Preface

Marketing is a major functional stream in business management and needs an approach of systems thinking to maintain operational synergy amidst growing competition as a result of globalization. The area of systems thinking and process dynamics is new for marketing managers and so also challenging. Systems thinking in the market development and management divulge manager’s active engagement in the monitoring, evaluation, and control of the various activities through stage-gate process and portfolio approaches. A network process perspective on the marketing management describes process dynamics in developing and implementing competitive strategies in a firm. Thus, a good knowledge of systems thinking and process dynamics in a marketing organization would help driving a sustainable growth. This perspective of systems thinking and process dynamics also explains how competitive strategies actually consist of myriad interdependent actions, negotiations, and micro-decisions in the effort to create strong networks and portfolio management. System thinking in marketing is an innovative perspective and a set of conceptual tools that enables the reader to understand competitive and complex business situations.

System thinking and process dynamics attempt to portray the performance-measurement system in marketing activities in a lucid way which has been an obscure issue for managers. A sound measurement system of various marketing operations in a firm improves decision-making scenario by focusing on aspects of the market competition and core competencies of a firm to create organizational value and provide a valid and systematic justification for strategies implemented by the managers. System thinking is a managerial process of introspection of organizational culture in modulating the contemporary strategy development, while process dynamics is a scientific approach to learn and penetrate into complex business situations. There is an increasing interest among multinational companies to consider marketing operations to reengineer with precision the decision making competencies by introducing systems thinking and process dynamics concepts. In addition, marketing education has now been considered as a science and not merely a strategic learning for manager.

Management learning is a process of new ways of thinking, realizing, and living with organizations. Marketing is a core function in business management not reduced to just a strategic tool for managers in a company. Innovative ideas have poured in building marketing strategies since long and in the era of globalization with manifold competition among companies, it needs to be reengineered. Systems thinking and process dynamics concepts have emerged as a new stream of applications in mending conventional strategy development approach in marketing area. This is a holistic approach of monitoring, evaluation, and application process of appropriate marketing strategies, understanding the competition, and its future implication on the business of a company. The emphasis of discussion is on the process of bringing systems into being, beginning with the identification of a need and extending through requirements
determination, functional analysis and allocation, design synthesis, evaluation, and validation, operation and support, phase-out, and disposal. By employing the iterative process of analysis, evaluation, feedback, and modification, most systems in existence can be improved in their affordability, effectiveness, and stakeholder satisfaction. During the process of business improvement, firms encounter with various gaps in reference to functional efficiency and customer value generation. The critical issues pertaining to gaps in the functional efficiency have been addressed in this book, referring to the P-Factor\(^1\) coordination for acquiring enhanced customer-retailer-technology triad power to gain competitive advantage.

This book focuses on thinking strategically about measurement, providing essential principles for developing and implementing a performance-measurement in a marketing firm. This book also introduces activity based dynamic modeling and analysis for architecting marketing strategies and policy applications. The strength of this book appears in describing the scientific concept of systems thinking and analyzing process dynamics for a marketing firms to win in complex situations. The arguments on new thinking and applications are supported with the best practices driving to lead in the market. The discussion in the book are woven around new business philosophy, organizational learning process, internal and external strategic fit of marketing policies of a company, process competency and its measurement, market penetration strategies, and efficiency of managerial communications. Discussions in each chapter are woven around the critical problems that are faced by the companies in developing and implementing technology driven retailing strategies and supported by managerial implications. The book discusses the trend of shifting retailing strategy using contemporary technology and customer centric marketing approaches to optimize benefit in the growing competitive business environment adapting new technology. There is not enough work done on these new concepts in reference to success in marketing operations amidst growing competitive pressures. This book would be useful to the working managers and researchers in acquiring new concepts and applied insights.

The discussion in this book demonstrates how marketing managers need to develop strategies to enhance the performance of a firm, analyzing numerous operational factors. The theoretical discussions in the book on systems thinking and process dynamics in marketing are supported with the best practices followed by many companies worldwide. Successfully achieving market leadership by a firm requires little intervention for decision makers on portfolio management and decisions making.

This book has emerged as a result of several brainstorming sessions with peer researchers on convergence of technology and business. Such discussions led to develop new concepts on systems thinking in marketing in reference to marketing-mix strategies, seasonality, and measuring customer value. Initially, I worked out a research agenda on orchestration of marketing strategies and published some working papers based on conceptual frameworks. Some of the research papers on systems thinking in reference to marketing management were also submitted to the international conferences that received high response. Such refined work has been presented in this book endorsed with applied illustrations and updated research on product management.

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ENDNOTE

1 P-Factor in retailing refers to the strategies of product, price, place, promotion, packaging, pace (competitive dynamics), people (sales front liners), performance, psychodynamics, posture and proliferation