

Advancing A Framework for The Disruptive Potential of Digital Start-Ups

Jasmin Mikl¹, Alexander Geske², David M. Herold³

Vienna University of Economics and Business, Vienna, Austria

Abstract

Digital platforms play an increasing role in the logistics industry and start-ups are challenging traditional logistics providers with new business models. It is, however, not clear whether these platforms have the potential to ‘disrupt’ current industries. As a response, this paper contributes a more nuanced view on the notion of disruption and disruptive innovation and is concerned with digital freight exchange platforms in particular. To distinguish between disruptive and sustained innovations, we develop a framework from literature that allows characterizing digital platforms and their disruptive potential along the initial target market, the value contribution, the ecosystem network and the industry supervision. We apply this framework to a comparative dual-case study of two digital freight exchange platforms and reveal important differences. Beyond its very contribution, the paper invites researchers to expand on the given approach, in particular to advance the predictive ability of the proposed framework.

Keywords: digitalization; start-ups; entrepreneurship