

This is a slightly revised version of an "appendix to the cover letter" that I sent to publishers in 1989:

For TOOLS, there are three main marketing possibilities:

- 1) a study guide to accompany one of your physics textbooks,
- 2) a stand-alone supplement aimed for "course adoption" by professors,
- 3) a stand-alone supplement for "on-the-shelf competition" with Schaum's, ...

Competition (for the 3 marketing possibilities)

1) For a study guide to accompany [here, I included the name of authors writing textbooks for a particular publisher], the main competitors are apathy (if students don't care enough about the study guide to buy it or keep it) and "recycled" used books, if students would not want to keep TOOLS. An appealing book is the only way to overcome these difficulties.

2) Other supplements (Schaum's & HBJ Outlines, REA Problem Solvers,...) are generally well written, but they don't offer the "unified problem-solving strategy" described in the Reviewer's Letter. [This letter was the "tips.htm" page, which I've modified for web-users.] If TOOLS was properly edited and packaged, I think many students would recognize its special value, and it would compete effectively. The most serious competitor would be the study guide that accompanies the textbook for the students' physics course, because the study guide is on the shelf next to the textbook and it is "customized" to blend smoothly with that particular textbook.

3) Adoption of TOOLS as a stand-alone supplement would get it onto the shelf next to the main text and give it credibility with students. But professors (not students) make adoption decisions, and it might be hard to compete against a study guide that comes with the main textbook because it's "the easy choice" for profs. This might be more realistic as a long-term option, if TOOLS received great reviews from teachers and/or students who have used it.

There could be large international sales of a stand-alone book, because the unique character of TOOLS might help it compete against local favorites that already have "name recognition." Its memory-improvers (flashcard reviews & summaries) would make it especially useful in countries with comprehensive exams that cover a wide range of physics, especially if TOOLS was modified (for a "foreign version") to match the structure and content of their exams.

Selling Points (for professors)

TOOLS offers benefits that will appeal to students and also professors.

Much emphasis is currently being placed on overcoming deficiencies in American science education. TOOLS will help students become clever problem solvers with a good conceptual foundation — and this reflects well on a college and its teachers. General thinking skills with long-term value (analytical logic, creativity, flexibility, discipline, useful memory, learning how to learn,...) are emphasized throughout TOOLS. Chapters 1A & 20 discuss these skills in a systematic way, and show how they can be improved.

TOOLS relieves teachers of mundane tasks like reviewing algebra & geometry, and teaching the technical details of problem solving. It will help them improve the problem-solving content of their course and give them more time to enrich it in any way they want: with science history & philosophy, demonstrations, films, discovery learning, discussion, stories, examples of everyday applications, ...

A "stand-alone" supplement has a large potential market. Based on figures from April 1988's "Physics Teacher" article by Simon George (and from another source) the number of students in the non-calculus and calculus classes is about $250,000 + 200,000 = 450,000$ students per year in the United States alone, plus possible international sales. With a good book and good marketing, it might be possible to gain a part of this market: a 5% share would be 22,500 American students/year.