

LEONARD L. BERRY
AND
A. PARASURAMAN

MARKETING
SERVICES

COMPETING
THROUGH
QUALITY

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MARKETING SERVICES



Competing Through Quality

Leonard L. Berry
A. Parasuraman



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To a small but determined group of American and European scholars who believed marketing services was different—and built a new academic field. And to a farsighted group of service company executives who attended the early meetings, served as role models within their firms, funded the academic research, and put the research findings into practice.

To my late grandfather, Joseph Gold, who enriched my life.

—L.B.

To my sister-in-law, Sara Swamy, and her husband, Sam Swamy.

—A.P.

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Acknowledgments

In this book, we bring together our combined 30-plus years of studying and writing about services marketing, contributions to the services marketing literature, and the insights of many executives and professors whom we surveyed. We aspired to write a book that would advance services marketing, a book that would build on what exists with new ideas and new wrinkles for old ideas. We wanted to write a book that not only would be interesting to read but also one that would improve the field. Hundreds of business books are published each year; we want this book to make a difference.

We are grateful to numerous people who have contributed their time, thoughts, skills, and encouragement to this volume. Chapters 2–4 are based, in part, on our ongoing research program in service quality sponsored by the Marketing Science Institute (MSI). Our co-researcher, Valarie Zeithaml of Duke University, although not an author of this book, has nonetheless made a significant contribution to it through her direct involvement in the service quality research program. We thank Professor Zeithaml for her outstanding contributions to a research program that began in 1983 and is still going strong. George Day, who recently concluded his term as Executive Director of MSI, and Katherine Jocz, Director of Research Management at MSI, have supported our research program in every possible way and we thank them both.

Adding richness to this book were the individuals who completed open-ended mail questionnaires or participated in telephone interviews concerning subject matter in which they had particular expertise. The pages that follow are filled with quotes and examples that come from this process. We are indebted to all of these accomplished people who provided such thoughtful comments.

We are also grateful to the services marketing scholars whose research we cite. The discipline of services marketing has made remarkable progress since 1977 when our friend, G. Lynn Shostack, published a landmark article in the *Journal of Marketing* entitled "Breaking Free from Product Marketing." This article stimulated the imagination of academic researchers as no other article had and fostered much of the seminal work that followed in the 1980s. To Ms. Shostack, and to other American and European researchers who gave momentum to the services marketing discipline, we tip our hats. Disciplines are built one research study, one article, one book, one conference, at a time; this book, another building block in an evolutionary process, is a tribute to many.

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Authors' Note

A number of individuals provided original material for this book by contributing written statements or participating in telephone interviews. Individuals who are quoted without an accompanying citation participated in our mail and telephone surveys. All quotations are used with permission.