



Case Studies in Research and Practice

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Case Study Research

Description, discovery, and theory testing

Empirical enquiry:
Investigating **contemporary phenomenon**
within its **real-life context**

- Studying phenomenon in its natural context at one or a few sites
- Qualitative tools and techniques for data collection and analysis
- Not explicitly controlling or manipulating variables



Selected 'Loebbecke' Cases (1)

- Taking Content Integration to the **POS**: Enhancing Shopping Convenience in **Metro's 'Future Store'**, 2004.
- Business Strategies for the Information Society: The Challenge of an **IT Outsourcer**, 1999.
- **NetCologne**: An Innovative Player on the German **Telecommunication Market**, 1999.
- Web Technologies Enabling Company Transparency - The Case of **transtec AG**, 1999.
- Network Integration at **CompuNet**, 1998.
- Building the Virtual Corporation at **Gerling**, 1997.
- Business Process Redesign at **CompuNet** - Standardizing Top-Quality Service Through Information Technology, 1995.



Selected 'Loebbecke' Cases (2)

- **KHD's** Vision 2000 **engine factory**, 1995.
- Betting on Information Technology at the **Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club**, 1995.
- **Home Banking**: An I.T. Based Business Philosophy or a Complementary Distribution Channel **CORTAL versus Crédit Commercial de France**, 1993.
- Staying at the Top with **Otis Elevator** - Sustaining a Competitive Advantage Through IT, 1992.
- Dealing in Time through IT: The **Union Bank of Switzerland** Case, 1992.



Case Study Research

Strengths

- Capturing of 'reality': **Context and detail**
- Enabling to relate context to processes and outcomes
- Aiming to understand **'how'** and **'why'**
- Phenomenon: Dynamic, not yet settled

Weaknesses

- Possibly establishing **relationships** between variables, **but not** establishing **causality**
- Cannot **generalize** findings statistically, although analytic generalization possible
- No control over independent variables: Limiting **internal** validity of conclusions



Related Research Strategies

- Field study (= case study as subtype)
 - ➔ Researcher as observer
- Action research
 - ➔ Researcher as observer and participant
- Application descriptions
 - ➔ Example or pure teaching cases

Case Research Design



Single Case

- Case needing to be **unique**
- Investigating phenomenon **in depth**
- Getting close to phenomenon
- Providing rich description
- Revealing deep structure

Multiple Cases

- Enabling analysis of data across cases
- Number of cases depending on how much new information likely to emerge from further cases (Eisenhardt: 4 to 10)

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Case Study Research Methods



Qualitative

- Including context and people affected
- Data collection
 - Interviews, field notes, documents, archives
 - Time-consuming and voluminous
- Data analysis not easy

Quantitative & Qualitative

- Richer picture
- Data possibly collected all at once or sequentially

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Doing Case Study Research



- Ask appropriate question: Important, interesting and able to be answered
- Do comprehensive literature analysis and careful research design work first
- Select appropriate unit of analysis and estimate number of cases
- Maintain case study database - from start

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Successful Case Study Research Requires ...



- Research **relevant to industry and practitioners**
- Understanding importance of pragmatism
- Initiative, persistence, and optimism
- Rigor in design and data collection
- Intense curiosity about 'phenomenon on context'

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.... Questions, Comments, Complaints ?



Thank you very much for your attention!

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