Crowdsourcing’s Impacts on Private Organisations’ Strategic Capabilities
Acknowledgements

This thesis was written by three students studying Business Administration in the third year of Bachelor level. It is the outcome of a two months research process with the aim of achieving a Bachelor’s degree. The research subject has been freely chosen by the students according to their preferences and interests in the field of Business Administration.

It was the authors’ intention to broaden knowledge and research about crowdsourcing as a business process and therefore they took the opportunity to elaborate on this still relatively unknown phenomenon within their Bachelor’s thesis.

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Abstract

The following Bachelor’s thesis explores the different uses of crowdsourcing by private organisations and analyses them internally, in terms of strategic capabilities. The purpose of this Bachelor’s thesis is to show the reader the different internal strategic issues resulting from the use of crowdsourcing by private organisations. The authors focused namely on crowd creation, crowdfunding and crowd voting through three private organisations using one of these types respectively in their business processes. The qualitative research was conducted through a multiple case study design and through interviews for the primary data collection. The results from the research varied from case to case. Firstly, the Ricola case has shown that crowd creation can especially have impacts on its physical strategic capabilities. Secondly, La Biscuiterie Jeannette’s case has indicated that crowdfunding strongly impacts its financial strategic capabilities. Thirdly, the case of Schneider has enabled to highlight on the one hand the growing importance of crowd voting and on the other hand that crowd voting had no major impacts on its strategic capabilities, yet. Finally, this research intended to give inspiration to other researchers into the field of crowdsourcing and its three subtypes. Therefore, this thesis can be a basis for further researches in this field.

Keywords
Crowdsourcing
Crowd Creation
Crowdfunding
Crowd Voting
Private Organisations
Strategic Capabilities
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1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to give general insights of the chosen subject of investigation as well as its relevance based upon a literature review.

“...the world is becoming too fast, too complex and too networked for any company to have all the answers inside.” - Yochai Benkler, Professor at Harvard Law Business School and author of “The Wealth of Networks” (2006)

1.1. Background

Following the quotation of Yochai Benkler mentioned in the beginning of the Introduction, the growing importance of innovative business processes for private organisations including external factors for solving tasks becomes clear. Crowdsourcing is a relatively young term in business research as it was first mentioned by Howe in the year 2006 in an article published in the American business magazine “Wired” (Brabham, 2011). According to Howe (2009), crowdsourcing refers to “[...] the act of a company or institution taking a function once performed by employees and outsourcing it to an undefined network of people in the form of an open call” (cited in Danish Crowdsourcing, 2015, n.p.). Further, “The growth of the Internet and the changes in consumers from being silent to being active have enabled private individuals to become contributors in crowdsourcing initiatives” (Beugré & Das 2013, p.22). Supported by the extremely fast development and growth of the Internet, crowdsourcing became a commonly used term in scientific literature as well as practically used in private organisations. Today, crowdsourcing is an established way of conducting business which can be described as a special option of outsourcing by using information technologies to allocate internal organisational tasks to a crowd (Bynum, 2013 and Prpić et al., 2015). The phenomenon of the crowd for the realisation of projects has already existed for years, but since the development of the Internet, crowdsourcing achieved a new dimension. Very often the crowd is an online community which is reached via the Internet. The aim of private organisations is to let the crowd actively participate in the value chain by getting data, information or anything else. (Bynum, 2013). Another characteristic of crowdsourcing is that it can be used as an inexpensive

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model for realising projects because it is very common for the individuals taking part in the crowdsourcing process to help voluntarily. However, there are also cases in which individuals get paid for their work they do in the crowdsourcing process. (Bynum, 2013). Since crowdsourcing is mostly conducted via the Internet, the individuals can take part in the crowdsourcing process from wherever they are geographically spread and whenever it suits for them best (Bynum, 2013). In general, crowdsourcing can be used by various types of organisations, institutions, individuals or academic research.

Bynum (2013) structured crowdsourcing as the following four types, *crowd creation*, *crowdfunding*, *crowd voting* and *crowd searching*. Each of these four different types of crowdsourcing is characterised in its own way.

Crowd creation might be described as co-creation which refers to “[...] a theory of interactions. It involves changing the way the organization interacts with individuals, including employees, customers or any stakeholder” (Gouillart, 2010, n.p.). Further, co-creation describes the phenomenon when individuals engage themselves in the value chain process of an organisation (Gouillart, 2010). Williams (2013) proposed its definition of crowd creation as “The act of bringing consumer and/or customers into the product, service or experience development process, through which mutual value is created for both parties” (n.p). Therefore, the purpose of co-creation is to use the creativity and energy of many people, so that it influences their individual experience as well as the economic situation of the organisation that enabled it (Gouillart, 2010). One example of crowd creation can be shown by McDonalds’ MyBurger campaign, where McDonalds asks the crowd online to create new variations of burgers in order to get new inspirations and even to add the best ones to their burger portfolio (McDonalds, 2015).

Crowdfunding can be explained as the phenomenon when an individual or an organisation introduces his/its project or idea to the public in order to collect money for financing this project and realising it. In this way, the collector hopes to get small amounts of money from many contributors for reaching the required sum of money. (Bynum, 2013). Mostly, crowdfunding takes place on online websites such as “gofoundme.com”, “kickstarter.com” or “indiegogo.com”. These websites give on the one hand individuals or organisations the opportunity to post an insertion for
introducing their projects or ideas they need money for, and on the other hand the opportunity for potential contributors to donate money (Crowdfunding, 2015).

Another type of crowdfunding being introduced in this thesis is crowd voting. This is a very popular way of crowdfunding which is characterised through the fact that the crowd is used to judge anything asked for (Bynum, 2013). Crowd voting is used by many online shops like “amazon.com”, “zalando.com” or “schneider.de” where customers are asked to leave an after sales rating for the product or seller. In this connection, crowdfunding also increases the transparency of marketplaces through customer reviews and rating websites. Further, according to the current development and growth of the Internet and e-commerce businesses, the new transparency crowdfunding offers has great potential for private organisations to generate brand trust because traditional ways like advertising on television or in newspapers is becoming nowadays less relevant. (Business Spectator, 2015)

The fourth type of crowdsourcing is crowd searching, which represents the event when the crowd is used to “[...] ascertain the location of a missing item or individual” (Bynum, 2013, n.p.). An example for crowd searching can be “Twitter” which has an own channel where people can tweet when they lost or found something. Additionally, crowd searching can also appear in the simple way of getting answers from the crowd to questions as in the case of the online platform “reddit.com”.

Further, researches support the strength of skills achieved through crowdsourcing by showing that collective knowledge of different people very often shows greater potential than just the knowledge of one individual. One simple example is “[...] if one collective member knows that “x > y” and another that “y > z”, then together they also know that “x > z” (Maleszka & Nguyen, 2015, p.332). This phenomenon, when intelligence emerges from the cooperation of many individuals, is called collective intelligence and can be used in crowdsourcing.

Following the definitions mentioned above, crowdsourcing can be used as a driver for innovation by private organisations thanks to the development of the new Internet era.

In the context of crowdsourcing it is also important to mention innovation and its management. Johnson et al. (2014, p.296) see innovation as “[...] the conversion of new
knowledge into a new product, process or service and the putting of this new product, process or service into actual use”. If managers realise the right timing of accepting and introducing innovation into their organisations, they could make use of the first mover advantages of the innovation (Johnson et al., 2014). The “[...] first mover advantage exists where an organization is better off than its competitors as a result of being first to market with a new product, process or service” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.308). To conclude, making use of the first mover advantages could lead to competitive advantage. So, innovation is an essential factor in today’s business to create value for organisations and also for customers and it is the manager’s duty to be aware of the chance to use crowdsourcing as a potential driver for innovation leading to competitive advantage for the organisation (Johnson et al., 2014).

The way of implementation of innovation into an organisation’s business process is called the innovation management. According to Birkinshaw et al. (2008) the innovation management is defined as the “[...] invention and implementation of a management practice, process, structure, or technique that is new to the state of the art and is intended to further organizational goals” (p.825). The final outcome of using innovation is dependent on the innovation management because of the tight “[...] relationship between business strategy, innovation, and organizational performance” (Flynn, 2008, n.p.). Hence, innovation can have a positive influence on an organisation’s economic success and market share. As a consequence of this, innovation can also be an important key factor for achieving competitive advantages as well in growing markets as in mature markets (Flynn, 2008 and Stalk, 2006). By applying crowdsourcing to the theory of innovation management, the implementation of crowdsourcing into the organisation can be characterised as an innovation process because it “[...] involves the implementation of a new or significantly improved product [...]” (Flynn, 2008, n.p.).

Researches have shown that different management actions have impacts on the outcome of organisations (Hvidman & Andersen, 2014). Especially, private organisations’ success is dependent on the implementation of innovation through management actions. And therefore crowdsourcing can become an important supportive factor for private organisations. Private organisations are per definition “[...] any person, partnership,
corporation, association or agency which is not a public body that is operated for profit” (Definitions Uslegal, 2015, n.p.).

To stay attractive on the market, private organisations need to sustain a competitive advantage through a well-defined strategy, which is defined as “[...] the long-term direction of an organisation.” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.3), where long-term refers to a period over several years and direction to the organisation’s objectives (Johnson et al., 2014). An organisation can achieve long-term survival or competitive advantage through strategic capabilities, according to the resource-based view of strategy. Indeed, strategic capabilities consist of two sub-concepts, namely resources and competences, where the resources are what an organisation has in terms of physical, financial and human resources, and competences how an organisation uses the resources effectively. (Johnson et al., 2014)

### 1.2. Problem Discussion

Having already introduced crowdsourcing in its four different types, it becomes clear that this innovative phenomenon does not only entail advantages, it also entails disadvantages which both need to be elaborated on. Several researches have engaged in the debate about crowdsourcing’s positive as well as negative aspects.

Very often, small tasks are outsourced to the crowd which would normally involve a large amount of work but can be easily accomplished by the crowd (Howe, 2009) since crowdsourcing offers comparable easy access to a large scale of workforce from geographically independent locations, as well as the flexibility in time (Bynum, 2013). According to Aquino (2013, p.33), “The lack of face-to-face communication and research could undermine the quality of the work [...]”. However, crowdsourcing enables private organisations to perform tasks at a low cost (Aquino, 2013). Although, when involving the crowd, a task or problem is given to a large number of non-experts, which could lead to weak results on a non-specialist level but some researchers also mention that the sum of the individual responses “[...] generally converge with those assigned by experts” (McAllister et al., 2015, p.71). Poetz and Schreier (2012) say that user’s generated ideas may even score higher than professionals’ ideas in terms of novelty and customer benefit, thus offering a valuable source of new knowledge. Further, according to the Pareto principle, 80% of the data gathered is useless which
means that when the crowd gets involved in crowdsourcing initiatives, many of the contributions given by the crowd will represent information of little value or no relevance (Estellés, 2011 and Reh, 2005). Obviously, all information must be filtered, which means significant time cost. However, supporters of crowdsourcing state that “[...] harnessing the knowledge of multiple individuals, who possess different knowledge and experiences, produces better, more accurate data” (Bynum, 2013, n.p.). Though, other critics of crowdsourcing also mention that there is a risk of decreasing quality and accuracy of projects by using crowdsourcing (Bynum, 2013). Additionally, crowdsourcing as a marketing tool can be very powerful as its best use is to listen to the market and audience, and therefore it can decrease the “time to market” (Aquino, 2013). Also the resources accessed from the crowd can be to garner new ideas and to be better able to respond to customer needs (Kosonen et al., 2013). Finally, crowdsourcing can be seen “[...] as an online, distributed problem-solving model [...which...] can help organizations develop solutions to a variety of business challenges” (Prpić et al., 2015, p.78).

Taking advantages and disadvantages of crowdsourcing into consideration as introduced in the outset, it is still questionable whether or not managers are able to use crowdsourcing in its most effective way. By using crowdsourcing, private organisations are able to get access to new resources (Prpić et al. 2015). In this way, it is obvious that crowdsourcing can enable private organisations to get access to assets or skills of people. Making effective use of the resources is an important competence that organisations and their management need to own (Johnson et al., 2014). Indeed, according to Gebauer (2011), managers need to make use of innovation management in order to achieve competitive advantage. So, researches have shown that if managers are able to recognise the potential and possibilities crowdsourcing offers, it can have a relevant influence on a private organisation’s ability to reach previously inaccessible resources to gain competitive advantage towards others (Prpić et al., 2015). However, according to Malhotra and Majchrzak (2014) organisations still have a great lack of using crowdsourcing effectively. This can be explained by the fact that many managers are afraid of using crowdsourcing “[...] because they do not understand how its various types can add value to the firm” (Prpić et al., 2015, p.77). Malhotra and Majchrzak (2014) also support that the implementation of innovation fails in many organisations which stops the process of gaining competitive advantage. As the concept of
crowdsourcing is still maturing so far, it brings with it some challenges that organisations need to face. Also, since crowdsourcing is a fairly new way of outsourcing, it requires new methods of management regarding workers, or contributors, and the resources produced which might require time and money (Business Spectator, 2015). Researches have shown that private organisations can raise their value by improving their resources and competences, defined as the major components of strategic capabilities. The identification of these two sub-concepts applied through three of the four types of crowdsourcing studied independently, which are crowd creation, crowdfunding and crowd voting stand in the focus on the further research of this thesis.

1.3. Purpose
The purpose of this thesis is to examine how private organisations’ strategic capabilities can be impacted by crowdsourcing in its three segments, namely crowd creation, crowdfunding and crowd voting, in order to show the reader the strategic issues of the use of crowdsourcing in a business process.

1.4. Research Question
Which impacts on private organisations’ strategic capabilities can crowdsourcing have?

1.5. Limitations and Delimitations
Several aspects concerning the limitations and delimitations of this research need to be taken into consideration. Firstly, the research process was limited to a time frame of two months provided by the external instructions for the elaboration of this Bachelor’s thesis. Secondly, due to the geographical location and the cost restraint of the authors, the research method process was limited. Further, the research process was delimited by the authors to only take private organisations into consideration which are already using crowdsourcing in their business process. This has helped, giving relevant examples of the adaptation of crowdsourcing. Therefore, crowd searching as one type of crowdsourcing did not meet the requirement in terms of the studied subject, the private organisations. Indeed, crowd searching by its definition, involves the crowd to ascertain the location of a missing item or individual. But the purpose of this involvement might not be profit-based, since it results in no added value to any private organisation.
2. Theoretical Framework

In this section, the theoretical relevance of the research previously brought in light will be deeper elaborated on, in order to have the sufficient theoretical knowledge for the purpose of this thesis.

The term strategy, which will be used throughout this thesis, is defined according to Johnson et al. (2014) as the long term direction of an organisation. The strategy of an organisation is influenced by the external and internal environment. By analysing organisations within the same external environment, the internal environment is crucial for the performance of an organisation (Johnson et al., 2014). This performance can be analysed through each organisation’s specific strategic capability in terms of the resources and competences they own. The terms of resources and competences are discussed quite controversially in business strategy (Ray & Ramakrishnan, 2006). The strategic capabilities are defined as “[...] the capabilities of an organization that contribute to its long-term survival or competitive advantage” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.70). Furthermore, according to Johnson et al. (2014), strategic capabilities are narrowed down to the sub concepts of resources and competences. As resources and competences are crucial ingredients of this research, precise definitions of these terms are elaborated in the following sections.

2.1. Resources

Resources are defined as “[...] the tangible and intangible assets of a firm which can be drawn upon by the firm when required to achieve its objective(s).” according to Ray and Ramakrishnan (2006, p.4). As shown in Table 1 Components of Strategic Capabilities below, the resources of an organisation could consist of physical- (for example machinery, patents, products or buildings), human- (for example managers, employees, suppliers or customers) and financial assets (for example cash flow or balance sheet) (Johnson et al., 2014). The competences describe the ability of an organisation to use the resources effectively in a way that they set them apart from the organisation’s competitors (Hall, 1992).

In the context of strategic capabilities the concept of the resource-based view needs to be brought in light, because it is an important paradigm of strategic management research of the last years (Ray and Ramakrishnan, 2006). “The resource-based view
(RBV) is a model that sees resources as a key to superior firm performance” (Rothaermel, 2012, p.5). This means, an organisation needs to do an internal analysis of its resources to find the sources which could lead to competitive advantage (Jurevicius, 2013), because the resources are the core concept of the resource-based view (Wernerfelt, 1984).

The table below shows the division of strategic capabilities into resources and competences in terms of physical, financial and human resources and competences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic capability</th>
<th>Resources: what we have (nouns), e.g.</th>
<th>Competences: what we do well (verbs), e.g.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Machines, buildings, raw materials, products, patents, databases, computer systems</td>
<td>Ways of achieving utilisation of plant, efficiency, productivity, flexibility, marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Balance sheet, cash flow, suppliers of funds</td>
<td>Ability to raise funds and manage cash flows, debtors, creditors, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Managers, employees, partners, suppliers, customers</td>
<td>How people gain and use experience, skills, knowledge, build relationships, motivate others and innovate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Components of Strategic Capabilities** (Johnson et al., 2014, p.71)

2.1.1. Physical Resources

The physical resources of an organisation can be defined as the assets of an organisation that are tangible such as machines, buildings, raw materials, products or inventory (Johnson et al., 2014). Regarding the strategic capabilities that physical resources might bring to an organisation, it has been said that “Physical resources can easily be bought in the market so they confer little advantage to the companies in the long run because rivals can soon acquire the identical assets” (Jurevicius, 2013, n.p.). Therefore, physical resources can be seen as of lower importance compared to the human and financial
resources. Nonetheless, physical resources are essential for any organisation in the achievement of strategic capabilities and superior performance (Johnson et al., 2014).

2.1.2. **Financial Resources**

Financial resources are defined as “[...] the money that is available for a person or organization to spend” (Finance practitioner, 2009, n.p.). Throughout this thesis the financial resources are studied as the turnover which is defined as the sum of the products being sold within one period of time evaluated to the sales prices (Simon et al., 2015). The financial resources of an organisation are a key component of its strategic capabilities. The turnover as a component of the financial resources of an organisation determines and influences also the human and physical resources. Sufficient financial resources enable an organisation to strengthen its human resources by for example hiring talented and experienced people as well as its physical resources through the acquisition of various assets that can also lead to strategic capabilities. The financial resources of an organisation might be therefore considered as a key component of an organisation’s total resources since an organisation can build upon these resources the two others which are human and physical to acquire the required strategic capabilities. (Johnson et al., 2014)

2.1.3. **Human Resources**

The definition of human resources is distinguished in literature in two different ways. On the one hand, human resources are seen as the actual people who are working for an organisation (Tracey, 2004). Additionally, human resources include managers and employees which are involved in the organisational process. This definition categorises human resources as an object on the same level as financial or physical resources. On the other hand, human resources are also defined by the organisational function which concerns all activities with “[...] recruiting, managing, training, developing and rewarding people within the organization” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.84). The Business Dictionary (2015) defines human resources also as “The division of a company that is focused on activities relating to employees. These activities normally include recruiting and hiring of new employees, orientation and training of current employees, employee benefits, and retention” (n.p.). This way of defining human resources is in literature usually mentioned as the term human resources management. No matter how human
resources are defined, they always have a tight and direct relationship to the value chain of an organisation, because employees are directly involved in the organisational process, they even create organisational processes, and the recruitment of employees is responsible for the quality of the workforce they hire (Bowman & Swart, 2007). In this context it becomes clear that human resources belong to an organisation’s strategic capabilities, which could lead to competitive advantage for an organisation (Bowman & Swart, 2007). Compared to financial and physical resources, the human resources get a special position in the context of the resource-based view, as the human resources are usually neither purchasable nor tradable physical assets of an organisation (Barney, 1986 and Castanias & Helfat, 1991). This is based on the fact that it is quite easy for any organisation to get financial assets in terms of credits or anything. Additionally, physical assets like machinery or computers are also usually available for any competitor on the market, as well. But when it comes to “[...] valuable human resources, such as specially skilled or talented employees, or resources that take the form of tacit routines performed collectively by a group [...]” (Bowman & Swart, 2007, p.490), it becomes comparably difficult to imitate these assets.

2.2. Competences

Several authors have defined competences in various ways. Selznick (1957) defined competences as “[...] an organization’s peculiar adaptation to its own special purposes and programs” (cited in Ray & Ramakrishnan, 2006, p.4). The view of competences has continuously changed since the last sixty years. So stated Andrews (1971) that “[...] competence is what an organization can do particularly well” (cited in Ray & Ramakrishnan, 2006, p.4). Here, the focus is for the first time more on the skills of an organisation. Further, according to Prahalad and Hamel (1990) competences can also be seen “[...] as the integration of the skills and techniques, especial knowledge, experience and technology a company possesses” (cited in Yang, 2013, p.175). Hall (1992) mentioned that “[...] the knowhow of employees and other stakeholders and the collective aptitudes” (cited in Ray & Ramakrishnan, 2006, p.5) can be seen as competences. Further, Sanchez and Heene (1997) came out with competences as “[...] the ability of an organization to sustain coordinated deployments of resources in ways that promise to help that organization achieve its goals” (cited in Ray & Ramakrishnan, 2006, p.6). Following Johnson et al. (2014, p.70), “[...] competences are the ways [...] assets are used or deployed effectively”. The assets are in this context the resources a
private organisation has. An easier understanding of the differences between resources and competences can be achieved by asking ‘what an organisation has’ for finding resources and by asking ‘what an organisation is doing well’ for finding competences (Johnson et al., 2014). The Table 1 Components of Strategic Capabilities above shows clearly that the importance of competences is equally to the importance of resources. It is not only relevant for an organisation to own for example highly developed machineries (resources), it is also from the same relevance that an organisation has the knowledge to use its machineries in the most effective ways (competences). Thus, the whole concept of competences includes “[...] the systems and processes by which [resources] are managed, the relationships and cooperation between people, their adaptability, their innovative capacity, the relationship with customers and suppliers, and the experience and learning about what works well and what does not” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.71). In the following of this thesis these concepts of competences are used in context of analysing the strategic capabilities of each of the three cases.
3. Method
The purpose of this chapter is to define and explain the methodological concepts used throughout this research.

3.1. Qualitative Research
In order to answer the research question and the purpose of this thesis, the authors used qualitative research throughout the research process. Indeed, “Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.386). Also, for the purpose of this research, a qualitative approach has enabled to consider more details and diversity in the data collection than a quantitative approach, known as a distinctive research strategy. Three main features characterise the qualitative research, namely the inductive process, interpretivism and constructionism. (Bryman & Bell, 2011)

3.1.1. Inductive Theory
The inductive theory is the opposite of deduction where theory is the outcome of research. Indeed, in the process of deduction, the researcher, on the basis of what is known about a particular domain and of theoretical considerations in relation to that domain, deduces a hypothesis that must then be subjected to empirical scrutiny. So inductive theory involves drawing generalisable inferences out of observations. (Bryman & Bell, 2011). As explained in the problem discussion, the authors used the theory of strategic capabilities in order to examine on the three types of crowdsourcing. By applying this theory, the authors have chosen to use the inductive way by complementing prior researches on the effectiveness of crowdsourcing in private organisations.

3.1.2. Interpretivism
In this context interpretivism is used by the authors to conduct the research. Interpretivism is an epistemological position which stresses that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of natural sciences (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Epistemology concerns “[...] the question of what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline” and “[...] whether or not the social world can and should be studied according to the same principles, procedures, and ethos
as the natural sciences” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.15). Also, interpretivism relates to qualitative research which focuses on details, diversity, and changes (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

3.1.3. Constructionism
Social ontology is concerned with the nature of social entities. “The central point of orientation here is the question of whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have a reality external to social actors, or whether they can and should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors” (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p.20). Constructionism (also referred to as constructivism) is an ontological position which implies that social properties are outcomes of the interactions between individuals (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In other words, this position asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors.

3.2. Research Design
A research design “[...] is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data” (Dhawan, 2010, p.36). Knowing that the authors have previously structured crowdsourcing into three types, namely crowd creation, crowdfunding and crowd voting, and that the object of investigation are private organisations, the authors have chosen to conduct a multiple case study research design. Indeed, for the purpose of this research, three private organisations, each one using one type of crowdsourcing, have been individually studied through a case study. According to Yin (2009, p.42) “A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context [...]”. But while single-case studies can richly describe the existence of a phenomenon (Siggelkow, 2007), multiple-case studies typically provide a stronger base for theory building (Yin, 2014). Adding theoretical assumptions to existing theories from case studies is a research strategy that involves using one or more cases to create theoretical constructs, propositions and/or midrange theory from case-based, empirical evidence (Eisenhardt, 1989). The process of using cases as the basis from which to develop theory refers to induction (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007), as explained previously in the section 3.1.1 Inductive Theory. Also, according to
Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007), the findings are more accurate, more robust and more generalisable when they are based on multiple case experiments because the propositions are more deeply grounded in varied empirical evidence than in single-case studies.

The three private organisations studied in this thesis have been chosen following a theoretical sampling, which means that cases are selected because they are particularly suitable for illuminating and extending relationships and logic among constructs. Theoretical sampling was in this case appropriate since the purpose of this research is to add assumptions to theories and not to test them. (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Therefore, for the purpose of this research, the cases had to fulfill some criteria which are first to be a private organisation and second to use one type of crowdsourcing (crowd creation, crowdfunding or crowd voting). Thirdly, the three private organisations studied had to respectively use one type of crowdsourcing each, in order to get three different case studies. Finally, in order to achieve a variety and a broader perspective in the findings, and since the authors are French and German, the selections of the three private organisations have been mainly done within Europe.

Case studies are rich in information and involve empirical descriptions of particular instances of a phenomenon that are typically based on a variety of data sources (Yin, 2009).

3.3. Data Sources
Using a multiple case study design in a qualitative research can accommodate a rich variety of data sources, including interviews, ethnographies, and observations (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). According to Dhawan (2010), while deciding about the method of data collection to be used for the study, the researcher should keep in mind two types of data, primary and secondary.

3.3.1. Primary Data
Primary data is defined as one which is collected by the researcher himself for the purpose of a specific inquiry or study. The sources of primary data might be given through structured-, unstructured- or participant observation, interview and survey.
(Appannaiah et al., 2010). For the purpose of the research of this thesis and knowing that the authors have conducted a multiple case study design, the sources of primary data were given through interviews.

According to Trochim (2006), survey research encompasses any measurement procedures that involve asking questions of respondents. Two broad categories emerge from survey research, which are interviews and questionnaires. Interviews are characterised by asking open-ended questions whereas questionnaires by closed-ended questions (Trochim, 2006). And according to Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) interviews are a highly efficient way to gather rich and empirical data. Therefore, the data collection of this thesis has been conducted through interviews.

Interview may be defined as “[…] a systematic conversation initiated for a specific purpose and focused on certain planned content areas, it is not a simple two-way conversation between an investigator and an informant” (Appannaiah et al., 2010, p.108). There are two forms of qualitative interviewing, which are unstructured and semi-structured interviewing (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The unstructured qualitative interview is when the researcher uses no specific procedures, where there could be a single question from the interviewer, and the interviewee is allowed to answer freely (Bryman & Bell, 2011). According to Burgess (1984), unstructured interviewing tends to be very similar in character to a conversation. The semi-structured qualitative interviewing is when the researcher has an interview guide but the interviewee is still free in the answering way (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In both cases, unstructured and semi-structured interviewing, the interviewer and the interviewee have flexibility in the conduction of the interview. Regarding the data collection for the purpose of this research, the questions asked to the interviewees were supported by the theoretical concepts previously developed in the chapter 2 *Theoretical Framework*. So the type of interview suiting the best to this research was the semi-structured one.

Furthermore, through the multiple case study, the interviewees have been actors within the chosen private organisations and had sufficient knowledge about the internal use of crowdsourcing in order to be able to answer properly the questions asked by the authors. Also, since the targeted private organisations were located in France, Germany and Switzerland, and the authors were physically located in Sweden, the interviews have
been conducted by phone, email and videoconference through the “Skype” engine. To
capture these primary data, the authors have recorded the phone and videoconference
interviews and translated the transcripts\(^2\) from the original language. Finally, the core
results of the interviews are presented in the Table 3 Ricola AG’s Interview Content
Based, Table 4 La Biscuiterie Jeannette 1850 SAS’s Interview Content Based and Table
5 Schneider Versand GmbH’s Interview Content Based in the chapter 4 Empirical
Investigation.

3.3.2. Secondary Data
Secondary data entail the use of primary data collected by other researchers, which can
be obtained through reports, publications, journals and websites (Appannaiah et al.,
2010). These types of data are being increasingly used due to the democratisation of
information and especially to the published data now available from various agencies
(Appannaiah et al., 2010). Furthermore, Appannaiah et al. (2010) state various
advantages of using secondary data, which are: the economy of expenditure, to
complete the research promptly, the use of secondary data as a basis for comparison
with the primary data found and finally the help for the researcher to formulate the
research problem. In the previous chapters of this thesis, the authors have already used
some secondary data in the form of scientific articles, books and websites in order for
the reader to get to know the main subject of the study as well as its issues. Also, the
existing literature brought in light previously has helped the authors designing the
purpose of this research. Finally, secondary data have been used again as a source of
data collection through journal articles, television interviews and through the official
websites of each of the three private organisations studied.

3.4. Source Criticism
As previously mentioned, the authors used several sources throughout the thesis. Hence,
it is important to be aware of the fact that not all information provided by secondary
data can be taken for granted. Indeed, a critical attention should be given to information
taken from websites which appear to be not scientific and could already be obsolete
because of the easy access of changing information in this channel. In order to confine

\(^2\) If the readers are interested in reading the whole transcripts of the interviews in original language or
English, they can formulate a request to the authors.
this source of information, the authors have added in the chapter 9 Reference List the date of access of all websites used. Further, information taken from private organisations’ websites are not objective because private organisations have an interest in making advertisement for themselves by showing them in the best light. Finally, journal articles need to be seen critically because they could also be written for a specific audience. Therefore, the content of journal articles could be limited to a certain level for a targeted audience.

3.5. Research Method

By definition, a research method is a technique for collecting data (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In order to make this technique effective, an operationalisation is necessary. Indeed, an operationalisation “[...] provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.40). Also, it is the process that is performed when abstract theories are broken down into useful empirical questions (Bryman & Bell, 2007). These empirical questions have been the ones asked to the actors (interviewees) within the chosen private organisations during the interviews and were based on the theoretical concepts from the chapter 2 Theoretical Framework of this thesis. The operationalisation table of this research is shown in the following as Table 2 Operationalisation. Finally, an operationalisation is part of processes supporting the quality of this thesis.
## 1. Crowd Creation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Sub-concepts</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Theoretical definitions</th>
<th>Empirical questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Which Physical Resources does your organisation gain through crowd creation?</td>
<td>Physical Resources of an organisation are its tangible assets. (Johnson et al., 2014)</td>
<td>In which way has crowd creation influence on your tangible assets?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Which Financial Resources does your organisation gain through crowd creation?</td>
<td>Financial resources are the money that is available for an organisation to spend. (Finance practitioner, 2009)</td>
<td>In which way has crowd creation influence on your turnover?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Which Human Resources does your organisation gain through crowd creation?</td>
<td>Human Resources concern all activities with “[...] recruiting, managing, training, developing and rewarding people within the organization.” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.84)</td>
<td>In which way has crowd creation influence on your recruitment of employees? In which way has crowd creation influence on your training and development of employees?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competences</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Which Physical Competences does your organisation gain through crowd creation?</td>
<td></td>
<td>How do you manage the use of your physical resources, which you achieve through crowd creation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Which Financial Competences does your organisation gain through crowd creation?</td>
<td>“[...] competences are the ways [...] assets are used or deployed effectively” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.70)</td>
<td>How do you manage the use of the financial resources, which you achieve through crowd creation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Which Human Competences does your organisation gain through crowd creation?</td>
<td></td>
<td>How do you manage the use of your human resources, which you achieve through crowd creation?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2. Crowdfunding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
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<th>Questions</th>
<th>Theoretical definitions</th>
<th>Empirical questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Which Physical Resources does your organisation gain through crowdfunding?</td>
<td>Physical Resources of an organisation are its tangible assets. (Johnson et al., 2014)</td>
<td>In which way has crowdfunding influence on your tangible assets?</td>
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<td>In which way has crowdfunding influence on your recruitment of employees?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In which way has crowdfunding influence on your training and development of employees?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competences</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Which Physical Competences does your organisation gain through crowdfunding?</td>
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<td>How do you manage the use of your physical resources, which you achieve through crowdfunding?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Which Financial Competences does your organisation gain through crowdfunding?</td>
<td></td>
<td>How do you manage the use of the financial resources, which you achieve through crowdfunding?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Which Human Competences does your organisation gain through crowdfunding?</td>
<td></td>
<td>How do you manage the use of your human resources, which you achieve through crowdfunding?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 3. Crowd Voting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Sub-concepts</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Theoretical definitions</th>
<th>Empirical questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Which Physical Resources does your organisation gain through crowd voting?</td>
<td>Physical Resources of an organisation are its tangible assets. (Johnson et al., 2014)</td>
<td>In which way has crowd voting influence on your tangible assets?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial</td>
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<td>In which way has crowd voting influence on your turnover?</td>
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<td>Competences</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Which Physical Competences does your organisation gain through crowd voting?</td>
<td>“[...] competences are the ways [...] assets are used or deployed effectively” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.70)</td>
<td>How do you manage the use of your physical resources, which you achieve through crowd voting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Which Financial Competences does your organisation gain through crowd voting?</td>
<td></td>
<td>How do you manage the use of the financial resources, which you achieve through crowd voting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Which Human Competences does your organisation gain through crowd voting?</td>
<td></td>
<td>How do you manage the use of your human resources, which you achieve through crowd voting?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Operationalisation (owned by the authors)
3.6. Reaching Reliability and Validity in the Study

Reliability and validity are two crucial criteria for the quality in business research (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

According to Terre Blanche et al. (2006), the term reliability refers to the dependability of a measurement instrument, which is the extent to which the instrument yields the same results on repeated trials. Also, reliability “[…] is commonly used in relation to the question of whether or not the measures that are devised for concepts in businesses and management (such as team working, employee motivation, organizational effectiveness) are consistent” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.41). Using an operationalisation gave this thesis reliability as any other researchers are able to conduct the same primary data collection for a multiple case study design targeted to private organisations.

Validity is concerned with “[…] whether or not a measure of a concept […] really measures that concept” (Bryman & Bell, p.159). Bryman and Bell (2011) further expand on the concept of validity by maintaining that it “[…] refers to whether you are observing, identifying, or measuring what you say you are” (p.395). The theoretical ideas developed by researchers conducting a study and their observations must be good matches, which relates to the internal validity of the study. In other words, there must be a good fit between the data analysed and the theories proposed. It is generally viewed as the “strength of qualitative research” due to the extensive participation a researcher takes in the social life of an observed group and ensures that a “[…] high level of congruence between concepts and observations […]” is met (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.395). In this thesis internal validity was met by choosing private organisations already using crowdsourcing in their business process (see chapter 4 Empirical Investigation). Also, crowdsourcing was previously discussed as being a potential competitive tool for private organisations and hence has been chosen to be analysed in the context of strategic capabilities. Finally, external validity is concerned with the level of generalisation findings can have (Bryman & Bell, 2011). By using a multiple case study as a research design for the purpose of this thesis, the authors were aware of the vulnerability to criticism regarding limited generalisation of their findings (Mookherji & LaFond, 2013). Indeed, as mentioned in the section 1.5 Limitations and Delimitations, the authors had a time constraint which limited their research to intensively focus on three different cases. Hence, a generalisation of the findings was
not possible, because the private organisations chosen as primary sources of empirical data could not reflect any other private organisation from another geographical or economical context.

3.7. Data Analysis

Grounded theory is one of the most widely used qualitative data analysis framework due to the publication of “The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research” by Barney and Anselm (1967). Although this theory has known several critics, it is still the most quoted book in social science (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Grounded theory implies several tools to be used in qualitative data analysis. First of all, the key process of grounded theory is coding, in which data are broken down into named components parts (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Charmaz (2000) explained this process in the following sentence: “We grounded theorists code our emerging data as we collect it… Unlike quantitative research that requires data to fit into preconceived standardized codes, the researcher’s interpretations of data shape his or her emergent codes in grounded theory” (p.515). The second step of grounded theory refers to the collection of data (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In this thesis, the authors have followed the process of coding the data collected by the three private organisations studied. Finally, the constant comparison is an aspect of the grounded theory that refers to the process of maintaining a close connection between data and conceptualisation so that the correspondence between concepts and categories with their indicators is not lost (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The data that the authors have gathered along the multiple case study were, according to the constant comparison process, compared with the components of strategic capabilities, elaborated on previously in chapter 2 Theoretical Framework.

Further, through the different interviews conducted and their records, the authors were able to gather a large amount of data in terms of words. In this context, a content analysis seemed appropriate since it is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories (Weber, 1990). Therefore, three tables showing the core results of the primary data collected through the three interviews have been designed in chapter 4 Empirical Investigation. This method helped the authors being consistent throughout the whole process from the data collection to the analysis.
3.8. Ethical Considerations

Since the authors of this thesis have collected primary data through interviews, and hence got in contact with participants for the purpose of this research, it is important to mention that the authors have conducted their research in accordance with the following ethical principles. Ethical principles in business research have been broken down into four main areas by Diener and Crandall (1978) as follows. The first area is harm to participants which can entail physical harm, harm to participants’ development or self-esteem, stress, harm to career prospects or future employment. The second ethical principle is the lack of informed consent which appears when there is a disguised or covert observation in which the researcher’s true identity is unknown. Thirdly, the invasion of privacy principle stipulates that the objectives of any study do not give the researcher a special right to introduce on a respondent’s privacy nor to abandon normal respect for an individual’s values. Finally, the fourth ethical principle according to Diener and Crandall (1978) is deception which occurs when researchers represent their research as something other than what it is.
4. Empirical Investigation

In this section, the backgrounds of the three studied private organisations respectively using one type of crowdsourcing are given followed by the tables showing the data collected through the interviews.

4.1. Ricola AG, a Private Organisation using Crowd Creation

4.1.1. Background

The authors were able to conduct an interview with a manager of Ricola AG (Ricola) who wished to stay anonymous. This private organisation has been chosen as an interview partner because of its “Ricola Limited Edition 2015” project designed through the platform “jovoto.com”, where the private organisation asked the community to create an attractive design for a limited edition of the Ricola herb drops packaging design, available to buy in 2016. This challenge has been made attractive by offering a prize pool of 18.000€. As a result, 495 ideas of designs have been created which were then scrutinised by a jury in order to reward the best designs. ((a) Ricola 2015 Jovoto, 2015). At the beginning of this thesis, crowd creation has been defined as “The act of bringing consumer and/or customers into the product, service or experience development process, through which mutual value is created for both parties” (Williams, 2013, n.p.). Therefore, Ricola, through its “Ricola Limited Edition 2015” project fits exactly to the requirements of the research purpose of this thesis, to study a private organisation using crowd creation. The winning design of the packaging is shown in Picture 2: Ricola Limited Edition 2015 in chapter 8 Appendix.

Ricola is a global and innovative manufacturer of herb drops. The private organisation has a broad product range of forty different herb drops and teas and exports them to over fifty countries. It is a family-run company created in the 1930s by Emil Richterich in Laufen, Switzerland, where it has now established its headquarter. Today, the global private organisation employs over four hundred employees worldwide. (Ricola, 2015)
Besides selling a variety of herb drops and teas, Ricola also ensures a high quality of its products by agreeing fixed long-term contracts with self-managed farms in the Valais, Emmental, Poschiavo, the Jura Mountains and in Central Switzerland. Herb cultivation is based on rigorous observation of natural practices using bio-sensitive products and without any use of pesticides, insecticides or herbicides. (Ricola, 2015)

Ricola operates in the business to consumer sector. The private organisation has neither direct sales nor factory sales outlets opened to individuals. Its products are only available to purchase through its recognised sales partners, which only sell products to the wholesale trade in the relevant country and have no direct retail outlets. (Ricola, 2015)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Capabilities</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Core Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Resources</strong></td>
<td>In which way has crowd creation influenced on your tangible assets?</td>
<td>- The new design of the packaging, which has been created through the crowd creation award, will be used for a new box. - The new box will not be produced by Ricola itself, it will be bought externally. - The new box will only be filled with bonbons, by already existing production machines. - It is a new product format which is going to be launched on the market. - The herb drops inside the can are going to have different flavours which is completely new for Ricola. - The new product is going to be a limited version and is not going to stay on the product range. - They are planning to do further limited editions packaging with the help of crowd creation projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Competences</strong></td>
<td>How do you use effectively your physical resources, which you achieve through crowd creation?</td>
<td>- The already existing machinery and equipment is going to be used and should be working to full capacity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Resources</strong></td>
<td>In which way has crowd creation influenced on your turnover?</td>
<td>- Ricola cannot give any information about this, so far. This is caused by the fact that they are still in the process of this project. - Ricola has been able to get a lot of designs through the crowdsourcing project on Jovoto but the final product will be released in 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Competences</strong></td>
<td>How do you use effectively your financial resources, which you achieve through crowd creation?</td>
<td>- Ricola is planning to directly invest the through crowdsourcing generated financial resources into new crowdsourcing projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Resources</strong></td>
<td>In which way has crowd creation influenced on your recruitment of employees?</td>
<td>- Crowd creation has no further influence on the recruitment of employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In which way has crowd creation influenced on your training and development of employees?</td>
<td>- Crowd creation has no further influence on the recruitment of employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Competences</strong></td>
<td>How do you manage the effective use of your human resources, which you achieve through crowd creation?</td>
<td>- As crowd creation has no further influence on the recruitment of the employees they cannot say anything about that. - In general, Ricola offers on-the-job trainings for employees. Every employee can do specific on-the-job trainings in his/her field. - Employees have an opportunity to learn different things which are completely new. - If a new product comes which is going to be launched on the market, the new board will be filled with benches by people having production knowledge. - The new box will not be produced by Ricola itself. It will be bought externally. - The new design of the packaging, which has been created through the crowd creation campaign, will be used for a new box.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2. La Biscuiterie Jeannette 1850 SAS, a Private Organisation using Crowdfunding

4.2.1. Background

La Biscuiterie Jeannette 1850 SAS (La Biscuiterie Jeannette) has been chosen as a case for this research, because Georges Viana was able to raise funds through crowdfunding in order to save La Biscuiterie Jeannette. At the beginning of this thesis, crowdfunding has been defined as the phenomenon when an individual or an organisation introduces his/its project or idea to the public in order to collect money for financing this project and realising it (Bynum, 2013). Hence, the act of saving La Biscuiterie Jeannette through crowdfunding fits exactly to the requirements of the research purpose of this thesis, to study a private organisation using crowdfunding.

La Biscuiterie Jeannette was founded in 1850 by the baker M. Mollier and L. Jeannette. This private organisation produces and sells madeleines, which is a typical French biscuit made of eggs, butter, sugar, milk, flour and vanilla with a specific shape (see chapter 8 Picture 1 Madeleines from La Biscuiterie Jeannette). The positioning of La Biscuiterie Jeannette on the market is in the qualitative product segment with the use of high quality raw materials and a strong local identity. Since its incorporation, La Biscuiterie Jeannette has known a strong growth mostly on the French market and has expanded its product range significantly. (Biscuiterie Jeannette 1850, 2015)

In December 2013 La Biscuiterie Jeannette filed for bankruptcy and the factory was about to be auctioned. Many employees who had been working for La Biscuiterie Jeannette for twenty, thirty and even forty years were threatened to lose their jobs. Twenty one of them took action to keep their working places by occupying the factory and by mediating the case (Mérouze, 2014 and Aizicovici, 2014). Indeed, many newspapers and TV channels have covered this case in France namely Le Monde, Le Figaro, BFMTV, Chef d’entreprise, Canal+ and France 3.

After one year of many attempts by investors and businessmen to takeover La Biscuiterie Jeannette, it is finally Georges Viana’s takeover offer that has been accepted by the Commercial Court of Caen (France) in November 2014 (La Tribune, 2014). Georges Viana is a 49 year old French entrepreneur who decided to conduct the ambitious project of relaunching La Biscuiterie Jeannette. Among the few projects that
have been presented, Georges Viana’s one is the only which includes a social chapter for the protection of employees, local identity and production. The project required an investment that Georges Viana was not able to afford alone. Therefore, he decided to use various sources of financing, especially crowdfunding. (Perroud, 2015). Finally, the Franco-Portuguese businessman has managed to raise, at last count, 100.882€ from 2076 donors to the revival of madeleines Jeannette via the crowdfunding website Bulbintown.com, launched in September 2014 (La Tribune, 2014).

The funds collected through crowdfunding came from various countries of different continents of the world, such as the United States, Australia, Singapore and South Korea (Aphatie, 2014). Also, according to Viana (2014), these funds will enable a leverage effect to persuade banks and other investors for future financing.
### Interview's Content Based Table

#### Table 4: La Biscuiterie Jeannette 1850 SAS's Interview Content Based

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Capabilities</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Core Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Resources</td>
<td>- In which way has crowdfunding influence on your tangible assets?</td>
<td>- There were two crowdfunding campaigns: one of donations &amp; counterparties of more than 100,000€ and another one of equity of 200,000€. - The first collected funds were injected into the private organization's working capital and mainly invested in the production line in order to start the production and invest in equipment. - There is a wish of opening outlets but in a second phase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Competences</td>
<td>- How do you use effectively your physical resources, which you achieve through crowdfunding?</td>
<td>- 100% of the funds are dedicated to the recovery and therefore to investment. - Also, these funds are used at 100% and are therefore effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Resources</td>
<td>- In which way has crowdfunding influence on your turnover?</td>
<td>- La Biscuiterie Jeannette starts from scratch and is still on scratch. - The only turnover it has and that can be recognized today is that of crowdfunding because they did not produce, so far. - The crowdfunding funds will allow La Biscuiterie Jeannette at 100% to generate turnover because it is really starting up. So it is an increase in the turnover of 100%. - In the first year of activity, the turnover estimation would be between 600,000€ and 800,000€ of which 100,000€ are from the first crowdfunding campaign. - This forecast is only valid thanks to the funds raised through crowdfunding. - The 200,000€ from the second crowdfunding campaign will enter into the capital of the company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Competences</td>
<td>- How do you use effectively your financial resources, which you achieve through crowdfunding?</td>
<td>- No answer provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>- In which way has crowdfunding influence on your recruitment of employees? - In which way has crowdfunding influence on your training and development of employees?</td>
<td>- G. Viana took care of 90% of the processes of fundraising and additionally he worked with the teams from the platform. For the second fundraising campaign in equity he involved his lawyers and accountants. - At the resumption, there would be 15 employees and in five years he expects to have 50 employees. - Primarily the idea is to rehire the employees of La Biscuiterie Jeannette, but if there is a high demand in the coming years they will possibly also hire elsewhere. - The average age of the employees is 53 years and they are people who have a lot of experience. - This is why trainings will not be in the technical field but rather in the quality and to strengthen their positioning, the high end and luxury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Competences</td>
<td>- How do you manage the effective use of your human resources, which you achieve through crowdfunding?</td>
<td>- The working process is well described, the employees know how to work and who is holding the working places. - There will be a first running-in phase to fully develop these processes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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4.2.2. Interviews Content Based Table

La Biscuiterie Jeannette 1850 SAS's Interview Content Based (owned by the authors)
4.3. Schneider Versand GmbH, a Private Organisation using Crowd Voting

4.3.1. Background
The authors were able to conduct an interview with M. Schönherr, the Head of marketing of Schneider Versand GmbH (Schneider). This private organisation was chosen as an interview partner because it uses a product rating system in its webshop, where any customer can leave comments on the product, the quality, the shipment or anything else. The users are free to leave any comments on the product and rate it between zero and five stars for showing the customer’s satisfaction. At the beginning of this thesis, crowd voting has been defined as something which is characterised through the fact that the crowd is used to judge anything asked for (Bynum, 2013). Therefore, the product rating system of Schneider’s webshop fits exactly to the requirements of the research purpose of this thesis, to study a private organisation using crowd voting. The interview has especially aimed to connect crowd voting and the product rating system into one term.

Schneider is Europe’s biggest catalogue selling specialist in promotional items with its headquarter in Wedel near Hamburg. Heiner Schneider founded the company in 1965 and started with fifteen employees. Since then the private organisation has continuously grown and today Schneider employs around 700 employees. (Schneider, 2015). Schneider is a private organisation and belongs since 2014 to the Creatrade Holding (Creatrade holding, 2015).

The private organisation works as an international multi-channel supplier selling products through catalogues, web shops and wholesale trade. Schneider’s assortment of goods covers a broad range from promotion items, living, decoration, gardening, fashion, kitchen to finally bath and office products. (Schneider, 2015). Schneider operates explicitly in the business to business sector and it is specialised in the customisation of promotion items. Owning its own printing production makes Schneider able to print the customers’ logo, brand name or slogan on any type of promotion items. Further, the private organisation also sells any other products for example interior, furniture or lamps. Its core business used to be selling through catalogues, but through the fast development and growth of the Internet during the last decades, the webshop, which is available at “schneider.de”, became increasingly important for Schneider, as well. (Schneider, 2015).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Capabilities</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Core Answers</th>
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| Physical Resources     | In which way has crowd voting influence on your products and tangible assets? | - It is difficult to just rate crowd voting and to see the effect of the product rating system.  
- Many different factors need to be taken into account.  
- Product rating system has no influence on the products.  
- The amount of representative data is not sufficient yet.  
- The product range is changing very fast so that it does not make sense in certain cases to change the product.  
- The product rating system might become more important in future, when a greater amount of representative data of the product is available.  
- The product rating system has no influence on single products yet, but product categories are already rated with it. |
| Physical Competences   | How do you use effectively your physical resources, which you achieve through crowd voting? | - Purchasing agents check the product rating system in combination with selling and returning lists and decide in each single case what to do.  
- Products just need to be changed in very bad cases.  
- The product rating system is not as significant as it seems on the first impression, because a lot of other factors, which cannot be covered with the product rating system, need to be taken into account, too.  
- In future it might have more influence on the products. |
| Financial Resources    | In which way has crowd voting influence on your turnover? | - In no way, no significant changes in turnover have been noticed since the implementation of the product rating system.  
- Once enough representative data will be gathered, one will be able to react on the findings, which will surely have an influence on turnover. |
| Financial Competences  | How do you use effectively your financial resources, which you achieve through crowd voting? | - Yes, to keep the possibility to learn more about the products and to be able to make better decisions in future.  
- There are several options to combine crowd voting with customer loyalty for example by giving vouchers to customers who gave feedback.  
- Several plans include to combine crowd voting with customer loyalty for example by giving vouchers to customers who gave feedback.  
- In general, it is difficult to implement the use of the product rating system into the daily working process of the purchasing agents. |
| Human Resources        | In which way has crowd voting influence on your recruitment of employees? | - No influence on the recruitment and development of employees.  
- No new departments or employees hired which are concerned with the product rating system or were hired because of the product rating system.  
- Only a new individual operation has been implemented into the field of work of the purchasing agents.  
- No big influence on the training and development of employees. |
| Human Competences      | How do you manage the effective use of your human resources, which you achieve through crowd voting? | - No direct answer to this question could be given, because there is no change in the human resources based on crowd voting.  
- In general, it is difficult to implement the use of the product rating system into the daily working process of the purchasing agents. |

**Schneider Versand GmbH**

**4.3.2. Interview's Content Based Table**

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5. Analysis

This chapter will analyse the findings of the research through the primary and secondary data previously collected in the chapter 4 Empirical Investigation with the Theoretical Framework from the chapter 2 in order to answer to the research question of this thesis.

5.1. Ricola AG

5.1.1. Physical Resources and Competences

In the following section, the impacts of Ricola’s physical resources and competences through crowd creation are analysed. The physical resources of an organisation can be defined as the assets of an organisation that are tangible such as machines, buildings, raw materials, products or inventory (Johnson et al., 2014). Through its “Ricola Limited Edition 2015” project, Ricola has given the opportunity to the crowd to participate in the creation of a new packaging design for a new Ricola herb drops box expected to be launched in 2016. The packaging design chosen by the jury for the new box will be adapted to a new product format. This new box will be produced and bought externally and hence will not afford any investment in new machines, defined as tangible assets. However, the adaptation of the chosen packaging design to a new product format will broaden Ricola’s product range, which belongs to the private organisation’s tangible assets. Also, the herb drops contained in the new limited box edition are not changed regarding the existing product range, which hence does not affect the herb drops production line since the herb drops are already produced by existing production machines. Nevertheless, Ricola took the opportunity of the crowd creation project for innovating its offer. Indeed, the launch of the limited edition box will contain already existing Ricola’s herb drops but of different flavours, which is completely new for Ricola. Further, as it is stated in the name’s project, Ricola is going to launch its new box of herb drops for a limited time period. This strategy chosen through crowd creation can be seen as a promotional tool for the private organisation since its customers will be aware of the time constraint available for purchasing the limited edition boxes. Finally, Ricola is planning to do further limited editions packaging with the help of crowdsourcing projects. This shows the trustworthiness crowd creation can afford to
Ricola, which might in the future have an impact on the private organisation’s product range and at large on its physical resources, as well.

According to Hall (1992), competences describe the ability of an organisation to use its resources. Ricola, through its crowd creation packaging design project has broadened its product range in terms of packaging, resulting in an increase of production. However, the content of the new boxes launched is of the already existing herb drops produced by the existing machinery and equipment, which might not have any effect on the number of the private organisation’s tangible assets. But since there is an increase in the production of the herb drops, the existing machinery and equipment are going to be used to full capacity. Further, the designs of the packaging of the limited edition of the boxes made by almost 500 people have been scrutinised by a jury in order to choose the best of them that Ricola will launch. In this case the jury had a key role and its members worked as experts to select the best design out of 495 provided by the crowd. Hence, the packaging for the boxes has been chosen effectively. Further, the designs created by the crowd could be used for other limited editions in future by the private organisation and therefore this overproduction of data can be used effectively for other projects. Finally, since Ricola uses its existing machinery and equipment belonging to the private organisation’s physical resources to full capacity for the herb drops production, it manages to achieve physical competences through crowd creation.

5.1.2. Financial Resources and Competences

The impacts of crowd creation on Ricola’s financial resources and competences are in the following analysed. Financial resources are defined as “[...] the money that is available for a person or organization to spend” (Finance practitioner, 2009, n.p.). As previously mentioned, the financial resources are studied throughout this thesis as the turnover which is defined as the sum of the products being sold within one period of time evaluated to the sales prices (Simon et al., 2015). Since the “Ricola Limited Edition 2015” crowd creation project is still in progress regarding the launch of the new boxes, the private organisation was not able to provide any financial resources’ information. Indeed, the new product is planned to be launched in 2016 on the market and therefore no sales have been performed, yet. Hence, there is no noticeable change in the turnover of Ricola regarding its crowd creation project, yet. However, by outsourcing the creation of the design of its new boxes, Ricola offered a prize pool of
18,000€ shared among the best designers. Also, if the private organisation had to hire skilled designers, the amount spent would have been certainly higher. Hence, Ricola might have realised a thrift and acquired a great variety of designs from the crowd.

Further, Ricola is planning to invest the financial resources generated by its crowd creation project into other crowdsourcing projects in future. Also, since the competences of a private organisation are the ways its resources are used or deployed effectively (Johnson et al., 2014), it can be assumed that Ricola will achieve competences through its future financial resources.

5.1.3. Human Resources and Competences

According to Johnson et al. (2014), human resources are defined by the organisational function which concerns all activities with “[...] recruiting, managing, training, developing and rewarding people within the organization” (p.84). The crowd creation project conducted by Ricola for the new packaging design of the “Ricola Limited Edition 2015” box did not have any influence on the recruitment of employees nor on the training and development of them within the private organisation. Hence, no human resources were gained for Ricola through crowd creation.

Nevertheless, Ricola offers on-the-job trainings for employees where every employee can practice in his/her field of work. This means that the private organisation provides individual training programs targeted to every specific job within Ricola. Further, there is a noticeable team spirit within Ricola where the team members of any projects share their experiences with other team members for facilitating the internal know-how. Through this experience-sharing, the employees mutually teach themselves and therefore achieve skills. So Ricola manages to achieve human competences because the employees teach themselves internally in order to perform better. But since the crowd creation project had no direct impacts on the human resources, crowdsourcing has no impact on Ricola’s human competences.
5.2. La Biscuiterie Jeannette 1850 SAS

5.2.1. Physical Resources and Competences

The conducted interview with the owner of La Biscuiterie Jeannette is analysed through the next three sections in accordance to the strategic capabilities of the private organisation. As previously stated in the chapter 2 *Theoretical Framework*, the physical resources of an organisation can be defined as the assets of an organisation that are tangible such as machines, buildings, raw materials, products or inventory (Johnson et al., 2014). In the case of La Biscuiterie Jeannette, crowdfunding has been used in two different campaigns, one of donations and counterparties of more than 100,000€ and the other of equity of 200,000€. The 100,000€ achieved through the first crowdfunding campaign have been invested into the private organisation’s working capital. The majority of this amount has been invested into the production line and other equipment. This shows the enormous impacts crowdfunding has on the private organisation’s physical resources. La Biscuiterie Jeannette’s main physical resources are financed by the crowdfunding campaigns, which show clearly that even large amounts of money are realisable through crowdfunding. The strength and importance of crowdfunding as an innovative tool for La Biscuiterie Jeannette are extremely underlined by this.

In the following, the impacts of crowdfunding on strategic capabilities in terms of physical competences are analysed. As prior stated, “[...] competence is what an organization can do particularly well” (Andrews, 1971 cited in Ray & Ramakrishnan, 2006, p.4). To make an effective use of the physical resources achieved through crowdfunding, Georges Viana has invested 100% of the funds of the first crowdfunding campaign into the recovery of La Biscuiterie Jeannette. Further, the takeover concept of Georges Viana includes rehiring fifteen employees which have already worked for La Biscuiterie Jeannette up to forty years. These employees have valuable know-how, which is necessary to run the plant and produce high quality products. To conclude, crowdfunding impacts also the physical competences of the private organisation because it provides the financial support to hire the required specialised employees which are needed for the effective use of the physical resources.

To sum up, crowdfunding has enabled La Biscuiterie Jeannette to gain capabilities in terms of physical resources and competences. These capabilities contribute to the long-
term survival and competitive advantage of La Biscuiterie Jeannette since they enable the manufacturing of products and a good positioning on the market.

5.2.2. Financial Resources and Competences

The impacts of crowdfunding on La Biscuiterie Jeannette’s financial resources and competences are in the following analysed. Financial resources are defined as “[...] the money that is available for a person or organization to spend” (Finance practitioner, 2009, n.p.). La Biscuiterie Jeannette was taken over by the end of 2014 by Georges Viana and since that time it has not produced nor sold any madeleines. As previously mentioned, the financial resources are studied throughout this thesis as the turnover which is defined as the sum of the products being sold within one period of time evaluated to the sales prices (Simon et al., 2015). Therefore, there is no turnover sales based that can be recognised by the private organisation, yet. However, through the first crowdfunding campaign, La Biscuiterie Jeannette has been able to raise more than 100.000€ in donations and counterparties and hence these funds can be recognised as part of the turnover for the current year 2015. Furthermore, taken into consideration that the amount of 200.000€ of the second crowdfunding campaign will be used for the equity of the private organisation, crowdfunding can also have a direct impact on the creditworthiness of the private organisation. Indeed, these funds will enable a leverage effect to persuade banks and other investors to lend money and to invest. This leverage effect will directly impact the other resources of the private organisation and especially the physical and the human resources by for example, acquiring new machinery or hiring employees. Also, the funds acquired through crowdfunding will enable La Biscuiterie Jeannette to generate a turnover between 600.000€ and 800.000€, of which 100.000€ are from the first crowdfunding campaign, according to its forecast. Finally, since the private organisation is still in the starting-up stage and has not sold any of its products yet, the increase in its turnover will be of 100%.

The financial competences are defined by Sanchez and Heene (1997), as “[...] the ability of an organization to sustain coordinated deployments of resources in ways that promise to help that organization achieve its goals” (cited in Ray & Ramakrishnan, 2006, p.6). In the case of La Biscuiterie Jeannette, the Empirical Investigation (chapter 4) did not provide any information to identify those financial competences acquired. However, as analysed previously, the funds raised through the first crowdfunding campaign were
invested in total into the production line of the private organisation. Hence, the financial resources acquired through crowdfunding are effectively put in for the recovery of the private organisation since its physical resources will enable to produce and sell madeleines. Financial competences are clearly shown by using the money for sustainable investments which will enable La Biscuiterie Jeannette to gain even more financial resources in future, too.

5.2.3. Human Resources and Competences

According to Tracey (2004), human resources are seen as the actual people who are working for an organisation. In the case of La Biscuiterie Jeannette, the organisation of all human resources has been managed by G. Viana himself. He took care of 90% of the crowdfunding processes and worked with the team of the online platform used for the crowdfunding projects, which shows that crowdfunding is an innovative tool that generates money by using little human resources. Additionally, Georges Viana involved lawyers and accountants into the crowdfunding projects for special consultancy in terms of legal and financial issues. This indicates that realising crowdfunding projects does not necessarily require a large amount of employees, but it is helpful to include specialists into the crowdfunding process. In general, crowdfunding offers the basis for growing the private organisation and also for enlarging the human resources, since G. Viana expects a growing number of his employees. So far, crowdfunding impacts the human resources of La Biscuiterie Jeannette in a positive way, but the final impacts on the human resources cannot be displayed yet, because the number of employees will be adapted to the future demand. The strategy of G. Viana is to mostly hire well technically experienced employees who have already been working for La Biscuiterie Jeannette. According the Johnson et al. (2014), human resources are the organisational function which concerns all activities with “[... ] recruiting, managing, training, developing and rewarding people within the organization” (p.84). And in the private organisation, employees’ trainings will rather be done on quality of madeleines in order to strengthen the positioning in the high quality biscuit market. In this way, crowdfunding enables the private organisation to invest in the training of employees to develop the private organisation’s positioning on the market.

Furthermore, the impacts of crowdfunding on La Biscuiterie Jeannette’s human competences are indicated in several ways. Firstly, being able to invest into the
production line and hiring skilled employees thanks to the fund rose through the crowdfunding projects, enables the effective use of the workforce. Secondly, training the employees in the quality sector allows guaranteeing the efficiency of the workforce. Thirdly, giving clear instructions about the working process facilitates the employees to work structured to support the efficiency, as well. Additionally, La Biscuiterie Jeannette is planning to do a test phase to fully develop the production processes. To sum up, crowdfunding has strong impacts on the human resources and competences because it enables the private organisation to recruit employees and set up efficient working conditions for them.

5.3. Schneider Versand GmbH

5.3.1. Physical Resources and Competences

The conducted interview with the head of marketing of Schneider let to interesting and unexpected findings about physical resources and competences. As previously stated in the chapter 2 Theoretical Framework, the physical resources of an organisation can be defined as the assets of an organisation that are tangible such as machines, buildings, raw materials, products or inventory (Johnson et al., 2014). In the case of Schneider crowd voting is used through its product rating system in the webshop. Here customers are able to leave comments on the products purchased. After having implemented the product rating system into the business process, Schneider first had to gather a certain amount of representative data to take conclusions from it. This means that the private organisation was not immediately able to make efficient use of crowd voting and benefit from it from the beginning on. So far, crowd voting has no influence on the single products of Schneider, because the gathered data are simply not representative enough yet. However, product categories are already rated through the crowd voting system and changed in single cases according to it. Further, especially in the mail order business, many other factors need to be taken into account for getting a representative rating of a product. For example when delays in delivery occur which is uncontrollable for Schneider, this could have negative influence on the rating of a product which normally would be good. Additionally, it does not make sense for some products to change them according to the results of the crowd voting system, because the product range of the private organisation is already changing very fast. That is why it is difficult to just rate crowd voting and see the effect of it on the products. To sum up, crowd voting has no
significant impacts on the physical resources, so far. Nevertheless, the importance of the crowd voting system might grow within the next years and as soon as the required amount of representative data of the products is available, the crowd voting system could have impacts on the changing of the products, belonging to Schneider’s physical resources.

In the following, the impacts of crowd voting on strategic capabilities in terms of physical competences are analysed. As previously mentioned, competences can be defined “[…] as the integration of the skills and techniques, especial knowledge, experience and technology a company possesses” (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990 cited in Yang, 2013, p.175). The physical competences are not directly impacted by the use of crowd voting in the case of Schneider, because no new physical resources are created through crowd voting. However, the effective use of the physical resources gained through crowd voting, can be described in the way that purchasing agents check the crowd voting system for outstanding ratings, which are either positive or negative, and analyse them in combination with selling and returning of the product. As a result of this, in some single cases it could happen, that crowd voting has an impact on the products. Anyhow in general, crowd voting is not as significant as it seems on the first impression, but it might have more impact on the private organisation’s physical resources and competences namely regarding the especial knowledge about products and the customers’ preferences it will further bring in future.

5.3.2. Financial Resources and Competences

The impacts of crowd voting on Schneider’s financial resources and competences are analysed in the following. Like previously defined and stated, financial resources are “[…] the money that is available for a person or organization to spend” (Finance practitioner, 2009, n.p.). In this thesis the financial resources are studied as the turnover which is the sum of the products being sold within one period of time evaluated to the sales prices (Simon et al., 2015). Since the implementation of the product rating system, Schneider could not notice any significant changes in the turnover. That is to say that crowd voting has no direct influence on the private organisation because the data gathered through crowd voting are simply not representative enough, yet. However, the prognosis for the future is that, once enough representative data will be gathered, the private organisation will be able to analyse the data to react efficiently on the findings.
This will surely have an influence on the turnover based on higher sales because crowd voting will help meeting more accurately the customers’ requirements.

Taking the previous findings into account, it is not possible to analyse the effective use of the financial resources because crowd voting did not have any impacts on the private organisation’s financial resources, so far. Hence, it is interesting to see that Schneider relies on the use of crowd voting and plans further investments in this in future, as well. The private organisation wants to keep the possibility to gain knowledge about products through crowd voting. Further, crowd voting can be used as a tool to create and enlarge customer loyalty. For example customers, who gave feedback on a product through the crowd voting system, get a reward in terms of a voucher for their next order. Here it becomes clear that crowd voting is a strong and variable tool for private organisations, as it offers the basis for many further business steps. Finally, crowd voting is not a risky tool for the private organisation and it offers a great variety of new opportunities which support innovative business processes.

5.3.3. Human Resources and Competences

At the outset human resources are defined as the organisational function which concerns all activities with “[...] recruiting, managing, training, developing and rewarding people within the organization” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.84). In Schneider’s case, crowd voting has no impacts on the recruitment of employees. The implementation of crowd voting did neither require any new departments nor specialised employees which are concerned with the crowd voting system. Being able to use crowd voting only required a new individual operation which has been implemented into the field of work of the purchasing agents. This shows that crowd voting is a tool which is simple to use and has the advantage that it does not require hiring expensive specialists. Even when it seems to be difficult for purchasing agents to add the use of crowd voting into their daily working process, taking the fairly easy implementation of crowd voting into the whole business process into consideration, it becomes obvious that the private organisation can easily make use of crowd voting without making too many efforts. Further, crowd voting does not have any impacts on the training and development of employees as it is easy to understand and use.
Since competences are defined as “[...] the ways [...] assets are used or deployed effectively.” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.70), and there is no change in Schneider’s human resources based on crowd voting, the impacts of crowd voting on the private organisation’s human competences cannot be displayed.
6. Conclusion

This chapter will conclude the thesis by answering to the purpose of the research. Crowdsourcing has been studied in its three segments, namely crowd creation, crowdfunding and crowd voting through three private organisations using respectively one of them, in order to examine crowdsourcing’s impacts on strategic capabilities. The analysed findings and implications are concluded in the following paragraphs.

Crowd creation studied through the private organisation Ricola has shown that this type of crowdsourcing has broadened its product range, belonging to the private organisation’s physical resources. Regarding Ricola’s physical competences, crowd creation has increased the production to full capacity of machinery and thus it has improved the efficiency of the use of machinery. Therefore, Ricola managed to achieve physical strategic capabilities through crowd creation, in terms of both resources and competences. Further, crowd creation did not provide clear evidence that it has helped strengthening Ricola’s financial strategic capabilities, yet. In fact, the crowd creation project is still in progress and Ricola has planned to use the new design by 2016. Nonetheless, in terms of financial resources, Ricola expects an increase in the turnover through its crowd creation project but this assumption should not be taken for granted. Since Ricola has planned to invest the financial resources generated from crowd creation in other crowd creation projects, it can be assumed that the private organisation might achieve financial competences through the use of its future financial resources. Further, the crowd creation project conducted by Ricola did neither have any impacts on the recruitment of employees nor on the training and development of them within the private organisation. Hence, no human resources were gained for Ricola through crowd creation. Furthermore, despite Ricola’s internal training programs, team spirit and know-how sharing, crowd creation did not directly impact the private organisation’s human strategic capabilities.

The case of La Biscuiterie Jeannette has revealed that crowdfunding can have a relatively high impact on the private organisation’s physical resources since it enables it to raise financial resources that can be invested in physical resources. Indeed, La Biscuiterie Jeannette’s case has shown that the funds raised from the first crowdfunding campaign have been invested at 100% in machinery, plant and equipment which have enabled it to start the production. Thus it can be said that these funds have been used
effectively and therefore La Biscuiterie Jeannette manages to achieve financial competences. Furthermore, the funds collected have also enabled La Biscuiterie Jeannette to rehire employees with valuable know-how of the production which means that this private organisation has also achieved physical competences using crowdfunding. Therefore, La Biscuiterie Jeannette has gained physical strategic capabilities through crowdfunding, in terms of both resources and competences. The case study of La Biscuiterie Jeannette has clearly shown that financial resources have been gained through both crowdfunding campaigns. The crowdfunding campaigns have also a direct impact on the creditworthiness of the private organisation and therefore, it will enable it to leverage other funds from other sources than the crowd. Regarding the financial competences, it can be said that the funds have been used effectively since they have been fully used for the relaunch of the production which is supposed to bring other financial resources in future. To conclude, crowdfunding has strong impacts on La Biscuiterie Jeannette’s financial strategic capabilities and especially on its financial resources. The crowdfunding campaigns have enabled La Biscuiterie Jeannette to achieve human resources by having rehired skilled employees. Also, human competences are gained since the rehired employees are experts in their field of work which guarantees an efficient production of madeleines. Therefore, La Biscuiterie Jeannette has gained human strategic capabilities through crowdfunding in terms of both resources and competences.

The case of Schneider has shown that crowd voting could have impacts on the private organisation’s physical resources and competences, and therefore physical strategic capabilities, if the data gathered from the crowd voting system are representative enough to make reasonable changes on the products. The conclusion which can be drawn from this is, the earlier the private organisation implements using crowd voting into its business process, the higher the chances are for getting representative qualitative data which could help improving the products and results in better physical strategic capabilities. However, it needs to be said that crowd voting cannot generate knowledge about all factors which need to be taken into consideration for a successful selling process. This shows that crowd voting is just a supportive tool for the business process, but it is not able to generate strategic capabilities on its own. Nevertheless, since Schneider is going to do further investments into the crowd voting system, it shows the trust in crowd voting and its growing importance in order to be able to strengthen
strategic capabilities in future. The financial strategic capabilities are not impacted by the use of crowd voting, yet. But the use of crowd voting could impact financial strategic capabilities as soon as the crowd voting system has collected enough representative data about products which enable the private organisation to reasonably change its products according to them. Finally, in the case of Schneider crowd voting has no impacts on the human strategic capabilities. This is caused by the fact that neither human resources, nor human competences are influenced in any ways by making use of crowd voting.
7. Reflexion

The authors are neither able to do any generalisation nor able to give any managerial implications of using crowdsourcing since this research has only been done on three different cases which differ in their internal and external environments. This limitation is mainly due to the time constraint the authors were given. However, the authors intend to give inspiration to other researchers into the field of crowdsourcing and its three subtypes. Therefore, this thesis can be a basis for further research in the field of crowdsourcing.
8. Appendix

Picture 1: Madeleines from La Biscuiterie Jeannette (Shopwise, 2015)


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