Preface

In a context characterized by a high number of companies, of products and of messages, the concept of strategic entrepreneurship arises. While on one hand, strategy implies extracting value from existing domains and creating competitive advantage, on the other hand, entrepreneurship enables identification of opportunities or of new niches (Webb, Ketchen, & Ireland, 2010, pp. 67-68). Thus, strategic entrepreneurship is defined as an effort of a company to both exploit the competitive advantage and explore for innovation (Ireland & Webb, 2007, p. 50).

Within the literature, strategic entrepreneurship refers to three main elements: developing an appropriate mindset within a company, finding a balance between exploration and exploitation, and continuous innovation. First, mindset implies cognitive frameworks through which the new knowledge is used and interpreted. Second, while exploration is defined as a process that involves “variation, search, creativity, experimentation, and the integration of diverse knowledge stock,” exploitation is a process that involves refinement, speed, precision, and a focus on existing competencies. Third, the concept that perfectly resonates with the content of this volume, continuous innovation, is perceived as a pathway through which strategic entrepreneurship contributes to the capacity of a company to produce prosperity (Webba, Ketchen, & Ireland, 2010, p. 69). Although innovation implies risk taking, it helps increasing the amount of utilized knowledge (Audretsch, Bönte, & Keilbach, 2008, p. 688).

As a new notion within the innovation context, digital economy (also known as e-economy, “information economy” or “the new economy”) is perceived as a driver of structural change and economic growth at the international level (Johansson, Karlsson, & Stough, 2006). Confronting with a permanent and rapid technological development and considering the need for enduring innovation in a digital economy, the concept of digital entrepreneurship must be developed. In this new environment, Information Technology, mobile technology, and new media are considered to be competitive advantages. Put it differently, it means having a high capability of accessing, creating, processing and strategically disseminating knowledge (Davidson & Vaast, 2010, p. 1).

While the initial definition of entrepreneurship, back in the 1700s, emphasizes the risk of buying at a certain price and selling at uncertain prices, nowadays digital entrepreneurship underlines the need to pursue the opportunities based on the digital media and information and communication technologies (Davidson & Vaast, 2010, p. 2).

In this respect, digital entrepreneurs are considered to combine business, knowledge and institutional opportunities. While business entrepreneurship is a venture aiming to generate financial profit (e.g. Amazon.com), knowledge entrepreneurship implies searching for information and knowledge-related opportunities in order to develop, expand and circulate a domain-related knowledge (e.g. consultants, journalists, academics, and pundits). Institutional entrepreneurship refers to the activities of creating new institutions or transforming the existing ones, generating legitimacy (Davidson & Vaast, 2010, p. 3).
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Considering this theoretical background, the present volume aims to investigate the role of digitalization and of global innovation on the entrepreneurial field. It represents an interdisciplinary work, binding together research from a wide range of disciplines. Regardless of the different approaches, all of the papers within this volume have, as a central concept, the entrepreneurship one. They all converge around this notion in the attempt to offer a comprehensive overview on entrepreneurship and on its applicability on the market. The main topics of this volume rely on the impact of new digital technologies on business, on collaborative processes and on social change, on the role of neuromarketing on measuring unconsciousness marketing influence, and on the correlation between educational field and entrepreneurship.

The contributors of this volume have different profiles. They have specializations in computer science, artificial intelligence, economics, business administration, strategic product design, entrepreneurship, strategic research, advertising and communication. In spite of these differences, by contributing to the present volume, all the authors have a common ground, namely developing knowledge on the digital entrepreneurship and global innovation.

The target of the volume is comprised of both academic specialists and industry professionals. The academic specialists can use this volume as a teaching guide by presenting students the latest developments within the digital entrepreneurship. At the same time, they can use the knowledge in the volume either to replicate the existing research instruments or to further develop other research ideas. The industry professionals can find a high amount of inspiration that can be useful for their future work or business ideas. Thus, they can find applicability of all the presented ideas in a wide range of domains.

Considering this context, the volume on Research on Digital Entrepreneurship and Global Innovation is composed on twelve chapters that have been reviewed during 2015-2016.

The article written by Farhan Shaikh, The Benefits of New Online (Digital) Technologies on Business: Understanding the Impact of Digital on Different Aspects of the Business, analyzes the impact of digital technology on the businesses and the challenges of the industrial leaders and the entrepreneurs. The overall findings are structured under three broad sections – Customer Experience, Process Optimization and Business Innovation. First, Customer Experience section captures the way companies are using the data from digital technologies, enhancing the way they interact with the customers. Second, the section on Process Optimization highlights the significant improvements achieved by using digital technologies for the existing business processes. Finally, Business Innovation captures the transformation power of digital, through new business models, business areas and data monetization.

Maria Ramirez-Salazar and Rafael Pérez-Urube, in their article, Open Collaborative Innovation: Booster of Solutions for the Challenges of a Global World – Collaborative Processes and Innovation Networks Create Value, emphasize the role of open collaborative innovation on dealing with the challenges of a global world. Open innovation is considered to be a way that allows the incorporation of external knowledge into a company. Open collaborative innovations are adding an external point of view from different interinstitutional and transdisciplinary entities. These entities rely on the common goal of provide practical solutions to business challenges that arise in a global world. There are seven components in the Open innovation collaborative model: Innovation challenges, internal-external knowledge, paradigm change, leadership, interinstitutional and transdisciplinary teams, storytelling, and creative solutions. It also contains six principles, thus having thirteen interactive variables: identity, agreements, flexibility, commitment, recognition, and trust. This research has identified, among the previously mentioned variables, that in order to be more successful leading projects (taking into consideration the millennia’s generation), it is necessary to strengthen creativity and communication as essential factors.
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Aiming to call attention to the concept of competitive intelligence, Ainul Mohsein Abdul-Mohsin develops the paper The Relationship between Entrepreneurial Competencies, Competitive Intelligence, and Innovative Performance among SMEs from an Emerging Country: Competitive Intelligence in SMEs. Competitive intelligence is considered to be vital to an organization because it emphasizes on understanding and measuring an organization’s competitive environment and the unstructured information that influence an organization’s strategic decision making. In fact, it also assists in creation of ideas and innovation. Yet, research on competitive intelligence practice among entrepreneurs is quite scanty. There is a need to investigate if entrepreneurial competencies and innovative performance is influenced by competitive intelligence. Thus, this study aims to analyze the relationship between entrepreneurial competencies, innovative performance and if competitive intelligence is the missing link among the entrepreneurs within the Malaysian SME context.

A technical contribution to the volume is the chapter Intercloud: Delivering Innovative Cloud Services, written by Alexandru Aurel Costan, Bogdan Iancu, Petru Cosmin Rasa, Alexandru Radu, Adrian Peculea, and Vasile Dadarlat. The article begins from the idea that cloud computing is considered the next step in the evolution of technological applications, services and products development, in the Future Internet and Internet of Things context. The permanent connection of users to the Internet has become widespread, so almost all available resources (data, software) can be placed on the Internet, shared between users - sometimes completely independently of others, and brought from the Internet to the user’s computer on demand. The chapter highlights the benefits of using hybrid technology with a focus towards entrepreneurs and business innovators. Intercloud systems are built of heterogeneous services, offered by different providers of cloud computing. To emphasize the business opportunities offered by innovative Intercloud approaches, an architecture for the interconnection of cloud services offered by multiple cloud providers, with applications to e-health, is presented. The main concepts and business benefits of using Intercloud systems and an architecture for interconnecting cloud services from multiple cloud providers is described.

Stelian Stancu, Constanta-Nicoleta Bodea, Laura Elly Naghi (Novac), Oana Madalina Popescu (Predescu), Alina Neamtu (Idorasis) have develop the chapter Use of New Innovative Technologies in Business by All Age Groups. The paper is covering the topic of the innovative technologies and their use at business level in an entrepreneurial environment, by all age groups. A number of areas are discussed, such as the demographic evolution and the age pyramid, the ageing process and a number of aspects regarding the flexi-security phenomenon in Romania compared to its evolution at European level. The chapter provides an overview about the demographic evolution, the age pyramid and the ageing process. The labor flexi-security at European level is also discussed covering the main flexi-security related indicators and few related econometric models are proposed.

By analyzing the case of Mexico, Verónica Baños-Monroy, Edgar Ramírez-Solís, and Lucia Rodríguez-Aceves are developing the chapter Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Latin American Family Firms: The Case of México. It examines the role of entrepreneurship and innovation in the development of family businesses in Latin America. The socio-economic dynamic of such region is an interesting field for research due to following reasons: it is a major manufacturing hub with growing importance in retail; it experienced a huge economical shift in the last ten years causing the growth of the middle class (an increase of 50 million people); family firms in the region are the main driver of growth and employment. The authors focus the analysis on Mexico due to its singular characteristics, making it a representative example of the region. Based on secondary sources, a characterization of the entrepreneurship and innovation in family owned and managed firms in the region is reviewed. Moreover, based on the Global
Entrepreneurship Monitor database, the authors present some recent data related with entrepreneurship levels in the region and its impact in terms of innovation. Finally, public policy implications are provided in order to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation in family businesses.

With a strong accent on the concept of pitching, the chapter *Pitching and the Other International Practices of Innovation Competitions: Channel for Youth Entrepreneurship* has been written by Rauno Rusko, Katja Härkönen, and Sofia Petäjäniemi. This chapter focuses on the international practices of innovation competitions. Pitching is a truly global phenomenon in the education and youth entrepreneurship, which has similar structures and contents all over the world. Thus, this international practice follows the ideas of Ohmae about the borderless world. In other words, the micro-activities and the practices of innovation events are following the joint global macro-level frameworks and practices. However, there seems to be slight differences of these events basing on how these events are named or marketed in the Web. Some of these events are web-based while others involve face-to-face happenings. All these forms of pitching events provide important channel for young entrepreneurship.

By emphasizing the increasing role of neuromarketing in the nowadays market, Ioana lancu is developing the chapter *A Neuromarketing Perspective on Measuring Marketing Influence at the Unconsciousness Level*. In a context characterized by an inflation of marketing messages, it is imperious to understand how consumers succeed in making the buying decision. Starting by briefly describing the structure and the role of the brain and the differences between consciousness and unconsciousness, the paper aims to investigate the way neuromarketing can help in comprehending the feelings of the consumers, the way products or services match the consumers’ needs, and the way companies can discover the insights of decision-making process. This paper can be perceived either as a guide for the companies that aim to find more on the way people manage information and make decisions or as a comprehensive description on human being marketing behavior that can serve both business, academic environments and consumers.

José Manuel Saiz-Alvarez and Jorge Colvin-Diez bring into discussion the correlation between digital entrepreneurship charity and social change. They are the contributors of the chapter *Digital Entrepreneurial Charity and Solidarity for Social Change: Kiva and the “Social-on-Lineization” of Poverty*. Microcredit has been studied from many perspectives. In this chapter, the authors analyze Kiva, the most important Person-to-Person microfinance organization from the perspective of social change. Moreover, the authors study how it has influenced the nascent of a new wave of entrepreneurs known as digital entrepreneurial charity. Applied to Kiva, they analyze the impact of the digital space and its Internet-based Peer-to-Peer Lending to create social change in the poor, while alleviating the poverty thanks to solidarity and charity. This work concludes affirming that banking the poor and education, with the intensive use of Internet-based devices, is the best way to alleviate poverty in our digital and globalized economic world.

The role of education in entrepreneurship is developed by Omar Patiño Castro, Catalina Ruiz Arias, Jose Jimenez Ibañez, and Francisco Matiz Bulla in their chapter *Universities Fostering Business Development: The Role of Education in Entrepreneurship*. They underline that Universities play a fundamental role in promoting entrepreneurship and directly contributing to the economic development of the country. This chapter presents the case of EAN University, an institution that from its foundation has focused on entrepreneurship as its mission. Over time, the university has taken concrete actions to develop its three mission areas: training, research and social outreach. At EAN University, the entrepreneur training model is an obligatory part of all programs, making it part of the student’s core education. In addition, the university promotes and creates a culture of entrepreneurship in its community through permanent business incubation and acceleration services, which are available to all students and graduates. EAN’s
accompaniment model begins with a diagnostic, which determines the stage the company is in: preincubation, incubation or acceleration. The university’s efforts then focus on directing and accompanying companies in the preincubation and incubation stages.

Constanța-Nicoleta Bodea, Stancu Stelian, and Radu-Ioan Mogos are discussing the importance of e-learning solutions in their chapter *E-Learning Solution for Enhancing Entrepreneurship Competencies in the Service Sector*. The chapter proposes an e-Learning solution for the entrepreneurship education, based on several simulation modules integrated into a classical learning management system. The originality of the approach is that the solution is domain independent and applied advanced IT technologies, such as agent-based simulations and extended graphical support. Using this e-learning solution, the students can learn how to choose characteristics/aspects for particular type of business and how important is each of them according specific criteria; how to set realistic values for different characteristics/aspects of the business, how a business scenario can be changed in order to fit better to the business context (business reality), modeled through by the scenario pattern and how to assess/evaluate business scenarios.

Dorin Spoaller, in his paper *Online Facial Symmetry and Achieving Success in a Digital Entrepreneurship World*, is conducting a comprehensive research on the importance of facial symmetry in advertising. The second most used page on a newly found website from which a client might buy an item is the ABOUT US page. Using real images of real employees has an overall positive effect on the outcome of that visit. However, it is not always as simple as that. Subtle differences in the content of the pictures may have more of an impact than previously thought. Online advertising has long been considered as a media where creativity is not needed, with the advertising agencies focusing on a few basic rules for displaying ads: call to action, numbers, colors, human figures or symbols and so on. The results are analyzed only on their conversion rate value, this being one of the main reasons why online advertising is being regarded as the future of advertising worldwide. This study is focusing on the Click Through Rate (CTR) impact of different ads using different Facial Symmetry Indexes (FSI) on the human figures used. The hypothesis proposed is that a person with a higher FSI, noticeable only at a subconscious level, will generate more clicks on an online ad.

Editing this volume was equally a complex and an amazing challenge. We have electronically met people all over the world, people eager to contribute to our knowledge experience and people eager to help us in pursuing the goal of developing a valuable book. Overall, it was a great experience, with many lessons to learn. We wish all the readers to enjoy the research, to get inspiration from them, to replicate the ideas and to further write their own works.

*Ioan Hosu*
*Babeș-Bolyai University, Romania*

*Ioana Iancu*
*Babeș-Bolyai University, Romania*
REFERENCES


