

# The Influence of New Product Development on Industry Competitiveness — A Case of Automobile Industry

陳銘欽、謝雅惠

E-mail: 9403682@mail.dyu.edu.tw

## ABSTRACT

After 50 years of development, the auto industry in Taiwan has been limited not only by its rather small market size, but also restrictions on technology imposed by parent makers. The problem has been further compounded by overproduction in the international auto market that resulted in mergers and alliances as well as globalization of auto manufacturing groups, not to mention the unfavorable impact upon the auto industry following accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). For all of the reasons mentioned above, there is no doubt misfortunes have been added to Taiwan's auto industry that has been already unfortunate for almost half a century. Under this unfavorable environment, Taiwan's auto industry has been forced to aggressively seek a living space for survival. As a result, it started to expand into the export market, marching toward globalization as well. After years and years of efforts that the auto industry has exerted, manufacturing of Taiwan autos has reached the level of the international standards insofar as quality is concerned. In recent years, the industry has spent huge amount of money in R&D and design, making differential products to meet local demand. In addition, the industry has spared no efforts in enhancing the level of customer satisfaction to make locally made auto popular among local residents. Acceptance of locally made auto has gradually increased its market share, peaking at 86.54% in 2002. But expansion in the domestic market has never been that easy. And that has prompted the industry to aggressively join the international division of labor system, setting up shops on Mainland China and Southeast Asia so as to break through the bottleneck of survival and development. 1.Domestic auto makers have organized research centers one after another, aggressively developing new high-quality models at reasonable price to remove the bad impression on home made cars that people used to have in the past. Needless to say, the market competitiveness of the product has been upgraded in the process. 2.To solidify the domestic market, the industry further differentiates the deluxe interior setup and accessories, applying humanized hi-tech on high-class luxurious cars to make them popular in the first place, and, secondly, create high value-added product in order to win the hearts of consumers. 3.Creation of own brand name: The market size of Taiwan's auto industry is rather small and, moreover, the key technology has been in the hands of the parent manufacturer. That makes it hard for the industry to take the initiative to engage in R&D and have its own brand name. Consequently, Taiwan must rely on international division of labor to make itself a major supply base for auto body and chassis components and, in addition, assist domestic component makers in expanding the scale of production so as to elevate their operating benefit.

Keywords : Auto industry ; New product ; Competitiveness

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