Getting Inside Your Employees’ Heads: Navigating Barriers to Internal-Crowdsourcing for Product and Service Innovation

Research-in-Progress

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Abstract

Organizations are beginning to experiment with the use of the “crowd” to complete tasks commonly performed by employees or designated agents. While “crowdsourcing” is growing, we know little about common uses of the crowd and the challenges such initiatives present. Findings from a grounded theory study reveal four common uses by established organizations: productivity, product/service innovation, knowledge capture, and marketing/branding. Further, leveraging internal crowds for product/service innovation may present unique challenges. Based on findings, an Internal-Crowdsourcing Acceptance Model illustrates the role of proactive executive leadership in breaking through organizational structure and processes that act as barriers to acceptance and use of internal-crowdsourcing platforms. The anticipated theoretical contribution of this research is the finding that internal-crowdsourcing presents many of the same challenges to organizations as faced in open innovation initiatives. Its anticipated contribution to practice is the identification of the role proactive executive leadership plays in reducing barriers to successful outcomes.

Keywords: crowdsourcing, innovation, open innovation, organizational change, leadership, organizational dynamics, Internal-Crowdsourcing Acceptance Model, grounded theory
Introduction

With the introduction of the Internet and new collaborative social media tools, organizations are beginning to leverage the productivity and collective intelligence of the crowd to supplement or even replace current in-house processes. This phenomenon, commonly referred to as “crowdsourcing” (Howe, 2006), is gaining popularity in both scholarly literature and in practice. Originally defined by Howe (2006), crowdsourcing is “the act of a company or institution taking a function once performed by employees and outsourcing it to an undefined (and generally large) network of people in the form of an open call.” At this early stage of inquiry, relatively little is known regarding the strategic use of the crowd by established organizations. The phenomenon is under theorized and there is a lack a substantive understanding regarding the risks, challenges, and impacts crowdsourcing initiatives have on the organizations that implement them. As such, more research is needed to build theoretical understanding that can guide both research and practice related to this new emerging phenomenon.

This paper presents preliminary results from a grounded theory study of trends and patterns associated with the use of the crowd by established organizations. While new businesses have also been built on a crowdsourcing business model (Howe, 2008), the focus here is on established organizations attempting to integrate crowdsourcing into current innovation practices. In this context, innovation is defined as new ideas or solutions to problems that lead to improvements or advancements for the organization within their marketplace (Hurley and Hult, 1998; Martins and Treblanche, 2003). Innovation may result in incremental or breakthrough products/services, reduction in costs, improved productivity, or entry into new unexplored markets.

We begin with an overview of the state of crowdsourcing research. This is followed by a discussion of research methodology and data sources. Next, we present findings that identify four common uses of crowdsourcing by established organizations. Finally we propose an Internal-Crowdsourcing Acceptance Model that outlines organizational challenges at play when attempting to leverage internal crowds for product and service innovation.

Background

Within both academic and business literature the term crowdsourcing has become synonymous with a wide variety of activities and an equally wide variety of “crowds.” Organizations are currently leveraging the crowd to improve algorithms (Lindley, 2009), to create new knowledge bases (Ghafele et. al., 2011; Wiggins and Crowston, 2011), to collect distributed data (Chilton, 2009; Haklay and Weber, 2008), to solve routine time-consuming tasks (Barrington et. al., 2009; Howe, 2008), to solve complex R&D problems (Howe, 2008; Lakhani et. al., 2007), for marketing and market research (Brabham, 2009; Piller et. al., 2000; Whitla, 2009), and for ideation related to new products and services (Di Gangi and Wasko, 2009; Jeppesen and Frederiksen, 2006).

Across this variety of uses, a wide variety of different “crowds” are participating. Crowds may include individuals both “outside” and “inside the firewall” (i.e., employees) (Stewart et. al., 2009), current customers or product communities (Di Gangi and Wasko, 2009), as well as the general public (Haklay and Weber, 2008). Crowds also come with different skills and knowledge, and provide different value to the organization (Erickson et. al., 2012a). Further, the number of individuals who participate varies greatly. Of the studies that report number of participants, numbers range from as few as 127 (Leimeister et. al., 2009) to over 150,000 (Ringo, 2007).

Finally, a number of studies have reported both tangible and intangible benefits of crowdsourcing (Anthes, 2010; Poetz and Schreier, 2012). Yet others report negative impacts such as decreased time to market (Knudsen and Mortensen, 2011), more costly and resource intensive projects (Jouret, 2009), increased costs in setting up legal frameworks and protecting IP (Jouret, 2009), and loss of control by the organization (Bonabeau, 2009).

While research to date has increased awareness of this new phenomenon, we know relatively little about the strategic uses of crowdsourcing by established organizations. To address this gap, this study attempts to: 1) identify the common uses of the crowd by established organizations and 2) to determine what
challenges these organizations face when attempting to leverage crowdsourcing to meet specific organizational needs.

**Research Methods**

Because crowdsourcing is a relatively new phenomenon with limited empirical research and a lack of substantive theory, we employ grounded theory methods to uncover themes and patterns related to our research questions (Fernández, 2004; Orlikowski, 1993). The goal in doing so is to generate an explanatory theory that is grounded in the experiences of those currently engaged in these initiatives. Our data sources included: 1) a comprehensive review of crowdsourcing literature, 2) interviews with practitioners across a wide variety of organizations, and 3) exploratory case studies with organizations currently engaged in crowdsourcing.

In line with grounded theory methods, literature was used as a source of data and not as a source of theoretical positioning (Glaser and Holton, 2004). A total of 106 peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and books were reviewed to identify current uses and organizational implications of such uses. Further, because in-context understanding is critical to understanding the challenges organizations may face when leveraging the crowd, interviews with practitioners and case studies were deemed critical for building new theory (Gregor, 2006; Klein and Myers, 1999; Yin, 1998). Eighteen semi-structured interviews with practitioners in small, medium, and large U.S. organizations were conducted to assess potential uses of the crowd and organizational issues related to the implementation of crowdsourcing initiatives.

Based on analysis of practitioner interviews criteria for inclusion in the case study portion of the study were created. Criteria included: mature organizations (3+ years) with 100+ employees, using online channels to crowdsourcing one or more stages of product/service innovation. Six companies were recruited to participate as field case sites. Five cases employed over 500 employees with one slightly over 100. Field sites represented a wide variety of industries including car manufacturing, defense contracting, document processing, and governmental institutions. By focusing on multiple organizations, identification of within-case and across-case patterns can further facilitate theory building (Eisenhardt, 1989). Twenty-eight individuals at multiple levels within each organization were interviewed using open-ended questions built around a flexible interview protocol (Myers, 2009). Interviews lasted between 30 to 90 minutes each and discussion focused on the organization’s motivation for engaging the crowd, the task(s) to be complete, the crowd being targeted, the processes for integrating the crowd’s input into current innovation practices, facilitators of and barriers to implementation, resources required, value realized, and unexpected outcomes or issues.

**Data Analysis**

Analysis was focused on both the specific crowdsourcing initiative under study as well as the impacts of such initiatives on the organization. Using grounded theory methods, patterns and trends emerged through an iterative process of data collection, coding, and categorization (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Because the purpose was to build theory, no pre-existing categories or theoretical framework was used. Instead, open coding was used to identify initial themes.

Open coding of the corpus of crowdsourcing literature led to the identification of fifty-eight characteristics related to the organizational use of crowdsourcing. Axial coding was used to further abstract and categorize identified characteristics. This resulted in the identification of three key categories, specifically organizational goals, desired outcomes, and common tasks. Concurrently, open coding of interviews from the six case studies revealed themes related to organizational needs, as well as desired outcomes. This led to the identification of the core category of “use” (i.e., linkages between needs, goals and desired outcomes.) After identification of the core category of use, selective coding was used to explore the relationship between use and other emergent themes with the purpose of building a theoretical framework.
Findings

Analysis revealed four common uses of the crowd by established organizations, specifically: 1) productivity, 2) product/service innovation, 3) knowledge capture, and 4) marketing/branding (Erickson et. al., 2012a, 2012b). Productivity use is the use of the crowd to reduce costs associated with the completion of routine time-consuming tasks. Product/service innovation use is the use of the crowd to gain competitive advantage by identifying opportunities to improve or extend offerings. Knowledge capture use is the accumulation of distributed knowledge in a central location. Finally, marketing/branding use is the use of the crowd to increase sales and brand affinity by engaging customers in creative or market research activities.

Further, findings indicate that organizations face unique challenges when leveraging internal crowds (i.e., employees) for ideation. Three of the six cases in our study were reaching out to internal crowds for ideation related to existing and new products and services. These organizations employed between 60,000 to 500,000 individuals and included an international car manufacturer, a governmental institution, and a defense contractor. In each case a new group was created to manage the implementation and on-going management of the internal crowdsourcing platform.

Across these cases, we saw consistent patterns related to challenges in overcoming current organizational structure and processes. Challenges included issues related to internal buy-in and acceptance as well as difficulties in integrating crowdsourcing initiatives into current organizational practices. Similar issues did not emerge in our cases where the crowd was being leveraged for productivity, knowledge capture, or marketing/branding.

The remainder of this paper focuses on our finding that organizations face unique challenges when attempting to integrate and leverage internal crowds for product/service innovation. Specifically, the organizations in our study faced two key challenges: 1) a misalignment between the values of an open crowdsourcing process and current organizational perceptions of value and 2) incompatibilities between new crowdsourcing processes and current organizational practices. Both created barriers to the use of internal-crowdsourcing initiatives and the acceptance of the ideas that were generated.

Organizational Perceptions of Value as Barriers to Internal-Crowdsourcing

In the three cases under study, key to the adoption of internal-crowdsourcing for product/service innovation was the ability to break through traditional organizational perceptions of value. Specifically, the value an individual brings to the innovation process (what we refer to as personal value) as well as the value innovation brings to the organization (referred to as innovation value).

Personal Value: Contribution Versus Title

Opening up innovation to employees outside the currently sanctioned innovation group(s) presupposes that all employees, regardless of position and training, can add value to the innovation process. In our cases, executives attempting to launch internal-crowdsourcing initiatives believed that an employee’s value was a function of their contribution and not the value their job title or job description implies. However, all individuals within the organization did not share this perception of value. Instead, interviewees reported that value was often seen as a function of job title or role.

Resistance to the acceptance of ideas generated by internal-crowds manifested itself in different ways. While some executives within sanctioned innovation groups saw the benefit of employee-wide ideation, others felt threatened or failed to see the value “outsiders” brought to the process. Further, both executives and managers were often reluctant to consider ideas from outsiders who were perceived as not understanding the feasibility of bringing new ideas to market. Non-managers working in innovation groups were also skeptical of outside ideas and on occasion actually mocked ideas from outside their group. As such perceptions of personal value as a function of job title/function often acted as barriers to both the use of internal ideation platforms and the acceptance of ideas that were generated.
Innovation Value: Tangible and Intangible

Traditionally, within large organizations innovation is measured in terms of economic gains from price, patents, and IP (Teece, 1986; Pisano and Teece, 2007; Sherry and Teece, 2004). As such, executives focus on how best to extract and measure these tangible benefits. In our cases, proponent of internal-crowdsourcing viewed the value of such initiatives as both tangible and intangible. Further, not all value was directly tied to traditional measures of innovation. Specifically, interviewees reported positive changes in employee morale, enhanced cross-functional collaboration, and the building of an innovative company culture. Further, executives spearheading crowdsourcing initiatives resisted attaching quantifiable measure to their initiatives because it was difficult, if not impossible, to quantify the intangible benefits of such initiatives. That is, a focus only on the tangible traditional measures of innovation diminished or de-valued the intangible benefits internal-crowdsourcing might bring to the organization. In short, acceptance of internal-crowdsourcing was facilitated by a belief that innovation value was both tangible and intangible.

Organizational Practices as Barriers to Internal-Crowdsourcing

In addition to the need to change perceptions of value, in our cases we also identified consistent themes related to organizational practices creating barriers to acceptance and use. Specifically, organizations struggled with overcoming issues related to established or institutionalized organizational structure as well as organizational processes.

Organizational Structure: Protecting Hierarchical Status

Barriers related to organizational structure were seen across all three cases. In one case, the internal-crowdsourcing initiative originated from within the organization’s IT department. This created friction and resistance from other departments who were concerned that the IT group was not fulfilling its designated duties. In short, innovation was seen as outside the “purview” of the operationally focused IT department. Innovation and innovative ideas belonged to sanctioned innovation and R&D groups and as such many were not supportive and outwardly critical of the IT department’s efforts to open up the innovation process.

In a second case, departmental managers saw company-wide ideation initiatives as encroaching on job responsibilities and bucking the current “chain of command.” As such, these managers often attempted to protect their “turf,” instituting onerous processes within their departments or denying support to those tasked with managing the ideation process. For example, in one case the individual tasked with monitoring the ideation site for his department was instructed not to comment on or advance ideas on the site without authorization from his immediate boss and boss’s boss. This allowed departmental managers to tightly control which ideas moved forward and which did not. Interestingly, within the same case, another manager in a different department was open to outside ideas even when those ideas required additional work for her staff. Such ideas were not see as threatening. Instead, this manager viewed ideas as ways to identify and improve the department’s performance. To facilitate the identification and advancement of ideas, this manager assigned a member of her staff the daily responsibility of monitoring the ideation platform. This employee was also given the autonomy to communicate with idea generators for clarification and to update them on their status of their ideas. Further, this manager set expectations that staff would collaborate across departments as necessary to advance ideas even when doing so was outside the direct responsibilities of her group.

Finally, in a third case, potential issues related to the need to shift management practices from “pyramidal structures” to more cross-functional team-based structures were reported. In this case, individuals within the defined innovation group were hesitant to post ideas to company-wide sites for fear that their ideas would be stolen or claimed by others thereby reducing their ability to personally benefit from them. Further, these individuals did not collaborate with others online to advance proposed ideas preferring instead to hold back ideas so as to maintain their unique and current status as innovative individuals within the organization.
Organizational Processes: Barriers to Entry

Current organizational practices also created hurdles for executives spearheading crowdsourcing initiatives and for employees wishing to contribute to the innovation process. For example, in two cases ideation was the domain of sanctioned innovation groups. Because these individuals had knowledge of and experience in making a business cases for an idea, current processes required that all ideas be turned into formal business presentations before being considered. This necessitated significant time and business knowledge often not compatible with employee ideation. Even when individuals outside the sanctioned innovation group were able to create formalized business presentations, if ideas were rejected this was often seen as a “black mark” on the employee promoting the idea. While making the business case is critical for advancing ideas, requiring all employees to do so at the early stage of the ideation process created barriers to entry for those outside current innovation groups.

Other process barriers included administrative processes. In one case, all employees were required to allocate time spent to individual budget categories for auditing purposes (i.e., a charge number was required to account for employee’s time). Without an approved budget number, employees could not, and would not, contribute to the ideation platform. Because the goal of the ideation platform was to generate new or novel ideas not necessarily tied to existing projects, the executive spearheading of the initiative had to work with the finance department to obtain approval and an appropriate budget number for “charging” time spent on ideation.

Finally, processes related to legal and security issues also created barriers to use. In two cases, because of the sensitive nature of the services provided ideation platforms were restricted to use only within headquarters or sanctioned offices. That is, ideation platforms were not accessible by remote employees or from non-work spaces after hours thus limiting usage.

The Role of Proactive Executive Leadership in Overcoming Barriers

Across our three cases, the presence of proactive executive leaders was key to overcoming organizational barriers and increasing acceptance and use of internal ideation platforms. In cases where interviewees reported success outcomes, proactive executives became personally involved in generating awareness of the initiative, helping other managers/leaders to recognize the value of such initiatives, creating incentives for participation, and rallying the resources to manage the day-to-day operation of their internal ideation sites. In these cases participants reported that proactive executives held the belief that personal value was a function of the contribution an individual made and innovation value was both tangible and intangible. Proactive executive leaders played an instrumental role in reducing and eliminating barriers to entry for employees. Further, these executives held sufficient status within the company (i.e., directors, vice president) to override or ward off challenges by others who did not share their beliefs.

Generating Awareness

In the cases where participants reported successful outcomes, proactive executive leaders became personally involved in generating awareness of the internal ideation platform. In one case, the leader championing the internal-crowdsourcing initiative invited employees who had contributed breakthrough ideas to executive meetings to publically recognize their efforts. This helped generate awareness that any employee, even one outside the sanctioned innovation group, could contribute valuable input. Additionally, it shifted the focus to the quality of the ideas generated, reinforced the potential benefits of the initiative, and was an outward show of support to both executives and employees. This proactive executive leader also meet personally with other executives to address their concerns, to demonstrate how the ideation platform functioned, to help them understand the value such initiatives brought to the organization, and to set expectations regarding support of and contribution to the initiative.

Creating Incentives to Participate

Proactive executive leaders also created incentives to encourage participation. This included bonuses, awards, and public recognition of contributors either via company-wide email or at company events.
Occasionally incentives acted more as mandates. In one case, submission of ideas to the company-wide ideation platform was required before funding would be considered. In this case, proactive executive leaders linked required processes to ideation platforms to ensure their use. This was particularly powerful in ensuring the contributions of innovation groups who were often hesitate to share their best ideas on open platforms.

Allocating Resources

Finally, proactive executive leaders were able to assemble the necessary resources to implement and sustain internal ideation platforms. This included having the discretionary funds to investment in both people and technical infrastructure. Typically, these executives would seek out and recruit like-minded individuals who shared their beliefs regarding the potential of internal-crowdsourcing. New groups were formed to implementation and manage the technical platform and the ideas that were submitted. In these cases, ideation groups worked closely with idea contributors to help shape their ideas into more acceptable forms. Additionally, members of these groups were tasked with advocating and promoting good ideas to managers within other departments who could further advance ideas, further increasing awareness of the initiative.

Discussion

The three organizations in our study faced a number of challenges when attempting to open up the innovation process to employees. Organizations faced issues with overcoming resistance to ideas that were generated by individuals outside sanctioned innovation groups, re-aligning organizational perceptions of value, as well as reducing barriers to entry created by established organizational structure and organizational processes. Across our three cases, organizations that had proactive executive leadership were more likely to report success than when leaders approved internal-crowdsourcing initiatives but did not actively generate awareness, create incentives, and allocate resources. When proactive executive leaders were able to circumvent established organizational practices and leverage resources to implement company-wide crowdsourcing ideation sites, participants reported a “flattening” of the organization and an empowerment of lower-level (i.e., non-managerial) employees. Additionally, more cross-functional departmental collaboration was observed.

Interestingly, many of the same issues found in our study of internal-crowdsourcing are also found within “open innovation.” In contrast to “closed innovation” where all innovation happens inside the corporation, “open innovation” involves reaching outside organizational boundaries for new sources of innovation (Chesbrough, 2003, 2006). An abundance of research on open innovation reveals that success is dependent on a number of factors including, organizational culture, an organization’s ability to recognize the need for change, as well as its ability to adapt to new ways of collecting and utilizing knowledge (Chesbrough, 2003; Dodgson et. al., 2006; Gassmann and Enkel, 2004; Hafkesbrink and Schroll, 2010; Nambisan and Sawhney, 2008 ch 12; von Hippel, 2005). In short, open innovation requires both cultural and organization change and a break from the “not invented here” mindset (Chesbrough, 2003).

While the organizations in our study were leveraging internal resources versus external resources (as is the case with open innovation), they were still attempting to integrate new sources of innovation into established practices. What was unexpected in our findings was the emergence of themes related to bringing “outsiders” into the innovation process even when these “outsiders” resided within the organization. Further, incompatibilities between crowdsourcing objectives and organizational structure and processes created substantial barriers to acceptance and use. This suggests that integration of internal crowds for product/service innovation may require a shift in current organizational culture, values and practices not required by other identified uses (i.e., productivity, knowledge capture, and marketing/branding).

In fact, internal-crowdsourcing may be a harder shift for established organizations then when leveraging outside innovation groups. Organizations that implement internal-crowdsourcing must be willing to open up the decision-making process to the internal crowd and give them a sense of ownership. This often runs contrary to traditional business practices and hierarchical structure. Innovation is no longer the domain
of sanctioned innovation groups. As such, this new business practice requires a shift in how individuals collaborate in relation to innovation, as well as a potential shift in the role of innovation groups within the organization.

With internal-crowdsourcing not only do proactive executive leaders need to convince sanctioned innovation groups that opening up the process to outsiders adds value, they must also convince these groups that employees in any group, at any level, with any level of skill can add value. Further, by opening up the innovation process to all employees, innovation groups may fear a loss of power and reputation within their organizations. After all, if an employee on the assembly line comes up with the next great idea, this may diminish the role of ideation within the innovation group. These groups may move from primary idea generators to idea evaluators and as such this may be seen as a demotion or lessening of their roles within the organization. If, however, these groups can shift their perception of value and break out of current siloed organizational structures, they have the ability to nurture and facilitate ideation across the organization, which in turn has the potential to bring both tangible and intangible benefits.

**Internal-Crowdsourcing Acceptance Model**

Based on our findings, we present a model outlining the dynamics at play when attempting to integrate internal crowds into the product/service innovation processes. The Internal-Crowdsourcing Acceptance Model is based on the view that internal-crowdsourcing for product/service innovation represents a new business practice that requires a shift in traditional organizational perceptions of value and organizational practices. To make these shifts, requires proactive executive leadership to actively reduce barriers to entry presented by current organizational culture and existing structure.

Organizational culture is most often discussed in terms of shared values, beliefs, and philosophies that drive and define appropriate behavior within the organization as well as processes (Glisson, 2000; Hurley and Hult, 1998; Martins and Terblanche, 2003; Tushman and O’Reilly, 2002, ch 4). Organizational culture has also been found to both encourage and discourage new approaches to innovation. The beliefs and values of leaders within the organization, as well as their interpersonal relationships with employees, can be a driving force or inhibitor of innovation. As such, organizational culture directly affects whether innovation is encouraged within an organization, the amount of innovation that is generated (Martins and Terblanche, 2003), and the strategic decisions senior management makes (Christensen et. al., 2004).

Additionally, the structure of the organization, its flexibility, and decision-making practices as well as policies and incentives can all support or discourage innovation (Fontana et. al., 2003; Martins and Terblanche, 2003; Tushman and O’Reilly, 2002). As firms mature they develop structures and processes to support business goals based on the organization’s dominant perception of value. As value is captured, these processes and structures become more embedded and fixed within the company making them difficult, time-consuming, and often costly to change (Tushman and O’Reilly, 2002, ch 2). Organizational practices become ingrained and are accompanied by a “this is just how we do it here” mentality making organizations either resistant to change or unaware of the need for change (Oliver, 1997; Tolbert and Zucker, 1994; Tushman et. al., 2003). Changing these established values and practices can be difficult; and the difficulty of instituting change is directly related to the stability of the practice to be changed.

When organizational practices, specifically structure and processes, have been built on the personal value job titles bring, as well as the tangible economic value innovation brings, integrating employees into the innovation mix may conflict with existing values and practices. Acceptance and use of internal-crowdsourcing ideation platforms requires convincing others something new is needed and that the change will result in better outcomes. Additionally, it requires the breaking down of established processes and the creation of new structures that may be perceived by individuals within the organization as both positive and negative.

The Internal-Crowdsourcing Acceptance Model illustrates the role proactive executives leadership plays in reducing barriers to extracting value from internal-crowdsourcing within established organizations. By generating awareness, creating incentives to participate, and allocating resources, these proactive executives can begin to remove, or address, barriers often created by current organizational perceptions of value. Further, this sets the stage for a realignment of values and organizational practices to those that facilitate and support internal ideation (see Figure 1).
Conclusion

While crowdsourcing may result in new product or service innovations thereby adding value to the organization, it also represents a potential process innovation that may in turn have implications for organizational culture, internal processes, and structure. This paper presents a model that identifies common challenges faced by established organizations when implementing internal-crowdsourcing for product/service innovation. The anticipated theoretical contribution of this research is the finding that internal-crowdsourcing presents many of the same challenges to organizations as faced in open innovation initiatives. As such, current knowledge gained through the study of open innovation may be particularly relevant to internal-crowdsourcing initiatives. The anticipated contribution to practice is the identification of specific practices that may be instrumental in addressing these challenges and reducing barriers to successful outcomes for organizations attempting to leverage internal crowds for ideation.

It is worth noting a few limitations of this study. First, additional case studies are needed to further tease out the role proactive executive leaders play in facilitating internal-crowdsourcing. Second, while both tangible and intangible benefits were reported, it is unclear the long-term benefits of such initiatives. These initiatives do not come without cost and it is currently unclear the impact these costs may have on the sustainability of these programs. Finally, our cases included initiatives focused on both product and service innovation. Separate analysis of product innovation and service innovation efforts should be conducted to determine if there are unique issues related to each. Additionally, an exploration of the different dynamics at play for internal versus external crowdsourcing is warranted. Future research should also continue to explore the similarities and differences between internal-crowdsourced innovation and open innovation. Such exploration will be critical in providing guidance as to how theory should be developed and evaluated, as well as providing guidance to corporations who wish to implement these initiatives.

References


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