



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

# The Dynamics of Digital Transformation

The Role of Digital Innovation,  
Ecosystems and Logics in Fundamental  
Organizational Change

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The Dynamics of Digital Disruption: The Role of Digital Innovation, Ecosystems and Logics in Fundamental Organizational Change

**Abstract**

This dissertation investigates digital transformation: processes where organizational actors engage in digital innovation and transform their organizations in order to respond to change in their business and technology environments. Specifically, it examines the dynamics of digital transformation, seeking to understand the key sociotechnical elements and their relationships that drive digital transformation processes and influence how they unfold over time.

The outset for theorizing in this dissertation is a body of literature that has begun to accumulate knowledge on digital transformation as a distinct phenomenon. Within this literature, I identify three areas vital to understanding digital transformation processes that have so far not been sufficiently theorized. First, research on digital transformation often describe it as a complex and longitudinal process that involves several sequences of digital innovation, yet it has primarily been studied in the form of discrete instances of innovation decoupled in time and space. As a result, current knowledge on digital transformation as a longitudinal process is limited. Second, the literature on digital transformation emphasize that interactions between digital business and technology environments and organizations are crucial for explaining why and how digital transformation unfolds. At the same time, however, the literature has so far not been able to offer a conceptualization of these interactions in ways that make formative influence over time visible. Third, existing research on digital transformation has remained dominantly focused on the role of managers and paid limited attention to other organizational actors in digital transformation.

Addressing these limitations in existing digital transformation research, I draw upon established theoretical concepts and the four appended research papers to theorize a conceptual framework on digital transformation dynamics. The conceptual framework contributes to research by clarifying a set of theoretical concepts and relationships that are instrumental for addressing digital transformation as a sequential and cumulative process, and the actors, agency and actions that realize digital transformation over time. It is supportive of future theorizing of digital transformation as a subject matter related yet distinct from other forms of organizational change enabled by technology use.

**Keywords**

Digital transformation, digital innovation, digital ecosystem, digital logic, process methodology

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