



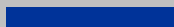



KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

- >> International Scientific Conference, Reutlingen, Germany
- >> Title: **Knowledge Economy- Chances & Challenges for SMEs**
- >> European School of Business Research Institute, Reutlingen University
- >> **9th - 10th October 2008**
- >> www.knowledge-economy.de

Information Booklet

Oct 2008

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Overview



Dear Sir or Madam,

the Research Institute of the European School of Business in Reutlingen (Germany) is hosting an international scientific conference “Knowledge Economy – Chances & Challenges for SMEs” on 09-10th October 2008.

As can be seen by the prominent role in the Lisbon Declaration in 2000, knowledge plays today a key role for competitiveness of companies as well as regions.

Within the context of an innovation-focused globalized world, the role of SME is often underestimated. The upcoming conference therefore will accentuate small and medium-sized enterprises and give a forum for exchange in research about knowledge management, innovation, and regional growth for scholars and practitioners.

We are keen to highlight internationality and the interdisciplinarity, as already successfully conducted in the 2007 conference, since we believe that knowledge economy deserves a holistic approach.

As hosts of this conference we are keen to build partnerships with companies in order to generate a fertile exchange of experience between scientists and managers.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Stephan Seiter

Prof. Dr. Hans-Peter Baumeister

“ SMEs constitute an important dynamic element in all economies as they drive innovation, especially in knowledge-based industries...”

OECD Istanbul Ministerial Declaration, 2004

Workshop I: KM and Innovation



Most economic structures world-wide are largely composed of SMEs, and the main share of employment is concentrated in this organizational form. Nevertheless, the role of knowledge and knowledge management still seems to be of minor importance in research about SMEs and in practice.

SMEs differ in many ways from large enterprises, as e.g. in the relationship of ownership and management, organizational structure, culture and behaviour, human resources, and customers and markets. Therefore, it seems to be obvious that existing models of knowledge and innovation management can not be transferred identically from large corporations to SMEs. Furthermore, the distinctive characteristics have influence on innovation and knowledge management within the firms, and can function as barriers to fully exploit their innovative capability. Consequently, SMEs are less innovative and tend to produce more incremental than radical innovations.

Contrary to empirical examinations, it was argued that for SMEs knowledge management should especially be of high relevance as they are less able to dominate markets and therefore depend on their ability to differentiate in globalized and highly competitive markets. Furthermore, the issue of erosion of the knowledge stock is highly relevant as the main knowledge assets are held on the level of individuals or entrepreneurs. German economy, amongst others, is currently threatened by the issue of company-owner succession, as a generation of founder and entrepreneurs retire.

The upcoming conference encourages contributions in the field of innovation and knowledge management, in which the objects of consideration are SMEs.

Workshop Chair:

Prof. Dr. Michael Stephan
University of Marburg
Germany



Workshop II: Economic growth and regional development



SMEs have for long been overlooked in the discussion of economic growth and regional as well as systemic competitiveness. During the cold war governments attempted to foster growth and demonstrate the vigour of the capitalist as well as the communist system by paving the way for large enterprises. It was assumed that by accumulation of men, capital and other resources, the large company was the framework in which these production inputs could be utilized most efficient. Centralized research and development in big multinational corporations led to innovations which were then by the mere power of these corporations and their networks spread out as new products and new services. However, during the last decades, markets became more integrated, competition increased and product life cycles deteriorated. Big corporations had increasingly problems with their bureaucratic structure to compete against highly innovative SMEs with much shorter decision time. This development was accompanied by the increasing value a good idea could claim via bigger market potential - through a huge integrated global market.

The decisive assets for a company are nowadays still men and capital - for the most part, however especially ideas are the sources for endogenous growth of a company and a whole economy.

Ideas do often spread more easily in SMEs as they do in big multinationals with a sophisticated system of hierarchical structures and routines of decision making. Good ideas are not exclusive to big multi national corporations - on the contrary they are innate to a single creative mind who often sets out to create an own company on the strive to make an idea come true. Only since recently - as economies transfer to knowledge economies - do policy decision makers accredit this potential of highly innovative SMEs and put programs in place to foster creation of ideas and new companies. Now, it is often recognized by the regional policy decision makers that the innovative SMEs are a powerful source of economic growth which can not be overlooked - especially in the context of the regionalization of knowledge economies.

Workshop Chair:

Prof. Dr. Martin Zagler
Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien
Austria



Program



Thursday, 09th October 2008

- 09:00 am Registration
- 10:00 am Welcome Address
Prof. Dr. Peter Niess (President Reutlingen University)
Prof. Dr. Stephan Seiter (Director ESB-Research Institute)
Prof. Dr. Hans-P. Baumeister (Director ESB-RI)
- 10:30 am Keynote: Prof. Dr. Harald Hagemann,
University of Hohenheim: "Schumpeter on Innovation"
- 11.15 am Coffee-Break
- 11.30 am Workshop Introductions I-II (Chairmen of Workshops)
- 12:30 pm Lunchbreak
- 02:00 pm Workshop Session
- Workshop Innovation and Management
- Regional Economic Competitiveness
- 04:00 pm Coffee-Break
- 04:30 pm Workshop Session Continued
- 07:30 pm Reception and Dinner

Friday, 10th October 2008

- 9:30 am Keynote: Thomas Fell, Managing Director
IBM for SME
"SME and IT: Knowledge Transfer in the era
of global networking"
- 10:15 am Coffee-Break
- 10:30 am Workshop Session
- Workshop Innovation and Management
- Regional Economic Competitiveness
- 12:00 am Preparation of Workshop Results
- 12:30 Plenary Discussion and Presentation of
Workshop Results
- 13:00 pm Official Closure and Lunch

The conference will be held in Building 17 on the Campus of Reutlingen University. This building is the most modern building on the campus and usually hosts the ESB-Master Study Program. It is fully equipped for our conference purposes with the latest technological infrastructure needed for successful conduction of workshops.



Organization



ESB Research Institute



ESB-Research is the research institute of the European School of Business Reutlingen. In its areas of competence the ESB-RI sees itself as a praxis-oriented Think-Tank. It accommodates the scientific resources of the ESB Reutlingen and its European partner universities in a worldwide, dynamic research network. It takes on its share to foster the innovation process of our Economy and Society along with supporting the scientific quality at the ESB. Through its work, the ESB-Research Institute sets out to make a theoretical and a practical contribution to research on some of the great challenges of the contemporary business environment:

- Innovation in business and commercial enterprise,
- The implications of emerging Knowledge Society, and
- The processes and consequences of Globalization.

The ESB Reutlingen has been successful in providing first class education in International Management for over 25 years. It has continuously been among the best rated German business schools. A joint, completely integrated study program with partner universities in various countries leading to a double-degree has been characteristic for the ESB.

This undergraduate program has been supplemented by various graduate-studies and post-graduate activities.

In this way, the ESB now has the pleasure of being in a classic structure as an international business school which begins with a Bachelor of Arts Undergraduate Program, and also offers a Master (MSc) and MBA- study program right up to Corporate Training.

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Conference chairs:

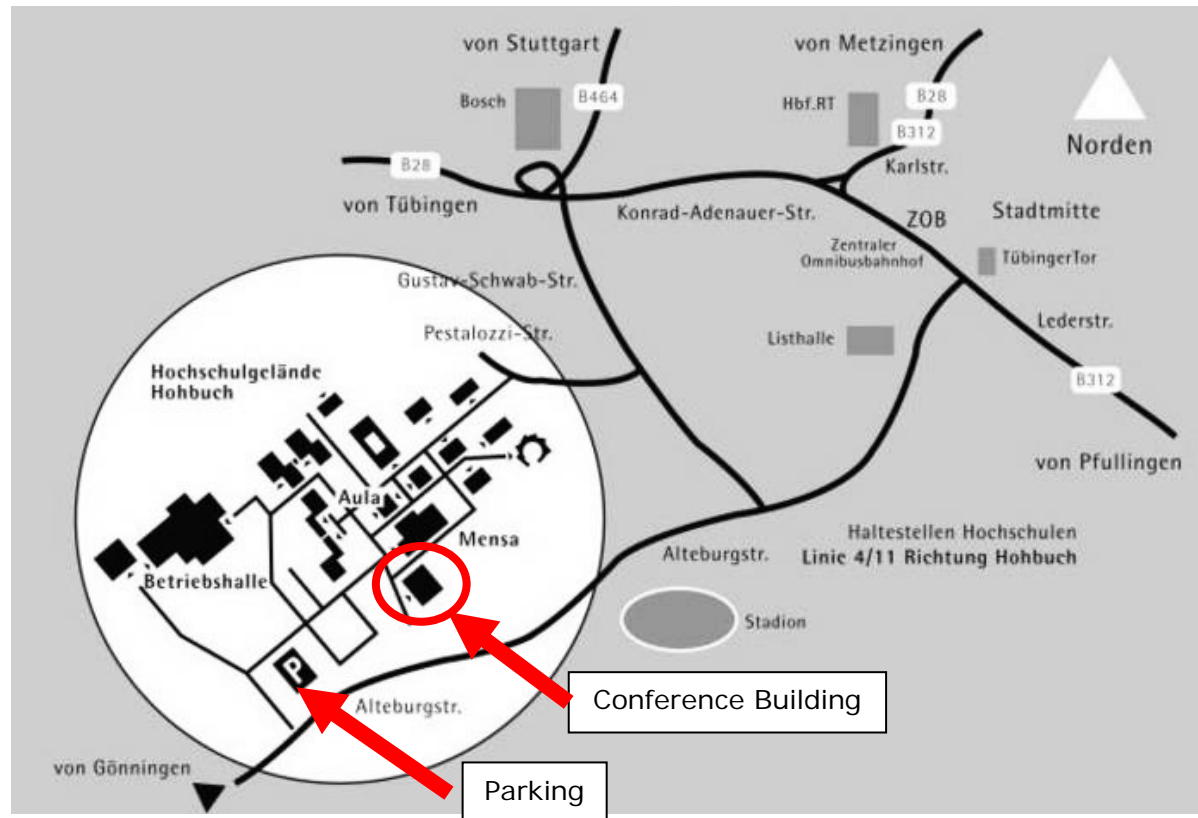


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