

PICTURES AT AN IMP EXHIBITION: IS THERE ROOM FOR COMPETITION?

**Malcolm T. Cunningham
Manchester U.K.**

20th IMP Conference

**Copenhagen Business School
And University of Southern Denmark**

Copenhagen 2- 4 September 2004

PICTURES AT AN IMP EXHIBITION: IS THERE ROOM FOR COMPETITION?

1. INTRODUCTION

Painting pictures gives the artist scope for the selective transforming of reality. Likewise, it is no surprise that the nature and functioning of markets can be transformed into 'theories', 'perceptions' and 'pictures' which are held by its participants. There is no single, objective representation of how market relationships, networks or competition actually work (Ford 2003). Yet the different pictures created by people have a major influence on the behaviour of firms and individuals. These pictures are formed by the beliefs and experiences about how the activities of customers, suppliers and other competitors impinge upon their own firm's marketing strategy and competitive behaviour. As greater knowledge and experience accumulates, so will these market pictures evolve over time. Yet they still retain their diversity. But they will remain as pictures or representations in the absence of any grand, robust and testable theory.

2. THE IMP EXHIBITION

The object of an exhibition is to display the pictures created by artists. The IMP exhibition is a collection of outstanding merit; all the pictures having been created during the past 30 years. What are these pictures? They are all representations of the characteristics of business-to-business markets as interpreted by the research artists involved.

Initially, in 1976 a new international group of artists emerged, sketching and then painting pictures of business marketing and purchasing. They called themselves the IMP group.

Their first major picture was based upon their extensive observations and insights of industrial markets and it portrayed Relationships between organisations. Soon afterwards, a more complex picture was created, depicting Interactions between firms in business markets. It had more depth and unique features than their earlier work and included a model (not unusual for artists!). The merits of these pictures were soon attracting audiences among both academics and practitioners. When the third major picture in the IMP tradition emerged from Scandinavian artists, its impact was immediate. It was called Markets as Networks and it focussed upon embedded relationships in a network of actors, resources and activities. These three illuminating portrayals of business markets proved distinctive enough to attract large gatherings at the annual exhibition of the now-established IMP school of modern painters.

When shown alongside more traditional pictures of markets painted by Kotler and his colleagues, the IMP pictures demonstrated the stark differences and by inference, the superior characteristics of the IMP approach. The post-Kotlerian style of painting by IMP artists was established and widely acclaimed throughout the Western world.

Many other artists have been sufficiently inspired by the IMP style to have joined the group, but they have worked in their own studios in their home countries. The three IMP masterpieces of Relationships, Interactions and Markets-as-Networks are considered to be innovative, imaginative and intellectually challenging. Many other distinguished pictures by various members of the IMP group have been added to the exhibition.

"To have a good idea is nothing remarkable; but to carry out an idea and make something great of it, that is the most difficult thing. That is, in fact, Art"

Antonin Dvorak (Czech Composer 1841-1904)

However, the IMP pictures are not immune from some concerns and dissenting comments which have surfaced in recent years. In highlighting these concerns and critical comments, one is reminded of the warnings of the Irish poet W.B. Yeats.

"Tread softly, lest you trample on someone's dreams".

3. THE ART CRITIC

As so often happens, praise precedes doubts and criticisms. What do the doubters and critics say?

- (1) First, because the IMP masterpieces are between 15 and 25 years old, they may be gathering dust and losing their freshness. Perhaps some new creative initiative is now needed
- (2) Second, amidst all the acclaim, there are anxieties concerning the increasing uniformity, repetition and stereotyping of the IMP style in recent years (Cunningham in Young (2003)).
- (3) Third, there is scope for learning from other groups of artists external to the IMP genre. Increasing attention could be focussed upon the development in marketing coinciding with the decline of Western Europe's traditional industrial markets. Other schools of artists have emerged, notably Relationship Marketing and Services Marketing. Contemporary developments in Business Strategy and Organisational Behaviour also have relevance. Some of this work resonates with the IMP style and draws upon certain of its concepts.
- (4) Fourth, IMP pictures have been strongly differentiated from American, and especially Kotler's, portraits of marketing. This is now less valid. Critics point out that many contemporary marketing researchers in the U.S.A. have espoused the post-modern philosophy (Cova and Salle (2003)). These authors assert that Kotler's text book ideas no longer represent the dominant theory of marketing, but just a moment in history of the discipline.
- (5) Fifth, there is evidence of an American fight-back against the increasing dominance of the relationships paradigm governing exchanges between suppliers and customers in business markets. American authors (Sharma and Pillai (2003)) express concern that transactional exchanges have been relegated to being undesirable. They question whether the shift of emphasis to relationship exchanges has improved company performance. Unfortunately, many American authors seem incapable of distinguishing between normal relationship exchanges and life-long, or very long term relationships between suppliers and customers. These authors (Sharma and Pillai) offer an up-to-date critique of the current debate in the

U.S.A. of the merits of both transactional and relational exchanges in marketing strategies. This debate confirms the need for IMP artists to re-examine the opportunities for more pictures of transactional (competitive) exchanges as distinct from relational (cooperative) exchanges.

(6) Sixth, the long established IMP focus on business markets has not incorporated many of the developments in consumer marketing which have occurred in the past decade. Some contemporary consumer marketing now has features which resonate with business marketing. One particular development stresses the micro-social level of consumption and deals with interactions between people. Consumers are not viewed as passive but are highly involved in consumption experiences; going out, searching, planning, discussing purchases and interacting with the product (or service) provider. Social networks are activated and the concept of tribes or communities has been introduced into the marketing literature. (Cova and Cova (2002))

(7) Finally, there is a danger that IMP artists will become too inward - looking, with their annual exhibition being too stylised and ritualistic. It relies heavily on the features of a tribal gathering (Cova and Sale (2003)). It depends almost exclusively upon pictures of co-operative relationships and networks of co-operative interactions. Competitive behaviour and independent actions by firms are too often neglected. At the last IMP exhibition in Lugano in 2003 only 3 pictures of competition were portrayed out of 174 pictures (research papers) on display.

4. MAKING ROOM FOR COMPETITION

Surely there is room for pictures of competition! What additional pictures might enhance the IMP exhibition? The following selection is presented in this paper.

- A background sketch which sets the scene of competing in a dynamic market and technological environment.
- The restoration of some older, neglected pictures representing how firms actually compete.
- A panoramic view of the competitive arena in which firms operate, showing images and patterns of how competitors are perceived. These are illustrated by strategic groups, competitive groups and tribal groups.
- A more detailed portrait of a tribal group. This is painted as a case study of the German packaging industry. It draws together and integrates several aspects of competitive behaviour in a composite picture.

5. ADAPT OR PERISH: A SKETCH OF THE COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT

The search for competitive advantage takes place within the context of shifting patterns of competitive rivalry. Whilst survival, growth and wealth creation are the spurs to competitive behaviour, the market niche which the firm occupies rarely endures. Core competences become eroded and the firm may not have the flexibility and skills to adapt to a changing environment. New entrants from a variety of backgrounds are attracted to a profitable market and the "rules of the competitive game" change. (Cunningham and Culligan (1988)). The challenge to the firm is to translate its unique competences into the market place. Organisational learning becomes of paramount importance. Technological developments by competitors change the market structure. Competition occurs for dominance of the various technological trajectories being

pursued by competitors. Uncertainty and risk provide an often anarchic context for firms seeking to differentiate themselves from competitors.

It is almost 30 years since early IMP researchers argued that "*industrial marketing is an organisational problem*". (Hakansson and Ostberg (1975)). In his unique longitudinal study of firms by case study method Pettigrew (1985) stressed that competitive strategy is a process of managing organisational change in a dynamic environment. Organisation issues dominate the agenda and managerial processes. Hence strategic action is to be seen as a political activity and phenomenon, closely linked to the Behavioural Theory of the Firm. Competitive strategy emerges by balancing organisational coalitions within the firm. 'Satisficing', rather than 'optimising' behaviour prevails.

The experience of many firms is that any major technological or radical marketing initiative demands a radical rethink to organisational development, together with the acquisition of new resources. This may take place through co-operative interactions in the market network, but may have to be achieved through the more aggressive exercise of power and the use of both transactional and relational exchanges with suppliers and customers. It has been argued that in co-operative interactions, both can gain, whereas in competitive interactions the relevant goals of both parties cannot be simultaneously satisfied (Wilkinson and Young (1994)). An alternative view is that cooperation and competition can and do co exist. One example being in developing a market jointly, but competing thereafter for shares of the spoils of success. Cooperation between competitors was well researched by Easton and Araujo (1988). Cooperation took on both a formal and informal style and could be unplanned or carefully managed. Competing firms were found to frequently cooperate to prevent certain undesirable forms of competitive behaviour, usually in the form of price wars, injurious to the parties concerned.

This background scenario to competition leads to a close examination of research on the topic '*How do firms actually compete?*'

6. HOW DO FIRMS COMPETE?

Competition takes place through interaction and network strategies. It is also a social process, dependent upon management perceptions of competitors and their activities. Additionally, regulatory institutions and self regulation by firms within an industry affect their competitive behaviour. There are also many modes by which firms compete.

(1) Interaction Strategies

These are founded upon the knowledge that suppliers and customers are frequently involved in complex, inter-dependent relationships. An acceptable match between the needs of the customer and the capabilities of the supplier is accomplished over time through interaction. Adaptation to each other's technical, financial and service requirements will probably have occurred. The original objective may have been to establish a new and mutually beneficial relationship but it might also be to break old ones and change the nature of the relationships.

Hallen and Johanson (1985) summarise the options for competitive interaction strategies of suppliers as:-

A pricing strategy, a technical/quality strategy, an adaptation strategy and a joint development strategy.

Portfolio theory, applied to managing relationships with customers, leads to the recognition that all such exchanges have widely differing characteristics in terms of risks, rewards and resources. With some customers a low resource transactional exchange strategy may be adequate; with others a relational exchange, involving extensive resources may be necessary.

(2) Network Strategies

These arise as a market evolves and suppliers have perceived that customer relationships are embedded in a network of interlinked relationships with other customers, suppliers and third parties. Competitive networks strategies may be seen to comprise two capabilities;-

First, the capability to create a network of relationships with the potential for cohesive and complementary action.

Second, the competence to harness the synergistic potential of that network of relationships in pursuit of a competitive goal. (Cunningham (1985)).

Network strategies figure strongly in the ideas of Johanson and Mattson (1992). Strategic actions are efforts by 'actors' to influence (change or preserve) their positions in networks. Objectives are defined in terms of desired network positions and changes in the network structure. Actions may mean changing the actors' pictures or theories of how the network functions and whether relationships are viewed as cooperative or competitive. Thus, network positions, network resources and network pictures are not unrelated.

(3) A Social Process Picture of Competitive Strategies.

In their study of competitive processes Easton and Araujo (1986) set out to answer, in a pragmatic way, how firms actually compete. Their approach had the central focus that competition is in part, a social process which is measured by means of the perceptions of the managerial participants. Such perceptions, or 'pictures', are one determinant of the firm's actions. If a firm does not perceive another firm as a competitor, it is unlikely to treat it as one. The authors propose two models which describe the phenomenon.

First, the attenuation model, whereby a firm may perceive competitors to a greater or lesser degree, rather than a dichotomous 'competitors or not?' Second, a sectoral model, whereby a sub -group, segment or sector of the market in which the firm operates determines whether or not they perceive firms as competitors, only if the operate in that same sector.

(4) Modes of Competitive Behaviour.

Easton's research (1988) moves the understanding of competitive processes beyond the simple dichotomy of competition or cooperation as an explanation of how firms actually compete as argued by Wilkinson and Young (1994). Easton identified five modes of behaviour as perceived by managers of firms within the same industry.

Conflict - firms seeking to destroy competitors or drive them out of direct competition.

Competition - firms engaged in parallel striving with the same, but often mutually exclusive aim of winning, but recognising that others may win.

Co-existence - competing firms behaving independently of others and seeking to minimise their continuing competitive inter-dependence. Firms may recognise other competitors but choose to ignore their actions

Cooperation - joint action by firms in pursuit of inter-dependent goals.

Collusion - covert cooperation among competitors aimed at damaging a third party

From this classification of behaviour, it is feasible to picture an industry in terms of a complex mix of goals and actions. The primary mode is usually competition in many areas, but co-existence with other firms, depending on specific circumstances and then cooperation with some firms on topics where resources may have to be shared, or where the "rules of the competitive game" dictate it.

(5) Regulatory Institutions and Self Regulation of Competition.

Gummerson (1997) introduces the notion of competitive marketing equilibrium where dynamic balance (or equilibrium) is achieved because three major forces are at work; competition, collaboration and regulation. He bases his argument on the notion that Western Economies are not free competition economies, but mixed ones. Collaboration occurs and there are regulatory bodies (institutions or self-managed by participants). Regulation is needed to suppress or eliminate anti - social or monopolistic behaviour. A dynamic balance is struck to reconcile these three forces and some optimal combination occurs. No one force dominates or is unduly powerful for long periods.

Gummerson also introduces the concept of hyper-competition (comparable to Easton's term 'conflict') in which a firm deliberately sets out to disrupt the status quo and any competitive advantage enjoyed by another firm. Whereas interaction and network strategies may emphasise cooperation, stability and progressive change, through long-term relationships, hyper-competition strives for continuous disruption and break down in an anarchic manner.

7. **STRUCTURING THE COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT: Patterns and Pictures.**

The competitive arena is a picture, not a territory nor a boundary of an industry. It is the perceived system within which a firm operates and from which likely threats and opportunities emerge. It is not necessarily identical to the market, the industry sector or the immediate network of the firm. The picture of the competitive arena will likely comprise patterns and clusters of competing firms in some structured form.

Easton (1988) argued that competitive activity is conditioned by the perceptions of patterns of rivalry and the structure of the competitive arena which are held by participants. So, a cognitive map may be drawn by the firm to plot its position relative to those of its competitors. This allows an assessment of the firm's intentions (strategic purpose) and those conjectured for its competitors. This cognitive map has resonance with the notion of the network structure and the firm's network position.

(1) Strategic Groups

The original conception of homogeneous groups of competitors has been largely discarded in favour of a view that identifiable groupings of competitors exist. It is argued that the nature of competition is dependent upon the group of competitors to which the firm belongs. Competition will depend upon the size and distribution of these groups in a market-network or competitive arena. The concept of strategic groups thus emerged. The early propositions by Caves (1980) and Porter (1980) that such groups could be delineated by reference to their common corporate strategies did not hold sway for long. How one can identify and summarise corporate strategies of competing firms as a basis of comparisons has never been made clear. Newman (1973) had used the criterion "highly symmetric corporate strategies" as his proposed measure but never operationalised it successfully. Many studies have used dimensions that have only tenuous links with strategic behaviour and the goal became finding structures of any kind.

The structural patterns (or pictures) which emerged were attempts to translate 'sources of advantage' (competence and skills) into 'positional advantage' that are indicators of competitive advantage. (Day and Wensley (1988)). There is no clear agreement as to the appropriate dimensions to be used in group construction (McGee and Thomas (1986)) yet the various pictures proposed retain some attractions for strategists.

(2) Competitive Groups

This term was proposed in an attempt to avoid the trap of relying on the perceived strategy of competitors as a dimension for structuring the competitive arena (Cunningham and Culligan (1988)). They argued that any dimension which was meaningful to the firm when plotting the map of competitors in the arena, network or market was worth using. In these authors' study of competitive groups in the on-line data industry, they identified clusters of competitors by reference to their technological commitment to a position or level in the value-added chain of data generation to supply. Firms competed with other firms in the same value-added level but also sought to compete by attempting to move up or down that chain. The objects were to occupy more powerful or profitable levels in the chain than the one in which they existed. Clusters of competitors were also identified by their size and scale of operations (a proxy for resources) and further clusters emerged according to the market niche or type of customer being served.

Clearly competitive groups are distinguishable on several dimensions and the firm may use several maps to determine its competitive position vis-à-vis different clusters of competitors. Competition is multi-faceted: by no means an original concept! The perceptual maps are pictures, not necessarily measurable nor logically proven as being inviolate.

8. **TRIBAL GROUPS: A speculative Picture of the Competitive Arena**

The idea of tribal groups is linked with the discussion in the previous section on grouping of competitors in some recognisable structure for strategy formulation. From its origins in consumer marketing and anthropology, the potential for tribal groups to be applied to business-to business marketing will be explored. Finally, a case study is presented to

expand the idea for possible application to the competitive behaviour of members of the tribal group in the German packaging industry.

(1) Tribes in Consumer Marketing.

The concept of tribes and tribal groups of consumers has been highlighted (Cova and Salle (2003)) to demonstrate contemporary developments in consumer marketing which have relevance to IMP research. Tribes or communities are defined as groups of individuals who are not necessarily homogeneous (in terms of objective social characteristics), but are inter-linked and capable of taking collective action. It is more than a simple aggregate, it is a group forged by interdependence between its members. At this micro-social level of the market, social links are created through their common experiences of consumption and it is here that the concept of tribes, as identified by Cova and Cova (2002) has been introduced. Members of the tribe communicate with one another about their beliefs, interests and loyalties to particular products or forms of consumption. They search, plan, day-dream and enjoy the sensation of buying. They also recall their consumption experiences with others in the group.

The tribal marketing approach, as reported by Cova and Cova (2002) has turned away from such concepts as life styles, consumer segments etc. that underpin the Kotlerian approach. The tribes exercise power through collective action. The marketing companies recognise that tribes are a source of competences which force the companies to establish partnership with the tribe. The tribe is no longer seen and treated as passive consumers.

If one considers the tribe or community as being able to perform the role of an individual actor, capable of collective action, such as applies in industrial market networks, it is possible to incorporate the tribal experiences into the company model (Cova and Salle 2003)).

(2) Anthropological Issues Concerning Tribes

Aside from marketing, anthropological studies of tribes in societies point to their having certain characteristics among which are the following:-

- Complex and close interlocking relationships.
- A culture which is preserved through bonding rituals and practices.
- A strong community spirit and loyalty to each other, amidst regulated competition and rivalry.
- Collective defence of territory against intruders.
- Preservation of order and discipline through leadership of elders and a tribal chief.
- Enjoyment of shared benefits and security through a strong sense of belonging.
- Negotiated settlement of disputes.
- Distinguishable characteristics from other tribes.

(3) Tribal Groups in B 2 B Markets

Is it feasible to transfer the concept of tribes and communities to business markets? Do such groups exist and what might be the competitive issues raised?

Extrapolating the anthropological and consumer tribal characteristics to the realm of B 2 B markets provides a challenging picture of possible tribal groupings.

The B 2 B tribe will be a community of individual firms with complex, interlocking relationships. They may be located in a geographical region but, more importantly, will share many common competences and experiences of exchanges in technologically similar products or services. There is considerable shared knowledge and perceptions of who is and who is not a member of the tribal group. The group is compact and self-governing and is distinguishable from other firms in the industry on certain characteristics. Inter-dependence will be strong and the 'rules of the competitive game' will be recognised and usually adhered to. There will be competition with other members, but also an atmosphere of 'live and let live' (or competitive co-existence) may occur. Hierarchical power relationships will prevail, sometimes regulated by leading firms of 'tribal elders'. Regulation may take the form of covert meetings to resolve conflicts and achieve a share out of the market on generally agreed terms. The tribal group operates to avoid destructive competition with its attendant reduced or unpredictable reward in terms of profit levels. These benefits, or rewards, accounts for the bonding of firms into the tribe.

It is argued here that the tribal group need not be confined to suppliers but can conceivably draw together customers and suppliers in a common, interdependent set of relationships. This group will collectively defend their common territory against intruders and invaders who pose a threat to the status quo. This capability to take collective action will be helped by effective, if covert, communications between disparate tribal members.

(4) The German Packaging Industry: A Case Study of a Tribal Group

This case study is not only an exposition of data collected by research, it is also presented to raise two important issues. First, to what extent, if at all, are the 'pictures' of competition developed earlier in this paper, applicable to an industry setting? Second, what competitive strategies might an outside supplier, who is not a tribal member, adopt to successfully enter the territory of the tribal group?

A possible example of a tribal group can be found by binding together into a distinct community both suppliers and customers in the German speciality packaging industry.

The total industry is heterogeneous comprising packaging for pharmaceuticals, toiletries, cigarettes, detergents and ready-to-eat foods etc. This case study focusses on the detergent packaging sector for the domestic market. Intense international competition occurs amongst customers (detergent distributors) and, to a lesser extent, between German-based packaging suppliers. Customers and suppliers form a closely knit interlocking tribal group of 4 customers and 7 suppliers. The technology of the packaging is in board, paper, plastic and also photographic and printing illustrations of the branded packaged good.

External to the tribal group are hundreds of retail customers of all 4 detergent distributors. Of these retailers, 20 major ones account for over 50% of the total packaged detergent market.

The accompanying figures and tables summarise the key features of the tribal group.

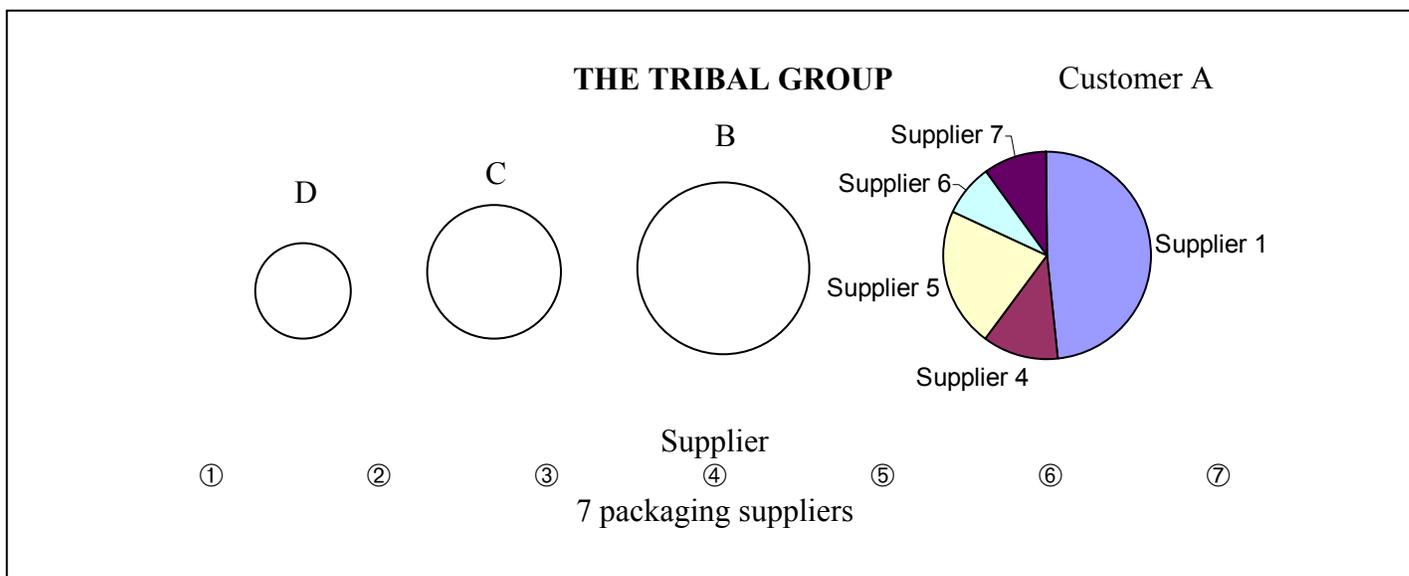
No customer single sources its packaging supplies.

4 of the 7 suppliers have a single customer.

3 other suppliers have between 2 and 4 customers each.

The varying power of customers in their market is reflected in their contrasting market shares of 50%, 25%, 19% and 6%.

For brevity, the shares of packaging purchases of the largest customer are shown, where its suppliers get 48%, 22%, 12%, 10% and 8% respectively in this multi-sourcing situation.



Customer D	Customer C	Customer B	Customer A
2 suppliers	3 suppliers	4 suppliers	5 suppliers
①	①	①	① 48% share
②	③	③	④ 12% share
	④	④	⑤ 22% share
			⑥ 8% share
		⑦	⑦ 10% share

Supplier ① has 4 customers	A	B	C	D
Supplier ② has 1 customer				D
Supplier ③ has 2 customers		B	C	
Supplier ④ has 3 customers	A	B	C	
Supplier ⑤ has 1 customer	A			
Supplier ⑥ has 1 customer	A			
Supplier ⑦ has 1 customer	A			

ANALYSIS OF THE CASE STUDY

Within the tribal group of customers (detergent manufacturers) and suppliers (packaging specialists) a number of competitive and strategic issues arise. These lend some support to the idea that the suppliers and customers belong to a tribal group.

1. As participants in the tribal group, the packaging suppliers pursue a range of complementary competitive behaviours, which bear a close resemblance to those identified earlier by Easton in his research studies.

The dominant behavioural modes are competitive and co-existence, which occur simultaneously: the balance between these modes changes with the changes in customer purchasing behaviour. Other modes are also found.

Co-existence. Suppliers behave independently of other suppliers as far as possible and avoid disrupting the status-quo in the short term.

Competition Suppliers are involved in parallel striving but constantly attempt to improve their market share in the medium term. They recognise that any gains made from one customer may be offset by loss of business from another one. Technological development and improvements in packaging designs and production processes accompany cost efficiencies.

Cooperation. Close cooperation between suppliers and customers is vital. Also joint cooperative action between competing suppliers takes place if a threat from outside the tribal group is imminent.

Collusion. A limited but persistent form of collusion occurs between suppliers. The collusion is covert and is to prevent destructive price competition. Suppliers belong to the same trade associations which facilitates information exchange on prices, capacity and technical standards.

Hyper-Competition. Very rarely destructive competitive behaviour may occur, such as when a potential rival packaging supplier from outside the tribal group emerges as a threat to all. This takes the form of conditional and temporary price reductions to loyal customers.

2. Technological development of packaging between a customer and one of its suppliers often stimulates technological development by other customers. This is done by

imitation or differentiation in packaging design. These developments cascade down to all other packaging suppliers under pressure from competitive buying by customers. In his way innovations diffuse rapidly in the tribal group.

3. The basis of competitive behaviour by suppliers is on three major dimensions:-
 - (a) Joint technical development in cooperation with selective customers.
 - (b) Service, especially speed and reliability of delivery.
 - (c) Price.

As one might expect, these dimensions mirror those interaction strategies identified by Hallen and Johanson. (1985)

4. Self-regulation occurs among the packaging suppliers as was proposed by Gummerson. (1997)
Customers also indulge in more limited self-regulation related to environmental, safety and health issues in the manufacture and packaging of detergents.

COMPETITIVE CHALLENGES.

Some strategic challenges emerge from the case study.

How may a new packaging supplier enter the tribal group?

What competitive strategies should be adopted to counter the collective defensive tactics of the incumbent packaging suppliers?

Which customer (s) in the tribal group should be the focus for an entry strategy by a new supplier?

For how long can a closely knit tribal group of customers and suppliers remain before being disrupted or else disintegrating by unilateral self interest behaviour by one member of the group?

POST SCRIPT

It was argued at the opening of this paper that:-

'Painting pictures gives the artist scope for the selective transforming of reality'.

Likewise:-

'The nature and functioning of markets and competition can be transformed into 'pictures' and 'theories' which are held by participants'.

It might be equally valid for the 'reality' of the competitive arena in which a firm operates to be transformed into various pictures, one of which is represented by a tribal group of inter-dependent firms. Inevitably, a firm's competitive strategy will be strongly influenced and shaped by such a picture.

Would the IMP Exhibition benefit from displaying more pictures which portrayed competitive issues?

REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Campbell N.C.G. and Cunningham M.T. (1983). 'Customer Analysis for Strategy Development in Industrial Markets'. *Strategic Management Journal* 4. pp. 360-380
- Carley K.M. (1999) 'Learning Within and Among Organisations' in Miner A.S. and Anderson P. (eds) 'Advances in Strategic Management: Population Level and Industrial Change' Vol.16 pp.35-53 JAI Press, Hartford.CN.
- Caves R.E. (1980) 'Industrial Organisation, Corporate Strategy and Structure: A Survey'. *Journal of Economic Literature*. Vol.18. No1 pp.64-92.
- Caves R.E and Porter M.E. (1977). 'From Entry Barriers to Mobility Barriers: Conjectural Decisions and Contrived Deterrence to New Competition?' *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 91. pp.241-262.
- Cova. B. and Salle R. (2003) 'When I.M.P. - Don Quixote tilts His Lance Against Kotlerian Windmills: B 2 B Marketing Deeply Changed during the last 25 years, B 2 C Marketing Too', 19th IMP Conference Lugano. Switzerland.
- Cova B. and Cova V. (2002) 'Tribal Marketing: The Tribalisation of Society and Its Impact on the Conduct of Marketing'. *European Journal of Marketing*. Vol 36 No. 5/6 pp. 590 - 620.
- Cunningham M.T. (1995) 'Competitive Strategies and Organisational Networks in New Technology Markets' in Moller K. and Wilson D. (eds) 'Business Marketing: An Interaction and Network Perspective' pp.321-349. Kluwer Academic Publishers. Mass U.S.A.
- Cunningham M.T. and Culligan K.L. (1988) 'Competition and Competitive Groupings: An Exploratory Study in Information Technology Markets'. *Journal of Marketing Management*. Vol.2.pp.148-174.
- Day G.S. and Wensley R. (1988) 'Assessing Advantages: A Framework for Diagnosing Competitive Superiority' *Journal of Marketing*, 52 April. pp. 1-26.
- Easton G. (1988) 'Competition and Marketing Strategy' *European Journal of Marketing*. Vol. 22. No 2.
- Easton G. and Araujo L (1986) 'Competition in Industrial Markets: Perceptions and Frameworks'. 3rd I.M.P. Conference, Lyon.
- Ford ID. et al. (2003) 'A Model for Managing in Networks' in 'Managing Business Relationships' John Wiley and Sons, Chichester. England. pp. 176/7.
- Gummerson E. (1997) 'In Search of Marketing Equilibrium: Relationship Marketing versus Hyper competition'. *Journal of Marketing Management*. 13 (5) pp. 421-430.
- Hakansson H. (ed) (1987) 'Industrial Technological Development: A Network Approach' Croom Helm. London.
- Hakansson H. and Johanson J. (1992) 'A Model of Industrial Networks' in 'Industrial Networks: A New View of Reality' pp. 28-34 Routledge, England.
- Hakansson H. and Ostberg. C. (1975) 'Industrial Marketing - An Organisational Problem?' 'Industrial Marketing Management' 4. pp.113 -123.
- Hakansson H. and Snehota I (1990) 'No Business is an Island: The Network Concept of Business Strategy' *Scandinavian Journal of Management*. 4(3) pp. 187-200.
- Hallen L and Johanson J (1985). 'Industrial Marketing Strategies in Different National Environments'. *Journal of Business Research*. 13 pp.495-509.
- Johanson J. and Mattson L - G (1992) 'Network Positions and Strategic Action - An Analytical Framework'. in 'Industrial Networks: A New View of Reality'. Routledge, London. pp. 205-214.

- McGee J. and Thomas H (1986) ' Strategic Groups; Theory, Research and Taxonomy '. Strategic Management Journal. 7.pp.141-160.
- Newman H.H. (1973) 'Strategic Groups and the Structure/Performance Relationship' A Study with Respect to the Chemical Process Industry. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Harvard University.
- Pettigrew A. (1985) ' The Awakening Giant: Continuity and Change in I.C.I ' Oxford. Basil Blackwell.
- Pillai K.G. and Sharma A (2003) ' Mature Relationships: Why Does Relational Orientation turn to Transactional Orientation?' Industrial Marketing Management. 32. Special Issue. pp. 643-651.
- Porter. M.E (1980). 'Competitive Strategies: Techniques for Analysing Industries and Competitors'. Free Press. New York.
- Sharma A and Pillai K.G. (2003) 'The Impact of Transactional and Relational Strategies in Business Markets: An Agenda for Enquiry' Industrial Marketing Management. 32. Special Issue. pp.643-651.
- Sheth J.N. and Shah R.M. (2003) ' Till Death Us Do Part - But Not Always: Six Antecedants to a Customer 's Relational Preference in Buyer-Seller Exchanges' Industrial Marketing Management 32. Special Issue pp. 627-631.
- Wilkinson I.F. and Young L.C. (1994) ' Business Dancing - The Nature and Role of Interfirm Relationships in Business Strategy' Asia - Australia Marketing Journal. 2 (1) pp.67-79.
- Young L.C. (2002) ' Whither IMP., Or Is It Whither IMP '. A Commentary on the Plenary Session of the 18th IMP Conference' Journal of Consumer Behaviour. Vol.1. No.3. pp. 309-316.

