Master’s Thesis in Strategic Entrepreneurship

“Sports teams as systems of managerial design choices”

Topic
The purpose of this master’s thesis is to investigate the performance implications of organizational designs. Firms can be considered systems of interdependent choices (Siggelkow, 2011) and by applying this approach, we can observe various types of design combinations that, potentially, imply differences in organizational performance (Miller, 1996). To measure such combinations of multiple dimensions, fine-grained data on several organizational variables are required – this can turn out to be a difficult task. Hence, resulting from the establishment of sports-oriented databases containing detailed information on athletics, their organizations, and strategies, management researchers have studied individuals and sports teams to use them as proxies for more typical business companies (e.g. Groshjean et al., 2016; Kilduff et al., 2016; Marino et al., 2015; Ross & Sharapov, 2015).

Following this, the student will study organizations by using data derived from ice-hockey (e.g. NHL) or soccer (e.g. Bundesliga) sports. Furthermore, the applicant is expected to make the topic their own. That is, the student will, after having been accepted for this thesis, identify a research question and summarize the intended subject, data, methods, and contributions of the study in the form of a proposal.

Data to be collected

Ice-hockey or soccer data
A great amount of data has already been collected and it is possible to continue extending these data sets. The data contain a set of variables at the individual level (players age, height, weight, experience, skills, past success in terms of awards, scores, penalty minutes, injuries, trades etc.), organizational level (strategy/tactics, power play, management’s experience etc.), and environmental level (location, level of pressure, unpredictability of opponents’ tactics etc.). There are a number of possible sources for the data, that can also be combined e.g. http://www.hockeydb.com/, http://www.hockeyzoneplus.com/menu_e.htm, http://www.nhl.com/stats/, https://www.hockey-reference.com/, http://www.hockeyabstract.com/playerusagecharts, http://nhlnumbers.com.

What we offer

- A topic that is interesting and relevant for both research and practice
- Committed supervision and regular interaction
- Guidance on the method and structured thesis process
- Access to all relevant data
What we require

**Essential**
- Very good desk research skills
- Good grasp of quantitative methods, or at least capability to learn fast
- Excellent command of English
- Interest in ice-hockey and/or soccer
- Understanding of our process: [http://www.ent.wi.tum.de/fileadmin/w00bcx/www/Writing_your_Thesis_in_Strategic_Entrepreneurship.pdf](http://www.ent.wi.tum.de/fileadmin/w00bcx/www/Writing_your_Thesis_in_Strategic_Entrepreneurship.pdf)

**Desirable**
- Prior applied experience in data collection
- Prior applied experience in quantitative research projects

Application

If you are interested, please send a full application (short cover letter and CV including an up-to-date transcript) to Petteri Leppänen (petteri.leppaenen@tum.de). Please also contact Petteri Leppänen for any questions you may have.

Literature