Services Research: Breadth, Relevance, and Glimpses into the Future

AMA SERVSIG Doctoral Consortium
Frontiers in Services Conference
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What do these firms have in common?
What do these firms have in common?
All are members of:

the Center for Services Leadership

W. P. Carey School of Business

www.wpcarey.asu.edu/csl
And all consider themselves . . .

Service Businesses . . .

who compete through providing service excellence.
Service Can Mean . . . .

– Service as a product

– Customer service

– Service as value-added for manufactured products

– Service derived from a tangible product
In fact. . .all businesses are service businesses

Vargo and Lusch, JM 2004
An Historical Perspective

• Journal of Retailing, Spring 1993
  – “Building a New Academic Field—The Case of Services Marketing” by Berry and Parasuraman
  – “Tracking the Evolution of the Services Marketing Literature,” by Fisk, Brown and Bitner

• Services Marketing Self-Portraits, 2000

• Journal of Marketing, January 2004
  – “Evolving to a New Dominant Logic for Marketing,” by Vargo and Lusch
Roots of the field

- Focus on substantive business issues
- Cross-functional (operations, marketing, human resources)
- Global contributions
- Methodology-neutral
Relevance of Services Research

- Focused on issues of importance to business strategy
- Growing demand for services knowledge from business and governments
- Published in all the major journals
Why Services Research is Relevant to Business

• Services frequently provide higher profit margins and new growth opportunities

• Customer satisfaction and loyalty are driven by service excellence

• Services can be used as a differentiation strategy in competitive markets
Service Excellence and Customer Goals

- Getting
- Satisfying
- Retaining
- Enhancing
The Service Profit Chain

ACSI and Market Value Added

Source: American Customer Satisfaction Index, The University of Michigan, www.theacsi.org
Strategic Services Pyramid

(Parasuraman 1996)
Growing Demand for Services Knowledge

• National focus on innovation and growth
  – Services are the engine for growth for companies, organizations and nations

• Job opportunities for our students
  – Growth in services and knowledge-worker jobs and need for specialized skills

• Demand for new research and better use of existing knowledge

• Need to bridge academic and functional silos
Percent of U.S. Gross Domestic Product by Industry

Glimpses into the Future

• Continuing evolution of the services literature

• Cross-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary work

• Global initiatives

• Broadening of topics
Next phase of services research evolution
(Fisk, Brown and Bitner 1993 and in progress)

- Crawling Out – pre-1980
- Scurrying About – 1980-1985
- Creating Language – 2001 to present
Upcoming Publications to watch for . . .

“Marketing Renaissance: Opportunities and Imperatives for Improving Marketing Thought, Practice, and Infrastructure”

Collection of 11 essays to appear in October 2005 *Journal of Marketing*

Ruth Bolton, editor
Upcoming Publications to watch for . . .

The Service-Dominant Logic of Marketing: Dialog, Debate, and Directions

A collection of papers in response to and building upon the award-winning JM 2004 article

Services Science?

- IBM initiatives
- Services Science, Management and Engineering (SSME)
- Panels on Saturday afternoon, October 8
Global Influences and Growth

• 28 countries represented at Frontiers in Services Conference 2005
• Global developments in . . .
  – China
  – Europe and Scandinavia
  – Australia
  – Singapore
Future Research Opportunities

• Build on characteristics of the Services Literature
  – Focus on substantive business issues
  – Cross-functional integration
  – Global contributions
  – Multiple methodologies
Future Research Opportunities

• Build on existing research streams – add depth and strengthen what we know
  – Service quality
  – Service/customer experiences
  – Technology and service
  – Service recovery
  – Customer satisfaction and loyalty
  – Customer co-production
  – Financial impact of services and service quality
Future Research Opportunities

• Chart new directions
  – Non-profit applications of services
  – Synergies with customer experience work
  – B2B services – strategy and implementation
  – Service solutions in manufacturing
  – Service supply chains and service outsourcing
  – Service networks
  – Services branding
  – Cross-disciplinary collaboration on services topics
  – Macro issues in services
  – Global challenges and integration
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