

Business model innovation

Supervisors: Prof. Thomas Lawton and Dr. Giacomo Carli (Department of Strategy and Marketing, The Open University Business School)

Project description:

We live in a world of disruptive innovations, and strategic management theories seem not always able to offer compelling explanations to these new phenomena. In recent years, research on business models has gained a momentum both in the academic community and in the business arena.

We would like to invite applications for a Ph.D. research on the widely-debated topic of business model innovation. According to our research agenda on the topic, we aim at contributing to the strategic management debate on business model innovation and business ecosystems.

While initial contributions were descriptive in nature, identifying standard model types, and examples of fading or successful models (Morris, Schindehutte, & Allen, 2005; Zott, Amit, & Massa, 2011), more recent approaches have looked at several organizational characteristics relevant in enhancing business model change (e.g. Chesbrough, 2010), as well as strategic dimensions of innovation in business models (e.g. Achtenhagen, Melin, & Naldi, 2013; Teece, 2010). A possible research direction could envision a contribution on how business model innovation is enacted in traditional sectors such as agriculture and food industries, considering interrelations with organizational and strategic aspects.

Alternatively, a different direction may target the use of business modelling tools in the practice of business model design. Differently from other strategy tools, business modelling tools, such as the popular canvass (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010), appear design-oriented and holistic. How do they support strategizing processes and how are they used in established companies and new ventures?

These topics outline very high potential areas of research for a Ph.D. student. We welcome applicants with a primary interest in strategic management willing to engage in the vibrant debate around business models. The applicant background may include management or technology-oriented studies. A brief work experience in management or as an entrepreneur would be appreciated. If you share our interest on business models, we look forward to hear from you.

Essential references:

- Achtenhagen, L., Melin, L., & Naldi, L. (2013). Dynamics of Business Models – Strategizing, Critical Capabilities and Activities for Sustained Value Creation. *Long Range Planning*, 46(6), 427–442. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2013.04.002>
- Chesbrough, H. (2010). Business Model Innovation: Opportunities and Barriers. *Long Range Planning*, 43(2–3), 354–363. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2009.07.010>
- Morris, M., Schindehutte, M., & Allen, J. (2005). The entrepreneur's business model: Toward a unified perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 58(6), 726–735. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2003.11.001>

- Osterwalder, A., & Pigneur, Y. (2010). *Business Model Generation: A Handbook for Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers*. John Wiley and Sons.
- Teece, D. J. (2010). Business Models, Business Strategy and Innovation. *Long Range Planning*, 43(2–3), 172–194. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2009.07.003>
- Zott, C., Amit, R., & Massa, L. (2011). The Business Model: Recent Developments and Future Research. *Journal of Management*, 37(4), 1019–1042. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0149206311406265>