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**Marketing and  
Innovation Management:  
An Integrated Perspective**

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# Marketing and Innovation Management: An Integrated Perspective

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## Marketing and Innovation Management: An Integrated Perspective

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### Abstract

The relevance and importance of marketing in innovation management has been questioned in recent years. Marketing has been blamed directly or indirectly for poor returns on investment in innovation, and marketing models of the diffusion of innovations have not been widely adopted. In this monograph we argue that marketing is currently in a unique position to reaffirm its critical role in innovation management. We review some recent research that has already started this “reinstatement” process and propose some future directions that may help complete it. We argue that the focus of marketing input into the innovation process should be shifted from quantifying consumer input through surveys toward uncovering qualitative insights by observing and engaging consumers. We also argue that marketing has a unique role to play in unifying and bridging various paradigms proposed in diffusion research. Finally, given the dramatic shifts in consumption patterns and social interactivity over the past few years, we explore how marketing has and should contribute to non-traditional and novel approaches to the launch of innovations.

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# 1

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## Introduction

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It would be difficult to find a CEO today that would not rank “innovation” as one of the top means by which a firm can sustain growth and survive a harsh competitive environment. In fact, according to Forrester Research (2006), 90% of CEOs feel that innovation is very or extremely important to growth. However, it is unlikely that many CEOs would place “Marketing” as one of the top functions in charge of formulating innovation strategy or ensuring the success of an innovation initiative. This problem is compounded by recent research from a number of disciplines outside of marketing (Technology and Operations Management, Organizational Behavior, Social Science) that has had a profound impact on how scholars and practitioners alike perceive the ingredients necessary to succeed at innovation. This has left marketing somewhat “dangling” in terms of perceived relevance for innovation and as having only a secondary role in the process.

In this monograph we attempt to explain why marketing has been perceived as being less relevant for innovation strategy and how this can be remedied. Indeed, recent work by marketing scholars holds the promise of increased marketing impact on innovation decision-making in future. To this end, in Section 2, we review some recent direct and

## 2 *Introduction*

indirect criticisms of the role played by marketing at the early phases of innovation management, when decisions are being made on which new products and services to focus on. In Section 3 we argue that these criticisms may be alleviated and that the role of marketing in innovation management may be reinforced by shifting the focus of marketing input. In particular, we recommend shifting the focus away from quantifying consumer input through surveys and toward uncovering qualitative insights by engaging and observing consumers. Such transition has already started, enabled by recent technological trends and developments which are being leveraged by marketing scholars and practitioners.

Section 4 addresses the topic of understanding customer adoption and the likely diffusion of innovations. The focus is on showing how marketing concepts and frameworks developed in this domain can fit with and enrich those proposed by other disciplines. Section 5 focuses on the launch of innovation into the marketplace and how recent trends are changing marketers' approach to this critical task.

Throughout the monograph, we attempt to offer a perspective that helps understand what marketing can bring to the table when it comes to setting innovation strategy and, at the same time, propose a way to approach research in this domain so that it has the intended effect of helping firms integrate the customer perspective.

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