, the greater the emphasis on a particular pillar, the greater the distance on that dimension from the origin. For example, the Strategy area focuses on Value, with secondary emphasis on Relationship Management and Business Networks, and little attention paid to OBB. The objective of this figure is to reinforce the notion that business markets and business marketing are not exclusively owned by the Marketing area group.

The Net Effect

Ivey's effort to weave business marketing into the fabric of the MBA program, which has taken place over many years, has not been a controlled experiment that allows us to definitively conclude that the approach has worked. However, we believe that the net effect is positive. The success of Ivey graduates in senior management positions is a testament to the benefits of inculcating future investment bankers, consultants, and CEOs with the notion that marketing ideas are applicable beyond consumer goods. Clearly, the Ivey MBA graduate has been explicitly exposed to a significant amount of business marketing content in the required core Marketing course, reinforced by material in other core courses (some of which is co-taught with a Marketing faculty member), and often supplemented by electives in Marketing and other disciplines. This has been our primary goal.

However, there can be some fallout from the approach we are advocating. Some students will argue that since they have had a fair amount of exposure to business marketing concepts in the core, they deem it

FIGURE 4. Emphasis on Business Marketing Foundation Topics in Core Courses



redundant to delve deeper, thus potentially affecting demand for the Business-to-Business Marketing elective, and related electives such as Sales Management and Channels of Distribution. From an individual business marketing faculty perspective, this could be bad, but it may not be necessarily bad at the school level—it depends on a school's strategy. A traditional strategy based on reinforcing functional areas and disciplines would view declining enrollments in functional courses as negative. On the other hand, a school that is directionally geared to look at cross-enterprise issues through less of a functional lens may view this positively.

In our case this effect of students claiming that they have had enough in year one has been counterbalanced by other students who choose the Business-to-Business Marketing elective, and other electives with business marketing content, because their appetite was whetted in the core

marketing course. The overall effect on enrollments in business marketing electives has been positive over time.

In addition, it could be perceived as difficult to implement our ideas in departments where there are only one or two faculty with strong business marketing interests (which may be more typical). We believe that our ideas still apply. However, the faculty must take on more of a missionary role to bring these ideas to faculty and students. For example, they could volunteer to teach a section of the core course and use this as an opportunity to introduce a simple business marketing framework, provide colleagues with a couple of very good business marketing cases backed up with good teaching plans, and bring managers to class to have them make the case for business marketing in the core.

Another potential drawback of making business marketing a part of the fabric is that, in order to maintain presence, constant attention and effort must be put into making sure that there is a balance across consumer and business contexts in the core as well as linkages to other subject areas. It could be easier to avoid this work. In fact, without “enablers” in place beyond the curriculum and courses, sustaining business marketing in the fabric would be very difficult.

SUSTAINING BUSINESS MARKETING IN THE FABRIC: THE ENABLERS

There are a number of enablers that we have found to be useful in sustaining momentum with respect to driving business marketing into the master’s program fabric.³ These enablers can be at the school, master’s program or Marketing-area-group level.

School-Level Enablers. The list of school-level enablers begins with the overall positioning of the school. All programs at Ivey are decision-focused with a general management orientation. This feature by itself encourages the exploration of business markets. Students self-select into the program, and they are open to a broad conceptualization of business activities presented in a cross-functional manner. The importance of this openness cannot be understated.

Additional school-level enablers come in the form of support for faculty or specific behaviors. On the faculty side, some business-marketing-oriented faculty are supported through chairs and professorships sponsored by firms working in business markets. Examples of these are the George and Mary Turnbull Professorship in Sales Management and the Magna International Chair. This not only helps in the classroom, but

also provides resources to develop a critical mass to execute research in business marketing, train doctoral students, and produce relevant teaching materials. All these activities sustain business marketing's momentum within the school.

As to support for specific behaviors, Ivey's position on development of case-based teaching materials is a key enabler. In a typical year, Ivey generates about 25 new Marketing cases, of which about 40 percent are in business marketing. For the great majority of these, expenses, including the use of case writers to assist faculty, are covered either by the School or by sponsoring organizations. Cases that are used at Ivey and beyond are recognized in the School's performance-evaluation system and specifically in the promotion and tenure processes—not as research but as additions to a faculty member's teaching portfolio.

At a more micro level, the school builds the desire to integrate cross-functionally into the workload-planning system. Faculty teaching in core MBA courses such as marketing is allocated five "classes" worth of teaching credit in addition to the normal 30 classes.⁴ This is to provide an incentive to team teach across core courses, share business marketing concepts with colleagues, and to generally wave the flag. This is not tightly monitored, but professionalism drives faculty to "earn" these credits. In addition, over time a *quid pro quo* culture has developed: "You work in my class and I will work in yours."

Finally, positioning business marketing as part of the fabric is enhanced by having other programs in the school pick up business marketing concepts. Ivey's undergraduate program is to some extent a mirror image of our MBA program with the same business marketing emphasis. The same holds true for the Ivey's executive MBA offerings. Executive development programs are also key, as mounting public and custom programs helps to reinforce the culture and provide learning opportunities for faculty to grow their expertise. For example, *Winning Market Leadership* (Ryans et al. 2000) grew out of executive development relationships with several major technology-driven businesses and is now the major integrative force in our Strategic Market Planning elective.

Program-Level Enablers. The MBA program design facilitates the push to make business marketing a part of the fabric in a couple of ways. First, our thrust is enabled by ensuring business markets cases are presented early in the first year of the program across multiple core courses. This helps form the students' expectation that they will work across both consumer and business contexts for the rest of their time at Ivey.

Second, the MBA program design focuses on the importance of team teaching. As part of earning the five class credits discussed previously, every faculty member who teaches a core course in the MBA Program commits to teaching at least five classes jointly with colleagues from other disciplines. Marketing faculty have co-taught business marketing issues with colleagues from Strategy, Management Accounting, Operations, Organizational Behavior, and other areas. Inevitably, these jointly taught classes are as illuminating for the faculty as for the students. The majority of these joint-teaching sessions have involved firms competing in business markets. The coordination of these efforts rests mainly with our Section Heads. Their role is to coalesce faculty assigned to a section of approximately 60 MBA students and to oversee the integration efforts.

Marketing Area Group Enablers. The last group of enablers comes from within the Marketing area group. At Ivey, this starts with the organization of the group itself. In contrast to many schools, we do not strive to balance the group on traditional dimensions (modeling, consumer behavior, strategy), but rather on the faculty member's (or prospective hire's) orientation to consumer versus business marketing. This orientation ensures that in our group are several hard-core business-marketing-oriented faculty members.

When it comes to faculty getting on board, momentum is developed by having many faculty members teach across the concepts shown in Figure 2. Inevitably, one of the key challenges is getting consumer-oriented faculty onside—especially if they teach the core course. We do this “gently” by supporting these faculty members with materials, teaching plans, and successful approaches to teaching the business-marketing materials.

CONCLUSION

This article has responded to Anderson and Narus's 1998 challenge, which was “to find ways to integrate key business-marketing paradigms into master's students' core courses” (p. 86). We have gone beyond the core courses to develop ideas as to how business markets and business marketing can be woven into the fabric of master's level programs. This involved understanding the rationale for doing so, identifying key concepts that need to be woven in, and presenting one case as to how this might be done through curriculum, teaching and institutional enablers. We suggest that this can be a springboard for others who want to accept the challenge.

NOTES

1. Similar arguments could be made for areas such as globalization and e-business; however discussion of this is beyond the scope of this article.

2. The Richard Ivey School of Business (Ivey) www.ivey.ca was founded in 1922 and commenced its MBA program in 1948. Since then, Ivey has advocated a learning process that is highly involving based upon intense class discussion, and frequently utilizing business case studies. The objective is to develop managers who can become leaders in their organizations. Ivey takes more of a general management perspective than a discipline-centric approach to learning.

3. Some of the enablers may be idiosyncratic to Ivey, but we discuss all of these ideas in order to provide a menu for others to think about.

4. Normal teaching load is 80-85 classes per year.

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