Information and Organization

Call for Papers

Special Issue:

"New Ways of Working: Rematerializing Organization in the Digital Age"

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Objective

With the rise of global and digitalized networks of connectivity that rely on an ever-increasing range of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), the time-space configurations underlying organizations and organizing have changed dramatically. This has led to the creation of new organizational designs that fall under the umbrella concept of 'New Ways of Working' (NWW). They include practices such as hotelling, 'Activity Based Working' and 'Distributed Work' (Dery et al., 2017; Harrison et al., 2004; Kingma, 2018). These new ways of organizing involve the reconfiguration of spatiotemporal, technological and sociocultural aspects of organizing. This implies that the material changes implicated in digitization are (re)shaping the social spaces of work relations (Thrift, 2005).

To date scholarly interest has, for the most part, treated the material aspects of organizing, that is, its spatial (architecture, workspaces) and technological (ICTs, machines, infrastructure) dimensions, as discrete and separate objects of inquiry. In addition, such a stance often tends to treat the material dimension of organizations as an object of inquiry alien to the study of the social dimensions of organizations (e.g., power relations, regimes of legitimation and meaning-making processes). **This special issue thus invites studies that display a combined interest in the material (i.e., technology and space) and social (e.g., discourses, power relations) dimensions of organizing in enacting organizational becoming (e.g., organizational change, evolution, generativity).**

Submissions should contribute to and advance our understanding of the interactions and mutual constitution of organizational space and technology, as well as explore the role new material relations play in organizations' sociocultural dynamics and evolution. Studies of the interactions between *material arrangements* and *social relations* are of particular interest, especially in settings where the ubiquity of digital network technologies affords new ways of working by fundamentally changing the spatiotemporal configurations and work practices of modern bureaucracies, businesses and enterprises.

Scope and themes

NWW can be regarded as part and parcel of the wider trend of workspace differentiation and flexibilisation (Felstead et al., 2005). This transformation encompasses the flexible use of home workspaces in terms of 'teleworking' (Cooper and Kurland, 2002; Peters and Heusinkveld, 2010;

Sewell and Taskin, 2015), the flexibilisation of office spaces under the form of 'hot desking', 'co-working' or 'nomadic working' (Bosch-Sijtsema et al., 2010; Chen and Nath, 2005; Hirst, 2011), as well as 'mobile working' (i.e. 'third space') between all of these workspaces (Brown and O'Hara, 2003; Hislop and Axtell, 2009; Kingma, 2016). More generally, this issue is inspired by the renewed interest in the material dimension of organizations (Aroles and McLean, 2016; de Vaujany and Mitev, 2013; de Vaujany and Vaast, 2014; Dale and Burrell, 2008; Kornberger and Clegg, 2004; Marrewijk and Yanow, 2010; Orlikowski and Scott, 2008; Wasserman and Frenkel, 2011).

The study of NWW calls for moving beyond seeing space and technology as separate aspects of materiality. Instead, with this Special Issue, we hope to foster research that embraces the new materialism in the social sciences (e.g., Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2002; Bennett, 2009; Coole and Frost, 2010; DeLanda, 2016; Pickering 1995), by exploring not only the complex, polymorphic and ever-changing relations between spatiotemporality and technology in organizing and organizational becoming, but also matter as an active and dynamic agent that is emergent, generative and resistive. In other words, spatiotemporal settings and technologies should be conceived as playing a constitutive role in working and organizing (Hancock and Spicer, 2011).

This special issue provides a space for research from a variety of disciplines to draw upon and extend contemporary theorizing around how the material and the social dimensions of everyday work life interrelate (e.g. Barad, 2003; Dale and Latham, 2015; Hernes, 2014; Latour, 2005; Lefebvre, 1991 [1974]; Leonardi, 2013; Merleau-Ponty, 1968 [1964]; Orlikowski and Scott, 2008; Schatzki, 2005; 2010; Suchman, 2007). We thus welcome a wide range of conceptual stances, including (but not limited to) actor-network theory, structurationism, performativity and complexity, practice-based approaches, sociomateriality, feminist theory, critical institutional approaches, etc.

In sum, this special issue welcomes contributions that critically explore the backgrounds, meanings, legitimations, and resources that underlie the spatiotemporal and technological arrangements that constitute the new ways of working. Additionally, the (unintended) organizational consequences and paradoxes associated with these new practices are of interest. It would also be of great significance to learn more about the different ideologies, expectations and meanings that various organizational actors associate with NWW, and how these affect the appropriation, modification or even resistance to NWW. Finally, we are interested in studies that focus on the relationship between NWW and *practices of co-working* that involve 'collaboration', 'networking', 'creativity', 'learning' and 'knowledge management' (Faraj et al., 2013; Gandini, 2015; Merkel, 2015).

Some possible questions might be:

- How is digital work in organizations affected by innovative spatiotemporal work arrangements?
- How are organizational power relations, regimes of legitimation and individual and group identities affected by new spatio-technological arrangements (e.g., hot-desking, telework, mobile work)?
- What are the explicit and implicit organizational constraints, possibilities and (un)intended consequences generated by material reconfigurations?
- What new kinds of organizational forms (e.g., virtual organizations, third workspaces, network enterprises) emerge from particular configurations of virtual and physical materialities?
- How and why have notions of time, space, materiality and work changed in contemporary society?
- To what extent and under what conditions are the ideologies of NWW enacted in actual work practice?

  How are established conceptions of organizational meaning and matter changed when NWW are studied in terms of spatiotemporal and material configurations?
- What methodological frameworks facilitate the exploration of the performative nature of materiality (especially technology and time-space configurations) in the context of the study of new ways of working?

- What new conceptual apparatuses can be developed to describe the spatiotemporal-material entanglements that underpin distributed and polymorphic forms of work?

Timeline

Paper Submission	1st February 2019
Outcome of first round of review	1st May 2019
Submission of revised papers	1st August 2019
Outcome of second round of review	1st November 2019
Receipt of final drafts by editors	1st February 2020
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