

Preface

What processes and activities inside the organisation are necessary for open innovation projects to have impact and to be sustainable? What stakeholders from inside and outside an organisation are needed to enable and guide an innovation concept from idea to market implementation? These questions from practice motivated me to explore stakeholder integration in service innovation and its' dynamics in-depth.

I am thankful and happy that my professor Prof. Dr. Kathrin M. Moeslein at Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg's Institute for Information Systems – Innovation and Value Creation gave me the opportunity and support to align the knowledge and experiences from my studies, including service-dominant logic, and my hands-on work in industry to set up this research project on the roles and modes of stakeholders in service innovation. A big “thank you” to her and to my second supervisor Prof. Dr. Freimut Bodendorf.

Thanks to the departments' joint projects with Fraunhofer IIS and Fraunhofer SCS (e.g. the “Service Factory Nürnberg” including JOSEPHS®), I was provided with the opportunity to engage in exciting and challenging projects in the sphere of user and stakeholder integration, with an interesting research ground, funding and great characters/colleagues to work with.

Special thanks are given to all participants of this research journey - especially to all interview partners and co-creators at Fraunhofer and in the different case companies who have to stay anonymous, unfortunately. This piece of research was brought to life only through your engagement!

Now that the magical moment to print this work has arrived, it is finally time to be somewhat melancholic and have a personal look back at writing this thesis. Hurray!

I feel that going through this dissertation project was like climbing a really impressive mountain: at first, this mountain looked dangerous, but it was so fascinating and pretty that I couldn't resist to start walking towards it. It looked scary in the beginning, but getting warm walking, it could feel like a good trip to do. There were some passages that felt like walking without gaining height. There were passages with rocks and fields of scree where the journey felt like taking two steps

forward, slipping one step right back. There were nice views in the sunshine as well as really cloudy passages. In the end, after dreaming about how it would be to actually reach the top of this mountain, after about 3.5 years, the thesis is done. After my Gipfelbrotzeit and a deep breath, it feels like the trip was not too bad after all and I can already look around and speculate about which mountain to climb next. I am really happy that this trip was supported and accompanied by a number of institutions and people.

In the context of several conference presentations, but especially at two doctoral seminars in 2014, at FMM and Reser, I received valuable feedback from senior researchers and PhD student fellows. I want to thank all of them for the interesting discussions and inspiration. Thereby, a special thank you goes to Stephen Vargo, Christian Kowalkowski, David Sörhammar and Kaisa Koskela-Huotari for their feedback, suggestions and sometimes somewhat confusing yet very helpful ideas. I feel grateful for meeting such interesting characters as well as for some really great conference nights out.

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