Marketing Activities and Entrepreneurship in Small Firms: A Study Of Greek Manufacturing SMEs

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Abstract: Research investigating the competitive advantage of small firms has consistently emphasized the importance of marketing, strategic positioning and entrepreneurship as key factors' in business survival and growth. The ability to identify and operate in a particular market niche enables the firm to exploit a range of specialisation and offers protection from larger competition. Yet despite the widespread acceptance of the importance of the marketing concept for firms survival and growth process, the precise marketing activities and competencies that contribute most strongly to business performance have still to be identified.

This paper reports the results of a study, which sought to explore the relationship between the marketing and entrepreneurial orientation of small firms. The study employed an activity-based perspective whereby demonstrable marketing competencies were related to the orientation evident in the firms and their ultimate performance. The analysis demonstrated that certain competencies were more strongly associated with a marketing orientation while others were associated with an entrepreneurial orientation. These results were linked to the performance of the firm. The discussion of these results contributes to our understanding of how marketing and entrepreneurship are linked to the competencies of the firm and its eventual performance. In addition, we provide guidelines for managers of small firms and delineate research directions in this field of study.