



The Antecedents of Strategic Market-Driving Orientation: Empirical Evidence from Software Businesses in Thailand

ตัวแปรต้นแห่งตุขของการมุ่งเน้นการขับเคลื่อนตลาดเชิงกลยุทธ์: หลักฐานเชิงประจักษ์จากธุรกิจซอฟต์แวร์ในประเทศไทย

Wittawat Pansuppawat^{1*} , Prathanporn Jhundra-Indra² , Karoon Pratoom³
วิทวัส ปานศุภวัชร^{1*} , ประทวนพร จันทร์อินทร์² , ภาณุณย์ ประทุม³

¹Doctor of Philosophy Program in Marketing Management Program

Mahasarakham Business School, Mahasarakham University

41/20 Kantarawichai, Mahasarakham Province 44150

¹หลักสูตรปรัชญาดุษฎีบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาการจัดการการตลาด

คณะการบัญชีและการจัดการ มหาวิทยาลัยมหาสารคาม

เลขที่ 41/20 ตำบลขามเรียง อำเภอ กันทรลิขสัม จังหวัดมหาสารคาม 44150

²Mahasarakham Business School, Mahasarakham University

41/20 Kantarawichai, Mahasarakham Province 44150

²สาขาวิชาการตลาด คณะการบัญชีและการจัดการ มหาวิทยาลัยมหาสารคาม

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³Mahasarakham Business School, Mahasarakham University

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³สาขาวิชาการจัดการ คณะการบัญชีและการจัดการ มหาวิทยาลัยมหาสารคาม

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บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษานี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อตรวจสอบอิทธิพลของตัวแปรอิสระซึ่งประกอบไปด้วยวิสัยทัศน์ทางการตลาดเพื่อการเปลี่ยนแปลงการดำเนินงาน การมีอยู่ขององค์ความรู้ด้านการตลาดขององค์กร การตระหนักรถึงวัฒนธรรมตลาด การเปลี่ยนแปลงทางเทคโนโลยีอย่างรวดเร็ว และการเพิ่มขึ้นของแรงกดดัน

*ผู้เขียนหลัก

อีเมล: wittpan@outlook.com

ทางการตลาด ซึ่งมีอิทธิพลต่อการมุ่งเน้นการขับเคลื่อนตลาดเชิงกลยุทธ์ โดยเก็บข้อมูลจากผู้จัดการทางการตลาดหรือผู้อำนวยการทางการตลาดของธุรกิจซอฟแวร์ในประเทศไทยจำนวน 162 คน และใช้การวิเคราะห์ความถดถอยในการทดสอบสมมติฐาน ผลการศึกษาพบว่า วิสัยทัศน์ทางการตลาด เป็นปัจจัยที่มีผลต่อการเปลี่ยนแปลงการดำเนินงาน การมีอยู่ขององค์ความรู้ด้านการตลาดขององค์กร และการเพิ่มขึ้นของแรงกดดันทางการตลาด มีอิทธิพลเชิงบวกต่อการมุ่งเน้นการขับเคลื่อนตลาดเชิงกลยุทธ์อย่างมีนัยสำคัญ ทางสถิติ นอกจากนี้การศึกษาครั้งนี้ยังได้เสนอแนวทางในการวิจัยในอนาคต

คำสำคัญ

การมุ่งเน้นการขับเคลื่อนตลาด วิสัยทัศน์ทางการตลาด องค์ความรู้ด้านการตลาด วัฒนธรรมตลาด การเปลี่ยนแปลงทางเทคโนโลยี แรงกดดันทางการตลาด

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the antecedents include marketing vision for transformational operation, marketing knowledge availability, and market pressure increase which influences on strategic market-driving orientation. Data was collected by using questionnaires from 162 marketing directors and marketing managers of software business firms in Thailand. The Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression was adopted for testing the hypotheses. The findings indicated that marketing vision for transformational operation, marketing knowledge availability, and market pressure increase were significantly positive influences on strategic market-driving orientation. The contributions and suggestion for future research directions also provided.

Keywords

Market-Driving, Marketing Vision, Marketing Knowledge, Market Culture, Technology Change, Market Pressure

Introduction

A firm can create values to customer by two aspects are as market-driven orientation and market-driving orientation. Market-driven orientation is performed by analyzing and understanding customer needs and deliver products and services to customer (Kumar, Scheer & Kotler, 2000). Hence, market-driven orientation creates customer value and gains benefits to the firm by offering products and services based on the customers' needs for receiving profits as the benefits to a firm. However, market-driven orientation might create less competitive advantages if all firms in the

market adopt market-driven orientation because the uniqueness of products and services from each firm will decrease due all firms tend to offers identical products and services to the customer (Carrillat, Jaramillo & Locander, 2004). Thus, a firm cannot make superior values to the customer and cannot attain superior competitive advantages. Another marketing aspect is market-driving orientation, market-driving orientation discovers the latent customers' needs and use as a guide for exploring new marketing opportunities, and reducing sales of existing products (Atuahene-Gima, Slater & Olson, 2005). Thus, market-driving strategies can be conducted by both indirect and direct reconfigure market structure and customer behavior from using both construction and deconstruction market elements for modifying market structure (Jaworski, Kohli & Sahay, 2000). Many firms have adopted market-driving orientation to drive the market and success (McLoughlin & Aaker, 2010). Hence, market-driving orientation concept is beginning to catch consideration from both academicians and professionals (Harris & Cai, 2002). However, the research of market-driving orientation is much less than market-driven orientation research which is a challenge for generalizing the concept of market-driving orientation (Saekoo & Ussahawanitchakit, 2009). In addition, the market-driving orientation research usually examine the outcomes of market-driving orientation such as creating the sustainable competitive advantage and profitability which not well explored and lacks of the evidence to demonstrate the relationship between the antecedents and the market-driving orientation (Day, 1994). Further, most of marketing executives understand that market-driving orientation is marketing alternatives for creating higher competitive advantages and marketing performance (Li, Huang & Tsai, 2009) but know less about the internal (e.g. organization culture, knowledge and transformational leadership) and external environmental conditions (e.g. trends, technology and competition) that incite firms to adopts market-driving orientation (Elg, Deligonul, Ghauri, Danis & Tarnovskaya, 2012). To fulfill these research gaps and extend market-driving orientation concept, the main purpose of this research is to examine the influence of the antecedents of strategic market-driving orientation on the strategic market-driving orientation.

Software businesses in Thailand are used as sample because the constantly growth by 11.1% in 2015 from 2014, and market value was 61 billion baht. Moreover, the Software Industry Promotion Agency (SIPA) forecasted that growth rate would be increased by 12.8% in 2016, by the favor of the mobile devices usage. Additionally, software industry usually face with the fast rate of technology changes which create new marketing possibility to modify market components (Perks, Kahn & Zhang, 2010). Henceforward, the software industry is suitable as a sample for this

research. The remaining parts of this article are as follows. First, the authors will describe the main research objective, the relevant literatures and hypotheses development. Second, the authors explain the research methodology. Third, the result of hypotheses testing and discussion are described. Finally, the summary of the research, the theoretical contributions, managerial implications and future research suggestion are provided for in this article.

Research Objectives

The main research objectives of this study is to examine the influence of marketing vision for transformational operation, marketing knowledge availability, market culture awareness, rapid technology change and market pressure increase on the strategic market-driving orientation.

Literature Review

The conceptual framework, which shown in Figure 1, is developed from the literature review and details are shown as follows:

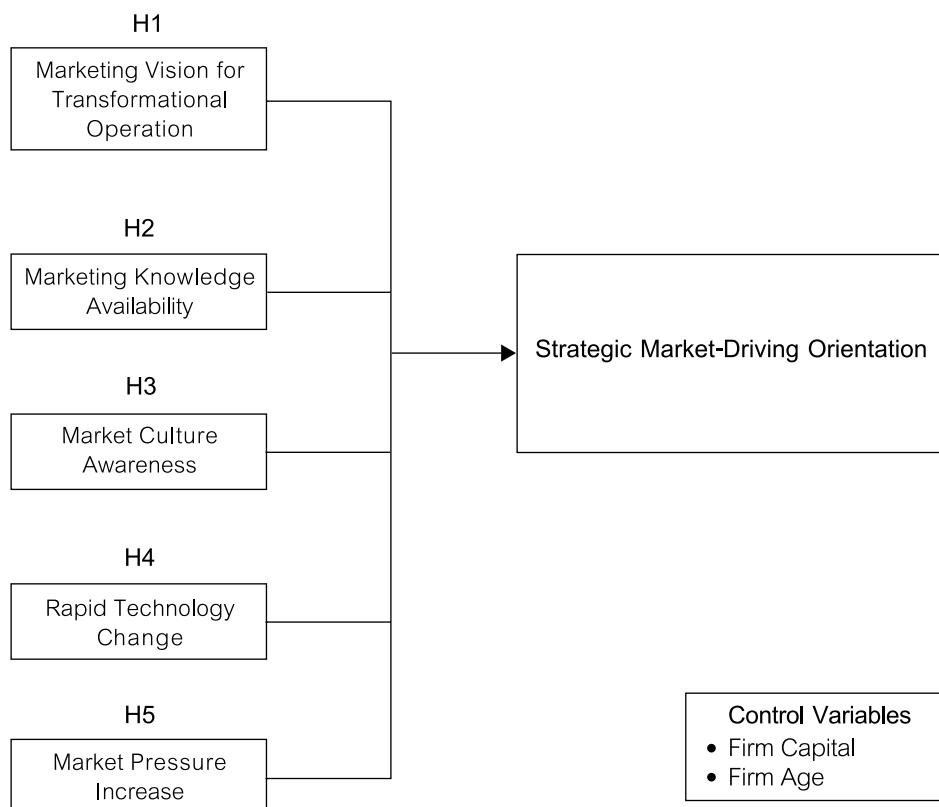


Figure 1: The relationship between variables



1. **Strategic market-driving orientation** refers as the value activities that a firm creates for driving markets to create vital changes for changing compositions of the market such as behaviors of customers, competitors and structures of the market by changing the value creation process of products, markets and industrial levels (Berghman, Matthyssens & Vandenbempt, 2006 ; Ghauri, Tarnovskaya & Elg, 2008). Next, the authors describe the antecedents of the strategic market-driving orientation.

2. **Marketing vision for transformational operation** refers as the ability of the firm to set the firm's future direction which involves marketing decisions, by stimulating the firm's employees to convert marketing operations by changing marketing strategy that is suitable with new market conditions (Jabnoun & Al Rasasi, 2005). Previous research indicated that the transformational leadership has a positive effect with the radical product innovation when conducting market-driving strategy (Sajjaviriya & Ussahawanitchakit, 2015). Likewise, internal marketing environment such as executive vision lead firm to adopt the entrepreneurial marketing which affect with the marketing outcome (Morris, Schindehutte & LaForge, 2002). Furthermore, executive vision for marketing leadership has positively affects with product innovation concentration of the proactive marketing strategy (Kanchanda, Ussahawanitchakit & Jhundra-Indra, 2012). Thus, the hypotheses are proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Marketing vision for transformational operation has a positive influence on strategic market-driving orientation.

3. **Marketing knowledge availability** refers as the level of marketing information which a firm can utilize this information to create marketing strategy (Syers, Ussahawanitchakit & Jhundra-Indra, 2012). Prior research indicated that a firm which has higher marketing knowledge can create products and services that are suitable with marketing trends (Ellis, 2010) for creating more effective strategy for the firm (Liao, Chen, Hsieh & Hsiao, 2009). Moreover, Lin, Che & Ting (2012) found the market knowledge and customer knowledge management mediate the relationship between market orientation and product innovation performance. These ideas lead to the hypotheses proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 2: Marketing knowledge availability has a positive influence on strategic market-driving orientation.

4. **Market culture awareness** refers as a firm to be cognizant of shared assumptions, beliefs, ideas, and values which involve the behaviors and norms with the marketing function that can maintain customer values, stakeholders' interests, and profitability by creating market orientation-based activities (Carr & Lopez, 2007). Gainer & Padanyi (2005) suggested that market culture is a significant tool for a firm's leader to implement strategies and drive the firm in the appropriate direction. Moreover, market culture that strongly focuses on a superior understanding of customer needs, competition, and market trends, to enable a market-oriented firm to identify and develop strategies that are essential for creating long-term performance (Kumar, Jones, Venkatesan & Leone, 2011). These ideas lead to the hypotheses proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 3: Market culture awareness has a positive influence on strategic market-driving orientation.

5. **Rapid technology change** refers as the speedy deviations of technology which influence on a firm's marketing operations; and, a firm has to align marketing operation to be suitable with this external environment (Atuahene-Gima & Murray, 2004). When technology has rapid changes, a firm has to respond to that change by interacting with the customer to align marketing operations to be suitable with the customer's demand in that market (Narver & Slater, 1990). The empirical evidence has suggested that technology change has an impact on a firm's marketing strategy, such as the creation of customer learning capability (Panya, Ussahawanitchakit & Jhundra-Indra 2014) and entrepreneurship (Holmes, Zahra, Hoskisson, Deghetto & Sutton, 2016). Additionally, technology can influence a firm's market orientation which leads to the marketing performance (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993). Hence the aforementioned relationships can be hypothesized as follows:

Hypothesis 4: Rapid technology change has a positive influence on strategic market-driving orientation.

6. **Market pressure increase** is defined as the a firm recognize the higher level of the pressure due to the higher competitive intensity which occurred from the number of competitors, competitor's action and changes of customer demand (Zahra, 2008). The concept of market pressure is due to the higher competitive intensity that can viewed as a predecessor of market opportunity (Dean, Meyer & Castro, 1993). Murray, Gao & Kotabe (2011) have mentioned that firms need to conduct



more marketing operations such as scanning and searching marketing trends and customer's need to create better marketing strategy against the aggressive competitor actions in a highly competitive market. Moreover, when firms have perceived market pressure increase due to higher competitive intensity, firms tend to conduct more marketing strategy for competing with the competitors to receive more benefits such as conducting more research and development (Lee, 2009), improving production procedure for reducing costs (Boone, 2000), and market orientation (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990). Hence the aforementioned relationships can be hypothesized as follows:

Hypothesis 5: market pressure increase has a positive influence on strategic market-driving orientation.

Research Methodology

1. Sample Selection and Data Collection Procedure

This research selects marketing managers and marketing directors of the software business firm in Thailand as the population which listed as member of The Software Industry Promotion Agency (SIPA). From the SIPA database, 1,129 software firms were listed and after remove duplicated address, 855 firm remains. From the earlier research, a suitable sample is 171 firm under the 95% confidentiality rule (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Additionally, a 20% response rate for a mail survey, without an appropriate follow-up procedure, is considered sufficient (Aaker, Kumar & Day, 2001). Thus, 855 software firms will use as the population in this research. The 855 mailed survey of questionnaire is used to collect data. As a result, 172 mail was undelivered due to the changes of address and total of 167 questionnaires were returned. Five of 167 questionnaires are removed caused by the incompleteness. Consequently, the response rate was approximately 23.72 percent. According to the rule of thumb of the minimum sample size, the minimum sample size should be more than five observations per each variable (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). Consequently, 162 software firms are satisfactory for using as sample for the multiple regression analysis in this research.

2. Test of Non-Response Bias

This research employs the non-response bias testing from the suggestion of Armstrong & Overton (1977) for generalizing the data from the sample to the population. For testing the non-response bias, the authors compare data between early and late respondent groups which categorized by the arrival date via using t-test comparisons. This research comparison the firm demographics



include firm capital, number of full-time employee, the length of time that running business, and average revenue per year. These results provide the evidence that there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups at a 95% confidence level. It can be confidently mentioned that the non-response bias is not a serious problem in this research.

3. Measurement

In this research, all variables are developed for measure all constructs in the conceptual model by using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Strategic market-driving orientation is evaluated by the degree of progression on acquiring of new marketing techniques, level of a firm on analyzing market, level of a firm that improving marketing operations, degree of a firm in educating customers, and level of firm that supporting staff to be creative for planning marketing strategy. For the antecedents, marketing vision for transformational operation is evaluated by degrees of executives who apply various technologies for a future marketing plan. Marketing knowledge availability is measured by the levels of a firm in marketing knowledge accumulation for the marketing strategy. Market culture awareness is measured by a firm's ability to observe customer demand, retain customer relationships and create a good marketing image. Rapid technology change is evaluated by a firm's perception that the progress of technology and a firm uses technology for better marketing operations. Market pressure increase is evaluated by the degree of firm perception with intense market tension due to high competition, market extension, and customer demand. Additionally, the measurements in this research contain both newly develop scales and adapts from other studies. Further, This research employs firm capital and firm age as control variables, firm capital is measured by the amount of money a firm has registered to settle the business. It is represented by a dummy variable (0 = total capital of the firm that are less than 10,000,000 baht, and 1 = total capital of the firm that are equal to or more than 10,000,000 baht). Another control variable is a firm ages which measured by the number of years a firm has been in operation. It is represented by a dummy variable (0 = the firm has been in business less than or equal to 10 years, and 1 = firm has been in business more than 10 years).

4. Method

For the credibility and accuracy of the measures, the first thirty questionnaires sent back from the informant were used to conduct the pre-test to test the validity and reliability of all measures that used in the questionnaire. Moreover, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) are used to test constructs validity of the newly developed scales and scales that



adopted from previous research. The results indicate that factor loadings of all measures in this research varies from 0.476 to 0.911. These values are greater than the 0.40 cut-off value (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) which indicates acceptable construct validity. In addition, Cronbach's alpha are used to evaluate the reliability. The findings of Cronbach's alpha coefficients were between 0.707 and 0.889 which exceeds the acceptable 0.70 cut-off score (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson., 2010). It can be concluded that the internal consistency of the entire scale exists in this, research (See Table 1). For the hypotheses testing, the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis is employed for testing all hypotheses. The equation is depicted as follows:

$$\text{Equation 1: } SMO = \alpha_{01} + \beta_1 MVT + \beta_2 MKA + \beta_3 MCA + \beta_4 RTC + \beta_5 MPI + \beta_6 FCP + \beta_7 FAG + \epsilon_{01}$$

Table 1

Results of Measure Validation

Variables	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's
Strategic Market-Driving Orientation (SMO)	0.476-0.829	0.839
Marketing Vision for transformational Operation (MVT)	0.828-0.911	0.884
Marketing Knowledge Availability (MKA)	0.861-0.877	0.889
Market Culture Awareness (MCA)	0.736-0.897	0.853
Rapid Technology Changes (RTC)	0.783-0.884	0.856
Market Pressure Increase (MPI)	0.683-0.802	0.707

Results and Discussion

Table 2 exhibits the descriptive statistics and correlation matrix between the independent and dependent variables. Correlation coefficients of variables are ranging from 0.417 - 0.700 which lower than 0.80 and the VIF varies from 1.241 – 3.377 which lower than 10. The results indicated there no multicollinearity problem in this study (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 3 presents the results of OLS regression analysis of the influence of the on strategic market-driving orientation. The results indicate that marketing vision for transformational operation is significantly and positively affect to strategic market-driving orientation strategy ($\beta_1 = 0.260$, $p < 0.01$). This result consistent with Morris, Schindehutte and LaForge (2002) which suggested internal marketing environment such as organizational culture and executive vision lead the firm to

adopt the entrepreneurial marketing which affect with the marketing outcome. In addition, previous research indicated firm has to have an ability to effectively and swiftly transform its marketing operation to be suitable with new market conditions (Meesuptong & Ussahawnanitchakit, 2013). Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Table 2:

Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

Variables	MVT	MKA	MCA	RTC	MPI	SMO	FCP	FAGG
Mean	4.20	4.10	4.22	4.26	4.29	4.22	-	-
S.D.	0.65	0.60	0.64	0.60	0.53	0.50	-	-
MVT	1							
MKA	.700***	1						
MCA	.624***	.687***	1					
RTC	.630***	.663***	.684***	1				
MPI	.696***	.513***	.602***	.635***	1			
SMO	.608***	.684***	.571***	.417***	.472***	1		
FCP	-.075	.025	.031	-.004	-.057	-.054	1	
FAG	-.136	-.066	-.037	-.108	-.043	-.142	.423**	1

p < .05, *p < .01

Secondly, the result indicates that market knowledge availability is significantly and positively affect to strategic market driving orientation ($\beta_2 = 0.454$, p < 0.01). The previous research indicated that the marketing information such as marketing environments, customer competitors, and suppliers has influence on the firm's marketing strategy by integrating marketing knowledge and other knowledge such as technology and production knowledge for greater outcomes (Yavuz, Hasiloglu, Kaya, Karcioğlu & Ersoz, 2005). Moreover, previous research indicates that firm that has marketing knowledge tends to create more effective strategy for the firm (Liao, Chen, Hsieh & Hsiao 2009). Thus, Hypothesis 2 is supported.

Thirdly, the findings from this research describe market culture awareness has no significantly affect strategic market-driving orientation ($\beta_3 = 0.024$, p > 0.10). Previous research argued that if organizational culture inconsistent with environment change, firm might fail. Consequently, the level of benefits that firm receives from market culture be influenced by level of

the firm flexibility and cooperation effective of the firm (Cordes, Richerson & Schwesinger, 2010). Furthermore, in each firm has subcultures which emerged by relations of employee and share same values and norms (De Chernatony, 1999). Consequently, the subcultures of firm might diverge and it is not affected with all employee. According to this approach of subculture, it is possible to assume that culture is no longer affect to change employee's values, norms and behavior. In this case, market culture awareness has not influenced strategic market-driving orientation. Moreover, the employee of software businesses in Thailand has highly turnover rate due the lack of proficiency personnel, this made the employee cannot absorb firm's culture to create values, norm and behavior. In addition, due to the lacks of proficiency personnel, software businesses in Thailand tend to hire workforces from the external sources such as subcontractors and freelance programmers which made these workforces also cannot perceive firm's culture and changes their norm, values and behaviors. **Thus, Hypothesis 3 is not supported.**

Fourthly, rapid technology change has no significantly affect strategic market-driving orientation ($\beta_4 = -0.126$, $p > 0.10$). This possible that technology change can be both encouragement and obstruction with firm's marketing operations, because technology change can make the competition more intense and complex (Mirbagheri & Hejazinia, 2010). Thus, firm might not follow technology change by adapting their marketing strategy even they can because firm will face more intense competition and might influence on firm performance (Chanthinok, Ussahawanitchakit & Jhundra-Indra, 2015). In addition, business in the high-technology industry such as software businesses usually confronts with fast rate technology change. If software firm immoderately adapts firm's strategy to response technology change, that might make software firm excessively use resources and might influence firm performance. Furthermore, software firm can encounter with the sales failure even they can adapts firm's strategy such as products and services to response the technology change because of products and service are outdated due the technology change in high rate. **Thus, Hypotheses 4 is not supported.**

Finally, the result reveals that market pressure increase is significantly and positively impact on strategic market-driving orientation ($\beta_5 = 0.188$, $p < 0.05$). These findings consistent with previous research found that firms need to conduct more marketing operations such as scanning and searching marketing trends and customer's need to create better marketing strategy against the aggressive competitor actions in a highly competitive market (Murray, Gao & Kotabe, 2011). Moreover, in high-pressure market environments, firms must seek new possibility to develop capabilities that help firms leverage marketing operations (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008). **Thus, Hypothesis 5 is supported.**

Additionally, the results of control variables indicate that firm capital and firm age are not significantly associated with strategic market-driving orientation. These results can be interpreted that strategic market driving orientation is not influenced by the capital of a firm. Moreover, strategic market driving orientation also not influenced by ages of a firm.

Table 3

The Results of the Regression Analysis of the influence of the antecedents on strategic market-driving orientation

Independent Variables		Dependent Variables
		SMO
		Equation 1
MVT (H1)		.260*** .094
MKA (H2)		.454*** .102
MCA (H3)		.024 .098
RTC (H4)		-.126 .090
MPI (H5)		.188** .074
FCP		-.075 .145
FAG		-.139 .123
Adjusted R ²		.504
Maximum VIF		3.377

** p < .05, *** p < .01



Conclusion

This research demonstrates the influences of the antecedents (marketing vision for transformational operation, marketing knowledge availability, market culture awareness, rapid technology change and market pressure increase) on strategic market-driving orientation. Software business used as the source of data and collect data from mailed survey questionnaires which directly distributed to marketing executives. At last, 162 questionnaires are usable.

The results of this research indicate that three of five antecedents include marketing vision for transformational operation, marketing knowledge availability, and market pressure increase influences on strategic market-driving orientation utilization. Thus, top management team and executives must pay attention to activities and capability that support firms to the successful of strategic market-driving orientation, such as market knowledge availability by supporting firm to obtain marketing knowledge from variety and sufficient sources for enhancing firm's strategic market-driving orientation activities. In addition, top management and executives should stimulate and build the radical changes in the behaviors of the followers by changing the marketing strategies, organization culture and vision. These changes will make firm sense and react with new marketing possibilities and renovate firm's marketing activities to suitable with new marketing possibilities and lead firm to achieve competitive advantage and higher performance. Additionally, the external factor such as market pressure increase can stimulate the utilization of strategic market-driving orientation. Hence, the strategic market-driving orientation can be an appropriate choice especially, when firm perceive the intense market pressure due to the high competition, the expansion of market, and customer demand.

Moreover, marketing knowledge availability has the highest influence on the strategic market-driving orientation. Thus, marketing executives should pay more attention with this factor when adopts the strategic market-driving orientation. Surprisingly, market culture awareness and rapid technology change has no significantly influences with the strategic market-driving orientation.

Future Research Direction

This research still have some recognized limitations such as the result of this research investigated from only software businesses in Thailand, this might deficiency for generalization results into other business. Hence, future research might study with other business which have different characteristics and business type such as startup companies for comparing the results with this research; and simultaneously increasing credibility and generalizability.

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