

This thesis explores organizations subjected to unsanctioned external innovation activities, where external developers create apps and other complementary innovations without consent. While organizations sometimes seek to stop these innovations, I investigate how an organization can utilize such product hackers instead. I pay specific attention to understanding how external developers go about creating unsanctioned innovations and how to emulate these external activities when designing digital platforms that are open for anyone to use.

The thesis uses empirical material from the Swedish public transport setting, an industry that has been marked by unsanctioned innovation. Starting in early 2012, I used action design research in collaboration with the Swedish Transport Administration (STA) to emulate self-resourcing and design an open platform. This research resulted in an active production platform that is currently used by both the STA and external third-party developers.

The theoretical contributions from this thesis include design principles for open platforms in situations where an organization's digital resources are being subjected to self-resourcing. These principles concern both product and process aspects throughout the open platform's developmental trajectory. Also, this thesis presents additional theoretical implications for open platforms, different types of platform emulation, insights on how to manage outlaw innovation, and methodological implications for guided emergence in action design research.



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Designing Platform Emulation

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