REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: CONNECTEDNESS, BUSINESS AND LEARNING:

CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

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by Associate Professor Margee Hume

The 2012 *Regional Development: connectedness, business and learning* colloquia at USQ Springfield campus is the initiative of the School of Management and Marketing and the Faculty of Business and law at the Springfield Campus.   It is designed to advance the current knowledge in the areas of developing regional and sustainable communities and focuses on the associated areas of connectedness, business and learning.

Regional Development: connectedness, business and learning colloquia

Regional Development: connectedness, business and learning conference complies with the academic research conference guidelines as set down by Department of Education, Science and Training, Australia (DEST), and other organisations. For Australian delegates, the Proceedings are Category E, Conference Publications: E1 * Full Written Paper * Refereed. *Regional Development: connectedness, business and learning* also complies with the requirements of the Performance-Based Research Fund administered by the Tertiary Education Commission and other organisations. For New Zealand contributors Proceedings are classed as Quality-Assured Conference Papers (Refereed). All papers have been subject to a comprehensive, double-blind peer review process. All such papers which have passed the competitive review process are accepted for presentation at Building Business Communities: Justice, Performance and Change conference.

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THE CONFERENCE PREFACE

by Associate Professor Margee Hume

Regional Development: connectedness, business and learning colloquia at USQ Springfield campus is the initiative of the School of Management and Marketing and the Faculty of Business and law at the Springfield Campus.   It is designed to advance the current knowledge in the areas of *connectedness, business and learning in communities* connecting communities has become one of the latest topical areas of research in particular for regional

areas. The rollout of the national broadband network, the increase in the role of social media and digital devices in work and learning and the ability of socially, emotionally and geographically isolated communities to become connected have positioned this area of research as a vital area of investigation . The colloquia brings together researchers in the area of information technology, management , regional development, education and marketing and engages them in discourse related to community and regional development, digital futures, education in regional environments and sustainability.

Community engagement and connectedness is a term that refers to interaction of people with their community and the connectedness of the community as a whole. Community engagement provides the opportunity for social connectedness, which enables people to achieve shared goals in business and societal values. Social connectedness is linked not only to the health of individuals but to the health of communities. It incorporates employment security   service provision, job satisfaction and esteem, well-being, economic strength, social stability and sustainability. Community engagement and connectedness mean different things to different people and the term is advancing to include how we connect and the impact of connectiveness and the digital world.   Clearly there is a need to enhance connectedness in local communities; it doesn't occur naturally. The aim of this colloquia is to address the many aspects of how to improve, enable and benefit from improved connectedness, learning and build community resiliency and business practice for future development and performance.

This conference expands the research and practitioner focus in the area of connectedness business and learning capturing the new recognition of the changes and public issues for community consumers and business. The set of the papers presented in the proceedings represents works of considered scholarship and have been produced through the process of double blind peer refereeing. Conferences, however, are more than their published proceedings. They represent a valuable venue for formal and informal exchange among academics/ professional / industry / practitioners and community stakeholders. It is through these interactions that we develop both ideas and collaborations that allow us to advance and evolve the important issues and agendas for building sustainable communities.

 We thank the Keynote addresses from Dr Mustafa Ally. We appreciate the interest from international affiliates and research higher degree students including:

City University

SEGi University College – Malaysia

Han Chian College – Malaysia

SEGi College – Kuala Lumpur

SEGi College – Penang

SEGi College – Sarawak

SEGi College – Subang Jaya

Far Eastern Federal University - Russia

Proserve Education Management Development Institute (Thames Business School) – Pakistan

EASB institute of Management – Singapore

The Institute of chartered Accounts – Sri Lanka

AEA Training Centre – Mauritius

South Africa Australian Education Centre (SAAEC) – South Africa

College for Higher Education Studies – CHES – FIJI

UUNZ Institute of Business – New Zealand

And finally, the support and contribution from the Australian centre for Sustainable Business and Development. The many contributions to the conference have focused on the overarching theme of building regions and communities and the drivers of connectedness, business development and learning.   Many of the authors are working with international and national collaborators in major projects that form the basis of the discussions and research papers presented.   We thank the national collaborators for their support and acknowledge the enriched contributions evidenced by the colloquia to support and contribute to the advancing national and international work in the area of sustainable communities. We thank the contributions and interest from the higher research degree students who reside in many diverse international settings.

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Paper six: Marketing Planning Challenges In International Business: A Managerial Analysis Framework for Regional And Global Strategy Development Considerations

Dr. Michael K. Mills

School of Marketing and Management
University of Southern Queensland
Springfield Campus
Springfield Queensland 4300
Australia
Email: mmills@usq.edu.au

Profile: Michael K. Mills is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Marketing and Management at the University of Southern Queensland. He lectures and researches in the areas of marketing strategy, business strategy, public sector marketing, retailing, and consumer behaviour. He has published over 70 professional articles in such journals as *Journal of Business Research*, *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, *Journal of Retailing*, *Journal of Advertising Research, and Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science.*

Abstract

Many scholars and executives are convinced that conventional strategy paradigms are inadequate given the challenges of today's rapidly changing business environment. In particular the literature suggests that organizations do not have the required tools to optimally determine the appropriateness of utilizing a regional versus global strategy approach. This article suggests the time is right for "unpacking" and re-conceptualizing strategic orientation in light of the difficulties faced by marketers in an increasingly global marketplace, and suggests a new management framework for analysis and regional strategy development.

Introduction

Many challenges confront marketing strategists in today's rapidly changing global business environment. Escalating customer expectations, intense global competition in a digital age, multi-company/multinational mergers, alliances, and acquisitions, technology advances, blurring of industry boundaries and sales and marketing productivity concerns, to mention a few, are creating unprecedented pressures for change within business organizations around the world--with a correspondent need for altering sales and marketing strategies, processes and organizational designs (Johnson et al., 2011).

Many scholars and executives are convinced that conventional strategy paradigms are inadequate for coping with contemporary strategic management challenges (e.g. Aaker and Mills, 2005; Ackerman, Eden, and Brown 2005; Cravens, Greenley, Piercy, and Slater 1997; Cravens, 1998, Piercy and Morgan, 1993; Hamel and Prahalad, 1989). In particular, conventional paradigms do not provide the necessary strategic direction for strategic marketing decisions in the contemporary global business environment.

Conventional Views: Historical Perspectives and Paradigms

The long established foundations of strategic thought and management systems reflect a historical perspective and a changing marketplace (Piercy, 1992; Mintzberg 1994; Harrison, 1999, Johnson et al 2011), and are shown below in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Evolution of Management Systems (Aaker and Mills, 2005)

	Budgeting	Long-Range Planning	StrategicPlanning	Strategic Market Management
Management Emphasis	Control deviations and manage complexity	Anticipate growth and manage complexity	Change strategic thrust and capability	Cope with strategic sur-prises and fast-developing threats/opportunities
Assumption	The past repeats	Past trends will continue	New trends and discontinuities are predictable	Planning cycles are inadequate to deal with rapid changes
Process		Periodic		Real time
Time Period Associated with System	From 1900s	From 1950s	From 1970s	From 1990s

While there are several indications that strategic thought and practice advanced to a new market-driven strategy era during the 1990's and beyond, many scholars and executives are convinced that conventional strategy paradigms are inadequate for coping with contemporary strategic management challenges (e.g. Aaker and Mills, 2005; Lavalo and Kahneman 2003; Cravens, Shipp, and Cravens, 1994; Cravens, 1998; Piercy and Morgan, 1993; Hamel and Prahalad, 1989).

As noted by Cravens (1998) existing strategic frameworks, matrixes, and so on don't really have a place in today's changing environment (Hamel and Prahalad, 1985; Hamel and Prahalad, 1994; Hamel 2000; Lin 2004). These paradigmatic tools are simply too static, too hierarchical and not reflective of today's conditions. A constantly changing environment renders accurate long term strategic planning extremely challenging due to the complex and chaotic modifications, conversions and transformations in the corporate arena (Legge, 1990; Bartol, Martin,Tein, and Matthews, 1997; Brown and Eisenhardt, 1998; Lovas and Ghoshal, 2000; Sharma,2000; Bazerman 2002; Aaker and Mills, 2005; Beaver, 2007).

Researchers of management theory have come to the realization that linear long term forecasts and long term business planning often proves highly speculative and inaccurate due to the ever evolving economic macro- and business micro climates (Mintzberg and Waters, 1985; Ocasio 1997; Eisenhardt and Brown, 1998; Stacey 2000; Calantone, Garcia and Droge, 2003). The

evolving literature applying chaos (Williams, 1999; Eisenhardt and Brown, 1998; Russell and Faulkner, 1999; Lewin, 1999; Pascal et. al, 2000; Richie, 2004) and crisis theory (e.g. Eisenhardt, 1989; De Kare-Silver, 1997; Perry, Taylor and Doerfel, 2003; Bonn and Rundle-Thiele, 2007; Milliner, Bonn and Rundle-Thiele, 2004) along with concepts of radical innovation (e.g. Greenwood and Hinings, 1996; Stringer, 2000) and so on are an indication that traditional approaches are strategically insufficient in times of marked and rapid change.

In particular, conventional paradigms do not provide the necessary strategic direction for strategic marketing decisions *in today's global business environment.* The complexities as well as the potential of a global environment have long been the subject of research and management attention (Levitt 1983; Killing 1986; Ohmae 1987; Aaker and Joachimsthaler 1999) and suggest many drivers of globalization. These drivers are influencers of strategy, and form the basis of strategic objectives.

However, today's firms must determine the appropriateness of multi-domestic, multinational or truly global strategy (Aaker and Mills, 2005). The answers are not easy, and as noted conventional strategic paradigms are felt by many to fall short of providing the answers and diagnostic criteria by which answers to these questions can be found. However, an increased understanding of and an answer to these questions rests on further elaboration of the global strategy consideration, and of a new strategic paradigm to be discussed below.

Global And Regional Strategy Decisions

A global strategy is different from multi-domestic or multinational (regional) strategies, in which separate strategies are developed for different countries/regions and implemented autonomously. For example, a retailer might develop different store groups, in several countries, that are not linked and that operate autonomously. A multidomestic operation is usually best managed as a portfolio of independent businesses with separate investment decisions made for each country.

A global strategy, by contrast, is conceived and implemented in a worldwide setting and involves the following decisions:

1. In which countries should products be marketed and at what market-share level in each? (Ohmae 1987; Levitt, 1983; Kotler et. al 2006; Pride, et. al 2007)

2. To what extent should products and services be standardized across countries? (Samiee, and Roth 1992; Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2004)

3. Where should the value-added activities, such as research, production and service be located? (Srivastava, Fahey and Christensen 2001)

4. To what extent should the brand name and marketing activities, such as brand position, advertising and pricing, be standardized across countries? (Quelch and Hoof 1986; Roth 1995)

5. Should competitive moves in individual countries be part of a global strategy, and, if so, what should that strategy be? (Yip and Johansson 1993; Yip 1996; Aaker and Mills, 2005).

Indicators that strategies should be global include:

- Major competitors in important markets are not domestic and have a presence in several countries (Banerjee, 1994)

- Standardization of some elements of the product or marketing strategy provides opportunities for scale economies (Szymanski, Bharadwaj, and Varadarajan 1993; Collis and Montgomery, 1995)

- Costs can be reduced and effectiveness increased by locating value-added activities in different countries (Arthur 1996; Hodgkinson and Sparrow, 2002))

- There is a potential to use the volume and profits from one market to subsidize gaining a position in another (Hitt, Hoskinsson, and Kim 1997)

- Trade barriers inhibit access to worthwhile markets (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2004)

- A global name can be an advantage and the name is available worldwide (Thomas, Bureau, and Saxena 1995; Branch 2001)

- A brand position and its supporting advertising will work across countries and has not been pre-empted (Aaker, 1999; Barwise and Robertson, 1992; Sandler and Shani 1993)

- Local markets do not require products or services for which a local operation would have an advantage (Hamel and Prahalad, 1985; Poh, LG. & Erwee, R. 2005).

These guide lines are useful as far as they go, but do not in themselves suggest appropriate strategy for regional or global markets, or implementation frameworks, and are not in themselves theory based.   Further, as noted above, existing strategic paradigms are felt by many scholars and executives to be inadequate for coping with contemporary strategic global management challenges.

How then can we best serve the purpose of relevance in terms of understanding global strategy issues? The answer perhaps lies in an "unpacking" of the more conventional views towards strategic orientation to reflect a more dynamic view of the strategy process.

Challenges to Conventional Theory: Why Don't Existing Strategic Paradigms Work For Developing Regional or Global Strategy?

Conventional economic theory implies deliberate positioning, through rational processes to optimize economic performance, as well as mechanistic, rational systems and generally linear processes with strategy flowing from the top downward (Taylor, 1947; Mintzberg and Waters, 1985; Collis and Montgomery, 1995 Cartwright and Oliver 2000; Chang and Singh 2000). Unfortunately, as even early researchers noted (e.g. Lindblom, 1959; Simon, 1960) rational and linear decision-making models are unrealistic; they do not lend themselves to predicting an uncertain future (Barney, Wright and Ketchen 2001;Waldman, Ramirez, House, and Puranam 2001; Johnson, et al. 2005), and clearly do not embrace the notion of variability in management decisions. Further, organisations and environments are changing continually in today's global environment (Jackson 1993) and do not present managers with the opportunity to take decisions at a point in time (e.g. Papadakis, Lioukas, and Chambers 1998; Calantone, Garcia and Droge 2003; Regner 2003).

Institutional theory (Day, 1994; Dennett, 1995; Scott, 1995), theories of culture (e.g. Schein 1992), and psychological theories (e.g. Hodgkinson and Sparrow, 2000) all emphasize incremental development as the outcome of individual and collective management experience, with the role of top management as the enactors of their experience**.** However institutional theorists (e.g. Greenwood and Hinings,1996) point to the similarities common between organizations and the strategies they follow. That is,

the strategic paradigm or model followed by an organization may simply be adopted again (continually over time)—in a new setting (Greenley, and Otemgil, 1996). Following such a strategic paradigm doesn't lend itself optimally to variability. The characteristics of the strategic context may be dissimilar, but the methodology followed may not reflect this adequately. In a similar fashion the theories of culture and related psychology perspectives are rooted in evidence of how strategies develop incrementally based on experience as well as the historical and cultural legacy of the organization, not allowing for the new experiences or the variability required in today's global world.

A NEW STRATEGIC PARADIGM

Understanding and enhancing considerations underlying a global strategy rest on effective conceptualizing the continually shifting international markets and conditions--while past strategic tools have been conceived in a much more static environment. These frameworks have failed to deal explicitly with the notion that strategy itself is fluid, multi-leveled (Bonn 2005; Aaker and Mills, 2005) and multidimensional (Aaker and Mills, 2005)—thus have also not explicitly dealt with the levels of strategy and how, why, when and where SBU's, for example, may be allowed to differ somewhat in terms of the overall corporate global strategy. To this point, the author contends that much of the literature dealing with emergent versus intended versus actual strategy (c.f. Johnson et. al 2005) is reflective, for example, not only in terms of changes in the environment, but also due to the lack of treatment of the differences (deviations) from an organizational strategic direction that occur at its different levels and parts.

Organizational strategy is both top down and bottom-up, but what is often forgotten are the deviations from the top that are reflected at the lower levels and across organizational units; this consideration is extremely important as it is reflected in intended versus emergent strategy. Whether disciplined or not this variability deserves conceptual recognition, and would seem to be an important key to considerations of global strategy.

Planning a global strategy given shifting markets requires strategic flexibility to seize opportunities, but flexibility requires discipline. Research such as that done by Eisenstadt and Sull (2001) points to the notion that mechanisms and rules used to shape decisions need not be

numerous or complex, but must offer the potential to deal effectively with flexibility in today's market conditions.

The strategic continuum to be described below offers a simple though novel framework which conceptualizes flexibility to enable more efficient and effective global strategy decisions. In saying this it is important to recognize that in practice, organizations bring to the marketplace different strategic orientations—that is, they bring varying methods and levels of strategic thought and application. These differing strategic orientations may be thought of as a continuum, reflecting a new paradigm that is perhaps useful in going beyond conventional paradigms in terms of reflecting the actual, rather more fluid nature of strategy, with important implications for the considerations inherent in developing a global strategy.

At one (prototypical) end of the Strategy continuum, Strategic Vision requires a long-term perspective; the focus needs to be on the future in both strategy development and the supporting analysis. Managing a strategic vision requires a certain type of organizational and management style, as summarized in Table 2. A strategic vision is based on a forward-looking, long term perspective—the planning horizon extends into the future two, five or more than ten years, depending on the business involved. The goal of the supporting information system and analysis effort is therefore to understand the likely future environment. Experts who have insights into key future events and trends can be helpful. Scenario analysis, Delphi techniques, technological forecasting and trend analysis should be part of the analysis phase of strategy development.

Strategic opportunism, on the other hand, emphasizes strategies that make sense today. The premise is that the market is so dynamic and uncertain that it is not always feasible to aim at a specific future target. The implicit belief is that the best ways to have the right strategy in place tomorrow is to have it right today. The protoypical business driven by strategic opportunism, however, is very different from a business guided by strategic vision. The strategic uncertainties are very different. What trends are most active or critical now? What is the current driving force in the market? What are the strategic problems facing the business that need immediate correction? What technologies are ready to be employed? What are the current strategic opportunities and threats? What are competitors doing in the market and in the lab? What strategic changes are occurring or will soon occur?

Table 2 The Strategic Orientation Continuum

Organizational Characteristics	Strategic Vision	Strategic Opportunism
Perspective	• Forward-looking	• Present
Strategic Uncertainties	• Trends affecting the future	• Current threats and opportunities
Environmental Sensing	• Future scenarios	• Change sensors
Information System	• Forward-looking	• On-line
Orientation	• Commitment	• Flexibility
	• Build assets	• Adaptability
	• Vertical integration	• Fast response
Leadership	• Charismatic	• Tactical
	• Visionary	• Action oriented
Structure	• Centralized	• Decentralized
	• Top-down	• Fluid
People	• Eye on the ball	• Entrepreneurial
Economic Advantage	• Scale economies	• Scope economies
Signaling	• Strong signals sent to competitors	• Surprise moves

Importantly the continuum nature of strategy operates at all levels of the organization-- corporate, business, and functional. That is, the Strategy continuum can be thought of as comprising both horizontal and vertical dimensions. Both Complexity and evolutionary theories, along with what Johnson et al (2011) describe as the design lens--which provides a view of organizations as systems-- suggest that for innovation and rapid response to changing conditions a degree of variety and diversity within and around organizations is critically important. *Variety potentially exists for all organizations at different levels and in different forms.* There is an ever changing environment, there are different types of businesses, there is

a variety of different groups and individuals and their experiences and their ideas within an organization, and there are always deviations from ways of paradigmatically doing things.

The continuum framework above and the recognition that the continuum is both horizontal and vertical allows firms to pinpoint their existing position both horizontally and vertically (at various levels of strategy) on any given dimension, as this relates to global strategic planning.

Recognizing the continuum nature of strategy offers many benefits in terms of global strategy consideration:

- *It allows a more fluid way of thinking about strategy and markets*.

When we speak of a global strategy we must recognize that really at any one time there exists deviation (variability) and interpretation of the overall strategic direction. Complexity theorists argue that innovation and creativity emerge when there is sufficient order to make things happen but not when there is such rigidity of control as to prevent such innovation (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1998); wise firms plan their global strategy with this in mind.

- *It helps conceptualize variety and the recognition that variety can be managed.*

The very notion of a continuum suggests variability and movement along dimension(s). The complexities of a global environment suggest that it may be entirely appropriate and even optimal that variation of strategic path for SBU and functional level strategies occur; the continuum represents a mechanism for recognizing and disciplining variability.

- *It helps set a framework for managing strategic congruence—both overall and at given levels of strategy.*

A strategy must match the structure, systems, people and culture of the organization. In additional, each organizational component needs to fit with the others. If an inconsistency exists, it is likely that implementation of the strategy will be affected.

The concept of organizational congruence suggests that interactions between organization structural components should be considered (Homburg, Workman, and Jenson,2000).

Do the systems fit the structure?

Do the people fit the structure?

Does the structure fit the culture?

Applying the strategic continuum paradigm to the notion of congruence implies a broader conceptualization of congruence, however--one that recognizes the allowable and optimal variability that can and should exist at strategic levels, dimensions and geographical markets.

- *It suggests dimensions of importance in terms of the measurement of efficiency and effectiveness and it allows measurement toward this end.*

As noted above when we speak of overall strategy we must recognize that really at any one time there exists deviation and somewhat varying interpretation of the overall direction. But how much deviation is too much, on what dimensions, and in what directions and settings?

Recognizing the continuum of strategy orientation is a first step to managing marketing programs for domestic or international markets, and essential for determination of global strategy. Strategic *effectiveness* of the organization's objectives is a function of the various components, dimensions and levels of strategy as well as their individual and collective importance. The continuum can serve as an analysis tool for identifying, understanding and measuring the importance of, individual dimensions and levels of the strategy decision within particular markets and overall. It can also serve to guide the measures of *efficiency*, through calculation of the costs and returns associated with strategic actions within and across markets. Further the strategic orientation continuum can provide value as a managerial tool useful in global strategy considerations in that it:

- Precipitates consideration of strategic choices along many dimensions and directions, levels and markets (Ohmae 1987)
- Forces both a long-range view and short term considerations (Bonn 2005)
- Can help make visible the resource allocation decision (c.f. Srivastava, Fahey and Christensen 2001)
- Aids strategic analysis and decision making (e.g. Lin 2004)

- Is useful in guiding strategic management and control mechanisms (e.g. Eisenhardt and Sull 2001)
- Points to both horizontal and vertical communication and coordination systems (e.g. Perry, Taylor and Dorfel 2003)
- Can help an organization better cope with change through facilitating analysis of the scope, directions and magnitude of change required. (Eisenhardt 1989, Piercy 1992).

The Strategic Continuum as Regional Development versus Global Development Diagnostic: A Managerial Perspective

Developing and implementing regional versus global strategy means recognizing the significant differences in the continuum and its levels, and where movement is required and capable in and across markets, and parts of the organization.

Considerations in developing and implementing a regional versus global strategy include:

1. Knowing where you are on the strategic orientation continuum--horizontally and vertically, both overall and on any given dimension of strategy. This provides an analysis of current strategy position and the dominant paradigm for guiding usual strategic action.

2. Understanding the importance of given dimensions and levels as key, and most critical to strategic regional versus global market success.

3. Recognizing that variability is a characteristic of dynamic organizations. The aim is to understand optimal levels of variability on strategy dimensions, levels, and with regards to the requirement of key international markets and segments.

4. Asking implementation questions. For example, in considering ways of international market entry vis a vis regional versus global strategy considerations (Ohmae 1989), the continuum can help guide implementation considerations through comparison of each alternative in terms of the components in the strategic continuum for similarities and differences in orientation and importance in the implementation process.

Applying the strategic continuum notion and the type of analysis shown below in Figure 2 may be useful in considering the degree of variability for a potential new market situation vis a vis the dominant global organizational strategic thrust. Figure 2 shows a case grid derived by scaling both the current dominant organizational strategic thrust and the potential market strategic requirements along simple nine point scales.

Quadrants Two and Three represent prototypical areas of high congruence between the potential market strategic requirements and current position. In Quadrant Two a (9,9) positioning is shown where both the organization's dominant global strategic thrust and strategic requirements for the potential market entry are characterized by the highest levels of strategic opportunism, while Quadrant Three's (1,1) position shows strategic fit between dominant organizational strategic thrust and potential new market requirements characterized by the highest levels of strategic vision.

Quadrant One's (1,9) positioning, by contrast characterizes a situation where the strategic requirements for the new market may require high levels of strategic opportunism, raising questions about the ability of the firm to respond quickly enough to market conditions (given its orientation to strategic vision) to be an effective player. Quadrant Four's positioning shows a (9,1) situation, where the firms' dominant global thrust is characteristic of the highest levels of strategic opportunism as compared to a market characterized by long term perspectives and perhaps environmental rigidity; this situation not only shows some strategic incongruence, but would point to the requirement for high levels of proactive, strategic market management for a better fit to potentially occur.

Figure 2

ORGANIZATION'S CURRENT DOMINANT

STRATEGIC THRUST

STRATEGIC VISION   STRATEGIC OPPORTUNISM

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9

X 1,9 Q1	X 9,9 Q2
Q3 X 1,1	Q4 X 9,1

CONCLUSION

This article has discussed the notion that existing strategy paradigms are inadequate given the challenges of today's rapidly changing global business environment. In particular the article has suggested that organizations likely do not have the tools to optimally develop appropriate regional versus global strategies.   This article then proposed the time is right for "unpacking" and re-conceptualizing strategic orientation in light of the difficulties faced by marketers in an

increasingly global marketplace, and suggested a new strategic paradigm and management framework for analysis and strategy evaluation.

The new paradigm is simple, somewhat novel, and seemingly appropriate for a world characterized by change and multidimensionality. While it offers the potential for improving our understanding of, and implementation of strategy in today's global environment through (1) conceptualizing strategy considerations along a continuum, and (2) suggesting managerial focus, it must be subject to future research and testing by both academics and global marketing managers for its potential to be truly ascertained.

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Paper Seven: If a picture is worth a thousand words, how do you value a thousand memories?

Barrie Todhunter,

University of Southern Queensland, Springfield Campus, Springfield Central

Abstract

This article examines characteristics and circumstances of postgraduate coursework students who tend to fly under the radar of university support systems and who often experience considerable difficulty in making a successful transition to postgraduate study. The case study described illustrates many of the issues facing postgraduate students studying at a distance, as well as the benefits of a flexible and blended learning model where such issues are addressed through opportunities to experience a face-to-face learning environment as a component of their studies. Problems arise for many students because they have either not undertaken university study for some time, or as is becoming increasingly common, have never studied at