
Preface

This book has grown from courses in operations strategy and operations management, taught to graduate students and executive managers in different countries. The objective of this book is for students and managers to understand the fundamentals and practice of global operations strategy. I have two primary audiences in mind for the book.

The first audience comprises various students. The core readers are graduate-level students. Executive programs can use part of this book for executives who want to focus on specific topics of global operations strategy, for instance, global supply chain, and cross-value global operations strategy, or to combine global operations strategy with a specific industry or company, for instance, global operations strategy of a telecommunication company. The book can be used by undergraduates who wish to enhance their understanding of global operations strategy and Ph.D. students who wish to read a literature review of global operations strategy and lay a foundation for further research in this field. The student audiences are:

- Master of Science students
- Master of Business Administration students
- Master of Philosophy students
- Students in executive (open and custom) programs
- Undergraduates
- Ph.D. students

For experienced practitioners, this book serves as a suitable reference for the fundamentals and practice of global operations strategy. The manager and practitioner audiences are:

- Managers in operations management or operations strategy
- Managers in international business
- Consultants
- Managers in marketing, finance, accounting, human resources, retailing, and logistics who are considering interface problems with global operations

Focus of the Book

I do not intend to cover all topics in operations strategy. “Global” operational problems are my focus. I focus on the global elements of global operations strategy, including global competency, global resource-based operations, global process-based operations, and global operational practice.

I also do not try to present all global decisions; hence, the book focuses on decisions at the “operations strategy” level. In a global environment, it is difficult to identify decisions at this level since a great number of decisions on global problems are at the “corporate strategy” level or the “business strategy” level. Separating decisions at the “operations strategy” level and at the “operations management” level is also difficult since their decision time horizons are close.

With a “focus strategy,” I may have overlooked some topics in operations strategy or global strategy. Given the constraints, I welcome any suggestion for improvement.

Features of the Book

The book reviews the newest theories in global operations strategy. For the covered topics, I conducted a literature review up to 2012.

All case information is updated to 2012. Except for a few classical cases, such as Coca-Cola for globalization and Toyota for operations strategy history, the newest cases are selected from recent years, including the Samsung versus Apple war in 2012, the shipbuilding crisis in 2012, the Bosch EFQM award 2012, Huawei globalization in 2012, the Foxconn–Apple supply chain crisis in 2011, the Japanese earthquake of 2011, and global supply chain 2011. The locations of cases are global: about one-third of cases and case examples are from Europe, one-third from North America, one-third from Asia Pacific, with many embedded examples from the rest of the world. The features of the book are:

- Underpinning by updated theory
- Illustrations using new management practice
- Inclusion of part objectives
- Inclusion of chapter objectives
- Case examples from recent years
- The newest cases tested by students
- References and further reading
- Supportive teaching materials including slides and teaching notes for all cases and case examples, teaching videos, syllabuses, exercise sets, and exam papers

Organization of the Book

The current literature in global operations strategy is fragmented and varied. To facilitate its understanding, I have organized the book with a “triple triangles” structure (see Fig. 1.9).

Part 1 introduces global operations strategy with a structure of “3I” triangles (see Fig. 1). Chapter 1 introduces the concept of global operations strategy, mainly addressing the question “what is global operations strategy?” Chapter 2 introduces the methods of operational globalization, mainly answering the question “how are operations globalized?” Chapter 3 introduces the rationale behind operational globalization, mainly addressing the question “why are operations globalized?”

Part 2 addresses the fundamentals of global operations strategy with a “3V” structure from three views (see Fig. 2). The fundamentals in the competency-based view are addressed in Chap. 4, fundamentals in the resource-based view in Chap. 5, and fundamentals in the process-based view in Chap. 6.

Part 3 discusses the practice of global operations strategy by a “3C” structure (see Fig. 3). Cross-border practice is addressed in Chap. 7, cross-function practice in Chap. 8, and cross-value practice in Chap. 9.

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