Teaching Electronic Commerce: Function- versus Process-Oriented MBA

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Agenda

- Introduction: The MACIS Project and beyond
- For a 'traditional', 'function-oriented' MBA
- For a 'process-oriented' MBA
- Conclusion / Discussion

The MACIS Project

- MACIS: Development of a Management Curriculum on and for the Information Society
- Concerning content and delivery mode of MBA courses
- March 1997 - December 1998, funded by European Commission
- Topics and participating schools
  - Orga. Behaviour / Accounting: ALBA, Athens, Greece
  - Marketing/ Retailing: ESADE, Barcelona, Spain
  - Decision Making: LBS, London, UK
  - HR Management: Erasmus, Rotterdam, NL
  - Logistics / Production: INSEAD, Fontainebleau, France
  - Mgmt. of Technology: Copenhagen Business School, DK
  - Strategy: University of Cologne, GE

... and beyond

- Global Masters of Electronic Commerce
- Courses organized by Electronic Commerce Research Centers (without 'stand-alone' degree)

For a 'traditional', 'function-oriented' MBA (1)

- Traditional MBA programs are not truly function-oriented (e.g. Strategy, Decision Science, Microeconomics, Orga. Behavior).
- Difference between 'function- versus process-oriented' courses and organizational structures (departments, PhD programs, etc.).
- A function-oriented MBA program does not exclude innovation, e.g. technology usage, new learning models, problem solving approaches, integrated courses, etc.

For a 'traditional', 'function-oriented' MBA (2)

- Teaching in a format different from department structure / professors' expertise requires resources (time / money) to be used for students instead of for internal coordination, incentive matching, etc.
- Concerning overall programs, packaging differs, but total content remains more or less the same.
- Most companies still hire for functions / 'functional' departments.
For a 'process-oriented' MBA

- Problem orientation / integration
- Innovativeness / attractiveness / fancyness
- Holisite view
- Omnipresent BPR initiatives
- Hiring companies may start being organized according to processes

Conclusion / Discussion

Function-oriented MBAs
- haven proven successful,
- can be innovative,
- but look old-fashioned

Process-oriented MBAs
- show 'customer' orientation,
- but are difficult to implement

Discussion

- When designing an Electronic Commerce MBA,
  - what would you in your current role prefer?
  - what do you think other stakeholders prefer / consider feasible?
    - MBA students
    - professors / teachers
    - PhD students
    - administrators

- What other options do you consider relevant
  (e.g. sector orientation)?