



Programme of NOMAD-research seminar

Date: Thursday 14.11.2013 at 09.15 – 13.00

Place: University of Vaasa, Nissi-auditorium

- 09.15 Overview of 'User-driven Service Innovation and Co-creation Management' (NOMAD)-research project
Juha Vänskä, University of Vaasa/SC-Research
- 09.30 'User-driven competence centres and business-led research networks',
Fidipro Professor Martin Meyer
University of Vaasa/SC-Research, University of Kent/Kent Business School (UK)
- 10.30 'Users and business model innovation - placing users at the centre of new organisational forms',
FidiPro Fellow Stephen Flowers
University of Vaasa/SC-Research, University of Brighton/CENTRIM (UK)
- 11.30 Break
- 11.45 'IP-based business models',
Dr. Juha Arrasvuori, University of Vaasa/SC-Research
- 12.15 'The emergence of user-centric business models',
Dr. Liting Liang, University of Vaasa/SC-Research
- 12.45 Discussion
- 13.00 Closing of the seminar

'User-driven competence centres and business-led research networks'

Fidipro Professor Martin Meyer

This presentation examines findings from a study of user-driven competence centres and business-led research networks. In a range of countries, policy makers have been trying to stimulate or reinforce these developments and launched initiatives to make the university and other research organizations more focused on industry or 'user' needs. The emergence of open innovation, user innovation and co-creation reinforces these developments further. In some instances, even new organizations have been created outside the traditional institutions to drive developments. Centres, such as SHOKs are a case in point. The Triple Helix of university-industry-government relations is a prominent perspective to capture these developments.

The Triple Helix framework suggests that tri-lateral networks between actors in science, industry and government are growing, and the boundaries between the three spheres are becoming increasingly blurred. Actors engaging in bringing the spheres together need to integrate activities across three dimensions:

- (1) knowledge spaces, which focus on collaboration of different actors aiming at improving local conditions for innovation by concentrating related R&D activities and other relevant operations;
- (2) consensus spaces, that create ideas and strategies in a 'triple helix' of multiple reciprocal relationships among institutional sectors (academic, public, private);
- (3) innovation spaces, which realise the goals articulated in the previous phase, establishing and/or attracting venture capital.

One could argue that, at least in theory, centres such as SHOKs and their international counterparts may be well suited to facilitate meaningful exchange between Triple Helix stakeholders, perhaps even more so than existing agencies because the new centres allow the various actors to interconnect, collide and create new value propositions while focussing on their respective core activities at the same time. While SHOKs appear very attractive conceptually, evaluative studies have raised serious questions about the centres, their operations and impact.

Reflecting on these we suggest that there is a need to shift the focus from structure to process and activity – with the actual interactions, connectivity and networks between Triple Helix stakeholders and shareholders becoming the core and essence. Taking a process perspective, new TH organizations as successful innovation environments would need to develop managerial strategies to (1) secure the participation of diverse actors, (2) set meaningful agendas and themes that are relevant to stakeholders and shape interaction, (3) moderate and alleviate paradoxes and anxieties in collaboration, and (4) focus the 'everyday' conversation on delivering value and impact for members and wider stakeholders.

'Users and business model innovation - placing users at the centre of new organisational forms'

FidiPro Fellow Stephen Flowers

It has long been recognised that users of a technology can be a potent source of ideas and can make a valuable contribution to firm innovation processes. It has also been observed that users, in certain circumstances, may act to innovate on their own account and may turn away from any firm involvement. This phenomenon is most easily observed in the digital industries but it is present across whole swathes of economic activity. Many aspects of this phenomenon have been described within the literature and the notion of user as an innovator is now widely accepted in academic, policy and practitioner communities.

However, this phenomenon continues to evolve and firms continue to seek new ways of benefitting from user activity. Much of the literature takes a narrow view of user activity that locates them as an adjunct to the firm, but this presentation will argue that this view needs to be revised and will explore how a firm has place users at the centre of its business operations.

This case raises questions for our understanding of the role(s) assigned to users within business operations and highlights the emergence of a new class of business model that is built around user activity.

'IP-based business models'

Dr. Juha Arrasvuori

Intellectual Property (IP) refers to creations of the mind, such as inventions, that are protected in law by for example patents. IP is become an increasingly important asset for businesses operating in the global digital economy. This presentation gives an overview of established and emerging business models based on Intellectual Property, in particular patents.

'The emergence of user-centric business models'

Dr. Liting Liang

Traditionally, firms often build up their business models based on internal resources and competences to explore external opportunities. Over recent years, technological changes, especially ICT advances, have encouraged the emergence of some new business models where firms seek new opportunities by integrating users into their core value creation processes. We will illustrate this phenomenon by presenting case studies of four firms adopting this approach including Rovio, Pinterest, Wikia and Tripadvisor. Our case studies demonstrate how firms can gain competitive advantages by fully exploring users' creative potential and treating users as their strategic assets. Some issues related with these user-centric business models will also be discussed.

