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The History of the Marketing College Is a Work in Progress

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This essay examines the relations between the College on Marketing and its parent societies—first TIMS, then ORSA as well, and, after the two societies merged, INFORMS.

There are stories to tell, but also questions to answer. Historians say that a good history has a theme or cluster of questions at its core. If we are to evaluate the institutional relationships, we should ask: Has the College been successful? If so, why? Did the parent organizations help or hinder? College members started a conference and later a journal. Were these acts cooperative or competitive with the parent societies? After all, TIMS and ORSA were running meetings and journals in which marketing people could participate. And, if the College has been successful, where does it go from here? Is success stable? Or, in today's dynamic world, is stability really decline in disguise?

Our analysis suggests that TIMS provided a hospitable environment for the birth of marketing science as a field. However, organizational problems did appear, and we shall see that small changes in events or people could have dramatically altered outcomes. We find good evidence of success but also centrifugal challenges for the College today.

Pre-Founding and the Zeitgeist of the 1960s

In the early years after World War II, industry enthusiastically explored scientific methods that might help

managers solve the many problems they encountered in rebuilding their companies. Industrial OR groups became common. During the same period universities were open to expansion into new fields. Riding this wave, ORSA was founded in 1952 and TIMS in 1953. Significant ORMS advances made it possible to improve inventory and production control in practical situations. Early workers also tackled marketing problems. These were more difficult because the variables themselves and the relationships among them were less clear and harder to measure. Nevertheless, the second issue of *Operations Research* contained a marketing paper by John Magee, "The Effect of Promotional Effort on Sales" (Magee 1953). In the seven volumes prior to 1960, nine marketing papers had appeared in that journal. The trend continued in the period leading up to the founding of the Marketing College in 1967. It is noteworthy that many of these papers described real operations and/or reported empirical analysis of field data. *Management Science* was also publishing marketing papers in this period, fewer in the 1950s but accelerating in the 1960s. Montgomery (2001), in his essay, analyzes the growing publication activity in marketing models prior to the founding of the College.

This author joined Case Western Reserve University (then Case Institute of Technology) in 1957 and, within a year, started working on an advertising allocation project at M&M's Candies. Academic courses were also beginning. Case introduced one entitled "Operations Research in Marketing" in the late 1950s, taught by the author. In the early 1960s William Massy at Stanford had two doctoral students specializing in management science in marketing, Donald Morrison and David Montgomery. Phillip Kotler at Northwestern had another, Glen Urban. Urban and Montgomery joined MIT as assistant professors in 1966, and Morrison went to Columbia the same year. Frank Bass had joined Purdue in 1961 and was pro-

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ducing doctoral students by 1965. Alfred Kuehn at Carnegie-Mellon was publishing marketing models, including an early one on advertising budgeting (Kuehn 1961).

During this time important advances in computing also took place. The author worked on algorithms for the traveling salesman problem requiring calculations made realistic by the "screaming" IBM 7090 (Little et al. 1963). Time-shared computing was just starting up. The first online marketing model, "A Geographic Model of an Urban Automobile Market," appeared as a working paper (Hlavac and Little 1966). Enthusiasm for the growing computer power was great, even though in hindsight the mainframe computers of the day were roughly comparable to a mid-1980s IBM PC with a math coprocessor.

The stage was set for the appearance of something like the TIMS College on Marketing.

In examining the relationship between the Marketing College and its parent organizations, we shall consider events at two levels. First, there were the College activities and the professional interactions among College members. We shall call this the *grass-roots* level. Then there were the communications and deliberations of the parent organizations. We refer to this as the *institutional* level. Our assignment is the latter, but we shall briefly describe the former as needed for context.

Founding the Marketing College

Grassroots View. Here is my tongue-in-cheek, "never before told" story of the founding of the College. The time was 1966; the place was MIT. David Montgomery, a new assistant professor in the marketing group, suggested that the group needed another secretary. As coordinator of the group, I knew we did *not* need another secretary. There was no place to put one, even if one were hired, and I was positive the dean would not pay for one. In fact, he would laugh me out of his office. However, I thought to myself, "This new assistant professor has a lot of nervous energy that needs direction. He should be encouraged to think up something to do *outside* the

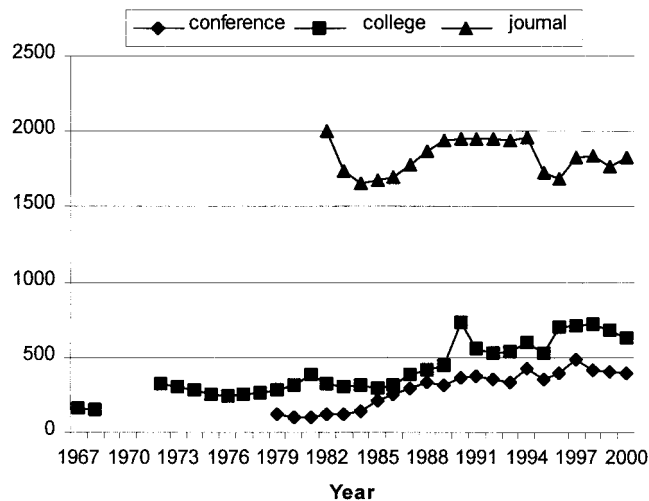
school." The result, I claim, was the TIMS College on Marketing, because not long afterward Dave came up with the idea that there should be an organization for people interested in management science in marketing and that TIMS might be the umbrella for doing it. "Great idea, Dave," I said, "Go to it." What happened next is obviously history.

Institutional View. The president of TIMS in 1967 was Ronald Howard of Stanford, who had done significant marketing model building while he worked part-time in the Arthur D. Little OR group during his graduate student years at M.I.T. (His important work on Markov decision processes was motivated in part by a marketing consulting project.) A survey, petition, and proposal to form a TIMS College on Marketing arrived from Dave Montgomery for consideration by the TIMS Council at the April 1967 TIMS meeting in Boston. Although I was not there, I imagine it took perhaps 6 to 8 minutes to pass a motion establishing the College (unless the idea provoked a round of congratulatory speeches). Basically, from the point of view of a parent organization, it is a no-brainer to endorse a new subdivision proposed by a group of enthusiastic members, some of whom are prominent in their fields, and including a number of people from well-known institutions. Issues that might create nervousness within the parent society, such as special journals and stand-alone conferences, would not come up until later.

College Growth and the ORSA/TIMS Ecumenical Movement of the 1970s

Grassroots View. The College newsletters of the time show healthy activity. The College organized sessions at national meetings, published abstracts, and printed lists of working papers of members. Sessions at meetings often included social events such as receptions where people could get together. Although some of the old membership numbers are missing, the college roughly doubled in size between 1966 and 1972, from 165 to 329, before dropping back to a

Figure 1 College on Marketing: Activity Trends



slightly lower plateau. Figure 1 plots the data we have.

Institutional View. While the Marketing College was expanding, TIMS and ORSA were starting a dialogue. By 1970 it had been almost 20 years since their founding. Although they were founded by different groups of people who articulated somewhat different visions, many members of each society found the practical distinctions between the activities of TIMS and ORSA to be small. Most important, the really active people in each society tended to belong to both. Many of the new leaders and even some of the founders regretted that two societies with so much overlap in membership had been formed in the first place. Yet, it was felt that a merger was out of the question, because each society had developed its own strong sense of identity. Nevertheless, various stirrings were taking place at the leadership levels of TIMS and ORSA, and several creative ideas came forward for cooperation. A joint national meeting of the two societies was organized for Atlantic City in November 1972.

In the period from 1970 to 1973, a series of committees explored opportunities for cooperation that could take advantage of the increased resources and numbers of members that would be possible with combined forces. Several joint ventures became great successes. One was the holding of joint national meetings. The first of the continuing series was in Boston

in the spring of 1974, the second in San Juan, Puerto Rico, that fall.

Journals were another area of fruitful cooperation. At the time, the author was on the ORSA Council and chaired a joint TIMS/ORSA publications committee. An immediate step was to combine the ORSA newsletter with the news and notes part of TIMS' *Interfaces* to form a single newsletter, *ORMS Today*, which was distributed to all members of both societies. The committee also explored opportunities and developed pro forma proposals for a variety of possible new joint journals. These ranged from general purpose subject matter such as "systems" and "applications" to such specialized topics as health and public systems. Of special note here is that one highly promising area was marketing. At the request of this writer, Dave Montgomery wrote an exploratory proposal in November 1973 for a journal focused on management science in marketing.

The result of this burst of activity was a pair of joint journals. Member surveys had shown a great desire for applications and implemented case studies. Therefore, *Interfaces* was enlarged and repositioned into a journal of ORMS practice. The first issue under joint auspices appeared in February 1974, and soon thereafter *Interfaces* began publishing its annual issue built around the winners of the Edelman practice prize. At the other end of the spectrum, the societies launched a new theoretical journal, *Mathematics of Operations Research*, with a first issue in February 1976.

For the most part, the initiation of joint activities had little effect on the TIMS College on Marketing, which simply went about its business of increasing communication among people interested in management science in marketing. However, Montgomery's memo on a marketing journal was lying dormant in the files, ready to reappear, given the right conditions.

A Separate Conference: "Market Measurement and Analysis"

Grassroots View. In March 1979, a series of circumstances led the Marketing College to run its first

stand-alone conference, chaired by Dick Wittink and the restless Dave Montgomery (see Wittink 2001). The meeting was held at Stanford, and attendees were equally balanced between academics and practitioners. The conference was a big success and started a stream of annual meetings that continues to this day. For the first four years it was called "Market Measurement and Analysis"; however, by the time of the fifth conference, which was held at University of Southern California in 1983, the journal *Marketing Science* had started publication. So the conference chair, Fred Zufryden, and his committee aligned the conference with the name of the journal, thereby crystallizing marketing science as the principal name for the emerging field.

Attendance at the first conference was planned to be 75, but it ultimately grew to 120. For the first five years, the size was limited to 100 or 120, but the demand was clearly much higher. As a result the conference eventually stopped restricting registration, and the number steadily rose until, by the 10th year, attendance exceeded 300 (see Table 1 and Figure 1).

Institutional View. The conference was (and is) a tremendous asset for both the College and its parent organizations, because it brings members of an important community face-to-face. Old friends stay in touch and new people are introduced. Practitioners talk to their peers at other companies and also find out what academics are doing. Young faculty and graduate students see and hear people whom they have only read about. Such communication is at the heart of the mission of a professional society and, for a developing field like marketing science, was absolutely essential.

A second reason why the conference was valuable was that it became a cash cow. Attendees at such conferences are relatively insensitive to conference fees. Of course, this can be abused and, if so, will boomerang. However, a conservative planning process that targets breakeven will produce a profit in most years and certainly has a positive expected value. The word profit may be misleading in the sense that the financial statements ignored the huge volunteer resources that made these conferences successful. The high quality of the labor was, in turn, underwritten

Table 1 College on Marketing: Activity Trends

Year	Conference Site	Conference Attendance	College Membership	Journal Circulation
1967			165	
1968			148	
1969				
1970				
1971				
1972			329	
1973			305	
1974			285	
1975			258	
1976			248	
1977			255	
1978			261	
1979	Stanford	120	289	
1980	UT Austin	100	320	
1981	NYU	100	391	
1982	Wharton	120	324	2004
1983	USC	119	304	1741
1984	U Chicago	144	310	1654
1985	Vanderbilt	212	294	1675
1986	UT Dallas	256	318	1701
1987	HEC	292	382	1775
1988	U Wash	336	413	1871
1989	Duke	312	444	1936
1990	U Illinois	365	730	1953
1991	Dupont	374	555	1956
1992	LBS	353	530	1949
1993	Wash U	335	540	1940
1994	U Arizona	429	601	1958
1995	U South Wales	356	526	1726
1996	U Fla	393	703	1690
1997	UC Berkeley	491	713	1830
1998	INSEAD	412	725	1836
1999	Syracuse U	403	677	1773
2000	UCLA	397	631	1834
2001	U Mainz	401		

Notes: In 1990 college dues were zero for a year. In 2000 the official INFORMS circulation is 2,878, because it includes 1,044 subscribers taking the journal through the online publication package. All figures are for year end.

by the companies and universities that employ the volunteers. Yet, profit in a broad sense was large because of the benefits to the community and its members.

A critical issue arose: Where do the monetary profits go? Within both TIMS and ORSA, conferences were an accounting category separate from colleges

and sections. The latter were commonly funded by section dues. Conference proceeds went into the general treasury. In the case of the Marketing Science conference, which was joint between ORSA and TIMS in its early years, a three-way split was negotiated among TIMS, ORSA, and the College on Marketing. After a few years, the College was one of the wealthiest subdivisions of TIMS.

An "Aha!" experience occurred at the 1985 conference at Vanderbilt to underscore the financial value of a successful meeting. We wanted to build the circulation of the journal to reduce operating losses and potentially to increase pages. Being marketers, we ran a promotion. At the conference, we distributed a special flier and offered a discount coupon to new subscribers, particularly targeting practitioners. The results were dismal. Then the light dawned—money was not the issue. Practitioners obtained less direct value from the journal than the academics and so relatively few subscribed. Practitioners tended to talk and listen first and then read if it seemed desirable. A win-win solution for supporting the journal was equally clear. Don't cut down trees. Simply take some of the conference profits and use them to subsidize the journal. This process (smoothed by the College treasury) has been the practice ever since.

An important institutional question is: Did the College need a parent society at all? Or, for that matter, did marketing scientists need the College? The arguments that they did are several. TIMS provided professional meeting staff to help the conference organizers handle arrangements and myriad details on and off site. The professionals also provided a continuity that was difficult to maintain with volunteers who turned over every year. In extreme cases, professionals need to come in and clean up the broken dishes. Another contribution of a professional society comes from its nonprofit, public service image. Special interest conferences are usually hosted by a university. Adding professional society auspices gives the conference a broader, less parochial flavor.

The history of the conference (Wittink 2001) shows that, although its steady state was robust, its content and sponsorship were highly sensitive to initial conditions. As Dick recounts, the original concept for the

conference was narrow, methodological, and unconnected to the College or to TIMS or ORSA. In the hands of the organizers, the theme of the conference broadened, and the idea of professional society sponsorship emerged and was embraced.

The College faced a policy issue as demand for the conference mounted. The small meetings with restricted attendance were very effective for the participants but left out many people who would have liked to attend. Eventually, the organizing committees adopted the policy (usual at national INFORMS meetings) of letting everyone be heard who wanted to present a paper. This guaranteed that young people and newcomers had an opportunity to present. A paper is often a person's plane ticket. Although presenters had to compete in a free market for audience, their access was not squeezed out by the reigning cliques and orthodoxies of the day. This style of conference puts a burden on the organizers to be sure that there are prominent sessions with well-known people describing their latest work. Although open access is obviously not the only possible format, it was one that worked well for creating the community of marketing scientists and binding it together.

Before the first conference, College membership stood at 261. After four years of conferences but before the introduction of the journal, membership had grown to 324.

A Separate Journal

Grassroots View. Academics generally prefer more publication outlets to fewer. Practitioners seek relevance, which may or may not be served by a new journal. In the 1970s both *Management Science* and *Operations Research* offered publication opportunities for the academics in the College on Marketing, and, as has been detailed by Montgomery (2001), good use was being made of these. The American Marketing Association's *Journal of Marketing Research* was also an outlet but had a different flavor and orientation (see Morrison 2001 and Bass 2001). As will be discussed later under institutional considerations, TIMS and ORSA faced a dilemma in the potential cannibaliza-

tion of their flagship journals by the specialty journal. However, it suffices here to note that a substantial group in the College (including all the people writing this history!) favored starting a new journal.

Institutional View. The TIMS Council that was scheduled to meet in New Orleans in May 1979 contained a remarkable number of people—almost 40% of the Council—who would today be called marketing scientists. These were Frank Bass (president), myself (vice president for publications), and council members Irwin Gross, Donald Morrison, Philippe Naert, and Maurice Sasieni. Furthermore, the author was not only on the TIMS Council (until September) but also president-elect of ORSA. As Shakespeare might say, “The stars were in alignment.” Frank and I were in complete agreement that we should try to start a journal. TIMS would move forward anyway, and I would broach the subject with the ORSA Executive Committee and Council. ORSA was unlikely to start a marketing journal on its own but, on the other hand, might not want to be left out if the journal were to go ahead.

As an immediate action in New Orleans, Frank appointed a committee, chaired by Don Morrison, to study the feasibility of a new journal and report back at the ORSA/TMS meeting in Milwaukee during October 1979. The committee report was thorough and positive. A new committee, chaired by Michael Rothkopf, the incoming vice president of publications for TIMS, was then assigned to work out specific details for consideration at the May 1980 meeting to be held in Washington. Mike was to keep his ORSA counterpart, David Hopkins, abreast of the effort. I joined the committee, picking up the task of working with the business office on the budget and a promotional plan for start up.

Knowing the expertise with publications within TIMS, I was confident that the journal would be financially viable in steady state. Commercial publishers had long since proven that one can make money on a low-circulation journal with high prestige by hiking the price to libraries. The universities end up paying the cost of publishing the journal (having already paid the authors to write the papers!). Our goal would be circulation, not profit, but we had the price knob to turn if we needed it to break even.

Meanwhile, cannibalism became a serious institutional issue. Both *Operations Research* and *Management Science* were publishing marketing papers. Did TIMS and ORSA really want their flagship journals to be denuded of papers relating to a major managerial function? The best articulation of the issue came from William Pierskalla, the editor of *Operations Research*. That journal had already lost coverage in transportation to *Transportation Science* and many theoretical papers to *Mathematics of Operations Research*. In his response to the 1979 Morrison Committee survey on feasibility, Bill had written that, although marketing submissions to *Operations Research* were not numerous, he felt that, before ORSA endorsed further spin-off journals, it should appoint a high-level committee to establish what the role of its flagship journal should be. Bill had earlier recruited Glen Urban to be area editor for marketing in *Operations Research* specifically with the goal of building up coverage. Glen, in a memo to Don Morrison and others in March 1980, noted that a new journal would have advantages but questioned the size of the potential audience and the number of high quality papers that would be available. In Bill's opinion, if the journal went forward, *Operations Research* and *Management Science* should both drop their marketing areas in order to make the new journal viable.

On the other side of this issue was the argument that there were marketing papers important to the field but too narrow and specialized to be appropriate for the broad flagship journals. Furthermore, as commercial publishers had frequently demonstrated, by getting out front of an emerging field and accepting modest cannibalization, the first mover can develop a commanding position. The TIMS Council was clearly infiltrated by partisans and the ORSA Council decided to join in. As a result a motion to start the journal passed both groups at the May 1980 ORSA/TIMS meeting in Washington. Interestingly, during the discussion in Joint Council, several ORSA representatives became concerned about financial viability. Because of this, start up of the journal was later made conditional on raising outside money to cover a portion of initial expenses. It is also interesting to note that, subsequently, Bill Pierskalla closed down the

marketing area in *Operations Research*, whereas Martin Starr, editor of *Management Science*, who had supported the new journal in the Morrison survey, kept his marketing area going. These actions make a fascinating case study of decisions that could have gone either way at the time but, having been made, had long-lasting effects as both of these journals have continued their chosen coverages for 20 years through many different editors.

At this point the institutional roles with respect to the journal were complete and the new joint publication, soon named *Marketing Science*, was on its way. The effort required to start it was surprisingly large (see Morrison 2001). The start-up process, although designed on the fly, had the good feature that it involved many people in committees, surveys, proposals, and reviews. These alerted the community to the journal and created excitement that made the heavy lifting seem lighter.

NSF Support for Basic Research in Marketing

Grassroots View. Members of the College (and others) doing research in marketing were delighted by the announcement in the March–April 1982 issue of *ORMS Today* that the National Science Foundation had established a new program in Decision and Management Science (later Decision, Risk, and Management Science). Along with the rest of management science, basic research in marketing science was now eligible for NSF funding.

Institutional View. Not much happens unless somebody makes it happen. In his role as president of TIMS, Frank Bass had set a goal of obtaining support and recognition at NSF for the field of management science broadly. The successful quest took over five years and involved many twists and turns. See Bass (2001) for the full story. Support for marketing science was a particularly satisfying byproduct, considering that Frank was a marketing professor himself.

Merger and Start of INFORMS 1989–95

Grassroots View. The marketing science journal and conference continued to develop in the late '80s and early '90s, reinforcing each other and the College in the period leading up to the merger of TIMS and ORSA into INFORMS.

Institutional View. The cumbersome negotiations between the councils on conferences and journals were part of the stimulus for the eventual merger of TIMS and ORSA. The joint national meetings were impressive successes, both professionally and financially. The joint journals, running at breakeven, were high in quality and had loyal followings. Yet, the coordination costs were high. There were two business offices, two councils and a joint council, two publications committees and a joint publication committee, and a combined meetings committee reporting to the two councils. This set-up made an awkward managerial structure, which consumed large quantities of volunteer time. It worked because of the efforts of the volunteers and because of critical overlaps in the leaderships of the two societies. However, in the fall of 1989 Donald Gross, president of ORSA, and William King, president of TIMS, decided to appoint a Committee on Cooperation to study ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the relationships between TIMS and ORSA. This author was chair. For five years the committee worked with a sequence of ORSA and TIMS officers and councils exploring new forms of cooperative activity and culminating in a merger vote in 1994 and the start of INFORMS in January 1995.

Individual subdivisions were, for the most part, little affected by the merger and the steps leading up to it, although some of their leaders as individuals were involved in committees working on aspects of cooperation. The College on Marketing, its conference, and the journal *Marketing Science* were active and healthy during this time. The College continued to grow from the high 300s to the 500s (with an outlier over 700 when the dues were set to zero for a year). The Conference had a spurt in growth as well, from the 200s to the 300s. Highly successful inter-

national conferences were run in Paris, London, and Sydney.

From an institutional point of view, the College raised few concerns. College officers had established good relations and continuity with members of the professional meetings staff of the former TIMS business office so that support for the Marketing Science Conference by INFORMS was consistent and of a high quality, as was the conference itself. The publications group that handled the day-to-day editing and redacting of the journal also had stable relationships with the editors of *Marketing Science*.

Following merger, another jump occurred in College membership, peaking in the 700s before falling somewhat. This reflected the growth in marketing science as a field and a new generation of academics, some of whom were students of the students of the College founders. In addition, and very desirably, new people entered the field from other disciplines.

The College Today

It is interesting and encouraging to see where the College stands today in the INFORMS organizational mix. INFORMS has 32 subdivisions built around professional interest specialties. At year's end in 2000, the College on Marketing was the fourth largest with 631 members, trailing only information systems, decision analysis, and operations management. The journal has a circulation of nearly 2,000 (with another 1,044 subscribing to the online edition only). The Marketing Science Conference continues to be large. Almost 400 people attended the meeting at UCLA in June 2000. In keeping with the expansion of marketing science around the world, the conference for 2001 will be in Wiesbaden, Germany. The Marketing Science Conference is one of the largest special interest conferences run by an INFORMS subdivision.

What Next? A Straw Manifesto

Academics and practitioners who identify with marketing science form a community with the College on Marketing at its institutional center. The community has the College as an organization, the Marketing Science Conference as a forum, and *Marketing Science* as

a journal. From time to time the College runs other special interest conferences, two, for example, having been run on e-commerce, one at MIT and one at USC. The College awards two prizes annually, one for the best paper, the other for the best dissertation. These enterprises seem stable. But is that good enough? In dynamic times is stability a disguise for slow decline? A strong new generation of marketing academics and practitioners emerged in the 1990s. Has the Marketing College engaged them? What are the new challenges?

Here is a "straw" manifesto on what the college might do next:

1. Become an INFORMS society rather than section. This is a higher designation within INFORMS and implies greater independence and autonomy. Other options might be to secede or dissolve or join with another group. However, the college enjoys quite high autonomy within INFORMS now and successfully receives key services there. Becoming a society would further formalize and strengthen the relationship. As part of an internal review, the College should analyze pricing to be sure that conference and journal prices encourage College membership. A membership drive would be in order.

2. Run someone for INFORMS council, or president, or vice president for publications, etc. This would be healthy for the college and for INFORMS.

3. Coordinate the marketing science-related websites. Currently our community has at least four active Websites: the College Website at Alberta, the journal Website at Penn State, the e-commerce Website at MIT, and the *Review of Marketing Science (ROMS)* Website at UT Dallas. The latter is developing a repository of working papers. Other fields have found that valuable research action can be captured and disseminated at the working paper stage. There is more than enough Web work for everybody. The College should coordinate these activities to make them seamless for marketing science professionals, whether academics or practitioners. Several international websites should be linked as well.

4. Involve more people and institutions from outside the United States. Our non-U.S. meetings are some of our largest. This should come as no surprise.

5. Involve more practitioners. Go back to our roots. Here lies a major opportunity to make a difference in our own community, academia, and the world. If our methodologies really work, people should be using them in practice, and we should be exercising our share of responsibility for making this happen and communicating about it. Start an online journal named *Marketing Engineering*. It would be a fully refereed journal. A print version could be published periodically for those who wish a paper copy.

6. Establish a formal liaison with the Marketing Science Institute, perhaps by having a jointly chosen person who would be both an MSI trustee and a member of the Marketing College Advisory Council.

7. Establish a "friends of marketing science" set of industrial organizations that has a serious stake in the field, e.g., information providers such as Information Resources, Jupiter Media Metrix, comScore, and AC-Nielsen, plus marketing-oriented companies such as Ford, GM, and Procter & Gamble.

Conclusion

TIMS and its successor INFORMS have provided the Marketing College and its organizers with an institutional umbrella that has permitted the College to create a marketing science community. This has been

a great success. Nevertheless, the College should not rest on its laurels but take on new challenges that will keep it vital.

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