

Marketing Channels and Supply Chain Management

Definition:

Marketing Channels and Supply Chain Management study how firms design, coordinate, and manage networks that move goods, services, and information to customers. They examine channel design, governance, value creation, digital disruption, resilience and sustainability to enhance customer experience, branding, and competitive advantage in increasingly dynamic and uncertain market environments. In line with the conference theme, this track is particularly interested in how technological transformation, including AI, automation, digital platforms, and data infrastructures, is reshaping channel relationships, interfirm interfaces, and supply network coordination. It also welcomes research on how geopolitical tensions, macroeconomic shocks, shifting trade relationships, and regulatory uncertainty are altering market access, distribution strategies, and the creation and delivery of value.

Sub-Research Track #10.1:

Marketing Channels

Definition (short):

Marketing Channels studies how goods, services, and information move from producers to customers through networks of manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, logistics providers, and digital platforms. It examines channel design, governance, value creation, digital transformation, and how distribution decisions shape customer experience, branding, resilience and firm performance in changing market conditions.

Definition (long):

Marketing Channels is the marketing research domain that studies the systems, structures, and processes through which goods, services, and information flow from producers to end customers. It examines how firms design, manage, and coordinate multi-organizational networks (manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, logistics providers, digital platforms) to efficiently and effectively deliver value in environments marked by technological, macroeconomic, and geopolitical change.

This domain draws on perspectives from economics, strategy, organizational theory, relationship marketing, and supply chain management to understand:

- channel design and structure (e.g., direct vs. indirect, multi-channel, omnichannel),
- power, conflict, and governance between channel members,
- value creation and appropriation along the channel,
- digital disruption and platform-mediated distribution,
- how geopolitical tensions, macroeconomic shocks, shifting trade relationships, and regulatory uncertainty shape distribution decisions
- and how distribution decisions affect customer experience, pricing, branding, and firm performance.

It also increasingly addresses data sharing, technology-enabled coordination, transparency and sustainability/ethics in distribution networks.

Sub-Research Track #10.2:

Supply Chain Management

Definition (short):

Supply Chain Management (SCM) studies how firms design, coordinate, and manage networks of partners, activities, and resources to deliver products and services while driving customer satisfaction and competitive advantage. From a marketing perspective, it focuses on market orientation, relationship management, value creation, digital innovation, and sustainability in supply chains shaped by technological transformation, regulatory uncertainty, and geopolitical change.

Definition (long):

Supply Chain Management (SCM) in marketing research is the study of how firms design, coordinate, and manage the end-to-end network of organizations, activities, information, and resources involved in creating and delivering products and services to customers. It investigates how interfirm relationships, logistics, information flows, and value co-creation across the supply chain influence marketing performance, customer satisfaction, and competitive advantage. Particularly as firms respond to technological transformation, macroeconomic shocks, shifting trade relationships, and broader geopolitical disruption.

While SCM is grounded in operations and logistics, its marketing research perspective focuses on:

- Market orientation: aligning supply chain activities with customer needs.
- Relationship management: building trust, commitment, and collaboration among suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers.
- Organizational buying: managing purchasing stakeholders and their interactions within the buying system to improve procurement decision-making
- Value creation & appropriation: understanding how supply chain decisions affect brand equity, pricing power, and customer experience.
- Innovation & digitalization: using technology and analytics to enhance responsiveness and resilience.

Sustainability & ethics: embedding environmental and social responsibility while addressing disruption, uncertainty, and vulnerability across supply networks.