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Innovation in Marketing Management

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Abstract

This research aims at exploring the relationship between a firm's strategic orientation, marketing management in terms of marketing mix tactics, and innovation performance. We examine three types of strategic orientations: customer, technology, and combined customer/technology orientation. We analyze their direct effect on innovation performance as well as the moderating effect of marketing management in terms of the marketing mix on this relationship. We test our hypotheses on a sample of 1603 French manufacturing firms and show that organizations with a combined customer/technology orientation outperform those with a customer or technology orientation alone. We also show that the moderating effect of marketing management in boosting innovation success is positive for all orientations, but greatest for organizations with a technology orientation. Finally, we find that the moderating effect of marketing management on the relationship between orientation and performance increases as more elements of the marketing mix are deployed simultaneously. We are pleased to introduce this special issue on marketing of high-technology products and innovations. High-technology industries are distinguished by increasing turbulence, and time-and information-intensive environments (Mohr, Sengupta, & Slater, in press). Additionally, issues related to unique characteristics like network effects, dominant design, and technological standards increase complexity in identifying, implementing, and evaluating marketing strategies in such environments (Hills & Sarin, 2003). This special issue features papers that contribute theoretically, methodologically, and substantively to enhancing our understanding of marketing strategies in high-tech environments.

The effects of exploratory and exploitative market learning on management innovation are contingent on technological and marketing capabilities. Specifically, technological capabilities enhance the positive effect of exploratory market learning and weaken the positive effect of exploitative market learning on management innovation. Marketing capabilities enhance the positive effect of exploitative market learning and weaken the positive effect of exploratory market learning on management innovation. This study contributes to the literature by integrating organizational learning theory with the absorptive capacity perspective to explain management innovation.

Keywords: Innovation performance, Marketing management, Customer orientation, Technology orientation, Management innovation, Market learning, Technological capabilities, Marketing capabilities

Introduction

We are pleased to introduce this special issue on marketing of high-technology products and innovations. High-technology industries are distinguished by increasing turbulence, and time- and information-intensive environments (Mohr, Sengupta and Slater 2009). Additionally, issues related to unique characteristics like network effects, dominant design, and technological standards increase complexity in identifying, implementing, and evaluating marketing strategies in such environments (Hills and Sarin 2003). This

special issue features papers that contribute theoretically, methodologically, and substantively to enhancing our understanding of marketing strategies in high-tech environments. The articles in this special issue address a wide array macro- and micro-level issues ranging from: • How do technologies evolve? • Why do great firms fail? • When should firms adopt an open system versus closed system architecture for new designs? • How do knowledge networks evolve? • To what extent is the conflict between marketers and engineers task-related vs. relational? • How and why does the marketing function use influence strategies, such as upward appeal and coalition building, in high-tech firms? What are the consequences of such influence strategies? In this introduction to the special issue, we overview the high points of the articles' contributions. In addition, we offer our own thoughts about future research on the topic of marketing of high-technology products and innovations. However, first and foremost we would like to acknowledge the important role of our special issue reviewers. A special issue is only as good as the manuscripts it receives, and the quality of the feedback provided by its reviewers. The reviewers of this special issue not only reviewed multiple versions of the manuscripts, but in some cases, reviewed multiple manuscripts or gave us a very rapid turnaround on reviews. We are enormously grateful to the reviewers whose names appear in the listing of special issue reviewers. We would also like to thank Peter LaPlaca, the editor of Industrial Marketing Management, for allowing us this opportunity to highlight an important and emerging stream of research in the marketing discipline.

Literature Review

Brands that are able to push the market and create a pull to make selling easier are able to attract resellers (Keller, 2010, [Srivastava et al., 2001](#)). Simultaneously, those resellers who are able to efficiently support the brand in penetrating a market and creating a pull for the brand are able to catch the attention of brand managers ([Parment, 2008](#)). While the creation of push and pull in a competitive market benefits both brand and reseller firms, it requires them to innovatively cooperate with each other ([Gupta & Malhotra, 2013](#)). According to the literature, when resellers benefit from the promotional activities performed by a brand, the indigenous knowledge and home-grown relationships of resellers play an important role in building the competency and capability of brand managers to innovatively juggle with the different barriers and shortcomings of the growth markets ([Cavusgil and Cavusgil, 2012](#), [Gupta and Malhotra, 2013](#)).

Juggling performed for altering and rearranging the actions of the brand based on its standardised policies and the requirement of a local market can result in the discovery of an innovative marketing idea that is very context specific and facilitates the smooth functioning of the brand in an agile situation ([Colder, 2000](#)). Such actions in a competitive market when viewed from the standpoint of resource advantage theory lead to the expectation that the success of juggling depends upon the resources required and the appropriation of incentives anticipated from the innovative marketing idea ([Achrol and Etzel, 2003](#)).

Research Gap and Research Problem

The foregone studies have covered various aspects regarding Strategies, Strategic marketing. Many of the papers have focused on numerous spheres of IT also. Several studies have been conducted pertaining to impact of IT on marketing. Telecom marketing has also been emphasized by several papers but there has not been so far any research which has investigated impact of IT on marketing strategies of airtel with special reference to product strategies, promotion strategies, pricing strategies and distribution strategies of Airtel based on two cities i.e. Aligarh and Bulandshahar. Thus, the study intends to fill up this gap. Application of IT remains an immensely important yardstick in determining the nature and, to a considerable extent, the level of service which a Telecom operator is able to provide. The effective use of

IT largely depends on users' need and their satisfaction. The study relating to the marketing will not be complete without looking into the aspects viz users need, product strategies, promotion strategies, pricing strategies and distribution strategies, therefore, All these aspects have been covered in this study.

Marketing research is always based on forecasting. This is its main limitation because forecasting is based on future and future is uncertain. It means that future activities cannot be evaluated properly at present. So, at the time of marketing research, a marketer should not only consider the future activities but also the past and the present activities. At the time of marketing research, a marketing manager should also consider the funds or finance related factors because he will have to face many difficulties in the absence of money. The deficiency of money minimizes the size of samples determined for marketing research. As a result, the fewer consumers are contracted. Besides it, the doubt always remains about the accuracy of the inferences which are taken on the basis of small samples. So, the researcher should arrange sufficient money for marketing research so that the sample can be taken in adequate quantity. A researcher requires the various types of information and facts during the time of marketing research which requires adequate time. But due to shortage of time, the marketing manager becomes impatient to obtain the report of research and he insists the researcher to give the report as soon as possible. As a result, the incomplete report is given to the marketing manager on the basis of which he takes the decision which may be harmful in the future. So, a researcher should be given adequate time for market research so that the proper report can be provided to marketing manager. The efficient and experienced market researchers are required for effective marketing research. A marketer may have to face various difficulties in their absence because every researcher uses the techniques and the principles of research differently. As a result the inferences derived from them can be different which create the illusionary situation for the marketer. A researcher should be efficient, experienced and skilled. He should understand that which fact is useful and which is not. The starting point for rural marketing research is the recognition of a management problem and defining business and research objectives. The foremost task in the problem discovery stage is to transform the management problem into a marketing research problem by looking at the context of the problem, the observation of the management and the exploration of the problem by putting a 'Why to the original problem'. Problem can also be studied in terms of business objectives and research objectives.

Objective of the study

The objective of the technique is the successful launching of new products and services helping the enterprise to survive in the actual changing environment. The final objective should be reached by assuming innovation (in a conscious and predetermined way) creating mechanisms and using the tools we describe in this study. The final aim is the consecution of a well balanced portfolio of innovations (product/service) placed in the sequential phases of the cycle of life (launching, maturity and declining) that going on with the natural process will replace the products that vanish at the other side of the curve (died products). The technique goes on beyond the negative side of the time axis. It considers the previous time to the launching of the product and takes into account the products from the moment of the idea definition. A quick investigation and scoping of the project. The first decision to go ahead with the project: The initial commitment of resources. Even if this decision is taken in the very first step the consequences are important because if it is rigorous it could reject possible success and if the contrary the accepted products would suppose wasting of resources. New product success or failure is largely decided in the first few plays of the game! A preliminary market assessment A quick and dirty assessment of the marketplace possible market acceptance and competitive situation largely non-scientific and relying principally on in-house sources. This facet of Stage 1 involves a variety of relatively inexpensive activities: a library search, contacts with key users, focus groups, and even a quick concept test with a handful of potential users. In this phase the Intelligence Business (Technology watch) plays a very important role gathering information

from the market tendencies. It is made relying principally on in-house sources. The purpose is to determine market size, market potential, and likely market acceptance. Is a detailed market study with the purpose to probe the customer in order to put meat in the idea- to take a rather simply idea and develop a complete description of the product: benefits, features, performance characteristics and design requirements. The problem is that most of us already have a fixed idea of what the customer is looking for, so we conveniently sip over this critical market study. A superior product one that delivers unique benefits to customers is the number one success factor. Only by understanding the interrelations between physical characteristics (i.e., product features) and customer perceptions (i.e., a customer perceived benefit) are you in a position to sit down and design a new product. The user needs and wants study identifies these relationships and answers the key research questions above about value and benefits. You can start by qualitative research- for example, focus groups of customers- to gain some insights into product value and desired benefits. But a focus group is a start only and certainly not a substitute for a broader-based study. The specific information objectives of this user needs and wants study often includes:

- to determine customers needs, wants and preferences in a new product
- to identify the order winning criteria and their relative importance
- to pinpoint areas of likes and satisfaction with current (competitive) products and also areas of dislikes, dissatisfaction and problems with these products
- to study how the customer uses the products-his or her use system- and what problems he or she faces in its use; and
- to understand the customer’s economics of use-the total cycle costs to the customer.

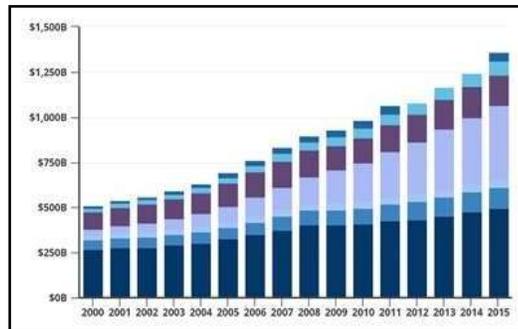


Figure 1.1

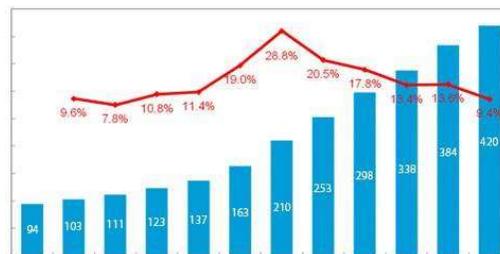


Figure 1.2

Data Analysis

There are more data sources than ever. Just googling a search term may not be sufficient, as the googled data may be inaccurate and/or biased. You want to avoid making important business decisions based on unreliable data. So which data sources should you use?

We're here to help you navigate them all. Read on for a quick breakdown of secondary and primary data and tips for finding valuable insights for your market research needs.

At the highest level, market research data can be categorized into secondary and primary types.

What Is Secondary Data?

Secondary data is public information that has been collected by others. It is typically free or inexpensive to obtain and can act as a strong foundation to any research project — provided you know where to find it and how to judge its worth and relevance.

Secondary Data Examples

Sources of secondary data include (but are not limited to):

Government statistics are widely available and easily accessed online, and can provide insights related to product shipments, trade activity, business formation, patents, pricing and economic trends, among other topics. However, data is often not presented explicitly for the subject you are interested in, so it can take some manipulation and cross-checking of the data to get it as narrowly focused as you'd like.

Industry associations typically have websites full of useful information — an overview of the industry and its history, a list of participating companies, press releases about product and company news, technical resources, and reports about industry trends. Some information may be accessible to members only (such as member directories or market research), but industry associations are a great place to look when starting to learn about a new industry or when looking for information an industry insider would have.

Trade publications, such as periodicals and news articles, most of which make their content available online, are an excellent source of in-depth product, industry and competitor data related to specific industries. Oftentimes, news articles include insights obtained directly from executives at leading companies about new technologies, industry trends and future plans.

Company websites can be virtual goldmines of information. Public companies will have investor relations sections full of annual reports, regulatory findings and investor presentations that can provide insights into both the individual company's performance and that of the industry at large. Public and private companies' websites will typically provide detail around product offerings, industries served, geographic presence, organizational structure, sales methods (distribution or direct), customer relationships and innovations.

Published **market research reports** are another possible resource, as anyone who's ever googled the name of the industry they're interested in and —market research can tell you. For a fee, they can provide a great overview of an industry, including quantitative data you might not find elsewhere related to market size, growth rates and industry participant market share. The downside is that you might not be interested in an overview — you might be interested in a niche, and that niche is only discussed on three of the report's 300 pages.

With all these sources of secondary data, you should be all set, right? Well, maybe not. If you are interested

in a niche product or a new technology, there may not be a lot out there in the public sphere. The most current information you can find might be a few years old. You might not be sure if the material you found online reflects an accurate portrayal of the whole industry. You might be asking a question no one's ever asked before, let alone answered. Now what?

What Is Primary Data?

Now it's time for primary data, new information collected specifically for your purposes, directly from people in the know. Methods of primary data collection vary based upon the goals of the research, as well as the type and depth of information being sought.

Primary Data Examples

In-depth interviews present the opportunity to gather detailed insights from leading industry participants about their business, competitors and the greater industry. When you approach a company contact from a position of knowledge — thanks to all that secondary data you've already collected — you can have a free-flowing conversation about the topics of interest. You can guide the conversation toward your research objectives, but also allow yourself to be led down unexpected paths by interviewees — some of the most valuable insights are the ones you didn't know you should be looking for.

If you're seeking data you can quantify, **surveys** are an excellent way to collect a large amount of information from a given population. Surveys can be used to describe a population in terms of who they are, what they do, what they like and if they're happy. You can then forecast the population's future behavior in light of these identified characteristics, behavior, preferences and satisfaction. Surveys yield the most meaningful data when they ask the right questions of the right people in the right way, so care should be taken both to develop survey questions respondents will find relevant and interesting, and to determine which method of conducting the survey (online, telephone or in-person) is most appropriate.

Looking to get consumers' thoughts on a new product or service offering idea when you're in the early stages of the development process? A focus group can get a small group of people that fit your target demographic in a room to discuss what they like, dislike, are confused by, would do differently — whatever. The group's leader encourages honest, open discussion among participants, collecting opinions that can further direct your development efforts.

Prefer to eavesdrop rather than ask questions outright? Social media monitoring can help you keep tabs on candid conversations about your industry, your company and your competitors. How much are people talking about your brand compared to competitive brands? Is what they're saying positive or negative? Is the public clamoring for something the industry currently doesn't provide? How are your competitors portraying themselves via social media, and what does that say about their strategy? Social media monitoring shows that you don't always need to participate in the conversation to learn from it.



Figure 1.3

Conclusion

The set of papers in this special issue contributes insights to the field of high-tech marketing research, progressing towards our goal of stimulating rigorous theoretical, methodological, and substantive research in this arena. We hope you find the set of papers useful and invigorating to your own research and thinking. Key findings of the study reflect that Industries these days have high concern for environmental protection and have strong belief that green marketing can definitely be used as a tool for gaining competitive and sustainable growth. Some companies are initiating and implementing these practices as a part of their corporate social responsibility. However environmental strategy formation and implementation are slowly making it to the priority lists of Indian corporate. Green marketing should not be considered as just one more approach to marketing, instead should be pursued with greater vigour as it has societal and environmental dimensions. With this view organizations are now aware with the fact that without adopting green in the core of their strategy they cannot survive in the present competitive era. Automobile companies are also adopting green to retain their image in the market. It is quite evident from the findings and discussions that all the three types of Automobile companies i.e. OEM, Tier 1 supplier and Tier 2 supplier have positive attitude for green philosophy and while initiating and implementing green marketing practices. It has been also observed that most of the companies are practicing it from a decade, and some companies have just started a green marketing practice which indicates an increasing focus on green marketing practices in automobile and ancillary industries. They had an opinion that sustainable development through green marketing is the new mantra of success and growth. The majority of the automobile companies are partially aware about green marketing and they have implemented these green marketing practices in any of the form, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, which are less detrimental to the environment, developing environment friendly suppliers, greening supply chains, use of renewable resources, considering products complete life cycle from raw material extraction to disposal – which is less harmful to environment. (cradle to grave approach), waste minimization and pollution prevention. This research has revealed that, due to several reasons – regulatory pressures from government, competitive forces, technological developments, influences the action of automobile and ancillary firms to ensure they are going green in new product development, product modification packaging, product safety throughout production, use and post-consumption. These government regulations as well as globalization are forcing the firms to be particular forcing to automobile and ancillary industries to find new ways to consolidate their platforms; thereby reducing, harmful impact on the environment. The competitors in the market have strong influence on the activities of the firm, they facing increasing competitive pressure to indulge greening-ness at every stage from choosing the raw

material, in production process, in selling and marketing to end of product life cycle. In this regard firms must proactively monitor the action and performance of their competition. Moreover these firms can establish a source of competitive advantage if they raise industry expectations for the environmental standards. There are huge opportunities in the Indian market for companies that establish their green credentials early. Being Eco-friendly gives the firm a USP (Unique Selling Proposition, which competitor may find difficult to match, hence being eco-friendly makes a firm competitive and customer friendly as well. Managers must start to recognize environmental important as an economic and competitive opportunity, not as an annoying cost or an inevitable threat. Environmental progress demands that the companies innovate to raise resource productivity-precisely the new challenge of global competition. It is the time to build on the underlying economic logic that links the environment, resource productivity, innovation and competitiveness. In harmony with above external forces there are some internal forces which are compelling companies to initiate and implement green marketing practices in their organisation. Those are corporate social responsibility (organizations believe that, they have moral obligation, cost and profit issues-cost factor associated with waste disposal or reduction in material usage forces firms to modify their behavior and sustainability in business. The study also revealed that green marketing practices have positive impact on market performance. This impact is analyzed through relationship between green marketing practices and various market performance indicators as below: There is positive relationship between the green marketing practices like developing environment friendly products, waste minimization and pollution prevention ecofriendly modification in product design, use of renewable resources, considering products complete life cycle from raw material extraction to disposal – which is less harmful to environment. (Cradle to Grave approach) and market performance indicators like positive company image, , competitive advantage, profitability, sales volume, business sustainability increased market share. Although there are huge opportunities for green marketing, Indian auto industry has to battle major challenges such as emission, energy safety, and climate change, lack of renewable resources, sustainable manufacturing will demand new equipment and process which will be costly affair. However despite of the challenges, auto industry has devised solution like set waste reduction goals contract with eco-friendly vendors, implementation of green marketing strategies (Environment friendly product, price promotion, logistics strategies), waste management programmes, employee awareness for environment friendly practises, 3R practices- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, sustainability developments through carbon credits. The only way forward is to achieve growth through innovative technologies and promote sustainable mobility. Study also revealed that, auto manufacturers have continued to invest in R&D dedicated to green innovation. ‘These green initiatives are expected to address issues of fuel emissions and efficiency – reducing fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. This study indicates noticeable use of various green branding practices are the strongest enablers to get competitive advantage. The insights from this study can indeed be used to formulate marketing strategies especially for green products by OEMs as well as ancillary industries for business sustainability with brighter today and greener tomorrow. It would ultimately give rise to sustainable development and preservation of environment. Green marketing helps in the effective outcomes like they could get a first-mover advantage, firms can also develop a competitive edge by creating a brand-image as an environment conscious body. Government and NGO are also supporting to the firms. Industry associations such as the CII actively encourage their members to be more sustainable. Central Government and state government of India is funding for environment friendly project cost from ten crore to 20crores for Cluster program (information source is Industrial officer: Office of the joint Director of Industries, Pune Region). In India along with automobile sector there are various sectors like Banking, FMCG, Pharmacy, Consumer Electronics, IT, Telecommunications, Oil and Gas, Energy, Housing and construction are the leading sectors which have an environmental strategy in place. The companies from these sectors are taking intense efforts to implement green marketing through various initiatives like green innovation, green operations, waste management, green supply chain management, energy conservation, biodiversity, practicing 3R Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. It has been also observed that most of the Indian companies from above sectors are practicing green marketing practices from a decade. Finally, consumers, industrial buyers and suppliers need to intensify the efforts to minimize the negative effects of the

environment-friendly marketing in the context of green marketing assuming even more importance and relevance in developing countries like India. This study concludes with a call to the other sectors other than automobile sector also to pursue eco friendly initiatives to foster long term growth in the economy.

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