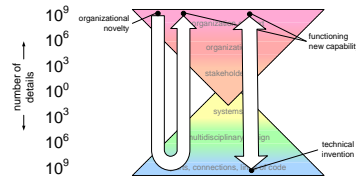


# What Is Innovation?

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## Abstract

This paper tries to describe the essence of innovation, as being an activity that results in a functioning innovation on the field that is scalable and sustainable.

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version: 0

status: preliminary draft

June 7, 2026

# 1 Innovation

In many organizations the holy grail of strategy is *innovation*. *Innovation* is a fundamental way to increase the value proposition to the market. Companies have a continuous need for a better value proposition in a world with constant pressure on the margin. The alternative to maintain the margin at a healthy level is to reduce cost levels.

Most (mature) organizations achieve the desired improvement of the value proposition by repetitive small improvement steps. However, many small steps often do not open new markets, or create new applications. *Innovation* is the result of a creative effort both in the technology side, as well as the application and marketing side.

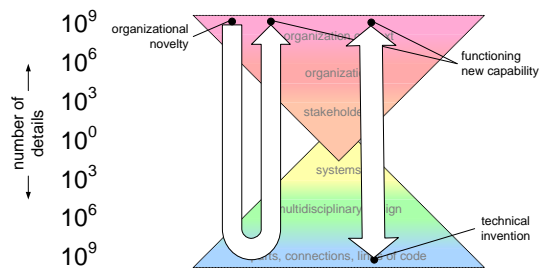


Figure 1: Innovations should function in the real world

Figure ??WIIdiablo shows that I see innovation as a fully functioning capability in the real world. It should function in the real world in a wide variety of circumstances. [?]www:DynamicRangeAbstractionLevels introduces the levels of details that form the background for two types of innovation:

**organizational novelty** that with appropriate technical support enables an organizational innovation

**technical inventions** that when implemented in a system and deployed in an organization results in a functioning new capability.

Figure 2 shows that truly innovative technology people (“inventors”), engineers, architects, organizers, and marketers need to collaborate in a concerted effort.

New fully functioning capabilities require both fully functioning enabling and complementing systems to be fully scalable and sustainable. For example, enabling systems are a functioning supply chain, logistics support, maintenance staffing, tools, procedures, et cetera, while complementing systems provide the capability with required energy, data, and communication infrastructure and operation.

There is a tension between processes and management and innovation. The inherent nature of innovation is to go beyond today’s limitations, while processes

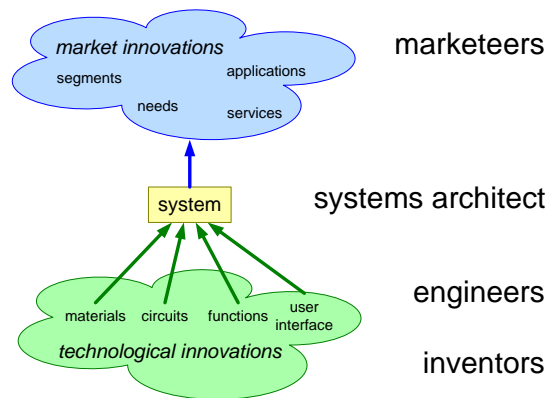


Figure 2: Innovations require all major contributors

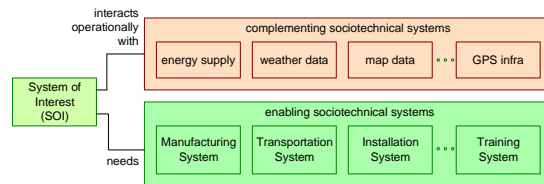


Figure 3: A functioning new capability requires both fully functioning enabling and complementing systems

and management also tend to enforce limitations. Innovation requires inspiration rather than control. This same tension can also be observed in the architecting role. Many architects are used to identify and mitigate risks, a valuable contribution to product creation. However, the risk based focus can be a severe limitation when searching for innovative solutions.

## References

- [1] Gerrit Muller. The system architecture homepage. <http://www.gaudisite.nl/index.html>, 1999.

## History

**Version: 0, date: June 6, 2026 changed by: Gerrit Muller**

- Created, using BusinessStrategyMethodsModels as starting point