

# Conceptualising Sri Lanka's Marketing Case Studies

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A banker by profession, Lewie Diasz regards himself more of a marketing strategist. Awarded the youngest fellow member in the world by CIM and with 13 years of teaching experience in the country's education faculties, he delves into a wealth of knowledge and research to produce a learning tool, no less, on management in the Sri Lankan context.

Words Prasadini Nanayakkara

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'Strategic Marketing - Marketing Strategies for Sri Lankan Business Entities' is a singular publication in that it compiles select case studies of leading Sri Lankan companies or the champions of the local industry. Primarily the book is intended to simplify complex theories and management models of marketing and management however, in a local context.

“There are management books that are very complex and do not explain theories in simple terms. While simplifying these so that anyone can understand them, I thought we should utilise local examples so that students can easily grasp the concepts,” explains Diasz. Consequently in order to build case studies, the author met with CEOs of each of these local companies, recognised as leaders in their respective industry categories with a proven track record in marketing. “These are companies that have used unconventional marketing methods with localised approaches and have a story to tell,” he adds. Each chapter is thus exemplified by a case study of a leading Sri Lankan company of repute. In total the book presents six such case studies with questions posed at the end of each case to illustrate theory through thought provoking examples.

Deemed as essential reading for MBA students and Post Graduate students the volume is geared towards students pursuing undergraduate and postgraduate levels of education. In addition it caters to entrepreneurs looking to gain a solid understanding on the basics of marketing . “The book is also useful for executives who want to understand some basic concepts and how they can apply it next day at work,” says Diasz on the practical approach of the book. For the professional readership the book promises an introductory ‘know-how’ on building an organization’s sustainable competitive advantage.

“There Are Management Books That Are Very Complex And Do Not Explain Theories In Simple Terms. While Simplifying These So That Anyone Can Understand Them, I Thought We Should Utilise Local Examples So That Students Can Easily Grasp The Concepts.” Another aspect that the author brings to light in is long-term value creation for shareholders. Recognising a void in understanding among strategic marketers, CEOs and Directors, the book lays emphasis on bridging the divide between value creation for customers and shareholders.

Diasz explains that strategic marketing is about adding value to customers that in turn result in superior shareholder value creation. “Today marketers only think of creating customer value and leave shareholder value to the accountant. Strategic marketers must come out of their shell and everything they do to deliver customer value must result in creating shareholder value,” stresses Diasz on a concept termed value-based marketing.

Accordingly the book moves away from traditional tactical marketing such as advertising and sales promotions. Instead, Diasz defines the role of marketers as having the potential to fuel an organization’s growth strategy and even a country’s growth strategy by delivering

on shareholder and customer value.

The academic leanings of the book is lightened with quotes by world-renowned personalities in the industry and chapters such as 'Management Philosophies from the Game of Golf' and 'Life's Little Instructions by William Snell'. Readers can also find a comprehensive index for ease of use of the book. Appended at the very end of the book is an unfoldeable poster-sized page titled, 'Exam Tool Kit'. Included with the marketing student in mind it comprises an exhaustive list of all models and theories for quick reference. "If you are a CIM or CIMA student sitting for an exam you can quickly go over it," states Diasz.

This instructive content comprising of 226 pages has also been read and endorsed by the Chairman of CIM UK, the CIMA Regional Director and renowned Sri Lankan professionals and academics. A work of three years, the book is the author's attempt to impart his own knowledge gained over a period of 13 years as a practicing marketer and an academic. Stressing that marketing is a subject that constantly needs to be updated Diasz states, "this is only the beginning.

I am also looking at the Indian market for my second edition which I wish to launch at the end of this year."

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