



The Business of Projects: Managing Innovation in Complex Products and Systems

By Andrew Davies, Michael Hobday

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This volume breaks new ground by showing how leading businesses create and implement projects to drive strategy and innovation. Projects are used to coordinate activities with customers and suppliers and ensure that organizations become more dynamic and adaptable. The book extends the resource-based view of the firm to focus on the business lessons learned from the design and production of high-value complex products and systems (CoPS), which have always been project-based. As well as new frameworks and management tools, it provides case studies of high-technology industries--such as telecommunications, flight simulation and medical devices.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This book has a very important message in proposing that, for many firms, project competence is a major precondition for competitive advantage. Building on a multitude of solid empirical studies within the COPS research programme, Davies and Hobday demonstrate convincingly the vital role of projects as a means of stimulating flexibility and effecting innovation. They present a comprehensive framework that accounts for the wider significance of projects for innovation and business strategy. For students within business and technology, as well as for managers, this book is a must read!" Lars Lindkvist, Professor of Business Administration, Linköping University, Sweden

"[A] major scholarly contribution to a rethinking of the role of projects in the management literature... moves beyond the orthodox view of projects as a set of operational planning and control tools and techniques, and instead demonstrates how projects are the fulcrum for organization-wide learning, innovation and business development." Robert DeFillippi, Suffolk University Business School, Boston

"The popularity of projects as a means for achieving competitive advantage in public and private organizations has become a well-recognized phenomenon, leading to a surge of interest in theory development and the practice of project management techniques. What has been missing, to date, is a work that places projects directly at the center of modern business practices, explaining clearly and concisely why projects are an effective means for achieving myriad organizational goals. This book addresses a critical and, until now, missing component in our understanding of the role of projects in successful business enterprises. Well-researched, provocative, and highly practical, *The Business of Projects*, is a welcome, and extremely timely addition to the project management literature." Jeffrey K. Pinto, Andrew Morrow and Elizabeth Lee Black Chair in Management of Technology, Sam and Irene Black School of Business

"Since the pioneering work of Joan Woodward and Alfred Chandler in the 1960s, researchers have tried to understand the relationships between strategy, organisation and technology. Davies and Hobday show how today's complex new technologies and organizational structures have made this task even more complicated. Their answer to many of the strategic challenges posed by the new environment is the project business. This book provides a major contribution to our understanding of industrial organisation in the early 21st century." Mark Dodgson, Director, Technology and Innovation Management Centre, University of Queensland

"It is no secret or surprise that much innovative and collaborative work in organizations these days happens through projects. What is surprising is just how little has been written about the nature, structure, and economics of projects... Written by academics who have experience working outside the academy, *The Business of Projects* fills this need very, very well." NASA's Ask Magazine

"For the reader who wants to understand this important category of projects and the innovation and learning problems associated with project business, I truly recommend the book. I especially believe that the theoretical framework presented in the book is a welcome contribution to both the literature on management in general and to the knowledge of project management/organization/business in particular. This book should also be important reading for project managers aiming at getting a better overview of what projects really are and for top managers analyzing the core capabilities necessary for firms searching for a future in complex systems. The book would also work well for academic courses preferably at the master and doctoral levels." Jonas Söderlund, School of Management, Linköping University, Technovation

About the Author

Dr Andrew Davies is a Senior Fellow of SPRU and Deputy Director of the Complex Product Systems Innovation Centre at the University of Sussex. Professor Michael Hobday is co-Director of the Complex Product Systems Innovation Centre at the University of Sussex and Professor of Innovation at Brighton University.

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