


Chapter 3

Global Marketing Strategy

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the evolving landscape of global marketing strategy by linking classical theoretical foundations with the realities of a digitally connected and culturally diverse world. It reviews how global marketing has progressed from a transactional discipline to a strategic philosophy that integrates value creation, cultural understanding, and agility. The chapter revisits key theoretical perspectives—including contingency frameworks and the standardization versus adaptation debate—to explain how firms balance global integration with local responsiveness. It also considers the implications of internationalization models and the growing relevance of digital intelligence and agility as determinants of competitiveness in an unpredictable global environment. By synthesizing conceptual insights and strategic practices, the chapter offers a holistic understanding of how global marketing is transforming environmental complexity, shifting competitive advantage, and positioning organizations for success in an era of sudden and disruptive change.

INTRODUCTION: THE SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF GLOBAL MARKETING

In an era defined by blurred borders and global competition becoming the default, marketing has evolved from a transactional function into a strategic discipline focused on creating value, managing relationships, and shaping societal well-being. The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines marketing as the activity, institutions, and processes that create, communicate, deliver, and exchange goods and services that are valuable to customers, clients, partners, and society as a whole (AMA, 2017). This definition diverges from the early production and sales-oriented eras, in which marketing primarily focused on promoting goods to consumers. The evolution of marketing has made it an integrative management philosophy that balances profitability with social and environmental responsibilities, rather than pushing goods to customers as it was decades ago. Global marketing represents the most advanced stage of this evolution. Marketing, whether on a local, national, or global scale, is fundamentally a process of generating

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value by providing products and services that fulfill consumer wants and needs more effectively than competitors. Although marketing is a universal discipline applicable worldwide, marketing strategies vary from country to country. Global marketing concentrates its resources and competencies on global market opportunities and threats. A major difference between regular and global marketing is the scope of the activities outside the home-country market. International marketing generally focuses on cross-border activities on a country-specific basis, whereas multinational marketing oversees autonomous companies in foreign markets; global marketing, however, consolidates all operations into a cohesive strategy framework. It aims to coordinate value creation, communication, and innovation across borders in order to gain a competitive advantage on a global scale. To summarize, while traditional marketing centered on the transaction, modern marketing has transitioned toward creating long-lasting value and fulfilling societal roles. Global marketing extends this by integrating these strategies on a global platform, ensuring both local and international coherence.

Equally important to understanding what global marketing is—is clarifying what it is not. It is not straightforward export management or cultural imperialism. A global marketing strategy requires cultural awareness and organizational agility rather than strict homogeneity. The phrase “think global, act local,” first articulated in the 1980s, signified the preliminary attempt to reconcile global efficiency with local adaptation (Robertson, 1995). In the current landscape of digital interaction and empowered consumers, this argument is increasingly reversed. Firms must also “think local, act global,” by considering local insights as a basis for scalable global innovation. In other words, firms in today’s era operate in a global arena while maintaining a global mindset, impacting local benefits, and achieving a superior competitive advantage in delivering value to consumers.

Global marketing is characterized by its complexity and strategic depth. It involves managing standardization and adaptation decisions in product design, price, communication, and distribution, all influenced by technological, political, and cultural factors. Global marketing is not an impulsive attempt to force a completely standard strategy on marketing globally. Instead, a significant question in global marketing is how to adapt the global marketing concept to suit specific products, companies, and markets. The globalization of consumption, the rise of global consumer segments, and the increasing number of digital platforms have all altered how businesses market their products. As a result, global marketing has become a key factor in helping businesses grow, stay competitive, and be strong. Global marketing provides access to consumers, information, and resources from around the world. It also requires an understanding of cultural diversity, legal pluralism, and environmental limitations. Consumers enjoy the experience of global brand interactions such as Apple’s design aesthetics; Netflix’s streaming service, or Adidas’s digital personalization features while anticipating culturally relevant representations of identity (De Mooij, 2021). Consequently, the strategic significance of global marketing extends beyond income production to encompass the coordination of consistent and flexible brand narratives.

Global marketing has never expanded in a strictly linear way. While it struggles with structural, cultural, and geopolitical obstacles, it is also driven by restraining forces (Green & Keegan, 2020). Main drivers of global integration and global marketing are technological innovation, digital interconnection, and the spread of knowledge. Artificial intelligence and big data analytics empower firms of all scales to identify and serve customers globally. Market and cost determinants further boost global coordination. Companies look for new markets to avoid saturation in their home markets, take advantage of economies of scale, and spread their risk. At

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