

Chapter 9

Open Innovation: Enhancing Theory and Practice by Integrating the Role of Innovation Communication

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Abstract Firms aim to foster open forms of innovation by collaborating with external partners, e.g., suppliers, customers or firms operating in foreign industries, in order to gain a competitive advantage. At the same time, there is no unique role model of how to realize the potential of open innovation in terms of systematically addressing the external resources. Based on survey data and multiple case study researches, we suggest that more attention should be directed toward a strategic application of innovation communication. We draw on open innovation literature and relational based view to investigate how distinct innovation communication assists a holistic (in terms of breadth and depth) open innovation approach. Our findings illustrate that firms can foster open innovation visibility, partner acquisition, and relationship management through systematic innovation communication. Furthermore, the results reveal how distinct aspects such as timing of communication during the innovation process, the communication channels and corresponding target groups constitute the idiosyncratic open innovation approach. The content of communication, however, is mostly similar to that of firms with a restrained open innovation approach. Accordingly, the findings of our study enhance understanding of how firms can benefit from distinct innovation communication in terms of open innovation.

9.1 Introduction

In times of ubiquitous chances, firms are more and more challenged by phenomena like converging industries. This phenomenon refers to blurring industry boundaries and the challenge of value propositions, products, services, and innovation converging (Bröring and Leker 2007; Hacklin et al. 2013). Accordingly, industry convergence is a development that forces many firms to commercialize technology

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and knowledge outside their main markets. It leads to faster innovation cycles and, in that vein, a lack of resources (*ibid*). This emphasizes the relevance for firms to systematically opening their innovation activities and investing in collaboration with external partners to innovate.

Open innovation as a term introduced by Chesbrough (2003) hereby describes the systematic approach of firms to involve external partners in their innovation processes. In exploiting open innovation, firms, e.g., aim to overcome long product development cycles or reduce risks by sharing it with partners (Cheng and Huizingh 2014; Herzog and Leker 2010). However, it is not an occasional task to introduce corresponding changes and activities into a firm's existing innovation processes but a holistic approach to collaborate with external partners (Enkel et al. 2009). Since open innovation became a dominant innovation management design, research and practice discovered that it is not a simple task to find the right partner or idea at the right time and to engage in collaboration. Additionally, it becomes very resource consuming to search and address every possible source and partner. Therefore, the question arises how ideas and partners are able to find you as a firm pursuing the open innovation approach. Open innovation as a cooperative approach with various communicative interfaces makes innovation communication a constitutive element (Zerfaß 2009) as an open innovation process not just comes with the challenge of exchanging details on technological details but also with the need of proper coordination, communication and general exchange of relevant information (Hauschildt and Salomo 2011).

In the following chapter, we elaborate the strategic importance of innovation communication and how firms can adapt their approaches in terms of enhancing their capacities to network with potential partners. Specifically, the question of how firms can benefit from open innovation visibility and why it holds high potential for firms to communicate their innovation capabilities and processes is discussed.

9.2 Innovation Communication

The opening of a firm's innovation activities generates multiple communicative transition points (Beckett and Hyland 2011) which have to be managed throughout the innovation process. While innovation communication in line with the innovation process itself is of a mainly operative nature, its utilization as a central initiation and steering element for partnerships and cooperation is of strategic relevance (Pfeffermann et al. 2008).

Accordingly, the innovation process in most firms is no longer a linear and mostly internally performed process but a cooperative one comprising various iterative steps (Zerfaß and Huck 2007a). As a consequence, innovation management is not a simple coordination of the internal R&D departments anymore, but the additional coordination of external partners, their linking to internal departments and the management of this innovation network (Möslein 2010; Zerfaß and Ernst 2008). This leads to the understanding of innovation as a social construct consisting

of processes of adjustment and participation of different actors (von Busse 2005) which, in turn, leads to a distinct meaning and task of innovation communication. Following Zerfaß and Huck (2007b, p. 848), innovation communication is a “systematically planned, performed and evaluated communication of innovation aiming to generate understanding and trust for the innovation as well as positioning the corresponding organization as innovator.” Besides its process-oriented character, innovation communication hereby also refers to the potential addressees as it includes the positioning of a firm as being innovative. Literature on innovation communication identifies a broad range of goals including the addressing of internal and external partners or potential partners (Möslein 2009). This emphasizes the relevance of innovation communication to foster a complaisant innovation culture (Zerfaß and Huck 2007a) and a strategic knowledge management (Zerfaß 2009) as well as the enabling of connecting one’s innovation activities to the market, building a high innovation reputation (Fink 2009) and the integration of different stakeholders in the innovation process (Möslein 2009). Attended with those goals is a broad range of addressees including internal as well as external actors (Zerfaß 2009). This notion of innovation communication is of the category persuasive information politics (Zerfaß and Ernst 2008) aiming to inform and positively influence different stakeholders and make the open innovation approach visible and understandable to them.

9.3 Open Innovation Visibility

Framing theory describes that subjectively observed conditions, which are influenced by the information provided, cause cognitive structures which, in turn, influence the observation of reality (Goffman 1974). As rationality of addressed actors is limited and availability of information is incomplete (Simon 1979), innovation communication is able to set certain frames and therefore influence observations and actions of the actors addressed (Pfeffermann et al. 2008). In the context of open innovation, this approach aims for the perception of a firm’s innovation capability, in particular open innovation capability, as well as its internal innovation culture (Gassmann et al. 2009; Trautmann and Enkel 2014). In that vein, innovation communication aims to foster internal absorption and, more importantly, a high perception of the firm’s innovation capability in order to appear highly attractive for potential partners (Dollinger et al. 1997). Based on the thereby arising possibilities of innovation communication, firms can enhance their open innovation visibility and networking potential to build new partnerships.

Focusing on internal addressees, innovation communication can be facilitated to build an open innovation culture when it comes to acceptance and assimilation of innovation (Zerfaß and Huck 2007a). Such utilization of innovation communication is especially valuable for firms pursuing an open innovation approach as it is not just about opening up to the outside but also about reducing internal barriers and systematizing knowledge flows (Möslein 2010). In this vein, it supports the

development of a firm's dynamic capabilities and accordingly its networking with different actors to generate and reorganize new knowledge (Pfeffermann 2011; Zaremba 2003). Also innovation communication can enable firms to renew and develop their resources and adapt external changes during their open innovation processes (Barreto 2010).

For a successful open innovation approach it is not sufficient to just generate an internal willingness, furthermore it is necessary to find external actors that are willing to agree to cooperation and to carve out complementary interests (Gassmann et al. 2010). As an instrument to increase demand for cooperation, open innovation visibility of a firm can foster the establishment of a high innovation reputation in the market (Pfeffermann 2011) (Fig. 9.1). By displaying the innovation capabilities, firms on the one hand emphasize their own interest in pursuing innovative activities and on the other hand they present a ticket of admission for potential partners (Rosenberg 1990). Furthermore, they communicate and demonstrate their open and collaborative approach of doing innovation. Firms hereby can illustrate that the external knowledge they search for is not a substitute for their own but an addition to their own resources and capabilities which illustrates the complementarity of the approach and the firms' capabilities to the potential partner (Mowery et al. 1996). In addition to a proactive approach to acquire new partners, innovation communication generating open innovation visibility attracts potential partners to approach the firm on their own initiative, thus create the ticket of admission for those partners (Mowery et al. 1996; Rosenberg 1990). In doing so, the potential partners become aware of potential cooperation options based on the firm's presented competencies and especially its willingness to cooperate.

Finally, by fostering the firms' dynamic capabilities, innovation communication not just enhances the internal acceptance and capacity to absorb innovation but also contributes to overcoming asymmetric information disposition at the market (Menon and Pfeffer 2003) and accordingly to inform (potential) partners about their open innovation approaches and search areas.

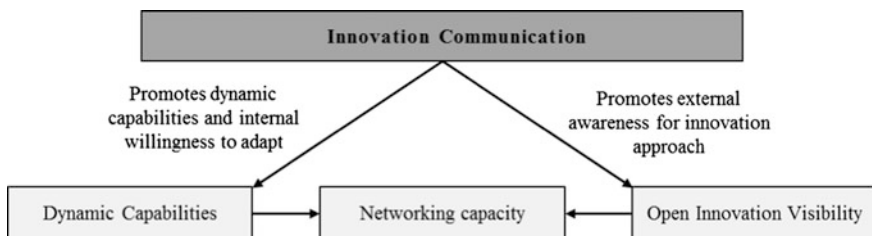


Fig. 9.1 Innovation communication as facilitator for a firm's networking capacity (illustration by authors)

9.4 Strategic Relevance of Innovation Communication

Focusing on open innovation, we have elaborated the various communicative interfaces and the strategic relevance of innovation communication in regard to firms’ dynamic capabilities as well as their processes to overcome information asymmetries. Hence, innovation communication can be understood as a constitutive element of the innovation approach (Zerfaß 2009) to generate competitive advantages (see Fig. 9.2). This theoretical framework emphasizing the relevance of communicative activities to achieve competitive advantage and superior open innovation visibility leads to the analytical framework of innovation communication as the basis for our data.

9.5 Methodology and Data

Due to limited theoretical insights on the concept of open innovation visibility, we conducted an inductive, multiple case study approach (Eisenhardt 1989). Therefore, we do not aim to test an existing theory but to contribute to theory building. The main advantages of this interpretative and qualitative approach are the possibilities to generate and analyze the data in a contextualized way (Yin 2013) and to create—as a result—a stable access to social reality and the phenomenon under research.

By using theoretical sampling (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007), we selected eight cases for the case study. By choosing the most representative, we further elaborate three of those cases as examples for this book chapter. The leading dimensions for case identification were (i) the implementation of a holistic and systematic open innovation approach and (ii) a strategic and integrative understanding of innovation communication. For the determination of the openness of innovation processes, we drew on data of an annual non-compulsory innovation survey, conducted by the “Dr. Manfred Bischoff Institute of Innovation Management of the Airbus Group” at Zeppelin University in Friedrichshafen, Germany. The data was analyzed by applying a concept developed by Laursen and Salter (2006) classifying innovation

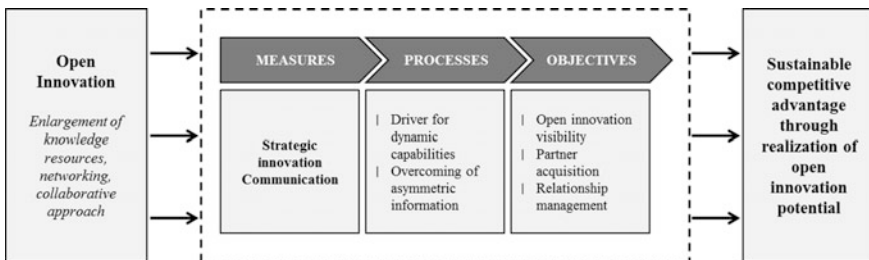


Fig. 9.2 Innovation communication as business capital to build competitive advantages (illustration by authors)

Table 9.1 Overview of the cases

Firm	Interview partner
Webasto SE	Innovation manager “Advanced Engineering & Product Strategy”
Mann+Hummel GmbH	Manager Corporate Strategy & Innovation
Sixt SE	Head of Business Development
Rehau AG & Co. KG	Head of Innovation Management
Philips Austria GmbH	Head of Advanced Development & Patents
T-Systems Multimedia Solutions GmbH	Head of Innovations T-Systems MMS
Outfittery GmbH	Head of Marketing Cooperation
Robert Bosch GmbH	Senior Manager IT-Technology

approaches regarding search breadth and search depth. Moreover, the degree of systematization of the open Innovation approach was analyzed utilizing the open innovation maturity framework by Enkel et al. (2011) (Table 9.1).

To address our research questions different data sources were selected for each of the cases. First, we conducted semi-structured interviews. Second, we analyzed publicly available information like press releases, web pages, and presentations. Third, we included data of the annual innovation survey to review the gained insights. The semi-structured interviews focused on the alignment of innovation management in general and the value creation of innovation communication in particular. Based on the interview data, we conducted a within case as well as cross case analysis (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). We used an open code system based on an iterative and continuous development process (Strauss and Corbin 2008). The results of the within case analysis were sent to the interview partners for confirmation aiming to increase the validity of the results. In general, this approach guarantees a high degree of transparency, builds up a definite research focus, and emphasizes the strict observance of scientific quality criteria.

9.6 Case Studies

9.6.1 *MANN+HUMMEL Group—Visibility by Using Innovation Communication*

MANN+HUMMEL, a leading producer of filter systems, has implemented an innovation process with many connections to the external environment including various external actors. Elements of the open innovation paradigm are visible at many different steps: Ideas are generated via idea platforms and workshops, customers are encouraged to give feedback and collaborate within the innovation process, suppliers are asked to participate in call for ideas and collaboration projects, and a spin-off for a cross-industry project has been established. Moreover, all

these steps are strictly structured to ensure organized interaction with the different actors and to identify trends and needs.

This open approach of innovation management is aligned with a strategic approach of communication activities. The integrated character of communication becomes apparent in various internal and external communication activities. Innovation as one of the main pillars of the corporate strategy is reflecting the commitment of the shareholders and the board. Therefore, the corporate strategy map including innovation as competitive advantage is forming the starting point for the innovation communication. With standardized methods and approaches, the company is ensuring that innovation communication is executed on a regular base. Examples for such approaches are the idea management platform with idea campaigns, regular reviews and challenges of innovation roadmaps and corresponding portfolios, information about content and status of innovation projects in innovation meetings, journals and within Technology Days at customers.

While the firm aims to foster the internal innovation culture as well as customer relations, the creation of open innovation visibility can be considered as one of the main strategic objectives of innovation communication. The company wants to be perceived as one of the leading experts, as provider for innovative solutions and as a reliable partner for cooperation.

“I think it is important to the external environment [...] that the cooperation partners address us [...], that they approach us actively and perceive us as experts knowing our innovative products and appreciate them.”

In order to attain this objective, MANN+HUMMEL uses trade fairs as well as congresses as platforms to present its products and to place topics of interest. In that vein, the company pursues to increase its innovation reputation by presenting its innovativeness and its open innovation visibility.

As a result, innovation communication at MANN+HUMMEL is more than an operative measure—it is a strategic tool to enhance partner relations and to enrich the open innovation approach. In this context, the creation of open innovation visibility is considered as one of the driving factors to build up the groundwork for an ongoing cooperative approach of innovation.

9.6.2 T-Systems Multimedia Solutions—“Ambidextrous Innovation” as Guiding Principle

T-Systems Multimedia Solutions, one of Europe’s largest companies for IT services, has innovation processes which rely on constant exchange and cooperation throughout the entire process stream. The guiding principle is called “Ambidextrous Innovation” meaning the innovative progress is implemented on the operational level by continuous and incremental progress as close as possible to the customers as well as on a more strategic level by pursuing radical changes and adjustments. This approach demonstrates the intention to meet the efficiency and requirements

driven by the company's key performance indicator while, at the same time, ensuring a certain flexibility. In this systematic framework, the openness is especially emphasized by cooperation-based market research and idea generation, systematic and open feedback processes and numerous development partnerships.

The innovation communication of T-Systems Multimedia Solutions is structured into outside-in communication for the continuous integration of external actors and innovation marketing for the improvement of the perception of innovativeness. This kind of communication and the aim to be perceived as more innovative compared to other market participants addresses the final customer as well partners. To foster open innovation visibility and to address partners, company representatives participate as keynote speakers at numerous conferences and symposiums, while they also operate a proactive partner marketing. By facilitating these different communication channels, the firm wants to present its topics and products as well as its way of innovating as well as its concept of "Ambidextrous Innovation." The strategic focus is not only on the presentation of innovative services but also on the presentation of open approaches, best practices, and processes to foster the cooperative concept.

T-System Multimedia Solutions pursue the objective to generate a unique selling point by communicating its innovation approach. In accordance with the innovation approach, T-Systems Multimedia Solutions aims to establish a high degree of awareness for its innovation model by using strategic communication measures.

9.6.3 Outfittery GmbH—Personal Networks Instead of Institutional Ties

Outfittery GmbH is Europe's biggest Personal Shopping Service for men. The innovative business model is heavily connected to its environment. Many new ideas—on the operational but also strategic level—are generated by collaborative approaches. Even the creation of those ideas is more based on personal contacts than institutional ties, the innovation process integrates external actors and therefore can be considered as open. This applies equally to prestigious projects like the "3D men scan" as well as adaptation's and innovations in its operational processes.

Comparable to this innovation approach, the innovation communication is based on many personal ties and networks, which enhance the transfer of knowledge beyond corporate borders. The firm pursues the objective to gain access to several start-up networks and platforms by innovation communication. In this context, it is important for Outfittery GmbH to underline the innovativeness to get a "ticket of admission" to these networks. This ticket is necessary, because respective exchange processes are based on mutual help. Every participant needs to offer specific knowledge and has to signal its openness for cooperation. In this context, the creation of open innovation visibility through interpersonal innovation communication is of strategic importance.

Outfittery GmbH aims for a general visibility of its innovativeness by using innovation communication. On the one hand, the innovativeness of the business model has to be communicated to a broad target group; on the other hand, this kind of communication can be considered as access key for different partner networks inside the start-up ecosystem.

9.7 Results

9.7.1 Communication Channels to Enhance Open Innovation Visibility

The data reveals different ways of enhancing open innovation visibility through communication. A classic way of innovation communication is to facilitate trade show appearances to present products and innovation. Such appearances comprise a persuasive information character as well as interactive elements as firms not only display products at their booth but also interact with visitors and thus can lead their attention toward methods, approaches, and processes leading to the results they display. Such as, for example, MANN+HUMMEL engaging in many congresses and trade shows. Not just to present their new products, but to place trends and other topics of interest.

Firms can similarly profit from attending and presenting at congresses. They can communicate their innovation activities, processes, and existing partnerships as a first step and contact potential partners attending the congress based on their presentation. Depending on the event and availability, firms can make use of their CEO to present as a keynote speaker or have employees of the innovation management represent the firm as an external figurehead.

A more sales and reputation oriented form of innovation communication is the implementation of roadshows or similar marketing activities such as Outfittery's "Men scanner," an innovation they promote on various occasions on order to display their innovative approach of selling men's clothes.

9.7.2 Addressees of Innovation Communication

In addition to distinct channels of innovation communication, the data illustrates differences in groups of addressees and corresponding approaches, especially in order to enhance open innovation visibility. Most relevance as integrated actors of innovation communication is assigned to the firms' customers which can be explained by the importance of customer-oriented communication and traditional innovation marketing activities themselves but also the intention of integrating the customer into the innovation process. Accordingly, firms implement idea

generation platforms or integrate customers in predefined feedback loops during their innovation process. Moreover, firms address research institutes, universities, or colleges through their innovation communication in a similar way in order to integrate them in their innovation activities. Thereby, firms not only focus on the generation of added value during the innovation process, e.g., during the idea generation phase, but also aim to appear attractive for future employees. As an example, T-Systems is very present at universities: The company supervises projects, offers industry-sponsored PhDs, and gives lectures to build up strong ties with potential future employees and to enrich HR-marketing.

Existing innovation partners as well as potential innovation partners, i.e., other firms or other experts, are addressed by innovation communication through fairs, exhibitions, congresses, or similar events. Firms thus foster innovation-oriented nursing of partnerships as well as continuous exchange in terms of ongoing projects or the generation of new ideas. At the same time, innovation communication on a superior level serves the promotion of visibility by leading the attention toward a firm's innovation capabilities to be attractive to potential and future partners and to initiate new innovation cooperation.

9.7.3 Innovation Communication and Open Innovation Visibility

As elaborated earlier, communicative activities can lead to adjustment in partners' perception. Innovation communication that actively copes with inequality of information and knowledge distribution conducts partnerships during an innovation project not only on a process base but also contributes to open innovation visibility in general. The data illustrates that aside from communication involved in the innovation process itself, firms pursue a superior perceived innovativeness in the market through purposeful innovation communication.

In that vein, innovation communication activities aim for the dissolution of knowledge asymmetries to enable future partnerships. At first, the firm has to be perceived as expert in a specific area by potential partners. While the general innovation capability is therefore communicated, firms further emphasize the cooperative approach of their innovation project in order to highlight their openness of collaborating with others. Accordingly, the goal is not only to increase the firms' perception of innovativeness but also the firms' perception of openness in the innovation process. For instance, T-Systems does not only want to be perceived as innovative by customers, but also by partners. In order to attain this objective, the firm presents its "Ambidextrous Innovation" approach on many expert conventions.

The data also shows that the open innovation visibility construct is multidimensional. One determining dimension is the need of an adequate internal knowledge base creating a "ticket of admission" for partnerships. Another determining dimension is the presentation of the firms' innovation strategy leading

potential partners' attention toward a high willingness to cooperate. For example, Outfittery emphasizes the attendance and especially an active participation in network events to present their competencies and initiate interaction and partnerships. Simply be becoming visible to others, a certain value in order to actively or passively initiate partnerships arises. To demonstrate potential partners a real win-win opportunity, it is conducive for firms to additionally highlight their knowledge and capabilities as complementary to the partners addressed. MANN+HUMMEL further emphasizes that a respective reputation in the market, in turn, also leads to external actors approaching the firm proactively with inquiries to cooperate. To foster external open innovation visibility, the example of T-Systems shows that presenting their innovation approach to actors outside the firm is beneficial in similar vein.

According to our study, open innovation visibility is both a necessary prerequisite to passively build a relationship with partners (potential partners approach the firm proactively) and a sufficient condition to actively build a relationship with partners (approach potential partners).

9.8 Discussion

Our results illustrate that innovation communication decisively contributes to realizing open innovation potential. A firm that pursues the open innovation approach has to position itself in the market as a credible partner willing to cooperate in order to actually initiate partnerships. One way of option for such a positioning is a respective innovation communication leading to enhanced open innovation visibility of a firm.

In line with literature, the study illustrates the role of innovation communication to manage existing partnerships and elaborates its role to acquire new partners by creating an open innovation visibility to external actors. Literature (Zerfaß and Huck 2007a) emphasizes the function of innovation communication to position the focal firm as being innovative. This positioning is supposed to lead to a respective innovation perception of the firm (Gassmann et al. 2009) and is supposed to ensure a ticket of admission (Rosenberg 1990) necessary for cooperation. Thus, the constitution of such open innovation reputation is a communicative element of persuasive information policy (Zerfaß and Ernst 2008).

While the data confirms the constitution of a respective reputation beneficial for proactive and necessary for passive acquisition of new partners, there are differences in the concept of innovation reputation deducted from literature and the focal concept of open innovation visibility. Difference lies in the strategic relevance as well as in the connectional breadth and depth. The data illustrates that a concept to enhance visibility is more than a matter of innovation reputation: The firms in our study consider a purposeful communication of their own innovation capacity toward a broad range of addressees as a central element of their innovation and communication strategy. In that vein, attention is created toward their innovation

capabilities leading to interest in cooperation. Accordingly, this is not an element of persuasive information policy (Zerfaß and Ernst 2008) but a strategic element closely aligned with the actual innovation management and open innovation processes.

In that context, we are able to differentiate between the concept of innovation reputation and open innovation visibility, whereas the constructs differ especially regarding strategic understanding and addressees. Open innovation visibility can be defined on the basis of three dimensions: First, for the positioning of a firm as being innovative, open innovation visibility comprises the communication of the general innovation capability of a firm as a central element. The results of our study illustrate that firms promote their innovation capacity in the market by facilitating their capabilities as ticket of admission (Rosenberg 1990). Second, while there is only little focus in terms of the actors addressed in the concept of innovation reputation and customers are addressees as well as potential employees, in the concept of open innovation visibility a direct reference to the firms' innovation processes is produced. This is achieved through a purposeful communication of the processes and approaches during the development of the innovation. Thus, stakeholders are not only informed about the outputs of the firms innovation processes, i.e., the new products or services, but also the underlying processes, activities, and cooperative behavior. The determining difference lies in the communication of the result when it comes to innovation reputation and the communication of the result in combination with the underlying processes when it comes to open innovation visibility. Innovation communication in the context of an implemented open innovation approach accordingly generates a value in communicating the approach itself, which is not directly associated with the newly created product or services: Firms can thus position themselves as innovator and additionally create attention among potential partners and signalize their willingness to cooperate. This is how innovation communication affects networking capacity of a firm as well as future innovation activities.

The third dimension, after innovation capability and a process-oriented approach, is the aspect of visibility anchoring the concept on an action level and within innovation communication. Building on the elements concerning the content of communication, firms furthermore need to facilitate innovation communication to create visibility. The results display that especially fairs, exhibitions and congresses are beneficial to promote innovation capabilities in combination with the underlying approaches differentiating the channels of communication from innovation reputation in the same way as the actors' addressed—by including and building up reciprocal effects with the innovation processes.

The interplay of innovation communication and open innovation visibility can be summarized as follows (see also Fig. 9.3): The distinct characteristic of open innovation visibility in contrast to innovation reputation is communication that comprises the innovation itself as well as the processes and partners that were part of the innovation. Building on a strategic and interactive understanding of communication, open innovation visibility is to not only able to initiate partnerships but

can generally enhance the networking capacity fostering a firm’s dynamic capabilities which, in turn, creates a competitive advantage.

9.9 Conclusion

This chapter illustrates that in the context of the open innovation paradigm, innovation communication is not just relevant in terms of a process-oriented coordination but is also of strategic relevance. While internally it contributes to the innovation culture of a firm, innovation communication externally enhances open innovation visibility and increased innovation perception through potential partners. The strategic relevance evolves from the positive influence on a firm’s networking capacity, resulting in a competitive advantage.

The novel concept of open innovation visibility is illustrated by the selected cases and leads to a distinction of the concept of a persuasive-oriented innovation communication approach. Specifically, the intention of firms to communicate their innovation capabilities and the implemented open approach to acquire partners and, in turn, foster the open innovation approach needs to be highlighted. Innovation communication accordingly is enhancing an active initiation of partnerships as it provides the requested ticket of admission. Furthermore, innovation communication is a necessary prerequisite to build partnerships initiated by the external partner.

Additionally, the data illustrates that firms especially facilitate the participation in trade shows, congresses, or symposia as channel of innovation communication in order to create visibility for their innovativeness and their approaches to innovate. Also, our study highlights the relevance of communicating innovation processes, approaches and partnerships in addition to the innovativeness itself in order to manifest one’s open innovation visibility.

Communication is purposefully implemented to enrich existing open innovation processes and to realize the underlying potential. On behalf of open innovation visibility, it becomes clear that innovation communication is not just an operative tool but should be an integrative strategic element of a firm’s innovation processes (Fig. 9.3).



Fig. 9.3 The three dimensions of the open innovation visibility concept as an integrative strategic element of a firm’s innovation processes (illustration by authors)

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