

Configuring Projects for Innovation

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Abstract

Creating new processes and products often requires the establishment of an entirely new organization, namely a project. In a project, a set of diverse, non-routine, and skilled tasks are performed over a limited time frame. We study how a project's particular organizational structure impacts its outcomes, in the form of process and product innovation. We answer this question through an analysis of panel data, spanning the time period from 2001 through 2015, involving 429 business-to-business (B2B) projects in the construction industry. Specifically, we rely on a hybrid effects Poisson model, the first application of such a model in marketing to date. We show that the organizational structure of a project depends on whether process or product innovation is the desired outcome; for process innovation, general contractors should perform a greater number of project tasks while for product innovation, allocation of tasks to subcontractors is more useful. Our findings also suggest collaboration between general contractor and subcontractors to benefit product innovation, while it is detrimental to process innovation.

Keywords: *B2B projects; task configuration; innovation*

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