

Call for Papers

Special issue of
International Journal of Operations and Production Management
on operations strategy and context

Operations strategy is an important area of practice and research. Since the seminal manufacturing strategy articles of Skinner from the 1960s and the books by Hayes & Wheelwright and Hill from the early 1980s, the number of papers, articles and books on the topic has grown exponentially and led to significant theoretical progress. In the process, manufacturing was taken out of its isolation. Today we rather use the term operations to include supply chain management, quasi-manufacturing services, e-business, service operations and the links between manufacturing and other functions, such as new product development, purchasing, marketing/sales and logistics.

At the same time, the empirical field has gone through a range of changes, including internationalization of operations and development of global operations networks, which has led to unprecedented levels of complexity, variety and dynamics operations managers have to deal with in their strategic considerations and decisions.

In addition, the variety of theoretical lenses used to study operations strategy content and process has increased considerably as well and currently includes the resource-based view of the firm, transaction cost economics, and information processing theory, in addition to established operations and strategic management approaches and contingency theories of organization. Emerging topics related to the implementation of operations strategy include the role of social capital and networks, sustainability and corporate social responsibility.

One of the major weaknesses in the field is that, in spite of the increasing variety of ways of organizing operations, operations strategy theory is relatively a-contextual and largely fails to take into account the influence of factors such as company size, industry type, company structure (plant, network), internationalization and globalization, culture and cultural differences (especially in global manufacturing networks), and differences in investment potential between established and emerging economies. Furthermore, in spite of recent efforts, the process of operations strategy development and implementation, which is also highly context dependent, is still relatively underresearched.

This call invites papers for publication in a special issue of the International Journal of Operations and Production Management. Papers may deal with, but are not limited to:

- Operations strategy content and process in particular external contexts (e.g. one or more industries, established and/or/versus emerging economies, company and/or/versus network level).
- The impact of globalization and, consequently, increasing complexity, variety and dynamics, on operations strategy
- The interaction between manufacturing strategy content and process and its internal context (e.g. new product development, corporate strategy, marketing and sales, logistics).
- The need for companies to excel in more than one performance indicator at the same time (“both-and” performance demands) and consequences for operations strategy content and process.
- Operations strategy in newly emerging businesses, including e-business and quasi-manufacturing services.

In addressing these and similar topics, authors are encouraged to use “non-traditional” theoretical lenses to enrich the body of operations strategy theory.

All papers should:

- Depart from a discussion of, and a research problem based in, relevant theories.
- Have a clear empirical basis (survey, case studies, action research, experiments).
- Present an academically rigorous contribution to the development of manufacturing strategy theory and managerial practice.

Manuscripts should not exceed 9,000 words. All contributions are subjected to a double-blind review process. There should be a separate title page giving the names and addresses of the authors. Any other references that reveal the identity of the authors should be removed. Full papers are required by September 25, 2009. We expect that the special issue will be published in the second half of 2010.

We look forward to your interest!

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