

**Investigation of new and incumbent organisational forms identity dynamics during
the ad-tech form emergence in the marketing industry**

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Abstract

Understanding how new organisational forms emerge is still a key area of research in organisational and management theory (OMT). Theorists looking beyond institutional entrepreneurs and institutional logics have begun to examine the role of identities in facilitating and locating emerging institutional arrangements like new forms in their prospective fields. This thesis adopts this perspective to examine how the ad-tech organisational form emerged during a period of crisis in the marketing industry caused by rapid succession of technological innovation that reordered the media landscape, changed consumer behaviours, and precipitated into widespread social changes. Specifically, I address the question ‘how do emerging organisational forms shape their identities in contexts where new technology is affecting the established industry?’

Using data from a ten-year longitudinal qualitative study of a sample of 594 firms drawn from the marketing industry, I find that: [1] the ad-tech form emerged through a phase process of emergence, differentiation and convergence in which both the new and incumbent form identity claims changed in response to the other [2] The emerging form frame their capability differences as competence enhancing, and conformed to existing institutional templates for value claims to minimise their differences with incumbent forms and avoid conflict. [3] Incumbent’s mimicry of new form features support new form emergence as do merging or acquiring entrepreneurial firm, which both lends legitimacy to emerging forms. The study provides insights into how new organisational form emergence in fields undergoing change may occur when emerging forms extend the collective identity of the field to encompass core features that dominant incumbents can coalesce around.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This thesis presents the findings of my investigation into the emergence of the ad-tech organisational form. I examine how the capability and identity claiming and legitimacy signalling behaviours of incumbent and emerging form proponents facilitate new form emergence. I propose that the ad-tech form emerged through a process of identity and capability claim emergence, differentiation and convergence, supported by the mechanisms of framing and mimicry. I identify incumbents as active constituents in the new form emergence processes and detail their role in facilitating the process outlined above in the model of new form emergence. This introductory chapter explores the rationale for the study – the need to develop our understanding of the dynamic interrelationship between new and incumbent organisational form identity claims and how this shapes emergence processes. And also to inform our understanding of how new organisational form emerge without distinctive collective identities in mature industries, which can support current explanations of collective identity change or reconstitution in mature fields. I introduce the key research aims and questions, and explain why the marketing industry was a suitable and interesting site to study new organisational form and the uniqueness of the ad-tech form emergence story. Finally, I describe the structure of this thesis.

1.2 Research Rationale

1.2.1 New organisational form emergence in mature industries

Understanding how new organisational forms emerge in established industries or fields is a key area of interest for organisational theorists. Established industries are fields rich with ready made organising templates and resources that entrepreneurs may employ to construct new organisational forms. Yet, it seems that the coercive effects of forces like isomorphism (Meyer and Rowan, 1977, DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) and liability of newness (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994) make it difficult for emergence processes to yield fruition in these context, whereas their relative absence in new markets allow a ‘trialling’ of different forms of organising prior to the legitimization of a suitable and eventually

successful organisational form. Emerging contexts are characterized by ambiguity and a lack of dominant referents (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). In these contexts, boundaries are under construction (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010) and clear resource relationships are yet to be instituted, thus, the initial period of indistinctive identities associated with new form emergence tends to be less damaging. For example, in the emerging satellite radio industry (Navis & Glynn, 2010), new form adopters escaped sanctions despite their indistinctive collective identities because constituents and audiences were still making sense of what the satellite radio form will be, how it will work, and what it will mean to be a member of that group. As meaning is constructed, new organisational form proponents have the opportunity to promote alternative ideas and conceptions that suit their goals or agendas (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009). Agency may thus result in the inclusion or exclusion of proximate organisations templates based on judgments about whether these organisations pose a competitive threat, or whether association with them can lend legitimacy to emerging forms (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010).

But as contexts reach maturity and taken-for-granted social codes emerge, indistinct identities even among incumbent organisational forms become detrimental, and this hinders the construction of new organisational forms. So for example, Zuckerman's (1999) found that stock analysts discount the share price of diversified firms due to their lack of sharply focused identities regardless of firms' size, age or success. Despite these challenges, scholars have provided some rich accounts of new organisational forms emergence in established markets, such as the non-kosher winery organisational form emergence in the Israeli wine industry (Simons and Roberts, 2008), the partner-associate organisational form in professional services (Lee and Pennings, 2002), and the craft brewery organisational form in U.S Brewery (Carroll and Swaminathan, 2000). These successful forms emergence have two commonalities: firstly, a presence of distinctive and highly contrasting identity that differentiates the emerging forms from established incumbents and positions them as contradictory but not competitive. For example, the kosher and non-kosher identities are completely contradictory and their products appeal to separate group of consumers. Likewise, the microbrewery and commercial brewery identities are also contradictory and serve different market segments even

though some large brewers also have sub-brands that serve parts of the craft market (Carroll and Swaminathan, 2000).

And secondly, the presence of technological, ideological or structural interdependencies that act as strong boundaries that demarcates new organisational forms from incumbents. For example, the flat organisational structure of partner-form professional service firms required consensual decision-making, which restricted the strategic goals and actions available to such organisations, and thus their size, growth and success. Whereas the hierarchical structure of partner-associate-form firms allowed delegation of decision-making to a small group of managers, which expanded the strategic options and scope of actions available to such organisation, in turn resulting in their growth and success. In sum, contemporary OMT literature suggest that emerging fields characterised by ill defined boundaries and unclear resource relationships are amenable sites for new organisational form construction where emerging forms lack distinctive collective identities. While mature and highly institutionalised field suit form emergence where actors have sharply focussed identities.

The story of the ad-tech organisational form emergence, which occurred despite the ad-tech form lacking a contrasting distinctive identity and boundary, is contrary to our understanding of emergence processes in mature fields from the dominant OMT perspective. But, a small but growing group of OMT theorists such as Glynn and Navis (2013) and Hsu (2006c) propose that socio-economic factors can moderate the effects of sanctions associated with indistinctive identities during new organisational form emergence. Changing socio-economic factors often disrupt established resource relationships and contribute to capabilities obsolescence, which provides opportunities to reframe field norms and construct identities that are consistent with emerging forms. For example, Djelic and Ainamo (1999) demonstrate how lifestyle changes and globalization altered the landscape of the luxury fashion market. These changes ushered in new requirements such as competencies in brand management, large-scale production or outsourcing, and strong management capabilities which the incumbent haute

couture form, constrained by their traditional craftsmen's identity, were largely unable to fully address. This resulted in the fragmentation of the market and the emergence of a form that could loosely claim facets of "modern-day artisan" identities.

Building on works by these scholars, I aim to extend OMT theory by proposing that new organisational forms emerge through the phases of emergence, differentiation and divergence. During the emergence phase, new forms differentiate on identity capability claiming, i.e. notions of what we do, but conform to established identity value claiming, which guides acceptable conceptions of who we are. Further, I argue that incumbent forms contribute to new form legitimacy by broadening their identity claims in response to emergence processes, which eventually leads to convergence on identity value claiming. I provide evidence that demonstrates how new form supporters participate in field level negotiations through framing of novel capabilities as competency enhancing, to revising the pre-existing collective identity shared by incumbents, and eventually realising a creatively ambiguous collective identity that all industry constituents employ. In so doing, I address the calls for research to investigate how the content (identities) of new organisational forms are developed (Ruef, 2000).

1.2.2 The interrelationship between collective identity, organisational identity and new organisational form emergence

Collective identities, defined as that which represents strategically constructed, fluid and organized shared perceptions that distinctively guide the actions of a group, but are sufficiently different from the individual identities of group members (Cornelissen et al., 2007), are important to organisational investigations across multiple levels of analysis. At the organisational level, they provide the resources used to create optimally distinctive organisational identities (Navis and Glynn, 2010, Patvardhan et al., 2015). While at the macro-level, collective identities help audiences recognize and distinguish between different organisational forms (Hsu and Hannan, 2005, Pólos et al., 2002) or market categories, and thereby shape the criteria organisations are evaluated against (Zuckerman,

1999). Hence, collective identities are widely regarded as legitimating mechanisms that facilitate the construction of categories (Jensen, 2010), and necessary precursors of new organisational forms (McKendrick et al., 2003).

Research efforts have so far concentrated on examining how new collective identities arise in emerging fields. Theorists propose that collective identity construction and legitimation involves the articulation of broad, meaningful stories that convey the purpose and core practices of a group (Wry et al., 2011), and boundary creation and maintenance activities that establish internal cohesion among group members, and signal coherence to external audiences (Weber et al., 2008, Patvardhan et al., 2015). This raises two important issues that this thesis addresses: [1] what is the process of new collective identity construction in mature fields, and [2] how and why will collective identity revisions occur in established markets?

Current research tells us that new collective identity construction requires agreement on its defining and growth stories that is shared among members and wider audiences to secure legitimation (Wry et al., 2011). But non-members may seek to co-opt or expand these stories in order to appeal to the audiences that an emerging collective identity garners. Wry et al. (2011) observed that despite the Dogme brother's success at staving off co-optation of the Dogme film collective identity, illegitimate claims by other indie film producers introduced enduring confusion that constrained audiences' ability to distinguish Dogme films from other independent genres. While attempts to co-opt an emerging collective identity may reflect incumbent response to the identity threat that emerging collective identities present (Elsbach and Kramer, 1996), they may also represent incumbents' revision of their collective identities to include previously existing features within the field amplified by emerging collective identity. Therefore, it is important to discern whether collective identity revisions are a strategic response by incumbents to the identity threats introduced by new organisational forms, or

whether collective identity revision marks incumbent change in their understanding of their existing collective identity.

1.3 Research aims and questions

This research aims to provide a nuanced account of organisational form emergence that examined the dynamic interrelationship between emerging and incumbent form identities. Our understanding of the impacts of emergence processes on incumbent forms identity is limited because extant research adopts a one-sided perspective that explores only the identity dynamics of challenger of incumbent forms (e.g. Fiol and Romanelli, 2012, Quirke, 2013). Also, it would be fruitful to further explore how new forms can be compelled to change their identity claims during the emergence processes. More insights on these issues will make us better able to identify emergence processes that are likely to succeed and isolate particular actions or events that especially contribute to emergence process success.

Scholars contend that legitimacy is a vital resource for new organisational forms and emphasise the role of constituents such as consumers (e.g. Lampel and Shamsie, 2003), stock analysts (e.g. Zuckerman, 1999), and financial institutions (e.g. Granqvist et al., 2013) as ultimate sources of legitimacy for new organisational forms. Yet, we know little about how incumbents too may positively contribute toward the legitimation of new forms, because current research evidence suggests that incumbents typically are a source of conflict as they attempt to delegitimise emerging forms (Kodeih and Greenwood, 2014, Greenwood et al., 2011, Negro et al., 2011, Wry et al., 2011). I argue that this position restricts our understanding of new forms emergence processes and I suggest a shift of focus to explore the circumstances in which incumbents can play a positive role, advertently or inadvertently, in new form emergence. Djelic and Ainamo (1999) study already provides some insights that explains how wider societal changes accelerates the obsolescence of industry capabilities in a manner that encouraged a new form that crystallised the “modern day artisan’ identity to emerge. In this study, incumbent inertia inadvertently facilitated new form emergence. Thus I extend this

approach by examining how incumbents in the context of a crisis arising from technological innovation and a changing media landscape respond to new form emergence through changes in their identity claims.

Finally, my research aims to empirically contribute to the literature of collective identity reconstitution in mature contexts. By building on works by Rao, Morrill, and Zald (2000) and Wry et al. (2011) that explain collective identity expansion by non-members seeking to redirect support and resource towards their agenda, I explore how ad-tech form proponents spur the field's effort to revise the marketing collective identity and include technological norms and features whilst also avoiding an identity crisis.

Hence, my research aims are listed as:

1. To identify and detail the dynamic interrelationship between new and incumbent form identity, and explain their change over time.
2. To identify the process of new organisational form emergence and its underlying support mechanism.
3. To understand how collective identities are revised or reconstituted in contexts where new forms emerge.

This research addresses the question: **How do emerging organisational forms shape their identities in contexts where new technology is affecting the established industry?**

To address this broad question fully, I have split it further into research questions:

1. How do the identity claims of emerging organisational forms differ from that of incumbent forms in marketing?
2. How and why do the identity claims of new and incumbent organisational forms change over time

3. How do incumbent organisational form identity claim change in response to new form emergence?

1.4 Research Context

In this section, I explain why I chose the marketing industry for this investigation. The marketing industry has for long been a stable industry where agencies with long histories and heritage dominate the market. In the last two decades however, technological innovations precipitated from the dotcom boom introduced changes to the industry. The online channel, resulting from the growth of Internet media through social networking, ecommerce and the changes in the way that consumers use and access media for business and personal use, have altered the landscape of marketing, requiring both new ways of targeting audiences online and new marketing capabilities to adapt to changes. While all of these changes appear to be suitable grounds for entrepreneurial actors to attempt new organisational form construction, defined as the “characteristics of an organisation that identifies it as a distinctive entity and, at the same time, classify it as a member of a group of similar organisations” (Romanelli, 1991), there were two aspects of the industry’s history that appears to be highly supportive of such a disruptive form emergence.

1.4.1 Early history of the marketing industry

The way that the marketing industry emerged has been instrumental in securing legitimacy for the ad-tech form. The industry first emerged when agents sold spaces to advertisers seeking to reach large audiences through printed media. Publishers and agents usually were dishonest about the readership and circulation figures of the publications advertisers bought ad-spaces in. To redress this, George P. Rowell compiled a *media directory* in 1869, a guide that listed accurate circulation figures and advertising rates for over five thousand newspapers across America (Tungate, 2013). And then in 1875, Francis Wayland Ayer, the founder of the influential agency N.W. Ayer and Sons agency, created the “*open contract*”, which eliminated the information asymmetry that existed between

agents, advertisers and publishers by ensuring that all parties had access to and used the same circulation figures when negotiating price. Before the open contract, publishers overstated their newspaper circulation figures to demand higher prices (Fox, 1984, Fill et al., 2013). Agents in turn overstated those figures to their clients (advertisers) and withheld wholesale space pricing information (Fox, 1984). This early dishonesty still impact on today's industry – brands still seek proof of marketing campaign effectiveness, which is challenging for incumbents to provide when campaigns run on traditional platforms like television, radio or printed media but possible on digital platforms. In subsequent chapters, I will illustrate how ad-tech agencies quickly secured constitutive legitimacy by creating techniques that make offline channels more auditable and by enhancing analytics and performance reporting for online marketing activities.

The other aspect of the industry's history that has been instrumental to ad-tech proponent is the industry's failure to fully professionalise and close the industry to uncertified members. By the 1900s, advertising spend was becoming rather significant, brands now sought creative services like copywriting and design, as well as non creative services like media space from agencies. In the UK a group of advertisers (brands) formed Advertiser's Protection Society (APS)¹ in 1900 to safeguard member's interests and improve ethics and transparency in the industry.

1.5 Research Contributions

The research makes empirical and theoretical contributions to the OMT literature on new organisational emergence in mature fields and collective identity construction. First, by adopting a holistic and dynamic view that explores the interrelationship between new and incumbent form identity claims, I provide empirical evidence that details how this interrelationship results in new form's use of differentiating and conforming identity claims in a phased emergence process supported by mimicry and framing. I also provide evidence that illustrates how incumbents respond by mimicry,

¹ The APS incorporated as Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA) in 1920, its current name.

differentiation, and ultimately by dispelling the institutional template hitherto adhered to. I offer insights on how the content of new organisational forms are constituted by showing how the ad-tech form framed solutions to the historical problems of auditability and measurability in a way that legitimised their membership claims of the marketing industry. Theoretically, this study proposes that some incumbent organisational forms play a facilitator role in new form emergence by undertaking actions that dilute excessive distinctiveness of a budding form and make it more recognisable and understandable to external constituents. These actions include mimicry of identity claims, accepting a reinterpretation of history or industry norms, and by financial transactions like mergers and acquisitions. Thus the study contributes to theory by demonstrating how the roles of incumbents can be expanded to include enabling new form emergence, rather than source of conflict or impediment that they are currently depicted as in extant literature (Negro et al., 2011).

Also, this study highlights specific industry factors at play and possibly contributing to organisational form emergence. This study shows that three specific factors associated with technological innovation namely: [1] *reactivity to technological innovation from external constituents like Google and Apple*. Because disruptive innovation occurred outside the industry, incumbent forms were reactive to its effect. Industry members' control over the pace, direction and type of innovation, moderated the ad-tech form emergence. And because the industry lacked control over the directions of these innovations, agencies were unable to prioritise which innovations to commit resources to. The lack on control over the technical innovations shaping the industry influenced how incumbents responded to the ad-tech form emergence by possibly reducing the sanction meted out to emerging forms. I argue that incumbents' measured reception of the ad-tech form emergence occurred because they perceived the opportunities to use ad-tech capabilities to regain control over marketing technology innovation and reaffirm the boundaries around the industry to exclude technology platform creators and publishers. [2] Changes to media hierarchy from television first to digital firms approach. And [3] fragmentation of the media landscape to include owned, earned and paid across more channels, from the status quo of just paid media.

Furthermore, the study makes some methodological contributions for by illustrating how web archives may be employed to scrape firm-level data for longitudinal studies. Emergence processes in mature fields are often long and protracted, and could be easily missed by short to medium term studies that provide snapshot accounts of industry change. But as firms' digital histories continue to grow, researchers can exploit the openness and accessibility of these data by using APIs and other scraping techniques to build longitudinal databases rich in data.

1.6 Thesis Outline

The thesis is split into chapters. Chapter 2 provides a summary of historical literature on new organisational form emergence including the contingency theory, co-evolutionary perspective, and population ecology. This summary provides the context of the field and highlights some of the limitations of past theories. In chapter 3, I provide a review of more contemporary literature of the neo-institutional literature on new organisational form emergence. I also review the literature on organisational and collective identity based perspectives of new organisational form emergence, and I situate my research in these fields. I conclude the chapter by explaining why my research focuses on new organisational form emergence in existing markets. In chapter 4, I explain the research design adopted for the study. Here I provide reasons for the philosophical positioning of the thesis, data sources, analytical techniques employed, some of the issues encountered over the course of research and step taken to address such issues.

Chapter 5 is the empirical chapter that details findings from the research. This chapter is divided into sections. Section 5.1 maps out the landscape of the industry and identifies and defines the incumbent organisational forms encountered at the start of the research. In this section, I provide company vignettes that illustrate how the industry adapted to the studio form, which gives a basis for understanding the actions of incumbents during the ad-tech form emergence. Section 5.2 presents the findings of how the ad-tech forms emerged in marketing by alternating between conforming to institutional templates of identity value claiming and differentiation on identity capability claims. I develop a phase model of new form emergence and show how new and incumbent forms identity claims change through the phases, and how micro mechanisms like framing and mimicry are employed to support changing identity claims.

In chapters 6 and 7, I discuss the findings and contribution of the study. I also summary the entire thesis and suggest limitations of this study and avenues for future research.

2 Historical Literature Summary

2.1 Overview

Early works on how organisational forms emerged tended towards an evolutionary perspective. Theorists emphasized the processes through which organisations adapted to their operating environment, with the view that environmental dynamics exerted pressures on organisational forms that threatened form survival. Such studies infer that suitable organisational forms will consistently out-perform poorly aligned forms leading to the ultimate demise of unsuitable forms (e.g. Child, 1972), and that new organisational forms emerge when poorly adapted forms are selected out of the environment (e.g. Hannan and Freeman, 1977), for example. While the former view largely describes the contingency approach, the latter is largely a summary of organisational ecology. Both of these approaches adopt a variation-selection-retention view of organisational forms, which suggest that both can broadly be classified as structural perspectives. In the rest of this chapter, I review contingency theory and organisational ecology perspectives on new organisational form emergence. While both perspectives have been widely impactful in other fields like strategic management (e.g. Govindarajan, 1988), Human resource management (e.g. Beersma et al 2003) and marketing (e.g. Zeithalm & Vadarajan, 1988), for relevance, my literature review is limited to organisational theory, and specifically examines the contributions both perspectives have made to new organisational form emergence literature.

2.2 Structural Perspective: Contingency Theory

Contingency theory emerged as a dominant approach to explain organisational adaptation to environments (Wood, 1979, Schreyögg, 1980). It is underpinned by the notion that organisations align their structure (taken here to denote form) with their contexts, e.g. environmental and/or technological contingencies, in order to maximize performance (Drazin and Van de Ven, 1985). Theorists make a distinction between internal contingencies such as organisational size or the nature of tasks undertaken, and environmental (external) contingencies like rate of technological or regulatory

change. Environmental contingencies have been of particular interest to contingency theorists because they broadly accept that not only is change a concern for organisations, but its frequency or rate, extent, and pattern (i.e. sporadic or regular) compounds the challenges that organisations face (Child, 1972).

Sillince (2005) summarized the three principles underpinning contingency theory as; [P1], there exists an associative relationship between an organisation's structure and its contingencies. Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) advanced this approach by arguing that organisation's ability to cope with its context is associated with its pattern of integration or differentiation, i.e. the environment influences the processes that organisations adopt. [2] An organisation's contingency determines its structure. And [3], organisational structures that better fit its different contingencies results in enhanced performance. These principles highlight how important organisational fit to environmental contingency is to theorists and the approaches developed to examine these principles are briefly summarized below:

Selection Approach - fit as congruence [P1]: this approach, often referred to as early structural contingency theory, focused on the congruence or fit between an organisational structure and context, and hypothesized that organisational context relates to structure (Drazin and Van de Ven, 1985). There are suggestions that evidence from natural selection studies that demonstrate how only organisations with appropriate structures survive in given environments because other inappropriate structures are selected out (e.g. Hannan and Freeman, 1977, Ruef, 1997), provides support for the structure-context fit hypothesis. Fit is viewed as the outcome of evolutionary adaptive processes that ensures the survival of only suitable organisations (Drazin and Van de Ven, 1985).

This broad premise has been criticized as being too open-ended and vague, providing "it depends" explanations for nearly all organisational phenomena (Longenecker and Pringle, 1978). Despite such criticisms, theorists like Drazin and Van de Ven (1985) and Child (1997) argue that macro-level

perspectives like organisational ecology, the managerial imperative, and institutional theory are implicitly contingency-based because they emphasize the pervasive and lasting constraints that institutional, regulatory and other external pressures exert on micro-level practices and processes that constitute the structure of organisations. They suggest that any theory that infers an associative or causal relationship is implicitly contingency-based.

Interaction Approach – fit as enhanced performance [P2]: this approach explains variation in organisational performance from the interaction between organisational structure and context. It is based on Ashby (1956) interaction hypothesis, the notion that organisational adaptability is improved when the degree of environmental complexity is mirrored by the organisation's structural complexity (Drazin and Van de Ven, 1985). Unlike the selection approach's focus on understanding congruence between organisational structure and context, the interaction approach explains the differences in organisational performance by examining how the degree of environmental complexities are reflected within organisational structures. Empirical evidence to support the interaction approach is lacking due in parts to methodological concerns with modelling interaction though Tushman (1979) and Schoonoven (1981) are notable exceptions.

Systems Approach – fit as consistency: proponents of the system approach argue that to understand organisational structure-context-performance relationships, efforts must be made to concurrently examine the many contingencies, structural alternatives and performance criteria that decision-makers contend with when designing organisations (Drazin and Van de Ven, 1985). Proponents criticize the selection and interaction approach for assuming that organisational structure can be viewed as decomposable parts, wherein specific contingencies that affect a particular structure of an organisation can be isolated and examined (Drazin and Van de Ven, 1985). Rather, the system approach regard organisational forms as the result of interdependencies between structural, contextual and performance criteria that organisations face. It is argued that internal consistency between structural

variables is positively related to performance (Child, 1977) . Hence it is important that organisational actors select a pattern of structure and process that matches the set of contingencies facing an organisation, and develop structures and processes that are internally consistent (Child, 1977).

Although contingency theory provides a lens to examine how organisational structures arise, it provides few direct propositions on the source of new organisational forms and on the dynamics by which new organisational forms become mainstay in their industries or fields. Rather, theorists contend that there can be no generalizable best-fit form of organizing (Wood, 1979, Ginsberg and Venkatraman, 1985) because different contextual conditions require different response strategies. Burns and Stalker (1961) are an exception. They propose that new organisational forms develop in tandem with technological innovation. Consequently, they argue that new organisational forms face peculiar challenges resulting from a lack of managerial experience of the novel environments that spur new form emergence. As a result, new organisational forms are typically found in ‘chaotic’ (Dijksterhuis et al., 1999) or highly ‘uncertain’ (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967) environments, and thrive when they adopt organic structures, characterized by a lack of rigidity or bureaucracy. Established organisational forms, on the other hand, are better adapted to ‘stochastic’ environments (Dijksterhuis et al., 1999) when they adopt mechanistic structures.

2.2.1 Criticisms and limitations of contingency theory

Contingency theory is criticized for being inherently static (Donaldson, 1987) and for ignoring the role of agency by casting organisations as passive inhabitants of their environments, with little power to influence it. Such a simplistic view fails to account for managerial intentionality and agency (Child, 1997), the complexity of organisational life, or indeed how vested interests effect wide reaching environmental and structural changes resulting in new organisational form emergence. Though some of these criticisms are shared with other perspectives like institutional theory (Dacin et al., 2005),

contingency theorists have failed to develop a more dynamic and heterogeneous view on sources of organisational variation over the years.

Critics also argue that the one-directional causality implied by contingency theory is inherently flawed and results in an overly simplistic theory of contingency-determinism, the notion that contingency determines structure (Child, 1972, Child, 1997). In his formulation of strategic choice theory, Child (1972) argued that organisations, especially larger corporations, are able to choose and influence the conditions of markets in which they operate. He observes that “some degree of environmental selection is open to most organisations, and some degree of environmental manipulation is open to most larger organisations” (p. 4). Different schools of thought provide evidence to support this assertion. Strategic group research informs us that managers may partition their environment by claiming membership of particular strategic groups as a means to reduce environmental uncertainty and focus organisational action (Peteraf and Shanley, 1997), while social movement research demonstrates that a small group of organized actors can effect wide reaching changes to their environment in ways that encourage new organisational form emergence (Lounsbury et al., 2003).

2.3 Structural Perspective: Organisational Ecology

Organisational ecology encompasses three perspectives that investigate why there is such diversity in organisational forms. The first perspective, organisational demography, adopts both an organisational level of analysis and a developmental approach. It draws parallels between biological systems and organisational life and contends that organisations progressively evolve in line with changes in their competitive environment. Theorists concern themselves with life cycle and demographic processes across organisations to glean insights on factors affecting organisational adaptability to specific environmental constraints (Carroll, 1984).

Population ecology is perhaps the most prominent of the ecological perspectives. In their influential paper, Hannan and Freeman (1977) challenged the idea that adaptation to environmental contingencies alone is a sufficient explanation for organisational forms diversity and proposed natural selection as a complementary explanation of organisational diversity. They argued that structural inertia, the tendency for organisations to be resistant or slow to change, poses an obvious constraint on organisations, which impedes adaptation to changing environmental demands. A greater degree of structural inertia was originally thought to lower organisational adaptability and flexibility, and increase the probability of being selected out of changing environments.

However, in an extension to their seminal work, Hannan and Freeman (1984) conceptualized the relationship between structural inertia and natural selection, and proposed that structural inertia be viewed as a consequence of selection processes. They argued that repeated alterations of organisational structures to align with environmental variability are detrimental to organisations for two reasons: firstly, selection favours organisations that adopt highly reproducible structures that signal reliability and accountability. And secondly, incessant structural change is costly in financial terms and in regards to the political assets that underpin organisational structures. Change that is disadvantageous to certain groups may be resisted and can contribute to organisational paralysis or failure.

The implications for new organisational forms are wide reaching. First, assuming organisations become more dominant as they age because time offers opportunity to reproduce structures that signal reliability and accountability (Barron et al., 1994), then new organisational forms emerge incrementally over time through an evolutionary process and thus are unlikely to be introduced by new entrants in highly institutionalized sectors. These sectors are arguably more likely to experience ecological drift (Ruef, 1997), wherein improvements in organisational fit to its environment occurs regardless of its adaptation efforts perhaps as the consequence of high barrier to entry and the

retraction of less inert competitors. Such arguments ignore the role of innovative entrepreneurs who introduce radically new organisations and organisational forms that often transform fairly static sectors.

And finally density dependence theory is third perspective of organisational ecology. Originally conceived by Hannan (1986), it proposes that an increase in the number of organisations in a population positively affects legitimation and increases competition within that population. And this in turn impacts the founding and mortality rate of organisations of the population because foundings increase while mortality decrease – leading to ‘steady state’ densities (Hannan, 1997). Hence, density dependence theory proposes that the relationship between density and founding rate is an inverted U shape, and that between density and mortality is U shaped (Barron, West & Hannan, 1994). Lomi, Larsen and Freeman (2005) note that despite being a simple ecological theory that systematically explains the initial pattern of a populations inception, growth and stabilisation, it has had much empirical support across the academic sphere including domains like entrepreneurship e.g. Aldrich (1999); innovation and strategic management e.g. Nelson (1996) and Utterback and Suarez (1993) and industrial organisations e.g. Geroski (1991). Nonetheless, as Lomi et al. (2005) note, the original density dependence theory has been criticised for its limited ability to account for the possible trajectories that mature populations may take after reaching an initial peak.

Hannan (1997) revision of density dependence theory addressed criticisms around resurgence of mature populations by incorporating suggestions that the effects of density dependence might be delayed e.g. organisations founded during the growth stage of population density when competition is intense are more likely to be at risk of failures; and expanded the theory to include a temporal dimension by proposing that the effects of population density on the founding and mortality rates change systematically as populations age.

2.3.1 Criticisms and limitations of organisational ecology

Amburgey and Rao (1996) note that there are concerns about the extent to which density dependence denotes cognitive legitimacy, and also concerns that density dependence assumes that firms have equal impacts of their populations. Furthermore, Amburgey and Rao (1996) argued that density dependence theory fail draw distinction between legitimacy of organisational forms and that of individual organisation, and thus view cognitive legitimacy as common resource available to all organisations. They suggest that organisational characteristics like status and reputation may moderate the effects of density dependence.

Other criticism of organisational ecology more broadly has centred around its lack of a generalizable explanatory model of organisational form emergence and its failure to examine or explain organisational form emergence beyond birth and death rates (Ruef, 2000). Organisational ecology, despite its richness of quantitative evidence, fails to give nuanced and in depth explanations of change or emergence processes which limits the scope of application of these theories.

2.4 Coevolutionary Theory

The coevolutionary perspective pioneered by theorists like McKelvey (1997) and Lewin et al. (1999) posits that a firm's strategic and organisational form coevolves over time with other organisational forms and the institutional, technological and competitive contexts in which the firm operates. It proposes that new organisational forms emerge through mutation of existing forms within a population, and that coevolution of organisations, populations and environments are interdependent outcomes of managerial action, institutional influence and extra institutional change (Lewin et al., 1999). Coevolutionary theorists argue that a multilevel, multi-directional, historically situated and dynamic approach to organisational inquiry is required to understand how forms change or emerge.

A key premise of coevolutionary theory is that organisations exist in a complex system of interdependencies in which outcomes are shaped by interaction and feedback (Lewin and Volberda, 1999, Pacheco et al., 2014). Interactions and feedback occurs across different levels. Organisations influence each other and their industry as they compete for resources, acquire new capabilities, innovate or adopt innovations (e.g. McKelvey, 1997), just as distinct business units are influenced by interaction with other units within and outside their organisations. Theorists thus make a distinction between micro-coevolution, i.e. coevolution that occurs as a result of inter-organisational interaction, and macro-coevolution, which is that occurring between organisations, populations and institutions (Lewin et al., 1999), or between organisations and macro environmental factors, for example. Further distinction is also made between horizontal coevolution that occurs between units within an organisation, and vertical coevolution that transcends organisational boundaries (Murmman, 2013).

These distinctions are applied to isolate and study the effects of different types of coevolution. For example, Eisenhardt and Galunic (2000) explore how horizontal coevolution occurring across business units in sample organisations result in better competition and collaboration among those units compared to non coevolving business units. They identified a virtuous cycle whereby the conditions that foster coevolution such as: the presence of medium term goal congruence between teams, knowledge and staff sharing, and flexible network relationships; result in better performance, which in turn also encourages more coevolution. Coevolution may also yield negative or unintended consequences. In his ethnographic study of Intel, Burgelman (2002; p. 326) identified coevolutionary lock-in, “a positive feedback process that increasingly ties the previous success of a company's strategy to that of its existing product-market environment, thereby making it difficult to change strategic direction”, as an adverse effect of vertical and macro coevolution.

Coevolutionary lock-in results from a focus to exploit current capabilities and resources at the expense of exploring new resources and capabilities (March, 1991). Burgelman observed that Intel

focused solely on growing the PC market segment that aligned with its microprocessor capabilities. It successfully invested in marketing campaigns, brand building exercises, and R&D initiatives with organisations like Microsoft, that made PCs the product of choice amongst consumer and thereby increased its market share. Intel became the market leader for microprocessors and successfully built on that position to forward integrate into the chipset and motherboard segments (Burgelman, 2002). During this period, however, investment in new resource or capability building was stifled because focus was solely placed on the core business. Failure to invest in other activities had significant consequences for Intel's future. As the market matured, growth was consigned to the lower end of the PC market where Intel's current products were ill suited to compete. Further, that segment of the market was a low-margin high-volume segment, which posed a problem for an organisation that earned nearly all its profits from the high-end microprocessor segment. Although Intel did adapt by developing the Celeron processor for the low-end market, Burgelman notes that senior executives were concerned that the new product further reinforced Intel's lock-in with the PC segment at a time when equipment manufacturers like IBM and Dell were no longer locked-in to Intel.

2.4.1 Criticisms and limitation of coevolutionary theory

Coevolutionary studies use a broadened lens to examine how the interaction between changing environmental and institutional contexts feed organisational change (Koza & Lewin, 1998). Proponents emphasize environmental factors because they argue that it shapes organisational adaptation (Djelic & Ainamo, 1999). Influenced by punctuated equilibrium thinking (Gersick, 1991; Tushman & Romanelli, 1985) and theories on organisational learning (March, 1991), coevolutionary theorists contend that organisations exploit existing institutional arrangements in ways that accommodate mainly incremental change during periods of relative environmental and institutional stability. Whereas periods of major environmental change threaten populations to the extent that they search for radical solutions, such as new organisational forms (Djelic & Ainamo, 1999). But the coevolutionary approach is criticised for its research emphasis on mature fields (Dieleman and Sachs, 2008). Few studies explore coevolution in emerging field in contexts with weak institutional arrangements.

2.5 Chapter summary

I have provided a summary of some historical approaches to new organisational form emergence, and discussed some criticisms associated with each approach. I summarised contingency theory's proposition that the relationship between a firm and its environment is associative and deterministic such that a firm's environment determines its structure; therefore better structure-environment alignment improves performance. This thesis has been criticised for being too simplistic and deterministic. I also summarised the ecological perspectives – which challenges the idea that adaptation to environmental contingencies alone can explain organisational form diversity. Organisational ecologists propose that structural inertia, the tendency for organisations to be slow or resistant to change, act along with selection processes to affect the diversity of organisational forms. Ecological perspectives imply that new organisational forms emerge incrementally over time by evolutionary processes. As a result, incumbent organisations are more likely to be sources of new organisational forms in highly institutionalised sectors, and increasing density of new form adopters legitimates the forms and encourages more firms to imitate its features. Like contingency theory, ecological perspectives are criticised for being too simplistic and critics question the extent to which density dependence reflects cognitive legitimacy of a form or that of the individual firm.

Finally, I summarised the coevolutionary approach, which posits that firm's strategy and organisational form coevolves overtime with its competitors, institutional, technological and competitive contexts. New forms emerge as a result of existing firms' mutation, coordinated with coevolution of institutional and extra institutional constituents. This approach emphasises the role of managerial action, agency, institutional constraints and interdependencies on organisational form changes and acknowledges the negative effects of coevolution e.g. coevolutionary lock-in. Yet, it ignores the disruptive role that institutional entrepreneurs have on form emergence.

3 Contemporary Literature Review

3.1 Overview

I explore neo-institutional approaches to new organisational form emergence in this section. Fundamental to these approaches is the notion that legitimacy, which is the “generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman, 1995, p.574), is a necessary currency for new organisational forms that affect institutional change. Suchman argued that structural legitimacy is vital to organisational forms because structures are a marker that situate a form in its wider institutional context and distinguish its competitors from allies. While Aldrich and Fiol (1994) contend that new forms suffer liability of newness because they lack the legitimacy that comes with strength in numbers. Therefore much of this chapter reviews literature that details how new organisational forms achieve legitimacy in order to be taken for granted in their institutional fields. I draw distinctions between sources of institutional change that support new organisational forms emergence, e.g. position within institutional field, institutional logics and complexity, or institutional entrepreneurship, and mechanisms employed to effect institutional change e.g. institutional work like boundary and practice work, theorization and framing, mobilization and collective action.

I further detail the differences in contemporary approaches to institutional change in emerging and mature institutional context, a major part of this thesis in section 3.6. Here, I review competing literature perspectives on how institutional changes occur in different contexts, problematize the context of my research – i.e. the marketing industry and explain how it differs from the current provisions in extant literature, and I develop a theoretical approach of new organisational form emergence in the marketing industry context.

3.2 Neo-institutional Theory

Hoffman (1999) describes institutions as the “rules, norms and beliefs that describe reality for the organisation, explaining what is and what is not, what can be acted upon and what cannot” (p.351). Institutions manifest as formal structures in which organisations are embedded (Zucker, 1987). Neo-institutional theorists like DiMaggio and Powell (1983) explain how homogeneity of organisational forms and practices occur in organisational fields, which they view as the combination of product suppliers, customers, regulators, competitors and others that make up a discernable area of institutional life. They posit that homogeneity occurs as a result of structuration of organisational fields, which results in the emergence of three powerful isomorphic forces when a field becomes established: [1] coercive isomorphism arising from the political influence of peers, competitors and customers that confer legitimacy on to focal firms; [2] mimetic isomorphism that arise as firms copy other’s successful strategies in the face of uncertainty; and [3] normative isomorphism derived from professions. At the core of neo-institutionalism is the assumption that institutions provide the cultural frameworks that underpin organisational life (Hirsch and Lounsbury, 1997). Field-level dynamics are at the heart of institutional theory (Weber and Dacin, 2011) and so it follows that macro-level dynamics feed into organisational life and shape micro-level actions. Therefore organisational forms or practice are adopted and diffuse throughout a field because they become taken-for-granted, even though better and more efficient alternatives may exist (Davis et al., 1994).

Early empirical neo-institutional studies explored the consequences of institutionalization, degree of institutionalization and characteristics of institutional environment (see Zucker, 1987 for a review), which critics argue fail to explicate the processes of institutional changes, and overlooks the role on endogenous agents in grafting and effecting changes. Hirsch and Lounsbury (1997) drew parallels between Parsonsian theory and neo-institutionalism because both emphasize isomorphism, suggests that legitimacy is derived from structures and outcomes, fail to adequately recognize endogenous sources of conflict or change hence minimizing the role of agency, and thus prioritizes stability over change. And DiMaggio (1988) observed that neo-institutional theory tells us little about how

institutionalized organisational forms and practices fall into disuse or indeed about the processes of deinstitutionalization. In response to these criticisms, researcher have addressed shortcomings by exploring, for example, how an organisational field formed around the central issue of environmental protection and coevolved with institutions (Hoffman, 1999), the process of deinstitutionalization of the conglomerate organisational form (Davis et al., 1994), the role of agency in affecting institutional change for example through institutional entrepreneurship (Maguire et al., 2004, Tracey et al., 2011), and more broadly through institutional work (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006).

Contemporary scholars have shifted the research focus further to sources and consequences of institutional changes across multiple levels of analysis to address questions about sources and consequences of endogenous institutional change and their interrelationship with broader macro dynamics, while yet addressing specific dynamics of institutional processes e.g. boundary work (Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010), identity work (Leung et al., 2013), or cultural entrepreneurship (Wry et al., 2011). The bodies of work that examine how institutional change arise within a field can broadly be grouped into two perspectives; the first examines the structure of fields and suggest actor's (used interchangeably to refer to firms or individuals) field-level position (core or periphery) and other attributes like degree of maturity of fields influence the stability of boundaries. Also, this position suggests that the degree of competitive or cooperative behaviors within fields influence the possibility of enacting institutional change. The second perspective proposes that institutional change arises when dominant logics are replaced or supplanted by challenger logics, which can give rise to new organisational forms because new routines, practices, structural configurations or technologies become taken for granted (Jones and Thornton, 2005, Thornton and Ocasio, 1999). I explore these perspectives further below.

3.3 Field-level Structure and Institutional Change

3.3.1 Field location and institutional change: core versus periphery organisations

Leblebici et al. (1991) reason that by virtue of their success, institutions create the conditions that incite change since established institutional fields have such great degrees of isomorphic pressure, which creates resource scarcity for materials necessary to meet set expectations. This resource scarcity thus motivates constituents to seek alternative resources that can be transferred into a field. Periphery actors at the boundaries of a field are thought to be conduits for change because: [1] there are more predisposed to identifying the gaps of opportunities that exists across multiple proximate fields (Rao et al., 2000). For example, Rao et al. (2000) recount how the ‘community mediation’ alternative dispute resolution form emerged from the collective action and mobilization by social workers, community activities, anthropologists and law professors, that had previously interacted with each other to resolve minor disputes and as such had had the opportunities to share knowledge and problematize issues across professional boundaries. And [2] because unlike their central counterparts, periphery or fringe actors are less familiar with institutionalized practices and expectations and likely disadvantaged by prevailing institutional arrangements thus are more likely to combine external practices when problem-solving (Maguire et al., 2004, Pacheco et al., 2010, Smets et al., 2012). Quirke (2013) study of rogue (secular, non-elite) private schools in Canada illustrates how periphery players evade institutional pressures to conform to prevailing norms. She identifies the strategic adoption of for-profit governance structures, servicing niche market constituents for example through the provision of specialist curricula, and appealing to environmental logics – in this case the consumer-centric market logics instead of the professional logics typical of the field, as actions taken by periphery private schools to circumvent institutional pressures.

Alternatively, scholars like Greenwood and Suddaby (2006) argue that core, centrally located field actors can act as endogenous agents of institutional change because the dominance derived from their size, status and power insulates them from wider isomorphic pressures. Centrally located firms are also likely to engage in boundary bridging activities resulting from exposure to a broader group of

customers, professional and regulatory agencies, which predisposes this group to alternative institutional and professional logics that may be rearticulated into their focal institutional fields. Like research that suggests that periphery actors are more likely to be sources of endogenous change, this approach raises questions about the role of embeddedness as a key mechanism in effecting institutional change, which I explore in subsequent chapters.

3.3.2 Field-level attributes: mature versus emerging fields

Mature Contexts

Institutional theorists differentiate mature from emerging contexts. Mature fields are relatively stable spheres where member interactions are established and can be anticipated. These repeated member interactions create common practices that reproduce the institutions to govern the field (Pacheco et al., 2010, Maguire et al., 2004), and sustain the resource relationships and organisational networks that support clear delineation of the field's boundaries. Boundaries distinguish a field, its shared norms and practices, from other fields (Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010), and provides the cognitive frames that field constituents use to derive their identities (Santos and Eisenhardt, 2009). Although boundaries support the reproduction of institutional practice and routines in ways that make them enduring, they can also make fields unresponsive and insulated from changes to their external environments which results in contradictions that may precede radical change (Seo and Creed, 2002). Consequently, some theorists have proposed that enacting institutional change in mature contexts requires boundary works that bridges the boundaries across other proximate fields (Greenwood and Suddaby, 2006) or expands the boundaries of a focal field to include new practices (Jones et al., 2012). While other theorists question the stability of boundaries and argue that they shift over time (Durand et al., 2007), or posit that fundamentally mature contexts often are fragmented with varying degrees of institutional pressures at different locations within fields (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Enacting institutional change through boundary bridging or expansion: there is a substantial body of research that supports the notion that institutional work aimed at boundary bridging or expansion is impactful in enacting change and facilitating the emergence of new organisational forms. Greenwood and Suddaby's (2006) study in particular highlights how providing non-standard industry services is an example of boundary bridging, which involves taking purposive actions to lessen an organisation's embeddedness with a field in order to exploit competitive gaps by increasing awareness of alternatives, as a motivating mechanism that supports institutional change. They found that by exploiting market opportunities to provide remunerative consulting and advisory services, the big Five were exposed to market logics that shaped the new multidisciplinary practice organisational form that they advocated. Boundary bridging also made the Big Five firms less embedded in their institutional field and sharply focused the incompatibility between the demands of the accountancy profession and those of their clients. This misalignment resulted in the Big Five's withdrawal from the training programme delivered by the professional bodies because they were deemed inadequate in addressing complex and changing needs of clients. Boundary bridging in this case sensitised actors to opportunities to theorise and mobilise a new organisational form that emerged because the proponent could reduce the isomorphic pressures to conform to established practice.

Hargadon and Sutton (1997) study on IDEO also supports notion that boundary spanning can be a source of novelty or institutional change in mature fields. They recount how designers at IDEO, a firm that is located across multiple institutional field but not central in any, transpose technology from one industry to create new combinations that solve design problems for clients in another industry. Similarly, Jones et al's (2012) study on the creation of the de novo modern architecture category found that undertaking boundary expansion is a significant activity through which a "shared interpretive framework" (p. 1539) could be developed among a divergent group of actors to encourage the development and adoption of a de novo category. They detail the discursive struggle over boundaries between proponents of the dominant revivalist logics who served traditional clients and

the modern functionalists who rejected their historic gothic aesthetics in favor of a commercial logic transposed into the field from through client association.

Boundary instability: evidence for current research increasingly suggests that the stability of field boundaries may be questionable. Simons & Roberts (2008) found that overtime, the seemingly insurmountable boundaries between the kosher and non-kosher wine producers weakened, and that producers spanned boundaries by making both non-kosher and kosher wine without suffering institutional sanctions. Furthermore, research from the ecological tradition suggests that stability and distinctiveness of boundaries change over time and may be contested by field constituents (Vergne and Wry, 2014). Studies examining the emergence of new institutional logics often depict how new logics permeate organisational boundaries through HR practices (e.g. Battilana and Dorado, 2010), or how market logics supplant craft logics in professional fields (e.g. Thornton and Ocasio, 1999, Rao et al., 2000). That field boundaries can be more or less stable over time suggests that other characteristics of a field too may be subject to change with time. So for example, a field may be more or less fragmented or centralised over time, as will be explored in subsequent sections.

Emerging contexts

Emerging fields are those in which the institutional arrangements have yet to become taken for granted, and therefore practices, routines and norms have yet to be legitimated. These fields are uncertain because the rules that define membership are ambiguous or not clearly articulated (Navis and Glynn, 2010, Purdy and Gray, 2009). Often, emerging contexts can be contested sites where on-going negotiations about the future practices and boundaries of the field play out between conflicting proponents, which may or may not result in institutionalisation depending on opposing proponents ability to reach consensus (Purdy and Gray, 2009, Maguire et al., 2004). The uncertain nature of emergence means that not all emerging fields reach maturity; some processes of emergence fizzle and fail while others succeed. Because the emergence process is complex and made up of different moving parts, it is difficult to distinguish exactly what makes an emergence process successful.

Nonetheless, theorists argue that the distinctiveness of emerging organisational form, firm or industry, and the ability to garner support from a varied coalition of constituent is vital to achieving legitimacy. Thus institutional theorists have highlighted the work by institutional entrepreneurs – who are able to theorise alternatives and mobilise resources and support – in introducing novelty into fields.

Institutional entrepreneurship in emerging context

Institutional entrepreneurship gained prominence because it addressed criticisms that neo-institutional theory inadequately explains transformation and change in organisational fields because it downplays the role of agency in those fields while exaggerating their permanence and stability attributed subject to the pressures of isomorphic forces (Tracey et al., 2011). “Institutional entrepreneurship represents the activities of actors who have an interest in particular institutional arrangements and who leverage resources to create new institutions or to transform existing ones” (Maguire et al. 2004, p. 657). This definition highlights the political dimension that institutional work takes even though Levy and Scully (2007) contend that while power is “is clearly implicated in the political contestation to reshape institutions, [it] is rarely examined explicitly (p. 975). Scholars recognized that organisational fields are structured hierarchically, with few actors occupying dominant positions at the top, and other spread from the middle to the bottom (Rao et al., 2000, DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, Levy and Scully, 2007).

Institutional entrepreneurship thus requires reordering of existing fields or imagining and actualizing new fields that serves the purpose of entrepreneurs. In particular, the literature addresses how processes of actualizing an emerging field. Maguire et al’s (2004) study of institutional entrepreneurship in the emerging HIV/AIDS advocacy field provides several insights. First, they find that institutional entrepreneurs are likely to be actors whose field positions lend legitimacy from a wide group of stakeholders during the institutionalization process. Prominent institutional entrepreneurs (Robert and Turner) in this study were well networked across relevant organisational fields, and in a sense occupied boundary-bridging positions that allowed them access resources

controlled by different groups – material resources from pharmaceutical fields and symbolic resources from the activism field. Second, they show that institutionalizing new practice requires apt political skills in framing arguments for change and theorizing the benefits of untested practices in a way that appeals to the interests of divergent groups. Robert and Turner’s argument for CTAC’s structure (Canadian Treatment Advocacy Council) stemmed from the need to meet conflicting interests of community activist groups and pharmaceutical companies. A ‘flexible’ structure that allowed representative membership from all groups, with the majority seventy-five percent of membership allocated to a broad coalition of interests from PWA community including women’s group, hemophiliacs and aboriginal groups facilitated acceptance and legitimation of the CTAC. Finally, this study shows how vital acceptance and perceived legitimacy of new practices is for securing new organisational field stability and recognition by external constituents. After CTAC was founded, Robert and Turner sought to rapidly assume the form of professional organisations by incorporating, publishing annual reports and audited accounts, hiring professionals and holding annual general meetings. These activities facilitated cognitive legitimacy of CTAC, a new organisation in a newly established organisational fields, amongst less proximate constituents, but presented a source of conflict for members that felt CTAC should remain a voice for activists by not getting too involved with corporates.

In emerging fields, the lack of routines, meanings and shared conceptions requires institutional entrepreneurs’ work to create a vision that members can cohere around, and develop a strategy to implement this vision. Institutional entrepreneurs must deploy strategies that meet the grand objectives of their visions but also support the micro processes that aid rapid routinization of practices. Levy and Scully (2007) succinctly summarise this when they argue that:

Effective strategy requires skilful analysis, so the Modern Prince ‘must be able to map, as accurately as possible, the complex terrain of parties, movements, institutions, economic forces — in short the dynamic balance and relations of will and force — in order to exploit places in the hierarchical network of power nodes, where hegemony is unstable or

breaks down' (Sanbonmatsu 2004: 135). To this end, the Modern Prince would also provide decisive leadership to exploit critical windows of opportunity.

I must note that the main differences between institutional entrepreneurship in emerging and mature fields I found in the literature is the overt contestation arising from the structural contingencies such as embedded networks, resource allocation and control, and technological or practice dependencies. Initially, the dominant thinking proposed that institutional entrepreneurs were more likely to occupy periphery or less dominant positions in their organisational fields, hence were incentivised to undertake actions that could reshape these fields (Leblebici et al., 1991, Kraatz and Zajac, 1996, Greenwood and Suddaby, 2006). Periphery actors are also thought to be more likely to experience inconsistency that arise because deeply held field values diverge from their material interests, which results in praxis (Seo and Creed, 2002). However, studies on the emergence of new organisational forms in accountancy have illustrated how dominant field players too can act as institutional entrepreneurs when their economic interests alert them to the existence of alternative logics that provide alternative templates for organising (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005, Greenwood and Suddaby, 2006). In both emerging and mature field, framing, theorising and mobilising are critical actions undertaken to enact institutional change.

3.4 Institutional Logics and New Organisational Forms

Institutional logics, which Thornton and Ocasio (1999) define as “the socially constructed, historical pattern of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality” (p.804), provide the taken-for-granted rules and norms that constitute our social systems, and the criteria to evaluate behaviours within that system. Firms, organisational forms and fields, market categories, professional fields and even industries perpetuate institutional logics because they provide the value systems that give their actions meaning (Lounsbury, 2002, Thornton and Ocasio, 1999). Haveman and Rao (1997) contend that institutional logics manifest and are inseparable from the

organisational forms in an industry because they embody firm's structure, processes, practices and collective identities, and therefore determine their core features. They argue that institutional logics determine the appropriateness and legitimacy of power structures and hierarchy of issues at the industry-level, and determine socio-political discourse, actions and strategies at the organisational-level. Put simply, institutional logics frame the way managers perceive and respond to challenges, in the same way that it provides stakeholders the tools to evaluate the appropriateness of managers' actions or responses.

Since institutions are self-replicating structures that endure through mimetic isomorphism, changes to institutional fields were originally attributed to exogenous jolts such as technological change, legislative changes, and disruptive social changes, which manifested in the emergence of new institutional logics that appropriated new routines, structures and organisational forms. But, like criticisms to neo institutional theories, this approach fails to account for endogenous work by existing institutional players to alter logics that are a source of contradictions. Hence, understanding how and where new logics may arise is fundamental to explaining how they permeate and diffuse in highly institutional fields. Extant literature offers two perspectives. The first suggests that new logics ascend and replace a hitherto dominant logics, leading to its decline, which results in new organisational form emergence (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005). The second view suggests that given the pervasive and complex nature of institutional fields such as industries and markets, new organisational forms emerge either as a direct consequence of the structure of those fields, e.g. fragmented fields are likely to be hotbeds for influences that breed new institutionalised forms, or as a consequence of the actions of institutional entrepreneurs who articulate and act on opportunities to change institutionalised arrangements to suit their interests (Purdy and Gray, 2009, Maguire et al., 2004, Lounsbury, 2007). Fragmentation occurs when a field is populated by actors with loose network ties or embeddedness that ascribe to different institutional norms .

There is empirical support for both perspectives. Thornton and Ocasio (1999) investigated the replacement of the editorial logic in US higher education publishing with a more dominant market logic. They demonstrated how managers' priorities of author-editor relationships and organic growth under the old editorial logic were replaced with a focus on resource competition and acquisition growth under the new market logic, which fundamentally shifted the focus and strategy of higher education publishers. Underpinning their work is the notion that professional fields are guided by singular logics (a unified, coherent set of logics) such that conflicts inevitably arise when challenger logics attempt to supplant incumbent logics. Glynn (2000) provides further support for this assertion. She investigated the construction of capabilities by occupational groups steeped in opposing logics, creative and market logics, at the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. She demonstrated how each group's identity derived from their professional logic and in turn framed their perceptions of the orchestra's capabilities. A crucial insight from this study is that institutional dynamics do not influence organisations in a vacuum. Rather, these dynamics interact with exogenous factors, e.g. reduced availability of financial resources for Orchestras and other cultural institutions, to elicit organisational and field level response.

Furthermore, studies such as Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) and Davis, Diekmann and Tinsley (1994) exemplify how new organisational form proponents enacting new logics at the industry levels can achieve legitimacy for new organisational forms. Suddaby and Greenwood's study in particular demonstrate how qualities of new organisational form proponents – such as status, power and central location within the fields – enable emerging organisational form proponents to undertake institutional work that results in the emergence of a new form. They demonstrate how the Big Five accounting firms by virtue of their status, size, exposure to alternative logics through their association with large multinational clients, were able to secure temporary legitimacy for the multidisciplinary practice form.

Work organisations have been identified as important conduits of institutional logics because employees act as carriers of logics which shape their values and inclinations (Haveman and Rao, 1997, Almandoz, 2014). Prior experience shape the choices of organisational forms that entrepreneur adopt for their novel ventures. For example Tracey et al. (2011) found that the founders of Aspire were influenced by practices from prior employments when founding the social enterprise. Also, prior experiences may shape how founders perceive institutional ambiguity and opportunities for actions in market spaces, which may allow organisational forms to be imprinted (Perkmann and Spicer, 2014) from proximate fields, or allow for logics to be combined in a way that creates hybrid organisational forms.

3.4.1 Institutional complexity and hybrid organisational form emergence

Recently too, a growing body of work on institutional complexity – which occurs when multiple and often conflicting institutional logics are present in a field (Kraatz and Block, 2008, Greenwood et al., 2011, Pache and Santos, 2010), shed light on the political tensions in complex fields and how these influence practices and structures at the organisational level. For instance, in their study of micro-finance organisations, Battilana and Dorado (2010) demonstrate how multiple logics permeate organisational boundaries through “carriers” recruited into organisations, and detail how organisational practices such as member socialization can be adapted to manage institutional complexity. Battilana and Dorado’s study extends a stream of literature that suggests that organisations adopt “ready-to-wear” templates that guide their perceptions of acceptable objectives, practices, structures, and thus organisational forms (Friedland and Alford, 1991). Other theorists have argued that the availability of templates is contingent on the field’s level of maturity (Pache and Santos, 2010). So for example while new entrants in mature fields might face isomorphic pressures to conform to the organisational form templates sanctioned in the field, emerging fields lack prescribed organisational form templates and thus organisations may have more flexibility in combining elements of different logics to create new organisational forms.

Pache & Santos (2011) also argue that the structural features of a field influence the degree of institutional complexity therein. Therefore, complexity more likely arises in fragmented fields, where multiple, uncoordinated referents make conflicting demands on organisations (Fligstein, 1997, Pache and Santos, 2010). And in turn, an organisation's experience of, and response to logic multiplicity will be a function of an organisation's power relations and status, and the degree of centralization in the field (Scott and Meyer, 1991, Pache and Santos, 2010). This notion is apt in the marketing context where more than thirty professional bodies and associations with varying degrees of influence exert different demands on organisations. This coupled with the lack of professional closure and the sustained but uneasy equilibrium between the creative, market and technology logics makes marketing an example of a highly fragmented field. Highly fragmented fields share similarities with emerging fields, both in their lack of prescribed organizing template and the flexibility to borrow and combine elements of different logics available in the immediate environment (King et al., 2011).

3.5 Collective Identity and New Organisational Form Emergence

Clegg et al. (2007) posit that firm's identities are constructed in relation to competitors and others in the wider context of their industry, and within the boundaries of the field. By including institutional elements into organisational identity, firms are enabled to acquire legitimacy that eases inward flow of resources (Glynn, 2008). Therefore, Glynn (2008) argues that the link between organisational and institutional identities is vital because the latter provides legitimate materials with which organisations can construct and enact identities that are implicitly legitimate and meaningful. The literature of macro-level identities uses various terms to refer to the same construct. Patvardhan et al. (2015) note that collective identity is variously referred to as 'identity code', 'industry, market or category identity', and more recently, I observe the addition of 'institutional identity' (Greenwood, Raynard, Micelotta, Kodeih, & Lounsbury, 2011; Glynn, 2008) to the mix. Broadly speaking, this literature can be classified into two groups: research adopting a cognitive perspective e.g. neo-institutional research,

category research and organisational ecology, and research adopting a cultural perspective e.g. social movement research on new organisational forms (Patvardhan et al., 2015).

The underlying premise of cognitive-based research is that collective identities provide the core features that organisations use to claim membership in a group (category) and distinguish themselves from other groups. Audiences too use these identities to recognise and evaluate firms and thus award legitimacy to organisational forms that conform to expectations (Hsu & Hannan, 2005; Glynn, 2008). As a result, research efforts have focused on exploring how audiences employ schemas or cognitive frames to assess, differentiate and recognize organisational forms as legitimate members of a category (Hsu, Hannan, & Polos, 2011; Negro, Koçak, & Hsu, 2010; Pólos et al., 2002), and how categorization affects organisational outcomes (e.g. Hsu, Hannan, & Kocak, 2009; Zuckerman, 1999). Schemas or cognitive frames are important “cognitive infrastructures” (Schneiberg & Berk, 2010, pg. 257) that contain cues of the characteristic features, values, and important dimensions of organisations. As audiences use them to create categories, defined as “a class about whose meaning an audience segment has reached a high level of intentional semantic consensus” (Durand & Paoella, 2013, p. 1104), they set up boundaries between different organisational forms. Collective identities develop around category boundaries (Durand & Paoella, 2013) when a shared set of commonalities that typifies a category is abstracted from individual organisational features (Hsu et al., 2011). These identities specify the features to which organisations claiming category membership must conform, and how audiences evaluate organisations (Negro et al., 2010).

The crux of the above conceptions is that an organisations’ embeddedness in an institutional field shapes its identity. Collective (or institutional) identities are a reflection of the “practices, structure, cognition and defined interests” fashioned by institutional processes and are therefore sustained by the same isomorphic pressures that sustain the structure of organisational fields (Hardy and Maguire, 2008). Variation in organisational identities also reflect field-level variation in the degree of

conformity to isomorphic pressures. Firms combine available materials in different ways when constructing organisational identity, much in the same way that firms perceive and respond to institutional pressures in different ways. Therefore, Glynn (2008) argues that collective identity emergence is contingent on, and reflective of institutionalisation, and cites Selznick's proposition that that institutionalisation "produces a distinct identity for organisations [and] maintaining this identity is crucial for organisational survival" (p.40).

By emphasizing embeddedness, the institutional view of identity, unlike essentialist views proposed by Albert and Whetten (1985) and later advanced by scholars such as Whetten & Mackey (2002) and Schultz & Hernes (2013), takes into account the relational and positional influence firms derive from their environment (Glynn, 2008). Firm's position and relationship with other field or networks constituents will shape their role and therefore the identities they enact. Empirical studies adopting the institutional approach to identity suggests that the interaction between organisational and collective identities are crucial determinants of a firm's acceptance or resistance to institutional change. Fox-Wolfgramm et al. (1998) for example posited that bank whose identities were incongruent with institutional pressures for change resist change, and use their success as evidence to reinforce and justify their organisational identity.

The alternative 'essentialist' view of organisational identity argues that organisational identities are the possessions of organisations and represent intra-organisational values of the *central, enduring and distinctive (CED)* features of the organisation (Albert & Whetten, 1985). Gioia et al (2010) provide an in-depth case study of the process of organisational identity construction, detailing the interactive and iterative process of claim making by internal stakeholders and legitimating feedback by external stakeholders that reinforces and validates some claims that guide the direction of construed identities. Gioia et al's processual and recurrent stage model positions organisational identity as an iterative construct that interacts between the firm and institutional levels tempered by institutional constraints,

i.e. legitimacy. Schultz & Hernes' (2013) support this view and suggests that organisational identity construction involves intra-organisational claim making and the evocation of the detritus of past-legitimated identities (Kroezen & Heugens, 2012), against which present and future identity claims are compared and validated. Their model of identity enactment suggests that identity is both temporal and historically contingent.

The main insight from essentialist theorists like Gioia et al is that organisations strive for optimal distinctiveness, i.e. "being the same and different at the same time" (Brewer, 1991; p. 475 cited from Gioia et al, 2010) compared to others within the boundaries of the institutional fields in which they belong, and relative to historical organisational identities present in their fields. Optimal distinctiveness enables organisations to construct and enact identities that are not too dissimilar from the sanctioned dominant identities within the boundaries of their institutional fields, and that are intrinsically legitimate because they incorporate the detritus of past-legitimated identities e.g. the craft brewery identity movement amongst Dutch microbrewers was based on the history of old Dutch breweries dating back to the nineteenth century (Kroezen & Heugens, 2012). This then poses the questions; how new is too new for field? How different is too different? And specifically, how can emerging organisational forms like ad-tech in changing fields construct optimally distinctive identities?

Indeed, all identity theorists agree that identity is a legitimating resource (e.g. Wry, Lounsbury & Glynn, 2011), the lack of which exposes organisations to adverse effects of institutional pressures, i.e. resources restrictions and potential fatality. Similarly, theorists agree that power (e.g. through size and / or the spatial positioning of an organisation within fields) lies with dominant actors who prescribe institutionalised practices and norms (including identities) that are replicated within the field (Greenwood et al, 2011) through isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Taken together and on

the surface, both perspectives suggest that it is unlikely that emerging and minor firms enact new / alternative identities in established fields – a position that fails to explain how new identities emerge among non-dominant organisations such fields. Also, the question ‘how these dynamics may play in contested or crisis fields?’ also remains open.

Consequently, there is an imperative to examine the cultural perspective advocated by Wry, Lounsbury & Glynn (2011) which views collective identities as “strategically constructed and fluid, organised around a shared purpose and output” (Wry et al., 2011). They posit that collective identity legitimation rests on membership expansion but is mediated by members spreading stories with coherent content that can incite further membership. They posit that change proponents construct two types of stories: defining stories synthesis the core features of a group while growth stories mobilise others to join the group by signalling practice variants and actions that will be consistent with the group’s core. The cultural entrepreneurship view suggests the possibility that new organisational form with undefined collective identities can emerge by using stories to instantiate their institutional logics.

3.6 Mature Fields in Crisis

Fligstein (1997) distinguished between organisational fields that are emerging, stable or in crisis and posited that it is possible to identify the socio-political skill and model of action necessary for institutional actions across these contexts. He observed that when fields are in crisis, incumbents are likely to reinforce their power because incumbent power bases rely on the established institutional principles. Change agents must conceive alternatives to the institutional order and build sufficient coalition to support their conceptions. He also argues that change agents also possess a collective identity with which they signal or share their vision of the new institutional order they are proposing.

The characteristics of fields in crisis or contested fields as Levy and Scully (2007) conceive it, best describes the context examined in this study. In this context, field boundaries and power structures though established, are being tested and renegotiated and so stability is more akin to a truce than a permanent state, up to the point of reinstitutionalisation. Furthermore, a new institutional order in which technology discontinuities affects incumbents' capabilities and thus their abilities to fulfil entrenched resource relationships might force firms to reconsider their boundaries – either to expand their boundaries by expanding capabilities or contract. Table 1 below reflects the features of varying institutional contexts:

TABLE 1: SUMMARISING THE FEATURES OF EMERGING, MATURE AND FIELDS IN CRISIS

FIELD CHARACTERISTICS	EMERGING	MATURE	CRISIS (MARKETING INDUSTRY CONTEXT)
Boundaries	Poorly defined	Established and stable	Changing
Identity	Indistinct, emerging	Distinctive	Influx
Power Structure	Emerging	Secure	Insecure
Resource relationship	Embedding	Embedded	Re-embedding
Practice	Emerging	Established	Changing
Institutional complexity	Low	Low	High

The risks that expanding boundaries and changing institutional arrangements pose to incumbents are significant. First, incumbents lack the technological capabilities to defend their markets from incursions by large technology firms. Second, incumbents may lack the material and symbolic resources necessary to compete against technology firms.

This suggests that while Fligstein's suggestion that incumbents will wield their power in response to encroachment by challengers should be considered, and it is conceivable that new forms may curtail this response.

3.7 Theoretical Perspectives Employed for this Study

I draw on literature from three related fields that explore emergence mechanisms namely: collective identity, new practice, value or market category creation, and new organisational forms literature, to guide this research. Works from these literature streams delineate between emergence processes in mature and emerging fields, and also provide insights on characteristics of different stage of emergence that are relevant to this study, e.g. King et al's (2011) study highlights the importance of identity elements present in an organisational field in shaping an new organisational forms Below is summary of the key literature that shaped the study. These papers were selected because they provided both methodological and theoretical guidelines for this study. Methodologically, constructs such as firm size, status, defining stories, which I interpreted as history/heritage, affiliation, capabilities, model of new organisational form adoption e.g. de novo or de alio, were identified as important features to examine from the selected literature. Theoretically, the selected literature highlighted the importance of institutional theory in explaining new organisational form emergence in mature contexts and influenced my decision to review the institutional theory in earlier sections.

Finally, the summary below identifies mechanisms underpinning emergence processes. Separating mechanisms from processes enabled these scholars to answer the 'how' questions of emergence process. As a result, I adopt this approach and separate observed processes from underpinning mechanisms.

TABLE 2: THEORETICAL FOCUS OF THE STUDY

FOCUS	EMERGING CONTEXT	MECHANISMS	MATURE CONTEXT
Collective identity creation	<p>Wry, Lounsbury & Glynn (2011) theorise how defining and growth stories are used in the construction and diffusion of new organisational forms collective identities. Defining stories are a simple and coherent synthesis of the core purpose and feature of an emergent group, while growth stories are used to "expand a collective identity boundary to accommodate specific types of actors and practice variants" (p.454).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Theorisation ○ Boundary construction ○ Storytelling 	<p>Fiol & Romanelli (2012) examine how new organisational forms emerge through the "processes of storytelling and social identification that promote a collective sense of identity, which is an essential bridge between a community of practice and the rise of a new similarity cluster" (p.598). With a focus on the pre emergence phase, they explicate how new form enthusiasts' involvement with each other and the creation of consistent stories support collective identity creation, and facilitate audience recognition of new clusters that precede new organisational form emergence. They shed light on the pre emergence phase of new organisational form development, and highlight the role of communities of practice in developing similarity clusters that precede new organisational forms.</p>
	<p>Navis & Glynn (2010) empirically demonstrate how linguistic frames are employed to create collective identities that give meaning to the new market categories that actors construct. Following the legitimation of the collective identities, firms then differentiate individual organisations from others in the group by highlighting their differences with reference group core features, practices and norms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Linguistic framing ➤ Label claims ➤ Founding/ mortality ➤ Mimetic isomorphism 	<p>Swaminathan (2001) asserts that the "collective identity of organisations plays a key role in the evolution of specialist organisational [forms] within industries" (p. 1171). In extending location-based resource partitioning theory, he argues that specialist organisational forms' collective identities develop around distinctive core features e.g. firm's size and reputation for quality in the winery industry, which differentiates emerging forms from incumbents by clearly defining their boundaries, and can be further narrowed to prevent co-optation from generalist incumbent forms. Generalists in turn can build robust identities that dilute the</p>

	<p>distinctiveness of new forms by undertaking marketing activities to change their image with audiences and claim features of the specialist form identities.</p>
<p>New organisational forms creation</p>	<p>David, Sine & Haveman (2013) draw on theory to show how institutional entrepreneurs legitimated the professional form in the emerging management consulting industry. Their work illustrates how institutional entrepreneurs exploit opportunities arising from changes in the competitive environment to introduce new organisational forms. In the case of management consulting, post war changes to the market provided opportunities to professionalise the field. New form proponents seized these opportunities by problematizing current management practices as inadequate in the face of post war corporate expansion, diversification and eventual consolidation of markets via mergers and vertical integrations, and counter to “Progressive values”. This study illustrates how theorisation, collective action, affiliations with elite group e.g. universities, support efforts to legitimise a new organisational form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Theorisations ○ Collective action ◀ Affiliation with high status group ▶ Welding status derived influence <p>Greenwood, Suddaby & Hinings (2002) examined the role of professional bodies in legitimising new organisational forms. They found that in addition to their role of reproducing and conserving routines, the Canadian institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) and the Institute of chartered accountants of Alberta (ICAA) acted as sites for discourse about the meaning and merits of the multidisciplinary practice organisational form, and discourse for what it means to be a contemporary accountant and the boundaries of the professional accountant’s role. Their study shows how large firms theorised the multidisciplinary practice forms, and circumvented isomorphic institutional pressures via their size, status and actions.</p>
	<p>King, Clemens & Fry (2011) explore how new organisational forms in emerging fields navigate the identity problem arising because they lack an established collective identity to draw on that gives meaning to and allows individual firms to differentiate themselves from other group members. Situating their research in the Arizona charter schools industry, they examine the collective identity realisation process of the charter school organisational form. They found that new form proponents drew on identity elements, organisational repertoires and templates available in the local context which</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Legislation ▶ Differentiation ◀ Mimicry ○ Use of available cultural and organisational resource across boundaries <p>Simons & Roberts (2008) investigate how the novel non-kosher organisational form penetrated local Israeli winery market. They demonstrate how founders with pre-founding experience in non-local markets were more likely to adopt the novel non-kosher form, and that prior industry experience (local or non-local) contributed to larger size firms and better quality products. Their work highlights the importance of movements of resource (talent/people) across population boundaries because these often are the conduits for transferring organisational templates, repertoire and other</p>

	<p>manifested as two identity clusters, one which targeted at risks students and provided supplementary social services to meet students' need and another that advocated creative approaches to education. Subsequent charter schools aligned (mimicry) with an identity cluster and thus differentiated their offering from others in the industry. <i>Their research points to the prospect that new organisational forms emergence can stem from the realisation of two distinctive collective identities as actors within the emerging form develop differentiating feature, rather than a coherent unitary collective identity as implied by extant research (e.g. McKendrick et al., 2003).</i></p>	<p>cultural materials necessary for entrepreneurial activities to reach fruition.</p>
<p>Market, category, value or practice creation</p>	<p>Weber, Heinz & DeSoucey (2008) illustrate how social movement affect new market creation by enabling the stimulation of alternative product or service production, creation of new collective identities and establishing new exchanges between consumers and producers. They show how the grass-fed social movement fostered internal cohesion amongst geographically dispersed actors with varying degree of values embodiment, which supported maintenance of boundaries around the emerging form. This study also highlights the importance of a highly contrasting collective identity that cast an emerging form as clearly distinctive or alternative to incumbents in the way that the grass-fed form was distinctive and alternative to the conventional beef producers. Finally, they demonstrated how de novo entrants without market preconceptions or embeddedness act as conduits for change by seeking out non-standard practices from a variety of sources to address industry challenges in</p>	<p>Greenwood and Suddaby (2006) examine how endogenous actors affect changes to institutions in their study of the emergence of the multidisciplinary practice (MDP) which sought to provide consulting, legal, accountancy and advisory services to clients) organisational form advocated by the Big Five accountancy firms. The crux of their argument is that high status endogenous actors are more likely to successfully enact institutional change if their boundary spanning activities sensitise them to alternative logics that address competitive concerns, and where these actors wield significant control over resources such that they are immune to the coercive and normative processes of their institutional fields. The found the Big Five were motivated to support the MDP form because of performance imperatives. Their alignment with global clients presented boundary-bridging opportunities to develop and provide non-audit work, at a time when audit and assurance revenues were declining. But, their affiliation with the accountancy profession was also a source of boundary</p>

ways consistent with the new values systems they espouse.	location	misalignment because the boundaries of the profession were incongruent with those of the MDP form. Nonetheless, the MDP form successfully emerged because the big Five's status and power insulates them from field-level isomorphic pressures.
<p>Khair & Wadhvani (2010) study how meaning is constructed and shared in a new market category. They found that auctioneers exploited field-level discourse surrounding the meaning of modernism vis-à-vis Western art to introduce constructs that separated modern Indian art as a distinctive market category, and establish new criteria for evaluating artwork in the new category. Buyers, critics, journalists and museums also participated in the institutionalisation of the new value system of modern Indian art by participating in market exchange activities such as buying, favourably reviewing, exhibiting and reporting on modern Indian art, which diffused the reinterpreted meaning of modern Indian arts, its value and position as a distinct market category.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discourse Sensegiving and making ➤ Theorisation ➤ Performativity ➤ Periphery/external field location 	<p>Lounsbury & Crumley's (2007) study on the creation of a new practice – active money management – in the US mutual fund industry addresses the question of where new practices originate. They argue that institutional changes such as new form organisational form, practice or field creation is a multilevel process that stems from the efforts of a dispersed group of actors, much beyond the scope of a single institutional entrepreneur. They argue that performativity introduces strategic and serendipitous variations in practices at the organisational level, that if problematized at the field level following mobilisation efforts by new practice proponents or responding incumbents, offer the scope for political negotiations and theorisations about the merits and extent to which the anomalous practice ought to be instituted in a field. Legitimacy follows the drawing of boundaries that distinguishes newly legitimated practice from incumbents. This study illustrates the conflict typical of entrepreneurial activities in established markets and suggests how wider field level forces e.g. the professionalization project of money managers, can support efforts to introduce institutional change.</p>

<p>Kennedy (2008) develops the idea of cognitive embeddedness and studied how media discourse embeds new firms in categories that reshape and come to reflect the market over time. These categories frame the shared social cognitive structures that audiences use to make sense of markets. He finds that new firms benefit from sharing media co-mentions with a select few existing rivals because these co-mentions help audiences categorise new firms and thus draw comparisons that show up the distinctive features of those firms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Embeddedness ▶ Categorisation ○ Framing ○ Sensemaking <p>Reay, Golden-Biddle, German (2006) investigate the legitimization of the nurse practitioner role in Canadian healthcare. They found that three micro processes namely [1] cultivating opportunities for change [2] situating change in current contexts and [3] demonstrating its value, supported the legitimization of change. They also found that small wins helped to consolidate change and motivated proponents to continue change efforts. They detail how nurse practitioners and other change proponents sought to clearly demarcate the boundaries of the new role to make it distinctive from physicians and registered nurses, yet complementary to both. They also illustrate how embeddedness within a change site can provide a foundation rather than hindrance to change. Nurse practitioners deeply embedded within regional health authorities secured legitimization for their roles.</p>
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3.8 Chapter summary

This section reviewed neo-institutional literature on new organisational forms emergence. I began by summarising neo-institutional theory proposed by DiMaggio and Powell (1983), which proposes that homogeneity in organisational fields occur because fields structuration results in three types of isomorphic pressures: coercive, mimetic and normative. Though criticised for its focus on exogenous sources of change such as legislative and regulative change or technological change, neo-institutional theorists have suggested that fields may be reordered by efforts of institutional entrepreneurs (DiMaggio, 1988) or by efforts by actors undertaking institutional work (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006), boundary work (Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010) or identity work (Leung et al., 2013, Wry et al., 2011).

The literature review explored how the possibility and trajectory of institutional change is influenced by structural attributes like location of change proponents – i.e. core or periphery, and the availability and distribution of resources. I also explore difference in effecting institutional change in established and mature fields. I explained how the characteristics of mature fields, with established boundaries, high degree on embeddedness and clear resource relationship make it difficult for challengers without sufficient resource to mobilise and effect change. Whereas insurgents possessing fewer resources may be more successful in emerging fields where institutional characteristics are not yet entrenched. Finally, the literature review explored the organisational and collective identity literature to understand their relationship with form emergence as tools that can instantiate the institutional logics that emerging organisational forms ascribe.

4 Methodology

4.1 Overview

I detail my methodological approach in this chapter. I commence by explaining my philosophical position, social constructionism, which is appropriate for my investigations into organisational form emergence because I am concerned with gaining deeper insights into particular processes of the ad-tech emergence story; including identifying and describing the enabling conditions that may have acted as antecedents for the ad-tech form emergence, and the response and actions of incumbent organisational forms that facilitated ad-tech's emergence and legitimacy. Social constructionism is an inter-subjective approach that allows the differences in opinions between researchers and participants to come to the fore in a way that supports the generation of shared understanding of a phenomenon, unlike positivism which begins with the researcher's hypothesis of the dimensions, and categories that should be the central focus (Bryman, 1989). Consequently, I have chosen a longitudinal qualitative research design that enable me surface richer details about the contexts of the industry before, during and just after the ad-tech form emergence using archival data, allows a deeper exploration of the micro details at play in the industry and also explore what meaning my interviewees give to their experience of the industry and their actions. By complimenting case study interviews with archival longitudinal data, I was better able to understand and interpret interviewees experience because I developed deeper grasp on their contexts and situation and I am thus better able to present my findings in an accessible and understandable manner to readers (Hyde, 2000). Finally in this chapter, I also detail the research strategies I employed to collect and analyse my data, I provide justifications for decisions I made during the research process, and include a critical reflection of the research process that addresses some of the

4.2 Philosophical Background: Social Constructionism

I adopt Berger & Luckmann's (1967) moderate social constructionism, which they pioneered with their influential book *The Social Construction of Reality*, in which they argue that realities and truths are historically and culturally specific, e.g. "what is 'real' to a Tibetan monk may not be 'real' to an

American businessman” (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 15). They also posit that we continuously produce our social order and employ social institutions to preserve, develop, and diffuse human knowledge. Ontologically, Berger and Luckmann argue the existence of an objective reality arising because humans, as social beings, live in a social world of their production. They go on to caution that the central focus for scholars should be on understanding what people know as the reality of their everyday lives i.e. practical knowledge and not ideas or theories, rather than focussing research efforts on discerning the existence of an objective reality. Social order, according to Berger and Luckmann, is a product of human activity both in its genesis, i.e. social order arises from past human activity, and in its instantiations through time, i.e. continuous human activities reproduce social order.

At its core, social constructionism explains the processes by which people develop their worldviews and explores the differences between historical and current forms of understanding, whilst considering what the alternatives are (Gergen, 1985). Social constructivists suggest that the prevalence of a form of understanding is not determined by its validity or substance, but by “vicissitudes of social processes (e.g. communication, negotiation, conflict, rhetoric)” (Gergen, 1985, p. 268). This is poignant; it positions taken-for-granted assumptions as politically negotiated aspects of socio-cultural life for groups of individuals. Thus epistemologically, social constructionism questions the reality of knowledge but accepts that knowledge is dependent on society and influenced by the phenomena it addresses (Elder-Vass, 2012). Elder-Vass (2012) goes on to suggest that “knowledge is a variety of belief and thus the property of individuals, but there are reasons why we credit some of our beliefs (and not others) with the quality of knowledge” (p.208). Bloor (1991) explains that knowledge is “collectively endorsed” such that idiosyncratic or individual proclamations are treated as mere belief (p. 5), regardless of their validity or invalidity. Knowledge, in Bloor’s contentions, is taken for granted social beliefs that are institutionalised among a group of constituents and guides the group’s way of life. Social constructionists like Berger and Luckmann distinguish between knowledge and truths for the purpose that we understand how people make sense of their social world because ‘knowledge feeds into and organises every aspect of their society.

The ontology of moderate social constructionist differs from that of more radical constructionists who posit that Kant (1724-1804) rightly made a distinction between the world in itself (noumenal), and the world as we experience it (phenomenal), and therefore hold that it is impossible to access the world in itself. Rather they contend that we can only speculate about the noumenal world (Collier, 1998), because any claims we make about that world are based on our conceptual schema or language games (Boghossian, 2001). Further, they posit that we experience different worlds, a subjective reality and thus eschew the notion of a single, objective reality. Critics to this position have long argued that such extreme relativism make it impossible to advocate one worldview over another and leaves no basis upon which morally dubious practices like oppression, war or human rights abuses may be condemned given that they can be explained away as just constructions of a society (Burr, 1998).

Other critics from like Searle (1997) reject Kant's distinction of the noumenal and phenomenal world, suggesting that Kant failed to escape Cartesian dualism (Elder-Vass, 2012). In the *Construction of Social Reality*, Searle (1996) argued that we live in just one world, which we know and are a part of (Smith, 2010), even though there exist phenomena within that world that present philosophical puzzles e.g. how "mental" realities that include consciousness and intentionality, fit into a physical world. Other critical realists, notably Smith (2010), call for a realist account of social constructionism that emphasizes people as participant in an objective reality that is shaped by sociocultural context. They suggest that scholars seek to understand how "truths" or "reality" in a realist-social constructionist account would be derived or negotiated, particularly when constructionists urge that we challenge the objective basis of our reality by suspending our beliefs that generally accepted "truths" or categories, e.g. man or woman, receive their merit from observation (Gergen, 1985).

Despite these criticisms, moderate social constructionism has been fruitfully applied in social science research broadly, and in theoretical and empirical management research specifically. Social

constructionist theory “is derived from cases that are grounded in situated experience and practice and are inductively derived. Although such theories are potentially transferable and applicable beyond the cases from which they emerge, social constructionists, however, point to the complexity and variability of social relations to argue against any attempts to claim causality, generalizability, or repeatability in their theories” (Turnbull, 2002, p.331). In this view, theory develops through an “act of generation, rather the formalization of underlying structure”, (Mir and Watson, 2001, p.1171: italics in original). The researcher and her informants co-create knowledge by interacting and interpreting the social situations and meanings attached to each other’s understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Indeed, while the notion that research knowledge is a generative exercise raises questions about the validity of research insights, scholars propose that social constructivists focus on how knowledge is generated and given meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Turnbull, 2002). For social constructivists, understanding the relationship between the researcher(s) and informants, the context of the research or unique constraints it poses, and the biases or values of the researcher are vital because they shed light on how meaning is created. Focussing on meaning creation infers that constructivist research seeks to provide deeper explanation or details about the ‘particular’, rather the simple causal relationships that may be associated with positivist research. Consequently, constructivist empirical research employ qualitative research designs where researchers maintain close contact with their research sites or data in order to support detailed observations or enhanced interpretations. Thick descriptions (Stake, 1995) that explain the context of a study and surfaces relevant voices are markers of quality research (Tracy, 2010). Tracy (2010) explains that multivocality, which refers to the representation of varied voices including those of the researchers enhances the credibility of research knowledge because “the objects of social science, like the social scientist who study them, are conscious, reflexive beings who endow their actions with meaning” (Benton & Craib, 2001. p. 90) and it crucial for the researcher to show an understanding of the different meanings that may be endowed in the research context and/or conveyed by informants during the interviews.

Within OMT, fields like neo institutionalism are underpinned by social constructionist philosophy. Suchman (1995) drew on the importance of acceptance of a socially constructed reality in which norms and values based systems are taken-for-granted when theorising the role of legitimacy in supporting organisational actions. Similarly, central neo institutional arguments e.g. the notion that organisational perception of isomorphic pressures varies across organisations align with constructivists notion that actors experience and make of sense of their environment differently. Organisational identity theories have also been significantly influenced by social constructionist philosophy. Works such as Glynn (2008), Hardy and Maguire (2008), and Wry et al. (2011) that explain how organisations enact identities that are fashioned by their understanding and perception of field level institutional processes are embedded within the social constructionism traditions. To align with the tradition of the tradition of my research field, and to be consistent with the tradition of scholars whose works have shaped my understanding and guided my empirical work, I too have adopted a social constructionist perspective.

Consequently, I have employed a longitudinal qualitative research design that allowed me to: [1] gather relevant contextual and historical data on the marketing industry, which sheds light on how aspects like failure to professionalize has in a sense left the industry “open”, [2] clearly collect background information on the competitive nature of the industry over the last two decades which gives meaning to the landscape of the industry and the perspectives of my interviewees and that of my sample organisations; and finally [3] identify and separate my relevant prejudices and experience as an accountant with any interest in the success of some start up agencies and the spouse of a digital marketing agency owner.

4.3 Qualitative Research Design

As this study aims to understand how the ad-tech form emerged and the role that incumbent organisations may have played to facilitate this (see research aims in chapter 1), it was important to collect data over a period of that to capture how form emergence would play out, and whether or how the context of the industry would change. Therefore a longitudinal archival study was appropriate for collecting data with which to identify patterns of change within the industry and to trace progress of a form emergence through identity claims, which would be difficult to ascertain or corroborate from interview data alone (e.g. Jones et al., 2012). Longitudinal qualitative data provides the opportunity to examine and make sense of the actions of key change proponents, in the case the large marketing agencies, explore how they frame their interests and the meaning give to their actions and claims in a way that made it possible to me to identify and analyse responses to the emergence of the new ad-tech organisational form.

To further explore how less prominent constituents experience and rationalise their actions in the context of a changing industry experiencing the ad-tech form emergence, I conducted interviews with participants across the industry spectrum from small, medium and large marketing agencies and one large advertiser in the mobile telecommunications industry. Some of the interviewees I knew well in a professional capacity. The restricted nature of access to large client-side advertisers and agencies made it necessary to collect as much data in each interview because there often wasn't opportunities to perform follow up interviews. I detail the particular research method I employ in subsequent sections.

In this chapter, I detail the overarching methodological approaches I employed and give a full account of the data collection strategy, the data structure, and the data analysis techniques employed. I provide some complimentary methodological information in subsequent chapters when this will be necessary to shed more light on the findings or explain specific challenges that arose during the research and how they were overcome.

TABLE 3: DATA STRUCTURE

RESEARCH TYPE	DATA TYPE	DATA SOURCE	SAMPLE SIZE	NUMBER OF DATA COLLECTION PERIODS	DATA COLLECTED	NUMBER OF PAGES
LONGITUDINAL ARCHIVAL STUDY	Historical website data	Company webpages archives	594	6 (2 yearly interval, 2004-14)	Webpages, blogs	1,619
	Company Vignette	Company webpages archives Online and print publications Professional bodies	3	3	Webpages, financial data, press releases, media reports and articles	30
	Trade Publication	Online and print publications	Multiple	Multiple	Articles	370
CASE STUDY INTERVIEWS	Qualitative Interview	Interviewees	22	1	Recorded transcripts	119

4.4 Data Sampling

4.4.1 Longitudinal Study Sampling

Three types of data were collected as part of the longitudinal study: historical website data for a sample of 594 companies, company vignettes and trade publications.

Historical website data – Firm Sampling

I started with a purposeful sample of 830 organisations selected from the Department for Business & Industrial Strategy's 2014 Business Population Estimates. I selected organisations claiming the 6020 Standard industrial classifications of economic activities (SIC) codes, which denotes marketing and advertising activities. I selected all of the oldest registered marketing agencies still trading, of which there were five between the eighteen hundreds and nineteen-seventies, and then I selected every other agency between nineteen eighty and nineteen ninety. The sampling was drawn randomly post

nineteen-ninety because of the increase in the numbers of agencies incorporated and trading from this period.

This resulted in two challenges: firstly, some of the randomly drawn sample had just been incorporated in 2014 and so lacked traceable or substantial history. Secondly, the random sample was disproportionately made up of Freelancers. While this arguably reflects the nature of the industry, for example the Design Council (2010) reported that 50% of its members turnover £50,000 or under, balancing the sample was necessary to ensure that I could adequately trace the changes that the ad-tech form emergence initiated to other forms (i.e. other form's reaction to ad-tech emergence) by observing the ways that individual firms talked about themselves and industry level issues overtime. I eliminated all firms incorporated after January 2012, and I also eliminated all companies with fewer than 3 intervals' worth of publicly available data. Of the 830 original sampled organisations, full or nearly full history was available for N=594 between 2004 and 2014. I verified each sample's data against information lodged with Companies House to identify ownership and update my database when merger and acquisition activities had occurred. Because of the variation in ages of firms in the sample and because I accepted sixty per cent history completeness, the sample size varied between periods.

TABLE 4: SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION

DESCRIPTION	YEARS					
	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Ad-form	54	57	60	96	114	123
Studio	41	49	62	114	150	122
Freelancer	36	35	60	258	309	320
Ad-tech	1	15	16	28	13	29
Total (N)	132	156	198	496	586	594

Company Vignette

I wrote company vignettes for three agencies, Elmwood Design, Design Bridge and Wren and Rowe. The purpose of the company vignette was to illustrate how studio organisational form emergence affected design consultancies and other specialised ad-form agencies. The vignettes recount the actions incumbent took in response to the pressures and risks that studio-form emergence posed, and detail the outcomes of some of those actions. These vignette were developed to provide context for understanding how the industry might act in the face of the ad-tech form emergence. This is important for my study because it exemplifies the strategies marketers adopt when faced with challenges or the prospect of change. It also provides fundamental contextual knowledge, because it in parts explains the underlying structure of the industry. I employed Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) theoretical sampling strategy to select cases, so that the selected companies demonstrate exemplar responses that firms made to the changes that occurred in the industry overtime and depict key practices that incumbent organisational forms have retained. The vignette were designed to give vital context to the ad-tech form emergence story because in many ways the digital revolution acted as antecedents for ad-tech form emergence – thus providing the theoretical insights that Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) suggests that cases should. The company vignette cases were selected based on three criteria:

- I. **Size:** It was important for the samples to be representative of small, medium and large design consultants; therefore I selected one agency for each category. Size is a fundamental feature of design consultancy because it is inherently identifying against larger ad-form agencies, and is tied to their claims of being specialist and focussed. Design consultants were usually small to mid-sized because for long the industry accepted that being large was incongruent with being creative. So these agencies threaded the fine line of being profitable at a capped size of around 50 employees, while retaining their reputation for creativity.
- II. **Reputation (Status):** selection was based on company reputation for creativity and renown (high status) in the industry. Reputation and status should usually contribute towards success when it is positive and well managed. Therefore I selected three organisations that had regular features in industry publications such as Marketing Week or AdWeek, had won awards for

core creative work in brand design and identity, and had FMCG client accounts. Using FMCG client account as a proxy for status is justified because FMCG client accounts are sought after in the industry since these clients often have large budgets, invest in agency relationships and seek creative ideas that will break through to consumers in a congested media space.

- III. **Complete and comparable data:** it was important to have full data on the company from the year 2000 to 2014. Marketing agencies have a relatively short life cycle because the industry is rather faddish, and go-to designers or agencies can quickly fall out of favour. This made the sampling process difficult since very few high status agencies from the last decade have survived or have complete data history for the length of my observation period. It was also important to have comparable data, e.g. published MD/CEO interviews addressing similarly substantive issues.

4.4.2 Case Study Interview Sampling

I set out to conduct interviews with agency owners or founders, senior managers and freelancers. Businesses were identified and selected based on age, growth and the prospects of eliciting a response through professional networking tool LinkedIn. I initially contacted interviewees via LinkedIn to ask if they would participate in interviews to discuss the changes in marketing industry based on their experiences. Some accepted and others declined. Where they declined, I asked people from within my professional networks to make LinkedIn introductions and attempted again. This was successful in two cases. Some interviewees put me in contact with individuals they thought would be interesting to speak with, and so some of the sample were serendipitously selected.

4.5 Data Collection

4.5.1 Longitudinal Study Data Collection

Historical Website Data Collection

Using Internet archives such as Wayback Machine, I worked backwards to collect publicly available website data at 2 yearly intervals to the start of my data collection period of 2004 (e.g. 2014, 2012, etc.) for the sample of 594 companies selected. I chose 2004 as the data collection cut off period for the longitudinal study because web archives become less reliable e.g. website content failed to match PR and marketing materials published in trade magazines, and more inaccessible from around 2004. Other reasons for the cut off were that some companies lacked websites at this stage while others simply had holding pages with their logos and addresses. Additionally, I found that web crawlers, which are programs or codes that automatically browse websites in a methodical fashion, were less reliable before 2004. Multiple domain name changes and firm name changes were also difficult to verify and match to relevant firms before 2004. There were technological constraints with opening flash and older technology websites pre 2004. All of these reasons made it necessary to cut off data collection at 2004. Nonetheless, a 10-year archival data collection period provided sufficient basis to pay “more attention to consistencies and changes over time [which] contributes to a better understanding of various subjects of interest, and thereby to more effective ways of dealing with them” (Katzell, 1994).

I focussed on gathering data pertaining to a firm’s identity, specifically recording capabilities and values, strategy and organisational structure. Consequently, I collected all available data on company history and identity claims from the ‘about us’ and ‘services’ pages of each companies’ website at every interval. Guided by the themes from the interviews I had conducted and the literature review, I also read through company blogs and collected any relevant data pertaining to identity, capabilities and innovations, perception of industry changes and any discussion surrounding technology, online media, ad-tech or marketing technology (Martech). My resulting database can be likened to an unbalanced panel dataset that contains demographic information for each sample company including

age (incorporation dates), size (turnover and number of employees), market segment (classification), and company generated data on its identity (salient feature), structure, capabilities and affiliations.

FIGURE 1: DATABASE EXTRACT SHOWING DATA CODING OF ARCHIVAL LONGITUDINAL CASES

Case ID	IncorporationDate	Salient Feature	SF Code	Org Form	Org_form_code	Value Prop	VP_code	Capability	Cap_code	Strategy
1	31/08/14	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Trad. Mktg	0	Full Serv
2	30/04/24	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Trad. Mktg	0	Full Serv
3	02/11/44	Creativity Digital	1,2	Ad-form	5	value	0	Dig. Mktg	1	Full Serv
4	16/05/57	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Dig. Mktg	1	Full Serv
5	16/01/61	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Trad. Mktg	0	Full Serv
304	16/01/61	Creativity Marketing	1,0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Trad. Mktg	0	Full Serv
6	11/06/68	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Dig. Mktg	1	Full Serv
7	04/02/71	Marketing	0	tech Ad-	3	Technical	2	DM Analytics	2	Focussed
305	04/10/77	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Trad. Mktg	0	Full Serv

Company Vignette Data Collection

The company vignette serve to demonstrate how a new form namely the studio organisational form successfully emerged in the industry, highlight how three different organisations interpreted and responded to the structural changes the perceived were affecting the industry, and explains their actions and my interpretation of their consequence. Put simply, the vignettes were designed to give an example of what happened the last time a new organisational form was legitimated in the field, how some constituents responded and the impact of their actions.

I collected articles that contained full profile interviews given by each of the three agency's leader(s), MD or CEO in which the agency's strategy or vision for the was discussed, from Marketing Week between 2000 and 2004. I also collected other press clippings where agencies discussed their latest work, client acquisition or client departure to establish how consistent companies actions were to strategy claims of pronouncements made in interviews. Where available, I collected annual reports or full filed submitted accounts, which often contain a strategy overview in lieu of annual reports. The

smaller agency had neither full filled account nor annual reports and so I instead I traced hiring announcements as a way to establishing consistency between public statements and company actions. I also traced the company leadership between 2000 and 2014 to discern if/where a change in leadership stems a change in company's actions and infer how that might also reflect a change in the agency's perception of the industry. Although all agencies had leadership changes over the 14-year data collection period, and especially in the case of Design Bridge, there was a material change in strategy on the appointment of new leadership in 2004.

Finally, where I used company-generated data e.g. archived website data, I triangulated that data against available press or IPA data to ensure that interpretations of events and related actions were accurate. I applied a strict data collection criteria for the vignettes because as Baxter and Jack (2008) notes, case study methodologies as adapted for the vignettes are often underpinned by positivist or constructivist philosophies influenced by the works of leading qualitative researchers like Yin (1994) and Glaser and Strauss (1965). Although my research is embedded in social constructivist traditions, I found it useful to adopt the methodical approach that grounded theorists advocate to enable me maintain rigour and criticality during the data collection and analysis process, and also perhaps because it provided some much needed comfort that I was "researching right".

Trade Publication Data Collection

My rationale for collecting trade publication data was to: [1] enhance the credibility, reliability and validity of my categorisations and definitions of organisational forms in marketing, and [2] to obtain supplementary information to triangulate my findings against. Payne et al. (2003) argue that whilst archival data collected by individual firms, industry bodies and trade associations are a convenient and low cost source of data for researchers; there are constraints to these datasets that necessitate the use of coherent criteria to ascertain whether they will be suitable for research endeavours. Although their criteria related to quantitative data for (post) positivist research, their framework provided relevant guidelines that I used to guide my archival data collection generally, but the trade publication

specifically. As such, I collected articles that answered the following questions: [1] does this data provide relevant contextual information on the marketing industry or the ad-tech organisational form? [2] Does this data shed light on current definitions and categorisations of organisational forms in marketing? And [3] does the data give insights about proponents or opponents of the ad-tech or incumbent forms and enhance my understanding of the phenomenon under investigation? The main source of specific agency and industry concern data were trade publications for example magazines like Marketing Week, Adweek, Design Week, The Drum, Campaign Magazine, TechCrunch and Creative Review. The IPA (Institute of Practitioners in Advertising) web archives were useful for checking timeline of events, while the Design Council, BIS Business Estimates, the National Archives (copies of documents relating to the professionalization project) were sources of general contextual information. I also collected data from academic publications from marketing and consumer research disciplines. Finally, financial data pertaining to mergers and acquisition and related investment activities were collected from business publications including the Financial Times and the Economist, and verified against filings submitted to Companies House.

Understanding the distinction between organisational forms in marketing is crucial to deepen our knowledge of marketing practice, and bridge the practitioner – academe gap. It is also useful to understand how organisational forms coexist in a field where the dominant forms legitimize practice, influence boundaries and frame the competitive landscape in a way that has so far starved off the ever creeping reach of high status technology companies like Facebook and Google. This understanding is especially apt as technology disrupts other seeming stable industries like the finance and automotive industries. Nonetheless, identifying and defining the distinct organisational forms in marketing is difficult because agencies, all of which strive to be perceived as unique in the market space, deliberately create confusion by using multiple labels to convey the same meaning. As a result, I draw on trade publications and academic resources to map out the organisational forms present in my sample period by seeking patterns in the use and meaning of labels attributable to each organisational form, the characteristics of capabilities each form possess, characteristics of organisational

configurations between distinctive groups, and size. I use trade publications because even though they do not explicitly discuss organisational forms in the academic sense, they discuss differences between *types* of agencies, challenges facing the industry and how exemplar agencies are addressing a unique set of circumstances that challenge the field. Trade publications were especially useful for identifying emerging capabilities that were yet to be taken-for-granted in academic literature, and for understanding customer's perceptions about the industry and the agencies they engaged, and how these perceptions differed from those held by those agencies.

4.5.2 Case Study Interviews Data Collection

No matter how small our sample or what our interest; we have always tried to go into organisations with a well-defined focus — to collect specific kinds of data systematically.

Mintzberg (1979)

I adopted Mintzberg's focussed approach in designing the interview materials. The literature review identified major themes associated with the establishment of an organisational form, which includes: the formation of collective identity (e.g. King et al., 2011), emergence of a common structure or configuration (e.g. Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005), and convergence in strategy (e.g. Minkoff, 2002). I used these themes to frame the questions for the semi-structured interviews (see appendix A). I employed semi-structured interviews because I hoped to gain interesting insights from the different owner/manager experiences, and I wanted to give them the opportunity to discuss those experiences. I was interested in their perception of changes to the industry and the reasons behind those changes, and I wanted to explore any key themes that interviewees generated which might not have been reflected in archival data or academic sources. Myers and Newman (2007) suggest that semi structured interviews offer a degree of openness for researchers to explore interesting topics that arise during interviews. Finally, I was interested in participants' perceptions and experiences of key events in the industry e.g. Google changing search results algorithms, because I aimed to triangulate them against archival data sources to understand and interpret response convergence or divergence.

Semi Structured Interviews

I conducted twenty-two interviews between February 2014 and January 2015. A dozen withdrew or partially withdrew consent citing competitive concerns. This thesis contains data from five face-to-face semi structured interviews and six telephone (or Skype) semi-structured interviews. I asked participants to share their experience of a major industry change that has affected their business and asked why they chose to found their businesses or work for their employers (Myers and Newman, 2007). Three of the face-to-face interviews were at restaurants or cafés because an informal setting was more likely to get participants to open up about their experiences and enabled me to quickly

establish rapport (Brewerton and Millward, 2001). Furthermore, as time was a major constraint, a working lunch was appealing to my busy interviewees so proposing it was crucial to obtaining confirmed appointments faster. This approach is consistent with Dearnley (2005) observation that accounting for the time constraints and setting of an interview was likely to produce better interaction with participants. One of the face-to-face interviews was conducted in a quiet room after an industry niche event for marketing agencies that service the gaming and gambling industry, and the last face-to-face interview was conducted at the agency's premises. This was necessary because the technical nature of the work conducted by the agency required the use of aids e.g. a whiteboard in the meeting room to explain complex matters. I was also shown around the company premises to get a feel for the types of computers and the complexity of the work they performed. I would have been unable to grasp the nature of the work this agency performed, or indeed visualise just how different this agency is to 'typical traditional' or 'digital' agencies without attending their premises. The final face to face interview was at my office. The face-to-face interviews typically lasted about an hour on average.

Finally the telephone (Skype) interviews were necessary where time constraints made it difficult to arrange face-to-face meetings. Burke and Miller (2001) observe that while researchers increasingly use telephone interviews for qualitative data collection, there are pitfalls to this data collection strategy that novice researchers may be ill prepared for. They suggest a pre interviewing planning phase which includes activities like sending participants a list of the interview questions and conducting a test/pilot interview to establish the amount of time required for the telephone calls. While I decided against sending interviewees a list of the guiding questions because I wanted a more organic conversation, I did exchange correspondence via LinkedIn that explained the types of questions I would be asking and I suggested 30-minute slots. This meant that interviewees were prepared ahead of the telephone calls.

All interviews were recorded, listened to and typed transcript prepared. I performed a grouped second interview with two interviewees to clarify some questions from the first interview. The group

interview was possible because I learned that both firms were working on a project for a national theatre and that both MDs knew each other. Getting both MD to attend the same working lunch was an efficient use of everyone's time and made it easier to get access again. One other interviewee provided clarifications via LinkedIn message and the last one provided clarification in person, at an industry event. In this case, I made researcher notes. The table below depicts the demographic characteristics of participating firms at 2014. By 2018, some of these firms have been acquired by larger networks.

TABLE 5: DETAILING DEMOGRAPHICS OF INTERVIEWED COMPANIES

		FIRM AGE OR EXPERIENCE	TURNOVER (£)	ORGANISATIONAL FORM	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	POSITION
1	CO1	8	<1M	Studio	5	Owner/MD
2	CO2	8	<1M	Ad-form	6	Co-founder
3	CO3	2	<1M	Studio	5	Co-founders
4	CO4	9	c.50M	Ad-tech	77	Commercial Director
5	CO5	20+	<1M	Freelancer	1	Owner
6	CO6	20+	<1M	Studio	12	MD
7	CO7	11	>100M	Mobile Telecoms	>500	Head of PR & Social
8	CO8	20+	<1M	Freelancer	1	Owner
9	CO9	3	<1M	Ad-form	<10	Owner
10	CO10	1	<2M	Ad-form	10	Co-founder

4.6 Data Analysis

4.6.1 Longitudinal Study Data Analysis

Historical website data

There was an overlap between the longitudinal archival study and the case study data collection and analysis, which meant that both studies informed each other. Although my strategy for the longitudinal study was originally to focus on just collecting and analysing historical company website data, mid-way through the data collection and analysis process, I began to collect trade publications because it gave me context for actions such as change in agency positioning (identity) claims or strategy, agency loss of clients, change in leadership, and so forth. The goal of this section of my research was to develop an understanding of the process of the ad tech form emergence that details the actions of both the emerging form and those of incumbents.

My data analysis process can broadly be described as three-staged. Initially, I began with a codebook derived from a combination of extant literature and early themes emerging from the qualitative case interviews I had conducted, and coded for meaning of firm's claims. My aim was to discern the cognitive meanings that sample companies' attached to texts and representations they made on their websites (Saldana, 2009). I also sought to understand their identity, capability and value claims, that is how firms express what they do and who they are and why; how did firms signal their organisational forms, and whether or not firms mentioned or acknowledged contemporary industry-wide issues. This step of the coding processes was done to understand and initially categorise each sample to an organisational form at each interval period. The table below is an excerpt from the codebook I used extracted from Nvivo. The explanations are the comments (memos) made on Nvivo to ensure that I was consistent in my application of codes. At the end of the initial coding, I manually updated the master Excel spreadsheet and assigned numeric values to each coding category.

Code	Explanation	Coding Category
Size	Size is important / significant for traditional ad-forms. Larger agencies can claim legitimacy to be generalists due to numbers of staff on the payroll with specific skills. Conversely, smaller agencies can claim to be more agile and nibble, or perhaps claim to be niche specialists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small • Medium • Large
Capability emphasis	Per Albert and Whetten's definition of identity as CED features of who we are and what we do, capability claims can more robustly be investigated and verified for consistency using the company's work portfolio than the claims of "who we are".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional marketing • Digital marketing • Digital marketing analytics & technology
Value proposition	Value proposition was especially mentioned across smaller agencies in the case interviews perhaps because they competed on cost. Value proposition mentions will be used as an indication that an agency was a small or micro studio or freelancer in spite of what their marketing materials indicates or of their claims of size.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value • Low cost • Technical
Strategy	Full service, focussed, generalist are examples of strategies adopted across the firms based on my experience and the case study interviews, which may tie in very closely with the legitimacy signals agencies send, and the capabilities they emphasize and perhaps the specificity of their positioning. Discerning an agency's strategy will be important because it manifests in their identity claims and also indicates the organisational forms they adopt or are likely to adopt over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full service agency • Integrated marketing communications • Focussed
Use of grand statements	Some agencies are eponymous enough to have vague but grand statements about who they are and what they do. Perhaps the perception is that this broadens their appeal and allows access to a wider range of clients, or perhaps these agencies genuinely believe in their malleability and are confident in their capacity to adapt their capabilities to fit a client's requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
Legitimacy signals	Agencies use legitimacy signals to back up claims e.g. full service capability claims often followed by reference to head count and examples of across the line marketing campaigns. History and heritage used to signal enduring creativity over time, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Via associations e.g. industry body (IPA, ISBA) • Client list e.g. FMCG, luxury brands • Heritage / status / Age • Awards and accolades • Geographical coverage

Clear differentiation or focussed positioning or 'vagueness'?	Some interviewees suggested that the uncertainty introduced by ad tech growth had encouraged increased competition that made specific positioning detrimental to small agencies especially. Hence I wanted to examine the extent to which the sampled agencies clearly signalled their focussed or differentiation strategy positioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambiguity • Specificity
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An extract of the outcome of the first stage coding is presented below. My motivation initially for assigning numeric values to the data was to enable quantitative data analyse, the default way in which I solve problems because I am an accountant and quantitative analyses comes more naturally to me. I also assigned numeric codes to the data because it made it easier to manipulate and identify patterns using Excel e.g. using the VLOOKUP function to identify where a sample's organisational form or capability claims code had change across the 6 data collection interval points.

FIGURE 2: EXTRACT SHOWING UPDATED DATABASE WITH 1ST ORDER CODING AND NUMERIC CODES

Case ID	IncorporationDate	Salient Feature	SF Code	Org Form	Org_form_code	Value Prop	VP_code	Capability	Cap_code	Strategy
1	31/08/14	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Trad. Mktg	0	Full Serv
2	30/04/24	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Trad. Mktg	0	Full Serv
3	02/11/44	Creativity Digital	1,2	Ad-form	5	value	0	Dig. Mktg	1	Full Serv
4	16/05/57	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Dig. Mktg	1	Full Serv
5	16/01/61	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Trad. Mktg	0	Full Serv
304	16/01/61	Creativity Marketing	1,0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Trad. Mktg	0	Full Serv
6	11/06/68	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Dig. Mktg	1	Full Serv
7	04/02/71	Marketing	0	Ad-tech	3	Technical	2	DM Analytics	2	Focussed
305	04/10/77	Marketing	0	Ad-form	5	Value	0	Trad. Mktg	0	Full Serv

The second step of the analysis involved seeking and making sense of patterns of change in the longitudinal data. I wanted to understand whether and why organisations changed their identity claims and organisational form, so I was interested to see if changes were linked to critical incidents within organisations, e.g. acquisition by a network or larger agency, joining a collaborative network, new staff hires like new creative director, copywriter of c-suite staff, key personnel departures, loss or gain of key client accounts and acquisition of a major technology or platform. I sought to understand why

companies maintained their identity and organisational forms also and how they signalled their consistency. This stage involved reviewing the coding done earlier, using excel to identify cases where a sample's assigned salient feature (numeric code), capability or organisational form (also numeric codes) changed during the observation period, as I mentioned earlier, from any incumbent form to ad-tech, initially, and then across incumbent categories.

I initially compared similarities and difference in demographic characteristics of samples that changed organisational form claims to understand whether, for example, there were specific features of larger (size) or older (age) firms that made them likely to change organisational forms or support their transition from one form to the other, and I also did the same for samples that showed no changes. I then examined all ad-tech form agencies coded in 2004 to understand the owner's or leadership past background, funding structure or any other unique characteristic could have influenced the choice of organisational form, which some marketing incumbents may perhaps lack. I developed second order codes as I iterated between the historical website data, my coding and demographic summary spreadsheet, some of the interview data and theory. At this stage, I began to collect more archival data from trade publications to challenge the robustness of my assertions. During the course of coding, recoding and modifying the second order codes, I developed an analytical framework that guided how I coded the rest of the data and with which I generated two key concepts: the mechanisms of differentiation and conformity that support new form emergence.

By the final stage of the data analysis, it was apparent that a pattern of claiming had emerged similar to phase model where samples claiming behaviours distinctly changed over time. At the start of the data collection period, typically between intervals 1 and 2, samples were consistent in their use of the institutional template for identity and capability claiming, hence I labelled this period the emergence phase. By interval 3 and 4 (2008/2010) there was an observable loosening of the institutional template for identity and capability claims making and legitimacy signalling that appeared to incite variation in

samples behaviour, which I labelled as differentiation phase. I noted that toward the end of the data collection period, samples had converged in a way that suggested a new institutional template for claims making had emerged. I initially called this the ‘consolidation’ phase but revised the terminology to ‘convergence’ to align with extant literature.

FIGURE 3: ILLUSTRATION OF ANALYTICAL MODEL DEVELOPED DURING DATA ANALYSIS

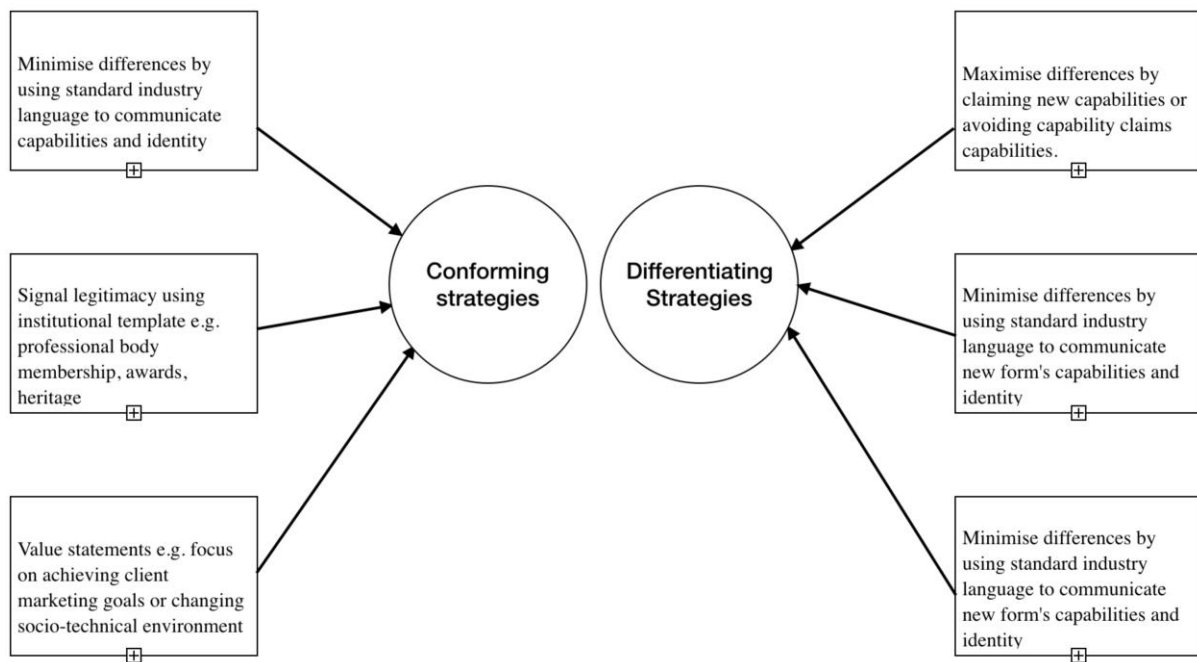


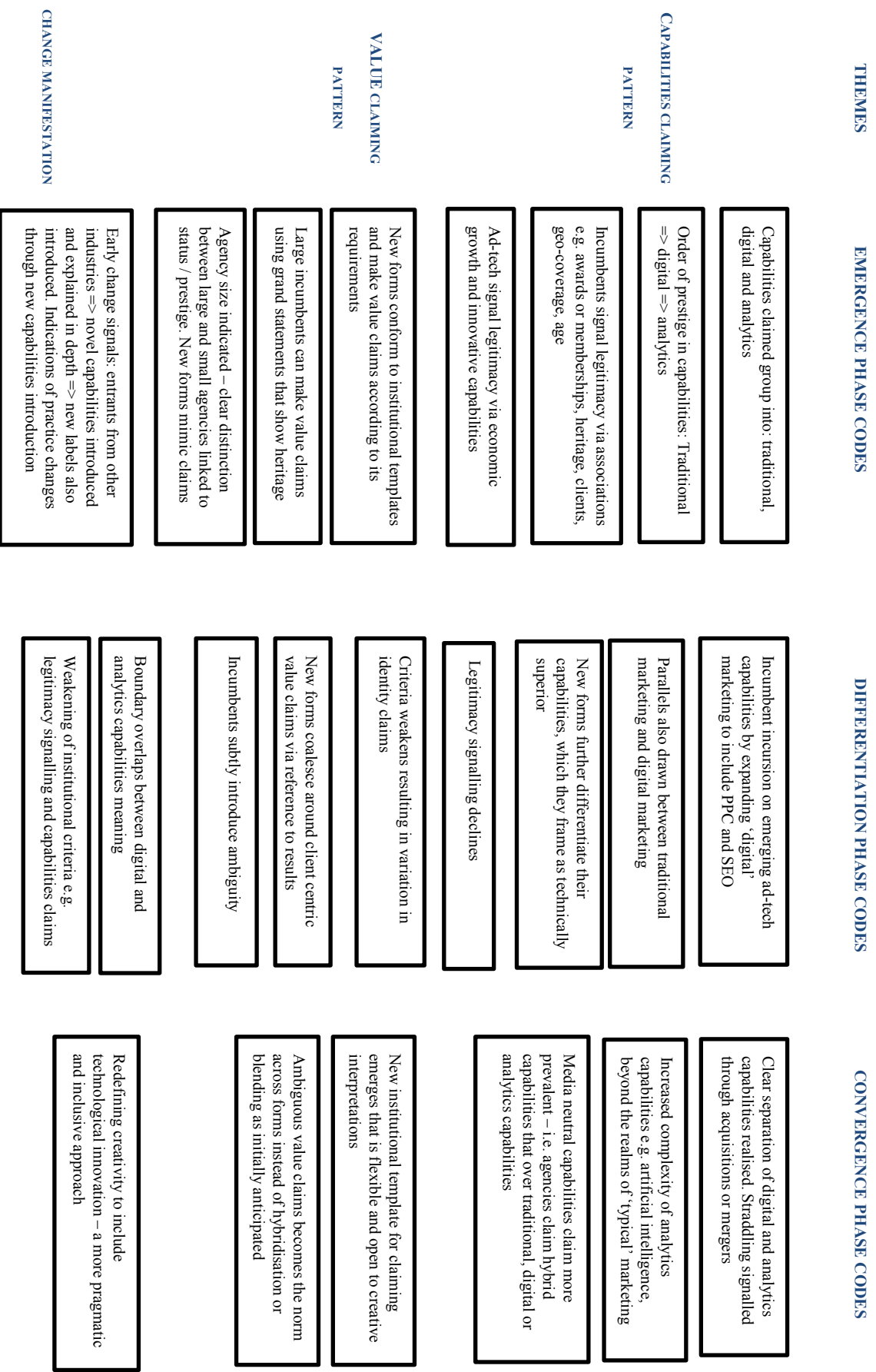
Table 6 shows an exemplar case of how an unchanging incumbent organisational form’s identity, capability and value claiming changes over time, and demonstrates how I coded the data. This example also shows how differentiation and conformity initially emerged from the data analysis process. Figure 3 shows how the final codes from the full data set were arranged on completion of the historical data analysis, prior to ‘side-by-side’ review of the results against the findings of the qualitative case interviews.

TABLE 6: EXAMPLE OF INCUMBENT ORGANISATIONAL FORM CODING 2004-2014

Case ID	Data collection Interval	Data	Code list	1st Order Codes	2nd Order Codes
30	1	We are a direct Communications agency, which produces and executes Big Ideas on and off-line.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS: Y • Cap: trad mktg • Strategy: focussed • Positioning: specific 	Clear, and typical identity (capability) statements	Minimize differences by conforming with industry templates for identity claiming and legitimacy signalling
	2	TRA was founded in 1991 by two of its current directors, Ben Cook and Neil Kirkman. Based in Bath since its inception, TRA has worked closely with blue chip national clients on a wide and developing range of marketing disciplines. These include brand development, CRM and e-marketing, direct mail, incentive schemes, advertising, design and database management... ...A critical element of this has been the development of a multi-skilled technology department which is an unusual skill set to find in an agency of this size in this sector. This department builds data analysis tools, e-commerce systems and website infrastructures. The technology department share the agency philosophy of providing added value over competitive offerings through an innovative and entrepreneurial approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legit sig: age, clients • Cap: Dig mktg • Strategy: full serv • Positioning: specific 	Clear, typical legitimacy statements	
	3	The Real Adventure is an award-winning digital and direct marketing communications agency based in Bath. We create consumer value and loyalty by enriching their brand journey with engaging experiences. We do this by understanding who your consumers are, what they need, when they need it, where and why, and how your brand integrates into their lives. We then deliver impactful campaigns and CRM programmes that feed the emotions, which drive consumer behaviour. Established in 1991 and part of Creston plc, a diversified marketing services group, The Real Adventure is made up of 65 people with an extensive range of client and agency experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *New independent network affiliation (acquired) • Legit sig: age, clients • Cap: blended trad & dig mktg • Strategy: full serv • Positioning: vague 	Clear, typical legitimacy statements, vague identity statements	Differentiate by making introducing ambiguity in capability statements, but conform with legitimacy signalling

4	Building Great Relationships... lies at the heart of everything we do. As an award winning digital and direct agency, we build great relationships between brands and consumers, driving engagement, loyalty and ultimately, value for your brand. Our work covers all disciplines in digital and direct marketing, with specific expertise in CRM, Social Media and Search Marketing. To learn more about how we build great relationships, get in touch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legit sig – awards / accolades • Cap – blended trad & dig mktg • Strategy – full serv • Positioning – vague 	Clear, typical legitimacy statements, vague identity statements	
5	We're one of the UK's leading relationship marketing agencies. We're 75 people who believe that long term consumer value lies in helping brands create meaningful, on-going relationships. We should know - we've been building great relationships for over 20 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legit sig – age, size • Cap: vague • Strategy: vague • Positioning: vague 	Clear, typical legitimacy statements, vague identity statements	Values based claims of meeting consumer's or client's need
6	Today's consumers don't wake up wanting a relationship with your brand. And earning a place in their lives takes much more than a few timely emails. In their always-on world, they call the shots, choosing when and how they engage with the content, experiences, services and products that matter to them. So we create relevant magic that builds emotional connections between brands and real people, in real time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cap – vague • Strategy – vague • Positioning – vague, GS signalling values	Typically ambiguous statements on identity and legitimacy claims	

FIGURE 4: CODING STRUCTURE OF LONGITUDINAL COMPANY-LEVEL DATA



Company Vignette Data Analysis

I employed thematic content analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994, Cohen et al., 2000) to generate themes from the data that could explain the actions organisations took in response to the pressures posed by studio forms – be that the pressure to develop digital capabilities or the ensuing competitive pressure that the online channel caused for offline only agencies. More specifically, I was interested in the outcomes (success or failure) of strategies these companies adopted in response to what their leadership had publicly expressed as the pressing issues affecting their businesses i.e. studio form emergence and the continuing technological discontinuities that precipitated from the dot come bubble. At the start of the analysis, I read all collected data pertaining to each sample (historical website data from 2000 to 2016, magazines, press releases, advertorials), annotating questions as they arose. The next stage of the analysis involved examining the data that gave insights into the company's strategy and performance. I was especially looking for rebranding announcements or new website launch that showcased completely new content. I took verbatim quotes because I felt it would be more insightful during the next stage of the data analysis.

Next, I created a storyboard that gave a chronological account of each sample's strategy using the verbatim quotes collected earlier and its outcome. The storyboard also contained visual aids such as screen grabs of distinctive pages of a sample's archived website, service portfolio or video clips from interesting interviews. To measure the success of those strategies (outcome), I evaluated revenue, net profit, net assets and head count growth. I anticipated a lag effect between strategy adoption and performance change so when for example Elmwood Designs made redundancies in 2000 and rebranded (albeit briefly) into a digital studio form agency 2002, I anticipated that the financial impact of these strategic shifts would come to the fore in 2004 and so I examined all published financial information for that year more exhaustively than I did 2002's. Minded by the impact of the global financial crisis, I evaluated the financial statements from 2008 to 2012 more cautiously, supplementing each

sample's historical website data with press releases where available, magazines, advertorial and similar materials to discern where other factors such as major client win, unpublicized white labelled projects, yet to be disclosed client account losses, and so forth, could also explain performance. Finally, I wrote the vignettes, focussing on detailing strategies and how the manifest, e.g. client account wins, geographical expansion or new office openings, and major project delivery.

Trade Publication Data Analysis

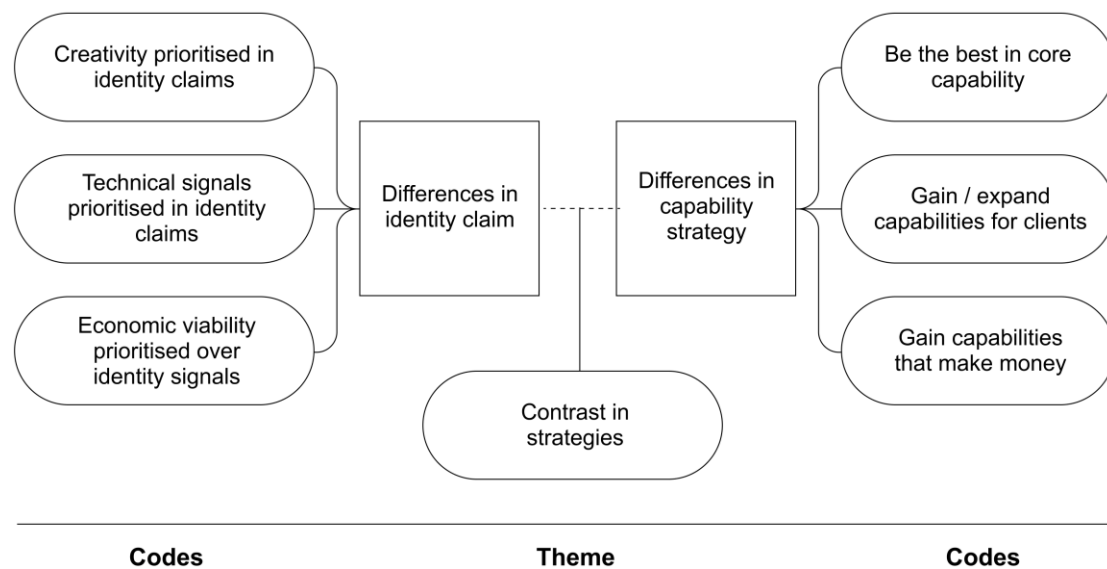
My primary objective of this data analysis was to rigorously define and categorise the organisational forms presently found in the industry. As a result, I used holistic coding techniques which is a way of lumping basic themes from data together (Saldaña, 2009). Holistic coding involves collecting, reading and re-reading all the data available for an inquiry together to understand the full picture ahead of coding. This reduces the risks that unexpected observations or sudden findings will alter the meanings of the data that has been coded. This was an especially useful analysis technique for the academic data from marketing and consumer behaviour publications because there is a widely accepted academe-practitioner knowledge gap that has resulted in a difference in the language used by both groups to refer to the same concepts. By fully reading and making sense of my selected literature, I could establish the sub-disciplines within the capabilities cluster of traditional, digital and analytic marketing, and map out the overall boundary of these capabilities.

4.6.2 Case Study Interviews Data Analysis

I performed initial data analysis and collection simultaneously, and this augmented my ability to recognize and record key themes and pattern appearing in the data (Cohen et al., 2000). When I identified a unique theme in one interview, I asked subsequent interviewees of their experiences, if any, of that theme and was able to progressively build a fuller picture of the

differences in experience, market segments, competitive pressures and strategic actions of my participants. Second cycle data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis (Cohen et al., 2000). I employed pattern coding on Nvivo (Miles and Huberman, 1994, Saldaña, 2009), which is a way of identifying and grouping large materials into meaningful patterns from which themes may be generated. I applied Saldaña (2009) guidance that themes are outcomes of coding that should describe subtle and tacit processes, therefore the themes generated from this level of coding guided my secondary data collection and were also triangulated against those themes that emerged from the secondary data. These themes were: [1] divergence in identity strategies across organisational forms, [2] operational and technical complexity as the resultant effect of industry changes, [3] organisational configuration or structure is not vital for survival or success, [4] creativity is what creativity does. Combining these themes with guidance from extant, I created a codebook which I used for the first stage of the historical website data analysis.

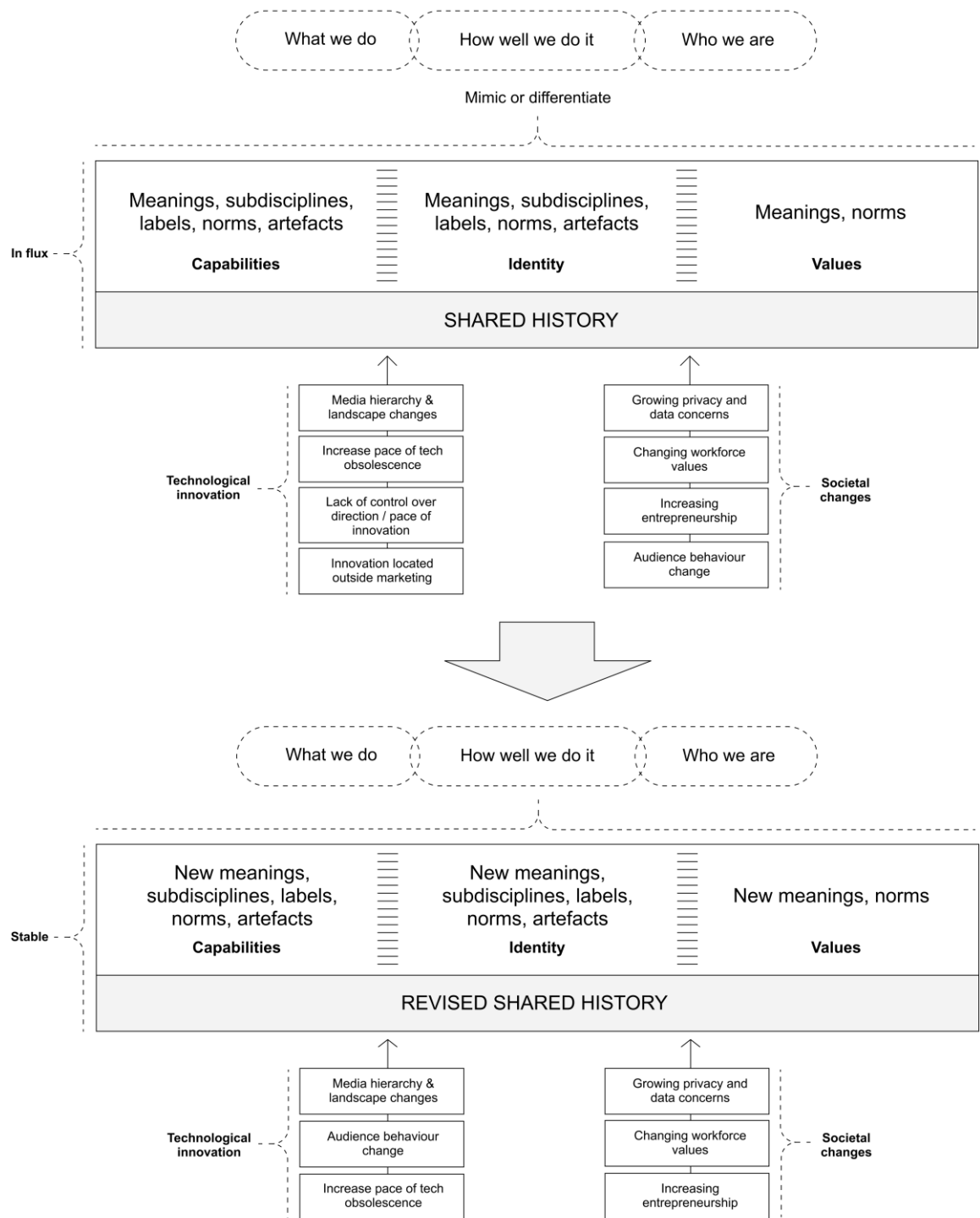
FIGURE 5: ILLUSTRATION OF THEMATIC ANALYSIS



Source: Adapted from Saldaña (2009:12)

Finally, to make sense of what I had understood from the interview data, I developed an analytic framework (figure below) that organized my findings by categorizing the factors interviewees suggested their agencies and industry competitors were reactive to, the impact on identity, capabilities, strategies and competitive dynamics, and the actions taken by these agencies under these circumstances. The framework was a useful reference tool because it enabled comparison of multiple strands of findings (from archival sources including historical website data, vignettes and trade publications, and case interviews), and was vital throughout my attempts at integrating the findings into a coherent model of new organisational form.

FIGURE 6: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK



4.7 Critical Reflection

I was motivated by the question ‘what would the agency of the future look like’ when I began my research at Leeds. I was fascinated by the interesting ways agencies around me experimented with their structures, the fact that creativity and technological nous were increasingly no longer considered mutually exclusive – movement beyond the ‘creative’ / ‘techie’ dichotomy, and intrigued by what appeared to be unending conversations about business models that would secure the future. On reflection, the way I framed my early question shaped the first two years of my research endeavor. ‘What would the agency of the future look like’ conjures up an image of survival following an epic battle against an existential threat to me now. And perhaps because I sensed the discontinuities in the industry as threats, I was immediately taken in by studies that employed survival analysis or event history analysis and found a natural home in organisational ecology, identity theories, co-evolutionary theory and category studies.

I cannot fully explain how or why I framed my original guiding question in the manner I did. But as an accountant trained on the mantra that cash is king, I perhaps viewed the period of flux as one that agencies simply had to survive by generating sufficient cash flow to keep afloat. And as an accountant I thought that my question could be answered quantitatively. During the first year of data collection, I quantified as much of the data that I could, operationalizing themes from the historical website data as variables where possible with a view that I could potentially create a panel data set if the data lent itself to it. During the semi structured interviews, although I was guided by some prepared questions mostly focused on identity, strategy and capabilities, I found it difficult to avoid asking questions that could give me an insight into how those dynamics translated into performance i.e. real-time numbers. Some interviewees chose not to disclose what they felt could be sensitive information because of my professional background and the fact that my spouse is an agency owner. Nonetheless,

I had robust and engaging conversations with all informants despite some requests to keep some data “off the records”.

After some interesting supervisory meetings in which I fielded ‘hows’ and ‘whats’ questions I was unable to answer, I was persuaded that perhaps a qualitative research project was required to understand the dynamics of ad-tech form emergence and to develop a theory that could be tested with the data I had been building. I set out to conduct the qualitative research with the same rigor that I employed for statutory work. Keeping ‘audit trails’ wherever possible, and making notes or diagrams – on Nvivo, on my excel spreadsheets, mobile devices and my planners, that I could refer to as ‘evidence’ at later dates. On reflection, I was concerned that it would be difficult to ‘prove’ the value of whatever I did as a qualitative researcher because I viewed qualitative research as an impossibly difficult skill that was the preserve of ‘philosophers’.

Over the course of my research, I have learned to be my own kind qualitative researcher. My ‘audit trail’ can be both a piece of datum and an analytic tool, and is, as I have learned, also a marker of quality. I am learning to work inductively, provide thick descriptions, be reflexive, show conceptual leaps, and take the readers along as I recount the story of my research. I learned that just as with being accountant, good qualitative research work involves retaining the integrity of the researcher, informants and the phenomena under investigating.

4.8 Chapter Summary

I have explained the research philosophical stance, methodology and strategy for data collection and analysis in this chapter. I also explained decisions I made during my investigation e.g. cut-off period for the longitudinal data collected, reasons for collecting trade publication data, justification for the inclusion of company vignettes and other similar decisions made during the research. I have also discussed steps taken to improve the validity,

rigour and reliability of my research. I adopted a social constructivist position and have therefore adopted an interpretative approach for my research. I performed a longitudinal archival qualitative research that used data collected from three main sources: historical website data, practitioner publication, company vignettes; and qualitative case interviews. Archival data such as company annual return, annual accounts filings from companies house, and financial press were accessed to supplement the historical website collected. Different data analysis techniques were employed; so for example I used thematic analysis and pattern coding for the case interview data, and used pattern coding for analysing the historical website data. I outlined some of the challenges I faced during the data collection process, e.g. the short life span of some marketing agencies.

5 Findings

This chapter details the findings from the longitudinal qualitative study. I present descriptive statistics that shows the distribution of organisational forms in the sample by key characteristics namely firm size and age. For ease, figure 5 also graphically, depicts the organisational form distribution in the data. The rest of the findings are structured as follows; first, I detail the characteristics of incumbents and new organisational forms at the start of the data collection periods in section 5.2 in order to provide an initial summary of affairs that contextualise subsequent changes. Sections 5.3 present the findings from the data analysis. I identified three phases of new form emergence namely: emergence, differentiation and convergence, from the data analysis. Each phase was characterised by distinctive capabilities and value claims supported two main mechanisms – differentiation and/or conformity. During the emergence phase, I found that new forms differentiated their capabilities from incumbents by framing these capabilities as competence enhancing; and conformed to the institutionalised template for value claims by mimicking the claims of incumbents. As new forms gained legitimacy, capability claims were further differentiated during the second phase of emergence, which I name as the differentiation phase because new firms also espoused values from incumbents. By the final phase we see convergence across the organisational form and a revision of the institutional identity of the industry. Finally, section 5.4 draws parallels between the form emergence story and the technological innovation and wider environmental changes during the data collection period.

5.1 Data Structure

The total sample of company data analysed during each data collection period changed. For example, I analysed data pertaining to one hundred and fifty six firms (n=156) in 2004 out of n=594 that comprise the entire dataset. This change in numbers reflect some realities; firstly, the accuracy of website scrapping was affected by obsolescence. Flash websites were especially difficult to scrape during pre 2006, and it was not uncommon for firms to have “business card” websites, which contained only contact information and addresses. Secondly, there was a noticeable spike in business founding and incorporations at the height of the financial crisis from 2008, and prior to 2008. And finally, few agencies survive in their original form beyond ten years. Many are acquired and subsumed into larger firms or networks, and others exit the industry. Because I collected my sample in 2014 from the BIS estimates and worked backwards to collect data, many of the firms that met the cut-off criteria (which are: [1] availability of 60% complete data history between 2014-2010. [2] Full history accessed as complete filings at companies house; [3] actual trading entity, holding companies and special purpose vehicles were excluded) for inclusion in the sample were yet to be founded in 2004. Also, there were twenty-four more firms in the data analysed for 2006 compared to 2004. This sample difference mainly arose because of inaccessibility of the webpages in 2004. I crossed reference the company age and size to ensure that the absence of 2004 data would not materially affect or alter the findings.

The table and figure below presents the demographics of the sample. The most striking feature of these diagrams is the steep increase in freelancer firms incorporated around 2008, which reflects impact of the financial crisis and related redundancies and job loses on the industry. I also record a growth in the numbers of medium and large agencies in 2008, which also corroborates the lagged effect of the financial crisis on the marketing industry. The graph shows that the total number of ad-tech firm peak at 28 in 2010, but declines to 13 in 2012. This peak reflects new entrant (incorporations), and incumbent technical digital studios

converting to ad-tech. I have excluded acquisitions by established ad-form incumbents in the ad-tech tally because the evidence suggests that the ad-tech firms were left to carry on with business as usual in this time. The decline in ad-tech numbers were mainly driven by business failures – like other industries, marketing has a high rate of new founding mortality and few agencies survive beyond five years. Secondly, some large ad-tech agencies abandoned the ad-tech form, choosing instead to offer integrated technical and creative services by adopting the ad-form. Finally, some of the ad-tech agencies acquired in previous periods were folded into the media arms of large parent-networks, effecting converting these agencies into media divisions of parent-networks.

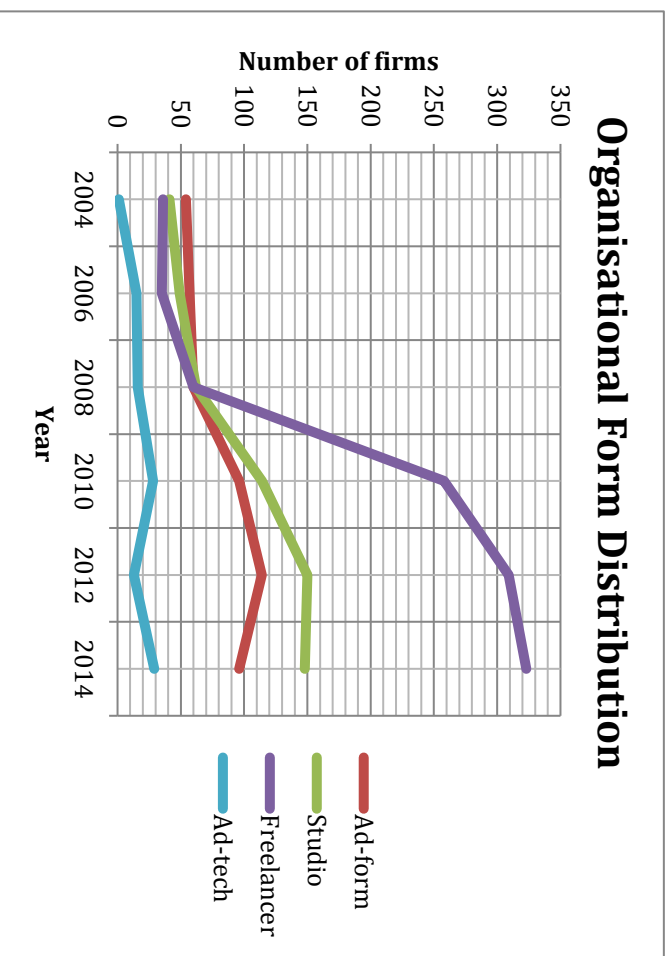


FIGURE 7: ORGANISATIONAL FORM DISTRIBUTION

TABLE 7: SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE

ORG FORM	SIZE	Company Age Range			
		Under 5	5 to 14	15 to 24	25 and over
Ad-form	Small	5	25	7	2
	Medium	4	6	6	3
	Large	3	22	17	21
Studio	Small	24	66	27	2
	Medium	0	0	0	1
	Large	0	1	0	1
Ad-tech	Small	2	4	0	1
	Medium	1	2	1	2
	Large	0	9	6	1
Freelancer	Small	129	166	23	4
	Medium	0	0	0	0
	Large	0	0	0	0

5.2 Characteristics of Incumbents and New Organisational Forms at the Start of Data Collection

I identified three incumbent organisational forms at the start of the data collection periods, namely the ad-form, studio form and freelancer form - all collectively referred to as incumbents. These forms were determined by examining their capabilities and value claims, affiliations with agency networks to understand their structure, ownership and embeddedness in the industry, and size. Affiliations with agency networks are a crucial characteristic for marketing agency because affiliations enhance the status of agencies by signalling their scale, geographical reach, strategy and creative ethos. Agencies may be affiliated with a network, a collaborative community, a collective, or may be independent. Furthermore, the findings indicated that discussions about the size of agencies were commonplace in industry press as were discussions about the differences between large networked and small independent agencies, which informed the inclusion of size in the analysis. I found that specific organisational forms were linked to size, e.g. the freelancer form comprises micro firms. I discuss the characteristics of each organisational form separately below:

5.2.1 Ad-form Organisational Form

The “ad-agency” form (referred to as the “ad-form” for short) is perhaps the most widely understood and recognizable of all organisational forms in marketing. The ad-form is distinguishable from others because: [1] *ad-form firms have creative, media and marketing, data and insights, specialist divisions e.g. wellness, women or 50+ functions arranged like typical bureaucratic organisations* (von Nordenflycht, 2011, Hackley, 2000, Pickton and Broderick, 2004). [2] *These agencies have creative/copywriter duos; a pairing that has sharply focussed academic research interests.* Researchers such as e.g. McLeod et al. (2009) have examined how social factors like class shape advertising creatives. Others works have sought to explore the perceived fragile or insecure identities that advertising creatives are thought to possess because peers and the public evaluate their work against

higher order aesthetic values (e.g. Alvesson, 1994, Hackley and Kover, 2007). Finally [3] *practitioners have highlighted the tensions that arise from the conflict between advertising creatives and non-creatives – derisively referred to as “suits” – who are tasked with managing the conflicting requirements of meeting a client’s expectation of budgets and delivery, and managing internal creatives to deliver expected briefs on time and budget. The separation of creative and non-creative functions is historical. Around 1878, James Walter Thompson (JWT) employed dedicated account executives to act as advocates for clients’ needs within agencies (Tungate, 2013), and Albert Davis Lasker, an agency proprietor, separated the creative and non-creative functions around 1878 when he observed that this would enhance productivity (Fox, 1984). As a result, these functions have evolved along different trajectories, entrenching the conflicts that arise from competing goals and shaping established practices in ad-form agencies.*

Marketing communication is at the core of what ad-form agencies do, and is the glue that binds the divergent industry disciplines together. While marketing involves developing strong customer relationships from which companies can extract value, communication involves disseminating information and fostering engagement with customers across various platforms in order to support marketing activities. Put simply, marketing communication involves selling a brand’s value to potential customers and this is rooted in the industry’s history. Early nineteenth century marketers initially bought media spaces from publishers of newspapers, magazine and other printed press, and sold them to clients with products to sell for profit (Fill et al., 2013), and developed this simple business to one that makes representations for brands. The broad remit and growing disaggregation of media channels makes it disadvantageous for agencies to have a narrow set of capabilities. It would restrict their ability to market and communicate the values of a brand to today’s audience in the most effective way. Consequently, ad-form agencies have broad and non-specified capabilities. Typical ad-form agencies tend to service nearly every marketing discipline in-house or within their networks.

Ad-form Identity Claims: Creativity and selling are the core essence of the ad-form's collective identity. Ogilvy (2011) famously opined, "If it doesn't sell, it isn't creative. Amen" (p.24). Industry founders like Claude Hopkins devised the dramatized selling technique that effectively involves pulling public stunts to sell a product, and Rosse Reeve created 'unique selling proposition' technique, which crystallizes the message of a brand into a short memorable slogan (Tungate, 2013). While many agencies claim the creative label, those agencies that possess the full range of capabilities to create and execute ideas are identified as *full service* agencies (Pickton and Broderick, 2004). The full service label suggests that claimants are large and as a result these agencies usually are the *lead* agency, i.e. the agency that manage the overall client-marketing brief but they may work with other specialist agencies to discharge projects. Legitimate claims to the full service label signals higher status in the industry, which is attractive to both jobseekers and clients, and an indicator of success among large agencies.

Other labels such as 'integrated' 'marketing communications' 'marketing' and 'marcomms' are often used interchangeably with full service. Other agencies with relatively narrower set of capabilities are identified simply as *specialist* agencies (Pickton and Broderick, 2004) and categorised based on their sub discipline and their focus, which may be creative or non-creative (i.e. marketing). So for example, agencies with a creative focus and specialism in branding are identified as brand consultants. Because brand consultants focus solely on creative work that may involve creating brand identities, brand designs, logos design, packaging and publications designs etc. they would usually employ predominantly creative staff like designers, art workers and copywriters. The core feature of these focused specialised agencies is 'creativity'. It provides the material for a broad collective identity that enables individual groups to be different yet similar, for example brand consultants are distinctive from specialist advertisers or graphic designers yet they are all creative agencies. Other agencies with a marketing focus are identified simply by their discipline. So for example media agencies, PR agencies, direct marketing agencies, shopper marketing agency, display and outdoor agency and so on.

Ad-form Affiliation: An interesting feature of this industry is the emphasis placed on forming affiliations with others via mergers and acquisitions (M&A) or strategic partnerships. Large mergers and acquisitions have resulted in one-stop-shops (Pickton & Broderick, 2005), which some refer to as holding companies, parent networks or groups, are groups of agencies centrally coordinated by a parent organisation that control the business affairs of subsidiaries and affiliates to varying degrees. While some networks exercise little control over their affiliate agencies, for example WPP Group still exercises little control over Y&R nearly twenty years after its difficult acquisition of the prestigious agency ([Adweek](#), 2000), others exercise significant control over the activities and type of work undertaken by individual agencies within the group. Strategic partnerships have also resulted in independent networks, a misnomer that refers to a group of organisations that enter an agreement to exchange knowledge, practice and client networking resource, under a formal umbrella branded company. These agreements come at a cost for member agencies that might be a fixed fee or percentage of annual profits. Affiliations are a strategic resource; they provide a means for smaller agencies to access large clients by participating in pitches with larger affiliated agencies, and for larger agencies to access creative talent by collaborating on pitches with creative agencies and gaining exposure to the thoughts of other creatives in the network. Agencies, small and large, also use networks to expand their geographical footprints. This is of primary importance because brands are international and to retain their business agencies too must be international.

I found three forms of affiliations among ad-form firms including:

1. Holding Companies, Groups or Parent Networks: These are the most influential type of affiliations and are characterised by a holding company acquiring several large networks so that a super structure with capabilities in every possible discipline of marketing and global geo-footprint is created. There are currently five parent networks or holding companies in the industry, which between them own or control around five thousand agencies worldwide. The first of the Big 5 is London-based

WPP Group, the agency that arguably invented the parent network structure. It owns four historic creative agency networks Y&R, Grey, JWT and Ogilvy and Mather. Second is New York based Omnicom Group, which owns iconic creative agencies and networks DDB, BBDO and TBWA. Others in the Big 5 are Paris-based Publicis Groupe, which owns British creative stalwarts BBH, Saatchi & Saatchi and digital pioneers SapientRazorfish and DigitasLBI; New York-based Interpublic Group Inc., which grew out of US creative icon McCann and own MullenLowe Profero, ad-tech agency Cadreon, and digital pioneers R/GA and Stickyeyes. And finally Dentsu Aegis, the Japanese firm now headquartered in London since Dentsu's record-breaking £4.9bn acquisition of Aegis in 2012 ([AdAge](#), 2012), unlike its counterparts, Dentsu own none of the historic creative agencies but have instead focussed on highly regarded new age firms like the creative and formerly independent McGarrybowen, digital specialists ISOBAR.

While other parent networks like Havas and group agencies exist, their billings and influence are a fraction of the Big 5's and they usually mimic the Big 5's strategies. Affiliation with the Big 5 is sought after because it influences peer and client perceptions of the acquired firm. Acquisition into the Big 5 recognises an agency as best in class for specific capabilities and propels that agency's reputation. It provides access to platforms that small independent agencies might otherwise not have access to, not just by providing member agencies with opportunities to expand their geographical footprint but also by providing status. Smaller agencies acquired by the Big 5 also benefit from working on higher profile campaigns, and with higher profile brands and clients as the preferred specialist agency in specific disciplines. The intra network collaboration and support often is attractive to smaller agencies looking to grow billings and reputation in a competitive market.

Notwithstanding their influence, there are criticisms of networks and the Big 5 especially. Industry critics argue that the dominance and control exerted by parent networks stifle creativity of smaller agencies. This argument is based on the thinking that smaller agencies in a network lack freedom to

push and execute unusual ideas because network management, who have more to lose if a campaign backfires, overrule them. Overtime, its argued that the very creative look and feel that makes a small agency attractive for acquisition is lost, replaced by a safe network style. Further criticism of the networks is that they under invest in the small agencies they acquire because they seek short-term gains. The perception is that small creative agencies are purchased for whatever topical capability or look and feel they possess, and therefore will be folded up or allowed to die after the network has extracted value. As Iris Worldwide CEO Ian Milner writes: ‘*once the earnout is done and dusted... it gets very tricky to retain the value.*’ ([Campaign](#), May 2018). Another familiar criticism is that larger networks fail to prioritise client needs because many parent networks are larger than the clients they serve and the asymmetry of power means that clients often can be ignored with little consequence.

In spite of these criticisms, their presence has fundamentally shaped the industry. The benefit of having a wide range of capabilities to service clients’ marketing needs through the line, i.e. across multiple channels like print, radio, TV and online, is widely acknowledged. Integrated marketing communications (IMC) emerged in the ninety-nineties as a mechanism for evaluating and strategizing to meet clients’ marketing requirements through the line using the most appropriate strategies (Duncan & Everett, 1993). Although the industry has struggled with implementing IMC and practitioners, academics, clients and even marketers’ overwhelming impression is that integration is often done badly (Kitchen 2000), networked agencies have been better placed to adopt IMC because: [1] they own their own media units and therefore buy media space competitively across channels (online media excluded although networks now have programmatic buying platforms discussed in subsequent chapters), [2] they are geographically connected and [3] they have the broadest capabilities and access to phenomenal pool of resources.

2. Independent Network: An independent network originally was one in which members entered an informal exchange relationship where they share ideas and deliberate industry challenges. More recently, these networks relationships have become more formalized. Members pay a fee to join the network thereby gaining access to like-minded agencies across the globe. Relationships among

members are maintained through regular meetings at conferences and networking events organized by network managers, which provide the opportunity for agency owners and managers to interact and discuss pressing issues ([Campaign](#), 1998). The appeal of independent networks has always been that agency owners retain full ownership of their business since independent networks do not acquire or merge with member agencies. This means that agencies retain full creative, media and marketing control, and any business relationship made between network members are at arms length.

Independent networks face the risk that successful members will be acquisition targets of larger multinational networks. This is addition to the difficulties network face in recruiting members because the costs and effort required to integrate into networks are high. Few networks accept a profit contribution from members, perhaps because marketing is a low margins business and many agencies are in the red, and the membership fees are expensive for small agencies. Convincing the right agencies that the value of membership outweighs the cost is hard and so is discerning which agencies pursue membership for long-term commitment not just to increase their acquisition prospects. Combined, these confound the challenges of running an independent network.

We never publish our network list we don't want people like Carat buying our partners.

Michael Hook, Chairman, Media Mondiale Network

3. Independent Agencies (No Formal Affiliation): Agencies without affiliations to networks or strategic partnerships are simply referred to as independent agencies. The independent label is inherently positive when claimed by a creative agency because it has emerged as the antithesis of a value extracting mega organisation that stifles creativity and innovation in favour of higher profits and growth. It also lends credence to agency's claims that they are focussed and offer better services to clients than their networked counterparts since they have fewer bureaucratic layers and fewer shareholders with divergent interests. While non-affiliated agencies enthusiastically use the independence label, my data showed that many of them rapidly accept acquisition offers from larger

networks. For example McGarryBowen below is now part of Dentsu-Aegis network even though many of its communications prior to acquisition emphasized its independence. It is difficult to understand the extent to which agencies use independence claims to enhance their marketing positions.

McGarryBowen is the lean, independent advertising agency envisioned by four principals with over 100 years of experience working with some of the world's biggest and most admired brands. Together they've built an organisation devoid of the distractions of politics and bureaucracy, and dedicated to focusing on what they know works: client leadership, strategic insight and creative innovation.

McGarryBowen website 2004

Nonetheless, clients accept that independent agencies produce more creative work because they specialize in fewer disciplines. For example:

We need creative ideas from our agencies that can be executed cheaply and there will be more opportunities for bespoke work if an idea can connect with consumers quickly. Agencies are not delivering integrated thinking where it is the idea that drives the work, not the channel. Agency people talk that language but few deliver it. Big agencies make most of their money from TV and that drives them. Some of the most interesting thinking at the moment is coming from independent agencies.

Sarah Alspach, Barclaycard Freedom Marketing Director ([Marketing Week](#), Aug 2010)

5.2.2 Studio Organisational Form

The studio form is a distinctive operation that comprise specialize creative and marketing functions. This organisational form excludes the complex and high resource consuming media function present in ad-form agencies because the growth in digital media and changes to client-agency relationships enabled some agencies to effectively operate without media owning (or buying) capabilities. Thus, structurally, studios differ significantly from ad-form agencies. They have fewer layers of administration and employer fewer skill sets internally. This means that studios are by default smaller in comparison to ad-form agencies. The studio form also establishes and maintains different types of (contractual) relationships with media owners and intermediary, some of which are ad-form agencies. And unlike their ad-form counterparts, studio form firms have specific capabilities that relate to their specialist channel. So for example early digital studios likes of *glue London* (since acquired by Denstu

Aegis network and dissolved), built a reputation for delivering impactful communications online while offline marketing studios specialise in specific offline channels.

The studio organisational forms is less understood by academics and have largely been ignored in extant literature because it is a relatively new form that emerged in the last two decades and has thus taken time to filter into academic parlance. When encountered, researchers refer to them as “smaller agencies” because of their comparatively lower turnover or billings (Leslie, 1997). As a result, current academic literature perpetuates the idea that there are mainly two organisational forms in marketing – large, classic ad-form agencies or smaller creative boutiques, i.e. agencies that specialize in the delivery of creative outputs, including for example brand identities and packaging consultancy or product innovation and design. (Kassaye, 1997). This false dichotomy is unhelpful in reducing the practitioner-academe knowledge gap (Nyilasy and Reid, 2009, Hunt, 2002). Because studios are a relatively newly established organisational form that have had negative effects of the population of smaller specialised ad-form agencies like design consultancies, I also provide an account of how three design consultancies agencies responded to the studio form emergence in three company vignettes.

Studio Form Identity Claims: I found that creativity and selling are also at the core of the studio form identity. But I observed that at the start of the studio form emergence, the rapidly changing skillset introduced by digital marketing influenced label use among online specialist studios. Hence these agencies claimed labels such as ‘email marketing’, ‘web design’, ‘online creative’, and ‘graphic design’ to signal their digital focus. But as the form has matured, these labels have been dropped.

Studio Form Affiliation: Studio organisational form firms create informal collaborative networks that enable them work with other studios in complementary ways to satisfy a client’s brief. These informal networks are important because they are cheap and easy to organise – few studios have the resources or capabilities to set up more formalised strategic partnerships or undertake M&A activities.

Moreover, studios acquired by large parent networks have a tendency of being wound up which makes these informal collaborations even more attractive to studio owners seeking to retain strategic and creative control of their agencies. These informal collaborative affiliations are also not immediately imitable by others. The relationships between members are nurtured over time, which fosters an efficient way of working where constituents know their roles and responsibilities.

I have built, what I have, kind of, called honeypots on LinkedIn. Groups, one is called tech PR freelancer, the other is called independent marketing and PR agency owner... So, two different groups on LinkedIn that now have around 600 or 1000 members that are fishing pools, if you like, for me to go and find. So, in tech PR freelancer, I can go and find consultants all over the world or all over Europe very, very quickly. I own the group, I own the rights to email the group at any given time that I want to.

Paul, Switch, Interview

It is difficult to quantify how many of these informal networks exist or indeed discern how successful they are. These network seem to stem from the social networks of founding members and so might be less enduring in comparison to the formalised affiliations of strategic partnerships or parent-subsidiary relationships. Nonetheless, the significance of these collaborative networks should not be downplayed. It has permeated through much of the industry and shapes the language constituents use, the boundaries between firms and practices.

I think now you have to work collaboratively, but the good thing about that is that most of the fraternity is a one-man-band, five-man band. There are very (very) few agencies that have 10 people or more – very few. So if you work collaboratively, it means that you can do things that are affordable for people. You can take the very best of the people you know, you work with people you like, you work with people you trust and in fact as long as you can come across as a united front, the clients will appreciate that.

ABH, ABH, Interview

Studio Form Emergence: Impact on Small Specialised Ad-Form Agencies

Small offline specialist ad-form agencies like direct marketing and design consultancies were the groups most affected by the emergence of the studio organisational form. This is because their similarities put offline specialist ad-form agencies at a disadvantage. Studio firms have different organisational structures that are more cost effective in comparison to the legacy structures that specialised ad-form agencies adopt. So for example, compared to specialist ad-form agencies, studios

employ fewer client administrative staff like account managers and planners in-house, and use more specialised freelance design, development, marketing resource, and third-party suppliers for administrative support. Furthermore, offline only specialism carried inherent risks because:

- I. **Offline only marketing was a declining sector:** Changing consumer behaviour initiated by the Internet highlighted digital channels as the industry's growth area from the late nineties and therefore brands had to win audiences' online attention early. This, compounded by the fact that new media marketing was a new and rapidly evolving discipline, which required a dynamic kind of organisation form that could rapidly pool in new capabilities for outside its boundaries, shed redundant capabilities and remain cost effective, made specialised ad-form agencies ill suited to compete in the changing market. Few digital studios had the resources to maintain in-house the different and rapidly changing skillset required to solely deliver a digital brief and so their informal collaborative affiliations became advantageous in seeking out and working with a variety of freelancers and other studios to complete briefs.
- II. **Declining FMCG marketing budgets:** FMCG clients make up the bulk of demand for offline marketing services. These brands were facing a triple whammy of challenges; competition from keenly priced retailer own-brand products, deep discounting and promotions among FMCGs, and declining consumer disposable income. In particular, analysts and marketers projected a decline in FMCG marketing budgets due to a projected 20% decline in consumer spend between 2001-2003 (Marketing Week 2000). The market decline actually lasted until 2004 and during this time marketing margins were low and reductions in client's marketing budgets were difficult for specialist offline agencies, especially those at the lower turnover spectrum, because they work with tight working capital requirements and rarely have the reserves or access to finance to fund long periods of losses or declining profitability. Coupled with the pressure posed by studios, being offline only became a competitive disadvantage.

"We are seeing a fundamental change to the face of business. Not temporary movements, permanent ones."

Joe Grimaldi, President, Mullen

“For traditional agencies, this [dot.com activity] could be a salvation, ...[our] dot.com billings have grown to 20 per cent this year, compared with 5 per cent in 1998”

Judy Habib, President, Kelley Habib John Integrated Marketing

“... dot.coms make up 40 per cent of billings, compared with just 15 percent last year. This is just the beginning. It’s a business phenomena, a channel that’s not going to disappear.”

Pat Harpell, chief executive of Harpell/Martins & Co.

“[We] receive a phone call a week from a dot.com company. We don’t even want most of those calls. They come with lots of money, but many of them are not mature brand believers.”

Jeff Winsper, president of TFA/Leo Burnett Technology Group

-- (Adweek, 1999)

My data shows that some specialist ad-form agencies made attempts to respond to the threats posed by the studio form emergence, which I have outlined above. Because smaller ad-form agencies were unable to gain digital capabilities by acquiring or merging with digital studios, they attempted to develop those capabilities in house. Notably, many design consultancies increased their recruitment efforts for digital skills and shed some older and less remunerative offline skills, with a view to rebalancing their capabilities across different channels. This was a significant divergence from the norm for these agencies and it was unclear how successfully they could merge their legacy structures with components of the studio form they mimicked. But the data suggests that these responses were timely because design consultants’ business model, which up to this point had involved employing high profile and expensive creatives whose design style were sought after and respected by ad clients, had become increasingly unfit for clients seeking fresh ideas from anyone not just high status individuals. In this context, it seemed that design consultants could respond to the threat posed by studios or do nothing.

Marketers have a tendency to play down the technological aspect of new media. In reality, however, most agencies are struggling to work out what it is that they need to know to operate effectively across new media channels and how best to acquire the required skills. A number of options exist: to contract the services of a specialist agency, as and when necessary, or to bring the requisite skills in house, either by recruiting professionals with appropriate experience, or by acquiring or merging with a new media company.

[Marketing Week](#), 2000

In the company vignette below, I examine how three high profile design consultancies responded to the challenges that the studio form emergence posed. All three agencies were featured in a Marketing Week article titled Strategic Survival, in which the pressures design consultancies faced due to shifts to digital capabilities and the reduction in offline demand were discussed.

Company Vignette 1: Elmwood Design Limited

Response to studio form emergence: Expand geographical footprint

“We don’t want to be a design business which is either purely packaging-based or purely online. It is important to be able to understand a brand across different channels and different media in order to improve the overall experience of it.”

Jonathan Sands, Chairman, 2000

In 2000, Elmwood made eight redundancies across offline functions like packaging design and began recruitment to expand its digital skills. By 2002, the company debuted a new website in which they had rebranded to offer digital services. Its foray into digital was short-lived because by 2004, the agency had consolidated its capabilities in core branding and removed references to ‘digital services’ in its revamped website. Elmwood instead focused on branding and packaging design innovation and developed tools like Step Change™, which identifies new ways of constructing brand challenges and improving the brief to delivery process. Elmwood’s focus on its core has been successful. The agency has grown steadily since 2000, winning more awards than any other brand and packing design agency – independent, networked, large or small – and expanded its geographical footprint to the US, Australia and Singapore.

elmwood is a brand creation business. The elmwood team of brand strategists, designers and writers work across multiple channels. Whether the media be digital or printed, our purpose is to create brand experiences that astound senses, strike hearts and awaken minds. (**Website 2002**)

A warm welcome to Elmwood Design. That's one thing you can always be sure of when you come to Elmwood - whether it's London, Leeds or Edinburgh. Great work only happens when you enjoy what you do. Which means having fun but being competitive too - for our clients and for ourselves (although you're on your own when it comes to table football). Use the buttons below to find out what makes us at Elmwood Design different (**Website 2004**)

We are the world's most effective brand design consultancy

It's an audacious claim we know, but true. We have won more 'International Design Effectiveness Awards' than any other business. Ever. Being able to prove the impact of our work drives everything we do, from challenging the initial brief to ensure we have solid, robust goals from the get go, to measuring the after effect of our creativity. We constantly strive to produce beautiful work that makes a difference. Work that everyone involved can be truly proud of.

No1
in the current and historic effectiveness league tables

Rank	Agency	Score
1	Elmwood	47
2	Pearlfisher	25
3	The Team	20
4	Lewis Moberly	17
5	Coley Porter Bell	15
6	Brandopus	14
7	Interbrand	14
8	999 Design	12
9	Design Bridge	11
10	JKR	11
11	Tayburn	11

Elmwood seemed more committed to the long-term prospects of new client's brands than their short-term economic gain. They sought to help grow their client's brand and therefore secure their own success through client loyalty. Ensuring that they could deliver the creative and strategic initiative that can make local brands international is a priority. So for example in 2004 when Elmwood was asked to create a brand for a small, unknown sausage product with annual turnovers of just £30,000 per year, they surprisingly accepted the brief and created a personal identity around the brand which consumers could relate to, drawing on the simplicity and success of the Ben & Jerry's. They created Debbie & Andrew, a successful international brand identity that helped the company grow turnover to over £1m in the first year of the brand's launch (MW, 2003). They also created HECK, the competitor sausage brand to Debbie & Andrew now fully owned and managed by the Keebles (same founders of Debbie & Andrew).

This focus also led to big account wins for Elmwood and facilitated the international expansion. In 2008, they won the William Hill brief for below-the-line services (MW, 2008) and have gone on to work on other high profile FMCG brand identity and package design briefs including former P&G's SunnyD rebrand (MW, 2009), McCain ([Campaign](#) 2009) to list a few. Further, this focus has positively impacted Elmwood's reputation among peers and the wider industry. The agency fully engages with trade publications, writing advertorials in relevant publications like Campaign and Marketing Week magazines, commissioning surveys on industry relevant issues and contributing to discussions about client-agency relationships. Elmwood demonstrates how a strategy focused on offline capabilities can be successful even though few agencies with similar strategies have had the same level of success.

Description	2000	2004	2014	Post 2014
Affiliation	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent
Turnover (£)	<2M	<5.6M	13M	
Net profit/loss (£)	-33.6K	169K	-163K	
Number of employees	20	46	133	
Net assets (£)	965K	1.28M	3.1M	
Specialism	Design consultancy	Design consultancy	Design consultancy	
Capabilities	Brand identity, product design	Brand identity, product design	Branding and design	

Company Vignette 2: Design Bridge

Response to studio form emergence: Expand geographical footprint and affiliate with WPP

Design Bridge also attempted to develop digital capabilities and replicate some of services that digital studios offered. They set up Design Bridge Digital Media as a standalone entity to service the digital market and like Elmwood; their foray into the digital space was short-lived.

“We have adjusted the balance of staff over time, so we have more people in new media and service branding, and fewer in packaging.”

David Rivett, Managing Director, 2000

Recently, we have seen that many of our clients need to make their brands work harder off-pack; perhaps through sponsorship (as diverse as TV programmes or sport), out of home opportunities or via digital media (from viral email campaigns to full-blown e-commerce). An understanding of the brand's relationship with consumers as a packaged product is fundamental to its successful communication via other media; the combination of our branding heritage and increasingly comprehensive skill base ensures that our clients' brands maximise these opportunities. (**Website 2002**)

From the start, way back in the 80s, we knew that Design Bridge was special. In truth we never liked to confine ourselves to being just another 'design group'. The notion of the big brand idea has always driven and inspired us... Our independence (we are an endangered species in today's business world) has enabled us to work with companies and brands we really admire. Working with clients such as Pernod Ricard, Mars, Panasonic and Akzo Nobel, we create and develop enduring and memorable brand experiences... This dynamic creativity, coupled with strategic insight, has helped us to win international creative awards such as the Pentawards, D&AD, Clio and Mobius. (**Website 2012**)

Around 2008, the agency rebranded and quietly shed its digital capabilities to focus on growing its core capabilities in the UK, and internationally. Offices were opened in the Netherlands where international chemical client Akzo Nobel is based, and also in Singapore to service AsiaPac clients like Panasonic. In the UK, the agency continued to work for popular brands like Innocent Smoothies, which enhanced its creative and branding reputation. Design Bridge also submitted its portfolio into more award competitions, most recently winning Bronze at the Clio Awards for its branding work for Fortnum and Mason in 2016, collecting six D&AD awards in 2015 for branding and packaging work for clients including Fortnum and Mason, Pernod Ricard's Tanqueray No. Ten gin packaging design, and collecting a Mobius award in 2013 for packaging design work for Pernod Ricard branded products. Design Bridge's decision to pursue geographical scale via a focused offline strategy at the expense of digital capabilities illustrates the difficult trade offs facing specialised ad-form agencies and also demonstrates the difficulty in successfully mimicking the features of studio organisational forms. Rebranding and hiring digital capabilities cannot sufficiently guarantee success. Rather it appears that replicating the collaborative networks that studios employ, along with its structural and contractual characteristic are vital to gain the cost advantage associated with the studio form.

DESCRIPTION	2000	2004	2014	POST 2014
Agency type	Independent	Independent	Group	Networked - WPP
Turnover (£)	<5.6M	<10M	39.3M	
Net profit/loss (£)	136K	358K	1.8M	
Number of employees	89	88	335	
Net assets (£)	2.7M	3.47M	10.4M	
Specialism	Design consultancy	Design consultancy	Brand design agency	
Capabilities	2D & 3D design, branding, strategy and innovation	2D & 3D design, branding, strategy, innovation, <i>digital communications</i>	3D & product design, branding, strategy, innovation	

Company Vignette 3: Wren & Rowe

Response to studio form emergence: None

Wren and Rowe is the smallest of the agencies of the three agencies that comprise this case study by revenue size, number of employees and net assets. Unlike counterparts, Wren and Rowe chose not to address the specific challenges posed by studios and did not invest in developing or hiring digital skills. They chose to focus on core brand and packaging design capabilities by adapting their business model. Wren & Rowe chose to work with high profile designers and researchers on a freelancer basis, rather than retaining them on payroll. This strategy potentially offered significant cost savings while at the same time lending it well to delivering whatever in-style look and feel clients' brand warrant.

Clients with the bigger consultancies will still often use personalities as points of reference," he says – which is fine, until the time comes when those personalities are no longer... At Wren & Rowe, I'm taking a completely different approach. It's still about people, but the idea is that when we use high-profile researchers or designers, they don't need to be there all the time. In fact, there's a large pool of talent out there that has become disenchanted with the huge treadmill studios

Paul Foulkes, Managing Director, 2000

Wren & Rowe forged strong informal links with other designers, researchers and smaller branding agencies internationally, in a way that mimicked the collaborative networks that digital studios had established locally, and enjoyed some initial success. Its product launch for St Omer, a French lager brand was successful (Campaign, 2002), and the agency won the branding brief for Sunny D in 2005 despite Saatchi & Saatchi, the lead marketing agency having full service capabilities (Campaign, 2005).

We help insight teams and marketing teams to dig deep into consumer behaviour, and more specifically shopper behaviour. We have identified that when in shopper mode i.e. in front of a supermarket shelf, or in a local pub, purchasing behaviour radically alters. Our team camps out with families across the world, and captures insights into their everyday lives. They can be with drinkers in South East Asia one week, and testing frozen food on Berliners the next.

Website 2008

But by mid 2008, Wren & Rowe began showing signs a business in distress. Rapid staff changes and the loss of one founding director, Elizabeth Wren, were strong indicators of decline. This and the failure to win any new business or develop new capabilities in the face of the recession suggested that the business was likely to be a victim of the renewed tough trading conditions. The business was eventually liquidated in 2013. Wren & Rowe's demise seemed linked to the sector of the market they serviced. The agency worked predominantly with food and beverage FMCG brands, a more volatile FMCG sector. And so it seemed that agencies like Wren & Rowe that worked on offline only briefs in this sector of the market were more exposed to risks of failure.

Description	2000	2004	2014
Agency type	Independent	Independent	Liquidated
Turnover (£)	<1M	399K	Nil
Net profit/loss (£)	15.2K (est. balance sheet)	-47K	-
Number of employees	Estimated <10	UNDISCLOSED	Nil
Net assets (£)	92.5K	73K	Nil
Specialism	Design consultancy	Design consultancy	N/A
Capabilities	Brand identity, product design	Brand identity, product design	N/A

5.2.3 Freelancer Organisational Form

Freelancers have become popular across professional fields. Public debates in the UK give the impression that this model of working is popular because of the increased priority given to flexibility and work-life balance, growing entrepreneurship, and the continuing growth of the so-called gig economy. However, freelancers have been a part of the marketing industry for at least two decades. Below, I define the freelancer form mainly by explaining what it means to constituents in the industry and what it is not. Freelancers derive their organisational identities from their professional fields and embed themselves in social networks that can provide fruitful opportunities. So freelancers have looser affiliation ties compared to other forms.

Freelancer Capability and Identity Claims

Freelancers are lone workers or a collective of lone workers that deliver parts or whole projects directly for brand clients or indirectly when “white-labelled” by agencies. White labelling occurs when an agency with the contractual obligation to deliver a marketing project outsources delivery to a third party confidentially. Freelancers are professionals whose capabilities reflect their training or past work experiences. As a result, marketing or PR consultants, web or app developers, illustrators, animators, designers and art workers are common kinds of freelancers in the industry. Freelancers are lean operation with specialized and focussed capabilities that may be creative, or marketing, or perhaps more technical like application development. Indeed, freelance work is not unique to marketing as for example IT, finance and dentistry are all professions where freelancers are prevalent. But in these professions, freelancers operate either as personal service companies for employers that effectively pass on the risks and the liabilities of national insurance to employees, or as contractors, locum or temporary staff placed by recruitment agencies. I draw a distinction between these ‘flexible’ workers and marketing freelancer that have multiple clients contracts, bear the full risks and rewards derived from those contracts; deliver contracts off client site (mostly, with exceptions for activities like training, presenting designs, workshops, etc.), utilise their own equipment, and contract at arms length with other third parties as required to discharge contractual obligations. Unlike typical

contractors who may loosely be classified as non-permanent employees, marketing freelancers in the context of this research exercise greater level of autonomy over their work.

5.2.4 Ad-tech Organisational Form

Ad-tech is the emerging organisational form in marketing that combines traditional marketing capabilities with technological capabilities such as proprietary software development, data analytics including programmatic buying, and digital marketing optimisation – hence ‘ad-tech’. It is not clear exactly when the term was coined, but early visible use of the term occurred in 1999, when Adtech AG, a digital marketing technology supplier based in Frankfurt made industry headline after it was acquired by one-time American dotcom darling, CMGI. Adtech AG developed and licensed proprietary Internet marketing software to international clients. Adtech AG’s acquisition aroused further interests in companies possessing similar capabilities initially from Internet giants keen to consolidate their market positions. During this time, it appears that marketing agencies and other industry constituents seemed to be observing with keen interest. Campaign Magazine recorded stories of ad-tech agency acquisitions regularly, while Tech Crunch (online technology publication) regularly reported stories on new ad-tech founding, acquisitions, venture capital funding and rounds, and so on. Despite growing coverage of the emerging organisational form from around the year 2000, there was little publicly available information on the exact capabilities that ad-tech agencies possess probably because the technologies they sell are based on patented proprietary information. But as early digital marketing involved banner adverts on webpages, I inferred from my source data that ad-tech capabilities involved identifying click through rates of banner adverts, and then refining these to targeted ad-placements, better inbound traffic and sales lead management, and conversion rate optimisation.

Ad-tech Capabilities and Identity Claims

Advertising (or marketing) technology serves to increase the accuracy and reach of digital (and in recent years, offline) marketing activities, and reduce the resource required to implement marketing.

In effect, ad-tech agencies seek to optimize digital marketing to improve the performance of marketing activities. In addition to optimising content, ad-tech capabilities also involve enhancing the process of bidding for and acquiring digital media spaces. Digital media spaces include anything from a column on a website that can embed adverts to search engine results entry, video content e.g. on Youtube, audio content e.g. on SoundCloud or Spotify, visual content on social media and so forth. Enhancing the biddable process as reported by an interviewee in chapter 6 involves creating and updating algorithms to ensure that the appropriate search terms are purchased at the competitive prices/media for a brand/client to ensure that the right target consumer is displayed an advert or brand message at the correct time.

5.2.5 Summary of Organisational Form Characteristics at the Start of Data Collection

This section set out to identify and define the key characteristics of the existing organisational forms in marketing. I found that agency affiliation, which affects firm's structure and ownership, capability and size are fundamental features that shape organisational forms. I identified three incumbent forms and one emerging form. Findings indicate that ad-forms are the dominant and central of the incumbent forms in marketing. These agencies are typically medium-large, often multinational groups with broad capabilities across the full disciplines of marketing. I identified the studio form as an antithesis to ad-forms. These organisations are smaller, more specialised in their capabilities and channel coverage, typically owner-managed and unlike their ad-form counterparts, these organisations are affiliated through more informal collaborative networks that can be flexible and adaptable depending on the requirements and relationships of collaborating partners. The last of the incumbents identified are freelancers or sole traders that discharge marketing services for clients - agencies or brands - in a manner that means that they take on the full risks and rewards associated with projects, which distinguishes freelancers from temporary staff and contractors. Finally, I identified the ad-tech form as firms that optimise digital marketing for clients through enhanced conversion rate optimisation, sales/leads generation, programmatic buying, traffic management and advanced analytics capabilities. Table 8 below summarises

TABLE 8: DEFINING THE ORGANISATIONAL FORMS IN MARKETING IN 2004

	AD-FORM	STUDIO	FREELANCER	AD-TECH
Nature of capability	Broad	Specific	Singular	Specific
Core capability	General marketing communications	Specialised marketing	Specific marketing function	Analytics, optimisation
Collective Identity	Creativity and selling	Creativity and selling	Professional group	Technology
Channel coverage	Channel neutral	Specific channel – on or offline	Specific channel – on or offline	Online only
Affiliation	Networked, independent-networked or independent	Collaborative network	Collectives	None
Typical Size	Large – Medium	Medium – Small	Micro	Large-Medium

5.3 Process of New Organisational Form Emergence

This section elaborates the findings of the research. I explore the questions what does a legitimate identity claim that expresses the capabilities and values of each organisational form look like across the 10-year data collection period, and how do ad-tech form proponents use these claims to legitimise their emerging form? I focused only on identity values and capability claims because it was easier to accurately discern these claims from my dataset. Nearly all firms in the dataset had website with ‘about us’/ ‘who we are’ and ‘services’/‘what we do’ pages, which provided the data analysed to discern identity values and capabilities claims. I also explored how interviewee’s perceptions of the industry could provide some insights to explain the patterns of identity values and capability claims.

The findings show that new organisational forms emerge by transitioning through three phases of values and capabilities claims namely: emergence, differentiation and convergence. During the emergence phase, new forms are differentiated from incumbent forms by explicitly framing the new set of capabilities they introduce as competence enhancing, and by strategically conforming to norms by mimicking currently institutionalised values systems to express who they are. By the second phase, new forms frame their capabilities as competence discontinuing and establish an alternative set of values to claim and adhered to. Also, the findings show a lagged relationship between new form claims and incumbents, whereby incumbents responded to new forms emergence processes by mimicking their capabilities claim. I demonstrate how incumbents are more intricately embedded in new form emergence beyond the depiction of conflict often portrayed in the literature – incumbents act as active participants in changing their claims, by mimicking incumbents of abandoning established templates.

5.3.1 Emergence Phase of New Organisational Form Emergence

Capability Claims: There was an obvious pattern in incumbent firms value and capability claims that gave early indications of the existence of an institutional template for making legitimate claims. Incumbents claimed specific capabilities across traditional marketing disciplines but usually included communications, digital marketing, creativity and the faddish capability of the period. Signalling the legitimacy of capability claims appear important because they provided an indication of the quality of client-agency relationships, showcase an agency's project(s) experience, and subtly position the agency in market segments so that prospective clients and brands can discern if the agency will take on their brief. Consequently, incumbents usually signalled engagement with prestigious clients e.g. Mercedes Benz, the scale of agency operations indicated by total global headcount and geographical reach, and finally testimonials or client case studies.

It was striking that not all the capabilities that incumbent claimed were skillsets possessed in-house. Capabilities were extended via collaborative and network ties developed often solely for this purpose. Capabilities possessed in this way were often framed as positive attempts to improve client's access to a wider and more diverse pool of talented individuals present in the industry, which therefore suggested that client expectations are the reason for possessing broad and vague capabilities. Besides protecting clients' interest, there were other benefits to externalising capabilities through network ties including [1] the cost benefits because risks of internalising capability is very high compared to the cost and benefits of outsourcing, externalising capabilities allow incumbents particularly to maintain the cost advantage associated with a leaner structure. And [2] the faddish nature of the industry requires firms to certain that capabilities that are internalised will be relatively enduring. At the time of data collection, I found no evidence that this could be ascertained.

In contrast, early adopters of the ad-tech form came from industries like IT-consulting, software development (de novo) and some highly technical digital marketing like search engine marketing and early digital marketing analytics specialists (de alio). At this stage, an umbrella of capabilities come

under the ad-tech form from the diverse range of industries that ad-tech adopters are derived, and so it appears that the boundaries around ad-tech was yet to be fully constructed or defined. Consequently, I found significant differences in ad-tech firms' capability claims such that it was difficult to identify a prototypical presentation of capabilities claims. Nonetheless, a pattern emerged that suggested overarching differences in the behaviours of *de novo* ad-tech firms, i.e. new entrants ad-tech adopters from outside the marketing industry, and *de alio* firms – incumbents firms that switched to the ad-tech form.

De novo ad-tech firms claimed more technical capabilities at the start of the data collection period, although they also made attempts to shed their IT-consulting or software development related structural symbols e.g. consultants job title instead of account managers or executives, from the histories to complete their transformation from a consulting business into an agency, and complete their marketing industry membership journey. While *de alio* ad-tech firms tended to blend their typical marketing capabilities with new technology capabilities by shedding specific traditional marketing capabilities in favour of broader and less distinctive capabilities, which they propose provides better results for marketing clients. Legitimacy of the new ad-tech capabilities were signalled by reference to any technology awards or accolades received, or like incumbents through reference to clients, case studies or testimonials. Therefore the findings show that although ad-tech forms differentiate through their capability claims, they signalled the legitimacy of their capabilities in the same way as incumbent forms.

TABLE 9: DATA TABLE EMERGENCE

DESCRIBING IDENTITY CLAIMS DURING EMERGENCE PHASE			
Organisational Forms	Capability “What we do”	Values “Who we are”	Selected Illustrative Data
INCUMBENT	Firms make specific claims that convey ‘what we do’. Claimed capabilities are typical of the industry so there is general consensus on their meaning. Claims are evidenced in portfolios, testimonials, case studies, and through firm size statements.	Presence of institutional template for making value claims. Statements about the heritage, status and purpose of the agency are necessary to signal legitimate industry membership hence all firms make value claims that conform to these institutional requirements. Lower status incumbents such as small firms or those lacking prominent founders compensate by referencing their creative prowess or accepted distinctive attributes.	<p>Who we are? “Creativity shapes everything we do” A lot of agencies talk about partnership. But rarely are they set up to allow clients open and collaborative access at every stage, including creative development.</p> <p>What do we do? We create active relationships between brands and individuals. It’s that simple. Customer relationship marketing is nothing new. What we do is a little different, we believe. The important word is “active”. An active relationship is one in which people – customers or prospects – actively participate.</p> <p>We offer powerful data solutions—both in-house and through knowledgebase marketing, a wholly owned subsidiary — and of course, best-in-class creative services. We combine broad-ranging capabilities in strategy and insights, customer dialogue and teleservices, media, interactive and promotions — and mix well — to deliver holistic, seamless client solutions. Our blue-chip roster includes global brands such as ford, Citibank, sears, Xerox, Roche, Telefonica, DANONE, Astrazeneca, club med, AT&T, burger king and Kraft.</p> <p>Since 1983, 2heads have been delivering innovative solutions for exhibitions, events, road shows and branded environments. We work with a number of clients on domestic and international exhibition programmes requiring fresh thinking and creativity, attention to detail, sound project management and commercial performance. Marcomms: since 1999 we have worked with b2b and consumer focused clients to deliver integrated marketing campaigns.</p> <p>Carat (Isohar) is the only independent media agency network in the world and as we are free from agency ties, we can focus totally on what’s best for our clients. We passionately believe that communications have the powers to transform our clients’ businesses. Our clients can expect a team that continually finds new and better ways to connect our clients to their consumers.</p>

<p>NEW FORM (AD-TECH)</p>	<p>Firms claim new or blended (new and existing) capabilities that are explained in depth and a clear rational for their inclusion in marketing is explained. These capabilities are framed as competence enhancing, thus firms emphasize how successful new capabilities can be for clients. New forms clearly differentiate their capabilities from incumbents.</p>	<p>Identity claims mimic incumbents by expressing founding date and related information. But reference is also made to the original industry that these firms served and reasons for entering the marketing industry.</p>	<p>NeoWorks develop, deploy and support high quality software solutions. A focus on well-designed and maintainable software ensures performance, scalability and low total cost of ownership. NeoWorks have over five years of experience developing content management, e-community, e-business and desktop application solutions. Consultancy NeoWorks consultants work together with clients to develop a comprehensive set of requirements and a specification from which the software solution will be developed.</p> <p>iCrossing is the world's leading Search engine marketing and technology company, enabling our clients to connect with their most targeted audiences in ways never before thought possible. Our clients see not only what people are buying, but also what they are thinking. In a word what we do is "connect". We use Search as the means to make these "connections". Today, Search represents hundreds of millions of people and the world's largest untapped focus group™. Search has changed the way we find information and is a medium in its own right.</p> <p>iCrossing harnesses the collective influence of the world's leading Search engines such as Google, Yahoo, and MSN in what we call Reverse Direct Marketing™. Traditional marketing via television, radio or print broadcasts messages to the masses.</p> <p>We believe no other SEM company has the technical abilities and implementation skills to best service your interests in relation to both customer acquisition and brand protection. Key to our success lies in our roots as a 'people led marketing agency that uses technology' and not vice versa. We aim to understand your needs and will even devote days to on-site consultancy to ensure you have the right skills to compliment the advancements made by using our services. Stickyeyes SEM is one of the services offered by Optimum4, and was launched in the summer of 1998 to meet demand from website owners for more visitors. It is now a leading and well sought-after SEM solution for any business that needs its website to work harder.</p>
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Identity Claims: In this period, I found that incumbents make distinctive identity claims and I found a pattern in the way that identity statements were made among incumbent forms of all sizes. The findings show that incumbent identity claims communicate the individual attributes of an agency (who we are) such as founders information and founding date, historically relevant information or grand statements that convey an agency's purpose or aims. Some agencies also incorporate leadership pronouncements in their identity claims especially where agencies have previously been lauded for ground breaking creative thinking. I also found that heritage is an important aspect of identity claims at this stage of the data collection period. There appears to be a hierarchy of status linked with age. In this hierarchy, agencies founded in the nineteenth century, and that are possibly linked to one of the founding fathers of the industry appear to have a higher status (usually large ad-form agencies). The second tier are first-wave agencies founded in the ninety-fifties, the third tier were new wave agencies incorporated during nineteen eighties, and finally other agencies sat at the bottom of the status hierarchy.

There are indications that smaller ad-form agencies with long industry history conform to the identity claiming patterns of their ad-form peers. So these agencies' identity statements emphasize, "Who they are". However, agencies lacking the heritage to include in identity statements instead include purpose statement, value propositions and economic growth signals in their identity claims, thereby attempting to change the focus to "What we do". I found that incumbents make reference to the marketing collective identity through their use of specific labels like 'full service agency', 'communications' and 'independent' that conveys their industry position.

During this period, new forms also conform to the industry's expectations by mimicking the identity claiming behaviours of incumbents and trying to minimize their differences. Ad-tech firms reference their founding information, size and age to signal legitimate industry membership. Because ad-tech agencies are as yet unable to draw on the common marketing identity to support their positioning in the industry and differentiate them from possible competitors, they refer to the original industries in

which they were founded and give detailed reasoning for entering the marketing industry. This element of the ad-tech identity claim instantly distinguishes it from forms. Interestingly, we observed that nearly all ad-tech agencies made leadership statements in their identity claims. I reason that these statements are made to convince external audiences of the benefits of ad-tech capabilities and reassure them that their agency is the best in class among ad-tech, on one hand. On the other hand, ad-tech agencies may make these claims purely for branding purposes because they know that the novelty of ad-tech implies that few clients have first hand experience of ad-tech services, or understand what these claims mean and therefore are unable to verify whether they are true.

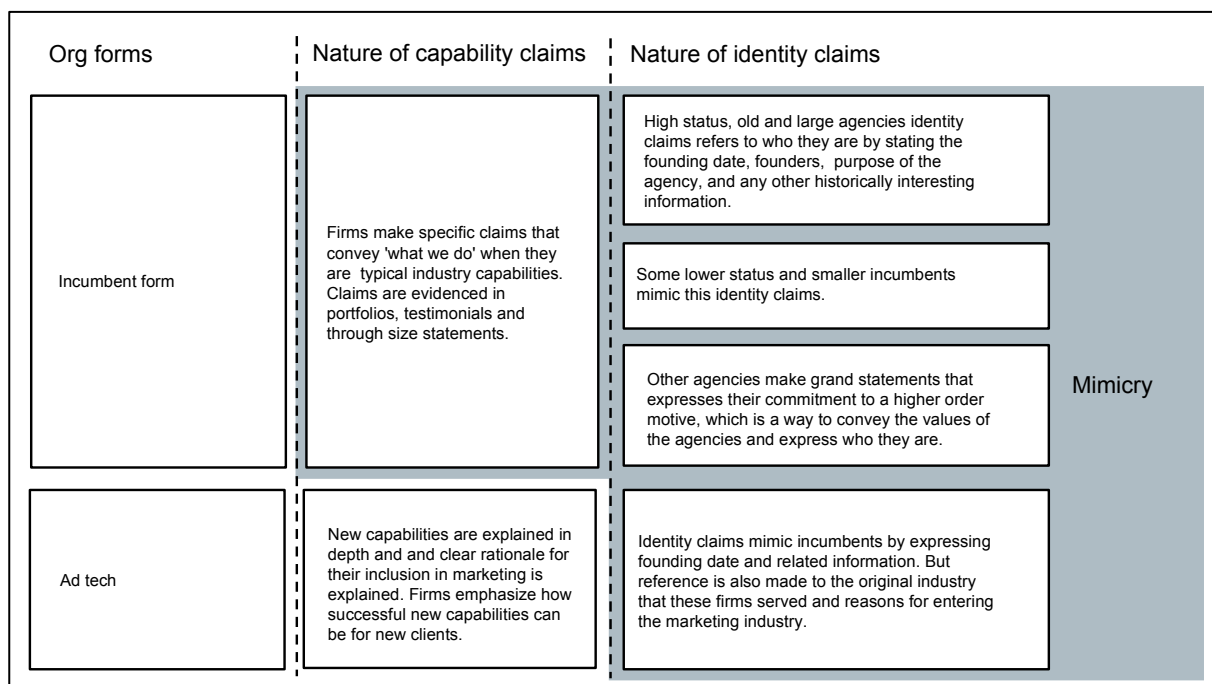


FIGURE 8: SUMMARY OF IDENTITY AND CAPABILITY CLAIMS DURING NEW FOR EMERGENCE PHASE

5.3.2 Differentiation Phase of New Organisational Form Emergence

Capability Claims: During this period, we see a change in the way that both incumbents and new forms make capability and value claims, which is reflected in the changes to the industry landscape. For example, prior status or heritage in traditional marketing began losing currency to being a ‘tech darling’ or an innovative agency with a particularly successful methodology e.g. for viral marketing, or any other faddish marketing capabilities. Analyses indicate that adherence to the institutional templates for values and capability claiming reported during the emergence phase wanes and a new norm is yet to be instantiated, which introduces flexibility to claim making.

I found that incumbents attempted to mimic some of the capabilities introduced by the new organisational form. These capabilities are framed as the natural extensions of contemporary marketing disciplines – i.e. competency enhancing. The growth of digital media and growing understanding of analytics like PPC, SEO, tracking e.g. CTR reporting (clickthrough rates) seem to drive incumbents’ framing of these skills as extension of digital marketing, in a context where digital marketing falls under the remit of traditional marketing activities – digital framed as just a channel. Claiming analytics capabilities appears to be a deliberate boundary-straddling attempt that if successful, could blur the lines between ad-tech and digital marketing, and limit the extent of institutional upheaval that the new form emergence could cause. In addition to claiming these competencies, some incumbents also mimicked the model of claims making consistent with new forms in the previous phase. So for example, I observed that incumbents began to list fewer specific capabilities on their websites. Rather, they projected ideas of what they could achieve and discussed fairly abstractly how they combine different functions of marketing to achieve a higher order goal, for example:

big: is a strategic communications agency. Specialising in event management, design, sponsorship, PR, production, new media and artist management.

Emergence phase

big: combine imaginative thinking with efficient project delivery, creating, invigorating and redefining your brand across all your above and below the line media communications. Creativity sits at the heart of big.

Differentiation phase

In contrast, new forms continue to employ capability differentiation strategies by framing their capabilities as competency discontinuing perhaps in direct response to incumbent incursions. I observed that ad-tech agencies seemed bolstered in making more distinctive capabilities claims that focussed solely on technological innovation or specific search marketing capabilities. But despite growing distinctiveness, evidence from industry commentators suggests that the new form is yet to achieve full cognitive legitimacy because incumbent agencies, clients and analysts still lacked understanding of the more technical aspects of ad-tech capabilities. Also new form proponent's use of technology language to describe marketing further alienated these constituents. The excerpt below summarises an industry commentator's experience of the AdTech London Conference:

This week, some reassurance. After considerable research, I can confirm that lots of other people (including me) don't get it either. A straw poll held at a dinner - the sort of rigorous research you've come to expect - revealed that VCs, bankers and dotcomers agreed. Last month, I went along to AdTech, the annual exhibition and beano for geek marketers... So I went along looking forward to having both sides of my brain stretched, and to seeing some inspiring examples of technology that could make a real difference to how we do what we do. As you've probably guessed by now, it was disappointing. Not because the breakthrough technologies that are changing the way we reach consumers weren't there. Rather, because it was so hard to tell. Five minutes spent in front of most stands yielded little in the way of meaningful information; there were platforms, solutions, even platform solutions, each one of them promising, and some guaranteeing, ROI. So much garbled tech-speak, so much buzzword bingo. And so much 'so what?' A 'proprietary semantic and contextual web-content vetting technology'; a 'global Real Time Network' (their capitals). I've no idea what either of these things is, though I've given considerable thought to whether the latter means that the Network sells Time and it Really exists, or whether the Network sells Real Time.

Andrew Walmsley, Campaign Magazine, 2011

There are grounds to reason that incumbents attempt to claim 'entry-level' ad-tech capabilities like PPC and SEO could effectively accelerate ad-tech's arms race to develop more technically advanced capabilities in order to create a more stable boundary between digital marketing and ad-tech marketing. In the same vein, if incumbent incursions fail, ad-tech firms stand to gain even more cognitive legitimacy because incumbents would have expended resource educating constituents like professional bodies, clients and audiences about the benefits and meaning of ad-tech capabilities. Nonetheless, with regards the model of capability claiming, ad-tech simply continue as they had done.

TABLE 10: DATA TABLE DIFFERENTIATION PHASE

DESCRIBING IDENTITY CLAIMS DURING THE DIFFERENTIATION PHASE			
Organisational Forms	Capability “What we do”	Values “Who we are”	Selected Illustrative Data
INCUMBENT	Firms integrate new set of capabilities into their claims, framed as competence enhancing. Flexibility introduced into capability claims resulting in broader claims. Use of specific listed capabilities wanes.	Failure to cohere around a new institutional template for legitimate claims making introduces creative ambiguity whereby individual firms have the leeway to decide whether and how to express their values.	<p>Today I would classify us as a marketing communications agency. I think probably five or more years ago, we would have been a PR agency. But, what has happened in the industry and with the changes in the media landscape, just solely being a PR agency is not enough anymore.</p> <p>We are Partners Andrews Aldridge. One of the UK's leading direct/digital agencies. We do direct. We do digital. We do data. But as our name suggests, everything we do is done in partnership – with each other, with our clients, with other agencies and with consumers. Vital Statistics Established: 1998 by Phil Andrews and Steve Aldridge Core Skills: Creative 3D Direct Marketing: Promotional Marketing, Client Service, Planning/Strategy, Creative, Studio/Digital Design, Data, Digital Production/Creative Services. Staff: 120 Billings: £120,000,000 Parent Company: Engine.</p> <p>Tullo Marshall Warren is one of Europe's largest Direct Marketing agencies, part of Creston Plc, a diversified marketing services group. <i>TMW employs over 200 highly skilled individuals, who work in a multi-disciplinary environment, responding to today's increasingly sophisticated marketing challenges. Our skillsets - strategy, digital, creative, publishing and account management, combine with our data planning, management & implementation expertise. Together, we deliver channel-neutral communications, which produce long-term, profitable relationships with customers.</i></p> <p>Welcome to Isobar: <i>People's relationships with brands have been radically transformed by technology in the past 10 years. In today's marketing communications, interaction and digital play a pivotal role, but in a few years time, all marketing will be digital marketing. We believe brands have the potential to surprise and delight their individual customers, reinvent categories or even redefine a whole industry.</i></p>

<p style="text-align: center;">NEW FORM (AD-TECH)</p>	<p>Firms frame distinctive capabilities as competency discontinuing. Efforts are made to qualify the differences between incumbents and ad-tech capabilities, with the latter focussed on optimising and improving marketing efficiency.</p>	<p>Firms develop a new template for claims making that is client centric and frame their value proposition as using technology to bridge the gap between brands and their consumers.</p>	<p>Our story is the world's story: one of change. <i>We began as a business & IT consulting company. Then the Internet arrived and altered the business landscape forever. Our consulting and technology roots served us well, giving us the unique ability to bridge the gaps between strategy, creativity, and execution, creating a seamless digital dialogue between a brand and its customers.</i> The same customers, and the very same technology, that are now responsible for the dynamic, consumer centric business world in which we live.</p> <p>We specialise in the delivery of really effective integrated PPC and SEO campaigns that help our clients <i>acquire customers profitably</i>. Our focus is on driving online sales, visibility and return on marketing investment. Our approach is highly target-driven, and we are passionate about making search work for our clients. DBD Media is a Google AdWords Qualified Company, and a member of the Microsoft adExcellence programme. We were elected into the IPA (the industry body and professional institute for UK advertising, media and marketing communications agencies) in 2007 and sit on its Search Marketing Advisory Committee.</p> <p>So we're <i>search engine marketers</i>. So within our agency we perform three functions: one is that we take interest across all of the search engines that are relevant to our client and deposit that interest on our clients website. We then evolve the campaigns both to improve – so they all operate as an auction. We improve the commercial efficiency of the auction dynamics in order to ensure that we can acquire traffic as cheaply as possible. We ensure that we invest the greatest proportion of clients budget in areas that have historically converted and then we look to grow their brands. And so filtering so there are dominant – Google is the most dominant search engine and then you've got Yahoo Bing who are bigger and smaller in different countries and then some much more localised search engines like in Russia you have Yandex in China Baidu in Norway you have Kvasir – so say I want to buy a widget people who are quite descriptive in wanting to buy a widget you advertise to them and then you deposit them on the site so that's search engine marketing in it's purest form.</p>
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Value Claims: There were major changes to the nature of identity claims among constituents, incumbents and new forms, during this phase as the institutional template for claims making disappears. Among incumbents, this introduces creative ambiguity because the field is yet to cohere around an answer of what it means to be a marketing agency. Firms have leeway in choosing the values they emphasize to express who they are. Identity claims hence centred on signalling economic growth, acknowledging the changing macro environment and translating those environmental challenges into success for clients – so identity claims focussed on the *impact of marketing activities*. This focus on impact allowed incumbents to make somewhat indistinctive identity claims, which is corroborated by the qualitative interview where respondents viewed identity as flexible and malleable features to be extended or adapted as required by competitive forces. The findings depict the organisational and collective identities as very much influencing and being a product of the institutional and competitive environment in which organisations exist, and suggests that the process to collective identity expansion begins with organisational identity shifts from essentialist or attribute based claims (e.g. Albert and Whetten, 1985) to a structuralist approach whereby field-level shared cognition informs individual identity claims (Glynn, 2008).

New forms also exploit the loosening of institutional norms for identity claiming when expressing who they are by developing their own criteria for value claiming that highlights their technical history or proprietary exchange/platform technologies or software, and frame the purpose of these competencies as bridging the gap between brands and consumers. Ad-tech firms cohere around a client centric value proposition, claimed in a manner that further differentiates them from incumbents. Interestingly, these value claims appear to be implicitly legitimate perhaps because: [1] new form agencies had become target for acquisitions since WPP's acquisition of Razorfish and Cadreon. [2] AOL's advertising technology division Platform, rebranded to Ad-tech, raising the profile of the emerging form. [3] New form agencies had secured invited member status into the IPA – the Institute of practitioners of advertising – thus securing some constitutive and cognitive legitimacy. And [4] one

ad-tech metric of click through advertising published annually had become mainstay in the industry, and was actively publicised and promoted by Campaign Magazine.

5.3.3 Convergence Phase of New Organisational Form Emergence

Capability Claims: I anticipated that a new template for capability claiming would materialise, which would elucidate the hierarchy of capabilities, distinguish incumbent from new form capabilities, and set forth how those capability claims ought to be presented. Instead I found that the industry moved beyond the need to express capability claims. Both incumbents and new form capability claims converge because of the failure to institutionalise a new set of capabilities that underpin membership of either incumbent or new forms, which creates more variation in within forms claim making behaviour. Some firms made capability claims regardless of the new normal, while other did not.

To get a sense for why some incumbents chose to continue making capability claims while others refrained, I considered the effects of affiliations – either through M&A or formal/informal networks, channel focus e.g. offline only, online only or media-neutral (both), and size on incumbent forms capability claims making. I found no conclusive evidence to support an assertion that these variables, affiliation, channel or size, influenced incumbent's decision to make or refrain from making capability claims. I anticipated that large or network affiliated incumbent with access to broader range of capabilities would be inclined to still make capability claims given that they could legitimately be boundary spanners. My findings indicated that whether or not network affiliated incumbents made capability claims was random. I also anticipated that online only and media-neutral agencies would be more apt to make generalist capability claims or reference the full range of marketing services they could provide clients based on their in-house expertise or resource. But the evidence to support this assertion is inconclusive.

Although capability claiming was no longer mandated, some new form firms also randomly made capability claims. I found a sense of déjà vu among ad-tech firms that chose to make capability claims during this period, because their claims resembled that of incumbents during the emergence phase. It was striking that some ad-tech firms appeared to be mimicking incumbent's earlier presentation of capability claims perhaps to further secure their status in the industry. Ad-tech agencies that made these claims referenced accolades and awards, their size, proprietary innovation or techniques, founders and geographical reach.

TABLE 11; DATA TABLE CONVERGENCE PHASE

DESCRIBING IDENTITY CLAIMS DURING THE CONVERGENCE PHASE			
Organisational Forms	Capability “What we do”	Values “Who we are”	Selected Illustrative Data
INCUMBENT	Requirement to express or claim capabilities wanes, firms randomly make these claims in varied and fragmented manner.	Values reign supreme and all forms coalesce around making ambiguous statements that express who they are. There are few to no sanctions for digressing or making extraordinary claims so some make disassociative identity claims.	<p>Partners Andrews Aldridge makes provocative ideas that change behaviours, by <i>any media</i> necessary.</p> <p>We help businesses get more customers, more leads, more sales and more profit with affordable and creative marketing solutions. From websites and digital marketing, to design, brand development and PR, we can deliver it all.</p> <p>Design Group International helps organisations and their leaders transform for a vibrant future. Founded in 2001, Design Group International gathers top professionals to assist the development of client organisations and their leaders. Design Group International Consultants offer multi-disciplinary expertise with a commitment to process consulting, and a deep network of colleagues and resources across the company’s brand.</p> <p>We are a global marketing and technology agency that transforms businesses for the digital age. We exist to help brands embrace the creative and technological changes revolutionising all aspects of their business. To do this requires a unique culture capable of supporting diverse talent. We call our collaborative way of working blending, and it’s central to everything we do – allowing us to take ideas from strategy and concept to launch and evaluation as quickly and effectively as possible.</p> <p>We are Drummond Central, a strategic marketing, creative and digital agency that researches, plans, creates and delivers, <i>readying your brand to be victorious in the battlefield.</i></p>
NEW FORM (AD-TECH)	Requirement to express or claim capabilities wanes, firms randomly make these claims in a manner that	Values reign supreme and all forms coalesce around making ambiguous statements that express who they	<p>We ideate, design and deliver iconic digital products and services that improve people’s lives. Our multidisciplinary team has been involved in some of the most groundbreaking projects across multiple industries. We collaborate with sophisticated clients to deliver a cohesive blueprint</p>

	<p>mimics those of incumbents during the emergence phase.</p>	<p>are. There are few to no sanctions for digressing or making extraordinary claims so some make dissociative identity claims.</p>	<p>that will satisfy audience needs and surpass business goals.</p> <p>We make growth happen! We bring our clients the thinking, skills, technology and thirst for results that pushes everyone to deliver on one thing that really matters. Growth! It's a blend that's earned us a ranking as the UK's #1 digital agency, based on performance and peer feedback. In fact one of our clients once said the reason he hired Greenlight was because we were the only agency that seemed to care about counting the money. We took it as a compliment!</p> <p>We are a digital marketing agency. We do all things digital. We believe in the power of connectedness. Connectedness is a philosophy. It's a way of building a connected brand that focuses on people rather than targets, engages in a conversation instead of shouting and develops a trust with consumers that is both meaningful and long lasting.</p> <p>Across the globe, we make digital marketing human by bringing everything together – creating the connections brands need to stay ahead, and giving businesses a tangible advantage in today's world. At iProspects, we are not just specialists in different types of digital marketing – we also know how to bring it together.</p>
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Value Claims: The findings indicate that much of identity signalling shifts to “who we are” instead of “what we do”. At the same time, there is a lack of institutional template for claiming ‘who we are’ or indeed agreement of the core features that members of the industry should possess. So although we see increasing importance of value claims during this period, there are few to no sanctions for divergent claims. This enhances the creative license that firms have to make identity claims. A pattern of generalised identity claiming emerges such that even new form coalesce around this creative ambiguity and move away from their client centric value focus and thus align their value claims as closely as possible to those of incumbent forms. A like for like comparative analysis of previously classified new form versus two incumbent form agencies show very little distinction in identity value claims. The excerpt below compares Stickyeyes (*new form*), AKQA and Doremus (*Incumbents*).

We are a different kind of digital marketing agency. One that combines world-class creative thinking with innovative insights to fuel success for some of the world’s biggest brands.

Stickyeyes, New form

AKQA is an ideas and innovation company. We exist to create the future for our clients

AKQA, Incumbent form

‘We make the complex compelling’ In the world of generalists, we are specialist. We prize creativity, intellect and discipline in all things. Our success is defined by outcomes. Delivered by good ideas, good people and good work.

Doremus, Incumbent form

During this phase, the findings indicate that firms across all organisational forms regard their organisational identities as a transient and malleable feature, contrary to academic notions of identities as central, enduring and distinctive features of organisations (Pratt and Foreman, 2000). This is corroborated by accounts from interviewees who view their identities as flexible constructs used to respond to competitive challenges they face in the industry. As one interviewee observed, it is not enough to be distinctive and recognised solely for one thing anymore. There are economic reasons for enacting ambiguous identities: incumbents must be keen to signal openness to include capabilities as the market evolves and so they refrain from making identity claims that could close off any future opportunities.

Today I would classify us as a marketing communications agency. I think probably five or more years ago, we would have been a PR agency. But, what has happened in the industry and with the changes in the media landscape, just solely being a PR agency is not enough anymore.

Switch

Further incumbent accounts from interviewees also suggest that their use of ambiguous organisational identities reflects how environmental uncertainties permeate industry boundaries and shape organisational practice, structure and action, which further reinforce uncertainties at the environmental level, which I discuss later. Nonetheless, to exploit the creative license available for ambiguous claims, I observed that some incumbents interestingly made dissociative claims, which are claims that repudiate industry membership and thereby construct distinctiveness from others in the industry. In the case of one interviewee, their dissociation was paradoxical given that they had claimed to be an integrated marketing communication agency:

Yes, I think I would categorise us as consultancy services. You know, we're a consulting business that then actually goes on to create campaigns. That's when the crossover occurs, you can either consult and plan and strategize, if you like, about what business should do, and that's consulting. I think you then go on to do execution, which is often creating digital platforms or PR campaigns or mobile applications, and that's much more about, kind of, creating products then really, it feels like.

Switch

In this case, the dissociative identity claim appears to be an extreme form of expansion beyond the boundaries of the marketing industry and into the professional service sector field. The interviewee, whose background is in Ogilvy and Mather, a WPP-owned subsidiary known for recruiting ex management consultants, is aware of the difference between management consultants and marketers. Indeed, both are in the service sector and discharge client briefs, but fundamentally differ in the kind of work undertaken. This dissociative claim also appears to be motivated by the need to legitimise the adoption of an atypical organisational structure. This business, though ad-form, adopts the structural configuration of a freelancer network, wherein most "employees" are engaged on a freelancer or contractor basis, and come together like a temporary organisation to fulfil projects. Depicting the business as a consultancy legitimises the use of "senior people, hands on, all the time" and justifies failure to "adopt a traditional agency structure, hierarchical structure of fewer senior people in relation to many junior people."

The second example of the dissociative identity claim was surprising given that it came from a copywriting agency, one of the professions regarded as the fundamental creative pillar of the industry. Here too, I infer that the dissociative strategy serves two purposes: firstly it serves the expansionary purpose of simultaneously aligning the agency with its traditional marketing industry and a poorly defined 'other' industry. Secondly, claiming to be a supplier to the industry appears to be an attempt to insulate the agency from direct competition from within the marketing industry.

I don't really consider myself, or Polon, to be part of the industry - more like a supplier to the design, advertising and marketing industries.

5.4 Factors Affecting the Industry Throughout the New Form Emergence

It is important to note that while the phases outlined above in §5.2 might appear to be reactions to exogenous technological dynamics such as innovations in mobile telephony, improved wireless and Internet connectivity and indeed innovations across digital platforms, I found no clear evidence to support such an assertion. So, the purpose of this section is to highlight the environmental and field-level factors that interviewees suggested had direct consequences for their businesses, and therefore had some bearings on how they made identity claims.

Interview participants widely acknowledged their reactivity to technological changes outside the industry, and indeed the significant impact that this lack of control over the direction and pace of change had on their businesses. My data shows consensus across all organisational forms that large technology firms like Google, Facebook and Apple, all external to the industry exert significant influence over the direction of change. This is because these firms are major media channels, or intermediaries on which marketing activities are displayed or performed. Consequently, changes to algorithms on Facebook or YouTube quickly affect audience engagement with advertising on these

platforms and can affect brands listings. These firms therefore influence industry practice; agencies and brands have to anticipate and implement changes in response to new product or feature launches:

“That was a knowledge based architectural issue that you make sure that your listings are appropriate on the internet. Google has evolved that now so now it’s a much more of an online PR activity”

Persicopix

“Google is your slave and master if you are a modern business. Google sets the rules, Google controls the rules and we all have to play by those rules. An online business that is looking for visibility needs to rank highly in Google. You can’t play the system, Google system of search engine, you have to play by Google’s rules.”

Switch

“So, you know, at the moment everything’s very Apple and Google dominated. It may well be that a handset or a tablet becomes completely redundant in the next 5 or 10 years, and actually, the way that people interact with technology fundamentally changes... So, there are lots of 10-year forecasts and scenario planning going on to try and work out what could happen. Any one of those could completely change the agency/company model.”

H3G

Second, interviewees suggested that fundamental change to practice from the television-first to a digital-first approach impacted their firms. The impact is a noticeable change to the power structure of the industry as digital agencies replace advertising agencies as *leads* that control large marketing budgets and steer the direction of the whole campaign from creative ideas to rollout. Where once advertising agencies produced the big ideas that were tweaked during a campaign’s rollout across television, radio and print and then taken online and across other specific channels, brands now ask for a digital first approach because of the reach and affordability of digital media. This is compounded by the fact that youthful audiences increasingly bypass old broadcast media channels like television and print, resulting in some online focused brands like Warby Parker and Ocado running exclusive online campaigns.

Finally, interviewees highlighted fragmentation of the media, from just paid media to now include owned and earned, and a reordering of the hierarchy as key undercurrents shaping the industry. In the pre-internet era, marketing efforts were focused on paid media like television, radio, print, display and outdoor. The media hierarchy for most consumer brands was television, radio, print and others in descending order, which made advertising agencies, tasked with generating the ‘big idea’, central to brand’s marketing activities. The Internet altered the media landscape by adding more channels (fragmentation) and complexities to marketing. Now paid, earned and owned media coexists in a manner that creates difficulties for agencies to determine where best to engage with a brand’s audiences. Brands can now use owned media, which relates to assets like a brand’s websites, blogs, YouTube channels, radio stations, and television channels, etc. to engage and communicate with their audiences directly. Similarly, brands can use earned media such as product fan pages, forums, and consumer generated social media pages or microsites to foster communities about their products.

The industry is yet to fully understand the impact of the changes to media landscape but early indications from my interviewees suggests that these changes are ushering in a new period of direct brand and audiences engagement that bypasses the need for agencies. Brands are becoming less reliant on their marketing agencies and instead internal marketing teams are getting better resourced, which is detrimental especially to small agencies. The fragmented landscape also requires more complex and sophisticated marketing strategies in order to be successful – which might be a challenge for agencies that are only as good as the weakest link in a network, but also offer opportunities for others.

Ten years ago, we would help a brand with its marketing and publicity using traditional media as a conduit to carry their message. Traditional print media, traditional broadcast media were the gatekeepers to publicity and fame and helping brands increase their sales or increase their engagement with audiences. That media landscape has been disrupted – it’s been diluted. The ability for brands today to communicate directly with their consumers or with their constituent audiences is far, far greater. So, we are less reliant on traditional media channels to engage with audiences and therefore, using things like social media or building their own channel is so much

more possible today. That channel could be a microsite, it could be a website, it could be your own magazine, it could be your own TV station on YouTube, it could be your own radio station on Sound Cloud or others. And therefore, because these other technologies quite often exist, brands are able to use those channels to reach their audiences.

Interviewees consider increasing technical complexity as a major impact of the changes to the media landscape and hierarchy. There is variation in organisational forms' experience of increasing technical complexity: the ad-tech manager admitted that the impact to their business has been an increase in the length of time taken to train new starters, *“to give you an idea of how much more technical the market has become. 4 years ago it used to take us 2 weeks of full time training to get someone in a position where they can add value. It now takes us 6 months.”* For other incumbents, increasing technicality drives specialisation further and results in further pressures to consolidate existing affiliations, but also provides opportunities to work collaboratively:

It's two things. On one end of the spectrum, it's the sheer complexity of things. What's happened is that technology has gone from basic HTML, let's say, some basic database stuff and so on, to this huge well of really sophisticated stuff where, if you're not up to speed with it, you get lost with it. The tasks within the Internet on one level of it have exponentially increased and so what I think is happening is that you get far more specialisation going on. Because the Internet allows for a very open landscape, if I need a specialist in something that does something somewhere, then through the Internet, through Behance or whatever these jobsites are – whatever – I'll find that person who can do that thin slice for me. This is really important because then I can build up much more specialist capability, so I think it's making the landscape open.

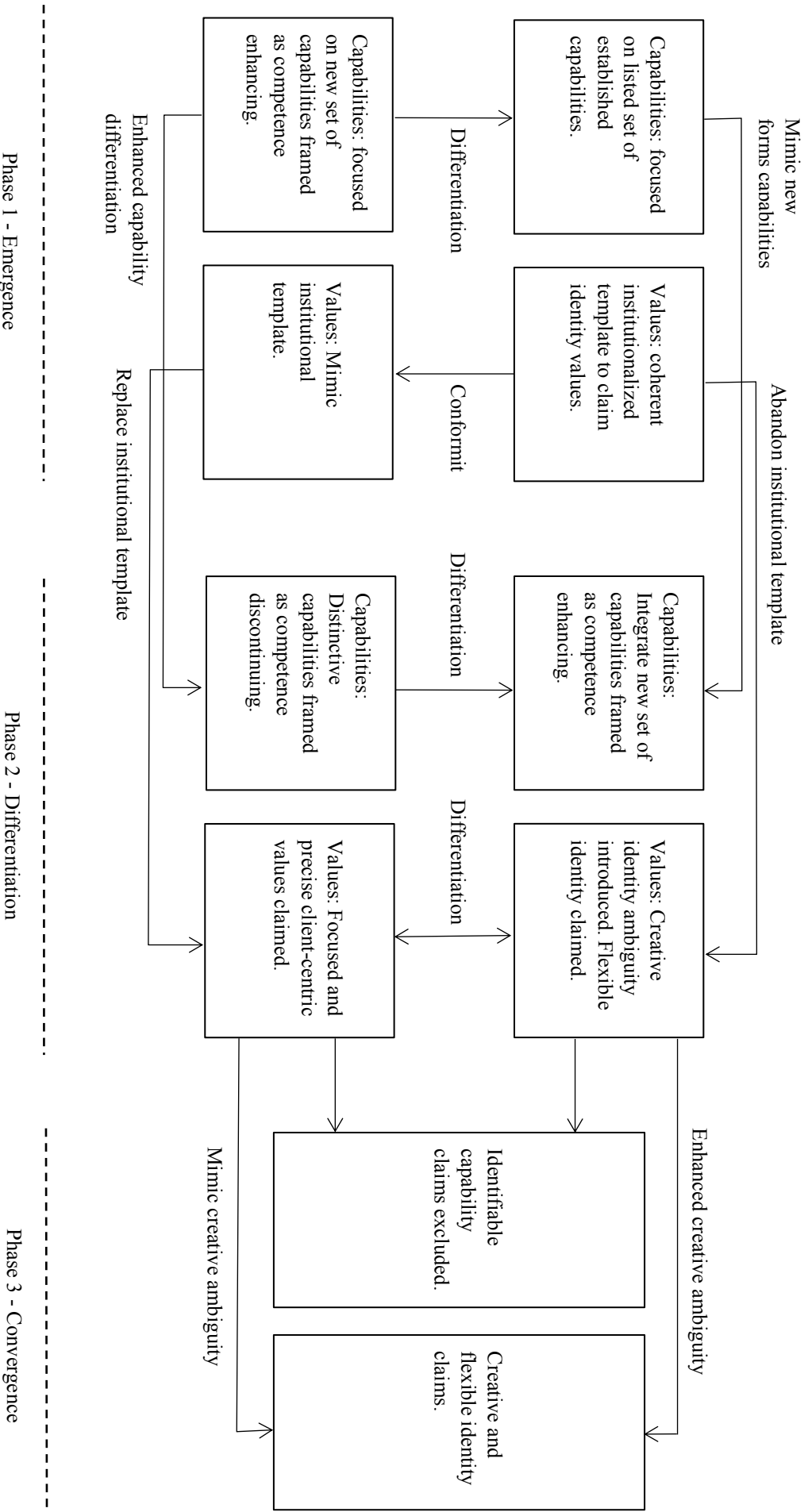


FIGURE 6: PHASE MODEL OF NEW ORGANISATIONAL FORM EMERGENCE

6 Discussion

This section elaborates the phase model of new organisational form emergence developed in chapter 5 by examining the identity dynamics of new and incumbent forms during each phase. Specifically, I explain how new form and incumbent organisational forms identity-claiming strategies alternate between differentiation and conformity over the phases of form emergence process. I also discuss how the identity dynamics of new and incumbent forms are interrelated, driven by the same mechanisms of framing and mimicry, which each form employs differently to achieve their goals. So for example, while new organisational forms use framing to problematize the limitations of incumbent capabilities and to situate their new capabilities as competence enhancing or discontinuing, incumbents use framing to minimise the distinctiveness of new forms capabilities and to extend the remit of their capabilities into new areas that new forms introduce.

6.1 Identity Strategies during the Emergence Phase: Conformity and Differentiation

The findings point to the importance of separating identity components into claims about capabilities and values for new organisational forms during the early phases of emergence. We find in this phase that because new forms have to conform to some established institutional expectations in order to acquire resources such as cognitive legitimacy (e.g. Navis & Glynn, 2010) necessary to legitimize a novel institutional arrangement, having the flexibility to differentiate on some aspect of identity is critical to maintain distinctiveness and to be recognised as such by external resource holders like customers and suppliers and peers. Zuckerman (1999) examined the relationship between conformity and resource acquisition, demonstrating how stocks that belong to illegitimate market categories are undervalued and ignored by analysts. He argued that market entrants must conform to gain membership to a new category, and only after securing membership can they differentiate from competitors. Supporting this assertion, my findings extends our understanding on how new organisational forms in established industries adopt existing templates (Santos and Eisenhardt, 2009)

to secure initial industry membership by mimicking the values statements of incumbents while espousing and differentiating their innovative capabilities.

Value statements that convey ‘who we are’ are important component of identity for individual firms and organisational forms. They communicate organisational objectives, belief and norms, and are a key means of enacting mimetic isomorphism (Meyer and Rowan, 1977, DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Isomorphism has been shown to play a major role in institutional processes or change. It fosters a sense of embeddedness that reduces the cognitive distance between new firms and incumbent rivals (e.g. Kennedy 2008, Reay et al. 2006) and reduces the likelihood of conflict between new forms and incumbents. Indeed, literature shows that new organisational form identity often competes with incumbent identity by challenging its status as the default meaningful identity. Examples of these include the identity conflict between modernist producers who introduced and framed aging in *barrique* barrels (small aromatic French oak barrels) as essential for producing quality, low tannin Barolo/Barbaresco wine and traditional producers who advocated long held norms of lengthy aging in large Slovenian oak barrels known as *botti grandi* as the hallmark of good Barolo/Barbaresco (Negro et al., 2011). Other examples include the craft brewing versus commercial brewing identity conflict (Carroll and Swaminathan, 2000) and haute cuisine versus novella cuisine identity conflict in French gastronomy (Rao et al., 2005).

Identity conflicts require a great deal of resource that new forms may lack. Therefore it seems apt that by mimicking the identity values of incumbents, new forms are able to circumvent or at least minimize the institutional pressures. This offers a complementary dimension to Greenwood et al’s (2002) assertion that field location and status of new organisational form proponents act as a shield from institutional pressures when introducing new institutional arrangements. In their study, the Big Five accounting firms that drove the innovative MDP form had far superior technical accounting and business consulting capabilities. But they also had the position of large, central incumbents (field

location), market share, and respect of their clients and peers (status). By combining these resources, endogenous change agents like the Big Five could push the debates and boundaries around the scope of accounting practice in favour of their new form because economic evidence suggests they are more successful. But when periphery and low status actors lacking comparable resources mimic institutional norms, they have the opportunity to align their interests with those of dominant players, thereby situating their emerging form closer to the centre of the field. I argue that this increases the likelihood of the novel institutional arrangement to garner the wider support and avoid being caste aside in the periphery of a field.

The findings indicate that although new forms differentiate on their capabilities, they do so subtly, framing their capabilities as competence enhancing. Even though the ad-tech's capabilities, purely based on analytical and programmatic skills, is in such stark contrast to incumbent marketing capabilities such that one is hard pressed to establish any crossovers at this stage, ad-tech proponents framed their capabilities as part of the tapestry of capabilities that should exist in marketing. Ad-tech capabilities are framed as a way of introducing transparency and auditing into marketing via analytics, and enhancing the efficiency of marketing activities via programmatic buying. This framing exploits historical client distrust in agencies' claims of marketing effectiveness and reach, and problematizes current capabilities. Framing ad-tech capabilities in this way also gives the form comprehensibility, a variant of cognitive legitimacy that is required during the early stages of form emergence, and that enables the emerging form to be situated within existing cultural schemas in a way that makes sense to industry constituents (Suchman, 1995, Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005).

6.2 Identity Strategies during the Differentiation Phase: Capability and Value Differentiation

The findings show two important shifts during this phase. First, we observe that differentiation becomes more profound and the differences between new and incumbent form's capabilities and

values are amplified. I argue that the enhanced differentiation witnessed during this phase represents a type of boundary work that arises because new forms perceive the need to distinguish their newly legitimated capabilities from those of incumbents in order to maintain distinctiveness. Lounsbury and Crumley (2007) assert that change proponents draw boundaries to distinguish their newly legitimated practices from those of incumbents. This boundary work differs from market making boundary work previously examined by scholars like Greenwood and Suddaby (2006) and Jones et al. (2012) that seeks to expand the boundaries of a focal group into new vistas. Rather, this type of boundary work serves to exclude others, to distinguish shared norms and practices of new form adopters from incumbents (Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010) and to shape the cognitive legitimacy that underpin new form identity claims (Santos and Eisenhardt, 2009). This type of boundary work results in the emergence of new identity value and capability claims that separate new forms from incumbents as the data shows.

And second, we observe a change in the institutional template that firms hitherto complied with when making (value) claims. This change is striking because incumbents abandon the institutional template altogether while new forms replace existing templates with a new client centric template for claims making – which raises the question why? I argue that new form's replacement of institutional templates is a proactive attempt to manage identity threats that can arise from incumbent incursions (Phillips and Kim, 2009). Moving beyond the organisational level to the industry level, I propose that new form's replacement of institutional templates in the differentiation phase manifested the emergence of a similarity cluster that had coalesced around a consistent set of values (Fiol and Romanelli, 2012). Therefore, the new template serves two purposes: [1] it defines and advertises acceptable features and norms to prospective adopters and [2] serves as a highly visible boundary between incumbents and new form – much like Wry et al.'s (2011) depiction of defining and growth stories. Contemporary literature suggests a number of ways in which identity threats can be managed. Phillips and Kim (2009) research on the early jazz market illustrates how firms employ deception to protect their identities threatened by market growth in lowbrow jazz production. Brown and Coupland

(2015) also argued that identity threats could be a resource interpreted by some to guide constructions of 'preferred selves'. Their example shows how rugby players used the threats to their identity emanating from insecurities associated with shortness of sporting careers, injuries and performance to construct masculine identities that normalise resilience, professionalism and aspiration.

Furthermore, I argue that by abandoning institutional templates altogether, incumbents open up the repertoires available to them. This is shrewd given the uncertainties that change projects, such as that connected with new form emergence, introduce to the market. Presently, theorists argue that templates and repertoires are vital resources that shape and guide organisational actions because they offer opportunities to combine previously legitimated materials in novel ways to create new forms, practice or identities (Kroezen and Heugens, 2012, King et al., 2011). Greenwood and Hinings (1996) view institutional templates as a source of inertia because they encourage strong reciprocal exchanges between individual firms and a field, which reinforces strong mimetic, normative and coercive pressures that contribute towards reduced organisational learning, hinders deployment of radical strategies and increases the difficulties in mobilising internal support for actions.

Templates are restrictive and doing away with them altogether removes their moderating or inertial impact (King et al., 2011) on organisational actions. Inertia limits organisational actions and increases the risks of failures and therefore as Kraatz and Zajac (1996) found, acting counter to prevailing institutional demands for example by abandoning templates can improve organisational performance and survival prospects. In their longitudinal study of liberal arts colleges, they found that the firms surviving the 16-year observation period had made illegitimate changes, i.e. changes contrary to institutional demands, which positively affected their survival and performance. Where templates cannot be done away with, their restrictive effects may be reduced by adding more templates to a firm's frame of reference e.g. Santos and Eisenhardt (2009) found that institutional entrepreneurs broaden their institutional template to support their attempts to access and control more markets.

6.3 Identity Strategies during the Convergence Phase: Creative Ambiguity

The findings show that several mechanisms are at play during the convergence phase. First we see that identity dynamics shift away from what we do, to expressing who we are through value statements. This shift eliminates the possibility of differentiating by capabilities and hinders new form's ability to signal distinctiveness – and thus reflects incumbent's enactment of robust identities (Swaminathan, 2001). Additionally, flexible and ambiguous identity claims are consolidated during this period. Incumbents extend their use of ambiguity by refining how they claim creativity, ideation and problem solving, broad and intangible constructs that are framed as critical components of the industry's identity. For their part, ad-tech form adopters also support this consolidation by mimicking incumbent's identity claims by introducing creativity and ideation in their presentations of who they are. Finally, during this phase, we see indications that the marketing collective identity is undergoing revisions to include technical capabilities as a possible core feature. I elaborate each of these further below.

The shift in identity dynamics from emphasising 'what we do' to 'who we are', driven mainly by incumbent forms during phases two and three, I argue constitutes a direct response by incumbents to reaffirm their central position in the industry. Swaminathan (2001) proposed that some incumbent organisational forms e.g. generalists respond to new form emergence by enacting robust identities which claim features of the new form identity thereby reducing their distinctiveness. To achieve this, he argued that incumbents could undertake marketing activities that change their image with audiences. My findings extend this reasoning by proposing that firms may also achieve robust identities by shifting identity focus away from differentiating features like what we do, and emphasising more intangible values like who we are. Indeed this notion that identity emphasis can be shifted in a way that demonstrates its agentic and temporal nature is not new. Scholars have addressed identity changes over time at the organisational level (e.g. Schultz and Hernes, 2013, Gioia et al.,

2000). Gioia et al. (2000) proposed that the durability of organisational identity lies in labels used, which are subject to changing meanings and are therefore unstable. This instability is adaptive and allow frequent “redefinition and revision” of identity to support changes in response to environmental demands (p.64). My findings extend identity shifts to the field level, showing how incumbents collectively act to enforce the removal of an institutional template by shifting the focus of identity claims to intangibles features, which reduces opportunities to differentiate and encourages ambiguity.

Robust or adaptive identities therefore illustrates how contrary to notions of identities as central, enduring and distinctive features of organisations (Pratt and Foreman, 2000, Albert and Whetten, 1985), identities can and do evolve from a spectrum that has essentialist attributes at one end, and constructionist attributes on the other. Corley et al. (2006) advocate research that offers a complementary approach to organisational identity whereby the essentialist perspective is used to explore micro level interactions of organisational level while the social constructionist approach is used to explore macro-level interactions, in order to bridge the gap between both perspectives and offer valuable insights. The finding from this analysis contributes in some ways towards this goal. The finding proposes a dynamic relationship between essentialist and structuralist perspective of organisational identity, and suggests that the relationship between essentialism / structuralism may be a spectrum whereby the characteristics of a field shapes how identities claims are made and enacted. Fields in crisis likely will transition from one end of the spectrum to another, whereas fields experiencing an extended period of relative stability may likely make identity claims that fit into either the essentialist or constructionist notion of identity claiming.

My findings indicate that prior to the new form emergence, no single coherent interpretation of the marketing collective identity had been constructed and taken-for-granted as default in the industry, therefore constituents faced no sanctions for extreme interpretations of the marketing identity. Incumbent agencies drew on established featured like creativity and selling as parts of their core, but

these are broad constructs that are subject to multiple interpretations. It appears that the ‘openness’ of the marketing collective identity enabled new form proponents to legitimately frame their capabilities as competence enhancing, because novel analytic capabilities improve agencies’ ability to sell goods for their brand clients. This openness also seems to explain why and how dissenting incumbents rationalise their use of dissociative strategies by which they disavow industry membership, yet claim marketing labels and undertake marketing work. This openness may also explain why incumbents sought to adopt ambiguous identities that expand the range of capabilities they can legitimately claim.

It also appears that this malleability of the marketing collective identity also contributes to the apparent absence of identity conflict, which usually occurs when new organisational form gains ascendance and seeks legitimation in established industries. The interview data indicates that the ad-tech organisational form emerged without crystallising a new, distinctive collective identity, which ad-tech adopters can cohere to. Rather, ad-tech firms situated their organisational identities within ‘selling’ and frame technology and analytical capabilities as means of improving the ‘selling’ function of marketing. This finding is striking and counterintuitive given that extant literature suggests that identity conflicts emanate from the efforts by new forms advocates to institute a new value system by reinterpreting industry norms in order to situate theirs as at least equal or superior to established norms. The new organisational form identity competes with the incumbent collective identity by challenging its status as the default meaningful collective identity. Examples of these include the identity conflict between modernist producers who introduced and framed aging in *barrique* barrels (small aromatic French oak barrels) as essential for producing quality, low tannin Barolo/Barbaresco wine and traditional producers who advocated long held norms of lengthy aging in large Slovenian oak barrels known as *botti grandi* as the hallmark of good Barolo/Barbaresco (Negro et al., 2011). Other examples include the craft brewing versus commercial brewing identity conflict (Carroll and Swaminathan, 2000), and haute cuisine versus novella cuisine identity conflict in French gastronomy (Rao et al., 2005).

7 Research Summary and Conclusion

This chapter recaps the research question, key literature, methodology, and findings of the study including the phase model of new organisational form emergence discussed earlier. I address the limitations of this research, discuss the contributions made to academic and practitioner literature, and conclude by suggesting possible avenues for future research.

7.1 Research Question

A growing body of work in OMT investigates new form emergence through an identity lens. Theorists distinguish between new form emergence in emerging and mature fields arguing that in the former, new forms can emerge in spite of indistinctive identity claims because boundaries, resource relationships and institutional norms are yet to formalised. And in the latter, new forms require distinctive identities that are recognisable by audiences are vital for new form emergence if they are to avoid sanctions. Nonetheless, few studies explore the dynamic interrelationship between new and incumbent form identities because scholars have usually adopted a one-sided perspective that explore either the new or incumbent form identity dynamics. I argued that addressing this issue would give us a better sense of which emergence processes are more likely to succeed or fail, and why.

I also argued that thus far, the OMT literature has prioritised external constituents like as conferrers of legitimacy necessary for successful emergence processes over incumbent organisational form. I argued that incumbents are just as vital in legitimising a new form because incumbents support audience sense making of new form distinctive features if/when they mimic some of those features. Incumbents offer more than identity threats or conflicts during the form emergence process, thus it is important that we understand when and why incumbents play a facilitator role in new form emergence. To address these issues, I examined

the over all research question: *How do emerging organisational forms shape their identities in contexts where new technology is affecting the established industry?*

And I addressed this overarching question by dividing it into the following:

1. How do the identity claims of emerging organisational forms differ from that of incumbent forms in marketing?
2. How and why do the identity claims of new and incumbent organisational forms change over time
3. How do incumbent organisational form identity claim change in response to new form emergence?

7.2 Key Contribution of The Study

The main contribution from this research is the phase model of organisational form emergence, which shows how new and incumbent organisational form identity claims are interrelated and change in response to the other. We find that during the emergence phase, new organisational forms align their value claims with incumbents by mimicking their use of institutional templates for value signalling. Furthermore, new forms frame novel capabilities they introduce as competence enhancing by problematizing historical issues with measurement and reliability of marketing performance data. This subtle differentiation, coupled with conforming to institutional templates, position new forms closely to incumbents by reducing their distinctiveness and thus minimizes identity conflicts. The findings also demonstrates how incumbent forms mimic new form framing strategies by suggesting their capabilities too are competency enhancing, and doing away with institutional templates to broaden the available repertoires available for incumbent and new form identity claims. This loosening of institutional requirements, I argue, further legitimises new form claims and prevents identity conflicts.

The study also provides empirical support to the literature on robust identities (Swaminathan, 2001), by tracing incumbents changes to their identity claims and demonstrating how they expanded their identity claims to include capabilities introduced by the new form. I argued that robust identities might reflect transitions from an essentialist notion of identity to a social constructionist notion, which suggests that nature of identity claims are not fixed, but transient. I propose that perhaps transitions from one notion of identity to another may be influenced by factors such as changes to the field e.g. media landscape changes and fragmentation, and technological innovation, which spurred on changes in the marketing industry.

Furthermore, the study provides empirical support for literature on collective identities reconstitution by showing how organisational identity claims that cohere around an institutional template results in a distinctive collective identity emergence. But the study also demonstrates how a collective identity might be fleeting by showing how ad-tech form abandoned their collective identity in favour of the institutionalised preference for ambiguity suggested by dominant incumbents. Finally, the study makes some methodological contributions pertaining to the use of web-archived data for research endeavours.

7.3 Research Limitation and Direction for Future Research

The total sample of companies included in the longitudinal study of 594 comprise less than one per cent of the total number of marketing agencies in the UK presently estimated to be around 20,000 (BIS estimates, with the majority being micro businesses or Freelancers). Therefore, questions arise around the generalizability of the findings. To address this, I ensured that agencies from the Big 5 networks were represented in the purposive sample, and I balanced the samples that giving proportional weighting to Freelancers, Studios and Ad-form agencies. I also purposively sampled firms by incorporation dates to reduce recency bias in the data.

A further limitation of the study is that reliance on website data created the need to draw inference on the reasons for firm's actions e.g. inferring why a firm changed value claims over time – which could contribute to researcher bias. To eliminate researcher bias, I triangulated across data sources. Where inferences were made that could significantly affect the findings, I cross referenced my coding and inferences against archival sources like industry press, annual reports and press releases if the observed sample publicly listed. The final limitation of the company-level data is that it lacks inter coder reliability. Because I singularly conducted the coding and data analysis, I have been unable to ensure inter coder reliability to give confidence in the data analysis. As a first time qualitative researcher, I employed Nvivo and Saldaña (2009), with oversight of my supervisor.

Two limitations arise with the interviews. First, I was unable to conduct follow up interviews with all the participants owing to time and access constraints. This meant that some of the questions arising on analysis were unanswered. Also, I was able to interview only one representative from 19 firms, and 2 representatives from 3 firms. This reduces the multivocality of the research, which including the addition of the researcher's voice is a means by which research can be made credible – one of eight key markers of quality in qualitative research (Tracy, 2010). Multivocality is important because different meanings may be endowed in a research or communicated by informants during the interviews (Tracy, 2010). So representing broad voices from a company improves the quality of findings. And second, the interviews were limited to twenty-two informants, with some asking not to be quoted. The small sample size is unlikely to affect the quality of the research because interviews provided contextual data in combination with the historical archival data that comprise the main body of the research findings.

The study provides some avenues for future research. It identifies factors like media fragmentation that can be operationalized as independent variables for a larger scale quantitative study examining the relationship between industry complexity and new organisational form emergence. As BIS estimates data was used as the backbone of this research, converting this data into a semi balanced panel data set will be achievable. Furthermore, there are opportunities to further explore how new forms are emerging in other industries that face similar technological challenges like the accounting software (SaaS) and automotive industries. There are also opportunities to examine how form emergence in marketing compares or contrasts against that of say the accounting software or automotive industries to build a current theory that address the new challenges that technology firms present to previously mature industries.

7.4 Closing Remarks

This study aimed to provide a nuanced account of the interrelationship between new and incumbent form identity claims during the organisational form emergence process. I argued that adopting a holistic and dynamic approach to examining identity claims would enhance our understanding of emergence processes. I provided evidence to demonstrate how new and incumbent forms identity claims altered in response to the others, and also provided evidence to support the assertion that incumbent's role in new form emergence processes can be facilitating, not just compromising.

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Appendix A: Semi Structure Interview Guide

- Interviewee Name?
- Who do you work for and what is your job title? If MD or owner, is this co-owned agency?
- What does your agency do?
- If this is called a start-up, how old is this start-up? Is this owner's first start up?
- Number of employees and turnover?
- How long have you worked here?
- How long have you been in marketing?
- Have you worked for a typical advertising agency?
- Do you have history as a (product) designer?
- When did you start designing for communications / branding?
- What differentiates this business from others in the same market space?
- What differentiates this business from a traditional agency?
- In what ways is this business similar to the traditional agency-model?
- From the perspective of practitioners within the industry, who are the players within the industry?

- What are the skills and capabilities that these individual players bring e.g. what do digital specialists do that graphic designers cannot do?
- Are there any industry wide changes affecting your business?