MSI at the **ARF**

Working Papers Guidelines

Working papers play a key role in the dissemination of knowledge developed by MSI-associated researchers. These working papers are intended to provide new perspectives on perennial and future marketing challenges and to offer directions for further action and research.

Working papers target both practitioners and researchers, and we place a premium on clear, readable writing as well as careful research and analysis. These guidelines are intended to help our prospective authors develop papers that will be useful to our readers and have a significant impact on marketing thinking and practice.

Note: The purpose of the MSI Working Paper Series is to provide MSI members and academics early access to research results. Therefore, the paper should be submitted to MSI well before submission to an academic journal, according to the date specified in the Research Agreement. Papers submitted that are already accepted at journals are, in general, "too late" to be appropriate for the working paper series.

Writing Guidelines
Before you begin writing, please consider these questions:
- Who is the target audience, and why should people be interested in your subject?
- What business problem or issue are you addressing?
- How does your evidence make your argument credible and persuasive?
- What data and ideas merit emphasis? Which are of secondary or little importance?
- What actions do you want your readers to take as a result of reading your paper?

Report Summary/Abstract
An essential part of every MSI working paper is the summary that prefaces each report. This 300- to 400- word managerial essay should frame the managerial issue or business question, briefly describe the study approach and methodology, and highlight key findings and insights. The conclusion of the report summary should discuss managerial implications of findings.

Working Paper
Introduction
Identify the business/marketing problem you are exploring, why it matters, and what is new and helpful about your findings. You might use a story or anecdote to open the paper, pose the issue as a challenging question, or include quotations from managers you interviewed during your research. The introduction should also describe the direction and highlights of the discussion to come. Give the reader an overview of the purpose and conduct of your study, what topics and themes will be explored, what key results you uncovered, and whether
they are "obvious" or unexpected/interesting.

Note that none of the approaches suggested here requires extensive referencing of the literature.

Evidence
The middle section of MSI papers usually gives the scientific basis for the report. It is the place to explain how you conducted and interpreted your research. A careful, well-reasoned discussion

gives credibility and weight to your argument, providing a sound basis for better business practice and further study.

Because the content of the middle section of the paper is usually complex and technical, it is important to make your presentation as accessible and efficient (short) as possible.

- Present the material in a sequence that is easy to follow.
- Use simple analyses where possible and put highly technical material in appendices.
- Distinguish between data and ideas that must be developed in the text, and those that can be more efficiently presented in a table, figure, or appendix.
- Include only the information that is important for readers to know.
- Refer to relevant research and theory but keep the literature review as short as possible when the study is empirical.
- Use headings to direct readers to the sections that are of greatest interest to them.

Conclusion and Managerial Implications

Explain how your work helps advance understanding of your subject and creates new opportunities for practitioners and researchers. The conclusion should answer these questions: How might your findings and interpretations affect and alter strategies, behavior, and practices in companies? What are the limitations of your study, and what aspects of your topic need further study? What is the next step for practitioners and researchers?

References

All text citations should be fully listed as references at the end of the paper, and all references listed must be cited in the text. Follow the author-date reference style used by the academic journals in the field.

File Submission

Working papers are submitted in two parts:
Report Summary/Abstract (PDF only)
Main document with a title page, main text, appendices, references, and tables and figures (PDF only)

PDF Style Requirements Font size: 12 points
Text: Double-spaced, left-justified
Page layout: 1-inch margins on all sides. No headers or footers.

Note 1: Tables and figures should be placed at the end of the paper and should be referenced in the text by number and placement (i.e., see Table 1, following References) or (Tables and Figures follow Reference throughout). Please delete instructions such as "[Insert Table/Figure here]" in the PDF file.

Note 2: The working paper should follow a format consistent with submissions to top academic journals and must not exceed 60 pages.