



Public Relations

It's very brave to theme this year's Conference 'Putting Marketing in its Place' and then to invite academics to contribute to a public relations paper track. Defining public relations and its relationship with marketing remains an essentially contested concept in academic theory and many theorists have taken considerable lengths to differentiate their field from marketing: some have even gone as far as describing what are perceived as takeover attempts by marketing as 'imperialism' (Grunig, 1992 and de Bussy and Ewing, 1998).

As such for this Conference and this paper track you have the opportunity to explore the disciplines and 'put marketing in its place'. But where is that as we move towards the second decade of the new millennium? We are inviting you to review and reflect on the complex and often contested terrain and relationship between public relations and marketing. This may encourage you to reconsider the place of public relations alongside marketing as well as other management functions. How does public relations fit within a reconstituted market economy? Have the rules of engagement with consumers, stakeholders or publics changed? What impact is new technology having on the discipline(s) and the relationships that are formed?

We would welcome critical papers based on theoretical critique as well as empirical data. In addition reflection on practice with implications for theory will also be welcomed. All of this may then help us to review and draw some conclusions on whether we can – or should – put marketing in its place.

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