

## **THE SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE MARKETING MANAGER**

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A growing, important business trend is for firms to engage in socially responsible practices. Meanwhile, the role of the marketing function and marketing managers, and their contribution to firms, are attracting attention in the marketing discipline. Interestingly however, the trend of social responsibility has not been integrated into the latter stream; thus we do not know much about the value from having a socially responsible marketing manager. Using legitimacy theory as a theoretical framework, this research investigates the concept of a socially responsible marketing manager, and tests its impact on marketing functions' performance (a form of external legitimacy) and influence within the firm (a form of internal legitimacy). Based on multiple empirical efforts (interviews, secondary data analysis, a survey, an experiment), we find that, while socially responsible marketing managers are still far from mainstream, such managers positively contribute to marketing functions' performance and influence within the firm. Additionally, this impact is moderated by two legitimacy-related factors: It is enhanced when customers are more interested in social responsibility and weakened when the marketing manager is more experienced.