

Research project and supervisory team

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Short introduction & description of research project	This PhD project examines how digital ventures achieve rapid scaling through an emerging human–AI organizing logic, with particular attention to its implications for market strategy. In these AI-first ventures, growth depends less on expanding human teams alone and more on how founders and employees orchestrate multiple AI agents in activities such as customer interaction, market analysis, segmentation, targeting, positioning, content generation, and operational support. As a result, the project foregrounds a fundamental shift in venture organizing: scaling is increasingly shaped by the integration of human judgment, AI-enabled action, and the continuous reconfiguration of market-facing strategies. Prior research has shown that digital ventures can scale rapidly through data-driven operation, instant release, and swift transformation, while also extending into new business areas by reusing and adapting a versatile digital core. However, less is understood about how these capabilities translate into dynamic and adaptive market strategies in AI-mediated environments. Building on this foundation, the project explores how scaling processes evolve when everyday organizing and market engagement are distributed across human actors and multiple AI agents rather than human teams alone. From this perspective, scaling involves not only expanding existing activities, but also designing and continuously adjusting integrated systems through which humans and AI agents jointly support experimentation, coordination, decision-making, and market strategy execution. This includes how ventures identify and refine target markets, personalize value propositions, respond to real-time market signals, and strategically reposition themselves as they grow. The project aims to develop new theoretical understanding of how human–AI organizing logic shapes both rapid growth and market strategy formation in digital ventures, how multiple AI agents are incorporated into entrepreneurial and market-facing work, and how these arrangements influence the ways startups expand, adapt, compete, and enter new business domains. In doing so, it contributes to research on digital innovation, entrepreneurship, strategy, information systems, and the evolving relationship between organizing logic and market strategy in AI-driven contexts. The project will be of interest to applicants with strong academic backgrounds and research interests in digital innovation, entrepreneurship, market strategy, information systems, and the organization of digital ventures. It is particularly well suited to candidates interested in contemporary developments such as AI-first ventures, human–AI collaboration, multi-agent systems, adaptive market strategy, and high-growth startup development. It offers an excellent opportunity for candidates wishing to develop strong qualitative research skills and theory-building capabilities within an interdisciplinary research environment.

	The successful candidate will join a supportive and stimulating research setting with access to established research platforms and resources, including the Zhejiang Brand Academy and the FinTech Key Laboratory. The project also offers opportunities to engage with industry collaboration and rich empirical settings, providing a strong foundation for conducting impactful research, developing advanced scholarly capabilities, and pursuing high-quality academic publications.
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