Assessing Performance Outcomes in Marketing

Abstract

Research in marketing is increasingly focused on building knowledge about how firms' marketing efforts may contribute to firm performance outcomes. A key precursor to accurately diagnosing the value created by firms’ marketing is conceptualizing and operationalizing appropriate ways to assess performance outcomes. Yet, to date, there has been no systematic examination of how researchers in marketing define and measure performance outcomes associated with firms' marketing efforts. We examine the assessment of such performance outcomes in over 700 empirical studies published in the top marketing journals during the period 1981-2014. The results reveal a large number of different performance outcome measures in prior empirical research that may only be weakly related to one another, making it difficult to synthesize findings across studies. In addition, we find significant problems in how performance outcomes in marketing are commonly conceptualized and operationalized. We also identify and a number of theoretically and managerially important performance areas in which empirical knowledge of marketing's impact is limited or absent. We examine the implications of these results and offer suggestions for improving future research practice.

Short Bio

Neil A. Morgan is Professor and PetSmart Distinguished Chair of Marketing at Indiana University’s Kelley School of Business. He was previously on the faculty of the University of North Carolina’s Kenan-Flagler School of Business and has also held faculty positions at the University of Wales, Cambridge University, and the University of Michigan. He has a BA from the London School of Economics, and an MBA and PhD in business administration from the University of Wales. Neil’s primary research and consulting interests are in brand strategy, marketing capabilities, customer feedback systems, marketing strategy formulation and implementation, and marketing performance assessment. His research has been published in numerous journals including Journal of Marketing, Marketing Science, Strategic Management Journal, Journal of Operations Management, Decision Sciences, and Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science. Neil serves on a number of journal boards including JM, JIMS, and AMS Review and he is also an AE at JAMS.