

2019 Sport Marketing Association Conference (SMA XVII)

Marketing Mix and the Need for a New Paradigm Shift: Practitioners Perspective

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25-minute oral presentation
(including questions)

Since World War I, the Marketing Mix (4Ps) concept has been integral in the organization of marketing courses in higher education (Harvard Business Review, 1985). The concept is utilized by executives everywhere since its origination almost 100 years ago. Although the concept is one of the main teaching points in marketing education, it is not without criticisms. The Marketing Mix concept does not account for customer behavior and services; it does not allow for interaction and the building of personal relationships, and it allows for no personification within its framework (Möller, 2006). Additionally, the growth of the internet, information technology, and the subsequent wave of the social media sector, artificial intelligence and blockchain have introduced a whole new set of issues that the outdated concept does not address.

Although there has been a large amount of evolution within the marketing world over than the last several years, marketing theories and research practices are still trailing behind. New information technology is being introduced faster than the academic world can keep up, and previous theories, like Marketing Mix, are not able to stand the test of time. The concept has been declared irrelevant and even “dead” by marketing practitioners such as Matthew Royse. Because there is a distinct lack of updated research into the marketing practices and theories, this paper seeks to discover what these theories are lacking and how to best update them for use in the 21st century from a practitioner perspective.

In order to gain insight into this topic, this qualitative study surveys and interviews 20 marketing practitioners about the relevance of Marketing Mix as a concept and how they believe the concept could be adapted for modern times. Through this method, the study intends to find meaning in the interviewees’ responses (Kvale, 1996) and gather knowledge from their personal experiences of using Marketing Mix or any modified version of the mix. With the newly obtained information, it is the study’s goal to provide alternative approaches or at least updated frameworks to Marketing Mix that account for modern-day issues. Marketing as an applied discipline ultimately benefits from research into the best practices for use (Chai, 2009). Therefore, this study seeks to provide meaningful insight into the marketing mix in the 21st century for use by practitioners in the field of marketing. Most of the sport marketing textbooks are using marketing mix as the main theory (Mullin, Hardy, Sutton, 2014; Pitts, Stotlar, 2013). Our study seeks to apply Harrigan and Hulbert (2011) that “we are at the stage where marketing academia has a lot to learn from marketing practice” (p. 254).