

Editorial:

Managing Innovation for Tangible Performance

Chris McPhee, Editor-in-Chief

Sorin Cohn, Guest Editor

From the Editor-in-Chief

Welcome to the October 2013 issue of the *Technology Innovation Management Review*. This is our second issue on the editorial theme of Managing Innovation for Tangible Performance, and I am pleased to welcome back our guest editor, **Sorin Cohn**, President of BD Cohnsulting Inc.

With this issue, the TIM Review celebrates its second birthday! In October 2011, this journal was re-launched as the *Technology Innovation Management Review*, thereby replacing the *Open Source Business Resource*, which was launched in July 2007. Coinciding with this milestone, we just surpassed our target of 10,000 unique visitors per month (timreview.ca/article/569), which represents a doubling of our readership in the past year. Special thanks to our readers, authors, guest editors, reviewers, advisors, and sponsors for their contributions to our success so far!

Our theme in November will be Living Labs, and our guest editors will be **Seppo Leminen**, Principal Lecturer at the Laurea University of Applied Sciences, Finland, and **Mika Westerlund**, Assistant Professor at Carleton University's Sprott School of Business in Ottawa, Canada. Also note that we are continuing our annual tradition of focusing our January issue on the theme of Open Source Business. Please get in touch if you are interested in contributing an article on this topic.

Finally, we encourage you to attend the upcoming International Seeking Solutions Summit (i3s-conference.com) and to participate as an "expert problem solver" in the Quebec Seeks Solution Event (quebecinternational.ca/qss) on November 5 and 6 in Quebec City, Canada. The best papers from the conference will be published in a future issue of the TIM Review. See our March 2013 issue for details of the Seeking Solutions approach to local open innovation (timreview.ca/issue/2013/march).

We hope you enjoy this issue of the TIM Review and will share your comments online. Please contact us (timreview.ca/contact) with article topics and submissions, suggestions for future themes, and any other feedback.

From the Guest Editor

In this second of two issues on Managing Innovation for Tangible Performance, our authors share insights on increasing the competitiveness of firms, meeting market needs by tailoring external innovations, managing innovation throughout a company's lifecycle, collaborating with partners in product development, fostering innovation literacy through applied research, and programming innovative thinking into company culture.

In the first article, I introduce an innovation management framework and assessment tool to help firms increase their competitiveness. This framework and its associated tool provide both large and small companies with an effective methodology for devising competitive management strategies based on an assessment of their competitive status and by monitoring their progress towards improved market positions. Thus, they enable the corporate leadership to decide on priorities for competitive development, adopt appropriate innovation strategies to meet corporate goals, monitor progress, make adjustments, and help create and maintain a culture of innovation that is aligned with business goals.

Next, **Jeff Moretz**, **Karthik Sankaranarayanan**, and **Jennifer Percival** from the University of Ontario Institute of Technology encourage us to not shy away from "reinventing the wheel" when it comes to leveraging external innovation and existing technologies to create products or services that cater to the market needs. They present a three-pillar model for bringing innovations to market successfully and profitably by focusing on market-oriented development, technological development capacity, and organizational capacity. Their article includes examples of companies that attained market success in large part by contextualizing existing technologies in order to create innovative products or services.

Tamas Kopolyay from the Université du Québec en Outaouais in Gatineau, Canada, and **Lisa Chillingworth** and **Brian Mitchell** from Szent István University in Budapest, Hungary, present a model that incorpor-

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ates the effect of leadership and organizational culture upon the evolution of innovation during the firm's market lifecycle. They argue that the management of innovation requires a wide spectrum of approaches with different levels of interventions through the firm's lifecycle. Their model graphically illustrates four dimensions of innovation upon which management focus to varying degrees in step with the firm's progression through the lifecycle.

John Thomson from Thoven Consulting and **Vince Thomson** from McGill University share insights into the use of agile, cooperative techniques to maintain daily communication among numerous internal and partner engineers to better coordinate product design and system integration. With a focus on boundary management (i.e., inter-team relationships and communication), they contrast conventional models of product development with a modern, collaborative approach, which today's companies need to make their product development efforts successful when working with partners.

Robert Luke from George Brown College in Toronto, Canada, examines how colleges and polytechnic institutes are fostering innovation literacy via support for business innovation. He argues that there are two key benefits from colleges conducting applied research with industry partners: industry gains access to talent and support to launch new products and services into the marketplace, and students gain innovation skills through their participation in applied research, which ultimately increases the innovation potential of the workforce. He then presents a logic model, which shows the approach used by George Brown College in developing a framework for measuring this innovation potential with a long-term, outcomes-based analysis.

Finally, **Tim Ragan**, the founder/owner of C-View Strategies, answers the question "How do you program innovative thinking into company culture?". He discusses how executive teams can program the "strategy setting" aspect of innovative thinking into their business and foster a culture of experimentation. He shares five practical steps to help companies intentionally build a culture of innovation within their own organization.

When we combine the insights of these six contributions with those from the articles in the September issue (timreview.ca/issue/2013/september), we see that Michael Porter was right to highlight the fact that "innovation is the central issue in economic prosperity" (1980; tinyurl.com/ms52o7c) – especially in the context of fiercely competitive globalized markets. However, "innovation

without methodology is just luck", as Morris Langdon (2006; tinyurl.com/lkfbxw) has stated so succinctly. Innovation is much more than just technology and R&D. A company's success depends more on market-worthy competitive pursuits and a culture that supports business goals and chosen innovation strategies.

Firm-level innovation comprises the entire portfolio of innovation activities carried out by the firm, and its management aims to maximize the benefits to the corporation in the context of competitive markets and finite corporate resources. Effective management of firm-level innovation is a multi-stage process that addresses, among others, the needs to:

1. Adopt and use an effective firm-level innovation management process based on a well chosen framework of innovation and effective management tools and metrics, as demonstrated by Cohn in this issue.
2. Ensure vision, will, and the means to proceed forward, including the necessary funding for innovation projects (see the article by Hurwitz in the September issue: timreview.ca/article/725). Collaboration is necessary to supplement internal resources and more and more companies take advantage of their partners to achieve critical innovation goals, as discussed by Thomson and Thomson in this issue. Companies need to understand and take advantage of their "innovation ecosystem" – a topic covered by Watters in the September issue (timreview.ca/article/727). Also, universities and colleges need to deliver better training to the next generation of innovators and business leaders, as exemplified by Luke in this issue.
3. Determine the competitive imperatives through targeted assessments (see Cohn in this issue) and business model investigations for achieving leadership differentiation and growth in the market. This approach may necessitate broadening the definition of value and wealth to include non-financial aspects of market performance, as shown by Brousseau-Gauthier and Brousseau in the September issue (timreview.ca/article/726).
4. Select innovation strategies and priority innovation goals, which should go beyond the usual considerations of product innovations to cover resources, culture, organization, corporate processes, and market-interaction innovations. As highlighted by Legrand and LaJoie in the September issue (timreview.ca/article/724), service innovation is becoming more important in the context of the global knowledge eco-

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nomy and requires special attention in Canada. Moretz, Sankaranarayanan, and Percival also point out in this issue the benefits of, and methodologies for, effective exploitation of external innovations and existing technologies.

5. Organize, measure and execute the chosen innovation projects with due attention on time management to avoid missing critical market windows or running out of financial means, as discussed by Crawhall in the September issue (timreview.ca/article/723).
6. Review, learn, adjust, and continue, because competition never ends and innovation must be pursued relentlessly to avoid lifecycle pitfalls and decline, as discussed by Kopyay, Chillingworth, and Mitchell in this issue.
7. Establish and maintain a culture of innovation that permeates all corporate levels, is aligned with corporate goals and performance-evaluation systems for human resources, and operates symbiotically with risk management. Addressing this need effectively requires inculcation of innovative thinking into company culture (see Ragan's contribution in this issue) and the mastering of the art and science of transformation, as described by Schroeder in the September issue (timreview.ca/article/722).

In summary, innovation needs to be managed strategically and methodically for tangible corporate (and national) performance where it matters: in the global marketplace.

So, can one innovate innovation? Our answer is an unqualified yes.

Sorin Cohn
Guest Editor

Chris McPhee
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About the Editors

Chris McPhee is Editor-in-Chief of the *Technology Innovation Management Review*. Chris holds an MASc degree in Technology Innovation Management from Carleton University in Ottawa and BScH and MSc degrees in Biology from Queen's University in Kingston. He has over 15 years of management, design, and content-development experience in Canada and Scotland, primarily in the science, health, and education sectors. As an advisor and editor, he helps entrepreneurs, executives, and researchers develop and express their ideas.

Sorin Cohn has 35 years of international business and technology experience, having been involved in most facets of innovation development: from idea to research and lab prototype, from technology to product, and then to market success on the global stage. He has developed new technologies, created R&D laboratories, started new product lines, and initiated and managed new business units. Sorin has several essential patents in web services, wireless, and digital signal processing, as well as over 70 publications and presentations. He has also been Adjunct Professor at the University of Ottawa. He is a Killam Scholar, and he holds a PhD in Electrical Engineering, an MSc in Physics, and an MEng in Engineering Physics. Sorin is President of BD *Cohn*sulting Inc. As well, he acts as Leader of Innovation Metrics at The Conference Board of Canada and as Chief Program Officer of i-CANADA. He is also Member of the Board of Startup Canada as well as the Board of the Centre for Energy Efficiency.

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