



ISM SEMINAR Summer Term 2015-16

Speaker: Professor Hans Berends, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam

Title: The development of open platform strategies in home automation

Date: Thursday 12 May 2016

Venue: 1.015, WBS

Time: 14:00

Abstract: Digitally connected products are changing many areas of work and life. For instance, smart thermostats, connected lighting, and digital door locks turn homes into the smart homes that were long the province of science fiction. Such digital innovation often evolves around platforms that enable connections across users and complementary products. A strategic question for platform providers is whether and how to open their platform to interoperate with devices from other developers. This seminar will present preliminary findings from a study that sets out to extend theory on the development of open platform strategies. We focus on the burgeoning home automation industry, in which we have so far identified around 70 platforms that enable users to connect multiple smart home devices. The histories of individual platforms have been reconstructed as event sequences. Our comparative analysis revealed four types of platforms strategies – orchestrator, connector, closed and mixed strategies – and shows how dynamics within and between these types results in more open and similar platform strategies, but also in increased competition between these platforms and the protocols they support.

Biography: Professor Berends is an organization scientist with a background in philosophy and industrial engineering, and received a PhD from Eindhoven University of Technology for a dissertation on knowledge sharing in industrial research. His research interests concern processes and practices of innovation, organizational learning, and interorganizational collaboration. His work has been published in leading journals including Organization Science, Organization Studies, Human Relations, and Journal of Product Innovation Management.

Registration: Alison Solman, ISM Group
Alison.solman@wbs.ac.uk
024 7652 4101

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