Events as means of 'position-taking' in an emerging field – the case of 'smart cities'

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Presentation of a research idea

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STARTING POINT: SMART CITIES AS AN EMERGING FIELD

A new market of previously public goods …

- 40,000 billion Dollars expected investment in urban infrastructures worldwide until 2030
- The promise of new information technologies ("mobile internet", "internet of things")
- New players appear in the marketplace for infrastructure: e.g. Cisco, IBM, Siemens

STARTING POINT : SMART CITIES AS AN EMERGING FIELD

... accompanied by a series of events, e.g.

- Smart City EXPO (Barcelona, Kyoto branch in 2014)
- Smart to Future Cities (London)
- Metropolitan Solutions (Hannover, 2015 Berlin)
- DLD cities (travelling: London, Rio, San Francisco ...)

INITIAL RESEARCH QUESTION:

What is the role of these events in the formation of the smart city field?

FCE LITERATURE

Field configuring events as …

- „Temporary organizations, …

- in which different people assemble periodically or on a one-time base,…

- to announce new products, develop industry standards, construct social networks" etc. (Lampel/Meyer 2008: 1026).

➔ *the field in a nutshell*

- either in a period of *emergence* or *maturity*

FCE LITERATURE

Different approaches to fields

- The harmonious view (Scott, Powell and DiMaggio)
- The conflict view (Bourdieu)

FCEs: Individuals come together …

- to develop or renew the "mutual awareness" to be "involved in a common enterprise" (Anand/Jones 2008)
- to establish or improve individual positions

FCE LITERATURE

The classic case

- Competition *within* events

The smart city case

- Competition *through* events

➔ *Players strategically use events in order to establish a powerful position in the emerging field*

SMART CITIES EVENTS

Which types of players?

- *City administrations*: Smart City EXPO (Barcelona)
- *Consultancies, Think Tanks*: Smart to Future Cities (Ovum)
- *Trade show organizers*: Metropolitan Solutions (Deutsche Messe)
- *Technology corporations*: DLD cities (Siemens)

NEW RESEARCH QUESTION:

How do different players use events in order to improve their strategic positions in the emerging field of smart cities?