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## Rethinking project management – Did we miss marketing management?

Vladimir Obradović<sup>a</sup>, Slavica Cicvarić Kostić<sup>a</sup>, Zorica Mitrović<sup>a\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>University of Belgrade -Faculty of Organisational Sciences, Jove Ilica 154, Belgrade 11000, Serbia

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### Abstract

Contemporary practice of project management is rapidly developing through interaction with emerging new practices that focuses on achieving better project performances by employing complementary management practices. The purpose of this paper is to explore the potential synergetic interaction between project management and marketing management practice. The findings indicated that using marketing practices in project management is evident and that project marketing management is an emerging practice that will bust projects performances to the top. The results also suggest that further research in this field is an order for development of both project management theory and practice.

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### 1. Introduction

The Project Management (PM) is more than sixty years an area of booming practical and academical interest. Today, PM has been successfully applied in a wide range of fields as diverse as engineering, medicine and social sciences to information technology and education (Ingason & Shepherd, 2014). Following its early technical and operational applications in the 1950s, then shifting to social sciences and contingency theory in 1970/80s, project management is deeply in «Third Wave».

The modern project management discipline focuses on adoption of contemporary management practices such as information management and knowledge management (Morris & Pinto, 2011). Respectively, Ika & Hodgson (2014) recorded:

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\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +381 69 889 3561.

E-mail address: [zorica.mitrovic@fon.bg.ac.rs](mailto:zorica.mitrovic@fon.bg.ac.rs)

“Faced with this diversity of contexts in which the same PM models and techniques were to be implemented, a gradual recognition of the need for adaptation, even a plurality of models emerged.”

Hence, the application of PM in different industries and organizational settings led to the evolution of PM through adaptation of new models and techniques and need to articulate the set of processes and competence elements for successful project management (Ika & Hodgson, 2014) (Todorovic, Bjelica & Mitrovic, 2013). Furthermore it is challenging to generate sufficient theoretical support when new practices often emerges before any theorising. Consequently the ability of the current project management theory to capture these changes needs to be reinforced by extending the foundations of project management concept with new findings revealed from fast developing practice. This paper addresses the issue of theory gap with particular attention to exploring the potential synergetic interaction between project management and marketing management practice.

## 2. Literature review

The contemporary practice of project management is rapidly developing through interaction with emerging new practices that focuses on achieving better project performances by employing complementary management practices from different settings.

One of the relatively recent developments in the field is old-new paradigm that stresses stakeholder-oriented management, emphasizing how Project Stakeholder Management is a key for better project performances (Xiaojin & Huang, 2006) (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & Colle, 2008) (Achterkamp & Vos, 2008) (Aaltonen, Jaakko, & Tuomas, 2008). Similarly, increasing interest by various authors is given to the contribution of knowledge management to better project performance (Reich, Gemino, & Sauer, 2014), (Koskinen & Pihlanto, 2008) (Todorović, Petrović, Mihić, Obradović, & Bushuyev, 2015). Thus, the project management body of knowledge is constantly growing.

Since recently, marketing management practice gains attention in project management literature discussing the potential synergetic interaction between project management and marketing management practice (Lecoeuvre-Soudain & Deshayes, 2006)(Lecoeuvre-Soudain, Deshayes, & Tikkanen, 2009) (Golob, Bastič, & Pšunder, 2013). This idea was firstly observed in practice when researchers started to develop the explanatory framework.

Considering that cornerstone of modern marketing thought is the claim that to achieve sustained success, firms should identify and satisfy customer needs more effectively than their competitors (Kirca, Jayachandran, & Bearden, 2005) it was only fair to assume that customer based project management would ensure better project performances. Even more, researchers and practitioners consider customer integration as a crucial success factor for the single project level (Voss, 2012), but also as a top priority for project-based firms (Pinto & Rouhiainen, 2001) (Alajoutsijarvi, Mainela, Salminen, & Ulkuniemi, 2012) (Artto, Valtakoski, & Kärki, 2015).

Parallel to approach that recognized the importance of customer based project management, a new trend of project marketing was evolving without any interaction with project management. Namely, International Network for Project Marketing and System Selling (INPM) introduced a discipline of project marketing as a broader term that always implicitly include project management but not vice versa (Scaates & Tikkanen, 2003). Accordingly the term of project marketing is defined as a multifunctional process of managing networks and buyer-seller interaction between project and business where the value creation process includes the search, preparation, bidding, negotiation, implementation, and transition of the project (Jalkala, Cova, Salle, & Salminen, 2010). Researchers from this field argue that this two disciplines are and can be interrelated in specific settings of the projects and organizations (Cova & Salle, 2005).

Still there is a very limited knowledge of the integration of project management and marketing management. The review of the theory may indicate marginal interest of research community or the lack of evidence from practice. On the other side, both private sector firms and public sector organizations are marketing oriented, and both sectors already experienced "projectification". Considering this it could be assumed that there is sufficient motivation to articulate body of knowledge to process idea that marketing management approach have to be integrated with project management in order to boost the performances of the projects.

Following chapter explains the concept of marketing and market orientation to provide the framework for considering the application of marketing practices and marketing orientation in project management.

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