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ROUTINE-CREATING ROUTINES FOR SERIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE CASE OF A COMPANY BUILDER (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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≈ INTERACTIVE PAPER ≈

**ROUTINE-CREATING ROUTINES FOR SERIAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP:
THE CASE OF A COMPANY BUILDER**

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Principal Topic

Venture-creating routines enable organizations to become serial entrepreneurs. Using organizational ethnography, we study how one such organization, a *company builder*, which is repeatedly creating new ventures uses a set of venture-creating routines. Since existing concepts of serial entrepreneurship focus on founding actions of individuals or teams and do not fully capture the organizational dimension, we use the insights from this single case to develop a framework that renders the company-building process as one being (re)shaped by organizational venture-creating routines.

Method

Out of the set of routines that are carried out in our case, we have selected the prototyping routine as the focal unit of analysis for further ethnographic investigation (after initial interviews and first observations; Yin, 2014). By focusing on the creation and replication of this routine, its re-contextualization for each new venture creation, and its replication in new ventures with different products and services, even business models, we contribute not only to research on serial entrepreneurship but also on the emerging field of routine dynamics. Using ethnographic data, we show how replication accelerates the new venture creation process, while at the same time allowing for novelty generation.

Results and Implications

With our study we aim to develop a more in-depth, rigorous and longitudinal understanding of venture-creating routines and routines and practices in entrepreneurial settings in general (Aldrich & Yang, 2013). In contrast to many established firms, new ventures face fundamental uncertainty (Knight, 1921) to be answered by ad-hoc adaptations (Ritala et al. 2016). In addition, the need to create a new venture with a distinct offer puts a lot of pressure on such ventures to deviate from any standard. Against this backdrop, it is rather counterintuitive to assume that organizational routines might be of any help in generating the novelty that is necessary to succeed on the market (Deken, Carlile, Berends, & Lauche, 2016). Although serial entrepreneurs are quite likely to develop and apply organizational routines for new venture creation, this process has not yet been brought up to the organizational level.

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