

Dik Warren Twedt

# A Marketing Strategy for Marketing Knowledge— Or How to Publish and Prosper

*Publishing increases one's options in teaching and in business.  
Here is some practical advice on how to do it more efficiently.*

**T**HIS ARTICLE is intended for two audiences: (1) academicians who want to increase their scholarly productivity, and (2) business executives who want to publish for a variety of reasons (including, perhaps, a desire to teach after having established a solid base of business experience). Clearly the pressure to publish is stronger on the first group, as shown by the rather grim catchphrase, "publish or perish."

The purpose of this article is to show both educators and practitioners how the sharing of marketing knowledge through publication can be both enjoyable and profitable, once the following principles are practiced:

## Identify your reasons for publishing.

Different reasons for publishing lead to different marketing strategies, and therefore it is important to determine first why you want to publish. Here are some possible motives, together with appropriate strategies for each:

- ▶ **To achieve tenure/promotion (for teachers).** Aim for as long a list as possible of short articles in scholarly journals. Books obviously take much longer to write than articles and, in some cases, may not even be completed and accepted by a publisher during the probation-

ary period for obtaining tenure. Also, the academic credit given for books vs. articles may be such that the time spent writing, say, 15 articles will probably count more heavily toward academic advancement than the same amount of time devoted to writing only one book, particularly if that book is an undergraduate textbook.

- ▶ **To achieve professional kudos and recognition.** For teachers, this goal is most likely to be achieved by articles in professional journals which depend upon "juries" of experts (usually two or three reviewers per article), who advise the editor of the merits of the article, or by a textbook accepted and published by a recognized publishing company or professional association. The time sequence is often: (1) journal article, (2) a popularization of that same article in a business publication, and (3) its inclusion in a textbook.

For marketing executives, peer recognition can come from these and also many other publishing sources (such as *Advertising Age* and *Sales Management*), which typically have audiences several times larger than those of professional journals. Consultants in particular often seek publication as a dignified form of advertising.

- ▶ **To achieve communication with colleagues.** This probably applies more to businessmen than to teachers. There are times when having an article published in a professional magazine adds credibility to one's ideas

## About the Author

DIK WARREN TWEDT is Professor of Marketing and Quantitative Management Science, University of Missouri, St. Louis.

المنارة للاستشارات

- ▶ **To discipline oneself into continued professional growth.** For both teachers and practitioners, the discipline of marshalling one's thinking about a marketing subject so that it emerges as an orderly presentation of theory and/or practice is a salutary experience which leads to growth. In ascending order of time required and difficulty of preparation, the sequence is usually: (1) business publications, (2) scientific journals, and (3) textbooks.
- ▶ **To increase direct income through royalties or honoraria.** If one's motivation is to maximize income from royalties, the "First Law of Marketing" is of paramount importance: "Make what people want to buy; don't try to sell what you happen to make." If your interests happen to be in Bayesian Theory or Markov Chain Analysis, and these are not what is selling this season, try to adapt your interests to what is selling. (This philosophy may be in conflict with the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, but it is first-rate marketing). Once the concept is accepted that publications are products that must be marketed to customers (accepted by editors), the author's chances of acceptance are significantly increased.

### Develop a card file of publication sources.

Recent discussions with academic colleagues have revealed that few of them are aware of the size of the potential market for journal articles. The second edition of *An Academic Writer's Guide to Publishing in Business and Economic Journals*, by David L. Kurtz and A. Edward Spitz (Bureau of Business Services & Research, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan, 48197, November 1974, 247 pp., \$5.50) contains information on how to submit articles to 236 journals, some 90 of which cover the marketing area.

But even this excellent reference work is incomplete, as shown by the following list of 15 journals that were not included, but are appropriate for marketing subjects:

*Australian Journal of Marketing Research*  
*The Conference Board Record*  
*Direct Marketing*  
*European Research*  
*Indian Journal of Marketing*  
*Journal of the American Statistical Association*  
*Journal of Consumer Research*  
*Journal of Contemporary Business*  
*Journal of Marketing & Economic Research*  
*Marketing Horizons*

*Marketing Information*  
*Marketing News*  
*Promotion*  
*Public Opinion Quarterly*  
*Sales Management*

All of the above publications are in English. Foreign marketing publications not included in the Kurtz and Spitz reference include:

*Absatzwirtschaft: Zeitschrift für Marketing* (German)  
*Bamat Hazarban/Consumer's Tribune* (Israeli)  
*Konsonanz: Quartalshefte zur Markt und Sozialanalyse* (Swiss)  
*Kriterion* (German)  
*Marknaden* (Swedish)  
*Markt* (German)  
*Revue Française du Marketing* (French)

All in all, aspiring authors of marketing articles have at least 112 potential sources for publication.

And, unlike some of our academic colleagues in other disciplines, such as mathematics, none of the marketing journals charge for publication; in fact, some of the marketing journals even pay modest honoraria. (There is a "Catch 22" in mathematics which is of real concern to mathematicians: since the most respected mathematical journals usually charge authors *page rates* of as much as \$40 to cover costs of composition and printing, younger faculty members may find that they cannot obtain promotion and higher salaries until they have established an impressive publication record, but this in turn is dependent upon their ability to pay publication costs, which may exceed \$1,000 an article.)

### Maintain an idea file.

Every aspiring author should maintain a "writing germination" file, in which ideas gained from reading or discussions are recorded in sufficient detail for later recall and development. Periodical review of this file, with reallocation of working priorities, will systematize literary production.

A major tool for adding to such a file is the "Creative Boredom" technique. Both teachers and marketing practitioners are subject to a common occupational hazard: the necessity of sitting through long and frequently boring meetings. It is not socially acceptable to leave these meetings, but it is well within the rules to appear to be making careful notes of the discussion. Some authors have found that some of their best ideas for publication come to them during such periods of enforced inactivity. (It helps if the individual has some command of a form of shorthand, so that this independent activity is less obvious to others in the group.)

## Participate actively in professional activities.

Even if you have to start on the hospitality committee of the local chapter of your professional association, do so. Many of my academic and business colleagues have found that some of their most rewarding professional and personal associations have come about through their activities with national professional organizations. It also helps to know editors of professional journals, and to be familiar with their editorial requirements.

## Learn how to use the "query."

Free-lance writers, whose income depends upon acceptance of their literary output, have long used the query to increase their productivity. A query is simply a letter or phone call to the editor, briefly outlining the author's idea for an article, together with a request for an evaluation of its suitability for publication.

## Zero defects, or the "Michaelangelo Principle."

In more than a decade of reviewing manuscripts for the *Journal of Marketing*, I have found fewer than one manuscript in 10 to be "letter perfect." It is painfully obvious that earning the Ph. D. does not automatically make one a master of English style, but it seems reasonable to expect that distinctions should be made between "data" and "datum," between "imply" and "infer," and even between "it's" and "its." These points are so obvious that they should not require belaboring; but the fact is, at least 90% of the selected manuscripts I have reviewed since 1963 contain errors of syntax, spelling, or style. And remember these are Selected manuscripts; the real turkeys are usually not forwarded to reviewers. A letter-perfect manuscript may still lack substance, but at least the baby will not be thrown out with the bath water. If your command of the language is uncertain, have the manuscript reviewed by someone who does have language skills.

Even lawyers may soon find that plain English is desirable. The Missouri Court of Appeals at St. Louis rejected an appeal this year because it did not "indicate to the court what the facts are in simple, concise language, to indicate wherein and why the trial court erred and to give the legal reasons in the argument to sustain the position taken." The court went on to note:

"It is not difficult to write a simple declarative sentence . . . It is not difficult to give a com-

plete and correct citation to a case . . . It is not difficult to spell correctly. It is not difficult to write simply and clearly. It just takes a little time."

The "Michaelangelo Principle" is profoundly important, but deceptively simple: "Trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle."

Even simple freedom from defects does not ensure that the style of a particular journal has been followed: this requires some familiarity with that journal and again, some attention to detail. But that is the author's responsibility.

## Avoid jargon and circumlocution.

Although the use of jargon is not limited to academicians, the discipline of preparing acceptable doctoral dissertations seems to have left many of them with a permanent obfuscatory style. Consider the following sentence by a respected member of the academic community (and one who is well-known to marketers as a professor at a major university and executive at a marketing consulting firm):

*The social ontogeny of each generation recapitulates the social phylogeny of Negroes in the New World because the basic socio-economic position of the group has not changed in a direction favorable to successful achievement in terms of conventional norms.*

Edwin Newman, who cites this example in his *Strictly Speaking* (pg. 146) suggests that this sentence would be clearer if it read: "Each generation of American Negroes, like it predecessors, makes less money than whites." This is not only a 67% reduction in number of words; it also is much more easily understood. Tighter editing—simply cutting out the verbal underbrush which is not needed—will frequently eliminate jargon and increase interest in what is left. Shorter articles also help to relieve space pressures which are being felt by leading journals as production costs increase.

## Avoid "footnoteitis."

Some footnotes may be necessary, but "footnoteitis" (an inflammation of footnotes) is to be avoided. I have actually reviewed articles in which the space devoted to footnotes exceeded that of the text of the article!

If you find that you have a surfeit of footnotes, or a lengthy technical appendix which may be of

little interest to the majority of readers, consider consolidating this material into one reference source, to be deposited with ASIS (American Society for Information Science, 1140 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036), which provides a reproduction service for readers at nominal cost.

### **Titles should be "academic."**

This rule applies to teachers who are still seeking academic advancement (and possibly to business executives who want to establish credentials for future teaching positions.) Titles which are too "practical" or even slightly humorous may strike some members of academic tenure and promotion committees as not being worthy examples of dignified, scholarly research. (The article you are now reading is a case in point—"A Marketing Strategy for the Dissemination of Marketing Knowledge" would probably be more acceptable to some academicians than "How to Publish and Prosper").

A distinguished and much-published professor put it this way: "If I publish an article on 'Stimulation of the Demand Function for Acrilan Artifacts,' I get credit for a scholarly contribution—but if I write an article on 'How to Sell More Rugs,' my colleagues think I am a huckster!" Even though this point may seem to be made with tongue-in-cheek, it is actually made in all seriousness.

### **Writing articles may be better than writing books.**

As suggested earlier, per unit of effort expended, the payoff for articles is likely to be greater than that for books. This is particularly true if you can use an article to get a controversy started; and that is a first-rate ploy for increasing the publication count

(see "Professor A's" anonymous article, "The Compleat Marketing Academic," in the August 15, 1975 *Marketing News*, in which he describes "ping-pong publication").

### **Don't overdo coauthorship.**

Francis Bacon observed that "reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man." The stimulation which comes from discussion with colleagues may be essential to clearer expression of ideas, but if coauthorship is practiced to the exclusion of single authorship (particularly if you are the junior author), it may be difficult for others to determine your relative contributions to marketing knowledge.

### **Rewrite and resubmit.**

A well-published colleague says, "I have never had an article ultimately rejected. Oh sure, I may have had to rewrite, and submit it to several different journals, but ultimately I connect." It is interesting to reflect on the fact that non-publication is more often caused by lack of application of basic marketing principles than by lack of ideas or even literary skills.

### **Get in the habit.**

Long after he was relieved from academic pressures, Professor Emeritus Ewald T. Grether received the Alpha Kappa Psi Foundation Award for his article, "Marketing and Public Policy: A Contemporary View" (*Journal of Marketing*, July 1974). When I asked this distinguished teacher what prompted him to continue publishing material of such high merit even after retirement, his answer spoke volumes: "I guess I just got in the habit."