

Actor roles and role patterns influencing business model innovation in new ventures

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Abstract

In the early stages of their development new ventures frequently undergo innovation to their business model, as they are acting in a highly dynamic, constantly changing environment. To design a new business model, entrepreneurs require support, feedback, knowhow, and contacts from multiple actors. While the importance of these actors has been acknowledged, it has not been examined how they actually influence the business model design of a new venture and what roles these actors take. To fill this gap our study draws on qualitative face-to-face interviews with 18 start-up companies to disclose actor roles in business model innovation. Our analysis identifies nine newly and unknown and ten already identified actor roles that can be associated with the context of business model innovation. Additionally, it reveals different role patterns characteristic of entrepreneurial networks, including reciprocity, temporality, and multiplicity.

Keywords: *business model innovation; role conceptualization; new venture*

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