

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT & MARKETING  
DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH SEMINAR

**Being There: Patent Class Contrast and  
the Impact of Technological Innovations**

By

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Date: Wednesday, 23 April 2014

Time: 2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Venue: M802

All interested are welcome

# Being There: Patent Class Contrast and the Impact of Technological Innovations

## Abstract

We build on recent research on the effects of category contrast to gain new insights on why some patents have more impact than others. Analyzing forward citation patterns of almost three millions patents of USPTO, we show that the distinctiveness of the class to which a patent belongs affects the number of citations received in two ways: first, patents classified in high-contrast classes, on average, exhibit a higher impact compared to those belonging to low-contrast classes; second, the impact of recombinant patents is reduced when they belong to a high contrast class. The paper elaborates on the theoretical link between the sociological literature on categories and innovation research.

Professor Filippo Carlo Wezel was appointed as Professor of Management and Organization in the Faculty of Economics at the University of Lugano, Switzerland from September 2009. He is also Permanent Visiting Professor at EM Lyon (France) and Senior Extra-mural Fellow of CentER at Tilburg University (Netherlands). With a PhD in Management from the University of Bologna, Prof. Wezel previously held appointments at the University of Groningen (Post-doc) and at Tilburg University (Assistant and, then, Associate Professor). He acquired further academic experience as visiting researcher/professor at the Wharton Business School (University of Pennsylvania, USA), and at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) and at the Universities of Antwerp (Belgium) and Lille (France).

His research focuses on organizational diversity, inter-firm mobility, and on identity-based competition. Some of his work has been published or is forthcoming in the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Organization Science*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Strategic Organization*, *Organization Studies*, *Advances in Strategic Management and Long Range Planning*. His newest projects concern the competitive dynamics of British politics after WWII, categorical straddling in the Franconian (German) beer industry, the evolution of the electronic music genre, and the rates of success of Dutch ships travelling to Asia in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.