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## Editorial

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**Biographical notes:** Alexander Brem received his Diploma in Business Administration and PhD from the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg in 2004 and 2007, respectively. From 2004 to 2007, he was a Senior Researcher and Teaching Assistant at the Chair of Industrial Management, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, where he currently works as a Professor of Idea and Innovation Management. Moreover, he is the Founder and Partner of VEND Consulting GmbH, Nuremberg. His current research interests include technology and innovation management as well as entrepreneurship. He is a reviewer and editorial board member of various international journals such as *Technovation* and *International Journal of Innovation Management*.

Eelko Huizingh is an Associate Professor of Innovation Management at the Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Groningen, The Netherlands. He is the Director of Scientific Affairs of The International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISPIM). His research focuses on the intersection of innovation, marketing, and information technology. He has (co)authored over 300 articles, which have appeared in *Technovation*, *Marketing Science*, *Marketing Letters*, *European Journal of Innovation Management*, *International Journal of Innovation Management*, *International Journal of Technology Management*, *International Journal Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management*, *Decision Support Systems*, *Information and Management*, and *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*. Recently, Sage published his book *Applied Statistics with SPSS*.

Eric Viardot is a Permanent Professor of Marketing and Strategy at EADA Business School in Barcelona. He holds a doctorate in Management. He is a graduate of the HEC Business School, Paris, and the Institute of Political Sciences, Paris. He has published various books and articles on strategic management and marketing with a strong focus on technology and innovation management. He teaches regularly in executive programmes in Europe. He is an active Consultant and Trainer and has worked with several major multinational corporations.

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Welcome to this special issue which is the second collaboration of the *IJTMKT* with the International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISPIM), a worldwide network of innovation management professionals from research, industry and intermediary organisations. ISPIM's goals are to create a worldwide network of excellence in the field of innovation management, to enhance collaboration between its members and to be at the forefront of research on innovation.

The first versions of the papers in this special issue were originally presented at the XXII ISPIM Conference in Hamburg, Germany on 12–15 June 2011 and at the 4th ISPIM Innovation Symposium held in Wellington, New Zealand on 29 November to 2 December 2011.

The two conferences were considering from a slightly different perspective one of the key current challenges for corporate innovation: the transformation of an innovation into a long-term standing competitive advantage. Indeed, very often, innovations – in terms of products, processes, services, modes of organising or business models – end up being imitated or adapted by the competitions and fail to deliver a sustainable market position.

Thus, the importance of this special issue in which different papers examine various ways to make sure that an innovation will deliver long term profitability and competitive advantage for a company.

The first article titled 'Service innovation: the challenge of management in hypercompetitive markets' explores how companies integrate concepts of organisational networks, technology diffusion and competitive advantage for developing and managing service innovation in hypercompetitive markets. Its methodology combines a case study research and a clinical inquiry research.

The article introduces a model which suggests that companies must be able to develop flexible routines to adapt their process to design services for hypercompetitive markets. Consequently, the firms which can organise their structure in order to overcome constraints for technology diffusion are in the best position to increase their innovation success rate in these markets.

The next article, 'IP and open innovation: theory and practice' analyses the relationship between intellectual property and open innovation along the innovation process, based upon a multiple case study involving three Italian companies. The paper proposes a framework which explains how different IP protection mechanisms, either legal or strategic, can be exploited to protect technology and know-how in collaborations concerning different phases of the innovation funnel.

The article highlights that the integration between legal and strategic IP tools is necessary to increase protection and secure a durable competitive advantage. But this is not enough: they must be complemented with the use of a set of managerial and organisational interventions concerning the management of human resources and of internal flows of knowledge and information.

Continuing with the topic the case of open innovation, the next article examines the conditions for a successful marketing strategy of an innovation through third parties titled 'Overcoming the pitfalls in external technology commercialisation: a managerial guide', it focuses on how should the external technology commercialisation (ETC) process be implemented by companies. Based on a deep analysis of a single case study, it identifies three major issues: the alignment of ETC with the corporate strategy, the commitment to the adoption of an open innovation model, and the quality and flows of communication and information within the company. An exciting finding of the research is that all those problems are interconnected and by nature very different from what are generally brought up as the main issues in literature. The authors argue that in fact the literature commonly confuses management of ETC (maintaining and honing the process) with the implementation of ETC (the introduction of the process to the company).

The following article is about the 'Application development in supplier-customer collaborations: success factors for firms in the process industries'. Actually, there are very few studies about this important element of the innovation process in business-to-business, as a substantial part of the innovation activities of a firm lies in the area of helping its customers to use supplied products more effectively by developing specific applications. Since there are few publications in this specific area, the authors have developed a theoretical framework which has been tested then with an exploratory survey of Swedish process industrial firms. The respondents have rated potential success factors and proposed additional ones which then have been regrouped into a hierarchical structure of strategic, tactical and operational success factors for application development.

The paper concludes that the area of application development should not be overlooked when recognised as relevant to a firm and offer fresh suggestions for improvement in that matter in order to secure a sustainable competitive advantage.

Moving to business-to-consumer marketing, the next article examines 'How does environmental information impact product purchase intent?'. It examines this impact first at a general level, but also at the level of subgroups, defined by academic degree and by gender. The results provide interesting insights to both academics and practitioners. More specifically, it shows that – contrary to some stereotypes common in the high tech industry – the level of academic degree as well as the gender of consumers have no relationship with their intent to purchase technology-based products.

Finally, the last two papers offer a new light on the growing role of the internet in the innovation process with the development of social media and cloud computing.

The paper titled 'Social media's opportunities in business-to-business customer interaction in innovation process' provides a sound analysis about how social media can provide novel and useful ways of interacting and collaborating in innovation, likewise for creating new information and knowledge about customers for innovations. These have not so far been much investigated because of the novelty of social media concepts and approaches. Furthermore, the opportunities of social media are not yet well understood in the contexts of innovation and customer interaction, especially in business-to-business. Based on a survey of Finnish companies, the paper studies the current situation regarding the opportunities of social media in facilitating customer interaction in the innovation process. It offers a typology of those opportunities based on the nature of the relationship with the customers. It also provides useful insights for business-to-business practitioners seeking to include the use of social media within their innovation development process.

The closing paper ponders about the role of cloud computing (CC) in the innovation process especially at the level of business model. The article, titled 'Cloud-enabled business transformation: a proposed framework' observes that, owing to its key features, CC should to drive innovative IT-enabled services and business paradigm shift. However, current practice and studies put their focus mainly on evolutionary more than revolutionary business transformation. The article proposes a conceptual framework about the role of CC as a transformation enabler and identifies four types of cloud-enabled business transformation. The author explores the driving forces, goals, concerns and impacts of CC in the different situations. It offers interesting perspective to understand and anticipate the role that CC may play in the innovation process.

Ultimately, we would like to thank Eelko Huizingh, the Director of Scientific Affairs of ISPIM and Steffen Conn, the ISPIM Operations Director who have made possible the making of this exciting special issue. Enjoy your reading and do not hesitate to send us your comments as well as your next academic paper about the marketing of technology-based solutions and innovations.