Chapter 3

Strategic Marketing Decisions

1. INTRODUCTION.

The term “strategic marketing decisions” describes the set of activities of an enterprise that are oriented to the consumers (Fletcher, 1990). Terms such as business politics, strategic market planning, strategic marketing, business strategy, will be included, from now on, in the term “strategic marketing decisions”. By speaking more generally, we could say that the importance of various strategies varies according to the nature and the market position of each enterprise.

When we refer to marketing decision-making, usually we imply the product specific decision-making. However, an enterprise should make decisions that take into account the whole set of products produced by it along with their interrelationships. Decisions that involve the drawing of guidelines and the long-term marketing planning can be described by the term “strategic market planning process”.

2. STRATEGIC MARKET PLANNING PROCESS

The objective of strategic marketing is to determine, on one hand, the markets that can be supplied by the enterprise and on the other to determine how to succeed in preserving the competitive advantages in those markets (Nylen, 1990).

The successful implementation of this process requires an answer to the following questions (David, 1986):
- Who are we?
- Who do we want to become?
- Which is the best way of becoming what we want?
- Which are our superior points and drawbacks?
- How can we take advantage of our capabilities and fight down out weak points?
- Which are the major opportunities and threats in our area?
- In what way can we take advantage of our opportunities and avoid the threats?
- What are the actions of our competitors?
- Which are the capabilities and the shortcomings of our competitors?
- In what way will the competitors react to our strategies?
- How much vulnerable are we to the strategies of our competitors?
- How much vulnerable are our competitors to our own strategies?

The possibility of finding answers to the above questions gives competitive advantages to the enterprise. Figure 1 presents the process that should be followed by an enterprise in its attempt to go over from current state to the desirable one.

*Figure 1. Strategic marketing process (Source: David, 1986)*