
Editorial: Innovating in the marketing of innovation

Alexander Brem

University of Southern Denmark,
Mads Clausen Institute,
Alsion 2, 6400 Sønderborg, Denmark
Email: brem@mci.sdu.dk

Eric Viardot*

EADA,
C/ Aragó, 204,
0811 Barcelona, Spain
Email: eviardot@eada.edu
*Corresponding author

Welcome to this special issue which is the fifth collaboration of the *International Journal of Technology Marketing (IJTMKT)* with the International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISPIM), a worldwide established 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.

Earlier versions of the papers in this special issue were originally presented at the XXV ISPIM Conference in Dublin, Ireland on 16–18 of June 2014, and at the ISPIM Americas Innovation Forum in Montreal, Canada, on 5–8 of October 2014. Based on the feedback of the conferences, revised articles were submitted to *IJTMKT*, where all papers went through another double-blind review process. 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 special issue.

Four papers have finally be selected which cover different facets of the marketing of innovative technology-based products and services. To complement the selection of papers, we have added a final article which has come through our regular submission process as well as a new section dedicated to the reviewing of books in the field of innovation and technology marketing.

The first three articles analyse different ways to increase the efficiency of the open innovation process by maximising the relationship with external partners while the two last papers explore the possible disruptive impact of new technology or market entrants.

The first paper is titled 'Building absorptive capacity for inbound open innovation: the role of knowledge brokers'. The authors state that while open innovation relies on the ability of a firm to exploit external sources of innovation to nurture its innovation processes, sometimes the active search of the external environment is not enough if the firm lacks the competences to screen and select external technology and knowledge. Knowledge brokers have been identified since the end of the 1990s as active helpers in

the innovation process but their role has been neglected in the open innovation literature, with only a few contributions. This paper fills an important gap in the investigation of knowledge brokers as it shows that they can play a significant part in recombining and creating new knowledge to foster the success of an open innovation project.

The second article focus on another increasingly popular tool of open innovation, the living labs which are often defined as physical or virtual public-private-people partnerships (4Ps) of firms, public agencies, universities, institutes, and users. Under the head of 'A framework for understanding the different research avenues of living labs', the authors identify eight distinct research avenues for living labs and created an illustrative framework that integrates and positions the found research avenues by their key aspects: systems, milieu and approach, user and public involvement, and activity, project, or management tool. Without discussion, such a framework contributes to the evolving discussion of living labs by distinguishing and ordering the multitude of research avenues in the field of living labs. In addition, it also explained the underlying assumptions of those avenues while contributing to a better conceptualisation of the business labs.

The third article is about partnership in innovation and is titled 'Partner selection versus partner attraction in R&D strategic alliances: the case of the Norwegian shipping industry'. The study investigates how partnership context influences the process of R&D consortia formation in a mature industry, the shipping industry, where innovativeness is a key factor for competitive advantage in the maritime sector. Innovative products in the maritime industry are often developed by several companies together. The investigation is based on the analysis of two cases studies to identify the criteria are used by maritime firms when they select and attract a partner for involvement in a long-term R&D strategic alliance. The authors discuss how different aims lead to different partner choice criteria and what the implications are for the strategies of developing R&D alliances. Those results will surely be of interest to scholars and professional of innovation management working with mature industries.

The fourth article is discussing the exciting technology of 3D printing which is sometimes referred as the next industrial revolution even if it was invented in the early '80s. Under the title of '3D printing disruptions and strategic choice – a way forward', the author notes that while suppliers in the nascent 3D printing industry enjoy exciting potential as new applications are developing rapidly, they have to face an increasing numbers of new entrants: Thus, they have to reconsider their marketing strategy in order to maintain competitiveness. This fascinating paper offers a way to make segment selections for the medium term by utilising a combination of well-accepted methods for decision-making. It provides also examples of the diffusion rates analysis are provided for three segments. Finally, it discusses the merits of this normative approach to strategic decision-making compared to the merits of simply reacting to industry events. Definitely, most of those lessons can apply to the large majority of disruptive technologies that are entering the field now from robots, drones, and big data software to self-driven cars, for instance.

Another segment of the car sector is the base of the fifth article, which is dedicated to the truck industry and is titled 'The unleashed dragon: a scenario analysis of Chinese truck manufacturers conquering western markets'. Indeed, while the Chinese automakers are still nimble on the global market, they are expected to become major players in Western automotive markets in the future. Through a workshop with senior executives of a major European truck manufacturing company, the author uses a mixed-method

analysis to generate a set of four potential scenarios for Chinese truck manufacturing companies entering developed markets: acquisition, technology improvement, low cost approach, and niche approach with ultra-light trucks. The main interest of this research is the use of the scenario methodology which suggests a new way of selecting the scenario-relevant theses based on the evaluation through an expert panel with the integration of desirability as an evaluation dimension. The methodology is discussed elaborately to show its appropriateness for other industry. Unquestionably, this innovative scenario methodology can be applied to the analysis of market entrants in many other technology driven markets.

Finally, we are introducing a new section in this issue of the journal that is dedicated to the critical reviewing of books relevant to our field. Hashem Sherif is inaugurating it with a sound and extensive analysis of 'ICTs in Developing Countries: Research, Practices, and Policy Implications' by N. Dey et al., published by Palgrave, MacMillan about an increasing popular theme in the development literature. Each chapter of the book is summarised and provided with an in depth evaluation of its value for the reader. We believe that such critical reviewing is another very interesting contribution to enhance the knowledge of our community of readers.

Enjoy your reading and do not hesitate to send us your comments as well as your next academic paper or book review about the marketing of technology-based solutions and innovations.