**Chapter 18 Global Marketing and R&D**

Ford’s Makketing Goes Global

In recent years globalization has become a major thrust at Ford,the most successful of Anerica’s throubled automobile companies.The company has been pushing aggressively toward the development of global vehicles--models that share the same components,look,and positioning wherever they are sold.By 2015 all Ford vehicles competing in global segments should be common in North America,Europe,and Asia.They include the Fiesta and Focus small cars,Fusion and Mondeo midsize cars,and commercial vans.

To support this “One Ford”vision,Ford consolidated its national and regional product development activities into one organization in 2006 and charged it with creating global models.In the process,the company cut costs by hundreds of millions of dollars by eliminating overlap.Global purchasing operations were consolidated in 2008,again for large cost savings both from eliminating duplication and from the pricing power associated with purchasing components on a large scale.In 2009,a global marketing,sales,and service organization was created to integrate and drive a more consistent and compelling connection with customers around the world.

In the past,Ford’s marketing departments in different countries had the authority to create their own programs and often did so in a vacuum without coordinating with marketers in other countries.The result was not only high costs from extensive duplication of everything fromTV commercials and photo sessions to public relations events,but also a lack of consistency in marketing message and public relations strategy.Now ford is insisting that marketing managers from different countries and regions communicate with each other before developing a marketing strategy for a vehicle.

The goal is not to have an identical marketing strategy for each country,but to have greater commonalities and synergies,to learn from each other,leveraging good ideas while reducing the duplication of effotr.Thus,for example,instead of hiring different photographers to shoot different pictures of the same car in different countries,Ford will use one photographer to shoot pictures for the entire world.

The launch of the 2011 Ford Focus is the first example of this execution.Marketers from around the world have cooperated on developing a marketing strategy.The car went on sale in China and Europe in the fall of 2009 and in the United Stated in 2010.Ten years ago,Ford used up to 15 advertising campaigns for individual countries when it launched the Focus globally and a number of different ad agencies.This time it used fewer than 10 campaigns,and they look much more like each other,sharing common themes.The same agency is coordinating and developing messages worldwide.The idea is to develop messages that work in all markets,and then to tweak those messages to account for differences in local culture.While Ford recognizes that country differences are still important,it does not want to use totally different messages.Rather,it is trying to develop a common set of marketing tools that can be used in different ways in different countries.

Marketers in the United States watched how the Chinese “seeded”the new Focus by giving it to early “influencers”who then wrote about it on social networking websites.In China,where traditional advertising is still not well developed.Internet-based social media caopaigns can (and did)speak interest.The marketers then decided to adopt a similar viral marketing strategy in the United States.The result was the “Fiesta Movement”,a web-centric exercise in viral marketing revoling around 100 “agents” who were given early versions of the 2011 Focus ang required to blog about it.