

THE DISCIPLINE OF MARKETING IN RELIGIOUSLY-AFFILIATED UNIVERSITIES

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INTRODUCTION

This session focuses on the issues that affect the discipline of Marketing as taught in religiously-affiliated universities where the majority of the students identify with the sponsoring religious institution. The majority of students in such institutions have been influenced by their religious beliefs on the nature of humanity and the practice of business. Thus, students in religiously-affiliated universities have a greater interest in the discussion of ethical issues that impact the discipline of marketing. Concern with ethical issues, however, may lead to ambivalent feelings about marketing and its effect on society. The members of the panel will each discuss the opportunities and challenges affecting marketing faculty teaching in universities with a strong religious affiliation.

ETHICAL ISSUES

Students with strong religious beliefs who choose to major in business have to reconcile the value of profit to a business with concerns about materialism and exploitation of human weaknesses. As marketing is often viewed as the branch of a business enterprise that is responsible for getting customers to buy a product or service, marketing sometimes seen as representing the "worst" of the business disciplines. Thus, finding ways to integrate a student's personal faith into the practice of

marketing can be a major challenge. Some members of the panel will deal with the opportunities religiously-affiliated universities present for an in-depth discussion of ethical issues, while others will focus on the challenge of trying to persuade many students that the discipline of marketing is not inherently "evil."

IMAGE OF MARKETING

Panel members will also deal with the image of marketing and the different marketing professions among different types of students. Alan Kluge will present preliminary findings on a research study that compares students at George Fox University with those at San Jose State University with regard to attitudes towards different professions in marketing. This research uses the dimensions of honesty and ethics that were generated by Gallup to rate different marketing careers. Regina Schlee will present the preliminary findings of a research study comparing perceptions of the different majors by students at Seattle Pacific University and those of California State University students at Fullerton and Northridge (research was co-sponsored by Schlee, Harich, and Curren).