

The Performativity of Strategy

Call for Papers – Special Issue of *Long Range Planning*

Special Issue Guest Editors

Laure Cabantous, Cass Business School, City University London

Jean-Pascal Gond, Cass Business School, City University London

Alex Wright, The Open University Business School

Deadline for submission of 1000-word long abstracts: **30 September 2014**

Deadline for submission of papers to the Special Issue: **15 March 2015**

Contact details: performativity.strat@gmail.com.

The Performativity of Strategy

Although it is widely acknowledged that strategy matters to society and has multiple effects on organizations and markets, the processes whereby strategic ideas, theories and models influence individuals, organizations and markets remain under-studied. In addition, despite extensive research on strategy, we still know little about how strategy theories “work” in practice.

This special issue is a forum to study the performativity of strategy and to answer the following questions: *How and why are strategy theories and concepts used and “performed” in practice? What are the implications and impact of the performativity of strategy?*

We would like management scholars to engage thoroughly with Michel Callon’s idea that economics and management theories are performative, that is they perform and shape the external world. However, we also consider that other conceptualizations of performativity – such as the conceptualization developed by the Communicative Constitution of Organization perspective, Barad’s post-humanist approach to performativity, or the concept of performative praxis – offer promising avenues to address these questions.

The purpose of this Special Issue is to engage scholars who have an interest in the *discursive, social-material* or *practice-based* dimensions of the performativity of strategy. We will therefore consider conceptual and empirical manuscripts as long as they explicitly mobilize one (or several) conceptualizations of performativity and they seek to create a new body of knowledge concerning the relationships between strategy theories and practice. We also welcome manuscripts that critically reflect on strategy theories’ influence on organizational reality.

We encourage papers from researchers and practitioners that address, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- How and to what extent does strategic management acquire the power to shape organizational life and the organizational field? Are strategy theories self-fulfilling prophecies? Can strategy be approached as performative praxis—a set of activities that contribute to turning a theory into social reality?

- How are some strategic management frameworks and tools such as Porter’s five forces framework, Barney’s VRIN model or Freeman’s stakeholder theory more performative than others?
- How do performativity struggles between alternative models or theories of strategy in organizations emerge? For instance, how do strategy theories compete with economic representations of the firm, financial models (e.g., real option modelling) and theories, models and concepts from other disciplines (e.g., decision theory, sociology, ecology) to shape organizational strategies?
- How do academics and practitioners interact (or compete) when designing or diffusing innovative strategic concepts, such as the Bottom of the Pyramid, Blue Ocean Strategy, Coopetition or the Red Queen Effect?
- If business models are models encapsulating an organization’s strategy, to what extent are these models “performative”? Where does the performative power of business models come from?
- How are strategy and management consultants, and other professionals involved in the performativity of strategy?

In responding to this call, we particularly welcome empirical contributions that document the concrete and practical effects of strategy theory. In terms of methodology, we welcome submissions in which a variety of research strategies and methods for collecting and analysing data are used.

Process and Deadlines

Stage 1: Submission of a 1000-words abstract by 30 September 2014

Please submit an extended abstract or a clear expression of interest to the guest editors by **30 September 2014** at the email address that follows: performativity.strat@gmail.com

All abstracts will receive a first screening and feedback by the guest editors who will encourage authors of promising abstracts to submit full manuscripts to the Special Issue.

Stage 2: Papers for the special issue will have to be sent by 15 March 2015

Papers for the special issue should be prepared according to LRP’s guidelines for authors (www.lrp.ac). Papers will undergo a normal reviewing process. Please submit full manuscripts to the online submission system of LRP before **15 March 2015**: <http://ees.elsevier.com/lrp/default.asp>

Should you have any questions about the Special Issue process and deadlines, please contact the guest editors at performativity.strat@gmail.com.

30 September 2014	Submission of abstract
15 October 2014	Notification to authors regarding their abstract submission
15 March 2015	Submission of full paper to Long Range Planning
Winter 2016	Intended publication of Special Issue

Suggested References

- Barad, K. 2003. Posthumanist performativity: Toward an understanding of how matter comes to matter. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28(3): 801-831.
- Barad, K. 2007. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*: Duke University Press.
- Cabantous, L., & Gond, J.-P. 2011. Rational decision-making as a 'performative praxis': Explaining rationality's éternel retour. *Organization Science*, 22(3): 573-586.
- Cabantous, L., Gond, J.-P. & Johnson-Cramer, M. 2010. Decision theory-as-practice: Crafting economic rationality in organizations. *Organization Studies*, 31(11): 1531-1566.
- Callon, M. 1998. *The Laws of the Markets*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Callon, M. 2007. What does it mean to say that economics is performative? In D. MacKenzie, F. Muniesa, & L. Siu (Eds.), *Do Economists Make Markets? On the Performativity of Economics*. Princeton University Press.
- Cochoy F., Giraudeau M., McFall L. 2010. Performativity, economics and politics: An overview, *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 3(2): 139-146.
- Cooren, F. 2004. Textual agency: How texts do things in organizational settings. *Organization*, 11(3): 373-393.
- Doganova, L., & Eyquem-Renault, M. 2009. What do business model do? Innovation devices in technology entrepreneurship. *Research Policy*, 38(10): 1559-1570.
- Ferraro, F., Pfeffer, J., & Sutton, R. I. 2005. Economic language and assumptions: How theories can become self-fulfilling. *Academy of Management Review*, 30(1): 8-24.
- Ghoshal, S. 2005. Bad management theories are destroying good management practices. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 4(1): 75-91.
- Hardy, C., Palmer, I., & Phillips, N. 2000. Discourse as a strategic resource. *Human relations*, 53(9): 1227-1248.
- MacKenzie, D., & Millo, Y. 2003. Constructing a market, performing a theory: the historical sociology of a financial derivatives exchange. *American Review of Sociology*, 109(1): 107-145.
- Orlikowski, W., J., & Scott, S. V. 2008. Sociomateriality: Challenging the separation of technology, work and organization. *Academy of Management Annals*, 2(1): 433-474.
- Vaara, E., Sorsa, V., & Pälli, P. 2010. On the force potential of strategy texts: A critical discourse analysis of a strategic plan and its power effects in a city organization. *Organization*, 17(6): 685-702.