

IT Supported Open Innovation in a Chinese Context

TREO Talk Paper

Florian Allwein

London School of Economics
f.o.allwein@lse.ac.uk

Carsten Sørensen

London School of Economics
c.sorensen@lse.ac.uk

Will Venters

London School of Economics
w.venters@lse.ac.uk

Abstract

We are conducting a research project with a large Chinese telecommunications company, looking at digital innovation and how it is supported by portfolios of digital services within a digital innovation platform. We focus on what we call near innovation (flexible networks and service portfolios), as this is the area where most companies are looking to innovate, and where digital technology can potentially make a difference (e.g. social networks, forums, or learning support systems). Our research question is “How can digital platforms support agile open innovation networks centered around keystone organizations?”.

In order to operationalize this approach, we plan to conceptualize IS as digital platforms (de Reuver et al. 2017) and describe the on-going innovation management activities around them using the terms established in the digital innovation literature (e.g. Yoo et al. 2010). We are interested in the balance of stability vs. change (Farjoun 2010), as well as how such platforms can support agility. We are currently conducting a case study with the company based on interviews and other mixed data.

We are especially interested in the context of the Chinese market and culture (Ramesh et al. 2017) for this project and want to reflect on how these affect innovation initiatives. As we think the aspect of innovation in China is relevant in context with the discussion of digital innovation, we would like this opportunity to discuss with, and learn from, the AMCIS community. Some potentially useful concepts to discuss include:

- Hierarchy vs bottom up, open innovation (Malone 2004)
- Guanxi and the importance of personal relationships (Davison et al. 2013)
- The tradition of Chinese innovation (Yip and McKern 2016)

References

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