

## Preface to the fourth edition

The first edition of *Marketing Strategy and Management* was largely written while I was the Crowther Foundation Distinguished Visiting Scholar at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1983. This break from the routine administrative duties of my appointment at Strathclyde University enabled me to commit to paper the essentials of a course which I have taught for many years as the capstone to an honours degree in marketing. The book thus assumes that the reader has already pursued one or more introductory courses in marketing, such as the Chartered Institute of Marketing's Certificate/Diploma courses or an undergraduate programme in business studies, and so is familiar with the descriptive aspects of the subject, as well as possessing a reasonable overview of it as a whole. It is quite likely, therefore, that the intended reader of this book will have already read one or more of the many comprehensive textbooks which are now available. Indeed, in the case of the honours year students at Strathclyde they will probably have read several of them, as well as having studied many sub-areas of marketing, such as advertising, organisational buying behaviour, market research, product development etc. in some depth.

While positioned originally as an advanced text for undergraduates, adoptions and use of the text indicate that it is widely used on Master's programmes – both in marketing and more broadly based MBA courses. Given the emphasis on professional practice in these programmes, and the CIMs Postgraduate Diploma, the content and approach have been found to work well with more experienced students seeking an authoritative overview of the subject. Accordingly, the purpose of this book is to build upon this knowledge by opening in Part 1 with an analysis of the nature of marketing strategy and strategic marketing planning (SMP).

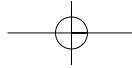
The scope of Part 1 remains very similar to that in earlier editions and opens with a Prologue

which is intended to provide an overview of the book as a whole, of the perspective adopted by the author and the manner in which this is to be developed. Chapter 2 takes a wide-ranging look at the nature of competition and the role which marketing has to play in contributing to organisational success. Much new material has been incorporated into this chapter to reflect the many changes which occurred in the 1990s. Among these were the emphasis on skills and competences and the notion of the learning organisation together with a revival of interest in the resource-based theory of the firm. Chapter 3 explores the relationship between corporate strategy and marketing strategy and comes to the conclusion that in all but the largest multidivisional organisations they amount to the same thing. This theme is expanded in Chapter 4 with a consideration of what is involved in formulating an effective strategy through the process of strategic marketing planning.

Chapter 5 explores a number of key concepts which experience has shown are of fundamental importance in defining the strategic alternatives available to the firm. Several of the techniques involve the use of matrix analysis whereby the decision-maker seeks to reduce complex issues to simple ones. Although this approach has been widely criticised as 'oversimplified' by many academics there can be little doubt that these techniques are widely used by practitioners.

The final chapter in Part 1, Research for marketing, appeared much later in earlier editions. However, on the basis that Part 2 is concerned with the analysis of information it seemed more logical to explore the methods and techniques at the manager's disposal for collecting data before describing the kind of data required.

Part 2 of the book comprises seven chapters which I have called The Marketing Appreciation. Essentially this section explores all the areas which the marketing decision-maker needs to consider in choosing a marketing strategy. The section opens



with a discussion of the macro-environment which determines the courses of action available to all competitors in the marketplace. This is followed by a series of micro-environmental analyses of industries and competitors, customers and the firm itself. Taken together these analyses provide the raw materials for identifying those market opportunities which offer the greatest potential to the organisation in terms of its aspirations and goals and paying due regard to the assets, skills and resources it has available to it. This process is termed 'matching' as the objective is to match the firm's strengths with opportunities while seeking to avoid potential threats and remedy any perceived weaknesses (the SWOT analysis).

The final two chapters in Part 2 explore three processes central to the development of an effective marketing strategy – segmentation, positioning and branding. Obviously, if customers are to develop preferences for and loyalty towards an organisation and its products/services they must be able to distinguish and differentiate its output from all those other competitors offering near or perfect substitutes for that output. It is here that the ability to define precisely the existence of subgroups or 'segments' within a market in terms of the specific wants of these segments will enable the seller to create offerings with a sustainable competitive advantage.

Part 3 is concerned with the management of the marketing mix. While it is fashionable in some quarters to question the validity of the mix concept, and especially the notion of the four Ps (product, price, place and promotion) which underpin it, I believe that it offers a robust and useful technique or approach for reducing the complexity of operational marketing to manageable proportions. By the same token, while I have taken the opportunity in preparing this fourth edition to extensively revise and update the content, I have not felt it necessary to discard some of the older material which has withstood the test of time. Many of the key concepts and ideas about marketing were first articulated in the 1950s and 60s by pioneers like Alderson, Ansoff, Drucker, Howard, Kotler, Levitt, McCarthy etc. With the rapid growth of the discipline much of this pioneering work became buried and lost to view – a tendency which has provoked frequent calls to get 'back to the basics'. In the process much orig-

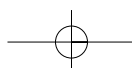
inal material is being rediscovered but, in my opinion, this hardly seems a sufficient reason to discard the original sources in favour of the new disciples. Hopefully, the reader will find an appropriate mix of both the old and new.

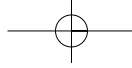
In dealing with the marketing mix, and following the traditional 4Ps framework, I have concentrated on the policy issues as these define the alternative courses of action from which the decision-maker must choose in seeking to develop a unique mix of their own. Those requiring more detailed and descriptive material will need to consult the specialised literature which deals with topics such as product development, personal selling, advertising etc. as subjects in their own right. (Recommendations for further reading are given at the end of every chapter.)

Part 4 – Implementing Marketing – explores a number of issues involved in converting objectives and ideas into effective action. In recent years a great deal of research has been undertaken into the nature and sources of competitive success.

While numerous prescriptions have been proposed it has become clear that there is no single, simple solution. Perhaps we should not be surprised at this given that competition is a dynamic activity in which rivals seek to gain an advantage over one another. What has become clear is that there are numerous conditions which are necessary for success but they are rarely if ever sufficient to guarantee it. The necessary conditions are described in some detail in this book and many like it. If you ignore the available advice there is a very high likelihood of failure. But, if you follow it it will only put you on a level playing field with everyone else who is familiar with the same advice. What differentiates degrees of success and failure appears to depend upon the quality of implementation. Some aspects of implementation, such as the preparation of a marketing plan and the measurement of performance against objectives, may be defined and quantified. But others, and probably the more important aspects, are more difficult to capture and define. They tend to be more subjective and qualitative in nature and embrace issues such as organisational culture and customer care and service. Both these topics are discussed in some detail.

Finally, I have included a chapter called Current issues and future trends and conclude





with a summary chapter which highlights some of the key issues which have emerged in the book as a whole.

As with the earlier editions, the opportunity has been taken to include a significant amount of new material. This process was assisted by the comments of three anonymous reviewers and many of their suggestions have been incorporated. Both structure and content have also benefited from using the text on a number of Executive Development and MBA programmes and the feedback received from these. In addition, editing two major textbooks – *The IEBM Encyclopedia of Marketing* (International Thomson Business Press)

and *The Marketing Book* (5th edn) (Butterworth Heinemann) – has provided me with an unparalleled opportunity to benefit from the latest thinking of some of the most distinguished marketing writers in the world. As you will see from the recommendations for further reading, these are seminal sources for any serious student of marketing.

While the compilation of the book has benefited greatly from the inputs of others, in the final analysis the responsibility for its merits and failings rests with the author.

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