The State of Strategic Marketing Application in Czech Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

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Abstract

The article deals with the issue of using strategic marketing in the business of small and medium-sized enterprises. The main objective of this paper is to theoretically define the principles of strategic marketing and then practically analyse the level of strategic marketing use as a tool of business management in selected Czech small and medium-sized enterprises. In order to fulfil the research plan, secondary and primary research was carried out. The theoretical part defines the basic problem areas such as various approaches to strategic marketing defining and strategic management process versus strategic marketing process. In the practical part, 335 companies are analysed, the results are commented and hypotheses evaluated. The most important findings are generally low rate of utilization of strategic marketing management tools and the utilization of these tools is dependent on company size, with micro companies being the worst and medium companies the best.

Keywords: marketing research; small and medium-sized enterprises; strategic marketing; strategy.

JEL classification: M31.

1. INTRODUCTION

Small and medium-sized enterprises represent for society and the marketplace many economic and social benefits. It is not typical for them to be owned by foreign entities, therefore they represent predominantly local capital. A typical feature of these business units is their flexibility in quick adaptation to changing market conditions and they are understood as the source of countless small innovations. According to the European Union concept the small and medium-sized enterprises are considered the firms which employ fewer than 250 employees and whose annual turnover does not exceed EUR 50 million or whose annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 43 million (CzechInvest, 2018).

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There is the global trend to eliminate trade barriers and support small and medium-sized enterprises in developed countries. The opportunity is to enhance revenue by selling more products to final consumers or intermediaries on international markets. Small and medium-sized enterprises tend to turn increasingly to innovation as a source of competitive advantage. Innovation can support development of products and services which cannot be imitated by competitors and customers are ready to pay a premium higher price. (Susman, 2007, p. 1) The role which SMEs play in the economy varies from nation to nation and reflects the cultural background of the different countries. In Europe, even though there are large differences between different countries, the focus has been primarily on the socioeconomic position of the existing SMEs in the traditional and medium-technology sectors of the economy. SMEs do not only play a different role in different countries, but also in different time periods in different industries in a national economy (Giaoutzi *et al.*, 1988).

In a general overview, small and medium-sized enterprises in the Czech Republic represent more than 1 million businesses and employ almost 60% of the total workforce. The small and medium-sized enterprises sector is an important driving force in the business environment, economic growth, innovation and competitiveness. It is also a major employer. The share of small and medium-sized enterprises in the total number of active business entities in the year 2016 was 99.8%. In the Czech Republic, 1,144,417 small and medium-sized enterprises performed in 2016. Small and medium-sized enterprises represent a 30% share of GDP creation in the Czech Republic. The total amount of investments in the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises reached 384,497 million Czech crowns (57.4%) in 2016 (Ministry of Industry and Trade, 2017)

The topic of the article is the issue of strategic marketing utilization in the corporate practice of small and medium-sized enterprises. The main goal is to theoretically define the principles of strategic marketing and then practically analyse the real level of strategic marketing use as a tool of corporate management in selected Czech small and medium-sized enterprises. To accomplish our goal, we have to conduct secondary and primary research. First, we will define the basic problem areas in the theoretical part, and then we will analyse 335 companies from the whole Czech Republic. The results will be commented upon, hypotheses will be evaluated and conclusions drawn.

2. SIGNIFICANCE AND CONCEPT OF STRATEGIC MARKETING

A strategy is a plan that integrates firm´s major goals, policies, decisions and sequences of action into a cohesive whole (Proctor, 2008). According to Gilligan and Collin and Wilson (2003, p. 53) strategy means to know where you want to go and then deciding upon how best to get there. Strategic marketing can therefore be distilled down to the planner deciding – with complete clarity – in which markets the firm wants or is able to compete, and then how exactly it will do this. Mintzberg and Quinn (1996) created five definitions of strategy (5Ps) – strategy as plan, ploy, pattern, position, and perspective – and looked at the interrelationships between these five definitions. Then they proposed the rule of successful strategies using four key ingredients. Strategies are directed toward unambiguous long-term goals and based on insightful understanding of the external environment. Then, strategies are based on intimate self-knowledge by the firm or by individuals of internal capabilities and are implemented with coordination and effective harnessing of the capabilities to achieve the targeted competitive position.

West *et al.* (2010, p. 31) state that marketing strategy has become an area of primary concern to all firms, depending critically on a subtle understanding and analysis of the market. Its importance becomes even greater in today´s ever-challenging and fast-changing business environment. The development of marketing strategy is essential for success not only in developed markets, but also in emerging markets where the elements of marketing mix are recognized as valuable sources for competitive advantage. According to Kotler *et al.* (2007) strategic marketing is the process of the company's strengths reconciling with the groups of customers the company can serve. It is a process that influences the overall direction and future of the company and therefore the knowledge of the marketing environment is necessary for the whole process. Egan and Thomas (2001, p. 10) claim that strategic marketing has to be able to answer four key questions: Where are we now? How did we get here? Where do we want to go? How do we get there? Drummond and Ensor (2005, p. 22) determine the difference between strategic and tactical marketing. Strategic marketing takes a longer-term time frame and broadly defines the firm´s marketing activities. The process seeks to develop effective responses to a changing business environment by analysing markets, segmentation and evaluating competitors´ offerings. On the other hand tactical marketing takes a shorter-term time frame and concerns day-to-day marketing activities. It translates strategy into specific actions and represents the on-going operational dimension of marketing strategy.

The development of strategic marketing is a completely natural matter, corresponding to socio-economic changes, management development and methods of situational analysis. According to Tomek and Vávrová (2012, p. 27) it is possible to talk about the development of the strategic marketing according to spheres of its activity, when it is first applied in the production of consumer goods, followed by industrial production in general, services, non-profit organizations, public administration, social marketing and generic marketing. Another significant development of strategic marketing is its deepening and the application of human concept, social responsibility and ecological orientation. The new and especially future approach in the area of strategic marketing can be seen in three levels: 1) Enhanced orientation towards information, 2) Process orientation, and 3) Relationship orientation. The most significant change is from transactional marketing to relationship marketing. Based on this, three basic directions can be identified: 1) Customer Relationship Management (CRM), 2) One-to-one Marketing and 3) Mass Customization.

Hunt (2018) examines the share of marketing field in five distinct seasons and discusses the potential of strategic marketing for the general marketing and related disciplines. He also discusses key factors that are likely to play a significant role in contribution reducing to the field (i.e a negative effect). Hunter's key question about the fifth era is: "Is the future of marketing discipline promising or problematic?". Brooksbank *et al.* (2018) compared the strategic marketing approach with the success of the firms in the developed market (USA) and emerging market (India). The study was conducted with 71 firms in the USA and 84 in India. The results confirm that conventional strategic marketing plays a crucial role in firms´ business success in India. However, they also suggest that the differences in the strategic environment faced by the firms in both countries require completely different priorities of success at each stage of the strategic marketing decision making process, such as timing, a different target for the use of specific tools, etc. Importance of the vision and mission for the company was examined in 50 top US firms by Bratianu and Balanescu (2008). Their conclusion is that vision, mission and values are

important for the success of the firm. Slater *et al.* (2010) investigated how the creative marketing strategy affects the performance of the firm. Their study, which includes 180 US companies, is clear that companies that have formulated a marketing strategy are more successful on the market. According to them creative marketing strategy is the result of the effort of whole firm and it must be supported with adequate assumptions (personnel security, implemented analytical tools, appropriate structure, etc.).

The perception of strategic marketing concept itself differs among the authors of professional publications. Above all, it is necessary to clarify the distinction between the strategic management process and the strategic marketing process. There is a very close link between these two terms, but the nature and focus of the activities vary. The strategic management process is a set of activities and decisions that lead to the formulation of the company plan and its implementation. The strategic marketing process fully focuses on all activities carried out on the level product – market. According to Jakubikova (2013, p. 43) the role of strategic marketing process is long-term regulation of the firm´s activities in order to fulfil the mission and objectives. Hanzelkova *et al.* (2009, p. 8) describes the strategic marketing management as a continuous process of simultaneous strategic marketing activities - marketing strategic analysis, defining marketing strategy, marketing strategy implementation and achievement of marketing objectives monitoring. The strategic management process can include mission, vision, strategic goals and business opportunities. The strategic marketing process involves marketing situational analysis, marketing objectives, marketing strategy formulation, marketing plan design, selection - implementation - control of marketing strategy.

A vision statement seeks to answer the question „What do want to become?" A firm´s vision tends to be future oriented, in that it represents where the firm is headed and where it wants to go (Ferrell and Hartline, 2014, p. 30). A firm´s mission statement defines what kind of firm its owners or managers want it to be, what business it is in, and what its broad-range goals are. The mission statement must be updated periodically and not defined too narrowly. Both the vision and the mission statement should be concise, clearly written, and enduring (Hamper, 2014, p. 14).

The firm's strategic goals are the desired future results and they evolve from the firm's mission, which is in itself a set of specific and achievable goals. According to Synek (2002, pp. 64-65) strategic goals can be classified according to various criteria, such as 1) the order of their importance - top (primary), subordinate and intermediate, 2) scope of goals - unlimited and limited goals; maximalist and minimalist, 3) time perspective - short, medium, long-term; permanent and temporary; static and dynamic 4) relationship among objectives - complementary, competitive, contradictory, indifferent, 5) content of the goal - economic (turnover, market share, production volume, production capacity, inventory); financial (total capital, equity, foreign capital, financial investment, liquidity, amount of receivables); performance (returns, costs, profits, cash-flow, profitability, productivity, etc.); technical; social (job creation, environmental protection, tax payment, sponsorship, etc.). According to Hoffman and Bateson (2017, p. 179) successful strategic goals can be expressed by the mnemonic S.M.A.R.T (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound). It is also possible to apply S.M.A.R.T.E.R which it means: 1) specific, 2) measurable, 3) achievable, 4) result oriented, 5) time-framed, 6) ethical, 7) resourced (Fotr *et al.*, 2012, p. 37).

The sources of firm´s opportunity may include offering of something that is deficient on the market, offering of the existing product in a new or better way, or market niche detection. A very practical way to understand and identify a firm's competitive advantage is to find answers to three-step questions. 1) What do we do better than our competitors? What is our competitive advantage? 2) Which resources and capabilities represent our advantage? 3) Which of these resources and abilities are valuable, unique and inimitable? (Mooradian *et al.*, 2012, p. 217) According to Kotler and Keller (2007) a competitive advantage is the ability of a firm to do something in one or more ways, what can´t be managed by competitors. It is important to create a sustainable competitive advantage, which must be seen as a benefit for the customer. According to Doyle (2016), Michael Porter has defined a number of competitive advantages, including: marketing communications, strong branding, effective marketing, high-quality employees, new technology, company financial health, low costs in general, excellent customer service etc.

The planning process starts with a marketing situational analysis. The purpose of performing situational analysis is to find the right balance between opportunities that are considered in the external environment and are beneficial to the firm and the capabilities and resources of the firm. The situation analysis can be applied thanks to using 5C concept: company; collaborators; customers; competitors; climate/context - macroeconomic factors (PEST analysis). A firm´s environment analysis can be done using the 4C concept: customer; country - national specifics; cost; competitors. At the time of internationalization and globalization of markets and business, it is advisable to perform situational analysis according to 7C concept: country - national specifics; climate/context - macroeconomic factors; company; customers; competitors; cost; change (Jakubikova, 2013, pp. 94-95). According to Čichovský (2013, pp. 68-69), marketing situational analysis can be carried out in areas such as: company, collaborators, customers, consumers, competitors, climate, context, country, cost and convenience. Other specific applied marketing analysis techniques, apart from those mentioned above, include, for example, macroeconomic models, models and methods of financial analysis of a company related to marketing management, position maps, value chain analysis, PIMS, market tests and pretests, PLC analysis, ABC analysis, network analysis using the relationship marketing diagram and others.

Marketing goals express specific tasks and the company expects to achieve them over a certain period of time. In general, marketing goals can be grouped into two main categories, namely economic and non-economic goals. The economic goals may include, for example, market share, sales volume, return on investment, profitability, increase in customer attendance, etc. Unlike the economic goals, the non-economic goals (also referred to as psychographic) are linked to consumer buying behaviour and include brand awareness increase, products preference increase, satisfaction , improvement of brand positing, etc. Paley (2000, pp. 12-13) divides the goals into two groups – quantitative and non-quantitative. Quantitative goals indicate in precise statements major performance expectations such as sales growth, market share, return on investment, profit etc. Non-quantitative goals could span diverse areas from organizational structure, distribution networks, and strategy teams to product development.

Marketing strategies respect the overall corporate strategy and the principle that this strategy should be reflected in the sub-strategy. Marketing strategies propose how to compete with the company's products in the business environment, how to achieve the determined goals. They also present the means and procedures by which the defined goals

will be achieved. According to Chernev (2018, p. 39) marketing strategy involves two components: the target market and the value proposition. The target market is defined by five factors that define the 5-C framework: customers whose needs the firm aims to fulfil, competitors that aim to fulfil the same needs of the same target customers, collaborators that work with the company to fulfil customers´ needs, the firm managing the offering, and the context in which the company operates. The value preposition defines the value that an offering aims to create for target customers, collaborators and the company. Mooradian *et al.* (2012, p. 128), state that the marketing strategy should meet the three basic requirements and it is its consistency according to the 5W and 1H concept (Who? Where? What? How? When? Why?), then it should be integrated when the individual elements of the 5W and 1H concept mutually do not oppose and support each other. The last requirement is its consistency with regard to long-term vision, key competencies and opportunities from the surrounding area. In the process of formulating the marketing strategy, they outline four sub-steps, such as identifying a firm's competitive advantage, market segmentation, targeting and positioning. These four separate steps are preceded by marketing situational analysis followed by the real marketing strategy implementation and control.

The result of marketing planning is the creation of a marketing plan. A marketing plan is a document that includes an assessment of the marketing situation, marketing goals, marketing strategy, and marketing initiatives. The marketing plan can be an independent document or it can be contained within a business plan (Levens, 2012, p. 33). Kotler and Keller (2016, p. 77) the most common emerging shortcomings in the marketing plans of firms today including lack of realism, lack of competitive analysis and short-term focus. They further add that marketing plans are created over a period of 1 year ranging from 5 to 50 pages.

Having analysed the firm´s situation, the firm then determines a way forward. Managers need to formulate a marketing strategy. The formulation stage culminates with the development of a strategic marketing plan. Marketing managers will undertake programmes and actions that deliver strategic objectives. Such actions, will often focus on individual elements of the marketing mix. Additionally, a process of monitoring and control needs to be put in place (Drummond *et al.*, 2008, pp. 14-15).Within the control phase of the strategic marketing process, it is essential that a marketing audit thoroughly analyzes the overall marketing situation of the firm and evaluates how effectively the firm performs marketing functions. It is a comprehensive, systematic, periodic and independent assessment of the business situation in a particular environment.

3. MARKETING RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research goal and hypotheses

Our main research goal was to determine the level of strategic marketing management in small and medium-sized companies in the Czech Republic.

In this article, the following hypotheses are formulated in line with the set goal. These will later be verified based on the evaluation of the data from the conducted research. The hypotheses are as follows:

H1: There is an impact of company size on research results.

H2: The size of the company affects whether it has formulated vision.

H3: *The size of the company affects whether it has formulated mission.*

H4: *The size of the company affects whether it has formulated strategic goals.*

H5: *The size of the company affects whether it has formulated strategy.*

H6: *The size of the company affects whether it has formulated control.*

Hypothesis 1 is a necessary hypothesis for validating the usability of data for other mathematical-statistical operations. Hypotheses 2 through 6 are chosen to determine the use of individual key elements of strategic marketing management in different companies.

3.2 Research methodology

The process of creating this article can be summed up as follows. The basis is the critical analysis of the available literary sources (academic literature, articles, researches, etc.) and the current state of the examined topics (academic articles in renowned databases). Based on this, primary research was planned using the questionnaire technique. Data was collected, processed, analysed and interpreted. This process allowed us to transform raw data first into new information (analysis and comparison), and later into new knowledge (interpretation), so that new recommendations could be created for companies.

As a method of own primary survey, questionnaire technique was used. The questionnaire was distributed both in paper and electronic form. The questionnaire was designed primarily for electronic distribution, where the assisted filling option cannot be used. In practice, however, all interviewers were properly trained, and they were asked to distribute the questionnaire if possible in paper form and offer the companies their assistance. The questionnaire contained a total of 31 questions, for this article we have selected the 5 most important. Altogether, almost 400 completed questionnaires were collected, but some of them had to be excluded, in the end the sample consists of 335 companies. The data was collected from March to May 2017.

The relevant part of the questionnaire is divided into 6 blocks according to strategic marketing management described in the theoretical part of this article, i.e. vision, mission, goals, analysis (not relevant part of this article), plans and control. Each block has 3 sub-questions, only block about control has 2. Questions in a block are ordered, usually according to the details, for example vision and mission where we ask first about their existence, and then importance and usability, or it can be a time sequence, where for goals we ask about strategic goals (3-5 years), then tactical (1 year) and then operational (order of months).

In the analysed first part, the questionnaire uses exclusively Likert's scale 1-5 (from completely agree to completely disagree). We understand that it is not common to use Likert scale even for questions about existence of something, where it would be appropriate to use yes/no answers, but in our trial sample companies voiced their concerns about the difficulty to explicitly state the fact and they would say rather yes (e.g. not formalized but they have something similar to vision). And it was easier for the companies to have the same system of answers for all the questions.

The data was processed in MS Excel and IBM SPSS and appropriate interpretive tools were created in the form of graphs and tables. Our econometric statistical testing has the following logic: we need to assess the data, test the dependencies of variables, determine which groups influence results. We test the data with one-way Chi-Square test of good

compliance to test the basic sample characteristics. Based on the type of data, we have chosen two-way Chi-Square to test the dependencies. And lastly, we will choose post-hoc test to test which group influences the results (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

3.3 Sample characteristics

The research sample consisted of 335 companies from all over the Czech Republic. The focus of the research was on SMEs, the interviewers were instructed to omit large companies. The division of companies in the sample does not correspond to the general division of companies in the Czech Republic, where there are more micro-companies and less medium-sized companies (see Table no. 1).

Table no. 1 – Sample characteristics by company size

Number of employees	Number of companies absolute	Number of companies relative (in%)
0-9	140	41.8
10-49	122	36.4
50-249	73	21.8

Source: own research

Due to the method of questionnaire distribution, there was an assumption of a significant distortion of the sample in relation to the county seat of the company. Out of the 14 regions of the Czech Republic, only 10 regions are in our sample, of which 5 have 5 or fewer companies. The highest numbers are for Moravian-Silesian region (198), Prague (51), Olomouc (29) and Zlín (28). By field of activity, the sample consists of all options, the highest numbers are for Law (26), Education (25), Arts and crafts (19), Construction (18).

The first step in econometric statistical testing is to test the basic characteristics of the sample. The test will use a one-way chi-square test of good compliance. The impact of company size on the sample is tested (see Table no. 2). The observed frequencies and the expected frequencies are the starting point. The test is performed at a significance level $\alpha = 0.05$, i.e. 5%. In the output of the IBM SPSS statistical program in the chi-quadrate test, there are two variants: Sig. (Significance) $< \alpha$ variables are related, Sig. $> \alpha$ variables are not related. The Chi-Square value gives the test criterion, if it falls within the acceptance field, we do not reject the zero hypothesis (H_0) on the 5% significance level. If it does not fall into the field of acceptance, we accept an alternative hypothesis (H_1).

    • H_0: Company size does not affect research results.
    • H_1: Company size affects research results.

Table no. 2 - Chi-square test impact of company size

	Size
Chi-Square	21.534[a]
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	0.000

a. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 111,7.
Source: own research

The test criterion is 21.534. The value of Sig. 0.000 is less than the set value of significance level, we reject the zero hypothesis (H0) on the independence of individual characters, and we accept the alternative H1 hypothesis that there is a certain influence of the company size on the research results. Therefore, it is possible to expect that the size of the company has an impact on the results of the research and it is advisable to further test it.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Research results

The presentation of the results is divided into blocks according to the questionnaire focus, in order to make the data more coherent and logical, the scale used is Likert scale (see Table no. 3).

Table no. 3 - Research results for 5 most important questions

Question	Completely agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Completely disagree	Total
1: Vision	95	94	89	40	17	335
2: Mission	83	88	89	44	26	329
3: Goals	110	92	70	26	24	322
4: Strategy	24	67	84	79	78	332
5: Control	123	102	65	27	14	331

Source: own research

The first block consists of three questions about vision. The logic of these questions is first to find out whether the company even has a vision and then how they work with it. The first question was "We have a vision". The question was evaluated with an average of 2.37 and answered by 335 companies. The option 1 was selected by 28% of companies, option 2 by 28%, option 3 again by nearly 28%, option 4 by 12%, and option 5 by 5%. The results are very surprising, as the average is relatively high (definitely closer to 3 than 1), which is shown in the numbers of neutral answers and disagreements. Such a basic thing for a company orientation as a vision of the future could be expected in many more companies. Our further questions in the block (not fully presented here) have shown that the companies that do have a vision think that it is important (88%) and are satisfied with it. However they seem to be using it incorrectly as it isn't used in internal communication and employees don't know it.

The second block consists of three questions about mission. The logic of these questions is, as with the previous block, to first find out whether the company even has a mission and how the mission works for them. The first question was "We have a mission". The question was evaluated with an average of 2.52 and answered by 335 companies. The option 1 was selected by 25% of the companies, option 2 by 27% of firms, option 3 by 26%, option 4 by 13% and option 5 by 8%. Already from these values, it is obvious that companies often do not have a formulated mission (see average and numbers of 3, 4, 5). It can be assumed that these results follow up on the attitude towards the vision, that is, companies that do not have basic vision also do not work with the concept of the mission. Our further questions in the block (not fully presented here) have shown that the companies don't use the mission well in communication with the customers and in their internal communication and motivation of their employees.

The third block consists of three questions about goals. The logic of these questions differs from the previous blocks, as companies always answer all three questions. These are focused on strategic, tactical and operational goals. The first question had the wording "We have strategic goals (3-5 years), e.g. market share, turnover, profit, etc.". The question was evaluated with an average of 2.26 and answered by 332 companies. The option 1 was selected by 34% of companies, option 2 by 29%, option 3 by 22%, option 4 by 8%, and option 5 by 8%. After the answers from the previous two blocks, it is probably not surprising that over 15% of companies have no strategic goals and almost 22% choose a neutral answer. In spite of this fact, the highest absolute values of the questionnaire so far can be observed in this block for the first two evaluation options, that is, about 63% of companies have or rather have defined strategic goals for 3-5 years. Our further questions in the block (not fully presented here) have shown that the companies rather prefer tactical goals (1 year) with an average of 1.93 or operative goals (months) with an average of 2.

The fourth block consists of three questions about plans and strategies in the company. This block follows the logic from the previous block, but the subject is one level above, i.e. instead of the goals we are asking about plans and strategies leading to these goals. The first question was "We have detailed strategies for all strategic goals." The question was evaluated with an average of 3.35, which is the worst value in the whole questionnaire, and it was answered by 332 companies. Only 7% of the companies selected option 1, option 2 was selected by 20% of companies, option 3 by 25%, and option 5 by 23%. In this block, we are building on the results from blocks 1 to 3, where companies proved that they do not have long-term visions, missions, goals, and as a result they do not have the strategies based on those. The distribution of answers is very negative. Our further questions in the block (not fully presented here) have shown that the companies rather use general plans for very specific goals (informal planning) with an average of 2.59, and prefer to use shorter (yearly) plans with an average of 1.93.

The last block consists of two questions about control in the company. The goal was to find out if companies are tracking and evaluating their performance systematically, or whether they are reviewing the situation after a problem occurs. The first question was "We systematically monitor and evaluate the performance of the company and compare it with our plans and goals." The question was evaluated with an average of 2.1 and answered by 331 companies. The option 1 was selected by 37% of companies, option 2 by 31%, option 3 by 20%, option 4 by 8%, and option 5 by 4%. According to the average and the number agrees (options 1 and 2), it is clear that companies are systematically controlling their performance. The positive answers of this question are striking, knowing how companies have negatively assessed their goals and planning. The second question was focused on control only if a problem occurs, and its results are very similar to the first one with the distribution of answers and an average of 2.12.

4.2 Hypotheses verification

In this subchapter, all working hypotheses will be evaluated. First, each hypothesis will be transformed into a statistical hypothesis, statistical testing will be performed using a suitable test, in our case its two-way Chi-square test (Independence Test), the results of the test will be commented on and a conclusion will be drawn.

The size of the company affects whether it has formulated vision.

The question 1 of the questionnaire and the company size identification factor are tested. The wording of the hypothesis will be transformed into a statistical hypothesis as follows:

• H_0: Existence of a vision in a company does not depend on its size.
• H_1: Existence of a vision in a company depends on its size.

This test is based on the contingency table, and hence the observed and expected frequencies, see Table no. 4.

Table no. 4 – Contingency table „vision * company size"

			Size			
			Micro	**Small**	**Medium**	**Total**
Vision	1	Count	30	39	26	95
		% within Vision	31.6%	41.1%	27.4%	100%
		Adjusted Residual	-2.4	1.1	1.6	
	2	Count	27	39	28	94
		% within Vision	28.7%	41.5%	29.8%	100%
		Adjusted Residual	-3.0	1.2	2.2	
	3	Count	50	26	13	89
		% within Vision	56.2%	29.2%	14.6%	100%
		Adjusted Residual	3.2	-1.6	-1.9	
	4	Count	23	11	6	40
		% within Vision	57.5%	27.5%	15.0%	100%
		Adjusted Residual	2.1	-1.2	-1.1	
	5	Count	10	7	0	17
		% within Vision	58.8%	41.2%	0.0%	100%
		Adjusted Residual	1.5	0.4	-2.2	
Total		Count	140	122	73	335
		% within Vision	41.8%	36.4%	21.8%	100%

Source: own research

The test is performed at a significance level $\alpha = 0.05$, i.e. 5%. Again as with the one-way Chi-square test, in the output of the IBM SPSS statistical program in the Chi-square test, there are two variants: Sig. (Significance) $< \alpha$ variables are related, Sig. $> \alpha$ variables are not related. The Pearson Chi-Square value shows the test criterion, if it falls within the acceptance field, we do not reject the zero hypothesis (H_0) sat the 5% significance level. If it does not fall into the acceptance field, we accept an alternative hypothesis (H_1).

The result of the test of independence of the influence of the company size on the existence of a vision is as follows: Sig. 0.000 is lower than the selected significance level, the test criterion is 28.408 and does not fall into the field of acceptance. At the significance level of 5%, the zero hypothesis can be rejected and an alternative hypothesis accepted. There is therefore a statistically significant link and it can be argued that the existence of a vision in a company depends on its size (see Table no. 5).

Table no. 5 – Chi-square results „vision * company goals"

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	28.408[a]	8	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	32.108	8	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	19.262	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	335		

a. 1 cells (6.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.70.
Source: own research

However, the contingency coefficient is very small 0.280, so the dependence is low. The post hoc test, see Table no. 4, showed that medium-sized companies answered most often positively and micro firms most often negatively, small companies were scattered at extremes.

The size of the company affects whether it has formulated mission.
The question 2 of the questionnaire and the company size identification factor are tested. The wording of the hypothesis will be transformed into a statistical hypothesis as follows:
- H_0: Existence of a mission in a company does not depend on its size.
- H_1: Existence of a mission in a company depends on its size.

This test is based on the contingency table, and hence the observed and expected frequencies, see Table no. 6.

Table no. 6 – Contingency table „mission * company size"

			Size			
			Micro	Small	Medium	Total
Mission	1	Count	23	36	24	83
		% within Mission	27.7%	43.4%	28.9%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-3.0	1.5	1.8	
	2	Count	33	34	21	88
		% within Mission	37.5%	38.6%	23.9%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-0.9	0.5	0.5	
	3	Count	41	31	17	89
		% within Mission	46.1%	34.8%	19.1%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	1.0	-0.4	-0.7	
	4	Count	23	15	6	44
		% within Mission	52.3%	34.1%	13.6%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	1.5	-0.4	-1.4	
	5	Count	17	4	4	25
		% within Mission	68.0%	16.0%	16.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	2.8	-2.2	-0.7	
Total		Count	137	120	72	329
		% within Mission	41.6%	36.5%	21.9%	100.0%

Source: own research

The test is performed at a significance level α = 0.05, i.e. 5%. The result of the test of independence of the influence of the company size on the existence of a mission is as follows: Sig. 0.019 is lower than the selected significance level, the test criterion is 18.329 and does not fall into the field of acceptance. At the significance level of 5%, the zero

hypothesis can be rejected and an alternative hypothesis accepted. There is therefore a statistically significant link and it can be argued that the existence of a mission in a company depends on its size (see Table no. 7).

Table no. 7 – Chi-square results „mission * company goals"

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.329[a]	8	0.019
Likelihood Ratio	18.884	8	0.015
Linear-by-Linear Association	14.357	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	329		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.47.
Source: own research

However, the contingency coefficient is very small 0.230, so the dependence is low. The post hoc test, see Table no. 6, did not show any relevant conclusion, as the only significant results are for both micro and medium sized companies at both extremes but nowhere else.

The size of the company affects whether it has formulated strategic goals.
The question 3 of the questionnaire and the company size identification factor are tested. The wording of the hypothesis will be transformed into a statistical hypothesis as follows:
- H_0: Existence of strategic goals in a company does not depend on its size.
- H_1: Existence of strategic goals in a company depends on its size.

This test is based on the contingency table, and hence the observed and expected frequencies, see Table no. 8.

Table no. 8 – Contingency table „strategic goals * company size"

			Size			
			Micro	Small	Medium	Total
Strategic goals	1	Count	33	39	37	109
		% within Strategic goals	30.3%	35.8%	33.9%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-3.0	-0.2	3.8	
	2	Count	39	38	15	92
		% within Strategic goals	42.4%	41.3%	16.3%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	0.1	1.1	-1.5	
	3	Count	41	21	8	70
		% within Strategic goals	58.6%	30.0%	11.4%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	3.2	-1.3	-2.4	
	4	Count	10	12	4	26
		% within Strategic goals	38.5%	46.2%	15.4%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-0.4	1.1	-0.8	
	5	Count	11	7	6	24
		% within Strategic goals	45.8%	29.2%	25.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	0.4	-0.8	0.4	
Total		Count	134	117	70	321
		% within Strategic goals	41.7%	36.4%	21.8%	100.0%

Source: own research

The test is performed at a significance level α = 0.05, i.e. 5%. The result of the test of the influence of the company size on the existence of a vision is as follows: Sig. 0.003 is less than the selected significance level, the test criterion is 23.487 and does not fall into the field of acceptance. At the significance level of 5%, the zero hypothesis can be rejected and an alternative hypothesis accepted. There is therefore a statistically significant link and it can be argued that the existence of strategic goals in a company depends on its size (see Table no. 9).

Table no. 9 – Chi-square results „strategic goals * company size"

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.487[a]	8	0.003
Likelihood Ratio	23.149	8	0.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.775	1	0.005
N of Valid Cases	321		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.23.
Source: own research

However, the contingency coefficient is very low 0.261, so the dependence is low. The post hoc test showed that the medium-sized companies most often answered positively and micro firms most often negatively, see Table no. 8.

The size of the company affects whether it has formulated strategy.
The question 4 of the questionnaire and the company size identification factor are tested. The wording of the hypothesis will be transformed into a statistical hypothesis as follows:
   • H_0: Existence of strategy in a company does not depend on its size.
   • H_1: Existence of strategy in a company depends on its size.

Table no. 10 – Contingency table „strategy * company size"

			Size			Total
			Micro	Small	Medium	
		Count	4	5	16	25
	1	% within Strategy	16.0%	20.0%	64.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-2.7	-1.8	5.3	
		Count	14	31	22	67
	2	% within Strategy	20.9%	46.3%	32.8%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-3.8	1.8	2.5	
		Count	30	36	18	84
Strategy	3	% within Strategy	35.7%	42.9%	21.4%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.3	1.3	-0.1	
		Count	42	27	10	79
	4	% within Strategy	53.2%	34.2%	12.7%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	2.4	-0.5	-2.2	
		Count	48	23	6	77
	5	% within Strategy	62.3%	29.9%	7.8%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	4.2	-1.4	-3.4	
Total		Count	138	122	72	332
		% within Strategy	41,6%	36.7%	21.7%	100.0%

Source: own research

This test is based on the contingency table, and hence the observed and expected frequencies, see Table no. 10.

The test is performed at a significance level $\alpha = 0.05$, i.e. 5%. The result of the test of the influence of the company size on the existence of strategy is as follows: Sig. 0.000 is less than the selected significance level, the test criterion is 62.713 and does not fall into the field of acceptance. At the significance level of 5%, the zero hypothesis can be rejected and an alternative hypothesis accepted. There is therefore a statistically significant link and it can be argued that the existence of a strategy in a company depends on its size (see Table no. 11).

Table no. 11 – Chi-square results „strategy * company size"

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	62.713[a]	10	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	59.727	10	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	51.525	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	332		

a. 3 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.22.
Source: own research

However, the contingency coefficient is average of 0.399, which is why the dependence is average. The post hoc test showed that medium-sized companies most often responded positively and micro firms most often negatively, small firms kept at the centre, see Table no. 10.

The size of the company affects whether it has formulated control.

The question 5 of the questionnaire and the company size identification factor are tested. The wording of the hypothesis will be transformed into a statistical hypothesis as follows:
- H_0: Existence of control in a company does not depend on its size.
- H_1: Existence of control in a company depends on its size.

This test is based on the contingency table, and hence the observed and expected frequencies, see Table no. 12.

Table no. 12 – Contingency table „control * company size"

			Size			
			Micro	Small	Medium	Total
Control	1	Count	28	52	43	123
		% within Control	22.8%	42.3%	35.0%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	-5.3	1.7	4.4	
	2	Count	46	38	17	101
		% within Control	45.5%	37.6%	16.8%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	1.0	0.3	-1.5	
	3	Count	37	20	8	65
		% within Control	56.9%	30.8%	12.3%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	2.8	-1.1	-2.1	
	4	Count	15	9	3	27
		% within Control	55.6%	33.3%	11.1%	100.0%
		Adjusted Residual	1.6	-0.4	-1.4	

		Size			
		Micro	**Small**	**Medium**	**Total**
5	Count	11	2	1	14
	% within Control	78.6%	14.3%	7.1%	100.0%
	Adjusted Residual	2.9	-1.8	-1.4	
Total	Count	137	121	73	331
	% within Control	41.4%	36.6%	22. 1%	100.0%

Source: own research

The test is performed at a significance level $\alpha = 0.05$, i.e. 5%. The result of the test of the influence of the company size on the existence of strategy is as follows: Sig. 0.000 is less than the selected significance level, the test criterion is 43.958 and does not fall into the field of acceptance. At the significance level of 5%, the zero hypothesis can be rejected and an alternative hypothesis accepted. There is therefore a statistically significant link and it can be argued that the existence of a control in a company depends on its size (see Table no. 13).

Table no. 13 – Chi-square results „control * company size"

	Value	**df**	**Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	43.958[a]	10	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	44.583	10	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	34.246	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	331		

a. 4 cells (22.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.22.
Source: own research

However, the contingency coefficient is rather average of 0.342, which is why the dependence is rather average. The post hoc test showed that micro companies responded most often negatively, small and medium companies positively, see Table no. 12.

4.3 Discussion

In the beginning of this subchapter, the authors would like to stress out that a number of results are in line with expectations from other research, different case studies, and last but not least from our own practice. However, some of the results were unexpected and surprising.

Overall, it can be concluded from all the results that there is a dependence between company size and its approach to individual strategic marketing management tools. Medium businesses are the best, meaning they use the most tools, followed by small businesses and micro firms are the worst (see Tables no. 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12). However, with further use of mathematical and statistical tools, it was found that the dependence is very low in most cases and there is overall poor utilization of strategic marketing management across all company sizes. Companies in our sample do not even use the basic tools such as vision, mission, strategic goals, and strategies. However, most companies are diligent to control their results. When closely looking at the data, companies that use strategic management tools are satisfied with them. Both vision and mission are used to motivate employees, helping companies keep track of their direction. Companies with defined strategic goals and strategies have generally had more positive responses across all our questions. It can therefore be assumed that strategically-minded companies have better results.

Most companies choose general business plans, with only one year goals. Only tactical plans lead to these goals. It could be argued here that, at a time of accelerated technology development, overheated economy, where companies have no problem getting customers but have problems to find labour (historically lowest unemployment rate in the Czech Republic), this setting is actually logical. By contacting the companies in the sample, there were some surprising facts confirming this thinking, where under current market conditions there are firms that are driven by market demand to such an extent that they have never been forced to use any strategic tools since their creation and only focus on satisfying their customers. An example may be a company set up by one of our students as an experiment. This company is working overtime 4 years in a row and only because of the diploma thesis the owner began to think about its strategy. In this case, the results of this research make sense - companies are not forced to fight for their survival in today's market conditions, therefore they neglect strategic marketing tools and only need to solve problems operationally. However, they pay attention to what they supply to their customers, hence the increased emphasis on control rather than planning.

Looking at the negative results of the research (negative response options), we can find critical points with potential for improvement. The overall low use of strategic marketing management is one of those points. This situation will certainly not be solved by a few suggestions in this article, but it can be said that it would be appropriate to at least raise the awareness about these tools among entrepreneurs, especially those in micro and small businesses. There are a number of projects that examine this issue and come to this conclusion. It would therefore be advisable to try to take it a step closer to the entrepreneurial practice in other projects and set up, for example, a modern interactive application/website that would explain these basic concepts comfortably anywhere on mobile devices to an entrepreneur who runs their company with not enough employees, and must cover a number of roles. This content will need to be supported by an appropriate communication campaign to reach the target audience. For authors, it's also a good impetus for creating at least a framework of this interactive content for our courses within a freely available Moodle module. This valuable content would surely attract a number of new students if, for example, our faculty had published it regularly on their blog. This could be the basis of the faculty's content strategy.

As mentioned above in the chapter "Significance and Concept of Strategic Marketing", the issue of the application of strategic marketing is not only examined and discussed within small and medium-sized companies in the Czech Republic. It can be considered as a global dynamic topic. Scientific studies and researches can be found for the already mentioned US and India markets. Further, a research study for Ghana can be presented. Dzisi and Ofosu (2014) examined the effect of marketing strategies on the performance of SMEs in Ghana in terms of their profitability, brand awareness and market share. 363 SMEs were sampled from a population of 900 through stratified random sampling. Results of the study also revealed that the SMEs in Ghana mostly use traditional form of marketing to reach potential customers and also to entrench their brands. The findings provide valuable insights for decision makers and SMEs owners on the relationship between strategic marketing and performance of SMEs in a globalized developing economy context. Frost (2003) in his study dealt with the use of strategic tools by small and medium-sized enterprises in Western Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia. The aim was to review the range of strategic tools and techniques available to strategic planners. SMEs were found to use a restricted range of strategic tools.

There is a need for a wider understanding of the tools available and their application to strategy development. There is also a survey of the strategic marketing practices of 218 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Taiwan conducted by Siu *et al.* (2004) Their survey´s results indicated that while the higher performing Taiwanese SMEs give a higher priority to marketing than to other business functions in corporate planning, they are still sales- or production-oriented. The higher performing Taiwanese SMEs are more aware of strategic planning tools, but they make less use of them.

It should also be noted that the outcomes of our investigation, where detailed attention is paid to the individual steps within the strategic management process and strategic marketing process, can be considered as unique. A number of national and international studies only deal mostly only with a general utilization of the strategic approach in business or in marketing activities. At the same time, the ambition of the authors was to apply precisely and comprehensively available theoretical knowledge from literature review in the area of strategic management process and strategic marketing process, as defined in the second chapter, to real units of small and medium-sized enterprises.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The main goal of the article was to theoretically define the principles of strategic marketing and then practically analyse the real level of strategic marketing use as a tool of corporate management in selected Czech small and medium-sized enterprises. Our main research goal was to determine the level of strategic marketing management in small and medium-sized companies in the Czech Republic with regard to their size. To meet the first part of our goal, we have characterized basic problem areas such as various approaches to definitions of strategic marketing, strategic management process versus strategic marketing process. To meet the second part of our goal, we have carried out a questionnaire survey with 335 companies. The results are somewhat striking at first with overall low utilisation of all strategic marketing management tools, but we think it may be a temporary phenomenon tied to the current state of Czech economy (historically lowest unemployment rate and highest growth of economy translates into companies not having to do anything special to be exceptionally successful). Our statistical hypotheses testing proved that the utilization of marketing management tools is dependent on company size, where micro companies are the worst and medium-sized companies the best. We are arguing that the companies should be aware of the facts mentioned and be prepared for when the next economic crisis hits as the companies using strategic marketing management tools tend to have overall better results. We also have a recommendation for academics, as this topic has many projects, to translate these projects into tangible modern educational tools available to (especially micro) companies. It may also be an incredibly successful topic for content marketing campaign that will draw new students.

In future work, we intend to adjust the questionnaire to go more in-depth with actually trying to solve the issues in the researched topic and not just describe them (i.e. qualitative part asking why the companies are not using certain tools and how to solve it), on representative sample of Czech companies.

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