Conceptualising and measuring Defensive Marketing Orientation (DMO): some inaugural

thoughts on assessing marketing's place in society's doghouse

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Abstract
Many commentators suggest that marketing should be at the heart of strategic decision making, yet lament its continued inability to establish a presence at business's top table. Such failure is generally deemed to be the fault of the organization at large, and there is a generally implied presumption that marketers are unfairly marginalized. For marketing to succeed, however, it must be perceived as both credible and contemporary, yet there are small, though substantive, bodies of research implying, 1) that marketing's reputation is still far from ideal and, 2) that practicing marketers prefer traditional means of endeavour that are likely counter-productive in the context of new, customer-focused, manifestos. Analysis of both the marketing and psychology literatures reveals that there is no existing measure that might be used to evaluate attitudes of marketers toward either MO or post-MO marketing concerns and that, consequently, we never test the commitment of the agent most critical to marketing's strategic aspirations. This paper makes a strong case for the rectification of such deficiency and, via critical reflection on some recent debates concerning marketing measures, suggests an inaugural perspective on how evaluation might be achieved. An agenda for further research is offered, too.

Introduction

At the approach of the new millennium the Journal of Marketing (JoM) published a special edition that focused on the need for marketing to adopt a wider and more relevant organizational role (e.g. Deshpandé, 1999; Rust and Moorman, 1999; Srivastava, Tassaduq and Fahey, 1999). In 2005 similar issues were visited in a series of JoM essays that, again, progressed a view that marketing should move beyond tactical roots and adopt a more complex, strategy-defining role (e.g. Brown, 2005; Sheth and Sisodia, 2005; Webster, 2005). More recently Rust (2006) demanded that marketing should look to occupy a more substantial position within the organization; that it should adopt a more mature and confident approach - coincidently more at ease both with itself and its operational context.

All articles were characterized by a degree of unease, suggesting that - without action - marketing was in danger of being marginalized: of failing to see, and feature in, the bigger picture. Similar bursts of angst have been noticeable, too, in the UK literature. Rudd and Morgan's (2003) editorial to the September special edition of the Journal of Strategic Marketing and, more recently, Mattsson, Ramaseshan and Carson's (2006) call for marketing to 'reclaim corporate strategy', both evidenced marketing's apparent reluctance - or inability - to claim a place at the heart of the organization. In all of these contributions there exists a sense that marketing has failed to overcome its mid-life crisis (e.g. Brown, 1995; Brady and Davis, 1993; Wilson and McDonald, 1994) and - as marketing now concludes its three-score years and ten (Rust, 2006) - there is perhaps a fear that a new, and this time potentially terminal, crisis awaits. Unless marketing grasps the strategic nettle it will, apparently, irreversibly fail to assert its potential.

We take this apparent malaise as a point of departure, and suggest its primary source may be an enemy from within. We hope, too, that our inaugural research will encourage further exploration of the attitudes and proclivities of a familiar, yet barely understood, organizational agent. And in pursuing one particular approach to fathoming the mindset of this particular entity, we also question some empiricist touchstones and offer, also, a view on recent debates concerning the development of marketing-related measures.

Marketing's role

Given the arguments above concerning marketing's failure to capitalise upon seventy years of sustained development, we perhaps first need to ask one very pertinent question: who, or what, is this apparently inert and baleful phenomenon called 'marketing'? Who, or what, is it that is failing to take the lead? The meaning of the word 'marketing' is, of course, extraordinarily diffuse, and can represent a wide range of ideas (see Figure 1., below):

Figure 1: Marketing's many meanings

1. A department, or organizational function/entity, populated by those we call 'marketers'.

2. An endeavour; something an organization engages in to facilitate its market aspirations.

3. A set of practices/techniques, often associated with the 4P 'marketing mix', plus a range of devices that collectively approximate as marketing planning, market research, segmentation, targeting and positioning.

4. An academic discipline, sustained by a substantive body of written knowledge generated and maintained by those who research and teach 'marketing'.

5. A concept, one that differentiates 'marketing' from 'selling', and that focuses on 'pull' from the customer, rather than 'push' from the organization.

6. A manifestation, primarily perceived by non- marketers, as method (advertising, direct mail, etc.) or philosophy (variously interpreted as persuasion, exploitation, or information).

7. A discourse, concerned primarily with the notions of materialism, consumerism and conspicuous display.

Perhaps most of the literary references to marketing are implicit and demand an intuitive response; one that attaches common meaning embracing much of the diversity detailed in Figure 1, above. Closer analysis, though, shows this is not always the case. Holbrook and Hulbert's (2002) elegy on the death of marketing, for example, quite clearly pertains to item 3; Brown's (1995) take on marketing's mid-life crisis is essentially about item 5; Woodall (2004) talks principally of item 2, whilst Abela (2006) and Wang and Wallendorf (2006) are concerned with the social implications of marketing and bring to mind items 6 and/or 7. As with many other contributions, however, Mattson, Rameseshan and Carson's (2006) notion of marketing as Grand Strategy demands a combined perspective - with philosophy, function and community of practice all at one, collectively in tune with a common sense of endeavour.

For marketing (as a collective entity) to a assert itself as a credible, positive and convincing force, however, it must first sharpen-up its brand image, and ensure that all aspects serve to support its aspirational base; for beyond its immediate adherents, marketing is seen in less than wholesome terms. Sheth and Sisodia (2005), for example, report on recent research suggesting 62% of consumers have a negative attitude toward marketing, and that only 10% are prepared to articulate positively on its merits. In respect of marketing's relationship with the market there exists, according to Singhapakdi *et al* (1999) an 'ethics gap'; a gap that represents the difference between behaviour that consumers think is acceptable and that which marketers appear to accept as appropriate. Babin, Boles and Robin (2001, p. 349), for example, speak of marketing environments as places *"... where implicit trusts are confronted and are either kept or breached"* – and where, often, the consumer views marketing with cynicism (Dobscha, 1998; Moorman, 1998), ambivalence (O'Donohoe, 2001) or scepticism (Tan, 2004).

The problem is, of course, that marketing is more frequently associated with indulgence and greed than with customer satisfaction, its purported *raison d'etre*; and is frequently seen to be feeding, and feeding off, associated and essentially human weaknesses. Marketing, objectified largely in terms of item 7 above, is perceived as a perpetrator, rather than facilitator, and it is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that *"… there is a lack of respect within the corporation and a lack of trust by consumers. Taken together, these two major deficiencies have placed marketing in society's doghouse as a shallow, wasteful, and polluting influence."* (Sheth and Sisodia, 2005, p. 160). Despite evidence of the marketer's apparent value to the organisation (e.g. Weinzimmer, *et* al, 2003) what chance, then, a place at the heart of the organization - with an opportunity to seize and influence the strategic imperative?

Marketing and the marketer

But who, or what, is at fault? Certainly perceived as a concept, a profession, and an academic discipline marketing has the dual interests of both customer and firm at heart, and its role as a unifier of corporate interest and activity is beyond doubt. But to what extent do marketing *practitioners* agree with such virtuous aims? To what extent do they believe in marketing as a means of serving, as opposed to duping, the customer? Would they agree with Arizona State's Stephen Brown who suggests marketing should be 'strategic management, operations, supply chain management, human resources and finance'? (Brown, S. W., 2005). Or are they, as Woodall (2004) hypothesises, still essentially 'hard-wired to the hard-sell'? Palmer and Ponsonby (2002) suggested that despite a plethora of new marketing manifestos, marketing on the ground is pretty much still the way it has always been, whilst much of the recent output from Ulster's Stephen Brown (from Brown, S. 1999, through to Brown, S. 2005) essentially reasserts – rightly or wrongly - stereotypical marketing characteristics and behaviours.

A few articles have sought to evaluate the way that practitioners either a) perceive their role, or b) understand the expectations placed upon them by either society or the organization. These include Clark (2000), who investigated how marketing managers judged the performance of strategies and tactics they employed, and Ardley (2005) who recently reported upon perceptions of marketing manager decision making. Rudd and Morgan (2003, p. 162) described work by the PA Consulting group that investigated marketers' perspectives on their own, and colleagues', role within the organization, whilst Nicole Coviello and colleagues have reported extensively on marketers' views on marketing practice in a range of international contexts (e.g. Coviello, *et al*, 2002); Brady and Palmer (2004), too, have undertaken similar work in Ireland.

Most studies reported similar findings; that marketers are generally resistant to change, both in terms of practice and their role within the firm. According to Rudd and Morgan (2003, p. 162), marketers are *"comfortable on their own turf – doing what marketers have always done, within their functional boundary."* These isolated examples provide some insight into the way that practitioners feel and behave, yet the marketing academy often appears to assume, or perhaps to hope, that *its* aspirations are always aligned with those of the marketer at large.

Exploring marketer attitudes

Clearly, there is more than a suggestion that the ideas and attitudes of practicing marketers are somewhat different to those that the academy would prefer them to be. Yet we know little about what marketers actually think about customers; or how marketers might react to the suggestion that they are 'just' the full-time component of a much wider marketing constituency; or how they feel about interfunctional co-ordination and the organization-wide dissemination of the marketing

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intelligence they have collected. In short, we have no real idea of the extent to which marketers, themselves, are market oriented.

The marketing canon tells us that the marketing project, primarily operationalised through the achievement of market orientation (MO), can be of substantial benefit to organizations (Kirca, Jayachandran and Bearden, 2005; Ellis, 2006). The literature, though, from Narver and Slater, and Kohli and Jaworski (1990 both – the start, according to Foley and Fahy, 2004, of 'true' market orientation debate) onwards, focuses almost entirely upon MO as a phenomenon conceptualized from the aggregate, or organizational, perspective. This literature is substantial; but investigation of a random, recent, sample covering a wide range of contexts (Bathgate, *et al*, 2006; Chatzipanagiotou, Vassilikopoulou and Siomkos (2008); Dwairi, Bhuian and Jurkus, 2007; Kolar, 2006; Macedo and Pinho, 2006) demonstrates a continuing reliance on founding MKTOR (Narver and Slater, 1990) and MARKOR (Kholi, Jaworski and Kumar, 1993) models of measurement, both of which focus on the firm, as a whole.

The bulk of the MO literature, therefore, seeks to model the extent to which *the organization* accepts, endorses and operationalises the marketing concept. Although never stated, this approach presumes that marketers are invariably 'on message' and that failure to adopt/adapt is most likely a result of 'dysfunctional conflict' (Maltz and Kholi, 2000) instigated by those within, for example, finance, R&D and operations. Interestingly, as far back as 1984, it was noted by Mitchell and Agenmonmen (p. 63) that *"attitudes of marketing academicians and practitioners are key agents in the adoption and implementation of the marketing concept philosophy"* yet this assumption has neither been challenged nor tested to any substantial degree (though see Dailey and Kim, 2001, and Best, 2000, for perspectives on 'Marketing IQ').

Beyond market orientation

Perhaps, though, the literature concerning similar, but different, orientations might reveal further insight into how marketers perceive their role and purpose. One potential candidate is Customer Orientation (CO), considered by Deshpandé, Farley and Webster (1993), to be either explicitly or implicitly 'synonymous' with market orientation. The literature concerning CO is more balanced than that relating to MO and embraces both aggregate *and* individual level perspectives.

For the former, work by Deshpandé, Farley and Webster (1993) is the point of departure. Their particular version of CO was contained within a multi-scale instrument designed also to measure innovativeness and corporate culture, and a number of other researchers, since, have taken CO as being similarly integral to a market oriented approach to doing business. Egan and Shipley (1995), Luo and Seyedian (2004), and Rindfleisch and Moorman (2003) all contain scales that either use, or are influenced by, statements, characteristics or criteria that effectively measure organisational 'orientation to the market' (Halliday, 2002) - but as seen from *outside* the firm. In this respect CO is frequently represented as a 'mirror' of MO (Andreasson, 1994) and, clearly, takes no account of the views of marketers. Individual perspectives on CO are primarily associated with the work of Saxe and Weitz (1982). Since its inception their SOCO scale has been the subject of substantial psychometric improvement (Michaels and Day, 1985; Thomas, Soutar and Ryan, 2001) and also domain extension (e.g. Boles, *et al,* 2001; Tadepalli, 1995). Other researchers have undertaken empirical work that uses just (Hoffman and Kelly, 1994) or mostly (Brady and Cronin, 2001) the 'positive'/'customer orientation' half of the battery, whilst others (Donavan, Brown and Mowen, 2004; Hajjat, 2002) have developed new scales that use SOCO as a frame of reference.

Generally, however, such measures are applied either to service workers (Brown, *et al*, 2002; Liu and Chen, 2006) or salespeople (e.g. Franke and Park, 2005; Harris, Mowen and Brown, 2005) and, occasionally, scales have been used in conjunction with MO-influenced metrics to help determine the influence of aggregate organizational orientations upon those of individuals (Kelley, 1992; Siguaw, Brown and Widing, 1994). Although individuals assessed can, broadly, be categorized as marketers, these are largely customer-facing personnel (or 'part-time' marketers; Gummeson, 1991) and not those who market strategically, or 'full-time'.

This is similarly the case with the only other frequently evaluated, synonymous tendency, Service Orientation (SO). Also more clearly associated with the part-time rather than full-time marketer individual-level SO is, anyhow, considered to be a behaviour rather than a personal trait or attitude (Donavan, Brown, Mowen, 2004). Hogan, Hogan and Bush (1984) consider SO to be a 'behavioural syndrome' equated to, or associated with, particular personality characteristics. Other SO scales (e.g. Cran, 1994; Frei and McDaniel, 1998; Carraher, *et al,* 1998) are similarly based upon the assumption that specific individual tendencies can be associated with 'appropriate' service work/worker behaviour. Exceptionally, Susskind, Kaemar and Borchgrevink (2003) assess SO as an attitude but, as with other associated studies, the 'marketers' concerned are not decision-makers.

Aggregate level measures are generally used to determine whether employees and/or customers believe a specific organization has adopted appropriate service-related policies. The SERV*OR scale developed by Lytle, Hom and Mokwa, 1998, has been used in various contexts (see also Lyn, Lytle and Bobek, 2000; Lytle and Timmerman, 2006) and by Saura, *et al*, (2005), in

association with other scales, including one for CO. Similar scales (e.g. Homberg, Hoyer and

Fassnacht, 2002; Schneider, White and Paul, 1998; Wright, Pearce and Busbin, 1997) have used

SO construct derivations as a means of gaining insights into aspects of business strategy, culture

and/or climate – but always as it applies to the organization as a whole; and never to marketing as

a specific community of practice.

There are myriad other analagous orientations within the literature (consumer orientation -

Sanchez and Fuentes, 2002; customer service orientation - Wright, Pearce and Busbin, 1997;

public relations orientation - Black and Härtel, 2002; quality orientation - Mohr-Jackson, 1998;

societal orientation – Liao, Foreman and Sargeant, 2001; service firm marketing-culture –

Webster, 1993) but none attempt to capture the attitudes of the practicing 'full-time' marketer.

Introducing Defensive Marketing Orientation (DMO)

The key objective of this paper is to redress the relative lack of research into 'full-time' marketer

attitudes and to encourage some further research into a little understood/explored domain. The

medium chosen for undertaking this work is a construct termed 'defensive marketing orientation'

(DMO), the genesis of which can be found in Woodall (2004). Here it was argued that marketing

activity, in its broadest sense (see item 2 in Figure 1), can be conceptualized as a binary

phenomenon having both a 'defensive' and an 'offensive' aspect.

Although already employed within the marketing literature, the terms offensive and defensive

marketing are used differently here. They are selected primarily for their inherent syntaxical

ambiguity, a choice that draws upon Fromm's (1949) notion that all orientations have

contrasting, and potentially contrary, elements. Thus, although often applied in the context of

customer acquisition (Rust, Zahorik and Keiningham, 1996) the term 'offensive' can more literally be seen to have two meanings; one synonymous with the words distasteful or unpleasant - and thus highly relevant to Sheth and Sisodia's (2005) description of marketing as a 'polluting' influence – and the other suggestive of competitive and/or proactive behaviour, as exemplified by Hugh Davidson's work (Davidson, 1972; Davidson, 1997; Keegan, Davidson and Brill, 2005). Thus the term 'offensive' serves to conjoin both aspirational and contestable elements inherent to one particular style of marketing - one normally associated with the 'full-time' marketer.

The term 'defensive' is conventionally applied within the context of customer retention (Rust, Zahorik and Keiningham, 1996; Fornell and Wernerfelt, 1987) but also, more literally, implies the building a tactical fortress against the acquisitive mores of the competition (Hauser and Shugan, 1983; Kumar and Sudharshan, 1988). Again, though, a literal interpretation of the term 'defensive' might imply a certain diffidence, or lack of marketing-like 'chutzpah', that the more aggressive full-time marketer might wish to avoid. Essentially, defensive marketing is the domain of the 'part-time' marketer, and suggests the notion of quietly, but effectively, marketing through the medium of product and/or service performance, with the overall intention of both retaining *and* winning customers.

Thus, 'offensive marketing' preferences those satisfaction-related practices that relate to identifying goods and services the customer might want, and of facilitating/promoting their availability; whilst 'defensive marketing' is concerned with satisfaction-related practices employed in the broad-scale delivery of those goods and services. This latter, coincidentally, is conceptualised also as concerning organizational behaviours/attitudes related, for example, to

governance or the environment, which – though not necessarily directed by the marketing

department - can also have a substantial impact on consumer behaviour.

Figure 2   Definitions of Offensive and Defensive marketing

Operational definitions:

❑ **'offensive' marketing**: Any activity or effect that serves to move the customer closer to, or further away, from purchase or repurchase, and which stems from purposeful endeavour primarily related to product promotion, pricing, placement and targeting, and the determination of product attributes.

❑ **'defensive' marketing**: Any activity or effect that serves to move the customer closer to, or further away, from purchase or repurchase, and which stems from product realisation, product consumption, or the customer's perception of organisational behaviour.

Aesthetic definitions:

❑ **'offensive' marketing**: Marketing with disdain; marketing for marketing's sake; marketing in an essentially exploitative and cynical manner.

❑ **'defensive' marketing**: Marketing with humility; marketing with an overriding sense of responsibility for society; marketing with probity

Note 1 – 'Product' is a generic term that represents both goods and services and any combination thereof.

Note 2 – For not-for-profit/social 'products', either commitment, engagement, or funding should be considered equivalent to the term 'purchase'.

Defensive marketing, therefore, relates more to performance, whereas offensive marketing

focuses on persuasion. This might also be conceptualized as promise-keeping versus promise

making (see, also, Grönroos, 2006); and, as evidenced in Figure 2, above, each might be

interpreted as having both operational and aesthetic aspects – with operational definitions

providing an objective perspective on practice-based issues, but aesthetic definitions profiling the

more negative interpretations of both categories, couched in terms that proponents of each might

use to characterise the weaknesses of the other. Clearly, these latter can be seen to apply over a

continuum, though, such that both 'disdain' (an offensive characteristic) and 'probity' (a defensive characteristic) could be either non-existent or absolute.

Given that marketing is a constantly evolving phenomenon, and that recent emphases on marketing ethics (Brinkman, 2002; Carrigan, Marinova and Smizgin, 2005; Nairn and Berthon, 2003); service-dominant logic (Lusch and Vargo, 2006; Grönroos, 2007; Vargo and Lusch, 2004); new demands for organizational responsiveness (Holbrook and Hulbert, 2002; Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Malhotra, 2002); 'meridian' marketing (Carù and Cova, 2003; Cova, 2005); trust (Ball, 2004; Deepak, Singh and Sebal, 2002; Winch and Joyce, 2005) and the value-defining potential of front-line staff (Berry, 1999; De Chernatony, Drury and Segal-Horn, 2004) – all, essentially, defensive phenomena - it seemed appropriate to attempt to test how those who might normally be construed as being vocationally aligned to 'offensive' activity (the 'full-time' marketer) might view this developing domain. And given that other analogous orientations have been conceptualized and evaluated primarily through attitude measures, we suggest that the development of a Defensive Marketing Orientation (DMO) instrument will provide a useful addition to the marketing researcher's armoury.

Methodological discussion

Most authors advising on structural approaches to attitude/orientation measurement (e.g. Churchill, 1979; DeVellis, 2003; Hinkin, 1998; Oppenheim, 1992) recommend a linear, two-phase scale development process. Phase one consists of mapping the conceptual domain, generation of a representative item pool, purification of the item pool to establish content validity, item scaling, and then initial questionnaire administration (followed by analysis of outcomes) focused coincidentally on construct validity, scale reliability and scale parsimony. A

second phase, concerned mainly with other aspects of validity (criterion, convergent, discriminant) represents the next rational step for the building of robust scales. Key characteristics of this approach are the use of factoring techniques designed to help achieve both 'simple' structure (minimal cross loading) and high levels of inter-item reliability - usually characterized by Cronbach's Alpha in excess of 0.7 (Peterson, 1994). Such instruments are based upon the principle of unidimensionality and indicators are considered to be reflective of the primary construct.

Others, though (for an overview, see Diamantopoulos, Riefler and Roth, 2008) have acknowledged that measurement can also be achieved via the development of an index, an instrument characterized by a formative, rather than a reflective structure. A number of recent contributions to the literature have bought about the rehabilitation of the index, and two particular papers have proved especially influential; the first (Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer, 2001) focusing on index development and validation via a recommended 'MIMIC' methodology, and the second (Jarvis, McKenzie and Podsakoff, 2003) providing clarification on how reflective and formative structures differ. This literature has caused researchers to re-evaluate their approach to the measurement of key marketing metrics, and consideration as to whether a construct should be either scale or index has now begun to assume axiomatic status, with the latter now gaining substantially in credibility (e.g. Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2006; Coltman, 2008).

There has, however, been little written about which of the two approaches might be best, or preferred, for a given application. A number of recent papers have sought to establish that structures that have previously only been evaluated via scales should, in reality, be considered to be either fully, or partly, formative constructs (e.g. consumer value, Lin, Sher and Shih, 2005;

corporate reputation, Helm, 2005; service value, Ruiz, *et al*, 2008; brand trust, Fuan, *et al*, 2008). That is, they have sought to suggest that particular theory is (or isn't) formative (or reflective) and, undoubtedly, this re-evaluation of extant knowledge will continue apace.

Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer (2001), and Diamantopoulos and Siguaw (2006), suggest decisions must be made at the very outset regarding which of the two types of measuring instrument is to be pursued. If, on the one hand, low collinearity is preferred, then items must – from the beginning - be entirely dissimilar, whilst, on the other hand, high inter-item reliability is only likely to be achieved if similarity is built in. In both cases – for indexes and scales, respectively – however, this can lead to the imposition of potentially constraining preliminary assumptions, with measures becoming self-fulfilling prophecies reinforced, inevitably, through the methods followed; either (usually confirmatory) factoring for scales or, perhaps, the MIMIC model for indexes.

Opportunistic statistics?

In this paper, though, rather than attempting either to build a scale or construct an index, we have sought to develop a measure based on ideas that *represent* (rather than reflect or form) a particular construct - and to allow, rather than oblige, a construct to emerge. We note that in recent years applications of factor analysis (for developing marketing measures) have been primarily employed for confirming, rather than developing, theory - with highest possible Alphas a presumed imperative. In this paper, though, we recognize, a) that the purpose of factor analysis is, effectively, to identify dormant variables that are found via the statistical coalescence of numbers that represent the reactions of responding subjects who are faced with a range of suggested dilemmas and, b) that the possibility of responding subjects reacting in a way that is

contrary to researchers' expectations should not be considered either unexpected or problematic. Factor analysis can offer a fascinating insight into the way that research subjects think about, and connect, the dilemmas that confront them; and in the same way that the analysis of qualitative data is often most effectively achieved through the search for *in vivo,* as well as *a priori,* codes, a similarly interpretive/inductive approach is equally appropriate for 'making sense' of quantitative data.   As a consequence, we have taken exploratory principal components factor analysis as our preferred method of analysis.

Mapping the conceptual domain

Churchill (1979, p. 67) encourages researchers to conduct a *"thorough review of literature in which the variable is used"* to ensure that conceptual domains are specified through the synthesis of what is already known. The defensive marketing construct used in this paper, however, represents a personalized perspective on the nature of marketing and, consequently, has no clear provenance. The authors' view *does* take account of extant perspectives, but combines these with other performance/persuasion-related elements explored in Woodall (2004). Domain content, therefore, is considered to be neither entirely 'out there' (Rorty, 1989), nor fixed within a coherent linguistic realm (Teas and Palan, 1997).   Rather, it is an internalized construct derived from a revised perspective on the semantic domain (Pole and Lampard, 2002) and from the researchers' own socially constructed view (Palmer and Ponsonby, 2002) on what marketing should, or could, be.   This phenomenon has a *prima facie* association with the orientations considered earlier in this paper, but any verifiable relationship is neither claimed nor sought.

Novack, the father of 'concept mapping', suggests that *"Meaningful learning involves the assimilation of new concepts and propositions into existing cognitive structures."* (Plotnick,

1997) and, essentially, the authors' attempt to re-fix the notions of defensive/offensive marketing substantially aligns with this view. Recommended techniques for developing new ideas are manifold, and – in addition to forensically analyzing the literature - introspective practices such as mindmapping (Wycoff, 1991) and individual brainstorming (Camacho and Paulus, 1995) have been shown to be effective. Using relevant techniques, therefore, it was provisionally determined that an individual marketer's defensive orientation could be evaluated by determining his/her attitude in respect of ….

a)   … the importance of both goods and service quality (Quality);

b)   … the value/role of 'part-time' marketers (Part-time)

c)   … the role of corporate reputation (Reputation)

d)   … approaches to the practice of marketing (Marketing)

e)   … customer centricity (Customers)

f)   … internal operational/support functions (Support)

g)   … the role of service, generally, as a marketing imperative (Service)

These were consequently hypothesized as key variables underpinning a personally revised perspective on defensive marketing. These were considered to be neither formative *nor* reflective of the overall construct, a view based upon the assumption that there is a circular and mutually-reinforcing relationship between marketing and the business/social environment it inhabits.

Following Oppenheim's (1992) suggestion that an initial item pool of 'several dozen' attitude statements should be generated, 104 items, both negatively and positively worded were developed. Some of these were influenced by statements contained within instruments discussed

earlier, and we especially acknowledge Black and Härtel, 2002; Dailey and Kim, 2001; Deshpande, Farley and Webster, 1993; Hajjat, 2002; Lytle, Hom and Mokwa, 1998; Narver and Slater, 1990; Sanzo, *et al*, 2003; Susskind, Kaemar and Borchgrevink, 2003, and Webster, 1993. Other key influences included outcomes of the authors' prior, qualitative, research within the marketer community.

Following item editing - a process used to filter out redundant, excessively duplicated or poorly worded items - 39 items and one dimension (Service) were discarded; and although symmetry of positively and negatively worded items had not been an initial objective, the edit did result in a relatively evenly balanced selection, both across the item pool and within dimensions.

Establishing content adequacy

Schriesheim, *et al* (1993) suggest there is no ideal mechanism for determining content adequacy, but expert evaluation is commonly used in the context of marketing-related measures (e.g. Donavan, Brown and Mowen, 2004; Lado, Mahdeau-Olivares, and Rivera, 1998; Sanzo, *et al*, 2003). For the DMO study this was facilitated by providing author-generated descriptions of both the construct as a whole, and of contributing dimensions. An expert panel was asked to review all surviving items in the context of the given descriptions, and to provide, 1) a score on a 1-5 Likert scale identifying the extent to which dimensions represented the conceptual domain, and 2) a view as to item-to-dimension fit. Decision rules were that any dimension with a mean score of four or more, and all items attached to a specific dimension by a majority of reviewers, should be retained.

Evaluating construct validity

The surviving 49 items were then randomly organized as a questionnaire, with a five-point Likert scale universally applied. Foster (1998) advises that for exploratory research a minimum item-to-response (or variables-to-subjects) factor of two, and a minimum absolute response number of 100, defines a suitable sample size. Kline (1998) similarly provides support for a 1:2 ratio, but suggests, too, a dimension-to-subject ratio of 1:20. Given both the nature of the item pool (49 items; six dimensions) and that the research was exploratory, a sample size of approximately 120 was considered to be adequate. Programme leaders at 19 Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) accredited examination centres were approached to submit questionnaires to programme delegates and, ultimately, submissions from 109 practising marketers were accumulated.

Following an intermediate 'cleansing' stage, where the item pool was reduced to 41 by rejecting items providing little or no discriminatory value, exploratory factor analysis was applied, but with no pre-determined notion of how many factors should emerge. Neiderman (1999), quoting Spector, reveals that a researcher might *"rotate several different number of factors and rely on the meaningfulness of the interpretation to decide on the number of factors".* Initial evaluation of results was based upon suggestions that factor loading should ideally be above 0.4 (Hinkin, 1998); that cross-loadings should ideally be less than half the principal loading (Hinkin, 1995); and that selected loadings be positive.

Analysis failed to support the original six dimension structure, but through application of the above criteria (adjusted subsequently to also acknowledge loading 'gaps' between opposing components 2 and 3 for items 2c. and 2d.) an encouraging three factor, 16-item, solution emerged (see Table 1).

Table 1: The Defensive Marketing Orientation (DMO) construct and results

Factor label/items	Factor Loadings			Descriptives	
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Mean	SD
1. Marketing Acknowledgement (Component 1)				**3.48**	**1.11**
a. The training of front-line employees should be an item on the Marketing Department's budget.	**0.53**			3.31	1.18
b. The values of a company/brand are represented primarily through the actions of its front-line employees.	**0.67**		0.13	3.72	1.01
c. Front-line employees know more about what the customer wants than do members of the Marketing Department.	**0.53**			3.17	1.04
d. Front-line employees are full-time members of the Marketing team	**0.56**	0.10	0.13	3.75	1.08
2. Marketing Expedience (Component 2)				**3.62**	**0.98**
a. When it comes to winning customers the end always justifies the means		**0.51**		3.47	0.92
b. Quality of goods and services is fine provided it doesn't get in the way of a good idea	0.18	**0.58**		3.63	0.90
c. Corporate social responsibility is fine if it can be shown to improve the bottom-line but a waste of time if it can't.	0.11	**0.32**	-0.16	3.83	0.86
d. Reputation helps, but advertising is the key to increased sales.	0.28	**0.37**	-0.14	3.41	1.00
e. As we know more about what is possible than the customer, it is our job to tell customers what they want.	-0.20	**0.62**	--0.17	3.48	1.00
f. Marketing is a clearly defined discipline that is distinct from any other in the organisation.		**0.51**	0.11	3.87	1.08
3. Marketing Idealism (Component 3)				**3.47**	**1.07**
a. Marketing practice must be ethically and morally beyond question.			**0.69**	3.90	0.88
b. Marketers should always tell customers the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth		-0.18	**0.65**	3.58	1.07
c. Providing better service is a greater priority than providing more service		0.19	**0.41**	3.97	0.97
d. Before any new product is introduced Marketing should always ensure that Operations are happy to produce/deliver it			**0.40**	3.84	1.12
e. As a marketer, I should always sacrifice short-term advantage for long-term benefits		-.033	**0.58**	2.99	0.97
f. The customers' interests should always come first, ahead of management's.	0.15	0.12	**0.40**	3.34	1.07
Aggregate score, Defensive Marketing Orientation				**3.58**	**1.18**

Factor 1 has been named 'Acknowledgement' (see Table 1.) and measures the extent to which

marketers are prepared to cede marketing responsibility to those working outside the marketing

department (see definition 1, Figure 1). It gauges indirectly, also, the degree to which the

marketer believes marketing to be a company-wide endeavour (see definitions 2. and 5.). All

items are positively oriented and all emanate from the pre-considered dimension 'Part-time'. A

comparison of factor characteristics to Table 1 of Jarvis, MacKenzie and Podsakoff, 2003 (p.

203:'Decision rules for determining whether a construct is formative or reflective') and a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.62 suggest a 'reflective' structure mode. Clearly, inter-item correlation is less than desired, but is slightly better than the 0.5/0.6 suggested by Churchill as appropriate for 'early-stage' research (Peterson, 1994). Had a 'scale' have been a pre-ordained outcome, a more analogical character would have been built into relevant items.

Factor 1 has been named 'Expedience'. Items are all negatively oriented but do not emanate from one, individual, pre-considered dimension. They are, though, all associated via disdain for the prejudicial, long-term, repercussions of pragmatic/expedient marketing behaviours. Collectively, the items in, and orientation of, this factor are redolent of a cavalier approach to business that marketers might adopt; and this, consequently, fits well with an *aesthetic* notion of offensive marketing (see Figure 2, earlier). Cronbach's alpha is just 0.43, but low inter-item collinearity (a maximum Variance Inflation Factor – VIF - reading of well below 10, a virtue for an index - Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer, 2001) conjoin with other characteristics to suggest a formative structure (again, see Table 1, Jarvis, MacKenzie and Podsakoff, 2003, p. 203). Items are variously derived from 'reputation', 'quality', 'marketing' and 'customers' dimensions.

Component 3 has similar formative characteristics to dimension 2 (plus low Alpha, 0.38, and VIF below 10) and also comprises items derived from a range of pre-considered dimensions – this time 'marketing', 'quality' and 'support'. All items are positively oriented and attributionally are the opposite of factor 1. This factor has been named 'Idealism', and suggests a way of thinking that aligns well with an aesthetic characterisation of defensive marketing (see Figure 2). Items in this particular battery all imply an aspirational approach to doing business; one, though, that might be considered, *in extremis,* to be overly cautious/constraining.

Discussion and results

Structurally, the instrument has substantial intuitive appeal. Clearly, it contains one factor (Idealism), that strongly represents the authors' underlying sense of what it means to market 'defensively'. And, also, the antithesis of this – offensive marketing – is clearly embodied in the Expedience factor. In this respect the instrument is not dissimilar to Saxe and Weitz's (1982) SOCO measure, where both customer- and sales-orientation scales are used to measure contrasting aspects of a perceived phenomenon. In addition, though, for DMO there is a third measure, one that addresses marketers' beliefs about those at the heart of defensive marketing – part-time marketers. What has emerged, therefore, is a measure that integrates/evaluates the relative weights of contrasting *aesthetic* marketer perspectives, whilst, coincidentally, considering the marketers attitude' in respect of perhaps the most important *operational* component of defensive marketing; and all within a relatively, parsimonious 16 item construct. Scoring direction is such that higher values imply a defensive orientation; lower values an offensive orientation.

Collectively, the instrument straddles Type II and Type IV factor specifications (Jarvis, MacKenzie and Podsakoff, 2003) with a formative second-order, and reflective/formative first-order structure. The authors can think of no reason why such a structure should not exist, and the methodology adopted allows such a possibility to occur. It is, though, understood that some might judge this combined scale/index interpretation "*a handy excuse for low internal consistency*" (Bollen and Lennox, in Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer, 2001, p.274; Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2006, p274) - but any such claim assumes *high* internal consistency

as an original aim, and this was not the case.   It is clear, though, that by adopting an inductive/interpretive approach to quantitative enquiry - following a path dictated by the emergence of data and structure, rather than looking to verify pre-determined ideas - we have surfaced a potentially useful and conceptually interesting arrangement that would not have emerged had we focused, at the outset, on building *either* a scale, *or* an index. And there is, anyhow, a current questioning of established and emerging empirical conventions in respect of both.   Diamontopoulos, Riefler and Roth (2008), whilst largely championing a systematic approach to index development, also acknowledge opposing claims; and the efficacy of scales, too - along with their associated 'certainties', validity and reliability - are additionally being questioned (e.g. Bergkvist and Rossiter, 2007; Borsboom, Mellenbergh and van Heerden, 2004; Rossiter, 2002).   It does not seem inappropriate, therefore, to further challenge the conventional wisdom, and an 'opportunistic' approach to the development of measures may well allow researchers to uncover and explore a wider range of measurement potential, at least at the developmental phase.

The research constituency on which we focused our investigations is relatively homogeneous. For the main part young (88% 35 and under), and all exposed – through CIM academic programmes – to the current marketing orthodoxy.   Average DMO score for the sample (3.58) implies, perhaps unsurprisingly, a rather more defensive than offensive orientation; Acknowledgement, Expedience and Idealism scores were all of a similar nature, at 3.49, 3.62 and 3.47 respectively. Our results, thus, have some explanatory merit in respect of a particular group of marketers, but we see more in the *potential* of the measure than we do in outputs based on the context of its development. We see, also, opportunities for improving the present structure/measure, but would encourage others, too, to initiate their own enquiries into the

vagaries of 'the marketer mindset'. We suggest, therefore, an agenda for further research, with items of interest as follows:

a) Measurement focused on DMO, itself, is at an early stage of development. 'Opportunistic' activity has revealed one particular construct that represents key concept principles, but others will clearly exist. To assume there is but one 'correct' solution is to assume primacy/exclusivity of both method and interpretation when, clearly, neither is true. More work on concept representation would be of substantial value whilst, of course, further testing of the present structure will be necessary to further evaluate/improve its own validity and reliability.

b) There will doubtless be different opinions on how the 'marketer mindset' might best be characterised. As explained in earlier sections of this paper, DMO is a personally derived and directed perspective on marketing imperatives, and the nature of its development acknowledges Palmer and Ponsonby's (2002) view that both research endeavour and theory are largely socially constructed. There is, in reality, no 'best' way to pursue the broad agendas explored in this paper, and other, non-DMO, perspectives – focusing on which marketer/market characteristics might be of most empirical interest - would be equally valuable.

c) Given that marketing theory changes over time, it would be interesting to determine whether marketers, themselves, similarly evolve. Anecdotal evidence suggests marketers merely adapt, and then 'revert to type' as, and when, this suits. Is marketing practice, for example, determined more by the type of individual that is attracted to the mythology of marketing, and less by the theories to which they are exposed? Further research of both a longitudinal demographic nature would help clarify the relationships between marketing and the marketer.

d) Are marketers, in particular cultures, different to their colleagues in other cultures? Extant theory is largely focused on ethics, but we know far less about – for example – how customer-centric 'full-time' marketers really are, or how they feel about their relationship with other organizational entities and/or agendas. Both nature and extent of 'marketer behaviour' research, generally, is surprisingly under-developed, and irrespective of which particular measure, or even mode of investigation (quantitative or qualitative) is utilised, we believe it important to be able to understand what drives and motivates the contemporary marketer. We are aware that the objectives of practising marketers (item 1, Figure 1) and those of marketing *academe* (item 4, Figure 1) are frequently mis-aligned, and without such understanding it is not possible to recommend effective solutions to perceived marketing problems.

Conclusions

Analysis of both the marketing and psychology literatures revealed that there is no existing instrument that evaluates attitudes of marketers in respect of MO or post-MO marketing concerns. Although many measures seek to determine the extent to which organisations, generally, are market, service and/or customer oriented, there is only very limited evidence of similar tests being applied to groups of marketers. Similarly, although specific categories of 'part-time marketer' (service workers and salespeople) have been the subject of orientation testing for more than twenty years, there appears to be an assumption that those who market strategically (and, coincidentally, full-time) are automatically imbued with market-oriented tendencies. There is, however, a small but substantive body of research that implies marketers are reactionary in nature, and that they prefer traditional/conventional models of marketing behaviour that appear, now, to be counter-productive in the context of 'new manifestos' and

concerns recently occurring in the literature. Our results show that fledgling marketing managers veer slightly more toward the 'defensive' than 'offensive', though this may well be a function of educational conditioning rather than innate and enduring attitude.

The DMO construct is, as far as we can determine, the only one presently mooted that might usefully be employed to interrogate/identify the attitudes of practising marketers in respect of key, contemporary marketing issues. If applied both cross-sectionally and longitudinally the construct could prove useful in evaluating differences between marketer attitudes in different industries, cultures and countries, and for monitoring changes, over time, of marketer/strategy compatibility. The research reported herein was conducted primarily to explore the operational potential of Woodall's (2004) interpretation of defensive marketing. Exploratory factor analysis was used to facilitate a jointly deductive/inductive approach to data analysis, and proved both opportunistic and effective – though further work is required. It is evident though, even at this relatively early stage of development, that no marketer scoring 'well' on a DMO measure could be accused of being entirely *"shallow, wasteful or polluting"* (Sheth and Sisodia, 2005, p. 160); and a general trend towards higher scores over succeeding years may well imply that marketing is able to find its way out of the metaphorical doghouse – assuming, of course, that organisations regard this as a desirable trajectory. And this is by no means certain, for marketing – perhaps - may always be the scapegoat that everyone loves to hate …

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