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## Editorial

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### Alexander Brem\*

VEND consulting GmbH  
and  
Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nuremberg  
Burgschmietstr. 2-4  
90419 Nuremberg, Germany  
E-mail: brem@vend-consulting.com  
\*Corresponding author

### Liora Katzenstein

ISEMI – The Institute for the Study of Entrepreneurship  
and Management of Innovation  
P.O. Box 39163  
Tel-Aviv 61391, Israel  
and  
Swinburne University of Technology, Australia  
E-mail: liora@isemi.org

### Mostafa Hashem Sherif

AT&T  
Room C5-2D18  
200 S. Laurel Avenue  
Middletown, NJ 07748, USA  
E-mail: hsherif@comcast.net

### Kai-Ingo Voigt

Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nuremberg  
Lange Gasse 20  
90403 Nuremberg, Germany  
E-mail: voigt@industriebetriebslehre.de

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**Biographical notes:** Alexander Brem received his Diploma in Business Administration from the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany in 2004 and earned his PhD there in 2007. From 2004 to 2007, he was the Senior Research and Teaching Assistant at the Chair of Industrial Management,

University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, where he now works as Senior Lecturer. Moreover, he is founder and partner of VEND consulting GmbH, Nuremberg. His current research interests include idea and innovation management, and strategic management in SMEs. He is a reviewer and editorial board member of various journals, e.g., *Technovation* and the *International Journal of Innovation Management*.

Liora Katzenstein has been involved with early-stage technology enterprises for more than two decades, with such roles as investor, advisor, board member and founder of a number of successful ventures. She is the founder and President since 1996 of The Institute for the Study of Entrepreneurship and Management of Innovation (ISEMI), Tel Aviv, Israel. She holds a Master in Law and Diplomacy from Tufts University, USA and a PhD in International Economics from the University of Geneva, Switzerland. She was awarded a visiting doctoral scholarship to Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration. Katzenstein serves on numerous boards of technology-related companies in Israel and around the world.

Mostafa Hashem Sherif has been with AT&T in various capacities since 1983. He has a PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles and an MS in Management of Technology from Stevens Institute of Technology, New Jersey, both in the USA. He is a Certified Project Manager from the Project Management Institute (PMI). His book *Managing Projects in Telecommunication Services* (John Wiley/IEEE Press, 2006) won the best book award of the International Association of Management of Technology (IAMOT).

Kai-Ingo Voigt is a Full Professor at the Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany, where he has held the Chair of Industrial Management since 1998. He received his PhD in 1991 from the University of Hamburg. His current research focuses on strategic management, innovation and technology management, and production and operations management.

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Today, maybe more than ever before, the survival of companies depends on gaining sustainable competitive advantages by offering continuously innovative products and services. This is why firms invoke the term 'innovation' nowadays as a badge of honour to inspire and mobilise their workforce and to attract investors. Many, however, overlook the fact that the implementation of innovations imposes changes, which can be misunderstood or provoke resistances. The aim of this special issue is to review the aspects of internal and external communication of large enterprises in order to engage the various stakeholders in defining change.

The emphasis on large institutions results from the fact that they encompass a variety of stakeholders that need to be convinced: internal groups such as employees or managers and external parties, such as customers, suppliers, legislators or shareholders.

A call for papers was issued to invite contributions that could shed light on the organisational impact of innovations in marketing and in technology. Based on a two rounds of reviews, the second being double blinded, the papers in this issue were

selected from 26 initial proposals from 13 different countries all over the world. We feel that the chosen papers represent a variety of ideas and implications that can be put to immediate use.

The first paper, entitled 'The management of marketing knowledge in the early phases of the innovation process' presents a conceptual framework for knowledge management in four areas of innovation: incremental innovations, new solutions, new applications and radical innovations. This framework extends the boundaries of the marketing literature beyond radical innovation and the front-end role of marketing managers.

The subject of the second paper is large-scale multi-sector radical innovations, as its title indicates: 'Stakeholder perceptions and implications for technology marketing in multi-sector innovations: the case of intelligent transport systems'. The paper adopts an inductive, theory-building approach to develop a conceptual model for understanding the perceptions of various stakeholders. The findings provide insights into the relationships among stakeholders and suggest ways for encouraging the collaboration between public and private sector stakeholders who wish to deploy emerging technologies.

Taking the Danish energy sector as an example, the third paper 'Leadership in interorganisational network-based innovation projects' presents a number of findings regarding involvement of potential partners into a project, intra- and inter-organisational anchorage of a project, profile of project managers, and management of customer relations within an inter-organisational setting.

Without a corporate champion, breakthrough products can have trouble gaining acceptance into the firm's development pipeline. The paper 'Innovation politics: how serial innovators gain organisational acceptance for breakthrough new products' explains how to take advantage of the political environment to promote the acceptance of the project.

The next paper 'From roles to skills – key persons in the innovation process' shows how key persons can lead innovation to success provided that their skills match the barriers that the innovations have to overcome.

Internal communication is indispensable to overcome misconceptions or misunderstandings about innovation. The article 'Overcoming resistance to innovations: an approach for the use of communication tools within the innovation process' highlights the need for adopting appropriate communication tools for the specific phase of the innovation. Communication tools were assessed according to their suitability to meet the phase-specific requirements. The results are used to build a phase-specific inventory of communication tools.

While the significance of lead-users is commonly recognised, quantitative data regarding the collaboration with lead-users are often lacking. The paper 'Lead-using or lead-refusing? An examination of customer integration in mechanical engineering firms' provides qualitative data from the field of mechanical engineering. The unanticipated findings suggest that companies may deliberately refuse to engage with lead-users. This indicates that the extent to which lead-users are integrated, depends upon the nature of the product and the nature of the relationship between the company and the respective lead-user.

The paper 'Key stakeholders' interaction as a factor of product innovation: the case of Russia' investigates the nature of innovation from the perspective of the firm's cooperation with key internal and external stakeholders.

In the last decade, the link between new product launch activities and market success has been a subject of increasing interest. The article 'Launching technological innovations: the relevance of a stakeholder perspective' considers the interdependencies between strategic, internally and externally directed tactical launch activities using data derived from 113 technological innovations launched in industrial markets. Launch strategy and tactics that address customers, market players, and parties from the broader firm environment are found to have a direct impact on market success.

Studies have identified that learning orientation and market orientation have positive influences on firm performance. The paper 'Absorptive capability and its mediating effect on the learning and market orientations' influences on performance' shows how the firm's absorptive capacity increases the success rated of learning- or market-oriented corporate strategies.

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