

## **Strategic Management Journal**

DOI: 10.1057/9781137294678.0655

Palgrave Macmillan

### **Please respect intellectual property rights**

This material is copyright and its use is restricted by our standard site license terms and conditions (see [palgraveconnect.com/pc/info/terms\\_conditions.html](http://palgraveconnect.com/pc/info/terms_conditions.html)). If you plan to copy, distribute or share in any format, including, for the avoidance of doubt, posting on websites, you need the express prior permission of Palgrave Macmillan. To request permission please contact [rights@palgrave.com](mailto:rights@palgrave.com).

## Strategic Management Journal

### Abstract

The article refers to the *Strategic Management Journal* as an academic publication specialized in the discipline of strategic management. It provides a description of its birth and evolution, mission and scope, and the editors responsible for its development over time. Moreover, the article analyses some key aspects of the journal such as its main statistical data, the role in the development of the discipline, its importance and impact in the context of the broader field of management, and its growing international profile as it became a global publication. Finally, the article describes the history of the SMJ Best Paper Prize in recognition of the most outstanding papers published in the journal.

### Birth and evolution

*Strategic Management Journal* (SMJ, <http://smj.strategicmanagement.net>) is an academic journal that was founded in 1980, at the same time as the STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT SOCIETY (SMS, <http://strategicmanagement.net>), being the latter's flagship publication. Strategic management is a young discipline within the broader field of management. It emerged in the early 1960s, based on different final courses in business schools on the problems of general management in firms, under the name of BUSINESS POLICY. Over the following years it gradually defined itself, consolidating new concepts and witnessing the appearance of the first major instances of research. It was towards the end of the 1970s when the discipline eventually found its rightful place as a major component of management with a research focus, being referred to as 'strategic management'. It was this context that saw the birth of SMS and SMJ, as the brainchild of SCHENDEL, DAN (born 1934) and Mary Lou Schendel and other scholars, with the aim of creating a new academic community and channelling the latest research in this field, thereby contributing to the fledgling discipline's growth and development.

SMJ's evolution cannot be understood without considering the parallel development of SMS and, briefly, of the academic community in strategic management. Accordingly, SMJ and SMS are mutually reinforcing: today, the journal has around 4000 readers who are also members of SMS, as well as counting on numerous individual and institutional subscribers worldwide.

### Mission and scope

The journal's mission is to contribute to the development of strategic management from both a theoretical and a practical perspective. To do so, it seeks to create an arena for discussion and debate by publishing research on almost any subject that can be included within the discipline of strategic management. The main topics are strategic resource allocation, organization structure, leadership, entrepreneurship and organizational purpose, methods and techniques for evaluating and understanding competitive, technological, social and political environments, planning processes, and strategic decision processes, among others.

The journal's first editorial already considered the dual remit of appealing both to academics and business professionals (Schendel, Ansoff and Channon, 1980). Although this policy has been upheld from the very beginning to the present, it should be noted that SMJ has had an eminently academic approach, becoming the flagship for the discipline of strategic management. García-Merino and Santos-Álvarez (2009) highlight this research-based, and therefore scholarly, approach by SMJ, as well as its importance in terms of the originality of the papers published.

### Editors

SMJ began its journey with three co-editors of recognized prestige within the ambit of the new discipline: Dan Schendel (Purdue University), ANSOFF, IGOR H. (1918–2002) (European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management) and Derek Channon (Manchester Business School). They founded the journal and oversaw its initial growth and focus. At the end of 1984, Igor Ansoff ceased to be a co-editor, with the other two continuing through to 1993. From 1994 onwards, Dan Schendel remained as the sole editor, although he was joined by Edward Zajac (Northwestern University), Karel Cool (INSEAD), BETTIS, RICHARD A. (born 1947) (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), John McGee (Warwick Business School) and Will Mitchell (University of Michigan and University of Toronto) as associate editors.

Following Dan Schendel's retirement in 2006, the journal was run by the co-editors Richard Bettis, Will Mitchell and Edward Zajac, and new associate editors were appointed to help with the increasing workload

in the journal's orientation and the selection of the papers submitted. The team of co-editors and associate editors is supported by a group of around 250 members of the Editorial Board, who are involved in reviewing papers for possible publication, and by hundreds of ad hoc reviewers.

**Key statistical data**

The journal is organized by volumes or series of issues included in a year. Between 1980 and 1987, four issues were published each year. Towards the end of the 1980s, special issues began to be published on specific topics in the field. Between 1988 and 1990, the number of issues per year began to grow, and by 1991 there were eight, a rate that was maintained until 1995. The ensuing years saw further growth in the number of issues per year until 1998, when it stabilized at 12 standard issues and one or two special issues. In total, excluding editorial notes and book reviews, between 1980 and 2011 (volumes 1 to 32) the journal has published almost 1800 papers, involving a total of 3530 authorships.

Table 1 features the journal's main descriptive data, both for the 32 volumes considered and for the four eight-year periods in which we have divided the analysis. These data enable us to deduce the following: (a) constant growth in scientific output (number of papers) over time, although it has levelled off over the last two stages (column 2); (b) constant growth in the number of authorships (column 3); (c) constant growth in the number of authors per paper, which suggests greater cooperation between researchers (column 4); and (d) constant growth in cooperation among institutions.

As can be seen, the papers published by a single author have been decreasing in relative terms (columns 5 and 6). Something similar, albeit to a lesser extent, has occurred with the papers published in intra-cooperation, that is, by several authors from the same institution (columns 7 and 8). However, inter-

institutional cooperation (involving authors from two or more institutions) has grown constantly from 28.99 per cent in the first stage to 64.91 per cent in the fourth (columns 9 and 10).

This constant growth in specialized scientific production in strategic management has opened the doors to new researchers and created a community of academics for the generation, development and dissemination of knowledge on the discipline. This circumstance, together with growing cooperation between authors and institutions, has led to the creation of a global knowledge network in this field.

**Importance in business management and strategic management**

Some authors have referred to *SMJ* as the 'flagship' of the discipline of strategic management. The above data reveal some of the reasons for this moniker. The significant role played by *SMJ* in this field is highlighted by Furrer, Thomas and Goussevskaia (2008), whose study of the main lines of research in strategic management based on the four main management journals reveals that 65 per cent of the papers on strategic management and 20 of the 41 most influential papers in the discipline's history have been published in *SMJ*. A further indication of *SMJ*'s importance is that it is used as a source in 76.47 per cent of the 18 studies conducted by different authors for characterizing specific aspects of the evolution of management as an academic discipline.

An important aspect for the discipline's development involves the special issues on monographic topics published since the journal's early days. These special numbers have focused the debate on original lines of research and subject matter, thereby fostering scholarly discussion and advances in knowledge by exploring the field's boundaries and its links to other disciplines. The subjects addressed include networks and alliances, organizational capabilities, entrepreneurship, global strategy, strategic process, resource-

**Table 1** Key data on *SMJ*

Stage	Articles	Authorships	Aut./Art.	1 author	%	Intra-coop.	%	Inter-coop.	%
I (1980–7)	238	374	1.57	123	51.68%	46	19.33%	69	28.99%
II (1988–95)	471	850	1.80	181	38.43%	107	22.72%	183	38.85%
III (1996–2003)	537	1084	2.02	151	28.12%	73	13.59%	313	58.29%
IV (2004–11)	550	1222	2.22	114	20.73%	79	14.36%	357	64.91%
TOTAL	1796	3530	1.97	569	31.68%	305	16.98%	922	51.34%

based view, evolutionary approaches, technological competences, strategy and economics, and the psychological fundamentals of strategic management.

A further aspect that defines *SMJ* is the importance it gives to the publication of work that reflects upon and analyses the discipline itself. Thus, it has published papers on the definition of strategic management (e.g., Nag, Hambrick and Chen, 2007), the concept of strategy (e.g., Ronda-Pupo and Guerras-Martin, 2012), the intellectual structure, the leading and most influential authors and papers (e.g., Ramos-Rodriguez and Ruiz-Navarro, 2004; Nerur, Rasheed and Natarajan, 2008), methodological problems in research into strategic management (e.g., Godfrey and Hill, 1995; Boyd, Gove and Hitt, 2005; Newbert, 2007), and researchers' publications (e.g., MacMillan and Stern, 1987; Franke, Edlund and Oster, 1990) or academic careers (e.g., Park and Gordon, 1996).

### Academic importance and impact

*SMJ*'s significant position in the rankings of journals has meant that the actual discipline of strategic management now occupies a distinct and important place within the broad field of management. Thus, it is included in the *Journal of Citation Reports*' Social Science Citation Index (ISI) in the categories of Business and Management, appearing in the ranking for the first time in 1983. Since then, it has almost always been among the top ten journals in both categories according to its impact factor, which has ranged from a minimum of 0.789 in 1983 to a maximum of 4.464 in 2009.

When we extend a journal's study scope, ISI's database 'Essential Science Indicators' compiles a ranking for the disciplines included in the extensive field of 'Economics and Business', classifying the journals by their overall number of citations and of citations per article for a period of around ten years. According to revised data at 1 May 2012, regarding a list of 285 journals, *SMJ* stood in seventh position in terms of the overall number of citations and in 11th for the average number of citations per paper.

Azar and Brock (2008) selected the 15 leading journals specialising in strategic management, finding that *SMJ* is the number one publication, a long way ahead of the second one, both in the overall number of citations and in terms of its impact factor. This privileged position has been maintained both for a

long period of ten years (1997–2006) and for each one of the four four-year periods analysed between 1991 and 2006.

Its importance is furthermore reflected by the fact it is used for compiling the research rankings of the best business schools, being included for this purpose in the *Financial Times* 45 Top Journals and in the *Bloomberg-Business Week* 20 Top Journals.

### International profile

*SMJ* was founded in the United States, which constitutes its main focus, as occurs also with other ambits in management. Nevertheless, over the course of time it has acquired a more international profile by including authors and institutions from other countries. In view of this, we can affirm that *SMJ* is an increasingly global publication on the discipline of strategic management.

The 1980–2009 period saw work published by authors from institutions pertaining to 38 different countries. The bulk of the research is conducted in the US, accounting for 72.9 per cent of the authors, followed at some considerable distance by the United Kingdom (5.88 per cent), Canada (4.36 per cent), France (3.59 per cent), Hong Kong (1.37 per cent), Spain (1.30 per cent) and the Netherlands (1.08 per cent). None of the other countries (31) individually reached a 1 per cent participation. In order to observe the steady and constant evolution towards the journal's greater internationalization, certain indicators are analysed by stages (Ronda-Pupo and Guerras-Martin, 2010):

- (a) The first stage (1980–9) involves institutions from 18 countries, with the second stage (1990–9) having 26 countries, and 34 in the third stage (2000–9). Only 13 countries participated in the three stages, so there is a growing involvement of new countries in the scientific network in strategic management represented by *SMJ*.
- (b) Those papers in cooperation between institutions from two or more countries are growing constantly and sharply. The first stage had only 22 papers in international cooperation, accounting for 6.7 per cent of the total. However, the figure for the second stage is 77 papers (13.1 per cent), and for the third it is 167 (23.8 per cent). This trend continues to grow, as the data for 2010 and 2011 show that international cooperation now amounts to 32 per cent of the papers published.

- (c) Whereas the US position in the first two stages represents the sole reference point or core of the discipline, the third stage sees the strong emergence of such focal points as the UK, Canada and France, with other countries recording sustained growth in their involvement: Spain, Germany, Hong Kong and the Netherlands.

### SMJ Best Paper Prize

The award for the best paper was introduced in 1993, and was called the 'SMJ Best Paper Prize' for honouring those articles that have made a significant contribution to research into strategic management. In order to be selected, a paper needs to have been published at least five years before the selection and also have made a proven contribution of significance to the discipline. The prize is announced each year during the SMS conference and is accompanied by a major financial award sponsored by John Wiley & Sons and SMS through its Strategy Research Foundation. In 2007, the name of the prize was changed to 'The Dan and Mary Lou Schendel Best Paper Prize', in honour of the contribution the Schendels made to SMS and SMJ.

Up to 2011, 21 prizes had been awarded. These papers have also been widely acknowledged by the scientific community in strategic management. According to the ISI Web of Science, 20 of the 21 papers honoured were among the 70 most cited out of the approximately 1800 papers published in the journal up to the end of 2011. Furthermore, nine out of the journal's ten most cited papers have received the prize, as well as 16 of the top 25. This is a good indicator of the quality of the papers awarded.

LUIS ANGEL GUERRAS-MARTIN AND  
GUILLERMO ARMANDO RONDA-PUPO

### See also

ANSOFF, IGOR H.; BASIC RESEARCH; BETTIS, RICHARD A.; BUSINESS POLICY; BUSINESS POLICY AND STRATEGY; SCHENDEL, DAN; STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT RESEARCH IN MANAGEMENT JOURNALS; STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT SOCIETY

### References

Azar, O. H. and Brock, D. M. 2008. A citation-based ranking of strategic management journals. *Journal of Economics & Management Strategy* 17, 781–802.

- Boyd, B. K., Gove, S. and Hitt, M. A. 2005. Construct measurement in strategic management research: Illusion or reality? *Strategic Management Journal* 26, 239–257.
- Franke, R. H., Edlund, T. W. and Oster, F. 1990. The development of strategic management: journal quality and article impact. *Strategic Management Journal* 11, 243–253.
- Furrer, O., Thomas, H. A. and Goussevskaia, A. 2008. The structure and evolution of the strategic management field: a content analysis of 26 years of strategic management research. *International Journal of Management Reviews* 10, 1–23.
- García-Merino, T. and Santos-Álvarez, V. 2009. Characterizing the top journals in strategic management: orientation, style, originality, and readability. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 40, 420–439.
- Godfrey, P. C. and Hill, C. W. L. 1995. The problem of unobservables in strategic management research. *Strategic Management Journal* 16, 519–533.
- MacMillan, I. C. and Stern, I. 1987. Delineating a forum for business policy scholars. *Strategic Management Journal* 8, 183–186.
- Nag, R., Hambrick, D. C. and Chen, M. J. 2007. What is strategic management, really? Inductive derivation of a consensus definition of the field. *Strategic Management Journal* 28, 935–955.
- Nerur, S. P., Rasheed, A. A. and Natarajan, V. 2008. The intellectual structure of the strategic management field: an author co-citation analysis. *Strategic Management Journal* 29, 319–336.
- Newbert, S. L. 2007. Empirical research on the resource-based view of the firm: an assessment and suggestions for future research. *Strategic Management Journal* 28, 121–146.
- Park, S. H. and Gordon, M. E. 1996. Publication records and tenure decisions in the field of strategic management. *Strategic Management Journal* 17, 109–128.
- Ramos-Rodriguez, A. R. and Ruiz-Navarro, J. 2004. Changes in the intellectual structure of strategic management research: a bibliometric study of the *Strategic Management Journal*, 1980–2000. *Strategic Management Journal* 25, 981–1004.
- Ronda-Pupo, G. A. and Guerras-Martin, L. A. 2010. Dynamics of the scientific community network within the strategic management field through the *Strategic Management Journal* 1980–2009: the role of cooperation. *Scientometrics* 85, 821–848.
- Ronda-Pupo, G. A. and Guerras-Martin, L. A. 2012. Dynamics of the evolution of the strategy concept 1962–2008: a co-word analysis. *Strategic Management Journal* 33, 162–188.
- Schendel, D., Ansoff, I. and Channon, D. 1980. Statement of editorial policy. *Strategic Management Journal* 1, 1–5.