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Journal of Marketing Education 1998; 20; 210
DOI: 10.1177/027347539802000304

The online version of this article can be found at:
http://jmd.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/20/3/210
Marketing Dėjà Vu: The Discovery of Integrated Marketing Communications

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Integrated marketing communications (IMC) misrepresents the nature of marketing and systematically ignores at least 60 years of marketing literature. IMC reinvents marketing theory using different terminology for extant concepts. This article examines IMC, its history, and its relationship to the marketing literature. Although IMC has the potential to contribute to the development of theory as it relates to promotion and marketing communication, academicians need to debate its substantive contributions to the marketing and communication literature. This article provides a starting point.

"Integrated marketing communications [IMC] will be the most important factor influencing marketing strategy in the next few years," according to Hume (1992). No doubt that IMC has become a "hot" topic says Novelli (1989-90), however, "not necessarily because it makes any more or less sense than it used to, but because the mega-agencies are using it to justify selling a market basket of services to their clients" (p. 7). The trade press has devoted a great amount of space to the topic, and IMC has received increased attention in academic journals and textbooks. IMC has also caught hold of the minds of many practitioners and academicians in a variety of disciplines (Cathey and Schumann 1996; Nowak and Siraj 1996).

Many in marketing hold the perception that IMC is simply a new phrase for something we know has existed for a long time. This sounds relatively benign. However, we cannot have a clear understanding of what the proponents of IMC advocate until we examine the writings of those on the forefront of the IMC movement. The revisionism that is being advocated is quite astounding. It begins and ends with concepts and theories developed in marketing. However, new terminology is being coined for concepts developed in marketing with what appears to be a complete disregard for the marketers who produced these conceptual developments. The result is a blurring of boundaries, confusing terminology, and a revision of concepts, which leads to disorganized thinking. This issue is one of direct concern to those who teach marketing, for the IMC movement presents a direct challenge to the foundations of the marketing discipline.

The purpose of our article is to illustrate that IMC is an opportunistic move—a marketplace survival strategy—developed by advertising agencies and schools of journalism and mass communication to respond to an industry shift toward marketing communication in a broad sense and away from advertising. This move, which includes the development of an IMC discipline, minimizes the contributions made to the marketing discipline and duplicates much of what is already being taught in schools of business. Furthermore, IMC proponents take credit for developing theories that have been housed in the marketing discipline for more than 50 years. The emergence of an IMC discipline has only been recent; it has been discussed formally for the past 5 years and the focus of official academic programs for about 4 years. It is time for those involved in marketing instruction to examine this new entrant, its history, and its relationship to marketing to determine if IMC is a new perspective, a new discipline, or something less.

WHAT IS IMC?

In the early part of this decade, confusion abounded as to the exact definition of IMC. Some people referred to it as "one-stop shopping," while others regarded it as one consistent message. This confusion resulted in the following charge (Wolter 1993): "People are having trouble defining integrated marketing communications (IMC) because the concept lacks a good, solid theory from which to start. Current IMC practice suffers from superficiality . . . ambiguity . . . and a blurred focus" (p. 12).

The current range of definitions extends from the view that IMC is corporate communications to the view that IMC is marketing. An example of the first is "IMC is a cross-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders by

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strategically controlling or influencing all messages sent to these groups and encouraging purposeful dialogue with them” (Duncan 1995, p. 8).

From the other end of the continuum, Tannenbaum (1991) states that it’s really a renewal of a commitment we used to make to the consumer but have forgotten all about. It’s a return to the day when the consumer was approached with respect. The customer conversation was two-way. ... It combines every form of communication—the price of the product, where the product is sold, how it is displayed, labeling, packaging, what is said about it in the ads, direct marketing, public relations. It even includes what a company’s employees say about the product—in sales pitches, telephone conversations, cocktail parties. ... Integrated Marketing Communications is a return to building brand loyalty by building brands that deserve loyalty. (p. 3)

Arrayed along this continuum are definitions by Dilenschneider (1991); Duncan (1993, p. 22); Caywood and Ewing (1991, p. 238); Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn (1993, p. xvii); Fortini-Campbell (1995); and Cathey and Schumann (1996). As can be seen in the above definitions, it is evident that IMC focuses on the following:

1. Integrating the promotional vehicles of the organization or creating IMC planning team connectedness (advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, public relations, personal selling, etc.);
2. Focusing on the consumer, or audience, as a starting point in the communication process;
3. Developing consistent messages for companies and brands;
4. Fostering long-term relationships between the customer and the company; and
5. Managing the points at which the customer comes in contact with the company.

However, the question still remains, is IMC different from the traditional concepts and theories associated with the marketing discipline? The following discussion addresses this issue from the perspective of IMC proponents, some of whom proclaim that marketing is “obsolete” and should be replaced by IMC.

A RECENT HISTORY OF IMC

IMC is an elusive concept. While its origins are somewhat debatable, the term IMC appears to have emerged in the public relations literature during the late 1980s. While there may be numerous reasons for coining the term, two have been cited within the literature. Novelli (1989-90) observed that the amount of money moving from advertising into other marketing communication vehicles was a major force in advertising agencies redefining their role in the communication process. He notes, “it isn’t altruism, or even what’s in the best interests of the client that is propelling IMC. It’s because ad dollars are flowing to other marketing communications disciplines and ad agencies need to do something to respond” (p. 7). Thus, it was a marketplace survival strategy that spurred IMC development, and, judging by the number of agencies embracing IMC, it was a readily accepted strategy. A second motivation for IMC development could be attributed to the low self-image of the public relations industry (Sparks 1993).

In 1991, a task force of public relations and advertising professionals and academicians studied the issue of IMC and the terminology associated with describing this new discipline. Their 1993 report, Preparing Advertising and Public Relations Students for the Communication Industry in the 21st Century (Duncan, Caywood, and Newsom 1993), debated the use of the following terms: integrated communications, total communications, and IMC. The task force acknowledged the semantic difficulties with all the names. It appears that public relations people felt the most threatened by the IMC term and contended the term was too narrow to adequately reflect the responsibilities of public relations. Thus, a consensus was not reached about what title should be given to this emerging phenomenon.

Associated with these industry trends, Duncan, Caywood, and Newsom (1993) note additional pressures that Schools of Journalism/Mass Communications (J/MC) faced. These include the following: (1) Fewer J/MC graduates were getting jobs in their fields of study, and fewer J/MC graduates were occupying executive positions in advertising agencies; (2) business schools were experiencing increased growth in student interest and enrollments; (3) J/MC schools experienced a decline in the number of qualified applicants; (4) within J/MC schools, advertising and public relations departments were seeing an increased number of majors; and (5) there were mounting internal political problems associated with few Ph.D.-trained faculty and the many professional faculty traditionally employed in these schools that resulted in increasing difficulty in faculty achieving tenure. Many of these problems were rooted in an inherent class structure that saw advertising and public relations faculty being looked down on by their colleagues in editorial journalism and liberal arts.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, academicians in the advertising/journalism/public relations fields were quite observant of the trends and sought to capitalize on this new industry direction as a solution to many of the pressures cited above. Conferences held by the American Association of Advertising and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications devoted numerous sessions to discussing IMC. Led by academicians in the School of Journalism at the University of Colorado and the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern, the IMC term served as a motivator to integrate programs (such as advertising, public relations, and direct marketing) that were formerly perceived to be separate entities. Similar to the broadening of marketing
that occurred in 1969 (Kotler and Levy 1969), academicians in J/MC schools suddenly broadened their outlook. However, it should be noted that IMC has not received enthusiastic support from everyone. Many academicians and practitioners in the area of public relations still view their role as much broader than the ‘selling’ role implied by IMC (Duncan, Caywood, and Newsom 1993). In fact, the Educational Affairs Committee of the Public Relations Society of America officially opposed the conclusions and recommendations of the task force on IMC headed by Duncan, Caywood, and Newsom (1993).

As with any new trend, those involved will seek to solidify their position in the face of those within the organization unwilling to join the parade. Early on in IMC development, there was debate over who was to oversee the marketing communications process. A former J. Walter Thompson executive stated that, “I don’t believe any advertising agency has the expertise to see the role integrated marketing needs to take” (Hume 1993, p. 3). Furthermore, Caywood and Ewing (1991) assert “that the experienced and properly cross-trained public relations professional is the most qualified to head any new integrated marketing communications unit” (p. 238). More recently, however, Moriarty (1994) acknowledges that it is not the credentials of the person managing the function but the generalist abilities of the person that are important when deciding who should manage the marketing communications function.

The first, “officially named” IMC program was opened at Northwestern’s Medill School of Journalism in 1991. The objective of the program was “to create a ‘valid’ curriculum that academically and professionally integrated the fields of advertising/sales promotion, corporate public relations, and direct marketing” (Caywood and Ewing 1991, p. 239). This curriculum consisted of the basic components, business management (i.e., core business courses including accounting, finance, economics, marketing, management, and information systems), integration (to link the four areas of specialization), and extension of the specialty areas. With the advent of this program, schools of journalism had moved their programs from a skills perspective (i.e., this is how you produce an advertisement/write a press release) to a more strategic perspective (i.e., this is how each component of marketing communications needs to be integrated to achieve organizational objectives). The University of Colorado opened the second official IMC program not long thereafter. While some have suggested that IMC has arisen, in part, because of the development of new technologies (e.g., database management, supercomputers, the World Wide Web, and the Internet), the task force studying IMC (Duncan, Caywood, and Newsom 1993) found that programs housing advertising and public relations courses are not prepared to train students in these new technologies. These programs have turned to business schools for this cross-disciplinary training (e.g., direct marketing, database management, finance), as well as for guidance and academic boundary definition.

Since the development of these programs, the discussion of IMC and the frequency with which it appears in the literature has grown dramatically. Northwestern has held an annual symposium on IMC in each of the past 4 years. Academicians now have regular columns in trade papers addressing IMC issues. Publications in journals such as the Journal of Marketing Communications and Integrated Marketing Communications Research Journal have debated the definition of IMC and who does what. In all of this discussion, however, there has been a noticeable lack of theoretical development with respect to IMC. Is IMC a new discipline with a distinct structure (theories) of its own (separate from other disciplines) as intimated by Cathey and Schumann (1996) or at least a new application of theories borrowed from other disciplines (e.g., marketers applying theories borrowed from social psychology to consumer behavior)? Or, is this just an opportunistic move to take advantage of an industry shift while disregarding where most of the theoretical development took place? To answer these questions, it is necessary to explore IMC from the perspective of those credited with its discovery and to contrast this with the development of marketing communications in the marketing discipline starting in the early part of this century.

IMC AND MARKETING: THE IMC PERSPECTIVE

Initially, the changes promoted by IMC were meant to realign academic education with business practice. In the task force report by Duncan, Caywood, and Newsom (1993), they state (with respect to IMC),

none of these changes mean that the traditional advertising, public relations and marketing professions will go away. They do suggest, however, that if professional concerns are overlapping, then the new communication managers may need to be able to work with, and across, the dotted lines of an organizational chart. (p. 7)

In reading the IMC literature of the past several years, it becomes apparent that academicians promoting this concept feel it is a radically new idea that will usher in a new business philosophy for the millennium. Proponents of IMC proudly proclaim that traditional marketing, as we know it, is “dead.” The traditional marketing mix is no longer relevant; instead, the four C’s (consumer, consumer cost, convenience, and communication) have become the new guiding principles (Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn 1993). In a recent symposium on IMC, one proponent has declared to have discovered customized marketing (Schultz 1995), or what the marketing discipline refers to as relationship marketing.
(Berry and Parasuraman 1991) or one-to-one marketing (Peppers and Rogers 1994). In the view of these academicians, IMC has replaced mass marketing with target marketing and customized communications. In essence, IMC has "turned all forms of marketing into communication and all forms of communication into marketing" (Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn 1993, p. 45). This raises the question, has the convergence of marketing and communication disciplines made the terms synonymous? Furthermore, does this mean that theories developed in the respective disciplines become eminently "borrowable" with no credit given to theory originators?

The IMC perspective views traditional marketing as having a production or selling orientation that produces goods for the mass market. In the IMC view of marketing, consumers are believed to function under the traditional hierarchy of effects, with advertising serving the major role of moving them through the hierarchy. Marketers tend to focus on the product that is produced and see production and distribution economies as the only means to achieve cost savings. The differences between IMC and traditional marketing have been highlighted in the following quotes:

A major difference between the new integrated marketing communications planning approach and most traditional marketing communications planning programs is that the new focus is on the consumer, customer, or prospect, not on the organization’s sales and profit goals. (Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn 1993, pp. 55-56)

A second major way in which our integrated marketing communications planning process differs from traditional methods is that we use customer and prospect behavior whenever possible as our first segmentation approach. (Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn 1993, p. 56)

We are convinced that all marketing organizations are totally dependent on their customers and their prospects for their volume and profit success. The customer and prospect base determine how successful an organization can be, not how skilled the marketer is but how many resources he or she has at hand. (Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn 1993, p. 56)

These differences have also been reinforced in trade paper writings, some of which have declared marketing as "obsolete" (Schultz 1994, p. 11).

It is also noteworthy that IMC differs from traditional marketing in the sense that new terminology is being used to describe the IMC process. According to Fortini-Campbell (1995), it is essential that brand equity be managed well. To do this, it is necessary to manage both the verbal language and body language of IMC. From her perspective, verbal language is the traditional promotional mix of advertising, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing. The term body language refers to the remaining elements of the traditional marketing mix, including pricing, product configuration, sales force, and points of distribution. There is inconsistency, however, among the proponents in how they refer to common core concepts of the supposed IMC theory. Schultz (1995, p. 13) refers to body language as "marketing communications contact tools" (product, price, distribution, and communication), while verbal language is referred to as "marketing communications contact tactics" (direct marketing, advertising, sales promotion, public relations, and event marketing).

It is evident from the writings of IMC academicians that there is a newfound excitement in the "discovery" of this new "discipline." While there has been a flurry of activity involving new terminology and academic degrees, we really need to consider the theoretical foundations of IMC (Duncan and Caywood 1996; Nowak and Phelps 1994). The genesis of IMC was industry practice, and as noted by Drucker (1985), "Every practice rests on theory, even if the practitioners themselves are unaware of it" (p. 26). IMC education rests on theory, and it is evident from the writings of IMC academicians (Cathey and Schumann 1996; Duncan and Caywood 1996; Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn 1993) that there is a reluctance to acknowledge that much of the theory claimed by IMC was actually developed in marketing and other disciplines over the past six decades.

**A COMPARISON OF CONCEPTS: MARKETING AND IMC**

Since much of IMC’s development has been described as undertaken to address weaknesses in marketing, a review of selected parts of the development of marketing may shed some light on these issues. IMC purports to offer several new perspectives on marketing:

1. an integrated perspective,
2. a consumer focus, and
3. the notion that marketing communications is broader than promotion.

**An Integrated Perspective**

While the term marketing mix, as the set of marketing functions employed for a particular task, stems from the early 1950s, it has its origins in the earliest marketing writings. We sometimes debate the set of marketing tasks or functions that comprise the marketing mix (see, for example, van Waterschoot and Van den Bulte 1992), but most in the field would see the so-called 4P classification developed by McCarthy (1960) as a reasonable statement of them. Likewise, the idea that it is essential that the various marketing mix elements
must be considered as an integrated whole has long been recognized in marketing. For example, Felton (1959) observed “another important condition that must be met is an actual integration and coordination of all the marketing functions” (pp. 55-56).

As with the marketing mix, the set of activities included in promotion is sometimes the subject of debate. The most common description of the elements in the promotional blend in use today appears to be the familiar personal selling, advertising, publicity, and sales promotion set. Some debate concerns the place for direct and database marketing, the role of public relations, and the status of other elements of marketing that communicate (e.g., branding). However, regardless of the set of activities included in promotion, and regardless of the term used to describe the set, the need for integration across the promotional elements has a long history. We have long understood that these mix elements need to be integrated. For example, Converse (1930) wrote in the language of the day, the sales department and the advertising department should cooperate in carrying out uniform policies so that the salesmen and the advertisements will produce the best results. The salesmen should be kept informed of the advertising being done so that they can make full use of it in their work. (p. 1010)

Clark (1922), writing on “demand creation,” observed that “The use of samples is sometimes considered as an independent method, but this is not correct, for they must be used in conjunction with personal solicitation, or advertising, or both. All of these methods are commonly used conjointly” (p. 14). More recently, Davis (1966) noted, “To achieve the optimum return from promotional expenditures, there is a need to integrate the contribution of each of the various forms of promotion, the allocation of funds among them, their respective messages, timing, and format” (p. 504).

A Consumer Focus

While the consumer as the central element in all marketing activities—usually referred to as the marketing concept—is generally dated to the early 1950s, it has its roots in a focus on the customer that is prevalent long before (Barksdale and Darden 1971). Although there are numerous ways to state the marketing concept, Kotler (1994) suggests that “the key to achieving organizational goals consists in determining the needs and wants of target markets and delivering the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than competitors” (p. 18). Felton’s (1959) view is consonant with that of Kotler, but is perhaps more interesting for the present purposes: The marketing concept is “a corporate state of mind that insists on the integration and coordination of all the marketing functions which, in turn, are melded with all other corporate functions, for the basic purpose of producing maximum long-range corporate profits” (p. 55). While the emphasis on profits in a definition of the marketing concept is somewhat controversial—Drucker (1954, pp. 36-37), for example, would argue that profits are the reward for customer satisfaction, not the drive—Felton’s definition makes explicit the notion that all activities must be integrated. The bulk of the recent marketing literature concerns the extent to which the marketing concept has been implemented, impediments to implementation, and methods to overcome these limitations (for a review, see Kohli and Jaworski 1990). While IMC sees the consumer as its one and only focal point, it has become evident that there is value in some circumstances to the production and selling philosophies (Houston 1986).

The Breadth of Marketing Communications

As Alderson (1965) observed, the market “is cleared by information” (p. 52). While it is evident that all elements of the marketing mix contain information, and therefore communicate (DeLozier 1976, p. 166), promotion has been traditionally seen as bearing the principal communication burden. Promotion has long been viewed as synonymous with marketing communication. Promotion is defined as communication undertaken to persuade others to accept ideas, concepts, or things. The tools of promotion—or marketing communications—include advertising, personal selling, reseller support, publicity, sales promotion, public relations, and corporate advertising (Engel, Warshaw, and Kinnear 1994), and some add direct marketing to the set of promotions tools (Kotler 1994). Marketers include public relations (Kinnear, Bernhardt, and Krentler 1995; Kotler 1994; Engel, Warshaw, and Kinnear 1994) in the promotional blend, while public relations professionals question whether marketing practices “square with the company’s social responsibility” (Kotler and Mindak 1978, p. 13) and choose to separate out public relations as a corporate communication function. Promotion management tends to be a term used by marketing academicians, while marketing practitioners prefer the term marketing communication (Shimp 1990).

In addition to its long-standing position in marketing, promotion also has roots in communication. Those in the communication area would see marketing communication as the umbrella term encompassing the various communication functions used by marketing (Webster 1971; Duncan and Everett 1993). Some have suggested that marketing communication includes communication through any and all of the marketing mix elements (DeLozier 1976; Shimp 1990; Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn 1993). The term marketing communication is defined as “the collection of all elements in an organization’s marketing mix that facilitate exchanges by establishing shared meaning with the organization’s customers or clients” (Shimp 1990, p. 8). Crane (1965,
TABLE 1
INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS AND MORE THAN 50 YEARS OF MARKETING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integrated Marketing Communications</th>
<th>Marketing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The old ways of marketing just don't cut it anymore. The days of traditional mass marketing are over&quot; (University relations brochure, Northwestern University, Medill School of Journalism 1995).</td>
<td>&quot;Today's companies are finding it increasingly hard to practice mass marketing. Mass markets are undergoing 'de-massification'&quot; (Kotler 1984, p. 251).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;One [a broader perspective] that thinks about communications from the point of view of our customer rather than from the tools that we happen to have the most experience working with&quot; (Fortini-Campbell 1995, p. 5).</td>
<td>&quot;Marketing, as we have come to understand it, has its focus on the customer&quot; (Drucker 1958, p. 253).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Our perception of integration of three years ago was wrong . . . The only place integration really occurs is with the consumer&quot; (Schultz 1995, p. 6).</td>
<td>Marketing views &quot;the entire business process as consisting of a tightly integrated effort to discover, create, arouse, and satisfy consumer needs&quot; (Levitt 1960, p. 55).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;With IMC, the &quot;focus is on the consumer, customer, or prospect, not on the organization's sales or profit goals&quot; (Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn 1993, pp. 55-56).</td>
<td>&quot;The consumer is the focal point of all marketing efforts. For that matter, according to the marketing concept, the consumer should be the focal point for all business efforts&quot; (McCarthy 1960, p. 47).</td>
</tr>
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<td>&quot;In short, marketing in the 1990s is communication and communication is marketing. The two are inseparable&quot; (Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn 1993, p. 46).</td>
<td>&quot;Communication is a fundamental and universal activity of business management. Advertising, personal selling, marketing research, public relations, and employee relations are techniques of communication. Marketing executives must become concerned with the flow of information as well as with the flow of goods&quot; (Hovland 1958, p. 369).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Although marketing communications has been used for several years as an umbrella term to refer to the various communication functions used by marketing, the strategic integration of these functional areas is what makes IMC a new approach to reaching consumers&quot; (Duncan and Everett 1993, p. 31).</td>
<td>&quot;The marketing concept has three basic elements: 1) Customer Orientation. Knowledge of the customer . . . should be the focal point of all marketing action . . . 2) Integrated Effort . . . placing emphasis on the integration of the marketing function . . . 3) Profit Direction&quot; (Bell and Emory 1971, p. 39).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Integrated marketing communications (IMC) is the strategic coordination of the messages and media used by an organization&quot; (Keegan, Moriarty, and Duncan 1992, p. 631).</td>
<td>&quot;Elements of the promotional mix are seldom used in isolation, rather they are used in combination for a collective impact greater than the sum of their parts&quot; (Kerman, Dommermuth, and Sommers 1970, p. 13).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For advertising to be an effective element of the marketing mix, an organization must have the right product and price as well as adequate distribution (Schultz and Tannenbaum 1988, p. 16).</td>
<td>&quot;There exists a continuing integral relationship between advertising and promotion decisions and decisions in the other . . . areas of marketing&quot; (Wedding and Lessler 1982, p. 1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More firms recognize the need to integrate the functions of ad agencies, public relations firms, packaging design firms, direct response specialists, and sales promotion agencies (Keegan, Moriarty, and Duncan 1992, p. 631).</td>
<td>&quot;Advertising and selling activities must be coordinated&quot; (Converse 1930, p. 1010).</td>
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</table>

1972) would argue that this role is too broad and that the fields of communication and marketing overlap only in the area of promotion. On one thing, everyone—both marketers and those in communication—agrees: Decisions about one element of the mix must always be made considering the requirements for coordination among all other marketing elements (Crane 1965, 1972; Webster 1971; Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn 1993; Kotler 1994; McCarthy and Perreault 1994).

In describing IMC, Caywood (1995) states, "In short it is like nothing that traditional marketing has preached and practiced for the past 50 years" (p. 1). Table 1 provides a
comparison of IMC and marketing concepts that illustrates that IMC is exactly like what traditional marketing has preached and practiced for more than 60 years.

**MOTIVATIONS FOR IMC**

The quotations in Table 1 provide telling evidence that what IMC has discovered in the 1990s is really a stream of thought developed in marketing over the past 6 decades. If this is so, then what is the value of IMC? From the perspective of the marketing discipline, very little added value can be seen in the concept. In some respects, there is more threat than value as we see confused terminology creeping into our discipline by those who are appealing to the "trendy" acronym or engaging in university politics. From the IMC perspective, however, there is much to gain. As more and more universities reexamine their program offerings, departments are facing increasing pressure to compete for constrained resources and justify their existence. This is the reality for higher education today. Universities are faced with creating educational production efficiencies that best use scarce resources and attract the most qualified applicants from, at best, a slowly growing student population.

From the vantage point of J/MC schools, the value of IMC is evident. The Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication task force report referred to earlier (Duncan, Caywood, and Newsom 1993) found that there is a need for students to be exposed to a cross-disciplinary education that prepares them for leadership roles in the rapidly changing communication industry. The task force acknowledged that J/MC students might be less prepared to handle leadership roles in the new communication environment. The concern is that communication industry management will look for students from business programs, rather than communication programs, to provide "the leadership necessary to make intersecting departments work together more effectively" (Duncan, Caywood, and Newsom 1993, p. 7). Some have suggested that "As American companies restructure themselves into small business units, and small companies grow, employees in greatest demand will be those who are 'flexible' and can perform a wide variety of jobs" (Mayer 1991, p. 207). Specialists will find themselves in roles of consultants, while generalists will be assigned the internal management roles (Duncan, Caywood, and Newsom 1993).

In the United States, statistics underscore the task force's concerns regarding business programs given the demand for business degrees. Business programs graduate five times the number of undergraduates relative to communication programs, approximately 20 times the number of master's degree candidates, and almost five times the amount of doctoral degree candidates (The Almanac of Higher Education 1994; Anderson, Carter, and Malizio 1989, p. 244). Overall trends for enrollments are flattening for undergraduate and doctoral degrees; demand for masters' degrees in business and communication is increasing (The Almanac of Higher Education 1994). The bottom line is that journalism and mass communication are most likely to find their growth in areas that have been occupied by business schools, because business schools have been providers of generalists rather than specialists, and generalists are being sought out in the new communication industry.

**WHY SHOULD WE CARE?**

Given the differing perspectives on marketing described here, what do we believe are the implications? We can look at this issue from at least three perspectives: marketing education, the marketing practitioner, and the advertising practitioner.

As far as the marketing literature is concerned, the activities of those in IMC are largely irrelevant. Mainstream marketing has been ignoring IMC and can continue to do so. However, in terms of marketing education, IMC has begun to creep into texts, and given that IMC is reinventing marketing with different terminology for extant concepts, the potential for confusion is apparent. This is, at best, a difficult marriage. This is not to say that IMC has nothing to offer marketing. It may provide an improved perspective on promotion in terms of an integrated perspective in a technology-forward environment. But the marketing concept, the nature of the marketing mix and the interactivity among the elements, and the realization that all elements of the marketing mix communicate does not need to be rediscovered, and these concepts probably do not require a new name. If one reads the IMC literature, at least 60 years of marketing literature is systematically ignored, completely misrepresenting the nature of marketing.

From the marketing practitioner standpoint, the reception and impact of IMC is probably dependent on the background of the reader. We might conjecture that a practitioner with no marketing background could well embrace IMC. For others, IMC may be dismissed, along with muttered observations about ivory tower dwellers who know nothing about the "real world." The first result is much less significant than the second. We have all experienced enough of the divisions between academe and practice.

It is a welcome realization that advertising practitioners have discovered marketing. To be sure, many of marketing's more savvy practitioners have been advertising people. However, many advertising practitioners have remained true to their roots in media and creativity. We believe that it is these practitioners who find new insights in IMC.
In defining the discipline, we leave you to contemplate the following quote, which we wish we could lay claim to, that was written more than 25 years ago by Kotler and Levy (1969) in their response to Luck (1969) on the “broadening of the marketing concept.”

First we must recognize that the scope, methods, and aims of any discipline are determined more by tradition than by anything intrinsic in the name. For example, economics is practiced primarily as a deductive science in contrast to most of the other social sciences. Secondly, every discipline periodically faces challenges to its traditional form from people within and outside who seek to make it more “relevant.” Thus, the deductive tradition in economics has been attacked repeatedly by institutionalists, psychologists, and empirically minded researchers. Thirdly, the members of the discipline will show responses to these challenges ranging from hostility, to sympathy, to open embrace. Whether a particular challenge is accepted depends on its ultimate contribution as a new perspective. Debate among the members of the discipline will hopefully clarify the issues, but other more fundamental factors will eventually determine the outcome. (p. 55)

As far as the current issue—the relationship between marketing and IMC—is concerned, we believe that the IMC perspective is likely to improve promotional practice. The remainder of the revisionist aspects of IMC (concerning the marketing mix, integration, consumer focus, and the notion that mass marketing is dead) are developed within a knowledge vacuum, and accordingly have only the ability to confuse, not to enlighten. The purpose here is not to “circle the wagons” to defend the discipline. As noted by Hunt (1989), in discussing the “crisis literature” in marketing, “discussion is constructively extended by defending the importance of history and reason in scholarly inquiry” (p. 4).

REFERENCES


