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About Millenials, New Technology and Researching Business Organizations

Abstract

Online resources for business research will be an innovative space that will help the community around the *Journal of Evolutionary Studies in Business* to sift through interesting and useful resources online to explore, research and teach the diverse, complex and global world of business.

Keywords: Online Resources; Researching Business; Digital Content; Millenials

An Innovative Area

As noted in their first editorial, the executive editors want to break new ground by alerting the community around JESB about interesting and useful resources online to explore, research and teach the diverse, complex and global world of business. Since the advent of the commercial Internet circa 1995, the world has massively gone online. There has been an explosion in the wealth of data and resources available to individuals and organizations as consumer of digital content but also as they themselves have become producers of these resources.

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The architecture of business has also changed. This as marginal applications and innovative software solutions can build into new business models. Think for instance that in today's post-industrial society a taxi company can grow internationally without owning a single car (Uber), the biggest global software vendors have written very little of the code they actually sell (Google Play Store, Apple App Store), the largest accommodation provider has no real estate (Airbnb), global telephone companies own no infrastructure (Skype, WeChat, WasApp, FaceTime), while the most valuable retailers have little or no inventory (Alibaba, Amazon) and the most popular media owners create no content (Facebook, Twitter, Reddit). One would be tempted to suggest assets are no longer important for revenue generation in the new millennium. Yet all of these businesses build on reliable and accessible infrastructure (such as telecommunications or electricity generation which are both characterized by large capital investments). Thus we must not get carried away, as there is more to competitive advantage than innovative software or simple differentiation.

Industry has coined the term "Millenials" to denote all those born and raised while considering the Internet a fact of life. Hence, to the extent that business organizations and people leave a digital "footprint" systematic studies of business (and the people that populate them) must now encompass those resources, the practices through which they are generated, as well as the motivation to generate them. More so as society has seen a fundamental transformation. Fifty or so years after bank credit cards were issued outside of the United States for the first time, today no-one raises an eyebrow to the rather mundane fact that a piece of plastic enables the transfer of value. At the same time, the companies and financial institutions involved in this industry have grown into significant multinational corporations.

In brief, online resources pose opportunities and challenges for teaching, researching and engaging with business organisations. They are fundamental to better understanding capitalism as a system, the organizations and people that compose it in the 21st century. We thus welcome the opportunity to create a space where we can inform about them, consider their content and discuss its potential.

Raising to the Challenge

As noted above, the executive editors of JESB plan to create an innovative space that helps the community around the journal to sift through the maze of online resources. This is a welcome addition to scholarly activities at the same time that it poses a challenge. Some of us still remember the days before the Internet. In that world paper-based communications such as scholarly journals played a key role to keep abreast with developments in the field. The model was relatively simple and guidelines for content were clear and standard. But in breaking new ground, as is the case of this section, we will stick to Antonio Machado:

“Caminante, no hay camino; se hace camino al andar” (loosely translated: “Traveler, there is no road; you make your path as you walk”).

Although we will make things as we walk the journey, here go some basic rules to structure content while thinking to provide guidance to contributors:

- Name or title of the resource
- Nature: Brief description of content and/or purpose (in 50 words or less).
- Category:
 - Single (i.e. a blog populated by one or several authors; perhaps a specific hashtag in tweeter);

- Generic (i.e. category of a resource such as a database, an activity as using a page in Facebook, blogging or using Wikipedia in teaching).
- Access: Free or pay-wall.
- Platform: How does one go about accessing it.
- Location: URL or keywords.
- Language that predominates: (self-explanatory).
- Type of scholarly activity for which it is relevant:
 - Research;
 - Teaching;
 - Administrative (i.e. assistance to productivity);
 - Social (i.e. engagement with others academics); or
 - Impact (i.e. engagement with non-academic community).
- Review by: (Name, Last Name) (Institution, Country)
- Date: (MM/YYYY)
- Review: In 800 to 15,000 words describe its contents while discussing its strengths, weaknesses, why it is innovative and the opportunities (or threats) it opens to the scholarly community around JESB.

Not each and every one of these will be appropriate for all the possible resources, resource combinations and their application to research, teaching and impact. But is a start.

So what is the journey? The goal is to assess the potential of online resources (either as a producer or consumer of these) to further our understanding of business organizations, their people and their practices. The expression of this potential is not limited to a discussion of sources for systematic study or to satisfy intellectual curiosity but it is open to discuss and

evaluate how they can further our teaching or indeed, help us engage with others in the scientific community or the general public. Online resources can be tools as much as they can be the object of research. As such they each have a past, present and future. They can be used to the benefit of single individuals or organizations but also communities of practice and learned societies. Some have worked well, others have found new applications while others had an ephemeral life. Ultimately, to establish a base-line from where we can improve our communications, research, engagement and daily life, in general, in as much as future generation of scholars can learn and better understand the different forms of capitalism, their institutions, their people, practices, ethics, governance and moral challenges in the early 21st century.

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