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Public relations and marketing: discovering common perspectives on corporate social responsibility

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## Outline

- Starting points: linking CSR with marketing and public relations
- Theoretical underpinnings: legitimacy theory and stakeholder theory
- Public relations and CSR
- Marketing and CSR
- CSR: public relations and marketing in interrelation

## Starting points



- CSR an important topic both in PR and marketing literature
- PR: CSR → reputation, reporting and communication practices, articulating CSR ... (e.g. Morsing & Schultz, 2006; Sykes, 2002)
- Marketing: CSR → consumerism, cause-related marketing, corporate giving ... (e.g. Beckmann, 2006)
- How can CSR be conceptualised in marketing and PR?
- What are the common underpinnings?

## Theoretical underpinnings



- Legitimacy theory and stakeholder theory - largely overlapping theories (e.g. Deegan & Blomquist, 2006)
  - Differences relate to issues of resolution
    - Stakeholder theory - how organisation interacts with particular stakeholders
    - Legitimacy theory - interactions with society as a whole
- ↓
- CSR as a legitimating activity which is valued, expected and demanded by different stakeholder groups (holders of norms for corporate behaviour).

## Legitimacy theory in PR and marketing



### PR

- A rationale for public relations (e.g. Boyd, 2000)
- PR as a legitimating practice for organisations

### Marketing

- The issue of legitimacy in marketing exchange and transactions processes (e.g. Pandya & Dholakia, 1992)
- Legitimate or proper transactions are those that are sanctioned by society

## Stakeholder theory in PR and marketing



### PR

- Important in terms of relations between an organisation and people who are mutually affected by different actions and decisions (e.g. Grunig & Grunig, 2000)
- PR practices used to gain or maintain the support of certain groups

### Marketing

- A core component in modern marketing theory
- Provides means for marketing to be accommodated at the corporate level

## PR views of CSR



- CSR as means to influence corporate image; a reputational component
  - Puts forward selfishness of a company
  - CSR communication is reduced to a promotional activity
- CSR as a major reason for an organisation to have PR (Grunig & Hunt, 1984)
  - PR as a mediator between the company and stakeholders
  - CSR as a rationale for identification, organisation and dialogue with stakeholders

## Marketing views of CSR

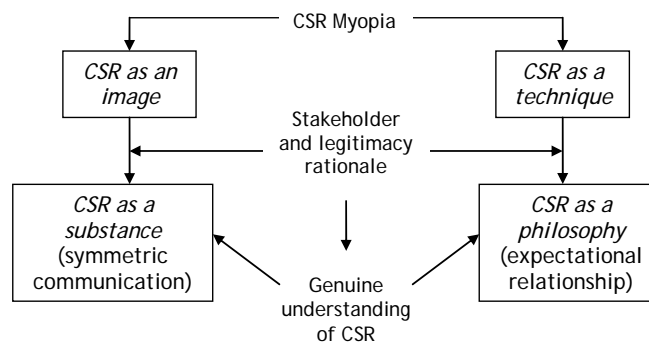


- CSR as a marketing technique (to boost sales)
  - Just another way to ensure customer loyalty and reputation, and increase profits
  - Aimed to satisfy consumer needs based on values and expectations regarding the role a company has in a society
- CSR as an inseparable part of the interaction process; a reason for marketing activities (Sweeney, 1972)
  - Focus on value creation based on long-term cohabitation and meeting expectations
  - A part of marketing: shift to corporate level concerns

## Similarities

	Public relations		Marketing	
	<i>CSR as an image</i>	<i>CSR as a substance</i>	<i>CSR as a technique</i>	<i>CSR as a philosophy</i>
<i>Orientation</i>	Publics	Society Stakeholders Publics	Consumers	Society Stakeholders
<i>End focus and goals</i>	Image, reputation Financial performance	Responsibility Legitimacy Morality Value creation Reputation	Brand loyalty Market share Economic success	Responsibility Legitimacy Morality Value creation Long-term market success
<i>Obligations</i>	External publics pressures	Stakeholder expectations (present and future)	Consumer needs	Stakeholder needs and expectations (present and future)
<i>Means</i>	One-way communication model Asymmetrical model	Symmetrical model	Marketing techniques and tools	Marketing relationships
<i>Values setting</i>	Publics (financial) Public discourses	Stakeholders Public discourses	Market Consumers	Stakeholders

## A paradigm shift





## Towards a joint contribution of PR and marketing to CSR

- Interdependence of both “functions”
- Systematically address stakeholder expectations
- Build relationships through ongoing stakeholder awareness
  
- PR: to build understanding and trust
- Marketing: to build on exchanges with consumers and other stakeholders



Thank you for your attention!

Any questions?

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