


Research-Based Guidelines for Marketing Information Systems

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ABSTRACT

Marketing information systems (MKIS) are decision support systems focused on specific marketing decisions, providing a more efficient and effective framework for analyzing and identifying changes in the market environment. The literature review reveals that there are gaps in theoretical and empirical studies about which specific steps and best practices should be considered in MKIS implementation efforts. Is it intended to synthesize the knowledge and perceptions generated by existing MKIS studies and identify the generic and particular guidelines that can be derived from the existing body of MKIS research. A review of the literature leads the authors to a thematic synthesis that generates five core guidelines for MKIS: (1) developing, implementing, and measuring the effectiveness of the MKIS; (2) how to align the MKIS with organizational strategy and decision-making; (3) leveraging the MKIS resources in internet marketing; (4) generating and applying marketing intelligence; and, finally, (5) leveraging the benefits of the MKIS in terms of accumulating knowledge and marketing intelligence.

KEYWORDS

Marketing, Marketing Information System, Marketing Intelligence Decision Support Systems, MIS, MKIS

INTRODUCTION

Marketing information systems (MKIS) have constituted a focal theme in academic and practitioner research for well over five decades. The MKIS concept has, thus, attracted a wide spectrum of definitions and conceptualizations in the available body of scholarly literature. However, all conceptualizations appear to converge upon the common definitional consensus that MKIS are management information systems (MIS) formulated specifically to support a firm's marketing strategy and decision-making (Mandal, 2018; Wahyuni & Lestari, 2020). Accordingly, the quintessential MIS contains four core components, namely, internal reporting systems that organize and collate a firm's internal records with immediate value to marketing decisions; marketing research systems, which

DOI: 10.4018/IJBSA.20210101.oa1

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are constituted of monitoring and tracking exercises designed purposefully to address well-defined marketing problems; marketing intelligence systems consisted of data sources and procedures to extract decision-making information from the marketing environment; and, fourthly, marketing models that act as the mechanism for interpreting marketing intelligence for application to strategic marketing (Ashmarina & Zotova, 2016; Sigauke, 2019; Martell, 2018). MKIS are particularly necessary for contemporary organizations because these systems provide the most effective frameworks for monitoring changes within the external market environment, such as shifting factors of consumer behavior, industry competition, government policies, technology, and economic conditions (Perreault, 2018). The overarching and fundamental benefit derived from the implementation of MKIS derives, therefore, from the fact that they facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, agility, and flexibility in modern firms' responses to changes in the external business and marketing environments.

Despite the existence of a robust body of pertinent literature, a preliminary review of the available research reveals that very few theoretical and empirical studies attempt to provide comprehensive guidelines on the implementation of MKIS. There appears to be a significant gap in the current body of knowledge concerning the question of what specific steps and best practices contemporary firms should consider in their efforts to implement MKIS (Perreault, 2018). The current paper's core objective, in this regard, is to synthesize the knowledge and insights generated by extant studies. We have compiled the most cited peer-reviewed literature on the topic, summarizing the current approach. Such a synthesis would be valuable in linking the meaningful yet disparate pieces of evidence generated by high-quality articles on MKIS that are presently available. This discussion's epistemological perspective is, therefore, guided by the research question: what generic and specific guidelines can be derived from the extant body of research into marketing information systems?

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

To answer the research question, the paper explores relevant literature sourced from the SCOPUS database in August 2020. SCOPUS is the most important peer-reviewed database of scientific articles in the academic world. However, we consider that the study has a limitation of only considering the SCOPUS database, thus excluding other academic databases.

Thus, we proceeded as follows: (i) definition of the research question; (ii) location of the studies; (iii) selection and evaluation of the studies; (iv) analysis and synthesis; (v) presentation of the results; and (vi) discussion and conclusion of the results. This methodology ensures that the review is comprehensive, auditable and replicable and answers the research question (Rosário et al., 2020; Rosário & Cuz, 2019; Sacavém, et al., 2019).

The bibliographic search included peer-reviewed, scientific articles published between January 1991 and August 2020. The literature search was delimited to the subject areas of business, management, and accounting; and the keywords: "marketing," "management," "management information systems," "MIS," "marketing information systems," "MKIS," "marketing research systems," "marketing intelligence," "marketing models," and "decision support systems." The search process generated 19 articles that are subsequently reviewed herein in narrative fashion to facilitate more in-depth and elaborate article-specific analyses, and the eventual derivation of shared themes that answer the paper's research question directly (Rosário et al., 2020; Rosário & Cuz, 2019; Sacavém, et al., 2019). Table 1 shows the details and characteristics of the evidence source.

The subsequent findings generated by the review process are presented in a narrative form, in order to allow an in-depth analysis of each article chosen in its central themes.

Consequently, the subsequent section 'theoretical perspectives' presents the results of the narrative review and the section 'discussion of the topics' conducts a thematic synthesis that generates five central guidelines for MKIS.

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