Theme 6: Capabilities
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Section 6.a
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Introduction: Building New Capabilities in an Organization

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Introduction

There is an increasing need for organizations to adapt to rapid changes in society. This need requires organizations’ and the leader within them, to explore, recognize, build and exploit new capabilities. Researching such capabilities has drawn attention from the design management research community in recent years. Dominantly, research contributions have focused on perspectives of innovation and the strategic application of design with the researcher distanced from context. Descriptive and evaluative case studies of past organizational leadership have been vital, by building momentum for the design movement. However, there is a need now to progress toward prescriptive and explorative research perspectives that embrace context through practice and the simultaneous research of design. Therefore, the aim of this track is to lead and progress discussion on research methodologies that support the research community in developing explorative and prescriptive research methodologies for context-orientated organizational research. This track brings together a group of diverse international researchers and practitioners to fuel discussion on design approaches and subsequent outcomes of prescriptive and explorative research methodologies.

6 perspectives on approaching research in building design capabilities

We begin our conversation on the move, with The Application of UX Research in New Energy Vehicle Innovation. The contribution from Ning Xioq, Menghan Tao, Xingfu Zhao, Yi Fan and Wenbin Liu provides rich insight into the China’s clean mobility innovation challenge and the importance of UX research for bridging the adoption from fossil to ‘clean’ energy fueled vehicles by China’s growing bourgeois. Conversation then turns to
managing design in a knowledge based economy, with Sylvia Liu presenting the
correspondence, A Conceptual Framework of Dynamic Design Management Capability. Liu will
present and discusses a conceptual framework to manage design capabilities and
performance – with the framework geared toward the nuances of a knowledge economy.
This conversation provides an appropriate prelude to the following paper, Using Design
Thinking to Improve Strategic Decisions during Collaborative Sensemaking. Ekaterina
Kotina, Mikko Koria and Sharon Prendeville of Loughborough University London shift
attention to addressing potential cognitive bias during strategic decision making through
applying design thinking. This contribution offers a platform for future research via a
framework on how to identify and mitigate confirmation bias during strategic decision
making. Attention then turns toward service design. Sirpa Liisa, Alison Rieple and Caroline
Ennis present, A model of service design elements to understand innovative service
processes. This paper addresses an understanding of innovative services by comparing
service design logic with the entrepreneurial logic of causation, effectuation and bricolage.
Empirical evidence is provided to show how service design logic and entrepreneurial logic
assists more innovative service design outcomes. The track continues with contribution
from Abigail Hird of University of Strathclyde, presenting, Externalising, sharing and
comparing perceptions in design. Hird will describes and reflects upon the notion of
knowledge models in design. Antonius van den Broek and Alison Rieple of University of
Arts London and University of Westminster then shift our attention to Using actor-
network theory to reveal strategy processes in design firms. This paper illustrates the
utility of actor-network theory (ANT) as a methodological approach to understand the
effect of the eclectic characteristics of design firms on their strategy development
processes.

This track has diversity of contributions - from originating institution, conceptual and
empirical in nature, spanning various domains of design. We see a variation from
industrial design, design management, service design, vehicle design and engineering to
strategic design – all with the implicit but shared vision of how design can be applied to
face societies emerging and known innovation challenges. This track in particular offers
methodological guidance for future research at the intersection of design and innovation,
with emphasis on proximity to the phenomena being studied. On behalf of the track
editors, we thank the authors for their energy and commitment to the discipline. We wish
the authors success and trust that the readers will find value immediately - and between
the lines - of the articles within this track.
References


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