Chapter 63
Global Innovators: How Open Innovation Serves Humanity

Robert Girling
Sonoma State University, USA

ABSTRACT
Innovation is vital to sustain and advance current activities or it can be vital to growing new businesses. The challenge for organizations operating in a global environment is to meet the evolution of the marketplace, social needs, and the needs of society. Open innovation allows organizations to draw from the global pool of knowledge to design products and business modes that provide value while meeting social needs. This chapter looks at several SMEs that are social innovators drawing on a range of technologies to create products and services or to commercialize existing products in a new way in order to meet pressing social needs round the world.

INTRODUCTION
Traditionally international business has been considered business transactions between parties from more than one country. The focus is on cross border activities and an important aspect of international business is the collaboration which occurs between domestic and foreign partners. One text states “Global business is fundamentally about not limiting yourself to your home country but treating the entire globe as your potential playground (or battlefield)” (Peng, 2010: 8). This concept is true to many aspects of international commerce and non perhaps more than innovation, research and development.

William H. Chesbrough (2003: 1) in his book defines open innovation as “the use of purposive inflows and outflows of knowledge to accelerate internal innovation, and expand the markets for the external use of innovation, respectively.” Open innovation involves the international search for new ideas and collaboration in utilizing that knowledge to meet human needs. Few would disagree that innovation is vital to sustain and advance current activities or that it can be vital to growing new...
Global innovators are companies which combine their values as an integral part of their business model to earn revenue while addressing essential social and environmental issues. As such they are adding important dimensions to global business. This article explores how some enterprises are building innovative business models which extend a hand to improve working conditions and raise living standards around the globe. For
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