

Strategizing Activities and Practice Interest Group
Three Year Review Report
Submitted to the Academy of Management DIGR Committee

February 2013

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Introduction

The Strategizing Activities and Practice Interest Group was established in 2010 and has run full main programs and PDW sessions at San Antonio (2011) and Boston (2012). It has received 66 main program, six symposia and five PDW submissions for the 2013 conference in Orlando, with 94 reviewers signed up.

The Interest Group has a distinct domain, the first two sentences of the domain statement being:

To advance knowledge and understanding of strategy as something people do and not just something organizations have, and therefore the work involved in doing strategy. Empirically the focus is on the day-to-day-work, activities and practices of strategists, with an interest in how this work socially accomplishes a wide range of individual and organizational outcomes, and also relates to broader societal and institutional trends.

The complete domain statement is included as Appendix 1.

The Interest Group's bylaws proposed that the Group should:

- 1. Enable the growth and visibility of a body of scholarship that is showing significant potential for scholarly contribution in opening up a venue for exploring strategic management as it is practiced within and across organizations*
- 2. Enable further development of an emerging community of international scholars*
- 3. Meet the development needs of this community of scholars through recognizing and advancing their particular methodological and epistemological traditions*
- 4. Increase the vibrancy of the Academy through a body of scholarship that enables connections to, yet has no exact overlap with, many other divisions*

In the following, we start by considering the key metrics provided by the Academy and then address the Academy's recommended topics of Member Survey, Observations for Improvement and Goals/actions in that order.

Overall, we find that the SAP Interest Group is a vibrant community, with a markedly international and early-career membership and a lively meeting program. At the same time, we make observations regarding potential improvements particularly in the following areas: support for early career scholars, communications and governance, liaison with other divisions and recruitment of US members.

Key Metrics

As background, we highlight the following, based largely on the 'Key Metrics' supplied by the Academy of Management.

The Interest Group membership at 1 July 2012 was 512, up 10.1 percent on the previous year (AoM: -2.5 percent). Its membership is distinctive in being 63.0 percent international (AoM: 45.2 per cent), 32.4 percent students (AoM: 25.6 percent) and 11.3 percent executives (AoM: 7.1 percent). The executive proportion is declining (-8.1 percent since 2011), something we shall return to in the Observations section.

The 2012 program accepted 31 papers and 8 symposia. Paper submissions for 2012 were 86, up 30.6 percent on the previous year; symposia submissions were 12, double the previous year. The 2012 paper acceptance rate was 36 percent (AoM: 51 percent); the symposium acceptance rate was 67 percent (AoM: 59 percent). The drop in 2013 submissions will be discussed in the Observations section.

The Interest Group’s 2012 elections participation rate was 28.7 percent (AoM: 28.0 percent), higher than the previous year (21.4 percent) but lower than the first (35.4 percent).

The Interest Group has consistently run a surplus (2011: \$700; 2012: \$743). It has also raised its own funds: in 2011, funds raised were \$4175, about double the Academy of Management allocation (\$2105); in 2012 funds raised were \$1406, against \$4255 from the Academy. At the end of 2012, the Interest Group had a balance of \$2182. Fundraising activity is discussed in the Observations and Goals/actions sections.

Survey Analysis and reflections

Our review survey was based on both standard Academy of Management questions and some designed specifically by the Interest Group. The survey was carried out in the Fall of 2012 and produced 155 responses, a response rate of 29.5 percent, the second highest of the five recent reviews for which the Academy has provided us data¹. The profile of respondents broadly reflected the membership and, except for the high proportion of European residents (46 percent), was similar to that of the comparison divisions.

On the Academy’s standard question, the survey found 57 percent of respondents either extremely or very satisfied with the Interest Group, roughly in the middle of the comparison group of five (see Table 1 below). There is a group of 12 percent who are only somewhat satisfied or not satisfied.

Table 1: Overall, how satisfied are you with your membership in the division?

	CMS	MSR	RM	SAP	TIM
Not satisfied	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Somewhat satisfied	13%	8%	6%	9%	8%
Satisfied	36%	31%	33%	33%	44%
Very satisfied	34%	35%	36%	35%	36%
Extremely satisfied	15%	25%	23%	22%	9%

This section continues by summarizing key points arising from the survey, broadly under the headings of the Health and Governance Checklist.

Bylaws and Domain

The survey introduced a specific question (18) asking about the possible Interest Group name change from Strategizing Activities and Practice, to Strategizing Activities and Practices (the last in the plural). This change is to affirm an interest in strategy’s discursive, sociomaterial or institutionalized practices, rather than simply in ‘practice’ (which might be understood by

¹ The four comparison divisions are CMS, MSR, RM and TIM.

‘activities’ anyway). 76.3 percent of respondents were in favor of the change, 7.9 percent against, the remainder indifferent/undecided.

The name change is further discussed in the Observations section and is the subject of a proposal in the Goals/action section.

Membership

The creation of an international community was one of the four original objectives in the Interest Group’s bylaws and our membership is highly international by Academy of Management standards. In line with this, 48 percent of respondents report themselves to be very or extremely satisfied with international outreach, the highest of the five comparison groups. However, the strength of the international community reflects the origins of the Interest Group rather than a deliberate membership campaign. Some qualitative responses to Questions 21, 22 and 23 touched on the need to increase US membership. Outreach to US members and the creation of a distinct membership secretary position will be covered in the Observations and Goals/action sections.

70 percent of respondents identify SAP as their primary division or interest group, again roughly in the middle of the five comparison groups. Where respondents indicated another division, the most popular were OMT (20), BPS (15), OB (7), MOC (6) and ODC (6). Just 33 percent of respondents were very or extremely satisfied with relations with other divisions, similar to the comparison group but allowing for improvement. Relationships with other divisions and traditions were amongst the most mentioned issues in the qualitative responses to Questions 21, 22 and 23. One of the four objectives in the Interest Group’s bylaws refers to the creation of connections with other divisions. Liaison with divisions will be addressed in the Observation and Goals/action sections.

The most important motive for belonging to SAP was to gain and share information relevant to research (average rating 1.41), equal second behind the Research Methods division. Gaining and sharing information relevant to teaching, training and management practice were next important (average ratings for the respective items 3.30 and 3.29). By a small margin, SAP members’ interest in teaching is the greatest of the five groups, though the interest in training and management practice was the second lowest. The importance of research and teaching may reflect particularly the early career profile of our membership, and we shall address their interests in the Observations and Goals/action sections.

Regularity of respondents’ attendance at the Academy meetings is in line with the other comparison groups (‘pretty much every year’: 39 percent), though, perhaps reflecting the early career and international status of many members, access to funding is identified as a higher barrier to attendance than for other groups (71 percent of non-attenders). However, scholarships to support travel to Academy meetings are not rated a high priority for future investment on the part of the Interest Group (Question 16).

Programs and Activities

Respondents appear generally satisfied with the Academy meeting activities. 70 percent of respondents agree or agree strongly that the Interest Group offers a diverse and interesting slate. 63 percent are very or extremely satisfied with PDW activities and 54 percent the same with traditional paper sessions: in both cases, these are the highest percentages of the five

comparison groups (see Table 2 below). 60 percent are very or extremely satisfied with symposia, the highest of the five comparison groups. 51 percent are very or extremely satisfied with activities that address the Interest Group’s domain, again the highest of the five comparison groups. 55 percent agree or agree strongly that the Interest Group offers useful reviews, satisfactory but with room for improvement, especially given our encouragement for this.

Table 2: Satisfaction with PDWs and Main Program Paper Sessions

	PDWs						Traditional Paper Sessions				
	Not satisfied		- Extremely satisfied				Not satisfied		- Extremely satisfied		
CMS	3%	15%	33%	33%	17%		4%	12%	37%	32%	14%
MSR	1%	12%	35%	33%	20%		1%	10%	39%	38%	12%
RM	2%	7%	40%	27%	24%		2%	9%	44%	36%	9%
SAP	3%	8%	28%	35%	26%		1%	12%	32%	39%	16%
TIM	2%	10%	44%	36%	8%		3%	15%	45%	33%	5%

Respondents are also satisfied with social and networking opportunities and with access to participation on the program (see Table 3). Despite the high rejection rate for paper proposals (above), it is noticeable that 58 percent of respondents express themselves to be extremely or very satisfied with participation, more than for any of the comparison groups. Nonetheless, although respondents may be satisfied with participation, 36 percent of respondents have never participated as a reviewer, 56 percent have never presented at a PDW, 34 percent had never presented a paper, 68 percent had never served as a chair or discussant and 75 percent had never volunteered in some capacity. While none of these percentages is out of line with the other groups (except the last), and they may reflect the newness of the Interest Group and the early career status of many members, these rates of participation are something that could be improved. We address participation in the Observation and Goals/action sections.

Table 3: Satisfaction with Social and Networking Opportunities and Access to Participation in Activities

	Social and Networking Opportunities						Access to Participation in Activities				
	Not satisfied		- Extremely satisfied				Not satisfied		- Extremely satisfied		
CMS	2%	11%	29%	32%	25%		4%	11%	34%	32%	20%
MSR	5%	7%	40%	26%	22%		2%	8%	37%	33%	21%
RM	5%	11%	44%	26%	14%		3%	8%	41%	32%	15%
SAP	3%	13%	29%	31%	25%		2%	11%	29%	36%	22%
TIM	4%	16%	39%	33%	9%		3%	10%	43%	35%	9%

The high proportion of early career and doctoral members may also be reflected in the expressed priorities for future investment by the Interest Group (Question 16). The highest priority (2.93 average ranking on a 1-7 scale) was more attention to doctoral students, followed by more attention to early career faculty (2.97), then - some way behind - presentations by leading members of the field (3.57). Implications particularly for the PDW program will be addressed under Goals/actions.

To recall, the practitioner membership is large by comparison with other Academy divisions, but declining. Several qualitative responses to Questions 20, 21 and 22 raised practitioner needs as requiring attention, though a couple also pointed to issues of confusion over the Interest Group’s affiliation to ‘Practice’. Overall, however, more attention to the practitioner membership was ranked fourth of the eight priorities on Question 16, with an average ranking of 4.48, well behind the top three priorities. We discuss practitioners further in the Observations section.

Communications and Governance

Respondents reported a high sense of community in the Interest Group, with 51 percent very or extremely satisfied, the highest proportion of the comparison groups. Qualitative answers to Question 20 on what respondents liked best about the Interest Group referred relatively often to the sense of community. 49 percent were similarly satisfied with the level of communication and 54 percent with the quality of the newsletter, both again the highest of the comparison groups (the latest newsletter is included as Appendix 2, giving an idea of the scope of our activity). However, only 31 per cent were very or extremely satisfied with the listserv: while not out of line with the other groups, this has potential for improvement.

44 percent of respondents were very or extremely satisfied with the responsiveness of officers to member concerns, equal highest of the comparison groups. However, as indicated in Table 4, the opportunities to influence the ‘division’ (i.e. Interest Group) or become ‘division’ leaders are average. As in Table 5, there is reasonable satisfaction with the elections and with awards processes, at least compared to the other groups. However, the largest group of qualitative responses to Question 21 on what respondents liked least about the Interest Group centered around issues of inclusiveness, referring to its apparent ‘clubish’ or ‘cliquish’ nature (15 responses in all). Inclusiveness is something that we address in the Observations and Goals/actions sections.

Table 4: Satisfaction with Influence and Leadership Openness

	Opportunities to Influence the ‘Division’						Ability to become ‘Division’ Leaders				
	Not satisfied		- Extremely satisfied				Not satisfied		- Extremely satisfied		
CMS	7%	19%	40%	25%	10%		4%	17%	37%	31%	11%
MSR	6%	14%	39%	24%	16%		6%	11%	43%	22%	18%
RM	6%	17%	49%	19%	9%		5%	13%	49%	22%	11%
SAP	7%	15%	44%	26%	8%		6%	13%	44%	25%	12%
TIM	10%	21%	51%	14%	4%		8%	17%	53%	17%	5%

Table 5: Satisfaction with Elections and Awards Processes.

	Fair and Open Elections						Selection Process for Awards				
	Not satisfied		- Extremely satisfied				Not satisfied		- Extremely satisfied		
CMS	1%	7%	35%	33%	24%		3%	9%	45%	30%	13%
MSR	4%	5%	37%	28%	26%		3%	8%	41%	30%	19%
RM	2%	6%	38%	33%	22%		3%	9%	49%	25%	15%
SAP	2%	6%	36%	29%	28%		2%	10%	44%	27%	17%
TIM	4%	10%	44%	28%	14%		5%	14%	51%	23%	7%

Observations for improvement

Our impression from the survey and the extent of PDW and main program activity is that the Strategizing Activities and Practice Interest Group has made a good start. On many of the comparative survey items, the Interest Group ranks highest amongst the comparison group. Interest Group membership is growing against a background of slight decline for the Academy as a whole. Although submissions for 2013 are down, this is against the background of an 18 percent fall for the Academy as a whole and the exceptional location of EGOS, attractive to European scholars, in North America this year. There is substantial reviewer sign-up, with a ratio of 1.4 reviewers per paper.

With regard to the original objectives stated in the bylaws, the Interest Group has been particularly successful in developing a community of international scholars. There is also good progress in enabling the growth of a body of scholarship exploring strategic management as it is practiced, in meeting the community's developmental needs and in creating a vibrant body of scholarship distinct from but connected to other divisions.

The Interest Group's officers believe that the Interest Group is capable of further growth on this present trajectory and expect that it will be in a position to apply for full Divisional status in the coming three years.

However, the survey and our responses to the Health and Governance checklist have together prompted a very helpful thought-process about areas for improvement. These areas fall broadly into four themes.

Support for Early Career Scholars and Doctoral Students

Our membership is relatively strong in terms of early career scholars and doctoral students, promising for the future. The survey identified the needs of these two groups as the highest priorities for investment by the Interest Group. Our PDWs are already highly rated by survey respondents, but these provide a particularly useful opportunity for further early career support. We have regularly run paper development sessions aimed at doctoral students, and we propose to continue this. In 2013, we shall be offering a journal editors' panel, representing the *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *Journal of Management Studies*, *Long Range Planning*, *Organization Studies* and *Strategic Organization*. There will be a PDW session for early career scholars and doctoral students, preceded by a new doctoral students' breakfast: naming this represents a future sponsorship opportunity for more targeted fundraising. We have also deliberately designed a 'State of SAP' PDW in order to showcase some 'next generation' scholars. There will also be a PDW on 'Teaching SAP', important for early career scholars particularly and an issue identified as high priority in the survey.

We already offer a best doctoral student paper prize, and will continue that. We are considering a best early career scholar (five years post-doctorate) paper prize. We intend to continue our efforts to increase participation in reviewing, a valuable apprenticeship for early career scholars and doctoral students, and we also aim to increase the quality of reviews, particularly important for this group. We already offer a best reviewer prize and have featured a photograph of the winner on the first page of our last newsletter, but we will consider further initiatives with regard to reviewing, particularly for the 2014 PDW. Naming these various prizes represents a fundraising opportunity. The prizes are not monetary at this point.

Offering early career scholars roles as chairs and discussants in the main program paper sessions is another opportunity for us to increase participation and raise the profiles of promising scholars.

We propose that one of the representatives-at-large should be specifically responsible for early career scholars and doctoral students. The introduction of a distinct membership secretary should enhance recruitment and retention of early career scholars as well.

In addition, we have co-sponsored a PDW aimed at early career scholars and doctoral students at EGOS this year, and we are in touch with Strategy-as-Practice or similar groups at the Strategic Management Society and the British Academy of Management.

Communications and Governance

The Interest Group is currently working through the first cycle of its leadership, with its founding generation on the point of retirement from office. It is important at this point that the Interest Group is clear about its identity and develops its future generations of officers. In developing its future leadership, the Interest Group needs also to address the survey concern about perceived clubbishness.

There are several ways to support the development of the next generation and increase inclusion. This year, our call for nominations explicitly encouraged both early-career scholars and geographical diversity, and also welcomed self-nomination. We intend to continue this approach. Beyond this, we can help less established scholars feel more involved in the Interest Group through program activities, for example participating as chairs or discussants, something that few survey respondents had done so far, and involving them in formal roles in PDWs (for example, paper development sessions). The elected representative-at-large positions could be given more clearly identified responsibilities, offering a chance for holders of such early career positions to make a mark and preparing them for larger roles later. We propose changing the current PDW Chair title to Assistant Program Chair in order to clarify the direction of expected development and also to encourage support for the Program Chair, recognized as currently an onerous position. At the same time, we propose a '2+3' progression sequence for officers, in order to remove the dauntingly long commitment involved in the five year progression from Assistant Program Chair to Past Chair: thus progression would normally be from Assistant Program Chair to Program Chair (i.e. two years), and then a separate process from Chair Elect through to Past Interest Group Chair (i.e. three years). This 2+3 structure would require more attention to continuity and support through various positions, something that the Health and Governance checklist has helped us identify as an area for improvement too in the future. We propose more formal induction of new officers in the future, particularly through a pre-meeting at the Academy, and to regularize an officers' meeting (virtual/physical) early in the year.

We can also improve communications and interaction, especially on Interest Group policy issues. The listserv offers one means for enhancing continuous interaction, and improvements here are a priority. Further development of the newsletter – already a perceived strength – could help too, especially in soliciting think-pieces on policy issues (the last newsletter had one such). We have resolved to devote more time in the Interest Group's business meeting to policy issues, rather than simply prize awards, announcements and similar. We are discussing ways of identifying officers more clearly at the business meeting (special badges, T-shirts or similar) in order to make it easier for members to interact with them.

One further issue is the Interest Group's identity as the original leadership moves on. Here the Interest Group's name is important. As above, the existing officers have proposed a change from Strategizing Activities and Practice to Strategizing Activities and Practices. This is in tune with current developments in the Interest Group's research, particularly its concern for discursive, sociomaterial and institutionalized practices.² It is also consistent with the original domain statement, where 'practices' are highlighted in the second sentence: 'Empirically the focus is on the day-to-day-work, activities and practices of strategists...' (see Appendix 1 for full text). The proposed name change is supported by 76.3 percent of survey respondents. This name change may also help resolve identity confusion on the part of some practitioners. As noted above, the Interest Group has a larger proportion of practitioners than others, some perhaps attracted initially by the apparent association with 'practice' signaled in the group's name. A practitioner interest is entirely appropriate to us, as it is to most other Divisions. However, we suspect that a misunderstanding of the 'practice' name does lead to some dissatisfaction with the Interest Group's priority on research, as indicated in a few of the qualitative responses to the survey. We expect that adopting the plural form 'Practices', referring to strategizing practices amenable theoretical and empirical research, will help reduce the identity confusion.

Liaison with Other Divisions

Only one third of survey respondents were very or extremely satisfied with liaison with other divisions. While not out of line with other divisions, there is scope for improvement: creating connections with other divisions is one of the bylaw objectives. We already have a formal liaison with BPS through Stefano Brusoni (formerly Sarah Kaplan). However, the survey identified OMT as the division with the largest alternative affiliation of members, and we shall seek a formal liaison person there too. For the 2013 meeting, we have already designed a showcase symposium with leading representatives of the BPS, OMT and MOC divisions, and we intend to continue such initiatives in future programs.

Developing US Membership

The Interest Group is unusual in having such a large international membership. However, several of the qualitative responses to the survey touched on the need to increase US membership. Increased US membership is an obvious means of increasing membership as a whole, as well as likely to serve the legitimacy of the Interest Group in the largest, and most prestigious, national community of scholars.

The creation of a formal Membership Secretary offers a means of being more proactive in recruiting US members. At the same time, we are specifically encouraging the nomination of US members to officer positions (two officers are from the US currently). A possibility is to encourage one of the representatives-at-large to take on specifically US member recruitment responsibilities.

² Vaara E. and Whittington R. (2012), 'Strategy as Practice: Taking Practices Seriously', *Academy of Management Annals*, 6, 1, 285-336.

Goals/actions

The discussion so far leads to a number of specific goals and actions, as follows:

1. Continued growth for the Interest Group on its present trajectory and progress towards full Divisional status over the next three years
2. The amendment of the bylaws to rename the Interest Group ‘Strategizing Activities and Practices’
3. The amendment of the bylaws to create the distinct position of membership secretary, elected on a three year basis similar to the current Treasurer and Secretary
4. The amendment of the bylaws to change the title of PDW Chair to Assistant Program Chair, with support to the main program included as part of the duties
5. The amendment of the bylaws to allow more explicitly for a two year progression between Assistant Program Chair and Program Chair and a three year progression through the various Interest Group Chair positions.
6. The assignment of formal responsibilities to representatives-at-large: these responsibilities may vary over time, but US membership, early career support and communications (listserv etc) are current priorities (no need for amendment to bylaws)
7. The encouragement of nominations for elected positions of early career scholars and US scholars
8. The formal induction of new officers by the Chair, Chair Elect and previous holders of relevant positions
9. The devotion of more time at the annual business meeting to Interest Group policy issues, supported by more policy discussion in the newsletter and elsewhere
10. The improvement of communications through the listserv and the regularization of Fall and Spring editions of the newsletter and any other means that appear appropriate
11. The promotion of inclusion through widening involvement in main program chair and discussant positions and prominent PDW activities
12. The continued development of PDW activities suited to early career scholars
13. The promotion of prizes (e.g. doctoral, early career scholar and best reviewer) and welcoming events (such as doctoral breakfasts) likely to benefit early career scholars
14. Increased fundraising, with naming opportunities for priority activities (such as prizes or welcoming events)
15. Seeking a formal liaison person with the OMT division and improving liaison generally with other Divisions, particularly through joint activities in the main program and PDWs

Appendix 1

Strategizing Activities and Practice Interest Group Domain Statement:

To advance knowledge and understanding of strategy as something people do and not just something organizations have, and therefore the work involved in doing strategy. Empirically the focus is on the day-to-day-work, activities and practices of strategists, with an interest in how this work socially accomplishes a wide range of individual and organizational outcomes, and also relates to broader societal and institutional trends. The focus on strategists extends beyond concerns with upper echelons and even middle managers to include other influential players such as consultants, non-executives and business school gurus, and beyond considerations such as demographics to a consideration of how aspects such as training, knowledge, identity and emotions can affect an individual's strategy making activity. The focus on the work of strategists includes both understanding at a micro level traditional areas of strategy process and content research and the generic practices (e.g. planning routines, discourse, tool-use) by which they are accomplished. Methodologically this research focus generates particular challenges in terms of closeness to strategic practitioners. Thus the interest group encourages methodological innovation through, for example, collaborative and mixed method approaches, action research interventions, executive development and coaching based relationships, video and narrative approaches. Theoretical pluralism is also encouraged with recognition of the potential contributions from a wide range of sociological and organization theories such as practice based, institutional, discourse, sensemaking, routines and cognition.

Appendix 2

See next page



SAP Newsletter

Join SAP in Orlando, 2013!

*Richard Whittington (Chair)
University of Oxford*

Welcome to a bumper newsletter! We have articles on *hot topics in SAP research*, how *SAP research differs* from typical SMJ research, the question of *what counts as strategic* in SAP research, being *new at the Academy conference*, a review of *SAP teaching resources*, and a debating-piece about *where next* for the Interest Group. There are reports from the *2012 Professional Development Workshops*, a list of *2012 prize-winners*, and *calls for submissions* to the main program and to the PDW sessions for the Academy meeting in Orlando, 2013. Next there are calls for a *British Journal of Management* special issue on *Materializing Strategy*, for *EGOS in Montreal* next year, for the *SMS 2013 in Atlanta* too, and for a *joint doctoral student and paper review session* in December at Aston. We also have news of *video and audio resources* useful for research and teaching in SAP. Finally, there is a *contacts list* for the Interest Group's officers – do be in touch. Throughout, the newsletter carries pictures from the Interest Group's 2012 Business Meeting and Social. Hope to see you at the same event in 2013!

Meanwhile, it's an important moment for the SAP Interest Group – our first formal review by the Academy is just starting. This is a great opportunity to consider what we are doing and what we can do better. All Interest Group members will receive a survey very soon, and we hope you will respond. There will be questions about what we can do to improve both the main program and the PDW program. There are questions too about how we can stay in touch and help our membership between Academy meetings. There is also a proposal regarding a change in the Interest Group's title, to recognize its interest in *practices*. The more responses we get to the survey, the better!

The Interest Group is growing: we are at 512 members, up from 221 in 2010, against a slight decline in overall Academy membership. The membership splits at just under 40 percent United States, just over 60 percent 'international'. We are looking to continue our growth trajectory. Remember: you can be member of more than two divisions or IGs, for a nominal fee.



Viviane Sergi (HEC Montreal) receives the best reviewer 2012 award from out-going Chair, Curtis Le Baron (BYU).

The Interest Group has benefited from great leadership in its first two years. Special thanks go to the outgoing Chair, Curtis LeBaron, and the Interest Group's 2012 Program Chair, Saku Mantere, and PDW Chair, Tomi Laamanen. Best wishes and thanks in advance to Tomi as 2013 Program Chair, and Ann Smith as 2013 PDW Chair. They want your submissions...

The 2013 Academy theme is '*Capitalism in Question*', raising issues about alternative economic systems around the world. This is a great opportunity to explore SAP questions around, for example, the influence of societal context on strategy activities, practitioners and practices.

The 2013 Academy will rely as usual on the help of IG members. Members serve in various officer positions, as award committee members and as reviewers. Please volunteer! The Interest Group particularly prides itself on the quality of its reviews. A reputation for good reviewing attracts good submissions and good reviews make for better final papers and better sessions. Reviewers are of course anonymous, but we can feature the 2012 best IG reviewer on our front page, Viviane Sergi (HEC Montreal). Thank you, Viviane, and all others who help out in so many ways.

Some Hot Topics in SAP Research

David Seidl (past SAP Chair, University of Zurich) and
Violetta Splitter (University of Zurich).

Over the last decade, strategy-as-practice (SAP) research has generated a substantial body of knowledge about the different aspects, forms and implications of strategizing activity (for an overview of the field see Golsorkhi, Rouleau, Seidl and Vaara, 2010. *Cambridge Handbook of Strategy as Practice*. Cambridge: CUP Press). As the research field has grown and matured, we can observe the establishment of distinctive subfields within SAP research focussing on issues such as the different roles of strategy tools, the forms and functions of strategy workshops, the ways in which discursive practices shape strategy, the strategic roles of middle managers or the possibilities and constraints of participation in strategizing. As is characteristic for a vibrant and creative research community, there are always lots of new research topics emerging next to the established ones.

In order to identify at least some of these new topics we conducted a survey among those SAP researchers who can be expected to have a good overview of the field. These included people with leadership roles in the SAP interest groups at the Academy of Management, British Academy of Management, EGOS, and SMS. Based on their feedback we created a list of ten currently “hot” topics which meet the following four criteria: particular interest in the topic, relative newness, growing number of people working on these topics and large potential for further research. We expect plenty more hot topics to emerge, but in the meantime we provide a brief description of current hot topics, at least as identified in the survey:

(1) Institutional dimension of strategy practice

Description: Research in this area examines how strategy practice affects and gets affected by macro-level institutions.

Researchers: Charlotte Cloutier, Loizos Heracleous, Paula Jarzabkowski, Ann Langley, Sotirios Paroutis, Michael Smets, Eero Vaara, Richard Whittington

Sample publications: Smets, M., Morris, T. and Greenwood, R. (2012) From Practice to Field: Multi-level Model of Practice-driven Institutional Change. *Academy of Management Journal* 55: 877-904; Paroutis S. and Heracleous L. (2013) Discourse Revisited: Dimensions and Employment of First-Order Strategy Discourse during Institutional Adoption. *Strategic Management Journal* (forthcoming).

Please Submit a Paper or Proposal to SAP at AoM 2013

The Academy of Management is calling for submissions (papers, symposia, PDW proposals, and caucus proposals) for the 2013 AOM Annual Meeting, August 9-13, Orlando, Florida. The deadline for ALL submissions will be January 15th, 2013 at 5:00 pm EST). The official conference theme is **"Capitalism in Question," addressing big questions about economic systems after the recent economic crisis and inviting us to think about other kinds of economic systems around the world. This is fertile territory for practice approaches to strategy that recognize the role of societal context. See also Tomi Laamanen's fuller call below.**

(2) Sociomateriality in strategy practice

Description: Research in this area examines the role and effect of material resources in strategizing practice.

Researchers: Linda Rouleau, Charlotte Cloutier, Stephanie Dameron, Päivi Eriksson, Paula Jarzabkowski, Jane Lê, Curtis LeBaron, Hanna Lehtimäki, Pekka Pälli, Michael Smets, Paul Spee, Virpi Sorsa, Eero Vaara, Richard Whittington

Sample publications: Kaplan, S. (2011) Strategy and PowerPoint: An Inquiry into the Epistemic Culture and Machinery of Strategy Making. *Organization Science* 22: 320-346; Vaara, E., Sorsa, V. and 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.

(3) The role of the body in strategy practice

Description: Research in this area examines the role that the body and embodiment play in strategy practice.

Researchers: Curtis LeBaron, Gary Burke, Paula Jarzabkowski, Michael Smets, Paul Spee, Richard Whittington

Sample publications: Streeck, J., Goodwin, C. and LeBaron, C. (Eds.) (2011) *Embodied interaction: Language and body in the material world*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press; Minochia, S. and Stonehouse, G. (2007) Towards a body-aware strategic organization, *Strategic Organization* 5(4), 437-445.

(4) The role of numbers in strategy practice

Description: Research in this area examines how numbers are being used by managers in strategizing practice.

Researchers: Jean-Louis Denis, Bertrand Fauré, Ann Langley, Feng Liu, Linda Rouleau

Sample publications: Fauré, B. and Rouleau, L. (2011) The Strategic competence of accountants and middle managers in budget making. *Accounting, Organization and Society*, 36, 167-182; Denis, J.-L., Langley, A. and Rouleau, L. (2006) The power of numbers in strategizing, *Strategic Organization*, 4 (4): 349-377.

(5) The role of time in strategy practice

Description: Research into this area looks at how time influences and is influenced by strategy practice.

Researchers: Sarah Kaplan, Jane Lê, Wanda Orlikowski
Sample publications: Kaplan, S. and Orlikowski, W. (2012) Temporal Work in Strategy Making, *Organization Science*, Forthcoming.

(6) Inter-organizational strategizing

Description: Research in this area is examining how strategizing occurs across organizational boundaries and within field contexts.

Researchers: Charlotte Cloutier, Stephanie Dameron, Robert MacIntosh, Donald MacLean, David Seidl, Felix Werle, Richard Whittington

Sample publications: Werle, F. and Seidl, D. (2012) Inter-Organizational Strategizing as Extension of Sensemaking Capacities. Paper presented at the *Academy of Management Meeting 2012*; Whittington R., Basak-Yakis B. and Cailluet L. (2011) Opening Strategy: Evolution of a Precarious Profession, *British Journal of Management*, 22: 531-544.

(7) The role of emotions in strategy practice

Description: Research in this area looks at how emotions shape and are shaped by strategy practice.

Researchers: Feng Liu, Ethel Brundin, Mona Ericson, Paula Jarzabkowski, Jane Lê, Sally Maitlis, Leif Melin

Sample publications: Feng L. and Sally, M. (2012) Emotional Dynamics And Strategizing Processes: A Study Of Strategic Conversations In Top Team Meetings. *Journal of Management Studies* (forthcoming).

(8) Strategy practice and performativity

Description: Research in this area examines the performativity of strategic practices.

Researchers: Stewart Clegg, Chris Carter, Jean-Pascal Gond, Stéphane Guérard, Martin Kornberger, Ann Langley, David Seidl

Sample publications: Kornberger, M. and Clegg, S. (2011) Strategy as performative practice: The case of Sydney 2030. *Strategic Organization* 9:136-162.

(9) Strategy practice and identity

Description: Research in this area examines how strategy practice shapes and is shaped the strategists identities.

Researchers: Saku Mantere, David Oliver, Linda Rouleau, Eero Vaara

Sample publications: Beech, N., and Johnson, P. (2005) Discourses of disrupted identities in the practice of strategic change: The mayor, the street-fighter and the insider-out. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 18(1): 31-47. Ravasi, D. and Phillips, N. (2011) Strategies of alignment: Organizational identity management and strategic change at Bang & Olufsen. *Strategic Organization*, 9(2): 103-135.

(10) Strategic legitimation practices

Description: Research in this area is examining how strategists engage in legitimation activities to acquire support for their ideas, projects and organizations.

Researchers: Julia Balogun, Joep Cornelissen, Claus Jacobs, Florian Ueberbacher, Eero Vaara

Sample publications: Vaara, E. and Monin, P. (2010) A Recursive Perspective on Discursive Legitimation and Organizational Action in Mergers and Acquisitions. *Organization Science*, 21: 3-22; Erkama, N. and Vaara, E. (2010) Struggles over legitimacy in global organizational restructuring: A rhetorical perspective on legitimation strategies and dynamics in a shutdown case. *Organization Studies*, 31(7), 813-839.



The IG 2012 Social seems to be going well – come along in 2013!

What SAP Does - Differently

Stephen Cummings (Victoria University Wellington) and Emmanuel Monod (Paris Dauphine University)

Vaara and Whittington's 2012 *Academy of Management Annals* review paper of SAP research articles signifies a 'coming of age' that affords a new opportunity. As SAP has taken form, many articles have helped galvanize the fledgling field by outlining what SAP research is. Now we are able to report on what SAP research *does*. In preparation for a PDW at the 2012 AOM conference, "SAP in perspective", we began to analyse the articles identified in Vaara and Whittington's (VW's) review.

While we don't have space to reveal the concept maps we developed for the session here, the counts of the most common concepts in the abstracts of these papers and those they frequently cite provide a good list of what SAP researchers focussed on. The top 15 (excluding 'strategy') are: Practice/s; Process; Managers; Organizational; Discursive; Actors; Planning; Case; Change; Making; Work; Activities; Context; Power; Middle. When we looked at the abstracts of those papers not included in the VW list but cited 5 or more times by the VW articles, most of the same concepts showed up, but additional prominent concepts that might be added to a definitional list were: Social; Influence; Empirical; Systems and Decisions.

There was agreement at the PDW that this list captured what SAP was about. But what people have subsequently reported to be most useful was the SAP list contrasted with a set developed for a recent article in *Long Range Planning* - all article abstracts published in the *Strategic Management Journal* from 2001-2008. The two list of most common concepts shows SAP's very distinct interests, compared with SMJ research:

SMJ

1. Firms
2. Performance
3. Management
4. Industry
5. Market
6. Competitive
7. Resources
8. Advantage
9. Results
10. Capabilities
11. Organizational
12. Value
13. Relationship
14. Model
15. Theory

SAP

1. Practice/s
2. Process
3. Managers
4. Organizational
5. Discursive
6. Actors
7. Planning
8. Case
9. Change
10. Making
11. Work
12. Activities
13. Context
14. Power
15. Middle

Is it 'strategic'?

Paula Jarzabkowski (Cornell University/University of Aston)

In discussion at SAP conferences and workshops, the question often arises; 'is this strategy?' This is particularly the case when papers deal with actors outside the C-suite and phenomena outside strategic planning, strategic decision-making and formally designated strategic change programmes. That is, outside those phenomena that the organisation itself labels as strategic and those actors who are either designated by others, or self-identify, as strategists.

On the one hand this query is relevant. If we go beyond what can clearly be labeled as strategy, we run the risk that everything, and hence nothing, is strategy. However, if we look at the broad remit of the SAP movement and some of the initial and recent agenda-setting papers, it is clear that the field set out to do more than apply a practice lens to the usual suspects and existing strategy phenomena. For example, Whittington et al (2003, *Journal of Management Inquiry*) identify a wide range of producers and consumers of the strategy discourse whose role in strategy-making is critical but under-explored, including gurus, ratings agents, and consultants that could not be considered strategists by traditional definitions. At the other end of the spectrum Johnson et al (2003, *Journal of Management Studies*) advocated a focus on the micro activities of people who do strategy inside organisations. Their criteria, consistent with that of Hendry (2000, *Journal of Management Studies*) is those activities that shape the survival of the firm, many of which may not be labelled as strategic, particularly a priori. Indeed, even in the strategy process tradition from which some strategy-as-practice research stems, it is hard to believe that Burgelman's (1983, *Administrative Science Quarterly*) project managers at Intel would have been either labelled or have self-identified as strategists.

Yet, as Jarzabkowski et al (2007, *Human Relations*) noted, most SAP studies still examine actors at the C-suite level, or those middle managers with clearly defined roles in strategic planning and strategic change. Hence, there are still few studies that examine other types of actors, such as those outside the firm (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009, *International Journal of Management Reviews*). Furthermore, because of our dominant focus on activities obviously labeled as strategic, we still have insufficient explanations of strategic emergence (Vaara & Whittington, 2012, *Academy of Management Annals*). This is partially an ontological problem, as there are few accessible theoretical frameworks with which to conceptualize emergence. It is also a methodological problem because an emerging unit of analysis cannot be precisely defined in advance. Indeed, if we adopt

practice perspectives on strategy without design (Chia & Holt, 2009, *Strategy Without Design*, CUP), and strategic activities as practical coping (Chia & Mackay, 2007, *Human Relations*), then it will be nearly impossible to identify in advance which actors and activities are strategic. Rather, it will be necessary to immerse in phenomena that seem to be important to the firm, and examine what emerges.

Meeting the SAP remit to broaden the phenomena of interest and the explanations for strategic outcomes beyond the usual suspects and typical activities thus remains challenging. A first step in rising to this challenge may be to acknowledge the limitations of ill-defined units of analyses and partial theories, and to press on regardless, in order to develop studies that bridge the links between activities that are seemingly inconsequential at their origin, and yet strategic in their impact.

The Academy for First-Timers

Katharina Dittrich (University of Zurich)

Maneuvering through the largest management conference worldwide can be a daunting task for PhD students and other first-timers, but focusing on a few essentials may help you to make your way through the conference jungle: (1) pre-conference workshops (so-called PDWs), (2) symposia and (3) business meetings and informal receptions.

PDWs are a great opportunity to engage in intensive, even one-to-one discussions with senior scholars (e.g. the SAP Paper Development Workshop), to meet your peers and realize they face the same anxieties and fears as you (e.g. the OMT Doctoral Consortium) and to get a sense of where particular research fields are heading (e.g. “New Directions in Research on Strategizing Activities and Practice”). Remember to look for and register early for PDWs as some of them require a separate application and have deadlines as early as mid-May.

During the main conference, focus on *symposia* because they offer greater coherency between the presentations and often assemble a number of leading scholars in a particular field, so it is easier for you to find the group of scholars you want to talk to.

However, don't get too caught up in the conference schedule and make sure you attend a number of *business meetings and receptions* (e.g. the SAP Business Meeting and Party). Enjoy the delicious food and drinks, relax and suddenly you may find yourself engaged in a discussion with scholars you have always wanted to talk to.

Some last words of practical advice. Consider staying in an apartment with other PhD students because it is lighter on your travel budget and simply more fun. Make sure to bring warm clothes for the conference, unless you feel comfortable in the fridge-like temperatures of American air-conditioning. And finally, don't forget to take the opportunity to do some sightseeing and go to Disneyland next year.



Felix Werle (University of Zurich) receives the prize for best doctoral student paper

Teaching Strategy-as-practice

Stéphane Guerard (University of Zurich) and Jane Lê (University of Sydney).

One basic mission of the strategy-as-practice (S-as-P) community is the production of knowledge relevant for practitioners. While a significant amount of such knowledge has been generated, we think that more effort needs to be devoted to teaching it.

Two years ago, we surveyed the approx. 500 people registered to the S-as-P website (www.s-as-p.org). While several expressed interest in teaching the practice of strategy, few people were actually teaching it. Since then, several initiatives have emerged (e.g., the textbook *Practicing Strategy* (2013) written by Paroutis, Heracleous and Angwin and the online series of short lectures on S-as-P (www.hstalks.com)). These efforts suggest that the strategy-as-practice community is taking a significant step toward reaching a larger audience. However, more needs to be done.

The S-as-P website (<http://www.s-as-p.org/>) now has a section called *teaching material*. We envision that this will become an important community resource. Thus, in order to expand this repository, we ask you to please send us any material that you use or would use to teach S-as-P (e.g. case studies, syllabus).

We encourage you to integrate this knowledge developed by our community into your teaching.



Ann Smith (2013 PDW Chair) is thanked for organizing the 2012 IG Social by Curtis LeBaron (outgoing IG Chair)

What Next for the SAP IG?

Ann Smith (University of Tennessee)

As we head into the third year of our Interest Group and the group member survey is getting underway this fall, perhaps now is a good time to ponder the future of our Interest Group. In a recent review of the original proposal to form our Interest Group, I was struck by the tensions between our group's strong connections with other divisions - such as Business Policy and Strategy, Research Methods, and Management and Organization Consulting - and the distinctiveness of our group in terms of the topics of daily crafting of strategy. But the need for this carved-out academic space seems obvious with our community now numbering over 500 members (as of October, 2012). So, where do we go from here?

I asked this question about the Interest Group's future innocuously to several SAP members across a variety of venues at the Boston conference. The responses varied from strong ("Let's leave this issue alone for now!"), perplexed ("Why of course we would try to become a Division in short order.") to vague ("Let's see where we are in 5 more years."). Perhaps I stumbled onto a third rail issue that may be better left alone at this point. Yet, I think the future of our Group might deserve some space and conversation during the next few years. What do we want to become?

There are a variety of alternatives for our future – apply to become a Division as soon as possible, apply to become a Division slowly after several years, merge back into a larger Division, merge with a smaller Division, merge several divisions, dissolve, or remain an Interest Group. What do you think? Let's talk about it at the Florida conference next year!

Sociomateriality: Does it Matter?

Curtis LeBaron (Brigham Young University)

Practice theory and research, which highlights what people *do* and *how*, has consistently emphasized the social aspects and material features of organizational activity. For this reason, our scholarly community (SAP) is well positioned to participate in a growing debate about *sociomateriality*, which is moving across various subfields of management studies.

Sociomateriality refers to the "inherent inseparability" of social and material aspects of organizational work (Orlikowski, 2008). While organization scholars have traditionally privileged

discourse (talk and text) as the empirical basis for their research findings, a growing number are turning their attention toward the artifacts and bodies that become unavoidably entangled with discourse. Notions of sociomateriality are helping to mend various academic and artificial distinctions that may be misleading and obsolete, such as the separation of cognition and embodiment, verbal and nonverbal, action and experience, and so forth.

But critics are raising important questions. Does sociomateriality matter? Will empirical attention to material things and physical bodies make a difference? Will sociomateriality be consequential for management research and practice? To address such questions, an SAP workshop was organized at the Academy of Management meeting in Boston. The workshop included three empirical presentations that employed contrasting methodologies to investigate the unintended consequences of various sociomaterial technologies and innovations.

- *Curtis LeBaron* (Brigham Young University) showed how written documents (an old technology) can play a crucial role in events such as employment interviews, negotiation sessions, and management meetings. More than mute containers of information, documents may be read aloud, often at a time and in a manner unintended by the original author. Specifically, LeBaron analyzed the interactive details of a videotaped police interrogation to show how the suspect's Miranda rights, when printed on cardstock and read aloud, were vocalized in ways that (ironically) empowered the interrogator rather than the suspect.
- *Wanda Orlikowski* (MIT), who coined the term "sociomateriality," examined the rise of social media reviewing websites, such as TripAdvisor®, which combine user-generated content with algorithmic rating and ranking mechanisms—innovations that have practical and sometimes unintended consequences for the hospitality industry. These media represent new forms of distributed, collective content production that defy easy characterization and shift established norms and forms of knowing and organizing. To examine such technologies empirically, Orlikowski argued, researchers need effective conceptual and analytical tools that allow them to make sense of these changes on the ground.
- *Paul Carlile* (Boston University) examined the 220-year history of the U.S. patent system in order to account for the evolution and unintended consequences of its associated information systems. He looked at how the accumulation of information as both thing and interest has driven the process of its emergence. To empirically track this dual nature of information, he focused on the actors involved

and the technological artifacts they developed and used. The dual nature of information and its accumulation provides a mechanism for explaining the branching layers of patent information systems' emergence: storage, classification, search and analytics. His approach gives us a more sophisticated mechanism for explaining the origins, consequences and contested nature of information systems, in contrast to the more general, evolutionary and recursive arguments that are currently invoked.

Although these scholars shared a sociomaterial orientation, the data they examined differed significantly in temporal duration and level of detail. LeBaron analyzed a few hours of videotaped data to identify empirical details (vocal and visible) and patterns of interaction among organizational participants. Orlikowski examined changes to a given industry, generated by social media technologies and their associated practices, involving a period of several years. Carlile studied the evolution of the U.S. patent information management systems (PIMS), which occurred over a 200-year period, and he empirically examined the interaction of actors and technology artifacts and changes that generate new actions and technologies over time.

The workshop showed that sociomateriality goes much deeper than relationships and physicality. Sociomateriality generates consequences of abundance or scarcity, success or failure, pleasure or pain, benefit or cost. A sociomaterial approach helps us to pay clear attention to the practices of individuals taking situated



Helene Colman accepts the best Practice-orientated paper award, on behalf of co-authors Katja Hyde and Randi Lunnan

actions—and the consequences that those individuals and actions generate. By seeing consequences as outcomes and inputs of the ongoing entanglements and processes of organizational life, our research becomes

more consequential as we help to answer the question: How can we develop or design better practices going forward?

SAP Reflections & Projections

Christina Cataldo, Jonathan Raelin and Uta Morgenstern (all University of Bath)

At the 2012 Academy of Management, we facilitated a PDW titled, “Reflections & Projections: An Interactive PDW Developing the Future of Strategy-as-Practice (SAP)”. This session featured keynote speakers and roundtable discussions to cultivate a future agenda for SAP.

Steve Floyd began by discussing SAP as an umbrella construct, cautioning the field about associated validity threats. *Paula Jarzabkowski* talked about refocusing SAP on a practice-based perspective, particularly one using video methodologies. *Linda Rouleau* urged the further adoption of an organizational ethnographic research approach. *Richard Whittington* raised implications arising from the limited scope of macro SAP research. *Gerard Hodgkinson* presented a cognitive approach to address the limited exposure of bounded rationality and emotions. Finally, *Hugh Willmott* presented a critical perspective, raising the possibility that SAP is losing sight of power and discourse’s impact.

Subsequent roundtables generated several questions to propel the field forward. Specifically:

- 1) Given its breadth, does SAP lack clarity around its fundamental purpose?
- 2) Can SAP be enhanced through a greater theoretical and political foundation?
- 3) By using micro-methods, is the presence of macro power and materiality undermined?
- 4) In the quest for legitimacy, is SAP losing its real-world relevance? How can SAP be more effectively brought to a practitioner audience?
- 5) What happens when people and organizations have conflicting demands? How do they reconcile this conflict?
- 6) What is the impact of emotion-driven behavior on SAP? How can we get access to and capture this component?

Capturing social practice in practice: Video recording, new avenues for studies of practice and the practice of ethnography

Gary Burke (Aston University)

There is a growing interest in studying how bodies, spatial contexts and material artifacts are implicated in the accomplishment of strategy work (Vaara & Whittington, *Academy of Management Annals*, 2012). Video methodologies, in particular, offer promise in this regard because they can overcome observational limitations and render situations more amenable to repeated scrutiny. This 2012 PDW provided a forum for scholars, from different disciplinary backgrounds, to share experiences and provoke discussion about the affordances of video methodologies and the practicalities of doing this kind of research. Discussions were wide-ranging, but all the speakers talked enthusiastically about the potential of video. These exhortations were, of course, tempered with tales about the difficulties of collecting video data. Presenters emphasized that video should only be used when it fits, for instance, where researchers believe that embodiment, spatiality and materiality are in some way consequential.

Various recording strategies were also discussed, ranging from relatively static approaches (e.g. recording fixed meetings) to more fluid approaches (e.g. shadowing managers, capturing opportune moments in a bar). These recording strategies prompted discussion about what a video camera does, and does not, capture. By zooming in our perspective inevitably narrows and we must guard against inadvertently overlooking important aspects of the “non-recorded” context. It is here, perhaps, that traditional ethnographic approaches and video can complement each other. Finally, there was a lot of discussion about how to analyse and write-up visual data. Future PDWs could usefully develop this theme; perhaps by giving participants the opportunity to analyse video excerpts and confront their analyses. There is certainly scope for more workshops on the video method, we still have much to learn.

Thanks to all contributors: François Cooren, Joep Cornelissen, Gail Fairhurst, Paula Jarzabkowski, Curtis LeBaron, Michael Pratt, Linda Rouleau and Paul Spee

Congratulations – and thank you!

The SAP IG attracted 87 paper submissions and 12 symposium submissions for the 2012 Academy, all requiring reviewing. The SAP community prides itself on the constructive nature of its reviews – it’s good for authors and great for the IG as a whole. So let’s give a big thank you to all our reviewers and a special one for

Viviane Sergi (HEC Montreal), SAP Best Reviewer 2012. Look out for the opportunity to sign up to review for 2013. Reviewing is good for you too!

Congratulations too for the following winners of the various best paper categories.

The SAP best doctoral student paper: *Felix Werle (doctoral student) and David Nils Seidl, University of Zurich*, 'Inter-organizational strategizing as extension of sensemaking.'

The SAP best Practice-orientated paper: *Helene Loe Colman, Katja Hydle and Randi Lunnan (BI Norwegian Business School)*, 'Who we are and what we do: Strategizing and identity work in post-acquisition integration'.

The SAP best paper overall: *A. Paul Spee (University of Sydney), Paula Jarzabkowski (Cornell University) and Michael Smets (Aston Business School)*, 'Keeping it real: Bringing sociomateriality into Strategy-as-Practice'.

organizational strategists are, what they do, how they do it, which practices and materials they draw on, and what the consequences of their activities are. While this interest group is concerned with the strategy work involved in strategy development and strategic change, it also encourages theoretical pluralism and methodological innovation. If the focus of your study is on strategy work at any organizational level and in any context, we invite you to submit your paper!

The general theme of the upcoming AoM Meeting is "Capitalism in Question." This call addresses features that differentiate capitalism from previous economic systems in history (market competition among profit-driven firms; wage employment within these firms; limited government over them) and questions the inevitability of the prevailing economic system. Such a broad research context opens up a number of questions for strategy scholars. What do strategic management practices look like in different capitalistic environments? What can managers in free-market capitalist economies learn from managers in organizations competing in variants to capitalism? How might the prevailing economic systems affect management processes within organizations? How strategy work is affected by different variants of capitalism warrants closer inspection. For more information on the AoM theme, please visit <http://annualmeeting.aomonline.org/2013>.



Paula Jarzabkowski and Paul Spee receive the award, the best overall paper (with Michael Smets)

While we encourage the submission of (conceptual and empirical) papers that focus on the specific conference theme, we also welcome papers that address other issues within the general domain of the SAP Interest Group and papers that explore the intersections of the SAP Interest Group and other closely related areas, such as BPS, ODC, MOC, and OMT. We also encourage you to submit symposia. Symposia offer an excellent opportunity for collaborating with others to develop a cohesive and engaging session. The SAP Interest Group encompasses diverse interests and is eager to engage with new ideas. We invite you in particular to organize symposia that propose integrative lenses or new methodologies that challenge current organizational and theoretical perspectives.

The submission deadline for the Orlando AOM Meeting is *January 15th, 2013 at 5:00 pm EST*. All submissions must be made through the AOM submission website. Please carefully review all the submission guidelines and formatting instructions before submitting. If any of the guidelines or formatting instructions are not met, the submission cannot be reviewed. SAP Interest Group Awards will be handed out for the best paper, the best doctoral student paper, and the best reviewer (see the SAP Interest Group website at <http://groups.aomonline.org/sap> for more details about these awards).

Main Program Call for Papers, Academy of Management, Orlando, 2013

Timo Laamanen (University of St Gallen)

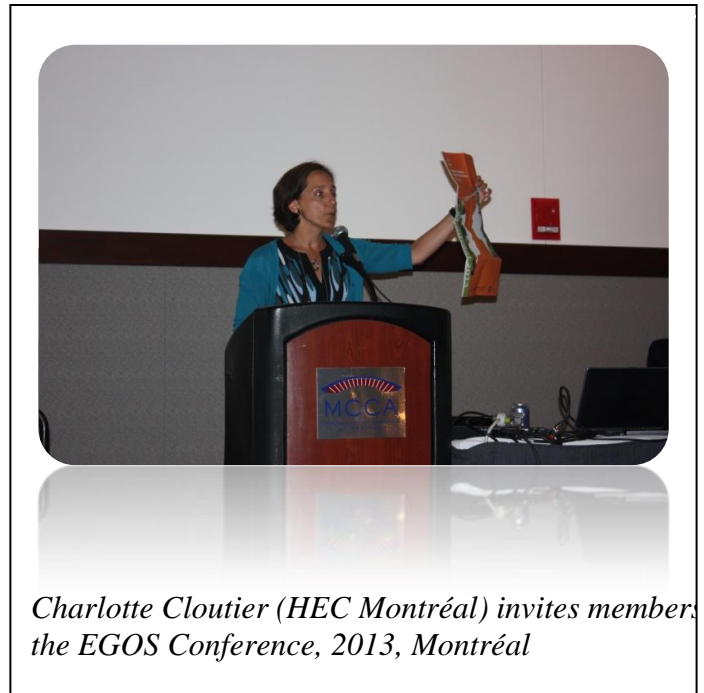
The primary purpose of the SAP Interest Group is to advance knowledge and understanding of strategy as something people in organizations do rather than only something that organizations have. This emerging body of knowledge is focused primarily on who

Professional Development Program Call, Academy of Management, Orlando, 2013

Ann Smith (University of Tennessee)

The PDWs in Boston were a great success due to Tomi Laamanen's planning and execution, well-designed PDW formats many in conjunction with other Divisions, and active participation by senior SAP scholars. The SAP PDWs provided a place for SAP scholars to connect with more established SAP scholars, to learn about methodological innovations and novel topics within SAP, and to think about the future of SAP research. At the "Publishing Strategy as Practice Paper Workshop" the papers of several junior scholars were selected and they worked one-on-one with a senior SAP scholar to further their paper towards journal submission. The video-recording session on Saturday morning was extremely well attended by both SAP members and members from other Divisions. Saturday also was a day in which emerging topics such as sociomateriality were clearly presented and discussed in a lively forum with many SAP members and members from other divisions in attendance. Extra chairs were brought in for the overflow crowd at the "Reflections & Projections: An Interactive PDW Developing the Future of Strategy-as-Practice" which was provocative and allowed time for participants to connect with one presenter for more informal discussions around a table. The "New Directions in Research on SAP" was also well-attended and provocative. The PDWs continue to be one of the best ways to connect with SAP scholars and scholars beyond the SAP division and to learn about cutting edge methodologies and ideas.

Please consider proposing a PDW for next year's conference! The general theme of the upcoming AoM Meeting is "Capitalism in Question." We warmly invite you to participate by proposing innovative PDW sessions or symposia and by signing up as a coach or participant in the paper development session that we envision to repeat also next year. Our hope is to continue the positive momentum of the past two conferences by providing an array of thought-provoking sessions, specific learning about new techniques or research ideas, and opportunities for close connections among doctoral students, junior faculty members, and senior SAP scholars.



Charlotte Cloutier (HEC Montréal) invites members to the EGOS Conference, 2013, Montréal

Call for 29th EGOS colloquium 2013, Montréal

Charlotte Cloutier (HEC Montréal), Paula Jarzabkowski (Cornell University/University of Aston), Paul Spee (University of Sydney)

From the strategy-as-practice perspective, strategy is something that "people do, with stuff, in societies" (Whittington, 2007). Strategy-as-practice researchers have consequently looked at people (strategy practitioners) and what they do while engaging in strategy work (strategy praxis). They have also become increasingly interested in how strategy practices are enacted and re-enacted on a day-to-day basis in organizations, and how they are embedded within wider levels of society. Strategy is thus viewed as the nexus between strategy practitioners, strategy praxis and strategy practices. Largely absent from this picture however is the "stuff" of strategizing, the material artefacts, objects, tools and technologies which are part and parcel of the social practice of strategy (Jarzabkowski & Whittington, 2008).

This dearth of research in the field of strategy-as-practice mirrors a wider neglect of the inherently sociomaterial nature of organizing in organizational theory (Leonardi & Barley, 2010; Orlikowski & Scott, 2008). In this year's EGOS Strategizing, Activity, and Practice subtheme we wish to explore the various ways in which sociomateriality – in the form of everyday enactment of objects, tools, artefacts, bodies, spaces, infrastructure and technologies in strategy work – might enhance our understanding of strategizing activity and practice.

We invite you to submit to the upcoming EGOS Strategizing Activity and Practice sub theme on “Connecting the material to the social”. Deadline for short papers is January 14, 2013.

As EGOS has acted as an important forum for the development of strategy-as-practice scholarship through the work conducted within the standing working group, strategy-as-practice papers offering contributions beyond the scope of the current theme are also welcomed.

We look forward to seeing you in Montréal.

Thank you from the Treasurer!

Claus Jacobs (Treasurer)

University of St. Gallen

Our second fully-fledged AOM program was kindly supported by institutional members of the Strategy as Practice community (www.sap-in.org). Brigham Young University as well as the Universities of Oxford, Zurich and St. Gallen provided the extra resources necessary to allow for a convivial business meeting and a great party!

Do be in touch with me or the IG Chair if your institution might like to be a sponsor for the 2013 meeting. It's good for the IG and good profile and network building for the institution (various rates are available):

claus.jacobs@unisg.ch;

richard.whittington@sbs.ox.ac.uk.

Call for Strategic Management Society Conference, Atlanta, 2013: Strategy and Sustainability.

Sustainability, the capacity to endure, has become a topic of global concern in recent years, but it has long been a concept central to strategic management. Though much has been learned over the years about how firms develop, acquire, and utilize resources to create sustainable competitive advantage, fundamental changes in competitive environments and in social concerns raise a relatively new and unaddressed set of issues in strategic management research and practice which present an opportunity to revisit our notions of sustainability. The 33rd SMS Annual International Conference in Atlanta will provide a forum for considering emerging and evolving notions of sustainability in strategy research and practice.

The SMS has a thriving ‘Practice of Strategy’ group with over 400 members. Do submit proposals and sign up to review: www.strategicmanagement.net. Deadline for submissions: 27 February, 2013.

BAM Doctoral Workshop and SAP-R Paper Review Meeting, University of Aston, December 13th, 2012.

The Strategy as Practice track at the British Academy of Management will be running a series of workshops aimed especially at early career researchers. The next event will be held at Aston University on the 13.12.2012. Details will be published on the Strategy as Practice forum (www.sap-in.org), as well as the British Academy of Management Website (www.bam.ac.uk). For further information, please contact Mike Zundel (m.zundel@liverpool.ac.uk).

This will be followed in the afternoon by the third meeting of the SAP –Review group (SAP-R), working to develop papers that are already in receipt of journal reviews. Contact *Gary Burke* (g.burke@aston.ac.uk) if you'd like to join what are typically very insightful discussions of getting papers to publication. If you have a paper in the review process (whether R&R or simple reject), and wish to participate in a frank and constructive discussion of how best to take it forward, do let Gary know too. We have had papers successfully published through this process already – yours could be next!

Call for Papers: *British Journal of Management* Special Issue on ‘Strategizing Material and Materializing Strategy’.

Editors *Stéphanie Dameron* (Université Paris-Dauphine), *Jane Lê* (University of Sydney) and *Curtis LeBaron* (Brigham Young University) call for submissions to this special issue of the *British Journal of Management*.

Grounded in practice-based views of strategy, this special issue will explore material practices associated with strategizing: How are objects, artifacts, tools and other material resources used by practitioners to shape and enact organizational strategy? Common objects include ID cards, desks, computers, electronic tablets, software, telephones, reports, presentations, flipcharts, meeting minutes, pens, and so forth. While such objects

may have standard features that make them and their uses recognizable, their influence and purpose vary widely according to how they are used in practice. Artifacts often have symbolic aspects or semiotic features, such as text or inscription, which are the residue of prior work or past acts of meaning. Tools refer to a broader conceptual category, which includes bundles of material and practice, such as meetings and workshops, strategic analysis tools and processes, project groups, and more. A host of material resources are potentially relevant to strategizing—from the human body with its ability to occupy, move, point and passionately argue, to architectural spaces that constrain and give shape to all socio-material practices.

Deadline 30 January, 2013. See the *British Journal of Management* website for further details.

Audio/Slide Talks on SAP Research

Paula Jarzabkowski and David Seidl have just published a collection of talks in the Henry Stewart Talks series. This is a comprehensive introduction to SAP research theories, methods and phenomena. There are contributions from Stewart Clegg, Davide Nicolini, Eero Vaara, Curtis LeBaron, Francois Cooren, Claus Jacobs and Richard Whittington, as well as the two editors.

Full reference: Jarzabkowski, P. and Seidl, D. (2012), *Strategy as Practice: Theories, methodologies and phenomena*, The Marketing & Management Collection, Henry Stewart Talks Ltd, London (online at <http://hstalks.com/go>)

JMS - HEC Montreal Publishing Qualitative Research Workshop video now online!

Charlotte Cloutier (HEC Montréal)

On June 4th, HEC Montreal, together with JMS (Journal of Management Studies) and the Chair in strategic management in pluralistic settings hosted a one day workshop on publishing qualitative research in top-tier journals. The video of this workshop is now available to view online at:

http://expertise.hec.ca/strategic_management_pluralistic_settings/2012/09/21/publishing-qualitative-research-june-workshop-video-available/.

The video is in two parts. In part 1, Kevin Corley (Associate Editor of *Academy of Management Journal*) and Davide Ravasi (Professor at Bocconi University) discuss the review process for Ileana Stigliani and Davide Ravasi's forthcoming *Academy of Management Journal* paper "Organizing thoughts and connecting brains: Material practices and the transition from

individual to group-level prospective sensemaking." Part 2 features a panel discussion on publishing qualitative research with: Kevin Corley, Samer Faraj (McGill University, Senior editor, *Organization Science*); Karen Golden-Biddle (Boston University); Jennifer Howard-Grenville (University of Oregon); Ann Langley (HEC Montréal, Co-editor *Strategic Organization* and Senior Editor, *Organization Studies*), and Davide Ravasi (Associate editor, *Journal of Management Studies*).

New YouTube Channel on Practice.

Robert Wright (Hong Kong Polytechnic University)

A pioneering strategic initiative between the Strategic Management Society's Strategy Practice (SP) Interest Group and the Academy of Management's Strategizing Activities and Practice (SAP) + the All Academy Practice Theme Committee (PTC) have joined forces to set up a YouTube platform to showcase all things "practice" about strategy, strategizing and strategic management including management in general. This YouTube platform will share the pioneering work of each of these three entities, all concerned with theorizing practice, practical rationality, the relevance of our scholarship, and in improving management practice. More videos are being added and we encourage you to subscribe.

Please visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/practicescholarship/videos?flow=grid&view=1>

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*Leadership: from left, Chahrazad Abdallah, David Seidl,
Charlotte Cloutier, Richard Whittington, Curtis LeBaron, Saku
Mantere, Sotirios Paroutis and Tomi Laamanen
(with many thanks to our tireless IG photographer and
PDW chair, the self-effacing Ann Smith)*