



Research School for Operations
Management and Logistics

Together we stand, divided we fall: achieving alignment in business ecosystems

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In increasingly specialized business environments no single firm tends to possess the resources to develop and commercialize an offering from start to finish. Innovation-oriented ventures, therefore, inherently operate within business ecosystems, where the individual offerings of various firms combine together to create novel customer facing value propositions. The ecosystem setting gives rise to several challenges, due to the high interdependence of ecosystem members and the novelty of the ecosystem value proposition in face of the broader socio-technical setting. Previous research proposes that in order to address these challenges, firms in ecosystems should achieve alignment among themselves and with the external environment surrounding the ecosystem. However, the notion of ecosystem alignment has thus far received limited scholarly attention. The current research aims to study the interactions of firms in business ecosystems in order to investigate four specific aspects of ecosystem alignment. As such, we propose to conduct three studies to investigate how ecosystem alignment is achieved, and one study that investigates the negative systemic effects of losing ecosystem alignment. In these studies, we employ theoretical synthesis, qualitative case study research and system dynamics modelling.