

# Better explanations for marketing performance

April 27 2012, By Antti Vassinen

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The foremost challenge in marketing research today is to understand how companies should allocate limited resources as well as the type of returns that can be expected from marketing investments. A better understanding of the determinants of marketing performance is a prerequisite for the development of marketing expertise both overall and on the level of individual organizations.

In his dissertation, Antti Vassinen M.Sc. (Tech.) presents a novel [method](#) to marketing that can be used to determine what actions and conditions combine to produce what results.

Using the method, researchers and executives are able to tap into the causal mechanisms that bring about marketing performance in specific business and operating environments.

The CEMO approach helps find solutions to critical problems faced by organizations and marketing management: What actions and approaches work and in what combinations? What are the causal mechanisms in our specific operating context?

## **New knowledge through discarding old assumptions**

Vassinen's method, the Configurational Explanation of Marketing Outcomes (CEMO), enables the modeling of complex and interrelated phenomena requiring profound qualitative and contextual understanding

through systematic configurational analysis.

As this information is often very difficult or impossible to obtain and verify using conventional statistical methods, Vassinen's approach is a valuable addition to analysis, planning, and control in marketing.

The method is based on assumptions that are in opposition to those of various commonly used statistical methods: several different paths lead the same end result, a minor difference along the way can shift the outcome completely, factors behind a good result are different to those behind a poor one.

"The method has been applied to consumer dairy products by Valio Ltd and the effectiveness of Blue1 Ltd air ticket promotions. The results have had immediate managerial implications. CEMO has been developed and tested with some twenty different company partners from a broad range of industries," explains Vassinen.

The study is part of the StratMark project by the Aalto University School of Economics and the Hanken School of Economics.

**More information:** The public examination of the doctoral dissertation, Configurational explanation of marketing outcomes: a fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis approach, by Antti Vassinen M.Sc. (Tech.) (Aalto University) in the subject area of marketing will take place at the Aalto University School of Economics on Friday 27 April 2012 at 12 noon (Assembly Hall, Main Building, Runeberginkatu 14-16).

Provided by Aalto University

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