

Aligning teaching and practice: Entrepreneurial SME marketing

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**A thesis submitted to AUT University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Business**

2017

**Faculty of Business, Economics and Law
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Attestation

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signature**Date**

Acknowledgements

This thesis has been made possible with the help of a long list of lovely people.

First I would like to thank my supervisor, Associate Professor Ken Hyde who has been here since day one. I have learned so much from you and thank you for your support, encouragement and continuous feedback. Your precision for detail is something I have learned and continuously strive for.

A warm thank you to my whanau. You are the reason I move forward. Without the support of my Mother and Father, I would not be in my Master's programme. Special thank you to my Mother for pushing me to pursue higher studies and thank you Father for being the man I strive to be. Thank you to my siblings for always pushing me and making me remember that the thesis will take me to higher places.

Special thanks to my friends who have supported me from day one. Hassan Raslan, I would not be here had it not been for those endless days in your Master's office. Mohamad Abdul Latif and Ali – you mapped out my journey and checked in with me at every milestone and continuously made me stay on track. Amin – the coffees kept me going. Azim – the Slurp times shall be cherished. Harun , Sheriff, Bluey, Hassan, Martin – the GWOL shall live on forever. To my childhood friends who have moved on – this is for you.

A very special heart warming thanks you to my new best friend, Joanna Taris. Oh dear Joanna, meeting you was the best thing that happened to me. I would not have made it through had it not been for your company. After meeting you, I looked forward to everyday.. In my times of struggle, you were my guiding hand and light.

I cannot express how happy and blessed to have met you. Thank you for the support, laughs, deep discussions, perspective and enlightenment on life . Your smile kept me going and made me remember it is these small details that make life worth living for. And that one should jump in the deep end and live the moment every day life gives us.

Every second spent with you shall be a cherished memory. I thank the heavens for bestowing your presence in my life.

Nicholia , oh dear Nich, God knows how much you mean to me. I need a page for you. Thank you for you for the continuous love and support. Anahita – you are the gem found along ones journey. Your friendship shall be cherished for a lifetime. Aimee- the pants were worth it. That smile and charisma of yours restores ones faith in life everyday.

Thanks to the staff at Strata café with special mention to my close friend, Dylan. Without your support, I would not have made it in my early years of university and the Master's journey. Thank you to the staff at Shakey Isles café for fuelling my thesis journey with notable mention to Heidi, Jesse, Paula, Diann and Dolly and the rest of the café staff. A very special thanks to Tane Diaz, Chase Onehi and Mati Green. Your continued support, brotherhood and fuel made writing every day possible. Tane, the brotherly talks and T-Blue Fluffys are the reason I am here today. Thank you for your helping hand in my times of struggle. The friend that always knew when I was down and was there to listen. Mati- the Saturday meet-ups were something I shall forever remember. Chase – you unlocked a dormant side of me that the world has now seen. Rylie and Diann, thank you. Rylie – you are ahead of your time. You shall be missed. Diann – the last months of struggles and therapy coffee talks got me through. Your smile and positivity made every moment with you beautiful. God Bless. Thanks to the staff at RAD café, with special mention to Duke, Nick, Ken Te, Jeremy, Sara, Juno, Courtney, Tashie and Josh.

Lydia, you need a page just for yourself. Special thank you to the Starbucks Staff – Kevin, Zach, Josiah, Susana, and everyone else who provided the banter, the extra edge and place of comfort to complete this endeavor. Uncle Anis and Auntie Farzana, only the heavens know how much support, help and guidance I have received from your gracious hands. Thank you for being the pillar of my university journey from day one. May God reward you infinitely. To Finn & Charlie and everyone at Olafs, thank you. The daily bread and company kept me going. To Manish and Karun- thank you brothers.

A special thanks to Blair Barkle. Without our daily life discussions, my Master's thesis would have been a very stale journey. I've learned so much about discussion, open mindedness and how there is always different ways at looking at matters from you. Jonathon – thank you for the brotherly talks and support. Gracias. Uncle Nick – thank you for everything all these years.

Special thanks to my mentor and friend- Dr Michael Lee – thank you for your continuous support. You will always be my favorite lecturer, mentor and a special friend. Dr Gavin- the final nudges at the end made all the difference. Thank you

A very special thanks to Dr Kate Jones. I would not have finished my Master's had it not been for your counseling on those days I decided to quit which only God knew about. Thank you for believing in me and pushing me to never give up. The embodiment of kia kaha has resonated in me from your talks. I cannot thank you enough. Thank you to all the staff and friends at in the marketing department with notable mention to my friends in the teaching office - Vrinda Soma, Ruby Heath and Marareia and everyone else. Ellie and James, thank you for your help. To the HOD Roger Marshall and university marketing lecturer staff, thank you. Roger, the coffee discussions will always be remembered for it was that nespresso sit down in your office that pushed me to business academia and teaching. Special thanks to my brother Baker for the continued support and reassurance that I am on the right path. Omar, without your support and talks every day, I would not have reached this part of my journey.

A special mention that would require a volume on its own – to my cousin Ahmed Al Salim. Oh cousin, I would not be here had it not been for your guiding words, talks and support. Only the Lord knows how much you have been there, from day one. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your continued support, mentoring, guidance and tough medicine that I needed to stay on track. To my Mother, you are my light, the one who has guided me through difficult times from day one. You are my everything dear Mother. Father, the pillar of my building. My love knows no bounds for both of you.

And to everyone else that I haven't mentioned, you are not forgotten. Thank you for everything. And most importantly, I give thanks to the Lord. None of my achievements would have been possible without your guiding hand and grace.

The most important discovery in my thesis was the people I have met along the way. Again. Thank you to all. And to you, Dear Joanna – Walter Mitty I shall indeed embody as you have done so. After meeting you, I feel like doing better. Becoming better. To strive for something greater. Verily, I have learned that we are human beings and a Real Hero and we shall be forever young.

Abstract

This research is investigating the gap between New Zealand university marketing degree content and SME marketing job requirements. Marketing has changed drastically in the Internet age. This study asks if university marketing courses have kept pace with the requirements of small-to-medium enterprises. The aim of the research is to explore the gap between SME marketing requirements and university marketing courses. To identify the strategic implications of any gap for businesses, universities and society and to suggest methods of remedying any gap identified. The methodology employed was content analysis of SME marketing job descriptions and university undergraduate marketing course curricula, followed by semi-structured interviews with undergraduate marketing coordinators from three New Zealand universities.

The findings indicate a gap indeed exists. Industry analysis identified four key areas in demand: soft skills, communication skills, theory and industry skills. Industry skills are most lacking in the marketing curricula while marketing theory is well covered. However, marketing theory tends to emphasize large business; no SME or startup-oriented theory or coursework was identified. Massey University was the only university to offer specific communication courses in its marketing curricula. Waikato offered the most digitally-enriched curricula. Interviews revealed there are political barriers to reform of the curricula, especially universities' adherence to the PBRF system and emphasis on research publications by academics. Teaching and industry experience appear to have minimal weighting in career progression for academics.

Universities should seek to incorporate all four areas identified into their business and marketing curricula. Academic career progression should place additional weight on teaching and industry experience. There appear to be an excess of academics who have never worked in marketing or business. Business schools need to embrace a balance between scholarly theory and practice, and install this into the curricula. More thorough internships, business-university associations and a greater emphasis on teaching excellence are recommended.

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter will provide an introduction to the research, which will investigate if there is a gap between the marketing knowledge, skills and competencies required by New Zealand's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the content currently delivered in undergraduate university marketing degrees in New Zealand. The first section provides background to the research to give a contextual basis of the thesis. The following section is the research aim, justification for the research and the methodology. A summary of the thesis outline is provided in the final section.

1.1 Background to the research

New Zealand university business schools are producing thousands of marketing and business graduates every year. But are they preparing students for the SME workforce? SMEs as businesses are significantly different to large businesses with specific emphasis on the notion of scarcity (Carson & Gilmore, 2000). That is, SMEs operate in a state of limited resources and capital which leads to a unique SME culture of innovation, flexibility and fluid business structures along with a series of limitations (Carson & Gilmore, 2000). Over 80% of New Zealand businesses are SMEs (TEC, 2016) and with marketing being cited as a critical success factor for business success, SME marketing therefore becomes a topic worthy of research. Classic business wisdom view marketing as a business function that mediates the relationship between the consumer and the business (Aaker 2011; Chitty 2011). Marketing as a function has evolved from standard, one-way communication methods to become targeted and consumer-involved, utilizing technological tools such as data analytics, digital marketing, social media marketing and digital advertising in addition to extensive utilization of online and offline networks.

1.2 Research aim

This study will focus on examining and determining if there exists a gap between the marketing knowledge, skills and competencies required by New Zealand's SMEs and the content currently delivered in undergraduate university marketing degrees in New Zealand.. The research will consist of two main areas: investigating SME marketing in terms of its roles and functions in SMEs as a business function, and the current state of marketing education in the context of the developments in digital business and social media platforms.

1.3 Justification for the research

Universities as institutes and their role and function in society have dramatically changed over the last decade due to a number of factors (Bennis & O'Toole 2005). These include the rapid development and use of digital technologies, Web 2.0 and social media (Harrigan & Hulbert 2011). Marketing education is an increasingly important area of research due to the role marketing plays in business success; therefore, the optimal marketing education curricula within our university marketing programmes is of significant importance. The findings of previous gap analysis studies suggest that a gap persists between marketing education content and industry marketing requirements (Schlee & Kaarns 2017; Wymbbs 2011; De Villiers 2010).

1.4 Methodology

The study presents an interpretivist approach to investigate the research problem. The methodology employed for the study consisted of two phases: content analysis and interviews. Phase One was comprised of a two-part content analysis. Part one was content analysis of SME entry-level marketing jobs from four industry leading New Zealand job sites to identify the knowledge, skills and competencies required for such jobs. Part two consisted of content analysis of the undergraduate marketing courses of

New Zealand's seven universities in order to examine the offerings in terms of course work and knowledge, and the skills and competencies taught.

Phase one's data was analysed and used to construct a series of questions for Phase Two where semi-structured interviews were conducted with four marketing educators with course coordinator roles from three New Zealand universities. Thematic analysis via Nvivo was used for the industry job content analysis, and manual thematic analysis and Nvivo coding was used to code the interview data. The findings along with the literature will be used to construct a curricula model for marketing departments in New Zealand universities for optimal course outcomes.

Chapter 3 provides an in-depth description of the research methodology employed for this thesis.

1.5 Contribution

The findings of the study contribute managerially and theoretically to the literature.

The implications of the findings in terms of contribution are comprised of in terms of the marketing literature, SME marketing literature, business education and marketing education contributions.

Firstly, the sales-focused orientation of SME marketing's networking was confirmed, although the application of this marketing function was generally found to be applied after the first three years of entry level work, when more strategic and managerial roles were given to employees. Secondly, irrespective of the job role, social media marketing, content marketing, and soft skills were collectively demanded as skills. Therefore, SME marketing is not only a function of marketing activities but more specifically, a mix of both technical and soft skill sets applied together in the work place. Marketing education content within New Zealand university curricula was found to be lacking in relevant industry knowledge, skills, and competencies required to prepare students for the SME marketing sector and the large business sector. However, the large business sector has the resources to upskill their entry level graduates compared to resource-scarce SMEs who

do not have this option. It is recommended that marketing education should teach both digital and soft skills which students can apply via internships, extensive real life projects, and pre-graduation work experience. Universities should revise their marketing degrees and integrate contemporary business practices both in digital and soft skill teachings to equip business students with the relevant skills required for entering the workforce.

1.6 Definitions of the four skillsets

Soft skills are defined as the interpersonal, behavioural or people skills needed to apply hard skills which often revolves around theory and technical skills in a particular setting (De Villiers,2010). Communication skills are defined as everything related to the different types of projecting information in the form of verbal, written and oral communication to name the three most common. Theoretical skills (knowledge) is the acquirement of specific areas of knowledge on a particular field (De Villiers, 2010 ; Wymbbs ,2011) . For example, learning about branding from a textbook is considered theoretical knowledge prior to communicating it or applying it in a setting. Industry (also called technical or digital) KSC refer to everything that is applied via a specific digital, IT or software based tool that seeks to achieve a specific objective (Schlee & Karns, 2017) . For example, designing a Google AdWords campaign on the Google suite for an advertising objective is considered a digital marketing skill.

1.7 Outline of the thesis

Following Chapter 1, which outlined the background, research aim, justification of the research, and methodology, we follow on to Chapter 2 which examines the literature on SME marketing and marketing education. In Chapter 3, a full description of the research methodology employed is given. Following Chapter 3, the research findings are presented in Chapters 4 to 6 with an in-depth analysis of the content analysis and interviews. A conceptual model of marketing knowledge, skills and capabilities is

presented in Chapter 7, together with a discussion of the findings in relation to extant literature.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

Small to medium enterprises (SMEs) make up a major part of the New Zealand economy. (Ministry of Business, 2017). SMEs have many similarities and differences to large businesses with the main differences being structure, size, agility, and founder involvement in the business operation. The nature of SMEs affects the marketing activity and thus marketing for SMEs tends to fall under the label of SME marketing which is also called startup marketing technology oriented SMEs. Marketing has undergone major changes in the last decade with the rapid evolution of the online Web, digital marketing, and social media networks (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; De Villiers, 2010; Wymbs, 2011). Despite the rapid development of digital marketing, marketing curricula remains traditionally focused on large business marketing, leaving SMEs at an arguable disadvantage by producing cohorts of graduates that lack SME marketing knowledge, skills, and competencies (KSC) to join and contribute their KSC to the SME sector. The role of marketing academics in educating students for the marketing sector is one of continuous debate. The literature review will first examine marketing as a business function, before focusing on SMEs followed by a detailed overview of SME marketing literature. Following this will be an examination of business and marketing education literature and the role of universities and marketing academics.

2.1 Marketing

According to the American Marketing Association the roles and functions of marketing revolve around the research, design, and implementation of value-adding products and services, which are marketed towards a specific target consumer (Aaker, 2011). Specifically, they define marketing as an “*activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large*” (Alan, 2012). The definition holds

significant meaning as it was once defined as a process but is now an activity, which now relates to a set of interconnected processes that seek to deliver greater value when compared to a silo process. In 1983, Dickinson, Herbst, and O'Shaughnessy wrote a controversial article titled "What are Business Schools Doing for Business?" The authors noted the lack of communication and connection between business schools and industry. Mintzberg (2004) adds that in addition to this disconnect, curricula still persistently orient around large business theory. Marketing as a business function serves multiple purposes from direct marketing, promotions, and strategic analysis to the development of long-term intangible assets that marketing defines as a brand. In turn, digital and software tools have rapidly developed, influencing the application of these functions. Small to medium enterprises differ from large businesses due to scarcity of resources, in turn affecting their marketing activities and every other business function. With over 70% of New Zealand businesses being SMEs, marketing within these small businesses is even more crucial for business success (Aaker, 2011; Chitty 2011; NZ SME Report 2014). The literature review that follows will first examine marketing in a broad context followed by an examination of the impact of SME marketing and technologies on the evolution of marketing. Following this will be a review of the business education literature with a focus on the state of marketing education, the reasoning behind its current state and the impact this presents to students, educators, and industry.

2.1.1 Traditional marketing

Marketing has traditionally been seen as a business function and its role is to mediate the relationship between the business and its customers (Moorman & Rust, 1999).

Undoubtedly, customers are the core of business performance; without customers, there would be no sales and without sales there would be no business. The marketing department, therefore, is not just a department, but a key driving force behind organizational growth and success (Aaker, 2011; Gilmore, 2012; Gilmore, Carson, & Grant, 2001; Moorman & Rust, 1999; Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). Furthermore, Aaker (2011) and Carson and Grant (2001) stress the significant relationship between marketing and other departments, such as operations and finance – with particular emphasis on the

former. This observation is supported by Chitty (2011), according to whom operational synergies with marketing are a key success factor in both large organizations and small to medium enterprises (SMEs). Other authors emphasize the role of marketing as a precursor to sales (Gilmore, 2012) while also noting that connections to other departments are less relevant in relatively smaller SMEs. Marketing as a concept has been progressively changing in dynamic and function in business as trends, consumers, and society collectively change. These changes are reflected in Table 1.

Table 1: Types of marketing

| Role | Description |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <i>Acquisition marketing</i> | Refers to marketing to potential new customers so as to acquire their business and, eventually, loyalty. |
| <i>Retention marketing</i> | Refers to marketing to existing customers. Here, the focus is on building and maintaining profit and long-term relationships. |
| <i>Direct marketing</i> | Refers to marketing to the customer via various B2C channels |
| <i>Brand marketing</i> | Refers to marketing with the goal of increasing brand equity – that is, the awareness of loyalty and strong positive association with specific brands. |
| <i>Content marketing</i> | The creation of useful content tailored to the buyers’ stage in the buyer journey. |
| <i>Inbound marketing</i> | Marketing with the goal of attracting customers without interrupting their routine. Focuses on content marketing as a strategy. |
| <i>Outbound marketing</i> | Business to consumer marketing consisting of traditional advertising, mass media, and telemarketing |
| <i>Social media marketing</i> | Digital marketing utilizing social media channels. Involves heavy co-creation and consumer involvement. |
| <i>Growth hacking</i> | Data driven marketing with rigorous metrics towards a single focused goal oriented around increasing the user base of the SME offering. |

(Sources: Aaker 2011; Chitty 2011; Deloitte 2017; Gallagher & Ransbotham, 2010; LinkedIn and Hubspot, 2015).

Marketing is critical to the success of small to medium sized enterprises, not only for traditional customer acquisition but also in terms of branding and overall business growth. Multiple authors note that the old method of business departments including marketing operating in silos is being phased out with the movement to digital marketing and integrated marketing communications (J. Hill, 2001a; Moorman & Rust, 1999; Moriarty, Jones, Rowley, & Kupiec-Teahan, 2008; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, & Carson, 2009a; Mike Simpson & Taylor, 2002a; Walsh & Lipinski, 2009).

This is because SMEs require extensive integration of marketing operations to satisfy consumers in a consumer involved digital age (Andrew, Eileen, & Chen, 2012; Balakrishnan, Dahnil, & Yi, 2014; Dahnil, Marzuki, Langgat, & Fabeil, 2014; Delahaye Paine, 2011; Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011; Ryan & Jones, 2011). Social media marketing plays a critical role for SMEs in that it provides a platform for their consumers to engage with each other and with businesses on multiple channels (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). Furthermore, social media integrates all of these roles through its dynamic, global reach and highly engaging online virtual community platforms. Aaker (2011) argues for a cautious approach, as he argues that social media should not usurp the fundamental goal of marketing. Namely, as per Friedman's profit oriented business ideology, it is important to remain focused on profits as the ultimate goal for marketing (Friedman, 2007; Husted & De Jesus Salazar, 2006).

2.1.2 Role of marketing

Marketing, as an academic discipline and business activity, has undergone significant change in terms of consumer-business dynamics (Carson, 1995; Gilmore, 2012; Moorman & Rust, 1999; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009). This relates to stakeholder relationships and involvements, with a strong emphasis on consumer involvement in the marketing process (Carson & Gilmore, 2000; Gilmore, Carson, & Grant, 2001; Moorman & Rust, 1999). Multiple marketing practitioners, as well as academics, agree that, in previous decades, marketing philosophies lost their modern application in light of the change in the business-consumer dynamic from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 (Aaker, 2011;

Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Shaltoni, 2016). Some factors responsible for the drastic shift in marketing as a profession include greater access to mass media, consumer empowerment, and Web 2.0 technologies that paved the way for digital marketing and social media as a disruptive and innovative form of marketing (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011). Another shift that has been noted by academics is that businesses are increasingly accounting for their service delivery (Brown, Fisk, & Bitner, 1994; Carlborg, Kindström, & Kowalkowski, 2013; Fisk, Brown, & Bitner, 1993; Rushton & Carson, 1985). This shift in power from businesses to consumers has brought about a disruptive change in the nature of competition, accountability, and marketing (Aaker, 2011; Drucker, 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011).

Within the context of these recent developments, several authors have noted a change in marketing orientation. Previously, marketing scholars supported a marketing orientation focused on a relationship-based approach to marketing (Carson & Gilmore, 2000; Gilmore, 2012; Morris & Lewis, 1995; Morrish, 2011). More recently, however, authors have argued for a customer-focused marketing model – including elements such as co-creation, engagement, bilateral relationships, and consumer involvement (Aaker 2011; Harrigan & Hulbert 2011; Wymbs, 2011). This is in contrast to a unilateral business-dominant paradigm that once dominated the marketing industry in the form of traditional one-way mass media and advertising (Tobergte & Curtis, 2016).

2.2 Small to medium enterprises

The literature on SMEs has highlighted the uniqueness of SMEs and the differences to large businesses in terms of business function, marketing, and resources (Gilmore, 2012; Gilmore et al., 2001; Reijonen, 2010). The academic literature on SME marketing has revealed the emergence of several themes around the obstacles that SMEs face in business operations and specifically marketing. These include limited capital, access to skilled labour, and limited expertise in addition to the heavy dependence on the founder's personality traits and business skill (Franco, Santos, Ramalho, & Nunes, 2014). A great deal of previous research into SME traits has focused on these elements in the context of

not only the limitations they put on SMEs but more importantly, how SMEs harness them to their advantage compared to their larger business counterparts. Given the emphasis on these traits, it is expected, then, that SME marketing will differ from traditional large business marketing (Gilmore, Gallagher, & Henry, 2007; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, & Carson, 2009). Several authors have noted that, with regard to business and marketing operations, there is a strong relationship between an SME's relative performance and its entrepreneurial orientation – specifically, the entrepreneurial orientations that apply to the SME's business and marketing practices (Carson, 1995; Gilmore, 2011, 2012; Gilmore et al., 2001). Gilmore (2011, 2012) provides further support in noting that marketing and entrepreneurship are synergistic, interdependent, and part of the same relative construct in the context of business practices.

Several factors drive the interface of marketing and entrepreneurship in SMEs. For instance, dynamic growth and interaction and value creation (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012). This is seen through the relatively rapid release of SME products and services, the necessity for personal achievement and a fluid and flexible business structure to meet a changing market and consumer demands and the importance of managing, maintaining, and growing SME networks (Aaker, 2011; Gilmore et al., 2007; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009).

2.2.1 NZ SMEs

NZ small to medium enterprises have seen an increase in both number of businesses and employees (Ministry of Business, 2017). New Zealand as a country and economy is comprised of small to medium businesses. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment report of 2017 provided the following data. Approximately 97% of businesses have less than 20 employees (499,944 businesses) with a further 28% of New Zealand's GDP being produced by this SME group. In terms of job creation, 2016 saw approximately 42% of jobs being created by SMEs with less than 20 employees. Similarly, SMEs with 50+ employees employed approximately 300,000 employees in the years 2013-2015. For full statistics and reference for New Zealand SMEs in terms of

GDP, job creation, and the impact SMEs have on the New Zealand economy, the reports of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (Ministry of Business, 2017) are recommended. SMEs in terms of size vary across countries, with the majority in New Zealand having between 5-20, 20-30 and 30-50 employees with approximately 5,000 having 50 employees. For the purposes of this thesis, SMEs are defined as small to medium enterprises with 50 or less employees (Ministry of Business, 2017)

2.3 SME marketing

SMEs differ significantly from large businesses and multinationals (Aaker 2011; Gilmore 2011; Carson & Gilmore, 2000 2009; Moorman & Rust, 1999; Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). The most commonly cited differences, for instance, are size, resource access, and structure. According to Walsh and Lipinski (2009) and Aaker (2011), SMEs are primarily limited by their size which, in turn, limits their market power. Dragos, Mihai and Iuliana (2014), on the other hand, view capital and departmental resources as the key limiting trait of SMEs. Indeed, multiple authors (Gilmore et al., 2001; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, & Carson, 2009) agree that size is a major area that leads to these differences between SMEs and large organizations with the former having arguably more room for creativity, innovation, and change. Evidently, we can note that SMEs lack resources to compete with larger organizations and thus this has led to authors proposing that SMEs do not conduct proper marketing in the classical business function sense (Kumar & Sheth, 2012; Moorman & Rust, 1999; Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). O'Dwyer, Gilmore and Carson (2009b) substantiate this claim with their finding that a lack of resources directly limits an SME's ability to conduct full-scale marketing programmes. However, McCartan-Quinn (2000) notes that despite SME business constraints, marketing still plays a vital role in an SME's initial growth and long-term success. Ironically, Drucker (2014) notes that SME success lies directly in entrepreneurial marketing where the small size, open culture, and room for innovation enables SMEs to grow despite the given constraints.

It is argued by theorists such as Cheng, Lourenço and Resnick (2016) that the effects of marketing are more evident in SMEs due to the open culture and essential focus on

customer engagement which Hee Song (2012) agrees is a key SME success factor. Gilmore et al. (2007) substantiate this claim by noting entrepreneurial marketing centred on customer engagement is a commonly established SME oriented marketing practice that positively correlates to increased sales and profit. From these observations, Hanna, Rohm and Crittenden (2011) and Narkiniemi (2013) argue that marketing practitioners deserve seats within the reign of management due to the multifaceted nature of the role marketers play, from sales and operations to product development. Krake (2005) and Gilmore et al. (2001) supported this finding with 100 qualitative interviews with findings indicating the multifaceted role of marketing within SMEs. Cheng et al. (2016) substantiated this claim by undertaking an extensive content analysis revealing that SME marketing is relatively unstructured with a flexible structure throughout the SME, enabling marketers to implement relatively more entrepreneurial marketing practices. Table 2 summarizes the key differences between SMEs and large businesses.

Table 2: Differences between SMEs and Large Businesses

| | SME | Large business |
|---------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Number of Employees | Low | High |
| Resources | Scarce | Highly available |
| Finance | Limited | High |
| Time | Low | High |
| Skilled Labour | Low | High |
| Flexibility | High | Low |
| Impact of Market Changes | High | Low-medium |
| Founder involvement | High | Low |

Aaker (2011) and Chitty (2012) emphasize the change in the landscape of marketing with particular emphasis on business consumer relationships and the interconnectedness of marketing communications as a business function. Table 2 indicates that marketing communications – the main activity of marketing – is no longer silo-like, but rather an integrated and synergistic marketing function(Cheng, Lourenço and Resnick, 2016).This

yields greater results in terms of ROI and customer satisfaction, and, ultimately, positions the brand as the ideal brand in the consumer's mind (Chitty, 2012). Indeed multiple authors support these findings in that an aligned communication strategy has resulted in stronger brand resonance in the consumer's mind (Chitty, 2012; Tobergte & Curtis, 2016; Tuten & Solomon, 2014).

2.3.1 Characteristics of SME marketing

As a function, marketing plays a multifaceted role in SMEs. Chitty (2012) and Tobergte & Curtis (2016) for instance, note that it pushes multiple boundaries between an SME and its respective stakeholders. Marketing functions are seen as a feasible way to identify, validate, and narrow down market gaps and secure a competitive advantage (Chitty, 2012; Gilmore, 2012; Moorman & Rust, 1999; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009). Adding on to these findings, the literature also emphasize marketing's important role in business operations by noting that effectively applied marketing practices maximize an SME's ability to innovate within a context of limited capital, skills, and resources, while remaining profitable (O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009). In this area, the SME literature indicates various factors related to business performance. An SME literature review conducted by Blythe (2001) revealed the factors as being the SME marketing function and the marketing knowledge, skills, and ability of the SME owner. Other authors noted customer satisfaction (Aaker, 2011), integrated marketing, and branding operations (Chitty 2012; Carson & Gilmore, 2000, 2009), in addition to sustained competitive advantages, as critical elements of SME success. SME businesses also narrow down their marketing functions, activities, and operations in a pre-planned, proactive, and customer-focused approach which stems from the SME's innovative approach. The classic marketing dynamic leans towards a management philosophy which centres the customer as the focal point of business operation and subsequently focuses on researching, understanding, creating, and communicating a value proposition (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012; Carson & Gilmore 2000).

Blankson and Cheng (2005) note that classical marketing is a fixed, pre-planned, and systematically organized business function that requires significant resources, which the SME structure does not operate by in the context of its fluid and dynamic structure.

Indeed, McLarty (1998) agrees that SME marketing is not systematic or operationalized. Traditionally, the focus of marketing as a business function was centred on customers, competition, profitability, and the selling of a uniform good to a specific mass market (Moorman & Rust, 1999). Notably, the factors that contributed to this paradigm included the industrial revolution with key driving forces being mass production, economies of scale, and the concept of normalization of goods and services (Fillis, 2002; Gilmore, 2011; Hill, 2001b; Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). Moreover, there has been an evident shift in both the practice and academic focus of marketing from mass marketing standardized products to market segmentation (Cheng et al., 2016). From here, the focus has developed into micro marketing and a more “narrowed focus” niche with the final shift going to mass customization and the final stage of personalization marketing (Mokhtar, 2015; Tuten, 2010). Indeed, drawing from the literature, we can note that SME marketing orients around innovative practices. Furthermore, the founder’s involvement and innovative practices have given rise to SME marketing as being entrepreneurial and therefore is also commonly called innovative marketing or entrepreneurial marketing. The characteristics of SMEs and their impact on SME marketing are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3: The Characteristics of SMEs and their Impact

| SME Trait | SME characteristic | Impact on SME Marketing |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Founder's Involvement | High | Founder's vision and ideation into marketing campaign |
| Culture | Flexible and innovative | Founder and employee involvement in multiple areas of marketing and business operations |
| Flexibility | High | Multiple tasks with flexible schedules |
| Number of Employees | Low | Must attract the skilled talents that fit within the SMEs and founder's vision |
| Finance | Low | Innovative low budget marketing initiatives (Social media, Content marketing) |
| Time | Low | Few effective campaigns |
| Skilled Labour | Low | SME marketers with KSC in digital, design and data oriented practices |
| Market Change Effect | High | Must remain up-to-date with industry |

As can be seen from the table, the characteristics of SME marketing have an effect on marketing orientation and the subsequent characteristics of SME marketing. Evidently, the marketing function within SMEs is in a sense limited by the constraints fundamental to the very nature of SMEs in terms of scarce resources and operation within a volatile business environment. The nature of SMEs is both its ultimatum and its ultimate competitive advantage compared to a large business model. Considered to be a pioneer of small business marketing, small business operations, and maximizing SME scarcity, Jason Fried from the company 37 Signals draws on the lessons that he and his company learned via maximizing the fluidity, flexibility, and agile nature of SMEs to their advantage (Bryant, 2017; Fried, 2010).

The marketing literature suggests a major focus on marketing theories centred on large corporations rather than SME marketing (Gilmore et al., 2007; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009). It is arguable, therefore, that these theories have questionable applications within SME contexts. Indeed, SMEs differ in their definitions and interpretations of marketing activity. Stokes (2000) notes that, amongst SME owners, sales and promotions are perceived as the dominant marketing functions. This stems from the ability of SMEs to produce sales with limited marketing planning and activities (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2011; Stokes, 2000). Unsurprisingly, Siu (2002) found that SMEs with established marketing practices have greater sales and are more profitable than those without these practices. In the context of SME strategic planning, marketing functions are strongly correlated with SME success; that is, successful SMEs define their marketing with a customer oriented focus (Gilmore, 2012; Hee Song, 2012; J. Hill, 2001; Nwankwo & Gbadamosi, 2011). Furthermore, the most profitable SMEs have in place a marketing plan tailored to their specific target market. Overall, the majority of the SME marketing literature points towards a pattern relating to a customer centric and network focused model of marketing.

2.4 The SME marketing environment

A key factor in SME marketing is the SMEs position within a dynamic environment (Siu 2001; Stokes 2000), which consequently results in non-systematic business and marketing decisions being made on a regular basis. The literature points to a lack of structure in SME business decisions alongside (Aaker 2011; Chitty 2012; Siu et al. 2001; Stokes 2000). Stokes (2000) and Gilmore (2011), also revealed the unstructured nature of SMEs. Consequently, this has led SME marketing to be an informal and continuously changing business function (Carson, Gilmore, & Rocks, 2004). Cheng, Lourenco, and Resnick (2016) support these claims of responsiveness in a dynamic environment by noting that SMEs evolve in their dynamic environment when responding to changing market needs.

2.4.1 Complexity

Indeed, in illustrating the dynamic complexity of the SME environment, authors have revealed multiple critical elements of marketing such as target customer markets and product and service trends (Carson, 1995; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009; Siu, 2002; Springer & Carson, 2012). Furthermore, the heavily saturated SME market gives rise to competition which according to Gilmore et al. (2011) ensures the firm remains relevant, focused, and consistent in delivering value to customers (Aaker, 2011). Furthermore, Carson and Crombie (1989) note that SMEs give little focus to formalities and business models. Aaker et al. (2011) along with Neti (2011) and Kotler (2011) emphasize this point by pointing to the scarce nature of resources within the SME environment, consequently leading to a narrower focus and marketing function. Inevitably this leads SME marketing to be responsive and reactive to the market, that is, responding to changing trends, customer problems, and needs in addition to competitive activity (Carson & Gilmore, 2000, 2009; Siu et al. 2001; Stokes et al. 2000; Martin 2009). Cheng, Lourenco, and Resnick (2016) support these findings with results of their study indicating that SME marketing strategies are associated with business and marketing innovation in addition to product quality, as opposed to systematic marketing processes

that are evident in large scaled systemized corporate businesses. SME marketing, in contrast to large businesses, heavily involves the founder and thus the founder's perceptions have significant influence on SME marketing activities and SMEs' direction (Carson & Gilmore, 2000).

2.4.2 Founder perceptions

SME marketing within a business context has a strong relationship with the SME owner's perception of the external environment and the owner's vision for the SME (Fillis, 2002; Gilmore et al., 2001; Hill, 2001a; Knight, 2000; Murdoch, Blackey, & Blythe, 2001). Qualitative interviews have affirmed these findings via establishing the relationship of the SME founder's vision and entrepreneurial traits with SMEs' marketing and overall business (O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009). Indeed, this entrepreneurial-founder factor plays a major part in characterizing SME marketing as it relies on continued research, learning, and application of experience that is heavily influenced by existing entrepreneurs within the SME market (Drucker, 2007; Fried, 2010). Furthermore, some authors have noticed varying approaches in SME marketing activity. Gilmore & Carson (2000) found that despite some focus on the classic 4P's of marketing along with the 7P's of service marketing, SME founders and entrepreneurial minded owners tend to focus on the power of promotion, word of mouth (WOM) marketing, and networking (Catarina, 2015; Demishkevich, 2015; Kumar, Kumar, & Mishra, 2015; Lekhanya Mpele, 2015; Vey, 2016). A qualitative study done by O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al. (2009) confirmed these claims with findings that substantiate the importance of networking and WOM in terms of SME marketing activities. Furthermore, it has been found that SME owners emphasize their brand as the most relevant form of contact with their customers upon which networking and WOM is built and sustained through continued SME marketing activities (Awan & Hashmi, 2014).

2.4.3. Innovative marketing activities

Drucker (2007, 2014) notes continuous innovation is the key to survival, in addition to positive growth due to the saturation of markets and increasing competition in the modern-day business landscape. Several authors (Drucker 2007, 2014; Carson & Gilmore 2000) agree with Drucker (2007) by noting that entrepreneurial practices are evident in SME marketing in addition to being a “good fit” for SME culture. That is, SMEs exist in a dynamic environment which results in SME marketing decisions being taken in a sporadic, non-sequential and unstructured fashion, which resembles the nature of entrepreneurship and innovation (Gilmore 2011; Gilmore & Carson 2009). On this note, entrepreneurial marketing is defined as innovative marketing, which transcends the fixed rules and practices that are seen in typical programmes in large-scale businesses (Collinson & Shaw, 2001; Gilmore, 2011; O'Dwyer et al., 2009). Arguably, with over 70% of NZ businesses being SMEs, the importance of entrepreneurial marketing is more important than ever before in order to continuously innovate and survive in a saturated economy (Berisha & Shiroka Pula, 2015; Massey et al., 2004; Ministry of Business, 2017).

Entrepreneurial marketing (EM) as a concept has taken on multiple definitions as time has progressed. With the sequential rise of SME importance in economies across the globe, marketing as a critical function of business has also evolved accordingly (O'Dwyer et al., 2009; Simpson & Taylor, 2002; Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). As Drucker (2007, 2014) notes, continuous innovative practices within business are key to business survival and EM is a result of innovative application within the function and role of marketing in businesses. It is further argued that the synergistic nature of marketing results in marketing as a function and business activity with significant relations with sales, operations and overall function of multiple business departments. Aaker (2011) and Chitty (2012) agree on this note, indicating the multifaceted nature of marketing giving rise to the EM framework. O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al. (2009) substantiated this claim with a literature analysis revealing that EM is based on the knowledge of how SME owners and entrepreneurs conduct business practice, that is, decisions relating to product and service offerings in the

context of SME constraints relating to resources, expertise, and size (Gilmore, 2012; Gilmore et al., 2001; Morris & Lewis, 1995; O'Dwyer et al., 2009; Reijonen, 2010; Resnick et al., 2011). The fluid and flexible structure of SMEs entails the very model of innovative marketing. Indeed as Drucker (2014) notes, scarcity is the ideal ground for the development of innovations. One of these, which has caused major disruption in the digital age, is social media marketing. From reaching millions of consumers with a single click to millions of content posted up online on a daily basis (Funk, 2013; Gallagher & Ransbotham, 2010; Kietzmann et al., 2011), social media is here to stay and grow. SMEs must adopt social media and innovative marketing strategies in order to maintain their place in the market. Failing to innovate is cited by multiple authors as the key reason for failure among SMEs (Atkins, 2014; Gunther, 2009). The following section will seek to examine online Web, digital marketing, and social media marketing and their implications for SMEs and SME marketing.

2.5 Technology and digital marketing

2.5.1 Overview of the Web

Before the age of social media and digital communication, there was Web 1.0.

This period of one-way communication was characterised by passive Internet consumers with minimal involvement in business operations and minimal user-generated content (UGC) from consumers (Andrew et al., 2012). The focus, then, was on consumers receiving information with little to no involvement in creating and developing messages, or even sharing messages within their consumer circle (Leeflang, Verhoef, Dahlström, & Freundt, 2014). Web 2.0, by contrast, fosters two-way communication and consumer involvement throughout the business-consumer relationship dynamic (Grzegorz, 2009; Schlee & Harich, 2010 ; Schlee & Karns, 2017). These characteristics make Web 2.0 the ideal platform for social media and digital marketing (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012).

Corporate businesses and mature start-up companies have successfully adopted the social media marketing strategy. SMEs, however, have yet to adapt a well-rounded social media

and overall digital marketing strategy to their existing strong focus on networking and sales oriented marketing as per traditional SME marketing strategy (Hee Song, 2012; Jones, 2010; Tobergte & Curtis, 2016). This is, in part, because – as examined previously – they see marketing as expensive and ineffective (Gilmore, 2012; O’Dwyer, Gilmorespri, & Carson, 2009) This section will now examine digital marketing, social media marketing, and technology in marketing and their implications for SMEs.

2.5.2 Web development

There are various definitions of Web 2.0. Practitioner Tim O’Reilly (2005) – the man behind the term – saw Web 2.0 as a progressive step in the online world by describing it as common applications linked together by common characteristics. From these definitions, we can isolate the meaning of Web 2.0 as an online platform where technological elements cooperatively provide a digital network space that empowers and connects consumers (Grzegorz, 2009; Jones, 2010; Kietzmann et al., 2011; Tuten, 2010). The multifaceted nature of Web 2.0 directly highlights the dynamic complexity of the issue, where elements of various fields from marketing, information technology, and psychology co-exist and cooperate synergistically (Grzegorz, 2009; Jones, 2010).

The technologies that have enabled the development of Web 2.0 platforms have arguably changed the role of marketing in relation to the previously cited change in business dynamics (Grzegorz, 2009; Jones, 2010). Marketing authors have come to a consensus on the changing dynamics of marketing that has meant that traditional mass media is losing its effectiveness (Aaker 2011) and consequently, an increase in Web 2.0 integrated methods must be employed in order to sustain competitive advantage and remain profitable (Chitty, 2011). Consumers, with specific emphasis on millennials, have more choice than ever in terms of products and services and are more critical in their purchasing behaviours (Lingelbach, Patino, & Pitta, 2012; Wolf & Thomas, 2007).

In terms of SME marketing, the authors come to the consensus that SMEs must adapt to the Web 2.0 phenomenon and change from traditional media to SME oriented marketing practices (Aaker 2011; Chitty 2012). SMEs must readily adopt social media and digital

marketing practice in order to survive in this competitive business landscape (Grzegorz, 2009; Jones, 2010; Tuten, 2010; Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011).

2.5.3 Evolution of marketing

Technological advancements are rapidly changing business with the fastest changing area in business being marketing (LinkedIn and Hubspot, 2017). However, university marketing educators' integration of these changes in marketing is rather slow and questionable (Gray, Grundvåg Ottesen, Bell, Chapman, & Whiten, 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017). Modern-day marketing practice is inseparable from technology, with digital marketing, analytics, and statistical software being the norm in everyday marketing roles in addition to digital media, social media, and smartphones having a central role in consumers' daily lives and consumption habits (Baysinger, 2015; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017). In this manner, it is argued that technological developments have radically changed business but more importantly, increased and changed the role of marketing as a business function from a department to an integrated activity that has significant impact on business success (Gray et al., 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Wymbs, 2016).

Wymbs (2011) along with LinkedIn and Hubspot (2015) note that despite this evolution and growth of marketing, leading it to become a technology facilitated business function, we as marketing professionals and academics are constricted by old theories that are arguably being phased out by the disruptive power of digital marketing. Although traditional marketing objectives and goals seldom change, marketing processes and functions are changing and therefore classical theory is now slowly fading away and losing its contemporary relevance. Factors that have caused this effect, in turn, are fuelling the growth of digital marketing including (but not limited to) the empowerment of consumers, globalization, access to digital devices, changing consumer trends, and the generation of millennial who have significantly more needs, demands, and desires compared to the previous baby boomer generation (Baysinger, 2015; De Villiers, 2010; Royle & Laing, 2014; UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2014).

It is suggested that traditional marketing theory be revised if marketing is to have its full potential in the business setting in this developed digital age and for the more developed era to come. Marketing curricula must take into account these rapid changes in order for the modern marketing graduate to be able to grow, survive, and lead in their role as the next digital marketers (Bott, 2008; Finch, Nadeau, & O'Reilly, 2013; Lamont & Friedman, 1997; Neier & Zayer, 2015; UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2014). The biggest change and evolved aspect of marketing is the digital marketing phenomenon which will now be briefly examined.

2.6 Digital marketing

Digital marketing as a phenomenon has rapidly grown in the last 10 years with the majority of its growth happening with the advent of social media platforms (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011). Digital marketing has varying definitions but is centred on the use of technology to communicate value to customers via various digital channels with the goal of developing, maintaining, and growing long-term customer relationships that ultimately lead to brand loyalty (Wymbs, 2011). Table 4 summarizes the main digital marketing channels utilized by businesses. Digital marketing has disrupted the traditional marketing-consumer relationship due to the availability of online shopping available on consumer smartphones and multiple other devices including laptops, tablets, and smart watches (Deloitte 2017; LinkedIn and Hubspot 2015). Interestingly, digital marketing, although transforming consumer behaviour and business-consumer relations, is still built and focused on traditional marketing objectives but is now conducted in a more efficient, real time, data driven, and scalable manner (Aaker, 2011; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Wymbs, 2011). Consumer engagement, once traditionally done through business controlled mass media channels such as TV, newspapers, radio, and print marketing is now co-created with consumers via online channels such as social media platforms, online blogs, forums, messenger platforms, and mobile applications (Chitty, 2012). The concept of engagement has changed from consuming what businesses provide to consumers to a highly involved mechanism where consumers are strongly involved in the

brand conversation via the use of digital channels. As Harrigan and Hulbert (2011) point out, consumers are now actively involved in the marketing and transaction process at multiple touch points allowing a wider reach, increased engagement, and consequently a more enhanced customer relationship (Constantinides, 2014; Howard, Mangold, & Johnston, 2014; Kietzmann et al., 2011) .Different types of digital marketing channels and tools are summarized in the table below. Although there are numerous digital marketing tools and channels, the most relevant ones based on the literature are provided below.

Table 4: Digital Marketing Applications

| Digital channel | Description | Marketing Application | Feasibility and Importance |
|-----------------|--|---|--|
| Website | Online platform that the SME owns. Essentially an online directory. | Online presence. Found on search engines Advertising retargeting | Low monetary cost Critical for online presence |
| Blog | Online website that serves as a content portal | Content marketing Brand authority Customer service | Low cost Critical for search engine rankings and brand awareness. |
| Facebook | Social media network where consumers communicate with brands, other consumers and create. content | Niche focused advertising Content marketing C2C dialogue Customer service Brand development | Critical for SMEs Viewed as a second website |
| Twitter | 140 character messaging platform in the form of “Tweets” | Influencer and relationship marketing B2C and C2C dialogue Customer interaction | Low priority for SMEs. More useful for large businesses |
| Instagram | Photo social network where consumers and businesses share visual content in the form of photos and videos relating to their personal and business offering | Product placement Celebrity endorsement | Critical for early customer engagement and brand positioning as the SME grows Feasible for the majority of SMEs |
| YouTube | World’s largest social video sharing platform where millions of videos are uploaded weekly. User generated and difficult to be visible. | Company culture videos Product demos | High cost Low interaction unless extensive advertising spent on content Videos increase branding. |
| Snapchat | Social media app that uses ephemeral messaging | Promotions Brand awareness campaigns | Low importance Low effect on brand equity, profitability Low barrier to effective use |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Email | Email marketing platforms such as Aweber, MailChimp | Email promotions Building subscriber list Hyper focused targeting in email promotions | Highly feasible Free-low cost Highly effective for brand equity, brand awareness, customer relations and promotions |
| Tools | | | |
| SEO (Search engine optimisation) | Optimising Web pages to be ranked in the first page of search engines (Google, Bing and Yahoo) | High ranking on search engine results for direct and indirect consumer searches | Critical importance High cost |
| Pay per click (PPC) advertising | Pay per click advertising on search engines | Targeted campaigns for specific campaigns | Important for early stages of SME operation for market visibility |
| Google Analytics | Analytics tool provided by Google for website analytical insights | Measuring campaign results Qualitative and quantitative reports | Highly feasible Critical for effective metric and insight interpretation. Data used to iterate and improve campaigns |

Digital marketing can be broken down into three main areas: paid media, owned media, and earned media (Crittenden & Crittenden, 2015). Each of these elements are related and seek to grow each other to achieve the goal of long-term customer relationships, sustainable profit, and ultimately, the intangible asset of a competitive brand which Aaker (2011) defines as brand equity. In essence, paid media is used to drive online traffic to the business-owned digital assets (website and social media pages) which then through extensive interaction, engagement and ultimately, word of mouth marketing, produces earned media which is the final product (Constantinides, 2014; Kietzmann et al., 2011). The earned media has the most powerful effect on brand awareness and brand equity due to the high trust consumers place on their peers and circle of influence experience with brands in relation to making their own consumer decisions (Rao Gundala & Khawaja, 2014; Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). A brief overview of these three digital marketing elements is provided below.

2.6.1 Paid media

Paid media refers to every form of advertising that is paid for. In the context of digital marketing, this includes multiple forms of paid advertising (Ads) commonly called pay per click (PPC) marketing, for example, Facebook advertising (Facebook Ads), Google advertising (Google Ads), and online advertising in the form of Twitter Ads, Bing Ads, Yahoo Ads, and website banners. PPC is usually commonly paired with search engine optimisation (SEO). The common theme in paid advertising is placement on the first page of search engines. The more expensive the search term (keyword) that consumers input to look for their desired product and or service, the more expensive the advertising campaign will be. Therefore, this area is strongly related to search engine optimisation (SEO) where marketers utilize digital marketing techniques to optimize their owned media (see below) to show up on search engines (Chitty, 2012; Crittenden & Crittenden, 2015). PPC results are measured by the most popular analytics tool known as Google Analytics which evaluates a PPC campaigns in terms of clicks, views, consumer activity on the campaign location (social media network and website), and final conversions to paying customers. The most commonly paired PPC and analytics duo are Google Adwords and Google analytics.

2.6.2 Owned media

This refers to media that is owned by the business in the form of websites, social media pages, original content such as eBooks, infographics, blog posts, and videos and originally created content. Millennial consumers in particular are major content consumers and providing them this content seeks to position the SME as a brand authority by increasing perceived expertise and brand awareness and providing valuable content for the traffic driven from paid media. Essentially, this comprises key channels where the brand is stored on the Web and consumers find these touch-points and interact (Constantinides, 2014; Hansson, Wrangmo, & Solberg Søylen, 2013)

2.6.3 Earned media

The effect of paid media driving online traffic to the SME-owned media channels is defined as earned media and is considered to be a form of by-product of the former two elements. Earned media is considered to be the most effective form of marketing, commonly referred to as word of mouth marketing (WOM). This is one of the most measurable forms of digital marketing with metrics such as Facebook likes, shares, comments, Instagram followers, comments, Twitter followers and the number of tweets, and website subscribers being a key measurement of the paid and owned media campaigns. An example is a paid Facebook advertisement for a local café SME which drives traffic to the cafe's website and social media channels (owned media). The increased likes, comments, shares, website subscribers, and ultimately, the conversion to a paying customer is the ultimate measurement for SMEs utilising digital marketing. Indeed, this is not new and utilizes the traditional AIDA model where subscribers go through the journey of attention and interest, to decision and finally the action of becoming a subscriber and as a result, a paying customer. Therefore, the literature, along with the author's view, re-emphasizes that digital marketing although disruptive, utilizes grounded marketing theory as a base for its strategic implementation and success in the modern business sector (Constantinides, 2014; Gallagher & Ransbotham, 2010; Gunther, 2009; Kietzmann et al., 2011). In essence, digital marketing has paved the way for new, more efficient, systematic methodologies of reaching customers in a digital business world (Georgieva & Djoukanova, 2014; Kietzmann et al., 2011).

2.7 Social media marketing

2.7.1 Honeycomb model

The honeycomb model (Figure 1) allows us to examine the structure, uses, and user benefits of social media channels (Kietzmann et al., 2011). This, in turn, provides a framework for SMEs to understand the social media landscape in order to formulate an effective social media marketing strategy for their target market. There are seven

components in this model: identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Leeflang et al., 2014). Each of these allows us to unveil and examine a specific facet of a user's social media experiences, and their implications for firms. Importantly, these components are often interrelated and they are not necessarily present in every social media activity. They are merely constructs to facilitate our understanding of how different levels of social media functionality can be observed, configured, and applied in a commercial context (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011).

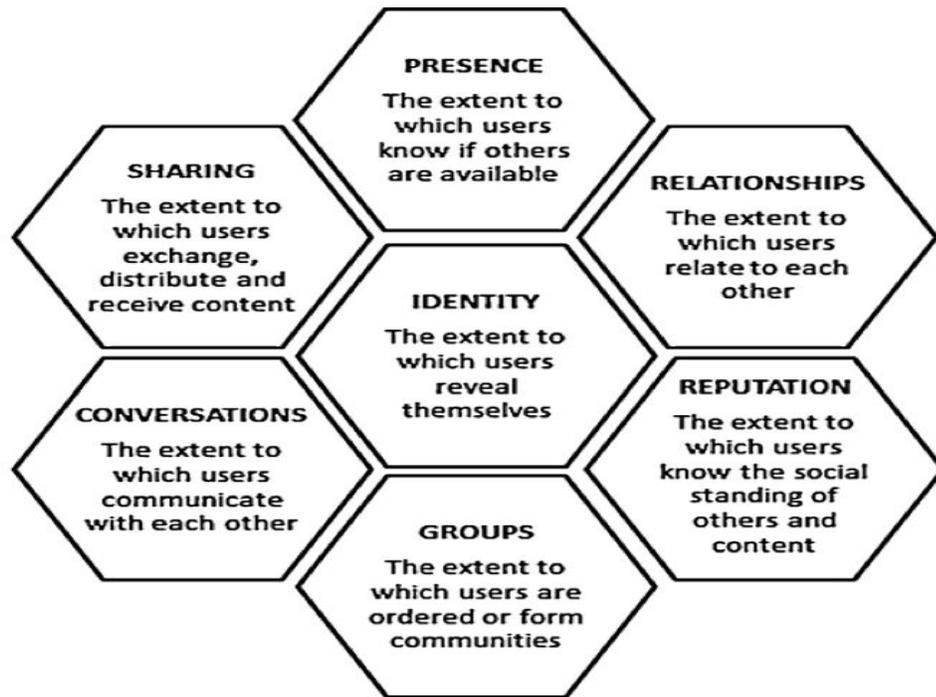


Figure 1: The Honeycomb model of social media
(Source: Kietzmann, Hermkens; McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011)

Table 5: Honeycomb Elements

| Honeycomb Element | Description |
|--------------------------|---|
| Identity | The extent to which social media users reveal their identity |
| Conversations | The extent with which social media users communicate with each other |
| Sharing | The extent which consumers share, receive and curate content |
| Presence | The extent to which users know others are available |
| Relationships | Extent of relationships formed between consumers |
| Reputation | Where users see identify themselves in the virtual communities relative to their friends and circle of influence. |
| Groups | The structure and dynamic of online virtual communities |

Table 5 summarises the social media Honeycomb model for social media networks. We can see the multifaceted nature of the social media broken down in the model. Each element provides us a specific aspect of social media relevant for businesses with key elements providing insight into the power and implications of social media for SMEs and large businesses. The identity element describes the transparent nature of social media whereby users post content in the form of text, photos, and videos about themselves, their views towards products and events happening in their world. The identity element encompasses both the user and the business. Users of social media create profiles and interact with business “pages”. (Bulearca & Bulearca, 2010; Kietzmann et al., 2011; Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2013; Simply Measured, 2014).

Conversation

This element relates to the in-depth communication happening between multiple levels such as consumer-to-consumer, business-to-consumer, and consumer-to-business. For example, conversations are much more rapid and brand impacting on Twitter and Facebook compared to a firm's online blog posts (Brandi & Regina, 2013; Bulearca & Bulearca, 2010). Authors argue that while sharing is a core drive of social media, conversation on the other hand, is core reasoning behind the original creation of social media networks. The researcher argues that social media platforms were designed with the goal of inducing and facilitating communication between users across the Web for a multitude of reasons (Constantinides, 2014; Kietzmann et al., 2011; Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995). These include sharing their day-to-day lives with friends and family, reading content of interest, and as adopters of technology (Constantinides, 2014). The researcher argues that one of the most important elements of conversation is social media platforms, which provide a space for sharing one's message for social and positive causes (Toubia & Stephen, 2013; Wolf & Thomas, 2007)

Sharing

Sharing is seen to be the driving force element of social media networks. This element represents the extent to which online consumers consume content, that is, the sharing, exchange, and distribution of both UGC and curated content across multiple social media networks. The important part here is the content that facilitates the connections with people and the underlying reason consumers meet and share online content on a regular basis. A major example of connection and reasoning in this element is Groupon, which provides consumers with significant discounts (normally 80-90% discount) for everyday products and services. A deal on a normally expensive breakfast buffet would only be valid if the coupon attracts a relatively large number of users. Consequently, the deal is shared across consumers' social media networks and this demonstrates the sharing elements that break down into the connectivity of users via a common reason. Further examples of this element include the sharing of blog posts, viral videos, and celebrity

tweets in addition to everyday UGC. In addition, the reasons for sharing and consumers' goals differ in the context of the social media platform being used. Consumers share their pictures on Instagram and Facebook while career driven reasons drive the sharing and posting of content on LinkedIn.

Reputation

As an element, reputation encompasses many aspects of branding as a business. A business's social media profile is transparent to its users – both consumers and businesses. The social media platforms empower users with tools to measure their digital reputation with specific social media KPI's such as number of followers, post shares, and so on. Increased content and a follower base breed higher degrees of trust. For example, Elon Musk has 13.5 million Twitter followers while Brandon Stanton, author of the world's biggest street photography page Humans of New York, has over 12 million followers on Facebook (Margaix-Arnal, 2007). Reputation in social media refers not only to the users' reputation but the content they share, exchange, and create (Chitty, 2012). Indeed, for Facebook, this refers to the posts, videos for YouTube, tweets for Twitter, and photo posts on Instagram. Like-minded users aggregate over time in what authors define as online brand communities and seek to further develop each other's reputation and personal brand (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012).

2.7.2 Implications of the Honeycomb model

The implication of these building blocks and for each network are highlighted in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6: Implications of the Seven Building Blocks

| Element | Implication |
|----------------------|--|
| <i>Identity</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data privacy, security, and misuse • Balance between sharing identity, privacy, negative publicity |
| <i>Conversations</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversation quality control • Authenticity • SME transparency |
| <i>Sharing</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal issues (copyright, offensive) • Creating common user interests |
| <i>Presence</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channel management / regulation |
| <i>Relationships</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building and managing relationships with online brand communities |
| <i>Reputation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the brand’s reach, social presence, and consumer engagement |
| <i>Groups</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filtering group content • These are micro-social media networks and, in a sense, entail all seven elements in a “group setting” entailing administration and control of in-group specific settings. |

Table 7. Honeycomb Social Media Functionalities

| Social media network | Components of the Honeycomb model |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>Facebook</i> | Relationships, identity, conversation, identity, reputation, presence |
| <i>Twitter</i> | Conversation, reputation, relationships |
| <i>Instagram</i> | Identity, presence, sharing |
| <i>YouTube</i> | Sharing, identity, relationships |

2.7.3 Five dimensions of social media marketing

Social media marketing is similar to relationship marketing wherein businesses forgo classical marketing methods and their associated formalities and instead focus on building relationships and meaningful connections with their consumers (Chitty, 2012). This adds to the traditional method of building relationships and connections with potential and existing customers to increase repeat purchases, brand loyalty, and, ultimately, developing a sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) in terms of brand patronage (Aaker, 2011). Social media is an innovative marketing tool that SMEs can use to create strong public relations (PR) with the market, relations with customers in virtual online communities as per the group element of the Honeycomb framework (Jan & Khan 2014). While PR used to be costly and difficult, it is now free and without the barriers presented by Web 1.0 such as budgets, industry connections, and hierarchy in addition to being relatively easier to execute (Chitty, 2012). Similar to the Honeycomb model, Asa’ad and Anas (2014) propose that social media has five dimensions of interest to SMEs that will allow them to understand and apply social media marketing to grow their business and brand. These dimensions are summarised in Table 7, and are followed by a comparison of Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram.

Table 8: Five Dimensions of Social Media Marketing

| Dimension | SME social media context |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Online communities</i> | SMEs can build online communities centred on their brand C2B with a strong C2C element |
| <i>Interaction</i> | B2C communication via Facebook and Twitter. Real time content exchange and feedback interaction (Berselli, Burger, & Close, 2012). C2B and C2C focus |
| <i>Sharing of content</i> | Extent which consumers create, share and exchange content on social media networks C2B and C2C focus |
| <i>Accessibility</i> | Minimal barriers to use, free, and very easy to learn for consumers and SMEs |
| <i>Credibility</i> | SMEs continually posting entertaining, educating and useful content to consumers establishes SME credibility and authority in the consumer's mind. Increases brand loyalty and purchases C2B Focus |

Adapted from Asa'ad and Anas (2014) and Alhadid (2014).

2.7.4 User-generated content

Consumers are now not only consumers but are active creators of online content. This change in the consumption dynamic has had disruptive effect on marketing and the business-consumer relationship dynamic (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012; Wymbs, 2011). Authors define the modern era as the age of interactivity where technological developments have shifted the consumer psych, business processes, and ultimately, the way we purchase and consume goods and services. The main factor responsible for this rapid digitization of marketing can be related back to the online Web and specifically, the empowerment of consumers via social media networks. Drawing from the literature, one can conclusively point out that the evolution of the Web from the static Web 1.0 to the extensive, globally connected Web 2.0 paved the way for the exponential success of social media.

In contrast to the traditional model of business-controlled media, the modern business landscape has shifted towards a model in which consumers are actively involved in the business operations that were previously unilateral. Social media has empowered consumers, leading to what Drucker (2007) and Aaker (2011) refer to as disruptive innovation. Millions of posts are shared on a daily basis from various types of SMEs and corporations that have made use of social media technologies in their marketing strategies. Companies can now post entertaining, useful, and relevant content on their social media accounts for free. It follows from this that, in this era of connectivity, consumers expect businesses to have an active, entertaining, and meaningful presence on social media (Aaker, 2012; Chitty, 2012). This provides an opportunity for SMEs to develop a deeper relationship with their customers.

It is important to note that social media is a tool and, hence, the critical aspect of its success is what consumers are using it for and how businesses can utilize this tool to grow their brand, client base, and ultimately, their bottom line. Gallagher & Rasbotham (2010) support this claim, highlighting that social media's usefulness is derived from how consumers use it, rather than in the technology itself. Further substantiating these views, multiple authors have noted that the paradigm shift relates to users now creating and

sharing their own content (Andrew et al., 2012; Georgieva & Djoukanova, 2014; Rowley, 2008).

On this note, Bång and Roos (2014) relate social media success to the Internet (Web 2.0) where users generate and share content simultaneously in what Aaker (2011) refers to as the “the sharing economy”. Based on the social media literature, the most commonly utilized platforms have been reviewed and narrowed down to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram albeit with different feasibilities for SMEs (Hanna et al., 2011; Leung, Bai, & Stahura, 2015). Relatively new additions to the business-marketing scene – for example, Pinterest, WhatsApp, and Snapchat – have significantly limited business applications as far as UGC and SME marketing are concerned and are thus left out of the SME social media review. Furthermore, social media networks have provided consumers with the power to grow brands or conversely, to write online reviews that stain brand reputations (Crittenden & Crittenden, 2015; Raghuraman, 2017). This is particularly the case where consumers have greater choice – for example, cafes and electronic purchases. YouTube will be briefly covered as a comparison to Instagram in that both are fully consumer driven. We will now examine these channels in terms of their functionality for SMEs. Following this, a conceptual model of social media communication for SMEs will be adapted and constructed from the literature.

2.7.5 Facebook

Defined as the worlds most used social media platform, both by businesses and consumers, Facebook is what Drucker (2014) categorises as a disruptive, radical, and industry changing innovation. The popular network is used by consumers to post content in the form of images, text, and videos together in real time (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012). Facebook’s key features include (but are not limited to): content creation, content sharing, and the curation of content. Millions of consumers are engaged in these three processes; consequently, creating social capital and online brand communities, or as Chitty (2012) defines it, online tribes. Facebook has enabled SMEs to increase their engagement and reach via marketing methods that are free and low cost with instant

feedback and results, providing the ability to continuously improve marketing activities. Prior to the advent of digital marketing and specifically, social media, marketers would decide on trade-offs between reach and engagement due to the static nature of traditional media methods – such as print, newspaper, and poorly integrated websites. Previous research done by Hansson et al. (2013) has taken into account Facebook's features, user experience, and success factors leading to its current one billion user base. Facebook provides several advantages to businesses, and in particular SMEs due to its low cost, wide reach, and creative potential. Multiple authors (Aaker 2011; Chitty 2011; Tuten 2010) have noted that this allows for effective SME marketing, despite scarcity in terms of time, money, and access to talent. As a consequence, authors have argued that the core functionality of Facebook is to stay up to date with related news in addition to the latest information revolving around consumers' interests but more importantly, to become content producers and content sharers. Consumers use Facebook, along with other social media channels such as Instagram, to project what they want the world to perceive them as. That is, a projection of their ideal self-image and personal brand that their peers and community view them by. In terms of SME application, Facebook pages have been found to significantly enhance company branding in a relatively inexpensive and fast manner.

In addition, a major content analysis study on Facebook content found that across 355 Facebook posts from 11 companies, personalizing content for the target consumer is the most important aspect for overall successful branding, entailing brand awareness and brand equity (Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012). However, examination of the Facebook marketing literature shows that the majority of studies have been performed on small regional business case studies and few studies have been undertaken on Facebook's effectiveness for different types of SMEs. Nevertheless, it is plausible that SMEs can reap significant benefits from Facebook with little minimal cost and significant positive impact on the SMEs' brand equity and ultimately, bottom-line (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012). Content sharing includes video and photos which are related to YouTube, the video network, and Instagram, the photo sharing app – both of which we will now examine.

2.7.6. YouTube

As the world's largest video platform and the second biggest search engine after its parent company Google, YouTube, like Facebook, is deemed as a radical innovation that has disrupted the industry. YouTube is a fully UGC oriented channel, unlike Facebook which has multiple company inputs into the user interface such as advertising and content. The UGC element is a critical factor behind the exponential growth of these platforms as it gives full control to the consumer and has evidently worked successfully (Wymbs, 2011). Facebook, in contrast, focuses on original, curated, and shared content via a C2C online community in addition to advertising being unavoidable on Facebook. On YouTube, web browser plugins are easily installed to block YouTube advertising, giving further control to the consumer (Hanna et al., 2011; Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2013).

2.7.7 Instagram

Defined as the world's largest photo sharing platform, Instagram is the most used mobile app by which consumers capture their daily lives. The differentiating factor that sets apart Instagram from other channels is that it is a fully mobile oriented app. Consumers can view user photo channels on other devices but the photos can only be taken and uploaded via mobile. Smart phone devices being on the rise with online transactions and photography capabilities have rendered this focus a major success with tens of millions of photos and online transactions happening every day globally (Bulearca & Bulearca, 2010; Hu, Manikonda, & Kambhampati, 2014; Tuten & Solomon, 2014). Initially, Instagram was an application that was utilized primarily by consumers but with its explosive growth, SMEs and large businesses across the globe are actively utilizing it on a daily basis. In doing so, they are promoting content, communicating their message, and ultimately, establishing consumer relationships and building brand equity (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012; Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2013).

2.7.8 Twitter

Launched in 2006, Twitter is an online micro-blogging platform that enables users to send messages in the form of 140 character “tweets”. The differentiating factor for this channel is that the single function of 140 character tweets decreases cognitive load on the consumer users (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012). Adding to the simplified functionality, Twitter also has an extremely minimal user interface and therefore is centred on its key function of micro blogging (Bulearca & Bulearca, 2010). Literature on Twitter use in SME and digital marketing supports this, showing that micro-blogging platforms such as Twitter deliver relatively faster, instantaneous communication, in comparison to traditional blogging methods that have higher learning curves (Bulearca & Bulearca, 2010). Furthermore, they avoid the information overload found on, for instance, Facebook, that results from advertising. Twitter's success is related to the consumer's continuous hunger for contemporary information regarding specific topics and the desire to share this with the world (Chitty, 2012). Furthermore, a key behavioural user factor in Twitter's success is the UGC nature of its content, empowering consumers to be news creators and influencers in their own virtual communities. In contrast to Facebook, Twitter's minimalist features and user interface provide an easier form of communication and, hence, have a shorter learning curve (Brandi & Regina, 2013). One can see the pattern that social media networks have in terms of ease of use, real time results, and low cost – all ideal elements for SMEs to draw from and apply in their SME marketing activities. The feasibility of these networks for SMEs will now be covered.

2.7.8 Feasibility for SMEs

Examining the social media channels reveals insights into their feasibility and relevance for SMEs. YouTube is ruled to be non-feasible. The three major channels – Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, are free and have low barriers to effective use. However, Twitter is not as effective for SME marketing goals as it is for large businesses and is used mainly to communicate with influencers, celebrities and for journalism purposes (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012). Twitter has been found to be more effective for technology SMEs (startups) compared to traditional product and service SMEs. YouTube, being the second

largest search engine, has visibility barriers to SMEs, as large budget corporations and music companies utilize paid SEO specialists to dominate the video networks. Furthermore, high quality videos required for SME and business marketing require extensive video equipment, editing skills, software, and a long turn-over period to produce a single video unit. Therefore, the technical barriers to effective video creation make YouTube and video marketing overall an inefficient SME marketing strategy. Facebook along with Instagram and an online website is found to be the most effective combination of social media channels for SMEs (Kumar et al., 2015; Simply Measured, 2014). Contrasting this to a Facebook status or Instagram photo taken by an advanced smartphone such as iPhone 7, we can see how this makes this network relatively more feasible for SME marketing practices.

Therefore, SMEs are advised to focus on producing high volumes of quality content on Facebook and Instagram along with content marketing on their website and integrated marketing communications (Chitty, 2012). We can see that these channels provide opportunities for SMEs to begin marketing at an extremely low cost, and they can market their products and services with very low barriers to implementation. From user-generated content to real time instant feedback and accelerated market positioning, social media offers significant changes to the once one-way business-customer relationship dynamic (Khan & Jan, 2015). With new technology comes new risks and implications for users – both SMEs and consumers. The next section will focus on the impacts of social media on SMEs in terms of marketing, business, and the overall business landscape.

2.7.9 Impacts of social media

Social media literature has evidently indicated that the impact of this digital phenomenon on SMEs and business overall is ultimately the changing relationship dynamic between consumers and businesses (Aaker, 2011; Wymbs, 2011). Social media has changed the once dominant B2C communication and has evolved business-consumer interaction channels leading to significant consumer involvement in the form of consumer-to-business (C2B) interaction and the newest form, consumer-to-consumer (C2C) interaction. The social media literature indicates more success in SME marketing campaigns that utilize various social media channels in an integrated manner. Multiple authors note that social media marketing has changed the relationship dynamic but also the overall business landscape in terms of communication channels, increased consumer influence, and participation in marketing activities (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012; Digrande, Knox, Manfred & Rose, 2013; Tuten & Solomon, 2014). It can be argued that consumers are no longer on the receiving end only but actively involved in the value creating process. Traditional selling models have shifted their focus to connecting and building rapport with consumers who demand transparency and now have more control of the messages received and want these messages to be personalized to their needs and desires (Digrande, Knox, Manfred, & Rose, 2013; Tuten & Solomon, 2014).

Drawing on the literature and the changes mentioned, a social media model was constructed by Gallagher & Ransbotham(2010) based on a thorough analysis of the social media marketing methodology employed by Starbucks and other businesses' social media strategies (see Figure 2). Although Starbucks is a global company, the social media strategies can be drawn from their methods and applied to SMEs due to the low barrier to the effective use of these networks. Social media empowers SMEs to be innovative by using existing resources to create new value for existing customers and future business growth. Therefore, we can conclude that the nature of social media

marketing empowers SMEs to do so (Gallaughner & Ransbotham, 2010; Gray et al., 2007; Hanna et al., 2011; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Hill, 2001; Schlee & Karns, 2017).

2.7.10 Risks of social media

Social media with all its benefits and opportunities will, as with every tool, harbour elements of risk associated with its use, affecting different stakeholders in different ways. From the SMEs point of view, it is the issue of controlling, filtering, and managing the UGC and SME generated content in addition to engaging the right audience (Kietzmann et al., 2011). On the other hand, the freedom to express, comment, share, and exchange content with consumers in addition to business information brings with it issues of privacy, time usage, and shift in power. Posting reviews on Facebook and on review websites such as Zomato and Yelp puts a business's reputation at risk of customer attacks (Hanna et al., 2011). SMEs must therefore be selective in their social media utilization with appropriate management procedures in place to ensure maximum ROI, minimal risk, and to effectively measure every campaign. Social media risks are summarised in Table 9.

Table 9: Risks Associated with Social Media

| Risk | Explanation |
|--------------------------|--|
| Transparency | Excess transparency can lead to the leak of SME innovations |
| Reputation management | Online presence must be managed |
| Security | Hacking of accounts Online trolls |
| Finance | Marketers/workers must be paid to produce social media |
| Time | Time used on social media can be delegated to other arguably more critical and bottom-line effective areas of business |
| Competitive transparency | Competitors can see content and replicate it |
| Return on Investment | Measuring social media ROI in terms of business bottom line is difficult |

Table 9 summarises the risks associated with social media networks. Transparency refers to the public nature of social media content. Facebook pages with thousands to millions of followers can easily be monitored and copied by competitors. This leads us to reputation management where staff or an external team have to manage online conversations on the businesses' social media pages in terms of customer complaints and campaign management, in addition to handling negative publicity. Furthermore, security is an issue in terms of access. Social media pages can play a major part in a company's branding success while also having the potential to ruin it. Indeed, the wrong Facebook post, Tweet or blog post can significantly impact a brand's online presence along with the SMEs' brand equity and association in the consumers mind (Nadeem, Andreini, Salo, & Laukkanen, 2015). Building a strong fan base with a large number of followers brings with it the risk of ruining a firm's reputation. Connecting this all together is the time required to build a well-established, highly followed, and engaged social media profile.

Following the examination of these social media networks, a conceptual model (Figure 2) and the associated table have been constructed to illustrate the communication paths that SMEs can effectively apply in their SME marketing activities.

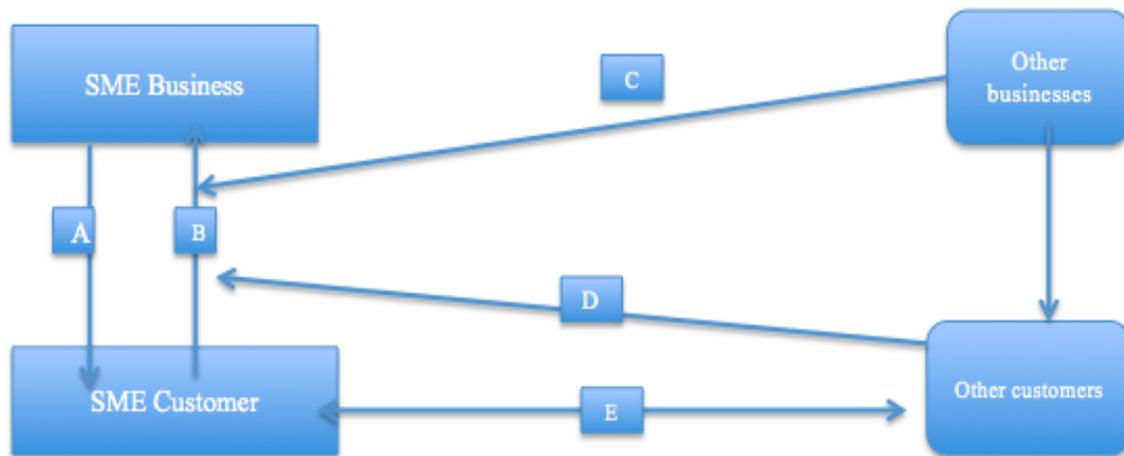


Figure 2: Social media communication model

Figure 2 and Table 10 illustrate the SME marketing landscape in the context of digital and social media marketing. As we can see, the paths range from A to E (see Table 10). Path A indicates the business-to-consumer (B2C) path where SMEs communicate with their customers. This is essentially business marketing via a “megaphone” approach and consists of both innovative social media marketing and sales oriented campaigns. From Facebook posts to business initiated tweets and blog posts, this is directed by the SME. Path B indicates the customer-to-business (C2B) area where consumers are actively involved in the creation of UGC alongside the business. This takes shape in the form of sharing, exchanging, and redistributing content initially posted in Path A, and participating in co-creation campaigns (Delahaye Paine, 2011). This is particularly popular with Instagram and Facebook where consumer post photos on Instagram and check in their locations on Facebook’s location feature. Finally, Path C is the consumer-to-consumer (C2C) path where consumers talk to teach on social media. That is – they communicate amongst themselves in online brand communities where common interests

are shared. Examples include C2C comments and conversations on Facebook, Instagram photo tags, and Twitter retweet conversations. Facebook and Instagram have proven to be the most active platforms for C2C. A specific company example would be the Starbucks campaign “tag a friend – 2 for 1 frappacchino”. This company-induced C2C initiative sets the pace for consumer-to-consumer conversation, thereby engaging consumers on brand related topics, and in turn, building brand awareness, brand equity, and ultimately, increasing engagement with the brand’s followers by connecting the consumers with a mutual object of interest (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014).

Table 10: Social Media Communication Paths

| Communication path | Consumer-brand example |
|---|--|
| Business-to-Consumer (B2C) (Path A) | Facebook posts Tweets Instagram posts Blog post |
| Customer-to-Business (C2B) (Path B) | Co-creation involvement and participation. -E.g. Consumers send their coffee cocktail flavours to a local café for the chance to be featured on the cafes menu -Customers upload their photos (UGC) to Instagram and Facebook on the SME's social media pages. |
| Customer-to-Customer (C2C) (Path D) | -C2C dialogue and co-creation (induced by the business) - Sharing comments, reviews and their experiences regarding their experience with a specific SME brand. |

Social media has empowered customers to become more sophisticated, calculating, and selective in their consumer behaviours. Developing on this new changing insight is the wave of new research that demonstrates changing consumer behaviours that are directly related to social media usage such as increased demand for unique tailored products (Balakrishnan et al., 2014; Hanna et al., 2011) and co-creation during production and marketing activities (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Piller & Walcher, 2006; Kim & Bae, 2008; Parise & Guinan, 2008; Drury, 2008). Drawing on these findings, we can note that customers want to have direct involvement in various parts of the business process. Prior to social media, communication was deemed much more systematic and formal (Aaker, 2011). However, with the rapid development of social media, consumers can now tweet to businesses, message them on Facebook and comment on their Instagram photos. Likewise, SMEs can respond to customer queries, online posts, negative reviews, and consumer generated content in real time (Chitty, 2012).

2.7.11 Social media summary

Social media has proven to be a disruptive phenomenon that is here to stay, grow, and normalize. Business communication, previously one way, has now changed to a two-way consumer-involved relationship in the “era of connectivity”. Consumers create, share, and own their content in what Aaker (2011) defined as the sharing economy.

The most commonly used social media platforms, both by users and SMEs, include Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram with each network having its own benefit, risk, and use for consumers and SMEs alike. We have seen the importance of SME marketing including the importance of social media marketing and its major adoption in the digital age. Now we ask the question – are these changes reflected in the business curriculum in New Zealand – specifically in marketing degrees? The next section will delve into the marketing education literature with a focus on the current state of marketing education and the areas of development, followed by a focus on SME marketing education.

2.8 Industry

2.8.1. Industry marketing KSC requirements

Accenture (2014) indicated that over 70% of chief marketing officers believe that marketing will undergo a transformation into a business function that is data and analysis driven. In line with this, technical KSC are in demand across entry level marketing jobs (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011). A recent study done on this in the US concluded with a long list of technical and soft skills in demand ranging from advanced Microsoft office skills, data analytics in software such as Qualtrics and SPSS, digital marketing skills such as Google Analytics and Google Adwords, and social media marketing platforms (Schlee & Karns, 2017) .Table 10 summarizes the findings of Wellman (2010) followed by Table 11 which illustrates the main findings of Schlee and Karns (2017).

Table 11: Knowledge, Skills and Competencies for Marketing Professionals

| Top 10 Attributes and Hard Skills | Top 10 Soft Skills |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Communications | 1. Creative/innovative |
| 2. Personal traits | 2. Attention to detail |
| 3. Work relationships and liaising | 3. Responsibility |
| 4. Digital literacy | 4. Initiative |
| 5. Work planning | 5. Interpersonal skills |
| 6. Working style | 6. Confident |
| 7. Task Management | 7. Analytics |
| 8. Numeracy | 8. Business aptitude |
| 9. Management and admin | 9. Self-motivation |
| 1. Quality focus | 10. Genuine interest/passion |

(Adapted from Wellman [2010] - Figure 4 [p. 918])

Entry level marketing salaries are heavily influenced by experience in marketing software such as data analytics, knowledge of supply chain management's relation to marketing, and experience through the form of internships, placements, and/ or experiential learning (Schlee & Harich, 2010). Within the area of quantitative knowledge and quantitative technology, data analytics, statistical software, web analytics, SEO and marketing metrics are in high demand from employers. Schlee and Karns (2010) found that from 210 job listings, 76% cited the need for more than one technical skillset and quantitative skillset, 38% cited three technical and quantitative skillsets, while the average technical and quantitative skillset out of 210 jobs was 2.4. Interestingly, data-oriented skills were found in the higher wage bracket jobs. Theoretical knowledge was found to agree with the

studies of Gray et al. (2007) and Schlee and Harich (2010) in that when it is coupled with technical and soft skills, is found to have more association with higher paid entry level and mid-level marketing jobs. Walker et al. (2009) proposed a career progressing model which depicts the stages a marketing professional goes through from entry to senior level in respect to the KSC required to do so. Schlee and Harich (2010) support the model in that they also found theoretical knowledge seeks to be more utilized as one progresses from entry, to upper entry, and to mid-senior level marketing positions accordingly. This can be associated with the notion that mid to senior level positions require more people skills due to increased responsibility, decision making, delegating, and motivating amongst colleagues (Schlee & Karns, 2017). Furthermore, as the responsibilities, tasks, and decisions increase, the KSC learned in a marketing degree, which are less required and remain arguably “dormant” in an entry level marketing position, come to the surface as conceptual knowledge in areas such direct marketing, product, communications, and branding which are required to further progress the marketing of a company (R. Davis, Misra, & van Auken, 2002; Marks, 2000; Wellman, 2010). Management of big data to inform marketing decisions, along with data analytics, and statistical software proficiency are strongly associated with higher salaries – interestingly in entry level and mid to senior positions, further indicating the importance of quantitative and technical KSC for the marketing profession (Schlee & Karns, 2017; LinkedIn and Hubspot, 2015). Knowledge and skills in other fields such as procurement under supply chain management and finance have a positive influencing effect on entry level marketing salaries (Schlee & Karns, 2017).

We can see from these studies a pattern of interrelated fields having a role in the marketing activities of a business. Using this, we can argue that marketing is increasingly becoming not only a multi-skilled profession but more importantly, it requires skills from various disciplines and is increasingly becoming a field where multiple skills are utilized. This is seen in professions such as accounting and finance where the tasks are specialized, focused, and utilize very specific KSC, whereas in marketing, the use of data analytics, financial data, and digital proficiency, along with KSC in consumer behavior and sales (psychology) and supply chain, are used to design and execute marketing

campaigns. (Schlee & Karns, 2017; Wellman, 2010; Wymbs, 2011).

2.8.2 Perceptions versus actual demand

With marketing being cited as the fastest growing sector of business, the nature of recruitment criteria in job descriptions versus the actual underlying requirements of businesses in this arguably digital age becomes a topic of interest. Previous academic studies conducted have shown a major trend towards highly developed soft skills, communication skills, and technical skills coupled with a strong grasp of marketing theory (Davis, Misra, & Van Auken, 2002a; Gray et al., 2007; Kelley & Bridges, 2005; Walker et al., 2009; Wellman, 2010). However, arguably, it is the underlying soft skills that allow a graduate to transition from a student into an entry level marketing professional with the willingness to learn, manage multiple deadlines, and work together in diverse teams towards common goals (De Villiers, 2010). A major study conducted by a well-respected marketing education leader, Market Motive, supports this argument whereby they found differences in what employers advertise for in marketing job advertisements, what they think they require, and what they actually want in marketing graduates in a three part longitudinal study (Stebbins & Galluzo, 2013). The findings by Stebbins and Galluzo (2013) are summarized in Table 12, indicating the disconnect between what managers say they require and what they actually require from marketing graduates.

Table 12: Marketing Job Requirements Compared Across Three Different Studies

| Job advertisement rankings | Managers' ratings on skills (quantitative) | Managers' primary information |
|---|--|---|
| 150,00 job listings analysed from 5 industry websites | 600 managers rating marketing tasks based on time priority | 32 marketing managers interviewed (semi-structured) |
| 1. Social media | 1. Web analytics | 1. Selling and persuasion skills |
| 2. SEO | 2. SEO | 2. Data driven decisions |
| 3. Email marketing | 3. Conversion Optimization | 3. Written communication |
| 4. Mobile marketing | 4. Content marketing | 4. Traditional marketing |
| 5. Paid search | 5. Social media | 5. Interpersonal skills |
| 6. Web analytics | 6. PPC (Paid advertising) | 6. Strategic analysis |
| 7. Content marketing | 7. Mobile marketing | 7. Other technical skills |

(Source: Stebbins & Galluzo, 2013)

Table 12 summarizes a significant study that reflects on the state of industry marketing requirements in terms of perceived and real requirements. It can be seen that job listings indicate increase technical skillsets along with online quantitative assessments completed by managers indicating similar results. However, qualitative interviews shed light into more different findings with managers indicating a strong preference for soft skills, communication skills, and data driven decision making. Ironically, the mention of specific technical skills as per the previous two parts of the study done in the same year were significantly less mentioned (Stebbins & Galluzo, 2013). This aligns with multiple marketing and business education studies on the importance of soft skills, data driven marketing, and the strongly demanded skills of written communication and interpersonal skills (De Villiers, 2010; Gray et al., 2007; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schulz, 2008;

Wellman, 2010). Using Market Motives studies, one can argue that marketing recruiters and managers hire for soft skills but advertise for technical skills. This can be attributed to what the CEO of Market Motives noted – that is, a significant lack of technical talent and therefore businesses would filter out applicants for these skills to minimize training costs (Stebbins & Galluzzo, 2013). In essence, businesses hire on soft skills despite the focus on technical and hard skills that dominate job advertising descriptions (Stebbins & Galluzzo, 2013; Wymbs, 2011). This is supported by De Villiers (2010) and Gray et al. (2007) in that graduates with soft skills are seen as more long-term investments for the company, stay longer in the company, and work up the ladder due to having highly developed soft skill competencies. Gray et al. (2007) along with Walker et al. (2009) found soft skills to be key determinants in long-term career growth and specifically, the growth from an entry level marketing assistant all the way to senior marketing management roles. Therefore, it is ironic in that one can argue that the KSC advertised in job descriptions are in fact not those that determine the likelihood of recruitment and hiring. However, one must be cautious in interpreting these results, as the sample size of 32 marketing managers is not a representative of marketing recruiters (Stebbins & Galluzzo, 2013). On the other hand, the different nature of qualitative insights from marketing managers compared to quantitative insights from job descriptions arguably provides insight into the argument that managers need to have more involvement in the advising of curricula content for marketing educators (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Schlee & Karns, 2016; Wymbs, 2011; De Villiers, 2010).

The wide range of skillsets required for marketing roles provides an interesting paradox for SMEs as they lack the ample resources available to large businesses. However, SMEs by nature are multifaceted, sporadic, and do not have specialist defined roles as large businesses do (Hill, 2001; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009). This is reflected in their dynamic job descriptions and thus one can say the initial work load, high in intensity and diversity, seeks to filter out the graduates who would be a match for the SME marketing and overall business role within the SME environment. One can argue that despite this scarcity of resources, soft skills should be the dominant recruiting factor as this realm of KSC is what determines teamwork, networking, and selling success which are critical

elements of SME marketing (De Villiers ,2010; Gilmore, & Carson, 2009). Therefore, SMEs in the hiring process, based on the aforementioned industry studies and marketing education literature, should seek to hire marketers with these soft skills due to their increased importance in SMEs compared to large businesses (De Villiers, 2010; Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009). Furthermore, SMEs have significantly more customer interaction and involvement in the marketing activity and overall business operations, rendering the soft skills even more important compared to the large businesses (Gilmore, & Carson, 2009).

2.8.3 Internships and experience

The importance of internships can be narrowed down to both educational reasons and the commonly known anecdote of theoretical knowledge versus real life application. Development of all competent KSC skills (the quartet KSC) is a long-term process (De Villiers, 2010) which renders deep learning as opposed to the ineffective short-term, surface learning approach which arguably a large majority of existing tertiary marketing and business curricula follow both in New Zealand (Gray et al., 2007) and the US (Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017) with the content analysis studies have revealed that internships are most dominantly placed in the final semester of the marketing and business curricula (Schlee and Karns, 2017 ; Wymbs, 2010). This coincides with a more short-term, surface learning approach as pointed out by De Villiers (2010) which is arguably less effective than more frequent internships and projects as the latter would seek to produce deep learning outcomes and consequently more competent entry level marketing graduates (Clark, 2003; Gault, Leach, & Duey, 2010; Knouse, Stephen B.; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017). The frequency of internships determine the level of learning from the experience (De Villiers, 2010; Ward & Yates, 2013). The acquisition of soft skills was found by De Villiers (2010) to be superficial – commonly known as surface learning – when done in the short course, on an infrequent basis. Based on De Villiers’ (2010) findings, we can argue that one factor that determines the effectiveness of internships is the frequency of their placement in degree programmes in addition to the group projects and experiential learning projects in curricula. Along these

lines, one can argue for the inclusion of internships as part of the core marketing curricula, not as an elective but as a core paper that runs throughout the degree programme. The inclusion of internship programmes as part of the core marketing curricula could be seen as a major step to integrating practical elements into the arguably theoretically oriented marketing curricula (Holstein, 2005; Mintzberg, 2004; Bennis & O'Toole, 2005).

Further studies have found that employers point to a strong demand for group projects (Aggarwal & O'Brien, 2008; Hill, Lomas, & MacGregor, 2003). One can argue that the relevance and validity of this requirement is evident when breaking down the learning elements of a successful group project which includes (but is not limited to) teamwork, communication, empathy, working to a deadline, delegation of tasks, initiative, and working with a diverse team in terms of background, skills, and experience as well as culture. This form of learning and assessment is well covered in the marketing education literature where multiple past studies have indicated its importance both by marketing business educators and employers (Gray et al., 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbs, 2011). With all the aforementioned positives of this method, there exists weakness that needs to be clarified. Brennan (2013) points that an all too common problem in group projects – the unequal distribution of work amongst the students. How do instructors and involved students deal with, cope, and progress forward with free riding students or as Goodnight and Colleagues (2008, pg.13) note, displaying “social loafing behaviour”. One suggestion to mitigate this issue is to break group projects into separate tasks which are subsequently designated to each group member but are completed individually. This serves to mitigate free riding behaviour and increases accountability, in turn simulating a more real life marketing job scenario. Continuous peer review methods are also suggested by Poddar (2010) in the form of milestones as opposed to the traditional final peer review method. The education literature also points out that students find it difficult to distinguish between members who face real difficulty and free riding members (Goodnight & Colleagues, 2008).

Assigning roles to students with a common unified goal is arguably more aligned to real life professional marketing roles than traditional group project systems where there is a lack of accountability and consequences for not delivering the required task (De Villiers, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017). On a different note, group size is suggested as a major bottleneck by De Villiers (2010) that limits project efficiency and the effectiveness of group projects. It is suggested that this common problem can be remedied by reducing the project complexity and scope in addition to having smaller group sizes and multiple peer evaluations for multiple stages in the project (Aggarwal & O'Brien, 2008). With all these aforementioned suggestions, one must therefore elaborate on the individual behind these changes, that is, the marketing educator. Suggestions for group project management by the instructor will take up resources in terms of time, department resources, and consulting with experts – both internal and in the marketing department (Daniel, 2009; de Rond & Miller, 2005; Houston, Meyer, & Paewai, 2006; Mcinnis, 2000; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). Furthermore, marketing academics, with their role as educators, are not promoted based on teaching excellence or pedagogical practice and therefore strong motivations are lacking for marketing academics to reform their group project assessments (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Seggie & Griffith, 2009).

2.8.4 Soft skills in industry

Multiple authors agree that for entry level marketing graduates aspiring to become senior managers, soft skill competencies such as communication skills, team work, self-management, independent learning, and cultural empathy at the workplace are keys to success for a marketing professional career (Schlee & Karns 2017; Wellman, 2010; De Villiers, 2010). Schlee, and Harich (2010) found that the frequency of soft skills in oral and written communication was 81% and 75% of the job advertisements sampled respectively. De Villiers (2010) explains the importance of initiative, self-management, and willingness to learn to holistically be labelled as lifelong learners who are able to comprehend that in order to progress their personal development in all types of KSC, they must continuously learn and as a result, progress their career. Gray et al. (2007) along with Walker et al. (2009) agree with findings showing that self-management and

minimal supervision as a self-directed learner and decision maker are regarded as important by practitioners. Being an independent learner is cited by Schlee and Karns (2017) along with Gray et al. (2017) and De Villiers (2010) as an important soft skill as work place pressures, tasks, and deadlines increase. Evidently this is critical for SME roles with the SME marketing role being more pressured, complex, and multitasking compared to more specialist large business professional marketing roles. An important issue to point out is although technical and theoretical KSC along with internships have been stressed by previous studies, soft skills remain a more critical factor in career progression (De Villiers, 2010; Kermis & Kermis, 2011; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Schulz, 2008; Walker et al., 2009). Arguably, it is the soft skills that projects the learning phase for a marketing professional. That is, the learning and development of technical skills is a byproduct of a professional's willingness to learn and to show initiative, self-management, the ability to work in diverse teams, and various other soft skills that work together to produce the result of a more competent marketing professional (Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009; De Villiers, 2010; Wymbs, 2011). Work readiness was an interesting finding by Walker et al. (2009) that revolved around a subset of soft skills which were noted as more work specific, as well as communication skills. These professional competencies which other authors' findings have aligned with, include email communication with colleagues, proposals, communicating ideas to different levels of staff, in addition to business aptitude (Clarke, Gray, & Mearman, 2006; Finch et al., 2013; Gray et al., 2007; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Walker et al., 2009).

2.9. Education

2.9.1 Introduction

Examining the marketing education literature revealed an increasing emphasis on the changing needs of marketers, the argued irrelevance of traditional marketing academia research, and the need to bridge the gap between marketing education offerings with marketing industry requirements (Catterall, Maclaran, & Stevens, 2002a; Davis et al.,

2002a; Hansotia, 2003; Starkey, 2005). Indeed, the digital marketing revolution has made marketing education a major topic for debate in terms of its relevance and usefulness for students, and the question of university-industry alignment in terms of curricula (Schlee & Karns, 2017; Wymbs, 2011). This section seeks to examine the state of marketing education and criticisms of marketing education. An in-depth examination of the marketing literature found multiple studies done in the UK, the US and one major study done in New Zealand in Otago University (Gray et al., 2007; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017). We will first review business and marketing education under the context of a university system and the trends in marketing education. Following this will be a review of educational elements broken down into soft skills, hard skills, and the impact technology has had on marketing. A critical lens on marketing education literature will then follow concluding with a discussion on the gap in the literature.

2.9.2 University contribution

The researcher recognizes the exceptional contribution that business academics have made to the body of knowledge to universities, industry, and society. Academics continue to progress and evolve their respective research fields and, in turn, advance the vast body of knowledge they offer to society (David & David, 2010). There is a universal agreement that university education in many ways plays a core role in the development of a progressive society – whether in terms of a skilled labour force, innovation, research, or development for both the private and public sector. Indeed, this relates strongly to the output of research from universities that increases knowledge in many and fosters creativity and entrepreneurship and more importantly, the educational journey students go through during their degree experience (Dostaler & Tomberlin, 2013; Henard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2007; Starkey, Hatchuel, & Tempest, 2004).

One can argue, for maximum success, business schools (and universities) must have a thorough understanding of the environment they operate in and the stakeholders involved in the university system – namely, employers, students, and academics (Schlee & Karns, 2017; Wymbs, 2011). This allows for better integration between universities and

teaching staff with practitioners and industry respectively (Holstein, 2005; Jacobs, 2009; Mintzberg, 2004).

The researcher needs to point out that regardless of its given nature, the primary role of marketing degrees under business schools – as with any university degree – is to educate and prepare students with relevant knowledge, skills, and competencies (KSC) for a relatively safe transition into the working sector (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Holstein, 2005; Jacobs, 2009; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001). However Mintzberg (2004) along with Bennis and O’Toole (2005) argue that the primary role of universities has now changed from education to a research facility, consequently resulting in teaching as a job role having less importance. This relates to the heavy weighting of research output and subsequent lack of weighting of teaching and industry experience on tenure and promotion which we will examine in a further section.

2.9.3 History of business schools

Historically, business schools were trade oriented schools with practical components making up the dominant component of the curricula (Jacobs, 2009). To understand the business industry-academia gap debate, we must first understand the history of business schools, and how a once vocational field was transformed into an academic research oriented school. Knowing the political origin of this business school transformation allows us to take steps towards transforming the business school to a more all-round facility. In the 1920s and 1930s business research had close industry and community relationships (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Holstein, 2005; Jacobs, 2009; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001; Starkey et al., 2004).

The transformation from a trade school to a research oriented business faculty stems from the influence of the Ford and Carnegie report (Holstein 2005). The report noted that it was time for business schools to cease operating as a professional vocational model and aim towards a scientific academic orientation (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005). Khurana’s (2007) publication on the development of the US business school sector is key to this

section. In his findings, Khurana (2007) found that business schools have been part of a transformation project where there are two focused goals. First, is the preparation of students for their business careers and second, is the transformation of business education into a hybrid of professional and scholarly study. In accordance with Bennis and O'Toole (2005), Khurana (2007) notes with concern that business schools most often choose the academic path with minimal vocational orientation. In simpler terms, Khurana (2007) points out how business schools have transformed from vocational industry led schools into academic institutes. The Ford Foundation's focus turned towards two prestigious universities – the world renowned Harvard Business School (HBS) and the Carnegie Institute of Technology Graduate School of Industrial Administration (GSIA) with a host of other business schools added as the years progressed. It was during these years of Ford's influence on business schools that the new research oriented academic system in statistical analysis and rigorous academic prowess was devised and implemented. In time, other business schools followed suit and the research oriented model for business schools became the norm (Khurana, 2007; Mintzberg, 2004). Along the same lines, Bennis and O'Toole (2005) shared similar findings revealing the initial research focus of universities had industry partnerships and research relevance was part of the agenda.

Holstein (2005) along with Mintzberg (2004) point out that the Harvard Business School (HBS) argued for a case writing and case-based teaching method while the Graduate School of Industrial Administration (GSIA) tended to focus on statistical, quantitative analysis and multidisciplinary research. The Ford Foundation's donations to both HBS and GSIA stemmed from their desire to have business education oriented around both methods – the HBS case method and the GSIA quantitative scholarly method. Ironically, however, despite supporting both schools, the winning method today is the GSIA research model. Daniel (2009) argues that it was the Ford and Carnegie reports that “ruined our business schools” and took away relevance, industry connection, and the primary purpose of making the future business leaders of tomorrow. The Carnegie Foundation was more focused on undergraduate business education while the Ford Foundation upon Henry Ford's passing, used their vast wealth to strongly influence and

transform the structure of business education from a practical business school model to a theoretical academic oriented business school system that is run by dominantly quantitative business theorists. (Khurana, 2007; Mintzberg, 2004).

2.9.4 Gap analysis studies

To ensure university-industry alignment within the marketing area, academics under the university system should seek to have an in-depth understanding of modern business needs in terms of relevant KSC. Several authors have sought to examine the marketing industry-academia gap (Davis et al., 2002a; Gray et al., 2007; Hunt, 2002; Lilien, Rangaswamy, Van Bruggen, & Wierenga, 2002; Madichie, 2009; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Royle & Laing, 2014; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Starkey & Tempest, 2005). A number of studies from varying disciplines have found a discourse between what they are taught in Higher Education (HE) curricula and expected industry knowledge, skills and competencies (KSC) (Breen, 2014; Fechheimer, Webber & Kleiber, 2011; Hunt, 2002; Stringfellow, Ennis, Brennan, & Harker, 2006; Wellman, 2010). In a recent empirical study in Australia, 63 organisations were asked about their marketing activities. Results indicated that organisational marketing requirements do not match the Australian university curricula (Bott, 2008). Similarly, a UK study conducted along the same lines found a gap between the HE offerings and marketing requirements in the marketing industry (Resnick, Cheng, Brindley, & Foster, 2011a). Marketing both as a field of study and business has changed rapidly over the last decade. Factors for this include rapid technological developments, consumer behaviour disruption, social media and access to technology (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Mintzberg, 2004; Wymbs, 2011).

Due to these factors of constant change and the rapid development of digital business, the area of bridging marketing academia and practice have been covered by several authors (David et al., 2011; Lilien et al., 2002; Madichie, 2009; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Royle & Laing, 2014; Schlee & Karns, 2017). A summary of the main studies found in the marketing education literature is found in Table 10. With the rise of the academia-industry gap studies, however, interest has arisen, and the body of knowledge has grown, on the *how* aspect – that is, how do marketing departments in universities create industry-

aligned curricula to equip students with the KSC to stay-up to-date with industry (De Villiers, 2010; Finch, Nadeau, & O'Reilly, 2013; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Wymbs, 2016).

Table 13: Marketing Academia Gaps Analysis Studies

| Authors | Methods | Findings |
|--|--|---|
| Chonko and Roberts (1996) | Developed on previous Chonko (1991) study + trend examination | Business graduates lack people skills, holistic business perspective and critical problem solving in context of varying marketing and business scenarios. |
| Tomkovick (1996) | Survey and 14-variable rating questionnaires for recruiters and students regarding perceived relevant KSC for marketing students | Entry-level soft skills + basic technical skills matched between both parties. |
| Smart, Kelley and Conant (1999) | Survey of 107 marketing educators | HE moving towards discussion oriented classes, technology in marketing and soft skills in networking/sales. |
| Catterall, Maclaren and Stevens (2002) | Meta-analysis of marketing education literature | Critical thinking and problem solving lacking in HE curriculum. |
| Li, Yen, and John Cheng (2008) | Gap analysis of marketing trends and curricula | Gap existing between current marketing trends and marketing curricula. |
| Bovinet (2007) | Exploratory research, Compares perception of skill sets between students, marketing educators, and practitioners | Similar match in soft skill perceptions but mismatch in technical skills. Entry level jobs required more soft then digital skills. |
| Gray et al. (2007) | Interviewed NZ marketing managers regarding importance of skills in entry level workers | Graduates lacking entry level digital + business communication |
| Johns (2008) | Survey of 63 organisations in Australia for required KSC compared to other disciplines | Marketing studies do not prepare students sufficiently compared to other disciplines |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Jacobs (2009) | Review of current marketing trends compared to business school curricula | Out of date with contemporary business practice with particular focus on academics being disconnected from practitioners. |
| Schlee and Harich (2010). | Content analysis of 500 marketing jobs | Technical and soft skills required for marketing jobs – with technical skills lacking most in university marketing curricula. Soft skills found to be important as one progresses to mid and senior positions. |
| Harrigan and Hulbert (2011) | Content analysis + in-depth interviews. Inductive data approach | Old marketing methods taught in university marketing curricula do not match current applied methods. |
| Walker et al. (2009) | Dreyfys and Drefus (1985) stages model applied to marketing professionals | Novices require work ready and soft skills along with conceptual knowledge. Experts require assimilation of soft skills with conceptual knowledge. Technical proficiency is more valued over technical specialist skills. |
| Wymbs (2011) | Examination of current marketing trends to develop a new marketing major | Current marketing curricula does not match the trends and vice versa. |
| Finch, Nadeau, and O'Reilly (2012) | Survey of Canadian companies regarding their top marketing priorities for marketing education change | ROI on campaigns marketing metrics and strategic marketing most important + soft skills (problem solving, written business communication). |
| Brocato, White, Bartkus and Brocato, (2015) | Content analysis of US social media curricula in selected tertiary curricula | Social media curricula is still in its infancy stage in terms of tertiary curricula integration. |
| Shaltoni (2016) | Content analysis of 120 business schools worldwide + 3 main textbooks | E marketing is still in its infancy phase in business and marketing education. Ironic due to its significant importance for digital natives. |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Mishra, Wilder, and Mishra (2017) | Survey of female attitudes towards digital marketing practice and in HE | Females lack digital confidence in career contexts + negative female stigma. HE must help in instruction/modules + hands-on opportunity during the HE programme. |
| Schlee and Karns (2017) | US study of KSC in terms of hard and soft skills found in entry level marketing descriptions accompanied by the salaries | Mix of technical, theoretical, and soft skills required for entry level positions. Technical aspects increasingly important. Soft skills main factor for progression as a marketing professional from entry to middle level and senior level. |

Table 10 sums up key educational gap studies in chronological order. A study conducted by Bovinet (2007) produced significant findings on the marketing education field. The extensive empirical study found that students lack problem-solving skills and the ability to follow through when doing something – that is, to start a task and finish it. Furthermore, the study revealed that students lack marketing from the customer perspective. The author’s work also revealed that students lack a holistic view of the relationship between the national and global economies and marketing’s role in the business sector. Wymbs (2011) further supported these findings with studies revealing that students lack quantitative skills in terms of financial and statistical analysis. In addition to this lack in quantitative skills, students are also found to lack holistic knowledge in other business areas such as finance, economics, and supply chain management in their relation to marketing (Abraham, 2006; Henard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2007; Holstein, 2005)

2.9.5 Marketing education trends

Marketing education plays a significant role in business success and hence, for academics and practitioners, it is an increasingly important area. The existing body of knowledge indicates some common themes in contemporary marketing and, in particular, the role of technology in marketing (Wymbs, 2011; De Villers, 2010). One theme concerns the rapid development of Web and later, digital technologies – and how these have reshaped the consumer-business landscape. This theme, then, relates to how marketing has been

implemented in the midst of this digital movement. Another theme in the literature is the global context of marketing, its analytical nature, and the need for analytics in marketing (Floyd & Gordon, 1998; Mitchell & Strauss, 2001). In a data driven world, marketers and business owners need to analyse massive amounts of data and extract useful insights to make more profitable business decisions. The rise of data is strongly related to consumers in this age of user-generated content (UGC) from social media networks and blogging platforms (Andrew et al., 2012). Given consumer-business relationships are increasingly important, the rise of “emotional intelligence” as a key skill for graduates is also mentioned (Abraham, 2006; De Villiers, 2010; Schulz, 2008). Encompassing the aforementioned themes in the literature, the most evident theme is the rapidly changing needs of businesses, demands on business students, and, in particular, the effect on marketing practitioners (Gray et al., 2007; Mcinnis, 2000; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Smart, Kelley, & Conant, 1999).

Indeed, the focus of this theme relates to its dual presence in both the marketing literature and marketing education due to this rapid change in technology having implications for industry but more importantly the need for universities to adapt to this change in terms of their curricula (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Brennan, 2013; De Villiers, 2010; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001). With change comes disruption, resistance, and adaptation and SMEs with scarce resources yet fluid business structures have both an advantage and challenge in terms of meeting the changing business technology and, ultimately, consumer needs (Resnick et al., 2011; Simpson & Taylor, 2002b; Takalani, 2014).

In addition, the literature points towards two distinct overarching themes in marketing education philosophy. These can be categorized as either intrinsic or instrumental (Clarke, Gray, & Mearman, 2006). The intrinsic view focuses on individual development in terms of intellectual prowess and character. Thus, it holds that the purpose of education is to empower and, in a sense, equip students with the tools and abilities for individualized self-development. The instrumental approach, on the other hand, focuses on specific skills with tangible, measurable outcomes. In simpler terms, the intrinsic philosophy relates to soft skills and emotional intelligence while the instrumental

approach refers to technical skills that are more quantitative and measurable (De Villiers, 2010; Finch et al., 2013; Gray et al., 2007; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Schulz, 2008; Williams, 2015). Business schools should embrace both philosophies and provide business and marketing students with an optimal well rounded set of KSC. The themes in the marketing education literature are summarized in Table 14.

Table 14: Literature Themes on Marketing Education

| Marketing education theme | Description | Authors |
|---|---|--|
| Technological development | Web 2.0 (digital business, digital marketing and social media) | (Bott, 2008; Gray, Grundvåg Ottesen, Bell, Chapman, & Whiten, 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Hunt, Eagle, & Kitchen, 2004; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017) |
| Global reach of marketing | Web 2.0 and Internet marketing | (Finch et al., 2013; Gray et al., 2007; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017) |
| Analytics | Measuring marketing initiatives | (Bott, 2008; Gray et al., 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Hunt, Eagle, & Kitchen, 2004; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017) |
| Emotional intelligence of marketing professionals | Growing importance of soft skills in the marketing practitioner skillset | (Kaplan, Piskin, & Bol, 2010; Kelley & Gaedeke, 1990; Lamb et al., 1995), |
| Changing needs of marketing practitioners | Industry marketing practices have changed over the last decade | (Gault, Redington, & Schlager, 2000; Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009) |
| Intrinsic marketing philosophy | Soft skills of marketing practitioners in the context of personal development | (De Villiers, 2010; Schulz, 2008; A. Williams, 2015) |
| Instrumental marketing philosophy | Technical skills with measurable outcomes | (Gray et al., 2007; Muñoz & Wood, 2015; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017) |
| Development of marketing | KSC required for | (Schlee & Harich, 2010; |

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| professionals | progression from entry to middle and senior level marketing positions | Schlee & Karns, 2017) |
| Soft skills and career progression | Soft skill competency main factor for marketing and interdisciplinary professional growth | (Davis et al., 2002; De Villiers, 2010; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017) |

Examining the literature points towards university curricula lacking a well-structured marketing curriculum that also includes SME and start-up oriented modules (Resnick, Cheng, Brindley, & Foster, 2011). Consequently, this affects marketing graduate employment outcomes and misleads their understanding of the unique nature of SME and SME marketing. SMEs, being relatively more dynamic and fluid than large businesses, require skills that equip marketing graduates to be adaptable to change. Marketing graduates not only need to keep up but must also grow alongside the rapidly changing SME business environment with intense competition, uncertainties, and growing challenges (O’Dwyer, Gilmorespi, et al., 2009; Simpson, Padmore, Taylor, & Frecknall-Hughes, 2006). Developing on this SME, employers likely require graduates not only with KSC in instrumental areas such as digital marketing but also in soft skill areas such as problem solving, networking, SME strategy, and business communication (De Villiers, 2010). The SME marketing literature points towards SME marketing being a multifaceted function and, hence, university marketing education must also take this into account when planning for student programme outcomes (Carson et al., 2004; Hill, 2001; Marcati, Guido, & Peluso, 2010; O’Dwyer, Gilmorespi, et al., 2009; Resnick et al., 2011).

The key importance is for marketing graduates to be able to apply KSC in an integrated fashion when undertaking SME marketing (De Villiers, 2010; Wymbs, 2011). Similarly, it has been suggested that marketing students should understand multiple digital technologies, particularly with digital technology growth happening (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011). This argument is persuasive due to the dominance and rapid adoption of social media and digital technologies – not only in business but also in consumers’ daily lives

(Carson, Gilmore & Rocks, 2004; Chitty, 2012; Wymbs, 2011). To reach digital savvy consumers, then, SMEs must readily adopt digital marketing strategies and, therefore, marketing students must be equipped with the relevant SME marketing KSC to enable them to do so at SMEs rightfully. Despite the marketing education literature revealing gaps in university marketing curricula, the studies have weaknesses that overlook core aspects of SMEs and SME marketing.

Though previous studies have shown there is a gap between marketing education and marketing industry requirements, the methods of these studies overall suffer from common weaknesses. Firstly, there are many different types of businesses and in turn, SMEs from hospitality, technology start-ups, to sole traders and one-two person consulting businesses (Ministry of Business, 2017). Secondly, SMEs run through a business cycle, as do larger businesses (Carson, Gilmore & Rocks, 2004). Different SME marketing tactics are required and prioritized relative to the stage of business the SME is operating in (Marcati et al., 2010; Morrish, 2011; Sok, O’Cass, & Sok, 2013).

The present research does not take into account these different stages of SME business and how these impact SME marketing activities in each stage. This is an area of SME marketing that needs further research to deepen our understanding. The weakness in marketing education studies was remedied partially in 2011 by Harrigan and Hulbert (2011) with an in-depth study on improving marketing curricula within marketing education. Employing extensive content analysis on marketing textbooks and curricula, the authors found an extensive gap between the existing business oriented marketing curricula and the new methods of data-driven and digital marketing. This study is considered to be one of the most extensive in the field (Wymbs 2011; Shaltoni, 2016). The “old marketing DNA” was revealed and a “new marketing DNA” was developed in the context of the rise in data and digital technologies in marketing functions, as well as networking and sales orientated functions (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011). In terms of marketing education, we will now look at the common areas of education that are commonly in demand. We will examine soft skills which encompass a broad range of

cognitive and communication areas followed by hard skills which include digital and theory.

2.9.6 Educational domains

Examination of the education, graduate employability, and skills development literature narrows down the KSC domain into two specific areas – hard skills and soft skills (De Villiers, 2010; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Wymbs, 2011). The former component includes theory KSC and technical KSC. Theory refers to conceptual marketing knowledge in terms of theoretical knowledge and case studies (Gray et al. 2007; Schlee & Karns, 2017). Technical skills refers to digital and software skillsets that are practised in modern day marketing and business such as digital marketing, data analytics, and various other forms of digital tools used to facilitate the function of marketing (Wymbs, 2011). Traditional marketing theories include the famous 4P's, framework tools such as PESTLE analysis, SWOT analysis, and Ansoff's matrix (Aaker, 2011). Marketing theory also includes market research, both theory and quantitative elements, consumer behaviour, and service marketing (Fisk et al., 1993; Moorman & Rust, 1999; Morosan, Bowen, & Atwood, 2014; Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). The recent development of digital marketing as a common marketing area has led to the development of digital business and digital marketing theory that has become part of the grounded marketing theory previously mentioned (Chitty, 2012; Wymbs, 2011). Notable mention is given to the major changes in consumer trends and needs that have led to increased emphasis on co-creation of value, consumer involvement, and relationship marketing with millennial consumers (Aaker, 2004; Baysinger, 2015; Chitty, 2012; Tucker, 2006). The latter soft skills refer to a set of skills often labelled as emotional intelligence which include communication and areas which are collectively referred to as people skills (De Villiers, 2010) which we will examine in the next section.

2.9.7 Soft skills

Multiple studies have shown soft skills to be of significant importance and associate soft skills with the short and long-term success of marketing and business professionals (De Villiers, 2010 ; Gray et al, 2007; Wymbs, 2011). First, we will define what soft skills are and then examine the literature revolving around soft skills in marketing and business education and their importance for employability

Soft skills have been found to be important for all marketing and business professionals regardless of stage (Gray et al., 2007). Weber et al. (2009) conducted an extensive literature analysis on previous soft skill studies and concluded with 107 in total. They found that not only are these skills required for entry level positions but must also be maintained and developed as an employee progresses from entry to senior level business positions in their career accordingly. Weber et al. (2009, p. 356) define soft skills as the “people and interpersonal skills required to apply theoretical knowledge and skills in the workplace setting and [to adapt] to changing demand”. Gray et al. (2010) conducted an extensive gaps analysis in Otago University’s marketing degree programme and found that soft skills are important for not only entry level positions but mid and senior level marketing positions. Interestingly, the emphasis on soft skills over technical skills in Gray et al.’s (2007) study is contradicted by Schlee and Karns (2017) recent study on marketing education literature where soft skills coupled with technical skills were found to be more important as a skillset duo rather than soft skills and theory as found in previous studies.

This may be explained by the 10-year gap between the two major studies where digital marketing has gone from an innovation to a widely used marketing tool across the marketing sector. In essence, digital marketing has moved from an innovation in marketing to a norm, in turn becoming a part of normal marketing practice and hence becoming a part of the entry level marketing job requirements. However, it is interesting to note that even in the 10-year rapid growth and evolution of digital marketing, soft skills remain a key skillset for employers and more importantly, an area that remains

critical for long-term career success for marketing graduates as it is transferrable across positions and different fields (De Villiers, 2010; Gray et al., 2007; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Wymbbs, 2011). Walker et al. (2009) emphasize the importance of soft skills by noting that highly competent marketing and business professionals have highly developed communication, problem-solving and team work skills. Likewise Walker et al. (2009) found that soft skills are a significant factor in both educational success and a relatively smooth transition into the workforce. Interestingly, De Villiers (2010) and Gray et al. (2007) both found that critical thinking is related to student attitudes, students own self perceptions, and engagement. Wellman (2010) found the most commonly sought after characteristics by employers include communication, technical proficiency, teamwork, initiative, interpersonal skills, analytical skills, and attention to detail (Wellman, 2010, p. 918). The numerous studies done on the area of soft skills arguably reveal the importance, demand, and significance of soft skills in the marketing profession as well as the need to integrate these into the curricula (Gray et al. 2007; Schee & Karn, 2017; Wellman, 2010; Wymbbs, 2011). This is also the view of other authors (Abraham, 2006; Richard Davis, Misra, & van Auken, 2002b; Gault, Redington, & Schlager, 2000; Husain, Mokhtar, Ahmad, & Mustapha, 2010; Kermis & Kermis, 2011; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Royle & Laing, 2014; Schulz, 2008), indicating the importance of soft skills for marketing and business professionals' career growth and personal growth. That is, novice to middle and senior marketing professionals all require soft skills with their importance and application increasing as the marketing professional progresses their career.

Previous studies demonstrating the importance of soft skills in curricula provide strong evidence with regards to the importance of this skillset for marketing and business graduates. Schlee, and Harich (2010) identified a subset of soft skills that are arguably lacking in graduates, that is, work readiness, which revolve around soft skills applied in a professional work environment. In their US based study Schlee, and Harich (2010) found that entry level marketing jobs strongly required soft skills with oral and written communication being cited in 84.4% and 75.3% of job descriptions while marketing positions from entry to mid and senior levels showed 83% demanding oral communication and 75.4% written communication. Furthermore, team work, leadership,

and relational skills at 55.8% were cited for entry level positions but a much higher 75% of senior positions indicated the need these skills. The substantial findings of Schlee and Harich (2010) and Schlee and Karns (2017) align with Gray et al.'s (2007) New Zealand marketing gaps analysis study, indicating that the importance of soft skills for progressing marketing professionals is valid regardless of country and economy. These include problem solving, work attitude, prioritization of tasks, taking initiative and adapting to tight workloads, and managing deadlines in a culturally diverse workplace (Schlee & Karns, 2017). Similarly, in their content analysis, Kelley and Bridge (2005) found that 76% of marketing practitioners and 50% of marketing educators cited the need for a professional soft skills course that teaches work readiness for entry level marketing positions. Both stakeholders cited the importance and need for soft skills to be integrated into the marketing curricula to not only ensure students receive the most complete marketing and overall business education possible but also to ensure that businesses receive the highest quality of graduates, in-turn producing a more productive workforce in the business sector (Bancino & Zevalkink, 2007; Kelley & Bridges, 2005; Schulz, 2008). The variety of soft skills that appeared in entry and mid-level marketing positions in the study by Schlee and Karns (2017) arguably provides guidance for marketing educators in preparing marketing students for a multifaceted marketing professional role. Finch, Nadeau, and O'Reilly (2012) added further support to these findings with extensive content analysis, concluding that soft skills are the foundation of marketing professional skillsets and the greatest determinant in career progression.

In summary, soft skills have been proven to be a significant skillset required by marketing and business professionals not only for entry level but mid and senior level marketing positions. The fast changing marketing sector further seeks to support this skillsets importance in that self-directed learning, self-management, and teamwork is increasingly being required and valued for entry level marketing positions (Finch et al., 2013; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Wellman, 2010).

2.9.8 Marketing Curricula

*“One can conceptualize teaching as a dramatic performance set within the classroom service-scape... the best performances. Create a positive learning environment”
(Lincoln, 2008a)*

Marketing and business education has seen a recent increase in studies regarding best practice pedagogy and andragogy (Clarke et al., 2006; De Villiers, 2010; Gault et al., 2000; Gray et al., 2007; Lincoln, 2004; Madhavaram & Laverie, 2010; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017). De Villiers (2010) argues for an andragogy approach due to the notion that secondary students are considered as adult learners upon entering the tertiary education system. The marketing knowledge versus skills in curricula debate has been an ongoing amongst multiple scholars (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Ivory et al., 2006; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001; Ken Starkey & Tempest, 2005; Varadarajan, 2003).

Marketing knowledge is argued to be more long term, stable, and subject to minimal change in relation to changing consumer and digital tools and trends (Gray et al., 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011). Consequently this has lead business and marketing educators to orient their degree programmes predominantly around conceptual knowledge and as a result, teaching curricula that arguably lacks the holistic balance of hard and soft skills required for competent marketing professional development (Gray et al., 2007; De Villiers, 2010; Wymbs, 2011). Marketing education, as with other fields, can be taught in best practice methods in pedagogy or as De Villiers (2010) argues, in andragogy.

The pedagogical competence model presented by Madhavaram and Laverie (2010) consists of five elements broken down into content (marketing) knowledge, knowledge of pedagogical (teaching) approaches, and three capabilities falling under course management, classroom management, and student management. Indeed effective training in all five of these areas complements the engaging, multifaceted educational service delivery method presented by Lincoln (2008a). Combining the two approaches would arguably present a robust marketing education experience for students and seek to mitigate the marketing education-industry gap that previous studies have found (Gray et al., 2007). Wheeler (2008) found that marketing education courses that were group project and problem solving oriented delivered significantly higher outcomes in engaging

students, developing critical thinking and self-management. To achieve this goal, marketing educators must integrate soft skill KSC modules throughout the courses (De Villiers, 2010). Following on from this argument, it is noted that integration of soft skills, conceptual knowledge, and communication skills throughout curricula is essential to develop highly competent marketing graduates who not only will excel in their entry level jobs but also progress to managerial roles (Walker et al., 2009). To encourage students to develop their quantitative and technical skillsets, marketing educators should include marketing career-based modules that explain the importance of varying skillsets in relation to career progression and specifically, extrinsic motivations like wages and promotion (Gray et al., 2007; De Villiers, 2010; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbs, 2011). Several studies in the marketing education literature have suggested recommendations on improving the quantitative proficiency of marketing graduates. These skills range from offering courses in data analytics, statistical courses with commerce and specifically, marketing application. Interestingly, the barriers to course reform are arguably not feasible due to every university offering courses in mathematics and statistics for commerce application (Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbs, 2011). This core issue will be examined in the following criticism and course reform section.

2.10 Criticism of marketing education

This section seeks to examine the literature in the areas of criticism of current marketing education and areas of development for marketing education. The current state of marketing and business education is subject to multiple criticisms and suggested areas of development (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Cavico & Mujtaba, 2009; Holstein, 2005; Jacobs, 2009; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001). The main themes are marketing education's lack of adaptation to technological advances in business, social media, and the digital millennial psychographic. The literature reveals soft skills to be lacking in marketing curricula with particular concern for SMEs in terms of sales and networking oriented business functions (Gilmore, Carson, & Rocks, 2006; Royle & Laing, 2014; Širec & Bradač, 2009; Watson, 2007). Indeed, the focus of the literature review remains primarily on the marketing education-industry gap. However, upon examining the literature, it was

also found that numerous sources question the relevance of business and specifically university marketing research (Baker, Kleine, & Bennion, 2003; Burke & Rau, 2010; Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Hansotia, 2003; Holstein, 2005; Houston et al., 2006; Mcinnis, 2000; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001; Rynes, Bartunek, & Daft, 2001). In other words, marketing academia's focus on theory is rarely translated and applied to the practitioner world (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005). Despite the evidence behind the need for quantitative skills in marketing graduates, the marketing education literature persistently shows that graduates lack these critical quantitative skills (Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbs, 2011). Indeed, the academic is the primary educator in a university class and examining their role will allow us to understand the academia-industry divide at a more holistic level due to the research heavy nature of an academics job (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Houston et al., 2006). Therefore, this section will also briefly examine the literature surrounding business research relevance and relate this to the business school-industry gap – the primary focus of this thesis.

2.10.1 Critical view on marketing education

According to Bennis and O'Toole (2005), business schools are facing heavy criticism for failing to impart useful skills and knowledge, or to prepare the next generation of business leaders. Reibstein, Day, and Wind (2009) examine the critical reasoning behind the argument of business schools losing their way and becoming excessively theory oriented. Furthermore, drawing from Ellson (2009, p. 162), the area of practical experience and teaching methodology comes to light. Ellson (2009) notes that there are multiple benefits for encouraging practical learning for academic staff, that is, relatively few universities can claim straight forwardly that their academics have industry experience. In a similar manner, the researcher agrees with several authors in noting that relatively few universities can straight forwardly claim that their courses are industry-aligned and prepare students with the optimal set of knowledge, skills, and competencies for the business workforce (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Ellson, 2009; Holstein, 2005; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001; Robles, 2012). Madhavaram and Laverie (2010) argue it is of major concern that post doctorate graduates (PHD candidates) who go on to become

lecturers all the way to professors receive little to no special training in pedagogy, andragogy, or teaching and are likely to have minimal to no industry experience in business or marketing. To ensure a cohort of marketing academics with excellent teaching skills, their development must progress in accordance with the components mentioned in the model suggested by Madhavaram and Laverie (2010) and best practice marketing education pedagogy and andragogy which can be done in partnership with the education department of every university (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Brennan, 2013; Fabrice Henard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2008; Ghoshal, Arnzen, & Brownfield, 1992; Patrick Tucker, 2006).

2.10.2 Change in education

Marketing has undergone major changes in the last decade (Wymbs, 2011) and therefore authors argue that marketing education should adapt to meet various stakeholders' needs, including businesses, SMEs and, specifically, marketing practitioners (Bovinet, 2007). Indeed, since marketing students will eventually be practitioners, they can be regarded as the most important stakeholder. Returning to the dominant themes in the marketing education literature, we see themes oriented around the role of technology in SME (and large business), marketing needs, and modern interactive business-consumer relationships (Mitchell & Strauss, 2001; Spiller & Scovotti, 2008). Indeed, the digital marketing phenomenon, trend, and business technological function is rapidly gaining ground in both the large and small business sector. Yet, persistently, we see marketing curricula that lack digital marketing modules (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Royle & Laing, 2014; Tholen, 2014; Wymbs, 2016). Business education authors argue that large business theory dominates marketing and business schools (Cheng et al., 2016; Mishra et al., 2017; Resnick et al., 2011; Royle & Laing, 2014). Over time this leads to an excess supply of theoretically oriented marketing graduates who, despite being immersed in large business, lack relevant KSC for SME marketing roles (Cheng et al., 2016; Resnick et al., 2011). Consequently, this results in students favouring large businesses due to being perceived more favourably by them than in the SME sector (Cheng, Lourenço, & Resnick, 2016). This phenomenon is summarized in Figure 3 where large business is abbreviated as LB.

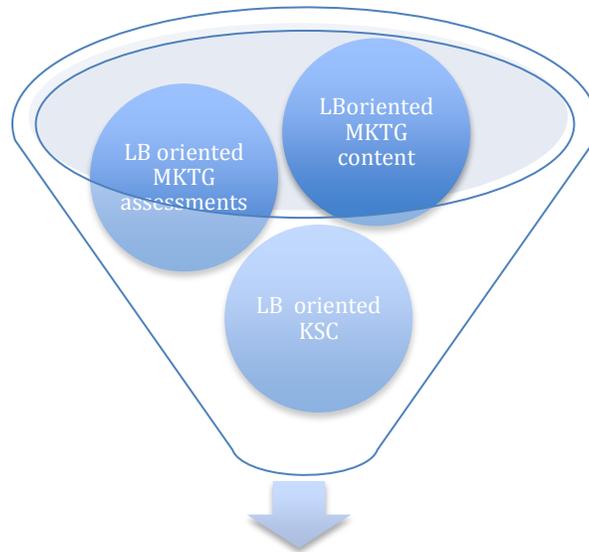


Figure 3: Large-business oriented graduate

This perception of large businesses is grounded in the view that they provide better career prospects, training, and learning opportunities than SMEs. In contrast, SMEs are more dynamic in nature due to scarce resources in addition to SME marketing having a sales and networking marketing orientation (Carson et al., 2004; Gilmore et al., 2006; Hill, 2001; Siu, 2002). Hence, it is plausible that, compared to their more systematic large business counterparts, SME marketing experiences may provide a more multifaceted professional learning experience (Carson, Gilmore, & Rocks, 2004). This is because SME marketing tasks tend to be more diverse and less planned in execution while large business marketing models are relatively more uniform and linear task oriented (Siu, 2002). Relevant business and marketing KSC have fundamentals that are applicable across all business sizes but it is the application and context that differentiate between SMEs and large businesses that are important. However, there are fundamental marketing and overall business KSC previous studies have examined that are key to becoming a successful marketing professional (Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbbs, 2011). These skills are centred on soft skills including communication, teamwork, interpersonal and professional competencies, and conceptual knowledge of various marketing areas (Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009; Wheeler, 2008).

2.11 Marketing academic roles

2.11.1 Academic role

A brief overview of the role of marketing academics within the academic world of the business school should be presented to give context to the following sections revolving around the politics of academia. Several authors have illustrated academic work within an arguably systematic process. Junior marketing academics will delegate their energies to obtain research grants for the department and attend scholarly conferences with the primary focus of being published in top tier journals (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Matthews, Lodge, & Bosanquet, 2014; Mcinnis, 2000; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). Madharavaram and Laverie (2010) substantiated this with findings indicating junior academics, who are predominantly recent marketing doctorate graduates, progress to academic roles involving teaching despite having minimal to no experience in marketing teaching, pedagogy, or industry marketing experience (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015). As the junior academic progresses in their research, they will be recognized and cited, and increased citations means more financial grants for the marketing department. All other areas such as research relevancy, industry experience, keeping up to date with industry trends, pedagogical excellence, and professional development are seen as distractions from the most important primary goal: to produce research that will make it in reputable marketing journals (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015). This process is arguably caused by the tenure and promotion factors centred primarily on research output (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015).

2.11.2 Performance-based research fund

Academia in New Zealand universities is centred on the performance-based research fund system (PBRF). The purpose of the PBRF system is to “encourage and reward excellent research in New Zealand universities “ (TEC 2016). This is stipulated by the government assessing each university’s research output and then dictating the funding for each university based on the results of this output accordingly. Marketing academics working in New Zealand marketing departments operate under the PBRF in a workload split that is set out in the contract that dictates the workload as follows: 40% teaching, 40% research and 20% administration related work. In theory, this seems to be a fair split and evenly distributes the role of a marketing academic into teaching, research, and administration. However, studies done on marketing academic progression factors strongly point towards research output as the dominant promotional factor in marketing academic careers. The purpose of the PBRF system is to increase the quality of research output at New Zealand universities and to provide a system of support and encouragement for teaching and research excellence (TEC, 2016). This in turn aims to support the process of developing researchers at the postgraduate level – both current and up-coming. With the importance of knowledge application increasing, the PBRF system not only focuses on research output but also on the quality of the output knowledge, its relevant application in industry, and its contextual application and usefulness for various stakeholders (TEC, 2016). Objectively, the vision and goals of the PBRF make logical sense and seek to develop academics both in teaching and research elements. However, studies on promotion indicate that marketing academics exist in a system that promotes primarily on research and places minimal weighting on teaching and industry experience (de Rond & Miller, 2005; Matthews et al., 2014; Pan & Lee, 2011; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). This will be examined in the sections to follow.

2.11.3. SME research

While SME marketing research has increased significantly, university curriculums do not reflect this in their curricula offerings (Cheng et al., 2016; Gilmore, 2011; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009; Resnick et al., 2011). A large number of studies conducted on SME marketing have centred on the elements of networking, sales orientation, and entrepreneurial marketing, resulting in an innovative SME marketing model (Awan & Hashmi, 2014; Cheng, Lourenço, & Resnick, 2016; Gilmore, Carson, & Rocks, 2006; Knight, 2000; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, & Carson, 2009). However, authors have also argued that the fruits of SME and SME marketing research have yet to manifest in marketing curricula offerings. In essence, there is a lack of SME oriented marketing curricula to produce a cohort of marketing graduates that meet SME marketing needs (Brocato et al., 2015; Cheng et al., 2016; Resnick et al., 2011). Despite the increase in SME research, large business marketing curricula remain dominant in both university curricula and marketing academia. As previously mentioned, this leads to an unfavourable view of SMEs and ultimately a displaced view of SME marketing for future graduates (Cheng et al., 2016). According to Martin and Chapman (2006), a lack of SME marketing course content – whether theoretical, practical, or project-based – has stained marketing students' views of SMEs and this has, in turn, affected their career goals. It is arguable that this is to be expected from students who are graduating from a marketing degree that focuses on large businesses and large business theory. This is a concern because large business models are, to a large extent, not applicable to SMEs. This is because of the unique characteristics of SMEs such as scarce resources and the hands-on involvement of the SME founder (O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009). Therefore, the production of marketing graduate cohorts lacking in SME marketing skills is not only affecting SMEs' lack of access to recruit relevant talent but also produces a negative perception of graduates' KSC from the SME owners' perspectives (Martin & Chapman, 2006). SMEs are well aware of the large business-centric curriculums major universities follow and as a result, form this negative stigma towards hiring these graduates (Martin & Chapman 2006). In a sense, graduates are skilled for a relatively different business market and consequently SMEs have less access to talent despite already being in a state of scarce

resources (Chitty, 2012). Therefore, today's marketing graduates lack of relevant KSC leaves them unprepared to work in SMEs. This is despite the evidence that SMEs are major contributors to the economy in terms of GDP, job creation, and business opportunity (Martin & Chapman, 2006; Massey et al., 2004; The Ministry of Economic Development [MED], 2011). Furthermore, SMEs make up over 80% of NZ businesses – further emphasizing the need to integrate SME oriented business and marketing content in university business degrees (Massey et al., 2004; MED, 2011).

The issue of university graduates having relevant KSC has been raised by a number of influential bodies across the globe from the UK, Australia and the US (Bott, 2008). The issue raised relates to students graduating from university programmes lacking the skills relevant for the workforce. Amongst the lacking KSC raised by the bodies include soft skills such as creativity, initiative, and interpersonal skills (Bott, 2008; De Villers, 2010; Wymbs, 2011). The importance of entrepreneurial marketing and innovation is seen as crucial not only for SME growth and survival but also for large businesses due to the saturation of markets, increased consumer choice, and continuously changing trends in business and between consumers giving rise for the need to incrementally and radically innovate in work places to maintain competitive advantage and sustainable profits (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012; Martin & Chapman, 2006; Wymbs, 2011). Martin and Chapman (2006) argue that the lack of these relevant SME KSC is the main reason why employers are reluctant to hire marketing graduates for SME roles. Nordling (2008) substantiates this claim with recent surveys revealing an ongoing skills gap in marketing graduates in terms of meeting SME marketing requirements. Previous studies have also indicated that large businesses have also begun adopting innovative and entrepreneurial cultures within their marketing functions (Aaker, 2011; Bancino & Zevalkink, 2007; Nordling, 2008). Therefore, a lack of entrepreneurial marketing modules not only produces graduates lacking SME skills but also, to a certain extent, lacking the innovative skillsets for large businesses in the context of this new era of digital marketing, entrepreneurial business cultures, and consumer involvement (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Wymbs, 2011).

2.11.4 Research by academics

Business education literature indicates that industry and academic communication to be minimal (Burke & Rau, 2010; Ellson, 2009; Hansotia, 2003). Furthermore, literature also shows that academics have little interest in practitioners and their ideas in the “real world” (Holstein, 2005). Indeed, the criticism of business schools draws back to the early 1950s (Mintzberg, 2004). The Carnegie report, for example, can be seen as a precursor to business school criticism (Khurana, 2007). Several authors have also criticized the disconnect between business schools and industry (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Burke & Rau, 2010; de Rond & Miller, 2005; Houston et al., 2006; Matthews et al., 2014; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). The argument that business research is relevant is refuted by Bennis and O’Toole (2005) along with Mintzberg (2004), who cite the lack of robust connections and partnerships between business schools and industry as arguable proof of this irrelevance. Bennis and O’Toole (2005) argue that if research was as relevant as multiple academics tout their research to be, why is it difficult to sell the findings and value of this research to practitioners? Bennis and O’Toole (2005) are distinguished academics in their own right, and therefore one places significant weighting on their views due to being both experienced practitioners and academics in their respective business fields. An interesting area covered in previous literature was the “implications for practice” review study conducted by Bartunek and Rynes et al. (2010). More than half of the articles sampled, including management and marketing articles, lacked specific practitioner implications and advice that contributed to the marketing profession. This further deepens the argument previously illustrated by Adler and Herzing (2009), supported by Bartunek and Rynes et al. (2010), that business academics operate in a self-enclosed loop ticking the requirements for career promotion. Not unlike Adler and Herzog (2009), Holstein (2005) argues that although business schools have earned their status as prestigious centres of academia and research, their undergraduate programmes have withered away their true purpose to train the next generation of marketers, managers, and business leaders. Deepening this argument, Holstein (2005) argues that business academics are not concerned with the sharing of research but rather razor focused on being published in top

journals and being cited. Ironically, business academics are well aware and are in fact indifferent to the fact that their academic research might not even be read once it is published (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Holstein, 2005; Jacobs, 2009; Kelly, 2005).

2.11.5 Tenure

In theory, marketing academics have three main roles: teaching, research, and service to the university and community. However, examination of academic studies oriented around promotion and tenure tend to indicate that research is the key promotional factor for marketing academics. A major longitudinal study conducted by Dobeles and Rundle-Theile (2015) in Australia comprised five years of observed academic teaching research loads for five individuals and captured the essence of this industry. Indeed, the truism of publish or perish was reinforced with findings solidifying the fact that academics are promoted solely on research output. Other roles involved in the academics role such as number of courses taught, financial grants obtained for the department, and teaching evaluations have been found to have no impact on tenure and promotion (Dobeles & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Matthews et al., 2014; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). Furthermore, Dobeles and Rundle-Theile's (2015) study also found that business academics who published more papers and had smaller class sizes were promoted more and had increased job satisfaction. This is interesting to marketing educators, with business school intakes being at their highest ever (Bennis & O'Toole 2005) while the promotional element of research remains strong. That is, class sizes have increased significantly, increasing workload and intensity while promotional factors remain the same, meaning that marketing academics have an increasingly stressful workload (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Dobeles & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Matthews et al., 2014). Junior academic staff are informed about this academic ladder system early on in their careers (Adler & Herzig, 2009; Holstein, 2005; Khurana, 2007). Marketing academics under the business school system learn all too quickly that any non-academic research output such as industry marketing articles, book publications, and industry experience do not have tenure and promotional weighting (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Dobeles & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Mintzberg, 2004).

The challenges of being an academic in the modern world are summarised by Williams and Van Dyke (2007) where the authors note that the disruptive effects of globalization have resulted in heated competition for students between universities in addition to reduced government funding and an increasingly demanding millennial student demographic (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Lingelbach et al., 2012; Matthews et al., 2014; Williams & Van Dyke, 2007). It is arguable that, in reality, most business schools will continue to hire and promote research oriented professors who lack practical field experience. Consequently, Khurana (2007) states that this model produces graduates who are also theoretically minded yet lack market employability. More recently, Reibstein, Day, and Wind (2009, p. 3) discuss how and why “business academia has lost its way”, indicating the rigorous focus on narrow niche theoretical research has led the business school path away from contributing to the industry. Ellson (2009, p. 162) concludes that, “Despite ample evidence of the benefits of practitioner learning, few institutions can straight forwardly claim teaching staff that offer wide experience of business practice or pedagogy that reflects authentic and legitimate practitioner learning.” On this note, business education authors have argued that, after decades of research, there remains a divide between business school training and marketplace needs (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Khurana, 2007; Mintzberg, 2004; Wymbs, 2011). Consequently, this misalignment situation significantly affects business and marketing students entering a NZ workforce in which over 80% of businesses are one to five employee SMEs (Massey et al., 2004; Ministry of Business, 2017). In addition, research-heavy academic roles, as well as being educators, tend to deter academics from investing time and effort into high levels of teaching. This is because teaching is less important for achieving tenure, promotions, and recognition (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Seggie & Griffith, 2009).

2.12 Literature conclusion

SMEs are different to large businesses in that they are agile, have flexible structures, and due to smaller sizes, more involvement from their staff in the direct operations of the business with particular emphasis on founder involvement (Awan & Hashmi, 2014; Carson, 1995; O'Dwyer, Gilmore, et al., 2009). SME marketing traits include significant sales and networking activities along with digital marketing and social media marketing (O'Dwyer, Gilmore, & Carson, 2009). The KSC required for SME marketing arguably shows a stronger requirement for soft and communication skills due to the networking and sales focused orientation of SME marketing compared to large business marketing (Siu, 2002). Marketing has had a significant period of change from traditional mass media methodologies to the now modern age of digital and entrepreneurial marketing with a culture of innovation and consumer involvement (Aaker, 2011; Chitty, 2012). It has been argued that marketing education remains fixed on the old traditional model of large business theory and lacks modern digital marketing practices. Several authors have noted that business schools should model their law and medicine school counterparts (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Jacobs, 2009; Mintzberg, 2004). Indeed, examining the law, medicine, and dentistry school models reveals a combined model of both academic and practical elements (Bennis & O'Toole). The robust models of these school degrees provide students with KSC to deliver specific skills for specific industries. While academics tend to criticize a solely practical approach, here we see curricula and teaching playing a dominant role in the schools' success (Brennan, 2013). In sum, it is argued that law, medicine, and dentistry schools produce better-rounded, educated, and ethical students who become both scholars and practitioners, compared to their business school counterparts, due to their balance of scholarly and relevant KSC. One presents the argument – should marketing and business schools not work towards this balance of academic knowledge and relevant KSC as well?

Chapter Three: Research Design

3.1 Research aims

The study presents an interpretive approach to investigate the research problem. The methodology employed for the study consisted of two phases: content analysis and interviews. Phase One was comprised of a two-part content analysis. Part one was content analysis of SME entry-level marketing jobs from four industry leading New Zealand job sites to identify the knowledge, skills, and competencies required in the positions advertised. Part two consisted of content analysis of undergraduate marketing courses at seven New Zealand universities to examine the offerings in terms of the course work and knowledge, skills, and competencies taught.

Phase One's data was analysed and used to construct a series of questions for Phase Two where semi-structured interviews were conducted with four marketing educators with course coordinator roles from three New Zealand universities. Thematic analysis via NVivo was used for the industry job content analysis; manual thematic analysis and NVivo coding was used to analyse the interview data. The findings along with the literature will be used to construct a curricula model for marketing departments in New Zealand universities.

Chapter 3 provides an in-depth description of the research methodology employed for this thesis.

3.2 Overview of methodology

The design of the study was broken down into two phases. Phase One – part one consisted of content analysis of SME marketing jobs in New Zealand, with data sources from leading industry job websites, to identify the common requirements of these jobs. Then, Phase One – part two comprised content analysis of university marketing course curricula from seven New Zealand universities. Phase Two comprised semi-structured

interviews with university marketing department lecturers with course coordinator responsibilities, to discuss any gaps identified between SME marketing job requirements, and university undergraduate marketing curricula.

3.3. Phase One (1) – Content analysis of SME marketing jobs

Content analysis was performed on job descriptions for marketing positions in New Zealand SMEs. Figures 4-10 show the parent and child nodes accordingly with 4.1 describing the node identification and analysis process.

Data: Job sites Seek.com, Indeed.com, Trade Me jobs, and Student Job Search (SJS) were searched for the period May to July 2016, to identify SME marketing positions being advertised. Research was conducted on keywords that related to marketing roles and was narrowed down to the following list: marketing, marketing assistant, digital marketing, PPC, Adwords, SEO, SEO marketing, marketing graduate, graduate marketing job, graduate marketing role, writer and content writer, marketing internship, digital marketing, digital marketing graduate, entry level marketing, entry graduate. 193 job descriptions for marketing roles in New Zealand SMEs were sourced. SMEs were identified as those businesses with fewer than 50 employees. Job descriptions were copied and pasted manually into Microsoft Office Word documents and renamed based on the website source and date. For example, a digital marketing job from Seek.com sourced in May was named SEMAY_01. In this manner, 193 job descriptions were copied into Word documents, which were then imported into NVivo software as “sources” to begin the coding. Figures 4-10 show the parent node themes.

Analysis: NVivo coding: The job description documents were then imported into NVivo as “sources”. Nodes were grouped into parent nodes with the actual KSC as child nodes within each relevant parent node. The parent nodes identified were digital marketing, software and technology, soft skills, marketing, communication, and job experience. Each parent had a set of child nodes into which the relevant KSC identified were coded.

For example, “Digital marketing knowledge” was coded into the digital knowledge child node under the digital marketing parent node and “attention to detail” was coded under the soft skills parent node.

Reporting: NVivo export

The NVivo coding was then exported into a Microsoft Excel table with the coding frequency for each child node (under the corresponding parent node). Bar graphs were produced for each parent node. The numbers for each child node were put into tables on Microsoft Excel categorised by the corresponding parent node. A total of six graphs were produced – one for each parent node.

Analysis of the NVivo sources revealed three common job themes: digital position, marketing assistant, and writer position. The positions for these three themes were highlighted and the same KSC analysis was done accordingly. These results are presented in a series of graphs.

3.4 Phase One (2) – Content analysis of New Zealand university undergraduate marketing curricula

Curricula for undergraduate marketing courses in seven New Zealand universities were examined for the SME marketing knowledge, skills, and competencies found in the initial SME marketing KSC.

Sample: The 2017 course guides were searched manually and where no 2017 course guides were found, the 2016 versions were used. The University of Auckland was the only university with the PDF version publicly available. The remainder of the New Zealand university marketing course guides had to be searched manually on Google via key words.

Analysis: Frequency tables identified the most common knowledge, skills, and aptitudes SMEs require of marketing recruits.

3.5 Phase Two – Interviews with university marketing department staff

Sample: Four interviews were conducted with university marketing department staff from three New Zealand universities:

The University of Auckland

Victoria University

Waikato University

The selected staff were senior lecturers who hold course coordinator and curriculum design responsibilities. AUT University was excluded due to a conflict of interest as the researcher's thesis was being conducted at this University. Otago University along with Massey University and Canterbury University had declined the interview proposal and therefore, the remaining universities who had accepted the interview offer were selected. As only three accepted, two marketing lecturers with different backgrounds - one academic and one industry –were chosen to balance out the sample pool from the University of Auckland and to increase the interviewee pool from three to four candidates to provide more data and insights for the research. The pool of academics selected ranged from lectures, senior lecturers and associate professors.

Data: The information collected from the interviews addressed the following issues:

- 1) The current state of their marketing courses
- 2) Do they teach relevant SME marketing KSC in their undergraduate marketing courses?
- 3) What are the challenges faced with course reform? (Both past and current / future planned)
- 4) Academic workloads in terms of research and teaching and how these are reflected in workload balance from primary sources
- 5) Miscellaneous information regarding the role of a marketing academic

A copy of the Interview Guide is provided in Appendix 1.

3.6 Justification for the research design

The reasoning behind the content analysis draws from the very purpose of the thesis – to examine the current marketing KSC requirements of entry level marketing jobs.

To collect such data, manual content analysis was required due to job descriptions being posted up on multiple websites. This was able to provide a snapshot of the current requirements that employers advertise for in entry-level marketing positions. Nvivo was chosen to code the data due to its extensive coding features in addition to exporting the frequency of the KSC, which was then coded into relevant tables in order to draw insights. Therefore, manual coding of job descriptions, which was then imported into Nvivo, was used to export quantitative tables to determine the relative frequencies of specific KSC required by employers in entry-level marketing positions.

Semi-structured interviews were regarded as able to provide the necessary data to comprehend and feasibly understand the reasoning behind the current marketing course structure, future offerings, and reasoning for these two elements in a manner that was relatively easy to comprehend by the interviewer. That is, the researcher sought to interpret and translate the data into feasible and actionable findings for future course alteration purposes – the ultimate goal of the thesis. The researcher’s main reason for interviewing lecturers for this thesis was to extract useful qualitative data in terms of the university course reform area specific to that university due to the lack of specific data in this field in the existing university education and SME marketing education literature. Furthermore, each university operates its their own set of systems and rules, which are not available as information online.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the interviews (Miles & Huberman 1994; Bryman & Bell, 2003). Transcripts were analyzed and coded for themes. Overall, four themes emerged from the coding of the interviews, which the researcher and supervisor agreed to

be most relevant to the focus of the thesis: the current state of marketing education at the interviewees' universities; teaching themes; politics; and obstacles to course improvement and reform.

Chapter Four: Findings (1) – SME marketing positions

This chapter will present the findings of the content analysis (CA). The primary focus of the content analysis (CA) was to analyze and narrow down the SME marketing requirements revealed in the 200 job descriptions in order to compare and contrast with university undergraduate course content.

4.1 SME content analysis

The primary purpose of this research is to examine the knowledge, skills, and competencies (KSC) required by marketing positions and to compare-contrast these with existing marketing courses within NZ university business degrees. A total of 200 marketing job descriptions were analyzed from four job websites (TradeMe, Seek, SJS and Indeed) using the Nvivo software. Initially, the KSC identified included advertising, writing, language, digital marketing, copywriting, communication and software-tech. Subsequently, they were narrowed down to digital marketing, communication, software-technology, soft skills, marketing, and job experience. The following section will present the findings in order of digital marketing, soft skills, software tech, marketing, communication, and job experience with a brief write up of the most relevant statistics from each table accordingly.

4.2 Digital marketing

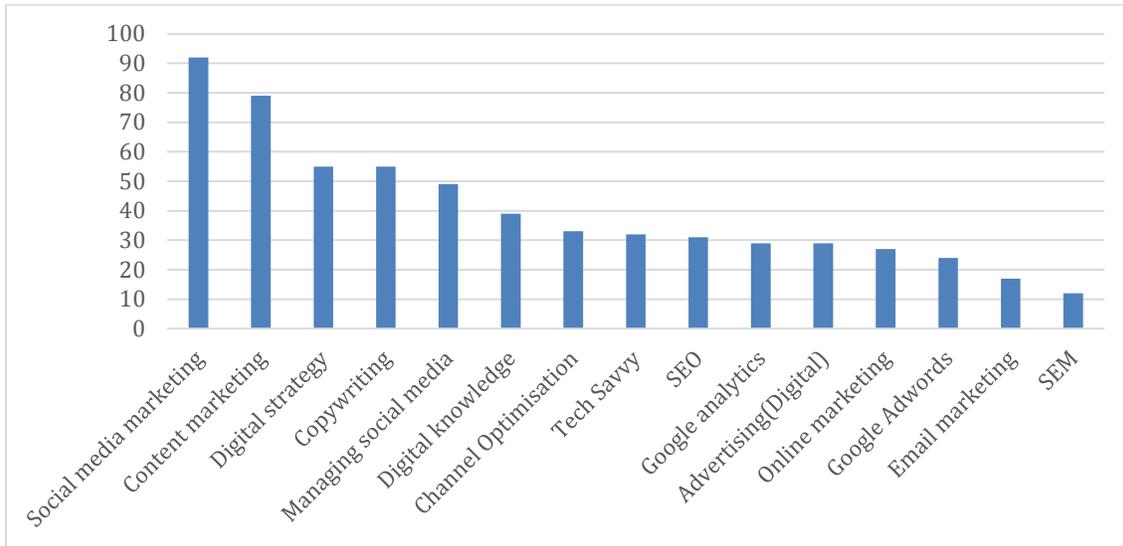


Figure 4: Digital marketing KSC

Figure 4 shows that the most in demand digital marketing KSC was social media marketing ($x = 92$), followed by content marketing at ($x = 79$) and digital strategy at ($x = 55$). The lowest in demand skill for the sample was search-engine-marketing (SEM) at ($x = 12$).

4.3 Soft skills

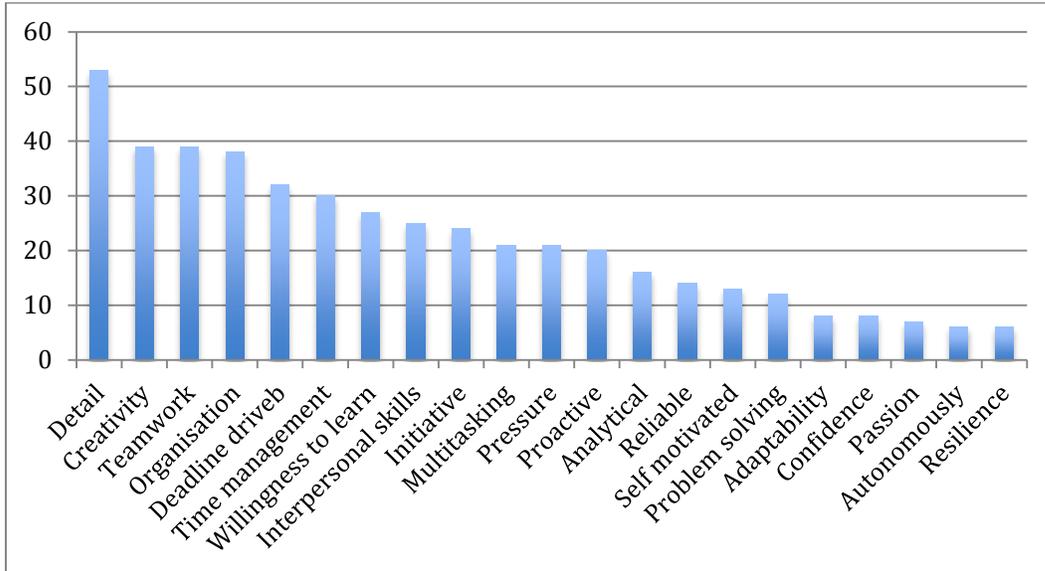


Figure 5: Soft skill KSC

The most cited soft skill was attention to detail at (x=53) followed by teamwork at (x=39), deadline driven at (x=39), and willingness to learn at (x=30). The lowest cited skills were resilience and working autonomously at (x=6).

4.4 Software and technology

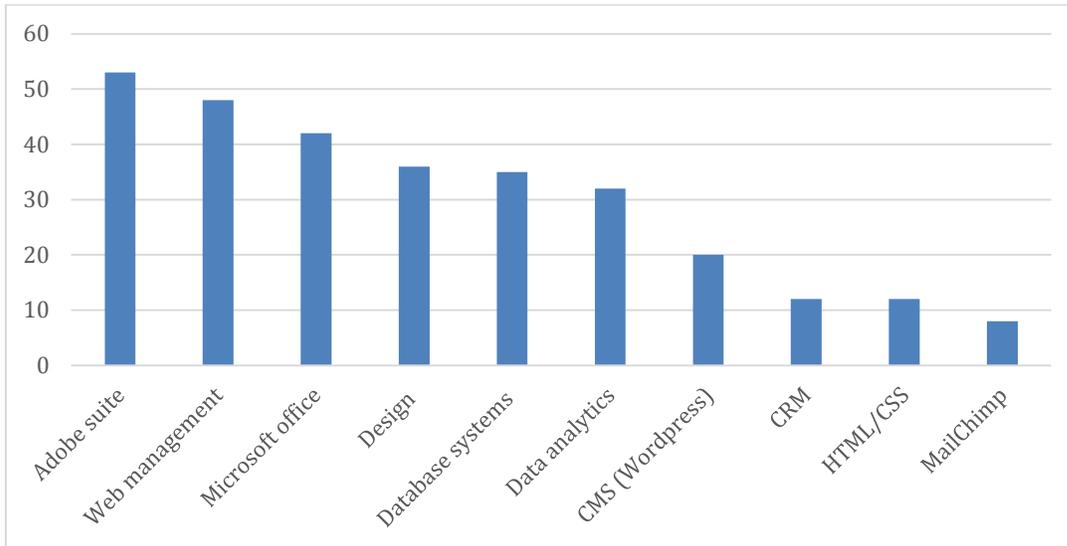


Figure 6: Software and technology KSC

Figure 6 indicates the most common software and technology skills coded over the three-month content analysis. The most in demand software and technology skill was the Adobe Suite at (x=53) followed by web management skills at (x=48) along with Microsoft Office at (x=42). Design and data skills was similar with the former having a frequency of at (x=36) and latter a frequency of at (x=35). The least in demand skill coded was the email marketing software, MailChimp at (x=8). A total of 298 software and technology SME KSC were coded.

4.5 Traditional marketing

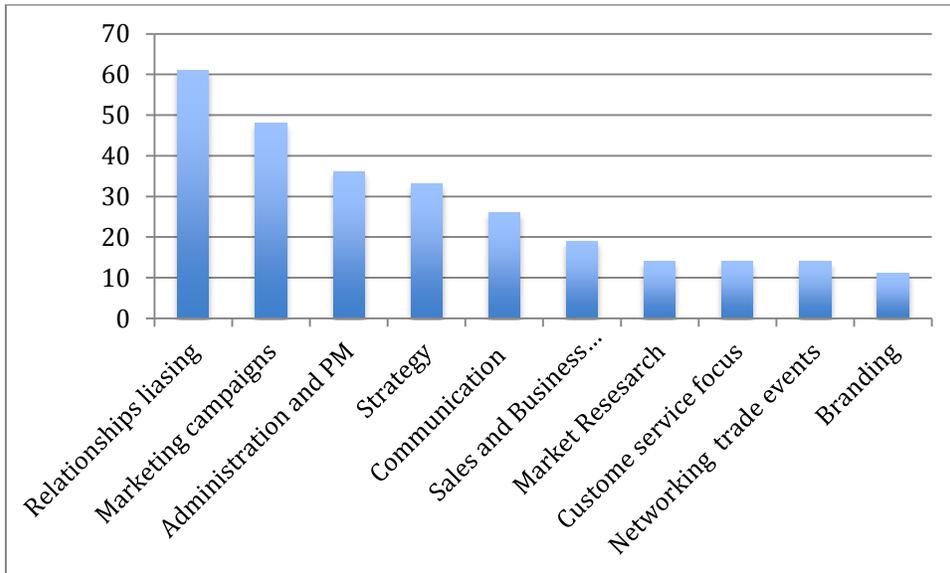


Figure 7: Marketing KSC

Figure 7 indicates the most commonly cited traditional marketing KSC. From the table we can see the most common was relationships and liaising at (x=61) followed by marketing campaigns at (x=48) and administration and project management at (x=36).

4.6 Communication

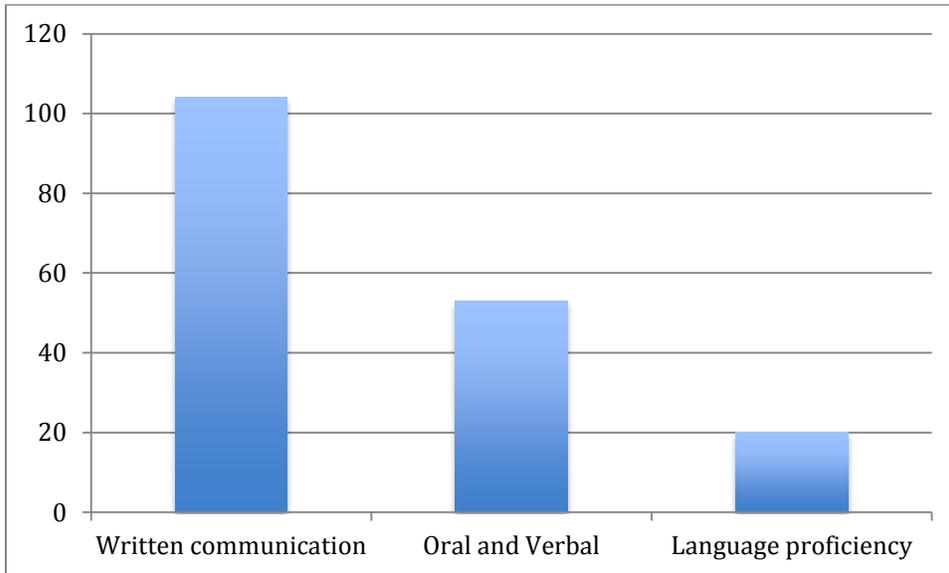


Figure 8: Communication KSC

Figure 8 indicates the communication KSC coded in the content analysis. The most common communication skill cited was written communication skills at (x=104) followed by oral and verbal skills at (x=53). Language proficiency was the least cited at (x=20). The figure is quite revealing in that it shows the significant importance of written communication for SMEs. Communication is a collective skillset in the sense that, as with other skills, it does not operate in silos. Indeed this finding provides evidence of the importance of written communication as a core skill. As we will examine in the discussion section, written communication along with copywriting form the basis of the majority of business communication.

4.7 Job experience

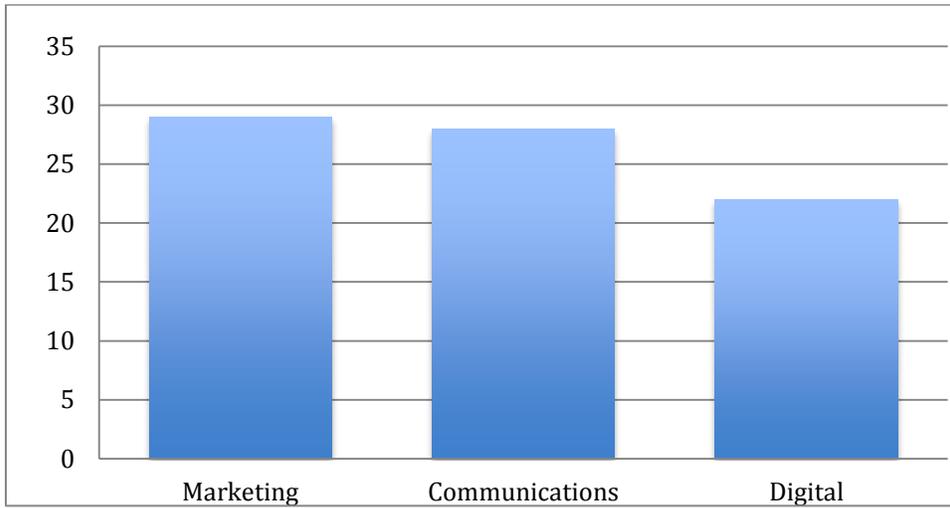


Figure 9: Job experience KSC

Figure 9 indicates the job experience KSC . The results were very similar, with marketing being the most common at (x=29), followed by communications at (x=28) and digital experience at (x=22).

4.7.1 Technical skills

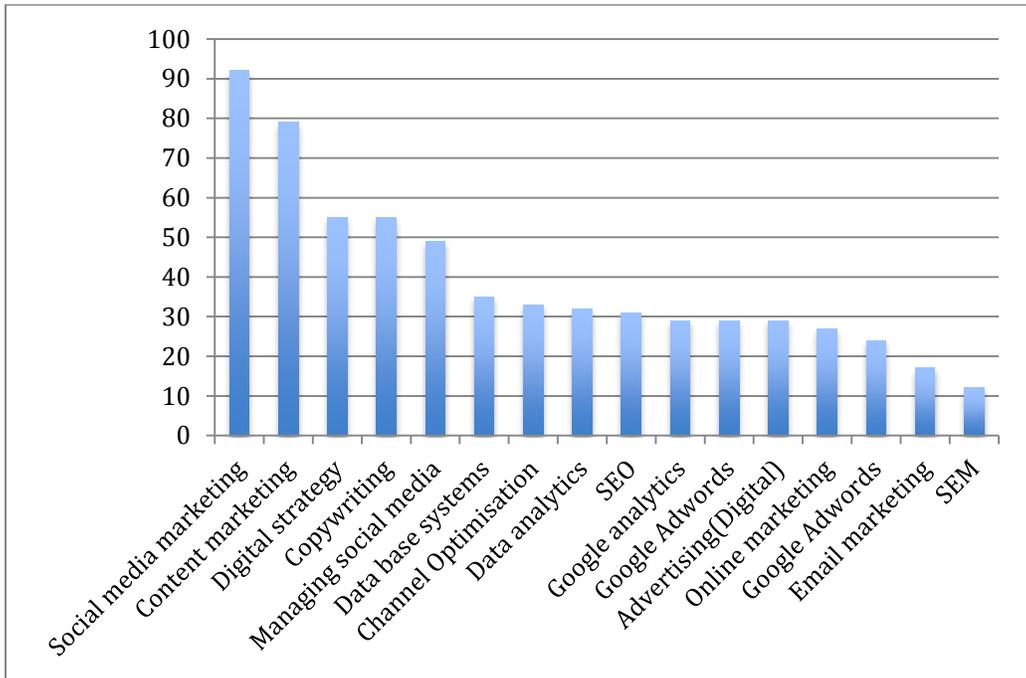


Figure 10: Technical skills KSC

Figure 10 shows the technical skills coded in the content analysis. The results show social media marketing at (x=92), followed by content marketing at (x=79) and copywriting and digital strategy both at (x=55). As a percentage, social media marketing related technical skills were coded in 54% of jobs.

4.8 Job themes

Following the overall KSC analysis, the most common jobs were organized, leading to three themes – writer position, digital position and marketing assistant. Appendix 2 provides sample job descriptions for these positions, from the research dataset. Tables 7-18 present the KSC for these three positions across the digital marketing, soft skills, software and technology, communication, and job experience KSC.

4.8.1 Writer position

A common theme observed was the writing job in the form of digital content writer, copywriter, content writer, and content publisher. These positions were grouped under the writer theme and coded for their SME KSC accordingly.

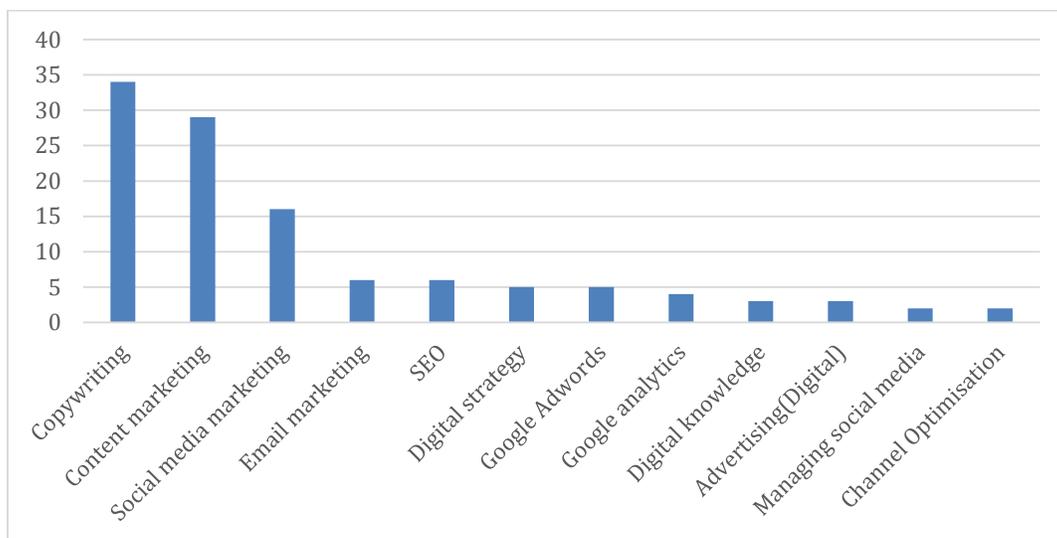


Figure 11: Digital marketing KSC for writer positions

Figure 11 indicates the digital marketing KSC for coded writer job. The most commonly coded KSC was copywriting at (x=34) followed by content marketing at (x=29). Expectedly, the niche technical skills of Google Adwords at (x=5), Google analytics at (x=4), and channel optimization at (x=2) had the lowest frequency. Interestingly, the highest digital nodes correspond to writing areas and the lowest to niche technical areas. This aligns with the nature of writing positions entailing high amounts of written deliverables.

4.8.2 Soft skills

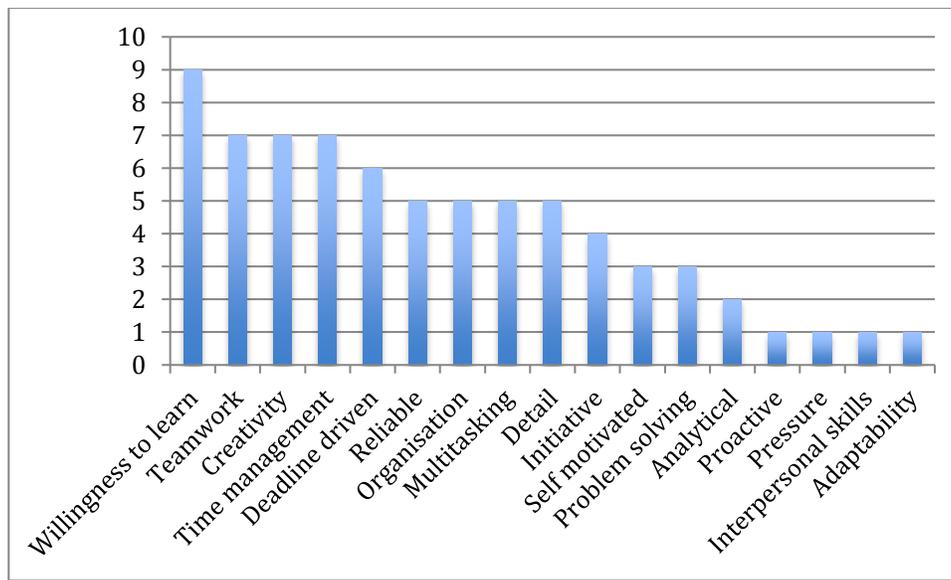


Figure 12: Soft skills KSC for writer positions

Figure 12 illustrates the most common soft skill KSC for a writer position. From the table we can note the common grouping of willingness to learn at (x=8) followed by teamwork at (x=7) and creativity at (x=7). Similarly, deadline drive, time management, and being reliable all had a value of at (x=6). The lowest cited KSC were adaptability at (x=1) and interpersonal skills at (x=1).

4.8.3 Software and technology

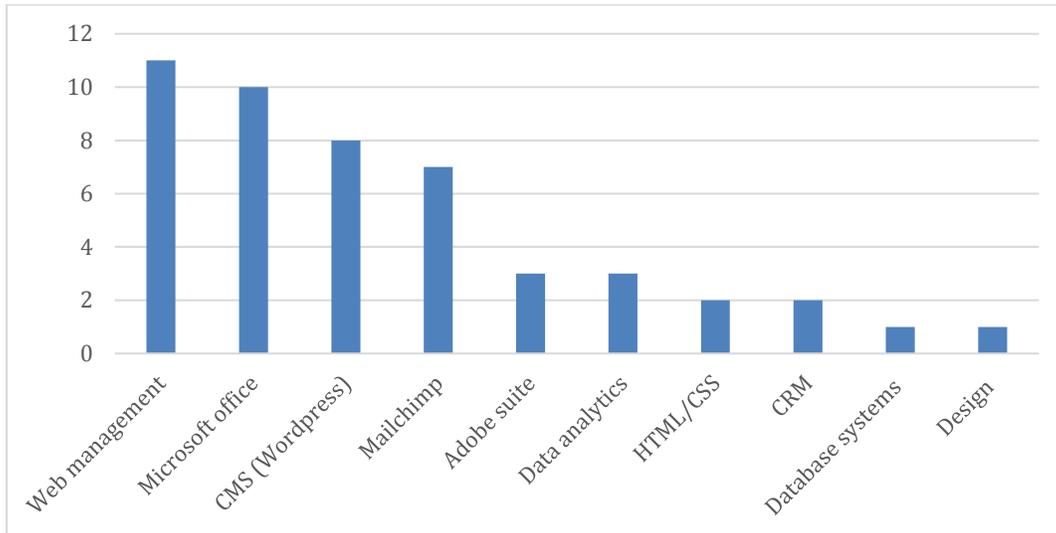


Figure 13: Software and technology KSC for writer positions

Figure 13 shows us the software and technology KSC for writer positions. Web management was coded at (x=11), Microsoft Office at (x=10) and CMS (Wordpress) at (x=8). Arguably CMS and Web management can be combined with a frequency of (x=19) due to WordPress being a Web management software. The least frequent KSC were design and database systems at (x=1). There is a clear pattern of writing oriented software packages for the writer jobs from word processing to blogging.

4.8.4 Marketing

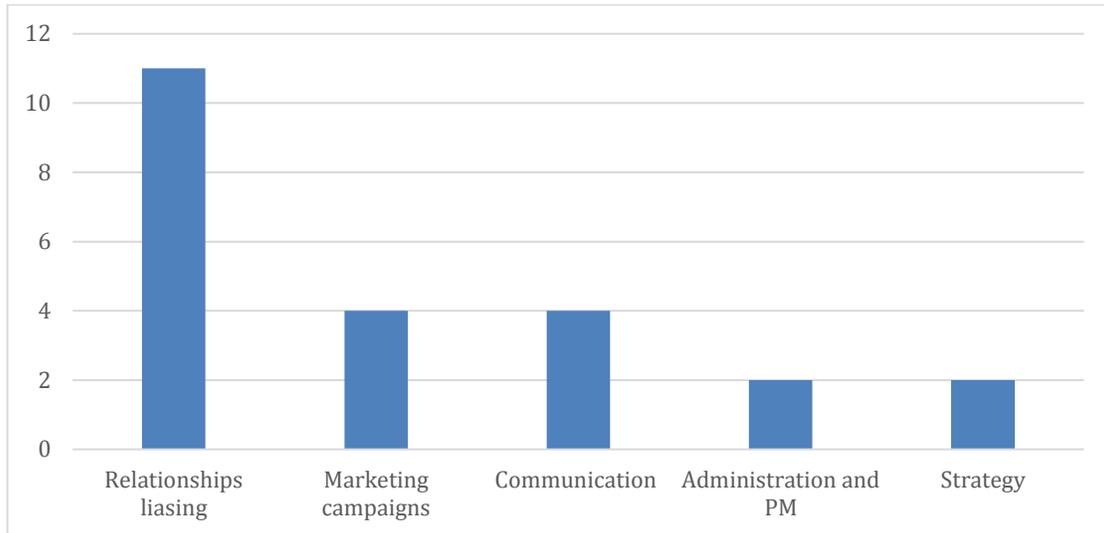


Figure 14: Traditional marketing KSC for writer positions

Figure 14 indicates the traditional marketing KSC coded in the writer positions. We can see the major KSC as relationships and liaising at (x=11) with the remaining nodes being significantly lower. The lowest was marketing strategy at (x=2). This indicates to us the importance of relationships in the writer's role in SME marketing.

4.8.5 Communication

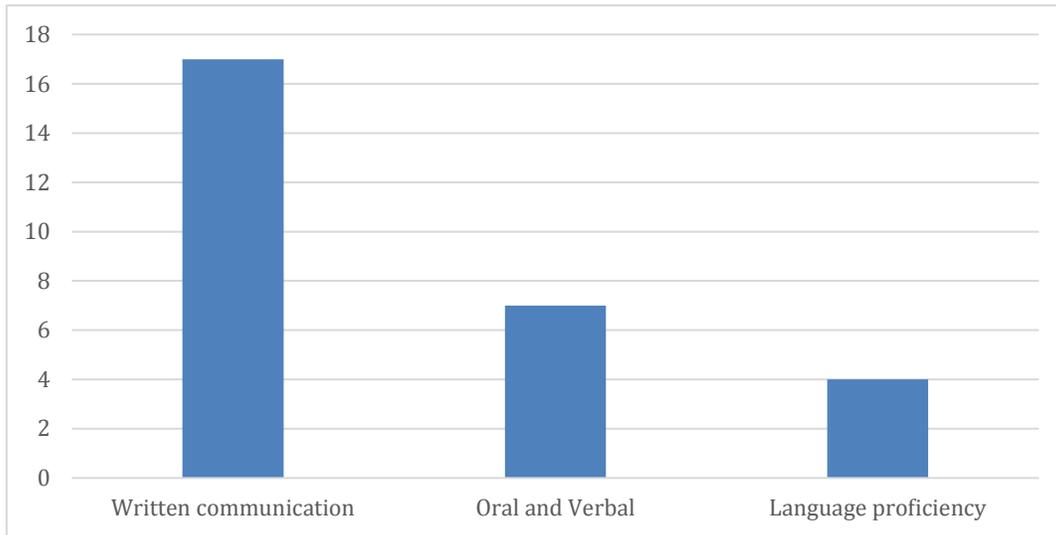


Figure 15: Communication KSC for writer positions

Figure 15 indicates the most common written communication KSC for writer positions. Written communication ($x=17$) had a significantly higher frequency compared to oral and verbal at ($x=7$) and language proficiency at ($x=4$).

4.8.6 Job experience

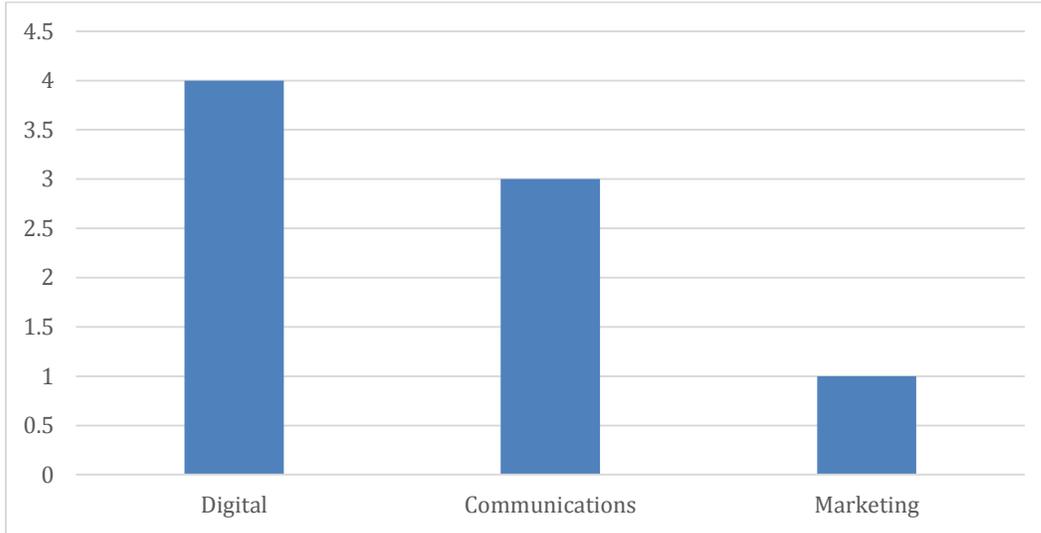


Figure 16: Job experience KSC for writer positions

Figure 16 shows the job experience KSC for writer positions. Digital internships were the most common at ($x=4$) while the lowest was marketing at ($x=1$).

4.8.7 Digital positions

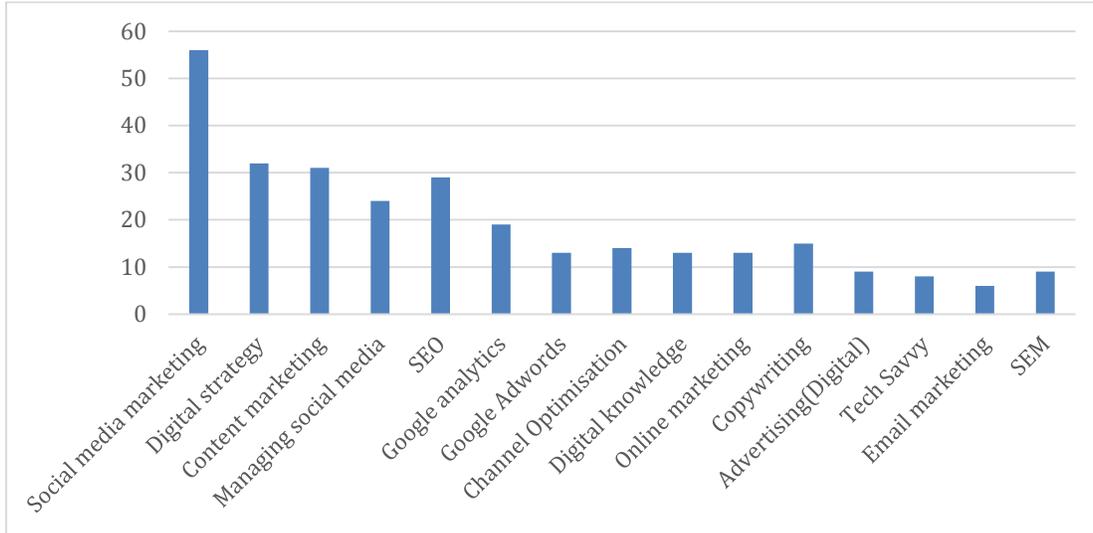


Figure 17: Digital marketing KSC for digital positions

Figure 17 indicates the most common digital marketing KSC. We can see that social media marketing at ($x=56$) was the most frequently coded KSC. Digital strategy at ($x=32$), content marketing at ($x=31$), SEO at ($x=29$) and managing social media ($x=24$) were similar in frequency. Indeed, these codes arguably fall under social media marketing. Collectively, the Google digital suite of Analytics at ($x=19$) and Google Adwords at ($x=13$) were coded 32 times.

4.8.8 Soft skills KSC for digital positions

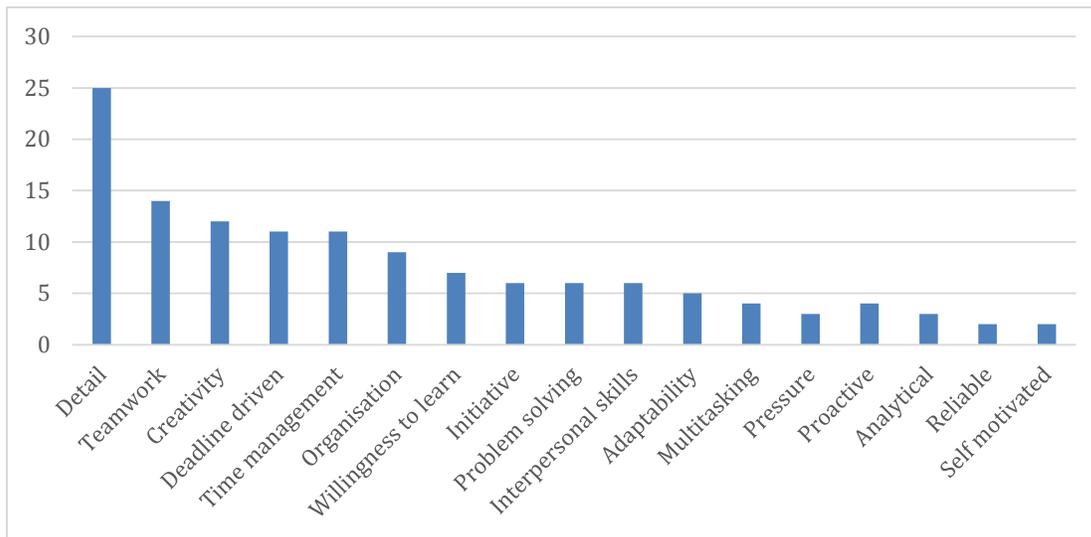


Figure 18: Soft skill KSC for digital positions

Figure 18 indicates the most common soft skill KSC for digital positions. From the chart, it can be seen that by far the greatest demand is for attention for detail. Teamwork at (x=14) creativity at (x=12), deadline driven at (x=11), and time management at (x=11) were found with similar frequencies. A total of 130 soft skills were coded, indicating the importance of these KSC for SME marketing and business positions overall.

4.8.9 Software and technology

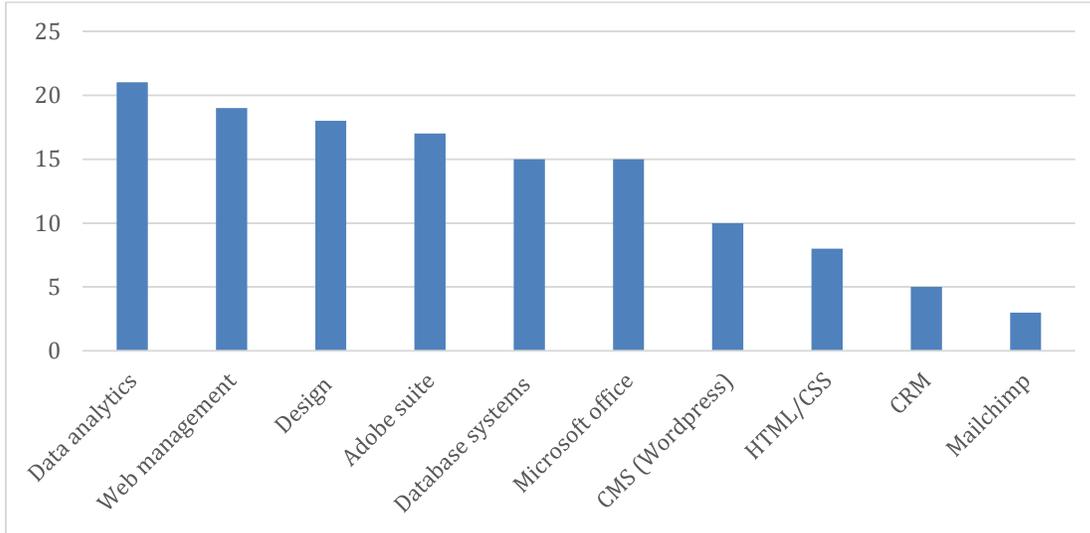


Figure 19: Software and technology KSC for digital positions

Figure 19 indicates the most common software and technology KSC for digital positions. From the chart we can observe nodes with similar coding for data analytics at (x=21), Web management at (x=19), and design at (x=18).

4.8.10 Marketing

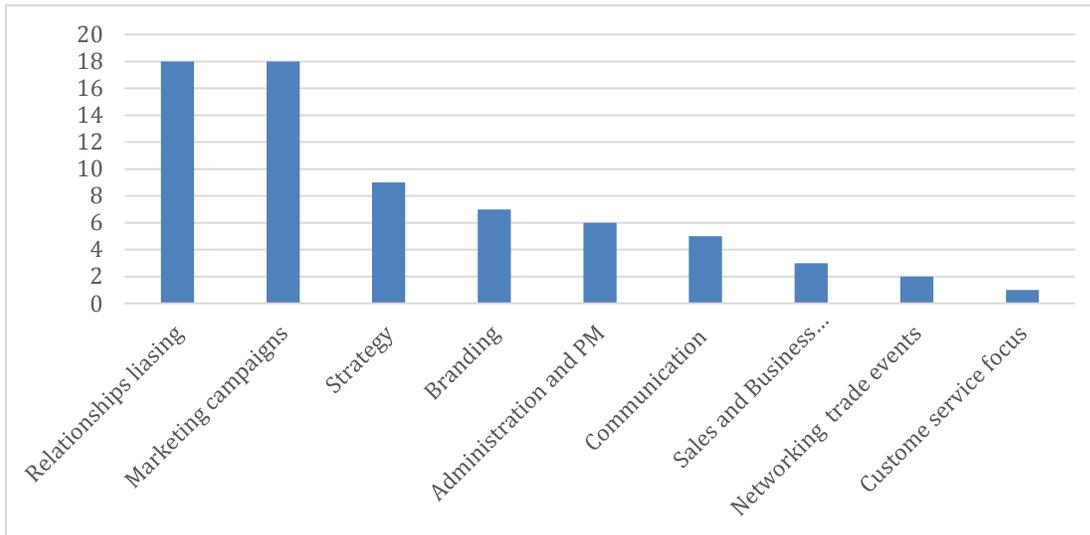


Figure 20: Marketing KSC for digital positions

Figure 20 indicates the most common marketing KSC for digital positions. From the chart we can see that the most common nodes were relationships and liaising at ($x=18$) and marketing campaigns at ($x=18$). The least frequent KSC was customer service focus at ($x=1$).

4.8.11 Communication

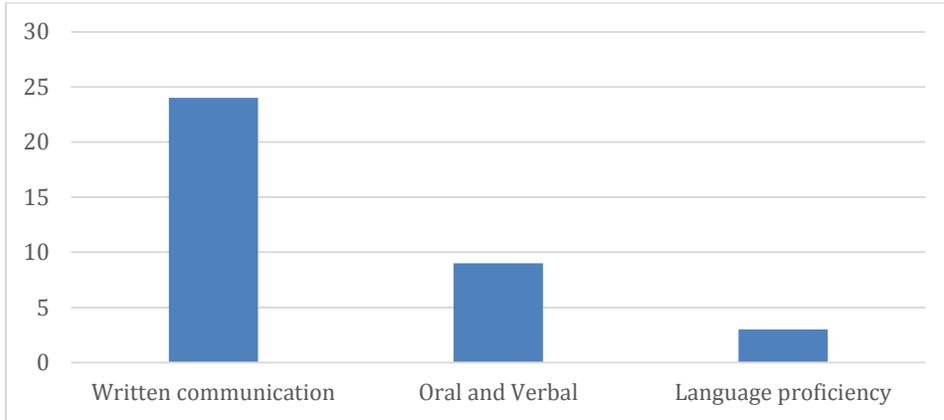


Figure 21: Communication KSC for digital positions

Figure 21 indicates the most common communication KSC for digital positions. From the chart it can be seen that the greatest demand was for written communication at (x=24). The lowest demand was for language proficiency at (x=3). Written communication was the main KSC coded at at (x=24) being 67% of the total communication KSC.

4.8.12 Job experience

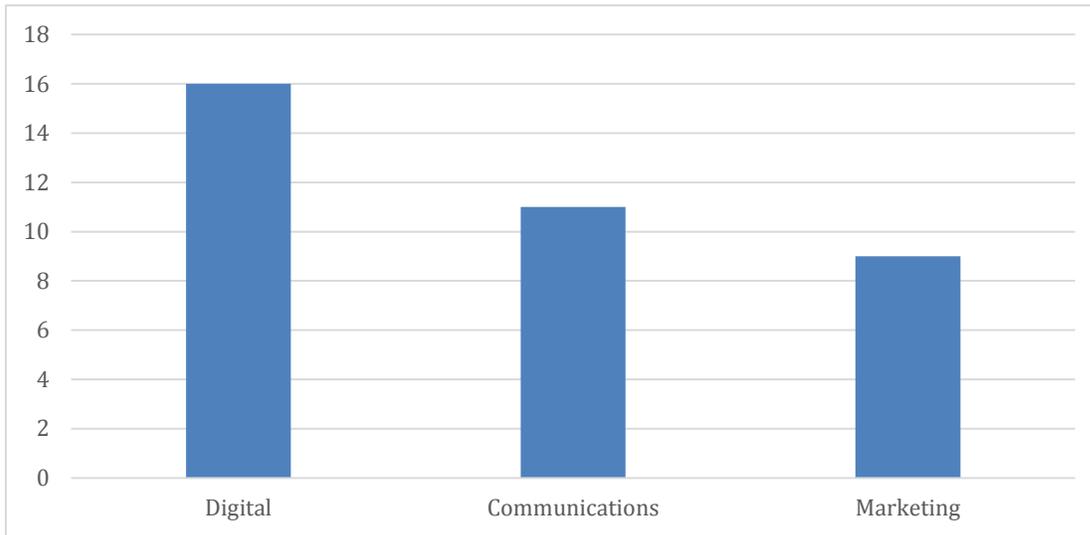


Figure 22: Job experience KSC for digital positions

Figure 22 shows us the most common job experience KSC for digital positions. From the chart we can see that digital had the most frequent nodes at at (x=16) followed by communications at (x=11) and marketing at (x=9) with close results.

4.9 Marketing assistant job

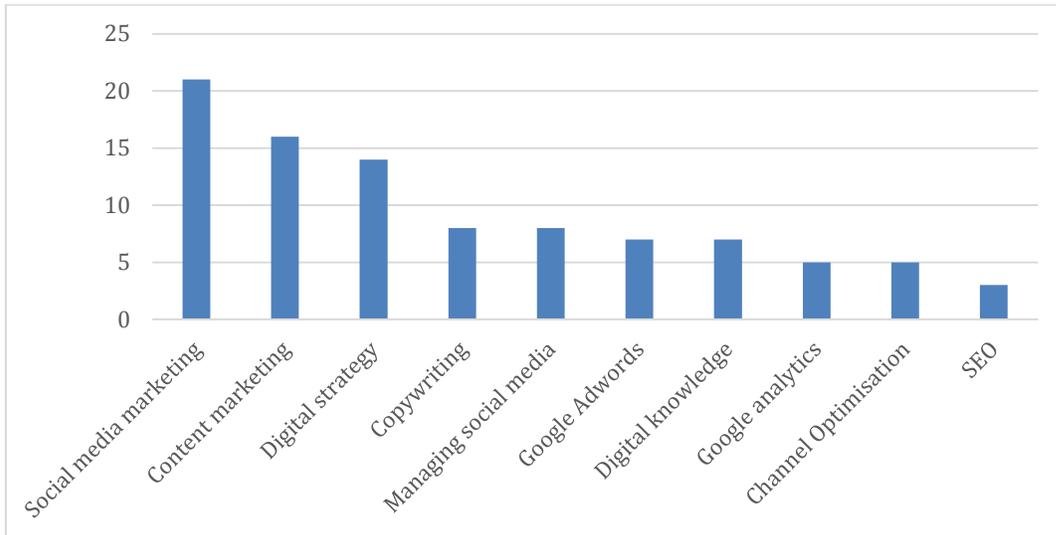


Figure 23: Digital marketing KSC for marketing assistant

Figure 23 shows the digital marketing KSC for marketing assistant positions. We can see a descending relationship of the KSC from social media marketing at ($x=21$) followed by content marketing at ($x=16$) and digital strategy at ($x=14$) all the way to SEO at ($x=3$).

Evidently, as the frequency of the KSC decreased, so did the technical aspect of the specific KSC coded.

4.9.1 Soft skills

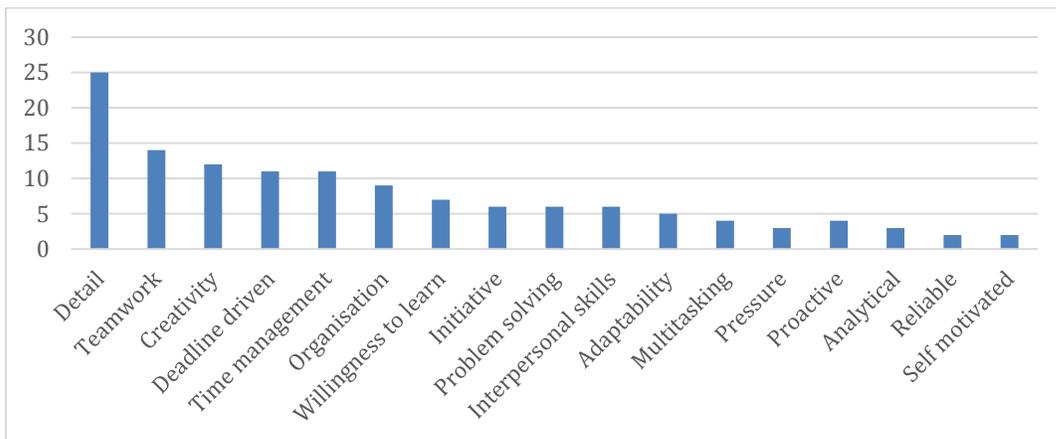


Figure 24: Soft skill KSC for marketing assistant positions

Figure 24 indicates the most common soft skill KSC for marketing assistant positions. From the chart, it can be seen that by far the greatest in demand soft skill KSC was attention to detail at (x=25). Following this was teamwork at (x=14), creativity at (x=12), and time management at (x=11). The lowest cited KSC was problem solving at (x=2). In total, there were 111 soft skills KSC for digital positions.

4.9.2 Software and technology

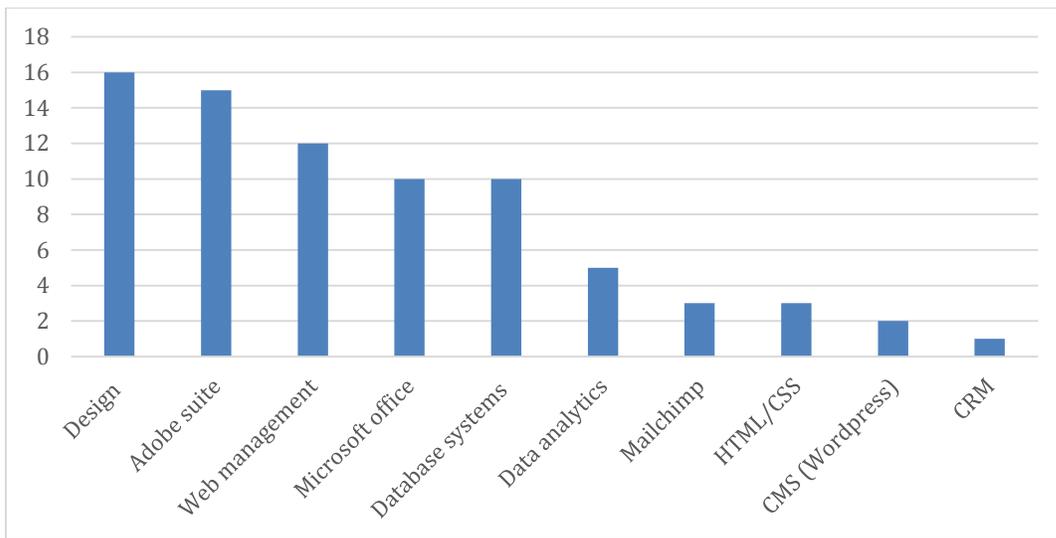


Figure 25: Software and technology KSC for marketing assistant positions

Figure 25 indicates the most common software and technology KSC for marketing assistant positions. From the chart we can see the most frequent KSC was design at (x=16), Adobe Design Suite at (x=15), followed by Web management at (x=12) and Microsoft Office at (x=10). Design KSC at (x=31) had 40% of the total KSC at (x=77).

4.9.3 Marketing

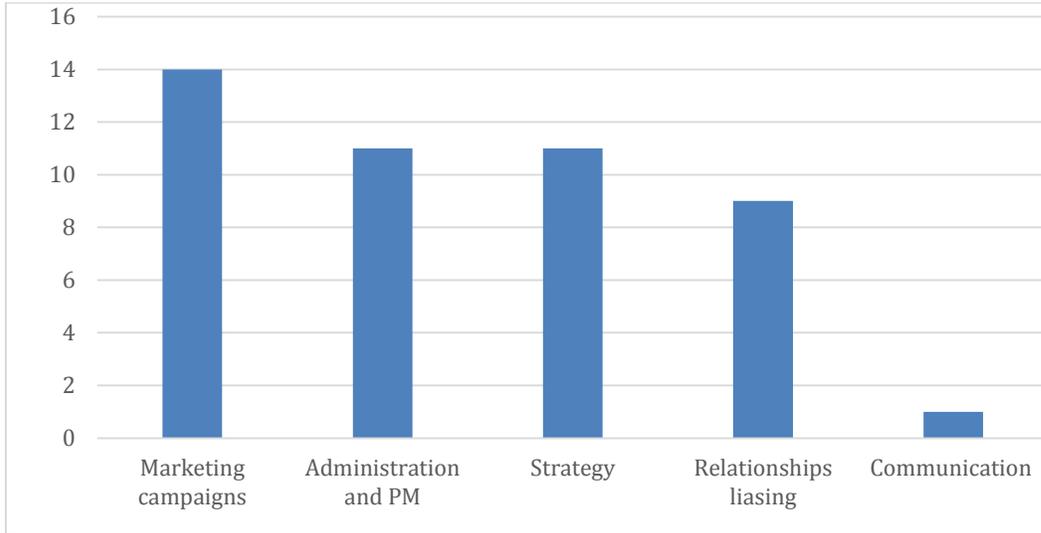


Figure 26: Marketing KSC for marketing assistant positions

Figure 26 indicates the most common marketing KSC for marketing assistant jobs. From the chart we can see that marketing campaigns had the most in demand KSC at ($x=14$), followed by administration and strategy both with at ($x=11$). The lowest KSC was communication at ($x=1$).

4.9.4 Communication

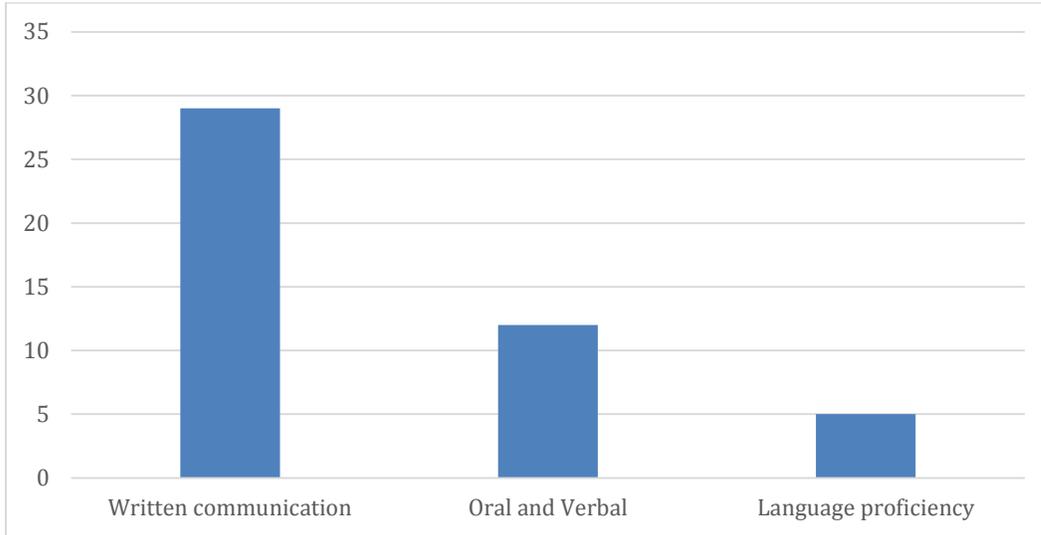


Figure 27: Communication KSC for marketing assistant positions

Figure 27 shows the most common communication KSC for marketing assistant jobs. From the chart we can see the greatest in demand KSC was written communication with oral and verbal second at at (x=11). We must note that communication is never in isolation and therefore in business and specifically the marketing world, communication is a mix of written and oral and/ or verbal.

4.9.5 Job experience

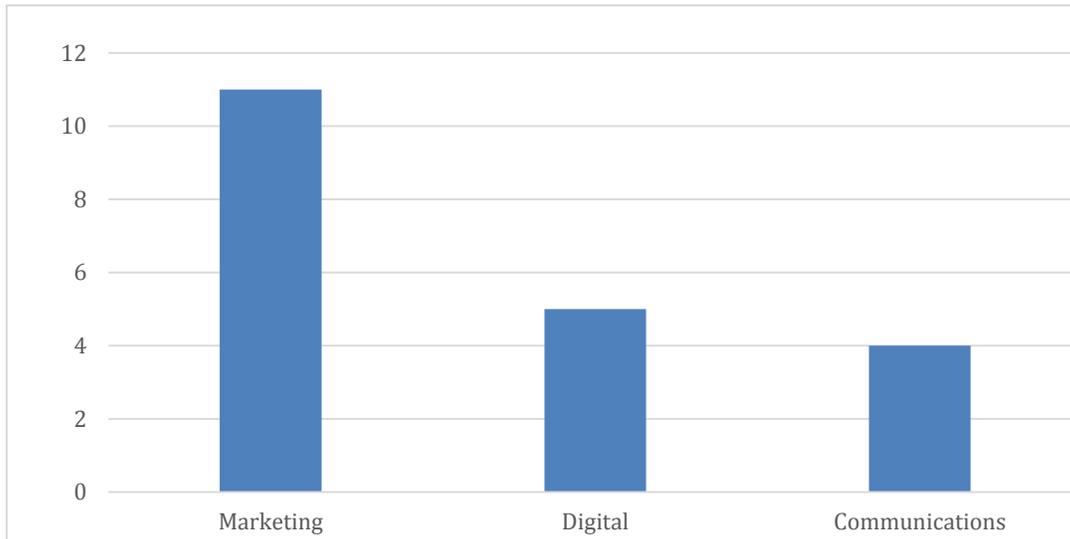


Figure 28: Job experience KSC for marketing assistant positions

Figure 28 indicates the most common job experience KSC for marketing assistant jobs. From the chart we can see that the most frequently coded was marketing at ($x=11$) with the lowest being digital at ($x=5$) and communication at ($x=4$). Note that communications and digital can fall under marketing and therefore collectively these nodes can arguably be coded as at ($x=20$) for marketing job KSC.

4.9.5 Findings Summary

The content analysis coupled with the academic interviews have revealed some interesting insights . We have seen the significant requirement of a variety of digital KSC with the creative and writing oriented digital skillset (social media marketing and content marketing) having the highest demand. Interestingly, the majority of social media positions examined all had a form of communication skill requirement, indicating the multifaceted role of this skillset and its importance to digital marketing as a modern day skillset for marketing and business graduates.

Soft skills were found to be of major importance with attention to detail and teamwork being most demanded. Communication skills interestingly had significant presence in job descriptions with written and oral being required in almost every job description.

Three job themes were identified (digital, writer and assistant) which describes the most common entry level marketing roles for students. The industry job content analysis has revealed a strong demand for digital KSC but also, in fine balance, a strong demand for soft and communication KSC's. Business and marketing theory was expected in jobs but not highlighted in highly emphasised, high demanded manner that soft, digital and communication KSCs were. The next section will examine the course guide content for the seven New Zealand University marketing curricula's respectively

Chapter Five: Findings (2) - University Marketing Courses

This chapter presents the results of the content analysis of university marketing course guides.

5.1 Coursework

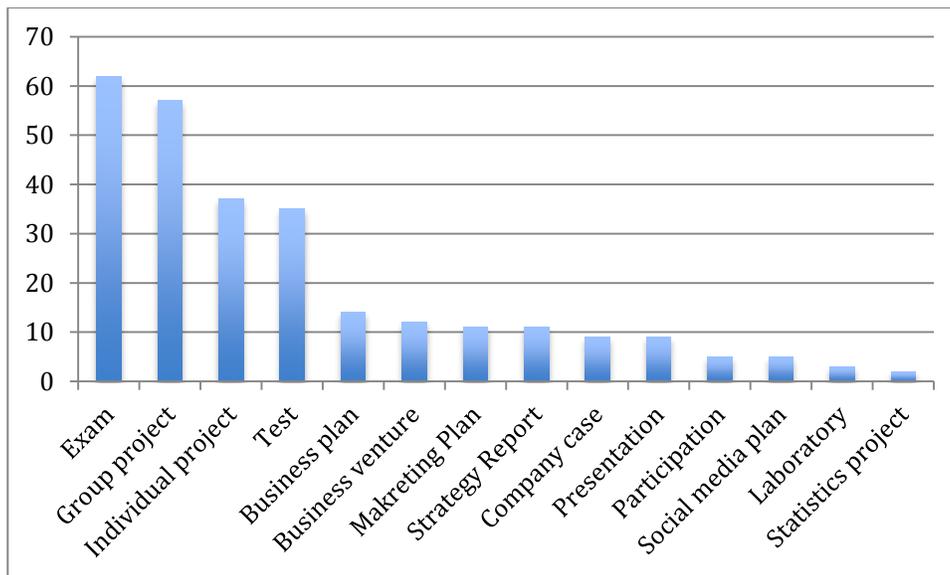


Figure 29: Coursework in New Zealand university marketing degrees

Figure 29 shows the coursework layout of New Zealand marketing degrees and the relation between the elements. From the chart we can see by far the most common was exams at (x=62), group projects at (x=57), and individual projects at (x=37) followed by individual tests at (x=35) which were in close in frequency. The least common was social media marketing plans at (x=5) along with laboratory work at (x=5) and statistics projects at (x=2).

5.2 Digital marketing

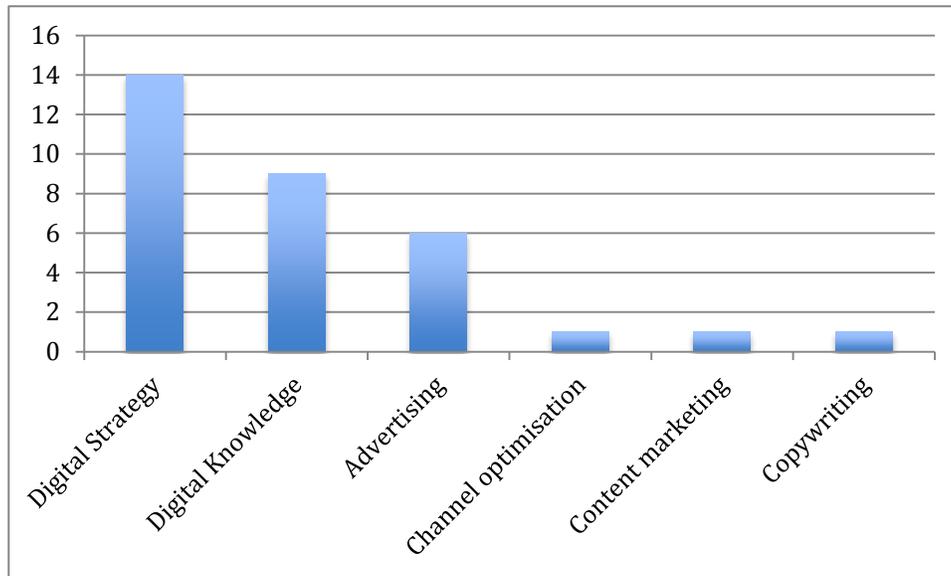


Figure 30: Digital marketing KSC in New Zealand marketing degree courses

Figure 30 indicates the most common digital marketing KSC in New Zealand marketing courses. From the chart we can see the top three KSC were digital strategy at (x=14), digital knowledge at (x=9), and advertising at (x=6). The least common was content marketing and copywriting at (x=1) with email marketing having zero presence in the marketing courses examined.

5.3 Software and technology

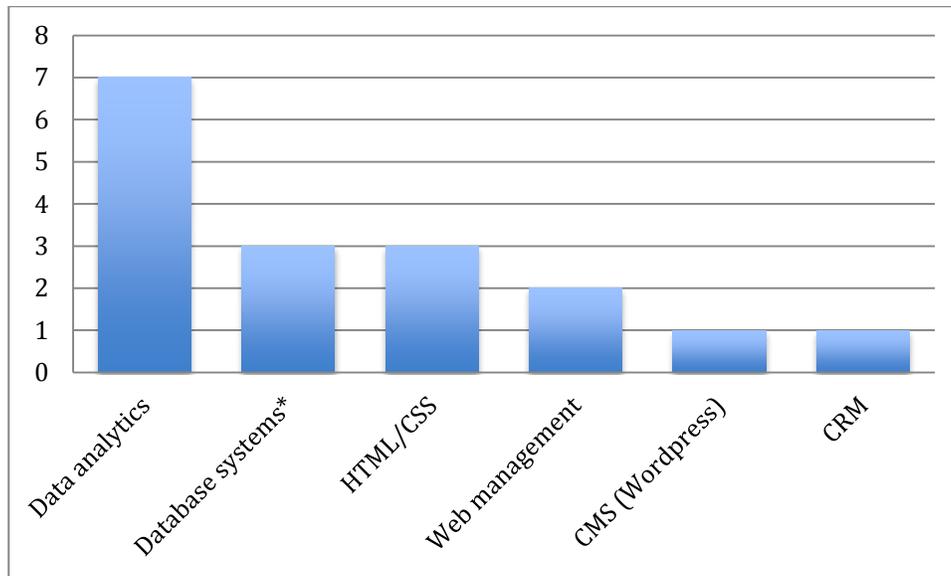


Figure 31: Software and technology KSC within New Zealand marketing courses

Figure 31 indicates the most common software and technology KSC in New Zealand marketing courses. From the chart we can see by far the most commonly covered KSC was data analytics at (x=7) and database systems at (x=3). The least common KSC was CRM at (x=1). A disappointing finding was the lack of specific Adobe Design Suite courses and Microsoft office modules. The “*” was found within selected university information system and information management courses, that is, non marketing courses.

5.4 Marketing

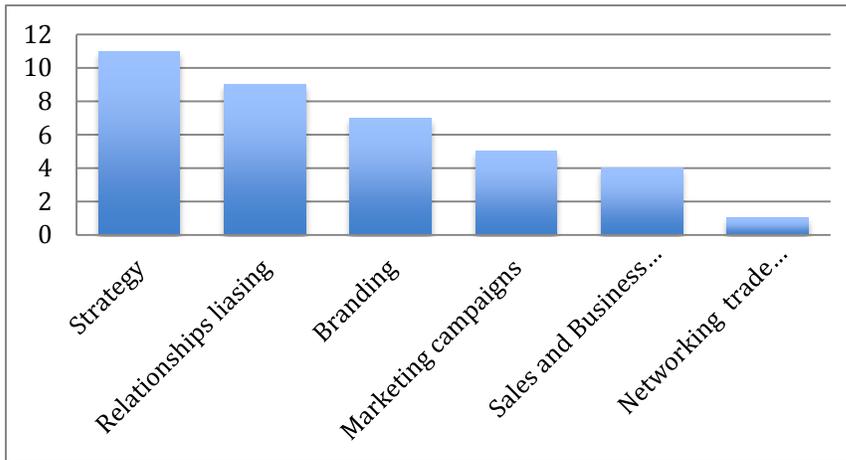


Figure 32: Marketing KSC for New Zealand marketing courses

Figure 32 indicates the most common marketing KSC covered in New Zealand marketing courses. The most common was marketing strategy at (x=11), relationships and liaising at (x=9), followed by branding at (x=7).

5.5 Communication

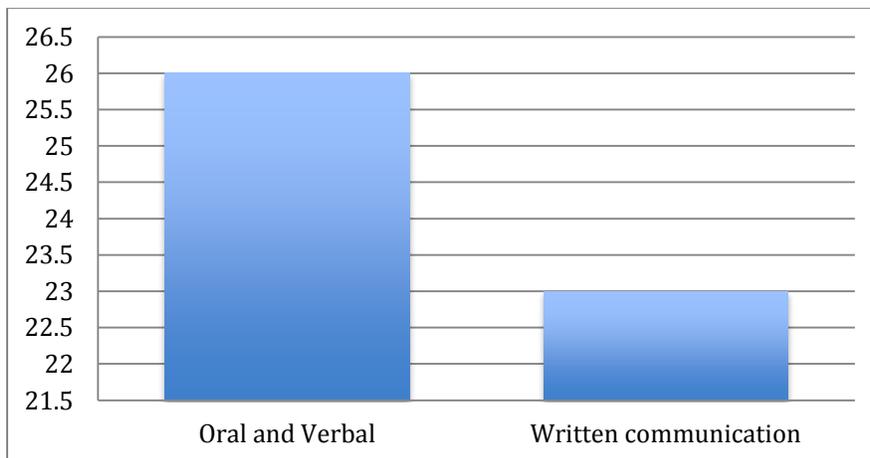


Figure 33: Communication KSC in New Zealand marketing degrees

Figure 33 indicates the most common communication KSC in New Zealand marketing degrees. Both types of communication KSC were covered extensively by oral and verbal at ($x=26$) and written communication at ($x=23$). Indeed, we can note that communication was dominantly a mix of oral and written. The dual nature of these KSC will be elaborated in the discussion section.

5.6 Job experience modules

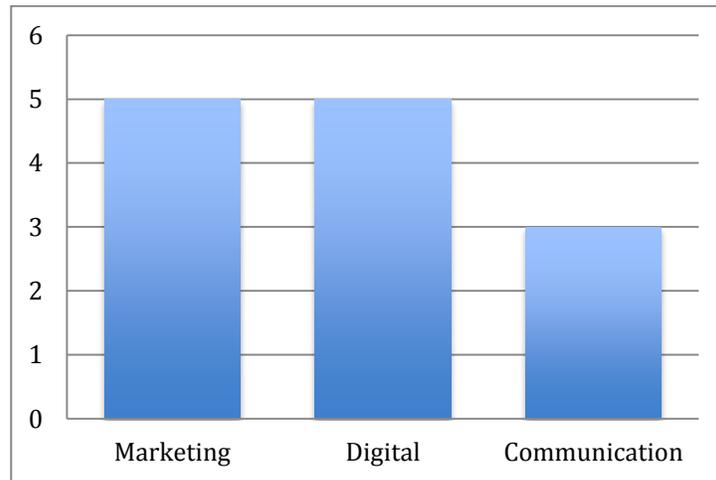


Figure 34: Job experience KSC for New Zealand marketing degree courses

Figure 34 indicates the most common job experience modules found in New Zealand marketing courses. Similar findings were found for all three with marketing at ($x=5$), digital at ($x=5$) and communication at ($x=3$).

5.7 The University of Auckland

Table 15 shows an overview of The University of Auckland (UoA) marketing courses coded against the KSC findings of the initial SME marketing content analysis.

The table shows a lack of major digital KSC within the curricula with a select few social media theoretical assignments and a simulation project for the strategy paper.

Interestingly, in terms of relevant KSC for the software aspect, data was specifically found in the INFOSYS and INFOMGMT papers of the business school and not in the BCom. Traditional marketing along with oral and verbal communication were covered with relative depth. Job placements and internships in terms of experience were not found within the curricula.

Table 15: The University of Auckland Marketing Course Guide Content Analysis

| Digital marketing | Papers |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Social media marketing | MKTG 306 (Social media theory assignment) |
| Content marketing | NONE |
| Digital strategy | MKTG 306 – Social media assignment MKTG 301 – Online simulation project |
| Copywriting | NONE |
| Managing social media | NONE |
| Digital knowledge | MKTG 306 – Marketing Communications report |
| Google Adwords | NONE |
| Google Analytics | NONE |
| Channel optimisation | NONE |
| Tech Savvy | NONE |
| SEO | NONE |
| Advertising | MKTG 306 Advertising report (Theory) MKTG 301 – Strategic market analysis (Theory) |
| Online marketing | NONE |
| Email marketing | NONE |
| SEM | NONE |
| Software and Technology | |
| Adobe Suite | NONE |
| Web management | INFOSYS 280 full course |
| Microsoft office | NONE |
| Design | NONE |
| Database systems | INFOSYS 330 full course |
| Data analytics | MKTG 302 SPSS Assignment INFOSYS 222 – SQL Assignment |
| CMS | NONE |
| CRM | NONE |
| HTML/CSS | INFOSYS 110 (Online introduction) INFOSYS 280 full course IN |
| Communication | |
| Written | MKTG 301, 303, 306 Assignments |
| Oral and Verbal communication | MKTG 301, 306 Group projects |
| Traditional Marketing | |
| Relationships | MKTG 301, 303 306 Group projects |
| Campaigns | MKTG 301, 303, 306 |
| Administration | NONE |
| Marketing strategy | MKTG 301 (Assignment + content) MKTG 306 (Assignment +Content) |
| Promotions | MKTG 306 (Assignment + content) |
| Customer service | NONE |
| Networking | NONE |
| Branding | MKTG 301 (Content) |
| Job Experience | |
| Marketing | NONE |
| Communication | NONE |
| Digital | INFOSYS 345 full year paper |

5.8 Auckland University of Technology

Table 16 shows an overview of the AUT marketing courses coded against the KSC findings of the initial SME marketing. Social media marketing theory alongside advertising and digital knowledge was covered by an integrated project in addition to oral and verbal communication. Expectedly, traditional marketing was covered thoroughly with campaigns and marketing strategy alongside branding. Job experience modules were covered thoroughly with a job placement internship.

Table 16: AUT University Marketing Course Gap Analysis

| Digital marketing | AUT Papers |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Social media marketing | MARS 601-602-603 project |
| Content marketing | NONE |
| Digital strategy | MARS 601-602-603 project |
| Copywriting | NONE |
| Managing social media | NONE |
| Digital knowledge | Level 6 and 7 project |
| Google Adwords | NONE |
| Google Analytics | NONE |
| Channel optimisation | NONE |
| Tech Savvy | NONE |
| SEO | NONE |
| SEM | NONE |
| Advertising | Level 7 projects |
| Online marketing | Level 7 projects |
| Email marketing | NONE |
| | |
| Software and Technology | |
| Adobe Suite | NONE |
| Web management | NONE |
| Microsoft office | NONE |
| Design | NONE |
| Database systems | NONE |
| Data analytics | MARS 601 |
| CMS | NONE |
| CRM | NONE |
| HTML/CSS | NONE |
| | |
| Communication | |
| Written | NONE |
| Oral and Verbal communication | Level 6 and 7 Group projects |
| | |
| Marketing nodes | |
| Relationships | Level 6 & 7 Group projects |
| Campaign | Level 6+7 integrated project |
| Administration | NONE |
| Marketing strategy | Level 6 & 7 |
| Promotions | 603 |
| Customer service | NONE |
| Networking | Level 7 (Final day presentations) |
| Branding | Level 7 |
| | |
| Job Experience | |
| Marketing | Project + Internship |
| Communication | 603 + Internship |
| Digital | Internship |

5.9 Waikato University

Table 17 indicates the Waikato University marketing courses coded against the KSC findings of the initial SME MARKETING CA. We can see from the tables that MKTG 370 covered all of the digital marketing KSC with the exception of email marketing and SEM. Software and technology were covered with data and web skills being well covered. Oral and verbal communication as expected was covered by multiple second and third stage papers. Traditional marketing as expected was covered well across multiple papers. Internships and placements were evident from the MSY 319 paper.

Table 17: Waikato University Marketing Courses Gap Analysis

| Digital marketing | Papers |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Social media marketing | MKTG 273, 370 |
| Content marketing | MKTG 370 |
| Digital strategy | MKTG 273,370 |
| Copywriting | MKTG 370 |
| Managing social media | MKTG 370 |
| Digital knowledge | MKTG 370 |
| Google Adwords | MKTG 370 |
| Google Analytics | MKTG 370 |
| Channel optimisation | MKTG 370 |
| Tech Savvy | MKTG 370 |
| SEO | MKTG 370 |
| Advertising | MKTG 273, 370 |
| Online marketing | MKTG 370 |
| Email marketing | NONE |
| SEM | NONE |
| Software and Technology Nodes | |
| Adobe Suite | NONE |
| Web management | MKTG 370 |
| Microsoft office | NONE |
| Design | NONE |
| Database systems | NONE |
| Data analytics | MKTG 370 |
| CMS | MKTG 370 |
| CRM | MKTG 258 |
| HTML/CSS | MKTG 370 |
| Communication | |
| Written | NONE |
| Oral and Verbal communication | MKTG 256, 275, 353, 356, 359, 371, 375 |
| Marketing nodes | |
| Relationships | NONE |
| Campaign | MKTG 370 |
| Administration | NONE |
| Marketing strategy | MKTG 251, 258, 353, 358 |
| Promotions | MKTG 209 |
| Customer service | NONE |
| Networking | NONE |
| Branding | MKTG 371 |
| Experience nodes | |
| Marketing | MSYS 319 |

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| Communication | MSYS 319 |
| Digital | MSYS 319 |

5.10 Massey University

Table 18 shows the Massey University marketing courses coded against the KSC findings of the SME marketing CA. The table shows us that digital marketing KSC, social media marketing, digital strategy, digital knowledge, and online marketing were covered. From software and technology, only data analytics was covered.

A surprising finding was the dedicated papers to written and business communication (219.100 & 219.202), also covering oral and verbal communication. As expected, traditional marketing was covered with marketing strategy promotion. Internships and placements were found within marketing and communication but lacked a digital oriented placement.

Table 18: Massey University Marketing Course Gap Analysis

| Digital marketing | Papers |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Social media marketing | MKTG 156.775, 156.235 |
| Content marketing | NONE |
| Digital strategy | MKTG 156.775, 156.235 |
| Copywriting | NONE |
| Managing social media | NONE |
| Digital knowledge | MKTG 156.775, 156.235 |
| Google Adwords | NONE |
| Google Analytics | NONE |
| Channel optimisation | NONE |
| Tech Savvy | NONE |
| SEO | NONE |
| Advertising | NONE |
| Online marketing | MKTG 156.775, 156.235 |
| Email marketing | NONE |
| SEM | NONE |
| Software and Technology KSC | |
| Adobe Suite | NONE |
| Web management | NONE |
| Microsoft office | NONE |
| Design | NONE |
| Database systems | NONE |
| Data analytics | MKTG 156.776 |
| CMS | NONE |
| CRM | NONE |
| HTML/CSS | NONE |
| Communication | |
| Written | MKTG 219.100, 219.101, 219.202 |
| Oral and Verbal communication | MKTG 219.100, 219.101, 219.205, 219.206 |
| Marketing nodes | |
| Relationships | MKTG 219.209, 219.307 |
| Campaign | MKTG 219.209 |
| Administration | NONE |
| Marketing strategy | MKTG 156.237 |
| Promotions | MKTG 156.237 |
| Customer service | NONE |
| Networking | NONE |
| Branding | 156.237 |
| Experience nodes | |
| Marketing | MKTG 219.311 |
| Communication | MKTG 219.309, MKTG 219.311 Internship |
| Digital | NONE |

5.11 Victoria University

Table 19 indicates the Victoria University marketing courses coded against the SME marketing CA. From software and technology, only data analytics was covered. Written and oral communication was covered across multiple papers. Traditional marketing was covered with marketing strategy, while promotion and branding were covered across multiple second and third stage papers. There was a lack of job placements and internships.

Table 19: Victoria University Marketing Course Gap Analysis

| Digital marketing | Papers |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Digital marketing node | Papers |
| Social media marketing | MARK 301, 312, 316 |
| Content marketing | NONE |
| Digital strategy | MARK 301, 312, 316 |
| Copywriting | NONE |
| Managing social media | MARK 301, 312, 316 |
| Digital knowledge | MARK 301, 312, 316 |
| Google Adwords | NONE |
| Google Analytics | NONE |
| Channel optimisation | NONE |
| Tech Savvy | NONE |
| SEO | NONE |
| Advertising | MKTG 301 |
| Online marketing | MARK 301, 312, 316 |
| Email marketing | MARK 301, 312, 316 |
| SEM | NONE |
| | |
| Software and Technology | |
| Adobe Suite | NONE |
| Web management | NONE |
| Microsoft office | NONE |
| Design | NONE |
| Database systems | NONE |
| Data analytics | QUAN 102 MARK 101, 203 |
| CMS | NONE |
| CRM | NONE |
| HTML/CSS | NONE |
| | |
| Communication | |
| Written | MKTG312, 316, 313 |
| Oral and Verbal communication | MARK 301, 310, 313, 316, 319 |
| | |
| Marketing nodes | |
| Relationships | NONE |
| Campaign | MARK 313 |
| Administration | NONE |
| Marketing strategy | MARK 101, 201, 202, 313 |
| Promotions | MARK 301, 312, 316, 313 |
| Customer service | NONE |
| Networking | NONE |
| Branding | MARK 201, 313, |
| | |
| Experience nodes | |
| Marketing | NONE |
| Communication | NONE |
| Digital | NONE |
| | |

5.12 Canterbury University

Table 20 indicates the Canterbury University marketing courses coded against the SME marketing CA. The digital marketing KSC section was covered well with a significant number of KSC present in the courses. Software KSC only had data analytics.

Communication was covered extensively across MKTG 309, 310, and 311. Experience in the form of placements and internships was covered in MKTG 390.

Table 20: Canterbury University Marketing Courses Gap Analysis

| Digital marketing | Papers |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Social media marketing | MKTG316 (theory) |
| Content marketing | MKTG 316 (theory) |
| Digital strategy | MKTG 316 (theory) |
| Copywriting | NONE |
| Managing social media | MKTG 316 (theory) |
| Digital knowledge | MKTG 316 (theory) |
| Google Adwords | NONE |
| Google Analytics | NONE |
| Channel optimisation | NONE |
| Tech Savvy | NONE |
| SEO | NONE |
| Advertising | NONE |
| Online marketing | MKTG 316 (theory) |
| Email marketing | NONE |
| SEM | NONE |
| Software and Technology Nodes | |
| Adobe Suite | NONE |
| Web management | NONE |
| Microsoft office | NONE |
| Design | NONE |
| Database systems | NONE |
| Data analytics | MKTG 202 |
| CMS | NONE |
| CRM | NONE |
| HTML/CSS | NONE |
| Communication | |
| Written | MKTG 309, 310, 311 |
| Oral and Verbal communication | MKTG 309, 310, 311 |
| Experience | |
| Marketing | MKTG 390 |
| Communication | MKTG 390 |
| Digital | MKTG 390 |

5.13 Otago University

Table 21 shows the Otago University marketing courses coded against the SME marketing CA. Digital marketing was covered extensively albeit in theoretical business and marketing plans. Digital knowledge as a result was well covered. Data analytics was the only software related KSC found. Communication was found to be extensively taught in MART 306 and 330. Traditional marketing elements covered across MART 201, 335 and 304 included strategy and promotion. A surprising find was a sales oriented paper with included field work.

Table 21: Otago University Marketing Course Guide Gap Analysis

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Digital marketing | Papers |
| Social media marketing | MART 112 Marketing plan |
| Content marketing | NONE |
| Digital strategy | MART 112 Marketing plan MART 335 Business Project |
| Copywriting | NONE |
| Managing social media | NONE |
| Digital knowledge | MART 335 – Business project |
| Google Adwords | NONE |
| Google Analytics | NONE |
| Channel optimisation | NONE |
| Tech Savvy | NONE |
| SEO | NONE |
| Advertising | NONE |
| Online marketing | NONE |
| Email marketing | NONE |
| SEM | NONE |
| Software and Technology Nodes | |
| Adobe Suite | NONE |
| Web management | NONE |
| Microsoft office | NONE |
| Design | NONE |
| Database systems | NONE |
| Data analytics | MART 212 |
| CMS | NONE |
| CRM | NONE |
| HTML/CSS | NONE |
| Communication | |
| Written | MART 306, 330 |
| Oral and Verbal communication | MART 306, 330 |
| Marketing nodes | |
| Relationships | NONE |
| Campaign | MART 201 |
| Administration | NONE |
| Marketing strategy | MART 335 |
| Promotions | MART 335 |
| Customer service | NONE |
| Networking | NONE |
| Branding | NONE |
| Sales | MART 304 – Sales Plan + Field Work |
| Experience nodes | |
| Marketing | NONE |

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Communication | NONE |
| Digital | NONE |

5.14 Summary comments on university marketing course offerings

In summary, we can argue that the majority of marketing courses offered in New Zealand University business degrees thoroughly covered traditional marketing theory, indirectly covered oral and written communication via assignments, but lacked practical digital marketing and business software training. Market research KSC was covered well across all seven universities in addition to approximately a third offering some form of job placements and internships. An overarching theme observed was the lack of SME and start-up business and marketing theory, case studies, and coverall course work within the New Zealand marketing courses.

The findings from the analysis reveals the most common KSC required in SME marketing jobs. The overarching theme identified is the wide range of KSC required by SMEs for their respective marketing roles. Indeed, although there are some KSC cited more than others, it can be argued that KSC are not applied in silos in real life nor should they be taught with this aim.

The most striking result from the data was the significant emphasis on social media and content marketing within the digital KSC area in relation to the lack of these KSC modules within the seven university marketing degrees. Interestingly, this is correlated to the marketing and SME marketing education literature examined – particularly Bennis and O’Toole’s (2005) original article regarding the business school disconnect with industry. Furthermore, niching down the SME CA results allowed us to produce the job themes. A worrying factor is the significant frequency of social media marketing, content marketing, and copywriting in demand KSC with the lack of these KSC in marketing courses. This concludes the findings chapter and the next section will discuss these findings in the context of the SME marketing sector, and the implications for university

marketing degrees with a focus on course reforming strategies and the importance of aligning courses with industry requirements. Conceptual models will be constructed around a new SME Marketing “DNA” coupled with a suggested SME curriculum. Limitations and future research will follow.

Chapter Six: Findings (3) - Interviews with University Academics

6.0 Introduction

The following tables were manually coded according to the thematic analysis of the interviews. Initially, over 10 themes were identified, which were then refined down to the following: current course offerings, politics of university academia, barriers to reform, teaching, and miscellaneous. The final column ‘miscellaneous’ was put in to include themes which belonged to more than one area and /or had a different thematic meaning compared to the initial organized themes.

Tables 38-42 represents the thematic analysis conducted on the semi-structured interviews with university undergraduate marketing lecturers from three North Island universities.

6.1 Current offerings

Table 38 indicates the university marketing lecturer quotes centred on the theme of ‘current offerings’ relating to soft skills, theory, communication, and industry skills. A common theme observed was the importance of soft skills. The majority of interviewees noted the importance of higher order thinking and the skill of “learning to learn”.

A common agreement was the difficulty in objectively teaching and measuring soft skills. Written communication, in accordance to lecturer views, was well covered in various forms of written course work such as assignments, reports, and examinations. Lecturers also agreed that oral and verbal presentation was covered by project presentation work albeit these were all indirectly taught. Interestingly, a lecturer from University W

indicated that soft skills are taught very indirectly and should be taught directly – particularly due to the universities marketing themselves as institutes teaching students how to think.

Table 22: Current Course Offerings Quotes from University Lecturers

| Sub theme | Quote |
|--|---|
| University W | |
| Communication and industry Data visualization | “But I think sometimes that is another thing that we need to weave through, presenting visual data because that is something in marketing that brings me to the last circle that has really changed, is the reliance on data and the reliance on numbers and they need to speak the numerical knowledge because business speaks that knowledge” |
| Current (Theory) | “We do have to teach some of the theoretical background because we cannot move forward if we don’t stand on the shoulders of giants, then we have to start right at the beginning” |
| Industry /Technology overlap Soft and communication | “Industry is about businesses. using technology to be smart, using technology to do your job kind of.I agree with you, don’t teach me how to press the button, teach me why I need to make a certain decision based on the data or what data do I need to collect and so on. And this then is using other resources to the best benefit, so the money, the time, the people, to make all of this work” |
| Soft skills (Information) | In real life you don’t even know where the information is. In fact, the guys that really know, the Carmaman’s and these guys that write about thinking tell you that we have unbounded information. There is too much. One of the skills you guys millenniums need to know is how to sift through information and actually know what is valid and what is nonsense. |
| Theory | “In marketing we claim, incorrectly, we claim to think that we have students that are more the right side of the rein, more fuzzy, more interpersonal, more about creativity, but then we teach them the exact same technical stuff.” |
| Theory | “Here’s the law, there’s the theory, here’s the framework, here’s the model. And I am outspokenly against that. So I don’t hide behind oh we work here and we shouldn’t be too harsh about it.” |
| Soft skills (Teaching) | The third thing is that I really think that we lip-service thinking skills. We have to really teach thinking skills, because we have no idea what the future looks like |
| Industry | But our university does have intensive internships and a variety of them They have a paper called 490 which is a research project that you do in a firm. It’s not just find the firm, it’s work in the firm with them on a project. So you have a so-called sponsor, someone who looks after you. |
| Four quadrants | “So given the resources, the capabilities, the competencies and the capacities, those are the three Cs that make something a good product or not right. They are doing the best that they can” |

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| University G | |
|---------------------|--|

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Communication | “No I guess you’re supposed to take it, we’re giving you the opportunity to practice it but realistically we don’t have courses on it |
| Soft skills | It’s how approachable you are, your people skills, ability to present, work in a team, your attitude, all that sort of stuff so that’s the stuff that employers are increasingly value over and above theory I think. |
| Soft skills | “Right so I kind of look at it and I go well really for me this is like the ultimate thing. You don’t have to know all of the information. You don’t have to be the nicest person in the world, what you do have to be though is someone that if I throw you in a room and say sort the fucking problem out you go okay well how can I sort the problem. That’s the thing and if you can’t come up with the answer at least you’re rational enough and mature enough to go well I don’t know the answer. I could potentially call in some other people to assist me or I can go and access some resources that might give me more information. That really is, like my own experience in well firstly in industry and also in academia is that that ability to deal with a given situation or issue or problem that arises is really critical“ |
| Communication | “they have speed networking things” <i>Referring to the business school toast masters events available for all students to upskill themselves in the communication and soft skill area</i> |
| Communication and soft skills | if you want networking you go to Toastmasters, if you want to learn how to debate and critically analyse and listen to people’s views and agree to agree and disagree and all these things, do you believe these guys should go to debating, it would be good for you as a marketer” <i>Business school club and external event available to all students</i> |
| Industry and technology | They have all sorts of, there’s internship programmes coming up all the time.” <i>Industry experiences available for students.</i> |
| University K | |
| Current | “but it’s interesting to be programme director, then you start to really look at the whole picture more so. I think we are pretty good but we are not great.” <i>Argument of the researcher is not to be great but to as great as possible within the resources available (Financial, academic labour and university semester time)</i> |
| Soft skills | “so I think about a number of areas right. So you’ve got this higher level thinking and I mean it’s pretty abstract but that is the kind of stuff that it sounds really naff like critical thinking and creative thinking that actually is true. Like, I want our students to graduate thinking better, thinking differently, like knowing how to solve |
| Communication (Industry demand) | And these business practical skills, I think they are important. We did a set in [contacted] industry and they were like communication skills, communication skills, that was the main thing that they talked about then” |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Digital theory (Intersection) | “think there is this really important space here- the intersection is so vital (Digital –theory overlap), because if you just have the theory, honestly who cares” |
| Theory | “if you don’t have that theoretical knowledge about what does it mean to be the channel, what does it mean to be the brand, then they can’t do that” <i>Meaning you won’t know what to do with the channel/situation unless you have the theory.</i> |
| Theory (lacking) | “so the theory on itself great, but only if they have that high level of thinking.” |
| Application (All four spheres) | “And I think getting them to solve problems that are real is important as opposed to hypothetically invent a new flavour of gum or something like that” |
| Soft skills | “But you know problem solving skills, critical thinking, being better at thinking about how you are communicating, how you handle information, that sort of stuff I think is [taught] quite good” |
| Soft skills and communication | “Yeah. And if you had those comments and insights and you had a tech person they could come and they could code it and they could analyse it, but if you look at it as a marketer it means so much more.” <i>Taking data, making more use of it. Applying it to increase bottom line Data alone not useful. What one does with the data is indeed the actual important part. Therefore marketers must also know how to retrieve the data, interpret the data, use theory to infer insights for specific situations (product/campaign ,market situation).</i> |
| Soft skills | “In the assessment you want to be sure that you are challenging them to do things and in the lectures that encourage problem solving behaviour, critical thinking, communication, that higher level of thinking. So I think that goes through it needs to kind of diffuse through everything” |
| Communication (Woven) | “And I think that that is important. And to me that enters into the assessment as a thread. And if we think we need to provide them information then we do” ...So like we do the writing module, we do the presentation module. It’s important they need to know it but it isn’t the focus of the course but hopefully they do it via the assessment” And then the industry specific things that come in should be woven into the classroom knowledge of theory, like how this relates to the theory, you know” <i>Assumptions that students are aware of the importance of the University work, it’s affect on them, their futures.</i> |

| | |
|--|--|
| Soft skills and communication | <p>“the magic is, is taking analytics, taking that data, taking the technicalities, and thinking about what that means”</p> <p><i>Translating data into insights and ultimately decisions which affect the business bottom line, the brand”</i></p> |
| Soft skills (University W and K aligned on this) | So that is like problem solving and thinking skills and being critical, you know. And honestly I think that that is one of the most important things that university education does, irrespective of the programme that you take, you know |
| Soft skills (Current) | “I think we are very good at this, at ensuring that we give a quality course to students who, and I am referring to the higher level thinking, who can think differently, who can solve problems” |
| All four quadrants | <p>““One thing I like about here... we have a reputation for awesome teachers, awesome lecturers, who really care about the students and what we are giving to the students and I think that that really enters into it and I am pretty proud of our programme in that way.</p> <p>So we look at our programme and we say are we offering them something real that they can take away? Are we offering them the kind of things that we want?</p> |
| Application middle (Current) | <p>“Yeah but like so they have to know the theory because if they know the theory then they can take off from that, but it’s the taking from that that is the most important thing to my mind. So yeah learn the theory but then use it. That’s the application.”</p> <p>And they can’t apply it well unless they have this higher level of thinking and so that is when we have to get them to do stuff and not just regurgitate.</p> |
| Tool box (learning to learn , apply) | “And I tell my students that in marketing we give you a tool box, you know, like all these theories and words and you need to figure out what you are going to do with that ultimately” |
| Communication (Projects) | So we make sure they have a little exposure to business writing in the first MARK101, this is what you need to do. You need to be clear. You need to be succinct. And then they get into report writing in 202, the consumer behaviour. It’s not like it’s part of consumer behaviour but it’s a little thing that we make sure they have to do and we always include presentation is always part of the mark, so they know how they do it, how they present it, how they put it on paper or develop a graph or a chart or something like that is important because it reflects them as well.” |
| University M | |
| Soft skills | That’s the traditional academic assessment type stuff. Soft skills is I think more of an effort to acknowledge that because we know it is important and so that comes into play when we do stuff like presentations, writing workshops, you know skills development, teamwork, all that sort of group projects, that sort of stuff we classify as soft skills. The stuff that’s also highly transferable and very, very much sought after by employers in the industry |

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| Soft skills (Applied in Projects) | , so group projects are the classic example of embedding soft skills into our curriculum |
| Soft skills and Communication | “then they obviously have to work in a team. You put procedures in place so they can report or evaluate their peers so that the ones that aren’t good at soft skills they can’t work in a team, get that message that the team has an issue with you and ideally you sort it out ., so it’s a work in progress. With group work we have readings about how to pre-empt team conflict and different lecturers will have different approaches” |
| Soft (Group projects) | You get the other issues cropping up which is you have people that are stuck in a sort of system where they’re always the slacker and so their friends are the work horses and they rely on them. It’s very hard for them to break out of that so learning to overcome that is another soft skill. |
| Communication | we test for that, communication, oral we try to have them do at least one presentation, if not more before they leave. |
| Written communication | The written communication is an obvious one, we obviously test for that all the time, exams, essays, assignments, group projects and there is a lot of support for writing and English support and all that sort of stuff. I think we’ve got writing definitely as a key component and often the writing is how they represent that they understand the theory and also with the writing communication |
| Industry/quarto model | <p>Right -on the job learning yeah and so the only way we can guarantee on the job learning is to try and improve people’s soft skills because that’s all about attitude, ability to learn quickly, ability to learn from others, not to annoy others, all that sort of stuff, make people want to help you, all that sort of stuff because once you’ve got it then the hope is that so even though our graduates might be a little bit behind on the industry part of things compared to like a Polytechnic Institute , in the long run we hope that they will overtake because they have that theoretical foundation that’s in their head, so they’re, for want of a better word, smarter to begin with, they’re just not as technically as sound or capable but they should be able to pick that up pretty quickly and then excel in the future because they’ve got other stuff that is in there”</p> <p><i>Theory and communication taught to enhance ability to learn on the job . Researcher argues this is more of a assumed “hit or miss” statement. Rather, the question is- is it taught directly or rather implicitly in terms of “learning how to learn?”</i></p> <p>“</p> |

6.2 Teaching themes

Table 23 indicates the teaching theme quotes from the university marketing lecturer interviews. Soft skills were emphasized in terms of teaching importance and more specifically, the need to teach them more directly. A series of interesting findings was revealed in this theme. The generation gap between the baby boomers and millennials posed a challenge in terms of connecting the lecturer with the audience. The concept of andragogy – teaching to adults – was a significant finding as it related to the other finding of co creation – where students are involved in the learning process as opposed to the more expert/student relationship in classical pedagogy.

Table 23: Teaching Themes from University Interviews

| Sub theme description | Quote |
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| University WR | |
| Teaching interpretation | <p>“don’t teach me how to press the button, teach me why I need to make a certain decision based on the data or what data do I need to collect and so on. And this then is using other resources to the best benefit, so the money, the time, the people, to make all of this work”</p> |
| Soft skills (Teaching) | <p>“The third thing is that I really think that we lip-service thinking skills. We have to really teach thinking skills, because we have no idea what the future looks like”</p> |
| Job ready lacking | <p>“I do utterly agree that we have moved away from a scholarly training to a career ready person who is interested in a commercial job. That movement has taken place and it seems from the side to me that universities are a bit slow at catching up with that perception, that we are not just creating these thinkers. They have to be somewhat job ready”</p> <p><i>Job ready entails all 4 quadrants (Soft skills, theory, communication, technical)</i></p> |
| Thinking skills | <p>“Do I even know what you should know in five years so that you can manage and live in the world that is going to be 2020? I don’t know. So I cannot simply prepare you for a job in marketing research or in media or in design....</p> <p>..... I’ve got to prepare you to be a thinker, a self-managed person, have a respectable mind.”</p> |
| Reform Soft skills thinking A | <p>“We need design thinking right. We need creative thinking. I taught that. Because I am an absolute fiend about the fact that if we claim we need to teach thinking skills, you need to really teach thinking skills, not claim that because we analyse the case that all the information is given to you, you now have thinking skills”</p> |
| Soft skills (Millenials) | <p>“In real life you don’t even know where the information is. In fact, the guys that really know, the Carmaman’s and these guys that write about thinking tell you that we have unbounded information. There is too much. One of the skills you guys millenniums need to know is how to sift through information and actually know what is valid and what is nonsense”</p> |

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| <p>Barriers to teaching Millennial student demographic</p> | <p>“That is a barrier. If I am very honest, and you don’t want to hear this, then another barrier is that students think that they should tell experts what they should be taught.. It will not happen in military. It will not happen in medicine. It will not happen in psychology. But students in business tell me and they have told me to my face, so it’s not heresy, I don’t believe that is a cool assignment. Excuse me? After I have been over 20 years in business, studied, know this stuff inside out, you tell me that that is not a cool assignment. How do you even know...?”</p> |
| <p>Soft skills (information searching)</p> | <p>I”n real life you don’t even know where the information is. In fact, the guys that really know, the Carmaman’s and these guys that write about thinking tell you that we have unbounded information. There is too much. One of the skills you guys millenniums need to know is how to sift through information and actually know what is valid and what is nonsense.”</p> |
| <p>Teaching adults</p> | <p>I am a big prophet for andragogy because we don’t teach children, we teach adults okay and it’s exactly what you are saying.</p> <p>You are not developing children, then they listen and they take your view on this and then they do what you tell them because they haven’t got already a foundation of knowledge, you should recognise their prior learning.</p> <p>Andragogy is you teach adults. They have prior knowledge. They have skills that you can develop further and you should help them co-create the learning because they can bring something to the table</p> |
| <p>PBRF (Teaching load)</p> | <p>“So you have a system that demands like you say radical and disruptive innovation and helps students understand that.</p> <p>In the meantime you are measuring people who are spending many, many hours pursuing more knowledge, more information, and the two have to meet.</p> <p>They have to kind of gel. At the moment what the system is trying to do is to make, to have a factory where everybody has all the skills.</p> |
| <p>(PBRF Teaching Politics) Multi-tasking of academics</p> | <p>.....There is no other industry in the world where you would expect someone who is an engineer to also paint the car or someone who is, which is</p> |

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| | <p>what is going on right now, you have to be an excellent researcher and you have to sell it, your gold nugget ...”</p> |
| Multi-tasking of academics | <p>“If you take the metaphor of the miner, someone who is good down there drilling into rock, he is not necessarily going to turn it into spectacular jeweller and convince someone it’s worth paying thousands of dollars for it, or someone that can actually make that jewellery into a fine piece of jewellery.</p> <p>...</p> <p>But in this industry they are expecting that. You have got to be a good researcher and a good teacher and good at interfacing with different parties”</p> |
| Soft skills (Teaching) Reality of content | <p>“The third thing is that I really think that we lip-service thinking skills. We have to really teach thinking skills, because we have no idea what the future looks like”</p> |
| Assumed knowledge | <p>“You have the whole rainbow. So as a teacher now, a facilitator, I have got to co-create with you. It would have been a very different process had I had just A students of the world, who are polished, excel, self-enthused, self-motivated, already at a high level, in the class, we are co-creating too when we are co-creating with the whole smorgasbord of the population right.</p> <p>The reason Ali is going to become an A candidate, therefore get a better job, therefore be better equipped is because Ali sits in the co-creation function, intervention and says wow, you know, if I had more chances in the class, because we are 32 or 50 or 80 or 600, I would have ... my eyes are open to this, this and this.</p> <p>...</p> <p>So Ali goes out and says hey I actually want to be a preferred candidate in this new job application so I am going to go out and learn and read up more, Google stuff and find out what is going on.”</p> <p>....</p> <p>But Ali’s not so great colleague just goes oh, that was an interesting class discussion, I wonder if this is in the exam, and gets a C.</p> |
| University teaching (Reform/Politics) | <p>“and to be honest I still believe that there is a very good solid argument for getting professionally qualified teachers in that doesn’t necessarily have fantastic research”</p> <p><i>Indeed, this has already begun with the PTF role in various Universities across the country.</i></p> |
| Types of students (Co-creation) | <p>“There is Ali, number one student who is going to be the A student, who is going to self-learn, who is going to self-project, who is going to look for opportunities.</p> |

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| Co-creation (A student) | You get an A which says okay we notice that you are willing to co-create, you are willing to take charge of your own, take responsibility for your learning, invest in your progression, so self-managed” |
| University K | |
| PBRF (Teaching) | “As well as the research, part of the research and our teaching is contributing to community. We are paid by students, by government,... so we need to respond.” |
| Co-creation of education | in my first class, every class I think I have ever taught in my life, I tell them that I will aim to give them the best course I can possible give them. It’s my job. And but they have to put in the time.” |
| Two way | “So do we give all the students exactly what they need to start out? We could try and I think it is our responsibility, but it’s also two-way.” |
| Assumed knowledge | but I think one of the things we have to be careful of is assuming knowledge, is assuming that they are ready for that. So you always have to check with that” |
| Soft skills (Higher order thinking) | “This is how I personally think about it okay. So that is higher level of thinking. That is something that we need to supply.” |
| University M | |
| Politics (Pedagogy training) | But you’re right a lot of people that came in before that have never had to learn how to lecture or learn how to teach. So researchers by training not teachers by training if that makes sense. |
| Sacrifice (Teaching and workload) | It’s just time. I think if it’s not time in terms of the contact time required to teach all four, it’s time in terms of the time required to prepare, to prepare something that integrates across all four circles really well with this four circle changing constantly and so if you, it’s the time the lecturer has to put the thought and the motivation they have to integrate all four knowing that once you bring that fourth wheel in that that’s the one that’s always going to be updating.” |
| Politics /Business school size | “ Yeah and remember that you’re going up against the rest of the university so you look at people like say the science faculty outside of say Physics, now the people in Physics they’ll have small classes, so small classes are easier to teach than big classes. “ <i>Easier on the PBRF. Therefore, the easier teaching allows more focused research, as more time, results are more concrete and absolute in nature etc.</i> <i>Cash cows of the Universities are the business</i> |

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| | <i>schools and the funds are used for the rest of the university.</i> |
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| Customer Stakeholder (Co-creation) | <p>“Say you’re a customer of a law firm you expect to go in, here’s my legal problem, you fix it, tell me the solution. Whereas education is different. What it involves is you’re not just a customer. There’s no product that we just go here’s the fucking programme”</p> <p>“The co-creation of knowledge and it’s the co-creation of your knowledge and that involves you the student contributing to the equation and they forget that.”</p> |
| Soft skills Higher order thinking | <p>“This is how I personally think about it okay. So that is higher level of thinking. That is something that we need to supply.”</p> |

6.3 Politics

Politically themed quotes provided some interesting findings surrounding university politics, which academics operate within. A surprising finding was the large teaching intake of business schools tended to work against the academics these intakes increasing the already high academic workload. Promotions for academics were based primarily on journal publications. Industry experience was minimally recognized by the PBRF system in addition to a majority of academics having minimal to no experience in real life marketing and business jobs. A further interesting finding was the emphasis on the student as the central stakeholder and how the PBRF system is framed in a way that lacks focus on the student as a paying customer of a university system and nor does it encourage best practice teaching in business schools. Rather, it has a prime focus on research publications.

Table 24: Political Themes from the University Interviews

| Sub theme description | Quote |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| University WR | |
| Soft skills (Barrier, challenge). | <p>The interviews that I have had, the academics complain about over full curricular and limited time to actually go and delve deep enough into their particular discipline,</p> <p>.... never mind add on top of that the so called soft skills we keep talking about, self-management, time management, negotiation, presentation skills, group interface. There is 108 that I have researched, so I can keep on all afternoon just rattling them off. We need to teach all that.</p> |
| Politics (Vision) | <p>“Unless we shift, we will die as an industry because people will simply go and take MOOCS or they will do what Price Waterhouse and the consulting firms are doing. They say look, come to us with a degree, we take that as kind of proof that you can think and you are self-managing but then we will give you the training you really need”</p> |
| Politics (Stakeholders) | <p>“Then the other group says okay but why do you take my money as a customer. Why do you claim to be industry we live in and you have heard that a thousand times I am sure, and research based but industry we live in. And then you give us people that are only half ready.”</p> |
| Academics (Pro argument) | <p>“But, the academic people will tell you that if you don’t do research you are not at the forefront of development and you don’t understand what is happening right there.</p> <p>True, but if you look at this, and I always pick a big thing. Let’s say this is marketing right and we are saying that that bit is advertising. When you study you take the pencil as fine as you can make it and then you draw a little line and you go down that track. What about all the rest of that? So don’t come to me with that you have to be research qualified to be able to teach because you must teach. You cannot teach a student the little sliver that you know that is going to help him one minute of one day of his entire career You’ve got to help the student that is going to from now on work for 50 years. It’s got to be tools that are going to be able to be honed and sharpened over time. You almost automatically have to give a student a fairly blunt instrument when they leave the university”</p> |

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| Multi-tasking of academics | <p>If you take the metaphor of the miner, someone who is good down there drilling into rock, he is not necessarily going to turn it into spectacular jewellery and convince someone it's worth paying thousands of dollars for it, or someone that can actually make that jewellery into a fine piece of jewellery.</p> <p>...</p> <p>But in this industry they are expecting that. You have got to be a good researcher and a good teacher and good at interfacing with different parties.</p> |
| Politics (Schools of Thought) | <p>"Well, it's important for you to understand that there are very distinct and separate schools of thought on this. There are one school, and it's not all the new or conservative, it's just the school of thought that says we are an academic environment which means that we teach scholarly thinking and critical analysis and people who will become really good at sourcing information, finding answers. We are not here to teach you competencies and skills like a Polytechnic institute or a technical school"</p> |
| Soft skills (Barrier, challenge) | <p>"The interviews that I have had, the academics complain about over full curricular and limited time to actually go and delve deep enough into their particular discipline..... never mind add on top of that the so called soft skills we keep talking about, self-management, time management, negotiation, presentation skills, group interface. There is 108 that I have researched, so I can keep on all afternoon just rattling them off. We need to teach all that"</p> |
| Miscellaneous (Politics, lack of prepared graduates) | <p>"I am as critical as you, if not more, about the fact that we produce business students who probably cannot operate, even at entry level when they leave"</p> |
| Politics (Lack of business experience) | <p>"One is that the system demands academically qualified people to teach business. They have spent way little time in business, and recently in business"</p> |
| Politics (PBRF system works against Academics) | <p>"Too few of them are either consulting or actually still running business or work in business or consult in business or are spending time in business, because it's not incentivised"</p> |
| Politics (Lack of incentive) | <p>"I consulted for a company today. Uni doesn't pay for me to do that. They are not going to sponsor me to give me time off. If I say to them I went there so I didn't do my research it's like ... it's not part of what is expected"</p> |
| Politics – Thresholds | <p>"What it will be is that it's like a hygiene factor"</p> |

| University G | |
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| Politics | “The thing is, there’s two different things. Some universities they are industry led so that basically industry tells them what to do and they just go we’re going to do it. Then there’s industry informed so you go well you tell us what you think and we might consider some of those within the curriculum” |
| PBRF | “11 Marketing journals across the globe.. Economics has over 30 The focus is much harder” |
| Politics /Business school size | <p>“ Yeah and remember that you’re going up against the rest of the university so you look at people like say the science faculty outside of say Physics, now the people in Physics they’ll have small classes, so small classes are easier to teach than big classes.</p> <p>“</p> <p>Easier on the PBRF</p> <p><i>Therefore, the easier teaching allows more focused research, as more time, results are more concrete and absolute in nature etc</i></p> <p><i>Cash cows of the Universities are the business schools and the funds are used for the rest of the university .</i></p> |
| Politics | “”Our Uni is definitely industry informed as opposed to industry led.” |
| Politics | “And grant money. They want you to be able to go out and get external funding, whether the external funding is through industry or through like government funds... the MBIE or the Marsden Fund which are big grant providers.”) |
| PBRR – Promotions | “a lot of it comes down to your publications, so your research output and your grant, external funding to come into the university because then the university kind of goes well you’ve got your 900 grand go and do your stuff we don’t have to fund you” |
| Promotions (PBRF) (80% of promotions based on academic) | “So have a look at those. Basically they went and did a study and they had a look at everyone in different universities and they went how do you get promoted and pretty much 80% of it is your publications more or less” |
| Politics (PBRF) (Uni funding) | “then at the same time your HOD will be sitting there going you need to do more publications because that’s what gets me our funding. Because that’s what the government bases their things on” |

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| Promotion Hygiene bench mark factor | In terms of our promotions and careers not really. Like I said it's a hygiene factor. You're either above the bar or not above the bar. If you're above the bar you can potentially go for promotion based on all of the other real stuff. <i>Basically , if research is top level, then your teaching and services to the University are recognised. But the other PBRF elements do not count without the research element</i> |
| Barriers/Politics (Smaller classes) | "Yeah, but you also have smaller classes that you have to teach so you probably, you can do them a little bit easier, there's less time involved with managing. We just did 301, we had 307 students. It was a frigging nightmare. At USW Marketing Fundamentals every semester has 900 students. One person is the manager. She has 13 tutors " |
| Barriers Business school size problems | "the problem is you're going up against when you're from a business school you're going up against the other faculties for promotions and so the other faculties because they have small classes they all get great teaching feedback" |
| University K | |
| Politics | Well first of all I think I probably wouldn't have a lot of time for an academic who says we are mainly research personally because our job is teaching, research and service". Indeed the reality is that lecturers have majority of their time in research... |
| Industry | And I think industry, sometimes sees us as just a waste of time, just like oh academics you know, when actually if they came to us and said hey can you do this it would be awesome. I would love that. |
| PBRF – all three elements | "As well as the research, part of the research and our teaching is contributing to community. We are paid by students, by government,..... so we need to respond." |
| University responsibility | So I think there are a few people that are mainly research and to be honest they probably shouldn't be in front of the classroom. Some of them, you know, but there is no grey area for me. University is teaching and research and so we have a responsibility to both. It's just our job." |
| University responsibility | "I agree, students are paying and we have a responsibility." |

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| University M | |
| Politics | “Yeah that’s a good point and I guess that’s the difference between university and a technical institution. |
| Politics | ...A vocational, if you go for a vocational degree then it’s very much focused on the industry and you need to be able to hit the workplace running and you need to know the actual skills hands on how to do, what button to push, how this programme works or whatever it is and it’s more like, it becomes more like an apprentice ship. |
| Soft skills | The stuff that’s also highly transferable and very, very much sought after by employers in the industry |
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6.4 Barriers and challenges

Table 25 shows us the interviewees' views in terms of barriers and challenges associated with university course reform with specific emphasis on marketing under the context of a business school. It was interesting to see the PBRF system itself as being a major barrier to improvement of course content. Indeed, excessive workloads on academics was highlighted by multiple lecturers as a key barrier to course improvements. Promotion being primarily focused on publication output resulted in decreased motivation to improve teaching in addition to not wanting to risk decreased course evaluations. A common theme observed was the argued scarcity of semester time to teach marketing students all the relevant KSC. Another overarching theme was the evident lack of incentive to improve one's industry experience and application of business due to the research oriented PBRF system.

Table 25: Barriers and Challenges to University Course Reform

| Sub theme description | Quote |
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| University W | |
| Change | If you have lagged, right like we say, universities have lagged behind what they should, then it's a radical change, even if you could have done it through incremental changes and you didn't do it through incremental changes, you have a leap to make. That is called radical. So they are behind. So the only thing that is now necessary is a radical change. They cannot make tiny changes anymore. They are too far behind" |
| Improvement | "The one thing I am not doing is defending the university because I think there should be improvement. I think there is major room for improvement" |
| Improvement | "I think they are doing a fair job but there is major room for improvement" |
| Barrier (Time) | "The point that I am trying to make is there simply isn't enough time to polish a student on every single sphere (Soft, communication, theory, industry). That they are going to need in every single discipline, in every single topic of the various options that you come out of university)" |
| Barrier (Academic workload) | "The interviews that I have had, the academics complain about over full curricular and limited time to actually go and delve deep enough into their particular discipline, never mind add on top of that the so called soft skills we keep talking about, self-management, time management, negotiation, presentation skills, group interface. There is 108 that I have researched, so I can keep on all afternoon just rattling them off. We need to teach all that" |
| University G | |
| Barriers to change | "What were the barriers? The barriers are like who's willing to make the change. That's pretty much it. Do you have the time to sit down for three months and change it and because we also get graded on our student feedback scores. Are you willing to take a 12 month hit in your scores?" |

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| <p>Barriers to change (Risk of evaluations)</p> | <p>“So if you just keep going and do the same old same old, the students rate you as a 90 out of 100 great person because you do your lecture slides and you show them and they go away and memorise it and get a grade. It’s great yeah, 90 out of 100. All of a sudden you go well let’s change it a bit and so this semester one of the lecturers pretty much gets 96 out of 100 every semester. He got 79 because the students were like. Referring to a new course change. They had to do more work. More innovative teaching is met with resistance. Particularly coming from a system that’s”</p> |
| <p>Barriers (internships)</p> | <p>“We don’t want to promote unpaid internships. Industry wants to have an unpaid intern. So basically you want to have free labour.”</p> |
| <p>Change (reasons)</p> | <p>“think the thing is there’s usually two reasons that you do it. You either do it because the information, so the actual content isn’t what it needs to be or there’s a pedagogical reason for it. So you can have a better, deeper learning doing something different. So a different format. You can challenge them in a different way and that’s when you might change it. So if you go in and you make a case for those two, better content, better pedagogy. I mean it gets received pretty well”</p> |
| <p>All round lecturer</p> | <p>Researcher: “He’s the ideal package in terms of relatability to the millennials, the scholarly academia for the university and then his own personal he’s developed which the university wants as well. “So what stops lecturers From al the actual becoming of this from all becoming lie this guy? Lecturer: “Incentives, motivation, internal motivation”</p> |

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| University K | |
| Generation gap | <p>think there is a lot of people who are hanging onto this area [theory and industry/technology and theory/soft skills]. They can't see that these can work together. They are like no, no, no, they can learn that when they go to work.</p> <p>We have to teach them the theory about planned behaviour and we have to teach them to be critical and creative. And they don't see that it can all work together.</p> <p><i>If someone has never been in industry, how can they know what to teach?</i></p> <p><i>Relevant experience is not only necessary for the academic but also to understand the future 3-5 years the student will be entering.</i></p> <p><i>Dentists/Doctors/Lawyers/Academics do not teach nor can they practice without having set foot into the industry</i></p> <p><i>. So why can business academics teach marketing and business without having set foot in a SME or business before?</i></p> |
| Communication | <p>And these business practical skills, I think they are important. We contacted industry and they were like communication skills, communication skills, that was the main thing that they talked about</p> |
| University M | |
| Barrier (Industry, Pedagogy) | <p>“so even though there's an advantage to exposing students to real world, what we often find is that because you've got 12 weeks to teach and industry is busy doing their own thing all the time and is evolving, you can't do really high level stuff with an industry project. You can only do tactical stuff”</p> |
| Barriers (Soft skills) | <p>“The soft skill is hard to assess objectively because you need, apart from group work which you can, stuff like attitude and all that you can't really judge a student on that because you don't have time to meet every single one of them and realise they have a can do attitude so we can't really assess all components of soft skills”</p> |

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| Barrier | <p>“But for 301 because it’s marketing strategy if you get a real world client in what often happens is that there’s just not enough time and there’s not enough data that the client can provide for the students to be able to plan the whole holistic strategic plan in less than 12 weeks so what often happens is they either spend too much time trying to gather the data themselves which means they’re not doing strategy anyway, they’re acting as research technicians, they’re just gathering data or they end up making a tactical decision and trying to frame that as a strategic output because really they haven’t had the real world data to be able to make the decision that is truly strategic and so that’s why we’ve moved from industry to assimilation in 301 just this semester because the simulation provides them all the data they could need.”</p> |
| <p>Politics (trade off) Industry digital trade off</p> | <p>“We probably don’t do enough to cover all of that. We try to do extra stuff like invite people from industry who are actually practising in it to teach that sort of stuff at a guest lecture level so that means that the students are exposed to these things. They’re not necessarily taught how to do it because there’s not enough time to do that</p> <p>.....and if we were to do that then we’d have to trade off some other stuff such as the soft skills and the communications theory.”</p> <p><i>Researcher Argue its not time but providing road maps to students is key for them to grasp the opportunity to up-skill themselves in the business school.</i></p> |
| Barrier (incentives) | <p>“I think there is no real incentive to changing a course if it’s already working and the person is getting good evaluations because there’s no metric that says that students who have done this course are more likely to get hired or students have come back and said this course really helped me get hired”</p> <p><i>(Don’t fix what’s not broken but what if the broken is perceived to be working).</i></p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| PBRF (Motivation) | <p>“If it gets a really good evaluation there is no incentive to change it obviously and it can get a good evaluation without touching industry at this stage because I guess there’s no question in the evaluations that says does this course prepare me for industry and even if there was, 80% of the students wouldn’t know what that is anyway.”</p> <p><i>Evaluation is from students who are in many ways working the system, doing what they “need to do” to get grades... Therefore using the students’ evaluations (which is questionable in sample size and representation) as effective evaluators of teaching quality...</i></p> <p><i>Students Don’t know about industry mainly because they have minimal exposure to it in the curriculum.</i></p> |
| Researchers question (A) | <p>“Why is there always a sacrifice, why can’t they, okay we have exceptional lecturers, professors and pedagogy as well, why is it always felt there’s a fear we’re going to lose one or the other? Why is it?”</p> |
| Answer Challenge (Changing industry + time) (B) | <p>“It’s just time. I think if it’s not time in terms of the contact time required to teach all four, it’s time in terms of the time required to prepare, to prepare something that integrates across all four circles really well with this fourth circle (industry/technology) changing constantly and so if you, it’s the time the lecturer has to put the thought and the motivation they have to integrate all four knowing that once you bring that fourth wheel in that that’s the one that’s always going to be updating.”</p> |

6.5 Miscellaneous

Table 26 indicates the miscellaneous themes from the university marketing lecturer interviews. A commonly observed theme was the traditional role that universities had of being a place to learn critical thinking, communication and learning how to learn. An interesting finding was the intangible value of the lifelong network students build during their university experience. A further significant finding was the importance of universities having a continuous improvement policy in terms of service delivery to the main stakeholder being the student.

Table 26: Miscellaneous Quotes from the University Interviews

| Sub theme description | Quote with lecturer inference |
|-----------------------------|--|
| University G | |
| University graduate profile | <p>“The thing here at our Uni – it’s not about shipping out graduates. It’s about we want the leaders of the future. I mean that’s full on like we want to send people out that are going to be the next or at some point in their career are going to be the marketing director or CEO of Tourism New Zealand, of Air New Zealand, of say BNZ, Fonterra. They’re seen as these big awesome companies and we want to develop a graduate profile that sends people out that can put them on a career trajectory to be running those things. We don’t want frontline, we don’t want to go oh yeah we’re kicking out the best frontline managers and that’s where they are or the best marketing co-ordinator. We want to create someone that has the potential to go forward and rule the planet.”</p> <p><i>Graduate profiles and complicated language documents are nice on paper but every strategy is limited by the moving pieces on the chess board. And indeed for business degrees, these include teaching quality, course content and the overall university environment. So do the papers taught inclusive of the lecturing/teaching and pedagogy translate the graduate profile</i></p> |
| Soft skills | <p>“Right so I kind of look at it and I go well really for me this is like the ultimate thing. You don’t have to be the nicest person in the world, what you do have to be though is someone that if I throw you in a room and say sort the fucking problem out you go okay well how can I sort the problem. That’s the thing and if you can’t come up with the answer at least you’re rational enough and mature enough to go well I don’t know the answer. I could potentially call in some other people to assist me or I can go and access some resources that might give me more information. That really is, like my own experience in well firstly in industry and also in academia is that that ability to deal with a given situation or issue or problem that arises is really critical“</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| Customer Stakeholder (Co-creation) | <p>“Say you’re a customer of a law firm you expect to go in, here’s my legal problem, you fix it, tell me the solution. Whereas education is different. What it involves is you’re not just a customer. There’s no product that we just go here’s the programme”</p> <p>“The co-creation of knowledge and it’s the co-creation of your knowledge and that involves you the student contributing to the equation and they forget that.”</p> |
| Corporate > SMEs | <p>“It depends on the advice but the thing is I would say whatever it is I would still say go to the big corporate because the structure is there, they have better training, even the experience that you will get will set you up for your career”</p> |
| Soft skills (Learning to learn) | <p>“Having the flexibility in your brain and in your makeup to be able to go, you know when you present someone with a problem”</p> <p><i>This is referring to the ability to learn. The ability or students to have the willingness to learn</i></p> |
| Digital oriented caller | <p>“Oh yeah he’s online Twitters all over the place. But my thing is it’s about having the drive and motivation to try and make it happen and do it.</p> |
| Industry demand (Soft skills) | <p>The stuff that’s also highly transferable and very, very much sought after by employers in the industry</p> |
| University K | |
| Soft skill (Importance) | <p>So that is like problem solving and thinking skills and being critical, you know. And honestly I think that that is one of the most important things that university education does, irrespective of the programme that you take, you know</p> |
| Industry | <p>“But I would also say one of my concerns right now, and it’s a rumour, but I’ve heard that some companies don’t want to hire marketing people now, they only want info data people.</p> <p><i>Meaning technical business people</i></p> |
| Industry linkage Part A (Lecturer asked Industry) | <p>I emailed like everyone I knew [in industry] and said exactly your question, what do you want, what input are you looking for. And I found this recruitment agency lady who happened to be in a stopover in Singapore.(next quote)</p> |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Industry linkage (Part B) | <p>“She said did you know digital is important and face-to-face is important but do not let them think that writing is not important, you know, don’t be fooled by that. Digital has to be there, definitely but just because it’s all visual and you’ve got You Tube presentations and interactive slide shows and stuff like that, there are people that are going to say give me a report and you’ve got to be able to communicate your ideas”</p> <p><i>Digital is not everything. Rather communicating your ideas in a concise manner that translates into action is more key”</i></p> |
| Industry | And I think industry, sometimes sees us as just a waste of time, just like oh academics you know, when actually if they came to us and said hey can you do this it would be awesomeI |
| Industry | if they [industry] came to us and said hey - can you do this it would be awesome. |
| SMEs | “Do we cater to SMEs? Probably not as well as we could, but in what way? It’s a tricky one.” |
| University responsibility (Alignment) | <p>“I definitely think that every university has to constantly monitor where they are at”</p> <p>but I don’t think you could ever complete it, because especially marketing and business is always changing,</p> <p>but what you have to do is constantly adapt, you know. So you have to bring in new ideas, you have to bring in new content, you have to be watching”</p> |
| Industry (Ideal future) | Ideally I would like to spend more time in industry itself and go and talk to people because we can hypothesis and we can talk to a few people here and there...but what would be awesome is to have somebody who isn’t bound by all the requirements of the teaching and research and everything else just to tell us what we need to do, do you know what I mean? |
| PBRF (Ideal equal elements) | “As well as the research, part of the research and our teaching is contributing to community. We are paid by students, by government,..... so we need to respond.” |
| University responsibility | So I think there are a few people that are mainly research and to be honest they probably shouldn’t be in front of the classroom. Some of them, you know, but there is no grey area for me. University is teaching and research and so we have a responsibility to both. It’s just our job.” |
| University responsibility | “I agree, students are paying and we have a responsibility.” |

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Stakeholders | “So do we give all the students exactly what they need to start out? We could try and I think it is our responsibility, but it’s also two-way” |
| Alignment | <p>Industry It’s not like we are here and they are there because if you picture yourself at a particular point and that is where you sit, that’s not correct for...because industry is always moving,..... so we should always be moving.</p> <p><i>Interesting.. the industry-experienced lectures are strikingly different from the Academics who’ve never worked.</i></p> <p><i>Striking difference</i></p> |
| Soft and Tech balance | “but if they have the tech that’s great, but do they still have the people that can do that. ..the magic is, is taking analytics, taking that data, taking the technicalities, and thinking about what that means.” |
| Current | <p>Like, I wouldn’t say that anyone is perfect and I think that it’s sort of an ongoing process. It’s not like we are here and they are there because if you picture yourself at a particular point and that is where you sit, that’s not correct for industry because industry is always moving, so we should always be moving.</p> <p><i>Interesting.. the Industry experienced lectures are strikingly different from the theory work-less ones.</i></p> |
| Theory (not enough) | “so the theory on itself great, but only if they have that high level of thinking.” |
| Current | <p>“but it’s interesting to be programme director, then you start to really look at the whole picture more so. I think we are pretty good but we are not great.”</p> <p>Holistic view should be shared with the rest of the department and strive to be the greatest “possible”</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| Communication | <p>“And these business practical skills, I think they are important. We did a set in [contacted] industry and they were like communication skills, communication skills, that was the main thing that they talked about”</p> |
| University WR | |
| University system | <p>“It’s always the same. What you measure gets done. Now we have a university that is a factory of knowledge right. We produce new knowledge and we pass new knowledge on”</p> |
| (Miscellaneous) Changing future Industry alignment | <p>“Do I even know what you should know in five years so that you can manage and live in the world that is going to be 2020? I don’t know. So I cannot simply prepare you for a job in marketing research or in media or in design....</p> <p>..... I’ve got to prepare you to be a thinker, a self-managed person, have a respectable mind.</p> |
| Perceptions amongst different stakeholders | <p>“Students perceptions of what they need and employers and lecturers are all different”</p> <p>Students I don’t think are in a position to understand how important the skills are that you learn at university. For example searching for information, networking”</p> |
| University value | <p>“I tell you that the best thing you get from university, the best thing you get is the networks of other students. Just knowing other people who can design stuff or test stuff or check”</p> |
| Academic research | <p>“But, the academic people will tell you that if you don’t do research you are not at the forefront of development and you don’t understand what is happening right there”</p> <p>True, but if you look at this, and I always pick a big thing. Let’s say this is marketing right and we are saying that that bit is advertising. When you study you take the pencil as fine as you can make it and then you draw a little line and you go down that track. What about all the rest of that? So don’t come to me with that you have to be research qualified to be able to teach because you must teach. You cannot teach a student the little sliver that you know that is going to help him one minute of one day of his entire career.</p> <p>You’ve got to help the student that is going to from now on work for 50 years. It’s got to be tools that are going to be able to be honed and sharpened over time. <i>You almost automatically have to give a student a fairly blunt instrument when they leave the university”</i></p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| Soft skills (industry) | “The stuff that’s also highly transferable and very, very much sought after by employers in the industry” |
| University (radical change vs. incremental) | “If you have lagged, right like we say, universities have lagged behind what they should, then it’s a radical change, even if you could have done it through incremental changes and you didn’t do it through incremental changes, you have a leap to make. That is called radical. So they are behind. So the only thing that is now necessary is a radical change. They cannot make tiny changes anymore. They are too far behind.” |
| Responsibility as life-long learners | “You are absolutely right. That must happen. If universities aren’t lifelong learners and therefore continuous disruptive and radical innovators, then they are making a big mistake” |
| Industry Learning on the job | <p>“But that is not new. It’s just because millennials are more critical of it. Because for example when I left university right and I started a business, I knew that I had to be highly polished in presentation skills. So I didn’t go oh what a crap university. I went okay I go to toastmasters in the evenings. I polish off my speaking skills. I go to a course on how to do presentations and create Powerpoints. I went on several courses on so called BPS, business presentation skills to make sure that I am a polished presenter. When I took on the sales job I didn’t say to the company oh I only have a degree, I don’t really know sales. I go and study sales from some sales academy.</p> <p>...Because I understand that in three years I can only learn so much”</p> <p><i>Generation gap shows here. The skills that were “lacking” in curricula are now not only soft and communication (direct) but digital, software and industry.</i></p> |
| University value | <p>... for me the biggest learning that a university has to deliver now is to show students that they have to be constant lifelong learners.</p> <p>....There is no alternative. Things are going to keep changing so fast”</p> |
| University place in society | “But the traditional place for a university was to teach people to think and become scholars, to be you know almost ... they can talk, they can philosophise, they can theorise, they can think about these things” |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Politics (Schools of thought)</p> <p>A</p> | <p>“The other school of thought says, but there has been a “massification” of education. As a global trend that means that we are not just getting the scholars, the Socrates, the Plato’s, you know, the thinkers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) We are getting people who take a degree as a ticket to a job. So we are definitely in the domain of qualifying teaching people to be entry level employees right. So we have an obligation because they pay us and employers look to us for qualified students with the correct requisite skills to actually enter and immediately be work ready. 2) We are aware, okay we’ve got to polish them, nurture them, teach them self-management, teach them thinking skills. But when we take someone with a degree we assume they’ve had three years of polishing and roaming and making them nice and shiny and they have to hit the ground running. That is the other school of thought” |
| <p>Politics (Schools of thought)</p> <p>Student as a customer</p> | <p>“Then the other group says okay but why do you take my money as a customer. Why do you claim to be industry we live in and you have heard that a thousand times I am sure, and research based but industry we live in. And then you give us people that are <u>only half ready</u>”</p> |
| <p>Industry politics (Academic)</p> | <p>“So the one school says we give them theoretical background and principles so that they can think for themselves from a solid base. So we teach them basically some analytical skills, thinking skills, researching skills, principles, you know, how this field works. So we teach accountants to think like accountants, lawyers to think like lawyers. And you and I will agree there are different thinking styles. That is no doubt”</p> |
| <p>Politics</p> | <p>“Yeah but you know, let’s be fair, somewhat ready. So there is definitely those two. And some of us, I include myself who has kind of a foot in each field, in each school of thought because I do believe that we do have to teach some of the theoretical background because we cannot move forward if we don’t stand on the shoulders of giants, then we have to start right at the beginning”</p> |

6.6 Summary of the findings of interviews with university academics

Interviews with university marketing academics with teaching and course coordination experience has provided us with very useful insights. Soft skills were agreed upon by the interviewed academics as being the focus of university course content albeit these were not taught directly in any of the courses. Teaching was seen as a side role for academics due to the heavy emphasis on research for promotions and recognition within their respective academia roles. Barriers to course reform revolved around intense existing academic workloads and lack of incentive for teaching focus due to its low weighing for promotion both in terms of salary and the academic ladder from lecturer to professor. SMEs were ironically not encouraged as a career due to the argument of resource scarce SMEs lacking training and development opportunities for recent marketing graduates otherwise available at the majority of large businesses.

Overall, the interviews illustrated the emphasis on soft skills, the PBRF system as the limiting factor for improved business school pedagogy, in addition to multifaceted and intensive academic workloads that deter business academics from having industry experience and the best possible teachers of marketing and overall business.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

Using the findings of the content analysis, the chapter will present a gap analysis of each set of KSC examined. The discussion will be based around the four sets of KSC identified – soft skills, communication skills, theory, and industry technical skills. The basis of this chapter will be as follows: the industry content analysis (CA) will be compared to and contrasted with the university content analysis and interview data. The chapter will discuss the gaps found, reasoning behind the gaps in relation to the business and marketing education literature, and the findings and the significance of these findings to industry and university stakeholders. Implications for businesses, university business schools, and students will be given in relation to curricular reform in the academic environment, and to student engagement. The conclusion of this chapter will present the limitations of the research and future research suggestions.

7.1 Conceptual model

Analysis of the KSC identified reveals four major themes: soft skills, communication skills, theoretical knowledge, and industry skills. The conceptual model was built on these four sets of KSC and will be the basis of the discussion and implications section to follow.

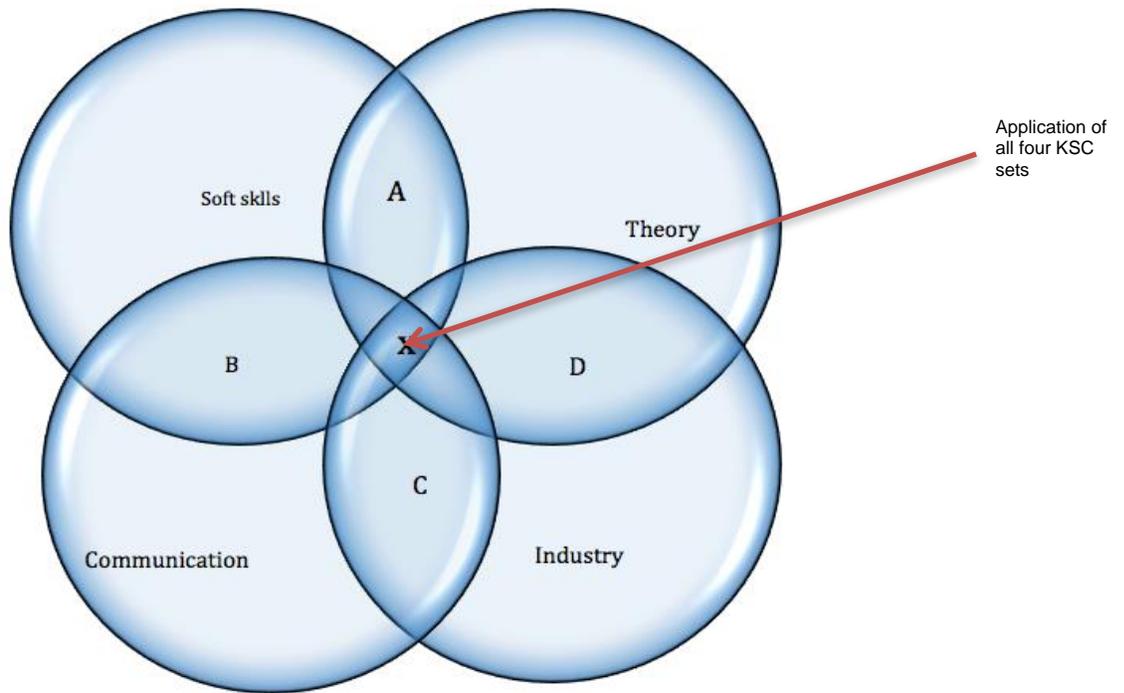


Figure 31: Marketing KSC model- The Quatro KSC

Table 43: Quatro KSC Model for Marketing Education

| Quadrant | Description | Change over time | Challenge |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| Soft skills | Emotional Intelligence Cognitive skills | Slow | Teaching soft skills to students of diverse levels |
| Communication skills | Oral and verbal communication | Slow | -Intergenerational gaps -Baby boomers teaching millennials |
| Theory | Theoretical frameworks Case studies (SME and large business) | Slow to change *Disruptive and has changed the business landscape | -Large business theory application -Lacking SME case studies -Lack of application of theory in integrated assignments and projects over the degree period |
| Industry (technology) | Digital and software skills (Digital marketing, social media, design, data analytics) | Relatively fast | -Baby boomers lacking digital literacy teaching digital-native millennials for a digital-oriented industry |

7.2 Discussion of findings

The discussion will interpret and discuss the findings in light of the four KSC areas – soft skills, communication skills, theory and digital skills - which we will examine in context of the gap found between industry and university marketing curricular. The contribution of the thesis will be intertwined with the discussion followed by the curricula reform section and reform summary in which the latter two areas are seen as the major contributions of this thesis. Frameworks are given for curricula reform in the final section for academics to use in their curricula reform endeavours.

7.2.1 Soft skills

Soft skills were strongly demanded by industry with the most in-demand being willingness to learn, taking initiative, managing deadlines, and teamwork. Marketing academics interviewed argued that these soft skills are taught inclusively in projects, group assignments and written assignments. (Clarke et al., 2006; Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Lincoln, 2004; Madhavaram & Laverie, 2010; Vafeas, 2013). However, these are all assumed to be inferred learning opportunities and soft skills are not actually taught as a separate module or course to students, nor are they integrated in extensive depth into the marketing curricula. Rather, the marketing academics interviewed assumed that students would learn these skills as a result of completing the assigned course work. Past literature has shown the importance of integrating soft skills into the marketing curricula and their importance for businesses, SMEs, and marketing professionals (De Villiers, 2010; Walker et al, 2009; Wellman, 2010; Wymbs, 2011).

Furthermore, the soft skill findings are in agreement with previous major studies done on marketing graduate requirements by Walker et al. (2009) and Harrigan and Hulbert (2011) with regard to the requirements for entry-level marketing positions. Marketing graduates need to have the willingness to learn and the initiative to conduct their own self-directed learning, in addition to having professional work place communication skills, (Hodges & Burchell, 2003; Jackson, n.d.-b; Nordling, 2008; Schulz, 2008;

Shuayto, 2013). Soft skills studies have collectively shown a pattern of findings indicating that business employers emphasise the importance of verbal and written communication, problem solving, and active listening as key soft skills that significantly enhance employability, not only for entry level graduates but for mid- and senior-level marketing and business graduates. This agrees with the findings of this study with over 150 citations of soft skills in the industry job descriptions content analysis. SME marketing further emphasises the need for soft skills due to increased founder involvement and customer interaction compared to large businesses (Siu, 2001).

A difference in the perception of soft skill teachings was found between the academics with industry experience and those who are pure theoretical academics. Having industry experience gives perspective to marketing educators, their experience consequently equipping them with the foresight of emphasising soft skills in their teaching. Two of the prominent marketing academics interviewed emphasised the importance of higher order thinking and building a network during a student's university degree time as major skillsets and indicators of future career and life success, which agrees with past literature (Gray et al 2007; Schlee & Harich 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017). Indeed, one academic emphasised that the most important aspects of a student's marketing and overall university degree are learning how to learn, building a network of life time relationships, and developing the soft skills that can carry him/her on to not only marketing careers but also other disciplines due to the interdisciplinary nature and transferability of soft skills. (Bancino & Zevalkink, 2007; Gewertz, 2007; Schulz, 2008). Prior to this research, it was well known to the researcher that soft skills were a key factor in a graduate's success as it is often said that "people skills" are the key to success. However, the digital revolution that has happened was perceived to make soft skills to be of secondary importance and digital skills to take the primary lead. However, upon examining recent studies on marketing job KSC requirements – namely Schlee & Karns (2017), Gray et al (2007) and Schlee & Harich (2010), we argue that, along with our soft skill findings, these soft skill findings ironically feed into the digital skillset as the need to continually improve one's KSC in all four areas is even more important in the digital economy than it was prior to this change in market dynamics. This, like numeracy and literacy, has a name, "digital

literacy”, and is now also part of the modern marketing and business graduate skillset requirements as we found in the job descriptions. Therefore, this new insight into the harmonious relationship between the soft skill KSC and their importance with the new digital skills revolution can be seen as a motivator for academics to enhance current soft skill learning opportunities and introduce new ones. In summary, the critical skill of continuous up-skilling (willingness to learn, self management, time management, initiative) is of increasing importance nowadays with the importance of digital literacy and technical (digital) skills in the marketing and business work place.

Teaching soft skills, as examined in De Villiers (2010) and from the interview insights, is argued to be a complex task with many challenges such as measuring soft skills of students in large numbers in addition to the pinpointing of assessments that foster soft skill KSC in students. The methods for soft skill development are suggested in section 7.2.25.

7.2.2 Communication

De Villiers (2010) identified cognitive skills and communication skills as falling under the one category of soft skills. For the sake of this research, it was decided that communication skills, often revolving around oral, verbal, and written communication, are in a category of their own. However, the two skillsets overlap, are related and synergistic in nature. Previous studies in marketing education have revealed a strong demand for oral and written communication skills (Gray et al., 2007; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbs, 2011). An interesting finding was the prevalence of written and oral communication demand from the job content analysis in a time that is perceived to be digitally dominated, with over 80% of jobs citing demand varying from basic to strong levels of communication skills. Ironically, Massey University was the only institute that offered specific communication and business communication courses within their business and marketing degrees. The remainder of the universities, as the content analysis and insights from the academic interviews showed, had opportunities for learning writing and communication skills in an inferred manner from assignments, examinations and various projects. The researcher argues that this inferred assumption is

a relatively flawed philosophy in terms of teaching communication because every lecturer interviewed emphasised the importance of communication for career progression but the curricula do not offer specific communication courses over the three year marketing degree nor do the curricula (and, in turn, marketing educators interviewed) emphasise this KSC area either in their teachings or in their interactions with the students.

Indeed, communication, as with any field, has both theoretical and practical components and thus can be taught, as evidenced by the vast soft skill training industry as mentioned by the lecturers interviewed who had published extensively in the soft and communication skills area. However, academics interviewed argued that there is sufficient content in existing marketing curricula for communication to be learned in an inferred manner from doing the course work for each course. As one senior lecturer noted:

“We’re giving you the opportunity to practise it but realistically we don’t have courses on it. We test for that, communication, oral, we try to have them do at least one presentation.”

A possible explanation for this result may be the lack of incentive academics are given to teach their students communication modules in the context of the research publication-centered PBRF promotion system (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; MacLead, 2015). Furthermore, there is a case for academics assuming that students have the relevant level of cognitive development in terms of soft and communication skills from secondary school. However, university academics were well aware of the theory-oriented schooling system and, in a sense, incomplete development of school student competence, with one senior marketing lecturer stating:

“So we’re already on the back foot by the time they get to us.”

No doubt this does not apply to all students but with marketing programmes having over 300 students in stage three and over double that in stage one, one can generalise to a

relative extent that there will be a percentage of students that do not possess the appropriate level of soft skills in terms of the skill of learning and applying knowledge and, therefore, the ability to maximise the learning opportunities from their marketing courses is arguably minimised. Our findings show that entry-level marketing positions require not only technical but also significant communication skills with particular focus on email communication, proposals, business writing (such as article and blog posts) and, in addition, appropriate communication etiquette between senior and same level colleagues, which agrees with past studies (Gray et al., 2007; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbs, 2011). However, it was still critical for lecturers to understand that communication skills were in demand in our entire sample set of jobs.

Communication, like soft skills, was a highly demanded skillset, despite the perception of this being a time of digital marketing and business. Therefore, we can state that classic communication methods such as public speaking, presentations and written reports are still fundamental skillsets in marketing and business workplace roles despite being in a time that is perceived to be digitally run and oriented. The incorporation of communication modules into the curricula is discussed in the reform section (7.2.25).

In summary, communication skills were found to be in high demand, which aligns with the findings of previous studies (Gray et al., 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; De Villiers, 2010; Walker et al., 2009; Wellman, 2010; Wymbs, 2011) in which communication skills are stressed as a key success factor for enhancing employability, successful transition into entry-level marketing positions, and progressing to mid- and senior-level marketing roles (Bridgstock, 2009; Clark, 2003; Husain et al., 2010; Ward & Yates, 2013; Wellman, 2010). However, the findings have shown that, except for Massey University, there is no specific communications course offered for business students and this should be remedied by way of guiding students towards communication learning opportunities (see 7.2.25) such as business school club events, Toastmasters and co-curricular events that are included in the core course or as part of the business school culture.

7.2.3 Theory

Marketing theory was a major area of interest for this study due to the hypothesis that there was a lack of SME marketing theory and digital marketing modules in New Zealand university marketing curricula. This hypothesis was based on past studies that have indicated a favouring of large business theory and a consequent lack of SME marketing theory (and a lack of digital marketing modules in tertiary curricula) (Harrigan & Hulbert 2011; Martin & Chapman, 2006; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Walker et al, 2009; Wymbs, 2011).

The most obvious pattern to emerge from the analysis is the significantly dominant presence of large business theory-oriented marketing courses with main area being the large business-oriented assignments. In accordance with past studies have found (Martin & Chapman, 2006), the marketing curricula examined showed a lack of SME marketing content, assessments and extensive digital marketing theory modules. A key finding in this study was that Waikato, Massey, and Victoria Universities offered basic introductory digital marketing theory courses while the remainder of the universities sampled did not offer any form of dedicated digital marketing papers. This demonstrates that each university and their associated business schools have their own culture and particular methods in terms of course offerings. Thus, one can argue, there is a lack of consistency among the universities in terms of offering the optimum set of courses for New Zealand business students.

Entry-level jobs showed considerable demand for marketing knowledge but, more importantly, also for technical and soft skills. Therefore, as theory facilitates the application of technology (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011), and having one without the other is seen as an incomplete grounding for the marketing graduate, particularly with New Zealand universities aspiring to develop their students for senior manager roles requiring higher order problem solving and decision making abilities, thorough theoretical knowledge becomes even more important (Gray et al., 2007). The interview findings agree with multiple studies in concluding that theory is more important for middle- and

senior-level marketing positions compared to entry-level positions (Catterall, Maclaran, & Stevens, 2002b; Richard Davis et al., 2002a; Gray et al., 2007; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Raghuraman, 2017; Schlee & Karns, 2017). This idea was elaborated on by the academics interviewed, indicating the importance of theory for developing graduates not to become front line managers but as two lecturers noted, to develop the next generation of managers, senior marketing professionals and ultimately marketing directors and head of marketing positions at SMEs and businesses accordingly.

However, multiple practitioners from previous studies have found that employers are increasingly seeking marketing graduates with knowledge in marketing theory (Cheng et al., 2016; Davis et al., 2002a; Kelley & Bridges, 2005; Resnick et al., 2011). While SME marketing theory was minimal to non-existent in the marketing curricula examined, the traditional large business marketing theory was taught to high standards with extensive case studies and projects oriented towards producing entry-level marketing professionals for large businesses. One can say that the current marketing curricula lack SME marketing case studies and assignments and, thus, seek to produce large business-oriented graduates; however, it does not teach graduates the innovation and dynamic culture that modern-day large businesses require to excel in a saturated market (Martin & Chapman, 2006). This consequently puts SMEs at a disadvantage and further discourages marketing and business students from seeking employment in SMEs and startups as noted by previous authors (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011).

Interestingly, after examination of the content analysis and interviews and, in some sense, contradictory of the previous authors' indication of a lack of SME theory in tertiary content, the researcher poses an argument that there is indeed SME business and marketing theory in content. One can argue that the majority of marketing and business theory can be applied to SME's, with the exception of Ansoff's Matrix due to its large market-oriented nature which lends itself naturally to large scale businesses. However, the researcher would like to illustrate that it is not the lack of SME theory that is the core issue. Rather, that issue itself is encompassed in the bigger problem, being a lack of SME and startup oriented marketing and business case studies in the courses. SME content is taught in a manner though not in a direct sense, but, rather, it is "engulfed" in large

business-oriented assessments and large business curricular culture.

For example, the University of Auckland (UoA) entrepreneurship hub for students is touted as the top in the country but this resource is not reflected in the papers from MKTG 201, 202, 301, 303 and the elective marketing papers for the UoA marketing major. Therefore, a lack of integration exists within the very business school in terms of existing curricula and existing co-curricula opportunities for students. The researcher argues that business schools should seek to connect the existing resources to the marketing major to ensure students receive an all-round educational experience.

A surprising insight was that, although the marketing degrees lacked SME and startup modules, the business schools offered extensive entrepreneurship and startup oriented opportunities that remedied this gap to a certain extent. For example, the Velocity Department in The University of Auckland is the biggest tertiary entrepreneurship programme in Australasia, offering workshops, seminars, and competitions centered on producing student-led startups with over 85 successful startups to date (Velocity, 2017). Interviews showed that similar co-curricula opportunities were offered at other universities with notable mention of the Massey Innovation Centre and Victoria University's entrepreneur boot camp (Massey, 2017; Victoria University, 2017). The most important limiting factor to be pointed out here is the lack of utilisation of these innovative hubs from the students' side (as cited by an award-winning academic from the interviewed sample) and this is seen as partly due to the lack of initiative from students but also a lack of awareness of such facilities and lack of encouragement from marketing educators in terms of motivating students to pursue co-curricular endeavours to further develop themselves in all aspects and competencies. The researcher suggests integration of these co-curricular hubs from the business schools into their marketing and business degrees in order to equip students with increasingly more robust marketing conceptual knowledge for increased competence and employability for both entry-level positions and, ultimately, senior marketing and business positions as well as interdisciplinary positions. In summary, it is not sufficient for universities to offer a theory-dominant curriculum at a time when marketing is rapidly changing, digitally evolving, and

specifically requiring highly developed soft skills as marketing professionals must continuously learn and update their KSC to maintain and grow as marketing professionals (Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009). Theoretical content and case studies must be taught not only for large business but also for SMEs and startups given the rise of SMEs and startups in New Zealand of GDP with the aim of equipping students with the optimum set of skills apply not only to their entry-level but as Gray et al., (2007) noted, for their mid- and senior-level marketing positions.

We now turn to the technological aspect of the findings where arguably all three elements of soft, communication, and theory combine in an applied manner.

7.2.4 Industry

The industry quadrant is defined by technological elements such as software suite skills and digital business tools. Content analysis findings showed multiple sets of digital and software skills demanded by industry. Amongst all three-job patterns found (digital, writing, and marketing assistant), some form of digital and software skills was required. Digital marketing, which included social media content marketing, had the highest demand while the highest demanded software skills were Adobe Design, web management and advanced Microsoft Office. An interesting insight and argument provided by the academics interviewed regarding the lack of these modules in marketing curricula was that their nature was to be continuously changing and that universities do not have the responsibility to keep up with technology in this way. The fear of becoming a polytechnic institute rather than a scholarly academic institute was a major theme across the academic interviews, a situation that dates back to the transformation of business schools from a vocational trade school to the modern scientific business schools (Khurana, 2007; Mintzberg, 2004; Bennis & O'Toole, 2005). Furthermore, content analysis revealed dominantly standardised assessment-oriented marketing curricula, further reinforcing the observation by one senior lecturer with 20 years' research and teaching experience that business schools pay "*lip service [to] the teaching of thinking skills*" and do not actually thoroughly teach an extensive and thoroughly integrated,

critical thinking-oriented business degree. However, academics interviewed had strikingly low views of the levels of scholarly thinking and theory within polytechnics and thus regarded their theory-dominant and industry-lacking marketing curricula as a form of academic superiority over polytechnic institutes. It was interesting, however, to see that it was, within the given sample, the industry-experienced marketing academics that favoured the university staying up to date with industry. Therefore, this presents some evidence that further demonstrates that the past experience of academics changes the perspective they hold, in turn affecting their teaching methods in arguably positive ways (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Matthews et al., 2014; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). The flow-on effect from having industry experience arguably reflects that the lecturers themselves have foresight into the environment that the student will enter upon completing their university degree. This creates a more empathetic learning experience where the students are taught by academics that not only are academic scholars in their field but also have applied their knowledge in the industry, having made real tangible impacts on real customers in a real work environment.

A key point emphasized by interviewed lecturers, with which the researcher disagrees, is that vocational skills are meant for polytechnic institutes and scholarly thinking is for universities. Indeed this assumes that polytechnic institutes do not have theory and downgrades the value of digital and software skills, which in a sense forms a justification for marketing departments not to incorporate much required digital and software KSC into their curricula despite the evidence pointing to its demand. It is interesting to note that the business school culture of separating theory and practice is arguably flawed due to the strong connection between these two areas. Drawing upon interview insights and past literature (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Wymbs, 2011), it can be shown that technology is built on the basis of existing theory. For example, social media marketing utilises social consumption theory, B2C, C2B, and C2C marketing theory, in addition to David Aaker's brand equity model (Aaker, 2011). Therefore, technology is not separate from marketing theory but rather it is built on application of existing marketing principles that enable the success of disruptive technologies such as Web 2.0, social media, data analytics, and the most commonly utilised technological development: digital marketing. The Adobe Suite

(Photoshop, InDesign, and Illustrator) is in demand not for the technological skill itself but rather its ability to be applied in designing relevant marketing deliverables such as visuals for social media channels, websites, and print marketing (Gray et al., 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011). Therefore, as we can see, there are multiple digital skillsets that are required by marketers in order to undertake market research, compile and write reports, create and monitor digital campaigns, in addition to measuring campaigns. One can argue that marketers need to be “T-shaped” with a general literacy in a wide range of skills including digital followed by a specialisation. Indeed, this is the focus that design, engineering, medicine and other schools follow but the content analysis result evidently indicates that the business school approach is too general and does not follow the best practice specialised methods that other fields follow.

The findings of this study, along with previous studies, emphasised that willingness to learn and initiative are key to the successful application of marketing knowledge and technical skills, and learning to apply these skills in a business environment is key for all rounded marketing professionals (Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbys, 2011). Therefore, it is argued that the application of marketing KSC in a professional work environment is important when undertaking technical related tasks and it is not the technical skills themselves that employers seek (Bridgstock, 2009; Holden, Jameson, & Walmsley, 2007; Husain et al., 2010; Wellman, 2010). This is particularly true for SMEs who lack the readily available pool of data and design-skilled labour to do the relevant digital and technical work for marketing activities (Siu, 2001). Thus compared to entry-level corporate marketing positions, the four quadrants of KSC work together most evidently in SME marketing roles where each area is required for entry-level roles due to the role being relatively more multi-faceted, dynamic and irregular compared to entry-level corporate marketing positions. Another example is the use of data software, which utilises market research principles but allows the marketer to handle and manage large amounts of data in a much more effective, efficient, and scalable manner. For SMEs this is even more critical due to the lack of capital that large businesses have, rendering the need for market research theory and technical skills even more necessary. Utilisation of free software for market research purposes, such as cloud software like Google office

suites, is a key skill for SMEs that lack the budget to outsource their market research as large businesses tend to do (Martin & Chapman, 2006; Siu, 2001). Interestingly, Microsoft Excel and Publisher were cited in more than 50% of jobs, indicating their importance for marketing professionals, with the former being required for quantitative and research tasks while the latter is used for copywriting, visual, and content marketing purposes. Based on these findings, we can see the importance of the integration of digital skills into the market research and data courses in marketing degrees to ensure that students are equipped with the right tools to be able undergo effective data-oriented marketing tasks. The relation between marketing theory and technology is summarised in Table 27.

7.2.5 The relationship of marketing theory to technology

Table 27: Marketing Theory Relation to Technology

| Theory | Technology |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Business-to-business marketing | Social media channels |
| Business-to-consumer marketing | Facebook posts |
| Social consumption | Twitter posts |
| Co creation | Instagram posts |
| Peer validation | Product placement |
| Consumer behaviour | |
| Branding | |
| Influencer marketing | |
| Celebrity endorsement | |
| Advertising | Facebook advertising |
| Segmentation | Google Adwords campaigns |
| Target market | Content marketing |
| Product positioning | campaigns |
| Consumer behaviour | |
| Branding | |
| Market research | SPSS |
| Quantitative analysis | SQL |
| 4P's | Social media promotions |
| | Channel design (place) |
| AIDA model | Email marketing campaigns |
| | Blogging newsletters |
| Consumer psychology | Adobe InDesign |
| Product design | Adobe Illustrator |
| Psychology of colour | |

Table 27 shows the relationship between technological KSC identified in the content analysis and grounded marketing and business theory. (Making Knowledge and application of segmentation and product positioning theories allow an SME marketer to design optimal Facebook advertising campaigns. The AIDA model (attention, interest, decision, action) is utilised in content marketing newsletters, email marketing, and Facebook marketing campaigns (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011). Marketing graduates with relevant marketing theory will be more prepared to design the right marketing campaign with the visual experience to elicit desired consumer responses for the specific marketing goal.

7.2.6 Integration of skills

Figure 31 and Figure 43 illustrate the *quatro* KSC. Each of the KSC elements overlaps with the others. The middle point where all four quadrants overlap is where the application of all four KSC occurs. Indeed the quadrant for each element has its own best practice methods for its teaching. As the entry-level marketing professionals increase their competence in each quadrant, they move towards the centre where they reach advanced and expert level competence in accordance with the Dreyfus model applied for marketing professionals (Walker et al., 2009). An interesting revelation from the analysis of the four KSC areas is the relationship between these four elements in terms of their individual elements and the long term approach needed for these processes to show feasible development in the student's KSC development. For example, in a group project context, effectively implemented (academic's side) and executed (student's side) group projects are a form of interactive learning that aims to develop student engagement, team work skills, communication skills and soft skills, which in turn develops KSC to higher levels, thereby increasing the market employability of each student.

Soft skills are arguably the most stable in terms of change with time (De Villiers, 2010). That is, consumer needs and trends that change along with the business sector have little effect on the nature of this skillset. However, the actual task of teaching soft skills has been found to require long-term approaches. (Abraham, 2006; Catterall et al., 2002b; Cheng et al., 2016; Gewertz, 2007; Schulz, 2008; A. Williams, 2015). As De Villiers (2010) points out, soft skills must be taught with a long-term approach to achieve deep learning as opposed to the surface learning produced by short courses.

This relates to short term learning approaches being ineffective in producing both long term results for every area of the *quatro* KSC but in particular to the soft and communication areas (De Villiers, 2010; Schee & Karns 2017; Wymbbs 2011). As one lecturer noted, having one seminar and workshop on soft and communication KSC would arguably produce very superficial results in terms of KSC development.

The very nature of soft skills requires a variety of scenarios, knowledge and learning experiences for students to learn, go through and reflect on to actually be developed (Gray et al, 2007; De Villiers, 2010). This is related to the nature of soft skill application in business where students are faced with continually changing, demanding and dynamic situations where different soft skill KSC are needed, applied and developed. These range from conflict resolution to working to tight deadlines, from time management to self-directed learning, in addition to initiative and business acumen. Soft skills must, therefore, be taught both directly and indirectly to develop thoroughly or, at least, to have the seeds sown for students to develop their soft skills by fostering the willingness to learn, take initiative and build relationships during their curricular time. The researcher argues that soft skills are developed in a process manner and are difficult to measure but the right assessment, environment and culture can develop long term soft skills in a deep learning approach. As mentioned previously, multiple, effectively-implemented group projects are but one example of developing multiple soft skill KSC across a standard three year marketing degree.

Similarly, communication shows little change due to the stable structure of this skillset with oral and written communication remaining a constant demanded skill according to past studies (Catterall et al., 2002b; Clarke et al., 2006; Kelley & Bridges, 2005; Schlee & Harich, 2010; Saeed, 2015; Schlee & Karns, 2017); that accords with the findings of the industry content analysis.

The challenge is that baby boomers, versed in a different era of communication, are teaching millennial students, who were raised with smartphones and digital communication from an early age, and who possess short attention spans, respond to varying styles of communication, and often are engaged in daily multitasking. (Berman & Sharland, 2002; Brennan, 2013; Noble, Haytko, & Phillips, 2009; Patrick Tucker, 2006; Wellman, 2010). A notable lecturer, when interviewed, had stressed the problems in teaching millennial students, being that they do not have foundational development of basic communication and soft skills, which, when coupled with a standardised grading system, renders the task of developing communication KSC by interactive learning

methods relatively more difficult due to a lack of pre-existing KSC in this area. As mentioned by one lecturer, a large number of students are already lacking in these two areas by the time they arrive for their business degree experience.

7.2.7 Coursework

Table 19 illustrates the common pattern of university degrees. As with previous studies, content analysis revealed a dominance of large business theory within marketing curricula (Harrigan & Hulbert 2011; Martin & Chapman, 2006). A traditional assessment approach was found in most courses with over 80% having more than 60% of their course mark in the form of a written report and examination revolving around large business case studies and assessments.

One can argue that this does not reflect real life practice of applied learning nor is it in line with best practice teaching, which notes the importance of experiential learning, group projects, and internships as the key area for students to learn the relevant KSC to enhance both their employability and future progression as marketing professionals (Brennan, 2013; Clarke et al., 2006; Gault et al., 2000; Lincoln, 2004; Madhavaram & Laverie, 2010; Ward & Yates, 2013). In the findings of this study, assignments were primarily based around theoretical marketing plans, advertising campaigns for simulated businesses, and final year projects for large corporate businesses with a small group presentation element for every group project examined.

With the exception of one university, the remaining six did not have extensive digital marketing-oriented courses or a thoroughly integrated course that covered social media marketing, content marketing, SEO, and digital advertising as per industry requirements for entry level marketing positions identified in the findings of this study and past studies (Gray et al., 2007; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Walker et al., 2009). Table 28 summarises the pattern of New Zealand university marketing degrees.

Table 28: NZ Marketing Degree Layout

| Year | Elements |
|-------------|--|
| First year | General business papers Introduction to marketing management Basic Frameworks (4Ps, SWOT, PESTLE, Porter's five forces) |
| Second year | <u>Marketing Papers:</u> Marketing research Intermediate marketing management <u>Assignments:</u> SPSS + data analysis Corporate case study Campaign (Visual + strategic report) |
| Third year | <u>Papers:</u> Marketing strategy Consumer behaviour Advertising and promotion Services marketing Advanced marketing research <u>Assignments:</u> Business plan for a new venture Marketing plan Advertising campaign for a large corporate Company case project (Group) |

The table illustrates the pattern of the NZ marketing courses that develop as the degree programme progresses from first to third year. However, the research has found that there is not sufficient practical work in the curricula. A key finding of this study was the lack of frequently spaced out practical workshops, assignments and reinforcement of theory – both for large and SME marketing and, likewise, large and small business oriented projects.

Interesting, there were 57 group projects found across the seven university marketing curricula examined but the overwhelming majority revolved around theoretical business plans and marketing plans - a task that arguably no entry-level marketing graduate would be given. How can one draw out a blueprint of a system without understanding the fundamental pieces and how the pieces interact let alone not having worked in each part? Indeed, the researcher argues this is the very phenomenon that occurs when marketing students are given very “overview theory” style assessments on a repeated basis without understanding the complex dynamics of marketing as a profession itself. Furthermore, the

entry-level jobs encompass the multiple areas that require the four KSC identified, which are not developed or even learned in the theoretical marketing assessments we have examined. On the other hand, one can argue the benefits of learning the skeletal framework of marketing (marketing, advertising and social media plans in the assessments) if they were supplemented with the learning of the individual elements.

In essence, this combination of the skeletal assessments with the individual elements would be much more effective in terms of learning, as learning the communication and digital KSC would produce more ideal outcomes. For example, a social media marketing plan assessment (the skeletal document) would be accompanied by a semester spent doing a real life social media monitoring assignment of a company of the student's choosing or the creation of their own page on a topic for which they had a passion with X number of posts per week. These posts would be boosted with a small Facebook advertising budget and aimed to be shared to as many blogs and other pages as possible. Furthermore, social media data such as number of comments, reposts, shares and other social analytics data can be measured and added to the write-up. This is more reflective of real life practice where marketing is both practised and measured on a regular basis (Schlee & Karns, 2017; Wymbs, 2011).

7.2.8 Politics

The conclusion about politics proved to be one of the most insightful in nature compared to all other findings. The academic orientation of the PBRF system is arguably at the core of the current state of business education in New Zealand as similarly mentioned about the US and British business education system in past studies (Khurana, 2007; Bennis & O' Toole, 2005). Academia, being a paid job, involves itself in an intrinsic and extrinsic reward system. The following sections will discuss the roles of an academic including teaching, research, service to the university, along with promotion and tenure factors in marketing academia, course reform barriers, and academic workloads.

7.2.9 Academic workloads

Academic workloads are noted both from interviews and the literature to be highly intensive and involving multiple roles, with the main three roles being research, teaching and service to the university, while secondary and tertiary roles include administration, presenting at conferences, adopting new technologies, in addition to engaging with industry (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Matthews et al., 2014; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). It is not difficult to see why New Zealand marketing academics are not incentivised to design and deliver innovative educational experiences to their students as they have minimal weighing in terms of career progression and promotion, in addition to which, the academics suffer from a significant lack of time. These interview findings are consistent with those of previous studies on academic career progression factors, confirming the association between research output and career promotion and, in turn, the minimal weighing teaching and industry experience have on academics' career promotion (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Khurana, 2007; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). This poses a major concern for New Zealand business schools; particularly considering the major influence university business and marketing educators have over a student's development of relevant KSC to use both as work skills and, ultimately, life skills.

Heads of departments (HODs) of marketing and business schools should prioritise teaching experience during hiring and training to ensure marketing educators deliver the most optimal marketing educational curricula. This cannot succeed on a business school scale, let alone a nationwide university scale, unless promotion and tenure factors are based on teaching excellence and the culture of business schools is changed to include and appreciate these two elements in addition to the academics' professionals role. Furthermore, SME and start-up oriented business and marketing assignments, modules and, ultimately, papers should be introduced to give students full semester education periods focused on this growing sector that is so crucial for the development of not only the New Zealand economy but also the economies of other countries.

The interviews revealed that the current PBRF system already gives research a dominant

weighting in terms of academic workload, university resources and, most importantly, promotion and tenure. Therefore, increasing the focus and resources towards the teaching and industry roles for marketing academics is a way to achieve an optimal balance. However, in order for lecturers to achieve this, teaching and industry experience must be given promotional weighting in order for lecturers to be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to pursue these two elements at full capacity and this must start with HODs and business faculty deans installing a culture of teaching excellence and reward for industry experience (De Villiers, 2010; Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015). Despite business school funding coming primarily from the PBRF, which is correlated research output, one could argue that this has led to a cultural problem that results in academics placing little emphasis on teaching excellence and, instead, in the context of intense academic workloads, only the research output. One cannot blame an academic for choosing this path due a significantly higher extrinsic reward system linked primarily to research output compared to the little intrinsic motivation academics have for teaching, in addition to a culture that arguably does not foster teaching excellence as a philosophy and organisational culture. The former was revealed in the findings with academics noting that business schools have a few basic workshops in terms of teaching academics how to teach their respective topics. The researcher argues this lack of effort and priority on teaching competence from the university business faculty fuels the lack of teaching priority culture that has filled our business schools. Similar patterns have been observed in US business schools (Khurana, 2007). As mentioned previously, the culture of a business school is significant in influencing the flexibility, development and motivation of its academics, that is, the business educators of New Zealand university business schools

One notable New Zealand University empowers their staff to act as consultants, allowing the academics to use full university facilities, with a portion of the remuneration going to the university. In essence, the university is an office and the academic is paying rent. Therefore, policies like this seek to encourage marketing and business academics to pursue the applied part of their profession, which is arguably a key part of progressing both academia and the marketing profession respectively as per the original vocational

model of business schools from the early 1950s (Holstein, 2005; Khurana, 2007; Mintzberg, 2004; Bennis & O’Toole, 2005). Bennis and O’Toole (2005) argue that the most engaging and productive business classroom experiences revolve around the educator having a broad perspective and skillset to actively engage students with case studies that require multi-disciplinary solutions. For marketing educators seeking to reform their curricula, the works of Wymbs (2011) and Harrigan and Hulbert (2011) are suggested for digital marketing curricula, which would be utilised, with the findings, in providing a list of curricular reform.

For soft skills reform, we recommend the works of De Villiers (2010) and for in-class and pedagogical reform guides and classroom delivery best practices, the works of Madhavaram and Laverie (2010) and Lincoln (2008a) are an effective and useful guide. These three in-depth sources on pedagogical reform for marketing and business curricula, along with our findings, will be synthesised together and built on, and discussed in the curricula reform section which is seen as both as an implication of the findings and contribution of the thesis.

7.2.10 Publish or perish

One of the most revealing insights from the interviews was the confirmation of the “publish or perish” phenomenon that dominates business academia (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015). Marketing educators are, in an indirect sense, forced to focus on research publications, which, in turn, compromises their focus on teaching and industry experience with the latter two elements not being rewarded in terms of career progression (Dobele & Rundle-Thiele, 2015). Initially, interview insights into the PBRF system made it seem feasible with one lecturer noting:

“We have a 40 teaching 40 research and actually theoretically they’re meant to be worth the same.”

However, further academic interview insights showed that it is indeed research output that stimulates career progression for academics, aligning with previous studies on progression factors in business academia (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Khurana, 2007; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). Business, originally an applied profession, has been designed and taught at university using a research-oriented model, ignoring the necessary areas for the development of competent business professionals such as a harmonious mix of emotional intelligence, technical skills, and conceptual knowledge (De Villiers, 2010; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Wymbbs, 2011). In addition to industry experience not being recognised or encouraged under the PBRF, the interviews also revealed that marketing academics who hold considerable expertise and experience in their specific areas are not encouraged or supported to maintain and grow industry experience as it takes time away from research activities. This research has shed light into this topic with confirming that “publish or perish” indeed exists in New Zealand business schools. Reforming this area, as mentioned previously, can only be done as a joint effort between academics, HODs and business school deans, both inside universities and between universities with a key stakeholder being the government due to the majority of business school funding coming from this source.

7.2.11 SMEs

An interesting insight from the findings is that SMEs and LEs are not as different as the researcher had envisioned prior to the undertaking of this research. This new insight and perspective came from examining the job descriptions, and discussing it with the academic lecturers interviewed, in addition to further reconciliation of the findings. Indeed, it is mainly the application of marketing and business principles that differs and not the actual theory. For example, branding in terms of developing logo design, brand positioning, website design and product/service positioning is fundamentally the same for SMEs and LEs. However, with budgets, size, structure, life cycle, tasks per employee, founder involvement and business culture being significantly different between SMEs

and LEs, then naturally the business and branding (and marketing) theory and principles will be understood, applied and manifested differently between the two business types.

SMEs, being more agile, flexible, and founder-involved, can arguably be perceived as offering greater learning opportunities due to the multitasking nature of SME business and marketing roles, consequently rendering the need for the SME marketer to undertake more tasks – both in depth and variety – compared to the specialist roles of large businesses. However, interview insights from an industry-experienced marketing lecturer suggested reasons for students to enter corporate marketing positions prior to SME marketing roles. These included more resources for training and development and, as a result, more opportunity for growth, larger networks, and systemised processes all ready for the graduate to make use of. In contrast, SMEs require a higher level of all four KSC quadrants – particularly soft and communication skills - to develop a role that is predominantly self-directed (Cheng, Lourenço, & Resnick, 2016; Hill, 2001; Martin & Chapman, 2006; Resnick, Cheng, Brindley, & Foster, 2011). This is because SME marketers must have the necessary skills to do multiple tasks (Cheng, Brindley, & Foster, 2011) and if they are lagging, for example, in Facebook advertising, Google Adwords, or email marketing, then they would have to up-skill themselves accordingly as they are working in the SME and most likely outside of work hours. This requires considerable self-management, initiative, self-directed learning and a strong willingness to learn – all soft skills required for successful SME marketing (Abraham, 2006; De Villiers, 2010; Kelley & Bridges, 2005; Schulz, 2008; Shuayto, 2013). Interestingly, large businesses would also require these soft skills but would provide the opportunity for students to learn.

This perspective – favouring large businesses over SMEs – has been an interesting insight from the interviews. The limitations of SMEs are arguably more problematic for current cohorts of marketing graduates who do not have the relevant SME marketing KSC for SMEs that lack resources to train and develop their new marketing graduates. That is, current graduates are not being prepared for the SME sector and therefore SME marketing would be a difficult endeavour to undertake due to the superficiality of how

the four quadrants of KSC are covered in the existing New Zealand university marketing curricula. Contrast this to large businesses, which have the structure, staff, finance and systems ready to train and upskill new graduates in multiple areas of marketing and business departments and in turn to fill up the four KSC areas required for competent marketing and business professionals (Chitty, 2012; Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbs, 2011). This suggests it might be beneficial for graduates to take a large business marketing job for a set period and once the four sets of skills are developed to a proficient level, they can either join an existing SME or start their own company accordingly.

What is interesting to note is that large businesses are also receiving graduates who lack the appropriately developed KSC in soft, communication and industry skills but, due to the structure in place, are able to train their graduates relatively to fill up the four KSC quadrants to competent levels of proficiency. Furthermore, marketing curricula favouring large business-oriented content further enhances large businesses' success in up-skilling marketing graduates to suit their requirements (Martin & Chapman, 2006). Adding SME-oriented content, case studies and connecting the marketing curricula to the startup and entrepreneurship facilities in each business school would be seen as feasible strategy that integrates SME and SME marketing content into the existing large business dominant curricula. In addition to SME-based content, the academics should seek to provide textbooks and in-depth extra reading material that is New Zealand SME- and startup-based. The interviews and content analysis, along with the researcher's own experience going through the programme, has shown that textbooks are overwhelmingly large business-based. Therefore, this research can be used a motivation for publishing and for textbook companies to include more New Zealand SME and SME marketing-based textbooks which increase the likelihood of achieving the vision of more startup and SME oriented modules to become a part of the core curricula in New Zealand marketing curricula.

7.2.12 Experience

Industry job analysis revealed a strong demand for past experience in the form of internships and work placements across traditional marketing, marketing communications, and digital marketing experience. However, mandatory internships and work placements were only found in AUT University's business programme with the remainder of the six universities offering optional (but limited) internships via papers, careers centre applications, and business school clubs such as a management consulting club, social enterprise club and various other economics- and finance-oriented clubs which in the majority of cases, were for a maximum five weeks and, often, unpaid.

However, interviews revealed a very small number of internships available for students in terms of SMEs and startups. However, business school career newsletters offered generous numbers of large business internships, further reinforcing the pattern of large business-oriented offerings at business schools and, in turn, less opportunity for marketing students to develop SME marketing KSC. A notable mention from the findings was the universities' firm stance against offering unpaid internships under the business school curricula and thus the affiliated clubs did not represent the business school . One senior lecturer noted that industry wanted free marketing work done for them and this was identified as a primary barrier to integrating internships into the curricula. However, the considerable amount of literature pointing towards the effectiveness of internships in student development as marketing professionals, in addition to enhancing employability for entry-level marketing positions, poses a concern for the lack of thorough integration of internship programmes in New Zealand marketing degree programmes. It is suggested marketing departments develop closer relationships with industry and collaboratively offer internship opportunities for marketing students to develop their KSC each year as opposed to a final semester internship, which, as De Villiers (2010) points out, produces surface learning as opposed to the deep learning that long-term approaches produce. Therefore, in terms of incorporating internships, we can argue that placing internships at more frequent intervals throughout the marketing degree with mentoring and accountability, in addition to reflection modules, in each internship would produce more successful application of students' KSC learned throughout the degree. This is as opposed to the classical "last semester internship" which has yielded

limited results thus far for students' development of competent KSC levels, as noted by one lecturer from their university internship placement programme. Mandatory internships, although not a novel or new idea, are not present in the core curricula, except in AUT University as mentioned previously, and thus the internship inclusion in the reform section (7.2.25) will emphasise the CSFs of internships, in addition to other types of applied learning that can be implemented to produce similar outcomes such as club projects, more effective assessment group projects and industry interaction assignments (De Villiers, 2010).

7.2.13 Job themes

The grouping of the three most common jobs in the content analysis itself provided interesting insight into the nature of the entry-level jobs for marketing and business students seeking marketing roles. The writer position entailed demand for written communication, copywriting, content marketing, and social media marketing for digital KSC. Unsurprisingly, creativity and teamwork were cited as well as WordPress and advanced Microsoft Office. One can notice the alignment of the writing orientation of these KSC. The current marketing curricula with their level of implementation would have difficulty in creating an effective copywriter or content marketer due to the lack of these modules in the marketing curricula examined.

Digital positions demonstrated a similar pattern with the digital KSC most in demand not being taught in curricula apart from Waikato University, which offered a full digital marketing paper – both in theory and practice. The University of Auckland had included brief social media marketing modules in the MKTG 306 promotions paper while AUT University had an integrated social media project across its three papers – 601, 602 and 603. The latter was a full-semester theory-dominant project while the former had a few modules with the paper focusing on promotional theory as a whole and not digital marketing as KSC element itself. Communication as a KSC area is strongly required in the marketing assistant role as per the findings and past studies (Gray et al, 2007; Schlee

& Harich, 2010) but the lack of communication courses (except at Massey University) is a worrying finding indicating that students are not equipped for this entry level marketing role. With these points being noted, one can argue that the digital position would be difficult to prepare for from the current New Zealand marketing curricula but, also, there would still be hope for the writing and marketing assistant role. The former would be remedied with more effective optimisation of existing course work due to written communication being the dominant form of assessments and thus, the modifying of these assessments (see 7.2.25) to more effectively produce the learning outcomes would seek to produce graduates ready for the writer positions. The latter marketing assistant position is more of a people-oriented, relationship-based and communication-based role – which not only encompasses written but a significant amount of oral and verbal communication. Therefore, more effective group projects and real life projects would seek to develop students' KSC towards the marketing assistant role accordingly (De Villiers, 2010; Wymbbs, 2011).

In summary, we can argue that current New Zealand marketing curricula do not sufficiently prepare students for digital- and writing-oriented marketing roles which require more specific and niche communication and technical skills. The category of positions observed (writer, marketing assistant and digital) each entailed similar yet also different KSC for each of the four KSC sets. However, current marketing graduates would struggle in digital and writing jobs due to the lack of writing- and digital-oriented KSC within the curricula such as digital marketing, social media marketing, blogging, and digital analytics. Furthermore, SME marketing roles which are arguably a blend of all three would be even more difficult for marketing graduates to work in and progress due to the relatively superficial treatment of the KSC graduates receive in each of the four quadrants identified in the marketing curricula. The researcher would like to point out here, again, that this lack of KSC development is not only the responsibility of the academic (within the business school context) but also the student themselves. This is a core theme of responsibility the researcher is basing for the thesis and hence, the element of dual responsibility in designing a curricula for ideal student outcomes is the responsibility of both stakeholders – students and academics.

7.2.14 Teaching methods

The interview findings, coupled with analysis of the assessment data, revealed some interesting patterns about the New Zealand marketing curricula. The dominance of standardised assessments stems is strongly related to the standardised teaching methods and traditional teaching culture found in the business schools in New Zealand Universities. One can argue that the culture of a organisation is a significant factor in determining how the entity operates and teaching within the New Zealand marketing departments under the business school culture can be examined in this perspective accordingly. Academics interviewed revealed that there was little motivation to enhance one's pedagogy as there is little to no weighting on tenure and promotion for such developments. For example, one university lecturer noted their marketing department requires a 70% score on course review sheets (done by students) at the end of the semester, with this being the only method of teaching feedback. One can argue, in a constructive sense, that this is not an effective pedagogical method of measurement, particularly in the context of the University's education department, which has researchers and experts on this very area. So the question is posed – why are marketing lecturers not utilising the most effective teaching and feedback methods? Again, this comes down to a lack of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. As mentioned by a senior lecture in marketing, one course change resulted in a drop in student positive feedback as the course was now relatively more difficult compared to the last cohort teaching style. This indicates to us that this is a two-way problem. First, the academic lacks motivation and incentives to devise and implement effective and creative teaching methods. Second, students, coming from a “meal ticket” standardised school teaching system, are also not adapted to creative learning methods which stretch their learning capacity and development of KSC. Therefore, in order for teaching methods to be innovative, effective and have a transformative effect on students, business schools should, as part of the staff review, course review and agendas for every semester, include teaching excellence as a core focus to educate and continuously develop their academics to ensure their teaching

methods are continuously developing.

A key finding that needs to be emphasised is the lack of effective course review or feedback mechanisms in place for the marketing educators and courses. Indeed, one “course feedback” paper at the end, often a 1-10 scale set of questions, filled out by students, is arguably a shallow method and lacks real life reflection, accountability, frequency and in-depth feedback that would translate into useful insights for the marketing educator, HODs and, more importantly, as a result, translate to improved courses for future semesters.

Ultimately, this would result in an optimal teaching experience for students in addition to fulfilling a key role – that of an educator.

Therefore, marketing educators should seek to have a more holistic range of KSC integrated into every marketing course to ensure students are being provided with the most thorough educational experience to ensure smooth transition into entry level marketing positions but, more importantly, the tools and skills to progress to mid-level and senior positions (Brennan, 2013; Clarke et al., 2006; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Parker, 2014; Walker et al., 2009). Teaching practice can be broken down as per marketing skills into two distinct skills: soft skills and hard knowledge, with the former including communication skills within its domain and the latter including industry skills pertaining to technical skills. In the marketing educator’s context, soft skills refer to the classroom performance entailing (but not limited to) communication, empathy, reliability to students, and the ability to inspire and motivate (Lincoln, 2008a). Hard KSC for marketing and business academics (educators) refers to pedagogical expertise and the five elements from the findings of Madhavaram and Laverie (2010). These five elements, when applied to business and more specifically marketing education, comprise of the following : business(and marketing) content knowledge, knowledge of business pedagogical methods, course management methods and capabilities, classroom management and finally, student management capabilities. This is summarized in Table 30 below.

Table 30: Marketing Pedagogical Elements

| Area | Stakeholder / Course Element | Sample question |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Marketing content | Textbooks Course coordinators | What are the acceptable sources – Which textbooks? Journals? Teaching experience? The Internet? |
| Marketing student | First year Second year Third year Postgraduate | Beliefs about students preferred learning styles. Traditional? Direct or indirect ? Interactive learning? Experiential learning? Flipped Classroom? |
| Marketing Educator | Tutors, Professional Teaching Fellows, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Associate professors, Professors, | Educators KSC and teaching standards. What are the educators strengths and weaknesses? Teaching centred? Industry experienced? Creative? |
| Marketing Class | Classroom Climate. Strongly related to Classroom element (below) | What style of teaching delivers the best learning experience? Competitive? Professional? Casual? Loose-tight? |
| Marketing Classroom | Lecture theatre Tutorial Room Seminar rooms Field trips | Impact of classroom design on student performance. Open learning style? Traditional classroom? Impact on student motivation and performance? |

The intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of academics in terms of teaching levels and performance is an area that the researcher would like to emphasise. HODs and senior staff should tap into the intrinsically rewarding aspect of teaching and seek to motivate their marketing and business educators to deliver more robust, innovative and enjoyable marketing curricula for students.

Irrespective of the method chosen by the marketing educator, the soft skills remain a key success factor for the effective teaching of marketing education. Millennial students require engaging, practical and stimulating learning methods and do not respond positively to the classical baby boomer generation style of teaching and standardised assessments (Tucker, 2006; Smart et al., 1999; Wilhelm, Logan, Smith, & Szul, 2001). Ardley and Taylor (2010) argue that real world projects are suited to the millennial student demographic and achieve critical engagement in addition to enhancing employability. Ironically, marketing degree course projects were found to be dominated by traditional marketing and business plans which are utopian and idealistic in nature in the layout and implementation. Furthermore, the chances that an entry-level marketing role would require the creation of an SME and startup business plan would be relatively slim. Marketing educators are advised to teach students the skill of learning, that is, effective learning and studying strategies, and only then can methods such as group projects, experiential learning, presentations and other pedagogical methods be maximised by students. Otherwise, students without this critical understanding of learning will have a rather shallow and superficial understanding from their marketing educational experience (De Villiers, 2010). Madhavaram and Laverie (2010) argue it is of major concern that doctoral (PhD) graduates who go on to become lecturers all the way to professors receive no special training in business and marketing-oriented pedagogy or teaching and are likely to have minimal to no industry experience in business or marketing (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Daniel, 2009; Holstein, 2005). Bennis and O'Toole (2005) go further to argue that business professors are the only academics that can teach in this field without ever setting foot into a business except as the customer. This

significantly affects the teaching method chosen as academics are specialised in theoretical journal publications and this focus will reflect in their chosen teaching methods, thereby passing on rigorous theoretical business content to students who will go on to seek work in a marketing industry that requires graduates with not only theory but KSC related to soft, communication and technical areas (Gray et al., 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Martin & Chapman, 2006; Wymbs, 2006).

Students, the central stakeholder of marketing degree programmes, arguably receive the final product of this academic system in that marketing academics, normally baby boomers, with minimal experience in marketing and absence of business pedagogy knowledge and expertise, are charged with teaching millennial students. Holstein (2005) and Mintzberg (2004) add that students are likely to complain that the instructors' teachings are arguably too theoretical and lack real life experience. Furthermore, the professors' scholarly research, holding value in its own right, is unlikely to be given recognition by the business community and practitioners accordingly. However, despite this demonstrated loop, the marketing academic will comfortably progress up the ranks in the business school under the existing research-oriented PBRF tenure and promotion system. In essence, marketing educators are primarily marketing academics in role, financial pay, and position in the marketing department and one must take this into consideration. The researcher would like to point out here that interviews revealed that knowledge-transfer mechanisms are being built into a few New Zealand university business schools whereby existing academic research is being "translated" into practical knowledge for marketing and business practitioners alike. This would seek to remedy the academic-practitioner gap found both in this study and previous studies (Baker et al., 2003; Daniel, 2009; Dobeles & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Dostaler & Tomberlin, 2013; Reibstein, Day, & Wind, 2009; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). However, until this is built into the promotional and tenure system, it will hold minimal effect in terms of motivating marketing academics to produce industry-relevant scholarly knowledge (Dobeles & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Dostaler & Tomberlin, 2013; Reibstein, Day, & Wind, 2009; Seggie & Griffith, 2009).

Drawing on the extensive work of Dostelir and Tomberlin (2013) along with integration of the research's findings, a collaborative approach to academia-practitioner partnerships is hypothesised.

A team of multiple professionals consisting of marketing consultants and marketing academics put together in an industry-university partnership manner could work towards ways to progress the marketing field, in turn creating new, relevant, practical knowledge. The researcher argues that if the same level of rigorous scientific analysis and academic prowess is delegated towards real life, relevant research, and application of knowledge, then the industry will benefit and academics will benefit (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005). Along the same lines, a similar protocol can be done for the teaching aspect of academic roles. That is, a team of marketing consultants and professors with a business pedagogy, as well as andragogy experts can work towards designing the optimal marketing education experience with the goal of producing graduates with all four areas of KSC (Brennan, 2013). Note that this has a carry-on effect as industry-experienced academics would seek to teach more balanced, relevant curricula, in turn producing more competent marketing professionals who in turn would partner with universities. This loop would arguably be of benefit to all stakeholders. Indeed for this hypothetical situation to occur there must be buy-in from the business school senior staff and dean and this means an arguably radical transformation of the tenure and promotion system in business schools (De Villiers, 2010). Marketing academics should be rewarded for industry consulting and teaching excellence and therefore it is suggested that the PBRF promotional system be inclusive of these two critical elements in promotion and tenure (De Villiers, 2010; Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Dostaler & Tomberlin, 2013; Matthews et al., 2014; Seggie & Griffith, 2009).

7.2.15 Service and perspective

Education as a service differs from other services in that the customers (students) are both consumers and creators of the service (Brown et al., 1994; Emiliani, 2004; Rushton &

Carson, 1985; Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). That is, marketing knowledge is co-created in the current tertiary education system. Educating and training marketing academics in relation to their responsibility and power to influence students' careers and lives would arguably motivate academics to pursue higher levels of teaching excellence and derive more meaningful intrinsic rewards from their job (De Villiers, 2010). That is, designing the optimal marketing degree for the stakeholders involved (academics and students) to teach it across specific touch points (classrooms, seminars, laboratories, co-curricular events) with the course work reflecting all four areas is a way of delivering maximum value to the central stakeholder – the student (Brennan, 2013; Carlborg et al., 2013; Emiliani, 2004; Lincoln, 2004; Madhavaram & Laverie, 2010; Matulich, Papp, & Haytko, 2008).

Educating marketing academics in their role as marketing educators, influencers and motivators and providing in-depth perspective on this role arguably would seek to intrinsically motivate marketing educators to further optimise their curricular offerings around the four KSC identified and, in turn, deliver a more valuable service experience to students (Carlborg, Kindström, & Kowalkowski, 2013; Emiliani, 2004). Marketing academics under their HODs and business schools must view business degrees as a transformative experience for students and seek to design the curricula in this manner (Brown et al., 1994; Emiliani, 2004; Fisk et al., 1993; Rushton & Carson, 1985; Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). Therefore, achieving the graduate profile with the goal of transforming students into future leaders, innovators and scholars, as per the majority of graduate profile goals of New Zealand universities, comes down to the course content and the academics charged with this teaching duty. This will no doubt be met with resistance as interview insights along with past studies have shown that there is little motivation to radically change towards innovative teaching methods in a PBRF system that primarily rewards research output (Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Dostaler & Tomberlin, 2013; Khurana, 2007; Seggie & Griffith, 2009; R. Williams & Van Dyke, 2007). However, one can argue that a university business school that is research-centred yet advocates to prepare students for the future is reflecting a somewhat questionable and contradictory approach, as the vision on paper does not reflect the course offerings that

students receive (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Daniel, 2009; David et al., 2011; Dostaler & Tomberlin, 2013; Holstein, 2005; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002). In order for business schools to reflect this, they need to reflect this in their curricula. In addition to the course curricular reforms (section 7.2.25), the researcher argues that the educational service perspective should be imparted into the business school culture (and thereby, academics) and in turn, it would seek to foster intrinsic motivation for academics to cherish and emphasise their teaching skills to higher levels.

7.2.16 Research

Mintzberg (2004), along with Bennis and O'Toole (2005), found rigorous business research to be of questionable relevance to practitioners and society in a time in which digital technology is rapidly evolving alongside rapidly changing consumer needs and demands. Transforming research into actionable information for practitioner application is seen as an area that is able to distract academics from their focus on publishing in top tier journal publications in order to get promoted (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Dobele & Rundle-Theile, 2015; Hansotia, 2003; Mintzberg & Lampel, 2001; Seggie & Griffith, 2009). Research relevancy is a major problem identified from the interviews because one must question the state of marketing and business research. Is it relevant for marketing and business industry or is it purely for other academics to read, cite and, in turn, use as a tool for promotion? Indeed, Mintzberg (2004) and Bennis and O'Toole (2005) argue the latter. Therefore it is argued that rigorous scientific research overshadows research relevancy (Mintzberg, 2004). Business is originally, prior to scientific transformation (Khurana, 2007), a profession of practice in terms of application. Marketing academics must engage in relevant, societal impactful research that also reflects in the teaching of ethics and socially responsible business courses in marketing curricula. Therefore, marketing academics should engage in relevant impactful research that is related to industry and, specifically, for their local communities and economies (Birkinshaw, Lecuona, & Barwise, 2016; Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008; Dostaler & Tomberlin, 2013; Varadarajan, 2003). SMEs make up the majority of businesses in New Zealand and therefore business academics must seek to engage in research that benefits local

businesses and, in turn, SMEs (Massey et al., 2004; The Ministry of Economic Development (MED), 2011). Ironically, it was the industry-experienced academics in the interviews that argued for the relevancy of research while the pure academic lecturers cited rigorous academic prowess as their ideal focus.

The difference in perspective, attitude and perceived responsibility between the pure academics and industry-experienced academics was very evident in the interviews. Having experience in one's field will no doubt lead to better teaching due to more experience and insight in the industry students will eventually end up in. The industry-experienced lecturers interviewed had argued for a case of more real life skills in their curricula but are continuously met with resistance from various stakeholders in the academic system, in addition to their own personal resistance to the reform idea due to the time (and money) it takes away from the core focus of the business school – that being research output. It is interesting to note that despite the ample anecdotal evidence of lecturers having very stale methods of teaching, which business schools are aware of, it does not pose a problem or concern for them. This arguably reflects in their lack of consideration for the students as the primary stakeholder and driver of the university system. One senior staff member argued that universities are places of scholarly research and not teaching but this is a very “head in the sand” philosophy that has appeared in many business schools. To emphasise this point, one lecturer goes on to note that New Zealand universities know instinctively that ,without the students, the university departments would not exist, so therefore, one can ask, why are they (the students) being given little focus in the sense of not receiving the very best educational experience? One can point to the PBRF system as the lead cause as the interviewed lecturers noted but the HODS, along with the deans, hold the key to changing this culture but are, arguably, based from literature and the findings, not doing so as it is not important to them because, in the end, it is primarily research they are focused on with everything and everyone else taking a backseat in importance. It all starts with culture and this is a major barrier as a lecturer from University “WR” noted. Culture is all about people and changing people poses more challenges than a system, as with people there is conflict, disagreement and emotion in addition to personal involvements at every level. Therefore, it is, as mentioned

in previous sections, a cultural issue at the heart of this optimal teaching and research dominant dilemma the research is delving into.

Business is centred on providing real products and services, marketing it to the target market and developing a long-term brand which seeks to create sustainable profits. In order to achieve this result, marketing academics should work closely with consultants and practitioners to stay up to date with industry, which seeks to positively affect the marketing educators' pedagogical approach, consequently leading to more relevant KSC taught to marketing students (Brennan, 2013).

7.2.17 Implications

The findings of this research have notable implications for three stakeholders: university business schools (specifically marketing departments), marketing students, and businesses (marketing industry).

First, the barriers to marketing academia reform will be examined briefly, followed by recommendations to implement suitable strategies to provide more robust curricula to marketing students, followed by limitations and suggestions for future research.

7.2.18 Barriers to business school reform

One can argue that in order to successfully change and reform a system, one must fully examine the barriers in place and work within existing resources to deliver optimal reform given these barriers. Due to the scope of this study, the barriers to marketing and business education reform are examined in a brief manner and cannot be explained in full detail. The following table was constructed based on past literature and the interview findings of this research to summarise the barriers to marketing course reform under a business school. Note that every university has its own set of cultural practices yet the interviews revealed a commonality amongst the universities in terms of curricular reform

barriers. It is noteworthy to mention that universities are businesses and marketing departments are like industry departments, and, like the latter, should seek to continually develop their skillsets and productivity output for their workers (academics) to ensure the customers (students) receive the best service who will then be received by industry professionals.

Table 29: Barriers to Marketing Course Reform

| Barrier | Description |
|---|---|
| Culture | Innovative university cultures are not extended to the teaching area since tenure and promotion are affected by research output. Radical culture revision in incremental doses is suggested. Cultural changes have strong resistance, particularly from baby boomer generation academics. |
| Department resources | Academic workloads already being heavy. High resistance to change – particularly with research time decreasing. |
| Resistance | Natural tendency for resistance to change. More prevalent in baby boomers that are not as digitally literate as digital native millennials and arguably less adaptable to change due to coming from a specialist, uniform oriented era compared to millennials. |
| Training and development | Up-skilling staff in andragogy and technical proficiency costs time and money. |
| Complexity | Course reform presents both incremental and radical disruptions to existing marketing departments – both in perception and actual implementation. |
| Politics (PBRF) | Research-centred system that dominates academic career life. Academics are paid to research and see teaching as secondary in role and importance. |
| Tenure and promotion | Promotion for marketing academics is primarily based on research output with emphasis on top tier journals. Teaching focus is not important for career progression (Dobele & Rundle-Thiele, 2015; Rundle-Thiele, 2015; Bridge, 2015). |
| Generation gap | Baby boomers and millennial students’ generation gap. |
| Quick fixes | Short-term short courses provide superficial results and not deep learning (Villiers 2010). These are seen as obstacles for long-term progress. |
| Perception of disruption and complexity | Any change is seen as complex and disruptive even if actual is less than perceived. Relates back to resistance to change which is related to fear and out of comfort zone perceptions |
| Cost of technology | Technological costs for digital marketing modules (perceived and actual). |
| Existing courses | Academics argue that students can up-skill by using online courses – both free and paid. Therefore, they believe the students have everything they need. But the educating of students to become self-directed learners and utilise resources is key to making this strategy work. |

Table 29 provides an overview of barriers to course reform within the particular context of marketing academia. These were approached by examining past studies as a base but constructed and refined utilising our interview findings as they relate directly to New Zealand business schools. The key barriers to course reform can be narrowed down to the PBRF system, business school culture, and standard barriers to every system's change process. These barriers will be examined in context of the gap found, implications for stakeholders and the reform methods. Detailed reform strategies are given in section 7.2.25 in addition to framework contributions in section 7.5.

7.2.19 Political barriers

The academic research core of every New Zealand business school, stemming from the PBRF system, is at the heart of the business school system. In turn, its research output-focus culture affects not only academics but also staff and students. The impact that the promotional weighting of research outputs has on a marketing academic's career has to change in order to change the culture of the business school. Interviews revealed this to be the strongest barrier to changing, in essence, any elemental role in the academic's given job role due to strong extrinsic (monetary) relation to research output. As one prominent senior lecturer noted, HODs always look to their academics (lecturers) for research output to increase the grants they receive from the government PBRF. The lecturer noted further that some research publications would result in grants in the six and seven figure mark for the marketing department (and, in turn, business school). This would translate into a permanent increase for the academic's salary. However, this increase in salary is not found in teaching excellence awards.

Indeed, despite the innovative culture that most business schools champion and market themselves under, the underlying truth is that they are all under the PBRF system that places top tier journal research as the priority and every other matter of secondary importance (Adler & Harzing, 2009). This is a major concern as pointed out by interviewed academics and multiple authors (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Holstein, 2005; Mintzberg, 2004; Bennis & O'Toole, 2005) as marketing academics are increasingly

being hired for their research record with little to no experience in real world business and marketing roles. This theory-based research system is persistent throughout every university in New Zealand and has a flow-on effect on the curricula which subsequently results in students' content being highly skewed towards academic theory with minor focus on communication and soft skills as well as digital skills. This culture has to change and until it does, every other factor to be discussed shortly will arguably be of limited success as long as this major political barrier exists. As numerous marketing and business academics have covered, change starts with the business culture and the business school as a business entity needs to embrace cultural change to spark a domino effect of positive and constructive change towards progressive business education reform.

7.2.20 Resource scarcity

As Dobele and Rundle-Thiele (2015) identify, consistent with the researcher's interview findings, academics have demanding workloads with primary roles of teaching, research and service to the university. Furthermore, academics engage with industry, adopt new technologies, travel for research conferences, and consult as a side job. Balancing all of these is arguably a difficult task given that career progression is primarily based on research output (Mintzberg, 2004). Marketing academics, as noted by all the academics interviewed, are focused on research, which brings in research grants and funding to the department's research function. Redesign and development of the curricula will not only be costly but, as the interviewed academics worryingly emphasised, will also distract them from the core area of research which again relates back to the tenure and promotion system which acts as a powerful extrinsic motivator (De Villers, 2010). The disconnect between academics and industry, in addition to the disconnect between the research and teaching roles, is seen as a barrier for curricular reform (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; De Villers, 2010). Therefore, demanding more from academics in the context of this time-scarce role will be met with resistance until the promotional weighting of teaching and industry experience is increased to substantial levels that affect both the academic's intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in their role as an academic. Therefore, to motivate academics accordingly, the university must reward excellent teaching and industry experience appropriately.

7.2.21 Promotion and tenure

As previously elaborated in the politics implication section (2.11), the culture of business academia is distilled down from the government-set PBRF system. Promotion and tenure are currently heavily related to research output. Teaching excellence needs to have stronger influence on career progression in order to motivate marketing educators to pursue continuous improvement in teaching. Industry experience should be rewarded and marketing academics should be encouraged to remain actively engaged with industry best practices. By doing so, marketing students and business students overall receive a more thorough marketing education experience, come out with more robust KSC in terms of soft, communication, theory and digital KSC, and become more work-ready for the marketing industry. The student is the customer of the marketing academic's (educator's) teaching service and, therefore, to make a change in the KSC for graduates, one must start with the educators, as they are the key to sparking positive, progressive change. The introduction of a Professional Teaching Fellow (PTF) roles at selected New Zealand universities, in addition to lecturer roles with no research responsibilities, has resulted in a completely teaching-based position which, as one of the lecturers interviewed indicated, is a way for Universities to acquire pure teaching staff without giving them academic benefits such as sabbaticals and promotions based on publications. Therefore, this is viewed as a polar opposite solution to the ideal proposed solution, which is a balance of all three elements of the academic role (teaching, research and service). Every lecturer interviewed emphasised the difficulty of balancing the research element, the key tenure and promotional factor, with teaching and service in addition to administrative tasks. Therefore, to change the culture, one argues that a shift in tenure and promotional factors is required. However, this is a highly difficult feat to accomplish due to the research tenure factor being a government initiative with the majority of University funding coming as research grants.

7.2.22 Human resistance

Humans are naturally inclined to resist change and, the tighter a system is, the more this effect shows. Marketing academics are primarily researchers by role and pay. Therefore, the topic of innovative teaching and industry experience will naturally be met with resistance from a marketing department operating within a research PBRF-oriented business school. As De Villiers (2010) notes, buy-in must be given from the HODs and senior staff within the marketing department and business school to ensure minimal resistance is produced. Collaboration between marketing academics, HODs and the business school faculty would seek to mitigate this friction and incrementally instil changes. Human resistance is related to the manner of system change that happens and, therefore, having an assigned leader to educate the marketing academics on the benefits of the planned transformation would mitigate resistance as covered in the sections below. Interviews indicated strong resistance from marketing and business academics alike for changing course structure and content due to the severe lack of incentives and motivations to do so. One can empathise with this, as an already intense workload and thus, time-scarce job has arguably questionable room for improvement due to an already packed system.

7.2.23 Short-term solutions

De Villiers (2010) pointed out that short-term fixes do not work for soft skill development or the integration of soft skills with technical and theoretical knowledge. Long-term approaches must be taken, starting from the first semester of marketing education to ensure that, instead of superficial learning, deep, meaningful learning is derived from the programme. However, the researcher argues that short workshops, albeit perceived to be a short-term solution, can be introduced into the curricula via revision sessions in addition to offering multiple workshops throughout the semester to ensure that long-term, deep learning is achieved rather than superficial surface learning (De Villiers, 2010; Lincoln, 2008a). This was supported by the academic interviews conducted where the one lecturer notably mentioned that superficial approaches do not work, and rather, it is more frequently-dosed initiatives such as workshops and extra curricular activities

(with feedback and accountability built in) that work to build soft skills over a period of a semester and subsequently, the degree period which, in New Zealand, is a three year business degree. However, the short terms solution has some merit in that it introduces students to this element of up-skilling themselves of the four KSC. Therefore, even a short workshop in the semester is still seen as more effective solution than no workshop at all. The exposure of students to the importance of soft and communication skills and how these are keys to career progress and success is seen an important step towards students taking matter into their own hands. That is, a short term solution offered by the Universities, such as workshops and a guest lecturer, can translate into students transforming it into a long-term, self-driven initiative.

7.2.24 Skill development

Changing the curricula to include more soft, communication and technical KSC would require marketing educators to have a more advanced and different set of teaching skills. Therefore, this requires training and development of marketing staff, which is perceived to be costly, time consuming, and will also be met with resistance as mentioned previously. Therefore, industry-experienced staff along with marketing educators with teaching awards and track records should be selected for piloting these training programmes with the aim of transforming the marketing curricula to reflect the modern marketing industry requirements with digital, soft, communication and theory KSC (Gray et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbs, 2011). Knowing and anticipating the barriers to curricular reform, there is still no absolute assurance that the changes will succeed. However, as with every system and cultural change, the chances of success are much higher if the change is presented in a constructive way. The benefits of the system change communicated to the stakeholders would ideally extend to a collective agreement in addition to faculty support that is both ongoing and progressive. Multiple lecturers from those interviewed noted that if the changes presented had better content and a pedagogical basis for change, then they would be received in a more positive light from deans, HODS and academic staff, that is, the stakeholders who approve the changes.

7.2.25 Curricula reform context

The main focus of this thesis was to examine what New Zealand SMEs and business require from new marketing employees and marketing curricula in New Zealand universities and to suggest strategies to mitigate any gap. In essence, the thesis aimed to suggest strategies for university marketing curricula reform in the context of existing barriers and political systems within the New Zealand tertiary education system. The findings show a lack of thoroughly integrated soft skill and communication modules in the marketing curricula along with a lack of SME marketing content and technical KSC. However, the political barriers of the academic PBRF system, and the intense academic workloads marketing educators operate under must be taken into consideration in all reform suggestions given. Strategies to mitigate these gaps in the context of the barriers identified will be briefly discussed. Table 30 offers a summary of these reforms followed by explanations of each method of reform with its feasibility and suggestions from the researcher in context of the findings, literature and researcher's own view based on their experience as an educator and business academic and student of business.

Table 31: Marketing Course Reform Methods

| Method | Description | Feasibility | Example | Challenges | Literature |
|---|--|---|---|---|------------|
| Change course | Change selected marketing course to reflect all four KSC. | LOW: Difficult due to major political and financial barriers in terms of course alterations as well as resources required to effectively change a course. | Change MKTG 201 | Buy-in from senior staff, department HODs, business school dean and vice chancellor's office. | |
| Modify existing course | Add new assignments and/ or change the exam to reflect the quarto KSC. | HIGH; Maintaining the core course structure allows minimal disruption to the degree structure. | Social media marketing assignments for promotions papers. | Lecturer evaluations at risk due to more challenging assignments. | |
| Compulsory internships /work placements | Mandatory internships for specific papers throughout the degree. | HIGH: Highly feasible. AUT University have this in place in the Co-operative department. | 3 month placements at NGOs, social enterprises, SMEs | Need separate department (money and time) to coordinate such a large-scale task. | |
| Student club work | Marketing projects for University Student Clubs | HIGH Business school has access to student clubs. Clubs require continuous semester work and have established relationships with business schools. | Social enterprise and student club internships | Not enough positions for the full marketing student cohort. Clubs are student-run initiatives so possibly different to real life. | |
| Soft skill assessments | Integrate more soft skill assessments in every course. | Medium to High | Oral & group presentations. Graded Discussions. | Motivating students to do people-oriented exercises. | |
| Communication assessments | Integrating public speaking | Medium to High | Business school events | Lack capacity to deal with | |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|
| | and networking events into the core curricula. | Existing infrastructure makes it possible. | run by Toastmasters and career centres. | large student cohorts | |
| Online course providers (Technical) | Integrate online courses as part of the curricula / encourage side projects. | High minimal disruption with maximum return. | Online course providers such as Udemy, Udacity, Coursera, HubSpot. | Quality and credibility of course. Digital accessibility for students Feedback, accountability and success measurement. Student-initiative dependent. | |
| Side projects | Students to do their own projects outside of class. | High. Minimal disruption to existing curricula. | Personal Blogs on topics like fashion, art and photography. Business topics. Deepak example | Feedback. Accountability Lack of motivation because not grade bearing. | |
| | | | | | |

Table 30 will be used as a base for the curricula reform section. The method selected is described with brief mention of its feasibility, followed by an example, possible challenges and literature references for further reading for the reform committee and academic who wish to dive deeper into the specific area they are interested in .

In reference to table 30 and the section to follow, this will be written as a mix of a discussion, implications and contribution of the research as the reforming of the curricula after identifying the gap is seen as the primary contribution and core goal of the undertaking of this research and thesis output respectively. The Quatro KSC model construct (Figure 31) will be utilised as an analysis benchmark tool when looking at

existing courses in identifying the gaps in existing curricula, followed by suggestions on how to remedy these gaps and ultimately, improve existing offerings via the strategies offered in Table 30. The main goal is to incorporate the four areas (soft skills, communication skills, theory and digital skills) in each course and, therefore, some methods overlap and include each other. In essence, the methods are interrelated and often overlap each other. However, we will examine each one separately and integrate them in the discussion as every business and marketing academic's situation is different. Prior to curricula reform suggestions, a contextual setting is given in terms of what entails a system change in terms of disruption and how this relates to change in the business school system. Following this will be the discussion of each reform method followed by the limitation and thesis contributions.

7.2.26 Reform Committee

A reform committee is suggested for marketing and business academics in their curricula reform endeavours.

A small but focused committee of industry-experienced marketing professionals, pure academics (business education and marketing specialised) and industry-experienced academics along with recent students who have done the paper(s) is suggested to comprise this committee. The reform process suggested is as follows:

- 1) Committee selects course/aspect of course to be examined and improved (based on feedback/ need to improve based on committee discussion/meetings);
- 2) Examine the content for each of the four areas (theory, soft skills, Communication and digital skills) with the reform committee in context of the latest industry requirements, best practice educational methods while balanced with the lecturers' current level of teaching and academic workload;
- 3) Once the area of development is found - for example, a marketing stage two-paper marketing plan assignment - then the committee would look at every aspect of the deliverable. Does it deliver in terms of both intended KSC development

(assessment objectives) and actual KSC development? Which area is lacking?
Which are the well-done areas? What can be improved?

- 4) Strategies to modify existing module(s) are selected from the reform methods to address the identified areas in relation to the Quatro KSC;
- 5) The reform method selected will be implemented and measured over time in increments agreed by the committee. The committee should gather feedback frequently from the academics and students - the two key stakeholders. Useful insights and data should be gathered. The researcher suggests the works of Gaffney and Krishnan (2000) for extensive examination of peer review techniques to be incorporated into team projects.

Methods to modify, improve and change courses will be discussed below. The researcher would like to acknowledge that each marketing and business academic operates within their area of competence, business school culture, PBRF requirements and their own personal pursuits. Therefore, these suggestions are not given as an absolute list. Rather, they should be taken in context of the university culture and politics they (and the reform committee) operate in, with the goal of integrating the modifications in their existing curricula while working to minimise stakeholder resistance at each step and successfully implement the changes.

7.2.27 Disruption and its effect

It is crucial to understand the level of disruption to the existing business degree system prior to undertaking any course reform. The lecturers interviewed noted that they would prefer students to up-skill themselves outside of class, independently of the academic's intervention, but, more importantly, to be more active participators in the co-creation of the knowledge they are taught during their degree experience. Indeed, one can agree that effective co-creation and participation are difficult with university classes having very large number of students, as the interview insights revealed, that regard a degree as a "meal ticket" to get a job, as students are also taught in standardised methods despite

being in the 21st century where numerous innovative education (including business educational) methods existing for academics to learn and apply.

This attitude and perspective does not motivate students to become scholarly thinkers or to develop the relevant KSC for long-term success as marketing and business professionals. Therefore, as previously discussed, with every reform method, educators must be trained in motivating students and, more importantly, students must be educated with regard to the importance of self-directed learning and personal development – both proven in past studies to be critical factors for long-term career success (Abraham, 2006; Deepa & Seth, 2013; Gewertz, 2007; Kelley & Bridges, 2005; Madhavaram & Laverie, 2010; Schulz, 2008; Williams, 2015). As with all methods of course curricula, they are merely strategies and tools and the successful reform depends on the people implementing the reform. In education, this is a complex dynamic because the student must be involved in the learning process in order for the lecturer's methods to work most effectively while the lecturer must be motivated to teach at levels of excellence despite the low promotion and tenure weighting placed on the teaching role. Therefore, the researcher argues that, regarding the skill of learning how to learn, lecturers demonstrating the importance of learning in addition to creating a more enjoyable business degree experience in the university degree is crucial for these strategies to work. This is ever more crucial for the digital native “millennials”, who have grown up in a digitally-saturated era and who are ironically being taught by baby boomer academics who come from more standardised, less digital and stricter contextual backgrounds. Therefore, a bridging element is suggested for academics to understand the millennial generation, in addition for millennial students to understand that baby boomers are fundamentally different. This bridging element can be in the form of HODs /relevant senior staff holding a seminar for marketing and business academics on millennial students in terms of how to teach them, how they respond, best practices, tips and overviews of the basics. This is critical due to the generational gap between the baby boomers and millennials and, as mentioned in the teaching section, is arguably a key factor in the successful reform. Namely this is because it stems from the academics themselves and their teaching efforts and performance. Even the most standard lectures

with the current assignments can be taught to higher levels of understanding and KSC development with the key factor being lecturers putting in more effort into the teaching element for students and, at the same time, students being more actively involved in the co-creation of knowledge relative to the learning activity given. This is arguably expected as it's 40% of the academic workload but, as mentioned multiple times, teaching has little to no weighting on tenure and promotion and distracts from the research element, the main element of promotion in the academic career ladder.

7.2.28 Critical Success factors

In order to ensure that the reform has a higher chance of success, the researcher suggests that the barriers to reform (Table 29) be examined and studied by the committee. The success factors are, in essence, the mitigation of these barriers in addition to the effective implementation of each step of curricula reform.

Each step to be implemented must take into account the relevant stakeholders at each phase of implementation, such as marketing and business academics, HODs, deans of business schools and faculties, in addition to the central education stakeholder - the student. Note that each type of reform method /strategy suggested will have varying levels of resistance from differing stakeholders. Therefore, effective communication is key to succeeding at any level of reform as the benefits must be conveyed accordingly to each stakeholder to ensure maximum buy-in and minimal resistance. Note that the researcher does not see methods having negatives per se in the traditional sense, more that each method has its own challenges and drawbacks compared to other methods relatively. Therefore, the researcher argues, it is fundamentally a cultural shift that is required in business schools that will naturally have a flow-on effect of acceptance from each stakeholder and, ultimately, the marketing academics and finally the students. Prior to big or small system changes, the people (stakeholders) need to be made aware of the reason for and benefits of the suggested change, in addition to the consequences of remaining in the status quo system. This is no different from the very business culture and business success factors that are taught by New Zealand business schools in the marketing and business degrees. Therefore, the researcher suggests that the business

school apply the very content it teaches to itself as an educational business entity and seek to optimise and improve its teaching operational elements with specific emphasis on teaching excellence and contemporary KSC that align with industry needs. This is in the context of education as a service (EaaS) and the student as the receiving stakeholder in the context of industry, which receives the students as by-products of the University service system.

7.2.29 Minimal viable reform

The researcher would like to point out a useful concept from the technology start-up sector for the curricula reform committee and academics interested in reforming their curricular content. This concept consists of the minimal viable product (MVP) concept from the technology start-up sector. Start-up founders often create an MVP, which has minimal features that test the product/service assumptions for feedback from the market in order to iterate repeatedly until a more market-ready solution is arrived at. Note that the learning is continuous and the cycle always continues but the final outcomes go from “beta to 1.0 to 2.0” and so on and so forth. For example, before testing out a full scale new flipped classroom model, the academic can give out mandatory readings with associated marks to test out students’ ability for self-directed learning, time management and willingness to learn. This would be measured across a semester and compared to the previous semester in terms of student engagement, results, and student feedback based on measurement criteria built into the “experiment”. Indeed, the MVP is a way of thinking, a philosophy and way of breaking down new ideas in micro sized “doses” to minimise risk and user resistance, and maximise learning and user experience. To apply these to yet another marketing curricula reform example, one can take the example we have identified in this thesis – the lack of digital KSC in New Zealand marketing curricula. The reform committee would select a paper such as “MKTG 306” from the University of Auckland and select the module to change, which could be, for example, a social media assignment. How can we apply the MVP and fidelity concept to this reform method? First, let’s choose to include blogging and social media marketing as the focus area of the assessment. Using the MVP philosophy, we will test out the MVP of this concept by giving students the task of analysing a company’s social media strategy for a period of X

weeks. Alternatively, a more medium to high level assessment concept can be for students to pick a topic they are passionate about, such as fashion, technology and/or food and set up a social media profile, write three posts a week and seek to promote it with Facebook advertising along with setting up a free WordPress blog. This is considered a high level MVP option for this assessment. The testing and measuring feedback of this MVP would provide useful data for continuous iteration until an ideal assessment deliverable is produced.

7.2.30 Education as a service

Students are encouraged not only to maximise their development of KSC for their experience but also because they are customers of the paid university education system. Despite the student loan system in New Zealand, students are technically customers of a paid education service and therefore should maximise every resource in terms of academic, student clubs and societies, arts and humanities facilities in addition to the sporting and co-curricular opportunities. The researcher is strongly aligned with one of the lecturer's views in that the mentioned areas of university are indeed the most important parts of the University journey for not only marketing and business students but for all university students. It is the researcher's view that academics, as educators, mentors, facilitators and ultimately, as leaders, should guide students towards the development of their KSC to the maximum level possible for the duration of the standard three-year marketing (business) degree.

It is interesting to note that every semester in New Zealand university degrees consists of twelve study weeks, which totals 60 working days a semester, 120 days a year and, therefore, 360 days of semester contact time over a degree period. This does not include weekend study time, the mid-semester study break or the examination study break.

Therefore, academics should have this time frame as perspective for their curriculum teaching methods and ask themselves: are they teaching the optimal set of KSC to students to result in a transformative effect? Are they collectively having an impact on students over the 360 days of contact time they have? Indeed, students do not have the same lecturers or tutors for the 360-day period. However, tutors, along with academics and senior business school staff, should all be working on this 360-day roadmap for

marketing and business students accordingly to ensure they truly transform students from Day 1 to Day 360.

Only then can universities truly boast about producing the next business visionaries, leaders and change makers of Aotearoa New Zealand. It is the researcher's view, based on literature examination and the findings, that marketing educators have a responsibility to guide students on their path to becoming the next entrepreneurial marketers, start-up founders and business visionaries of our nation. The business school should educate every academic as to the opportunities the school and university has to offer in terms of KSC development – be it in the form of clubs, Toastmasters, NGO work, social enterprises, competitions, conferences and other university specific events. The classic argument posed by many of the lecturers interviewed, that “students should take initiative themselves and teach themselves” is somewhat unfounded and shallow due to the assumption that students have the soft skills and initiative prior to entering tertiary education. Indeed, a sample of students have this predisposition but the researcher, as an academic, business educator and mentor, would make noteworthy mention that this assumption is somewhat a convenient avenue for academics to cite to allow them to ignore their teaching responsibilities and, instead, focus on the extrinsically-rewarded research element of their role. While the latter is entirely normal and is accepted to be so, one cannot accept students receiving sub par teaching delivery in their curricula because their lecturers are too busy publishing research.

This is arguably not delivering value for the customer, the student, and it can be argued that the university is not applying its own business principles of delivering value which is taught in every New Zealand marketing degree examined in this research. We will now look at the assessment approaches in context of the curricula reform table 30.

7.2.31 Change course

This is seen as the most difficult and time-consuming method of change but is discussed as an analogy for course reform to benchmark the remaining options – namely being modifying existing courses and the elements that comprise the courses. Putting a whole

new course would, according to the Senior Lecturer interviewed who has done so before, require a significant number of sign-offs from multiple staff including the HOD, department academics in addition to the dean of the business school and sign-offs from directors and executives around the Vice Chancellor's level. The marketing academic also noted that the politics of changing a course often outweigh the benefits of the change itself due to many factors such as resistance from multiple stakeholders and the lack of weighting that course optimisation has on tenure and promotion. Therefore, based on the data collection, the researcher argues that existing courses should be modified from within the existing content and, in essence, tweaked to include the optimum set of KSC offerings in their course content, projects and examinations accordingly. Therefore, the majority of the curricular reform section will revolve around the modification of existing courses. The researcher will provide their overall suggestion. A final suggestion will be given as a conclusive suggestion for curricula reform.

7.2.32 Modify existing curricula

Taking into account the profound challenges in changing courses at the tertiary level, one can argue that the next best alternative, which is more feasible and would work in an acceptable timeframe, is the modification of the existing marketing (and business) papers. Modification of curricula relates to the removing, adding and, in turn, modification of existing curricular items which consists of assignments, projects, content modules and all forms of assessment in curricula, with the goal of optimising the existing offering for maximum KSC development in students. This option is highly feasible because the "course pieces" are all in place, in terms of administration, sign-offs, created course material and assignment approvals, as well as other areas that need to be developed, approved and signed off for course development in a business school context. Therefore, modifying these existing course elements will have a higher chance of being accepted by senior stakeholders who sign off on these changes. A key insight from the interviews that lead to this argument is the consistent mentioning by multiple academics, in relation to the difficulty of changing a course due to the ripple effect it has on the existing paper structure, was the scarcity of academic work time, in addition to a lack of motivation to optimise courses due to the little to no weighting it has on tenure and promotion.

The researcher would like to note that it is important that the modifications not turn the assignments into purely “practical projects”. That is, they should maintain academic prowess but balance it and integrate with practical content, well-designed projects and ensure that teaching excellence is maintained by marketing educating staff. This is something that must start at the university senior staff level and be instilled into mid-level and junior lecturing staff, all the way down to the students in a teaching excellence-focused manner. For it is the students that make the university – not the academics. They are researchers primarily but without the teaching role, they would not be lecturers, senior lectures or professors. Therefore, more attention from the business schools needs to be given to the teaching aspect and in turn, to the students.

7.2.33 Soft skill assessments

Soft skills, as mentioned in the literature review and discussion, are sometimes similar to communication skills but are fundamentally different in the sense that they are less “viewable”, a term which more relates to communication, whether oral, verbal or written communication. Soft skills are argued as both a means to an end and the end itself. This pertains to the notion that communication has deliverables in terms of written communication, oral speeches, presentations, and email communication and so on and so forth. These areas themselves require soft skills of all sorts. Therefore, the nature of soft skills is arguably that they are always being developed and are difficult to measure in terms of competence as they are being developed to reach an end - which is a deliverable the person is tasked with .

However, one must note that students and graduates can assess themselves and sell their soft skills accordingly. That is, students who demonstrate initiative, time management and resilience can state these as a list of skills but would prove them by stating how they demonstrated such skills. Such is the nature of job interview questions one commonly knows of such as, “Tell me about a time you took initiative, delivered under a tight deadline, showed resilience” . The required note-taking, summarising, condensing of theory and application of this knowledge in an examination is a demonstration of many soft skills. On this note, one can argue that there are many roles an academic plays - teacher, motivator, leader and role model – that can instil the right habits, vision,

behaviours and mindset into their students by ensuring their teaching is at levels of excellence and this would seek to foster higher soft skill KSC in students.

7.2. 34 Development of soft skills and industry relevance

Soft skills can be developed via the utilisation of business school co-curricular events such as entrepreneurship competitions, Toastmasters, and networking events to learn networking and communication-oriented KSC). As noted by two marketing lecturers, who both had industry experience and multiple teaching awards, education is now a two-way learning process and students must be involved in the equation, for knowledge is now co-created (Brennan, 2013; Tucker, 2006). Co-creation of knowledge involves soft skills as it relates to the soft skills of self-management, initiative, and willingness to learn which the researcher, along with Gray et al. (2007) and De Villiers (2010), found to be strongly in demand by employers and crucial for long-term progression that transcends role and discipline. The research has shown that soft skills are in demand not only by digital and writer positions but more so in marketing assistant positions where there is more interaction with clients, varying levels of business staff interaction and more emphasis on communication skills because the very role of being an assistant means that it is a more people-focused role at its core essence.

An interesting finding from the interviews, in addition to supporting the Market Motive study from the literature, is that managers are now arguably hiring for soft skills and training graduates for hard skills. The argument posed is that the major problem, ironically, is not only a lack of digital (hard skilled) talent but also, more importantly, the lack of talent in the area of soft and communication skills. As mentioned in the discussion, soft skills and communication are what take the graduate from entry to middle and ultimately senior level marketing and business positions and are ultimately, a interdisciplinary skillset that is transferrable across every field. One can argue that employers see graduates with the right soft skills as an investment to the company as they are more easily trained in the hard (digital and technical) skillsets but, more importantly,

have the right personality, fit into the team and business culture and, therefore, can amalgamate into the business culture more seamlessly. Interestingly, there was not one course in the curricula examined (besides mandatory internships which are somewhat limited in their learning at the current level of implementation) on business culture that teaches students how to fit into business culture, what is expected in addition to business communication and soft skills for the first six to twelve months of a graduate's entry level position. Gray et al (2007) along with Schlee & Karns (2017) support this argument in that it is, indeed, people skills, which are often used interchangeably with soft and communication skills, that graduates need to progress in their careers. Therefore, managers should indeed hire for soft skills but ensure that there exists a level of pre-existing hard skills in what was noted before as "digital literacy". That is, it is more important for marketers to be aware of and understand the basics of digital marketing tools while, more importantly, focusing their efforts on the core essence of marketing which relates to persuasion, data-driven decision-making, sales, soft skills and communication skills in addition to creative and business acumen. Arguably, from the content analysis, one can question the level of soft and communication KSC current marketing students can receive from a theoretically-oriented degree that lacks dynamic learning opportunities in the form of experiential learning, effectively designed group projects, frequent internships and applied learning situations in addition to intensive self directed learning (De Villiers, 2010; Wymbs, 2011).

7.2.35

Communication projects

Incorporating these areas into curricula is arguably a linear process. Firstly, one can introduce them as modules into the curricula, which will be met with high resistance from internal stakeholders due to the disruptive effect of this method. The second method is to utilise existing business school clubs and initiatives that the university offers that seek to build communication (and soft skills), which will stir up little to no resistance from academics, as it won't interrupt the existing programme. The downside to this option is

that it relies on student initiative to pursue these endeavours

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7.2.36 Group projects

Based on the content analysis findings, current team projects (also called assignments) are limited to LE business plans, business plans for simulated businesses and marketing plans for LEs . Consequently, presentations are oriented around these assignments, with only a few universities offering an accountability system during team projects that minimises “group loafers” that ride on their peers’ work and receive grades for work they did not undertake. Furthermore, it is interesting in talking to academics, that there was a failure to impart the importance, value and learning of these group projects into students prior to and during the project term. The main argument made by academics was that students should already know the importance of their learning since they are now tertiary students. However, this is a major assumption. Therefore, the researcher suggests that the importance and learning outcomes from effective group projects and their relation to the real world be well highlighted at the beginning and during the projects’ durational period. This is particularly important for first and second year business students with the former having just finished high school and second year students having only one year’s experience, which arguably is not enough to have the required KSC to maximise the effectiveness of group projects.

It is suggested that every group project, not only in the marketing department but the business school itself, be revised to ensure that the core goal of the team project – doing each one’s assigned set task to maximum efficiency and excellence, with full accountability and feedback, as in real life SMEs and Les - is actually met and not only existing as a “objective” on the assignment document. This method is seen as a low disruptive option with a higher likely success rate as it does not change the structure of the existing course or lecturers’ goals for the specific paper and thus would arguably face minimal resistance from academics, HODs and students - that is, stakeholders buy in. Rather it enhances the existing offering and takes the group projects from “1.0 to 2.0” in terms of educational outcomes and, more importantly, student experience leading to more

optimal KSC development. Section 7.2.25 offers more detail on course reform methods and how team projects are important in context of the development of the Quatro KSC for students.

7.2.37 online courses

The shortcomings in the four KSC areas can be remedied by instructing students to complete existing online courses – which are predominantly free – and to add them to their KSC portfolio, LinkedIn profile as well as their classic resume. The courses identified, when undertaken by students, should remedy the gaps in the theory and digital KSC accordingly. Furthermore, the researcher argues that the very process of students selecting to up-skill themselves in online digital courses from their own undertaking and seeking to develop their KSC accordingly, evidently shows the soft skills of willingness to learn, initiative, time management and creativity along with communication, as multiple online courses have written and graphical components which all add up to communication and digital KSC. Therefore, one can argue that students up-skilling themselves in online digital courses hits four birds with one stone, albeit on different levels for each bird (KSC level). Below is an overview of online courses suggested by the researcher that would, when done properly via self-directed learning, seek to develop the four KSC areas for students, as each course offers theory, communication modules and digital modules in addition to developing the digital KSC to a high level. Interestingly, the process of doing these online courses would seek to develop the student's soft skills as a result of self-management, time management, taking initiative, willingness to learn and the plethora of other soft skills that are exemplified from a student's undertaking of side activities on top of their existing time-scarce university schedule. This is already seen in the students at high school and university that undertake sporting co-curricular and humanities clubs such as debating club, UN Youth club and similar. Therefore, this online course suggestion is riding on existing student behaviours but rather in a new way and this case of utilising an existing behaviour would arguably make a stronger case when proposing this idea to senior staff in the marketing and business department. Listed below are some suggested courses for curricular reform.

Google Online courses - Currently Google offers courses on digital marketing, Google Analytics, Google Adwords and the famous Online Marketing Challenge, which is actively promoted in various universities in New Zealand. Upon completion, the course offers an electronic badge for your resume and LinkedIn profile for proof of your newly developed digital KSC.

Hubspot Academy marketing academy- teaches content marketing, social media marketing, digital marketing, written communication in the form of sales emails and sales letters (Hubspot, 2017). A Hubspot certificate and electronic badge is given at the end of the course for students to display their new KSC for employers and prospect colleagues. Furthermore, Hubspot programs are taught by real marketing university lecturers and professors (Hubspot, 2017).

Facebook Marketing Blueprint- teaches Facebook Advertising, Digital analytics (Facebook analytics), social strategy. Facebook content marketing and social media communication ethics and etiquette. (Facebook, 2017). This is free and offered directly by Facebook.

Lynda.com- this platform offers a plethora of courses in almost every digital and communication area which students can complete that develops the Quatro KSC. Interestingly, this is offered for free for students in New Zealand universities.

University MOOCS- Massive Open Online Courses offered by: Harvard University, Stanford University and MIT – these world-class universities all offer full free courses on various topics such as digital marketing, user experience, digital analytics, marketing strategy for start-ups and SMEs, branding, communication, sales and many other relevant business modules.

Other courses – the academic /lecturer can recommend their own courses. Furthermore, the student can find other online courses with the massive amount available online.

A few points must be made about these online courses as reform methods. Regardless of the online course chosen, the main challenge to this method is that students must undertake them themselves outside of the curriculum (assuming that they are not incorporated into the curriculum at first). It is difficult to squeeze in extra work into time-intensive workloads. However, one can argue that, for the large number of students who do not participate in co-curricular activities or other non-study activities, lack of time will not be an issue. On the other hand, existing students who engage in multiple co-curricular areas will arguably pose little resistance to this suggestion as it rides on their existing behaviours of curiosity, up-skilling and self-directed learning.

However, the courses' being online poses the problem of online distractions that the millennial generation are well known for. Therefore, the researcher suggests a series of short workshops, tutorials and / or educational method modules at the beginning, middle and end of the lecture period that remind students on the effective study strategies outside of class in the context of an intensive university workload. Ideally, this can be done at the business careers centre at every business school in the form of a lecture presentation, seminars with multiple time slots, a PDF file that's sent out to students and, ideally, a recorded video. These different content formats seek to mitigate any obstacle of time commitments and excuses students would provide in terms of not having access to the right information to maximise these opportunities.

7.2.38 Existing degree system

An interesting agreement emerged from the interviews in relation to the existing university system. This relates to the vast array of existing resources available for students in terms of business school and other faculty clubs, ranging from, as mentioned previously, marketing club, finance club, economics club, debating club, philosophy club, in addition to the sports, musical, film and language clubs. The researcher argues that: scenario one: if a student were to undertake the normal marketing (business) degree and merely join these clubs, attend the meet-ups, participate in the club activities and do a

form of applied learning, then their KSC development will be much higher than if they just attended the standard degree. Scenario two is where the courses are modified to include the KSC based on the reform methods suggested with the student also attending co-curricular activities as mentioned. Most importantly, based on the literature and interview findings is the people skills element – soft and communication skills. In accordance with the interview findings, the clubs and societies that students can join and participate in can develop soft and communication skills to high levels, as the clubs all conduct real events, real life activities and seek to develop new interests for the student, further enhancing their cognitive development by expanding their horizons on new areas and perspectives which will make them a more all-rounded business professional. It is suggested that a list of these co-curricular opportunities and free courses be compiled into a blog post, a PDF, newsletter, series of emails and other forms of communication for students to fully understand the system they are in.

7.2.39 KSC Portfolio

Utilising the findings, past literature and researcher's own position on this topic, the researcher suggests that business schools should offer a portfolio-building system for business students to complete as they progress through each of their assessments and papers accordingly. This borrows from the portfolio method used to display one's KSC, achievements and personal brand in fields such as design, photography and architecture. The researcher argues that students should be encouraged, supported and taught to develop a portfolio, showcasing (for example) their digital marketing projects, social media projects, research skills, writing skills (via written content) in addition to soft skill accomplishments. This seeks to fulfil multiple objectives including, but not limited to, the following: it shows the student their own progress, giving a sense of accomplishment and pride in their university work as well as giving perspective to their university learning journey. This improves a student's sense of fulfilment as a student as it gives them a sense of assurance that they are progressing in their degree journey Secondly, it seeks to show the employers the transformative change the student has gone through during their university experience. Business industry employers tend to have a negative perception of the value of university degrees, in particular theoretically-oriented business degrees and

this seeks to mitigate this perception. Thirdly, incorporating this portfolio aspect into the curricula will seek to motivate academics to think critically about the four areas of KSC and how they can be actively incorporated into the curricula. The design of papers in terms of assessments, tests, examinations and content should seek to produce deliverables for the students. Projects are one deliverable that already exists in the New Zealand business degree system but this is somewhat limited to a few papers only. For example, INFOSYS 345 is a full year, two-semester project paper at the University of Auckland. This paper itself is a portfolio of micro projects that the students showcase when completed on their resume, LinkedIn and other job application documents. Therefore, elements of existing papers should be re-examined to allow the showcasing of the relevant KSC for students to show on their job documents.

Students can develop a portfolio of skills and tailor it to job paths. Indeed, this would suit a more razor-sharp focused demonstration of skills to show the employers, which would help job alignment and reduce new graduate mismatch recruitment costs. It would help for the university to guide students towards papers, design assessments, tests and overall coursework to align with specific development of KSC to ensure students finish degrees with an actual set of KSC that will equip them with the right toolset to enter and progress in their marketing and business careers. However, it must be noted that the researcher does not want to create a systematic “to the dot, engineered degree” and would remind the reform committee that a major part of the degree experience is the inorganic, spontaneous and unexpected scenarios and, more important, going out of your comfort zone. It is commonly noted that only through new experiences, content and situations outside of one’s comfort zone does one grow the most.

Marketing students with set goals and career guidance are more likely to succeed in their education, as having a purpose and defined goal gives clarity, focus and aids the student in times of difficulty and doubt as well as making the journey more productive and fruitful. Indeed, a student facing difficulty during their university degree journey will more likely overcome these obstacles and grow as a student if they have a set goal and support along the way to maintain this track

The three positions (and other identified job patterns from other studies and industry data) can be used as a road map to guide students throughout their degree to develop a tailored KSC portfolio. The point behind a set of specific marketing career workshops is that it gives the students a goal, perspective and clear focus on what to develop in relation to the requirements that are expected of them in the marketing and business industry, which leads to the concept of internships.

7.2.40 Internships

The findings indicated a major lack of internships across the New Zealand universities with only two universities offering compulsory internship modules. However, even these two universities offer them in the final semester of the degree, which somewhat undermines the effectiveness of the internship. That is, the application of learning is not as effective when it is at the end of a long multifaceted journey as it is when applied on a more frequent basis. The researcher provides the following suggestions for incorporating internships and, in essence, real life application for students. Firstly, every university in New Zealand has a careers centre and industry-university team that are in charge of keeping up to date with industry. However, the university is not translating this industry knowledge into more up-to-date curricula as our findings indicate. Internships are centred on the notion of applied learning in a real life environment. One can argue that internships are the highest level of applied learning. Therefore, there are a multitude of levels that marketing and business academics can implement from the smallest to highest spectrum of applied learning in terms of the benchmark: that being, the supervised and optimised internship at a real SME, start-up or large business.

Application of learning can be done via online courses, student side projects, student club work and various other NGOs and social enterprises offered through the business school. The business school and academics must foster a culture of self-directed learning – thereby motivating students to seek out opportunities and, in turn, developing their communication and soft skill KSC.

One must note, with only two out of the seven New Zealand universities offering internships as a core part of the curriculum, that, before any improvements are suggested, business schools must, first and foremost, should make internships as a standalone paper, part a core paper and, if not, a core part of the curricula. That is, a compulsory internship course that students must undertake as AUT University currently does. This will ensure all students who graduate have had some experience in at least one company before graduating.

The success of internships (application of learning) rests on many factors, which include: the application type, frequency of internship, learning outcomes, accountability, reflection, transferability of skills and mentorship (De Villiers, 2010; Gray et al 2007; Wymbys, 2011). The works of De Villiers (2010) are suggested for soft skill development in internships. Application of learning is suggested first by increasing the number of internships in the existing programs for AUT and Waikato University – the two universities with compulsory internships modules in New Zealand. The remaining five universities should begin to include internships as a core paper and one of the graduating requirements, which would motivate students to seek out and find every possible opportunity to fulfil this requirement.

7.2.41 Reform summary

The inconsistency found between New Zealand university marketing curricula and industry requirements results in an interesting positive consequence. Those students who seek to up-skill themselves in various KSC will have a competitive edge over their peers. Previous studies along with our findings show that willingness to learn, taking initiative, and self-directed learning are important attributes that employers seek in marketing graduates (David & David, 2010; De Villiers, 2010). That is, business departments should encourage their marketing students to take the initiative and develop a personal portfolio of side projects that will increase their employability. Projects can be student club marketing activities, non-profit, and social enterprise projects in addition to multiple other opportunities. The KSC identified can be distilled down into side project deliverables for students to achieve in order to enhance employability for entry-level

marketing positions. Examples include encouraging students to undertake social media management for student-run clubs, marketing campaigns for social enterprises, actively writing and promoting a personal blog to develop digital content skills, and offering strategic marketing consulting for NGOs, non-profits, and local businesses to gain experience, build a network, and possibly secure future employment (De Villiers, 2010; Wymbs, 2011). Students who feel they do not have the appropriate level of skills in any of the quarto KSC quadrants can read online marketing content from various free content providers, take free courses from websites such as Hubspot and Google, as well as free online courses supplied by Harvard and Stanford universities, in addition to utilising the vast library of free resources on YouTube that cover sales as well as SME, start-up, and digital marketing. Interestingly, every university interviewed offered students a free subscription to Lynda.com which offers full courses on areas such as digital marketing, social media marketing, User experience design, data analytics, soft skill courses, communication courses and a vast array of educational content.

Therefore, students are encouraged to maximise their time at university in terms of learning, development, enjoyment and, thereby, maximising every opportunity to develop themselves in all four KSC areas.

7.3 Summary of discussion

SME marketing was found to require extensive soft, communication, theory and digital KSC while also showing distinct patterns for entry-level marketing jobs entailing written, digital, and marketing assistant-oriented roles. Soft skills were found to be the most long-term, robust and useful skills for marketing professionals from entry level to senior level. The utility of theory manifested more in the middle and senior level marketing positions while technical KSC, once the dominant KSC required at entry level (Schlee & Harich, 2010), are now of significant importance when coupled with soft and theoretical KSC. That is, the four KSC identified are now required for entry level positions with each of the KSC varying in necessity as the marketing graduate progresses from entry level to

senior level marketing roles (Gray et al., 2007; Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Walker et al., 2009; Wymbs, 2011).

The varying KSC required in marketing roles were not found in marketing curricula and can be associated with the lack of teaching focus in marketing academic roles. In essence, the root of this identified gap problem starts with the marketing education system. Hiring criteria must be changed to increase the emphasis on teaching excellence and industry experience. Best practice pedagogy must be applied by educational leaders to design the most effective classroom experience (Lincoln, 2008a) using various pedagogical approaches (Brennan, 2003; De Villiers, 2010; Madhavaram & Laverie, 2010; Wymbs, 2011). Staying up to date with industry allows marketing educators to tailor their programmes to include KSC that employers seek in marketing graduates from all four quadrants of KSC, in turn satisfying students and industry. Students must take the initiative to up-skill themselves as business school reform takes time and will undoubtedly be met with resistance from various levels of staff (De Villiers, 2010). Business school culture must adapt to reflect the rapidly changing business environment and actively impart these changes in the marketing curricula.

7.4 Limitations

The thesis has identified, to a relative extent, a gap between existing New Zealand university marketing degrees and KSC required in entry-level SME marketing jobs. However, the findings in this thesis are subject to multiple limitations. First, the content analysis for the SME jobs was limited to the months of June, July, and August 2017. This is not a direct reflection of all industry requirements due to the fluctuations between hiring seasons. Secondly, the job description sources were limited to four websites. There are other methods of job applications including recruitment companies, internships from universities, and the job network LinkedIn that were not sampled. Thirdly, the content analysis of university marketing curricula entailed its own set of limitations due to the nature of the course data. Course guides had limited information regarding specifics of the KSC taught and, with the exception of bullet points in the AUT

University course guides, the soft skills KSC were not present in the university course guides. Therefore, the content analysis of university curricula could not fully identify the soft skills in the university content and compare them to the extensive soft skill KSC found in the industry content analysis. Fourth, the interviews covered four academics but covered three universities. A larger sample of academics with industry experience and pure academic backgrounds from all seven New Zealand universities would have produced more robust results.

7.5 Contribution Summary

The study contributes to our knowledge by providing us with multiple frameworks and perspectives in analysing the current business education system, methods to improve on it and how to work towards the future of marketing (and business) education in the context of an ever-changing business sector and society. As seen from the main contribution section in the discussion, the frameworks and concepts that have been derived from the findings in the literature that can be used by academics can be narrowed down to the Quatro KSC, the KSC portfolio, the cultural change for business schools, in addition to the reform committee for curricula reform and the barriers for curricula reform for New Zealand business schools.

7.5.1 Quatro KSC model

The quatro KSC model would be of use to marketing educators to use as an analysis tool to examine which quadrant their respective curriculum (in terms of tests, projects, assignments, examinations and content) is missing and seek to mitigate this gap with the suggested reform strategies and utilise the existing marketing education literature. The research findings have shown that marketing as a function is multifaceted and requires KSC in terms of technical skills (digital and software). A key finding that must be pointed out is the significantly high demand for technical and quantitative KSC from the industry content analysis sample. This provides a strong argument to introduce and ideally extensively integrate quantitative and technical KSC offerings into the existing

marketing curricula to ensure marketing graduates are equipped with these KSC for the marketing positions that require digital- and data-oriented skills. Course reform strategies provide marketing academics with methods to apply incremental changes to their courses to slowly merge the KSC into their curricula with minimal disruption to their PBRF-oriented contracts and academic workloads.

A significant contribution from this research is the “secrets in plain sight” notion that the interviews, university analysis and course analysis revealed a gold mine of knowledge and opportunity in business degrees. Indeed, as a lecturer noted, education is now two way, in the very essence of co-creation.

Therefore, one reminds oneself of the proverb, “When the student is ready, the teacher appears.” Therefore, academics, in an intense workload and time-scarce role, have limited time to make an impact on every student, particularly with student numbers ranging from 300 to 600 per class from first year to third year business courses. However, as the same lecturer noted, and with which the researcher agrees, the university experience is meant to equip students with the skill of learning how to learn, taking initiative, building networks, effective communication and the interaction with peers who will, as one lecturer noted, go on to become your colleagues and future business partners.

In summarising the curricula reform strategies:

The researcher argues, in spite of the limitations, that this research contributes on multiple levels: by adding new theory, providing managerial implications, and confirming past literature. Of particular use is the managerial implication this research has for multiple stakeholders including: University business academics, business and marketing industry and, most importantly, students. Technology has been evolved from an innovation to a norm in industry in relation to digital marketing and data-driven marketing but this was shown to be still lacking in the curricula. That is, digital- and data-driven marketing has not been integrated into the New Zealand marketing curricula due

to the perception found, of technology being a “polytechnic area” of teaching and a lack of teaching emphasis due to the PBRF system dominating our business schools.

7.5.2 Technology and theory

Technology has been shown to enable marketing rather than being a separate entity itself. Theory, while argued as separate from technology, has been shown, in fact, to be a key progressive factor as identified by a Senior Lecturer in marketing in a prominent New Zealand university, in the success of multiple digital business and marketing technology advancements including social media marketing, Google marketing suites, data analytics, and mobile marketing. These digital tools have been successfully utilised and implemented due to the principles underlying their effectiveness existing in established marketing theory. Therefore, marketing and business academics can use this as a strong case for incorporating digital KSC modules, assignments and course work into the currently one-dimensional theoretical-oriented programme

Secondly, soft skills have been shown to be of crucial importance for not only entry-level marketing professionals but also aspiring professionals who wish to progress to middle and senior level marketing positions. Past studies show mixed views on the importance of technical skills for entry-level positions (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Schlee & Karns, 2017; Wymbs, 2011); however, the **findings** of this study have shown that they are indeed a key area that employers are looking for. SMEs, unlike their well-resourced large business counterparts, require graduates with considerable soft, communication, and technical KSC. The researcher argues that soft skills are arguably the easiest to incorporate into the existing curricula due to the vast array of existing course work which, when optimised and taught to higher teaching levels, would arguably produce immediate results – which depending on the academics teaching levels, can be incremental or radical improvements in student soft skill KSC development .

7.5.3 Tool applications

In essence, the very core of this thesis’s research can be distilled down into the gap identified between marketing degree-taught KSC and industry-required KSC, which

helped formulate the Quatro KSC and the reforming suggestions. The latter two outputs are argued to be the major contributions of this study. These tools can be used by marketing and business academics as frameworks for curricular examination, curricular reform and, ultimately, as a tool to design the optimum university marketing (and business) degree experience that enhances the degree experience and lives of, arguably, the two most important stakeholders - the marketing (and business) academics and the business student. Those students, with a relatively higher set of developed KSC, will go on to make a more thorough, productive and fruitful impact on our society in Aotearoa New Zealand and, in due time, the global scale as the future visionaries and business leaders.

7.5.4 Core of change

The author would like to present the key contribution of this thesis in terms of the curricular reform with the cultural change being the key requirement to successful change. The interviews indicated that the PBRF and promotion factors on research were the key obstacle to business curricula change. Everything filters down from the cultural dynamic at a workplace and this is not different for university marketing departments and business schools.

The people are the main barrier to change. Indeed, the PBRF is a barrier for change due to academics placing their time and energy on this area due to its significant extrinsic weighting on promotion and tenure. One can also argue that being promoted from lecturer to senior lecturer, associate professor and then to professor is also an intrinsic process, as it requires significant years of research and publications to achieve this, which so happens to be the form of monetary promotion as well. Therefore, the researcher concludes that research-based promotion is not only extrinsically based but has intrinsic elements in it despite being the major factor of monetary promotional influence.

A few key areas that the researcher would like to emphasise as a key contribution of this research is the illustration of the importance of business culture principles but within an educational institute, and the development of a road map for students to utilise along their degree journey.

The former relates to, as with industry cultural changes, the need for staff of all levels to come together and discuss the agenda together. In this case, curricular reform in context of the “quarto KSC and industry – curricula” gap is a much-needed topic to be discussed and worked on. One needs not complex nor technological solutions. Rather, personal communication from senior staff (who are on the reform committee) to marketing academics/educators is what is needed at the very beginning. Furthermore, the utilisation of the flipped classroom is key to the successful cultural shift for curricular reform as it presents the least form of resistance from business school stakeholders. The MVP concept must be applied to curricular reform for every element that needs to be changed to ensure minimal resistance and maximal feedback is obtained by academics, which in turn can be used to promote this idea to senior staff for further buy-in.

The latter, being the existing system of the business school, needs to be emphasised as noted in the discussion, in a “marketing degree road map” manner for students to provide them with perspective in addition to a compass for their business degree journey. Academics should actively connect students to the existing array of resources their business schools and universities offer in order to keep students aware of the gold mine of KSC development opportunities they are sitting on - particularly in context of the 360 day concept mapped out previously. These multiple elements - the cultural shift, MVP implementation, connecting students to existing resources, in addition to the transformative model of “360 days” with academics - are argued to be the key managerial implication and contribution of this research for stakeholders in business schools to use in their curricular reform endeavours

Business academics should continuously ask themselves: are they producing the next visionaries? Are they maximising the 360 contact days they have with the students? Is the culture in their marketing and business department one of change, teaching excellence and student-focused? Is every course element in terms of tests, assignments and content modified to ensure the KSC development for students is at a high level? This philosophy and way of thinking can and should be used by New Zealand business schools to further

better their offerings. The researcher believes, in this manner, the schools can take what they currently offer and transform it into the most student-centred, innovative and robust marketing curricula New Zealand business schools have to offer.

7.6 Future research

This thesis provides a path for future research within the field of marketing education. The economy in New Zealand and major OECD countries is progressing significantly in relation to the growing number of start-ups, and SMEs and large businesses require graduates with exceptional skills across all four quadrants. Therefore, students will increasingly require KSC for this sector. Indeed, there now exist more specific marketing and business roles in the SME sector in addition to different niche sectors existing in the business sector. Therefore, a gaps analysis specific to each university would be of major benefit to educators, universities and students alike. One major beneficial study would be to use service design theory to map out the full student (customer) journey experience for university business students in order to identify areas of development with the goal of providing the best business education experience for all stakeholders. Universities are under increasing pressure to adapt and one of the universities interviewed is undergoing major course reform. However, the details could not be published. Arguably, there is some form of industry alignment happening in every New Zealand university. However, each university exists in an environment of academic politics whereby it is funded and ranked by its research output, which is arguably the ultimate limiting factor in incentivising the business schools to become industry-aligned and teaching-focused. The government is at the centre of this system and, therefore, in order for universities to fully embrace the change in marketing and business practices, there must be a collaborative effort between university business schools, industry, and ultimately, government. However, the researcher argues that if the business school culture change is initiated from the school first, followed by students embracing this new shift at incremental changes, then the government buy-in will more likely occur.

7.7 Conclusion

This study set out to determine if there was a gap between the university marketing curricula and New Zealand requirements and the defining elements within each side of the equation. The study endeavoured to determine the nature of marketing, SMEs, and SME marketing. SMEs are flexible and agile, with SME marketing taking on these characteristics. The marketing and SME literature has demonstrated the multifaceted nature of marketing as a business function. The nature of SMEs in turn makes SME marketing more creative, with both founder involvement and the adaptability to change to consumer needs. Large businesses, on the other hand, are more systemised, relatively larger and have a more structured role, in turn requiring large business marketing roles to be more specialised in practice. This study found that large business marketing theory was covered well in New Zealand university marketing curricula. Soft skills and communication skills were taught indirectly via the offering of projects and coursework but were not taught directly. Industry (technical) skills demonstrated the biggest gap between university curricula and industry requirements, with a lack of digital marketing and software skills being taught in the universities. Political insights in context of the New Zealand PBRF system were identified as significant barriers to course reform and pedagogical excellence amongst academics, stemming from teaching and industry experience having little role in career promotions in New Zealand academia.

Graduate profiles promoted by universities did not match the courses taught and demonstrated a disconnect between the universities' offerings and actual outcomes for students. Business schools should revise their vision, redesign their marketing courses, integrate the four quadrants of KSC into every marketing course, and then seek to train their marketing educators to improve and refine their teaching practice and encourage active industry engagement. The minimal weighting teaching and industry experience have on an academic's resume and career progression is a major concern which the researcher argues should be radically revised if marketing education is to remain relevant and able to create the future marketers and business leaders of New Zealand. A fine balance between research, teaching, and industry experience must be reached in order for

business schools to live up to their full potential and make the most impact on students, businesses and society. The researcher does not downgrade the importance of existing marketing research. However, one should question the relevance and impact this research has on practitioners, curricula and society, and the weighting given to research which, according to Bennis and O'Toole (2005), is of questionable relevance and is disconnected from society. Therefore, hypothetically, even if the PRBF system remains the same, one must question if academics are conducting relevant research, which can be used by practitioners in addition to providing greater insight into the real world. As it was found in this research, academics are predominantly skilled in theoretically-oriented research. Upon posing this idea, one is drawn back to the fact that industry experience is not encouraged, supported, or funded by universities, consequently resulting in even more theoretical focus by academics in their line of work.

Marketing as a key function of business is continuously changing and therefore universities must have in place staff members whose focus is to keep up to date with industry and feed the insights back to heads of departments where pedagogical relevance is taken and applied to each marketing course. Mentions of such positions were given from an industry-led university in New Zealand but the application is seldom seen. SMEs and start-ups must be given place in the curricula and not only through business school co-curricula optional seminars. The hope of this research is that New Zealand marketing departments will revise their current curricula and seek, through incremental and radical changes, to enhance their offerings to equip their graduates with the relevant KSC as well as to change the culture of business schools from pure academia to a mix of scholarly thinking and application.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Interview guide: University marketing staff

The following questions were used to frame the interview with the selected University staff.

A semi structured approach was taken which utilized these three topic areas for the basis of a in-depth discussion. This conversational method was used to have a relatively more real, less engineered and more genuine discussion which resulted in more relevant and useful extracts and insights for the final results and ultimately, the write up and conceptual model that followed.

Begin interview by stating my name, AUT University and thanking the lecturer for their time for the interview on behalf of yourself and AUT as a marketing student and. State the research topic, the ideal goals from the thesis research and how their experience can be of great help for this research.

Question 1- Views on current offering

- What knowledge/skills does your undergraduate degree provide to prepare graduates for entry level SME marketing positions?
 - This section will discuss the current offering

Question 2 – Results contrast

Here are the results of my research to date. Present the results of content analysis and survey . Based on the data collected, SME's are telling us that the main areas of requirement in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies are (show the results / scroll down) .Let the Senior Academic look at the data at their own pace.

Interviewer:

- Do you believe your undergraduate marketing degree provides these to a certain extent ?
 - If so, can you explain/discuss how so , via general courses, specific courses, assignments , are these being taught/requirements being met by the courses?

- *If Yes to the above-* Given your course design experience, Can you tell me about the course design/curriculum design process in terms of

Question 3 – Course design and reform

- What do you believe to be the obstacles to marketing course redesign? Areas include but are not limited to: political factors, economical factors, University System, Academic working environment/culture, the PBRF , student willingness to learn
- Can you tell me about your course curricula design experience in the past – what were the obstacles you faced/challenges you faced? How were they overcome?

Appendix 2

Job descriptions

Below are sample job descriptions from the content analysis

Job 1: Copywriter (Writing position)

This employer requires support in producing web content for clients. They are looking for someone who can review client information, identify what is relevant for the client's website, and then develop interesting and engaging web-friendly content for the site.

This role would suit a journalism or marketing student who would like some writing and content marketing experience working for varied clients. You need to be a strong written communicator with a flair for marketing and copywriting. In addition, you'll need to be deadline oriented, flexible and reliable.

The hours are flexible - you can work from home at times that suit you, so long as the work is completed within a reasonable timeframe. Due to the nature of the role, work will be irregular and dependent on clients coming forward.

You can be based anywhere as you will be corresponding with the employer by email, Skype and phone when necessary.

If this sounds like you, **APPLY NOW!!**

Please note: You will be hired as a self-employed contractor on a project-by-project basis. As such, most students on Student Visas will be unable to apply.

Job 2: Marketing assistant position- permanent part time

This business is looking for a hardworking and honest student to provide marketing assistance on a part-time basis in Swanson.

You will be working with the Managing Director on a part-time basis, and you will mainly be responsible for:

Managing our contact database

Putting together various marketing collateral (including but not limited to brochures, website, newsletters, social media, sample boxes etc)

Managing Google adwords campaigns.

PPC and SEO

You must be a well presented, energetic self starter who is a good communicator with excellent communication skills.

Must be competent in using the below:

Microsoft Excel (or the Microsoft Office Suite)

InDesign

Squarespace

Mail Chimp and all social media mediums.

If you have all of the above along with a passion for excellent customer service and a strong interest in Design - we want to talk to you!

Job 3: Digital position- part time with full time potential

We work with fantastic clients who want to think and act differently to category norms, and as a result we produce strategic media and digital solutions that make a real difference to their businesses. We are looking for a recent graduate who wants to start their career in a busy growing agency.

The role involves:

1. Campaign Implementation

Defining the requirements for ads to creative partners, implementing these into an ad serving system and liaising with media owners to put these live.

2. Campaign Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring performance during campaigns through active reporting and working with campaign lead to optimise where required. Creating accurate campaign performance reports (both interim and final) to be presented internally and to clients and identifying insights from results to inform future campaigns.

3. Invoicing and Admin

This is a role that requires a unique combination of attention to detail and a level of technical capability. Ideal candidates will be able to demonstrate an affinity and love for data and analysis, and also an interest in technology, plus a strong working knowledge of the Microsoft Office suite, particularly Excel.

Please note - you must have the right to work in New Zealand.