

Omskapande processer

När Internet kom till postorderföretaget

AKADEMISK AVHANDLING

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Abstract

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Re-creating processes When Internet came to the mail order company

The subject of this thesis is the implementation of e-commerce as a technical and commercial strategy of a mail order company. The study is longitudinal and mainly performed with interviews and observations during 2001 and 2009. I have analyzed the material with the help of translation theory and with an emphasis on Callon (1986).

The study revealed that the mail order company over time changed the way e-commerce was looked upon and thereby also the way that the company should organize. I identified six different definitions of e-commerce which sequentially replaced one another as the idea that was to be translated in the company. In the beginning of the translating process the idea with e-commerce was identified as mainly technical, but that changed over time and thereafter mainly became a commercial idea about trade. This meant that focus shifted and that the persons involved in translating e-commerce also became more closely linked to the market and the customers. The e-commerce site was then defined as a shop or a warehouse and thereby became connected with familiar physical places and not with abstract digital and technical places as cyberspace where sites are offline or online.

At the end of the study e-commerce tended to be defined as an opportunity for customers to shop together and thereby being social on an interactive media. This meant that the customers contributed in defining new boundaries for the company, boundaries that included the customers since they now could interact with each other as well as with the company on the web site. The idea with e-commerce was thereby translated several times in the company during the time of the study. The translation process was bewildering for the company and meant at the end of the study that it identified itself as an e-commerce company and not as a mail order company, partly due to that 60 % of the customer orders were then laid over the Internet. Another reason was that mail order was considered out of date and that e-commerce was and is the main channel for distance shopping today at the studied company.

Key words: Internet, e-commerce, organizing, organizational change, translation.

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