CHAPTER 37

Open Strategy as a New Form of Strategizing

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Introduction

Strategy-as-practice (SAP) research focuses on the 'doing of strategy' thereby examining strategy actors, activities and practices involved in formulating, implementing and changing strategies (Kohtamäki et al. 2022; Whittington 2006). Thereby the SAP approach has the potential to critically examine the phenomenon of organizational strategy through a lens that might help to tackle the increasingly complex challenges that organizations are facing today. In this context, most recently 'Open Strategy', a new, major phenomenon in strategy practice and research (Whittington, Cailluet and Yakis-Douglas 2011), is gaining attention by more and more organizations and strategy scholars. While strategy-making was commonly perceived as the sole domain of elite groups within organizations such as small homogeneous top management teams (TMTs) (Hautz 2017), and treated with secrecy to protect competitive advantage (Chandler 1962), this approach to strategy is increasingly facing severe limitations such as cognitive biases, rigidities and limited employee engagement and understanding resulting in increasing failure rates (Stadler et al. 2021). In a response to those limitations, the last decade has brought a shift towards increasing openness in the strategy process. Openness has thereby been conceptualized as a 'a dynamic bundle of practices that affords internal and external actors' greater strategic transparency and/or inclusion, the balance and extent of which respond to evolving contingencies derived from both within and without organizational boundaries' (Hautz, Seidl and Whittington 2017: 299). Hence, open strategic practices aim at greater transparency regarding strategic issues and the inclusion of a larger number and variety of both, internal and external actors in the strategy process (Hautz et al. 2019).

The German-based Premium Cola collective, for example, unlimitedly allows all its more than 1,600 members 'to set strategy agendas, participate in strategy deliberations, and to contribute to decision-making' via a mailing list (Luedicke et al. 2017: 371). At the Swedish telecommunications firm Ericsson, non-executive employees and outsiders engage in the digital 'Strategy Perspectives' community and discuss strategic topics on future trends impacting company and industry (Stadler et al. 2021). Henkel and Deutsche Telekom rely on intranet-based prediction markets to gather and aggregate employees' knowledge via efficient market mechanisms to improve strategic decision-making (Hautz et al. 2019; Stadler et al. 2021). IBM, Barclays, the British bank, and Steelcase, the US-based furniture company apply online strategy jams to involve employees early on in strategy development and facilitate subsequent implementation (Stadler, Hautz and von den Eichen 2020) and even secretive organizations such as the US Navy are relying on crowdsourcing to involve outsiders in developing new strategies (Aten and Thomas 2016). Despite using digital technologies, organizations such as Adidas, or the European steel producer Voest, are organizing analogue workshops with selected non-executive employees and externals such as suppliers, customers, competitors or start-ups in order to identify disruptive threats and to develop growth strategies in non-core businesses (Stadler et al. 2021). And this phenomenon is not limited to large corporations. Also, small- and medium-sized firms open up their strategic deliberations including Gallus, the world's leading

producer of printing presses for label manufacturers, or Saxonia, a software developer (Stadler et al. 2021).

Through applying such diverse practices of openness, traditional strategy work is being re-evaluated and powerful traditions in existing strategy research are challenged. Open Strategy significantly departs from the traditional elitism of Chandler (1962) and the secrecy assumptions set forth by Barney's (1991) resource-based view, but also from assumptions that view strategy as emergent (Mintzberg 1990). This departure from established strategy perspectives requires alternative discussions and has resulted in the emergence of a new field in the strategy research domain. The focus of this steadily growing body of literature is on practices that allow for openness in the context of strategy-making. Therefore, especially SAP scholars have been at the forefront of studying this new phenomenon. Driven by economic, social and technological developments (Whittington, Cailluet and Yakis-Douglas 2011), increased openness in the strategy process seems to fundamentally change the role of actors, their activities and practices performed in the context of strategy development and implementation. In this chapter we aim to review and reconcile SAP literature that has engaged in studying openness in the strategy process, to provide an overview on specific practices studied and to give more insights on major themes that have been related to openness. This chapter continues as follows. The next section focuses on the conceptualization of Open Strategy as a bundle of practices. We continue reviewing the existing literature reporting on practices of openness. From the conceptual and empirical studies identified, we especially focus on thirty-four studies that – explicitly or at least implicitly – applied a practice perspective on openness in the strategy process. Based on these studies, we discuss central themes including the roles of technology and materiality, discourse, temporal dynamics and the relations between emergence and planning as well as between openness and closure. Finally, we highlight how especially a SAP perspective can further contribute to our understanding of Open Strategy.

Open Strategy – A Dynamic Bundle of Diverse Practices

The concept of 'Open Strategy' in its current meaning was influentially shaped by Whittington, Cailluet and Yakis-Douglas (2011), who described the trend towards more 'openness' in strategy-making. In their initial conceptualization, they take a negative definition as a starting point: Open Strategy is introduced as the opposite to 'traditionally exclusive' and opaque strategy-making practices (Whittington, Cailluet and Yakis-Douglas 2011: 535). This first binary distinction between open and closed has then been further operationalized alongside the two key dimensions of transparency and inclusion, which are considered (but not operationalized) to represent continua in their own right. While transparency refers to the availability of strategic information to internal and external audiences, inclusion refers to external and internal consultation to exchange 'information, views and proposals intended to shape the continued evolution of an organization's strategy' (Whittington, Cailluet and Yakis-Douglas 2011: 536). This has resulted in the consideration of a firm as either being open or closed in its strategy process.

In further developing this conceptualization, Hautz, Seidl and Whittington (2017) go beyond this implicit dichotomy based on the two dimensions and 'define Open Strategy as a dynamic bundle of strategizing practices aimed at increased transparency and inclusion regarding strategic issues' (Hautz 2017: 1959). Central to this conceptualization is that both dimensions are explicitly operationalized and discussed as a continuum, rather than a dichotomous decision to be open or closed (Hautz, Seidl and Whittington 2017) and that they are treated as complementary.

Both wider transparency and inclusiveness beyond an exclusively small set of actors in strategy participation in organizations have a research history. Research on participation has, for example, focused on middle management involvement (Wooldridge, Schmid and Floyd 2008). Regarding transparency, researchers from the fields of reputation and impression management

have explored the role of external stakeholders and interest groups (Benner and Zenger 2016; Rindova and Fombrun 1999). However, compared to previous forms of participation and transparency, Open Strategy practices mark a distinctive step in terms of their drivers and, consequently, their likely extent driven by economic, societal and technological forces. Research on Open Strategy thereby takes some of its motivation and relevance from trends in contemporary society (Splitter et al. 2023). Increasing openness has emerged as a leitmotif in many domains over the past decades in various fields of our society (Tkacz 2012). Driven by the combination of spread of internet access, the ability to connect and collaborate around shared interests and the exponentially growing amount of digital data that are created, transparency and inclusion have become demands that organizations are facing on multiple levels. Until recently, the reach and involvement of a larger number of individuals has been difficult and costly to realize, while now digital technologies facilitate the process at low cost and effort (Hautz 2017; Haefliger et al. 2011; Stieger et al. 2012).

Practices of Transparency

A wide variety of Open Strategy-making practices related to the two dimensions of inclusion and transparency have been identified by the reviewed studies so far (Hautz et al. 2019; Ohlson and Yakis-Douglas 2019). These practices that allow organizations to target and engage a wider variety of actors outside TMTs for various strategic purposes differ across multiple dimensions.

In their review of literature on openness as an organizing principle in general, Splitter et al. (2023: 13) find that 'transparency emerges as a primary dimension of openness in seven out of eight organizational domains', including Open Data, Open Education, Open Government, Open Innovation, Open Science, Open Source Software and Open Strategy. Only in the case of Open Platforms is transparency defined as a secondary dimension. What is particular for transparency in Open Strategy contexts, when compared to the other domains of openness, is that in many studies practices of transparency and inclusion go hand in hand. For example, transparency is achieved through creating open conversations and dialogues about strategy with diverse actors (Heracleous, Gößwein and Beaudette 2018) or by providing information necessary for actors to engage in contributing relevant strategic ideas, proposals and suggestions (Dobusch and Dobusch 2019).

But also practices that exclusively aim at increasing transparency without providing explicit opportunities for increased inclusion at the same time have been studied by a few selected studies (see e.g., Whittington, Cailluet and Yakis-Douglas 2016; Yakis-Douglas et al. 2017). These practices of transparency include broadcasting relevant strategic information, for example, through executive blogs (Gegenhuber and Dobusch 2017), strategy presentations targeting analysts and investors (Whittington, Yakis-Douglas and Ahn 2016) or public announcements in the course of M&A deals (Ohlson and Yakis-Douglas 2019; Yakis-Douglas et al. 2017) but also strategic reporting, internal fora, or even whistleblowing (Whittington and Yakis-Douglas 2020). Dobusch et al. (2017) argue that such an approach, restricted to transparency, is often marked by intentions of making an impression rather than creating commitment or consensus. Rather differently, Turco (2016) in her study on a case entitled *The Conversational Firm* emphasizes how a transparency-led approach to openness, where all members of an organization get equal access to all kinds of strategic information while leaving traditional decision hierarchies and job roles intact, might help to enhance both organizational performance and employee satisfaction.

For characterizing and comparing said transparency practices, scholars have suggested several sub-dimensions to provide more nuanced insights, including the number and range of targeted audiences, the range and number of topics disclosed to those specific audiences, thereby regularly distinguishing between internal and external audiences (e.g., Seidl, von Krogh and Whittington 2019b; Whittington, Cailluet and Yakis-Douglas 2011).

But unpacking practices behind general attempts of increasing transparency in strategy processes also points towards potential risks and costs of

opening the strategy process, which may have the potential to outweigh benefits due to tensions inherent in the practices (Hautz, Seidl and Whittington 2017). Sharing of information bears the risk of sacrificing competitive information and may even reduce shared understanding to lack of clarity, shared language and information overload (Luedicke et al. 2017). Hautz, Seidl and Whittington (2017) refer to a *dilemma* of disclosure and dilemma of empowerment, where included actors are required to process large amounts of information and data that goes beyond their original background and context. Based on this conceptualization it is suggested that in terms of being able to leverage benefits of openness, organization need to consider the tension and dilemmatic nature of various open practices (Hautz et al. 2019).

Practices of Inclusion

Practices aimed at increased inclusion specifically aim towards inclusion of a larger number and variety of actors in the strategy process who are typically not in the roles of formal strategists. Such practices include analogue practices such as interorganizational workshops (Seidl and Werle 2018), internal strategy workshops (Mack and Szulanski 2017; Splitter, Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2021) or town hall meetings (Stadler et al. 2021). But also practices such as crowdsourcing, dialoguing, collaborating or soliciting based on digital technologies such as online contests (Hutter Nketia and Füller 2017; Stadler, Hautz and von den Eichen 2020), community platforms (Aten and Thomas 2016; Malhotra, Majchrzak and Niemiec 2017; Matzler et al. 2016; Stadler, Hautz and von den Eichen 2020; Stieger et al. 2012), wikis (Dobusch and Kapeller 2018; Dobusch, Dobusch and Müller-Seitz 2019), or online prediction markets (Stadler, Hautz and von den Eichen 2021) have been investigated. Similar to transparency practices, these studies utilize sub-dimensions to develop a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the actors involved and the specific open practices (Seidl, von Krogh and Whittington 2019b). These sub-dimensions include the number and range of involved stakeholders, the depth of their involvement, their role in the decision-making and 'procedural openness' (Hautz et al. 2019; Seidl, von Krogh and Whittington 2019b). From our identified empirical studies, the vast majority focuses on openness in terms of reaching out to or actively involving actors from outside TMTs but still from within organizational boundaries. Some have considered openness in terms of both including employees but also crossing organizational boundaries and include or address external actors as well. Only very few studies have exclusively focused on external actors who are included in large-scale Open Strategy initiatives (see e.g., the case of Wikimedia's Open Strategy process, Dobusch, Dobusch and Müller-Seitz 2019).

In addition, studies discussing the inclusion of external actors in strategizing processes have focused on interorganizational strategizing. A smaller number of specifically selected actors, representing several organizations, engage in strategy workshops to collectively make sense of meta-problems that are difficult to comprehend and address in isolation (Seidl and Werle 2018). These might, for example, include complex, specific technological developments that pose threats to organizations' businesses (Gattringer et al. 2021). Such interorganizational workshops rely on individuals who are purposefully selected based on their background, knowledge and hierarchical level in an organization (Teulier and Rouleau 2013).

One reason for hesitating to include too many stakeholders in the strategy process might be what Hautz, Seidl and Whittington (2017) term 'dilemma of process', namely that the involvement of wider audiences poses significant challenges in terms of losing speed, flexibility and control in the process (Luedicke et al. 2017). Also, the inclusion of actors in the strategy process might raise diverse expectations (Baptista et al. 2017; Hautz, Seidl and Whittington 2017). When such expectations are unmet, this can result in tensions and conflict (Malhotra, Majchrzak and Niemiec 2017) and a consequential frustration (Baptista et al. 2017) and demotivation of actors (Luedicke et al. 2017). It is yet to be investigated whether this is the case because of or in spite of the fact 'Open Strategy does not necessarily involve the final transfer of

decision rights' (Hautz, Seidl and Whittington 2017: 301; see also Seidl, von Krogh and Whittington 2019b; Whittington, Cailluet and Yakis-Douglas 2011). To date, the majority of open practices aim at information benefits related to idea collection but management nearly always retains decision rights (Hautz et al. 2019) and exclusively sets structures and rules, leading to limited degrees of procedural openness (Dobusch and Dobusch 2019; Dobusch, Dobusch and Müller-Seitz 2019; Seidl, von Krogh and Whittington 2019b).

Key Themes in Research on Open Strategy

Despite a growing number of studies on Open Strategy in recent years, this research stream in itself is still in early phases. We have reviewed literature reporting on practices of openness (see Table 37.1). As this is typically the case in phases of early development of a research stream, practice-related research in the field of Open Strategy so far is characterized by several studies engaging in conceptualizing and theorizing to contribute to better conceptual comprehension of the phenomenon itself. This work accounts for six studies in our sample. Despite advances in this context, empirically verified knowledge on many aspects related to Open Strategy is still limited. As documented in Table 37.1 existing empirical studies – twenty-six of our sample – have thereby largely applied qualitative single or multiple case study approaches mainly based on triangulating data from organizational ethnography, (non-)participant observation, interviews and archival data. Only two studies (Hutter, Nketia and Füller 2017; Whittington, Cailluet and Yakis-Douglas 2016) were based on quantitative data that rely on survey data or secondary archival data of organizations.

Given the overwhelming dominance of the single case study approach, a key methodological decision in these studies is the selection of cases to study (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). Usually, cases have been selected because of strategy-related activities explicitly labelled as 'open', 'transparent' or 'inclusive', such as in the cases of crowdsourcing strategy by a medium-sized firm in Austria (Stieger et al. 2012), the game-based approach by the US Navy (Aten and Thomas 2016) or the Open Strategy process of Wikimedia (Dobusch, Dobusch and Müller-Seitz 2019). Utilizing a typical strength of analysing single cases, these studies combine various data sources and offer a longitudinal perspective. However, in all of the examples mentioned before, the organizations under study engage in temporally limited Open Strategy initiatives that are meant to support or complement traditional strategy-making. Many fewer cases studied were 'born open' or aim to permanently increase the openness of their strategy-making processes (examples include Gegenhuber and Dobusch 2017; Luedicke et al. 2017).

Even fewer studies investigate openness and Open Strategy practices respectively in cases not explicitly labelled as open (for an exception, see the study of the TV Series *Borgen* by Holstein and Rantakari 2022).

Given the predominance of selecting cases labelled as 'open' to study Open Strategy, the focus on identifying and evaluating practices specifically associated with or driven by such open approaches is to be expected. Depending on the focus of the respective analysis, various types of practices (e.g., transparency and/or inclusion-related) or certain aspects of these practices (e.g., materiality, temporality) are highlighted.

Technologies and Materiality Enabling Open Strategy

To some degree, given the general importance of technology as a mediating artefact increasing openness in strategy is being seen as not exclusively but largely driven by new digital technologies (see Table 37.2). Hence, the use of these technologies in Open Strategy processes offers opportunities to further explore socio-materiality in strategy work in general. So far, one angle of investigating materiality in Open Strategy has been that organizations can choose different tools, set-ups or digital technologies as material enablers of inclusion and transparency which allow to overcome specific barriers to traditional strategy work technologies (Mount, Clegg and Pitsis 2020). Stieger et al. (2012), for example, discuss how

Table 37.1 Studies examining Open Strategy from a practice perspective

Author	Title	Research design and data	Research setting/case	Open Strategy practices discussed
Aten and Thomas (2016)	Crowdsourcing strategizing: communication technology affordances and the communicative constitution of organizational strategy	Single case study – multi-source data	Governmental institution: US Navy	Crowdsourcing
Azad and Zablith (2021)	How digital visualizations shape strategy work on the front lines	Single case study – multi-source data	University	Digital supported strategy discussions
Baptista et al. (2017)	Social media and the emergence of reflexiveness as a new capability for Open Strategy	Multiple case study – multi-source data	Seven organizations across different sectors	Social media
Belmondo and Sargis-Roussel (2022)	The political dynamics of opening participation in strategy: the role of strategy specialists' legitimacy and disposition to openness	Conceptual	N/A	Open Strategy practices in general
Brielmaier and Friesl (2021)	Pulled in all directions: Open Strategy participation as an attention contest	Conceptual	N/A	Analogue and online strategy practices
Cai and Canales (2021)	Dual strategy process in open strategizing	Single case study – multi-source data	Organization: platform service 'Techbridge' (synonym)	Crowdsourcing
Dobusch et al. (2017)	A communication perspective on Open Strategy and open innovation	Conceptual	N/A	Open Strategy practices in general
Dobusch and Kapeller (2018)	Open strategy-making with crowds and communities: comparing Wikimedia and Creative Commons	Multiple case study – multi-source data	Non-profit organizations: Wikimedia and Creative Commons	Wikis
Dobusch, Dobusch and Müller-Seitz (2019)	Closing for the benefit of openness? The case of Wikimedia's Open Strategy process	Single case study – multi-source data	Non-profit organization: Wikimedia	Wikis
Einola, Kohtamäki and Hietikko (2019)	Open Strategy in a smart city	Single case study – multi-source data	Medium-sized city: Vaasa, Finland	Crowdsourcing
Gattringer et al. (2021)	Prospective collaborative sensemaking for identifying the potential impact of emerging technologies	Process study – multi-source data	Managers from multiple organizations of different industries	Interorganizational workshops
Gegenhuber and Dobusch (2017)	Making an impression through openness: how Open Strategy-making practices change in the evolution of new ventures	Multiple case study – multi-source data	New ventures	Strategy dialoguing and strategy broadcasting

Table 37.1 (*cont.*)

Author	Title	Research design and data	Research setting/case	Open Strategy practices discussed
Goldman and Kruger (2021)	Viewing 'Open Strategy' as a viable approach to the management of strategy	Interviews	South African companies	IT-enabled practices
Heracleous, Gößwein and Beaudette (2018)	Open strategy-making at the Wikimedia Foundation: a dialogic perspective	Single case study – multi-source data	Non-profit organization: Wikimedia	Wikis
Holstein and Rantakari (2022)	Space and the dynamic between openness and closure: open strategizing in the TV series *Borgen*	Single case study – video material	Visual fiction: Danish TV series *Borgen*	Strategy discussions
Hutter, Nketia and Füller (2017)	Falling short with participation – different effects of ideation, commenting and evaluating behaviour on open strategizing	Single case study – survey	Large international organization: Siemens	Online idea platform
Lingo (2023)	Digital curation and creative brokering: managing information overload in open organizing	Single case study – multi-source data	Family-owned business: save market basket	Social media
Luedicke et al. (2017)	Radically open strategizing: how the Premium Cola collective takes open strategy to the extreme	Single case study – multi-source data	Organization: Premium Cola	Online strategy discussions, mailing lists, video meetings
Lundgren-Henriksson and Sorsa (2023)	Open strategizing on social media: a process model of emotional mechanisms and outcomes from un-orchestrated participation	Single case study – multi-source data	Public institution: cities	Social media
Mack and Szulanski (2017)	Opening up: how centralization affects participation and inclusion in strategy-making	Multiple case study – multi-source data	Vignettes based on two organizations	Strategy workshops with employee inclusion
Malhotra, Majchrzak and Niemiec (2017)	Using public crowds for Open Strategy formulation: mitigating the risks of knowledge gaps	Single case study – multi-source data	Governmental institution: New Zealand Research Institute	Crowdsourcing
Mantere and Whittington (2021)	Becoming a strategist: the roles of strategy discourse and ontological security in managerial identity work	Interviews	Individuals from multiple organizations	Open Strategy practices in general
Morton, Wilson and Cooke (2020)	The digital work of strategists: using Open Strategy for organizational transformation	Single case study – multi-source data	Large UK organization: InfoLib	Social media, blogs, discussions
Mount, Clegg and Pitsis (2020)	Conceptualizing the de-materializing characteristics of internal inclusion in crowdsourced Open Strategy	Conceptual	N/A	Crowdsourcing
Plotnikova, Pandza and Sales-Cavalcante (2021)	How strategy professionals develop and sustain an online strategy community – the lessons from Ericsson	Single case study – multi-source data	Large international organization: Ericsson	Online strategy community

Pregmark and Berggren (2020)	Strategy workshops with wider participation: trust as enabler	Single case study – multi-source data	Multiple organizations acting in different industries	Strategy workshops with wider inclusion
Schmitt (2010)	Dealing with wicked issues: open strategizing and the Camisea case	Single Case Study – multi-source Data	Large international organization: Shell	Strategy workshops with stakeholder inclusion
Schwarz (2020)	Revisiting scenario planning and business wargaming from an Open Strategy perspective	Conceptual	N/A	Online and offline scenario planning and business wargaming with wider inclusion
Seidl and Werle (2018)	Interorganizational sensemaking in the face of strategic meta-problems: requisite variety and dynamics of participation	Multiple case study – multi-source data	Industry-related settings: water industry and flexible production	Interorganizational workshops
Smith et al. (2018)	Zones of participation (and non-participation) in Open Strategy: desirable, actual and undesirable	Multiple case study – multi-source data	Two producer cooperatives	Open Strategy practices in general
Splitter, Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2021)	Middle managers‘ struggle over their subject position in Open Strategy processes	Single case study – multi-source data	Large international organization: financial company	Strategy workshops with employee inclusion
Stjerne, Geraldi and Wenzel (2022)	Strategic practice drift: how Open Strategy infiltrates the strategy process	Single case study – multi-source data	Large international organization: financial company	Agile project management leading to increased transparency and inclusion
Whittington, Yakis-Douglas and Ahn (2016)	Cheap talk? Strategy presentations as a form of Chief Executive Officer impression management	Presentation and financial data	Organizations listed on NYSE	Strategy presentations
Whittington and Yakis-Douglas (2020)	The grand challenge of corporate control: opening strategy to the normative pressures of networked professionals	Conceptual	N/A	Collective sub-politics, individualist whistleblowing

Table 37.2 Studies examining materiality in Open Strategy

Author	Aspects of socio-materiality discussed
Aten and Thomas (2016)	Crowdsourcing technologies used for strategizing require individual and collective affordances that are supported by specific material aspects of the crowdsourcing technology (e.g., anonymous participation, systematic reward) that is used.
Baptista et al. (2017)	The material design of social media technologies – that enable emergent and immediate feedback – requires organizations to develop new capabilities such as *reflexiveness* to handle tensions that emerge through emergent feedback.
Hutter, Nketia and Füller (2017)	Online strategy platforms require design aspects that allow participants to comment and evaluate others' ideas in order to promote organizational and virtual sense of community. Simple participation in online initiatives does not promote organizational sense of community. The ease of use of the online platforms is a basic requirement otherwise resulting in frustration and non-participation.
Malhotra, Majchrzak and Niemiec (2017)	Risks of contentious conflict and self-promotion in online crowdsourcing can be reduced by specific management actions such as anonymous posting or appropriate issue framing that are embedded on crowdsourcing platforms.
Einola, Kohtamäki and Hietikko (2019)	Open Strategy and crowdsourcing tools can be used to gather input and ideas of citizens to contribute to city development. Authors build on socio-materiality and analyse the individual's technology usage for strategizing Open Strategy facilitated knowledge integration and reduced conflicts.
Morton, Wilson and Cooke (2020)	In Open Strategy settings the work of strategists shifts more towards digital work. Strategists use digital tools to broadcast, solicit, collaborate and action strategy to their organizational community.
Mount, Clegg and Pitsis (2020)	Authors conceptualize and argue that anonymity, process structuring, information processing, parallelism and group memory are material enablers of inclusion in crowdsourcing strategy.
Schwarz (2020)	Author suggests scenario planning and business wargaming as concepts that can be used for open strategizing practices when a moderate number of participants is included.
Azad and Zablith (2021)	Digital visualizations of complex problems can improve frontline employees' understanding and enactment of a strategy when further discussed in wider strategy workshops.
Goldman and Kruger (2021)	Open Strategy can help South African companies better handle the management of strategy and remain flexible. Authors build on IT-enabledness as defining dimension of Open Strategy.
Plotnikova, Pandza and Sales-Cavalcante (2021)	Online strategy communities based on digital technologies can be used to ongoingly and continuously strategize including the whole workforce. Open Strategy thereby pushes professional strategists from their roles as expert planners and analysts into managers that need to adapt community boundaries, incentivize participation and the appropriate framing of strategic content in the online strategy community.
Holstein and Rantakari (2022)	Specific spatial characteristics of rooms in which open strategizing takes place enable or disable actors' inclusion. Open rooms support inclusion, while discussions in more narrow spaces disable inclusion of actors.

crowdsourcing technology allows to efficiently involve a large crowd of employees in a firm's strategy discussion through asynchronous contributions. The use of digital technologies enables the organization to efficiently aggregate knowledge contributed by this crowd, while also creating (albeit limited) opportunities of bottom-up agenda setting (Stieger et al. 2012).

Morton, Wilson and Cooke (2020) explored how the digital work of strategists – the deliberate use of IT for open transparent and inclusive strategizing – enables organizational transformation. Thereby they link 'the IT-mediated practices through which the strategy takes place, the flow of activities involved [and] the type of openness generated (inclusion/transparency)' (Morton, Wilson and

Cooke 2020). Azad and Zablith (2021), in contrast, specifically focus on how digital visualization technologies used in the strategizing process, their specific features and their associated affordances affect frontline employees' understanding and participation in the enactment of a strategy.

It has also been discussed how materiality plays a role in the interaction with the range and scope of actors involved and audiences targeted (Hautz et al. 2019). Digital technologies allow broadcasting a strategic issue to a very large, more or less undefined crowd and inviting actors to self-identify (Aten and Thomas 2016; Malhotra, Majchrzak and Niemiec 2017). Here, digital technologies 'have lowered the cost of communication and interaction so that firms can very easily broadcast their problems to a very wide set of constituents' (Hautz et al. 2019: 95; see also Einola, Kohtamäki and Hietikko 2019; Malhotra, Majchrzak and Niemiec 2017). At the same time specific analogue workshop set-ups allow to purposefully identify actors potentially relevant to a strategic issue. Such a purposeful, controlled selection process of analogue settings results in smaller groups with a lower number of participants and allows working with them in an analogue face-to-face-setting (Mack and Szulanski 2017; Seidl and Werle 2018).

Materiality also plays a role in the discussion on how deeply those actors are involved (Mack and Szulanski 2017; Quick and Feldman 2011). While collecting strategy ideas via crowdsourcing technologies might support forms of mere participation, deeper inclusion, in contrast, is described as involving repeated, large-scale strategy workshops or interactive community platforms, implying a growing sense of community over time (Hutter, Nketia and Füller 2017; Plotnikova, Pandza and Sales-Cavalcante 2021). Finally, Dobusch, Dobusch and Müller-Seitz (2019) show in their study of Wikimedia's Open Strategy process how wiki software, the very technology used to enable inclusion of anyone interested, limits and biases the actual scope of participants by primarily attracting participants already familiar with wiki editing.

Discursive Processes and Practices

When we turn to discourse perspectives on Open Strategy, one of the most cited articles in Open Strategy predates the label of 'Open Strategy' itself. Yet, Mantere and Vaara's (2008) study 'on the problem of participation in strategy' shows how various discourses in strategy promote (non-)participatory approaches to strategy, not least by being linked to other strategy-related practices. Looking at participation in strategy as a discursive process, Mantere and Vaara (2008: 354) found that 'clear-cut and transparent rules help to demystify strategizing and legitimize wide participation', thereby emphasizing the importance of how open the rules governing open processes are themselves. For example, discourses of 'Mystification' privilege top managers as the only legitimate authors of 'visions, missions and other strategy statements', which 'are often crafted in closed workshops' (Mantere and Vaara 2008: 354). In other discourses such as 'Self-actualization', 'strategy was rather seen as a process open to all people in the organization' (Mantere and Vaara 2008: 351). However, the discourses identified are classified as either promoting participation or non-participation – from a relational lens, one would also want to ask in what way promoting some form of participation can also lead to new or reinforced forms of non-participation. For example, empowering middle managers in strategy-making might not just increase their say vis-à-vis top management but also give them opportunities to limit participation by lower-level employees (see already Mantere and Vaara 2008).

SAP studies focusing on openness and its dimensions also tend to emphasize discourse (see Table 37.3). Mantere and Whittington explore how strategy discourse 'can play both disciplinary and emancipatory roles' (2021: 553) in influencing individuals' strategist identity. Lundgren-Henriksson and Sorsa (2023), in turn, analyse emotions as a discursive resource potentially resulting in Open Strategy as emerging organically on social media. They show, however, how decision-makers can react by orchestrating inclusion through the rhetorical use of emotions, as well.

Heracleous (2019), building upon another discourse-theoretical foundation, suggests a dialogical perspective on Open Strategy and, after distinguishing between functional, interpretive and critical perspectives, highlights the 'potential resulting

Table 37.3 Studies engaging in discussions about discourse in Open Strategy

Author	Aspects of discourse discussed
Aten and Thomas (2016)	How crowdsourcing can be used to foster strategy discourse among organizational workforces. Discourse leads to more understanding compared to top-down strategy communication.
Dobusch et al. (2017)	Authors highlight the difference between open innovation and Open Strategy from a communication-centred perspective. Compared to open innovation in which the factual and the temporal dimension are typically low and the social dimension is high; in Open Strategy discourse is taking place on a low social dimension but high in terms of temporal and factual dimensions.
Heracleous, Gößwein and Beaudette (2018)	Authors discuss how dialogue is influencing Open Strategy processes and how discourse emerges in functional dialogic processes through continuous and iterative processes.
Seidl and Werle (2018)	Strategy discussions and discourse in interorganizational workshops help managers to make sense of strategic meta-problems. Article uncovers how participants of these workshops are selected and how the selection yields different outcomes.
Mantere and Whittington (2021)	Investigate how wider strategy discourse influence individuals' strategist identity and can result in disciplinary or emancipatory effects on individual's strategist identity.
Lundgren-Henriksson and Sorsa (2023)	Emotions are investigated as a discursive resource that potentially leads to emerging openness on social media.

tensions when a dialogic process that at minimum tries to be faithful to [ideal-typical dialogue in the sense of Bohm (1996)] or aspects of it, is employed as part of an Open Strategy process' (Heracleous 2019: 264).

Temporal Dynamics in Open Processes

From its early conceptualization it has been considered that an organization's level of openness or closure on one or both dimensions is neither dichotomous nor fixed. Hence, openness is not static but dynamic in nature, over time allowing movements along and between the dimensions, towards and away from greater openness, and also across different phases of the strategy process itself (Hautz 2017; Hautz, Seidl and Whittington 2017). Hence SAP-related research on Open Strategy has also further explored these temporal dynamics (see Table 37.4).

Cai and Canales (2021), for example, study how transparency precedes inclusion in an Open Strategy process. In their qualitative case study on a digital platform used in the strategy process they show that the sub-dimensions of transparency are a requirement for successful subsequent inclusion (Cai and Canales 2021). In their study, Gegenhuber and Dobusch (2017) track the changing impression management potential/effect of various Open Strategy practices of new ventures (broadcasting, dialoguing and including) over time and over various phases of the organization life cycle. Taking a similarly longitudinal perspective, Gattringer et al. (2021) investigate how an open collaborative and prospective sensemaking approach influences the way actors interpret and make sense of emerging technologies. They show how over a period of one year, over a series of subsequent workshops, participants develop a better understanding through discussing potential scenarios on the implications of blockchain technology.

Stjerne, Geraldi and Wenzel (2022), discuss how Open Strategy infiltrates the strategy process over time – partly unnoticed behind the backs of top managers – through what they call a 'strategic practice drift'. This refers to 'a gradual . . . shift towards Open Strategy that occurs through "accommodating" and "legitimizing" the performance of transparency and inclusion in the strategy process' (Stjerne, Geraldi and Wenzel 2022: 3). That such gradual shifts towards more openness potentially pose a challenge for the subject position of middle managers is the focus of a study by Splitter, Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2021: 1), who propose 'a process model depicting the recursive dynamics of middle managers' struggles to maintain their

Table 37.4 Studies engaging in discussions about temporal dynamics in Open Strategy

Author	Aspects of temporal dynamics discussed
Schmitt (2010)	Opening the strategy process and including stakeholders in critical projects can improve information flow and align the expectations and opinions of a diverse set of stakeholders. For successful sensemaking stakeholders need to be included ongoingly and constantly over the project time span.
Gegenhuber and Dobusch (2017)	Broadcasting, dialoguing and including allow organizations to follow proactive impression management strategies. For new ventures dialoguing helps in the launch stage, while broadcasting attracts support from audiences in the growth stage; thereby acknowledging the stages of the organizational life cycle.
Luedicke et al. (2017)	Even in a company that radically opens their strategy process, applied practices can evoke problems such as information asymmetries, power asymmetries and information overload. Over time counterbalancing practices are required to handle these problems.
Dobusch and Kapeller (2018)	Distinguishing between crowds and communities is essential as these different actors can react differently to certain practices applied. Communities tend to favour open practices more compared to crowds. Crowds tend to better follow closed practices. Over time it is shown how Open Strategy practices change and how different tools are used.
Pregmark and Berggren (2020)	Trust of strategy workshop participants is a necessary requirement for their success. Trust – influenced by opening up the conversation, process clarity and honest intent of participants – is developed by and established over time in workshops with wider participation.
Whittington and Yakis-Douglas (2020)	Managed Open Strategy practices (strategic reporting, internal fora) and unmanaged practices (corporate sub-politics, whistleblowing) can exert corporate control. In principle, these kinds of practices can mobilize social norms in societies' interest.
Brielmaier and Friesl (2021)	Open Strategy often has low participation rates. This is due to attention contests such as status transition, process ambiguity, identity shifts and time constraints. Authors highlight temporal differences between digital and analogue Open Strategy practices and highlight that digital Open Strategy practices compete with limited time resources of actors.
Cai and Canales (2021)	Transparency precedes inclusion in an Open Strategy process. Sub-dimensions of transparency are a requirement for successful inclusion; inclusion leads to variety, density and usability of ideas that are key to success.
Gattringer et al. (2021)	Interorganizational Open Strategy workshops, that are regularly conducted over time, help managers in sensemaking about new emerging technologies and evaluating the potential impact on their business.
Splitter, Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2021)	When middle managers are excluded from Open Strategy, they struggle over their subject positions. The role as facilitator leads to struggles with role assignments and middle managers consequently over the course of time perform actions to maintain and reclaim their role as strategists.
Stjerne, Geraldi and Wenzel (2022)	Open Strategy can infiltrate the strategy process. This 'strategic practice drift' is an unnoticed and gradual shift towards more transparency and inclusion influenced by actors 'accommodating' and 'legitimizing' its performance.
Lundgren-Henriksson and Sorsa (2023)	Uncontrolled transparency and inclusion in Open Strategy on social media result in increasing emotional expression and escalating conflict. Through a shift from emergent to orchestrated inclusion over time conflicts can be reduced.

subject positions in the face of [increasing] employee participation'. Distinguishing between analogue and digital Open Strategy practices, Brielmaier and Friesl (2021) operationalize Open Strategy processes as attention contests. They arrive at four different types of tensions (process ambiguity, status transitions, time constraints, identity shifts) resulting from introducing Open Strategy practices in established organizational structures and suggest addressing these tensions with the help of various attention (re)distribution mechanisms. In particular, differences between analogue and digital Open Strategy initiatives need to be considered, as time limitations may be

minor in analogue workshops, with time being freed up, while digital initiatives 'compete with everyday routines for actors' limited time' (Brielmaier and Friesl 2021: 6). While the study is mainly concerned with ways to increase participation in strategy, the focus on tensions is similar to the dialogical approach by Heracleous, Gößwein and Beaudette (2018) and sensitizes for discrepancies between stated openness and actually changing levels of participation over time.

Unmanaged versus Controlled Open Strategizing

Moving away from conventional to more inclusive strategy processes often demands top management commitment and substantial investments in process design (Seidl, von Krogh and Whittington 2019a). Hence, in contrast to emergent strategy (Mintzberg and Waters 1985) that is less formal, openness in the strategy process requires formal CEO and strategic initiation. But while the vast majority of practices studied by practice-related Open Strategy research are characterized by explicit top management knowledge, commitment, their purposeful choices and activities as well a substantial investments in strategy design (Seidl, von Krogh and Whittington 2019a), some of the identified open practices also emerge 'unmanaged' from the bottom of the organization (see Table 37.5; e.g., Stjerne, Geraldi and Wenzel 2022; Whittington and Yakis-Douglas 2020).

As mentioned above, Stjerne, Geraldi and Wenzel (2022) discuss how Open Strategy is not introduced purposefully, but openness rather infiltrates the strategy process, mostly unnoticed behind the backs of top managers, who might be sceptical of the concept. That such a shift towards openness in strategy is an inherently political process is highlighted by Belmondo and Sargis-Roussel (2022). They identify 'exclusion, domination, conversation and controversy' as ideal-typical enactments of the political aspects of opening participation, emphasizing that Open Strategy 'may be a way for strategists to reinforce the domination of their field in their organization and their own status within it as experienced practitioners' (Belmondo and Sargis-Roussel 2022:

Table 37.5 Studies engaging in discussions about unmanaged and controlled open strategizing

Author	Aspects of unmanaged versus controlled open strategizing discussed
Whittington, Yakis-Douglas and Ahn (2016)	Strategy presentations can be an effective and controlled form of impression management by new CEOs and have a positive impact on an investor's perception of a CEO and subsequently on stock prices.
Whittington and Yakis-Douglas (2020)	Managed Open Strategy practices (strategic reporting, internal fora) and unmanaged practices (corporate sub-politics, whistleblowing) can exert corporate control. In principle, these kinds of practices can mobilize social norms in societies interest.
Brielmaier and Friesl (2021)	Open Strategy often has low participation rates. This is due to attention contests such as status transition, process ambiguity, identity shifts and time constraints. Through controlled and managed processes, such as increasing incentives, form a good organizational climate and appropriate design of the initiatives, attention contests can be reduced.
Belmondo and Sargis-Roussel (2022)	Describe how specific management practices – dividing labour, coordinating and controlling – depending on strategists' disposition to openness and legitimacy, promote or decline openness of participants.
Stjerne, Geraldi and Wenzel (2022)	Describe how Open Strategy can infiltrate the strategy process as new project management methods such as agile require more transparency and inclusion. This leads to individuals opening strategy bottom-up and requesting more transparency and inclusion. Hence, emerging uncontrolled and unmanaged behind the backs of top management.
Lundgren-Henriksson and Sorsa (2023)	Describe how uncontrolled transparency and inclusion can emerge on social media and result in emotional and escalating conflict. Controlled process management can subsequently reduce emotional expressions and guide actors in participation.

629). Finally, in a more recent processual perspective on Open Strategy, Friesl, Brielmaier and Dobusch (2023) focus on self-selection into strategy as either managed or unmanaged trajectories. While not exclusively relevant for Open Strategy, who takes part in strategy-making is subject to change over time and dependent on who is self-selecting to contribute and why.

Open Strategy as a Relation between Openness and Closure

Early conceptualizations of Open Strategy generally applied an affirmative perspective on openness, concerned with unleashing its potential for improving strategy processes. However, most recently SAP research on Open Strategy has increasingly highlighted that such a perspective comes at the risk of underestimating the continued role of closure in Open Strategy processes: first, opening up certain aspects of organizational strategy-making may lead to new forms of closure, subverting or even thwarting attempts at increasing openness. This can particularly appear when actors with exclusionary behaviour are invited into the process, and that through their behaviour then drive away and exclude others (Dobusch and Dobusch 2019). Second, increasing openness in one regard might depend on closure in another regard. When the amount of information that is available is increased this might create new forms of opacity that need to be addressed (Gegenhuber et al. 2023). Third, certain types of strategies may cause strategy processes to shift from being open towards being closed (Smith et al. 2018).

Our review (see Table 37.6) shows that cases of (allegedly) radical openness such as the free online encyclopaedia Wikipedia (Dobusch and Dobusch 2019; Dobusch, Dobusch and Müller-Seitz 2019; Heracleous, Gößwein and Beaudette 2018) or the case of the Premium Cola collective (Luedicke et al. 2017) provide examples for both these dynamics. In Wikipedia, the claim of an encyclopaedia that 'anyone can edit' makes it difficult to exclude individual contributors, even when their behaviour creates an unwelcoming atmosphere that prevents others (e.g., women) from participating (Bear and Collier 2016). In a way, Wikipedia is dealing with closure as a consequence of its radical openness (Dobusch, Dobusch and Müller-Seitz 2019).

The case of Premium Cola, in turn, illustrates how informal practices such as 'selective participation' and 'authoritative decision-making' emerged to counterbalance radically open practices such as 'distributed agenda setting' (Luedicke et al. 2017). Consequently, Dobusch and Dobusch (2019) have proposed to conceptualize openness and closure in strategy-making as reciprocally constitutive instead of opposite poles on a continuum. From such a perspective, openness can conceptually only be thought of in comparison to or in distinction from closedness. Efforts to open up existing processes (e.g., allowing broader access to strategically relevant information) and the creation of settings marked as open (e.g., launching an explicit Open Strategy process) always refer to the observation of contexts perceived as closed (e.g., limited access to information/strategy-making processes).

Building upon such a relational or constitutive understanding of openness in strategy processes, recent studies such as Holstein and Rantakari's (2022) tried to identify conditions under which openness might unintentionally turn to closure, despite attempts to remain open. Lingo (2023), to give another example, investigates how leaders strategically select, share and interpret digital material across a diffuse network of actors to achieve concerted strategic action in the face of information overload – practices she refers to as digital curation and brokering. Practices such as 'spotlighting, amplifying, refuting, recapping and refocusing' (Lingo 2023: 105) favour openness by considering comments. However, while through a process of sensemaking in the context of information overload ideas may be excluded that cannot be assigned to a category necessary for summarization.

But openness versus closure has also been discussed by Open Strategy research when considering the role of materiality in an Open Strategy process. Mount, Clegg and Pitsis (2020: 2) conceptually discuss that 'merely adopting, [for example,] crowdsourcing [technologies] as a tool for Open Strategy does not afford agency to peripheral actors and enable inclusion'. They raise an 'openness paradox', arguing that material characteristics of

Table 37.6 Studies examining openness and closure in Open Strategy

Author	Aspects of openness versus closure discussed
Luedicke et al. (2017)	Show how even in radical open organizations in terms of strategy responsible actors need to make exclusive decision and counterbalance in order to remain efficient.
Mack and Szulanski (2017)	Authors differentiate between participation and inclusion and show how organizational structure matters for openness and closure. Decentralized organizations tend to apply inclusive practices over their whole strategy process, whereas centralized organizations tend to incorporate phases of exclusion.
Dobusch and Kapeller (2018)	Distinguishing between crowds and communities and how different types of groups favour openness or closure. Communities tend to favour open practices more compared to crowds. Crowds tend to better follow closed practices.
Smith et al. (2018)	Opening strategy can lead to tensions between groups and individuals and consequently result in zones of participation and non-participation for actors that were initially not intended.
Dobusch, Dobusch and Müller-Seitz (2019)	Openness and closure are strongly related. Closure in some parts of a process can improve openness in other parts. Specifically, in some phases of the strategy process procedural closure benefits the content-related openness in other phases.
Mount, Clegg and Pitsis (2020)	Authors highlight that crowdsourcing technologies often bring material barriers that promote exclusion and conceptualize anonymity, process structuring, information processing, parallelism and group memory as material enablers for inclusion in crowdsourcing strategy.
Plotnikova, Pandza and Sales-Cavalcante (2021)	Open Strategy requires the substantial disclosure of information in order to work properly. However, sensitive information may not be shared with externals that are not members of an organization. Authors describe how an online strategy community can be designed with substantial openness characteristics, however when excluding external experts specific steps of closure can be done to prevent loss of sensitive information.
Belmondo and Sargis-Roussel (2022)	Individuals' characteristics (their legitimacy and disposition to openness) lead to behaviour that fosters openness or closure. Strategists depending on their characteristics engage in exclusion, domination, conversation or controversy.
Holstein and Rantakari (2022)	Space influences openness and closure during open strategy discussions. When actors aim to exclude others they tend to move to exclusive and more narrow spaces. In contrast, spatial features of open spaces promote open strategy discussions.
Lingo (2023)	Open Strategy on social media can bring information overload to leaders. Through summarizing comments some suggestions may be excluded because they cannot be assigned to a category for summarization.

strategy tools can be leveraged 'for rhetorical purposes to justify positions that support their political interests' (Jarzabkowski and Kaplan 2015: 538) often to the deliberate exclusion of others (Kaplan 2008; 2011).

Directions for the Future in Open Strategy Research

Our chapter has specifically highlighted research on Open Strategy with – at least implicit – practice perspective. We have shown how practice-related insights have contributed to conceptualizing the new phenomenon of openness in the strategy process and have discussed key themes in this new research stream. Open Strategy research itself can still be considered quite nascent and raises therefore many pressing issues for SAP researchers. Based on our discussion we identify several avenues for future SAP research on Open Strategy, related to practices, actors, methods and outcomes.

Practices of Openness

Our review shows that the majority of studies have focused on practices of inclusion, discussing the breadth, scope or the role of materiality for such

kinds of practices. Fewer studies have explicitly focused on practices of transparency or the interplay of those two types of open practices, which gives room to future studies. In addition, future studies can focus on practices enabling *openness in decision-making*. As emphasized by Whittington, Cailluet and Yakis-Douglas (2011) and evidenced by a recent overview by Splitter et al. (2023), openness in decision-making has only been a secondary concern for scholars and practitioners of Open Strategy so far. Consequently, we know little about (a) why this is the case; and (b) what (mostly: unintended) consequences various Open Strategy practices have on decision-making in organizations. The latter is particularly relevant with respect to other established participation practices and structures, most of all workplace democracy and co-determination (Frega, Herzog and Neuhäuser 2019); no studies in the past decade of Open Strategy research have addressed this relationship.

Strategy Actors and Openness: The Individual in Open Strategy

A major avenue for future research could also be on generating deeper insights on how openness changes roles of different actors in the strategy process. Increased openness has implications for responsibilities, necessary skills and status that is associated with the profession of strategists. As in conventional approaches to strategizing, strategists were responsible for the generation and communication of strategy content. In contrast, in an Open Strategy process, strategists have to become aware of their changing roles. Currently, Open Strategy scholars have begun to focus, for example, on the role of middle managers (e.g., Splitter, Jarzabkowski and Seidl 2021), building upon a long-standing tradition of assessing their role in strategy-making as well as on frontline workers struggling with taking on a new role as (part-time) strategists (Plotnikova, Brielmaier and Friesl 2021). However, additional work is needed in this still underexplored area and actors have to be considered. So far, it has not been discussed whether and in what way Open Strategy leads to changing roles of top management or external actors such as suppliers or customers. For all the various potential actors involved in Open Strategy processes, we know little about the impact of openness in strategy on their individual identity constructions and emotional aspects associated with it (see, however, the recent study by Lingo (2023), which touches on this issue).

New Methodological Avenues in Open Strategy Research

In addition, given the dominant methodological leanings of extant Open Strategy research, we see two opportunities for advancing our understanding of the phenomenon by empirically applying a practice-theoretical lens. The first and most obvious recommendation is to move towards a more comparative assessment of Open Strategy in various cases. While the increasing proliferation of Open Strategy will probably make it easier to engage in case comparisons, we see also see room for revisiting the growing number of single cases in some form of (qualitative) meta case study analysis (see Habersang et al. 2019 for such an approach).

Our second recommendation follows Tkacz's (2012: 404) imperative to increase our understanding of openness by 'leaving the rhetoric of open behind'. This could, for example, lead to different case selection rationales that do not identify cases based upon self-proclaimed openness or strategy processes explicitly labelled as such. Instead, it could be worthwhile to investigate practices driving openness (and closure) in conventional strategy processes not labelled as 'open', 'transparent' or 'inclusive'.

Outcomes of Open Strategy Processes

Finally, first conceptual and qualitative work suggests potentially beneficial consequences for the strategy work of organizations. The majority of literature has emphasized information, knowledge and creativity benefits related to idea generation (Hutter, Nketia and Füller 2017; Malhotra, Majchrzak and Niemiec 2017; Stieger et al. 2012); legitimation and impression benefits (Whittington, Yakis-Douglas and Ahn 2016; Yakis-Douglas et al. 2017); or implementation benefits. But current

research is far from being able to fully understand or empirically verify those outcomes and there is still limited understanding under which conditions specific consequences might manifest, let alone guide through potential tensions (Hautz, Seidl and Whittington 2017) and paradoxes (Dobusch and Dobusch 2019) that come with increasingly Open Strategy processes. Ultimate performance mechanisms are likely to be very complex (Seidl, von Krogh and Whittington 2019a). Assuming a direct link between Open Strategy and firm performance outcomes would be a black-box approach not taking account of the multidimensional nature of this new phenomenon and its multiple nuanced consequences. Therefore, as Seidl, von Krogh and Whittington (2019a) put it, studying those effects needs additional focus and teasing out.

As more and more companies experiment with different open practices which are studied by strategy practice scholars, more insights will be generated on their intended and unintended consequences and how practices are and should be enacted by a range of actors in specific situations and over time for varying manifestations along the dimensions of openness.

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