

Call for Papers for the Fifth Emerging Discourse Incubator

Leveraging Multiple Types of Resources within the Supply Chain Network for Competitive Advantage

The purpose of this EDI is to encourage a re-examination of how a firm can leverage resources within its supply chain network to enhance its competitive advantage via both market and non-market based competitive actions. For example, Apple Corporation is able to engage in highly successful product competition with firms such as Samsung because its supply chain network has the needed resources to design, manufacture and bring the firm's products to market faster than its rivals. Therefore, this EDI is particularly interested in submissions that adopt a competitive dynamics perspective to investigate the role of supply chain networks on firm-level competitive moves and countermoves (Grimm, Lee, and Smith, 2006; Hofer, Cantor, and Dai, 2012). Examples of competitive moves and counter-moves include pricing actions, marketing and advertising actions, facility expansion actions, new product innovation actions (e.g., Ferrier, Smith and Grimm, 1999). Increasingly, firms are also engaging in non-market competitive moves such as political lobbying actions as a way to take a proactive posture towards the public policy environment (e.g., Oliver & Holzinger, 2008).

Strategy scholars and economists have debated for many years the role of market forces on the promotion of overall economic growth and innovation. Due to issues of potential market share erosion or industry dethronement (see creative destruction, Schumpeter, 1950; Chen and Miller 2012), many firms such as Apple, Google, and Amazon, are highly incentivized to undertake competitive actions to enhance firm performance. However, only recently has there been increased interest in how internal and external resources within the supply chain network play a critical role in enabling the firm to engage in competitive behavior. While there is little debate that the supply chain can represent an important resource to enhance the firm's ability to compete in hyper-competitive markets, some stakeholders are concerned that firms will leverage their supply chain resources for anti-competitive purposes.

The first goal of this Emerging Discourse Incubator is to increase our understanding of how resources within supply chain networks can provide firms with the ability to engage in competitive and anti-competitive behavior through market-based actions (e.g., competitive moves such as pricing actions and new product introductions) and non-market-based actions (e.g., political influencing strategies). For instance, firms are able to create and share proprietary resources across their networks to realize superior financial and operational returns (Burt, 2003). Firms can leverage resources from their supply chain relationships to identify and exploit market and political opportunities. At the same time, firms can capitalize on supply chain relationships to create undue harm through anti-competitive behavior. For

example, suppliers can leverage the information technology and marketing capabilities accumulated via customer relationships to launch products and services that compete with their customers' offerings (Alcacer and Oxley, 2013). Firm can also engage in non-market actions. For instance, in anticipation of potential governmental rules, anti-trust laws and litigation, some firms proactively lobby public policy officials to protect their supply chain investments. Lobbying enables firms to act more efficiently by enhancing their supply chain network capabilities, but at the risk of creating constraints or harm to other stakeholders. Buyer-Supplier relationships embedded in supply chain networks, thus, have the potential to significantly shape - for better or worse – inter-firm rivalry and political barriers to market expansion.

Likewise, the second goal of the Emerging Discourse Incubator is to develop an improved understanding on the role of multiplex relationships in the leveraging of resources within modern supply chain networks to enhance a firm's ability to make competitive moves and counter-moves. Multiplex relationships are defined as situations when two or more firms and/or individuals are connected through distinct inter- or intra-organizational ties that represent different roles (Modi and Cantor, 2020; Slot, Wuyts, and Geyskens, 2020). Shipilov et al. (2014) noted that multiplex relationships exist not only at the firm level but also at the department, team, or individual level of analysis. Therefore, questions naturally arise as to the competitive impact of multiplex relationships on firm performance. As firms and managers seek to define, build, and leverage relational ties with other firms and individuals, it is important to develop a deeper understanding of the multidimensional nature of relationships in the supply chain. Doing so can significantly improve our understanding of how different types of relationships can influence how managers can gain access to, mobilize, and reconfigure firm and network resources to achieve greater competitive advantage. We believe that individual factors such as personality and cognitive ability as well as situational factors like information technology resources, public policy and the environment influence a team's ability to benefit from multiplex relationships. Because the external environment and supply chain networks undergo frequent changes, this EDI is interested in research that studies how different types of multiplex relationships and organizational changes impact a team's ability to make competitive decisions in organizations and/or supply chain networks (e.g., Summers, Humphrey, and Ferris, 2012). We are also supportive of research on multiplexity that considers how the external business and regulatory environment could influence the firm's competitive behavior.

To summarize, the purpose of this EDI is to encourage further supply chain research by adopting a cross-disciplinary approach to study the formation and leveraging of supply chain network resources for competitive advantage purposes via both market and non-market based competitive actions. This need exists because there is a constant evolution of firm behavior and government regulations within industries and supply chain networks across the globe. The confluence of these forces influences competitive behavior in supply chains.

Provided below are sample questions (organized by topical area) that would be appropriate for this EDI include, but are not limited to:

- Inter-organizational and Supply Chain Network Topic Area:
 - How does the complexity of the supply chain network impact a buying firm's competitive actions and performance?
 - To what extent do the network structural characteristics and prominence of supply chain actors in the buyer firm's network enhance or hinder the ability of the buyer firm to undertake competitive actions?
- Public Policy Topic Area:
 - How does a firm's non-market actions influence firm supply chain actions and firm behavior?
 - Are there certain types of market or non-market based actions carried out by a supplier firm that hinder the buyer firm's ability to navigate unexpected dynamics in their industry or the global economy?
- Individual Topic Area:
 - To what extent do the personality characteristics of representatives from supplier, rival, or buyer firms impact the speed of firms to implement competitive actions in the supply chain network?
 - How do the multiplex relationships among employees in an organization impact a team's capability to leverage supply network resources to support competitive actions?
- Information Technology Area:
 - How does a buyer firm's information technology capabilities enable the firm to leverage supply chain resources for competitive advantage purposes?

We are open to submissions to this EDI that consider any level of analysis such as dyadic, firm or individual level characteristics. As such, frameworks that incorporate elements from supply chain, strategy, public policy, information systems, and/or organizational behavior would be encouraged for this EDI.

Timeline

- June 2021: Initial call for submissions
- June 2021 - December 2022: EDI submissions, as well as regular submissions, are welcomed and will be processed upon submission.
- January 2022: Invited papers will appear online, to initiate the discourse.
- January 2022 - December 2022: EDI papers will be published, as accepted.

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