

EDITORIAL REVIEWERS' PERSEPECTIVES ON WRITING AND PUBLISHING IN HIGH QUALITY MARKETING JOURNALS: AN INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

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With the existing insights on writing and publishing marketing journal articles and the discipline's rapid expansion of publishing opportunities in new U.S. and international marketing journals, one intuitive prediction is marketing scholars' publishing success of important scientific articles is rapidly becoming a more common occurrence. Yet, this trend prediction is perplexing and contradictive because the prestigious and top 25 ranked marketing-oriented journals consistently report annual acceptance rates ranging between 7 and 18%. The low acceptance suggest a disconnect gap between conducting important, relevant quality research and ultimately publishing that research in quality journals.

In an effort to begin closing this disconnect gap, the primary objective underlying this special session is one of generating meaningful discussions between journal editorial board reviewers, acknowledged as outstanding reviewers, and the audience on critical questions and elements about the development of manuscripts submitted to high quality journal review processes.

One of the unique elements of the session is the interactive framework of using question and answer format between panel members and the audience to create a meaningful dialogue and opportunities of exchanging invaluable writing, organizing, and publishing insights toward improving the journal quality factor of manuscripts submitted to journal review processes. In addition, the interactive dialogue provides invaluable insights to main as well as specific components of a manuscript that editorial reviewers use in evaluating a manuscript's value and contribution to the body of marketing knowledge (or the literature).

Current doctorate students, young scholars, and older authors who are finding difficulties in getting their research through journal review processes and a positive publication outcome in high quality marketing journal outlets can gain better understanding of the role, responsibilities, and expectations of editorial reviewers. The expert reviewers will discuss a variety of issues that are classified as "fixable manuscript problems" such as: (1) general manuscript sloppiness – including grammar, style, syntax, spelling errors as well as failure to follow the target journal's style guidelines; (2) development of hypotheses that are illogical and/or poorly supported by theory or extant literatures; (3) attempts at trying to analyze too many variables, test too many hypotheses, and/or ineffectiveness in presenting a coherent set of findings; (4) using a well written literature review that does not present the right development background for supporting the manuscript's main story line; (5) ignoring alternative theoretical explanations for unsupported relationships; (6) using the lack of support of hypothesized relationships as the only contribution to the literature. Manuscript problems that are very difficult, if not impossible, to successfully fix (possibly fatal flaws) consists of such issue as: (1) inadequate post hoc explanation of unsupported hypotheses or unexpected findings; (2) poor development of construct measures and/or pretesting procedures; (3) questions of whether the measures really tap (or correctly) capture the construct (s) of interest; (4) serious errors in the analysis use to test the hypothesized relationships; (5) judgments that the topic is too narrow in scope to be of interest and benefit to the target journal's readership from either an academic and/or practitioner perspective; and (6) findings fail to make an incremental or substantial contribution (theoretical, methodological, managerial) to the marketing literature.

The discussions of the above topics/issues, from editorial reviewers' perspective, will provide insights to establishing and understanding both the "do's and don'ts" in successfully preparing manuscripts for submission to journals' review processes. Leaving this session, researchers will have a better understanding that writing important scientific articles for prestigious and high-quality marketing journals entails a variety of complex and interrelated journal quality image issues which mediate journal reviewers' judgments of the article's importance and value to the literature and ultimately editors' acceptance/rejection decisions. Gaining awareness and understanding of the important elements of a manuscript, from a reviewer's perspective, provide insight and knowledge about the expectations and standards authors must meet or exceed in order to maximize the likelihood of an acceptance decision. It is the author's responsibility (not the reviewer's) to provide a convincing argument and support that leads reviewers to positive evaluative judgments of the importance and relevancy of the research topic and questions driving the research endeavor. The authors must provide evidence of scientific rigoroussness in the methodology, measurements and analysis procedures. Finally, the authors must convince reviewers and editors that the empirical findings make substantial (absolute) and/or relative (incremental) contributions that are meaningful and useful to the literature (or the body of marketing knowledge).