The Chair of Strategy and Organization (Prof. Dr. Isabell M. Welpe) offers Master's Theses in the following research area:

From Wikis to idea contests – how organizations use crowdsourcing in practice

BACKGROUND.
Crowdsourcing may be described as a sourcing model in which organizations use pre-dominantly advanced internet technologies to harness the efforts of a virtual crowd to perform specific organizational tasks. Thereby it is currently attracting much attention from companies for its competitive advantages over traditional work structures regarding how to utilize skills and labor and especially to harvest expertise and innovation. In this context, crowdsourcing may occur in various forms, such as Wikis, Idea Contests or Social Networks and may be facilitated in an internal (only tapping into the resources of employees), an external or a mixed approach. Nonetheless, very few companies are able to unlock the full potential of crowdsourcing in its various facets. For instance, crowdsourcing may need to be adapted for different types of tasks and solvers. Further, companies may struggle in recruiting a critical mass of participants. And lastly, literature has emphasized that firms need to build dedicated processes and internal capabilities to effectively utilize crowdsourcing.

THESIS TOPICS.

1. Employees that engage in internal crowdsourcing.
   Which type of employees are eager to participate in internal crowdsourcing? Which are the early adopters? Which incentives have to be set to motivate employees for participation in different contexts of internal crowdsourcing and how do they differ? For what purpose do employees use platforms in practice? This may be explored by (1.) by a systematic literature analysis to cluster the different forms of internal crowdsourcing used in practice and on frameworks that allow the distinction of employees, (2.) a survey among employees regarding their usage of internal crowdsourcing platforms in their company.

2. Antecedents and Barriers.
   Which are the antecedents (e.g. spare time to use crowdsourcing systems, top management support, problem formulation) for companies to facilitate internal crowdsourcing? Are there barriers like knowledge losses, losing control over the crowd's activities, internal workforce resistance? This may be explored by (1.) a systematic literature analysis regarding antecedents and barriers found in literature and (2.) a short series of interviews with managers regarding their experience with internal crowdsourcing in their company.

3. Spillover effects of internal crowdsourcing.
   Does the introduction of internal crowdsourcing platforms / systems by an organization affect the overall performance / creativity of its employees?

Other questions within the scope of the topic may be welcome as well – please provide a short proposal in this case.

MOTIVATION.
We offer the opportunity to work on state-of-the-art research topics including strong support and supervision if needed. For this purpose, we are looking for highly motivated and talented students with excellent English skills, that are self-driven, reliable and precise and that have a strong interest for the topic of crowdsourcing and Management Information Systems Research.

CONTACT.
Any interested student, please send your application together with your CV and Transcripts of Records as pdf-file to Christoph Höllig (christoph.hoellig@tum.de). The theses can be done either in English or in German.
FURTHER READINGS.


