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[Lydia Bennett](#)*

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Article

Perceptions of Value Co-Creation in Marketing and Supply Chain Integration

Lydia Bennett

Sapienza University of Rome; lydiabennett1111@gmail.com

Abstract: This study explores the perceptions of value co-creation in marketing and supply chain integration, examining how businesses are increasingly involving customers in the product and service development process. As customer expectations evolve, companies are shifting toward more personalized offerings, emphasizing the role of marketing in creating meaningful, collaborative relationships with customers. The research highlights the significance of integrating marketing and supply chain functions to ensure that customer expectations are met efficiently and effectively. By examining the interplay between customer involvement, marketing strategies, and supply chain processes, this study identifies key factors that influence the success of value co-creation efforts. The findings reveal that customer engagement, facilitated by marketing, plays a crucial role in shaping product development and ensuring customer satisfaction. However, challenges such as managing customer expectations, aligning departmental goals, and maintaining supply chain flexibility are prevalent. Technology, particularly data analytics and digital platforms, is identified as a key enabler in overcoming these challenges and facilitating real-time collaboration between marketing and supply chain teams. The study also emphasizes the importance of organizational culture, where cross-department collaboration and customer-centric values are essential for effective value co-creation. Ultimately, the research underscores the need for businesses to adopt a holistic approach that aligns marketing, supply chain, and technology to deliver value in a customer-driven marketplace, thereby achieving long-term competitiveness and success.

Keywords: value co-creation; marketing; supply chain integration; customer involvement; personalization; technology; organizational culture

1. Introduction

Value co-creation has emerged as a transformative concept in contemporary marketing and supply chain management, fundamentally altering how organizations interact with their stakeholders and deliver value to customers. This phenomenon is built on the premise that value is not solely created by firms in isolation but rather through the active involvement of multiple stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, and even competitors. The process of co-creation emphasizes the integration of knowledge, skills, and resources from different parties to enhance the product or service offering, making it a collaborative and dynamic process (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). As the landscape of business operations continues to evolve, especially with the advancement of digital technologies and the globalization of markets, co-creation has become a critical driver of innovation and competitive advantage. Companies that embrace co-creation are able to leverage the insights and expertise of various stakeholders, thus creating more personalized and value-driven solutions that meet the evolving needs of their customer base (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). One of the primary areas where co-creation is making a significant impact is in marketing. Traditionally, marketing was perceived as a one-way communication channel, where companies pushed their products or services to consumers. However, the advent of digital platforms and the rise of social media have fundamentally changed this dynamic, giving consumers a voice and a platform to co-create their experiences. Today, marketing is seen as a two-way interaction where customers not only consume

value but also contribute to its creation. This shift has prompted organizations to rethink their marketing strategies and adopt a more customer-centric approach. Consumers are no longer passive recipients; they actively participate in the development, design, and refinement of products and services (Emon & Khan, 2024). The increasing importance of customer engagement has led to the rise of customer relationship management (CRM) systems that aim to foster deeper connections and better understanding between businesses and their customers (Emon et al., 2025). As a result, marketing is increasingly being viewed as a collaborative, value-driven process where the boundaries between producers and consumers blur. The significance of co-creation extends beyond marketing to the domain of supply chain management. In an increasingly interconnected world, companies are recognizing the value of integrating their supply chains with various partners to achieve greater operational efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance customer satisfaction (Christopher, 2016). By sharing information, resources, and capabilities with suppliers and logistics partners, firms can create more flexible, responsive, and resilient supply chains that better meet the demands of the market. In this context, co-creation becomes a key element in enhancing the integration of marketing and supply chain functions, ensuring that both areas work in synergy to deliver value to customers. Supply chain integration facilitates the smooth flow of information, goods, and services between various stakeholders, enabling a seamless experience for the end customer (Cousins, Lawson, Petersen, Petersen, & Handfield, 2006). Moreover, with the advent of technologies such as Internet of Things (IoT) and blockchain, supply chains are becoming increasingly transparent, allowing for greater collaboration between firms and their suppliers, which in turn enhances the co-creation process (Emon et al., 2024). The role of value co-creation in supply chain integration is particularly relevant in industries where customization and customer-specific solutions are paramount. For example, in industries such as automotive manufacturing, healthcare, and technology, the need to tailor products and services to the unique needs of individual customers has led to more collaborative relationships between firms and their suppliers. In such environments, supply chain partners often work together to co-create solutions that meet the specific demands of customers. This involves sharing knowledge about customer preferences, production capabilities, and delivery constraints, which allows organizations to create products that are not only innovative but also highly aligned with market demand (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). The integration of marketing and supply chain functions is therefore not just about operational efficiency but also about delivering value in ways that are meaningful to customers (Emon & Khan, 2024). As firms move towards more personalized and customer-centric approaches, the ability to co-create value within the supply chain becomes a critical success factor. At the heart of value co-creation is the notion of stakeholder engagement. Stakeholders, whether they are customers, suppliers, or other partners, are no longer seen as passive entities in the process but active participants who contribute to the creation of value. This shift requires organizations to adopt a more collaborative mindset, where the interests and needs of all stakeholders are considered in decision-making. Engaging stakeholders in the co-creation process not only enhances the value delivered to customers but also strengthens relationships and fosters loyalty (Emon et al., 2025). For example, firms that involve customers in the design process of new products can gain valuable insights into their preferences, which can then be used to tailor offerings that better meet their needs. Similarly, suppliers who are involved in product development can provide innovative solutions that improve product quality, reduce costs, or shorten time-to-market. By integrating marketing and supply chain functions, firms can create a more holistic approach to value creation that considers all aspects of the product lifecycle, from design to delivery (Emon et al., 2024). The growing emphasis on value co-creation also reflects broader changes in consumer behavior. Today's consumers are more informed, connected, and empowered than ever before. With access to vast amounts of information and the ability to engage directly with companies through digital platforms, consumers are increasingly demanding a say in the products and services they purchase. They are not just interested in consuming goods and services; they want to participate in their creation, influence their development, and contribute to the innovation process (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). This shift has been particularly evident in industries such as technology, where companies like Apple and

Samsung actively involve their customers in the development of new products through beta testing and online forums. By engaging consumers in the co-creation process, these companies not only gain valuable feedback but also create a sense of ownership and loyalty among their customer base. This dynamic has led to the rise of “user-generated content” and “crowdsourcing,” where consumers actively contribute ideas, designs, and solutions that are then integrated into the product or service offering (Emon & Khan, 2024). As such, the role of marketing has evolved from being a one-way communication channel to a collaborative process that integrates the voices and insights of consumers into the core of the business. In the context of supply chains, the need for greater collaboration is equally important. As firms face increasing pressure to deliver high-quality products at lower costs and faster speeds, supply chain partners are being called upon to play a more active role in the co-creation process. This involves not only sharing resources and information but also engaging in joint problem-solving and innovation. In practice, this might involve working with suppliers to develop new materials or production methods, or collaborating with logistics partners to improve delivery efficiency (Handfield & Nichols, 2004). By integrating these activities with marketing efforts, firms can create a more seamless experience for customers, ensuring that the right products are available at the right time and in the right place. In addition, the integration of marketing and supply chain functions allows for more accurate demand forecasting, better inventory management, and improved customer service, all of which contribute to a higher level of value co-creation (Cousins et al., 2006). The integration of marketing and supply chain functions is not without its challenges. While the potential benefits of value co-creation are clear, there are also significant obstacles that organizations must overcome to fully realize its potential. One of the primary challenges is the alignment of objectives and strategies across different functional areas. Marketing teams may be focused on customer engagement and brand building, while supply chain teams may be more concerned with cost efficiency and operational excellence. Bridging this gap requires strong leadership, clear communication, and a shared understanding of the value co-creation process. Furthermore, organizations must be willing to invest in the necessary infrastructure, technology, and training to support the integration of marketing and supply chain functions. This may involve implementing new IT systems, such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) software, or adopting new collaborative tools that allow for real-time communication and information sharing between teams (Emon et al., 2025). Moreover, cultural and organizational barriers can also impede the integration of marketing and supply chain activities. Many firms operate in silos, with marketing, sales, production, and logistics teams working independently of each other. Overcoming these silos requires a shift in organizational culture towards greater collaboration and cross-functional teamwork. Leaders must encourage a culture of openness, trust, and shared responsibility, where all stakeholders are empowered to contribute to the co-creation process. In addition, firms must be willing to embrace new ways of working, such as agile methodologies and collaborative planning processes, to facilitate the integration of marketing and supply chain functions (Emon et al., 2024). Despite these challenges, the potential rewards of value co-creation are significant. By fostering stronger relationships with customers and suppliers, organizations can create more innovative, high-quality products that meet the evolving demands of the market. In addition, the integration of marketing and supply chain functions enables firms to operate more efficiently, reduce costs, and improve customer satisfaction. As the business environment continues to evolve, companies that embrace value co-creation and integrate their marketing and supply chain efforts will be better positioned to succeed in an increasingly competitive marketplace (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). The importance of co-creation in both marketing and supply chain management will continue to grow, shaping the future of business strategy and operations for years to come. In conclusion, value co-creation represents a paradigm shift in how businesses approach the creation and delivery of value to customers. By integrating marketing and supply chain functions and fostering collaboration between stakeholders, organizations can create more personalized, innovative, and customer-centric solutions. However, realizing the full potential of co-creation requires overcoming significant challenges, including aligning objectives, breaking down organizational silos, and investing in the necessary infrastructure.

Despite these obstacles, the benefits of value co-creation are clear, and companies that embrace this approach will be better positioned to thrive in the dynamic and competitive business environment of the future. As the role of consumers in the value creation process continues to evolve, companies that actively engage their customers and supply chain partners will be well-equipped to navigate the complexities of the modern marketplace.

2. Literature Review

The concept of value co-creation has attracted considerable attention in both academic and business circles in recent years due to its ability to reshape traditional approaches to value generation within the fields of marketing and supply chain management. Value co-creation refers to the process through which organizations and their stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, and other partners, collaborate to jointly produce value. This collaborative effort stands in contrast to the more traditional view where value is created solely by the company and delivered to the customer. The development of this concept is grounded in the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), which posits that service, rather than products, is the fundamental basis of economic exchange (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). SDL emphasizes the importance of resource integration, particularly between customers and firms, where both parties actively participate in the creation of value. The application of this perspective has revolutionized how businesses think about their role in value creation, with a growing recognition that customers are no longer passive recipients of value but active contributors to the process (Vargo et al., 2008). In marketing, value co-creation represents a significant shift from the traditional view of marketing as a one-way communication channel. Traditionally, marketers communicated with consumers through advertising and promotional efforts, pushing products and services onto the market with little to no input from the consumers themselves (Kotler et al., 2015). However, in the current digital era, consumers are increasingly empowered, with access to vast amounts of information through the internet and social media platforms. Consumers now demand more personalized, authentic, and engaging experiences from brands. This shift has prompted companies to adopt more customer-centric approaches, where they actively involve consumers in the creation of value (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Consumer involvement can take many forms, ranging from providing feedback on product development to engaging in co-design or even co-production of goods and services. As such, the role of the marketer has evolved, from being a product promoter to a facilitator of value co-creation (Payne et al., 2008). This transformation is especially evident in sectors like technology, fashion, and hospitality, where customer engagement is a crucial factor in delivering customized and unique experiences (Khan & Emon, 2024). Recent research has highlighted how digital technologies and social media platforms play a pivotal role in fostering value co-creation in marketing. The internet allows for real-time interactions between companies and consumers, making it easier for businesses to understand and respond to customer needs. Companies are now leveraging user-generated content, online communities, and social media interactions to engage customers in the co-creation process (Schreier, 2012). For instance, companies like LEGO and Coca-Cola use social media platforms to solicit ideas and feedback from their customers, enabling them to co-create new products and marketing campaigns (Khan et al., 2024). These companies are leveraging the collective creativity of their customer base, allowing for greater innovation and better alignment of their products with consumer desires. This collaborative model of marketing not only helps businesses create products that resonate more with their target audiences but also strengthens customer loyalty and brand advocacy (Hoyer et al., 2010). Moreover, the rise of crowdsourcing platforms has further expanded the scope of value co-creation, allowing companies to tap into the expertise and creativity of a vast pool of consumers and suppliers. Crowdsourcing is particularly prevalent in industries where rapid innovation is key to maintaining a competitive edge, such as technology and entertainment. Firms in these industries actively engage with external stakeholders to generate ideas, solve problems, or even design entire products. Crowdsourcing enables organizations to access a diverse set of perspectives and skills, which can lead to more innovative and effective solutions (Brabham, 2013). Through crowdsourcing, businesses are able to co-create

products with their customers, turning them into brand advocates and loyal supporters (Khan et al., 2025). The integration of marketing and supply chain management is crucial in achieving effective value co-creation. While marketing focuses on customer engagement and brand development, the supply chain ensures that the right products and services are delivered to customers in a timely and efficient manner. Supply chain management, therefore, plays a critical role in ensuring that the value created in the marketing process is delivered to the customer in the most effective way (Christopher, 2016). Effective supply chain integration enables firms to respond quickly to changes in customer demand, reducing lead times and improving overall customer satisfaction. This seamless coordination between marketing and supply chain functions is essential for firms looking to create value in a competitive marketplace (Lee & Billington, 1992). Additionally, supply chains are increasingly becoming more dynamic and responsive due to the growing reliance on technology, particularly digital tools such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, cloud computing, and big data analytics (Gunasekaran et al., 2015). These technological advancements allow businesses to gain real-time insights into customer preferences, production schedules, and inventory levels, thereby improving the co-creation of value by aligning marketing efforts with supply chain operations (Khan et al., 2024). The importance of customer-supplier collaboration in value co-creation is particularly prominent in industries where customization and product differentiation are key competitive advantages. In sectors such as automotive, healthcare, and fashion, firms increasingly rely on the expertise and resources of their suppliers to develop tailored products that meet the specific needs of individual customers. This collaborative approach allows companies to deliver more personalized solutions while reducing production costs and time-to-market. Supply chain partners play an essential role in this process by providing raw materials, production capabilities, and logistical support that enable firms to deliver customized products (Cousins et al., 2006). In this context, value co-creation becomes a critical element of supply chain integration, as firms work closely with their suppliers to develop innovative solutions that improve product quality, reduce costs, and enhance customer satisfaction (Khan & Emon, 2024). Another key aspect of value co-creation is the shift towards a service-based economy, where firms focus on providing solutions rather than simply products. In this model, the customer is viewed as an active participant in the co-creation process, helping to design and customize the service to meet their unique needs. The service-dominant logic emphasizes the importance of collaboration between the firm and the customer in the creation of value, with the exchange of services (rather than goods) being the central focus of the economic transaction (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). This model is particularly relevant in industries such as healthcare, education, and financial services, where customer involvement is essential to delivering tailored and personalized services (Vargo et al., 2008). Research has shown that firms that embrace service-dominant logic and involve customers in the co-creation process are better able to differentiate themselves in the marketplace and build stronger, more loyal customer relationships (Lusch & Vargo, 2006). The integration of marketing and supply chain functions has become increasingly important in the context of globalization and the rise of global value chains. As companies expand their operations into new markets and source materials from different parts of the world, the ability to integrate marketing and supply chain functions becomes critical to delivering value on a global scale. Global supply chains are often complex, involving multiple suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors across different countries and regions. This complexity requires firms to work closely with their partners to ensure that they can deliver products and services that meet local customer needs while maintaining global standards of quality and efficiency (Cai et al., 2017). By integrating marketing and supply chain functions, firms are better able to align their operations with the needs of local customers and adapt quickly to changes in market demand. The role of digital transformation in enabling value co-creation cannot be overstated. The proliferation of digital technologies, including the internet of things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), and blockchain, has opened up new opportunities for firms to engage in value co-creation with their customers and supply chain partners. These technologies allow for greater transparency, faster communication, and more efficient resource allocation, all of which enhance the co-creation process. For instance, the use

of AI-powered chatbots and recommendation engines in marketing helps firms provide personalized experiences to customers, while blockchain technology improves supply chain transparency by enabling secure and traceable transactions (Khan et al., 2025). As firms continue to embrace digital transformation, the ability to co-create value with customers and suppliers will become even more critical to achieving a competitive advantage in the marketplace. While the potential benefits of value co-creation are clear, there are several challenges that firms must overcome in order to fully realize its potential. One of the primary challenges is the need to align the objectives and strategies of different functional areas within the organization. Marketing and supply chain functions often have different goals and priorities, with marketing focusing on customer engagement and brand building, while supply chain management emphasizes cost efficiency and operational excellence (Kahn & Emon, 2024). Bridging this gap requires strong leadership, effective communication, and a shared understanding of the value co-creation process. Additionally, firms must be willing to invest in the necessary infrastructure and technology to support the integration of marketing and supply chain activities (Khan et al., 2024). This might involve adopting new IT systems, implementing collaborative tools, and providing training to employees in order to build a culture of cross-functional collaboration. Value co-creation represents a paradigm shift in how businesses approach value generation, particularly in the context of marketing and supply chain integration. As firms increasingly recognize the importance of customer and supplier involvement in the value creation process, they are adopting more collaborative and customer-centric strategies. The integration of marketing and supply chain functions is crucial in ensuring that value co-creation is effectively implemented, allowing businesses to deliver personalized, innovative, and high-quality products and services. However, realizing the full potential of value co-creation requires overcoming challenges such as aligning functional objectives, investing in technology, and fostering a culture of collaboration. With the continued evolution of digital technologies and the rise of global value chains, the role of value co-creation in driving business success will only become more significant in the years to come.

3. Research Methodology

The research methodology employed in this study followed a qualitative approach to explore the perceptions of value co-creation in marketing and supply chain integration. The aim was to gain a deeper understanding of how businesses and their stakeholders collaborate to generate value and the role that both marketing and supply chain functions play in this process. The study was designed to gather rich, detailed insights from a diverse group of individuals involved in these activities. A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who were knowledgeable about and actively engaged in marketing and supply chain functions within their organizations. A total of 31 participants were chosen for this study, representing a range of industries, including manufacturing, retail, healthcare, and technology. These participants were selected based on their roles in marketing, supply chain management, and organizational leadership, ensuring that they had direct experience with the integration of marketing and supply chain functions and the practice of value co-creation. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, which allowed for flexibility in the questioning and enabled participants to share their experiences and insights in their own words. The semi-structured interview format was chosen to provide a balance between focused questioning and the freedom for participants to explore topics they felt were relevant to the research. The interviews were conducted in person or via video conferencing, depending on the participant's location and preference, and each interview lasted between 45 minutes to an hour. Prior to the interviews, participants were informed about the purpose of the research and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Consent was obtained from all participants, and they were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence. The interview guide was developed to cover key areas related to the research questions, including participants' understanding of value co-creation, their experiences with integrating marketing and supply chain functions, and the challenges and benefits they perceived in the co-creation process. The interviews were open-ended,

allowing participants to elaborate on their responses and provide examples from their own work experiences. This approach enabled the researcher to gain insights into both the general perceptions and specific practices related to value co-creation. Once the interviews were conducted, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim, and the data was analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involved identifying patterns and themes within the data that were relevant to the research questions. Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to explore the participants' perspectives on value co-creation and how it is implemented in practice. The analysis process followed a systematic approach: the transcripts were read and re-read to become familiar with the data, initial codes were generated to identify relevant segments, and these codes were grouped into themes based on their similarities. The themes were then refined and analyzed in relation to the research objectives, and the findings were compared to existing literature on value co-creation, marketing, and supply chain integration. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, several measures were taken. First, the researcher maintained a detailed audit trail of the research process, documenting decisions made during data collection and analysis. This helped to ensure transparency and allowed for the replication of the study. Second, member checking was conducted, where participants were given the opportunity to review the transcripts and provide feedback on the accuracy and clarity of their responses. This step helped to confirm that the researcher had accurately captured the participants' perspectives. Finally, data triangulation was employed, where the findings from the interviews were cross-checked with other sources of data, such as relevant literature and secondary data, to strengthen the credibility of the results. Overall, the methodology employed in this study allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the perceptions of value co-creation in marketing and supply chain integration. The qualitative approach, with its emphasis on in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, provided rich insights into the complex nature of value co-creation and the ways in which it is perceived and practiced by industry professionals. The purposive sample of 31 participants ensured that the findings were grounded in real-world experiences, and the analytical methods employed allowed for the identification of key themes that addressed the research questions in detail.

4. Results

The results and findings from this study revealed several key insights into the perceptions of value co-creation in marketing and supply chain integration. The analysis of the interview data provided a comprehensive understanding of how businesses and their stakeholders perceive the concept of value co-creation and the impact of integrating marketing and supply chain activities on the co-creation process. A central theme that emerged from the data was the recognition that value co-creation is a collaborative and dynamic process that involves multiple stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, and internal organizational functions such as marketing and supply chain management. Participants highlighted the growing importance of customer involvement in the value co-creation process. Many respondents described how customers are no longer passive recipients of value but are actively engaged in the creation of value through their interactions with the company. This shift in customer behavior has been driven by the increasing availability of information, the rise of social media platforms, and the growing desire for personalized products and services. Respondents indicated that customers now expect to have a more significant role in shaping the products, services, and experiences they receive. This expectation has led companies to adopt more customer-centric strategies, where customer feedback, input, and collaboration are integral to the value creation process. For example, several participants shared experiences where their companies have initiated customer co-design programs, where customers are invited to collaborate with the company in the design and development of new products or services. One of the key findings was the critical role of marketing in facilitating value co-creation. Marketing was consistently described as the function responsible for engaging customers, understanding their needs and preferences, and fostering relationships that enable collaboration. Marketers play a central role in identifying opportunities for co-creation and ensuring that the customer's voice is incorporated into the design,

development, and delivery of products or services. Many participants emphasized the importance of utilizing customer data and insights to personalize marketing efforts and create experiences that resonate with individual customers. This was particularly evident in industries where customer satisfaction and loyalty are closely linked to the ability to deliver personalized, high-quality experiences. In these sectors, marketing is seen as a bridge between the company and the customer, ensuring that the products or services offered align with customer expectations and desires. However, while marketing plays a pivotal role in value co-creation, participants also pointed out the importance of integrating marketing efforts with supply chain functions. The integration of marketing and supply chain management was seen as essential for ensuring that the value created through marketing initiatives can be effectively delivered to customers. Several respondents noted that a seamless connection between marketing and supply chain activities is necessary to fulfill customer expectations in a timely and efficient manner. For example, if a company's marketing campaign promotes a limited-time offer or a customized product, the supply chain must be able to respond quickly to meet customer demand and ensure that the product is available when promised. Participants emphasized that a breakdown in the coordination between marketing and supply chain functions can result in missed opportunities, dissatisfied customers, and a loss of competitive advantage. Supply chain management, according to many participants, plays a significant role in the value co-creation process by ensuring the efficient movement of goods and services, managing inventories, and overseeing the logistics necessary to meet customer demand. Respondents emphasized that supply chain professionals must work closely with marketing teams to align their efforts with the customer's expectations. For instance, marketing campaigns that promote specific features or benefits of a product must be supported by the supply chain's ability to deliver those features consistently. This requires effective communication and collaboration between marketing and supply chain teams, who must work together to ensure that customers receive the value promised in the marketing message. Participants noted that companies with strong marketing-supply chain integration were better able to respond to changing customer needs and preferences, as well as to market dynamics such as seasonal demand fluctuations or supply disruptions. Another important finding from the study was the recognition of the challenges associated with value co-creation. Many participants described the complexities of coordinating multiple stakeholders, each with their own objectives, priorities, and processes. While there is widespread agreement that value co-creation is beneficial, the integration of marketing and supply chain activities to achieve co-creation is often difficult to implement. Several respondents highlighted issues related to communication barriers between marketing and supply chain teams, differing goals, and lack of shared understanding of the co-creation process. For instance, marketing teams may focus on customer engagement and product differentiation, while supply chain teams prioritize cost reduction and operational efficiency. These conflicting priorities can sometimes lead to tension and misalignment between the two functions, making it challenging to create a unified approach to value co-creation. In addition, some participants expressed concerns about the difficulties of managing customer expectations in the context of co-creation. As customers become more involved in the value creation process, their expectations become more complex and difficult to manage. Respondents shared instances where customers requested highly customized products or services, which posed challenges for the supply chain in terms of production capabilities and delivery timelines. This highlights the tension that can arise between the desire for personalized, co-created products and the realities of operational constraints within the supply chain. Respondents also noted that customer involvement in the co-creation process can sometimes result in unrealistic expectations, which can lead to dissatisfaction if the company is unable to fulfill these expectations in a timely and cost-effective manner. Despite these challenges, the findings also revealed several strategies that companies have implemented to successfully integrate marketing and supply chain functions for value co-creation. One common approach was the adoption of technology to enhance communication, coordination, and collaboration between marketing and supply chain teams. Several participants mentioned the use of enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, customer relationship

management (CRM) tools, and digital platforms that allow marketing and supply chain professionals to share information, track customer preferences, and monitor the status of orders in real time. By leveraging these technologies, companies are better able to synchronize their efforts and ensure that the value co-created through marketing initiatives is effectively delivered to customers. Respondents also highlighted the importance of cross-functional teams that bring together marketing, supply chain, and other departments such as product development and customer service to ensure a holistic approach to value co-creation. These teams are able to share insights, align strategies, and work collaboratively to achieve the company’s objectives and deliver value to customers. Another strategy mentioned by participants was the importance of cultivating a culture of collaboration and customer-centricity within the organization. Several respondents emphasized that value co-creation requires a mindset shift within the company, where all departments, including marketing and supply chain, are focused on delivering value to customers. This customer-centric culture encourages employees at all levels to view their work through the lens of value creation and collaboration. Participants noted that when employees understand the importance of customer involvement in the value creation process and are empowered to make decisions that support co-creation, the organization is better positioned to succeed. Companies that prioritize customer satisfaction and value creation, and that foster collaboration between marketing, supply chain, and other functions, are more likely to see positive results from their value co-creation efforts. The study also revealed that the effectiveness of value co-creation is influenced by the type of industry and the specific nature of the product or service being offered. In industries where customization is a key competitive advantage, such as luxury goods, fashion, and technology, companies are more likely to engage customers in the co-creation process. Respondents from these sectors shared examples of how their companies work closely with customers to design and develop products that meet specific needs and preferences. In contrast, participants from industries with standardized products or services, such as manufacturing and retail, reported that their value co-creation efforts were often focused on improving the customer experience rather than customizing products. This suggests that the nature of the industry and the product being offered play a significant role in determining the extent to which companies engage in value co-creation with customers. Finally, the findings indicated that the successful integration of marketing and supply chain functions in value co-creation ultimately leads to a more competitive and resilient organization. Companies that effectively align their marketing and supply chain activities are better able to meet customer expectations, respond to market changes, and deliver value in a timely and efficient manner. Respondents observed that such companies often experience higher levels of customer loyalty, increased brand equity, and improved profitability. Moreover, these organizations are better equipped to navigate challenges such as supply chain disruptions, changing customer demands, and global competition. By embracing value co-creation and fostering collaboration between marketing and supply chain functions, companies are able to build stronger relationships with customers, enhance their competitive advantage, and achieve long-term success.

Table 1. Themes Relating to Customer Involvement in Value Co-Creation.

Theme	Description
Active Role of Customers	Customers are seen as active participants in the development of products and services.
Personalized Experiences	Customers demand tailored solutions, indicating a shift towards more personalized offerings.
Feedback Mechanisms	Structured systems for customer feedback, such as surveys and focus groups, have become integral to product development.
Co-design and Co-production	Customers engage in the design and production phases, enhancing the final product’s relevance to their needs.

The findings reveal that customer involvement is not just a passive reception of products, but an active engagement that shapes the outcome of services and products. Participants noted that

customers’ demands for personalization are growing, with businesses shifting from one-size-fits-all approaches to more customizable offerings. Companies are increasingly establishing structured feedback mechanisms that enable real-time input from customers, fostering a continuous dialogue about product quality and expectations. Moreover, many businesses have adopted practices like co-design and co-production, where customers directly influence the creation process. These changes signify a broader trend toward customer-centric business models where clients are viewed as integral partners in the value creation journey.

Table 2. Themes Relating to the Role of Marketing in Value Co-Creation.

Theme	Description
Customer-Centric Marketing	Marketing focuses on creating deep customer relationships and engagement.
Personalization Through Data	Companies are leveraging data analytics to personalize marketing efforts.
Brand Advocacy	Customers actively advocate for brands when they feel their input is valued.
Marketing as Facilitation	Marketing teams serve as the facilitators in co-creating value with customers.

The research underscores the pivotal role marketing plays in enabling value co-creation. Marketing departments are shifting toward customer-centric strategies that prioritize long-term relationships and engagement over one-time transactions. A key component of this shift is the use of data analytics, which allows companies to tailor their messages and offers to the specific needs and preferences of their customer base. This data-driven personalization not only enhances the customer experience but also increases the likelihood of customer advocacy. Participants emphasized that marketing teams are no longer simply promoters of products; instead, they act as facilitators who bridge the gap between customer desires and company offerings, ensuring that customers’ contributions are woven into the value creation process.

Table 3. Themes Relating to Marketing-Supply Chain Integration.

Theme	Description
Collaborative Efforts	Marketing and supply chain departments need to collaborate closely.
Communication Channels	Effective communication channels between teams are critical to the process.
Alignment of Goals	Both functions must align their goals to ensure that marketing promises match supply chain capabilities.
Real-Time Information Sharing	Instantaneous updates on customer demand and product availability are essential for seamless coordination.

The integration of marketing and supply chain functions emerged as a crucial aspect of value co-creation. Participants noted that collaboration between these departments is essential for ensuring that marketing campaigns are not only enticing but also feasible in terms of product availability and delivery. For marketing strategies to be effective, they must be in direct alignment with the supply chain’s capabilities, which requires transparent communication. Real-time information sharing was identified as a key tool to keep all teams informed about customer demand fluctuations, stock levels, and production timelines. Without this level of coordination, the risk of customer dissatisfaction due to unmet expectations becomes significantly higher.

Table 4. Themes Relating to Technology in Value Co-Creation.

Theme	Description
Role of Technology in Communication	Technology enhances communication between departments and stakeholders.
Data-Driven Decision Making	The use of big data and analytics helps companies make informed decisions about co-creation strategies.
Digital Platforms for Collaboration	Platforms that facilitate cross-functional collaboration are central to value creation.
Automation in Supply Chain	Automation technologies help streamline supply chain operations, allowing for faster responses to customer demands.

Technology plays a significant role in facilitating value co-creation by enhancing both communication and operational efficiency. Participants indicated that digital tools are crucial for enabling seamless communication between marketing and supply chain teams. Big data analytics was highlighted as an important tool for understanding customer preferences and predicting demand, which in turn helps companies make more informed decisions. Furthermore, digital platforms that allow cross-functional collaboration are seen as essential for aligning marketing and supply chain efforts. In supply chain operations, automation technologies were noted for their ability to improve the speed and accuracy of inventory management and product fulfillment, thus contributing to a more efficient co-creation process.

Table 5. Themes Relating to Supply Chain Challenges in Co-Creation.

Theme	Description
Coordination with Suppliers	Supply chain coordination with external suppliers is often difficult to manage.
Flexibility in Operations	Supply chains must be flexible to accommodate customized orders and varying demand.
Logistics Management	Managing the logistics of delivering customized products can be complex.
Inventory Management	Maintaining appropriate inventory levels for co-created products is a key challenge.

Challenges within the supply chain were identified as critical barriers to effective value co-creation. Coordination with suppliers, especially those involved in the production of customized or unique products, often proved to be difficult. This requires a level of operational flexibility that many supply chains struggle to achieve. The complexity of logistics management is heightened when dealing with co-created products, which may have specific delivery requirements. Additionally, inventory management emerged as a recurring challenge, particularly when demand is unpredictable or when products are highly customized. Supply chain teams must find ways to manage stock levels efficiently while ensuring that they can meet customer demands promptly.

Table 6. Themes Relating to Customer Expectations and Value Co-Creation.

Theme	Description
Heightened Customer Expectations	Customers expect more personalized products and timely delivery.
Demand for Transparency	Customers desire transparency in the co-creation process.
Risk of Unrealistic Expectations	Customers may have expectations that exceed what companies can deliver.
Pressure to Deliver Quality	There is increasing pressure to maintain high product quality in co-created products.

Customer expectations play a central role in the value co-creation process, with participants emphasizing that expectations have risen significantly. Consumers now expect not only personalized products but also timely deliveries that align with marketing promises. Transparency was frequently mentioned, with customers wanting to be involved at every stage of the co-creation process, from product design to fulfillment. However, some participants warned that this could lead to unrealistic expectations, particularly if the company cannot deliver on the co-created product’s promises due to logistical or production constraints. The need to maintain high product quality, even in the face of increasing customization, adds another layer of pressure on organizations striving to balance customer demands with operational capabilities.

Table 7. Themes Relating to Organizational Culture in Value Co-Creation.

Theme	Description
Cross-Department Collaboration	Fostering a culture of collaboration between departments is key to success.
Customer-Centric Organizational Culture	Organizations that focus on customer needs and satisfaction perform better in co-creation efforts.
Empowering Employees	Empowering employees to make decisions related to co-creation enhances efficiency.
Training and Development	Ongoing training is essential for equipping staff with the skills needed for co-creation.

A customer-centric organizational culture was identified as essential for the successful implementation of value co-creation. Respondents noted that companies that promote cross-department collaboration are more effective in aligning marketing and supply chain efforts. Empowering employees to take ownership of the co-creation process, particularly those working directly with customers, was seen as a crucial factor in fostering innovation and enhancing efficiency. Moreover, the ongoing training and development of employees were highlighted as necessary to ensure that staff have the requisite skills and knowledge to engage in value co-creation effectively. Companies that invest in a culture that prioritizes collaboration, customer satisfaction, and continuous learning are better positioned to navigate the complexities of value co-creation.

Table 8. Themes Relating to Barriers to Effective Value Co-Creation.

Theme	Description
Resource Constraints	Limited resources can hinder the ability to engage in co-creation activities.
Inadequate Technology	Insufficient technological infrastructure can prevent effective value co-creation.
Misalignment of Strategic Goals	A lack of alignment between different departments’ goals can impede co-creation efforts.
Risk of Over-Customization	Over-emphasis on customization can lead to inefficiencies and customer dissatisfaction.

Barriers to effective value co-creation were a central concern for many participants. Resource constraints, both in terms of financial and human capital, were frequently mentioned as obstacles to engaging in more extensive co-creation activities. In some cases, organizations faced challenges in adopting the necessary technological infrastructure to support seamless collaboration between departments and with customers. Misalignment of strategic goals between marketing, supply chain, and other departments often led to inefficient or fragmented co-creation efforts. Additionally, while customization is generally seen as a key to value co-creation, respondents warned against the risk of over-customization, which can lead to inefficiencies, higher costs, and customer dissatisfaction if not managed properly.

The findings of this study reveal several important insights into the perceptions of value co-creation in marketing and supply chain integration. It became clear that customer involvement is central to the value co-creation process, with customers increasingly seen as active participants in product and service development. The shift towards personalized experiences and the demand for tailored solutions highlight the growing importance of customer engagement in shaping offerings. Furthermore, marketing plays a pivotal role in facilitating this co-creation by acting as the bridge between the company and the customer. Marketing teams are not only responsible for promoting products but also for creating meaningful relationships with customers and utilizing data analytics to personalize offerings and foster brand advocacy. The integration of marketing and supply chain functions was identified as essential for effective value co-creation. Successful collaboration between these two departments ensures that marketing promises align with supply chain capabilities, and that customer expectations are met in a timely and efficient manner. Real-time communication and shared goals between marketing and supply chain teams emerged as key factors in ensuring smooth coordination and achieving customer satisfaction. However, the study also revealed several challenges, including the complexity of managing customer expectations, coordinating with external suppliers, and maintaining flexibility in operations to accommodate customization demands. Technology emerged as a critical enabler of value co-creation, with participants emphasizing the role of digital platforms, data analytics, and automation in enhancing collaboration and improving operational efficiency. Yet, challenges related to supply chain flexibility, inventory management, and logistics management were prominent. Despite these hurdles, companies that successfully integrated marketing and supply chain activities were seen to gain a competitive edge, demonstrating the importance of fostering a customer-centric culture within organizations. Companies that invest in cross-department collaboration, empower employees, and prioritize customer needs were found to be more successful in navigating the complexities of value co-creation and ensuring long-term business growth.

5. Discussion

The findings from this study offer valuable insights into the dynamics of value co-creation in marketing and supply chain integration. As customer expectations shift toward more personalized and tailored experiences, companies are increasingly recognizing the importance of involving customers in the co-creation process. Customers are no longer seen as passive recipients of products or services, but as active contributors to the development of offerings that meet their specific needs and preferences. This shift in customer behavior highlights the growing significance of engagement strategies and customer involvement in driving value creation. Businesses that embrace this transformation are better positioned to offer unique and relevant solutions that align with individual customer desires. The role of marketing in value co-creation is central to creating and maintaining strong customer relationships. Marketing is no longer limited to promoting products; instead, it serves as a facilitator that enables customers to shape and personalize their experiences with the company. By leveraging data analytics and personalized marketing approaches, companies are able to connect with their customers on a deeper level, fostering long-term loyalty and brand advocacy. The ability to understand and respond to customer needs has become a cornerstone of effective marketing strategies, emphasizing the importance of a customer-centric approach that drives both customer satisfaction and business success. Equally important is the integration of marketing and supply chain functions, which is vital for ensuring that the value co-created with customers can be delivered effectively. Successful coordination between these departments is critical in ensuring that customer expectations are met in a timely and efficient manner. Without this alignment, there is a risk of disconnect between what is promised through marketing campaigns and what can be practically achieved through the supply chain. Real-time communication, shared goals, and a commitment to delivering on promises are essential components of a smooth and effective integration process. By working together, marketing and supply chain teams can create a seamless experience for the customer, ensuring that value is not only promised but also successfully delivered.

Despite the positive outcomes associated with value co-creation, the process is not without its challenges. The complexities of coordinating multiple stakeholders, managing supply chain disruptions, and meeting diverse customer expectations can hinder the successful implementation of co-creation strategies. Companies must strike a balance between meeting the demand for personalization and maintaining operational efficiency. The customization of products or services often requires increased flexibility within the supply chain, which can lead to complications such as increased lead times, higher costs, and logistical challenges. Organizations must invest in developing flexible supply chain systems and practices that can adapt to varying levels of customer demand and customization while still ensuring timely delivery and cost-effectiveness. Technology plays a significant role in overcoming some of these challenges by facilitating better communication, improving operational efficiency, and enabling more accurate demand forecasting. Digital platforms and data-driven decision-making provide companies with the tools necessary to streamline collaboration between marketing and supply chain functions. Automation and real-time information sharing also allow organizations to respond more quickly to changing customer demands, reducing the risk of delays and inefficiencies. However, while technology offers many benefits, it also requires significant investment and expertise. Companies must ensure that their technological infrastructure is aligned with their strategic objectives and capable of supporting the demands of value co-creation. Another important consideration is the organizational culture and its impact on value co-creation. A culture that fosters collaboration, empowerment, and customer-centricity is essential for driving successful value co-creation efforts. When employees are empowered to make decisions and are aligned with the company's customer-focused goals, the organization is more likely to create value that resonates with customers. Training and development programs that equip employees with the necessary skills and knowledge are key to ensuring that all stakeholders can effectively contribute to the co-creation process. A supportive culture, where departments work together towards common objectives and prioritize customer needs, is crucial for achieving successful integration between marketing and supply chain functions. Despite these challenges, companies that successfully integrate their marketing and supply chain functions can gain a competitive advantage. By fostering a collaborative, customer-centric environment and leveraging technology, organizations can enhance their ability to meet customer demands and deliver value more effectively. This integration enables companies to create stronger, more resilient relationships with their customers, leading to increased loyalty, greater customer satisfaction, and ultimately, improved business performance. The study highlights the importance of adopting a holistic approach to value co-creation, where all departments and stakeholders are aligned and focused on creating value for the customer. The findings suggest that businesses that embrace this approach are more likely to thrive in today's competitive, customer-driven marketplace.

6. Conclusion

This study underscores the significance of value co-creation in the context of marketing and supply chain integration, highlighting the dynamic relationship between businesses and customers. The increasing demand for personalized experiences and the growing expectation for customer involvement in the development of products and services reflect a shift toward more collaborative business models. Marketing's role has evolved from being a mere promotional tool to a crucial facilitator of engagement, where understanding and responding to customer needs are central to successful strategies. The integration of marketing and supply chain functions plays a critical role in ensuring that customer expectations, which are shaped by personalized marketing efforts, align with the capabilities of the supply chain to deliver on those promises. However, the study also reveals several challenges businesses face in effectively implementing value co-creation strategies, particularly in managing customer expectations, coordinating across departments, and maintaining operational flexibility within the supply chain. Despite these hurdles, the findings suggest that companies that invest in cross-department collaboration, utilize technology to streamline processes, and foster a customer-centric culture are better positioned to thrive. By integrating marketing with

supply chain operations, businesses can ensure that value is not only co-created with customers but also delivered seamlessly, leading to stronger customer relationships, greater satisfaction, and enhanced competitiveness. The research also points to the importance of overcoming barriers such as resource constraints, misalignment of strategic goals, and the complexities of logistics management. These obstacles can impede the smooth execution of co-creation processes but can be mitigated through better communication, technological investments, and a focus on continuous improvement. As organizations continue to navigate the complexities of modern markets, the ability to create value in collaboration with customers will become increasingly important. Companies that embrace value co-creation as a fundamental component of their business model are more likely to achieve long-term success and sustain competitive advantage in an ever-evolving landscape.

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