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Towards a Theory of Strategic Alignment in Entrepreneurial Organizations

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Towards a Theory of Strategic Alignment in Entrepreneurial Organizations

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Abstract

The alignment of business strategy with IT strategy continues to be an important issue for managers and researchers as organizations seek to maximize their IT investments in turbulent times. Strategic alignment is important for all organizations, yet relatively little research has been conducted into alignment within entrepreneurial organizations. We argue that while existing alignment frameworks and models provide a solid basis for considering alignment in many organizations, a more refined view of alignment is needed for entrepreneurial organizations because of their dynamic, opportunity-seeking characteristics. Building on two in-depth case studies of strategic alignment, we show how existing measures of alignment are limited in their application to entrepreneurial organizations. In our case studies, existing alignment measures indicate misalignment when in reality, the information technology and information systems at these firms are appropriate given their entrepreneurial orientation. We theorize why this might be the case and develop propositions for further study. We also suggest directions for developing more refined measures of alignment for entrepreneurial organizations.

Keywords: strategic alignment, fit, entrepreneurship, innovation, dynamic capabilities, strategic IS management

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