

# LEARNING FROM THE PALOMAR5 - INNOVATION CAMP TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR A NEW USER INNOVATION METHODOLOGY

**Aiko Karaschewitz**  
Technische Universität Berlin  
aiko.karaschewitz@tim.tu-berlin.de

**Katharina Hölzle,**  
Universität Potsdam  
katharina.hoelzle@uni-potsdam.de

## **Abstract:**

In times of a globally connected world and constantly changing market conditions, companies must find better ways how to fruitfully involve users into their innovative efforts. Especially users' need knowledge has been identified as fundamentally important for successful innovation and future preparedness. Nonetheless, scholars still find many hurdles and difficulties to access and integrate this knowledge, as it is sticky and costly to transfer. To tap this resource, scholars have proposed methods like user toolkits and virtual communities for innovation. However, with the rise of the participatory internet, users themselves now show us the new direction: since 2005, the phenomenon of online organized unconferences has spread globally. Here, passionate community members physically meet to discuss and drive issues they perceive as pressing and urgent in their fields of interest. Taking advantage of the underlying principles of unconferences, and combining them with a long-term live-and-work set-up, the Palomar5 innovation camp resulted from a corporate sponsoring as an extreme experimental prototype. In our research we analyze this approach as a methodology to enable highly motivated users, to foster the emergence of need knowledge, future issues and possible solutions. Conducting an explorative single case study, we draw rich data from 24 qualitative interviews, while having complete archive access to internal documents, public articles and film documentation. As a result we present a comprehensive innovation camp framework, explaining three requirement areas. We show what initial set-up requirements must be fulfilled before an innovation camp may start. We explain two different leadership styles needed to support the self-organizational creation process and knowledge emergence. And finally, we present two outcome dimensions and how they should be exploited from a corporate perspective.

*Keywords: Palomar5, knowledge management, innovation camp framework.*

Remarks: Full paper is in a research stage and will be published after the discussion at the MakeLearn 2012 conference presentation.