

Abstract

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Managing Know-Who Based Companies – A Multinetworked Approach to Knowledge and Innovation Management

This study explores the increasing degree of networking that supports complex and time-paced innovation processes. Two dilemmas of innovation are introduced as theoretical problems to solve. Specific networking patterns are identified and analyzed both at the extra- and the intracorporate level, and a new type of synergy is discovered between these two levels. Theories on knowledge creation and innovation are used to understand and explain the networking patterns, and how they can be used to circumvent the dilemmas of innovation.

In terms of empirical research, part of the thesis is based on in-depth cases on Canon, Sony and Toyota, reported in more detail in a previous article (1997) and book (1998). The other part of empirical research that contributes to this thesis is represented by 14 new brief case examples from Western MNCs, aiming at generalizing my findings to transnational companies in general.

Whereas my previous studies have been primarily of an inductive nature, this book also makes extensive use of deduction from theory. Accordingly, an abductive research method was deployed. The result is a new model for 'Know-Who Based K&I Management' conceptualized to summarize theoretical and empirical findings, and to provide normative recommendations to companies willing to take new approaches to networking for increased innovation performance.

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