

Innovation and Platform Strategies in the Service Industry

January 3 – 22, 2022

Target Group & Prerequisites:

- Upper undergraduate students of business, economics, and related fields
- After two years of study or graduates with good standing. Proof of English proficiency required.

What do many of the most valuable companies in the world, like Apple, Amazon or Facebook, have in common? Their businesses are all based on digital services, provided via platforms. Many innovative startups, in Silicon Valley and also in Europe's main startup hub Berlin, aim to design platform-based business models. Traditional service companies need to innovate to not lose out against new platforms.

In this module, students will gain insights into innovation and platform strategies in the service industry. Theoretical concepts are taught alongside cases from literature and class exercises. Furthermore, students will get a real challenge from a business partner, applying their learned knowledge, work out a solution and pitch in front of the business partner.

Experiential learning through that case and reflection of it, is emphasized. Students will work on their communication skills and learn techniques for visualizing their business idea (e.g. pitching, canvas, prototyping).

Timetable

Monday, Jan 3	Brief virtual welcome session & intro to Moodle
Monday, Jan 3 – Friday, Jan 7	Reading Week
Saturday, Jan 8 – Sunday Jan 9	Time for travel
Sunday, Jan 9	Arrival in Berlin and move in to accommodation
Monday, Jan 10	Welcome Day: Campus tour, social events
Tuesday, Jan 11 – Friday, Jan 14	Class, excursions, and optional cultural programme
Saturday, Jan 15 – Sunday, Jan 16	Weekend and optional cultural programme
Monday, Jan 17 – Friday Jan 21	Class, excursions, and optional cultural programme
Friday, Jan 21	Farewell Reception
Saturday, Jan 22	Move out of accommodation and departure

Virtual Reading Week (January 3 – 7, 2022)

The virtual reading week aims at sensitizing the participants to fundamental concepts of strategic and innovation management. Moreover, students will develop a basic understanding of platform strategies and customer-focused prototyping and business model design.

Altogether, students will study 6 papers available on Moodle (the learning platform of the HWR Berlin) and answer associated questions (monitored self-tests). Please expect to spend a few hours each day on reading and answering the questions. You may complete the task at your preferred time and pace, yet, all self-tests must be concluded by Monday, January 10, 9 am.

Literature (subject to change)

- Porter, M. E. (2008): The Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy, in: Harvard Business Review, January, pp. 78-93
- Porter, M.E./Heppelmann, J.E. (2014): How Smart, Connected Products Are Transforming Competition, in: Harvard Business Review, November, <https://hbr.org/2014/11/how-smart-connected-products-are-transforming-competition>
- van der Heijden, K. (1997): Scenarios, Strategy, and the Strategy Process. In: Nijenrode Research Paper Series. Centre for Organisational Learning and Change. No. 1997-01.
- Hamel, G./Zanini, M. (2018): The End of Bureaucracy, Harvard Business Review, November/December
- Zhu, F./Iansiti, M. (2019): Why Some Platforms Thrive ...and Others Don't. In: Harvard Business Review, January/February
- European Commission (2020): Uncovering Blindspots in the Policy Debate on Platform Power (Final Report). A report by the Expert Group for the Observatory on the Online Platform Economy. <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/expert-group-eu-observatory-online-platform-economy-final-reports>

On-site Programme in Berlin (January 9 – 22, 2022)

Lecturers

- Prof. Dr. Matthias Tomenendal, Prof. Dr. Caroline V. Rudzinska, Prof. Dr. Gert Bruche

Date	Theoretical Input	Real Case Challenge
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamentals of strategic management and innovation management (Prof. Dr. Matthias Tomenendal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing on case challenge by company partner as a real client • <i>Assignment: Getting acquainted with the field of business of the company partner</i>
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Foresight: • Working with trends and foresight (Prof. Dr. Caroline V. Rudzinska) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assignment: Creating a future scenario. How to envision the Future?</i>
Day 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of service businesses: Professional services, digital services, platforms and ecosystems (Prof. Dr. Matthias Tomenendal) 	
Day 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying a great business opportunity. • Working with a future persona, future customer journey and the Value Proposition Canvas. (Prof. Dr. Caroline V. Rudzinska) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assignment: Creating a future persona, a customer journey and identifying a relevant innovation solution via the Value Proposition Canvas.</i>
Day 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform Strategies I: Basic platform economics and platform strategies (Prof. Dr. Gert Bruche) 	
Day 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding an innovation idea via Design Thinking (Prof. Dr. Caroline V. Rudzinska) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assignment: Prototyping a business idea, testing, evaluation and adapting it.</i>
Day 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform Strategies II: Regulating platforms (European perspective) (Prof. Dr. Gert Bruche) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assignment: Challenges of the company partner in a platform perspective and possible strategies</i>
Day 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study visit to the EUREF Campus Berlin • (Prof. Dr. Matthias Tomenendal) 	
Day 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to sell your business idea! (Prof. Dr. Caroline V. Rudzinska) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assignment: Finalization of a convincing presentation of the innovation solution for the business client.</i>
Day 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation Pitch Session: Final Pitch Session in front of the client. (Prof. Dr. Matthias Tomenendal & Prof. Dr. Caroline V. Rudzinska) 	

Literature

- Cusumano, M.A./Gawer, A./Yoffie, D.B. (2019): The Business of Platforms: Strategy in the Age of Digital Competition, Innovation, and Power. Harper Collins Books
- European Commission: Latest versions of the legislative initiative of the EC, the Digital Markets Act and the Digital Services Act (or summaries of these initiatives)
- Kotter, J. P. (2012): Accelerate! Harvard Business Review, November
- Lang, N./Szczepanski, K. von/Wurzer, C. (2019): The Emerging Art of Ecosystem Management, BCG Report
- Lewrick, M./Link, P./Leifer, L. (2018): The Design Thinking Playbook : Mindful Digital Transformation of Teams, Products, Services, Businesses and Ecosystems. Wiley
- Porter, M.E./Heppelmann, J.E. (2015): How Smart, Connected Products Are Transforming Companies, in: Harvard Business Review, October issue, https://hbr.org/2015/10/how-smart-connected-products-are-transforming-companies?cm_sp=Article-_-Links-_-Top%20of%20Page%20Recirculation

Study Visit(s)

- EUREF Campus Berlin (with examples of smart city initiatives)

Assessment

- 50% Innovation project (small student teams), working on a challenging real case and pitching in front of the client on Day 10
- 50% Written paper (individually), approx. 800-1.000 words (excl. cover/charts/graphs/tables/bibliography): Digital Five-Forces-Analysis and SWOT Analysis for a service business unit of your own choice.
To be uploaded to moodle by the end of Day 6
 - Additional credit to be earned by extending this paper by a comparative SWOT Analysis (comparison with a (potential) competitor) and the derivation of strategic recommendations, incl. (digital) innovations → for more information see the section "Optional Credit (extra)" below

Cultural Module:
German Culture & Society: Cultural Perspectives

10 hours of German Culture & Society (study visits and class)

Topics & Learning Outcomes

This module will deal with German culture and society through many different site visits, and explore topics such as the Berlin Wall and Cold War era, Nazi-Germany, Prussia and its kings, German stereotypes, German university system, German politics, contemporary art or pop culture in Germany. In reflective papers, the students will have the opportunity to contemplate and highlight the differences and similarities between the students' home cultures and their new host culture/the cultures of their classmates. This module will help students to reflect upon and their intercultural experience.

Study Visits

- On the weekend and at least one visit on weekdays. Sites include: Schloss Charlottenburg, Palace of Tears, Dark Worlds: bunker tour, Reichstag (German Parliament).

Assessment

- 2 Reflective papers (one per week). Pass or fail grade.

Grading

Grades will be based on active participation and regular attendance in class and class excursions, on self-study and homework assignments, and on the examinations. If all assessments are passed, students will be issued a Certificate including a transcript of the grades received. Students with less than 80% attendance will not receive documentation of course participation. If students miss more than two classes, the final grade will be downgraded. Grades are stated in the German and in the ECTS system.

Workload and Credits

6 ECTS credits

The workload of this programme is equivalent to 150 hours / 6 ECTS and consists of:

- Reading Week incl. self-tests (monitored)
- Contact hours for the on-site programme (40 hours business course & 10 hours intercultural module)
- Excursions and company visits
- Self-study, research, group projects, preparation for assessments

Optional Credit (extra)

(to be completed after the programme, available for an additional fee)

Students may gain an additional credit by completing an extra assignment (in addition to the tasks listed above) i.e. handing in a paper. This paper is due max 4 weeks after the end of the on-site programme. This option allows students to receive a total of 7 ECTS rather than 6. Price: 50 Euro for a regular credit (Bachelor level) / 80 Euro for a credit at (post-) graduate level.

* Please note that all course content and teaching staff may be subject to change