Editorial

amj – Progress and Prospects

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The Australasian Marketing Journal (amj) is a quality academic journal for scholars, educators and practitioners covering all core areas of marketing, from branding and advertising to customer relationship management and services management, and from marketing metrics and knowledge management to consumer behaviour and cross-cultural studies. It is the official journal of the Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy (ANZMAC) and is published two to three times a year. In this editorial we comment on the health of the journal today and offer some thoughts about future opportunities and challenges.

A Story of Steady Progress

Building on a history that extends back to 1993, the amj has progressed to become the leading Australasian marketing journal for researchers and educators in the region.

It prides itself on being a generalist journal in which key marketing issues are examined. A sign of this is the breadth of topics that have been featured. The most heavily represented topic over the 5 year period 2001-2005 was relationship/loyalty marketing (8 papers), followed by exporting/international marketing, social marketing, education, and methods/techniques (6 papers each), advertising, consumer behaviour and e-commerce (5 papers each), branding (4 papers), NPD/diffusion (3 papers), customer service, networks, pricing and strategy (2 papers each), and country-of-origin, culture, complaints/service recovery, and product strategy (1 paper each). Considerable impetus has been given to a number of key topics through the publication of special issues, notably: ‘Services Marketing’ edited by James Barnes, Greg Elliott and Paul Patterson [2002, 10 (1)]; ‘Social Marketing’ edited by Janet Hoek [2003, 11 (1)]; ‘Emerging Issues in Services Marketing: emotions, e-marketing and encounters’ edited by Janet McColl-Kennedy and Paul Patterson [2003, 11 (2)]; and ‘Empirical Generalisations in Marketing’ edited by Mark Uncles and Malcolm Wright [2004, 12 (3)].

The emphasis throughout has been to publish quality research. In 2001, as a visible sign of this commitment, the amj best paper prize was instigated. The editors select a shortlist of papers from the previous year, which is put to a distinguished panel to select a winner. The prize is awarded annually at the ANZMAC conference. Previous winners have been: Ian Wilkinson, ‘A History of Network and Channels Thinking in the 20th Century’ [2001, 9 (2), 23-52]; Liliana Bove and Lester Johnson, ‘Predicting Personal Loyalty to a Service Worker’ [2002, 10 (1), 24-35]; Josee Bloemer and Gary Odekerken, ‘Antecedents and Consequences of Affective Commitment’ [2003, 11 (3), 33-42]; John Scriven and Andrew Ehrenberg, ‘Consistent Responses to Price Changes’ [2004, 12 (3), 21-39; Sara Dolnicar, Roman Freitag and Melanie Randle, ‘To Segment or Not to Segment? An Investigation of Segmentation Strategy Success Under Varying Market Conditions’ [2005, 13 (1), 20-35].

The publication process is supported by a group of expert referees and a double-blind peer review process. In this the editors are greatly assisted by members of the Editorial Review Board and, in addition, they have been fortunate in the advice received from ad hoc reviewers. Not only has this resulted in constructive feedback for authors, but it also has been instrumental in keeping review times to an average of only 8.2 weeks – with 76% of manuscript reviews turned around in 6 weeks (based on figures for 1st and 2nd reviews, November 2004-November 2005). In 2002, to recognise the contribution of reviewers, the amj best reviewer prize was instigated. The editors select the recipient on the basis of the comprehensiveness of the reviews, constructiveness of feedback and response time. The award is granted at the annual ANZMAC conference. Past winners have been...

Internationally, the profile and reputation of amj is growing, assisted by on-line access and systems such as Proquest and ELMAR. In addition, the Editorial Review Board not only includes experts with Australian and New Zealand affiliations, but also lists leading researchers from China, Korea, Netherlands, Singapore, Thailand, UK and USA. It remains the case that the majority of authors have an Australian or New Zealand affiliation – 59% and 18% respectively (based on figures for 2001-2005, whereby if two authors affiliate in different countries then 0.5 is allotted to each and so on for greater numbers of authors). Nevertheless, 14% of papers are written by authors with a European affiliation, 6% with a North American affiliation, and 3% with a SE Asian affiliation.

The amj primarily exists as a vehicle for publishing peer-reviewed scholarly research, but as the journal of a professional society, ANZMAC, it also has an important role disseminating ideas on educational philosophy and practice. To this end, amj has carried articles on student learning, the barriers to deep learning in student teams, the pros and cons of journal rankings, advice for early career researchers, the writing of research theses, and related themes. More broadly, the journal is seen as a resource for researchers and educators in marketing, and carries research notes, case studies, book reviews, executive summaries, invited commentaries and editorials.

Noteworthy too is the investment made in the development of a journal web-site [accessible through ANZMAC (www.anzmac.org) or through the School of Marketing at UNSW (www.marketing.unsw.edu.au)]. All back issues from the first issue in 1993 to the present day are freely available, providing access for marketers wherever they are located in the world.

Future Prospects

Over the coming years the journal will continue to evolve and, we trust, gain in stature. Crucial to this process is the continued flow of manuscripts – these are the lifeblood of the journal. We have every confidence that quality manuscripts will continue to be submitted. Nevertheless, it would be good to see the number of desk rejections fall – since August 2000 roughly 16% of submissions have been desk-rejected because papers have not met even minimal submission requirements or because they have not fallen within the coverage of a general marketing journal. Prospective authors are advised to give their work a final polish before submission, thereby reducing the chances of desk rejection, minimising the number of revision cycles and increasing the chances of eventual publication.

A challenge will be to continue to raise the profile and reputation of the journal. On-line access has been of immense importance, and this has seen a growth in citations to articles published in the journal. But more can and should be done in this regard. One avenue for achieving this is to build on the evident success of our professional society, ANZMAC. The journal provides a very tangible benefit to members – it is a means of helping members keep up to date with the latest scholarship in the region and beyond, as well as giving access to resources on educational practice, cases, commentaries and so forth. It is to be expected that these links will be strengthened.

Also we would expect to see the journal reaching out beyond the confines of the academic and educational communities of Australia and New Zealand. Commercially, the journal already benefits from links with marketing and marketing research organisations in Australia and New Zealand, notably its long-term association with the Australian Marketing Institute (AMI). In recent years Executive Summaries have been distributed to members of various professional associations in the region, with very positive responses. In future it may be possible to exchange and cross-link more resources, with a view to stimulating greater dialogue between the research and business communities.

Geographically, the amj has an important role to play in the Asia-Pacific region, as is already reflected in published articles focusing on Asia, the international composition of the Editorial Review Board and plans for a special issue on Marketing in China. In saying this we do no more than echo the remarks of Peter Chandler who, in the very first issue, wrote: “For a marketer, there is surely no more exciting place in the world to be than in the Asia Pacific region. For most of the countries which comprise the region, gross national product is outpacing the rest of the world and associated with this, there is rapid economic development which in turn is generating many new business opportunities. … Both marketing practitioners and marketing academics at tertiary institutions such as mine need to stay abreast of the innovative approaches which are working in the region. They also need to be better acquainted with the social, political and economic fabric of the countries
within which they operate. I hope that the amj will help them in this quest and that as a result, they will share in the excitement and rewards available during this golden age” [1993, 1 (1)]. If anything, these words are of greater significance today than they were when first uttered over a decade ago.

**Parting Thanks**

For any enterprise of this kind to succeed there must be a team of committed helpers and assistants. We have already acknowledged the importance of our ad hoc reviewers and Editorial Review Board. We also acknowledge the help and advice of the ANZMAC Executive and particularly the publications sub-committee. Production of the journal would not be possible without the financial support provided by ANZMAC members and personal and institutional subscribers, however we are indebted to the School of Marketing, University of New South Wales (UNSW), for generously providing the greatest proportion of funds. As editors, we have had the benefit of invaluable support, dedication and commitment from our Editorial Assistant, Nadia Withers, and Production Editor, Irine Kay at Bluteeetle Studio. Additional assistance in managing the web-site and distributing hardcopies has been provided by Margot Decelis and Paula Aldwell.

Our editorial predecessors, Frank Alpert and Lester Johnson, gave us charge of a thriving amj in 1999. Over the intervening five years the journal has gone from strength to strength. Now we have pleasure in wishing our successor, Richard Varey, every success for the future.

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