

Special Report

A Bird's Nest on the Ground

An Investigative Series on the Use of the CoB for Personal Gain

The recent release of the CoB's new journal classifications is sure to lead to a number of interesting reports here at USMNEWS.NET. The [analysis of the MKT journal rankings](#) revealed a number of issues with the 2007-08 CoB journal ranking process that was chaired by *untenured assistant* professor of economics, Sami Dakhli. Also part of that process was *untenured assistant* professor of marketing, Michael Wittmann. This *Special Report* takes a look at how the journals that have published Wittmann's past work were ranked by the CBA of the mid-1990s, and how that ranking was changed by Dakhli, Wittmann and the other members of the CoB's journal ranking committee. A similar analysis of *untenured* associate professor of finance John Clark's publications is also presented here. The [recent report on the MKT journal rankings](#) revealed that Clark attempted to have more than his share of influence on the CoB's 2007-08 journal ranking process.

Table 1
Wittmann's Journal Publications and the 2007-08 CoB Journal Classifications

Year	Journal Publications	Journal Classifications
2008		
2007	Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing	Added as a B
2006	Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management	Moved from B to A
2005	International J of Physical Dist & Logistics Mgt	Added as an A
2004	Journal of Marketing for Higher Education	Added as a C
	Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing	Added as a B
2003		
2002	Journal of Relationship Marketing	Added as a B
2001	Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing	Added as a B

Sources: Business Source Premier and [Memo to Osmonbekov](#).

As Table 1 above indicates, using the new CoB journal rankings Wittmann has 2 A-level publications, 4 B-level publications and 1 C-level publication. One of his 2 A-level publications -- the *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management* -- was upgraded from a B-level publication from the mid-1990s journal ranking lists used in USM's business school. The other -- *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management* -- entered the MKT journals ranking for the first time, and it did so as an A-level publication. All 4 of Wittmann's Bs were added to the MKT journals ranking for the first time in 2007-08.


Sources tell USMNEWS.NET that one of Wittmann's As -- the *JPSSM* -- is closer to a C than an A (if not a C altogether). Many marketing professors that have come through USM's business school have been able to hit the *JPSSM* at least once, if not multiple times. This record is certainly not indicative of a *real* A-level journal. Wittmann's other A -- the *IJPD&LM* -- is published under the  Emerald umbrella. According to sources, journals under this umbrella are rarely classified as A-level journals. In fact, many, if not most, are classified as C-level outlets (or lower) at most national research universities. Clearly, according to sources, Wittmann's membership on the CoB's journal ranking committee worked to his advantage as indicated by the upgrading, in some cases dramatically, of the journal outlets on his C.V. In terms of A-level publications, Wittmann went from none to 2 with the adoption of the new rankings (in 2008).

Table 2 below shows Clark's journal publications. Before the 2007-08 journal ranking process in the CoB, Clark had 2 As, 3 Bs, 3 Cs and 1 that was not included in the mid-1990s journal rankings (using Business Source Premier). According to Table 2, Clark now has 3 As, 5 Bs, and 1 C.

Table 2
Clark's Journal Publications and the 2007-08 CoB Journal Classifications

<u>Year</u>	<u>Journal Publications</u>	<u>Journal Classifications</u>
2008	Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice	B
2007		
2006		
2005	Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	A
2004	Quarterly Review of Economics & Finance	B
	Journal of Advertising Research	B
2003	Financial Review	A
	Journal of Business Ethics	Moved from C to B
2002	International Journal of Electronic Commerce	Added as an A
2001	International Journal of Management	C
	Quarterly Journal of Business & Economics	Moved from C to B

Source: Business Source Premier.

Clearly, Clark's attempt to influence the journal ranking process paid off for him. Two of his publications were moved from C-level to B-level. One of these -- the *Quarterly Journal of Business & Economics* -- is usually a C-level journal at national research universities. Not only that, sources tell USMNEWS.NET that the *QJB&E* is now known as the *Quarterly Journal of Finance & Accounting*, a name that will not be recognized by most scholars.

Easily the biggest windfall for Clark is the entry of the *International Journal of Electronic Commerce* as an A-level journal in the CoB's **management information systems** classifications. This journal is only 12 years old, and it is based at

Fairleigh Dickinson University. The classification of this journal as an A by the journal ranking committee boosted Clark's portfolio of As by 50%.

This report shows how easily one's standing in the CoB's faculty hierarchy can be manipulated through the journal ranking process. Both Wittmann and Clark appear to have used the process to increase their position in the CoB. The payoff (i.e., future merit raises, professorships, etc.) is yet to come, but sources indicate that there is little doubt that it will eventually arrive. When it does, USMNEWS.NET reporters will be there to bring the story to you.

Appendix

Wittmann

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Not Included</u>
Before	0	1	0	0	6
After	2	4	1	0	0

Note: Sources tell USMNEWS.NET that having 6 "not included" journals (from the mid-1990s classifications) says a lot about the kinds of journals targeted by Wittmann.

Clark

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Not Included</u>
Before	2	3	3	0	1
After	3	5	1	0	0

Note: Clark's As and Bs climbed 50% and 67%, respectively. This was accommodated, in part, by a 67% reduction in Clark's Cs.