

TEXTBOOK ADOPTION PROCESS BY MARKETING PROFESSORS

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ABSTRACT

Textbooks are an integral component of the higher education process. This study examines the textbook selection process and the marketing techniques used by publishers to encourage adoption. A total of 493 survey responses were collected. Results indicate that content, ancillary materials, and textbook costs are the primary drivers of adoption. Examination copies, contact by book reps, and direct mail flyers are the best methods of encouraging marketing faculty to examine a new textbook. Significant differences were found based on years of teaching experience, rank, and the institution's student enrollment.

INTRODUCTION

Whether the course is taught in a traditional manner or is online, textbooks normally serve as the course's foundation. In some cases, accessibility to an adequate textbook determines whether a particular course will even be taught (Lowry and Moser 1995). It is estimated that textbooks provide between 75 and 90 percent of instructional learning (Stein, Stuen, Carnine, and Long 2001). Because of a textbook's fundamental role in the instructional process, most college professors spend considerable time in selecting the appropriate text for the class (Lowry and Moser 1995). While anecdotal evidence provides information as to the selection criteria used, very little empirical research has been found in the area of textbook adoption, especially by marketing professors (Lowry and Moser 1995; Smith and DeRidder 1997; Smith and Muller 1998; Stein, Stuen, Carnine, and Long 2001).

Textbook publishing is a highly competitive industry with total college textbook and course-related materials sales estimated to be in excess of \$6.9 billion (National Association of College Stores, www.nacs.org/public/research/higher_ed_retail.asp, March 16, 2006). As with most industries, consolidations have reduced the number of publishers within the industry resulting in intensified competition among the remaining firms. With increasing pressures to earn profits publishers are seeking new and creative ways to market their textbooks.

On the other side of the textbook equation are the students. Since the 1987–1988 academic year, the prices of college textbooks and supplies have averaged a 6 percent annual increase, which is twice the annual inflation rate. At the same time, however, college tuitions have averaged a 7 percent annual increase. According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), the aver-

age cost of textbooks per semester is \$898 (Marklein 2005). This is about 26 percent of the cost of tuition and fees at a public university and approximately 8 percent of the cost of tuition and fees at a private institution (Marklein 2005).

To combat the high cost of textbooks, students are turning to alternative methods. A survey by the National Association of College Stores found that only 43 percent of students buy the required books for their courses (Carlson 2005). Many students either borrow a textbook from a friend who took the class or students share a textbook. Alternatively, some students are turning to online texts primarily in an effort to reduce costs. Approximately 11 percent of students indicated a preference for online versions (Carlson 2005).

A third component of the textbook market is the used textbook wholesaler. Purchasing used textbooks from students, college book stores, and professors, the used textbook market is thriving. Examination copies given to professors often end up in the used or even new textbook market despite efforts by publishers to mark complimentary copies in various ways (Dunne 1993). With costs of used textbooks typically 25 percent below the retail price of a new book, students consistently purchase used texts before shelling out the money needed for a new book.

These phenomena create a unique competitive environment among college textbook publishers, used textbook wholesalers, students, and professors. Used textbook dealers have set up a comprehensive system of buying and selling used textbooks across the country, which pushes down the demand for new textbooks. Since most students do not retain their textbooks, book wholesalers are able to turn over used books a number of times before a new edition of a text is introduced or the book becomes obsolete (Unni 2005). The same happens with complimentary texts that are sold by professors (Dunne 1993).

In response to these market conditions, textbook publishers have been accused of utilizing tactics that actually increase the cost of textbooks, rather than reduce the costs (Lightenberg 1992). Publishers continue to add supplements to the textbook package, such as CDs, workbooks, and online material, primarily to combat the competitive pressures faced from other publishers and the used textbook market. These supplements drive up the cost of producing the text, and in turn drive up the cost of the new text for students.

In addition to production costs, publishers invest considerable marketing dollars to encourage professors to examine and adopt their particular textbooks. Currently, publishers are spending 20 percent of the wholesale value of new books on marketing-related expenses (National Association of College Stores, www.nacs.org/public/research/higher_ed_retail.asp, March 16, 2006). As a result, publishers continually look for more effective means of promoting their texts. Understanding the criteria and methodologies used by professors in the textbook adoption process would be valuable to publishers and could be an impetus to reduce the current competitive rivalry. Wiser use of marketing and sales dollars could result in reduced costs and/or more effective textbook promotions.

While previous research has examined various aspects of the textbook adoption process, the primary study that examined the criteria utilized in the selection of a text was in 1997 by Smith and DeRidder. The study examined the general criteria of textbook selection and publisher incentives in the adoption process of accounting textbooks. While information is pertinent to textbook adoption in general, it does not address the criteria used by marketing professors, which may or may not be the same criteria used by accounting professors. In the Smith and DeRidder study, the top five criteria used in textbook selection were (1) comprehensibility to students, (2) currency of text material, (3) compatibility between the text and homework problems, (4) exposition of quality of text, and (5) solutions manual. Other criteria relevant to this study included the computerized test bank (ranked 8th), the cost to students (ranked 9th), instructors' teaching guide (rank 12th), and computerized practice set (rank 13th).

Because very little empirical research has examined the criteria for textbook selection by marketing professors and the promotional methods used by college textbook publishers, a study was conducted as an initial step in understanding this process. By matching selection criteria and promotional methodologies of textbook publishers to college professors' adoption processes, the effectiveness of both will be enhanced.

THE STUDY

The study was conducted using Internet survey methodology. A sample of 4,357 marketing professors was

selected from universities throughout the United States using the Hasselback directory of marketing faculty. An e-mail was sent explaining the purpose of the study with a link to the survey if they wanted to participate. For various reasons such as wrong address, insufficient address, or the e-mail was viewed as SPAM by the university's e-mail filter system, 810 e-mails were returned. Of the 3,547 e-mails that were delivered, 493 responded, yielding a response rate of 13.9 percent.

The survey consisted of 15 questions addressing the textbook adoption process and five demographic-related questions. The importance of each criterion, such as content, cost, and ancillary materials, in the selection of a textbook was measured using a 5-point scale. Because of the significance of supplemental materials and the investment by publishers in developing supplements, a separate question dealt with the supplements, such as the test bank and PowerPoint slides, and the relative importance of these items in electronic and/or online formats.

A five-point rating scale was used to ask about the influence of the reputation of the textbook authors and how important a personal acquaintance was with the author(s) on the adoption process. Additional questions addressed the issues of why professors switch textbooks and how long they stay with a textbook before switching.

The next section of the questionnaire dealt with the promotion of textbooks, both from the professor's selection viewpoint and the publisher's promotion viewpoint. Again, a 5-point rating scale was used to evaluate various methods, such as e-mail, direct mail, and telephone, which professors utilize to learn about a new textbook. In terms of being contacted by publishers, questions were asked concerning how book reps contact them, how often they are contacted, and how often they would like to be contacted.

The next part of the questionnaire examined various methods publishers use to promote new textbooks, such as direct mail, e-mail, telephone, and personal visits from book reps. The last component of the questionnaire sought personal and institutional information from respondents, such as rank, years of teaching experience, and size of institution.

THE RESULTS

Table 1 provides the sample characteristics. A total of 493 usable surveys were received. The sample consisted of a large percentage of full professors (42.6%) and individuals with more than 20 years of teaching experience (46.9%). Instructors and assistant professors were the least represented as well as individuals with less than 10 years of teaching experience. In terms of institutional enrollment, the largest group of the respondents was from schools with 15,000 or more students (42.6%) with another 37.1 percent coming from schools with 5,000 to 14,999 students.

TABLE 1 SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS			
Demographic Variable		Classification	Percentage
Teaching experience		Less than 10 years	21.7%
		11–20 years	31.4%
		More than 20 years	46.9%
Current rank		Instructor/Assistant	21.7%
		Associate professor	33.3%
		Full professor	42.6%
Institution’s enrollment		0–4,999	19.7%
		5,000 to 14,999	37.1%
		15,000 or more	42.6%
N = 493			

TABLE 2 CRITERIA IN DECISION TO ADOPT A TEXTBOOK				
Variables				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	
Content	4.85	Author(s) of text	3.05	
Ancillary materials	3.84	Online and hard copy	2.56	
Cost of text	3.67	Online text only	1.87	
Length of text	3.54	Advertising of text	1.85	
Edition of text	3.44			
Variables Significant Based on Teaching Experience				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>0–10 yrs</i>	<i>11–20 yrs</i>	<i>20+ yrs</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Ancillary materials	3.96	3.97	3.70	3.10 (.04)
Cost of text	3.95	3.68	3.54	5.46 (.00)
Edition of text	3.34	3.44	3.70	4.12 (.01)
Variables Significant Based on Rank				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Inst/Assist.</i>	<i>Assoc. Prof</i>	<i>Full Prof</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Cost of text	3.95	3.73	3.46	8.03 (.00)
Edition of text	3.30	3.42	3.72	5.19 (.00)
Variables significant based on school size				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Under 5,000</i>	<i>5,000–14,999</i>	<i>15,000+</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Ancillary materials	3.88	4.00	3.71	3.11 (.04)

A 5-point rating scale anchored by very important and very unimportant measured the relative importance of various criteria used in the textbook adoption process.

Results are listed in Table 2. In addition to ranking the various criteria, t-tests were used to determine if significant differences existed based on the respondent's years of teaching experience, rank, and institution's student

enrollment.

The highest response, in terms of criteria used in selecting a textbook, was for content, with a mean of 4.85, which was a full one point above the second place criterion. This finding was expected and is consistent with the Smith and DeRidder study (1997). The next four items were ancillary materials (3.84), cost of text (3.67), length of text (3.54), and length of text (3.44).

The fact that the cost of the text for students ranked 3rd in this study is counter to two previous studies. In the Smith and DeRidder (1997) study, which examined adoption by accounting faculty, cost ranked 9th with a mean of 3.98 on a 7-point scale. Converted to a 5-point scale, the mean in the Smith and DeRidder (1997) study would be equivalent to 2.84 in this study. In the Smith and Muller (1998) study, which examined adoption by marketing faculty, cost ranked 10th. Clearly, the cost of the text for students has increased in importance to faculty.

The last four criteria used in textbook adoptions were author(s) of the textbook with a mean of 3.05, online and hard copy with a mean of 2.56, online text only with a mean of 1.87, and advertising of the text, mean of 1.85. While the author(s) of the text is of some concern in the selection process, advertising and availability of an online text appear not to be critical criteria.

Ancillary materials, cost of the text for students, and the edition of the text were significantly different based on a marketing professor's teaching experience. For ancillary or supplemental materials, it was more important to individuals with less than 20 years of teaching experience than it was for professors with 20 or more years of experience. An inverse relationship was found with cost of the textbook. The longer an individual had taught, the less important the student's cost of the textbook was to them in the selection process. For the edition of the text, it was more important for individuals who had 20 more or years than it was for individuals with less than 20 years of teaching experience.

Cost of the text and edition of the text were significantly different based on the respondent's rank. The same pattern as with years of teaching experience was observed. The cost of text was inversely related to rank while the edition of text was more important to full professors.

The only selection criterion that was significantly different based on the school enrollment was ancillary materials. Ancillaries were most important to professors

at schools with student enrollments from 5,000 to 14,999 and least important in schools with enrollments in excess of 15,000 students.

While professors desire higher edition texts, they are not resistant to first editions. When asked if they were leery about adopting a first edition, only 8 percent said they were definitely leery (see Table 3). An additional 34.5 percent said they were somewhat leery, but 57.5 percent indicated that they were not leery at all in adopting a first edition.

Two additional questions asked about authorship. The first asked about the importance of the author(s) reputation; the second about being personally acquainted with the author(s). The mean for the importance of the author(s) reputation on a 5-point scale was 3.09, and the mean for being acquainted with the author(s) was 2.10 (see Table 4). The reputation of the author(s) was significantly different for years of teaching experience and for school size. Reputation was most important for individuals who have been teaching from 11 to 20 years and least important for individuals who have been teaching less than 10 years. For school size, the larger the student enrollment, the more important the reputation of the author was in the selection process.

Being acquainted with the author was significantly different for all three factors examined: teaching experience, rank, and school size. Acquaintance with the author was least important for individuals who have 10 or fewer years of teaching experience. In terms of rank, there was a direct relationship. The higher the rank, the more important being acquainted with the author(s) was in the selection process. For school size, a direct relationship was also found. The larger the student enrollment, the greater the importance of being acquainted with the author(s) was in the selection process. It must be noted, however, that acquaintance with the author scored very low, around 2.00 on a 5-point scale. Reputation was only slightly more important with a score of 3 on a 5-point scale.

With publishers offering more and technology-enhanced ancillary materials, the next section of the study examined the various ancillary materials and how important each was in the selection process. The results are listed in Table 5. The top five ancillary materials were basic PowerPoint slides, cases, videos, electronic test bank, and instructor's manual on a CD. The least important ancillary materials were online items and a CD for

TABLE 3
ADOPTING THE FIRST EDITION OF A TEXT

	Mean	Not at all	Somewhat	Definitely
How leery are you?	3.05	57.5%	34.5%	8.0%

TABLE 4
REPUTATION AND ACQUAINTANCE WITH AUTHOR(S)

Variables				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	
Reputation of author	3.09	Acquaintance with author	2.10	
Variables Significant Based on Teaching Experience				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>0–10 yrs</i>	<i>11–20 yrs</i>	<i>20+ yrs</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Reputation of author	2.93	3.29	3.04	3.56 (.03)
Acquaintance with author	1.87	2.22	2.13	2.90 (.05)
Variables Significant Based on Rank				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Inst/Assist.</i>	<i>Assoc. Prof</i>	<i>Full Prof</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Acquaintance with author	1.89	2.09	2.23	3.02 (.05)
Variables Significant Based on School Size				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Under 5,000</i>	<i>5,000–14,999</i>	<i>15,000+</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Reputation of author	2.86	3.04	3.24	3.88 (.02)
Acquaintance with author	1.86	2.03	2.28	4.94 (.01)

The importance of cases was different for all three variables examined. Cases were most important for individuals with less teaching experience and lower rank. As professors gained teaching experience and increased in rank, they relied less on cases. The same was true for the instructor's manual being on a CD. It was more important to professors of lower rank and less teaching experience.

School size was significantly different for cases, electronic test bank, and online student quizzes. The larger the student enrollment, the less important cases were in the selection process. The same was true for online student quizzes. For the electronic test bank, however, a different pattern was found. The electronic test bank was most important to mid-size schools with enrollments of 5,000 to 14,999.

Table 6 provides a list of the various reasons for switching textbooks. The top two reasons were content of a new text and a new textbook is better suited for the professor's teaching style, indicated by approximately 60 percent of the respondents. Approximately 54 percent of the sample indicated they switched because they were unhappy with their current text and 49.7 percent said that a new edition of their current text was coming out so it was a good time to switch. Other reasons cited for switching texts include dissatisfaction with ancillary materials (37.9%), better ancillary materials with a new text (37.43%), and unhappiness with the publisher (17.8%).

With most marketing textbooks on a 3-year cycle, it is not surprising that 36.9 percent of the sample said they switch every three years (see Table 7). Approximately 27 percent of the sample will switch in less than 3 years while almost 35 percent keep their texts more than 3 years. With the amount of time it takes to learn a new textbook, it is surprising that approximately 63 percent of the respondents will switch textbooks every three years or less.

The only significant difference was based on the respondent's rank. Based on the mean, instructors and assistant professors appear to switch texts more often than either associate or full professors. This may be due to an assistant professor trying to find a text he or she is comfortable using. It is not unusual for the textbook to already be selected when a new assistant professor or instructor reports for his or her first job.

The next part of the questionnaire addressed the promotional aspect of textbooks in terms of how professors gain knowledge of new texts, what type of marketing approach is preferred, and how it relates to what publishers are currently doing. This first question in this section addressed the various promotional methodologies professors utilize to learn about new textbooks in their field. Results are listed in Table 8.

The most desirable method, by far, was an examination copy of the new text. The second most desirable

TABLE 5
IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS ANCILLARIES TO ADOPT A TEXTBOOK

Variables				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	
Basic PPT slides	3.59	Video-enhanced PPT	3.11	
Cases	3.54	Hard copy of test bank	2.88	
Videos	3.46	Online class material	2.61	
Electronic test bank	3.45	CD for students	2.41	
IM on CD	3.35	Online student quizzes	2.35	
Hard copy of IM	3.17	Online testing	2.00	
Variables Significant Based on Teaching Experience				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>0–10 yrs</i>	<i>11–20 yrs</i>	<i>20+ yrs</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Cases	3.78	3.66	3.35	5.93 (.00)
IM on CD	3.63	3.43	3.17	4.56 (.01)
Variables Significant Based on Rank				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Inst/Assist.</i>	<i>Assoc. Prof</i>	<i>Full Prof</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Cases	3.76	3.61	3.36	4.68 (.01)
IM on CD	3.61	3.37	3.20	3.18 (.04)
Variables Significant Based on School Size				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Under 5,000</i>	<i>5,000–14,999</i>	<i>15,000+</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Cases	3.84	3.54	3.42	4.41 (.01)
Electronic test bank	3.31	3.73	3.29	4.58 (.01)
Online student quizzes	2.63	2.36	2.22	3.39 (.03)

TABLE 6
REASONS FOR SWITCHING TEXTBOOKS

Reason	N	Percent
Content of new text	305	61.9%
New textbook better suited to my teaching style	296	60.0%
Unhappy with current text	269	54.6%
New edition of current text coming out and want to change	245	49.7%
Dissatisfied with ancillary materials of current text	187	37.9%
Better ancillary materials with new text	184	37.3%
Unhappy with publisher of current text	88	17.8%

method of learning about a new book was through the publisher's sales representative and third on the list was direct mail. The next three methods of learning about a new text, in order of desirability, were publisher booth

displays at conferences, a publisher's website, and e-mail. The last two methods received exceptionally low scores, advertising in media and the telephone.

Four of the eight variables were significantly differ-

TABLE 7
FREQUENCY IN SWITCHING TEXTBOOKS

Reason	Value	N	Percent
Once a year	1	8	1.6%
Every two years	2	126	25.6%
Every three years	3	182	36.9%
Every four years	4	58	11.8%
Every five years	5	30	6.1%
Typically stay longer than 5 years	6	84	17.0%
Significance – Rank	<i>Inst/Assist.</i>	<i>Assoc. Prof</i>	<i>Full Prof</i>
T-value = 3.62 (.03)	3.19	3.66	3.54

TABLE 8
LEARNING ABOUT NEW TEXTBOOK

Variables				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	
Examination copy	4.75	Publisher's website	3.10	
Contact by book rep	3.80	E-mail	3.04	
Direct mail	3.40	Advertising in media	2.18	
Booth displays	3.13	Telephone	1.65	
Variables Significant Based on Teaching Experience				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>0–10 yrs</i>	<i>11–20 yrs</i>	<i>20+ yrs</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Contact by book rep	3.38	3.76	4.02	12.74 (.00)
Publisher's website	3.42	3.10	2.95	5.08 (.00)
Advertising in media	2.20	2.03	2.28	2.93 (.05)
Telephone	1.50	1.56	1.79	5.03 (.00)
Variables Significant Based on Rank				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Inst/Assist.</i>	<i>Assoc. Prof</i>	<i>Full Prof</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Contact by book rep	3.43	3.74	4.00	9.96 (.00)
Publisher's website	3.44	3.09	2.93	5.81 (.00)
Variables Significant Based on School Size				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Under 5,000</i>	<i>5,000–14,999</i>	<i>15,000+</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Publisher's website	3.13	3.31	2.90	5.07 (.01)
Telephone	1.91	1.62	1.57	4.82 (.01)

ent based on the professor's level of teaching experience. The more experience a professor has, the more he or she relies on the publisher's book rep to learn about new textbooks. The reverse was seen for using the publisher's

website to learn about new books. Individuals with less teaching experience used the website more than individuals with more teaching experience. Advertising in the media was used the least by individuals with 11–20 years

of teaching experience. While telephone was the least attractive method of learning about new textbooks, it was more desirable for individuals with 20 or more years of teaching experience.

Contact by a book rep and the publisher's website were significantly different based on rank. As rank increased, so did the desirability of utilizing book reps to learn about new textbooks. For publishers' websites, it was just the opposite. As rank increased, using the publishers' websites was less attractive.

The publisher's website and telephone were significantly different based on school size. The publisher's website was used the most by professors at schools with student enrollments from 5,000 to 14,999. It was used the least at larger schools with student enrollments of 15,000 or more. Learning about new textbooks via the telephone declined with school size. This may be due to smaller schools being contacted more by telephone while book reps will make personal visits at the large schools.

Because of the desirability of contact by book reps, professors were asked what type of communication methods from book reps was desirable. Results are listed in Table 9. The most desirable communication methods was personal visits, with a mean of 3.90. The second most desirable method was e-mail, with a mean of 3.60. The least desirable method of communication was the tele-

phone, with a mean of 2.42.

All three methods of communication were significantly different based on the person's teaching experience. As teaching experience increased, so did the desirability of personal visits by the publisher's book rep. For e-mail contact, the reverse was true. The less teaching experience an individual had, the more desirable e-mail was. While the telephone was the least desired method, it was directly related to teaching experience.

For rank, personal visits and e-mail were significantly different. Personal visits were directly related to rank, while e-mail contact was inversely related. Individuals of higher rank had a higher preference for personal visits from the book rep while individuals of lower ranks preferred e-mail contacts from the book rep.

For school size, e-mail and telephone communication were significantly different. E-mail was most preferred by mid-level schools of 5,000 to 14,999 students. It was the least preferred by the larger schools. Telephone communication was inversely related. Smaller schools indicated a higher level of acceptance of telephone communication than did the larger schools.

Closely related with the method of communication is the frequency of contact. Results are provided in Table 10. Currently 47.9 percent of the respondents indicate they are contacted by their book rep once a semester. This

TABLE 9
COMMUNICATION METHODS FROM BOOK REPS

TABLE 9 COMMUNICATION METHODS FROM BOOK REPS				
Variables				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	
Personal visit	3.90	Telephone	2.42	
E-mail contact	3.60			
Variables Significant Based on Teaching Experience				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>0–10 yrs</i>	<i>11–20 yrs</i>	<i>20+ yrs</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Personal visit	3.54	3.82	4.13	10.74 (.00)
E-mail contact	3.90	3.56	3.48	4.92 (.00)
Telephone contact	2.18	2.37	2.56	3.92 (.02)
Variables Significant Based on Rank				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Inst/Assist.</i>	<i>Assoc. Prof</i>	<i>Full Prof</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Personal visit	3.58	3.88	4.07	6.87 (.00)
E-mail contact	3.92	3.58	3.44	6.35 (.00)
Variables Significant Based on School Size				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Under 5,000</i>	<i>5,000–14,999</i>	<i>15,000+</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
E-mail contact	3.54	3.84	3.43	6.33 (.00)
Telephone contact	2.66	2.43	2.29	3.15 (.04)

frequency was also the most desirable, with 56.2 percent indicating that it is their preferred level of contact. Currently, 27.4 percent of the sample is contacted two or three times a semester and 5.7 percent is contacted four or more times. Both are higher than the desired frequency. In the opposite direction, less frequent contact, only 12.4 percent are contacted once a year and 5.9 percent are contacted less than once a year. In contrast, 18.7 percent of the faculty indicated they would prefer contact once a year and 4.9 percent wanted less than once a year. From comparing the current level of contact to the desired level of contact, it appears that publishers are contacting professors more frequently than is desired. What the survey did not reveal is does this produce a negative impact on the professor's likelihood of adopting a particular textbook or is it just what he or she would prefer, with no negative adoption impact.

Teaching experience, rank, and school size all demonstrated significant differences. All three demonstrated

significant differences for current contact, but only school size was significantly different for the desired contact. Individuals with 20 more years of teaching experience are being contacted significantly less than individuals with less than 20 years of teaching experience. For rank, a similar pattern is evident with instructors and assistant professors being contacted more frequently than full professors. For school size, the smaller the school the more frequent the contact by a book rep. The same pattern was found for desired contact. Smaller schools prefer a higher level of contact than do larger schools.

Direct mail is often used to inform professors about new textbooks. The two most common forms of direct mail are a specific promotional piece advertising only one text and a multiple book promotion that describes several new books offered by the publisher. The data indicate that specific book promotions are more helpful than multiple book promotions (see Table 11).

As with any product, the challenge facing textbook

TABLE 10
FREQUENCY OF CONTACT BY BOOK REP

Frequency of Contact	Current Contact Value	Desired Contact by Rep	by Rep
Four times or more a semester	5	5.7%	1.2%
Two or three times per semester	4	27.4%	18.7%
Once a semester	3	47.9%	56.2%
Once a year	2	12.4%	18.7%
Less than once a year	1	5.9%	4.9%
Significance – Teaching Experience	0–10 yrs.	11–20 yrs.	20+ yrs.
Current Contact [T-Value = 5.35 (.00)]	3.57	3.55	3.25
Significance – Rank	Inst./Asst.	Associate Prof	Full Prof
Current Contact [T-Value = 2.90 (.05)]	3.59	3.49	3.35
Significance – School size	Under 5,000	5,000–14,999	15,000+
Current Contact [T-Value = 4.93 (.00)]	3.66	3.44	3.35
Desired Contact [T-Value = 5.00 (.00)]	3.06	3.01	2.80

TABLE 11
DIRECT MAIL PROMOTIONS FROM PUBLISHERS

Criteria	Mean	Not Helpful (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Very helpful (5)
Specific book promotions	3.34	12.8%	10.5%	23.7%	34.9%	17.6%
Multiple book promotions	2.81	21.3%	18.7%	26.2%	24.1%	9.3%

publishers is getting professors to look at a new text. Like many products, if the book is examined, the probability of purchase, or in this case adoption, greatly increases. Seven types of textbook marketing techniques designed to encourage instructors to take a closer look at a new text were examined. Results are provided in Table 12.

Based on previous results discussed, it is not surprising that the most effective means of encouraging a professor to take a closer look at a new text is an examination copy. The mean response was 4.82. The second most effective method was contact from a book rep, with a mean of 4.00. Third most effective method was direct mail, with a mean of 3.39. E-mail and the publisher's website round out the top five. An interesting observation of these first five promotional methods is the clear separation in the rankings between each one. Examination copies are clearly first, contact with book reps clearly second, and so forth down to number five.

The last two methods of encouraging a closer look at a new text are significantly lower than the first five. Both appear to be ineffective methods of promoting a new text. The mean for using the telephone or a magazine was 1.92

and 1.87, respectively.

Contact by book reps was significantly different for teaching experience and rank. For both, the greater the teaching experience and the higher the rank, the more likely a book rep would be able to encourage an individual to take a closer look at a new text. While magazines were the least used method of encouraging professors to take a closer look at a new text, it was the more effective for individuals with 20 years or more of teaching experience as well as for full professors.

For the publisher's website, instructors and assistant professors were the most likely to use the website to learn about new texts while associate and full professors were less likely. In terms of school size, schools under 15,000 were more likely to use the website than schools over 15,000.

With the advent of the web, many companies, including publishers, are making greater use of their website. With this in mind, respondents were asked if they visit the publisher's website in the process of selecting a new text. A little of one third, 37.1 percent, said they always access the publisher's website when reviewing a new textbook

TABLE 12
BOOK PROMOTIONS THAT ENCOURAGE CLOSER LOOK AT NEW TEST

Variables				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Mean</i>	
Examination copy	4.82	Publisher's website	2.69	
Contact by book rep	4.00	Telephone	1.92	
Direct mail promotion	3.39	Magazine	1.87	
E-mail	2.98			
Variables Significant Based on Teaching Experience				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>0–10 yrs</i>	<i>11–20 yrs</i>	<i>20+ yrs</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Contact by book rep	3.70	3.92	4.19	8.77 (.00)
Direct mail	3.28	3.25	3.53	3.49 (.03)
Telephone	1.73	1.79	2.09	6.17 (.00)
Magazine	1.85	1.61	2.06	12.29 (.00)
Variables Significant Based on Rank				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Inst/Assist.</i>	<i>Assoc. Prof</i>	<i>Full Prof</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Contact by book rep	3.70	3.91	4.20	8.93 (.00)
Publisher's website	2.99	2.60	2.61	4.21 (.01)
Magazine	1.75	1.79	2.00	3.72 (.02)
Variables Significant Based on School Size				
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Under 5,000</i>	<i>5,000–14,999</i>	<i>15,000 +</i>	<i>T-Value (Sig)</i>
Publisher's website	2.78	2.81	2.53	3.00 (.05)

(see Table 13). Forty-five percent will occasionally access the publisher's website and 17 percent never do. While it appears the website is being accessed, it is not being used extensively in the new textbook evaluation process.

Teaching experience, rank, and school size were significantly different. Individuals with 20 or more years of teaching experience were less likely to access the website when selecting a text than individuals with less than 20 years of experience. A similar pattern was evident for rank. Full professors were less likely to access the publisher's website when selecting a new text. For school size, the larger schools were less likely to access the websites.

DISCUSSION

This study provides valuable information in terms of how marketing professors adopt textbooks and how they view marketing methods being used by textbook publishers. Clearly, the most effective method of encouraging faculty to adopt a new text is to get the new book into their hands so they can examine the book. Because content is extremely important, a professor needs to examine the text to determine what is presented in the book and how it is presented.

Textbook publishers have been criticized for adding unused ancillaries to textbooks. A survey of university faculty indicated 65 percent rarely or never use the extra materials being provided (University Press 2004). This study confirms the importance of ancillary materials in the adoption process. Textbook publishers are correct in placing a heavy emphasis on ancillaries. But what may be misdirected is the type and quantity of ancillaries. This study would indicate marketing faculty desire high qual-

ity basic ancillaries, such as the basic PowerPoint slides, videos, an electronic test bank, and an instructor manual's on CD. Rather than adding additional ancillary materials, publishers may gain more favor with faculty by enhancing the current ancillaries. Thus, adding 100 more questions per chapter to an electronic test bank may be more advantageous than adding extra online material that can be utilized in the course. Certainly, future studies need to be conducted in the area of ancillaries to determine the thoughts of professors on what is desired and how much. Issues of quality also need to be examined.

This study highlights the need for authors of marketing textbooks to be involved in conferences to establish and maintain relationships with current and future adopters. Not only can they develop relationships with marketing faculty, but it also can be beneficial in establishing the author's reputation as a scholar. In addition, authors may want to make personal contact with professors who have adopted their texts to thank them for the adoption.

When professors do switch textbooks, it is almost always due to more desirable content of a new book or dissatisfaction with the content of the current text. Less frequently are faculty members dissatisfied with the ancillary materials or switch to a new book because it has better ancillary materials. In addition, the most likely time for switching is when their current text is entering a new edition. Thus, timing is critical. Examination copies received at the right time enhances the probability of adoption, while copies received at other times is likely to be set aside or end up in the used textbook market.

Professors prefer being contacted once a semester. Of course, the most logical time is just prior to when the textbook order for the next semester is due. If an examination copy of the text can be given at that time, the adoption probability is certainly enhanced. Personal visits

TABLE 13
ACCESSING PUBLISHER'S WEBSITE WHEN SELECTING TEXTBOOK

Reason	Value	N	Percent
Every time I select a text	3	183	37.1%
Occasionally when I select a text	2	225	45.6%
Never when I select a text	1	84	17.0%
Significance – Teaching Experience	0–10 yrs	11–20 yrs	20+ yrs
T-value = 10.92 (.00)	2.38	2.30	2.05
Significance – Rank	Inst/Assist.	Assoc. Prof	Full Prof
T-value = 13.41 (.00)	2.39	2.30	2.01
Significance – School size	Under 5,000	5,000–14,999	15,000+
T-Value = 3.04 (.05)	2.22	2.29	2.11

are the best for higher-ranking professors with a higher level of teaching experience, while e-mail is the best for lower rank, less experienced faculty. A telephone call is not acceptable.

Direct mail promotions can be an effective promotional method, if the piece discusses only one textbook. The promotional flyers or magazines that describe multiple books are not nearly as effective in encouraging professors to consider a new book. Next to receiving an examination copy of the text and contact by the book rep, direct mail is an effective means of learning about new books. It is more effective than booth displays at conferences. While participants at a conference can examine books at a booth, not all conferences are attended by publishers and not all faculty members attend conferences. Thus, learning about new books at a conference is not a consistent methodology.

Another critical issue found in this study is the cost of the text for students. Because of increased costs for textbooks and tuition, students have complained. In many localities, the local media has echoed this sentiment, as well as parents. University faculty appear to have heard the message. Cost is now the third most important criteria

in the selection of a book, close behind ancillary materials and it is the most important to lower rank, less experience professors.

Textbook publishers need to take notice. Instead of adding more costs through additional ancillary materials, perhaps the companies need to look for means of reducing the costs of what is currently on the market. If not, it is highly possible that new upstart companies like Atomic Dog may capture a larger percentage of the textbook market. Atomic Dog is a new publisher that produces online and accompanying paperback copies of a text for considerably lower price than mainstream publishers (Carlson 2005). As more faculty members empathize with students, more will look for ways to reduce their student's textbook costs.

When marketing textbooks to professors, textbook publishers should be cognizant of the various differences among marketing professors based on their years of teaching experience and rank. In addition, publishers should note the subtle differences found based on school size. Heeding such differences can increase a publisher's efficiencies as well as reduce their marketing costs.

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