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Special Issue

A Holistic View of Marketing of Innovation in European Countries

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GUEST EDITORIAL

A Holistic View of Marketing of Innovation in European Countries:

Introduction

Francesco Schiavone

Michele Simoni

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Innovation has always been a critical field of interest and action for European policy-makers in all of the industries. Over the last decade, European companies had to increase their innovation activities and capabilities, such as the development and marketing of new technologies and products, in order to face the rising competition of their Asian and American competitors. The objective of the Special Issue of the Journal of Euromarketing devoted to the Marketing of New Technologies and Innovations in Europe is to contribute to the debate in this area by discussing topics such as the following:

- Innovation and marketing strategies of European Small and Medium Enterprises (SME)
- Marketing approaches of innovation networks among firms in Europe
- From the idea to the firm: marketing innovations within regional European high tech clusters
- Role of trade marketing for new technologies in Europe's consumer market
- Collaborate to compete: co-opetition among firms in the marketing of new technologies
- International marketing of emerging technologies: the case of European Firms
- Web-marketing actions and innovations: benefits, limits and cases of study in Europe
- Large European High-Tech Companies and their marketing actions over crisis periods
- Financial crisis, innovation and marketing strategy: European best practices
- Marketing trends of new technology based firms in emerging European countries

This list is indicative of the types of contributions sought for the special issue. It is not intended to be exhaustive however, but rather illustrative. The papers submitted to this Special Issue provide robust theoretical foundations integrated with empirical data. A number of papers are based on in-depth case studies and action research. Industry-based case studies written in a non academic style are also included in the Special Issue.

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Innovation is one of the most valuable economic activities, and in many European Countries has become the core of firms' and policy makers' agenda. Scholars have devoted attention to the topic, producing abundant literature on the different meanings of innovation, and on the ways to develop and promote it. Nevertheless, innovation is still far from being a simple task. Several dimensions are involved whose interplay is intricate and non-linear, leading to difficult marketing activities. In addition, when innovative activities flourish and take root in an area, the attractiveness of the territory increases for investors and people. As a consequence, new resources can be targeted and attracted from other areas that foster innovation, leading to a virtuous circular process.

This special issue stems from our belief that a systemic and holistic view is required to fully understand innovation marketing activities. As guidance for readers, we propose a model that comprises three layers at which literature has analyzed innovation: single organizations, organizations within their context (e.g., inter-organizational networks or stake-holders web), and territories. According to this model, papers in the issue can be framed in terms of the layer at which they analyze innovation. Two papers adopt a single organization perspective analyzing conditions required within the firm to develop and promote innovations in the market. Two papers adopt the perspective of the organization immersed in its context focusing on the required fit between innovation and other players' expectations. Two papers adopt the territorial perspective. One deals with the problem of creating appropriate conditions for technological innovation to occur, and of using adequate marketing tools to attract resources. The other discusses causes and consequences of changes occurring in an innovative field, such the European medical care in terms of doctors-patient marketing relationship.

Figure 1: Different Layers of Analysis of Innovations Marketing. *GUEST EDITORIAL 3*

The first two papers of the special issue deal with capabilities required by firms to succeed in innovative activities.

The paper by Del Giudice and La Peruta analyzes the relevance of market orientation for innovation development in science-based business. The authors empirically test the interplay between market orientation, technological capabilities, and firms' performances. Through a structural equation applied to bio-tech industry, they show that the alignment among all components of firms' knowledge management systems are required to achieve superior results.

In the same vein, the paper by Villasalero et al. investigates the firms' capabilities needed for innovations. The study focuses on the wind energy business and suggests that traditional theories fail to explain the emergence of innovative leaders in the industry. Through a multiple-case approach, authors apply dynamic capabilities theory to show that discovery and innovation development process are separate phases, characterized by different critical marketing factors.

The next papers link internal firm traits to context characteristics relevant for the innovation process. The paper by Castellano et al. focuses on the electric car launch, analyzing reasons for past failures and current expected success. The study argues that fit between internal and external factors is necessary for innovation to spread across the market. In particular, authors show through empirical findings that appropriate conditions occur when the environmental pressure for innovation aligns with the firm's will to anticipate the market, which, in turn leads to the development of the needed dynamic capabilities.

The work of Ikävalko et al. analyzes factors that facilitate innovation in service firms. Adapting a multi-level approach, authors argue that a systemic approach is required in order to allow service organizations to adopt innovations and to fully exploit their market potential. In so doing they complement existing literature on innovation, and show through a multiple-case study that service innovation requires specific systemic factors to succeed.

The last two papers of the issue deal with the territorial dimensions of innovation.

The work of Bonetti and Masiello analyzes the creation of territorial conditions able to attract and retain innovative businesses. In particular, authors focus on policies that increase territorial attractiveness for investors interested in R&D activities. The authors propose an interpretative conceptual model, and distinguish between investment attraction and embeddedness. The two phases differ in both the targeted investors and the marketing tools used to attract innovative businesses. The consequences of the presence of new R&D activities in an area are explored.

The paper of Castellano et al. analyses the medical care industry in Europe. Authors describe the innovations occurred in the industry, focusing on the consequences of these changes. In particular, the paper points out that technical innovation is leading to a shift from the old doctor-to-patient paradigm to a new doctor-to-consumer paradigm. Effects of this shift are discussed in terms of opportunities and threats, and its impact on medical tourism is analyzed.

Focusing on European economy, this special issue is an attempt to offer a comprehensive view of the complexity that shapes marketing of innovations in developed countries. Although limited in its scope, the richness of approaches and theoretical backgrounds of the papers may stimulate readers to adopt a more holistic view in study of the topic.