



## Call for Papers for a Special Issue

### Business Models

Submission Period: December 15, 2012 – January 15, 2013

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### Introduction and Special Issue Background

The business model has received increasing attention since the late 1990s, driven partly by the opportunities for new Internet ventures and their need to explain to potential stakeholders how they planned to generate sustained value. But the notion has also proven helpful in describing how established firms have found new sources of value creation and/or capture. The business model, it seems, is not one distinct construct, but rather an umbrella term that refers to various aspects of the underlying phenomenon (namely, how firms do business at the system level), such as value creation, value capture, or activity system. Not surprisingly, it has become an important topic of study for entrepreneurship scholars, especially in social entrepreneurship where firms must often find new, original ways to create societal wealth. At the same time, however, the business model has also become increasingly relevant for strategy scholars interested in better understanding mechanisms for value capture and activity systems. The received literature offers various ways of conceptualizing business models. It also suggests that their study lies at the intersection of entrepreneurship and strategy, and therefore clearly represents a topic of interest for scholars of strategic entrepreneurship. The business model can also be viewed as dynamic, focusing on how strategic choices generate consequences and their resulting feedback loops. Thus, the notion of the business model could offer an interesting perspective for the study of strategic interaction between industry players. Despite the number of research papers devoted to exploring business models over the last decade, structured and rigorous research (both theoretical and empirical) is still rare. Much remains to be explored about how the business model approach might shed new light on fundamental questions of strategic entrepreneurship. The approach might help us extend and even reconsider some of the received wisdom of the strategy and entrepreneurship fields of study. However, in order to make significant progress, we need rigorous conceptualizations of the business model, a better understanding of its antecedents and consequences, as well as the mechanisms through which it operates.

## Research Questions

The topics developed in this special issue will be in line with the 10 SEJ theme areas. This list of questions is illustrative and not exhaustive in identifying topics that are relevant for the special issue. For research questions not listed below, scholars should also consider the extent to which their questions fit with *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal's* (SEJ's) core themes. Without being exhaustive, the research questions addressed in this special issue could be:

- The epistemological and conceptual roots of the business model: What are the micro-foundations of the business model? What theories can be used to frame and anchor the concept? How can business model research rejuvenate the field of strategy and/or the field of entrepreneurship? Can business model research help fill the gap between theory and practice? How does the business model differ from, or interact with, other received strategy and entrepreneurship concepts? What makes it distinct? How can it be operationalized and measured?
- The general impact and context of new business models: How do business models impact both the societal and the sector levels? What kind of transformations are they bringing about? What are the institutional factors favoring or impeding the emergence as well as the success of new business models? How should business models be evaluated?
- Business model innovation: What does business model innovation mean? Where do new business models come from? What is the decision process leading to business model innovation? What are the costs and benefits of business model innovation? What are the drivers and challenges of business model innovation? How important is business model innovation compared to other forms of innovation, and how distinct are they? How do the characteristics and behaviors of entrepreneurs, stakeholders, and the configuration of their networks influence business model innovation? What are the performance consequences of business model innovation? When is business model innovation inappropriate or inefficient?
- The mechanisms creating entrepreneurial opportunities for new business models: How do technological innovations lead to the emergence of new business models? How does internationalization allow for the creation of new business models? What other factors influence, and interact with, the emergence of new business models?
- The changes in traditional business models: How are established businesses rejuvenated by new business models? How are different business models competing?
- The elaboration and implementation processes of new business models: How do entrepreneurs manage the uncertainty they are confronted with in their innovation process? How are new business models implemented and legitimated?
- The social impact of business models: What social challenges can be addressed by business models? What business models should social ventures adopt? How do the business models of non-profit firms differ from the business models of profit-oriented firms? How do entrepreneurs make social business models efficient? How do they make them work?
- The performance of business models: What are the relevant performance outcomes of business models? Which business model choices allow for reducing risk, and which ones allow for increasing revenues, decreasing costs, improving reputation, etc.? Are some business models more prone to generate and appropriate value? How to ensure the sustainability of business models? How do competing business models interact and perform?

### **Expected contributions**

The literature is consolidating, and a growing community of researchers, emerging in various fields (strategy, entrepreneurship, organization theory, marketing and economics, among others), is beginning to anchor the business model concept in various theoretical frameworks. The methods used to observe and study business models empirically are multiplying, particularly concerning the relationship between business models and performance, industry structures and competitive dynamics, and, of course, entrepreneurship.

Due to the potential for debate inherent in the topic, we expect to receive empirical and theoretical submissions that meet the *SEJ*'s standards of rigor, novelty, and relevance for practice. We are also expecting rigorous papers dedicated to business models and at the crossroads of entrepreneurship and strategic management, using methods such as traditional quantitative research, but also optimization, game theory, frontier efficiency, simulations, structural estimations, and carefully-crafted qualitative research. Scholars are also encouraged to consider various levels of analysis, including new ventures, large corporations, established firms of all sizes, institutions, and/or individual entrepreneurs.

### **Deadlines, Submission and Review Process**

Original submissions must be submitted between December 15, 2012 and January 15, 2013 in adherence with the *SEJ* submission process described at <http://sej.strategicmanagement.net>. Please do not submit your article prior to December 15, 2012 or after January 15, 2013. Authors should indicate that they would like the submission to be considered for this special issue. All papers will be externally reviewed according to standard policies of Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal. A special conference will be organized at IESE Business School in Barcelona in September 2013 with all papers invited to submit a revision in the first round.

### **Further Information**




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