

PROXIMITY ECONOMICS IN BUSINESS

Guest Editors: Pierre-Yves Gomez, Anne Rousseau, Isabelle Vandangeon-Derumez

9 Contributors to this issue

13 *Distance and proximity: issues for organizations*

Pierre-Yves Gomez, Anne Rousseau, Isabelle Vandangeon-Derumez

25 *Innovation in craft industry and proximity effects*

Jean-Claude Boldrini, Emmanuel Chéné, Hélène Journé-Michel

Contrarily to that what common representations hint at, a lot of craftsmen innovate but they do it by relying on networks of proximity. Within the framework of the Artisanat-Université network, we have tried to understand what are the prerequisites for innovation and how proximity kept up by craftsmen enables them to go beyond routines in order to explore higher potential activities.

43 *Proximity and the evolution of convention. The case of philatelic market digital*

Antony Kuhn, Yves Moulin

Are quality conventions that regulate a market changing in response to the development of information technology? The growth of trades trough the Internet increases transparency on prices. It also increases the uncertainty about the quality of the traded product, because of the inability to achieve now a visual inspection of the goods. The analysis of the trades in the philatelic market digital shows that the quality convention adapts itself and relies on the confidence indicators about the seller to facilitate the purchase.

57 *Business models, proximities and territorialization of firms. The case of the food processing sector in Quebec*

Anne-Laure Saives, Robert H. Desmarteau, Lamia Kerzazi

How do the proximity issues stake on the strategies of Quebec food processing enterprises? 64 interviews conducted in three regions revealed 5 different business models and 4 different innovation behaviours based on various territorial levers. Four types of “milieu” propicious towards different proximity-based projects or routines (industrialising, typifying, globalising and glocalising milieu) favoured the development of firms.

77 *Knowledge Management in a large industrial firm: virtual availability of knowledge and detachment of experts*

Isabelle Corbett-Etchevers, Eléonore Mounoud

Our analysis of Knowledge Management tools and practices in a large industrial firm highlights the combination of two movements: the virtual availability of knowledge and the physical distance of experts, now removed from operations. Contacts between experts and operational members are expected to be less frequent as Information and Communication Technologies allow tapping into knowledge anytime, anywhere. However, such an approach calls into question the identity dynamics of experts and runs the risk of weakening the knowledge dynamics within the company.

91 *Proximity between human and non human in knowledge construction process*

Xavier Weppe

Is Actor-Network Theory useful to renew our understanding of knowledge dynamics in the organisations? Applying this theory to the study of five project teams, we analyze the relationships between human and non-human actors in different work situations. Knowledge creation appears to be a sociomaterial “bricolage”, based on cognitive and social practices.

109 *Social capital in family firm. An empirical evaluation of its organizational efficiency*

Albert B.R. Lwango, Régis Cœurderoy

Based on its social capital, family business benefits from specific social and informal mechanisms to coordinate, monitor and reduce internal transactions costs – this is a factor of organizational efficiency. However, such advantage tends to disappear with the complexity of family business.

125 *Proximity of stakeholders and strategic alignment. The Triodos Belgium case study*

Marc Ingham, Françoise de Viron, Alain Tihon

The Triodos Bank was created in 1980. The objective of the Bank is to have finance serve sustainable development. Three main factors can explain the growing success of this bank: the values on which the bank is founded are clearly stated and integrated in its activities, the stakeholders share these values, and are involved in strategic process of the bank. This commitment depends on finding and organizing relationships of proximity with the aim of mutual enrichment.

- 141 *Making of Proximities. Evidence from a strategic case study in rural areas*
Alexandre Asselineau, Anne Cromarias

From a case study based on the Nutrition Health Park of Naturopôle, this paper shows how a small company in isolated rural areas operates to create proximities with private and public partners. Thus, the management of proximities turns out as a fundamental strategic characteristic of the new firm and its main competitive advantage.

- 157 *Business situation, cognitive proximity and change*
Christophe Schmitt, Rémi Fabbri, Marie Gallais

The concept of situation management, little used in science management, seems to conceal the levers for the managerial activity under ambiguous and uncertain situations. This article seeks to show how the use of the concept of situation management can facilitate organizational change. It proposes and illustrates an entry point little used in science management: situations management through cognitive proximity of the actors.

- 171 *Identity, change and organizational proximity.*
A comparative cases study of European management schools
Christophe Lejeune, Alain Vas

This article describes four case studies of identity change within European management schools after a first accreditation failure. Our results show how different sequences of sensemaking and sensegiving processes have appeared within the studied management schools. We discuss then two paths for identity change that should be taken into account for managing change.

- 189 *Financial proxemics of SMEs: collateral effects of global financiarization*
Olivier Torrès

The proxemic law, initially created by psychologists A. Moles and E. Rohmer, is defined as a natural tendency of Human being to focus on what is close to him at the expense of what is far away. The subjective space is organized into a hierarchy. Applied in Management sciences, this law is particularly relevant in the management of SME. The purpose of this paper is to show how finance SMEs is crossed by a multitude of proxemics (patrimonial proxemics, spatial proxemics, temporal proxemics...), giving high specificity to the financial management of SMEs. Also, the author shows that recent developments in the banking organization (heads of agencies turn over, credit scoring, banking concentration...) tend to question these proxemics by establishing a remote management.

- 205 **Summary**