HOW STRATEGIC FORESIGHT IS USED IN STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Exploring Cases of Business Model Innovation

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We know too little about how foresight tools & information are used in the implementation phase of strategic innovation projects.

**Research**: The link between foresight and strategy implementation deserves greater attention.

**Practice**: Foresight can support the implementation of complex projects under uncertainty.
FOCUS OF STUDY & RESEARCH AIM

Business Model Innovation Projects: Complex and long-term projects to exploit business fields that are new to the firm and whose implementation is characterized by multiple iterations.

We aim to explore the effect of using foresight tools and information on establishing cognitive alignment between decision-makers with answering:

What is the need and use for employing foresight tools and information when implementing new business models in corporate environments?
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Business model innovation as a multi-level recursive process of action and cognitive alignment between decision-makers across different organizational levels (Rohrbeck & Knab, forthcoming).

Illustration based on Gavetti & Rivkin (2007); Rohrbeck & Knab (forthcoming)
KEY DEFINITIONS

**Foresight Tools**: The entirety of approaches, concepts, frameworks, applications, or analyses to guide strategic thinking, decision-making and business model implementation *generated by the project team*.

*Examples*: Scenarios, Roadmaps, Business Model Templates, ...

**Foresight Information**: The entirety of reports, data, analyses, or materials to support strategic thinking, decision-making and business model implementation *used by the project team*.

*Examples*: Trend Reports, Analysts' Reports, Databases, ...
EMBEDDED CASE STUDY DESIGN

MNC in a Market in Transition

Corporate Strategy

- Strategic Initiative 1
- Strategic Initiative 2
- ...

Strategic Transformation

- In house
- Separated

Business Model Innovation Projects

- Tech-driven
- Market driven

- BMI Project 1
- BMI Project 2
- BMI Project 3
- BMI Project 4
DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

Tech-driven
BMI Project 1
BMI Project 2

Market-driven
BMI Project 3
BMI Project 4

retrospective data
interviews
internal documents
external documents

Nature of Support
External Documents
Internal Documents

Nature of Support
Tech-driven
Market-driven

inhouse
separated

Embedded Cases

Timelines
Thick Descriptions
Cross-Case Comparison
Zoom-in on critical incidents
MAPPING STRATEGIC DECISION POINTS

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**Concept Development** | **Pilot Project** | **Roll-Out**

**Decision Point**

- **When?**
- **Who?**
- **Which foresight tools & information were used to support the decision?**
CODING & CLUSTERING APPROACH

How foresight tools & information are used to establish alignment between decision-makers

- Articulating
- Structuring
- Validating
- Legitimizing
- ...
- **Mandatory Use**

**Decision Point**

When? Who?

Which foresight tools & information were used to support the decision?
DISCUSSION

- Rather than debating the accuracy or efficiency of foresight tools & information, we examine their **use and dynamics** in strategic decision-making (→ *boundary objects*).

- Taking into account the variety of their forms, we show how foresight tools and information are used as **narrative and calculative devices** that allow decision-makers to construct a shared understanding during the exploitation of new business fields.

- Our preliminary findings point to a **variety of “use patterns”**, ranging from mandatory (“It is required by the guideline”) over purely instrumental and pragmatic (“I know how to get decisions through here”) to normative patterns (“I am convinced it is our responsibility to back-up such important decisions”).