David W. Stewart

Getting Published: Reflections of an Old Editor

My time as editor has been a dynamic period for the marketing community. It has witnessed the maturing of information technology, the Internet boom and bust, and the collapse of some of the most widely recognized and trusted of brands, including Andersen, Sunbeam, Oldsmobile, and Firestone. Even such seemingly powerful brands as Disney, McDonald's, AT&T, and Coca-Cola have struggled. At the same time, the attention of the popular business press and the public at large has become increasingly focused on markets and marketing practices. Issues of intellectual property, consumer privacy, and fair business practices have become part of the daily business headlines. The celebrity attorney has been replaced by the celebrity chief executive officer. The locus of economic growth and new organizational forms has increasingly shifted westward from Europe, the East Coast, and the Midwest to the West Coast and Asia. The only exception to these broad shifts appears to be Japan, once feared as an economic powerhouse and now reduced to a troubled economy.

Change is evitable and is what sustains the need for research and scholarship. Paradigms, assumptions, and even "facts" that dominate thought and practice at one point give way to new facts and modes of thought. In my editorial statement at the beginning of my term as editor (Stewart 1999), I discussed the role of *Journal of Marketing* (*JM*) as a tangible artifact of an intellectual community. This intellectual community is very much alive and responsive to change. It is again time for a change in the stewardship of the Journal. This change will, no doubt, bring new energy, new perspectives, and new directions to the Journal. However, editors merely manage in a modest way the real changes that occur in the intellectual discipline. Most of the articles to be published by the new editor during her first year are already written and in the review process. The problems and topics on which scholars within marketing's intellectual community are working and will work reflect the broader social and economic environment of which marketing is a part. An editor has little, if any, influence on this environment. However, an editor plays an especially important role in ensuring that the scholarship that derives from response to change is captured and published on a timely basis.

I discuss three things in my last editorial as editor: First, I describe the changes that have occurred in the Journal over the past three years. These changes suggest a great deal about the nature of the changes in markets and marketing practices that have taken place. Second, I share my perspective as an editor on what is most likely to be valuable to the discipline and find its way into the pages of the Journal. This will be a brief treatise on how to get published. Third, I acknowledge the contributions of the many people who have contributed to the Journal's success.

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What We Have Done Together

The marketing discipline has changed in fundamental ways in recent years. The contents of *JM* reflect that change. The community of which the Journal is a part broadened its focus in recent years. This broadened focus is reflected in the content of the Journal. In preparing for my role as editor, I did a coarse and subjective analysis of the content of *JM* from 1996 to 1998. I repeated this content analysis for the articles published during my tenure as editor from the beginning of 2000 to the end of 2002. Table 1 provides a summary of these two analyses. Although these analyses are crude and certainly miss important nuances, a comparison of the two analyses is nonetheless revealing.

A particularly striking finding in this comparison is what is not present. The Internet bubble is barely visible in the content of the Journal. I believe this says something positive about the Journal and its review process, as well as the field of marketing. In a journal devoted to the identification of generalizable market and business phenomena, there is no place for fads. This does not mean that *JM* has ignored the Internet, e-commerce, and the information revolution. Quite the contrary is the case. However, much of what has been published in the Journal about the Internet and e-commerce has not focused on the venue as the rationale for the contribution. Rather, the focus has been on more fundamental market phenomena and business practices. The Internet and e-commerce are merely components of these larger phenomena and practices.

As is now obvious to almost everyone, the Internet and e-commerce are important because they can substantially reduce transaction costs in the value delivery systems that serve some markets, and they can selectively create markets that were not economically viable because geographic dispersion made search for and transactions within them unattractive to both buyers and sellers. However, it is not clear that the Internet created much incremental demand. All of this means that the real benefits of the Internet and e-commerce are related to the well-known and even mundane practice of taking marketing share from competitors through reduced costs or superior quality or service. Some marketing scholars were making these points even at the peak of the Internet frenzy.

TABLE 1
Comparative Content of Articles in *JM*

Articles Published 1996–98	Articles Published 2000–2002
Advertising and promotion (16)	Relationship marketing (10)
Market orientation and organizational design (8)	Advertising and promotion (10)
Personal selling and sales management (8)	Marketing strategy (8)
Product development and management (7)	Services marketing (8)
Channels of distribution (5)	Product development and management (8)
Marketing strategy (5)	Personal selling and sales management (5)
Customer satisfaction (4)	Organizational design and performance (5)
Relationship marketing (4)	Critical analysis/interpretive analysis of marketing phenomena (4)
Pricing (4)	Retailing (3)
Services marketing (4)	Value of customers (3)
History and philosophy of marketing (3)	Brands and branding (2)
Knowledge management and decision support systems (3)	Buyer behavior (2)
Social influence (3)	Quality (2)
Public policy and regulation (3)	
Marketing research and demand forecasting (2)	
Internet marketing and interactive shopping (2)	
Retailing (2)	
Packaging (1)	
Buyer behavior (1)	

It is important for the most influential journals in a field to remain above the hype and faddishness that often characterize the popular business press and many consulting practices. The credibility of the Journal and the discipline rests on the ability to distinguish the important general phenomena from the trivial.

With a modest bit of interpretation, Table 1 demonstrates that the focus of the field of marketing has been changing over time. Relationship marketing has become a more prominent part of *JM*'s content. Similarly, work on the unique characteristics of services marketing has increased. Indeed, there is a strong link between relationship building and much of what is done in the design and delivery of services. Work that once focused exclusively on channels of distribution has largely been replaced with work that focuses on broader strategic issues of design of value delivery systems and interorganizational governance. Business-to-business marketing has similarly been subsumed within broader frameworks for conceptualizing value delivery systems that are ultimately driven by end-user consumers (at least in developed markets).

Focus on customer satisfaction appears to have been replaced by a greater focus on the value of the customer. Time and practice have shown that a satisfied customer is not always a profitable customer, and unsatisfied customers are often cost sinks that the firm would do better ignoring than trying to serve. Pricing is an essential component of the value equation, but in the past several years it has been more closely linked to such topics as the design of value delivery systems, branding, and relationship building.

The marketing mix remains alive and well in the content of *JM*. Product design, branding, advertising and promotion, personnel selling and sales management, and retailing all continue to be well represented in the pages of the Journal. Close examination of the content of articles on these topics reveals changes in the broader environment. Thus, the markets and industries in which data are obtained tend to reflect growth sectors such as services and high technology.

Some changes in the Journal are not so visible from a cursory examination of its content. The Journal has become more international. However, it has become more international by virtue of its authors rather than because of a specific focus on the unique characteristics of international markets. Almost one-third of the articles published during the past three years have had at least one author who was affiliated with an institution outside the United States. The source of data for empirical studies has also increasingly been from non-U.S. settings. These particular changes do not mean that the Journal has published more "international marketing" articles. Quite the contrary is the case; few articles are published simply because they are international. Rather, the international composition of published authors and the international sourcing of empirical data mean that the community of scholars has expanded and work is now being carried out that is even more likely to be generalizable across geopolitical and cultural boundaries.

One important characteristic of the Journal has not changed over time. The *Journal of Marketing* continues to welcome the broadest possible array of methodological tools for describing and explaining market and marketing phenomena. Data and empirical results obtained through qualitative methods, interpretive research, model building, experiments, surveys, and analysis of archival records are to be found in the pages of the Journal. This eclectic mixture of data and research methods is indicative of a journal that is driven by theory and substantive problems rather than method. This is a healthy characteristic and suggests an intellectual vitality in the discipline.

The changing character of *JM*'s content and the eclectic mix of methods found in it suggest that there is no easy formula for describing articles that are published in the Journal. Given that *JM*'s mission is to publish the best work in the discipline, it should not be surprising that there is no simple formula for publication. Indeed, if ever such a cookie-cutter approach were to describe the Journal, it would suggest that *JM* has lost its way and inevitably will lose its influence.

The *Journal of Marketing* continues to be among the most frequently cited journals in all the social sciences precisely because it publishes articles that make unique contributions.

Although there is no simple formula for publication in *JM*, articles that are published share some important characteristics. These characteristics may not be so obvious to the reader or author, but they tend to emerge in the course of an editor's work in processing more than a thousand manuscripts. There are only a few basic reasons papers are accepted or rejected, though the precise ways these reasons manifest themselves in specific papers are legion. So what are the keys to success?

Getting Published

Know the Journal

The first step in publishing in *JM* is developing an understanding of the role of the Journal, which publishes only about 10% of the manuscripts that are submitted to it. It publishes the best work in the entire field of marketing; it seeks articles that make broad contributions to the field. As a result, an otherwise very good paper in a narrow area may not be acceptable for publication in *JM*. This does not mean that the paper is poor; rather, it means that the paper does not make enough of a general contribution to the marketing discipline to warrant its selection over other papers. The best papers on advertising compete for space against the best papers on channels of distribution. These papers, in turn, compete for space against the best papers in every other area of marketing. A remarkably large percentage of the papers submitted to *JM*, including those that are eventually published, do a poor job of describing the incremental contribution of the paper. Therefore, a good place for authors to begin when considering publication in the Journal is to focus on the nature of the contribution of the paper.

Although it is a good practice to review past issues of *JM* for form and content, examination of past issues is not the best guide to the incremental contribution of a paper. Past issues can indicate what is already known in an area and therefore serve as a benchmark for assessing a paper's contribution. However, just because a topic has been addressed often in prior literature is no guarantee that a paper on the same topic will be publishable. Areas of inquiry mature over time, and research on a given topic tends to become less incremental and less interesting. The thirty-third paper on a topic is simply not as useful or interesting as the first paper. Similarly, just because something was done in a previously published article is not, in and of itself, justification for a practice. Sloppy methodology or an incomplete model may be overlooked in the first article on a topic (because the topic has not been previously explored), but it is unlikely to be acceptable in subsequent work (because the earlier flaws in need of correction should now be obvious from the prior work).

It is also important to recognize that *JM*'s mission is to publish substantive contributions to the marketing discipline. The Journal seeks papers that make conceptual, theoretical, or empirical contributions; it does not publish papers in which the primary contribution is methodological, measurement related, or modeling oriented. The Journal publishes articles that make a substantive contribution and make secondary contributions to methods, measures, or modeling. Indeed, such secondary contributions can increase the overall contribution of a paper and sometimes make the difference in whether a paper is published or rejected. Such methodological contributions are not substitutes for substantive contributions, however.

Another important characteristic of *JM* is related to its readership. The *Journal of Marketing* has the largest circulation of any academic marketing journal. The vast majority of its subscribers are not academics. The content of the Journal must be accessible to these readers. It is also important to recognize that as a general marketing journal, *JM* is read by academics who are not specialists in a given area of marketing. This means that even well-published academic readers may not be familiar with the unique jargon or specialized research methods employed in a given paper. For this reason, *JM* places a high premium on the readability of papers. Many papers are rejected simply because they are inaccessible to the reader (usually by reviewers who are more knowledgeable than the typical *JM* reader about the topic). Authors occasionally complain that reviewers did not seem to understand or were not well versed in an area with which a paper deals. In most cases, this lack of understanding is not the fault of the reviewers. Rather, it was not the reviewer who failed to understand but the author who failed to communicate. Most authors are too close to their work to know whether they are actually communicating. A good copy editor, who is always available at a price, can work wonders with otherwise obtuse prose. Presenting a paper or having others read it can also uncover a host of incomprehensible passages of text that seem crystal clear to the author and typographical errors that obscure the intended meaning of a statement.

Knowing the journal to which you are submitting is an essential first step in publishing. The *Journal of Marketing* has unique characteristics, and prospective authors should be aware of these. A lack of familiarity with the Journal is often all too obvious: I have had papers forwarded to me by past editors (some of whom have not been editors for ten years), I have received papers that identify the Journal by the wrong name, I have received papers in which the cover letter clearly identifies the topic of the paper as inappropriate for *JM*, and I have received papers so filled with typos or poor language that I could not send them out for review.

Increasing the Odds of Rejection

The most common reason that *JM* rejects a paper is that it lacks a sufficient incremental contribution. I learned early in my tenure as editor that this explanation for rejecting a paper is especially disconcerting to authors. Such a rationale is based on a subjective judgment (though informed by the opinions of reviewers). It is also difficult to tell an author exactly what must be done to improve the contribution of a paper. Sometimes the methodology in an empirical study is so flawed that the contribution could be improved only by redesigning the study. More often, there is nothing wrong with the methodology; the issue addressed is just not very important.

There are things a prospective author can do to improve the likelihood that a paper will make a sufficient incremental contribution. There are also types of papers that are more likely to be found wanting with respect to incremental contribution. The best approach to making an important incremental contribution is to do something interesting. Whether something is interesting or not is an empirical question. So share your idea with others; ask if something to which you are considering devoting time and resources is interesting to others. You might still wish to work on the idea even if others do not find it interesting, but be aware that such ideas have a low probability of being published. Read the relevant literature and cite it. It is unlikely that you are the first to examine a particular issue or problem. You may be the first to examine a particular dimension of the problem or issue, but you need to articulate clearly what your paper adds or what gaps it fills. This is another area in which authors often complain that reviewers do not understand or have not paid attention to in their papers. What usually happens is that key literature is ignored and a paper's contribution is framed in terms far too general. Interesting may compensate (to a degree) for conceptual or methodological sloppiness, but it is better to offer a sound conceptual and methodological approach that suggests acquaintance with previous work in the same area.

There are types of papers that have a particularly difficult time meeting the necessary hurdle for incremental contribution. This does not mean that such papers are never published, but they carry an especially heavy burden for demonstrating the significance of their contribution, especially in a journal like *JM*. Venue is seldom a sufficient rationale for publishing a paper. Just because a particular phenomenon has not been examined in a particular venue (such as a specific industry or country) is not a good reason to do a study. This is the problem with much of the research in an international or Internet context. For example, it is unclear why consumer decision making should necessarily be different in Malaysia. If it is not found to be different, investigation of the topic has a "so what?" quality. If it is found to be different, finding a difference alone is insufficient without an explanation for the difference. Unfortunately, all too often the real reason for any obtained difference is trivial (consumers in Malaysia are not as familiar with the stimulus brands as consumers in the United States; the required translation of the questionnaire produced differences in the meaning of the questions compared with the original instrument). Similarly, trust and reputation are important in many markets. Why would it be assumed that there is any difference in an Internet context? Venue-driven research bears the burden of making the case that venue should matter for some important reason and then demonstrating that the expected difference is present for the reason posited. This is a high hurdle.

Replications are not compelling for similar reasons. A replication that works has a "so what?" character. A replication that does not work raises questions about why. Replications may fail for many reasons, and most of these reasons are not interesting. A replication may fail because a different measure was used, a manipulation failed, or the sample was inappropriate. A failure to replicate bears the burden of explanation. Such failures can be important for the establishment of the boundary conditions of phenomena, but this too is a high hurdle.

A variation of replication is the addition of a new variable. This type of research often starts with well-established research and is justified by a finding that adding a previously unexamined variable accounts for some additional variance. Such research can be interesting, especially if the new variable suggests boundaries for a phenomenon, but as with venue-driven research and replications, the burden for demonstrating the importance of a contribution is high. The questions raised are why this particular variable is examined and others are not, why the selected variable is theoretically relevant, and how important the added variance accounted for really is.

Some authors employ a strategy of taking selected variables from a larger data set and attempting to make a stand-alone paper from these variables. They then take another subset of variables and attempt to construct another paper. Nothing is inherently wrong with trying to leverage a data collection effort. However, there are some inherent dangers in doing so. Often, a single paper using all the available data makes for a far stronger contribution than several papers each with a far more modest contribution. I have found it common for reviewers to ask for additional information or data and for the authors to respond that, indeed, they already have the necessary data. Another danger in this approach is that each subsequent study is likely to be less important than the last, especially when some of the same variables are used in each study. Therefore, even when the first study is published, the second study may not be. The result is a weaker first paper and no second paper.

Data fitting is not usually interesting no matter how sophisticated the model or method is. This is the problem with much of the recent work employing structural equation modeling. There is an appropriate use for fitting models, but merely showing that a set of data fits a model is not an especially compelling contribution. The same data may fit many different models with different theoretical implications. Data may also fit a model for reasons as uninteresting as the use of variables with highly correlated errors. The burden on the author is to make a compelling case that there is theoretical or practical significance associated with fitting a given model. Similarly, descriptive and purely exploratory work is generally less interesting. Such work certainly can be important for the development of taxonomies or for the identification of important relationships that have heretofore not been identified. Merely describing a phenomenon without some effort to suggest a conceptual basis for the observations leaves much unanswered.

Finally, compelling contributions tend to avoid the obvious. Many relationships have not been tested (especially in specific venues), but there is a reason they have not been tested. If outcomes are obvious, there is no real need to test them. Demonstrations that the obvious does not hold can be interesting, but failures to demonstrate the obvious, when failure means an inability to reject the null hypothesis, are incomplete. There are many reasons for obtaining results that do not differ from the null: insufficient power, insensitive measures, and weak manipulations, among others. Again, the burden of demonstrating an interesting and compelling contribution is high for such research.

Increasing the Odds of Being Published

In addition to selecting interesting problems or questions on which to work, there are other things authors can do to increase the odds of publishing a paper. Get feedback early and often. You can get feedback by presenting the paper at conferences, at other universities, and to your own colleagues. Indeed, the colleagues with whom you interact each day are an especially important source of feedback about how interesting the paper might be, how well you communicate, how you might better design a study and analyze its results, and what the results might mean for theory and practice. This is why choosing colleagues is such an important part of a career decision. Good colleagues who are themselves active scholars are an invaluable resource.

If you do not have a large set of local colleagues, and even if you do, ask others to read your paper. Identify key people working in the same area, regardless of their location; share your work with them; and ask for feedback. Part of the feedback you obtain should be finding out what others are working on in similar areas and reviewing what has been recently published in the area. As an editor, I could usually identify the papers that had been read by no one other than the author before submission. Feedback helps and raises the odds of publication. Early feedback even helps you avoid work on a project that has a low probability of success in the first instance.

Listen to the reviewers; they are generally trying to help. Reviewers often do understand what they read, but authors are often not clear about what they mean. Identifying and correcting such gaps in communication are part of the purpose of the review process. Reviewers disagree far less often than many authors believe. Indeed, reviewers generally agree on the problems that exist in a particular paper. Disagreements sometimes occur when reviewers offer potential solutions for these problems. For example, all the reviewers may agree that one problem with a paper is insufficient power in a statistical test. One reviewer may suggest increasing sample size to solve this problem, another reviewer may suggest using a more sensitive measure, and a third reviewer may suggest using a covariate to reduce the error variance. In such a case, it is not unusual for authors to become concerned that the reviewers disagree about the approach they should take in the revision. They lose sight of the real problem, on which all agree. It is the solution to the problem rather than the particular approach that is important. Authors sometimes use such "disagreements" disingenuously to dismiss reviewers' comments. An editor can help sort through these kinds of disagreements, but it is important for authors to recognize that there is a difference between disagreements on fundamental problems and disagreements with respect to suggestions for resolving the problem. The author who accepts the existence of the problem and works to resolve it will likely be met with a positive response from all the reviewers, regardless of the particular solution that was adopted.

Arguing with reviewers is seldom helpful and may even hurt your case. If you believe a reviewer is wrong, appeal to the editor. Let the editor know the source of your disagreement and offer whatever supporting evidence you can muster. In your response to the reviewer, you need only politely indicate that you disagree and have asked the editor for advice.

When you have a question, contact the editor. It is part of the editor's responsibility to help you through the editorial process. Ultimately, the editor must make a decision about your paper, however. This is a decision about your paper; it is not about you. The goal of the editor is to fill issues of the journal, subject to a quality constraint. This means that your incentives and those of the editor are closely aligned. However, you should listen to what the editor asks you to do. If you are unwilling to make the changes that have been requested, you probably should withdraw the paper and submit it elsewhere.

If you are given the opportunity to revise a paper, do so and do so quickly. Any opportunity to revise is a victory and moves you a step closer to publication. The odds of eventually being published go up substantially when a revision is invited. In recent years, 75% of papers have been rejected after the initial review. Of the papers whose authors have been given the chance to revise, half have eventually been published. Of the papers that have gone through a second revision, 90% have been eventually published, though some of these have required several more rounds of revision.

Much of the research in which we are engaged is time sensitive. Other scholars likely are working on similar topics, and some phenomena change over time in important ways. This means that the longer you wait to revise and resubmit a paper, the more likely its contribution will be lower by the time it is reviewed again. Authors occasionally become annoyed at the "inconsistency" of reviewers (and editors), because they were told a paper was interesting and made an important contribution in one round of reviews and subsequently were told that the paper's contribution was not great in the next round of reviews. The odds that this will happen go up the longer it takes the author to complete the revision. In such cases, the reviewers are not being inconsistent; rather, their evaluations are time dependent. Also, the longer the interval between a review and revision, the more likely it is that a reviewer or editor will drop out of the process. This is not always a problem, but sometimes new reviewers (sometimes multiple new reviewers) must be brought into the review process. Editors do not like to do this, and new reviewers often raise new issues. Although this is frustrating to authors, it is often the authors who are to blame for failing to revise on a timely basis.

Appeals are possible but seldom successful. When an editor has made a decision, it is rare that the decision will be reversed. If you believe that an injustice has been done, you can appeal to the editor. In some cases, the editor will then assign the paper to a referee for an assessment. Usually this process involves sharing the paper, all reviews, all responses to the reviewers, and all correspondence by the editor with a senior scholar in the field (often a former editor). The senior scholar is asked for an assessment of the decision and in some cases recommends that the authors be provided a chance to revise the paper. Revisions then go back to the original reviewers. Such appeals are at the discretion of the editor, and authors have the burden of suggesting reasons the request is appropriate. The majority of such appeals are resolved with a negative outcome, and even when revision is invited, it is rare that the author is able to resolve the issues (papers are rejected for good reasons).

Rejection is inevitable for active scholars; learn from rejection. The comments of the reviewers and editor often suggest the direction for a new paper. New papers (new data, new conceptual framework) are welcome. Rejected papers often form the basis for new work on the same topic. Indeed, as editor, I have encouraged authors of papers on interesting topics to develop a new paper on the same topic even as I rejected their current submission. I did not do so to be polite. Rather, I was encouraging further work on a subject I believed would be a good addition to the Journal. Also, many of the papers that are rejected by *JM* are published elsewhere. The feedback from the review process can be helpful to an author in revising a paper for another journal.

Editors want to know the history of a manuscript. If your paper has been reviewed and rejected by another journal, it is in your self-interest to let the editor know this. Often, the editor will contact the editor of the other journals to determine who the reviewers were. This enables the editor to find new reviewers who do not have a previous history with the paper. It is common for the same reviewer to receive a paper from different journals when the history of the paper is unknown to the editor. In the worst case, the reviewer informs the editor that he or she has seen the manuscript before and that the current paper is identical to the one previously reviewed. Needless to say, this does not impress either the reviewer or the editor with respect to the author's willingness to learn from the review process and improve the paper in response to constructive criticism. Editors are also open to suggestions for potential reviewers as well as suggestions for reviewers to avoid because they have seen the paper before or have a different point of view from that expressed in the paper. Editors are not always able to act on these suggestions, because reviewers may have other papers or be otherwise unavailable. However, editors attempt to use suggestions when they are offered.

Summary

There should be no mystery associated with the publication process. It is in the interests of everyone that authors understand the mechanics of the publication process. At one level, getting published is quite simple: (1) Work on interesting problems; (2) obtain feedback by having others read your work and by presenting it; (3) write well and, if necessary, use a copy editor (especially if English is not your first language); (4) be succinct and use space wisely; (5) provide relevant details (What did you do? What literature did you use? What is your contribution?); (6) if given the opportunity to revise, do so and quickly; (7) listen to the reviewers and the editor; and (8) learn from and build on rejection.

At another level, getting published is difficult. It is about creativity, and creative enterprises are always risky. Managing such risk involves persistence and hard work, but it is worth the effort if the goal is a contribution to the intellectual community.

A Word of Gratitude

In closing, I thank all the members of the marketing community who have contributed to the Journal and made my time as editor easier and enjoyable. I first want to thank our readers, especially readers who do not otherwise directly contribute to the Journal through submission and reviewing of papers. Great journals must have a readership base that is broader than its authors and reviewers. The impact of a journal depends in no small measure on its ability to influence the thinking and behavior of its readers. The *Journal of Marketing* plays an important role in influencing the marketing discipline through its readers who come to it solely as a source of information and ideas. To the readers of the Journal, I say thank you for your continuing confidence in the ability of the Journal to inform, stimulate thinking and creativity, and motivate behavior. Second, I thank all the authors who have submitted papers to the Journal. The quality of the articles published in the Journal and the Journal's influence are a function of both the papers that are published and those that are submitted but not selected for publication. Because the mission of the Journal is to publish the best conceptual and empirical work in the marketing discipline, the willingness of authors to submit their best work to *JM* is critical to its success. To all of the scholars who have submitted papers, I say thank you.

The quality of the articles published in *JM* and the impact these articles have on the field of marketing are significantly enhanced by the insights, comments, and constructive criticism of the scholars who review them. I thank the members of the editorial board who have shouldered a heavy burden during my editorship. I also thank the many ad hoc reviewers who have contributed to the review of papers. Authors routinely comment that the reviews they receive from *JM* are among the timeliest and most constructive they have received from any journal. These comments reflect the quality of the reviewers rather than the editor. The timely and constructive criticism provided in the review process is one reason the Journal is so strong; these characteristics encourage authors to submit their best work.

I also thank the past and future editors of the Journal. Past editors left me a strong legacy on which to build; I look forward to the continuation of that legacy by future editors. I especially want to thank Robert Lusch, my predecessor, for introducing me to the role of editor and for smoothing the transition between editors. I wish Ruth Bolton much success as editor and thank her for her help during the waning portion of my term.

The journal staff of American Marketing Association has made the task of editor far easier than it might have been. I appreciate their cooperation and assistance. My colleagues in the Marshall School at University of Southern California and my coauthors at other institutions deserve particular recognition. They have (usually) cheerfully tolerated my absence from other departmental obligations and delays in the completion of joint research projects.

Finally, I owe a debt of gratitude to Brenda Miller, who has served as my editorial assistant throughout my term. The Journal would not have operated so smoothly or be where it is today without her many contributions.

I appreciate the opportunity to have served as editor of *Journal of Marketing*. It has been stimulating, educational, and most of all fun. I wish everyone as much fun in the future.

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