

Acknowledgements

Our cumulative experience with marketing, branding and brand management amounts to more than 70 years. Nonetheless, this book wouldn't have been possible without the help and guidance of various people. When we started work on this book, some people asked us why we wanted to write a book on **branding**, an area already inundated with many valuable publications. When we clarified that our focus would be on business-to-business and not on business-to-customer brand management, a few surprised seconds of silence were followed by a storm of questions. Judging from the nature of these questions, we realized that there was a great need from managers to understand this area in a practical way without reducing the complexity of the subject matter.

Our understanding of marketing and branding, acquired through years of research, teaching and listening to people, forms the foundation of this book. Additional reading, and even more research was necessary to come up with a running theme for this book. Thanks to Jim Collins' most successful book *Good to Great – Why Some Companies Make the Leap ... and Others Don't*, we got the inspiration to create **guiding principles**, a step-by-step approach for achieving or maintaining a successful brand management for B2B companies.

Creating this book has been a demanding task: the subject is a complex and moving one, drafted in a global environment, researched on three continents: America, Asia, and Europe, and produced in real-time through Internet platforms or constant e-mail communication. *Microsoft Word* reached its limit many times and drove us up

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We believe that although far from being perfect, this book makes a meaningful contribution to increasing the knowledge of B2B **branding**. We hope you share this opinion.