

**Lydie Smets**

## **Controlling Collaborative New Product Development**

### Abstract

New product development (NPD) projects are extremely challenging for manufacturers given the decreasing product life cycles, accelerating technological developments, and increasing market dynamics and complexity. To master and exploit these challenges, manufacturers are increasingly involving external stakeholders in NPD, such as suppliers, customers, and competitors. While many researchers investigated the benefits of collaborative NPD and proved that joint NPD helps manufacturers reduce development costs and cycle times and increase new product advantage and quality, scarce research exists on how to manage collaborative NPD to truly attain the expected benefits. Even with all partners being committed to the successful completion of collaborative NPD, managers still need to know how to coordinate and control the interdependent activities if willing to achieve desirable outcomes. Therefore, this PhD-project empirically investigates the importance of applying formal and informal management controls in three different types of collaborative NPD, i.e., with customers, suppliers, and competitors. The first study investigates the effect of allowing the customer to use formal controls on customer participation in NPD. In the second study, we try to discover what control mechanisms manufacturers should use in order to reap the full benefits of supplier-involving NPD. Finally, the third study aims to find out how manufacturers engaged in collaborative NPD with competitors deal with the challenge of applying formal and informal controls. In that way, the present research aims to provide ample implications on how managers can best design management control practices in collaborative NPD.