Journal of Services Marketing

Emerald Article: Eleven years of scholarly research in the <IT>Journal of Services Marketing</IT>
Deon Nel, Gené van Heerden, Anthony Chan, Mehdi Ghazisaeedi, Wade Halvorson, Peter Steyn

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Eleven years of scholarly research in the 
Journal of Services Marketing

Deon Nel
Flinders Business School, Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia

Gené van Heerden, Anthony Chan and Mehdi Ghazisaeedi
Division of Industrial Marketing, e-Commerce and Logistics, Lulea University of Technology, Lulea, Sweden

Wade Halvorson
UWA Business School, University of Western Australia, Crawley, Australia, and

Peter Steyn
Division of Industrial Marketing, e-Commerce and Logistics, Lulea University of Technology, Lulea, Sweden

Abstract
Purpose – The publication of papers in scholarly journals is an important channel for the dissemination of academic knowledge. Analyzing academic content provides useful insights into how services marketing evolves over a selected time frame. The purpose of this paper is to determine key trends published in the Journal of Services Marketing during the recent 11-year period from 1998 to 2008.

Design/methodology/approach – This paper presents a content analysis of the papers published in the Journal of Services Marketing during the period 1998-2008. A total of 417 papers, excluding book reviews, were analyzed. Descriptive statistics provide an overview of the research contributions.

Findings – The main finding is that most of the papers published in the Journal of Services Marketing during the recent 11-year period are research-based papers. Other findings include a trend towards co-authorship, the use of surveys and empirical data, adults as research subjects, factor analysis, structural equation modeling, and analysis of variance as the most popular statistical techniques. Based on a keyword analysis most papers are related to service quality and customer service.

Practical implications – Researchers who wish to publish in this journal can use the findings as a guideline in preparing for their submission. The study gives an overview of the types of papers published in this journal. The analysis also shows that there is no preference for a particular topic for publication which stimulates new and varied contribution from researchers.

Originality/value – This is the first content analysis conducted of the scholarly contribution to this journal that shows the trends in services research topics.

Keywords Data analysis, Serials, Customer services quality

Paper type Research paper

Introduction
This paper provides a review of the content contributed to the Journal of Services Marketing over the period 1998-2008[1]. Pasadeos et al. (1998) refer to literature investigations as the “intellectual history” of a particular discipline. More recently the intellectual history of specific journals had been documented. One specific example is the insight into contributions made to the International Journal of Advertising (West, 2007). The approach by West (2007) suggests a “reflective view” to the research contributions published in a particular journal as a useful approach. Adopting this approach, content analysis was used to analyze inputs, namely the authors and their institutions and the outputs, the nature of the papers published in the International Journal of Advertising (West, 2007).

The Journal of Services Marketing has been in existence since 1987. The benefit derived from a scholarly literature study as in this paper is that it gives insight into the various types of studies conducted in the recent past. Doing an analysis of one specific journal provides the audience with a greater understanding of the latest trends in the field of services marketing as interpreted by one of the journals within the specialization (Leong, 1989; Malhotra, 1996). A recent example of analyzing a number of journals publishing on essentially closely related scholarly content is the Seggie and Griffith (2009) paper analyzing publications in the Journal of Marketing, Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Research, and Marketing Science. The major advantage of this

An executive summary for managers and executive readers can be found at the end of this article.

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approach is the measuring of publication productivity in a range of leading journals for promotion purposes. Analyzing a single journal does not aim to solely measure author productivity, the focus is more to get a better overview of the type of paper favored by a single journal. The purpose of this paper is to determine the key trends in services marketing as published in the *Journal of Services Marketing* over the recent 11-year period, i.e. 1998-2008.

In this paper, a brief overview of previous studies based on scholarly literature conducted in the field of marketing is offered. It refers to some of the frameworks used and the contributions thereof. A short explanation of the methodology follows; referring specifically to the categories used in the coding and analysis of the papers. The next section of the paper reports the inputs (top authors, number of authors per article) and the outputs (classification of the papers; topics, sample, method and analysis of each paper; top keywords and the top keywords in a title) of the total article base excluding the book reviews. It concludes by identifying the implications for researchers and the avenues for future research for scholars.

**Literature review**

In communication, marketing, and other professional disciplines, investigations of the literature offer insights into the contributions of particular authors and specific published works. This can be used to describe a discipline’s intellectual history (Pasadeos et al., 1998). For instance, marketing research is concerned with “application of theories, problemsolving methods and techniques to the identification and solution of problems in marketing” (Malhotra, 1996). Similarly, each discipline develops focus and application.

Üsdiken and Pasadeos (1995) categorized studies of the scholarly literature into six dimensions:

1. “publishing productivity”, which is an assessment of the contributions of particular authors and institutions (Barry, 1990);
2. “comprehensive reviews”, which establishes heuristics or paradigms based on the conclusions reached from a large number of studies on a particular topic (Arndt, 1986);
3. “meta-analyses” utilize data based conclusions on the findings from multiple studies (Crouch, 1996);
4. “methodological investigations” focus on the research methods used across a number of studies within the same topic or in the same discipline (Kolbe and Burnett, 1991; Pitt et al., 2005; Van der Merwe et al., 2007);
5. “specific journal” investigations provide an in-depth review of one or more publications (Leong, 1989; Malhotra, 1996); and
6. “citation analyses” were more concerned with the references/footnotes listed in papers (Baumgartner and Pieters, 2003) and co-citation networks (Pasadeos et al., 1998).

A ten-year content analysis of advertising research trends for the years 1976 through 1985 was conducted by Yale and Gilly (1988), as was a major review of research in general services marketing by Fisk et al. (1993). Tripp (1997) offered a systematic, conceptual review of most services advertising articles published in journals and proceedings for over 15 years.

The services marketing literature is driven by a rapidly growing population of services marketing scholars and the loose-knit system of publication outlets that has emerged to publish their works (Brown et al., 1994). Fisk et al. (1993) divided services marketing literature into three evolutionary stages:

1. “crawling out stage” (1953-1980);
2. “scurrying about stage” (1980-1985); and
3. “walking erect stage” (1986-present).

The literature grew rapidly with new books, journal publications, conference proceedings, and dissertations dealing with services marketing issues during the “walking erect” stage (Brown et al., 1994). This growth accelerated with an increase of general services marketing publications in the top academic marketing journals. The *Journal of Marketing* has published between one and three services marketing papers each year since 1987 (compared to a total of four between 1980 and 1985). The *Journal of Marketing* has been the primary outlet for academic services marketing research among the field’s top journals. Several other service-related journals have been launched since the *Journal of Services Marketing* first published in 1987. The aim of the *Journal of Services Marketing* is to publish articles that enrich the practice of services marketing while simultaneously making significant contributions to the advancement of the discipline. The *Journal of Services Marketing* has earned a position of quality impact in services marketing and that warrants an analysis of the contribution made by the journal and its authors in recent years. Reviewing some important journal citation indices, as depicted in Table I, provides evidence of the impact the *Journal of Services Marketing* has had. A detailed discussion on the interpretation of these citation metrics can be viewed at www.harzing.com/pop.htm. Judging by these metrics the *Journal of Services Marketing* has done very well.

This paper follows the methodology used by West (2007) for the analysis of the *International Journal of Advertising*. Multiple input and output dimensions are used that offer a high level overview of the mixture of publishing productivity, a comprehensive review of the past 11 years of publication, and the methodological procedures favored by the *Journal of Services Marketing* authors. Other scholars have preferred to use a more one-dimensional approach such as the Pasadeos et al. (1998) bibliometric study of advertising literature that identified the most-cited writers, most-cited published works, and co-citation networks. For the purposes of presenting publication activity in this review of the *Journal of Services Marketing*, the West (2007) framework was preferred, because it provided a broader view of publication trends.

**Methodology**

A content analysis of 11 year’s articles in the *Journal of Services Marketing* was conducted. All articles from 1998-2008 were analyzed. According to West’s (2007) article an objective content analysis is possible when most of the variables do not require judgmental coding. This study used the objective approach as used by West (2007) because multiple researchers following the same procedures on the same data will reach similar conclusions (Kassarjian, 1977). True objective content analysis is only possible using computer-based content analysis dictionaries (Ryan and
Bernard, 2000), but using the parameters as suggested by West (2007), similar objectivity can be achieved. The parameters used for coding in this study were top publishing authors, number of authors, classification of articles, topic, sampling method and analysis. It was decided to exclude gender of the authors and location of institution since West (2007) noted a few challenges with these two aspects. In the analysis of determining the authors’ gender researchers can struggle with the ambiguity of using the first name to determine gender. The location of institution over a period of time linked to a particular author can become a source of inconsistency in recording the data. It was decided not to report on author domicile because it was not possible to record that accurately in all cases.

The sample consisted of the total number of articles published in the Journal of Services Marketing during the 11 years from 1998-2008. A total of 417 papers were used in this data analysis technique. The sheer multiplicity of the topics presented and how to categorize them was a challenge. The researchers decided not to proceed with multiple categories, because it introduced a degree of judgmental coding and that was in conflict with the goals of completing an objective content analysis as suggested by Kassarjian (1977). The most practical way forward was to enter the key parameters under investigation for each paper into a spreadsheet. A content analysis of paper titles was completed to categorize by major topic classification. The services marketing topics were classified using the framework suggested in Brown et al. (1994). Topic classification was managed in a two-stage process. Six authors were divided into two groups, consisting of three members per group. Each group completed the classification independently and each group assessment of classification was compared for consistency of review after completion. Less than ten papers required a consensus decision of how to best classify papers that could be regarded as boundary spanning in terms of topic. The topics were:

- service quality and customer satisfaction;
- service encounters and experience;
- service design and delivery;
- customer retention and relationship marketing;
- internal marketing and support services;
- service recovery;
- reverse marketing (“service provider improving relationships with suppliers and vendors to provide the final customer with higher service quality, also referred to as the value-added chain”);
- modeling and measurement (“alternative measures for understanding customer and employee satisfaction; and the popular SERVQUAL instrument refinement and alternative approaches”);
- technology infusion (“the impact of technology on the entire service industry and organizational structures and business methods demands further research”);
- customer acquisition, advertising, and communication; and
- strategy, performance, and management.

An alternative approach would be to use the categories specified on the official web site of the Journal of Services Marketing. The Journal of Services Marketing list specifies the following topics:

- customer policy and service;
- marketing of services;
- marketing planning; and
- service marketing abroad and service quality.

It was decided to use the Brown et al. (1994) categories since they incorporate most of these topics specified on the web site, and it brings a degree of independent scholarly credibility and precedence.

With the topic classification process completed as described above, two of the authors started coding the total sample of papers, according to the West (2007) guidelines in coding the sample, method and analysis. The process of classifying the papers was completed in batches of twenty, with each of the two authors coding the same twenty papers. The classification was compared and any ambiguous categorization were discussed and resolved by both authors. This process continued until the total of 417 papers published during the 11-year period was reached.

Only papers published were used to determine the key trends in services marketing published in the Journal of Services Marketing during 1998-2008. Book reviews were excluded from this study and the analysis thereof.

Findings

The findings are reported in two sections, inputs and outputs. Inputs were top authors, number of authors per article and outputs were classification of the papers; topics, sample,
method and analysis of each paper; top keywords and the top keywords in a title of the 417 articles published over the period 1998-2008.

**Inputs**

Scholars agree that an analysis of published research in a journal would be incomplete without an analysis of authors (West, 2007; Inkpen and Beamish, 1994; Malhotra, 1996). The most published authors are shown in Table II. This table summarizes the top publishing authors, indicating those with three or more publications over the period 1998-2008. The most prolific authors are lead by Anna S. Mattila, with eight publications where she was either sole author or a co-author of an article. The next four authors, Rajshekhar “Raj” G. Javalgi, Charles L. Martin, Adrian Palmer and Audhesh K. Paswan have each contributed six publications to the *Journal of Services Marketing*. A further four scholars – Spiros Gounaris, Debra Grace, Paul G. Patterson, and Jochen Wirtz, each have five articles published in the *Journal of Services Marketing*. The rest of the table refers to the authors who have published respectively four and three articles.

Table III summarizes the trend of the number of authors per article. The 11 years of articles published in the *Journal of Services Marketing* have indicated that there is an increase in number of authors per article. Malhotra (1996) mentioned whilst conducting a content analysis on the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* that there seems to be a trend away from single-author articles. In a similar case, West (2007) cited that single-authored papers appear to be in decline in favor of two- to three-authored papers. Pitt (2008) emphasizes the importance of co-authorship in publishing academic papers. He discusses the importance of establishing a social network of colleagues that both improve the quality of the research involved and, through synergies, improve author productivity while decreasing personal workload requirements. A similar trend was observed in a study of US automotive engineers where shared knowledge positively impacted product development performance (Hong et al., 2004). Academic scholarly publication seems to embrace teamwork as the days of the sole inventor makes way for multiple engineers, product designers and group based innovation. The evidence from this study suggests that advances in business/service research is analogous to product engineering and the pure sciences where multiple contributions from more than one person is required to maintain a competitive edge.

A cursory perusal of Table III illustrates that in recent years there has been a move away from single authors in articles published in the *Journal of Services Marketing*. It seems that during 1998-2008 the authors of the *Journal of Services Marketing* appreciated the advantages of co-authorship.

**Outputs**

A classification was necessary as it provides an overview of the type of papers published in the *Journal of Services Marketing*. Authors are requested to indicate what kind of papers they wrote, and this gets published with the abstract of the paper. Table IV is a summary of the total article base divided into the various categories.

In an analysis of the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Malhotra (1996) refers to the journal as a “stable and mature” journal. One of the characteristics he used as a justification is the total number of articles published per year. The number used in the Malhotra (1996) study was 35. If this is used as a measure when we refer to the *Journal of Services Marketing*, the 35 article benchmark was reached in 2001. That number gradually grew to 47 articles in 2008. Table IV shows the number of articles published in each of the different types of articles for the period 1998-2008.

From Table IV the papers published in the *Journal of Services Marketing* have a strong emphasis on research. This is followed by conceptual papers, with general review and literature review coming in at third and fourth in terms of number of these types of articles. The *Journal of Services Marketing* published papers in a wide variety of topics. On careful review we created additional categories for these emerging topics (see Table V). It should be encouraging to prospective authors that the journal welcomes a wide range of topics in the services marketing arena. “Service quality” is the number one category from 1998 to 2000. For the period 2001 to 2004 the emphasis had moved to “Customer retention and relationship marketing”. The top position for the period 2005 to 2008 shifted to “Strategy, performance, and management”. It appears research into “Customer acquisition, advertising, and communication” has seen a
Eleven years of scholarly research in JSM

Table IV  Journal of Services Marketing classification of papers per year 1998-2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total articles</th>
<th>Viewpoint</th>
<th>Case study</th>
<th>Conceptual paper</th>
<th>General review</th>
<th>Literature review</th>
<th>Research article</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

steady decline from 21 percent to 5 percent over the past 11 years. “Service encounters and experience” remains steady around 10 percent over the same period. “Technology infusion” rounds out the major categories at around 7 percent.

The majority of the articles used empirical data (68 percent between 1998 and 2000, 82 percent between 2001 and 2004, and 82 percent between 2005 and 2008). The use of non-student adults as sampling units grew from 37 percent to 46 percent while the use of managers and practitioners remains stable between 21 percent and 23 percent. The editor of the Journal of Services Marketing confirmed that some Journal of Services Marketing reviewers are categorically against “student” samples (as with other journals too). Researchers targeting the Journal of Services Marketing should take notice that the journal will lean against student samples and that any use of such samples would need to be very well justified.

While various forms of surveys were the most predominant research methods used with an average of 62.3 percent, qualitative research has been gaining popularity as it rose tenfold from 1 percent to 10 percent. The number of case studies published has also risen significantly from 3 percent to 6 percent. We observe that a significant number of researchers compliment their quantitative research with qualitative analysis.

Correlations and regressions were the most commonly used analytical techniques at the beginning of the last 11 years (27 percent). Since then, its popularity declined slightly in favor of more sophisticated analyses like confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM), which grew from 10 percent to 23 percent. The use of analyses of variance (ANOVA) and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) remained steady at 13 percent to 15 percent. Qualitative analysis has also gained in popularity as it grew from 4 percent to 13 percent.

These findings are similar to the Malhotra (1996) study in his analysis of the Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science. The findings of this study indicate that the Journal of Services Marketing criteria for publishing articles are in step with some of the major journals and articles published in the field of marketing.

To provide complementary insight into the specific topics covered in the Journal of Services Marketing, a frequency analysis of the words used in the paper keywords and paper titles were done separately. The text for each article and the paper titles were copied into separate word processor documents. That enabled the researchers to use the “find” command from the drop-down menu to count the number of times a keyword was found by the software. If a keyword was found more than once in a particular paper it was counted each time it was used. The result can be seen in Tables VI and VII. In Table VI 20 keywords accounted for a total frequency of 716. All of the irrelevant words (e.g. prepositions, etc.) were removed before the analysis. In Table VI, “the hot” services marketing topics were related to service customer satisfaction, consumer behavior, and service quality. The most frequent keywords used were customer satisfaction (95), consumer behavior (80), service quality (57) and customer services quality (39). This supports the findings in Table V where service quality and customer service categories as one of the common topics in the Journal of Services Marketing. In Table VII, the top keywords, quality, customer (consumer), and satisfaction were used in the titles for the period 1998-2000. Customer(s), quality and relationships remained consistently top used words for both periods 2001-2004 and 2005-2008. The number of keywords in the paper titles shows a steady increase from 120 (1998-2000) through 329 (2001-2004) to 403 (2005-2008). This seems to indicate that authors are trying to capture more theoretical concept information in the title as time progressed from 1998 onwards.

Readers should interpret the raw frequency scores in Tables VI and VII with special care, due to the different time periods reported. Table VI reports the scores for 11 years of data. In Table VII the period 1998-2000 accounts for three years, while the remaining periods 2001-2004 and 2005-2008 reports over a period of four years.

An interesting aspect is that the Journal of Services Marketing does not have a particular preference in terms of topics. In fact it seems as though the journal is fairly open for topics that fall outside the traditional categorizing of services marketing. A strong emphasis is placed on empirical work and these types of papers clearly dominated the 11-year period.

Research over the 11 years was based on samples that mainly consisted of adults, practitioners, or managers and students. The analytical method used in the papers was mostly factor analysis, structural equation modeling and analysis of variance.
Last, an important issue for future researchers is the trend in the increasing number of contributing authors per article, illustrating the importance of research networks.

Managerial implications and recommendations

Managers and practitioners reading a paper like this might justifiably raise some criticism that studies of the literature is nothing other than academics stroking their own egos. Does it really matter in the world of business which scholar has been the most prolific contributor in a particular field? Also would it not be more valuable to have inputs from a range of publications that covers all the subfields of services marketing? Three viewpoints are offered that argues why papers such as this offers value to practicing services marketers. First, tracking the evolution of services marketing as an academic discipline over the past 11 years is a formidable reading task even for the astute manager. Most senior management would be able to give an informed opinion of the major trends in a field such as services...
marketing, but might find it challenging to pinpoint a suite of esoteric scholarly contributions, for example, on service recovery and guarantees. Most progressive organizations have such strategies in place, but the ability to cherry pick a few papers that reports the latest updates is invaluable to managers. Second, it is a time consuming process for management to decipher ever increasing statistical rigor, and it can be beneficial to contact a leading author on a specialized topic to get advice and guidance on quick implementation required in a fast paced business world. Disciplinary evolution and leading contributors in other disciplines such as strategic management has been well documented (Furrer et al., 2007).

This paper offers similar insights to service industry managers that provide useful trends in terms of topics, leading authors and how the field of services marketing has changed during three periods since 1998. Thirdly, a keyword analysis classified by period offers a quick insight into those key concepts that have an enduring influence in a field and separates it from short-lived fads. In this paper four keywords consistently remain important areas of focus for practitioners. Evidence from Table VII indicates that managers cannot afford to lose a grip on quality; customers; satisfaction; and relationships. The top keywords are all familiar territory to management and remained so the past 11 years. The practical implications are that studies of the literature can confirm the permanence of established best practice, to sustain the positive financial returns that services marketing principles have on business (Rust et al., 2005; Vogel et al., 2008).

Studies such as this require a substantial amount of manual work, and journal publishers and editors might need to consider the development of online database systems making it easier for managers to search scholarly publication in a particular journal. Search engines such as Google Scholar, university libraries and online journal databases do a great job across all disciplines, but a deep search within one journal is not a trivial task for the practitioner user. A report building capability generating the tables produced in this paper should be able to be completed in a few minutes rather than a few weeks it takes four to six dedicated researchers to compile. It will add value to the academic and practitioner leadership to be able to update and append data to a study such as this on a regular basis. If the databases are developed in conjunction with other journals covering a scholarly discipline it automatically overcomes the limitations discussed below.

**Limitations**

A limitation of this research is that it does not cover more than one of the services marketing journals. This is an analysis of a single journal and it is recognized that articles with a services marketing focus are published in other journals as well. To obtain a more complete picture of the development of services marketing as published in the *Journal of Services Marketing*, future studies could look at the evolution of the field in its subfields as covered by related services marketing journals. Such an analysis could provide a better insight into the relationships between the subfields and how such a more comprehensive view might chart the future directions of the discipline. Second, this paper limits trends to papers written in English. A significant number of service marketing management insights are emerging in scholarly publication reporting in languages other than English. Third, this paper reports on principally North American scholarly contribution. It does not sufficiently reflect data collected from European, Asian Pacific and emerging economy regions.

**Future research**

Future studies of the services marketing research literature can investigate which authors have had what impact on the discipline. Another type of study could examine publishing activity in the *Journal of Services Marketing*, showing which scholars from which institutions have been productive in terms of publishing in the *Journal of Services Marketing*. Future studies could also focus on citation patterns addressing the most-cited authors in the *Journal of Services Marketing* as well as which articles are the most-cited works in the *Journal of Services Marketing* using the approach alluded to in Table I. Pasadecos et al. (1998) believe the basic assumption in such analysis is that a heavily cited article or book must be considered important by a large number of scholars in a discipline or across disciplines. This will provide a sense of how important peers view the *Journal of Services Marketing* and its articles to be. Ideally, a journal wants to aspire to be regarded as a “stable and mature” journal as Malhotra (1996) describes the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*.

**Conclusion**

This paper reported the inputs and outputs of the *Journal of Services Marketing* over an 11-year period, 1998-2008. It is the first of its kind aimed at this particular journal. A paper base of 417 articles was analyzed using content analysis with the aim at providing an overview of the contributions to the journal over the 11 years.

We hope that this review of the articles published in the *Journal of Services Marketing* from 1998 through 2008 has given
a small insight into the current status and trends in services marketing. An important aspect to take note of for future contributors of this journal is the type of paper submitted. It is clear that research type of papers is mostly preferred.

Note

1 The research team conducted this article’s analysis and discussion independently. Readers also may be interested in the Editor’s response, found elsewhere in this issue.

Table VII  *Journal of Services Marketing* Top keywords in paper titles, 1998-2008 reported in three different year periods

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>Customer(s)</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Relationship(s)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Relationship(s)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Satisfaction</td>
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References


**Further reading**


**Corresponding author**

Deon Nel can be contacted at: deon.nel@flinders.edu.au

**Executive summary and implications for managers and executives**

This summary has been provided to allow managers and executives a rapid appreciation of the content of the article. Those with a particular interest in the topic covered may then read the article in toto to take advantage of the more comprehensive description of the research undertaken and its results to get the full benefit of the material present.

Given that the *Journal of Services Marketing* is the oldest journal dedicated to the subject, an analysis of the wide variety of topics covered in its pages over an 11-year period is rather more than a case of academics stroking their own egos, but a valuable offering to practicing services marketers of the development of key trends in terms of topics, leading authors, and how the field of services marketing has changed since the publication began in 1998.

The aim of the journal is to publish articles that enrich the practice of services marketing while simultaneously making significant contributions to the advancement of the discipline. An analysis of its impact is warranted as it has earned a position of quality impact in services. The challenge of the project was taken by Professor Deon Nel et al. whose reflections cover the years 1998-2008, during which time they note that:

- 39 authors had each contributed to three or more articles;
- less than one-fourth of the articles were written by a single author, with an increase in recent years of the percentage of articles written by three or more co-authors;
• 354 of 417 articles were “research articles”;
• about one of five article topics pertained to “service quality and customer service,” more than any other topic category;
• overwhelmingly, “surveys” were the most common source of data reported and “adult [customers]” were most often the respondents studied; and
• not surprisingly, “services marketing” was found to be the most frequently reported keyword, followed by “customer satisfaction,” “consumer behavior” and “service quality.”

So why do these and other statistics matter? First, tracking the evolution of services marketing as an academic discipline over the past 11 years is a formidable reading task even for the astute manager. Most senior management would be able to give an informed opinion of the major trends in a field such as services marketing, but might find it challenging to pinpoint a suite of esoteric scholarly contributions, for example, on service recovery and guarantees. Most progressive organizations have such strategies in place, but the ability to cherry pick a few papers that report the latest updates is invaluable to managers. Second, it is a time-consuming process for management to decipher ever-increasing statistical rigor, and it can be beneficial to contact a leading author on a specialized topic to get advice and guidance on quick implementation required in a fast-paced business world. Third, a keyword analysis classified by period offers a quick insight into those key concepts that have an enduring influence in a field and separates it from short-lived fads.

It should be encouraging to prospective authors that the journal welcomes a wide range of topics in the services marketing arena. “Service quality” is the number one category from 1998 to 2000. For the period 2001 to 2004 the emphasis had moved to “Customer retention and relationship marketing”. The top position for the period 2005 to 2008 shifted to “Strategy, performance, and management”. It appears research into “Customer acquisition, advertising, and communication” has seen a steady decline from 21 percent to 5 percent. “Service encounters and experience” remains steady around 10 percent and “Technology infusion” rounds out the major categories at around 7 percent.

The majority of the articles used empirical data (68 percent between 1998 and 2000, 82 percent between 2001 and 2004, and 82 percent between 2005 and 2008). The use of non-student adults as sampling units grew from 37 percent to 46 percent while the use of managers and practitioners remains stable between 21 percent and 23 percent. Researchers targeting the Journal of Services Marketing should take notice that the journal will lean against student samples and that any use of such samples would need to be very well justified.

While various forms of surveys were the most predominant research methods used with an average of 62.3 percent, qualitative research has been gaining popularity as it rose tenfold from 1 percent to 10 percent. The number of case studies published has also risen significantly from 3 percent to 6 percent. A significant number of researchers complement their quantitative research with qualitative analysis.

Correlations and regressions were the most commonly used analytical techniques at the beginning of the 11-year period (27 percent). Since then, its popularity declined slightly in favor of more sophisticated analyses like confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling, which grew from 10 percent to 23 percent. The use of analyses of variance and multivariate analysis of variance remained steady at 13 percent to 15 percent. Qualitative analysis has also gained in popularity as it grew from 4 percent to 13 percent.

A response to the paper from the Editor of the Journal of Services Marketing appears elsewhere in this edition.

(A précis of the article “11 years of scholarly research in The Journal of Services Marketing”. Supplied by Marketing Consultants for Emerald.)