



Call for Papers: Corporate Headquarters in the 21st Century

Deadline: 31 October 2018

The *Journal of Organization Design* welcomes submissions to a Special Collection of articles focused on 'Corporate Headquarters in the 21st Century.'

Background

The corporate headquarters (CHQ) is a defining feature of *all* corporations and, thus, a key concern in organization and management research (Chandler, 1962, 1991; Menz, Kunisch, & Collis, 2015). Scholars have explored various aspects of the CHQ, including its roles (e.g., Arrfelt et al., 2015; Chandler, 1991; Foss, 1997), its size and staffing (e.g., Collis, Young, & Goold, 2007, 2012; Kleinbaum & Stuart, 2014; Menz & Scheef, 2014; Whittington et al., 2017), its functions and sub-units (e.g., Kunisch, Müller-Stewens, & Campbell, 2014; Menz & Barnbeck, 2017; Trichterborn, Knyphausen-Aufsess, & Schweizer, 2016), its disaggregation and dispersion (e.g., Nell, Kappen, & Laamanen, 2017), its location (e.g., Birkinshaw et al., 2006; Coeurderoy & Verbeke, 2016; Meyer & Benito, 2016), and its internal and external relations (e.g., Joseph & Ocasio, 2012; Kostova, Marano, & Tallman, 2016; Sengul & Gimeno, 2013). Collectively, these efforts have advanced our understanding of the CHQ and the functioning of corporations (see Kunisch, Menz, & Ambos, 2015; Menz et al., 2015).

However, recent changes in corporations' internal and external environments challenge extant knowledge about the CHQ and call for new research. First, the changing nature of modern corporations (Davis, 2016) suggests a need to rethink the roles and functions of the CHQ. For example, blurring firm boundaries and the rise of ecosystems can be expected to influence the nature and design of the CHQ. Second, novel CHQ forms are emerging, such as more dispersed and disaggregated CHQ, second homes, and even virtual headquarters. Finally, as technologies, automation, and artificial intelligence are increasingly penetrating businesses, we have to rethink the nature of CHQ work. For example, while information technology can be expected to reduce information-processing costs, it also enables the CHQ to take on new tasks, such as data analytics. In sum, these examples illustrate the need for a collective effort to revisit the functioning and design of the CHQ in the modern corporation.

Aims and scope

Given these developments, the purpose of this *Journal of Organization Design* Special Collection is to shed new light on the design of the CHQ, especially with regard to different CHQ types, changes in the CHQ's design, and whether and why the CHQ is necessary. Ultimately, these insights will help advance our understanding of the nature and functioning of corporations in the 21st century. Possible research questions falling into four broad themes that reflect the scope of this Collection include, but are not limited to, the following.

Formal and informal design

- What are the boundaries of the CHQ? For example, what explains the rise of new CHQ forms (e.g., virtual CHQs, dispersed CHQs)?
- How do firms define CHQ subunits, and how do subunits affect innovation and strategic change? For example, which strategic, structural, and other factors affect decisions to locate a specific function (e.g., HR, IT, marketing, and strategy) in the CHQ?
- What interfaces do CHQs have (i.e., internal and external linkages)? What do such interfaces look like? What makes them more or less effective? For examples, what interfaces do CHQs have with other HQ layers such as regional or divisional HQ?
- How are formal and informal designs related? For example, how do CHQ structures affect CHQ attention, incentives, collaboration, cognition, and decisions?
- How are CHQ design, corporate strategy and location related? For example, how does CHQ design affect corporate strategy and strategic change? How do location choices affect CHQ designs?

People and staffing

- Who are the key actors at the CHQ? For example, to what extent has the "C-suite" changed (i.e. rise of CSO, CMO positions)?
- How and why are some career paths or experiences more suitable for preparing an executive for a CHQ position than others? For example, what are the (e.g., demographic and psychological) characteristics of CHQ managers and staff in general? Do they differ from those of managers and staff in the operating units? If so, how?
- What are the requirements for a CHQ position (as opposed to a line-management position), and how do those requirements affect the selection and development of candidates? Specifically, is a CHQ position a career springboard or a dead-end?
- How do various actors at the CHQ influence organizational outcomes, such as corporate strategy (i.e., M&A) and strategic change? For example, how do differences in the backgrounds of CHQ executives affect decisions regarding the design of the CHQ?
- To what extent have staffing and roles at the CHQ changed over time (e.g., strategic planners)?

Tools and practices

- What kinds of tools and practices are in place at the CHQ? For example, what is the role of benchmarking and best practices?
- How are CHQ tools and practices developed? How are they maintained? Do they have a tendency to deteriorate over time?
- In what ways do CHQ structures and staffing affect the adoption of tools and practices? For example, which biases of CHQ actors influence the adoption of certain tools and practices?
- Which kinds of tools and practices are more suitable in certain situations? For example, when do firms use corporate programs and/or strategic initiatives to formulate and implement corporate strategies?
- What are the relationships between various tools and various outcomes? For example, how does strategic planning and forecasting affect decision making?

Technology and resources

- How do technology and automation change the nature and design of the CHQ? For example, what new CHQ designs are made possible by new technologies?
- How do technology and automation affect tasks at the CHQ? For example, how does technology affect information processing or resource-allocation decisions at the CHQ?
- In what ways and with what consequences does technology supplement or complement CHQ staff?
- In what ways does CHQ staffing affect the adoption of technologies? For example, which biases of CHQ actors influence the adoption of technology?
- In what ways does technology affect organizational outcomes? For example, how do new technologies affect the development of CHQ capabilities? How does technology enable the CHQ to create and capture value?

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