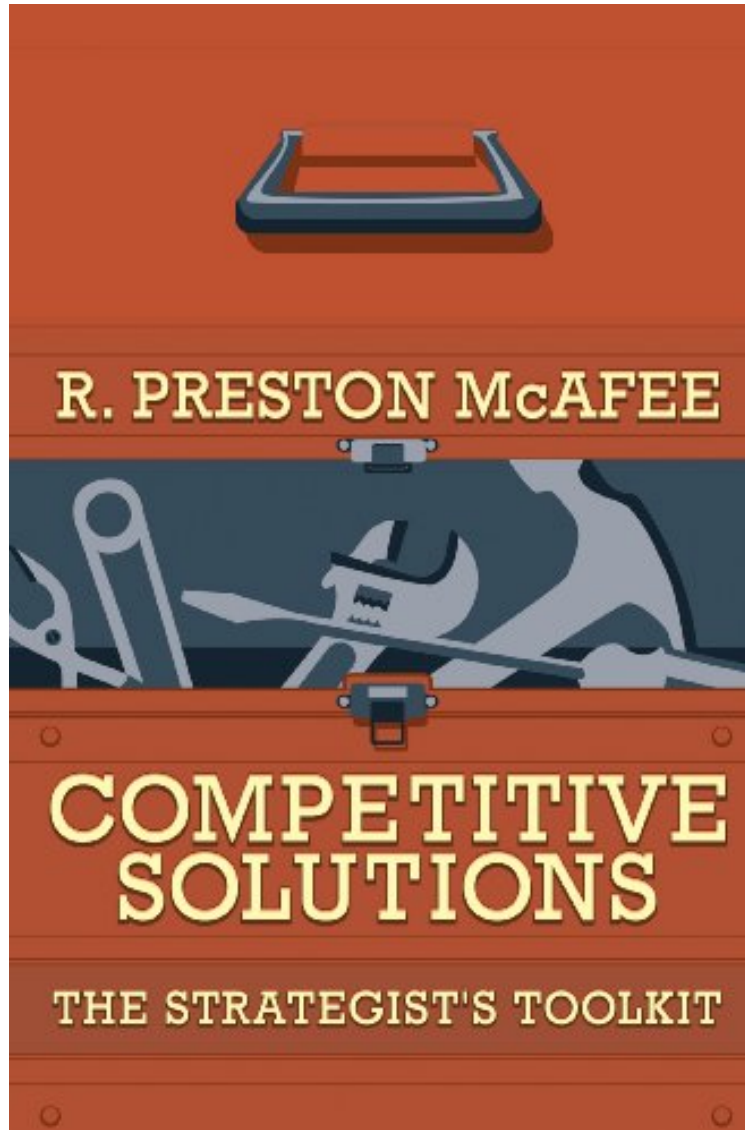


Competitive Solutions: The Strategist's Toolkit

R. Preston McAfee

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R. Preston McAfee : Competitive Solutions: The Strategist's Toolkit before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Competitive Solutions: The Strategist's Toolkit:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Well worth the read for an MBA student
By Stephen Preston was one of my professors way back at the University of Western Ontario. I admired his work then and I see he has maintained and exceeded that high level since. From an economist's world view looking at the business literature much of what I read does not speak to me in terms that are immediately obvious. Preston's work resonates with me because he is coming from a game theory, mathematical, statistical and economic world view. As a current executive MBA student I have found Preston's telling of the core concepts easy to digest and sensible. I recommend this book, well done

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very Useful
By Daniel L. Light
There were things that I didn't think my MBA covered adequately, strategy was one of the biggest. This book filled in those holes.
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I Prefer Porter's Book on the Topic
By Loyd Eskildson
McAfee's book arose out of teaching and his consulting work. He believes strategy normally does not receive enough emphasis on pricing, litigation/antitrust, and the need for a company's vision to be unique. The book is an attempt to replace Porter's seminal work, but doesn't accomplish that. Moreover, some of his examples are badly dated - eg. the excessive praise for AOL in its opening chapter.

Competitive Solutions is an entertaining and wideranging introduction to successful business methods applied to a variety of real-world situations. Rejecting the one-size-fits-all premise that underlies so many guides to business strategy, Preston McAfee develops the intellectual tools and insights needed to confront many marketplace problems. Drawing on his broad experience as a consultant for major U.S. companies, as well as extensive research, McAfee emphasizes cooperation, pricing, litigation, and antitrust as vital to a firm's competitive posture--and focuses more attention on these elements than do most business strategy accounts. McAfee begins by considering strategy as successfully applied by America OnLine, an example that introduces many of the tools discussed in greater depth throughout the book. From here he moves to industry analysis: By examining the context for developing a strategy, he points out uses of positioning and differentiation that enable a firm to weaken price competition and deter rivals from stealing customers. McAfee's exploration of a product's life cycle proves an invaluable guide to positioning new technology in order to maximize the potential for future customers. In the centerpiece of the book, McAfee lays out a how-to manual for cooperation, providing tactics crucial for setting standards, lobbying the government, and fostering industry growth. Writing in a conversational manner, McAfee also addresses such deep topics as organizational design and employee compensation and incentives. More detailed discussions examine antitrust enforcement, which is an increasingly important constraint on strategy, as well as strategies for pricing, bidding, signaling, and bargaining. This book is a fascinating examination of modern business strategy and its application in many different settings. Students of business and economics--as well as executives and managers--will recognize Competitive Solutions as an indispensable resource as well as a definitive vision of the strategic firm: one in which each element of company strategy reinforces the other elements.

One of Strategy Business's Best Business Books for 2003
"Competitive Solutions: The Strategist's Toolkit belongs on every strategist's bookshelf. McAfee is an economist with a gift for selecting and communicating the best new thinking by economists about business, translating from often abstruse mathematics to clear English and understandable examples. McAfee explains economists' latest thinking about pricing, auctions, signaling, and incentives--key decisions that have make-or-break potential for a company."--Strategy Business "[T]his book does an excellent job of translating the insights of modern IO into language that business students can readily grasp. . . . I am confident that this is a book that will be received by good students and will serve well as the main text in any strategy course that approaches the topic."--Benjamin E. Hermalin, Journal of Economic Literature
From the Inside Flap
"Preston McAfee has produced a superb, remarkably comprehensive book on competitive strategy. It is accessible, accurate, and entertaining! Students will stay awake reading it. At its core are numerous examples from actual business settings that are clearly relevant to today's strategist."--Peter Cramton, University of Maryland
"This is a very good book that goes a long way toward filling the need for a work on the economics of competition. It has the potential to substantially improve courses in competitive strategy. The coverage is wonderful, the examples are interesting, the informal arguments are excellent, and the style is engaging."--Mark Satterthwaite, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University
"The very readable style, accessibility, and richness and recentness of examples differentiate this book from some of its competitors in a way that should make it popular with students. McAfee clearly knows his subject well, understands the connections between the theoretical and empirical scholarship in the economics of strategy and the practical challenges faced by strategists, and draws on the latest academic literature and a variety of relevant examples in making his points."--Eric Zitzewitz, Stanford Business School
From the Back Cover
"A fascinating read--combining economics and strategy. Just what we need at Samsung."--John Shin, Senior Consultant in Strategy and Leadership, Samsung Electronics, Ltd.
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