National University of Singapore  
School of Business  
Department of Marketing

MKT3413 – SME Marketing Strategy

Lecturer : Assoc. Prof. Lee Khai Sheang

Session : Semester II, 2009/10

Course Objectives
Compared to major corporations, start-up firms and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) often face resource limitations in competing for markets. As such, strategies for major corporations, which often assume implicitly that sufficient resources are available for strategy implementation, may not be applicable for start-up firms and SMEs.

This course focuses on formulating competitive strategy for start-up firms and SMEs, taking into explicit consideration of the limitations of such firms compared to major corporations. This course aims to:

- Provide students an appreciation of the limitations that start-up firms and SMEs face in competing for markets, and the implications of such limitations in formulating competitive strategies for start-up firms and SMEs.
- Introduce students to some competitive strategy frameworks, concepts and theories that relevant and/or unique for start-up firms and SMEs.
- Enhance students’ skills in applying general marketing concepts and theories to formulate strategies for start-ups and SMEs in competing for markets.
- Enhance students’ ability to develop more effective business and marketing plans that take into consideration the particular difficulties faced by start-up firms, and SMEs.

Students are expected to apply theories and concepts introduced in the course to solving business and strategy problems, through:
- Evaluation of business start-up proposals,
- Project work, in which students are required to do the following,
  - Formulate a competitive strategy for a start-up or SME.
  - Prepare a comprehensive “Business Plan” for a start-up or SME.
  - Present their competitive strategy and business plan, and critique their peers’ presentations and proposals.

Readings
1. Hand-outs: Journal articles and notes.

Software
1. BizViability Software – Assessing the Commercial Viability of a Start-up
2. BizPlan Software – Preparing a Business Plan for a Business Start-up
3. BizPitch Software – Making a 2-Minute Elevator Pitch
**Assessment Method**

**50% - Group (Max 3 Members) with Peer Review Adjustment**
- BizViability Report : 5%
- BizViability Presentation : 5%
- BizPlan Report : 15%
- BizPlan Presentation : 15%
- BizPitch Report : 5%
- BizPitch Presentation : 5%

**50% - Individual**
- Critique (Oral) of BizViability Presentation : 10%
- Critique (Oral) of BizPlan Presentation : 15%
- Critique (Oral) of BizPitch Presentation : 10%
- Participation : 15%

**Total** : 100%
Course Outline

Week | Topic
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1 | (a) Introduction: Course Overview, Assessments, & Expectations

(b) Business Plan for Start-ups and SMEs
Software:
- BizViability Software – Assessing the Commercial Viability of a Start-up
- BizPlan Software – Preparing a Business Plan for a Business Start-up
- BizPitch Software – Making a 2-Minute Elevator Pitch

2 | (a) Conventional Strategy Frameworks: Limitations for Start-ups and SMEs in Competing for Markets
Readings:
- Chapters 1 and 2 in *Competing for Markets: Strategies for SMEs*, Lee, Lim, & Tan (2002).

(b) Competing Under Resource Constraints: Competitive Strategy Framework for Start-ups & SMEs
Readings:
- Chapters 3 & 9 in *Competing for Markets: Strategies for SMEs*, Lee, Lim, & Tan (2002).

Case Discussion: Coffee Products (Malaysia)

3 | (a) Finalize Group Formation

(b) New Product Launch by Start-Ups: Differentiation, Substitution, & Niching Strategies
Readings:
- Chapter 4 & 5 in *Competing for Markets: Strategies for SMEs*, Lee, Lim, & Tan (2002).

Case Discussion: Optical Distortion (USA)

4 | (a) All Groups: Business Start-up Project
- Presentation of Business Idea
- Approval & Confirmation of Business Start-up Proposal
5 Free-Riding as a Competitive Strategy for Start-ups and SMEs: Parallel Imports
Readings:
- Chapter 6 in *Competing for Markets: Strategies for SMEs*, Lee, Lim, & Tan (2002).

Case Discussion: Cycle & Carriage vs. the Parallel Importers (Singapore)

6 Competing Against a Giant: Market Penetration Strategy
Reading:
- *Competing for Markets: Strategies for SMEs*, Lee, Lim, & Tan (2002).

Case Discussion: Industrial Equipment Malaysia

7 All Groups:
- Presentation of BizViability
- Submission of BizViability Report

All Individuals:
- Critique (Oral) of BizViability Presentation

8 New Product Market Entry and Development Strategies
Reading:

Case Discussion: Agricultural Machinery Malaysia

9 Growth & Strategy Evolution: From Private Label to Own Brand Strategy
Readings:
- Chapters 3 to 8 in *Competing for Markets: Strategies for SMEs*, Lee, Lim, & Tan (2002).

Case Discussion: Zheng Zhang Textiles Factory (China)

10 Presentation Groups Scheduled:
- Presentation of BizPlan
- Submission of BizPlan Report

Critique Groups Scheduled:
- Critique (Oral) of BizPlan Presentation

11 Presentation Groups Scheduled:
• Presentation of BizPlan
• Submission of BizPlan Report

Critique Groups Scheduled:
• Critique (Oral) of BizPlan Presentation

12 Presentation Groups Scheduled:
• Presentation of BizPlan
• Submission of BizPlan Report

Critique Groups Scheduled:
• BizPitch Presentation

13 All Groups:
• Presentation of BizPitch to Potential Investors

All Individuals:
• Critique (Oral) of BizPitch Presentation
• Peer Review Submission