BWL-MA-UFÜ7(C)
Selected Issues in Digital Innovation, Transformation, and Entrepreneurship – Digital Entrepreneurship: Building new Technology Startups

Overview

As digital technologies continue to transform industries, digital entrepreneurship has emerged as a critical driver of innovation, value creation, and societal change. Entrepreneurs are building ventures that are not only digitally enabled but also fundamentally shaped by the possibilities of digital platforms, ecosystems, and technologies. These advancements have expanded the scope of entrepreneurship, allowing ventures to scale rapidly, innovate dynamically, and address complex societal challenges.

The concept of digital entrepreneurship reflects the dynamic interplay between digital technologies on the one hand, and entrepreneurial processes and outcomes on the other. But this relationship is not always or unequivocally beneficial. While some ventures successfully harness digital technologies to create entirely new, digital business models, others face challenges through digital technologies, such as platform dependencies, role conflicts, and a pressure to scale exponentially. Digital entrepreneurship thus requires us to develop a deep understanding of both the transformative potential of technology and the systemic issues it introduces.

This seminar will explore the potentials and challenges of digital entrepreneurship. Together, we will examine a variety of foundational and technology-specific topics related to the digital transformation of entrepreneurship, such as how digital technologies enable and constrain entrepreneurial opportunities and processes, what advantages digital technologies offer for creating, scaling, and innovating ventures, and which roles, processes, and structures are critical to mastering the challenges of digital platform ecosystems. Furthermore, we will investigate how digital entrepreneurship addresses specific societal issues, including inclusion, sustainability, and education. Through this exploration, we aim to develop a balanced understanding of the transformative power of digital entrepreneurship and its implications for organizations and society.

Contents

Our seminar will include:

- A general overview of the entrepreneurial process
- An introduction to the foundations and essential aspects of digital entrepreneurship.
- Specific challenges of digital entrepreneurship:
    - Building digital market offerings
    - Building digital firms
    - Growing digital firms
    - Innovation digital market offerings

    - ….
- Refresher workshops on how to design and write a seminar paper
    - How to do a literature review
    - How to design, structure and write a scientific paper
- Presentations of the student seminar papers
- Presentations and critical discussions of seminal scientific articles on digital entrepreneurship

Exemplary Seminar Topics

Students can select a topic of their choice from a list of available questions and explore a question related to the twin transformation of firms of their own choosing.

Topic 1	Entrepreneurship: the process of starting new ventures
	E.g., Davidsson, P. (2015). Entrepreneurial opportunities and the entrepreneurship nexus: A re-conceptualization. Journal of Business Venturing, 30(5), 674–695. Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The Promise of Entrepreneurship as a Field of Research. *Academy of Management Review*, *25*(1), 217-226. Berglund, H., Bousfiha, M., & Mansoori, Y. (2020). Opportunities as Artifacts and Entrepreneurship as Design. *Academy of Management Review*, *45*(4), 825–846.
Topic 2	Digital entrepreneurship: Changes to processes and outcomes of entrepreneurship through digital technologies
	E.g., Steininger, D. M. (2019). Linking Information Systems and Entrepreneurship: A Review and Agenda for IT-Associated and Digital Entrepreneurship Research. *Information Systems Journal*, *29*(2), 363-407. Nambisan, S. (2017). Digital Entrepreneurship: Toward a Digital Technology Perspective of Entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 41(6), 1029–1055. von Briel, F., Recker, J., Selander, L., Hukal, P., Jarvenpaa, S. L., Yoo, Y., Lehmann, J., Chan, Y. E., Rothe, H., Alpar, P., Fuerstenau, D., & Wurm, B. (2021). Researching Digital Entrepreneurship: Current Issues and Suggestions for Future Directions. *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, *48*(33), 284-304.

Topic 3	The advantages of digital technologies to support entrepreneurship
	E.g., Lin, Y.-K., & Maruping, L. M. (2022). Open Source Collaboration in Digital Entrepreneurship. *Organization Science*, *33*(1), 212-230. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2021.1538 Wang, W., Mahmood, A., Sismeiro, C., & Vulkan, N. (2019). The Evolution of Equity Crowdfunding: Insights from Co-Investments of Angels and the Crowd. Research Policy, 48(6), 103727. Von Briel, F., Davidsson, P., & Recker, J. (2018). Digital Technologies as External Enablers of New Venture Creation in the IT Hardware Sector. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 42(1), 47–69.
Topic 4	The challenges in digital entrepreneurship
	E.g., Nambisan, S., & Baron, R. A. (2021). On the Costs of Digital Entrepreneurship: Role Conflict, Stress, and Venture Performance in Digital Platform-Based Ecosystems. Journal of Business Research, 125, 520–532. Cutolo, D., & Kenney, M. (2021). Platform-dependent entrepreneurs: Power asymmetries, risks, and strategies in the platform economy. Academy of Management Perspectives, 35(4), 584-605.
Topic 5	Market-Entry of Digital Ventures
	E.g., Lehmann, J., & Recker, J. (2022). Offerings That are "Ever-in-the-Making": How Digital Ventures Continuously Develop Their Products After Launch. *Business & Information Systems Engineering*, *64*(1), 69-89. Lehmann, J., Recker, J., Yoo, Y., & Rosenkranz, C. (2022). Designing Digital Market Offerings: How Digital Ventures Navigate the Tension Between Generative Digital Technology and the Existing Environment. *MIS Quarterly*, *46*(3), 1453-1482. O'Brien, D., & Wellbrock, C.-M. (2024). How the Trick is Done – Conditions of Success in Entrepreneurial Digital Journalism. *Digital Journalism*, *12*(2), 121-148.
Topic 6	Digital technologies and venture growth
	E.g., Tumbas, S., Berente, N., Seidel, S., & vom Brocke, J. (2015). *The 'Digital Façade' of Rapidly Growing Entrepreneurial Organizations* 36th International Conference on Information Systems. Association for Information Systems,,

	Fort Worth, Texas. Huang, J., Henfridsson, O., & Liu, M. J. (2022). Extending Digital Ventures Through Templating. Information Systems Research, 33(1), 285-310 Giustiziero, G., Kretschmer, T., Somaya, D., & Wu, B. (2023). Hyperspecialization and Hyperscaling: A Resource-based Theory of the Digital Firm. *Strategic Management Journal*, *44*(6), 1391-1424.
Topic 7	Specific topics around digital entrepreneurship
	E.g., Women's digital entrepreneurship: McAdam, M., Crowley, C., & Harrison, R. T. (2020). Digital Girl: Cyberfeminism and the Emancipatory Potential of Digital Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies. Small Business Economics, 55(2), 349–362. Sustainable digital entrepreneurship: George, G., Merrill, R. K., & Schillebeeckx, S. J. (2021). Digital sustainability and entrepreneurship: How digital innovations are helping tackle climate change and sustainable development. Entrepreneurship theory and practice, 45(5), 999-1027. Digital academic entrepreneurship: Rippa, P., & Secundo, G. (2018). Digital Academic Entrepreneurship: The Potential of Digital Technologies on Academic Entrepreneurship. Technological Forecasting & Social Change, 146, 900–911. Digital creative industries entrepreneurship: Chalmers, D., Fisch, C., Matthews, R., Quinn, W., & Recker, J. (2022). Beyond the Bubble: Will NFTs and Digital Proof of Ownership Empower Creative Industry Entrepreneurs? *Journal of Business Venturing Insights*, *17*(June), e00309.

Tasks

Students will be assigned to one of the topic areas above and will be asked to:

1. Deal with the corresponding research areas and prepare a presentation introducing their topic.

2. Write an essay about a selected aspect within their topic area but going beyond the introduction associated with that topic. Students can choose to
    a. explore additional relevant scientific literature on the topic and synthesize that literature to present a comprehensive, balanced, and informed consideration of the topic, or

b. find a specific use case referring to their topic and describing and explaining the way in which issues concerning digital entrepreneurship are managed in real-life business practice.

3. Give a short presentation summarizing their essays.

Learning outcomes

Students learn to…

- find and select relevant literature on a given problem or question independently.
- apply discipline and technical knowledge and skills to analyze and evaluate technological influences on a range of managerial questions about innovation, transformation, and entrepreneurship, particularly the opportunities and challenges introduced by digital technologies in entrepreneurial processes.
- acquaint themselves with the scholarship of world class research faculty in the areas of digital innovation, transformation, and entrepreneurship, with a focus on the potentials and challenges of digital platforms, ecosystems, and technologies.
- understanding some of the leading issues, theories, and methodologies that characterize research in in the areas of digital innovation, transformation, and entrepreneurship, in particular the interplay between entrepreneurial opportunities, platform ecosystems, and societal challenges.
- apply discipline and technical knowledge to analyze and evaluate scientific processes and outcomes.
- develop written communication skills to structure, explain and defend scientific thinking.
- develop presentation skills to present and discuss research processes and outcomes.

Schedule

1. Kick-Off: Introduction and topic assignment **(3 hours + break): 30.04., 10:00**
2. Refresher workshops on how to design and write a seminar paper **(2 days / 2 hours): 07.05. & 14.05., 10:00**
3. Topic presentations based on given research papers and discussion **(2 days/ 3.5 hours + break): 21.05. & 11.06., 10:00**
4. Paper development workshop **(1 day/ 7 hours + break) 28.06., 10:00**

Relevant Readings

See above.

Further readings will be announced in due time.

Assessment

Grading in this course is on three main components. Grading rubrics will be used and made accessible to the students in advance. In order to pass the seminar, all three partial examinations must be passed.

1. Presentation of Seminal Scientific Paper (20% of final grade)
2. Submission of Seminar Essay (60% of final grade)
3. Presentation of lessons learned from paper development workshop (20% of final grade).

Teaching Team

Stephanie Kitzler completed her master's degree in business administration and is working as a research assistant at the Chair for Information Systems and Digital Innovation. With a strong interest in women's digital entrepreneurship and the impact of digital technologies on venture creation, she is currently pursuing her doctoral studies, focusing on the role of digital technologies in enabling and constraining women entrepreneurship.

Jan Recker is Alexander-von-Humboldt Fellow, Nucleus Professor for Information Systems and Digital Innovation at the University of Hamburg, and Adjunct Professor at the QUT Business School, Australia.

In his research he explores the intersection of technology, people and work. He works with particularly large organizations, such as Woolworths, SAP, Hilti, Commonwealth Bank, Lufthansa, Ubisoft, Esri, federal and state governments, and with particularly small organizations ("start-ups") in the consumer goods, hardware, and financial sectors. He tackles questions in the areas of

- systems analysis and design practices in the digital age
- digital entrepreneurship
- digital innovation and transformation in large organizations
- digitalization of products, services, and processes
- digital solutions for a sustainable future

Jan's research in these areas draws on quantitative, qualitative, and computational methods. He has also written popular textbooks on scientific research and data analysis, which are in use in over 500 institutions in over 60 countries. He was Editor-in-Chief of the Communications of the Association for Information Systems from 2015-2020. He is Senior Editor for the MIS Quarterly**.** In 2019, he was named #1 business researcher under 40 years of age by the German Magazine Wirtschaftswoche. He was the youngest academic ever to be named an AIS fellow in 2018. In 2019, he received an "Outstanding Associate Editor Award" from MIS Quarterly. He publishes a podcast called "this IS research".

e jan.christof.recker@ uni-hamburg.de
w http://www.janrecker.com/, https://www.bwl.uni-hamburg.de/isdi.html
t twitter.com/janrecker
l https://www.linkedin.com/in/jan-recker-10303b5/
p http://www.janrecker.com/this-is-research-podcast/