



# THEORIES OF INFORMATION SOCIETY

## Course syllabus

Course consists of 30 hours of lectures. These will be delivered as follows.

### **1. Concept and key characteristics of information society (Hours 1-10)**

- relationship between technology, social structure and processes;
- the question of technological determinism, continuity and discontinuity of the information society in relation to an industrial society,
- integration, community, networks, inclusion and exclusion in the information society, choice, control, autonomy, planning, guidance and strength at an individual and (sub) system level in the information society,
- de-centred control centres in the information society,
- the relationship between market mechanisms and regulatory strategies,
- review and comparison of different theoretical approaches to those themes (D. Bell, A. Giddens, J. Habermas, M. Castells, N. Luhmann, U. Beck, H. Schiller, etc.)

### **2. Information society and everyday life (Hours 11-16)**

- emergence of the internet and the next generation internet users: digital divide
- the conceptual foundations of social network sites
- gender and race in the information society
- internet geographies: on digital divisions of labour
- social media and the news: implications for the press and society
- the impact of the internet on media industries: an economic perspective

### **3. Networked politics and governments in the information society (Hours 17-22)**

- government in the information society
- e-democracy
- online social networks and bottom-up politics
- information society and collective action
- empowering citizens of the internet age

### **4. Networked businesses, industries and economies (Hours 23-27)**

- medium of abundance and zero marginal cost economy
- the digital divide and employment
- the emergence of start-up culture
- critical perspective on the potential of the internet at the margins of the global economy

### **5. Technological and regulatory histories and futures (Hours 28-30)**

- next-generation content for next-generation networks
- data privacy and the cloud
- social media challenge to internet governance



## THEORIES OF INFORMATION SOCIETY

### Course reading materials

#### *Obligatory literature*

- Frank Webster (2014): *Theories of the Information Society*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: Routledge.
- Andrew Murray (2013): *Information Technology Lay: The Law and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Alistair S. Duff (2013): *Information Society Studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Rolf H. Weber (2014): *Shaping Internet Governance: Regulatory Challenges*. Heidelberg, London, New York: Springer.

#### *Additional relevant materials – EU and the information society*

- David Ward (2016): *The European Union and the Culture Industries*. New York: Routledge.
- William J. Martin (2017): *The Global Information Society*. London: Routledge.
- *European Journal of Innovation Management*, Volume 20 (2017), Issue 1 - Special Issue: Start-ups and Open Innovation.

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# THEORIES OF INFORMATION SOCIETY

## Course instructions

1. Attending lectures and seminars is highly recommended. You must be personally present to defend your seminar paper.

2. During the course, you will need to:

a) complete a seminar paper (write and defend) in groups of (up to) three students. The seminar paper is preparation of a start-up project idea in broader area of information society. This will earn you up to 35 points. Each student's individual performance in the exercises and solving the tasks during the , which can bring additional 15 points.

b) Seminar paper is composed of two forms, which are attached to these instructions. In addition to that, it follow general instructions of the Faculty of Information Studies in Novo mesto for the production of written products (published on [www.fis.unm.si](http://www.fis.unm.si) under the section "pravilniki in obrazci").

c) Seminar paper must make a reference to Eurostat comprehensive database on "Digital economy and society". Students are encouraged to use additional relevant databases.

3. Upon completion of the course there is an exam worth up to additional 50 points. Only students who have previously successfully completed seminar paper may take the exam.

4. To pass the course the student needs to meet minimum criteria set by the grading regulations of the Faculty of Information Studies in Novo mesto for the production of written products (published on [www.fis.unm.si](http://www.fis.unm.si) under the section "pravilniki in obrazci"). However, to pass student needs to meet the minimum criteria for both seminar paper and exam.

5. The points from seminar paper and individual assessments are valid until the beginning of the new academic year.

6. Each student can earn up to 5 additional points by attending exercises over 75%.

7. The content of the course is defined in the syllabus, which is published on Moodle and on website [www.borutronevic.net](http://www.borutronevic.net).



## FORM 1 - Business team

**1. Information about the members of your team.** *(Name and surname, education profile, role in the company, year of birth, e-mail, impact/achievement so far) (\*One person can have more roles. E.g: Leader and HR manager.)*

### Information about the first member of the team:

### Information about the second member of the team:

### Information about the third member of the team:

**Additional description of the team\*** *(If you could not include all the meaningful information in the last question or consider that some factors shall be made clear, give us an URL (.doc .docx .pdf .odt .rtf) with the additional information in Annexes. It can be an official document or a brief description about the roles that team member is performing, his/her knowledge and skills for the development of the idea, etc.)*

**2. Are all team members willing to devote their effort to the company? Even if you will not get investment?**



**3. Does any of the founders have any obligations, possibly in the future, which will impede the realization of utter devotion to the idea? Whether any of the team members have any formal legal restrictions (e.g. Non-disclosure agreement, non-competition clause)?**

**4. Does your team need more help? Describe what other person(s) do you need in your team, what shall be his/her/their role? What are the general characteristics of potential employee? When is the perfect time to hire another person? (Consider a short-term period. The first year of company development)**



## FORM 2 - YOUR BUSINESS IDEA

**Your idea in one phrase:**

**Mission / Twitter Pitch** (no more than 140 characters)

**Customer needs / Problem detected** (no more than 500 characters; Which problem does your project solve? What customer need does it fulfill? How does your customer currently solve this need?)

**Value proposition / solution provided** (no more than 500 characters; Describe in a few words your value proposition to the client, this is how your project solves the problem detected.)

**Which market or industry are you targeting with your solution? (choose one)**

Agricultural Sector - Communication & Connectivity - Education - Employment and Recruitments - Events - IT Services & Platforms - Logistics & Transportation - Real Estate - Shopping Experience - Software - Elearning - Financial Services - Gambling - Gaming- E health - Wellness - Advertising - Social Media Marketing - Dating - Fashion & Clothing - News and Media - Social Shopping - Sports - Culture & Leisure - Music & Video - Digital Security - Surveillance - Digital Inclusion - Energy - Smart Cities - Social Innovation - Food & Drink - **Travel** - Art & Design - Consumer Web

**Type of product** (Tell us what is your main activity within the sector: do you develop SW? offer consultancy services? make web pages? does your product optimizes existing processes? As for the previous question, try to select just that one option: the more precise your classification, the better we can select experts to assess you in the future and the more suited the feedback we will be able to provide you with. For example, a classical infrastructure-planning service customized to a customer would correspond to the "Consultancy" option even though you may manage it through a website, but if you offer it completely online and automatized with AI technologies, you should select "Digital consultancy") (If you don't find a suitable option in the list below, add it as a new tag.)

Content Generation - Crowdfunding - Crowdsourcing - E commerce & marketplace - Platform & Infrastructure - Mobile Apps - Paymet Tools - Productivity Tools - Recommendations - Search Engines & Content Agregator - Services for POS - Social Networks & Communities - Consultancy - Devices - Second Screen



**How do you do it? How do you use the technology in your business?**

(Tell us how you are applying the technology in your business to understand how others could help you during the acceleration period. There is no right answer. No more than 1000 characters)

**What software tools do/would you use?** (What are the programming skills and tools required for the development of your idea? 500 characters)

**Intellectual Property Involvement** (What is the part where intellectual property, created outside of this team, is involved in the project (in addition to open source, if you use one) or other important comments on this topic?)



**How long have you been working on your idea?** Write the number of months you have been working on the idea. Start counting from when you first began to regularly dedicate significant time to advance the idea both in the concept development and the product, no matter if you were dedicated part-time or full time.)

\_\_\_\_\_ months \_\_\_\_\_.

**Stage of Development** (Considering the whole idea and your vision describe what is the stage you are currently working on? No more than 500 characters)

**Development Status** (Do you have a prototype? When it will be ready?)

**Time-to-market**

(Tell us how long do you think it is going to take to launch commercially, after you have fully developed your idea) After whichs stage of development, what exacty, to which degree, how many units? (no more than 500 caracters)

**What kind of funds has your company received?**

(The ammount and the source)





## What are your funding needs?

(How much do you need, and from where?)

## Give us some details about how are you planning to use the funds.

### **OPPORTUNITY SPACE**

As you know, our aim is to detect and select those projects with major economic potential and help them to become global businesses that people will want to invest in. So that's why, beyond and besides a very large market opportunity, we are looking for true scalable businesses. However, not being global or scalable cannot be a problem if are able to exploit some advantages of proximity and local relationships. How global and scalable your product is?)

**Target audience** (no more than 500 characters; Tell us which is your target audience and an estimation of the size. For example: "mass market: young people from 21 to 30 years old, internet users, 2.000.000 in Spain")



**Business model** (no more than 1000 characters; Describe how your income is generated, who pays whom, who are your customers and/or users. Are you selling to other companies? Are your customers individuals? Do you have to close sales agreements with big corporations? Tell us if you have a pay-per-use or freemium model, if you will have a source of income related to advertising or if you are considering a subscription model, etc. We don't need the exact numbers of your business case, just the main elements of your proposed income model)

**Partnership needs / Relations with third parties** (no more than 500 characters; Describe if havingn agreements or alliances with third parties (technology provider, supplier, etc.) is key to develop your idea, the nature of the agreement, and the state of previous agreements or ongoing negotiations, if applicable.)



**What is the strategy to reach your clients?** (no more than 500 characters; Describe your go-to-market strategy and how you will tell potential customers about your product, how you will acquire customers, how you will grow your company and your sales and marketing strategy.)

### **Business scope**

(In order to know how large your market is, it's key to know how easy you think your business can become internationalized. Think about where you can naturally expand your business.)

**Size of opportunity** (no more than 400 characters; Estimate your opportunity's annual income with argumetnation. You just need a realistic estimation, there is no need to present a business plan)

**Company's goal or exit strategy** (no more than 400 characters; Describe how you see your company in 3-5 years. Is it a leader in the sector? Is it the reference for a specific type of product? Is it internationalised? Has it been acquired by another company? (e.g. Instagram by Facebook))



## MARKET AND INNOVATION

(We want to know some tips about your product's magic and how innovative it is. Remember that we are looking for true disruptive ideas that change the world and really excite the customers about them. Identify competition and how you differentiate from them help us to better understand your advantage, your product, how you are positioning it in the market and even how large your opportunity actually is.)

**What is new about your project that we cannot find in your competitors?** (no more than 500 character; we want to know your product's magic. What is new about your product and what will excite customers about your product?)

**Competitor #1 URL:**

**What are the differences between your project and competitor #1?** (number of characters between 20 and 500 characters)

**Competitor #2 URL:**

**What are the differences between your project and competitor #2?** (number of characters between 20 and 500 characters)

**Competitor #3 URL:**

**What are the differences between your project and competitor #3?** (number of characters between 20 and 500 characters)



**How difficult would it be for a competitor to copy your idea?** (no more than 500 characters; tell us if you have some patent or intellectual/industrial property, exclusive contracts, supplier agreements or channels to find and retain clients and any other noteworthy entrance barrier that could prevent/delay third parties to copy or achieve your market position.)

**Which is your major risk?** (No more than 500 characters; tell us which situations or threats you have identified that, might they occur in the coming months, would impact your launch plans, forcing you to redefine your product, or where your capacity to acquire clients or users would be diminished.)



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## Databases

Seminar paper must make a meaningful reference to Eurostat comprehensive database on “Digital economy and society”:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/digital-economy-and-society/data/comprehensive-database>

*Additional databases:*

Students are encouraged to use additional relevant databases. An example of such a database is Industrial Development Organization's INDSTAT4 database on ICT manufacturing statistics.

[https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/partnership/LCW190\\_en.pdf](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/partnership/LCW190_en.pdf)