
Editorial

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Biographical notes: G.D. Sardana is a Mechanical Engineer and has received his PhD from IIT-Delhi in Productivity and Performance. Presently, he is a Professor in Operations Management, and Chairman, Bimtech Center for Management Case Development, at Birla Institute of Management Technology. He has industry experience of 42 years chiefly at BHEL, ABB, and Singer. He is in academics for the last nine years. He has published over 90 papers: three papers have won best paper awards from the Indian Institution of Industrial Engineering. His books include, *Productivity Management* (Narosa, 1998) and *Measurement for Business Excellence* (Narosa, 2009). He has edited 11 books on business cases.

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Short product life cycles, more frequent changes in customer preferences, ever increasing global competition, fast rate of obsolescence, and emerging new technologies have increased the need for innovation and new product development (NPD). The market re-orientation resulting from customer expectations of product performance and intense competition has created a genuine need for alternative technologies to reduce costs and improve quality. Though scale alone is not important, it is required in combination with scalability, an attribute associated with flexibility to produce variety from the same configuration of process technology. Marketing now is acquiring a new dimension of marketing technology and technology-centred products. Marketing and technology have never been so entwined as they are now.

International Conference on Management Cases (ICMC 2012), jointly organised by the Birla Institute of Management Technology, Greater Noida, India and the School of Public Policy, George Mason University, Arlington, Virginia, USA held on November 29–30, 2012, at BIMTECH Campus provided a vibrant forum to discuss marketing of technology and technology intensive products. Experienced academics, practicing managers, and research scholars shared their expertise through presentation of case studies that were focused on these matters. This issue carries four updated and revised papers selected for the journal from the 69 papers that were presented at ICMC 2012. The selected papers present a state of marketing practices as followed in four diverse areas/products evidenced in both the manufacturing and the service sector organisations.

In the opening paper of this issue H.M. Jha 'Bidyarthi' et al. discuss various issues emerging from initiatives of UID-enabled banking upon unbanked through micro-ATM. Poverty remains the biggest policy concern in India. Although the economy is growing at an average of nine percent, the growth is not inclusive. Several factors are responsible for this. 70% of the 125 billion people of India live in villages. There is wide spread illiteracy, lack of employment opportunities, and absence of job skills that lead to the creation of an impoverished economy. One of the primary reasons for poverty is being excluded from participating in the economy. Lack of access to a bank account can be a significant barrier to employment or entrepreneurship. Historically, economic inclusion of under-served people has been achieved through three different financial institutions: rural cooperatives, SCBs and RRBs. Among the several major initiatives that have been rolled out, a prominent one is from a multi-national bank (name withheld as requested by the bank) through UID-enabled 24 hour door-step banking using micro-ATM and business correspondence model. H.M. Jha 'Bidyarthi' et al. analyse all these and more in their detailed research findings.

Mohammed Arshad Khan and Santanu Roy in the next paper point out that due to the increasingly complex and competitive business environment, organisations have put more emphasis on knowledge management (KM). It is a changing realm as a key differentiator rather than just serving as a business enabler. The acquired knowledge is used to optimise and increase their operational efficiency, drive down operational cost and enhance core competencies. This assumes criticality in information technology firms that operate on a truly global scale across cultures, economies and political systems. The study probes into these aspects by presenting a case of a successful globally distributed international information technology company. The authors reflect upon the innovative steps adopted by the IT the company, Sapien Corporation, to enhance the KM competencies of the enterprise and of the employees. The case refers to the steps taken by the company to develop knowledge generation and assimilation tools on its own as well as in partnership with other companies. The case details the evolution of the major components of this strategic initiative.

The Aakash Android-based tablet computer opens up a world of new technology. As a low priced product, it promises millions of students, the young professionals, and to the people at the bottom of the pyramid the excitement of being a part of the high technology and interacting with a broader community. The tablet provides advantageous educational applications for students and adults, who would have otherwise grown with the experience of not being a part of the challenging economic environment, because they could not afford a laptop. However, the product needs a business model for economic sustainability and to create real value for the manufacturer and the consumers. Sharma et al. outline ways in which an organisations can develop strategic partnerships, expand

strategy to consider a market that has largely been untouched, and to produce a gadget that empowers individuals at the bottom of the pyramid. The authors discuss various facets of marketing as blue ocean strategy, likely competition, promotion and advertising, and tie-ups as partnership to distribute the product to consumers in diverse fields.

Jagoda et al. in the last paper of this issue refer to problems faced in carrying out innovation. Innovation is a resource intensive and uncertain process necessitated by increasing intensity of shorter product life cycles, hyper global competition and the fast pace of technological development and obsolescence. NPD has become a pre-requisite for survival of modern firms. This is particularly true of new media businesses such as entertainment and gaming where firms strive to create new and innovative content for their survival. However, as the return on investment in this process cannot be assured, it is not very easy for the entrepreneurs to find investors. The authors discuss crowdsourcing, a term coined to represent creative businesses involved in developing entertainment and knowledge tools and practices that exploit the potential and reach of the internet. The paper presents a study of Mini War Gaming, a Canadian firm which uses this model for raising funds through many small donations from its eager supporters.

We hope that the papers included in the issue have provided new insights to understand the complex relationships between marketing and marketing of technology. There are dependencies, interactive influences and trade-offs in decision making. In this dynamic scenario, the practicing manager has to take a strategic decision aiming at the growth and the transformation of the organisation. There are social and financial implications. We trust that the case studies and the articles will encourage the academics, practitioners, and the students of management studies alike to appreciate the concepts and approaches to seek solution.

As guest editors of a special issue of this volume, we express our sincere thanks to the publishers, Inderscience Enterprises Ltd. and specifically *IJTMkt* Editors Prof. Dr. Alexander Brem, and Prof. Éric Viardot for providing us this opportunity to create this issue.