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Author(s): Christine Moorman, Rohit Deshpandé and Gerald Zaltman

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Christine Moorman, Rohit Deshpandé, & Gerald Zaltman

Factors Affecting Trust in Market Research Relationships

Building on previous work suggesting that trust is critical in facilitating exchange relationships, the authors describe a comprehensive theory of trust in market research relationships. This theory focuses on the factors that determine users' trust in their researchers, including individual, interpersonal, organizational, interorganizational/interdepartmental, and project factors. The theory is tested in a sample of 779 users. Results indicate that the interpersonal factors are the most predictive of trust. Among these factors, perceived researcher integrity, willingness to reduce research uncertainty, confidentiality, expertise, tactfulness, sincerity, congeniality, and timeliness are most strongly associated with trust. Among the remaining factors, the formalization of the user's organization, the culture of the researcher's department or organization, the research organization's or department's power, and the extent to which the research is customized also affect trust. These findings generally do not change across different types of dyadic relationships.

THE use of information has been identified as a source of a firm's market orientation (Kohli and Jaworski 1990) and sustainable competitive advantage (Day 1991; Glazer 1991; Porter and Millar 1985). One factor that distinguishes firms that merely *possess* information from those that *use* information is the level of trust users have in producers of information. Trust has been found to influence the perceived quality of user-researcher interactions, the level of researcher involvement, the level of user commitment to the relationship, and the level of market research¹ utilization

(Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé 1992). Trust is important to research relationships because, among other things, users must frequently rely on market research to design and evaluate marketing strategies, though they are often unable to evaluate research quality. Hence, being able to trust researchers to ensure quality and to interpret implications correctly for the firm is critical to the user's reliance on research in decision making.

Despite the importance of trust, scholarly inquiry on the topic has been hampered in two ways. First, very little academic research has attempted to document empirically the factors that affect trust in marketing relationships (cf. Anderson and Weitz 1990; Dwyer and Oh 1987). In fact, no study has attempted to develop a theoretical framework of factors that influence trust in research relationships. Second, research has not systematically distinguished trust from related factors. For example, Sullivan and Peterson (1982) assess trust by measuring sincerity, caution, effort in establishing a relationship, equality, goal congruence, consistency, and expectations of cooperation. Crosby, Evans, and Cowles (1990) assess trust

Christine Moorman is Assistant Professor of Marketing, Graduate School of Business, University of Wisconsin—Madison. Rohit Deshpandé is Professor of Marketing, Amos Tuck School of Business Administration, Dartmouth College. Gerald Zaltman is Joseph C. Wilson Professor of Marketing, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University. The first author thanks the Graduate School, University of Wisconsin—Madison, the second author thanks the Tuck Associates Program, and all three authors thank the Marketing Science Institute for supporting the research, as well as Jon Austin, Bob Dwyer, Ajay Kohli, and Robert Spekman for their comments on a previous version of the manuscript, and Jill Orum for her assistance in data collection and manuscript preparation.

¹We use the term "market" research rather than "marketing" research throughout to refer to the information that is collected rather than the functional area or department. Hence, our focus is on *market*

research information though we consider relationships between various users and *marketing* researchers.

by measuring sincerity, competitive behaviors, honesty, and beliefs about information sharing. As we argue, some of these dimensions are viewed more appropriately as factors that influence trust than as components of trust itself.

This article develops a theory about factors affecting user trust in marketing researchers. After describing our conceptualization of trust, we present this theory and formal hypotheses. We then report the results of an empirical study designed to test the hypotheses. Finally, we discuss the implications and limitations of our study and offer suggestions for future research.

Trust

Trust is defined as *a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence* (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé 1992). This definition spans the two general approaches to trust in the literature (see also Dwyer and Lagace 1986). First, considerable research in marketing views trust as a belief, confidence, or expectation about an exchange partner's trustworthiness that results from the partner's expertise, reliability, or intentionality (Anderson and Weitz 1990; Blau 1964; Dwyer and Oh 1987; Pruitt 1981; Rotter 1967; Schurr and Ozanne 1985). Second, trust has been viewed as a behavioral intention or behavior that reflects a reliance on a partner and involves vulnerability and uncertainty on the part of the trustor (Coleman 1990; Deutsch 1962; Giffin 1967; Schlenker, Helm, and Tedeschi 1973; Zand 1972). This view suggests that, without *vulnerability*, trust is unnecessary because outcomes are inconsequential for the trustor. It is consistent with Deutsch's (1962) definition of trust as "actions that increase one's vulnerability to another," which Coleman (1990, p. 100) suggests might include "voluntarily placing resources at the disposal of another or transferring control over resources to another." This view also suggests that *uncertainty* is critical to trust, because trust is unnecessary if the trustor can control an exchange partner's actions or has complete knowledge about those actions (Coleman 1990; Deutsch 1958).

We argue that both belief and behavioral intention components must be present for trust to exist. Accordingly, a person who believes that a partner is trustworthy and yet is unwilling to rely on that partner has only limited trust. Further, reliance on a partner without a concomitant belief about that partner's trustworthiness may indicate power and control more than it does trust.

In the context of market research relationships, vulnerability and uncertainty arise for several reasons. Many users, for example, are unable to evaluate the quality of research services, which means that they

must rely on researchers to give "credence" to or ensure a level of information quality. Other users are unable to interpret research findings and assess their implications, which means they must rely on researchers to perform such interpretive functions. Furthermore, users who rely on researchers for scanning and information collection are vulnerable because their knowledge of the environment depends, to a large extent, on their researchers' efficacy. Also increasing the extent to which users are vulnerable to researchers is the fact that researchers often provide information that is used to evaluate users' decisions (Perkins and Rao 1990; Zaltman and Moorman 1989). Finally, in relationships between users and researchers in an external research organization, users must share proprietary information about future marketing strategies, placing themselves at the mercy of researchers' prudence in maintaining confidentiality.

Theoretical Relationships

A model of the antecedents and consequences of users' trust in marketing researchers is illustrated in Figure 1. A variety of factors that affect trust are shown, including individual, interpersonal, organizational, interdepartmental/interorganizational, and project factors. Trust, in turn, influences a number of relationship processes (only trust is shown), which affect the extent to which market research is used. Trust and research utilization can, in turn, feed back to affect users' perceptions of researchers' characteristics. We do not formally investigate this feedback effect. Instead, our focus is on the factors affecting trust.

The Role of Main-Effect Characteristics in Trust: Individual User Characteristics

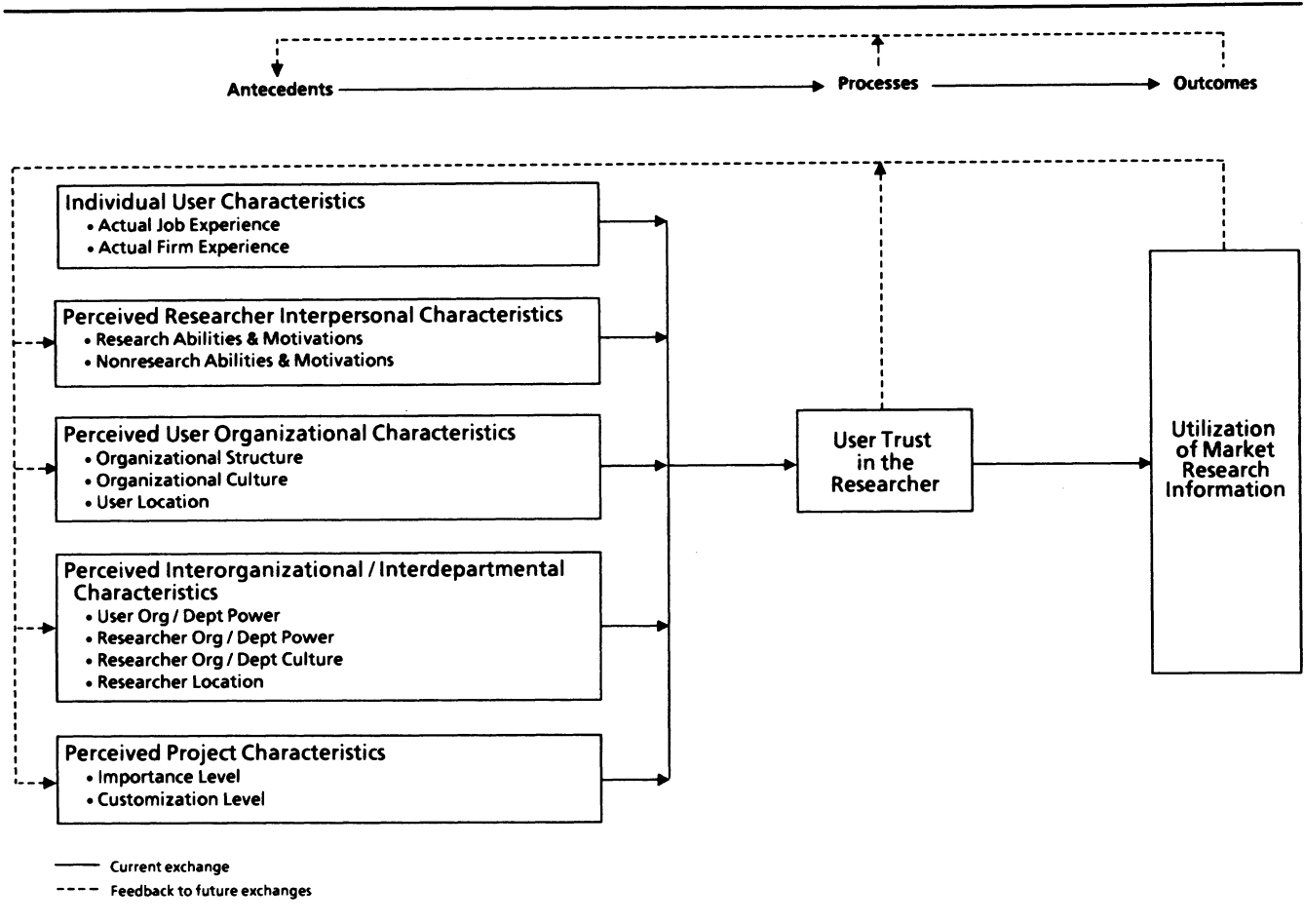
Two related characteristics, user job experience and user firm experience, are investigated for their influence on user trust in researchers. Experience refers to the user's tenure in the job or with the firm. Users with lower levels of experience are expected to be more willing to trust researchers because of their lack of company, marketing, or research knowledge. Experienced users, in contrast, are likely to have more knowledge and confidence in their own ability to use research and to manage relationships (McDaniel, Schmidt, and Hunter 1988). These qualities make experienced users less likely to rely on researchers in relationships. Hence:

H₁: User trust in researchers is higher when user (a) job experience or (b) firm experience is lower.

Researcher Interpersonal Characteristics

Interpersonal characteristics refer to a broad set of researcher qualities that are demonstrated in user-

FIGURE 1
Theoretical Framework



researcher interactions. One set of interpersonal characteristics involves a researcher's motivation and ability to engage in certain types of research activities. Another set involves nonresearch motivations and abilities that reflect a researcher's general orientation toward a user. This orientation may be exhibited in greater sensitivity toward, a willingness to protect, or acting in earnest toward a user.

Research abilities and motivations. *Perceived expertise* is a researcher's perceived knowledge and technical competence. Investigations into the persuasive effects of source credibility have demonstrated that highly trustworthy and expert spokespersons induce more positive attitudes toward the ideas they advocate than do spokespersons who are perceived as less trustworthy and expert (Giffin 1967; Hovland, Janis, and Kelley 1953). Research has also found this effect to be more likely when the message recipient is negatively oriented toward the issue (Sternthal, Dholakia, and Leavitt 1978), a situation that mirrors the skepticism many users have for research.

Extending prior research, we argue that expertise

is a key factor affecting trust, and that it should be distinguished from technical competence in two ways (see also Root and Kinnear 1991). First, whereas it is generally understood that technical errors can happen honestly, violations of trust are generally viewed as errors of commission. Second, technical competence can be observed and assessed much more readily than can acts based in trust. Given this distinction, expertise is theorized to encourage trust because a user's reliance on a researcher is highly dependent on his or her appraisal of the researcher's ability to plan and implement research activities. Research by Crosby, Evans, and Cowles (1990) supports this view by showing that perceived expertise is a significant predictor of trust (see also Busch and Wilson 1976).

Perceived willingness to reduce research uncertainty is a researcher's perceived motivation to interpret ambiguous research findings. Zaltman and Moorman (1988) suggest that researchers who are willing to reduce research uncertainty by reflecting creatively on their experience provide important value-added services for users. Barabba and Zaltman (1991) further suggest that the interpretation, extrapolation, and

creation of meaning from research data constitute the *primary* value-adding function that research performs. Furthermore, Blattberg and Hoch's (1990) findings that individuals who use both marketing models *and* intuition make better marketing decisions than do individuals who use models *or* intuition support the importance of judgment in the interpretation of research findings. These findings and suggestions follow from the fact that research studies rarely provide all of the information needed for important decisions and that every research approach has limitations, particularly in terms of how the data can be analyzed and interpreted. Therefore, because research often creates uncertainty that users must reduce in order to make decisions, users trust researchers who display a willingness to assist in this process. This discussion suggests:

- H₂: User trust in researchers is higher when researcher (a) expertise or (b) willingness to reduce uncertainty is perceived to be higher rather than lower.

Nonresearch abilities and motivations. *Perceived sincerity* is the extent to which a researcher is perceived to be honest and to be someone who makes promises with the intention of fulfilling them (Larzeleve and Huston 1980). Research suggests that when a source's past communications are truthful, receivers are more likely to rely on current communications from that source (Gahagan and Tedeschi 1968; Schlenker, Helm, and Tedeschi 1973). As Schlenker and his coauthors state, "A promiser who did not back up his words with corresponding deeds soon would be distrusted" (p. 420). Other research has suggested that sincerity is a subdimension of trust (see Crosby, Evans, and Cowles 1990; Kaplan 1973; Rotter 1967). Consistent with the first view, we believe that sincerity is better described as a determinant of trust, because when users sense that researchers are sincere or "truth tellers" (Zaltman and Moorman 1988), they extend trust because doing so lessens the vulnerability and uncertainty associated with research relationships.

Perceived integrity is a researcher's perceived unwillingness to sacrifice ethical standards to achieve individual or organizational objectives. Past research has demonstrated an empirical linkage between integrity and trust. For example, Butler and Cantrell (1984) report that integrity is a significant determinant of subordinate trust in superiors. In the context of research relationships, Hunt, Chonko, and Wilcox (1984, p. 312) suggest that threats to integrity standards all have "the common theme of deliberate production of dishonest or less-than-completely-honest research," involving falsifying figures, altering research results, misusing statistics, or misinterpreting the results of a research project to support a predetermined personal or corporate point of view. Consequently, researchers who demonstrate integrity are likely to be trusted be-

cause users can expect them to adhere to higher standards and thereby remain more objective throughout the research process.

Perceived dependability is a researcher's perceived predictability (Rempel and Holmes 1986). Other researchers have distinguished between predictability and dependability, claiming that an individual's *actions* are regarded as "predictable" whereas an *individual* is regarded as "dependable" (Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna 1985). Used in the latter way, dependability has some basis in other interpersonal antecedents, such as sincerity and integrity (see Johnson-George and Swap 1982 for a similar distinction). However, dependability that is based in a sense of predictability (as used in our research) is distinct from these higher order interpersonal qualities. Trust increases with dependability as users come to rely on the predictability and consistency of researcher actions. High variance behavior, in contrast, reduces trust.

Perceived collective orientation is a researcher's perceived willingness to cooperate with users (Zaltman and Moorman 1988). Research has found that individuals are more willing to commit to another party if that party is believed to be cooperative as opposed to competitive or individualistically oriented (Anderson and Weitz 1990; Pruitt 1981). Macneil (1980) refers to this orientation as a flexibility that partners allow one another in relationships. Given this orientation, we expect trust to follow.

Perceived tactfulness is the level of etiquette a researcher displays during exchanges with users. Tact is especially important in communicating research findings that do not meet users' expectations or that could be embarrassing, because users strongly prefer research that supports the status quo or confirms prior beliefs (Deshpandé and Zaltman 1982, 1984; Perkins and Rao 1990; Root and Kinnear 1991). If users cannot count on researchers to have a sense of etiquette when they discover bad news, researchers will not be trusted.

Perceived timeliness is a researcher's perceived efficiency in responding to user needs. Relatedly, Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1990) describe responsiveness as a factor that affects consumers' perceptions of service quality. Austin (1991) also notes the importance of timeliness to user satisfaction with and trust in researchers and suggests that it involves paying bills on time, sending requested information or materials in a timely manner, and providing feedback within a reasonable time period. Finally, timeliness has been reported to be correlated positively with manager satisfaction and the utilization of information systems (Bailey and Pearson 1983).

Perceived confidentiality is the researcher's perceived willingness to keep proprietary research findings safe from the user's competitors. Other research

has demonstrated the importance of confidentiality to trust and related exchange processes (Bailey and Pearson 1983; Hunt, Chonko, and Wilcox 1984; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry 1990). For example, the perceived confidentiality of disclosures increases users' perceptions of counselors' credibility (Corcoran 1988), increases the willingness to relate in social support group settings (Posey 1988), and is a critical component of social exchange and trust among community members (Aguilar 1984).

Perceived congeniality is the extent to which a researcher is perceived to be friendly, courteous, and positively disposed toward the user. This dimension has also been linked to satisfaction (Ives, Olson, and Baroudi 1983) and perceptions of service quality (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry 1990). Though congeniality may not always be necessary to establish good working relationships (Crouch and Yetton 1988), it seems reasonable that, given the intangible nature of research exchanges, users would be likely to make attributions about researchers' trustworthiness on the basis of a variety of cues. One simple cue, which reflects a minimal level of user orientation, is a researcher's courtesy to the user. Being courteous, of course, is not expected to be sufficient to maintain trust without other researcher qualities; however, congeniality should contribute to trust.

Given that the aforementioned qualities reduce risk and uncertainty, researchers displaying attitudes and behaviors that reflect these abilities and motivations should be able to increase users' beliefs in their trustworthiness and increase users' willingness to rely on them. Hence, we formally hypothesize:

- H₃: User trust in researchers is higher when researcher (a) sincerity, (b) integrity, (c) dependability, (d) collective orientation, (e) tactfulness, (f) timeliness, (g) confidentiality, or (h) congeniality is perceived to be higher rather than lower.

User Organizational Characteristics

User's organizational structure. Two aspects of firm structure, bureaucratization and complexity, are related to trust.

Perceived organizational bureaucratization is the degree to which a user views his or her organization as managed primarily through formalized relationships and a centralized authority (John 1984). *Formalization* is the degree to which rules define organizational roles, authority relations, communications, norms and sanctions, and procedures (Hall, Haas, and Johnson 1967; John and Martin 1984), including the flexibility managers have when handling a particular task (Deshpandé 1982). *Centralization* is the degree of delegation in organizational decision-making authority (Aiken and Hage 1968).

There are two general views of the effect of bu-

reaucracy on trust. One view suggests that bureaucratically arranged organizations produce trust through structural and procedural controls, especially when other person-based and process-based modes are absent (Shapiro 1987; Zucker 1986). The other view is that bureaucratic structures established to ensure efficiency (Arrow 1974) reduce the likelihood of trust in organizational relationships. This view is supported by research noting that bureaucratic structuring increases opportunism (John 1984) and that managers deprived of decision-making authority have correspondingly less trust in their organizations (Hrebiniak 1974).

Given that we view trust as developing from interpersonal relationships, organizational bureaucratization is expected to reduce trust because it discourages interpersonal risk-taking, including displays of uncertainty and vulnerability (Fox 1974). A bureaucratic environment also discourages flexibility toward exchange partners, thus reducing trust (John and Martin 1984). As Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987, p. 349) note, "... reliance on bureaucratic structuring will affect trustworthiness adversely in that unilateral decisions, centralized authority, and operations 'strictly by the book' do not communicate desired coordination, reciprocity, or commitment to the relationship."

Perceived organizational complexity is the degree of formal structural differentiation within an organization (Blau and Schoenherr 1971). Price and Mueller (1986) note that highly complex organizations are characterized by many occupational roles, divisions, departments, levels of authority, and operating sites. Complexity can be found in the horizontal differentiation of divisions and departments, the vertical differentiation of levels of authority, and the spatial differentiation of operating sites. Complexity should reduce trust in research relationships for two reasons. First, greater complexity may mean that researchers and users are not physically close to one another, which interferes with their ability to build trust in relationships. Additionally, complexity may threaten trust-building because of the likelihood of greater dissimilarities in beliefs and norms as firms add more divisions, departments, and roles. Hence, we hypothesize:

- H₄: User trust in researchers is higher when the user organization's (a) formalization, (b) centralization, or (c) complexity is perceived to be lower rather than higher.

User's perceived organizational culture. Organizational culture, defined as "the pattern of shared values and beliefs that help individuals understand organizational functioning and that provide norms for behavior in the organization" (Deshpandé and Webster 1989, p. 4), is theorized to affect trust according

to the type of culture present. Deshpandé, Farley, and Webster (1992) assess four modal types of organizational cultures: clans, adhocracies, hierarchies, and markets.

Clans emphasize cohesiveness, participation, and teamwork. Members of organizations with strong clan cultures should be willing to trust their researchers because the cultural norm is the establishment and maintenance of successful working relationships (Ouchi 1980). Moreover, clan members are generally viewed as part of an extended family, a situation ideal for the creation and maintenance of trusting relationships. *Adhocracies* emphasize entrepreneurship, creativity, and adaptability. Hence, members of organizations with strong adhocracies should be willing to trust researchers because the norms emphasize tolerance and flexibility (Mintzberg 1979) and because such cultures are likely to place a premium on employee skills (including research skills) that offer stability in dynamic settings. *Hierarchies* emphasize order, uniformity, and efficiency. Lower levels of trust are expected because such cultures provide sufficient stability and control to make trust less necessary or salient. *Markets* emphasize competitiveness and goal achievement. Trust is expected to be lower in these cultures because personal relationships (i.e., team membership) are viewed as instrumental and are used opportunistically (Williamson 1975). We hypothesize:

- H₅: User trust in researchers is higher when the user organization is perceived to be a (a) stronger rather than weaker, clan or adhocracy culture or (b) weaker rather than stronger, hierarchical or market culture.

User organizational location. Research indicates that a manager's position within an organization affects a variety of interpersonal and decision-making processes. For example, organizational position has been reported to influence a manager's knowledge about organizational phenomena (Walker 1985), self-esteem (Tharenou and Harker 1982), leadership style (Adams 1977), and perceived fairness (Stolte 1983). More prominent organizational positions also have been shown to be related to trust by lower status employees (Tjosvold 1977) and general trust in the organization, including the degree to which it is perceived as benign, cooperative, or consistent (Hrebiniak 1974). Conversely, other research has shown no linkage between organizational location and trust (Zalesny, Farace, and Kurcher-Hawkins 1985).

Given the view of trust in this research—as involving a willingness to rely on another party—a theoretical position that departs from the literature is offered. We argue that users with lower levels of authority, in general, are less able to influence the behaviors of others in the firm. Hence, they develop more trusting relationships to accomplish goals. Users in

higher level positions, in contrast, may be able to accomplish their goals without trusting relationships. We hypothesize:

- H₆: User trust in researchers is higher when users hold organizational positions with lower rather than higher levels of authority.

Interorganizational/Interdepartmental Characteristics

When a relationship involves an internal user and an external researcher, the relationship is interorganizational, whereas if the relationship involves an internal user and an internal researcher, the relationship is interdepartmental. Three general categories comprise this set of characteristics. One set involves users' perceptions of power in organizational or departmental relationships; the other two involve users' perceptions of two research organizational or departmental characteristics.

Perceived power in the relationship. User departmental/organizational power generally is due to the user's status as research initiator and buyer whereas researcher organizational/departmental power is most likely to emanate from the researcher's specialized experiential, informational, or technological assets. Previous research on power in relationships has led to two general findings. First, power breeds trust (Frost, Stimpson, and Maughan 1978; Sullivan and Peterson 1982), functional conflict (from the perspective of the firm having power; Anderson and Narus 1990), and respect from exchange partners (Anderson, Lodish, and Weitz 1987). Second, power creates conflict (from the perspective of the firm against which the power is used; Anderson and Narus 1990) and mistrust of the powerful parties' intentions (Anderson and Weitz 1990).

Following Anderson and Narus (1990), we predict that perceived power will affect trust differently depending on which organization or department has that power. Specifically, given that research organizations or departments have achieved power because of their specialized skills, trust is likely to follow as users rely on those skills in the design and evaluation of marketing strategies. Moreover, when researchers have power due to specialized skills, users may lack the expertise to evaluate research adequately and hence the use of research may involve uncertainty and vulnerability—ideal conditions for trust to emerge (Barber 1983). In contrast, perceived user organization/department power may be used to direct researchers' behaviors, which reduces users' need to trust in the relationship. We formally hypothesize:

- H₇: User trust in researchers is higher when the perception is that (a) research organizational/departmental power is higher rather than lower or (b) user organizational/departmental power is lower rather than higher.

User's perceptions of a researcher's culture. Past research has demonstrated that perceptions of an exchange partner's culture affect trust in that partner (see Peterson and Shimada 1978; Sullivan et al. 1981). Hence, we believe that a user's perceptions of a researcher's culture will influence user trust in researchers. As with user cultures, we expect the sense of family in clans and the tolerance and flexibility of adhocracies to be associated with stronger trust in researchers. Conversely, a user will have lower trust in researcher cultures that are hierarchies or markets. Given the presence of different subcultures within a single organization (Deshpandé, Farley, and Webster 1992; Deshpandé and Webster 1989; Smircich 1983), this effect is expected regardless of whether the unit of analysis is two organizations or two departments.

H₈: User trust in researchers is higher when a user perceives a researcher's organizational/departmental culture to be a stronger clan or adhocracy culture, or to be a weaker hierarchical or market culture.

User's perception of a researcher's location. Researchers located in higher levels of the organization are more likely to influence decision making within the organization than are researchers at lower levels. This capability increases researcher perceived credibility and power which, according to the theory proposed up to this point, increases user trust in them.

H₉: User trust in researchers is higher when the researcher's organizational location is perceived to be higher rather than lower.

Project Characteristics

Perceived importance of research project. A research project might be important for a variety of reasons. It may, for example, involve a strategic decision (e.g., product addition or deletion), portend important financial or competitive considerations for the firm, or hold important career implications for an individual. Higher project importance levels are expected to increase user trust in researchers because such levels raise users' vulnerability in the relationship, which compels them to work hard at developing effective research relationships and causes increased reliance on researchers. Unimportant projects involve less vulnerability, which means that trust is correspondingly less salient in these relationships.²

²We acknowledge that users are likely to choose researchers they trust for important projects. However, if we control for prior trust in the current exchange, users are also likely to trust researchers more when they are engaged in important, as opposed to unimportant, projects.

Perceived customization of research project. Heide and Miner (1991) report that customization increases the generation of relationship-specific assets, which other research has linked to increased collaboration in (Williamson 1975), continuation of (Levinthal and Fichman 1988), and positive evaluation of (Surprenant and Solomon 1987) relationships. Like other customized exchanges, custom research entails greater levels of risk for users than does noncustomized research because users must depend on researchers to make relationship-specific decisions and investments throughout the project. This situation produces a more likely context for the development of trust than does a syndicated research project in which less researcher discretion is necessary and, hence, there is less opportunity for user uncertainty and vulnerability. We hypothesize:

H₁₀: User trust in researchers is higher when the project is perceived to be more rather than less (a) important or (b) customized.

The Effects of Individual and Organizational Moderators on H₁–H₁₀

Differences between users and researchers can facilitate or inhibit the role of trust in research relationships. Following Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé (1992), we theorize about the effects of two individual differences and one organizational difference on the hypothesized relationships. As we consider this part of our research to be exploratory, the hypotheses are more speculative. We do, however, offer formal hypotheses (aside from the null) as a way of furthering research on these moderating effects.

Individual differences: members of the same and different communities. Previous work has described community differences between users and providers of knowledge (Caplan, Morrison, and Stambaugh 1975) and how these differences affect knowledge use and other outcomes (Crosby, Evans, and Cowles 1990; Deshpandé and Zaltman 1984, 1987). We examine two general types of community differences: (1) when the user and provider are both researchers versus when one is a manager, and (2) when the user and the provider are both in marketing versus when one is a non-marketer (e.g., an engineer).

In general, our theorizing about the effects of similarities and differences is based in the principle of salience in social psychological research. Salience is typically used to refer to stimuli that are prominent in relation to a particular context because of their innate qualities, the situational environment, or a person's prior knowledge or frame of reference. Prior research suggests that individuals tend to pay more attention to, to attribute more causality to, and to be more capable of retrieving salient stimuli (Taylor et al 1979;

Tversky and Kahneman 1974). Applied to the issue of how dyadic conditions affect the importance of various characteristics to trust, we suggest that characteristics that are shared between dyad members are less salient to the partners and, hence, have a weaker influence on how the relationship operates. In contrast, characteristics that are not shared are more salient to the partners and, hence, have a stronger impact on the relationship.

Therefore, users working with researchers from different communities (i.e., manager-researcher and marketer-nonmarketer dyads) are expected to rely more heavily on interpersonal characteristics in the decision to trust because this unshared information will be more salient in the exchange process. These interpersonal characteristics are not expected to be salient when dyads contain members of the same community (i.e., researcher-researcher and marketer-marketer dyads), as both parties are likely to display these characteristics in their exchanges. The effects of the remaining characteristics (e.g., organizational or project factors) on trust are not sensitive to these community differences because they do not vary systematically across similar and dissimilar dyads. Hence, we hypothesize:

H₁₁: The relationships between trust and interpersonal characteristics are stronger for relationships involving dissimilar parties than for relationships involving similar parties.

Organizational differences: intraorganizational and interorganizational relationships. Given that two departments are more likely to be similar to one another if they are within a single firm than if they are in two different organizations, it follows that organizational characteristics should be more salient, and hence stronger predictors of trust, in interorganizational relationships than in intraorganizational relationships. We expect no differences, however, in the effects of individual, interpersonal, interorganizational/interdepartmental, and project characteristics on trust because such characteristics are not expected to vary systematically in interorganizational and intraorganizational dyads.³ Hence, we hypothesize:

H₁₂: The relationships between trust and the organizational characteristics are stronger for interorganizational relationships than for intraorganizational relationships.

³Though clearly the interorganizational/interdepartmental characteristics will vary depending on whether the relationship is interorganizational or intraorganizational, in this case the variability is a function of the nature of the variable and its conceptualization rather than a condition that reflects differences that can be examined empirically.

Method

Measure Development

On the basis of the construct definitions, we either developed measures or borrowed them from past research (see Appendix) and then performed two pretests. The first pretest assisted in item refinement. A list of defined measures and items for those measures was mailed to 10 academicians and 10 practitioners. Following Churchill (1979), we requested recipients to assign each item to the measure they thought appropriate, as well as to note when they thought the item could be represented by more than one measure.

The second pretest, which determined that trust could be discriminated adequately from the interpersonal characteristics, involved a sample of 50 randomly selected members of the sample frame. Recipients were asked to evaluate their most recent relationship with either an internal or external researcher. Responses (54%) were analyzed for discriminant validity with related constructs by means of an exploratory factor analysis (principal components analysis with a varimax rotation) and for reliability by examining item-to-total correlations. Results indicated that trust could be differentiated from related constructs and that it was reliable.

Procedure

A sample of 1680 research users was generated by phoning each firm and division on the *Advertising Age* 1990 list of the top 200 advertisers. The users consisted of (1) marketing managers (e.g., vice presidents of marketing, marketing directors, or product and brand managers who evaluated either internal or external researchers), (2) marketing researchers within a firm who evaluated external researchers, and (3) nonmarketing managers (e.g., engineers, product development managers, and manufacturing managers) who evaluated internal researchers.

Each sample member was mailed a cover letter, a questionnaire, and a brief author profile. The cover letter explained the purpose of the research and promised a summary of the results to all who returned their business cards with completed questionnaires. The questionnaires, though identical in structure, directed respondents to evaluate different types of relationships. One new dollar bill was affixed to the cover letter as an advance token of appreciation. Finally, respondents were asked for the name and address of one nonmarketing manager who used marketing research. These recommendations yielded 188 eligible respondents, increasing the sample size to 1868. Three weeks after the first mailing, randomly selected nonrespondents were phoned, reminded of the survey, and encouraged to complete and return the questionnaire. Two weeks after the phoning, a second mailing was

sent to all nonrespondents. A similar procedure was used for the recommended nonmarketers, with the exception that the phone calls were not necessary because the response rate was above average after the first mailing.

Table 1 summarizes the samples and response rates for each of the four dyads. As noted there, some recipients returned the questionnaire because it was inappropriate for their organization or experience, which reduced the sample to 1719. Of these eligible individuals, 779 (45.3%) responded. The response rates varied across dyads from 35.8% for the internal marketing manager–external researcher dyad to 58.0% for the internal researcher–external researcher dyad. Such variance across types of respondents has been noted previously (Deshpandé and Zaltman 1984). Earlier and later responses were compared on key variables and no differences were found.

Measure Purification

The Appendix contains the measures and items. Following Gerbing and Anderson (1988), we purified our proposed measures by assessing their reliability and unidimensionality. First, we examined the item-to-total correlations for the items in each of the proposed scales and deleted items with low correlations if they tapped no additional domain of interest. Then, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis on items from subsets of theoretically related measures to assess the extent to which they reflected a single dimension. The subsets corresponded to the characteristics contained in a given hypothesis.⁴ After deletion of items having high correlations with items for other measures, models ranging from one to *n* factors were estimated, with *n*

⁴This procedure was performed in subsets because of the problems associated with purifying large numbers of constructs by confirmatory factor analysis and the importance of establishing unidimensionality only for highly theoretically related measures.

corresponding to the number of hypothesized measures and trust (e.g., H_3 , $n = 9$). In each case, the predicted number of constructs had a superior fit as indicated by standard goodness-of-fit indices and by the low cross-loadings between constructs.⁵ These findings provide evidence that the predicted number of measures best represents the underlying data structure, and that the factors theorized to affect trust are distinct from the measure of trust itself. Table 2 notes that fitted models retained all measures at acceptable reliability levels.

General Theory-Testing Approach

We tested the hypotheses by using a single regression model in which all main and interaction effects were entered simultaneously as predictors of the dependent variable, trust. Prior to that test, we created several sets of variables by using dummy and effects coding. First, researcher and user organizational locations were dummy coded so that each level was a variable coded a 1 and all other levels were coded 0. Second, variables representing the main effects of the individual and organizational moderators were constructed by means of unweighted effects coding (see Cohen and Cohen 1983).⁶ Following from a coding of the re-

⁵In each case χ^2 was significantly smaller than competing confirmatory factor models ($\Delta \chi^2_1 > 3.84$).

⁶Despite the unbalanced nature of the dyad characteristics in our sample (e.g., 276 intraorganizational dyads and 503 interorganizational dyads), unweighted effects coding was adopted over weighted effects coding (which would adjust the parameter estimates by group size) for two reasons. First, the first three dyads (see Table 1) were evenly sampled at the outset of the study and deviations in response reflected actual differences in these samples. For example, many IMM-EMR and IMM-IMR relationships did not exist in the firms we sampled; therefore the questionnaires were passed on to an IMR who was instructed to complete it by focusing on an EMR relationship. Hence, the eligible sample for dyad 3 increased from the original sample level. In the case of dyad 4, we requested that the respondents in the first three dyads (695 respondents) provide the name of a nonmarketing

TABLE 1
Dyadic Relationships and Response Rates

Relationship Type	Original Sample	Eligible Sample	Number of Respondents	Response Rates (%)
All dyads	1868	1719	779	45.3
Dyad 1, IMM-IMR: internal marketing manager– internal marketing researcher	560	489	192	39.2
Dyad 2, IMM-EMR: internal marketing manager– external marketing researcher	560	480	172	35.8
Dyad 3, IMR-EMR: internal marketing researcher– external marketing researcher	560	570 ^a	331	58.0
Dyad 4, INM-IMR: internal nonmarketing manager– internal marketing researcher	188	180	84	46.6

^aThe eligible sample increase over the original sample is due to the reassignment of dyad 1 and dyad 2 members to dyad 3.

TABLE 2
Properties of Purified Measures

Measure	Items	Range	Mean	S.D.	Alpha
USER TRUST IN RESEARCHER	5	1-7	5.32	1.11	.84
<i>Individual User Characteristics</i>					
ACTUAL JOB EXPERIENCE	1	1-35	8.54	6.87	—
ACTUAL FIRM EXPERIENCE	1	1-30	3.34	3.19	—
<i>Perceived Researcher Interpersonal Characteristics</i>					
EXPERTISE	3	1-7	5.74	1.16	.92
WILLINGNESS TO REDUCE UNCERTAINTY	3	1-7	4.82	1.03	.57
SINCERITY	3	1-7	6.04	.97	.92
INTEGRITY	3	1-7	6.16	.97	.77
DEPENDABILITY	2	1-7	5.16	1.04	.80 ^a
COLLECTIVE ORIENTATION	3	1-7	5.11	1.06	.70
TACTFULNESS	3	1-7	5.49	1.00	.78
TIMELINESS	3	1-7	5.61	1.12	.79
CONFIDENTIALITY	3	1-7	6.21	1.08	.89
CONGENIALITY	3	1-7	5.88	.96	.77
<i>Perceived User Organizational Characteristics</i>					
FORMALIZATION	15	1-4	2.06	.39	.79
CENTRALIZATION	8	1-4	3.05	.40	.73
COMPLEXITY	1	1-4	1.93	.93	—
CLAN CULTURE	4	1-100	21.08	12.74	.87
ADHOCRACY CULTURE	4	1-100	21.79	12.38	.87
HIERARCHICAL CULTURE	3	1-100	25.67	14.80	.81
MARKET CULTURE	4	1-100	30.61	14.25	.87
USER LOCATION ^b	1	1-3	—	—	—
<i>Perceived Interorganizational/Interdepartmental Characteristics</i>					
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT POWER	3	1-7	4.00	1.37	.79
USER ORG/DEPT POWER	3	1-7	3.53	1.64	.87
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT CLAN	4	1-100	24.56	12.74	.91
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT ADHOCRACY	4	1-100	24.16	12.38	.91
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT HIERARCHY	4	1-100	22.91	14.80	.91
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT MARKET	4	1-100	28.19	14.25	.91
RESEARCHER LOCATION ^b	1	1-4	—	—	—
<i>Perceived Project Characteristics</i>					
IMPORTANCE	2	1-7	6.02	1.02	.74 ^a
CUSTOMIZATION	1	1-7	6.24	1.35	—

^aPearson correlations.

^bVariables are nominal. Hence, the means and standard deviations are not reported.

spondents' job titles and instructions to focus on a particular type of provider, RESDYAD consists of researcher-manager relationships (coded -1) and researcher-researcher relationships (coded 1); MKTDYAD consists of nonmarketer-marketer rela-

manager who uses research information. Hence, the resulting 188 sample members would appear to be proportional to the actual number of INM-IMR relationships in these firms. Second, it is unclear whether differences in response rates reflect actual differences in the number of these relationships (suggesting that our sample is ecologically accurate) or represent biases in the willingness to respond to the survey. A brief followup of nonrespondents in dyads 1 and 2 indicated that many of the nonrespondents were no longer with the firm or did not use research in their firms. Therefore, our response rates, though different from one another, appear to reflect the types of research relationships in the large firms in our sample. (We did experiment with a weighted effects coding scheme to assess the impact on our parameter estimates. Few changes occurred in the estimates.)

tionships (coded -1) and marketer-marketer relationships (coded 1). Following from instructions asking respondents to focus on either an *external* or *internal* researcher, ORGDYAD consists of interorganizational relationships (coded -1) and intraorganizational relationships (coded 1). Finally, given the intercorrelated nature of the independent variables, a procedure recommended by Mason and Perreault (1991) was performed to rule out multicollinearity as a source of inflated standard errors for the parameter estimates.

Results

Table 3 contains the coefficients resulting from the regression model. As suggested there, a user's trust in his or her researcher is significantly affected by 15

TABLE 3
Regression Analyses^a

Independent Variables ^b	Standardized Beta Coefficient	t-value
H₁: Effect of Individual User Characteristics		
ACTUAL JOB EXPERIENCE	.00	.19
ACTUAL FIRM EXPERIENCE	-.01	-.45
H₂: Effect of Perceived Researcher Research Abilities and Motivations		
EXPERTISE	.19	6.18*
WILLINGNESS TO REDUCE UNCERTAINTY	.32	9.53*
H₃: Effect of Perceived Researcher Personal Abilities and Motivations		
SINCERITY	.15	3.41*
INTEGRITY	.62	18.16*
DEPENDABILITY	.01	.47
COLLECTIVE ORIENTATION	.04	1.32
TACTFULNESS	.17	4.73*
TIMELINESS	.08	2.31**
CONFIDENTIALITY	.26	8.10*
CONGENIALITY	-.10	-2.45*
H₄: Effect of Perceived User Organizational Structure		
FORMALIZATION	-.14	-1.85***
CENTRALIZATION	.02	.00
COMPLEXITY	.02	.66
H₅: Effect of Perceived User Organizational Culture		
CLAN CULTURE	.02	.85
ADHOCRACY CULTURE	.00	.03
HIERARCHICAL CULTURE	-.01	-.26
MARKET CULTURE	-.002	-.09
H₆: Effect of Perceived User Organizational Location		
USER LOCATION (researcher)	-.03	-1.04
USER LOCATION (marketing manager)	-.004	-.13
USER LOCATION (vice president)	.03	1.31
H₇: Effect of Perceived User and Researcher Organizational/Departmental Power		
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT POWER	.08	3.45*
USER ORG/DEPT POWER	.01	.39
H₈: Effect of Perceived Researcher Organizational/Departmental Culture		
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT CLAN	.03	1.17
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT ADHOCRACY	.01	.19
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT HIERARCHY	-.05	-1.81***
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT MARKET	-.03	-.75
H₉: Effect of Perceived Researcher Organizational Location		
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT LOCATION (report to brand/product managers)	-.29	-2.36**
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT LOCATION (report to top or general managers)	-.01	-.57
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT LOCATION (report to marketing/sales managers)	.02	.82
RESEARCHER ORG/DEPT LOCATION (report to engineers/product development managers)	-.02	-.72
H₁₀: Effect of Perceived Project Characteristics		
IMPORTANCE	-.04	-1.04
CUSTOMIZATION	.04	2.01**
H₁₁: Effect of Individual Moderators on H₁-H₁₀^c		
RESEARCHER TIMELINESS × RESDYAD	.07	2.61**
H₁₂: Effect of Organizational Moderators on H₁-H₁₀^c		
USER ORGANIZATION FORMALIZATION × ORGDYAD	.06	3.83**
Total R ² =	.51	

^aTo be conservative, all tests of significance are two-tailed.

RESDYAD = 1 for researcher-researcher dyads, -1 for researcher-manager dyads

MKTDYAD = 1 for marketer-marketer dyads, -1 for marketer-nonmarketer dyads

ORGDYAD = 1 for intraorganizational dyads, -1 for interorganizational dyads

^bAll independent variables are perceived by the user, unless otherwise noted.

^cOnly the significant interactions are displayed.

*p < .001.

**p < .05.

***p < .10.

main and interaction effects. We review these results in the order of the hypotheses.

The Effects of Main-Effect Characteristics on Trust

As neither of the individual user characteristics is a significant predictor of user trust in the researcher, $H_{1a,b}$ is not supported. However, most of the researcher interpersonal characteristics are significant. Both perceived research abilities and motivations significantly predict trust: the researcher's perceived expertise ($\beta = .19, p < .001$) and perceived willingness to reduce research uncertainty ($\beta = .32, p < .001$). These findings support $H_{2a,b}$. Many of the nonresearch abilities and motivations are also significant predictors of trust, including the researcher's perceived sincerity ($\beta = .15, p < .001$), integrity ($\beta = .62, p < .001$), tactfulness ($\beta = .17, p < .001$), timeliness ($\beta = .08, p < .05$), and confidentiality ($\beta = .26, p < .001$). These results support $H_{3a}, H_{3b}, H_{3c}, H_{3f}$, and H_{3g} . The researcher's perceived congeniality, in contrast, has a significant negative effect on trust ($\beta = -.10, p < .001$), failing to support H_{3h} . Finally, as the researcher's perceived dependability and collective orientation are unrelated to trust, H_{3c} and H_{3d} are not supported.

Fewer of the organizational variables have an effect on user trust. User organization formalization has the expected negative effect on trust ($\beta = .14, p < .10$), supporting H_{4a} . However, user organization centralization, complexity, and culture do not predict user trust, failing to support $H_{4b,c}$ and $H_{5a,b}$. Finally, user location also has no effect on trust, which does not support H_6 .

For the interorganizational/interdepartmental characteristics, we find that research organization/department power predicts user trust ($\beta = .08, p < .001$), which supports H_{7a} . User organization/department power is unrelated to user trust, however, so H_{7b} is not supported. A user's perception of researcher's organization/department culture is also generally unrelated to trust, except when the perceived culture is a hierarchy ($\beta = -.05, p < .10$), in which case the perception has a negative effect on user trust. These findings partially support H_{8b} but fail to support H_{8a} . Finally, results for researchers who report to brand and product managers (as opposed to higher levels of the organization) are related negatively to user trust ($\beta = -.29, p < .05$), providing support for H_9 . None of the other researcher locations are significantly related to trust. Finally, project importance has no effect on trust and H_{10a} is not supported. However, project customization is a weak predictor of trust ($\beta = .04, p < .05$), supporting H_{10b} .

The Effects of Individual and Organizational Moderators on H_1 – H_{10}

In general, the effects of the moderators on the hypothesized relationships are weak. For example, none

of the interactions involving marketing orientation differences (MKTDYAD) are significant, indicating a lack of support for H_{11} . Furthermore, only one of the interpersonal characteristics (timeliness, $\beta = .07, p < .05$) interacts with differences in research orientation (RESDYAD) to predict trust, also indicating a general lack of support for H_{11} . This significant interaction indicates that the timeliness-trust relationship is stronger in researcher-researcher relationships than in researcher-manager relationships. These findings also indicate that the relationships between trust and the individual, organizational, interorganizational/interdepartmental, and project characteristics are unaffected by community similarities and differences.

For the interactions involving organizational differences (ORGDYAD), results indicate a lack of support for H_{12} , which predicts that organizational characteristics will be stronger predictors of trust in interorganizational relationships. In fact, there is only one significant interaction involving ORGDYAD and these characteristics, the effect of user's organizational formalization \times ORGDYAD on trust ($\beta = .06, p < .05$). Examining this interaction by plotting the regression lines under the two conditions of the moderating variable reveals an interesting result. When formalization is low, its effect on trust is stronger in interorganizational dyads than in intraorganizational dyads. However, as formalization increases, its effect on trust is stronger in intraorganizational dyads. This result should be viewed as a contingency on the main-effect relationship between formalization and trust noted previously. Finally, ORGDYAD does not interact with the individual, interpersonal, interorganizational/interdepartmental, or project characteristics.

Discussion

The traditional view of trust adopted in marketing has been based on a purely psychological approach. Our research complements and extends that view to include sociological theories. Hence, our definition includes both a confidence in an exchange partner (the psychological component) and a willingness to rely on an exchange partner (the sociological component). Confidence and reliance, in turn, indicate the critical roles of uncertainty and vulnerability to trust in relationships. In particular, we argue that if a trustor has complete knowledge about an exchange partner's actions, is able to control the exchange partner, or has not transferred critical resources to an exchange partner, trust is not necessary in the relationship.

Given this theoretical foundation, our research further establishes that trust is distinct from related antecedents, including a variety of interpersonal, organizational, and interorganizational factors that may

affect the level of trust in relationships. Distinguishing between trust and other concepts accomplishes two objectives. First, it assists in defining the nomological network of trust and related factors. Second, it provides a preliminary understanding of the conditions under which trust is facilitated or undermined and gives direction to future research about the factors that vary concomitantly with trust. In the remainder of this section we discuss these factors and provide insight into their theoretical and managerial implications.

Our results indicate that trust may be more a function of interpersonal factors than of individual factors. These results are consistent with a general research trend focusing on trust as a product of the relationship between two parties as opposed to a personality trait exhibited by either party. Despite this trend, we believe future research would benefit from identifying and testing other individual characteristics that may affect trust levels. For example, an individual's interpersonal orientation—the extent to which a person is interested in and reactive to other people (Swap and Rubin 1983)—might make a person more likely to trust others.

Among the perceived interpersonal characteristics, a researcher's perceived integrity is the most important predictor of trust, indicating that users expect researchers to adhere to high standards and to maintain objectivity throughout the research process. Researcher integrity is likely to be reflected in an array of behaviors over the research cycle. These behaviors can include at the outset the researcher's clear statement about what cannot be accomplished given time, budget, or other constraints. They might even include the researcher's refusal to undertake a project when he or she feels various constraints preclude the collection of sound data (Barabba and Zaltman 1991). At the end of the process, a researcher's refusal to participate in a skewed interpretation of the data also contributes to the development and maintenance of trust. Additionally, users know that research results may be subject to a variety of interpretations, especially by people in different functional areas. Researcher integrity provides a stabilizing effect that users come to rely on in the reconciliation of competing user judgments.

The importance of integrity to trust suggests several important research questions. First, given that integrity is likely to be important because users are unable to evaluate research quality, it may be interesting to assess the degree to which the importance of integrity is diminished as a user's ability to evaluate research quality increases. Furthermore, future research might assess the importance of individual and organizational factors to integrity. Discovering, for example, the types of organizational cultures, structures, and reward systems that foster integrity would

be useful, especially given the current trend of restructuring internal market research departments and subcontracting market research to commercial research firms. Relatedly, investigating the degree to which individual and organizational factors jointly influence integrity should suggest ways to manage researchers and their environments to foster integrity. Finally, understanding the types of beliefs held by high integrity researchers about themselves, their roles, and their relationships with others may provide insight into whether low integrity is a product of opportunistic, instrumental thought processes or some other set of beliefs.

Following integrity, the researcher's perceived willingness to reduce research uncertainty is the next most important predictor of trust. As described previously, reducing uncertainty may involve using fewer data analysis skills and more data interpretation skills. Such skills require researchers to utilize their broad understanding of the marketplace and research insights to construct explanations about research findings. In this process, the researcher shares his or her tacit knowledge or frame of reference with the user. This frame of reference is likely to be sophisticated because the researcher who participates in the uncertainty absorption process is also likely to be more experienced and hence to have an especially useful inventory of tacit knowledge (Sternberg and Wagner 1986). Attempts to identify researcher qualities facilitating this skill would be useful to firms attempting to recruit such individuals. Finally, because of the importance of integrity, our results indicate that researchers must carefully distinguish between uncertainty absorption and strict data analysis when discussing findings with users.

Researcher confidentiality is also very important to trust in research relationships, which is not surprising given that information can be used to secure competitive advantage. Future research should examine the cues that increase and decrease perceptions of confidentiality. For example, is confidentiality expressed solely in an individual researcher's characteristics? To what degree do organizational or departmental norms and procedures contribute to or detract from such perceptions? Do users trust confidentiality contracts signed by external research firms? It may also be interesting to investigate how the absence of confidentiality affects the exchanges between parties, with attention to dysfunctional behaviors (e.g., users' withholding of important background information) that may undermine the utilization of research in firms (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé 1992).

This research supports the generally accepted idea that expertise is an important foundation for trust. Our research also highlights, however, that trust is affected by a variety of other factors that are not attri-

butions tied exclusively to technical competence. Specifically, given that research is essentially a shared form of knowledge (Hunt 1990), its truthfulness is affected in large part by a researcher's demonstrated sincerity. Hence, the "truth" of research may be determined in part by a "trust" test in addition to other means of validating knowledge claims (Zaltman, LeMasters, and Heffring 1982). In fact, this "trust" test is a component of the authority truth test noted in the sociology of knowledge literature (Holzner and Marx 1979). Future research could extend some of the preliminary applied sociology work that identifies different kinds of "truth tests" (Deshpandé 1986; Weiss and Bucuvalas 1980) by examining the conditions under which various tests (including the trust test) are employed individually or jointly to influence knowledge acceptance.

Two other perceived researcher characteristics important to trust are a researcher's timeliness and congeniality. Of the two, the negative relationship between congeniality and trust warrants the most attention. Past research has typically found a positive relationship between sources' courtesy, friendliness, or likability and their persuasiveness or the extent to which they are trusted. Perhaps because market research is viewed as a "science" and researchers are considered "scientists" rather than "businesspeople," congeniality may run counter to the schema that many users have of researchers. An overly congenial researcher therefore may cause users to make negative attributions, including questioning the researcher's skills and knowledge. Future research should investigate the conditions under which congeniality fosters trust, including the presence of other research and nonresearch abilities and motivations.

Though much of our theory about the interpersonal characteristics is supported, the same cannot be said for our theory about the user's organization structure, culture, and location. Only formalization is significantly and negatively related to trust. Other research has established that organizational characteristics affect the decision to adopt and implement new ideas (cf. Rogers 1983; Zaltman, Duncan, and Holbek 1973). Moreover, these factors have been found to affect how organizations acquire and process information (Deshpandé and Kohli 1989). It is surprising, therefore, that these effects do not extend uniformly to the formation of users' trust in researchers. Perhaps future research should consider how other processes mediate or moderate the effects of organizational variables on trust in relationships. For example, additional research may demonstrate that organizational characteristics influence trust only when their impact is mediated by more micro-level processes, as when organizational bureaucratization influences the level of exchange bureaucratization, which in turn decreases trust.

For the interorganizational/interdepartmental factors, several interesting findings emerge. In the case of researcher organizational culture, bureaucracies had a negative effect on trust, as expected. This finding is consistent with the negative effect of user organization formalization, which also reduced trust, and with previous research describing the effect of bureaucratic control on trust in channels of distribution (Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh 1987; John and Martin 1984). These findings indicate that trust can be negatively influenced by bureaucratic controls within one's own organization and by such controls in an exchange partner's organization. As a result, large firms may be especially vulnerable to low levels of trust, because such organizations are typically highly layered. Recent moves by firms to delay and flatten organizational structures seem likely, therefore, to produce the added benefit of an increased atmosphere of trust between researchers and users. This possibility suggests that an important avenue for future research is investigating the longitudinal impacts of organizational delayering on marketing performance. In particular, given the substantial efforts being made in this direction by some firms, it is critical to examine whether a lasting improvement in trust, research utilization, or other outcomes occurs.

Another interorganizational/interdepartmental factor, researcher power, increases users' trust in researchers. This finding is inconsistent with that of Anderson and Weitz (1990), who report that an imbalance of power in relationships decreases mutual trust between parties. One possible explanation is that a researcher's power translates into credibility and expertise, not the ability to threaten or control an exchange partner as has been suggested in other research. More broadly, the issue of how trust operates in conjunction with other relationship factors, such as power and control, warrants greater research attention. For example, Shapiro (1987) refers to the need for controls so that the "trusted" do not behave opportunistically; however, she also claims that such controls reduce trust in relationships. Future research should utilize more controlled approaches to separate the effects of trust, power, and bureaucratic control on how relationships operate.

Given that researcher power affects user trust, it is important to consider the factors that influence researcher power. First, our results indicate that researchers may be empowered by the ownership of exclusive experiential, informational, or technological assets. Second, the acquisition of individual researchers (with specializations or important skills not readily found among other researchers) may also create a perception of power. Research organization/department power, then, may actually be an aggregated sense of the research abilities discussed previously. Third, re-

searcher power may be a function of organizational location, as our results indicate that researchers are trusted less when they report to product and brand managers than when they report to higher level marketing or general managers. Designing research relationships with these factors in mind should increase user trust in researchers.

With the above-noted exceptions, most of the organizational and interorganizational/interdepartmental factors do not directly affect trust, suggesting that trust is generally less sensitive to these more macro factors. Future research would do well, therefore, to focus on the interpersonal factors that appear to account for the greatest variance in trust. Another approach would be to examine the potential moderating (as opposed to main) effects of structure, culture, location, and power on the relationships between the interpersonal characteristics and trust. Such investigations would extend the extant literature by providing insight into whether certain organizational characteristics can add to or detract from the effectiveness of various interpersonal characteristics. Our finding that the interpersonal characteristics generally do not affect trust differently in intra- and interorganizational settings is an initial step toward this end.

Results are mixed on project importance and customization factors. Customization of the research project affects trust in research relationships and is likely to generate relationship-specific assets that past research has linked with exchange cooperation and continuity (Levinthal and Fichman 1988). Unlike customization, the strategic importance of the research project has no effect on users' trust in the researchers. Future research should seek to understand how users offset the risk and vulnerability associated with having researchers handle strategically important projects without trusting relationships. For example, do users establish various controls such as contracts, monitoring

capabilities, or procedural rules for executing the project? Examining these and other compensatory behaviors in future research would provide additional insight.

Considering our results in the aggregate, we see that the effects of various characteristics on trust do not generally change across different types of research relationships. This stability suggests that several core characteristics apparently are valued in these relationships and that context does not affect the perceived salience of these characteristics to trust, as was expected. This stability also suggests that our theory of trust may be applicable to other information-based relationships and perhaps to other relationships more generally. One difference, alluded to previously, between information relationships and other relationships that may cause some variance in the characteristics affecting trust is whether the exchange involves search, experience, or credence goods. Given the intangible and sophisticated nature of many information relationships, more experience and credence qualities are likely to be present, increasing the need for the user to rely on the provider of information and the interpersonal qualities he or she displays. However, if the exchange involves more search goods (i.e., goods whose quality can be assessed by direct observation), the importance of trust and of the interpersonal factors to trust is likely to diminish.

Finally, though our research provides insight into the relative importance of various characteristics to trust, it leaves unanswered the question of how these factors are processed during early and later encounters between exchange partners and whether the factors that develop trust at the outset of a relationship are the same as those that maintain it in later stages. Future research using a longitudinal design could address this and related questions about how trust actually develops.

Appendix

Measures and Items ^a	Source
User Trust in Researcher	
a. If I or someone from my firm could not be reached by our researcher, I would be willing to let my researcher make important research decisions without my involvement.	Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé (1992)
b. If I or someone from my department was unable to monitor my researcher's activities, I would be willing to trust my researcher to get the job done right.	
c. I trust my researcher to do things I can't do myself.	
d. I trust my researcher to do things my department can't do itself.	
e. I generally do not trust my researcher. ^b	
Individual User Characteristics	
<i>Actual Job Experience</i>	New item
How many years have you been in this position?	
<i>Actual Firm Experience</i>	New item
How many years have you worked for this firm?	

Appendix (Continued)

Measures and Items ^a	Source
Perceived Researcher Interpersonal Characteristics	
<i>Expertise</i>	New scale
a. Expert-nonexpert (7 a great deal, 1 none)	
b. Trained-untrained (7 a great deal, 1 none)	
c. Experienced-inexperienced (7 great deal, 1 none)	
<i>Uncertainty Reduction</i>	New scale
a. My researcher reflects on his/her experience to fill in the gaps left by research.	
b. My researcher is unable to provide convincing interpretations when the data appear inconclusive. ^b	
c. My researcher is creative in interpreting uncertain research findings.	
<i>Sincerity</i>	New scale
a. My researcher is sincere in his/her promises.	
b. My researcher is honest with me.	
c. My researcher will act sincerely in future dealings.	
<i>Integrity</i>	New scale
a. My researcher does not have a great deal of integrity. ^b	
b. My researcher brings high personal standards to his/her work.	
c. Integrity—no integrity (7 a great deal, 1 none)	
<i>Dependability</i>	New items
a. I have a good sense of what my researcher will say and do in most situations.	
b. My researcher is a very predictable person.	
<i>Collective Orientation</i>	New scale
a. My researcher is a team player.	
b. My researcher is flexible in meeting my needs even if it sometimes means sacrificing methodological perfection.	
c. My researcher makes wise judgments concerning when to express his/her opinions and when to allow me to do things my way.	
<i>Tact</i>	New scale
a. Tactful-untactful (7 great deal, 1 none)	
b. My researcher would be tactful in presenting research findings that may be embarrassing for someone.	
c. My researcher would be diplomatic when presenting unexpected research findings.	
<i>Timeliness</i>	New scale
a. My researcher usually accommodates my last minute requests.	
b. My researcher is punctual in meeting deadlines.	
c. My researcher returns phone calls promptly.	
<i>Confidentiality</i>	New scale
a. The information we share with my researcher will not be shared with competitors.	
b. Our research findings are safe with my researcher.	
c. My researcher can be expected to keep confidential what he/she learns about our organization beyond the specific research project.	
<i>Congeniality</i>	New scale
a. Disagreeable-agreeable ^b (7 a great deal, 1 none)	
b. Friendly-unfriendly (7 a great deal, 1 none)	
c. Good disposition—bad disposition (7 a great deal, 1 none)	
Perceived User Organizational Characteristics	
<i>Centralization</i> (1 never, 2 seldom, 3 often, 4 always, 9 not applicable)	Deshpandé and Zaltman (1982)
a. How frequently do you usually participate in decisions on the adoption of new products? ^b	
b. How frequently do you usually participate in decisions on the modification of existing products? ^b	
c. How frequently do you usually participate in decisions to delete existing products? ^b	
d. There is little action taken in my job until a superior approves the decision.	
e. If I wished to make my own decisions, I would be quickly discouraged.	
f. Even small matters on this job have to be referred to someone higher up for final answers.	

Appendix (Continued)

Measures and Items ^a	Source
<p>g. I have to ask my boss before I do almost anything.</p> <p>h. Any decision I make has to have my boss' approval.</p> <p><i>Formalization</i> (1 definitely true, 2 more true than false, 3 more false than true, 4 definitely false)</p> <p>a. Generally, I feel that I am my own boss in most matters relating to my job.</p> <p>b. I can make my own decisions in my job without checking with anybody else.</p> <p>c. How things are done around here is pretty much up to me.</p> <p>d. I am allowed to do almost as I please.</p> <p>e. I make up my own rules on this job.</p> <p>f. I am constantly being checked on for rule violations.^b</p> <p>g. I feel that I am constantly being watched to see that I obey all the rules.^b</p> <p>h. There is no specific rule manual detailing what I do.</p> <p>i. There is a complete written job description for my position^b</p> <p>j. Whenever we have a problem, we are supposed to go to the same person for an answer.^b</p> <p>k. In this organization everyone has a specific job to do.^b</p> <p>l. The organization keeps a written record of everyone's performance.^b</p> <p>m. We follow strict operational procedures at all times.^b</p> <p>n. Whatever situations arise, we have procedures to follow in dealing with them.^b</p> <p>o. Going through the proper channels in getting a job done is constantly stressed.^b</p> <p>Hall, Haas, and Johnson</p>	<p>Deshpandé and Zaltman (1982)</p>
<p><i>Complexity</i> (1 definitely true, 2 more true than false, 3 more false than true, 4 definitely false)</p> <p>This organization has a large number of separate departments.^b</p>	<p>Adapted from Price and Mueller (1986)</p>
<p><i>Culture</i>: Clan (1A, 2A, 3A, 4A), Adhocracy (1B, 2B, 3B, 4B), Hierarchy (1C, 2C, 3C, 4C), Market (1D, 2D, 3D, 4D)</p> <p>1. Kind of Organization (Please distribute 100 points)</p> <p>_____ (A) The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.</p> <p>_____ (B) The organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks.</p> <p>_____ (C) The organization is a very formalized and structured place. Bureaucratic procedures generally govern what people do.</p> <p>_____ (D) The organization is very production oriented. The major concern is with getting the job done. People aren't very personally involved.</p> <p>100</p> <p>2. Leadership (Please distribute 100 points)</p> <p>_____ (A) The head of the organization is generally considered to be a mentor, sage, or a father or mother figure.</p> <p>_____ (B) The head of the organization is generally considered to be an entrepreneur, an innovator, or a risk taker.</p> <p>_____ (C) The head of the organization is generally considered to be a coordinator, an organizer, or an administrator.</p> <p>_____ (D) The head of the organization is generally considered to be a producer, a technician, or a hard-driver.</p> <p>100</p> <p>3. What Holds the Organization Together (Please distribute 100 points)</p> <p>_____ (A) The glue that holds the organization together is loyalty and tradition. Commitment to this firm runs high.</p> <p>_____ (B) The glue that holds the organization together is a commitment to innovation and development. There is an emphasis on being first.</p> <p>_____ (C) The glue that holds the organization together is formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth-running institution is important here.</p> <p>_____ (D) The glue that holds the organization together is the emphasis on tasks and goal accomplishment. A production orientation is commonly shared.</p> <p>100</p> <p>4. What Is Important (Please distribute 100 points)</p> <p>_____ (A) The organization emphasizes human resources. High cohesion and morale in the firm are important.</p>	<p>Adapted from Quinn 1988 by Deshpandé, Farley, and Webster (1992).</p>

Appendix (Continued)

Measures and Items ^a	Source
_____ (B) The organization emphasizes growth and acquiring new resources . Readiness to meet new challenges is important.	
_____ (C) The organization emphasizes permanence and stability . Efficient, smooth operations are important.	
_____ (D) The organization emphasizes competitive actions and achievement . 100 Measurable goals are important.	
<i>User Location</i> What is your current position?	
Perceived Interorganizational/Interdepartmental Characteristics	
<i>Researcher Organization/Department Power</i>	New scale
a. My research firm (department) has special expertise not found in other research firms (department).	
b. Other research firms (department) could not provide me with the insights that my present research firm (department) can.	
c. My research firm's (department) expertise is common in the industry. ^b	
<i>User Organization/Department Power</i>	New scale
a. My research firm relies on our company's business for their continued growth.	
b. My firm accounts for a large proportion of my research firm's revenues.	
c. My research firm is dependent on our firm.	
<i>Researcher Organization/Department Culture:</i> Clan (A's), Adhocracy (B's), Hierarchical (C's), Market (D's) Same measures as the User's Organizational Culture except that the respondent is directed to evaluate the researcher's organization/department culture	Adapted from Quinn (1988) by Deshpandé, Farley, and Webster (1992)
<i>Researcher Location</i> To whom do your researchers primarily report? (1 top management, 2 general management, 3 marketing or sales management, 4 product or brand management, 5 engineering and product development)	Adapted from Kinnear and Root (1988)
Perceived Project Characteristics	
<i>Importance of the Research Project</i>	New items
a. Important to the firm—not important to the firm (7 a great deal, 1 not at all)	
b. Important to me—not important to me (7 a great deal, 1 not at all)	
<i>Customization of the Research Project</i>	New item
Syndicated—Custom ^b (7 a great deal, 1 not at all)	

^aAll items used the scale 7 = strongly agree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 1 = strongly disagree, unless otherwise noted.

^bReverse coded.

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