
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Annick Castiaux has a scientific background as a Physicist. After some years in the research environment where she worked for the Belgian National Foundation for Research (FNRS), she decided to join the private sector. During five years, she worked as a Consultant in Information and Knowledge Management for I.R.I.S. SA, an IT company located in Louvain-la-Neuve. This experience gave her some knowledge of organisations and their difficulties to manage technological changes. In 2002, she came back to the university, this time in the Business Administration Department of the University of Namur. She teaches strategy and innovation courses, integrating both technological and managerial viewpoint. Her research interest is in the field of innovation management, with a focus on ICT and sustainable (eco-friendly) technologies. She is also an Invited Professor in the Facultés Universitaires Saint-Louis (Brussels) and in the Université Catholique de Louvain (Mons Campus).

Eelko K.R.E. Huizingh is an Associate Professor of Innovation Management at the Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Groningen, the Netherlands. He is the Director Scientific Affairs of ISPIM. His research focuses on the intersection of innovation, marketing and information

technology. He has (co-)authored over 300 articles, which have appeared in a wide range of journals including *Marketing Science*, *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *Technovation* and *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*. He has been Guest Editor of numerous journals. In addition, he runs Huizingh Academic Development which offers research and writing workshops aimed at academic researchers.

Steffen Conn is the Operations Director of ISPIM. He received his Doctor of Science (Technology) from Lappeenranta University of Technology, Finland (Distinction), and first class BA and MA degrees (Distinction) from Groupe ESC Rennes, France. He has previously held research positions at various organisations around Europe. He has edited more than 20 journal special issues and innovation books. He is also the author of numerous articles in the field of innovation management. He has been a board member of ISPIM since 2003.

Nowadays, many firms realise that their ultimate objective goes far beyond only maximising shareholder value. Sustainable firms embrace the objective of maximising the three P's of profit, planet and people, where the three elements are considered as interconnected and of similar priority. The sustainability challenge requires firms to find an appropriate balance between economic, environmental and social well-being. This challenge directly impacts the process and the goals of innovation efforts in a firm. The purpose of this special issue is to review current and future research in this cross-disciplinary domain. Determining, reaching and maintaining the appropriate balance between the three P's impacts a firm's innovation policy in various ways and this special issue aims to increase our understanding of where we stand, and which next steps we need to make. The special issue is mainly based on a selection of the best contributions to the XXII ISPIM Conference 2011 in Hamburg, Germany dealing with sustainability in innovation.

An important consequence for innovation decision-makers is that sustainability requires them to extend their innovation analysis. The analysis also needs to include their direct stakeholders and their partners in the entire value chain, both upstream and downstream. This inevitably increases the complexity and the systemic nature of innovation processes, as the interests, capabilities and consequences of many more parties need to be considered, in order to develop innovations that improve the current balance for the focal firm and also increase the level of economic, environmental and social well-being for the parties involved.

The first paper in this special issue, entitled 'Collaborative business modelling for systemic and sustainability innovations', concentrates on the systemic nature of sustainability innovations and the requirement that multiple organisations act in an orchestrated fashion. The authors, René Rohrbeck, Lars Konnertz and Sebastian Knab, describe the findings of a case study in which eight firms have collaborated to envision and create new business models in the energy industry. The authors conclude that the applied collaborative business modelling (CBM) approach offers a powerful platform for jointly identifying economic and societal value, for defining both value creation and value capture systems, and for planning of complex and uncertain future markets.

Energy is an obvious focal area in the trend towards more sustainability, as electricity production based on renewable energies is a key measure against climate change and resource depletion. Mario Richter concentrates in the second paper also on renewable energy, in this case offshore wind energy. Offshore wind energy is considered to have

tremendous potential for Germany's future electricity supply, but has so far been considered the domain of large utilities due to the necessary investments. Nevertheless, several German municipal utilities have recently started to invest in offshore wind energy. The paper 'Business model innovation for sustainable energy: how German municipal utilities invest in offshore wind energy' identifies how and why municipal utilities invest in offshore wind energy. The good news this study provides is that municipal utilities can help to bring the offshore market forward. However, in order to be successful, considerable business model innovation is required.

In the third paper, Frank Tietze, Tim Schiederig and Cornelius Herstatt study the mobility sector, an industry that consumes a lot of energy. They focus on so-called product service system innovators, more precisely on the question how firms can become such innovators. Based on a case study of three firms, they propose in their paper 'Firms' transition to green product service system innovators: cases from the mobility sector' a framework that incorporates three major transition paths. The authors maintain that firms need to possess three complementary capabilities that comprise the 'capability envelope', including product and service capabilities as well as network/infrastructure capabilities. The latter capability set appears to be critical to govern product service system innovations after market entry.

The final two papers in the special issue focus on design. The paper 'Framing the role of design in transformation of consumption practices: beyond the designer-product-user triad' focuses on how design can contribute to influence consumption behaviours. The authors maintain that as a first step towards more sustainable consumption patterns, we need to abandon the perceived split between behaviour and technology. The authors, Ida Nilstad Pettersen, Casper Boks, Arnold Tukker, suggest to see consumption behaviours in relation with the technologies used in everyday consumption practices and wider sociotechnical systems. This implies a shift in focus from the attitudes, values and intentions of consumers and the energy throughput of technologies, to the actions and interactions that take place; how people do what they do and why. The authors stress that in order to understand under what conditions design interventions can contribute to making consumption more sustainable, we need to look beyond the relations between designer, product or service and user, and to take into account the dynamics of both design and use processes.

In the fifth and final paper, Beaven S.J. Wiggett and Gillian Marcelle investigate ecodesign practices among South African electronic design firms. With the increasing role of formerly developing countries in the global economy, it is important to realise that sustainable innovation is not only of interest for Western countries. The paper 'Ecodesign in South African firms – how feasible?' studies 30 firms and finds that awareness of ecodesign practices is currently relatively low and that very few firms implement such practices with a specific, strategic intent. Nevertheless, outliers demonstrate and have gained significant benefits. The most important motivating factor for South African firms is regulation, whereas cost concerns and conflicts with other product requirements are the most important hindering factors.

Finally, the guest editors of this special issue would like to thank all authors for their contributions, and the willingness and perseverance they showed in the process that has led to this interesting special issue. Additionally, our special thanks go to the reviewers whose critical and insightful comments have helped to further increase the quality of the published papers.