

# Chapter 12

## Stakeholder Causal Scope Centric Market Positioning: Implications of Relationship Marketing Indicators

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### ABSTRACT

*A multi-case study study has been conducted on five grown sports organizations to realize how the organizations have been utilizing various Relationship Marketing (RM) indicators in order to position their image in their target markets. Based on various existing and emergent Stakeholder Causal Scope (SCS) and relevant RM indicator(s), the organizations differentiate their corporate profile or market offering in a way that conveys a central idea relating to their stakeholder relationship value and relevant market positioning. 12 RM indicators, four market positioning dimensions, and subsequent existing and emerging differentiation variables are described in this chapter. Underlying the relevant SCS, the organizations utilize these RM indicators and differentiation variables to design their market offerings in order to position their corporate or market offerings' image in their target markets. The RM-centred market positioning initiatives of the sports organizations emerge as viable across industries and markets.*

### INTRODUCTION

Stakeholder Causal Scope (SCS) management of Relationship Marketing (RM) as a stakeholder centric value proposition has been contributing significantly in contemporary market positioning. The RM practices of five grown sports organizations are illustrated in this chapter, with the

purpose of realizing how the organizations have been utilizing various RM perspectives (which are standardized as RM indicators) in order to position their image in the target markets. Based on various existing and emergent SCS and relevant RM indicator(s), the organizations differentiate their corporate profile or market offering (product and service) in a way that conveys a central idea

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relating to their stakeholder relationship value and relevant market positioning to the target markets. Therefore, the aim here is to recognize how the organizations construct a distinct market position, while employing various RM indicators and relevant SCS opportunities through their offering. Moreover, the synthesis of various market positioning dimensions and positioning differentiation variables, based on the implications of RM indicators and SCS analysis of five grown sports organizations has provided a varying degree of success of market positioning. 12 RM indicators and four major market positioning dimensions and subsequent differentiation variables are described in this chapter, where focusing on the relevant SCS, the organizations utilize these RM indicators and differentiation variables to design their market offerings in order to position their corporate and/or market offerings' image in the target markets. Although, the implications of RM indicators on SCS centric market positioning are recognized from the sports industry, it could apply to any other industry and market, as the RM centred policy is applicable to any industry and market; however, the relationship portfolio should follow only the given situation of the target market (Gummesson, 2002).

## **BACKGROUND**

RM keeps a keen eye on stakeholders' existing relational perspectives in order to nurture and flourish further lucrative relational interaction among associated stakeholders. Focusing on the mutually beneficial relationship values and diverse goals of associated stakeholders, RM administers marketing activities with a long-term outlook, while the stakeholders work interdependently in order to identify, establish, maintain, and enhance value for customers by meeting and exceeding customers' anticipation in a way that customers expect and accept, and share that value with the involved stakeholders towards a win-win outcome.

Moreover, RM helps marketers to assess what level of marketing emphasis should be provided to each stakeholder (Payne, et al., 2001); so that the level of interaction among associated stakeholders can be measurable. Such a RM effort enables to recognize the significance of involvement, roles, responsibilities, accountabilities, and further relational prospects of each of the involved stakeholders. Payne et al. (2005) elaborated that often stakeholders are inadequately recognized by organizations, as a single stakeholder may play multiple roles in a value-network. Therefore, prospective values may not be generated through only the transactional marketing management philosophy. RM enforces additional consideration to a broad range of stakeholders' interests and causal scope because of their prospective impact on an organization's value creation process, and because of the systemic effects of interdependencies, which may not previously have been entirely understood (Payne, et al., 2005). Consequently, RM directs the entire marketing management process through a stakeholder engaging approach, where each of the associated stakeholder's prospective causal scope in terms of identifying, establishing, maintaining and enhancing alternative ways of marketing can be accountable. Stakeholder Causal Scope (SCS) in RM is seen as the "possibility of contributing mutually beneficial value among the key stakeholders or value network" (Shams, 2011a, p. 13; Gide & Shams, 2011a, p. 1063) or cause and consequence of stakeholder relationships and interactions under a contract in the completion of a project (Business Dictionary, 2010).

Simultaneously, market positioning as one of the key marketing management components has a significant role in marketing history, as well as in contemporary marketing in order to shape and reshape an image of a company, product or service, brand, place, person or any other entity to its target market. Market positioning is designing a company's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the (existing and potential) customers and other stakeholders.

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