

TRENDS IN SERVICES MARKETING RESEARCH

As much as everything changes, it simply stays the same. Or does it? Services marketing has gone through a revolution of changes and what better way to gain deeper insight than through the lens of the Journal of Services Marketing. This is the oldest journal dedicated to the field of services marketing and the variety of topics covered make it a valuable offering for practicing services marketers. So, what contributions have been made?

The services industry is important and creates a lot of interest amongst practitioners and scholars alike. Services marketing literature is driven by a growing number of services marketing scholars. The Journal of Services Marketing has contributed to the rapid increase of academic knowledge and insight by publishing articles that enrich the practice of services marketing while simultaneously making significant contributions to the advancement of the discipline.

A study was undertaken by a research team, including [Dr Gene van Heerden](#) in the [Department of Marketing Management](#), to determine the key trends published in the Journal of Services Marketing during the 11-year period from 1998-2008. A total of 417 papers were content analysed and descriptive statistics provided an overview of the research contributions. This was the first content analysis conducted on this journal and indicates the trends in services marketing research.

The results of the study indicate that most papers published in the Journal of Services Marketing in the past eleven years are research-based papers. The study also found a trend towards co-authorship, the use of surveys and empirical data, adults as research subjects, factor analysis, structural equation modelling, and analysis of variance as the most popular statistical techniques. The study conducted a keyword analysis where it was found that most papers are related to service quality and customer service. The article managed to provide insight into the current status and trends in services marketing.

So, did services marketing stay the same? The answer is most certainly no, not when it comes to the publication of articles. The paper provides researchers wanting to publish in the journal with insight from the results that shows that there is no preference for a particular topic for publications that might stimulate new and varied contributions from researchers.

*The full reference for this study is:

Nel, D., [Van Heerden, G.](#), Chan, A., Ghazisaeedi, M., Halverson, W. and Steyn, P. 2011. Eleven years of scholarly research in the Journal of Services Marketing. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 25(1): 4-13.