

HEY! – That’s my territory.

The deterritorialization of an organization through the introduction of an enterprise social media and its affordances



Master thesis

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Abstract

Purpose: This thesis looks into the impact that the introduction of an enterprise social media (ESM) has on an internationally fragmented organization and its workforce. By introducing a new theoretical lens of deterritorialization, this study aims to understand how the different structures within an organization are impacted through the newly introduced ESM and its affordances. The lens of deterritorialization adds on to the existing body of implementation literature as compared to the TAM (Technology Acceptance Model), UTAUT (Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology) and the TPB (Theory of Planned Behaviour), this lens enables for the research to focus not only on the individual but also on the existing social structures present within the organization.

Methods: The present study applied several qualitative methods in which different employees of the company participated. Interviews with key informants and the implementation team were conducted. Also, 19 implementation meetings were observed and two focus group meetings (n=7) about the experiences of first time users were held. Last, desk research of an internal weekly update was conducted. The different data was transcribed and anonymized and coded both using inductive and deductive methods.

Results: The results of the study show the multifaceted nature of an ESM implementation and the impact of deterritorialization and fragmentation have had on the organization. Several key topics have been identified such as the challenges faced in the different phases of implementing, the fragmentation of the ways of working, the difficulty in building up the platform, the different regions and territories becoming more visible and findable, as well as the role that employees play within the implementation of an ESM.

Conclusion: The implementation of an ESM and the impact of deterritorialization on an internationally fragmented organization has many different facets. On the surface it was seen as positive, however different underlying factors were identified that are holding back the implementation. The way in which the ESM will develop, will impact the deterritorialization of the organization.

Key words: *Implementation study, deterritorialization, fragmentation, globalization, organizational studies*

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1. Introduction

Organizations operating in a globalized world face new challenges in making their workforce feel connected to the organization and one another. One enabler for organizations to ‘go global’ is the many developments made in transportation and the improvements made to communication technologies (Bhagat et al., 2017). They have consequently allowed individuals to communicate with each other in different places across the globe. Going abroad has influenced the organizations and their strategy, people, costs, and risks and allowed them to succeed in dealing with a hyper-connected world (Dewhurst et al., 2012).

Globalization is the way in which borders are seamlessly crossed by humans interacting with the social, cultural, and technological patterns around the globe. This influences the movement of people and materials in a world that is becoming smaller (Battersby, 2022; Walsh Haines, 2022). This has given the world a view that there are no borders and everything is connected (Nandwa, 2014).

In response to globalization, organizations must find ways to connect their changing and growing workforce. Effective information communication technology (ICT) is critical in this (Chary, 2007), where organizations must leverage the benefits of new technological developments such as enterprise social medias (ESMs) or intranets (Bhagat et al., 2017). Each platform has its affordances, such as visibility, editability, persistence, and association (Guo et al., 2021), that can both aid and restrain employees in their work and how they socialize. The connections made through such systems are valuable for future collaborations and for connecting organizational members to the culture that the organization represents (Liu & Bakici, 2019).

While globalization is often seen from a political and economic perspective (Levitt, 1983; Passaris, 2006; Ristovska & Ristovska, 2014), the social, cultural, and technological patterns have often been neglected: these patterns can help to understand how employees connect to the organization, as introducing certain technologies influences social and cultural interactions. These patterns, combined with intranets or ESMs, prove vital as they will help organizational members recognize the organizational culture and create a stronger connection with the organization (Liu & Bakici, 2019).

Through globalization, fragmentation also comes into play within organizations. Fragmentation is either helping the organization to focus more on certain activities or pulling the organization apart (Foresight, 2022). Fragmentation pushes organizations to think differently about how they interact with their workforce. Not only thinking about how they

can avoid driving the different teams apart but also trying to decrease the distance between them. Through fragmentation, islands are formed, and through deterritorialization, these islands can be broken down to create more unity (Rivkin & Ryan, 2017). This process of forming more unity can be seen as reterritorialization (Rivkin & Ryan, 2017). Therefore, through the implementation of an ESM, deterritorialization can be seen as an insightful approach to understanding the impacts it has on an internationally fragmented organization.

The present study aims to examine how the implementation of an ESM and its affordances could help to connect an internationally fragmented organization and its workforce, addressing the question: *How does implementing an enterprise social media platform help the deterritorialization of an internationally fragmented organization and its workforce?* The lens of deterritorialization has been applied to this research and can provide new insights for organizations implementing an intranet or an ESM. To the researcher's knowledge, deterritorialization has often been used within the context of capitalism and in understanding globalization (Deleuze & Guattari, 1984; Elden, 2005) but has not been applied within technology implementation studies. Implementation studies have often turned to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), or the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ling et al., 2011; Rahman et al., 2017; Roudi et al., 2022). These different theories have mainly focused on the individual and their acceptance towards a technology, and have neglected the role of the environment on the acceptance of technologies for individuals (Shachak et al., 2019).

To be able to understand the impact that the implementation of an ESM has on the deterritorialization of an organization, an ethnographic research approach has been selected. This type of research allows for the researcher to be "up-close", and to employ more than "observations" to the case, allowing for a deeper understanding of the situation to be achieved (Genzuk, 2003). As Genzuk (2003) mentions, ethnographic research allows for a detailed picture to be painted of the situation where, in this case, an ESM is being implemented and the impact it has on an organization.

2. Theoretical Background

This research provides a new lens into understanding how the implementation of an ESM impacts an organization. The concepts that are important to be understood for this are deterritorialization, globalization, and fragmentation, as these can influence the workforce and the organization. Not only that, but for an international organization, it is important to understand and connect its workforce from an organizational culture and identity point of view.

2.1. Enterprise social medias and affordances

Organizations across the globe implement many different forms of communication to rally their employees together, keep them informed, and allow them to connect to one another. Examples of such forms of communication range from internal social media platforms, intranets, Microsoft Teams, and many more (El-Bash, 2020; Ewing et al., 2019).

The implementation phase of technologies within organizations has often times been looked at through lenses that focus on the functionality rather than the impact such a system has on the organizational structure. Current theories that have been identified in literature focus on the individual and their acceptance of the technology rather than the environment in which they find themselves in. The Technology Acceptance model, as well as the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology have been critiqued because of their simplistic nature (Shacak et al., 2019, p. 1) as they only take the user and their “beliefs, perception and usage intentions” into consideration. Next to that, the Theory of Planned Behaviour which outlines the behaviour and the intent on carrying out said behaviour (Driscoll & Modi, 2020), further emphasizes the way in which studies have looked into the way that individual users accept technologies through an intentions perspective (Rahman et al. 2017; Rouidi et al. 2022). To be able to understand the implementation of a communication technology within an organization and the impact on the existing social structures, another theoretical approach can prove to be fruitful in finding out how individuals and their environment react. In the case of this research, it is through the application of the lens of deterritorialization, where the multifaceted nature of an implementation within an organization can be understood.

When new forms of technology for communicating, sharing, and connecting are implemented within an organization, the affordances that they provide must also be considered. In this study, the technologies in question are intranets and enterprise social medias (ESM). An intranet encompasses not only the way in which employees can access certain documentation, but also how they connect with one another (Ogwe, 2023). In other words, the intranet that is implemented can be seen as the linking pin towards different types

of interactions that employees may have during their work day. An intranet, according to San (2016), can therefore be seen as a form of an ESM. With this in mind, and because of the many different possible forms of communication technologies and whether they could be an ESM, the most relevant definition for this research is:

“Web-based platforms that allow workers to (1) communicate messages with specific coworkers or broadcast messages to everyone in the organization; (2) explicitly indicate or implicitly reveal particular coworkers as communication partners; (3) post, edit, and sort text and files linked to themselves or others; and (4) view the messages, connections, text, and files communicated, posted, edited and sorted by anyone else in the organization at any time of their choosing.” (Leonardi et al., 2013, p. 2).

This definition does not discriminate the many different existing platforms, and allows for them to be positioned under the umbrella term of ESM. Not only does the definition describe how employees can connect with each other, but it also describes the way that files and documentation can be utilized within the organization. This allows for ESM to take on a more complex dimension and not limit the functionality that it may have.

The perspective of affordances is important to consider when discussing the implications that it may have on an organization. This perspective takes both the user (human) and the way in which the technology (material) reacts to each other during usage into account (Leonardi, 2011). Affordances were first defined by Gibson (1979) as the way in which an environment and an animal complement each other. Specifically, the many actions that an environment affords for different species (Gibson, 1979; Tonnema, 2020). These can be different depending on the species; for example, a cave for a deer could be shelter during a storm, while for a bat, it is a habitat that they constantly occupy. Relating this to technology, the way the features and functionalities complement their ways of working can be seen as the affordances of a platform.

Furthermore, affordances for an ESM can be seen from the four distinct perspectives that Treem and Leonardi (2012) proposed. These affordances are visibility, editability, persistence, and association. For an ESM, visibility allows employees to see their interactions and their different posts (Treem & Leonardi, 2012). This visibility, especially in modern organizations, allows individuals to know what people are doing and what is happening (Leonardi, 2013). Especially considering that nowadays, work is getting even more specialized and people may lack the understanding to know what other employees are doing (Leonardi, 2013). Combining this with the affordance of persistence, even if employees log

off, or leave the platform, what they have done remains (Treem & Leonardi, 2012). They are allowing the organization to retain knowledge within their ESM platform. Relating persistence to visibility, this is especially important due to the employees being able to learn from each other (Leonardi, 2013). The editability affordance deals with the way in which there is higher value that is produced through the way that employees can craft and edit what they want to share with the organization (Treem & Leonardi, 2012). The final affordance is that of association, which is about the connections between the people, the posts they make, and the findability of the individuals they are looking for. In the study of Steinfeld et al. (2009) they found a positive association in the usage of an ESM, as they reached out more to employees who were further away/less known to them.

Affordances are therefore important to keep in mind, when wanting to understand usage patterns. The ones that were recognized were the affordances of visibility, persistence, editability, and association. With these different affordances, a better understanding can be developed of how employees make use of an ESM within their work and how these can potentially influence the implementation phase.

2.2. Organizational culture, identity and enterprise social medias

Bringing employees together in an international organization through the implementation of an ESM can be a challenge, especially in terms of creating an organizational culture that is reflected within the entire organization. Organizational culture has been defined as the way in which it is the glue that holds groups together and the shared values and beliefs between these groups (Schein, 2009; Lubis & Hanum, 2020). Even though the focus of this research is on organizational culture, it is important to mention that a relationship of duality exists between identity and culture.

Providing a brief definition of organizational identity, it is the “central and enduring attributes of an organization that distinguish it from other organizations” (Whetten, 2006, p. 220). Looking into the duality of this relationship, both can be turned to when one is lacking or is questioned due to the performance of an organization. Ravasi (2016, p. 7) elaborated on the example of Bang and Olufsen, where there was a time when the identity was threatened, and the organizational culture was looked into to answer the question of “Who are we, *really?*” or “Who do we want to be?” These questions allowed for continuity from the past and the organizational culture can be used to evaluate and craft the identity (Ravasi, 2016). When reflecting this back to the definition of organizational culture, these different questions that were posed can be seen as the “glue” that kept the group together.

Furthermore, Haimes (2006) provides another definition of organizational identity that also distinguishes it from culture. The definition highlights that culture can be seen as “fixed rules”, whilst identity gives people the “context” needed to understand those rules and the environment (Haimes, 2006, p. 9). For example, an ESM provides employees with the context needed to understand the organizational culture.

Next to organizational culture and identity, the language that is being spoken allows individuals to cross into new places (Mohammed, 2020). Neeley (2012) mentions that through globalization, individuals are required to work with many different regions, and having a single standard language helps in the different business operations. The language that is often considered as the standard language for business, is English. In relation to identity, Mohammed (2020) mentions that with English emerging as the globalized language, it is giving groups a new sense of identity through potentially speaking another language which they are used to. This is especially important in relation to the definition of Haimes (2006), as through the language that is spoken within organizations the rules of the culture can be understood. Not only is it about understanding the different rules of the culture, but it also allows individuals to communicate with one who is not from the same place (Mohammed, 2020). Therefore, within organizations, the standard business language that is being spoken amongst the different employees plays an important role in the day-to-day business operations, as well as the way in which an ESM is being used to translate and communicate different types of information.

From an organizational culture perspective, it is important that organizational identity is also mentioned. Gaining knowledge of the organizational culture allows the new hires to better understand the organization and develop a sense of belonging (Leidner et al., 2020). Not only that, but they also develop a higher sense of acceptance by their co-workers and supervisors (Leidner et al., 2020). Applying this to the aforementioned definitions of organizational identity, on the one hand, culture is the “fixed rules” but identity also presents them with the context for understanding that culture and the rules (Ravasi, 2016; Haimes, 2006). It can be theorized that for existing employees, identity helps build an understanding of the context where the culture of the organization can be better understood. Furthermore, the usage of an ESM can help them connect and feel like they belong to the organization (Leidner et al., 2020).

2.3. Globalization and international organizations

Globalization has been given many definitions since it was first used in an article by Levitt in 1983. There are discussions between scholars about the origin of where it truly began.

However, according to Dirlik (2000) and Peters (2023), the first apparition of the term came in the 18th and 19th centuries.

For this research, the definition of globalization comes partly from Battersby (2022, p. 9048) where he mentions that it is “the transcendence of nation state boundaries and governmental authority by an increasingly complex and extensive array of economic, social, cultural, and technology-mediated patterns of human interaction. These patterns encompass material and symbolic modes of exchange”(Battersby, 2022., p. 9048). As well as the definition presented by Walsh-Haines (2022, p. 5429), which represents the second half of the definition, where globalization is “the fast movement of people, commodities, and ideas in an ever-shrinking world” (Walsh-Haines, 2022., p. 5429). Together, these definitions conceptualize globalization, as it is the way in which borders are seamlessly crossed with regards to how humans, together with the social, cultural, and technological patterns, interact with one another across the globe.

The focus of globalization in research, is often times not on the human interactions with the social, cultural, and technological patterns, but on the economic and political lens (Levitt, 1983; Passaris, 2006; Ristovska & Ristovska 2014). In relation to the economic lens, just as what Roukis (2006) mentions, the underlying goal of globalization is profits. In the context of organizations and this research, solely focusing on the underlying goal and neglecting the way in which the social, cultural, and technological facets interact with one another can potentially lead to a lack of understanding of how humans experience globalization. Therefore, the current research prioritizes the interactions with the social, cultural and technological facets, enabling for a certain understanding to be developed with the implementation of an ESM within an international organization.

2.4.Fragmentation and deterritorialization

Central to this research is the interplay between fragmentation and deterritorialization. These theoretical concepts demonstrate how globalization reshapes structures. Deterritorialization is a theory coined by Deleuze and Guattari (1984) in their work, *Anti-Oedipus*. This theory has its roots in capitalism and deals with changing structures. An example of this is the way that workers were so-called freed from their land and the landowners after the industrial revolution when they had the opportunity to put themselves on the labour market (Munro & Thanem, 2018). In this example, the state (or the land owners) deals with deterritorialization due to the changes that their working structures undertook. In organizational contexts, deterritorialization (Rivkin & Ryan, 2017) is more appropriate for examining the way in which an organization can experience deterritorialization. In its simplest form,

deterritorialization, is the process where existing structures get broken down and are altered (Rivkin & Ryan, 2017). The process of altering, can also be seen as the first step towards reterritorializing a structure that has been broken down, in other words, fitting into another “social regime of signification” (Rivkin & Ryan, 2017, p. 457). To bring this into perspective for organizations, deterritorialization creates new structures or fragments within them.

Lastly, next to deterritorialization, the term fragmentation is defined as the breaking down of single processes into multiple ones (Jones & Kierzkowski, 2000). Within organizations, the breaking down of processes or even structures affects the way in which the different day-to-day business operations take place. On the one hand, in the context of economy, fragmentation has positively strengthened regional economies (Foresight, 2022). Foresight (2022, p. 1) mentions that this is because of the fact that globalization expands to “like-minded countries” and does not result in reversing globalization. This is especially relevant to take into consideration, as changing organizational structures can prove to give new insights that can help to advance the organization. Especially considering the way in which the implementation of an ESM can potentially impact an organization and the different existing structures.

2.5. Deterritorialization and globalization in organizations

Combining deterritorialization and globalization helps to develop an understanding of how globalization potentially influences organizations and their territories.

Firstly when it comes to globalization, it has several implications towards territories, or in this case borders (Bates-Eamer & Hallgrímsdóttir, 2020). Borders play a role in the way in which the agreements, constructs, as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria are formed (Bates-Eamer & Hallgrímsdóttir, 2020). These borders, or territories, can be seen as a form of fragmentation. With these borders or territories in mind, it can potentially influence the ways of working for teams within an organization. The borders are always moving and are constantly building up and breaking down geopolitical spaces (Bates-Eamer & Hallgrímsdóttir, 2020; Wong-Mingji, 2009). This shows that the different territories, as well as their borders, can take up new meanings depending on the contested area. As Wong-Mingji (2009) mentions, the discussion of blurring borders is a constant contestation as territories are redefined until a future opposition. These new borders, which have been achieved through oppositions, can redefine the different agreements, constructs, and also the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Consequently, this influences the future ways of working for an organization, through the development of new territories.

Furthermore, globalization is not only important in the context of the social, cultural and technological patterns for organizations, it is also important for the way in which they deal with their different territories. With globalization, organizations should also take glocalization into consideration, where the different solutions that they provide can be adapted for different local region (Belk, 2019). The adaptation is not only important from a solutions perspective but also from an employee's perspective. For example specific markets require specific people to be able to operate within them. As Ger (1999) mentions that local firms, or in this case teams, have a higher advantage compared to global organizations who want to operate in a new market. Therefore, this adaptation can be very powerful in the different patterns, whether social, cultural or even technological, as it can potentially help the adaptation of new solutions or ways of working. Moreover, as was previously mentioned, it shows that it is not a one size fits all scenario and that it could lead to potential conflict and harm (Pavićević et al., 2021; Risse, 2023). However, technologies such as intranets or ESMs can potentially aid in the process of glocalization. These technologies not only allow for information to be shared on a global level, but also on a local level where it aids in understanding a specific region. Careful consideration should therefore be paid towards the glocalization of solutions and employees. Not only for the customer, but also for the employees who are directly dealing with glocalization.

2.6. Summary

The different concepts of deterritorialization, fragmentation, affordances, organizational culture, as well as globalization, that were outlined above, help to gain an initial understanding on the multifaceted nature of the implementation of an ESM. Not only in the implementation, but also with the potential impact that an implementation of an ESM has on an internationally fragmented organization. With this understanding now further developed, different qualitative methods can be applied to further conduct this research within a organizational setting.

3. Research setting

The case study for this research was an organization in the Netherlands, implementing a new ESM. The organization has around 1000 employees, is divided into seven business units and is active in the technological industry. Each business unit is in charge of its own operations and global markets. The organization works not only in the Netherlands but also globally as, for example, in China and the United States of America. I started in the organization in September 2023, when I was working for one of the business units. Through this research, I followed the implementation of the ESM throughout the organization.

For this research, the organization has been called Keppra Sand and the new ESM has been called Glow. This ESM would help the different business units, and would be the new social and interaction platform for everyone located in the headquarters in the Netherlands, but also abroad. This platform would get rid of existing intranets or social platforms, and Glow would be the only one to stay. Not only that, but Glow would also lessen the number of emails about updates for the organization. Updates could be posted on Glow, which notifies the different organizational members. Further, the hope the organization had with this new platform, is that it will start new cross-business unit collaborations and promote the sharing of knowledge.

The ESM is part of their response to the strategic theme called One Company. This strategic theme is part of the organization's wider strategy and has a goal, as mentioned before, to create closer collaborations across the different business units and the international teams. The organization is not changing structures; it is looking into the way in which the different collaborations can occur more on a cross-business unit and on an international level.

4. Methods

4.1. Research design

Different qualitative methods were chosen to study the relationship between the implementation of an ESM and its affordances in the deterritorialization of an internationally fragmented organization and its workforce. The different methods involved (1) gaining insights into the strategic theme of One Company by interviewing key informants, (2) observations of the different core team meetings relating to the implementation process of the ESM, (3) interviews with key Core Team members, (4) focus groups with first-time users to gain a better insight into their experiences and (5) selecting quotes from the weekly update from the board of directors. The Qualitative research methods were chosen because they allowed for a deeper understanding of situations where the underlying patterns relating to the strategic theme of One Company, the deterritorialization of the organization and the affordances of Glow were present (Waitzkin, 1993). Not only that, but qualitative research methods allowed for different possible interpretations at certain points in time (Merriam, 2002).

Firstly, key informant interviews were conducted about the strategic theme of One Company. Key informants are individuals who have a deep understanding of the topic (Oliphant et al., 2019), in this case the Alignment Team members. These members are dealing with the implementation of the strategic theme and they are part of the senior management team of Keppra Sand. Through semi-structured interviews with seven members of the Alignment Team, topics of interest were recognized for during the observations of the different Glow implementation meetings.

Following that, participant observations took place. Within this qualitative measure of observation, the researcher became immersed in the culture of Keppra Sand (Ciesielska et al. 2017). The researcher has been at the company for a while. They had started as a working student, and switched their role to a graduation project student 7 months after they had started at the company. This helped to build rapport (Horsfall et al., 2021), as the researcher gained an understanding of the organization and built relationships with organizational members.

Next to the participant observations, the 11 Core Team members of the ESM implementation team were also interviewed. These interviews allowed for a better understanding of how they dealt with the implementation phase from their business unit as well as their own point of view. These interviews could be seen as a type of validation interview as it allowed for firstly checking the authenticity and accuracy and secondly to

rebuild and balance out the power relationship between the researcher and the participant (Buchinder, 2010). Especially considering that the researcher had a passive role in the implementation meetings. Not only that, but these interviews allowed for further explication or new insights to be gained from each business unit. This is especially important, as the Core Team meetings were with members from the different business units as well as members from abroad. Moreover, as with the Alignment Team interviews, a semi-structured interview scheme was used. The questions were built on the findings from the implementation meetings.

Lastly, two focus groups with first-time users from the seven different business units were organized. Focus group research allows for rich data to be collected through the different group interactions and the dynamics that are present (McLafferty, 2004). Within these focus groups, the point was to see the way in which the different business units react to each other and their experiences with Glow. Helping the researcher to see the different facets that could be in play with first-time users. It was also decided that at least one participant would be from abroad, allowing for the international point of view to be included. An overview of the different methods of data collection can be found in Table 1.

Table 1.

Methods of data collection

Methods of data collection	Number of instances	Data collected
Alignment Team Interviews	8 interviews	Field notes
Observations of meetings	19 meetings	Recordings + Field notes
Core Team interviews	12 interviews	Recordings
Focus groups	2 focus groups (14 total participants)	Recordings
Weekly update from the board of directors	20 quotes	Field notes

4.2. Data collection

4.2.1. *Alignment Team interviews*

Of the 12 Alignment Team members, a total of eight members were interviewed. Five questions guided the interview session, shown in Table 2. At the start of the interview, the researcher would outline the aims of the research. The plan was to record the interviews, but after the first recording, it was decided to not continue to do so. The rest of the Alignment Team interviews would not be recorded, however active note taking would occur. These notes would subsequently then be part of the field notes.

Through the decision to change to active note-taking (field notes), the researcher not only wrote down what was being said, but also formulated new questions that could be interesting to get their perspective on. The choice for making active notes (field notes), relates to naive descriptions of what was happening (Tjora, 2006). As Tjora (2006) mentions, naively taking notes allows for an initial start to be made toward the analysis. Moreover, pairing what was heard with writing reflections after the interview took place allowed the researcher to reflect on the notes and to recall any interesting things that had happened. Adding a step of reflection, helped the researcher to question the notes that were made (Oliver et al., 2005). The questions that were asked helped to understand the strategic theme of One Company and the way that Glow plays a role in this. The data collected from the Alignment Team interviews would help guide the observations.

Table 2.

Alignment Team Interview Scheme

Questions for Alignment Team

1. What is the essence of One Company?
 2. From your perspective/role do you think that it is a valid strategy?
 3. How do you see One Company effecting your business unit?
 - a. How do you see future potential collaborations with other business units?
 4. To what extent do you think that it will impact the way that an external person looks at the organization?
 5. What is the role of Glow in advancing the One Company strategy?
-

4.2.2. *Observations of meetings*

To join the meetings, rapport was built with the key person from the general communications team at Keppra Sand. At the start of the meeting, the researcher introduced themselves and

mentioned the purpose of their presence. The researcher explained the research to them without mentioning the terms fragmentation and deterritorialization as these could have a negative connotation. Rather than using those terms, the researcher stressed how the ESM would bring the different business units closer. This allowed the researcher to be easily integrated within the Core Team, which was implementing the program within their different business units and abroad. They were also informed about the possibility of interviews with each of the members. The researcher joined 19 meetings with an average time of 47 minutes. The total amount of time for all of the meetings was around 15 hours.

At the beginning of the participant observations, consent would be asked. If this was not given, then notes would be taken. During the meeting, the researcher would be like a fly on the wall, only asking questions if interesting subjects came up. Active note-taking dealt with observations such as the way in which they responded, and their attitude towards the different subjects that were being dealt with; how they were dealing with deterritorialization was paid attention to. Next to the recordings, these notes proved to be fruitful for the analysis.

At the end of the participant observation, the researcher would ask any questions if anything of interest would be appropriate to ask at the moment. Additionally, the researcher stressed that if they had their own meetings that they should think of inviting the researcher. The same procedures would take place within these meetings.

4.2.3. Core Team interviews

The Core Team member interviews followed the same guidelines as the interviews with the Alignment Team members. The only difference was that here, the recordings did take place. Consent was asked verbally. Furthermore, the same information about opting out was also provided. The questions for these participants differed, as they dealt with topics that came up in the Core Team meetings and would be further asked on to help validate different dynamics or the accuracy and authenticity of the data. Due to the fact that the researcher was already participating in the meetings with the complete Core Team, the members were approached through Teams or in person. The inclusion criteria was that they were part of the Core Team and have participated in several meetings for the implementation of Glow. In the Core Team, this resulted in no one being excluded and the whole team being chosen for interview participation. The questions for the Core Team interviews can be seen below in Table 3.

Table 3.

Core Team interview scheme

Questions for Core Team

***Bold for 30 min sessions...** Italics for potential follow ups depending on the time.*

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Opening | <p>How has the implementation of Glow been for you and your business unit/ region?</p> <p>What are some of the different tasks that you have been carrying out?</p> <p>Is this something that you did only within your business unit or did you involve people from outside your business unit as well?</p> |
| 2. Globalization | <p>Do you feel as though Glow will close the gap between teams located abroad?</p> <p><i>How have you been involving the rest of your business unit for getting Glow up and running?</i></p> |
| 3. Fragmentation/
deterritorialization | <p>How do you feel Glow will help with the visibility across the organization? (BU...)</p> <p>To what extent will Glow help with cross team projects?</p> |
| 4. Affordances ESM | <p>How have you been experiencing Glow?</p> <p>What do you think of the different features and functionalities that Glow offers?</p> |
| 5. One Company | <p>Have you also been looking into other business units or has the focus only been on your own tasks with Glow?</p> |
-

4.2.4. *Focus groups*

Two focus group sessions were held to see how first-time users from the different business units responded to the new ESM. Asking specific questions to the group about their experiences, allowed the researcher to pay attention to their interactions and dynamics with the platform and each other. In each focus group, seven employees representing each of the business units participated.

The focus groups were organized by finding participants through the people's directory on Glow and contacting them through email. The inclusion criteria was that all of the members that were selected for the focus group, who had responded to the email, were part of different business units. The only exclusion criteria was if the potential participant did not respond in time to the participation request. If this was the case, more invitations were sent out to other potential participants.

Following that, through the preparation of ten different questions, the focus groups were organized by the researcher to examine participants' interactions. The researcher guided the focus group to talk about the different relevant themes: globalization, One Company, fragmentation, deterritorialization, and ESM affordances. The conversation guide can be found below in Table 4.

Table 4.

Focus group conversation guide

Conversation guide

Depending on how the session is going, prompts and reactions can be used to stimulate the other participants and also to allow for them to participate and to answer questions.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Opening | How have you been using Glow during your day-to-day activities?
Can you name some use examples, with regards to some features you have made use of? (allow interaction and understanding between participants) |
| 2. Globalization | How have you been able to connect to teams abroad through using Glow?
- If you have not experienced this yet, what are you imagining?
To what extent does Glow help close the gap between business units? |
| 3. Fragmentation/
deterritorialization | How do you feel Glow will help with the visibility across the organization? (BU...)
To what extent will Glow help with cross team projects? |
| 4. Affordances ESM | How does Glow complement your daily work tasks?
Which functionalities do you appreciate and what have you been missing? |
| 5. One Company | How do you feel as though Glow will help Keppra Sand as a whole in the future?
To what extent does Glow bring everyone together?
- Would you actively look at other business units or would you stick to your own because it is what you need for your function? |
-

4.2.5. *Weekly update from the board of directors*

The final means of collecting data were the weekly updates from the board of directors. At the start of each week, one of the three members of the board updated the company about changes or anything that is of value for colleagues to know. These updates also were a valuable data source as they dealt with, for example, the introduction of the ESM and the One Company strategic theme, and the researcher also added their own reflections to these.

To collect data from this source, relevant quotes were selected, coded and reflected upon. These reflections would prove to be useful in further understanding the organization and the different themes that the researcher was interested in. The researcher collected and analysed 20 quotes from the different weekly updates.

4.3. Data analysis

After the data collection, the different recordings from the interviews and focus groups were transcribed and anonymized. This was done by utilizing Whisper AI. This AI tool was able to change the audio file into a text file that could be further processed. To anonymize this data, Chat GPT Enterprise edition was used, where specific prompts were given to remove names, business units, and anything related to the organization and the real name of Glow. The observation notes and quotes from the weekly updates from the board of directors were also anonymized. The confidentiality of the data and privacy of the participants was upheld because this version of Chat GPT offers enterprise-grade security such as encryption of data both in transit and at rest (*ChatGPT for Enterprise*, n.d.). Next to that, ChatGPT Enterprise is SOC 2 Type 2 compliant, proving that it meets high standards for data security and privacy. Additionally, when making use of ChatGPT Enterprise, the data (both input and output) remains private and is not used to improve the model (*ChatGPT for Enterprise*, n.d.). Together, the data was added to ATLAS.ti.

Different steps were taken to reach the final codebook, which can be found in Appendix 9.1. The first set of codes was deductively found through existing concepts from literature (Chandra & Shang, 2019). These codes related to the different themes recognized within the theoretical framework. For example the codes of association, editability, or persistence originate from the paper of Treem and Leonardi (2012). Next to that, some codes were also found inductively, as by going through the transcripts and coding new data, new codes were found (Chandra & Shang, 2019). For example, the codes of scepticism or necessity were added due to the prevalence of such themes within the data. These different

codes helped to narrow down the results into categories, such as concern or the Power of One. As such, the final codebook is a reflection of both inductive and deductive coding.

Rather than calculating an intercoder reliability score, discussions were held instead. Two of these rounds were at different points in time, together with the company supervisor. The last round of discussion took place with a direct colleague of the researcher who was in charge of Glow for their respective business unit. These different rounds of coding allowed for discrepancies and misunderstandings in the coding to be identified and would result in the codebook changing structure or having new codes added within it. For example after the second round, it became clear that ways of working was an important code to add to the codebook. These rounds proved to be useful as, through the ethnographic nature of the research (Cheung & Tai, 2021), it helped with creating a trustworthy codebook. Furthermore, this way of finding the reliability of the codebook, helped to understand how others viewed the data in relation to the codes that the researcher had at different points in time.

After the coding process, the codes were filtered to find the most relevant codes that related to the research question. This was an iterative process as along the way, the codes were altered and changed as well as put into different groups with new codes also being added. With this separation that was made, the following themes were added which were then used to outline the results section. They were as follows: ‘The Need for Deterritorialization: Awareness towards engagement’, ‘The Fragmentation and deterritorialization of the ways of working’, ‘The Fragmentation of Personalization’, ‘Information Gathering: A Needle in a Fragmented Hay Stack’, ‘The Visibility of Territories’, and ‘The Role of Employees’.

5. Results

In the following section the results of the different qualitative methods are outlined. The structure of the results section highlights the different themes that are most important in answering the research question. These different findings provide an insight into the way in which an internationally fragmented organization deals with deterritorialization through the implementation of an ESM.

5.1. The Need for Deterritorialization: Awareness towards engagement

With the launch of a new ESM within an organization, understanding how employees go from being aware of the program, towards engaging with the program and the rest of the organization is of importance. Employees have been dealing with deterritorialization as through the different platforms disappearing, the implementers are pushing them out of what they know and towards a new platform. The codes that were identified within this theme can be seen below in Table 5.

Table 5

Overview of identified codes for section 5.1.

Code Group	Sub-Code
Affordances	Awareness
	Adoption
	Engagement
	Association
	Visibility
	Wishes
The Power of One	Deterritorialization
Concern	Scepticism

Firstly, it was relevant to see how the employees within the organization would play a role in spreading the word on the arrival of a new ESM. Interestingly, there was a contradiction in one of the interviews which showed that there was a different outcome of the Core Team than what was hoped. They mentioned: “*So the challenge there is to have that core team member create yet again, acceptance. And basically tell the story about Glow [...].*” (KU1, Core Team interview). Shortly after that, they mentioned the contradiction to this: “*Yeah, well, what we hoped and what did not really happen is that those core team members would actually actively go into their business unit or into their international office to collect the information to get it out there. [...]* So talk to people, basically be an

ambassador for Glow, and that did not really happen in the end [...]" (KU1, Core Team interview). Because the Core Team members were not ambassadors, it could be argued that the adoption and promotion of the ESM were not done to the fullest extent.

Next to the Core Team members, management should also play a role. Their usage can positively help employees in the awareness and consequent adoption phase. For example:

"If we don't see, let's say, let management saying something about it or managers mentioning something, I don't think that it'll trickle down to the actual colleagues and staff members; it'll just be another extra thing that was launched by the company that nobody has the time or energy to really dive into because workloads are so high as it is."(BU6, International, Core Team interview)

Relating this to the Core Team not being ambassadors, it could potentially be due to the lack of time where they could not complete their role. This also comes back within the following quote: *"Then it's never going to happen because my daily work is consuming enough [...]"* (BU5, Core Team interview). Additionally, as mentioned in the quote: *"So the core team should consist of people that actually chose the Glow platform [...]"* (BU2, Core Team Interview). This shows that not only time played a part, but for the Core Team, they should have chosen people who were actually interested and who had actively chosen for the platform. This was also emphasized again in the following quote:

"To me, everyone on the core team seemed to be in the same position as I was in that I couldn't really see anyone who had been like, "I want to do this, it's going to be amazing, I want to be a part of it." It was most of us were kind of like, "There was no one else to do it, so I ended up doing it" (BU6, International, Core Team interview).

Following that, the adoption of the ESM will depend not only on the value that the ESM provides, but also on the visibility that the platform receives. In the field notes, after one of the Alignment Team interviews, it was noted that adopting the system would only work if there is value. This also relates to the following quote: *"The more information you have, the more it might trigger some people to check it frequently"* (BU5, International, Core Team interview). The presence of information seems to be an important factor in adopting the platform as emphasized by another quote however, they already have their information on another platform: *"Yeah, no, I got a lot of feedback that like, yeah, we have this on slide, on slide, so you can find the information"* (BU2, Core Team interview).

Furthermore, an employee in one of the international offices had the following experience: *"it is because of something that happened a few days back on the big screen and*

then everybody started checking, OK, what is Glow and everything” (BU6, International, Core Team interview). Through visibly informing people, they have had the need to check out the platform and potentially leading to adoption. This is also in relation to the association that was made towards the platform in one of the implementation meetings, where the following was mentioned:

“That’s the biggest challenge—to make it a lively platform where people consistently share, not just once and then forget about it. We’ll give it active attention, especially starting July 8th. We’ll use posters, messages, and other methods, so people start to feel it’s part of their routine.” (BU3 and 7 on Glow)

This shows the importance for keeping users engaged with the platform through having an active presence in the marketing of the ESM. In relation to engagement, the element of gamification was also mentioned. For example: *“Maybe we should think it through and find a way to make it a fun thing. Like, I’m not saying that we have to have a competition or something, but it’s a gamification kind of thing”* (Core Team meeting 5). This wish was further reciprocated with the following:

“There are a few things that we could actually do and the supplier of Glow also advised us to, to gamify the introduction of Glow. We can give away Glows in Glow. We can say the first hundred people to actually fill their profile for 100%. Get an extra day off. Extra day off. Something like that.” (Core Team meeting 5)

Such gamification elements can help to positively promote engagement with the platform. Especially considering that they could be rewarded for filling in their profile.

Another final pattern to consider for the data was how the platforms play a role in the engagement of employees. With Glow remaining as the only platform, the engagement of the employees can be positively increased. For example: *“Yeah. I think when all the other tools are gone, then people will use Glow more often, and then we will have more priority to the profiles and everything, so yeah”* (BU7, Core Team interview). The importance lies in the priority given to the platform, once the others have gone.

5.2. The Fragmentation and deterritorialization of the ways of working

The introduction of the ESM has challenged the ways of working within the organization. This was prevalent within the data as patterns showed that employees were missing different features and functionalities from the old platforms. The data also showed the way in which individuals were transparent about their way of working, the necessity and, the scepticism of the changes with the ESM. Furthermore, in relation to the impact of the ESM, the patterns

were visible relating to the organizational culture, how employees communicate through existing platforms, and the support that they received in building the platform. These different patterns also revealed the way in which users have specific wishes and how they would engage with the ESM. All of these patterns highlight the changing ways of working within the organization, their fragmentation, but also how they are going through the process of deterritorialization. The codes that were identified within this theme can be seen below in Table 6.

Table 6

Overview of identified codes for section 5.2.

Code Group	Sub-Code
Affordances	Feature-parity Support Structure Engagement Wishes
Ways of working	Transparency Technological patterns
Concern	Necessity Scepticism
Cultural patterns	Organizational culture
Social patterns	Communication

Firstly, the ESM was met with quite some scepticism from the employees in the different business units. Not only is this due to past experiences such as “oh it’s another platform” (BU5, Core Team interview) but also with regards to the employees who are present within the different business units. Such reactions also play a role in further strengthening the existing territories, through showing the scepticism that exists with introducing new platforms within the organization. With the employees who are more sceptical, the implementation of the ESM becomes more difficult. This is interesting, as the age of the employees played a role in how the platform was received. For example, the following was mentioned:

“Somehow you have to understand that Business unit 5 is a very old department, and there are people working there who are on their way to retirement. So for them this whole Glow thing is just... yeah, whatever. I mean, they have seen things come

and go so many times because there are people that have been working for 30 to 40 years, yeah. So I think they feel like, oh, the young people have another new idea again, and you can feel that. [...]” (BU5, Core Team interview)

The way in which there is a separation, or fragmentation, between the older and the younger generation is interesting and as they mentioned that the older generation has “seen things come and go”. Relating to this, within the researchers’ observations, where it was noted that there is scepticism because business unit 1 seems to often starts projects without completely finalizing them. Through oftentimes not completely finalizing projects, the scepticism could potentially have its roots here.

The ESM’s features also changed the ways of working for employees. It can be argued that, in opposition to what Wong-Mingji (2009) mentions, the contestation that occurs through the ESM cannot interfere with what they have known. They have their tools in place and they are not as willing to use a new platform. This results in the “older” territories remaining, as was also mentioned that BU5 was an older business unit. Through the disappearance of all the other programs, Glow stays as the “single source of truth” (KU1, Core Team interview). It is apparent that the features and functionalities are really important to the employees. For example, in an interview, the following was said: “[...] *if you want people to adopt something new, then it should at least correspond to what they were using before*” (BU2, Core Team interview). This example, shows that there is a lack of features present compared to the platforms that have been removed. However, from the perspective of the ones who have introduced and helped the different business units get up and running, it is interesting that they feel they have incorporated the different features from the previous systems. In this case, contradictions exist between the so-called makers and the users of the ESM. This can be seen in the following example:

“From the beginning on, we thought, well, when we are building a new intranet, when we are launching Glow, we have to have a people directory so that we can replace the previous internal platform. We have to have the social function so that we can replace other platforms. And we have this, well, basically knowledge base and place where people can find all the information so that we can replace the hub.” (KU2, Core Team interview)

The way in which there is a difference in the understanding of the functionalities is interesting to keep in mind. The aforementioned quote contradicts the experience of first-time users, who actually missed features of a previous system. This can be seen in the following example: *“Like Workplace, there’s a timeline, and I hated that Workplace decided how to sort*

this and what to show and what not to show, but I kind of miss that timeline, you know, sensibility for Glow.”(Focus group 1). However, knowing this, what also showed in the data is that there is enough support for the development of such features that may be lacking. Showing that even though features are missing, the supplier of the system is willing to, and able to, develop them for the sake of the organization. This was mentioned in the following:

“I know the supplier is actually working on this, and they have a feed now, which is not up to par yet with how we want it to work. But yeah, it needs to be future-proof, and it's not there yet. It's moving there, definitely, and they're making big strides forward, especially, for example, with the whole AI implementation.” (KU1, Core Team interview)

Lastly, another important aspect that arose from the data is the fact that the business units already have their own means of communicating. Glow supports “another platform”, but apart from that it is difficult for them to accept it and add it to their ways of working. This complexity in communicating with one another, and the amount of platforms that are already there also relates to the aspect of fragmentation. For example:

“[...] salespeople are already using a lot of tools like Navision, CRM... like some people have worked for multiple business units, so they use one CRM for business unit 3, one CRM for business unit 6 . So in between all this, they don't, you know, check other intranet portals whenever they need information.” (BU6 D, Core Team interview).

Not only was this present within this specific business unit, but this was also mentioned within the focus group (1) with first-time users: *“The developers use Slack, which I don't really use, but all of their customer facing people use teams, [...]”* The ways of working are still unclear within the business units and this questions the effectiveness of Glow in relation to employee usage patterns and the value it can add to their work. Not only that, but due to all the different platforms, it becomes unclear for employees where to communicate and where to find the relevant information. This point was further supported when in a focus group (2) an employee had mentioned that the amount of platforms was *“pretty overwhelming”* and in the interview with KU2 they had mentioned that they would be *“paying for four different tools”*. Showing the future benefit of Glow being the sole platform remaining.

Furthermore, on the future ways of working of the organization was reflected upon, where in the weekly newsletter of the board, they mentioned that *“A new way of working will be demanded and expected of everyone at the company in the coming*

years”. This indicates that the organization will be going through changes, and that Glow will also question and challenge the ways of working of the organization and all of its employees.

5.3. The Fragmentation of Personalization

The personalization of the ESM also plays a role in how employees experience the platform for themselves. Within this section, the most prevalent patterns related to the way that employees were given responsibilities towards editing content but also the structure are discussed. With this editability, patterns of fragmentation were also identified. Also the importance of language was recognized, next to the wishes and scepticisms that were felt towards the ESM. These different patterns show the way that deterritorialization has played a role in how employees could personalize their experiences. However, it also highlights how personalization can lead to fragmentation, hindering the way in which the organization can become one. The codes that were identified within this theme can be seen below in Table 7.

Table 7

Overview of identified codes for section 5.3.

Code Group	Sub-Code
Affordances	Editability
	Structure
	Wishes
	Language
The Power of One	Fragmentation
	One Company
Concern	Scepticism

The editability of the platform is a factor that influences how users interact with the content. Not only producing the content but also editing the content once it has been posted. The interviews have shed light on how users have experienced this where reactions such as “*Glow makes it easier to update things quickly*” (HR on Glow 1) and also that “[...] *It is functionality-wise good already, but I think when it comes to, for example, design elements, there's really a lot to win.*” (KU1, Core Team interview). The way in which there is a lot to win, shows that Glow is a new platform, but also that users are still exploring the platform and everything that is possible. For example, in one of the Alignment Team interviews it was said that the platform gives a clean sheet (BU6). This clean sheet allows for employees to pay closer attention to their interactions and how the platform is built.

Giving people power over their content seems to be an aspect that is recurrent with regards to personalizing the platform. For example in one implementation meeting, the following was mentioned:

“Also, what someone mentioned about giving teams the opportunity or the ability, the authorization to make their own team page, make them responsible for their content.[...]” (Core Team meeting 5)

The ownership of content gives teams responsibility, but the content can look different compared to the rest of the organization. This, to a certain extent, can be pushing the organization further apart. As was noted in the following example:

“If we wanted to be one team, one company, then we should do this together, [...] and I think that makes it more like one united platform, and now it’s just separate business units and separate teams that are filling it.” (HR, Core Team interview)

This quote is important, as it also reflects on the way in which the platform was built for all of the different business units. The business units were given a lot of freedom in designing their side of the platform. On the one hand, it can help to meet the needs of the employees of a specific business unit, but on the other this has resulted in responses such as *“There’s just not a lot of thought on data structure”* (BU2, Core Team interview). In response to this, what was also mentioned within the researchers’ observations, was that the people building the page were willing to reshuffle the homepage to fit the needs of the specific BU, furthermore noting that it would destroy the purpose to discover what is happening outside of your organization and create a stronger fragment. Personalization, in this case, can be very powerful as it either helps a certain BU to be more willing to use the platform, but consequently misses out on the opportunities to step outside of one’s business unit.

Lastly, another interesting point that was brought up within the data was the way the difficulty in meeting the needs of the different employees that will be using the ESM. For example:

“Everybody has different wants and needs and desires of functionality and skill levels. So, you know, is this really bulletproof for a global rollout of over 1,000 colleagues? And it really did go well.” (BU1, International, Core Team interview)

This positivity that was felt with the rollout was not reciprocated in all places. In one of the business units they felt as though they were *“constricted”* in creating content and were *“not able to make a very attractive-looking page. I know that the options are there, but [...] you need time and a sense of feeling for it, yeah”* (BU5, Core Team interview). Even though there

have been difficulties, there has been positivity in the way that the people who are building the platform have been helping the different business. For example:

“And I think also, BUI played a role in it—they sat down with each department also, of what would be their needs. How would they [...]make their own choices in their own area, so to say. So that helped also quite a lot.” (BU4, Core Team interview)

Sitting down with the different business units and focusing on their own needs could lead to the platform lacking in unity. The importance of unity in the look and feel of the ESM was also mentioned in the observations of the researcher. This observation highlights the fine line that is present between personalizing the platform for higher engagement, and striving away from One Company. Showing the difficulty of creating a unified platform, when the ability of personalization is available to the business units and the employees.

Further relating to personalization, the language policy within the system was a notable pattern. It was interesting to see that there were some contradictions where the organization has an English first policy however some employees would find it better to have content available in their native language. This is especially interesting, as through the native language people would feel more comfortable and would be much more willing to read the information. For example:

“And another part is probably language because if it’s in English and some of the team members are not really good at English, they would never check. So if we have some auto-translation functionality, it might improve.” (BU5, Core Team interview, International).

This example shows that the native language would support their willingness to check out the platform and the information that is present. What was also noted from the observations with the CCO, was that concerning diversity and inclusion, many things were still in Dutch. This pushes colleagues away who are not located in the Netherlands.

Furthermore, in relation to documentation being in Dutch, the ways of working are also interesting to look at. Especially considering that when employees have been used to a particular language, making the switch to another language could be harder for them. For example, it was mentioned in a Core Team interview that *“As time progresses, some of the older employees are leaving the company and the younger generations are far more willing to read information in English. And they’re fine with that”* (KU1). In relation to this, what has also strengthened the English first policy is that *“everything that’s on Glow has to be available in English and can be made available in other languages afterward.”* (HR on

Glow). It was also noted from the observational notes with the CFO that all of the different guides are available in English.

The language that is present within an organization can play a role in impacting how employees experience the ESM and also how they experience the interactions with each other. In relation to this, what was observed is that the ones who started the platform are actively monitoring to make sure that English is the first language (KU). Language is one side of the data that is important to consider for the discussion, as it can potentially play a role in an internationally fragmented organization.

5.4. Information Gathering: A Needle in a Fragmented Hay Stack

The fragmentation within the organization was something that was felt by the different employees who were filling the ESM with the necessary information. It was also noted that the platform would help with information becoming more visible, as well as employees being more findable. Therefore, in relation to information gathering and the importance of the visibility, the findability was a prevalent pattern. Not only that, but it was also noted that the organizational culture, the persistence of information, and how employees can edit said information played a role within the fragmentation and deterritorialization of the organization. Furthermore, it was also seen that towards becoming One Company, there were patterns recognized relating to feature parity as well as shareability. The codes that were identified within this theme can be seen below in Table 8.

Table 8

Overview of identified codes for section 5.4.

Code Group	Sub-Code
Affordances	Visibility
	Findability
	Persistence
	Editability
	Feature-parity
	Shareability
Social patterns	Information gathering
Cultural patterns	Organizational culture
The Power of One	Deterritorialization
	One Company

The biggest struggle that was visible within the data was that of information gathering. This is because the information needed to fill Glow was hard to find. For example: *“I do not really know how to reach people. I don't really know where my team members actually even inform my other coworkers”* (Core Team meeting 5). In relation to this, the issue of communication was also present where one of the interviewees mentioned that *“one of the biggest problems at Keppra Sand is just not finding each other anymore.”* (BU2, Core Team interview). This recurrence of not knowing how to find and communicate with people makes the gathering of information significantly harder. Also considering that within one of the researchers' observation notes with an Alignment Team member, they had mentioned that through sharing information they felt as though they would be losing control (however they were moving away from that feeling as a business unit) (BU2). With this feeling of losing control, the information has also been seen as incomplete or sensitive by another business unit. For example:

“Yes, I tried the history, but it was just I mean, it was fun to retrieve all the information about the history, and I got in touch with a lot of people. But it was shut down because they felt that the history was not complete, or it was very sensitive, apparently.” (BU5, Core Team interview).

Showing that gathering information within the organization is a tough task. Furthermore, within an update meeting for business unit 4 about Glow, it was observed that the audience laughed at the findability of information. Within the whole organization, the struggle to find information seems to be something that is recurring.

Not only is information gathering for the ESM an interesting topic, but also the findability of organizational information. Seemingly enough, the introduction of the ESM and the removal of the other platforms has been met with quite some positivity. Especially considering that the ones who are not located in the Netherlands can profit from this. For example:

“To bring together, you know, a central location where everybody can find what they need and unify, ultimately unify, the resources under one platform because that was the biggest challenge that I received feedback on constantly from multiple people in multiple business units that we support [...]” (BU1, International, Core Team interview)

By unifying the resources, the ESM is challenging the different territories. In an interview, it was said that *“all of the information is there and up to date”* (KU2, Core Team interview). Also, *“there would have been a lot of complaints if we didn't have a platform like this, so it's*

really nice to know it's there if we need to look something up" (Focus group 1). Showing persistence in being able to use the platform to look up necessary information.

Moreover this not only helps the information to be up to date, but the ESM also allows for individuals to be found and visible based on teams or certain expertise. For example, it was noted in one of the Core Team meetings (5) that the *"more attractive part of the whole page is really the team's page,"* where you know *"which team does what, what responsibilities, and who can connect with."* For finding someone with a specific expertise, the following was mentioned:

"And also sometimes you are struggling, like for instance, within the field of marketing, then you think, "Hey, which marketer is busy with more or less the same thing? How can I find something on Glow? Or who is responsible for certain things? How can we get in contact?"" (BU4, Core Team interview).

In relation to finding individuals on the team's page, it was noted that it *"needs to be a little bit easier"* (BU5, Core Team interview). This is because of the fact that it is *"manual work"* to make changes when people leave or switch roles. Even though this feature has been seen as positive, in this case, the negativity comes from the lack of automation. Impacting the visibility and findability of employees.

Lastly, profiles were an interesting aspect of the data. Profiles being up-to-date and complete would help with the visibility and findability of employees. For example: *"I mean, if you're searching for somebody, it would probably be more beneficial to have a complete profile"* (Focus group 1). Furthermore it was also apparent that quite a lot of people did not fill in their profile, but the following was mentioned about this: *"I don't think everyone has filled in their profile yet, but when everyone does, it will be very easy to search for the expertise you are looking for [...]."* (HR, Core Team interview) Showing the importance of having a filled-in profile for the rest of the organization.

Even though Glow is the platform that will be the sole one to stay, comments have been made about how it is hard to replace the existing systems that business units already have. For example: *"This is a difficult one because I think that Teams right now is already serving that. [...] But I think you can tell that it's really hard to move all the information."* (BU5, Core Team interview). Showing the way in which the platform will be hard to adopt especially in combination with gathering information, and ensuring that employees have a central place for finding all of the necessary organizational information.

5.5. The Visibility of Territories

Even though the information can often be considered as if one is finding a needle in a haystack, the existing territories have had a light shed on them through the ESM. Within this section, the different results regarding the territories gaining visibility, as well as the way they are dealing with deterritorialization will be discussed. Furthermore, the role of the ESM in fragmentation, but also towards becoming One Company will also be dealt with. There were also further patterns discovered, in the way that specific associations were made towards the system and how the regional cultures of each territory would come back within the ESM. The codes that were identified within this theme can be seen below in Table 9.

Table 9

Overview of identified codes for section 5.5.

Code Group	Sub-Code
Affordances	Visibility
	Association
The Power of One	Deterritorialization
	Fragmentation
	One Company
Concern	Uncertainty
Cultural patterns	Regional culture

One of the important factors of the different territories becoming visible is through the steps that are being taken towards becoming One Company. Within the observations, for the quotes of the weekly newsletter of the board of directors, it was noted that *“The goal of Glow is to connect colleagues from all over the world, provide up-to-date information, and be a central hub of all company-related information.”* Even though there seems to be an understanding of what the goal is for Glow, on a business unit level there seems to be an uncertainty where the following was mentioned: *“We haven't really talked about the future of Glow with the core team and maybe in that regard there hasn't been that much of a vision on Glow as well”* (BU2, Core Team interview). As well as in another example, it was mentioned that they *“think everyone has a slightly different idea of what the platform is going to be”* (BU5, International, Core Team interview). Showing that the interactions and what the platform will be is still uncertain.

Next to the uncertainty, the fragmentation between the regions was also visible within the data. This fragmentation has caused a difference in understanding on topics that happen in

the organization, as well as the missing lines of communication between employees. For example:

“So there was a limit in communication between the global headquarters and the subsidiaries. And from that perspective, I was very curious because I think that also was happening, you know, completely unintentionally to other subsidiaries. I'm like, "If this is what we're experiencing, then I have a feeling that others are experiencing the same thing and just don't even know that that's actually happening.” (BU1, International, Core Team interview)

This quote is especially interesting as they mention that possibly could not be the only ones dealing with such issues. Moreover, this was also reciprocated within another interview they were not the only ones:

“Even though people in HQ, you know, you walk 20 meters and you're in a different business unit, you could have these conversations, but especially for people who are not based in HQ, it's difficult to have those kinds of bonds.” (BU6, International, Core Team interview).

The reciprocation in feelings of the lack in communication (or “bonds”) is something that stands out for the offices that are located away from the Netherlands. Putting the misunderstandings aside, in relation to closing the gap to the offices located abroad, the following was said:

“I really do because I think the biggest struggle being a subsidiary is we don't intrinsically have access to, you know, just asking somebody, "Hey, where is this training program or where can I find this information?" It wasn't apparent and visible to us because we weren't walking the halls of HQ and having the resources right at hand or having the convenience of turning to our neighbour and them knowing who to talk to, especially since we also don't have our own internal IT department.” (BU1, International, Core Team interview)

Even though there are steps being taken towards One Company, the organization and the different information are not only becoming accessible to those not located in the Netherlands, but the opposite is also the case. The offices located abroad are providing information that will help colleagues to not only understand them better but also provide them with the right information when they are visiting:

“Like, for instance, I heard that for a lot of foreign offices, they added parts of when you visit our office or when you visit this, you can do this, this, and this. [...] It also brings a broader perspective on information.” (BU4, Core Team interview)

This is also strengthened as it was mentioned that the offices located abroad would also like for employees to get to know how they operate differently. For example: *“And then, you know, our culture is different, our lifestyle, or whatever is different. I think it’s also interesting that we can share something different”* (BU5, International, Core Team interview). Not only do they make themselves more visible within the organization, there was also mention of getting to *“know how many offices we have overseas, so that information is really useful for me because if I need to look for someone from the headquarters or from another office I never met with, then it’s quite useful for me”* (BU5, International, Core Team interview). This is especially important, and was reflected in a focus group where they mentioned the following:

“being in a satellite office that’s predominantly focused on Business unit 5, we kind of miss out on hearing a lot of the things that you guys might also take for granted that you get to hear on a regular basis. So, I think for me, the story is a big one”. (Focus group 1)

This reflection on sharing stories with the organization, shows the importance for *“satellite offices”* to be able to share and receive information from the different territories across the organization.

Even though all of this information is being shared, and they want people to get to know the different regions better, there are contradictions present. In a Core Team interview, it was mentioned that they are *“not there yet on that front; on the international front, we have a lot of work to do”* (KU1, Core Team interview). That the organization was not there yet was further supported by another Core Team member who had mentioned that *“the whole implementation actually didn’t involve a lot with the overseas office”* (BU5, International, Core Team interview). Even though some of the employees shed positivity on the ESM, on the global side, a better approach could have been taken. Especially considering that through more information being shared, the more can be leveraged from one another. For example: *“The goal is to share more internally because more knowledge means we can better leverage each other’s skills and expertise, especially from the specialists”* (BU3 and 7 on Glow). This was also further emphasized within the observations with one of the Alignment Team members where the researcher reflected on the fact that the learning from one another and also the gaining experience and sharing is important for the organization. With the proposed pillars, these can help teams to perform across territories when working on larger topics. This is especially important, when considering that the international side of the organization could have been more involved.

Internally for the organization, it has given groups a better voice and also a platform where they will be visible to the rest of the organization. This was visible with the works council, as it was noted in the observations that they are happy with Glow, as it now gives them a platform where they are visible and also findable for employees, not remaining unknown. With this observation, interestingly enough, what one Core Team member had mentioned is quite interesting in relation to the total impact that the platform could have: *“And I think this, even though it's sort of, you know, it's just a system, it's a piece of the puzzle. But I think it has just an underlying greater impact than it's given credit for”* (BU1, International, Core Team interview). This association made with the platform shows that the impact that an ESM may have on an organization is not given enough credit, for what it is actually worth. As the saying goes, it can be a butterfly effect for down the line, however, cultures should not be forgotten. In the observations, it was noted that with China and the colleagues there, they would not readily share things with the organization. Therefore the ESM has quite a way to go to create visibility for the territories that find it difficult to engage with the platform.

5.6. The Role of Employees

The way that ESM will be used and integrated into employees' daily work depends on many different potential factors. Whether it is the person they are, their role or even the communication platforms they are already using; this section outlines the different findings relating to the employee and their role with using the ESM as well as towards becoming One Company and the relation to deterritorialization and fragmentation. Furthermore, other patterns in relation to this concern the existing platforms they use, their transparency on their ways of working and the associations that they made towards the ESM. These patterns also tied in with how the employees share and what their wishes for the content on the platform are, but also the general necessity of the ESM for their work. The codes that were identified within this theme can be seen below in Table 10.

Table 10*Overview of identified codes for section 5.6.*

Code Group	Sub-Code
Social patterns	Person related traits
Ways of working	Role relationship
	Transparency
	Technological patterns
The Power of One	Fragmentation
	One Company
	Deterritorialization
Affordances	Association
	Shareability
	Wishes
Concern	Necessity
Cultural patterns	Organizational culture

The personal traits that individuals have within an organization seem to decide the way in which they interact with an ESM. For example: *“I really like it. The hard time I have is I wanna be part of every community. So then I just overload myself with all sorts of information. But again, it’s sort of part of who I am”* (BU1, International, Core Team interview). This person wants to be part of everything and indulge in all that the platform and the communities offer. With such a person in mind, through a conversation with an employee from BU4, it was observed that when asked if things would change the ESM, they would not, as it would depend on the people. This is especially interesting as these traits are also reflected in people’s expectations with certain roles within the organization. For example:

“Indeed, if only the marketing people are the ones serving stuff, then it will just continue being that, yeah, because why would I serve about some new feature or some struggles that we went while developing a new feature? Yeah, why would I write a story about that if no one has ever done that” (Focus group 2)

Next to marketing having a specific role, in the Core Team interview with HR, they mentioned that *“I think we as HR can teach people also to use it because I think... umm, KU doesn’t agree with me that I think people are mostly going to Glow to search for HR or IT stuff.”* The way that they can teach people, and their expectations with the content that people

will go and find is really interesting. While the ESM provides more information, this is understandable from an HR perspective.

Going back to the quote above, the way they brought up making stories and how they would not do it if no one else ever has, also relates to another point within the data. The stories are an interesting feature within the ESM; however, through posting only positive items, people will refrain from posting about their struggles. This was noted in one of the Core Team interviews where the following was said:

“And so I would like to also kind of see some stories of struggles or challenges and not always like this happy ending story of “look how amazing this is and we are.” But then it just becomes like another platform where everyone's putting up this front of perfection, and it's not very helpful to, like, I don't know, psychologically, it's like to our psyches, like this need to be perfect and need to succeed. So hopefully, as this evolves, it becomes a place where it's more like two-way than just one-way.”

(BU6, International, Core Team interview)

Moreover, specific employees within the different business units often push people to share posts on Glow, rather than intrinsically doing this themselves. For example, in one of the Core Team interviews, they mentioned that they *“are very well informed about things going on in the organization. So we try to be very proactive in that, and actually go to people, say, hey, you are working on this, you should write something about that on Glow.[...]”* (KU1, Core Team interview). With this being said, however, they are contradicting themselves as later in this interview they mention that they will give everyone access and *“that way we hope that people, [...] can just do it, you know? It's not like, oh yeah, I need to talk to marketing first to get the ball rolling. No, I can't just do it this myself.”* In relation to the roles of individuals, the people building the platform think that marketing will not be only expertise writing; however in practice this is still very much the case.

Another interesting point of data is that in one of the business units, due to the usage patterns of their marketing individual, one of the employees had decided to stop using the old platforms and start using Glow (*“This morning, in one of my colleagues, he said, he got a notification from Workplace, he said, oh, you have not been on Workplace for a long time, so he said, well, I won't go to Workplace anymore”*) (BU7, Core Team interview). In relation to platform usage, it is also worth noting that employees often already have their own ways of working put in place. This can potentially influence future usage of the ESM. For example: *“I tend to have my habits, you know, my go-to places—Teams, Outlook—that are probably the two apps that I use the most”* (Focus group 1).

No matter the business unit or role that individuals have, there is still some fragmentation that is present. Especially considering that with certain features, employees could easily stick to what they know. This was also noted in the observations, where the stories on the ESM are related specifically to a business unit. In relation to this, someone had mentioned that “[...]it’s also quite focused on Business unit 4, so I kind of unsubscribe from that”(focus group 1). This further reinforces the fact that if employees wanted, they could easily remain within their business unit bubble. Doing this, though, would defeat the purpose of becoming One Company. During one of the Core Team interviews, the following was mentioned:

“If Glow should have a focus, that should be the main focus of Glow to see how to get international colleagues and cross business unit colleagues together to share experience, information, or whatever they can share.” (BU2, Core Team interview)

The focus stated above directly relates to the goal that was mentioned in section 5.6 on the visibility of the territories. However, in relation to bringing colleagues together, it is contradictory to what another person has said. They mentioned that *“there are hundreds of people in the organization, right? [...]I don’t really have the time, you know, to see what [...] other people are doing. That might sound a bit negative”* (Focus group 1). This person sees that they do not have time to engage with the whole organization. In other words, the employees play a role in how the ESM will be used in the future, where it was also recognized that it is more than bringing business units together. In the observations with the board it became clear that it is about utilizing the power of the house (Keppra Sand), as well as helping employees understand that they do not work for their business unit, but for Keppra Sand. The following example also highlights this:

“I hope that it will help them to understand that they are not working, for instance, for Business unit 4, they are working for the company, but at their unit. But the company is still their company. So we have this, yeah, I think it will create common grounds, [...]” (KU1, Core Team interview).

One company, in the eyes of for example an Alignment Team member, where they noted that they do not find this necessary. As the focus should be on the focus markets, rather than on One Company. In response to this, the focus markets *“was not the customer’s choice but the choice of the organization”* (BU7, Core Team interview). This association shows that even with One Company, choices behind the focus markets have impacted the way of working and how visible the business units have become.

Lastly, it is interesting to note that one of the members of the team behind Glow think that *“Glow is a really cool example of a project that, with success, together with all of the employees worldwide has been realized. And that is something that we can be really proud of.”* (Observations). Not only that, but One Company will bring about a change to the culture within the organization. The implementation of an ESM has many faces, each with their own experiences.

6. Discussion

The present study aimed to explore the way in which the implementation of an ESM and its affordances could help connect an internationally fragmented organization and its workforce. By exploring this, through several different qualitative methods, different patterns were identified that showed the ways in which the organization and its employees responded to the new ESM. This discussion section highlights the main findings of the study and discusses their relationship to the main research question.

6.1. Main findings

The main findings relate to the research question because deterritorialization was identified within the organization and in the different territories. These findings highlight the breaking down of existing structures and the way that the introduction of the ESM is pushing people into a new “social regime of signification” (Rivkin & Ryan, 2017, p. 457). Not only through the disappearance of the other platforms, but also through Glow there is a hope that people will understand that they are working for Keppra Sand and not their business unit. This would help employees be more connected, as it allows for them to leverage each other’s skills and work on projects together, helping teams to work together across territories.

6.2. The Need for deterritorialization: Awareness towards engagement

The different steps of awareness towards engagement were also recognized in the data. These different steps highlighted the difficulty in creating awareness, but also keeping employees engaged with the platform.

The main difficulty was with the Core Team and their role in the process. The data revealed that there was a lack in time and intrinsic motivation on their part, resulting in the platform not trickling down into their respective business units. Making the engagement of the employees harder, as they did not actively promote the platform from their role as Core Team members.

Besides the Core Team members it was noted that managers should promote the platform which could help employees to actively engage with the platform. As a result, different techniques on how to promote the platform, like adding a gamification element, are discussed but not yet implemented. Therefore, it could be argued that by people not actively engaging with the platform, and remaining with the platforms that contain all the necessary information needed for their work, the idea of it helping to create One Company could not be fulfilled. For the future success of the platform it is therefore important to keep this in mind.

6.3. The Fragmentation and Deterritorialization of the Ways of Working

In relation to the ways of working, it was revealed that employees would be dealing with changes. These changes relate to how deterritorialization could potentially play a role in bringing employees closer together or driving them apart due to the platform and features that they previously have used and dealt with. The data showed that there was quite a lot of scepticism within the introduction of the ESM. It can be argued that the organization is fragmented from within business units, as from an employee perspective they often stick to what they know and are not willing to actively change. Furthermore, what has also made the ESM implementation harder is through Business unit 1 creating their own demons. By not following through with past implementations, the scepticism within the employees is further emphasized.

The ways of working were also negatively impacted as the past features of platforms did not come back in the new ESM. Through this lack in features, the implementation also becomes harder as employees question the necessity of the platform if it cannot even provide something they had in the past. Further pushing people away from the ESM through strengthening the fragments, and negatively influencing the hopes towards the deterritorialization of the organization.

6.4. The Fragmentation of Personalization

Following that, in relation to the research, the way that employees engage with the ESM through personalization and language was shown to have many facades impacting the deterritorialization of Keppra Sand. Even though engagement has not been discussed in the theory, it is the way in which employees can connect to the whole organization, in the context of starting to use the platform and the different functionalities (Gatenby et al. 2008; Postma, 2023). The personalization of the platform on the one hand allows for business units to create their own version of the ESM, allowing for more engagement with Glow. However, through personalizing the platform it sacrifices the look of unity, and employees will be less likely to engage beyond their own business unit. Through personalization, employees have not understood the “context” (Haines, 2006, p. 9) that is provided through the ESM, sacrificing their understanding on One Company. Showing that the personalization of an ESM is a very difficult subject as it is hard to meet all the needs and wants of the employees whilst at the same time keeping a unified look. Potentially questioning the value of the personalization.

Language also plays a very important role as it was recognized that language influences the way in which employees engage with the platform. Interestingly, it seems that the auto-translation is an important feature that is wanted in all languages as it allows for

people to engage with the organization no matter their level of English. In this regard, personalization and language therefore influence the experience of employees as it can help them to make the platform their own. This is an important element, as through the affordances, at the end of the day how one user makes use of a platform will differ compared to another.

6.5. Information gathering: A Needle in a Fragmented Hay Stack

What was further recognized in the results is the difficulty of finding information within the organization. This is counteracting deterritorialization, through showing that there is a higher level of fragmentation where it is not only happening across business units, but also within business units. The recognized issue is one of communication, but also that often the employees do not know how to reach individuals for gathering the necessary information. In relation to this, the findability and visibility of individuals across the organization was considered important. Through the profiles, it would allow for people to share what they want with the rest of the organization. However, emphasis was placed on the way that this should actually be done if this feature would actually be used. It can be argued that the other platforms can overshadow Glow. Not only has it been proven that it is hard to migrate the information, this directly challenges the employee's way of working and their willingness to experience deterritorialization. The difficulties lie in the gathering but also finding of information across the different platforms that are currently being utilized in the organization, but also in each respective business unit. This further emphasizes the fragments that are present within the different business units.

6.6. The Visibility of Territories

On the international front new significance has been given in the way that the offices have been given a better connection and insight into what other employees world-wide are doing and working on. This can be seen as reterritorialization as the regions who were once perceived invisible are gaining visibility through the ESM. However because the organization mentioned that they are not there yet on the international front, this highlights the fragmentation, and also potentially shows where the focus was put on during the implementation of Glow.

6.7. The Role of employees

Lastly, it is important to discuss the results that were gathered in relation to the role that employees play with the ESM. The data showed that the way in which employees decide to interact with Glow will impact the extent to which deterritorialization will occur. From an employee's perspective, it can be argued that their experiences on Glow will be entirely up to

them. This is because there is uncertainty in the goal of Glow. In relation to the definition of organizational culture (Schein, 2009; Lubis & Hanum, 2020), if there would be more clarity on the goal of glow, this could act as the glue that holds the group together to use the platform.

Next to that, the personal traits and the role that the employee has within the organization will change the way they use the platform. It was recognized that depending on the person, they would be engaging on a different level with the platform. From a role perspective there is a general understanding that when you are from marketing, you will oftentimes be the one providing the content. This association shows that there is a fragmented understanding of who can actually post. In reality, no matter the role of the individual, everyone should be able to post on Glow.

Lastly, the type of content also played a role in fragmentation. Through only posting stories that are positive it pushes employees away from sharing their negative experiences. This results in the content on Glow being fragmented in the sense that only one type of content is posted.

6.8. Theoretical implications

Applying the lens of deterritorialization (Rivkin & Ryan, 2017), has allowed for a new understanding to be developed within implementation research. Furthermore, through identifying the distinct affordances of visibility, editability, persistence, association (Treem & Leonardi, 2012), and others that were found during the data collection, helped to understand the features and functionalities that would be suitable for an internationally fragmented organization. Applying these to a research setting, allowed for an understanding of the dynamics to be formed with regards to how the internationally fragmented organization would respond to the implementation of an ESM. This lens has several implications for current research on understanding the multifaceted nature of an implementation within an internationally fragmented organization.

In relation to implementation research, the usage of deterritorialization as a theoretical lens has enabled for new insights to be gained within an organizational setting. As it was previously mentioned, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and also the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) provided a limited look into the implementation of technologies. These models mainly focus on the user and their attitudes rather than looking at the environment which they find themselves in (Shacak et al. 2019). Through this research, the lens of deterritorialization has been able to show how the

organization is experiencing deterritorialization and is entering into a new “social regime of signification” (Rivkin & Ryan, 2017, p. 457). With this being said, it can be argued that for future research a combination of either the TAM or the UTAUT together with deterritorialization can provide more of an insight into the attitudes of users and their willingness to adopt a new technology within the changing structures of their organization. The current research has indeed looked into the impact an implementation has from both the organizations side as well as the employees side, but gaining a better understanding on the attitudes of employees can prove to be insightful.

Next to deterritorialization, the affordances of the ESM and how these could impact the organization were also investigated. Taking the affordances into account, allowed for an understanding to be developed towards how the user and the technology would react to each other during usage (Leonardi, 2011). By furthering this and focusing on the affordances of visibility, editability, persistence, and association gave this research a basis for analysing the data (Treem & Leonardi, 2012). Furthermore, through the ESM giving regions more visibility it can be argued from an organizations perspective that employees will reach out more to find content that they normally would not be able to find. This point of continuation supports previous work (Ravasi, 2016; Haimés, 2006; Steinfeld et al., 2009) on how employees reach out to one another and are given the tools to understand regions that were once invisible. This was also present within the usage of a standardized language, with an English first policy, where the importance of also being able to have the content in their own language would stimulate employees to engage more with the platform. This does contradict Neeley’s (2012) point where having a standardized language makes business operations easier across the organization. It is however important to mention that even though organizational culture was the focus, more explicitly focusing on identity and the “toolbox” (Ravasi, 2016; Haimés, 2006) can potentially provide more insights into how employees deal with certain policies or in this case the implementation of the ESM. However, adding the affordances perspective to this research, it has allowed for the multifaceted nature of an ESM within an internationally fragmented organization to be better understood.

Lastly, the main theoretical lens of deterritorialization paired with globalization and fragmentation also helped to understand how the structures of the organization would be impacted by the introduction of an ESM. Due to the structure of the organization and their specialization within different markets, it can be argued that the fragmentation is positively strengthening each business unit. This is in line with what Foresight (2022) mentioned that through globalization it has strengthened regional economies, where in this case the

economies can be seen as business units within the organization. However, it can also be argued that the different business units have received contestation through the ESM and therefore are to a certain extent experiencing the blurring of their borders in relation to their visibility (Wong-Mingji, 2009). This blurring of borders and the visibility is in relation to how the business units can share information across the organization through Glow. Even though the focus of the research was on the deterritorialization of the complete organization, it could also prove fruitful to hone in on a single business unit who also operates on a global level.

6.9. Practical recommendations

Based on the results and the challenges mentioned above, the way in which Keppra Sand can benefit from the recommendations is the way in which further attention can be paid towards streamlining the implementation of Glow within the organization. The recommendations highlighted below focus on (a) improving communication, (b) information gathering, (c) better connecting offices abroad, (d) keeping employees engaged and (e) improving the ESM. These different recommendation should not only benefit the current organization and its employees, but other organizations who are dealing with similar situations within their implementation of an ESM.

Firstly with Glow, it is important to improve the communication as of currently there seems to be a misunderstanding in how the platform should be used. Not only should more attention be paid towards providing employees with an insight into how they plan on developing the platform, but they should ensure that the Core Team also has a vision for the future. This will not only help the clarity of Glow and what it is trying to achieve, but in the long run it can help with providing goals for what they also want to reach with specific milestones that can help guide the progression of Glow. Focus should be put on forming a long term Core Team that will further help to implement Glow. These employees, who have the intrinsic motivation to continue the Glow project to fine tune it along the way, could help with the engagement and also the continuity of the ESM. These employees can ensure that they also keep an eye on the content and the different things that are posted whilst also playing a role in motivating employees on how to best interact and work with the platform. These individuals could benefit the organization as a whole.

Secondly, for the continuation of the ESM for the organization, the act of information gathering is essential. The way that this has been seen by employees and the ones trying to fill the ESM was quite negative as firstly they could not be found and often times things

could also not be shared or were incomplete. Business units, who are working under the umbrella of Keppra Sand should be able to internally share information with one another even if it might be sensitive. With the right tag in relation to the information, it could help to classify this and help the shareability across the organization. Furthermore, it should be noted that through the individuals who could be intrinsically motivated to help further Glow, they could motivate others and really push towards trying to achieve a complete page. This approach enables for the information to be up-to-date and also available to all employees. Not only in a single business unit, but also across the entire organization. Another aspect, in relation to information gathering, is that with certain features like the teams pages, there should be an automation. This automation is in the form where colleagues who change jobs or leave it, should be automatically changed within the pages. Otherwise, users who created the pages, they should be able to receive updates when colleagues change so that they can directly update this.

After addressing the communication and the information gathering, the international offices need to be further addressed. Not only in terms of connecting them to each other, but also to the organization within the Netherlands. This is proving to be vital as employees should be able to feel part of the organization and not as just another company within Keppra Sand. The way that this is done can help in achieving the One Company that the organization wants to strive towards with this strategic pillar. Furthermore, as it was mentioned within the data, on the international side of things, the organization is not there yet. Therefore with the different offices located abroad, more attention should be paid towards aiding them migrate and be part of Glow. This is especially important, considering that some regions will find it harder to share on the platform than others. By helping the different regions to fill in the content and to get their site more up and running than they already are, it can help with the engagement of the employees.

Next to that, gamification could be a useful technique to keep employees engaged with the platform (Looyestyn et al., 2017; Da Rocha Seixas et al., 2015; Brigham, 2015). Not only that, but it should be clearly communicated that everyone can post on Glow, as it was shown that people are still unsure about this. Up to this point, Glow is something different for everyone. Trying to get everyone on the same page of understanding is therefore important in trying to communicate and also share things with one another. By actively trying to allow employees to engage with the platform, the elements of gamification could be fruitful. For example, through the provision of small achievements or milestones for making posts or

finding small hidden functionalities in the platform can help to boost their motivation to also actively take part in exploring but also engaging with the platform.

Lastly, for measuring how the engagement has been over a certain period of time, a survey on the usage of patterns of employees would also prove to be useful for the organization. This survey can tackle different subjects, such as how they feel connected to the whole organization, or even how they have been experiencing the ESM. These insights can prove to be useful when wanting to further develop as well as improve the ESM, in relation to deterritorialization, and the different features that are available to employees.

6.10. Limitations and future research

Some limitations need to be considered. The first is regarding the transferability of the research findings. Due to the distinct structure and presence of business units in the specific case study, transferring this research would provide different results in other organizations. However, these results would still be able to provide new and valuable insights for the organizations dealing with the implementation of an ESM.

Secondly, the main focus for the different implementation meetings was in the Netherlands. Involving international colleagues could have revealed more in-depth results on how different cultures or regions are experiencing the implementation. As well as potentially revealing different needs and wants compared to the organization within the Netherlands. Although the international aspect was considered through the Core Team interviews and the focus groups, more depth could have been given to the research if some of the implementation meetings would also involve employees based in the USA, China or other locations where the organization is active. The results for the current implementation meetings are therefore biased towards the Netherlands and how the platform was built for the different business units that are located there.

In relation to future research, it would be interesting to see how such an implementation would impact new employees who have just joined the organization. Especially considering that they have just joined the organization and could potentially provide different and new insights into how such an implementation could go. Especially if organization identity would also be focused more on, next to organizational culture.

Furthermore, a longitudinal study would also prove to be useful for organizations. Through looking at not only the implementation phase, but also the phases up until the complete adoption within the organization, new insights could be revealed. Especially considering that with the implementation phase, not all aspects could be visible to employees that have just been introduced, or are still building the platform.

A final future research direction could be to see how the ESM specifically influences a specific structure within an organization. This could be interesting to gain an in-depth understanding on how employees in a specific structure deal with the implementation of an ESM.

7. Conclusion

The present study looked into the way that the implementation of an ESM and its affordances could help the deterritorialization of an internationally fragmented organization and its workforce. Through the different findings that have been identified, it can be said that the process of implementing an ESM within an internationally fragmented organization is multifaceted and with that so is the deterritorialization. Theoretically, during the implementation of Glow, the organization and its different territories are dealing with deterritorialization as the different business units have become more visible and findable for each other. On the surface level, employees have experienced this to be overall quite positive, through Glow being the only platform that remains. However, under the surface there have been many factors holding the process of implementation back, such as missing information, the lack of certain features, and wishes of employees still needing to be met. This makes it more difficult for people to make use of the platform and with that connecting with other business units. Therefore, the way in which the ESM will be further developed will impact the usage pattern of the different business unit and their employees and with that how Keppra Sand can experience deterritorialization.

8. References

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9. Appendix

9.1. Codebook

Table 12

Codebook

Code Group	Sub-Code	Definition	Example
Cultural patterns	Regional culture	It is the way in which culture differs depending on where they are located in the world.	And then, you know, our culture is different, our lifestyle, or whatever is different. I think it's also interesting that we can share something different.
	Organizational culture	The glue that holds groups together as well as being the values and beliefs that are shared between these groups.	I think we as HR can teach people also to use it because I think... umm, KU doesn't agree with me that I think people are mostly going to Glow to search for HR or IT stuff.
Social patterns	Communication	Describes the communication patterns that exists between the business units but also in between the regions.	There is a miscommunication for Glow
	Person related traits	How the way in which individuals are, as people, will change the way they engage with systems.	When asked if things will change, not a lot as it will depend on the people
	Information gathering	The way in which interactions take place for the locating of information to put on Glow.	I don't really know how to reach people. I do not really know how to reach people. I don't really know where my team members

			actually even inform my other coworkers
Ways of working	Technological patterns	The way that different technologies have provided teams with a means to communicate with each other.	we use WeChat to discuss if there is any topic with the overseas team
	Role relationship	Depending on the role of the individual within the organization, their ways of working will differ.	And some people will never use it because it doesn't fit their way of working, or it's not relevant to their role. But for all commercial and financial teams, those dealing with future things, Glow plays an important role.
	Mismatch	When the new program does not suit their current ways of working.	So I use Slack for the technical part, and I don't think Glow should replace Slack because that's a whole other software program to use
	Transparency	Describes how open individuals are about the ways of working at the organization.	I think if you wanted to have Glow, to make Glow a success, then four hours wasn't nearly enough, then you need so much time to actually talk to everyone in the market group to convince them of the advantages of Glow
Affordances	Adoption	Describes how people start making use of the platform and applying it into their daily work.	(Adoption in the negative sense) There are these settings, but the timing hasn't been right, and so management started using a

		different tool altogether for that single source of truth document.
Association	It is about the connections that are made between the people, the system and the posts they make.	it's to improve the communication platform for all of Keppra Sand. So I think for me, that's the core in my mind to keep it.
Awareness	How users get to know the existence of the platform and its different features/functionality.	I think that my role was actually to set the outlines of Glow and make people more enthusiastic about the new. Yeah, no intranet
Editability	The way in which there is higher value that is produced through the way that employees can craft "their own experience" and "choose as well as" edit what they want to share with the organization	(personalization of task bar) The left sidebar is customizable per business unit and, eventually, per user. The most used apps will be included
Support	The way in which support is given in building up the platform and its different content.	Also, the platform also has limitations with regards to the functions, but the developer is really quick at adding functionalities.
Persistence	Even if employees logs off, or leaves the platform, what they have done remains	So at least we know we can find some things there, right? There would have been a lot of complaints if we didn't have a platform like this, so it's really nice to know it's there if we need to look something up.

Findability	Describes the way in which individuals/information/places are findable within the platform.	So yeah, so everybody... I think it's easy, just one click, and then you can see the information that you want and are looking for.
Structure	The buildup of the platform and the different content.	There's just not a lot of thought on data structure
Visibility	See their interactions and their different posts as well as from others	The more information you have, the more it might trigger some people to check it frequently
Shareability	The shareability of the content that can be found on the platform.	So the whole thought behind this is share that information up front, share what you're working on, and then somebody might step up and say, hey, but you're doing this, I can contribute.
Engagement	The way in which employees can connect to the whole organization, in the context of starting to use the platform and the different functionalities (Gatenby et al. 2008; Postma, 2023)	We have now built this platform. How will we make sure that it will not be the next hub, for example, where we put a lot of effort in a little, a lot of information in, but then it gets like forgotten more or less. You want it to be part of your day-to-day workflow
Wishes	The things that user want for the platform.	It would be nice if there were a little bit of text under each expertise or for each section to explain what you're doing.

	Language	Means by which languages can be translated within a platform and also in operations.	So Glow follows the company policy of English first, hence it is more readily available than the information, for example, before on the Company hub, which was in either Dutch or English, most of it actually in Dutch. So we're sticking to our company policy of English first
	Feature parity	The way in which features from another system come back in a new one	how do you get workplace to Glow? They don't have an API.
The Power of One	One company	It is the strategic theme that the organization is wanting to implement.	In the end, we are responsible for this platform from the communications team, but it's not our platform. It is all of our platform.
	Deterritorialization	The way that existing organizational structures are broken down, towards forming new territories of collaboration.	It's like using the tool as a center to connect the different market groups within Keppra Sand.
	Fragmentation	How the organization is split with regards to their business operation.	Only when they need to look for something, they might go to these websites.
Concern	Scepticism	Disbelief or doubt in the implementation of the ESM. (Oxford English Dictionary, n.d.)	And maybe, yeah, you can do some integration with it, but it's difficult to make something that will be used by everybody. We've seen that with other tools.

Uncertainty	Unknowing of a specific situation which they are in.	We haven't really talked about the future of Glow with the core team and maybe in that regard there hasn't been that much of a vision on Glow as well.
Necessity	The need for implementing an ESM.	Only when they need to look for something, they might go to these websites.

9.2. Use of AI

During the preparation of this work the author used ChatGPT Enterprise edition and Whisper AI in order to create the image that can be seen on the front page, help with the finding of synonyms for concepts, transcribe the interview recordings, and anonymize the transcribed data. After using these tools/services, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the work.