

---

# **Collaborative Knowledge Networks:** *Lessons to Learn from a Large Automotive Company*

---

*Nouha TAIFI*  
*eBMS - ISUFI*  
*Università del Salento, Italy*  
*[nouha.taifi@ebms.unile.it](mailto:nouha.taifi@ebms.unile.it)*  
*[www.ebms.it](http://www.ebms.it)*



The purpose of this research:

- ❑ Scientific Background and Tentative Model

Case study of the research:

- ❑ Collaborative knowledge environment of an automotive company and its dealers' network for innovation and new product development
- ❑ Research Questions and Method
- ❑ Exploratory Results and Discussion



## Research's Scientific Background 1/3

- KBV for knowledge as a strategic resource (Grant, 1996; Clark and Fujimoto, 1990)
- Knowledge strategy for innovation and NPD (Zack, 1999)
- NPD through collaboration with external actors (Von Hippel, 1988)
- ICT-based collaboration for open innovation (Davis and Spekman, 2004; Chesbrough, 2007)

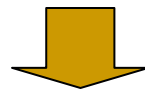


***New organizational models  
for knowledge management within  
the extended enterprise (EE)  
in the digital era***



## Research's Scientific Background 2/3

- Strategic alliances and networks (Gulati, 1998; Gulati et al., 2000) with suppliers, partners and customers
- Inter-organizational communities of practice (Brown and Duguid, 1991; Wenger and Snyder2000) with research groups, universities and laboratories
- Collaborative Knowledge Networks (CKN) (Gloor, 2006)



***Innovation and  
New Product Development (NPD)  
in the extended enterprise (EE)***



## Research's Scientific Background 3/3

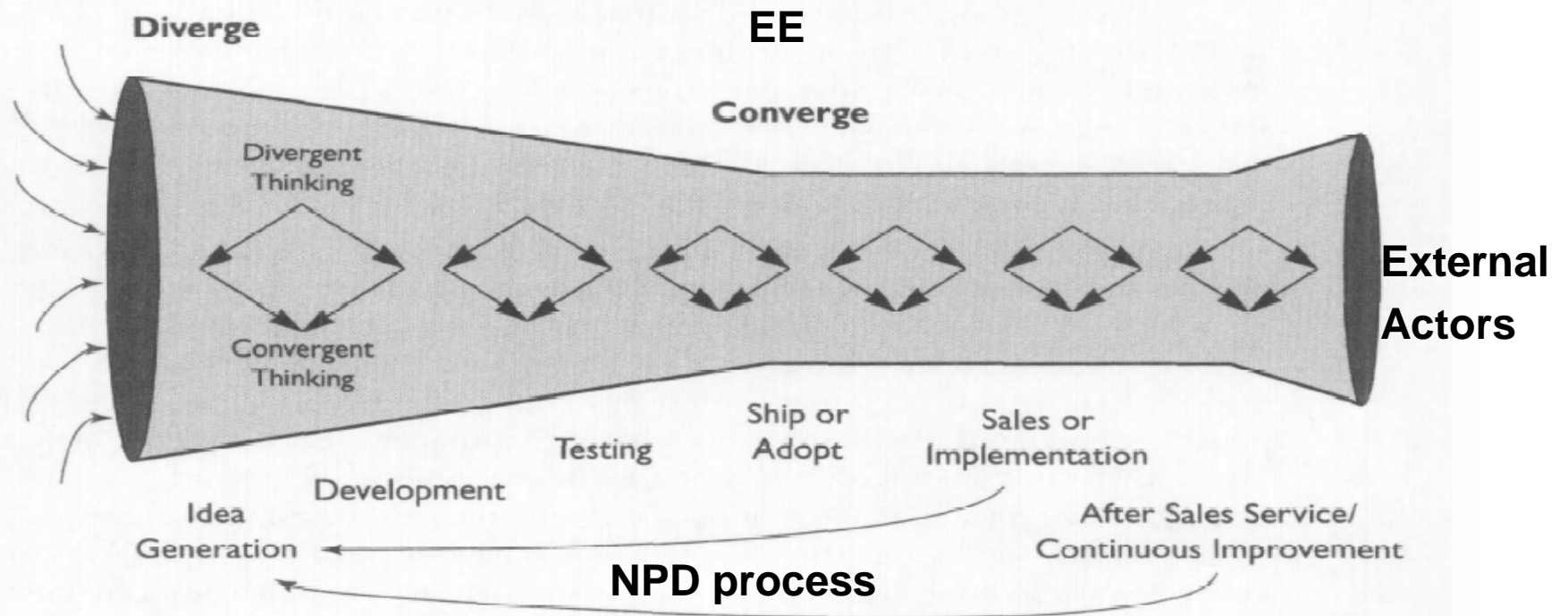
The new product development process:

- seen as one of the fundamental extended enterprise strategic processes (Kinder, 2003).
- widely recognized as the most important organization knowledge creation processes (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995), targeted most by knowledge management initiatives (Mertins et al., 2001)
- seen as combining exploration and exploitation in a single activity (Knott, 2002)



# Tentative Model

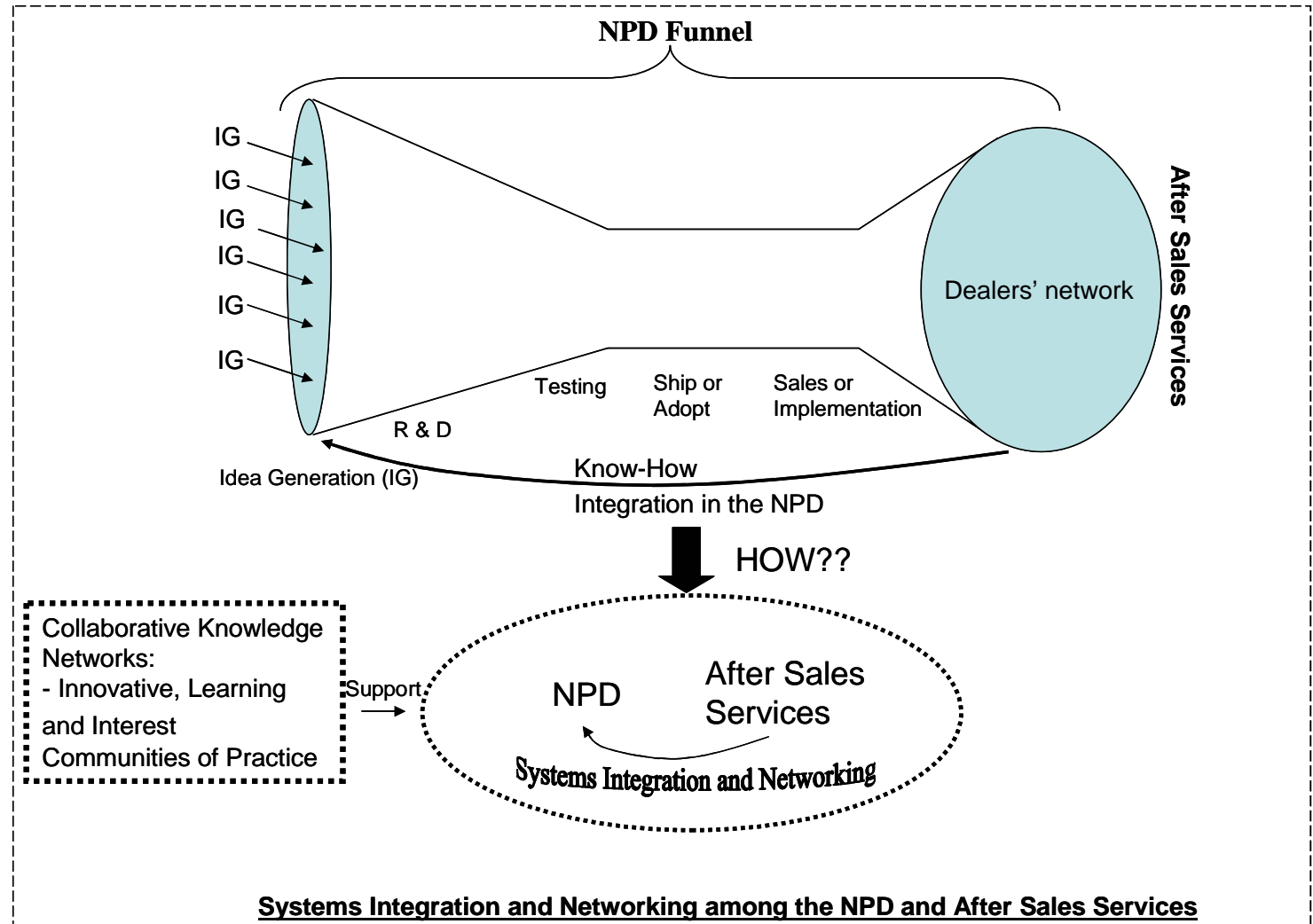
**FIGURE I.** The Innovation Funnel\*: Incremental Cycles



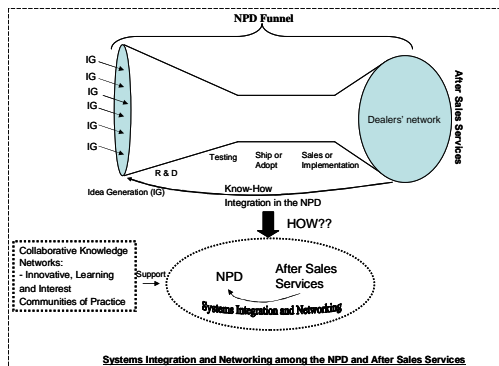
\* Based partially on "The Developmental Funnel" in Wheelwright and Clark, *Revolutionizing Product Development*, 1992.

# Case study

Collaborative knowledge environment among an automotive company and its after sales services SMEs.

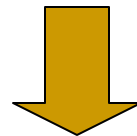


# Research Questions and Method



■ How are the mechanisms involved in the interaction among the extended enterprise and the dealers' network?

■ How do the collaborative tools and processes impact on the CKN? What are the successful outcomes and challenges of the CKN among the extended enterprise and the dealers' network?

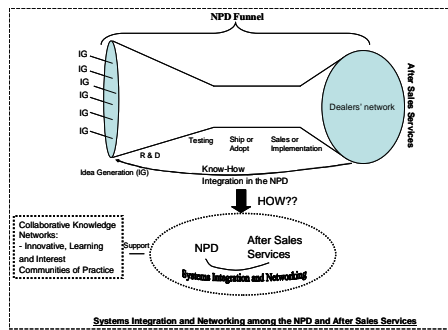


- Semi-structured interviews to the EE managers responsible of the dealers' network
- Questionnaires dedicated to the dealers' network members





# Exploratory Results

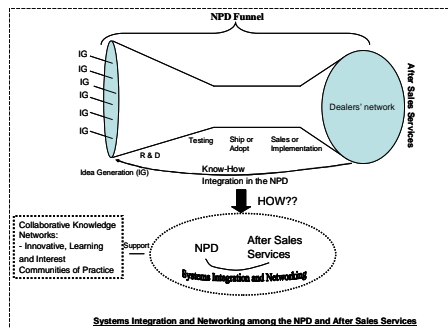


*CKN interaction mechanisms:*

- Integrative IT-infrastructure:
  - Integrated Knowledge management systems for problem-solving
  - IT-tools for knowledge exploitation and exploration



# Exploratory Results

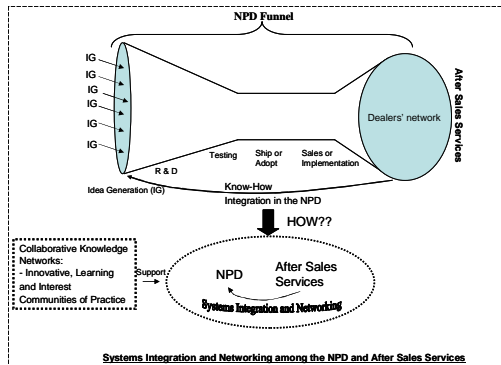


## *CKN interaction mechanisms:*

- Professional Trainings for knowledge sharing
  - ❑ Face to face interaction
  - ❑ Knowledge exchange among the CKN members
  - ❑ Grasp technical knowledge



# Exploratory Results

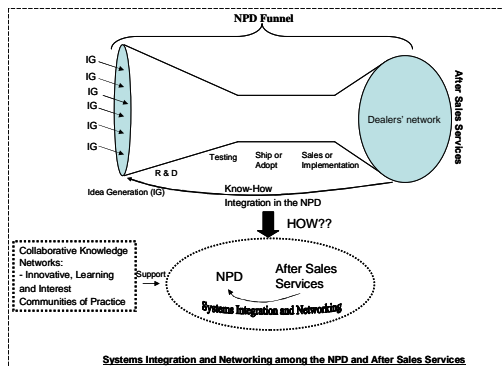


*Some success factors:*

- Trust, motivation,
- Bi-directional knowledge sharing
- Codification strategy
- IT-tools for knowledge sharing
- ICT-based collaboration for the collaborative knowledge environment development
- Focus on the technical knowledge acquisition of the dealers knowledge workers



# Exploratory Results



## *Some Challenges*

- Computer self efficacy
- IT perceived usefulness and efficiency
- Weak ties and strong ties



---

Thank you for your *Extended* Attention

---

Please, contact me at:

[nouha.taifi@ebms.unile.it](mailto:nouha.taifi@ebms.unile.it)

