


MSc Business Administration
Human Resource Management

Viewing corporate alumni programmes as communities of practice

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Joseph Laufer

Management Summary

Category

Master thesis

Purpose

This master thesis explores the area of corporate alumni programmes, and in particular how firms currently utilize and engage their alumni and how the communities of practice framework can be used to gain further insight into the group dynamic aspects of these programmes.

Design/Methodology/Approach

A two step approach was followed in this research where first a review of 222 corporate alumni programmes was undertaken in order to identify the range of prevailing attitudes, objectives and practices of firms in this area. The information gathered from this review was used to identify case study subjects of alumni programmes within four firms and four universities which were assessed individually and on a cross-case basis using the communities of practice framework.

Findings

The findings indicated that while fully developed corporate alumni programmes did not seem to be common among firms outside the traditional accounting, law, and consulting sectors, that individual practices related to alumni relations appeared to be wide spread among the review group. A comparison between the alumni programmes of universities and firms highlighted the differences in both their focus with regard to associated services and benefits, as well as the cohesiveness of their respective alumni as a group or community.

Research Limitations/Implications

The study included a review of corporate alumni programmes as well as an in-depth assessment of eight case studies from universities and firms. As exploratory research it can not be used for generalization purposes but instead serves as a base for identifying areas requiring additional investigation (i.e. evaluating the effectiveness of corporate alumni programme practices).

Originality/Value

This master thesis addresses a lack of research in the area of corporate alumni programmes by identifying the range of prevailing practices in this area, and proposing a basis for a classification system of these programmes using the communities of practice framework.

Keywords

Corporate alumni programmes, Communities of practice

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction to the research areas which will be included in this thesis. It details the key motivators for undertaking the research and highlights the significance of the topic. The anticipated benefits from the research are also described.

1.1 Corporate alumni programmes

Corporate alumni programmes are identified more and more as a human resource priority as firms discover the potential benefits of maintaining a relationship with former employees. For a firm, an alumni programme can be useful for better leveraging the value of its people and in the process contribute to organization performance (Britt, 2002; Kirsner, 2002; Stewart, 2003; Weaver, 2006). Alumni represent, not only, potential buyers of products and services but more significantly an important competitive advantage for firms where they can contribute in a range of other roles such as: rehires and referral sources; suppliers of intellectual capital; ambassadors, marketers, and lobbyists; and investors (Sertoglu and Berkowitch, 2002).

For example, in the case of rehires, research has indicated that recruiting costs can be half as much as for new employees and that turnover is substantially lower (Britt, 2002). Much of this can be attributed to the fact that seasoned alumni are easily integrated back into the organization with skills, experiences, and expectations specifically tailored for a firm's needs. Even if alumni are not rehired, maintaining a positive connection with former employees can be beneficial as either referrals for other prospective employees or as potential future business partners (DeLong 2004; Kirsner, 2002; Stewart, 2003)

Today, the various models of corporate alumni programmes encompass a membership base comprised of both former employees, who have either moved on to new employment positions, and retirees, as well as in some cases current employees, contract workers, student interns, etc. In the past few decades, the definition of an alumni has evolved as the workplace has radically changed. The original model behind these programmes can be attributed to the alumni programmes of universities where graduates maintain an allegiance to their alma mater and benefit from the association.

Corporate alumni programmes initially, in a labour market where lifetime employment was the norm, were primarily made up of retired employees and were used for social purposes. The boom and bust cycle associated with high tech firms from the 1980s onward were periods of massive layoffs where in some cases a firm's entire workforce became redundant. These individuals often chose to maintain an informal connection as a group and form a network run program for either sharing job leads or for partnering in new start-up firm activities. The growth of these unofficial groups would not have been possible without the development of both the Internet and online collaborative groupware tools such as usenet postings, email listserves, and Yahoo Groups. While not all of these can be considered to be alumni programmes, firms often do support their

unofficial alumni networks by providing some level of formal sanction and using them as a communication channel to share information with their former employees.

Professional firms in the areas of accounting and law were also able to benefit from these advances in information technologies and build on their existing alumni relations practices. These types of firms are somewhat unique in that their new employees typically remained in the organization for only a few years before moving on, in many cases, to advisory positions in firms outside of the industry. These alumni represent an important source for securing potential future clients and therefore generating more revenue for their alma mater firm (Denney, 1983). Examples of types of member services in these programmes include: job placement services, directories, social events, newsletters, technical programs (Iyer et al., 1997).

The rapid spread of alumni programmes beyond professional firms to other types of businesses, as part of a formal corporate practice can be viewed as a consequence of fundamental shifts that are taking place in the business environment. A core characteristic of this environment is growing uncertainty, where firms are challenged by globalization and heightened competition, highly demanding customers with rapidly changing needs, advancing technologies which help achieve economic efficiencies but at the same time also radically change the nature of the business, and finally a transformation in workforce characteristics (Noe et al., 1997). Therefore, a firm's ability to effectively utilize human resources and the knowledge it contains represents a key competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Gertler and Levitte, 2005). Another element driving firms to implement alumni programmes are changes in the workforce related to both the different characteristics attributed to generations (i.e. Baby boomers and Generation Y) and the shifting perceptions of individuals with regard to the concepts of work and careers.

The term baby boomers refers to people born during the demographic post-World War Two baby boom between 1946 and 1964 who are now beginning to retire in large numbers. This retirement wave marks the radical transformation of the workforce due to the aging populations of the developed countries. It is expected that a substantial segment of this group will choose to continue to work past their retirement age on either a part-time, contract, or flex time basis (McNamara et al., 2006) and that they will be a valuable resource for firms needing employees with a unique combination of work experience and knowledge (Rubin, 2006). The gradual exit of the baby boomers from the labor market is also expected to result in a decline in overall labor participation rates and is compounded by the fact that overall labor force growth is slowing which together will contribute to future labor shortages in developed countries (Toossi, 2006).

Another transformation occurring in the workforce is a mindset shift among workers from the baby boomer generation norm of a long-term lifetime contracted relationship with one employer to a transactional exchange of the individual with numerous employers. In these protean or boundaryless careers workers seem to be responsible for setting the course of their career paths which not only provides them with a continuously expanding skillset but also possibly addresses their need for work flexibility, job satisfaction, and self fulfillment (Arthur et al., 2005; Hall, 2002).

The gradual entrance of members of Generation X into the workforce which encompasses people born between 1982 and 2001 is seen as strengthening the trend of workers pursuing protean careers. Generation X is also significant since it is representative of the changes which technologies like the Internet and mobile phones have had on society both as individuals and as a collective. These workers are typically more comfortable and adaptable with technology and utilize blogs, instant messaging, social networks, etc on a regular basis to both connect with friends, make new acquaintances and interact with the larger world (Levinson, 2007).

1.2 Research proposal

1.2.1 The research gap

Existing research in the area of corporate alumni programmes is scarce and what exists has been limited in its focus. The only published article found in this specific area titled “Identification of accounting firm alumni with their former firm” (Iyer et al., 1997) concluded that, “accounting firms can manage alumni as assets and that existing firm policies (*socialization, mentoring, and to a smaller extent career counseling*) that operate while alumni are still employees affect alumni identification, which in turn affects alumni’s inclination to benefit their former firm”. The authors in this article stressed the need for additional research identifying effective programs and practices related to corporate alumni programmes. Furthermore, the article focuses on the relationship between former employees and accounting firms yet does not address aspects related to the benefits and practices associated with the relationships and interactions among alumni. The dynamics of alumni communities may not have been of significance in 1997 when the article was published but this has dramatically changed since then, particularly when one considers the transformation of the Internet into a mainstream media channel and the development of various social network platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn etc. Similar research efforts in overlapping areas of work in the more developed area of university alumni programmes have also focused primarily on the relationship between alumni and an organization (firm or university) while again ignoring the alumni to alumni aspects of the programme components.

In fact, the topic of alumni relations seems to have been approached by practitioners and researchers as an abstract and all encompassing group where different types of members (i.e. knowledge workers, support staff, junior managers, senior executives) may in reality share little in common. The community aspects of the programme which includes the fluid social dynamics between individual members and internal groups has been left as a black box type component where it seems that all alumni are assumed from a membership perspective to be similar in nature and potential. Following this rationale, it is plausible that an alumni programme is comprised of not only formal ‘command and control’ type practices defined by the organization but also informal practices determined by individual members or groups which may remain hidden or obscure despite being of some importance.

In order to gain a better understanding of the black box element, described earlier, it may be useful to assess corporate alumni programmes from a network theory perspective. On a basic level, a network is comprised of nodes representing individuals or groups who are connected through ties or social relationships which can be either asymmetric or symmetric (Garton et al., 1997; Lievrouw and Livingstone, 2006; Newman, 2003). The relationship between nodes can be of a communication, friendship, membership, geographic or transactional nature with the possibility existing of having more than one which is called multiplex ties (Garton et al., 1997). Connections within a particular social network differ with ties ranging in strength from weak to strong (i.e. co-worker versus childhood friend) but this is not constant and changes based on time and circumstances (Haythornthwaite, 2000). Another issue related to the strength of ties is the significance of both weak and strong ties in a network where the first provides the sole link to dissimilar and unique nodes outside of a person's usual network, which is referred to as local bridges (Granovetter, 1973) while the second is associated with greater levels of trust between members.

Researchers also distinguish between two types of social networks. A personal network refers to one unintentionally constructed out of common interests, geographic proximity, and random interaction (Haythornthwaite, 2000), while a professional network is one intentionally created for the exchange of task related resources (Nardi et al., 2002).

Corporate alumni programmes can therefore be seen as serving complex networks connecting members both to each other, to related formal/informal groups, and finally to the organization itself. The nature of ties between these nodes is a combination of weak and strong links determined by the characteristics of each organization (workforce makeup, corporate culture, business activity, etc). Therefore, network theory suggests that organizations interested in enhancing their alumni programmes should strive to develop practices which both strengthen existing ties between members as well as create new "weak" ties between unconnected individuals and groups. At the same time, network theory does not seem to provide much insight into the community dynamics of these alumni programmes and member interaction both with the programme as a whole and with each other. The structural emphasis of this theory and its lack of supporting theories in behavior and dynamics can therefore result in misleading conclusions or interpretations (Watts, 2003).

Group dynamics as a field of research has followed two primary directions. The development stream, is the first and views it as a social system within which people engage with each other and develop relationships (Wheelan, 1994). In contrast, the problem solving stream considers the dynamics of groups as being generated from the concentrated effort of resolving a common problem or task (Seers and Woodruff, 1997). The communities of practice theory which will be explained in the next paragraph, has been used in research (Dameron and Josserand, 2006) as an analytical framework which integrates the two streams while also addressing the deficiencies of using network theory in the evaluation of the corporate alumni programmes described earlier.

Communities of practice are independent unstructured groups where members share a common interest and interact to improve their practice. The underlying theories were originally based on a

study of situated learning in apprenticeship type systems (Lave and Wenger, 1991) which was later further developed to explain the social interactive elements of these type of groups (Wenger, 1998). Based on Wenger's work communities of practice can form when three components exist which include: *domain* (an area of knowledge of interest to members who have relevant expertise that is not possessed by others; *community* (joint activities of members where information is shared and relationships are established); and *practice* (the development over time of a shared repertoire by members). Membership within communities is not fixed with new members entering and old members gradually exiting.

The framework addresses people's participation in the group through different modes of belonging (engagement, imagination, alignment) and as movement from the periphery to core and from core to the periphery (although some may choose to remain on the periphery of the group). This is of consequence since it addresses the issue of a members identity both in the group and in the larger world which is not static or constant but is, in fact, evolving based on the particular experiences, skills, and circumstances of each individual. Other useful components from the communities of practice theories include the concept of members following different trajectories in the group, the existence of multiple communities in parallel as constellations, and the important role that group boundaries and information brokering plays in community growth (Wenger et al., 2002).

Recent research in the area of communities of practice has also taken a more practical direction and based on the experiences of firms who have utilized them has found both a link between these types of groups and a firm's competitive advantage (Teigland, 2000; Liedtka, 1999). It has also highlighted the importance of supporting HR policies such as recruiting and training in maximizing benefits associated with these particular types of groups (Roberts, 2006). Furthermore, specific practices and tools have been developed to help firms cultivate and leverage communities of practice (Brown and Dugud, 2001; Saint-Onge and Wallace, 2003; Wenger et al, 2002). Examples of developed practices include identifying the key roles of facilitators in these communities as a person who sustains, maintains clear, permeable and meaningful boundaries, responds, and stimulates the community (Stuckey and Smith, 2004), which in the context of a firm can relate to the human resource or corporate communication professional responsible for the corporate alumni programme.

The adoption of communities of practice by firms has been cited as a useful framework for assessing distinct metacapabilities which, "allow organizations to adapt to change on a continuous basis by contributing the kind of skill and knowledge that underlie the process of capability building itself." (Liedtka, 1999) But, as of yet, the communities of practice framework has not been applied into the setting of alumni relations and corporate alumni programmes.

Therefore, it is this combination of theory and practice which makes an analysis of corporate alumni programmes using the communities of practice framework appealing since it holds the potential for both a better understanding of the community dynamics, and the development of appropriate practices which can be adapted by firms for their specific needs. Looking at alumni programmes as communities of practice changes the perspective by looking beyond the

traditional amorphous all-encompassing network cited earlier and instead seeing it as a constellation of sub-groups where member ties with each other are constantly in flux as their perception of identity changes. It also places them within a context where networks intercept other networks (i.e. retirees, current workers, former employees) and thus recognizes their interconnectedness. This emphasizes the importance of defining appropriate practices which address the realities of the entire system and not just that of the formal alumni program component. Another aspect of this systematic view is that the communities of practice framework, as an open model, can also incorporate external networks outside of the organization which could be links to other firms, clients, consumers - potential relationships extending out from an alumni programme that could also be extremely beneficial to a firm.

It is important, at the same time, to recognize that corporate alumni programmes in many cases may not be considered to be full communities of practice since they often are weak in group cohesiveness with regard to their shared domain, practice and community components. But the framework still provides a useful marker for developing a continuum model of programme types based on both the particular needs of the firm and the membership makeup.

1.2.2 The research statement

The overall goal of this research is to advance the understanding of corporate alumni programmes and examine the relevance and applicability of the communities of practice framework in this area. The central research statement for the thesis is:

What is the nature of corporate alumni programmes and how can these programmes be optimally organized?

Additional sub-questions that will be addressed in the thesis include:

- What is the range of prevailing attitudes, objectives, and practices of firms with their corporate alumni programmes?
- Which typology could be used to distinguish corporate alumni programmes?
- What range of components exist for constructing a corporate alumni programme?
- What is an appropriate analysis framework for developing a set of best practices in the area of corporate alumni programmes?

These questions will be addressed through a combination of both relevant theory and collected empirical findings as described in the next section.

1.2.3 Methodology overview

Given the previously noted lack of research in corporate alumni programmes, the first phase of this study will involve an overview assessment of current trends and practices in this area based on a cross section of firms appearing in the following popular business practitioner publication rankings: 100 Best Companies to Work For (Fortune Magazine, Jan. 2009), The 50 Most Innovative Companies (Business Week, April 2009), and the top 100 firms from the Fortune 500 (Fortune Magazine, May 2009). This assessment will identify the corporate alumni programme components of each firm, the business sectors identified with these components, and also the business function areas responsible for these activities. The research undertaken will also serve as a selection mechanism for screening cases which will be incorporated in the case studies component of the thesis.

A firm's view of former employees as alumni is a relatively new practice modeled after the more common relationships that many higher education institutions have historically actively nurtured and managed with their graduates. Out of this experience, universities have developed a wide range of programmes and practices related to their alumni networks which could also be useful for firms in defining appropriate corporate alumni programme practices. This thesis will therefore also review the alumni programmes of a number of graduate level Dutch higher education institutions with developed, mature, and encompassing alumni programmes in study areas where there is high value for graduating students to remain engaged with their alma mater for either networking purposes (i.e. Business Administration) or continued education (i.e. Geo-Information sciences). The alumni programmes of the following schools will be included in this research: Rotterdam School of Management (RSM), Nyenrode Business School (Nyenrode), TiasNimbas Business School (TiasNimbas), and the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC).

The purpose of this thesis is to explore and expand knowledge related to corporate alumni programmes and therefore a qualitative methodology approach (i.e. interviews, observations, descriptions) will be adopted which will incorporate a number of case studies based on both the subject schools and a strategic selection of corporate alumni programmes. In each of the identified institutions an alumni relations officer will be interviewed about their existing alumni relations practices and perceptions. Print and online material related to the respective alumni programmes will also be collected for analysis. A semi-structured interview was chosen as the primary tool in order to both collect comparable base line information while also allowing a flexibility to explore unanticipated but still relevant topics.

Following this methodology, an inventory of alumni programme related policies and practices will be compiled from the selected schools and companies. Given the formal and informal aspects of alumni programmes, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with school alumni relations coordinators in order to identify programme components and understand their role in the network. Additional insight will be gained from assessing formal and informal written records both offline and online related to each alumni programme (i.e. alumni magazines, alumni newsletters, online alumni postings, etc.) Guiding the inventory survey of these practices will be

the communities of practice framework's three modes of belonging: engagement, imagination, alignment, four community dualities, and the six design elements: events, leadership, connectivity membership, learning projects, and artifacts (Wenger, 1999)

The findings will then be evaluated in order to define possible types of corporate alumni programmes based on the communities of practice evolution model (Gongla and Rizzuto, 2001) and determine effective practices for each type of programme. The case study research approach of this thesis will be instrumental for both highlighting the differences between the various types of corporate alumni programmes and analyzing the applicability of the communities of practice framework in the unexplored area of corporate alumni relations.

1.3 Expected benefits

It is perceived that this thesis will provide the following benefits:

- Tracing the history and current state of corporate alumni programmes.
- Defining archetypes of corporate alumni programmes based.
- Providing firms with useful models for organizing their alumni programmes.
- Generating interest for further research in the area of corporate alumni programmes.

1.4 Table of contents

Chapter one: Introduction - research proposal

Defining the background, motivation, methodology, & objectives of this thesis.

Chapter two: Theory and related studies

Describing the evolution of corporate alumni programmes and introducing key concepts of communities of practice as a relevant analysis framework for assessing these programmes.

Chapter three: Method

Outlining the two step research design (review & case studies) developed for this study.

Chapter four: Review findings

Reporting the findings from the review of 222 corporate alumni programmes.

Chapter five: Case studies

Assessing eight alumni programs of universities and firms using the analysis framework.

Chapter Six: Conclusions - summary

Presenting findings, recommendations, and possible future research areas.

Chapter 2 Theory and related studies

This chapter will begin by providing a brief outline tracing the historic evolution of corporate alumni programmes which is useful for better understanding the current attitudes and practices of firms in this area. This will be followed by a review of existing research which focuses primarily on the benefits associated with corporate alumni programmes and also highlights the growing interest of firms in implimenting these practices. The communities of practice framework is being utilised in this thesis as an instrument for comparing and contrasting alumni programmes. Therefore this chapter will also address the theoretical and practical aspects of the communities of practice framework both in general terms and in the specific context of this research topic in order to provide adequate reasoning for the decision to use it as described.

2.1 Corporate alumni programmes

The word alumni is typically used in the context of schools and universities and refers to graduates who maintain an affinity and connection with their alma mater institution. The same term is now being used within the context of the workplace where firms through established alumni programmes develop long-term relationships, also known as lifetime affiliation, with former employees which can include retirees, laid off workers, employees who have left for other jobs, interns and contractors.

A wide range of options exist for designing and administering corporate alumni programmes based on the specific circumstances and needs of each company and these can vary in terms of size, longevity, origins, purpose, governance, authority, form, activities, and membership criteria (Xing, 2006). Activities organized as part of these programmes include among other things: recurring alumni events and meetings, job opportunities both within and outside the company, alumni directories, alumni business listings, professional development workshops, career placement, etc.

2.1.1 Evolution

In earlier periods of history where cradle-to-grave lifetime employment was the norm it is perhaps not surprising that companies had an extremely negative view of employees who chose to leave their place of employment and often treated these individuals as disloyal outcasts. In fact, firms of that era were reported as having an unwritten rule of neither hiring nor dealing with former employees (Canabou, 2007). Since then employers attitudes towards former employees have experienced a radical transformation to the current reality where, “the more successful our alumni are, the more it builds our brand” (Rose, 2006), and “our people will be movers and shakers wherever they land next. We’re planting seeds for the future” (Canabou, 2007) It is therefore logical that the original form of corporate alumni programmes may have emerged from retiree associations where traditionally retired workers of that time made up the overwhelming majority of a firm’s alumni.

These retiree associations were used by companies to maintain a relationship with retired employees but also as an important channel for communicating changes or updates regarding employment benefits like pensions and health insurance. The central role that these early phase corporate alumni programmes played is illustrated in the following purpose statement from the Florida Power Corporation (FPC) Retirees' Association website, "Providing communication to and from the corporate headquarters, to exchange ideas pertaining to the retirees' welfare and to provide a social basis of fellowship of those who have shared a comradeship in working together"¹.

The next development in the evolution of corporate alumni programmes can be attributed to the massive downsizing trends of the 1990s where large groups of employees suddenly found their jobs terminated. This unfortunate period coincided with the rapid growth of the Internet as a mass communication medium which enabled these former employees to organize themselves as both a support group and a resource for finding new jobs. For example, in 1993 as part of a voluntary downsizing at IBM over 90,000 left their jobs and some of them subsequently established an unofficial alumni group called Big Blue Alumni International which attracted between 8,000 to 10,000 members (Horwitt, 1999).

Official corporate alumni programmes gained popularity among firms during the late 1990s where it was seen as an effective recruitment strategy for dealing with the then tight labour market which was characterized by low unemployment, high turnover, and a shortage of skilled workers in a number of key areas. The rehiring of former employees was found to be both a cost effective and beneficial way of securing required talent since these individuals were known by the firm and already possessed an intimate familiarity with the particular organizational culture. Booz Allen Hamilton, a consulting practice, follows this strategy by tapping into its 10,000 member strong alumni network for talent recruitment purposes. The firm uses a component of its corporate alumni programme called the, "ComeBack Kids" to actively pursue former employees which in 2005 resulted in the hiring of 220 men and 108 women (Nycz-Conner, 2006). A similar initiative at Ernst & Young, an accounting consultancy, involves the recruitment of these 'boomerangs' employees which was reported to account for a quarter of all experienced hires (Kirsner, 2002).

An emerging and relatively new phase in the evolution of corporate alumni programmes completes a circle with the retiree associations discussed earlier but in contrast a growing number of firms now seeks to continue harnessing the skills and knowledge of their retirees. This both new and old focus stems from a growing dilemma facing firms which is expressed in the following conclusion from a survey of human-resources directors, "When the baby-boomer generation retires, many companies will find out too late that a career's worth of experience has walked out the door, leaving insufficient talent to fill the void" (Economist, 2006). Companies like IBM, Dow Chemical, Shell, etc. are addressing this challenge by incorporating components

¹ <http://www.fpcra.org/>

in their corporate alumni programmes specifically tailored for reintroducing retired employees to their workforce on a temporary, contract, or flexible basis.

The current global economic recession which began in the end of 2007 is generating renewed interest from firms in corporate alumni programmes. One reason which may possibly provide some explanation for the perceived rapid growth in the number of these programmes is that it provides potential benefits for both current employees and alumni. For example, it has been suggested that corporate alumni programmes can reduce the stress experienced by employees during times of change such as in this instance, as well as provide recently laid off workers with an incentive to consider returning when economic circumstances change for the better (Burke and Cooper, 2004). Furthermore, employees who remain within a firm can utilize their corporate alumni programme to keep connected with former colleagues and follow their careers as they find new jobs - this could alleviate feelings of guilt among remaining employees (Burke and Cooper, 2004)

2.1.2 Benefits

Corporate alumni programmes have been mentioned primarily within the specific context of human resources (HR) primarily as a recruiting strategy where former talented employees can be rehired thus preserving a firm's investment in their skills (Cappelli, 2008). At the same time, these types of programmes can also be an effective component in dealing with other aspects of the HR flow policy such as: selection and recruitment; staff development; career renewal and outplacement.

Research in the areas of networking and knowledge management related to corporate alumni networks has found that it facilitates processes encouraging both external and internal knowledge flows in an organization (McNamara & McLoughlin, 2007). Therefore, companies utilizing alumni programmes can benefit from being able to tap into both current and former employees, as well as any other relevant networks which these individuals might belong to (e.g. university alumni, professional association membership, etc.)

A survey of corporate alumni programmes (Xing, 2006) expands on the area of knowledge flows by identifying the perceived benefits of both employees and employers. In the case of companies these included: extend recruitment network, business development, lower recruitment costs, access quality referrals, acquire market intelligence, extend network to other industries, cultivate employee ownership, build loyalty and trust, manage staffing levels, extend brand image and influence. While for employees the perceived benefits of being a member of a corporate alumni programme were: job opportunities, professional development, access to expertise, career development, new business ventures, new market opportunities, news of company initiatives, talent management, influence company products and policies, share thoughts without risk.

These points highlight the fundamental changes that both workers and companies have experienced which has shifted away from traditional norms such as lifetime employment and stable predictable market conditions and is increasingly marked by uncertainty. For firms this has meant operating in an environment where both the market and technology are experiencing rapid change (Beer, 1984) which in turn has also impacted the labour market where individuals now often pursue multiple boundaryless careers (Beer, 1984; Arthur and Rousseau, 1996) while being guided by shifting social values focused on individual fulfillment (Beer, 1984).

In this environment, one of the key demands for an organization is to establish effective flow policies which, “allow a continual process of matching individual career needs and organization requirements” (Beer, 1984). A corporate alumni programme therefore is a useful component in this process since it provides employers with not only access to a relevant and dynamic pool of skilled employees but also possibly as a resource for introducing new stakeholders such as former employees, prospective recruits, and customers into the discussion over changes or enhancements to existing flow policies within the organization.

One obvious important need for firms is the ability to attract needed talent and corporate alumni programmes in the case of up-or-out employment systems common with large professional firms in the areas of accounting, law, and management consulting represents an attractive factor for prospective recruits.

Once within an organization new employees can continue to benefit from the existence of a corporate alumni programme by utilizing it as a career development tool for monitoring both their own achievements and goals as well as those of their peers. An organization, in turn, can leverage its alumni programme to promote valued workforce skills, existing career paths, career opportunity information, an career authority and control elements such as an inventory of skills and job preference which could be used for automatically matching employees with job vacancies (Beer, 1984). In fact, relevant career information such as this combined with skill development in a positive work environment can have an equally positive effect on an organization’s competitive ability to maximize productivity while minimizing staff turnover (Granrose & Baccili, 2006).

Corporate alumni programmes also serve a role in managing outflow by providing outplacement type services for eligible exiting employees or by simply offering both them and alumni with a platform for sharing useful job leads and advice. At the same time, firms through their alumni programmes continue to maintain a relationship with former employees who under certain circumstances could re-enter its workforce either as returning employees or in some other capacity.

In effect, this creates a revolving door alternative to the traditional linear view of employment. For example, corporate alumni programmes are being used as a vehicle for recruiting consultants on a temporary basis who through their unique mix of skills represent a source of innovation which does not require as much management oversight as regular employment intermediaries

since these individuals would already be familiar with the relevant organizational culture (Nesheim et al., 2007)

Organizational culture can also benefit from corporate alumni programmes since it makes it possible, for example, for firms with in-and-out type flow systems to still preserve a strong culture despite the typically short employment period of its professional workforce. This can be achieved not by having the burden necessarily fall on senior management (Beer, 1984) but by leveraging the alumni programme as a socialization mechanism. It can also change accepted conceptions regarding the link between flow patterns and their influence on organizational culture since exiting a firm does not necessarily imply the severing of existing relationships or a negative impact on interdependence in the case of employees re-entering the workforce.

A case can also be made that these programmes can have a positive affect on employee commitment to the organization since they provide the means for a mutually beneficial relationship between company and worker not only during the employment period but also long after the departure of employees from the organization. The impact of these networks on psychological contracts could therefore alter accepted notions that, “some flow patterns (notably in-and-out and up-or-out patterns) make it difficult for employees to develop long term commitment to an organization, even when other factors such as satisfaction with work, pay, and working conditions make commitment desirable” (Beer, 1984)

Table 1: Corporate alumni programmes - perceived benefits

Extend recruitment network	Contribute to business development
Reduce recruitment costs	Access to quality referrals
Acquire market intelligence	Link to other industries
Cultivate employee ownership	Build employee trust/loyalty
Manage flexible staffing levels	Extend brand image and influence
Nurture new stakeholders	Provide outplacement services
Retain organizational knowledge	Sustain corporate culture

Ultimately, corporate alumni programmes can be seen as reenforcing and extending the principle where, “employees are treated as investments which if properly supported and developed can yield a long-term stream of benefits to the organization (Beer, 1984)

This precise principle of firms managing alumni as long term investments is addressed in research undertaken on the topic of corporate alumni programmes titled, “Identification of Accounting Firm Alumni with their Former Firm: Antecedents and Outcomes (Iyer et al., 1997).

In this article, the authors evaluated the effectiveness of alumni programme components common in accounting firms like career services, member directories, events, newsletters, and professional training from the point of view of maximizing the benefits of firms from alumni. The research findings suggested that firms could indeed manage alumni as assets but that future work is needed, “to identify specific programs and practices that most effectively enhance the alumni-firm relationship”. The next section will introduce the communities of practice framework which is utilized as a mechanism for gaining more insight into that relationship.

2.2 Communities of practice

The term communities of practice in existing research has been defined in a variety of ways but all common definitions (Brown et al., 1998; Wenger and Snyder, 2000) seem to emphasize the importance of a community in creating and sharing knowledge which enables individuals to acquire and expand relevant competencies. The differences in definitions with regard to the term have resulted in the concept being characterized as *a source of reusibility* which through its inherent flexibility can be applied for different academic and practical purposes (Cox, 2005).

These groups are commonly defined as a social framework where members share common concerns, face similar problems or issues, or have a passion in one particular area, and who expand, enrich and develop knowledge and expertise through ongoing interaction (Wenger, 1998). Frequently cited examples of communities of practice from daily life include parents who as part of their children’s weekend football league games share children rearing tips and stories with each other, or work colleagues who meet regularly during a lunch break while casually discussing their respective daily business related experiences and thoughts.

Other illustrations of these communities range from small close knit groups like medieval tradesmen guilds and local farmers to much larger and looser entities such as in the case of hundreds of computer programmers from around the world collaborating virtually over the Internet and in the process developing components for open source software (Wenger, 2002).

These types of groups represent an omnipresent phenomena where practically all individuals serve in them as members either at home, work, or through other frameworks such as in the case of hobbies or other social activities. Some groups may follow more of a formal and institutional nature while others are less formal and could be characterized as being practically invisible, but all represent forms of organizations (Wenger, 1998). Communities of practice utilized within companies are different from similar entities like project teams or work groups in among other things that participant roles are not formally defined, progress is not measured through usual performance indicators like milestones, and there is no formal end date for group activities (Wenger, 2002).

2.2.1 Theoretical evolution

The communities of practice concept was originally developed as a situated learning theory in 1991 by Etienne Wenger and Jean Lave who observed a number of apprenticeship type programmes which included: midwives, tailors, naval quartermasters, mean cutters, and non-drinking alcoholics. Lave and Wenger proposed that the socialization aspect of apprenticeships was as significant as the information or knowledge associated with the relevant skill or trade (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

In this context, of specific interest was the contrast between new and seasoned workers and the respective influence that their interaction had on each other through the described community based learning. The process responsible for the transition in the cited instances from apprentice to master was attributed by Lave and Wenger to both location (on-site within the appropriate and real practice setting) and community (working with experienced colleagues), and this in their work was described as Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP). The LPP concept emphasizes the importance of participation in these frameworks, where the learning of practice was not simply a matter of replicating existing knowledge but actually an integral component of the practice itself.

Wenger in a subsequent book published in 1998 further elaborates and develops the organizational aspects of the communities of practice concept by providing a more detailed definition for such groups, particularly in business settings, based on his observations from an insurance claims processing department. In this work new elements are introduced to the overall concept related to the changing identities of members; the trajectories that members follow in groups based on their particular patterns of participation; the impact of multi-membership in collaborating, competing, or non-related groups on individual members; and the significance of boundaries between groups.

Wenger places much of his focus in this work on introducing two core components. The first, practice, is defined as a duality of both participation and reification (the creation of artifacts, tools, stories, procedures) where members negotiate the meaning of their membership in the group. Practice in the context of the community is also revealed to have three dimensions through which members interact with each other (*mutual engagement*), driven by a sense of collective accountability defined by the group (*joint enterprise*), and which over time results in the development of common resources such as routines or stories (*shared repertoire*). The second core component, identity, touches on the perception of individuals as members in the group which encompasses multiple facets related to practice, cited earlier, and is an element which is constantly changing and being renegotiated.

In 2002, Wenger in collaboration with Richard McDermott and William M. Snyder published the book, “Cultivating Communities of Practice” (Wenger et al., 2002) which as suggested by its title represented a shift in the research focus towards the utility of the concept for businesses and the development of supporting tools for large organizations interested in using it for the purpose of managing knowledge workers, stimulating innovation, and improving firm competitiveness. Three new characteristics are therefore introduced as crucial elements for the formation and existence of communities of practice. The first characteristic, *domain*, refers to the expertise or competencies that bond members together and which also distinguishes them from others outside of the group. The second, *community*, represents the social structure which makes it possible for members of the group to come together and interact. Finally, the last characteristic, *practice*, describes the tangible products or outcomes of member interactions through which knowledge within a community is created, developed, shared, and maintained. These three characteristics are introduced as elements which the authors state if organized correctly within an organization can result in knowledge optimization.

2.2.2 Framework components

Wenger’s work since 1998 provides both a more concrete definition of the communities of practice concept and an analytical framework for addressing the dynamics within these types of groups . While communities of practice may not be visible as such to both internal members and casual observers a list of characteristics of these types of groups has been defined by Wenger (Table 1).

These indicators emphasize the unique nature of communities of practice type groups where members share a participatory relationship based on tangible elements related to engagement, imagination, and alignment which are defined by Wenger as three *modes of belonging* (Wenger, 1999).

Table 2: Indicators of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998)

1.	Sustained mutual relationships - harmonious or conflictual
2.	Shared ways of engaging in doing things together
3.	The rapid flow of information and propagation of innovation
4.	Absence of introductory preambles, as if conversations and interactions were merely the continuation of an ongoing process
5.	Very quick setup of a problem to be discussed
6.	Substantial overlap in participants’ descriptions of who belongs
7.	Knowing what others know, what they can do, and how they can contribute to an enterprise
8.	Mutually defining identities
9.	The ability to assess the appropriateness of actions and products
10.	Specific tools, representations, and other artifacts
11.	Local lore, shared stories, inside jokes, knowing laughter
12.	Jargon and shortcuts to communication as well as the ease of producing new ones
13.	Certain styles recognized as displaying membership
14.	A shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world

As suggested by the modes of belonging component, member participation in a community of practice is not limited to one or two conventional possibilities (i.e. attending or not attending an event, submitting or not submitting a survey) but can actually be viewed on a much broader level where participation manifests itself in different forms. For example, members can interact in some way or fashion with others in the group (*engagement*) which in turn impacts their own sense of identity.

The precise recognition or awareness of an individual regarding their membership in a group also represents a form of participation (*imagination*) where one's internal image in the community and world is used for orientation, reflection and exploration. One illustration, cited by Wenger, of the role that imagination plays in this context is the abstract conceptualization of national citizenship where a sense of membership exists despite the fact that not all members of a country are engaged directly with each other.

The last mode of belonging (*alignment*) emphasizes the interconnectedness between all three modes where the various forms of participation of members within a group does not just occur in a vacuum but is influenced by the perspectives, interpretations and actions of both other members and the group as a whole. This often informal act of coordination within the community ensures that the actions of members effectively transcend the individual or local sphere and follow an overall collective direction.

The usefulness of the three modes of belonging according to Wenger is twofold where for one, the breakdown of participation into the areas of engagement, imagination, and alignment highlights both the unique and related aspects of each which are all present in different degrees and combinations in the various forms of communities of practice. The balance between the three modes where one or two elements might dominate over the other(s) represents an important factor in the dynamics of a group which Wenger suggests could serve as a base for distinguishing the various types of communities of practice.

This emerging typology framework can also be seen as being related to the other benefit associated with the modes of belonging where a practical dimension is added to the overall concept of community of practice by matching appropriate but distinct strategies to each form of participation.

Wenger develops this practical framework further by addressing conceptual architectural aspects related to design dimensions of communities of practice by defining four inherent dualities (Wenger, 1998) as well as a supporting set of design elements (Wenger, 1999). The dualities described below provide a range along which the three modes of belonging representing the different types of member participation can be evaluated and customized for the particular needs of each group.

Participation - Reification: Generating participation within a group is achieved through a combination of specifically designed artifacts (*reification*) and a suitable mix of individual members (*participation*).

Designed - Emergent: The design capacity within communities is limited in scope since member participation is reactive and therefore dynamic in nature. Participation and the various possible outcomes emerging from it should not be seen as a result of design but in response to it. The challenge, in this case, should not be to eliminate one or the other but to accommodate both in an appropriate manner using a robust design.

Local - Global: The substance of a particular community while defined through its design is also constantly being challenged, revised and developed by its members but these activities can be seen as effecting different levels or locals within the group. In essence, the design component in this specific context can be viewed as a means of communication for a community which in its reach among members falls somewhere within the local to global continuum.

Identification - Negotiability: A person's identity in a group is greatly influenced by their respective ability to negotiate the specific meaning of membership. The flexibility or lack of flexibility in this area varies by the particular circumstances and needs of each group where design not only defines the boundaries of the group (i.e. criteria for membership) but also must generate and direct participation.

The last essential component that Wenger proposes is a set of six design elements (Wenger, 1998) which together with the three modes of participation and the four dualities mentioned earlier more or less complete the practical framework for evaluating and adapting the design of communities of practice. This toolkit includes the following elements: *events* (organizing occasions for members to meet which are relevant and consistent with the group's identity), *leadership* (developing leadership within the group and providing appropriate opportunities for members to lead), *connectivity* (providing the means through which members can both share information and communicate), *membership* (recruiting a critical mass of members and in cases of overextended membership creating complimentary sub-groups), *learning projects* (identifying long term assignments related to the group's domain which capture the interest and passion of members and help develop the community), and *artifacts* (creating and maintaining tangible products from the engagement of members such as documents, tools, stories, and websites which can be useful for the continuing evolution of the community).

Two additional and useful elements introduced by Wenger in tandem with his framework relate to the existence of multiple communities of practice which raises issues concerning both the boundaries of and between groups, as well as the impact of multi-membership on members. Boundaries in the context of communities of practice hold a different meaning than in the case of more formal organizations where it typically denotes a distinct functional line which exists to separate it from other groups. Here, a boundary actually represents the opposite and is focused on the connections between various communities in a given environment. Wenger coins the

phrase *constellation of communities* (Wenger, 1998) to describe a grouping of communities that based on a particular perspective can be seen as being related. This can be an important element since it has the potential to provide a group with external stimuli which enables it to further evolve and develop.

Therefore, the challenge for a community is to have boundaries which are both not too insular to arrest innovation within the group nor too disconnected where external links with other groups have little or no relevance to a community's domain or practice. Wenger uses the term *bridges* to describe three mechanisms which can be used by groups for spanning boundaries - brokering (members functioning as a link between communities), boundary objects (artifacts, discourses, and processes shared between communities), and boundary interactions (encounters, practices, and peripheries oriented membership).

As mentioned before, boundaries are not the only noteworthy phenomena related to the real world environment where multiple communities of practice co-exist. People in this reality must also maintain a multi-membership across various groups which according to Wenger, "can and do conflict with, influence, compliment, and enrich each other". In affect, this necessitates members to manage their various memberships by prioritizing them and defining participation based on which of them are core and which are more peripheral.

In fact, communities which incorporate design elements addressing multi-membership participation are better positioned to engage their members. This also serves as a good example of community trajectories through which both new members can grasp the possible participation paths in the group based on current and past experiences (Lave and Wenger, 1991), and existing members can learn about new possibilities for participation (Wenger, 1998). Communities can utilize three categories of trajectories based on the participation goal - inbound (towards full membership), peripheral (low commitment types of interaction), and outbound (opportunities extending beyond the group) which are also highly relevant in the context of two of the three modes of belonging discussed earlier: imagination and alignment (Wenger, 1999).

Trajectories introduced by new members are just one example of factors which can stimulate change within communities. This experience of change has been addressed by Wenger through the concept of communities going through a series of development stages following a life-cycle pattern which spans from beginning to end. In this pattern, five stages are described ("potential", "coalescing", "active", "dispersed", and "memorable") which are distinguished from each other through distinct community activities and member relations (Wenger, 1998). Subsequent research has built on this original premise (McDermott, 2000; Wenger et al., 2002) but only one seems to have taken a more practitioner perspective by incorporating an evolutionary model instead of a life-cycle model (Gongla and Rizzuto, 2001) as seen in table 2, on the following page.

Table 3: Community evolution model definition (Gongla and Rizzuto, 2001)

	Potential	Building	Engaged	Active	Adaptive
Definition	A community is forming.	The community defines itself and formalizes its operating principles.	The community executes and improves its processes.	The community understands and demonstrates benefits from knowledge, management and the collective work of the community.	The community and its supporting organization(s) are using knowledge for competitive advantage.

This model is based on research conducted at IBM where over 60 internal communities were studied and which suggested that communities did not simply reach their end (death) but actually morph into different forms and evolve along a continuum - a process which can follow both a forward and backward direction.

2.2.3 Benefits and criticism

A growing number of multinational entities such as BP/Amoco, IBM, Montgomery-Watson Harza, Shell, Siemens, Johnson & Johnson, The World Bank, Bristol-Myers Squibb (Fontaine & Millen, 2004) are attributed as supporting and utilizing communities of practice within their organizations. The added value for these and other businesses has been anecdotally claimed to be linked to among other things: corporate strategy, new business development, problem solving, knowledge management, employee professional development, and talent recruitment and retention (Wenger & Snyder, 2000).

In other existing research, communities of practice have been described in the case of large firms as being instrumental in increasing social capital, organizational performance, customer response, as well as creating new business opportunities (Lesser and Storck, 2001). They have also been associated with firms which achieve both a competitive advantage and an improved ability for on-time customer delivery performance (Teigland, 2000; Liedtka, 1999), as well as represent a “well balanced” strategy for balancing exploitation and exploration processes within organizations (Probst & Borzillo, 2008).

Many of the examples of benefits cited above may possibly stem from the fact that communities of practice enable firms to transcend beyond the traditional organization bonds of either a functional or geographic nature. It has also been suggested that harnessing these groups both within and outside of the organization will become a growing priority in the future for maximizing knowledge capacities since employees will not only be members of internal communities of practice but also external ones related to their personal or professional lives (Roberts, 2006).

There has also been a great deal of skepticism among researchers regarding the ability of firms to actively construct and support communities of practice (Brown and Duguid, 1991; Lave and Wenger, 1991) which stands in contrast to the original concept which presented these groups as spontaneous, and self-organizing (Lave and Wenger, 1991). This criticism has been somewhat mitigated following studies suggesting that firms can still play a role in fostering and participating in formally sponsored communities of practice (Brown and Duguid, 2001; Wenger et al., 2002).

Other areas of debate relate to the membership size of communities of practice in which the concept principles treat small on-site groups identically the same as large virtual groups which may have hundreds of members scattered across the world. The issue concerning the level of relations between members has also been addressed through the creation of a new category of groups with significantly looser ties called networks of practice (Brown and Duguid, 2001) or collectivities of practice (Lindkvist, 2005) which while different from the original are also seen as being more adaptable to the accelerating business environment.

Yet another subject of contention relates to how both cultural differences and the growing trend towards individualization impacts the existence and activities of communities of practice. Specifically, whether the decline in social structures in western economies might in turn signal the weakening of communities of practice type groups, and if this represents a possible advantage for societies where the community remains a core component above the individual such as in the case of East Asian countries (Roberts, 2006).

2.2.4 Practical applications

Existing work in the area of communities of practice carry titles like, “Why communities of practice succeed and why they fail” (Probst and Borzillo, 2008), “Sustaining communities of practice” (Stuckey and Smith, 2004), “Evolving communities of practice: IBM Global Services experience” (Gongla and Rizzuto, 2001) and “Organizing for continuous innovation: the community of practice approach” (Corso et al., 2008). These highlight the growing body of research focused specifically on practical aspects of the concept and is useful since it illuminates how Wengers original framework is being both applied and further developed by various firms for a wide range of business settings.

For example, a growing volume of best practices has evolved with regard to the business experience with communities of practice. One research effort reviewed 57 corporate communities of practice in Europe and the US and identified success and failure factors (Probst and Borzillo, 2008). Among the recommended practices are: “stick to strategic objective”, “Divide objectives into sub-topics”, “Form governance committees with sponsors and CoP leaders”, “Overcome hierarchy related pressures”, “Provide the sponsor with measurable performance”, “illustrate results for CoP members”, “Promote access to other intra-and inter-organizational networks”, and “The CoP leader must have a driver and promoter role”, with cited

reasons for failure being: “lack of a core group”, “low level of one-to-one interaction between members”, “rigidity of competences”, “lack of identification with the CoP”, and “practice intangibility”.

Researchers have also developed tools to assist companies in establishing and managing their communities of practice groups. In “A roadmap for Community management” (Corso et al., 2008) a six phase process is proposed which includes both planning elements (strategic concept, governance definition, design, implementation and launch) and administrative/analysis elements (day-by-day operations, assessment). Another example of a practical oriented resource is the “steering wheel to manage COPs” (Probst and Borzillo, 2008) which introduces a governance model incorporating components like measurements, objectives, sponsorship, leadership, boundary-spanning, risk-free environment, and measurements. Given the perceived limited role that companies can play in the creation of communities of practice groups, other research activities in this area have focused, for example, on the proper blend of communication technologies as a factor in the dynamics of communities of practice (Smith and Trayner, 2005) and how the role of facilitators can be optimized in these groups (Stuckey and Smith, 2005).

2.3 Corporate alumni programmes and communities of practice

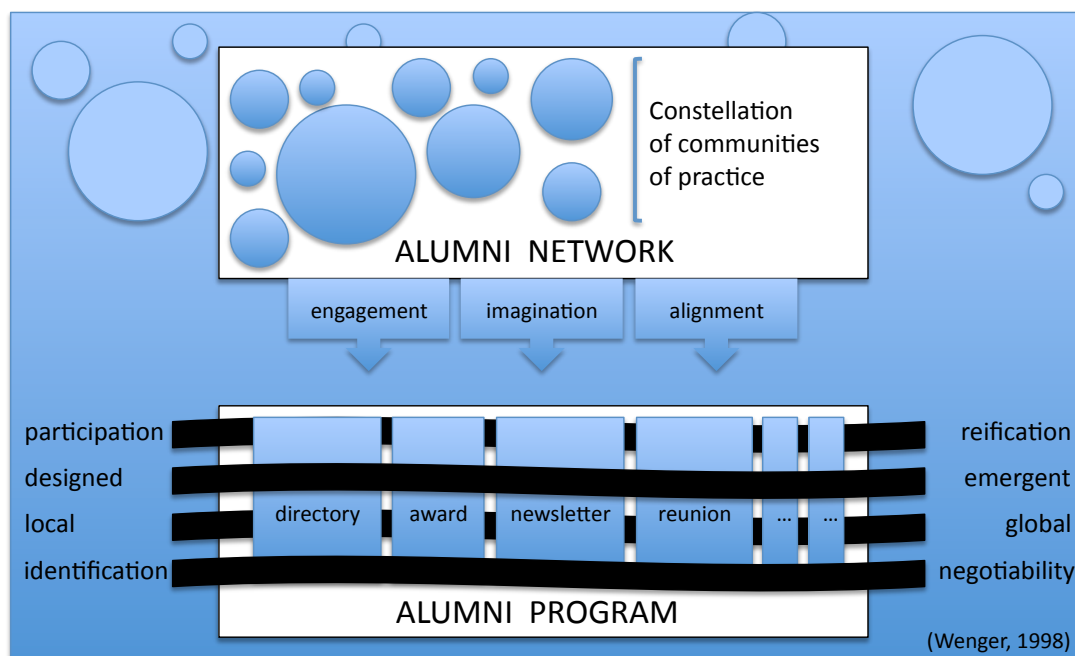
Alumni programmes in both university and corporate settings involve these types of organizations actively building, preserving, and developing a relationship with alumni stakeholders which is typically not done from altruistic reasons but is linked to specific strategic objectives (i.e. fundraising, recruiting, new business development, etc.). These programmes may have traditionally been focused more on the individual member level than the alumni group level through activities like direct correspondences (i.e. fundraising appeals, member updates, organization news) and networking events (i.e. conferences, general reunions). This focus has changed with the advent of the Internet which has empowered individuals to engage with both fellow classmates and other alumni for various purposes, and has also driven organizations to pursue a growing role as facilitators within their alumni communities by incorporating social media components such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Youtube, etc in their programmes.

The gradual re-orientation of corporate and university alumni programmes towards member engagement on both an individual and group level provides a new setting for applying the communities of practice framework. A starting point in assessing the potential utility of the framework within this specific context is by posing the question of whether or not alumni groups in either a corporate or university setting can be considered as communities of practice. Wenger’s 14 point list of indicators cited earlier (Table 1) is helpful in this case since it can be argued that some compatibility exists between the concept framework and illustrations of these types of groups. For example, alumni from either a law firm or a graduate business school are likely to have developed mutual relationships, shared ways of engagement, a perception of who belongs, specific tools, a common history, jargon language, and a group discourse.

At the same time, as illustrated through the previous example, there are distinct differences between individual companies and universities based on factors such as activity area, geographic location, organization culture and structure, etc. which in turn also strongly influence the nature of alumni as both individuals and as a formal group. This raises the need for defining or adopting a different frame of reference or scale with regard to a programmes' alumni members and their relevant forms of congregation. Alumni programmes which treat their entire membership as a single community of practice may find that the domain, engagement, and practice elements are too diluted to constitute a useful social structure for the purposes of this particular framework. Instead the view of an entire alumni community as a constellation of practices which are interconnected both with each other and with various other stakeholders provides advantages for both strengthening the identity of member as alumni as well as retaining and developing capacities and competencies.

Figure 1 displays a representation of the communities of practice framework (Wenger, 1998) which will be applied as part of this thesis research to the general area of alumni relations and in particular corporate alumni programmes where an alumni network is represented as a collection of groups and communities (constellation). An alumni programme, as illustrated, is comprised of a selection of service components (i.e directory, newsletter, events, ect) where each can be modified using specific dimensions (i.e. participation - reification, designed - emergent, local - global, identification - negotiability) to suit the appropriate or aspired form of participation (engagement, imagination, and alignment) expected from its alumni members. The lighter circles outside of the alumni network box represent communities which do not belong to the formal alumni network which can either be internal or external to the organization (i.e. employees, prospective employees, interns, etc).

Figure 1: Alumni programme in the communities of practice framework



Chapter 3 Method

The corporate alumni programme is a relatively new phenomena where little to no research has been undertaken with regard to business practices in this area. This is the primary reason for formulating the research question as exploratory which will be addressed using a two stage research design. This chapter will describe the research questions, qualitative approach, and methods used in collecting and analysing the data.

3.1 The research questions

What is the nature of corporate alumni programmes and how can these programmes be optimally organized?

Additional sub-questions that will be addressed in the thesis include:

- What is the range of prevailing attitudes, objectives, and practices of firms with their corporate alumni programmes?
- Which typology could be used to distinguish corporate alumni programmes?
- What range of components exist for constructing a corporate alumni programme?
- What is an appropriate analysis framework for developing a set of best practices in the area of corporate alumni programmes?

3.2 The qualitative approach

Social science research involves three primary approaches: qualitative, quantitative, and a combination of both. The matter of choice is determined based on the type of information that is sought after as part of the research effort. It must support among other things: the research objective, the role of the researcher, the methods employed as part of the research and the precise manner that data is analysed (Creswell, 2004; Silverman, 2006) The following outlines the key variations between the qualitative and quantitative approaches (table 4).

Table 4: Use these practices of research, as the researcher: (Creswell, 2004)

Qualitative Approaches	Quantitative Approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positions himself or herself• Collects participant meanings• Focuses on a single concept or phenomenon• Brings personal values to the study• Studies the context or setting of participants• Validates the accuracy of findings• Makes interpretations of the data• Creates an agenda for change or reform• Collaborate with the participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tests or verifies theories or explanations• Identifies variables to study• Relates variables in questions or hypotheses• Use standards of validity and reliability• Observes and measures information numerically• Uses unbiased approaches• Employs statistical procedures

Quantitative type research is typically followed for purposes of generalization or for hypotheses testing, with the central associated benefit being the ability to include a large sample population through instruments like surveys and questionnaires. In contrast, a qualitative approach is adopted when the purpose of the research is to achieve a better and more in-depth grasp of a particular phenomenon through interviews, observations, artifact review, and other specifically suited research methods (Creswell, 2004; Silverman, 2006).

This research effort will follow a qualitative approach since it provides significant advantages when exploring a subject such as corporate alumni programmes. This is particularly the case with regard to the data collection process which using this approach is flexible and unstructured thus enabling contextual interpretation which is useful for a better understanding of the subject being investigated (Silverman, 2006).

3.3 The exploratory case study method

The use of case studies as a research method is recommended for topics that are either new, in which there is inadequate theory (Eisenhardt, 1989), or when in-depth and holistic investigation is needed (Feagin et al., 1991). The definition of this particular method as an empirical inquiry into a current phenomena existing within a real life context over which the researcher is powerless (Yin, 1994) highlights its potential usefulness for external environment observation. These traits are evident in this study and the investigation of “how” questions which form part of the primary research question further reinforce the applicability of the case study method.

The types of case studies have been divided into three groups: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive (Yin, 1993). Exploratory case studies are considered as a prelude to further social research and also accommodates a degree of flexibility with regard to some fieldwork and data collection taking place before the primary research questions are formally outlined, as is the case in this particular study. In all types of this research method, the selection of cases does not follow sampling research principles but is guided with the intent of maximizing learning during the study period (Stake, 1995) which yet again is highly relevant in this instance. Furthermore, case subjects can be selected based on a wide range of factors depending on the research objectives: typical, diverse, extreme, deviant, influential, crucial, pathway, most-similar, and most-different (Gerring, 2007). The selection of cases for this research were based on the “most different” approach (Lijphart, 1975) which was chosen in order to examine variations among firms and universities with regard to their alumni programmes. Beyond the issue of selection, case study research can be either single or multiple in their focus. Single cases can carry a risk of misrepresentation and are typically used in rare instances or for theory validation (Yin, 1994). In contrast, multiple-case studies are commonly used for replication purposes where either similar, contrasting, or shared form outcomes are realized.

Types of evidence in case studies include: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observation, physical artifacts (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994) but not all

sources need to be used in all studies (Yin, 1994). Relevant analytical techniques include presenting evidence in matrix of categories and data displays (Miles and Huberman, 1984) and direct interpretation of events (Eisner and Peshkin, 1990). Furthermore, cases should not simply be a presentation of all facts but only a selection of relevant and important facts (de Vause, 2001).

3.4 Data collection and analysis methods

As discussed earlier, the discovery nature of the research topic necessitates a research design supporting open-ended data collection and interpretation which in turn would enable exploration of the emerging themes and data related to corporate alumni programmes. For this purpose, a qualitative exploratory multi-case study was adopted following a two stage research design where first the phenomena of corporate alumni programmes was investigated through the collection of factual information on the characteristics of alumni programmes in a variety of businesses. This also served as a mechanism for screening cases following a focused sampling approach resulting in the selection of cases representing “illuminating examples” (de Vause, 2001) of the investigated phenomena. This phase involved the following steps:

- Compiling a list of 222 firms appearing in business rankings related to innovation, size, and attractiveness to workers from the following indexes: Fortune Magazine’s “100 Best Companies to Work For” (January, 2009), and “Fortune 500 - Annual ranking of America’s largest corporations” (May, 2009), and Business Week’s “50 Most Innovative Companies” (April, 2009).
- Assessing alumni programme practices (components, overall philosophy, ownership) based on relevant information on corporate websites, Internet search using the company name and the keywords “alumni”, and identifying official and unofficial corporate alumni groups on LinkedIn (a popular professional social network).
- Identifying trends and relevant observations from the collected data.
- Evaluating the original research design and questions for possible revisions.

In the second phase of the research based on the conclusions from the earlier phase (appearing in chapter 4) a decision was made to include four university alumni programmes as cases in addition to the four business alumni programmes since these were thought to be more mature and encompassing in nature and could therefore be useful in better understanding the phenomena being investigated. These cases were chosen based on factors such as research access, academic discipline, perceived awareness among students and alumni regarding the value of the alumni network, and contrasting characteristics of the alumni programme with the following schools selected: TiasNimbas Business School (TiasNimbas), Rotterdam School of Management (RSM), Nyenrode Business Universiteit (Nyenrode) and the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC).

The first phase of the research also helped determine the four business alumni programme cases which were selected on an inductive and “most different” basis in order to develop some basis

for a classification of corporate alumni programmes. The selected business subjects were: IBM (technology service provider), Boston Consulting Group (management consulting), Chevron (oil and gas), and HSBC (financial services).

3.5 Operationalization

The communities of practice framework is used in this thesis to both assess and compare/contrast the alumni programme case studies since it was judged as providing useful insight into alumni group dynamics. The combination of case studies and exploratory research methods is also viewed as being a suitable framework for studying social, institutional, and organizational dimensions of these types of groups (Lorenz and Barlatier, 2007). In order to operationalize the framework relevant research on communities of practices were reviewed and utilized concepts were adapted and defined for the particular setting of alumni programmes (Bozarth, 2008; Ingram and Gilding, 2002; Ollila and Simpson, 2004; Gongla and Rizzuto, 2001).

Table 5: Operationalization parameters

Concept	Variable	Operationalization
Constellations	Communities	Groups with interacting practices which may have: shared historical roots, related enterprises, common members, shared artifacts, geographical relations, overlapping styles or discourses.
Design Elements	Event	Activity which brings alumni together
	Leadership	Activity which enables alumni to shape their community
	Connectivity	Activity which brokers between people or facilitates communications
	Membership	Activity which introduces new subgroups of membership into the community
	Joint Projects	Activity where members take responsibility over a shared agenda
	Artifacts	An object created through member engagement and which continues to exist
Modes of Belonging	Engagement, Imagination & Alignment	Characterization of the mode combination in the component where engagement refers to bringing members together, imagination which helps construct the perceived image of individuals as members, and alignment which serves as a guideline for coordinating perspectives, interpretations, and actions of members in order to achieve general community objectives.
Dualities	Participation & Reification	Characterization of the dualities combination in the component (dominance of one or balance between the two) where reification refers to the perceived focus on producing tangible outcomes, and participation (or lack of) refers to the perceived focus of engaging members as participants.
	Design & Emergent	Characterization of the dualities combination in the component (dominance of one or balance between the two) where design refers to the perceived focus on formal structures, and emergent refers to a perceived focus on members creating structures through their ongoing active participation.
	Local & Global	Characterization of the dualities combination in the component (dominance of one or balance between the two) where local and global refer to the perceived significance of the component to the wider membership.

Concept	Variable	Operationalization
	Identification & Negotiability	Characterization of the dualities combination in the component (dominance of one or balance between the two) where this duality refers to the perceived influence that members have over their identity as participants.

3.6 Analysis

The unit of analysis in this thesis is the alumni programme with triangulation sources of evidence which included semi-structured interviews with administrators of the university alumni programmes, documents (i.e. newspaper articles, webpages, etc) , and physical artifacts (i.e. programme brochures, conference agendas, alumni publications, etc) focused on identifying the components of each alumni programme. Each component was then placed in the communities of practice framework and analyzed using the variables described above. In order to illustrate the analysis process an example of an alumni programme component (in this case, a social event) is provided below following a descriptive quote (Bakker and de Back, 2009):

“Beauty and ‘gezelligheid’ in Zeeland

Enjoying the beautiful surroundings, sun on your head and sand in your hair... That was the 17th edition of the VCV Motorbike and Convertible day on Sunday 7 June. It was 9:30 a.m., a time when some of us turn over again, play with the children, or pour another cup of coffee while perusing the Saturday papers. But at De Goese Golf, the parking area was full of motorbikes and convertibles, from classics like Austin Healeys to comfortable modern cars such as the Austin Martin DB9. There were even two Wiesmanns shining in the sun ...” (VCV Alumni, June 2009)

The quote above describes an annual social event of the Nyenrode alumni programme where alumni partake in a day long car rally race across the Netherlands. This event does not involve anyone outside of the alumni community and therefore from the perspective of *constellations* is limited to that of alumni. With regard to *design elements* Nyenrode’s “convertible day” is an example of an event as well as an artifact since it is a recurring tradition. Alumni participation with this component in the sense of *modes of belonging* is not as much an example of *engagement* since in practical terms it involves only a small number of participants but is more about *imagination* since it reinforces the perception of members of the larger alumni community with regard to the uniqueness and tradition-bound aspects of their identity. The *dualities* in this case are largely influenced by the traditional, institutional, and relatively rigid nature of the event and therefore can be seen as being slanted more towards *reification*, *design*, and *identification*. The remaining *local - global* dimensions of the component can be considered as being of equal weight since there is an element of connecting multi-levels of the alumni membership. This component would therefore be documented in the following fashion (table 6).

Table 6: Component analysis - example

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities
Convertible Day	Traditional day long motorbike and convertible car rally race across the Netherlands.	• Alumni	• Events • Artifact	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

The collection of components from each programme would then be analyzed as a group in order to explore possible overview characteristics as well as also compare and contrast with the other cases.

3.7 Reliability and validity

The definition of reliability within the context of research deals with information trustworthiness and the requirement of generating consistent data over multiple test situations. This is not always possible in the case of qualitative data since conditions and factors in the environment of the evaluated phenomena are in constant change, and the complexity and flexibility of the specific qualitative approach may be difficult to follow. In addition, data interpretation may not be optimal with regard to reliability since information and data might be incorrectly interpreted by the researcher. The ways in which the researcher attempted to ensure data analysis trustworthiness included: literature review; examination of methodology, triangulation, and methodology description.

The issue of the suitability of the research design for data collection relevant to this study, and the degree of match between what was planned and what was actually measured refers to validity (Silverman, 2006). In other words, how credible and dependable is the particular qualitative research and are the reported outcomes plausible. This is not an easily determined issue but the validity of the research can be strengthened by among other things: in-depth description of research and context, review and reverification of data, etc. The researcher has also employed collaboration as a measure for increasing the validity of the study and has involved both researchers and practitioners in the formulation stages of the work in order to optimize the research design. An additional factor contributing to the validity of this study are the particular qualifications of the researcher and in particular his involvement in the field of alumni relations with relevant experiences spanning over a decade which contributed to the ability of the researcher to operate in the capacity of a senior investigator (Yin, 1994).

Chapter 4 Review findings

This chapter reports the findings from the first phase of the research effort which involved observations of firm activities associated directly or indirectly with corporate alumni programmes. The data gathered was used for both adjusting the research design and for case screening selection of the business case study subjects.

4.1 Introduction

A corporate alumni programme can follow multiple forms. It can be an officially managed initiative administrated by dedicated employees, a company funded initiative administrated by an external firm, or a company sanctioned alumni association with nonprofit status. Determining factors with regard to the various forms of programmes seems to focus on elements like size and workforce character.

For example, Forrester Research, an independent technology and market research company chose to have its alumni programme managed by a firm specializing in building and managing online alumni communities. The rationale for this decision according to the company's VP of strategic growth was to ensure alumni ownership of the programme (Canabou, 2007).

Companies like Microsoft and Procter & Gamble have independent but recognized alumni associations which provide a platform for collaboration between former employees and the firms while professional firms in areas like accounting , law, and consulting such as McKinsey & Co and Ernst & Young where relationships are a core element in the business typically have well developed in-house alumni programmes.

The practices and components which comprise corporate alumni programmes often focus not only on former employees but also on current employees since this is the period where attitudes towards the company are established with elements such as socialization and mentoring suggested as effective strategies (Iyer et al., 1997). Another important period shaping the alumni attitudes of employees is the departure experience from the firm where the exit process represents a significant component since it is typically the last formal interaction with the employee.

An effective exit component has been defined as an occasion where human resource representatives convey the advantages of employees keeping in touch with the firm and the importance of that relationship to the firm, as well as record information (departure rational, perspectives on the firm, career plans, contact details) useful for defining appropriate parameters and preferences for subsequent alumni contacts (Sertoglu and Berkowitch, 2002).

4.2 Parameters

As part of this thesis effort a review of current trends and practices of corporate alumni programmes was carried out looking at 222 companies which appeared in three recent business rankings indexes - Fortune Magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" (January 2009) and "Fortune 500 - Annual ranking of America's largest corporations" (May, 2009), and Business Week's "50 Most Innovative Companies" (April, 2009). These rankings were chosen based on the assumption that corporate alumni programmes would be more likely to be found within large, innovative, and worker friendly firms.

The review process was constructed based on the expected behavior that a potential former employee of a company might follow in an effort to re-connect as an alumni. This included three steps: (1) A focused search on the corporate website for alumni programme related information, (2) A general search on the Internet for similar information, (3) A search for official and nonofficial company groups on LinkedIn which is a highly popular social network for professionals.

Information collected as part of the review included: business sector, workforce size, existence of a corporate alumni programme, focus and components of a corporate alumni programme. A review of both official and unofficial company groups on a prominent professional social network (LinkedIn) was also undertaken in an effort to assess indirect alumni components of firms. These activities while not representing formal alumni programmes still indicate the existence of relevant practices in this area. Data recorded included: existence of a company group (created & managed by a current employee), title of the group "owner" or "manager", and the number of unofficial company groups created by either former employees or other individuals.

The decision to conduct a review of trends and practices was taken due to both the scarcity of relevant research and the fact that most of the existing information on this subject was created by firms offering alumni relation type services which might be somewhat subjective and slanted towards their specific business offerings. This review is, therefore, meant to provide an overview of the current corporate alumni programme environment which is useful in observing general trends and current practices that as mentioned before will be used for research design modifications and for the selection of appropriate case study subjects.

4.3 Results

Based on the review, 33 out of 222 companies were found to have some type of official corporate alumni programme which represents 15% of the total group. Out of this group, 10 were professional firms (i.e. accounting, legal, management consulting) which as mentioned before represent sectors which already had relatively well established alumni programme practices (Iyer et al., 1997).

These were typically comprised of a broad range of service components such as a member directory, alumni newsletter/publication, access to firm research, events, job opportunities, continued education, benefits, discussion boards, professional market place, etc. Similar practices to those of professional firms were observed in the alumni programmes of financial firms such as J.P. Morgan and Goldman Sachs and technology service provider IBM. The remaining firms typically had highly focused alumni programmes which therefore included only a limited number of supporting components. For example, in the healthcare (Children's Healthcare of Atlanta), insurance (Principle Financial Group), and oil and gas (Chevron) sectors the observed corporate alumni programmes were entirely focused on recruitment of former employees either on a full or flex time basis. Other firms with sizable retiree populations such as automotive sector General Motors had alumni programmes catering to members as both an important customer base and a powerful lobbying group.

The relatively small number of firms observed with formal corporate alumni programmes might suggest that these practices are not common but this does not seem to be the case since the number of companies with employee created alumni groups on LinkedIn was 124 or over half of all the companies reviewed. This figure increases even further in the third category of companies with unofficial alumni groups on LinkedIn which found 147 examples, representing 66% of the total number (figure 2). It should be noted that categories are not mutually exclusive and firms may appear in more than one category.

Figure 2: Corporate alumni activities - formal, informal, unofficial

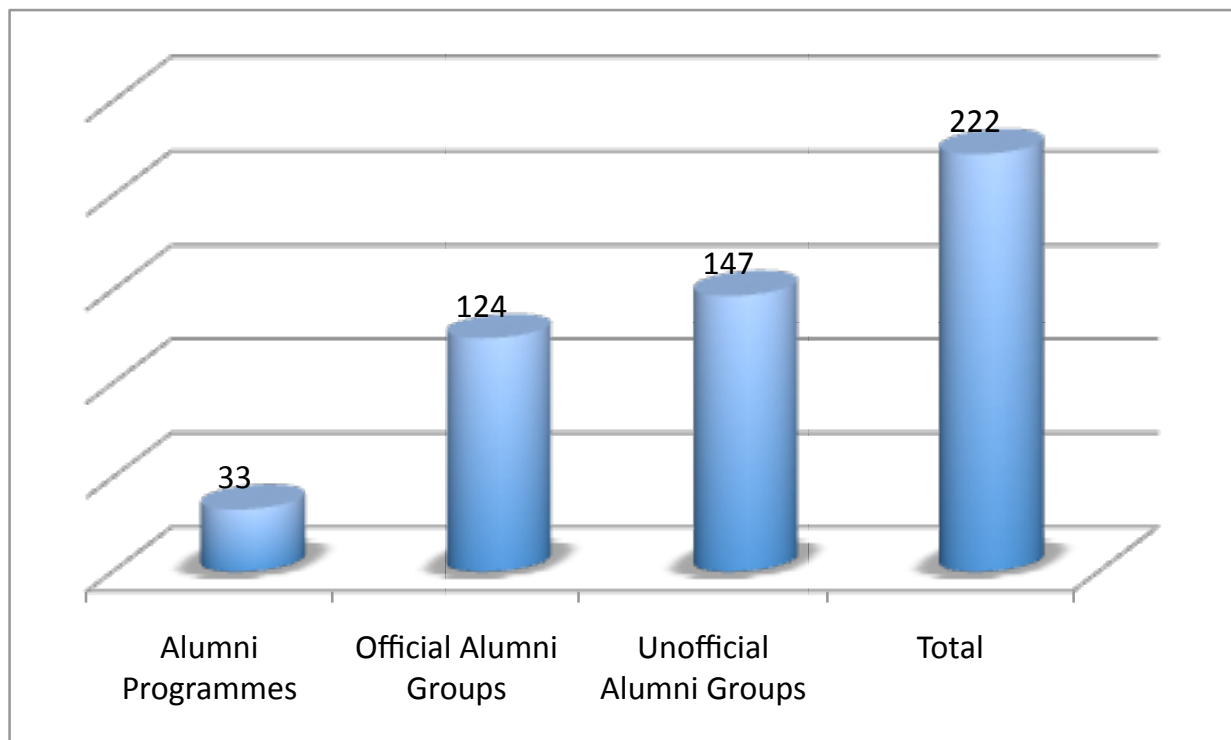
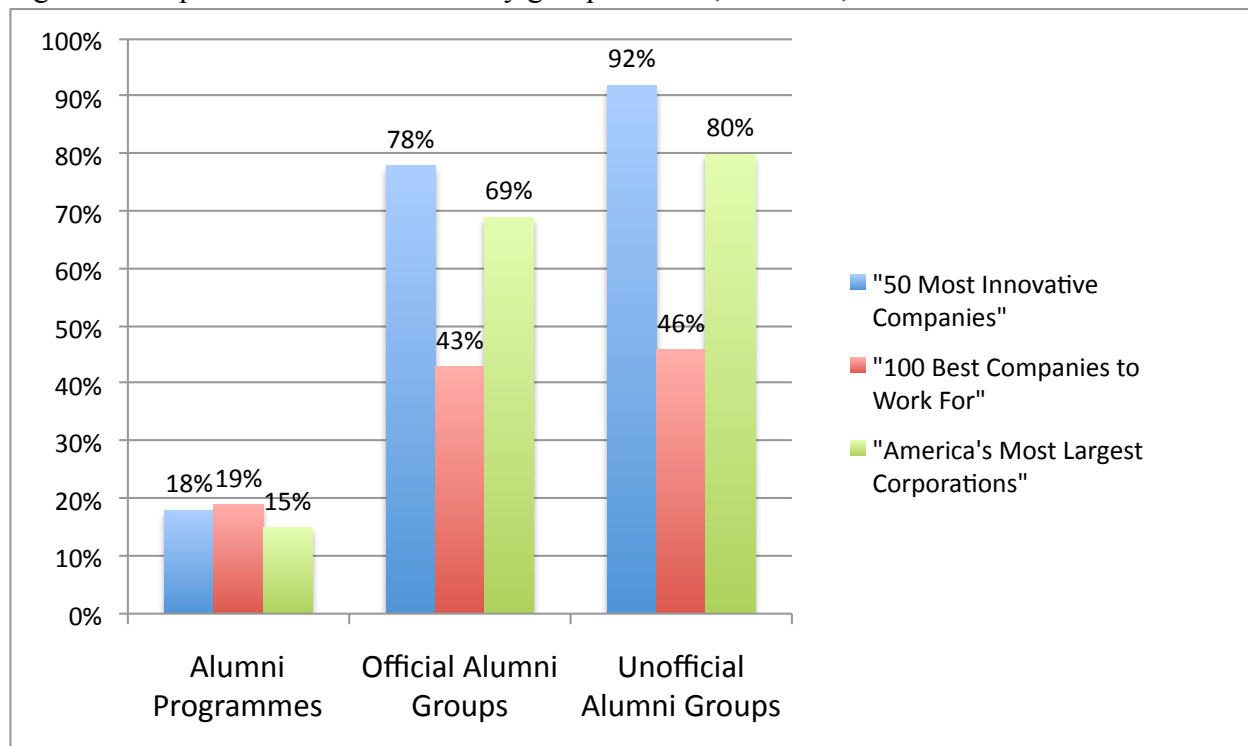


Figure 3: Corporate alumni activities by group - formal, informal, unofficial



A breakdown of corporate alumni activities (figure 3) of the reviewed firms as a function of their respective characteristic - innovation, employee friendly, and size, does not provide much further insight. It does indicate that in all three groups a relatively low percentage of firms have formal alumni programmes but suggests that individual practices in this area might be more prevalent within larger and more innovative firms.

These general findings suggest that while most firms may not have yet incorporated formal alumni programmes into their corporate strategy that these are still being broadly implemented on a local or micro level based on specific business unit needs.

The function areas extrapolated from the owner/manager titles of the company LinkedIn groups (table 7) illustrate this last point.

Table 7: Company LinkedIn groups - business units/functions

Communications, Business Development, Marketing, IT, Recruiting, Talent Management, Human Resources, Knowledge Management, Outsourcing Management, Innovation, Client Collaboration, E-Business, Emerging Media, Sales, Business Integration, Strategic Planning, Staffing, Civic Affairs, Alumni Affairs, Professional Development, Training.

Companies with formal alumni programmes were found in the following sectors: professional firms (law, accounting, management consulting), healthcare, biotechnology, information technology (IT), financial services, chemical, aerospace/defense, automotive, and retail. A comparison of three examples of corporate alumni programme components below (table 8) highlights variations in both focus and design. The apparent differences most probably arise from a combination of factors such as business needs, industry size, workforce characteristics, corporate culture, as well as the length of time or experience that a company has had with its particular alumni programme.

Table 8: Highlights of corporate alumni programme components in three firms

	Boston Consulting Group	Chevron	Goldman Sachs
Sector	Management Consulting	Oil & Gas	Financial Services
Workforce Size	6,500	67,000	16,000
Overall Purpose	Talent Management Business Development Brand Value	Knowledge Management Flexible Labour	Business Development Recruitment
Membership	Alumni, Employees	Alumni, Retirees	Alumni, Employees
Philosophy	“BCG alumni belong to a unique, dynamic, global community ... our goal is to encourage each other, share ideas, and foster success - ... creating relationships that are personally and professionally rewarding” (Source: BCG website)	“Many parts of our business are growing and we need experienced and skilled talent to help us deliver the vital energy that moves the world” (Source: Chevron website)	“Even after our people leave ... they still identify with the firm and we want to foster that connection ... (alumni) help validate our culture, ... (they) provide a real tangible value that transcends any single generation” (Source: Goldman Sachs website)
Key Features	Lifetime career support Alumni Directory Alumni newsletters Access to firm research and publications Worldwide Alumni Day	Career Opportunities Associate Referrals Corporate News	Alumni Directories Company News Career Opportunities Mentoring Market Places

These programmes also seem to be relatively well distributed with regard to workforce size where out of the 33 programmes: six were in firms with under 10,000 employees; 15 were in firms with between 10,000 and 99,999 employees; the remaining 13 were in firms with over 100,000 employees.

In the diagram below (table 9) it is possible to see the wide range of components existing in the corporate alumni programmes observed in this phase of the research. A glossary of alumni programme component definitions has also been developed as part of this research (appendix 2)

Table 9: List of corporate alumni programme components

Type	Component
Resources	Job Postings (External) Career Opportunities (Internal) Alumni Directory Business Directory (Alumni owned services)
Information	Alumni Profiles (e.g. success stories) Firm research and publications Newsletters
Events	Career Fairs Networking events Trade Shows Social activities Worldwide Alumni Day Volunteer activities Interaction with executives
Programmes	Lifetime career support (Career Guidance) Retiree work options (e.g. technical specialists, guest speakers, recruiters, mentors, peer reviewers, advisors, short term assignments) Company history (e.g. reminiscence about the past) Segmented networks (women, senior executives) Technical training Guest Speaker opportunities Alumni Association Partnerships (Transitions to Government) Local Alumni Chapters
Communication	Discussion Boards Company news Social network platforms Blogs Share ideas Refer a friend Polls
Benefits	Insurance Product Discounts

The overview also highlights the existence of a large number of unofficial company groups on LinkedIn which may serve as a trigger for companies to establish formal alumni programmes since this represents a potential risk. External parties behind many of these may have ulterior motives which do not necessarily coincide with both the firm and former employee interests and could actually result in the alienation of alumni members.

Ultimately, the proliferation of both these and semi-official company groups can both cause confusion among alumni employees and dilute the potency of a firm's activities in this area. This again illustrates the need for an overall and all encompassing corporate alumni programme which manages, coordinates and prioritizes alumni activities in perhaps a similar fashion to other important resources and assets at a company's disposal.

4.4 Relevance to research

The observed findings with regard to current practices and trends of firms in the area of corporate alumni programmes has highlighted the relative scarcity of well developed and encompassing alumni programmes among general businesses. As illustrated, a large number of firms may have individual components geared towards harnessing their respective alumni communities for a particular purpose (i.e. recruiting, business development, knowledge management, etc.) but these isolated practices lack a formal corporate framework. For this reason, it was decided to expand the case study boundaries of this research to incorporate the experiences of universities with academic alumni programmes. These programmes were viewed as representing mature, coherent and formalized frameworks of alumni practices.

Chapter 5 Case Studies

In this chapter case studies of alumni programmes from both universities and business firms will be analysed using the communities of practice framework introduced earlier in chapter two and three, which dealt with the theoretical and methodological aspects of the subject explored in this thesis. As mentioned before, the subjects for the case studies were chosen since they represent extreme variations of alumni programmes and therefore could be useful in identifying particular design elements and patterns associated with different types of alumni communities. The chapter will first begin with the case studies of university alumni programmes since these have been perceived as being more encompassing and mature than those of companies which will be addressed in the subsequent section.

Each of the case studies follows a similar structure:

- General details regarding the alumni programme
- Review of alumni programme components
- Outline of the domain, community and practice aspects of the alumni community
- Characterization of the programme based on its modes of participation, dualities, design elements, and constellations.
- Summary of alumni programme components.

In the last part of this chapter a summary will be presented which will introduce a proposed typology of corporate alumni programmes.

5.1 University alumni programmes

The alumni programmes of four academic institutions in the Netherlands were reviewed as part of this research: Nyenrode Business University, Rotterdam School of Management (RSM) of Erasmus University, TiasNimbas Business School of Tilberg University, and the International Institute For Geo Science and Earth Observations (ITC) at the University of Twente. As mentioned before, the decision to include case studies of university alumni programmes was taken since these were perceived as being both well developed and mature, as well as having an alumni membership base with a relatively developed awareness regarding the value of their respective alumni networks. Furthermore, the selection of the individual cases followed the “most different” approach.

5.1.1 Nyenrode Business University

Introduction

Nyenrode Business University (Nyenrode) is the oldest of the case study institutions and was established in 1946 by senior executives from leading Dutch multinational firms for the purpose of developing future generations of practical and entrepreneurial business leaders as stressed by its motto, “By business for business”. Nyenrode offers a range of academic programmes in the area of business, management, and accounting as well as customized training courses for corporations but its primary focus is on the graduate MBA and MSc in Management programmes with most full time students residing on campus. The university campus is situated on a former estate which boasts unique features such as a castle, coach-house, deer park, medieval maze, formal English rose garden, as well as a growing number of statues donated haphazardly as gifts by the various graduating classes. Complimenting this environment is a collection of traditions and rituals which have developed over the decades and which together serve as a powerful bonding element for both students and alumni as illustrated below.

“I’ve heard about it (the school) from several Nyenrode alumni. Some of them had graduated as long as 15 years ago, but their memories were still so fresh - and so positive ... they’d all experienced the same old Nyenrode traditions - the gala nights, the ceremonies and rituals. There was such a strong sense of community ... One of the things I really enjoy is the sense of tradition, unique little rituals and ceremonies that every generation of Nyenrodians experiences. The induction, the songs ... Anyone who’s ever studied at Nyenrode knows about them, it brings us all together ... I know how special the alumni network really is. You meet them, they participate in things - it’s not just a database, they’re real people, a real community.”²

Domain, community and practice

Nyenrode’s alumni network includes over 13,000 members from over 50 nationalities with the majority of them residing in the Netherlands. Alumni members can be seen as representing a constellation of practices where the domain, community and practice components of their respective communities are closely intertwined around preserving the Nyenrodean collective identity. The alumni programme in this case plays an important role in preserving the strong sense of identity shared by members as alumni through a wide range of components which have carefully defined modes of belonging.

Modes of belonging & dualities

Nyenrode alumni come together as part of traditional parties (i.e. Christmas Gala), sport events (i.e. Golf tournament), and social gatherings (i.e. convertible day) which ensure a consistent engagement level of the community which is also to a great extent institutional in its design

² <http://nyenrode.nl/Education/businessdegrees/imba/curriculum/Pages/Alumni.aspx>

dimensions -more designed than emergent with less leeway for members to influence events and negotiate their own particular meaning and identity. These events are not only examples of engagement but also serve a purpose in providing alumni with an alignment mechanism.

Other similar components which also focus individual activities towards collective goals of the community include governance structures such as the alumni association, alumni class representatives, local alumni chapters (aka circles) and the Nyenrode Fund. Of course, closely linked to both of modes of belonging mentioned so far is imagination and how members perceive themselves as Nyenrodeans both in and outside the alumni community which yet again has been largely predefined. “Nyenrode Now”, the School’s alumni publication includes in every one of its issue content related to the estate grounds, castle, or student experience (table 10) which reinforces the common identity between alumni members regardless of their graduation year.

Table 10: Thematic content in alumni publications (Nyenrode Now, 2005-2009)

“Nyenrode’s survival instinct” - Nyenrode estate in the 20th century (Spring, 2009)
“Sporting Chances” - History of sport activities on the estate (Winter, 2009)
“A Tail of Feathers” - Peacocks on the Nyenrode estate (Winter, 2008)
“Nyenrode Knights” - Medieval history of the Nyenrode estate (Spring, 2008)
“Family Fortunes” - Nyenrode estate in the 19th century (Summer, 2008)
“A winter’s tale” - Discovery of rare mushrooms on the estate (Winter, 2007)
“A sound base” - Castle foundation infrastructure project (Spring, 2007)
“Seen and herd” - Deer on the estate (Fall, 2007)
“High flyer” - History of previous estate owner, Michiel Onnes (Winter, 2006)
“Master of Art” - History of previous estate owner Jacques Goudstikker, (Spring, 2006)
“Fabulous fungi” - Fungi at Nyenrode (Winter, 2005)
“A knight to remember” - Nyenrode in the Middle Ages (Spring, 2005)
“The Ortt Era” - History of previous estate owners, the Ortts (Fall, 2005)

Another element strengthening the Nyenrodean identity is the insular nature of the network where it is rare to see many interactions with external communities, and where among other things: only paying members of the alumni association have access to common services like the alumni directory, the main focus of alumni events are of a social nature and as mentioned where most of the efforts seem to be focused on preserving existing traditions and norms. The strength of both the alumni community and alumni programme is that they harness vital support of alumni for both recruiting new students as well as various development projects (i.e. student scholarships, new business accelerator, business contacts).

The components of the Nyenrode alumni programme summarized on the following page (table 11) illustrate the strong focus on establishing and preserving the Nyenrodean identity through a complex system of multiple design elements which extend beyond the perceived basic norm of connectivity, events and artifacts, and include leadership, membership, and projects. These elements together attract broad forms of participation and support a highly focused engagement orientation.

Table 11 : Nyenrode alumni programme - summary

Practice Focus	Alumni Profile	Framework	Benefits	Components
Community	Concentrated and homogenous. Sharing a strong emotional bond to common symbols and rituals (i.e. the castle, estate). Traditional business leaders with a Dutch orientation. Sense of prestige	Intricate system of components that reenforces the imagination and alignment modes which are typically highly institutional regarding dualities (i.e. Reification, Designed, Identification)	Culture Recruiting Support	Print Publication, E-Newsletter, Local chapters, alumni scholarships, alumni association, school fund, career counseling, member directory (online/print), business accelerator (incubator), member of merit award, social gatherings.

5.1.2 Rotterdam School of Management (RSM), Erasmus University

Introduction

The Rotterdam School of Management (RSM) at Erasmus University prides itself as one of the top ranked business schools in Europe with both an international reach and an international reputation, which since 1985 has offered an MBA degree programme with graduates now numbering over 3,500 alumni from close to 100 countries. The School operates out of a non-descript building that is not much different from others on the Erasums campus and which from the inside gives the impression of a somewhat impersonal corporate office with marble tiled walls, lush carpets, and large green plants. RSM alumni and students attribute the success and uniqueness of their programme to the small class size, intense team based study model, and student body diversity (95% of students are not Dutch). In this environment students quickly develop close relationships as classmates.

“... the MBA gave me the opportunity to meet truly exceptional people, whom, today, I am privileged to call my friends ... The peers I have worked with and the experience of the programme cannot be matched anywhere in terms of knowledge, professionalism, and willingness to share experiences and help each other. I have worked in teams where each person represents a different continent ... I can truly say that RSM is very special. What I like the most and what makes it different from any other schools in the world is the following: extremely international, small and close knit, much more team-oriented than at an average MBA, very diverse background ... if there was one thing I find particularly impressive at RSM, this is the cooperation among the students, the creativity, the sociability and the good balance of different nationalities. We worked together and not against each other.”³

³ http://www.businessweek.com/bschools/00/profiles/erasmus_comments.htm

Domain, community and practice

The RSM student experience is not simply about attending classes and completing the assigned studies but also about focusing their entrepreneurial energies and expanding boundaries as a class on both the programme and the school. This individual trait which is harnessed within a close class structure often continues after graduation where, “Every one ... has a unique background ... around 40 different nationalities are represented in the programme, and as many professions, industries, value systems and experiences. More than just international, our participants represent diversity of virtually every social dimension ... ability to come up with world-changing ideas, and the personal influence to turn these ideas into world-changing results⁴”. For example, student innovation at RSM has been responsible for launching the annual RSM day symposium conference (now in its 4th year) which takes place simultaneously both at the School and in major alumni chapter locations around the world.

The stated objective of the RSM alumni programme is enabling alumni to, “... connect(s) to a globally-dispersed network that will generate a wealth of social and business opportunities for the rest of your career ... tap into this resource of contacts, advice, expertise, ideas and friendship. Lifetime learning and development activities ensure you stay up-to-speed on the latest management thinking, and recapture that RSM-inspiring thinking”⁵. This illustrates the highly individual orientation of the alumni programme on professional fulfillment where the domain, practice and community elements can be seen as being focused largely in the area of the competitive advantage of the School’s graduates in the employment world. It is therefore not surprising that RSM alumni in a recent survey identified key objectives of their network as being: business opportunities, career opportunities, and social opportunities, and also indicated their interest in the alumni programme focusing specifically on areas like: business networking, life long learning, recruitment services, and class fraternity.

Modes of belonging & dualities

RSM alumni are scattered around the world which somewhat limits the opportunities open to the school with regard to using engagement as a central mode of belonging. The School’s alumni programme therefore incorporates components which tap prominently into the imagination and alignment modes in order to achieve its goals. For example, the recurring theme of alumni success stories in RSM publications and the hosting of various conferences at the School communicates a sense of prestige and of being on the cutting edge of business education which both promotes a sense of accomplishment among alumni and drives them to excel. A component filling a similar role is the RSM “Most Distinguished Alumni Award” which honors graduates

⁴ http://www.rsm.nl/portal/page/portal/home/mba/ft_mba/Full-time%20brochure%202010.pdf

⁵ http://www.rsm.nl/home/mba/ft_mba/your_future_career/networks

who have distinguished professional achievements with one of the award criteria being, “the extent of the influence of the nominee’s MBA degree on the career trajectory”⁶.

Factors such as the geographic distance between alumni, the emphasis on individual achievement, and strength of the class identity have all had an impact on the dualities of the individual alumni programme components where there is an inherent flexibility for members to negotiate their own particular meaning as alumni. For example, alumni through the act of interviewing applicants gain the ability to influence the future generation of students and alumni. In essence stamping their own subjective mark on the evolving identity of the School. The programme flexibility can also be illustrated through its accommodation of other alumni identities (cited by Wenger as the nexus of multimembership) such as in the case of the company ambassadors component.

The importance of the local - global dimension is also apparent through for example the RSM International Charity Foundation component which serves as a conduit for coordinating and promoting the various alumni charity activities occurring around the world. The School’s alumni programme also uses a cross selection of design elements in its components specifically suited for these circumstances where for example, events typically also include a connectivity component which artifacts such as webcasts are also produced.

The components of the RSM alumni programme summarized on the following page (table 12) which include the examples listed above yet again illustrates the overall fit between these and the community which it supports. In this case, it is the relatively balance between the dualities which on one hand preserve and develop the sense of identity associated with being an RSM alumni but on the other hand provide members with a range of maneuverability to participate and influence.

Table 12: RSM alumni programme - summary

Practice Focus	Alumni Profile	Framework	Benefits	Components
Professional Stature	Dispersed around the world. Highly diverse in culture, professions, values, and experiences. Entrepreneurial and individual with a strong class identity. Graduating classes vary in personality.	Intricate system of components that using imagination and alignment as central modes provide members with a flexible platform to adapt their alum identity to suit their needs.	Networking Innovation	Print Publication, E-Newsletter, co-sponsor events, speakers, intl. study trips, conferences, member directory, class reunions, clubs, lifelong education, recruiting & interviewing, charity foundation, awards, alumni board, receptions,

⁶ http://www.rsm.nl/portal/page/portal/home/news/detail?p_item_id=5233558

5.1.3 TiasNimbas Business School

Introduction

The TiasNimbas Business School is a joint venture of Tilburg University and Eindhoven University of Technology and offers a variety of part-time and full-time MBA programmes from multiple locations like Tilburg and Utrecht in the Netherlands, and Bonn in Germany.

TiasNimbas promotes its alumni base of 8,000 from over 65 countries as, “one of the fastest school alumni associations in the world ... a platform to extend your business contacts⁷” but also stresses the link to the much broader alumni circles of its two parent universities which, “multiply our alumni networks many times over and further expands the reach and influence of our business school. ⁸” Facilitating networking between alumni is therefore one central objective of the TiasNimbas Alumni Programme with one other substantial focus being on lifetime education as illustrated from the School’s motto, “Never Stop Asking.”

Domain, community and practice

The heterogenous nature of the student population which is dispersed both geographically and programme wise as well as predominately part time means that the domain, community and practice aspects related to graduating student classes are somewhat underdeveloped and explain the tightly focused scope of the TiasNimbas alumni programme.

Modes of belonging & dualities

The TiasNimbas alumni programme, given the nascent stage of its alumni community, is focused on a small number of well defined connectivity and lifetime education components which incorporate two modes of belonging in particular. The first mode, alignment, is being used to direct the individual activities of alumni towards a common direction such as in the case of the thematic networks where TiasNimbas is attempting to create sub-groups promoting both learning and networking within the community.

The School is also putting a lot of effort into developing its reputation by among other ways building up the identity of its alumni which deals with the imagination mode. Examples of this can be seen from the School’s description of its main facility as an, “elegant historic building (that) gives the impression of the intimate atmosphere of an Oxbridge college ⁹” as well as the elaborate graduation ceremony highlighted in the various programme brochures in the following fashion, “For graduation we offer something really special. Our graduation day is held in the Dom the cathedral of Utrecht under the imposing 12th century vaulted ceilings. You will process

⁷ TiasNimbas Business School, One Year Full-Time MBA Brochure (pg. 12)

⁸ TiasNimbas Business School, One Year Full-Time MBA Brochure (pg. 12)

⁹ TiasNimbas Business School, One Year Full-Time MBA Brochure (pg. 9)

with your fellow students, families and friends, dressed in academic gowns to take part in an impressive British style ceremony recognizing your achievement ... ¹⁰”

The framework dualities which are slanted towards design, local, and identification can be seen as catering in the most efficient manner to the particular characteristics of TiasNimbas graduates in an alumni community focused primarily on professional networking and life long learning. The knowledge updates component provides a good example of this efficiency where alumni are provided with the opportunity to complete a selection of educational modules of their choice in order to acquire new skills or perhaps refresh existing knowledge. Further more, this process also provides participating alumni with formal certification attesting to the completion of these activities which can play a central role in bolstering the self perception of members as alumni in the outside world. A summary of the key characteristics of the TiasNimbas alumni programme components appears on the following page (table 13).

Table 13: TiasNimbas alumni programme - summary

Practice Focus	Alumni Profile	Framework	Benefits	Components
Connectivity	Heterogeneous and loosely aligned group of members focusing more on educational & professional gains of their membership than social contacts.	Tightly focused component mix focused on modes of imagination and alignment with dualities tending to be more institutional	Brand Value	Member directory, conferences, Network groups, classmate group alert, lifelong education, student student referral programme.

5.1.4 International Institute For Geo Science and Earth Observations (ITC)

Introduction

The International Institute for Geo Science and Earth Observations (ITC) was founded by the Dutch government over 50 years ago with the mission of assisting developing and in-transition countries in technical capacity building in the area of remote sensing tools and geographical information systems (GIS). ITC offers a wide range of degree, diploma and certificate programmes and has over 19,000 alumni from over 175 countries. Students from primarily developing countries study in a state-of-the art teaching and research facility in the Netherlands with all of their needs (i.e. housing, food, etc) provided in order to allow them to fully devote themselves to their studies.

¹⁰ TiasNimbas Business School, One Year Full-Time MBA Brochure (pg. 9)

Domain, community and practice

ITC graduates seem to be particularly passionate about using their acquired skills and knowledge to assist in the development of their home countries which serves as a powerful base of the domain, community, and practice as illustrated below (table 14). This is in addition to the strong technical component of geo-information studies which requires periodic follow-up courses in order to remain up-to-date and where knowledge can evolve through work based experience.

Table 14: Assortment of quotes from ITC alumni (ITC News, 2005)

“my ambition is to ... achieve to bridge up science with local livelihoods, i.e. let the local community to benefit from the power of science”
“my ambition is to ... achieve water self-sufficiency in my country”
“my ambition is to ... achieve: more geo-information skills to cope with the changing demands”
“my ambition is to ... achieve sharing contemporary skills and knowledge relevant to our least developed countries”
“my ambition is to study and research more so that I can implement a modern land administration system in Vietnam”
“my ambition is ... to contribute that poor people in my country reach a better situation”
“my ambition is to ... achieve the knowledge gained at ITC and thereafter to contribute to the advancement and sustainable development of my country”
“my ambition is to help solve our country’s forest management problems by providing accurate data through modern geo-information technologies”

Modes of belonging & dualities

The ITC alumni programme is indeed focused primarily on providing graduates with the resources to properly leverage their acquired skills wherever they might be. This involves components which have a strong element of imagination in order to preserve the ‘change the world’ attitude that students develop during their studies. For example, the association of the ITC with the United Nations University provides alumni with added legitimacy which is also further achieved through the fact that alumni gatherings are often hosted or attended by senior officials from the local Dutch embassy. The ability of graduates to use the lifetime alumni email address (another alumni programme component) formally linked with ITC also can contribute significantly to the professional standing and legitimacy of members in their own countries.

Many of the programme components focus on engagement because of the limitations created from alumni being scattered across the world and often not having convenient access to the Internet. This is the reason that the alumni programme relies on faculty visits around the world, relevant professional conferences, and the establishment of local chapters as vehicles for bringing alumni together.

The dualities in the components of this programme can be seen as following two distinct patterns. The first is characterized as less structured such as in the case of interactions with alumni in their countries in order to provide maximum flexibility to suit the particular circumstances of each setting (i.e. participation, emergent, local, negotiability). The second pattern of dualities is more institutionalized and applies specifically to the follow-up learning opportunities available through the programme to alumni (i.e. certificate programmes) which are more rigid in nature. A hybrid between the two patterns can be illustrated through the example of the refresher courses where local alumni are responsible for organizing the initial dimensions of the initiative (i.e. participants, topic, funding) which is then formally organized by the School (i.e. teachers, study programme, logistics, etc).

Table 15: ITC alumni programme - summary

Practice Focus	Alumni Profile	Framework	Benefits	Components
Technical Knowledge	Global community of professionals from undeveloped world, passionate about using and acquiring technical skills and knowledge which can contribute to the development of their own countries. Often lacking in resources (e.g. IT / Internet).	Both imagination and engagement modes are utilized which indicates the importance of alumni interaction in developing their practice, as well as the significance of the perceived identity of alumni (internal/external)	Culture Recruiting	Print Publication, E-Newsletter, Alumni gatherings (faculty trips, conferences), Institution email address accounts, member directory, local chapters, lifelong education (certificate and refresher courses), social network, award, student recruitment, professional research.

5.1.5 Cross-case analysis

The university case studies presented in this chapter represent somewhat extreme and distinct examples of alumni programmes viewed through the communities of practice framework. Each case illustrates how the design of an alumni programme can be shown to match both the specific characteristics of its alumni members as well as determinant factors from both the school and the particular academic programme. In the case of Nyenrode it is the exposure that students have to rituals and traditions on a castle estate that defines their community which is in contrast to the TiasNimbas programme which in essence must create a common alumni identity from scratch. At RSM it is actually the experience of interacting with a unique and diverse group of students who develop into close classmates and later alumni which defines many of the programme components, while ITC students do not simply acquire technical skills during their education but also become members of an international community serving a greater good in developing countries around the world.

These four programmes can also be viewed as being in different stages of development with regard to the activities taking place in their alumni communities which may be useful for developing a typology system. As mentioned in chapter two, the evolutionary model of

communities of practice (Gongla and Rizzuto, 2001) suggests five stages of development for communities that in some aspects correspond to the university case studies (Table 16).

Table 16: Fundamental Functions, Stages of Evolution (Gongla and Rizzuto, 2001) and assigned university case study examples

<u>Stage</u>	Potential	Building	Engaged	Active	Adaptive
<u>Fundamental Function</u>	Connection	Memory and context creation	Access and learning	Collaboration	Innovation and generation
<u>Example</u>	TiasNimbas	TiasNimbas	ITC	Nyenrode	RSM

The TiasNimbas community can initially be viewed as falling in the “potential” stage. In this stage the primary function of the community is connecting its members, with the organization providing assistance in locating and introducing people by defining criteria for potential community members, locating appropriate individuals, and bringing them together in some form or fashion. The mechanisms which are used include a range of electronic messaging systems (e.g. email, chat rooms, listserves), online forums, and online directories. TiasNimbas’ lifetime education components (i.e. network groups) suggest a possible transition of the community from the “potential” to the second evolution stage called “building” which in this case focuses on areas such as: knowledge classification and storage, formulating strategies for supporting learning, community engagement planning, and initial deployment.

In the third stage “engaged” the community operates with a shared agenda and experiences growth. The organization here plays a role in introducing new alumni to the community, managing communications, and collecting relevant input. Member activity is typically characterized by among other things sharing experiences and stories as well as contributing professional advice and knowledge through portals and designated experts. ITC illustrates this stage of evolution where for example each graduating student is provided with local alumni information for their home countries and is also contacted by a local alum. The school also facilitates on a regular basis the exchange of stories and experiences of its alumni through publications, E-Newsletters, and impromptu alumni gatherings in order to sustain trust, assess possible areas for improvement, and encourage the sharing of relevant knowledge.

Nyenrode provides an example for the fourth stage, “active”, where the community is further developed, polished, and is primarily focused on sustaining the existing activity level through close collaboration of members as a group and with the organization. This phase is characterized by a greater level of formalization in the community with organized work structures and processes which in this case would be a collection of linked governance mechanisms like the alumni association, alumni class representative system, and local chapter network.

The last stage, “adaptive”, adds an element of dynamic innovation to the community where members in response to external stimuli show flexibility by creating new components and expanding the group boundaries. These are attributes which are shared by the RSM alumni

community where new ideas like study trips to foreign countries and the “MBA Boost” programme (continued education opportunities using alumni speakers) have been generated, developed and implemented successfully internally.

These examples and the stages of evolution that they possibly represent highlight both the differences between alumni programmes and the potential for growth in each of their respective communities. In the next section a similar analysis to the one undertaken for the university alumni programmes will be applied to four business cases in order to evaluate similarities and differences between the two.

5.2 Corporate alumni programmes

The alumni programmes of four firms were reviewed as part of this research: International Business Machines Corp. (IBM), The Boston Consulting Group (BCG), The Chevron Corporation (Chevron), and HSBC Group (HSBC). These case study subjects were chosen since each represented distinct variations of alumni programmes which could be useful for defining a relevant typology structure.

5.2.1 International Business Machines Corp. (IBM)

Introduction

IBM was founded over 100 years ago and is considered to be a technological pioneer responsible for introducing an extensive range of inventions and innovations to the world such as scales, calculators, clocks, and personal computers. Today the company has a workforce of over 380,000 employees in over 170 countries with operations spanning a wide range of areas related to computer manufacturing, software development, and service consulting.

With a consistent and central focus on innovation, the company’s alumni programme currently encompasses over 90,000 current and former employees and is part of a much more ambitious venture involving the development of a large scale business social network called, “The Greater IBM Connection”. The vision behind this network is as, “a channel for people who have worked at IBM and want to remain connected to IBMers past, present and future in a new kind of network that will serve new kinds of relationships”¹¹. It is attributed to another bold experiment that the company undertook in 2003 called the IBM “jam” where thousands of employees participated in an online brainstorming session and formulated values and goals for the company which among other things led to the development of the Greater IBM social network.

¹¹ <http://www.elsua.net/2006/08/11/the-greater-ibm-connection-bringing-social-networking-to-the-ibm-enterprise/>

Domain, community and practice

This programme was developed in close consultation with “hundreds of former IBMers who helped define the need for an online connecting point where old friends and colleagues could exchange greetings, news, and ideas ... know about events ... (and) stay in touch with the news, ideas, and technology innovations that were available ... at IBM”¹². The current welcome message for new members introduces additional dimensions to the network objectives such as, “collaborate on new ideas, partner for mutual benefit and discuss issues with high caliber minds”¹³.

Modes of belonging & dualities

The Greater IBM programme operates on a large scale from both a geographic and membership sense which has meant that the components are focused on two particular modes of belonging. Alignment, which guides alumni activities towards a common direction which for example includes instructing members on how to blog, organize events, or join local chapters. The other emphasis observed in this programme is on engagement where members are encouraged to participate in the community for among other reasons the apparent motivation of IBM to accumulate experience and knowledge in the developing field of business social networks. This last point is supported through the fact that the programme includes components on practically every public social network. Imagination in the case of this programme is of lesser significance given the reputed strong corporate culture already present within the company that also extend to the alumni and employee identities. The size aspect of the programme also impacts the component dualities which from an administrative point of view require more of an institutional slant towards designed and identification, but also contains evenly weighted dualities between both participation and reification, as well as the global and local.

The knowledge management orientation of the alumni programme can also be identified through both the access to other communities in the Greater IBM constellation (i.e. current employees, external researchers, partner organizations), and the large number of design elements which are all utilized in unison within the various components in order to maximize their effectiveness. A programme summary appears on the following page (table 17)

¹² <http://www.ibm.com/ibm/greateribm/faq.shtml>

¹³ <http://greateribm.xing.com/>

Table 17: IBM alumni programme - summary

Practice Focus	Alumni Profile	Framework	Benefits	Components
Knowledge Management	Global population of former employees & alumni with relatively strong identification with IBM and an interest to keep up-to-date with relevant events/ research.	Broad component mix focused on alignment and engagement modes with dualities tending to be institutional.	Innovation	Member directory, Events, Public Social Networks, Blogs, Local Chapters, E-Newsletter, Video/Audio seminars, Job listings, Community facilitators (“core connectors”)

5.2.2 Boston Consulting Group (BCG)

Introduction

BGC is a global management consulting firm which has approximately 6,500 employees and operates in 38 countries. The firm has over 3000 alumni and subscribes to the philosophy that alumni share a lifelong bond with the firm, and that the alumni programme will “encourage each other, share ideas, and foster success-thus creating relationships that are personally and professionally rewarding”¹⁴.

Domain, community and practice

The work experience at BCG has been compared to an apprenticeship with both a great deal of training and mentoring for junior consultants in their work. New employees are typically trained in a group and develop a strong class identity as illustrated below:

“Being in a class fosters a real sense of community ... You become really close-knit, both socially and professionally ... BCG is filled with an interesting, diverse group of people who are passionate about what they do ... It’s a very supportive atmosphere ... I’ve really enjoyed working with my class ... I just have this underlying feeling that all my colleagues are on the same wavelength as me”¹⁵.

Consulting firms are typically known for an “up-or-out” corporate culture where only a fraction of hired consultants succeed in being promoted up the ranks and with the latter expected to leave the organization. BCG stands out from its peers in this regard and is attributed as a firm which, “hires people to keep people, not to have them go through an attrition process ... They want you to succeed, not to work a couple of years before they push you out”¹⁶. Nevertheless, the firm also

¹⁴ <https://www.bcg.com/bcgnetworks/alumni>

¹⁵ <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/8780652/Boston-Consulting-Group---Wetfeet>

¹⁶ <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/8780652/Boston-Consulting-Group---Wetfeet>

pays careful and dedicated care to its departing employees by providing both job leads, career guidance, and access to a prestigious and well connected alumni network.

Modes of belonging & dualities

As in the case of other professional service type firms in accounting and law, BCG uses its alumni programme as a vehicle for both acquiring new clients as well as recruiting new employees. The components supporting these goals have a strong emphasis on imagination since it is important for the firm to constantly reaffirm and communicate the unique strengths, intimacy, prestige and value of the alumni network. For potential clients it is by communicating stories such as the one below, while for students it is through alumni success stories which justify and validate the required hardships associated with entry consultant positions.

“Since leaving I have stayed in touch with the many good friends I made, and taken advantage of BCG’s alumni programme – including dinners, wine-tasting, and industry discussion breakfasts. Recently, I attended the BCG European consumer goods alumni weekend. Alumni, current BCGers and industry experts gathered at a beautiful lakeside alpine castle hotel to discuss hot topics in the consumer industry, share views and experience, socialise and enjoy the surroundings. So both personally and professionally, I am happy to still feel part of the BCG family despite the new direction I have taken.”¹⁷

The dualities in this programme follow two patterns where on one hand elements related to imagination and engagement are defined by the firm in order to sustain the “success factor” values and perceptions associated with BCG alumni and achieve specific goals (i.e. attract new clients), but where on the other hand alignment to some extent is more informal and left up to the community to define.

The programme is somewhat spartan in its use of design elements and seems to be focus primarily on connectivity and artifacts which is in line with its particular goals. Access to other communities in the constellation is partial since it covers existing employees but is otherwise relatively insular in order to possibly promote a sense of exclusivity. An overview of the key characteristics of the firm’s alumni programme is provided below (table 18).

Table 18: BCG alumni programme - summary

Practice Focus	Alumni Profile	Framework	Benefits	Components
Professional Stature	Dispersed around the world. Highly diverse in culture, professions, values, and experiences. Entrepreneurial and individual.	System that uses imagination and engagement as key modes which provide members with a flexible platform to adapt their alumni identity to suit their needs.	New Clients Recruiting Brand Value	Benefits guide, alumni day, access to research, member directory (print/online), jobs database, E-Newsletter, event.

¹⁷ http://www.bcg.london.com/careers/career_growth/beyond_bcg/alumni.aspx#tcm153765

5.2.3 Chevron Corporation (Chevron)

Introduction

Chevron is an integrated energy company with extensive petroleum operations around the world. The company employs 67,000 people in over 100 countries. The cohesiveness of the workforce as a network is illustrated through the fact that 18,000 employees were reported in 2008 as being members of various affinity groups within the company dealing with recruitment, community activism, employee development, etc.

Domain, community and practice

The particular drivers behind the company's alumni programme can be seen as stemming from the unique characteristics of the petroleum industry. Technical employees in areas like drilling and offshore operations, experience unique and demanding work conditions (i.e. 28/28 schedules are common and mean a pattern of 28 days of work followed by 28 days of leave time) which results in the formation of an informal close knit community between these professionals focused on their shared experiences. The challenging nature of these jobs and growing business pressures to deliver results has created a need for companies like Chevron to, "fast track the careers of incoming recruits to bring them up to a point where they are trained, competent and professionally mature enough to make critical decisions earlier than they would have done under previous circumstances"¹⁸.

Chevron is addressing the knowledge gap problem facing the industry through its alumni programme which provides a platform for both keeping in touch with its employees and facilitating interactions within that community, as well as a flexible work programme for alumni called Bridges which enables former employees to return on a part-time or contract basis. These employees fulfill a unique role at Chevron in the capacity of transferring knowledge as technical specialists, partner representatives, guest speakers, recruiters, mentors, peer reviewers, and advisors to focus areas.

The respective benefits to both the company and alumni is expressed in the following quote, "I am playing a part in the future of the drilling industry as a mentor and contributing to the operational excellence of the company. What I do makes a difference... I see myself as a mentor to a whole new set of young people entering the industry. They are eager to soak things up, to understand the know-how of drilling. These young engineers will be outstanding drillinghands."¹⁹

¹⁸ <http://www.oilandgaseurasia.com/recruitment/p/5/articles/26/>

¹⁹ <http://www.oilandgaseurasia.com/recruitment/p/5/articles/26/>

Modes of belonging & dualities

Given the specific characteristics and factors described above it is not surprising to see Chevron's alumni programme focused particularly in the alignment mode of belonging where former employees are directed towards a common direction. The dedicated alumni website (alumni.chevron.com), featured alumni profile, and the flexible work scheme are all designed with alumni recruitment in mind. The clear and focused objective of the programme also defines the dualities of the components which are towards specific outcomes (reification), designed, and with little room for alumni to negotiate their own meaning in the formal community. (identification)

This system makes very limited use of the design elements with only connectivity being identified in the components. The extremely limited access to other parts of the organization's constellations (i.e. current employees) illustrates yet again the extremely efficient and goal oriented nature in this programme. A summary of the characteristics of the company's alumni programme is provided below (table 19)

Table 19: Chevron alumni programme - summary

Practice Focus	Alumni Profile	Framework	Benefits	Components
Technical Knowledge	Informal and close knit technical skilled group of professionals in a high risk, highly demanding industry.	Focused system with strong and structured emphasis on the alignment mode.	Knowledge Management Flexible Workforce	Website, member directory, profiles, flexible work programme

5.2.4 The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC Group)

Introduction

HSBC despite its name is of Scottish origins and is one of the largest commercial banks in the United Kingdom. It has achieved a prominent position in worldwide banking through strategic mergers and acquisitions and employs over 300,000 employees in 82 countries. HSBC has become a household name to millions of people around the globe and is ranked in the top 50 of the world's most recognized global brands.

Domain, community and practice

The bank places great importance in the cohesiveness of its corporate culture which is illustrated, for example, through the fact that included among the criteria used for acquisitions is the human fit between the organizations. Among the strategies used for creating commroderie between employees has been through a program where newly recruited graduates from around the world spend seven weeks together and participate in a central induction event. Entrepreneurship and

international experience also represent core elements of the corporate culture which explains the bank's focus on activities aimed at recruiting former employees.

Modes of belonging & dualities

From the perspective of domain, practice, and community the HSBC alumni network represents a somewhat loose collective of individuals who share work experiences and interact primarily for networking purposes. The firm has a very focused approach with its alumni programme which includes both imagination and engagement mode dimensions with a clear emphasis on recruitment. The "Success Stories" component where former employees share how their HSBC work experience has helped them careerwise can be seen as an attempt of shaping perceptions of other employees who are encouraged to follow a similar line of thought and in essence reconnect with or strengthen their identity as bank alumni. Complimenting this element is the HSBC social network group on FaceBook which provides a symbolic mechanism for bank alumni to incorporate their alumni identity in their lives alongside their alma mater, sports clubs, and favorite causes, as well as engage with each other.

The dualities in this case are dictated by both the nature of the alumni network as well as the specific goals that HSBC has set out for the alumni programme which on one hand is focused and institutional (designed, identification, local) but also in another context is about building a community (participation). This dual focus is also expressed in the limited arsenal of design elements present in the components where there's a combination of connectivity and membership but with limited access to other parts of the organization's constellation. A summary of the characteristics of the bank's alumni programme is provided below (table 20).

Table 20: HSBC alumni programme - summary

Practice Focus	Alumni Profile	Framework	Benefits	Components
Employment	Heterogeneous and loosely aligned group of members focusing on professional gains of their membership than social contacts.	Tightly focused component mix focused on modes of imagination and engagement with dualities tending to be institutional.	Recruitment Brand value	Success Stories, Public Social Network Group

5.2.5 Cross-case analysis

The four corporate alumni programme case studies provide somewhat of a contrast in comparison to the previous examples from the university alumni programmes. For example, the number of components on average in each of the company programmes is relatively less than among the universities which as suggested earlier indicates a much more focused and goal oriented approach. The stark differences between the individual companies also highlighted the

dramatic impact that factors such as company size, industry, corporate culture, etc has on their respective programmes which was illustrated through the different patterns and settings observed from the communities of practice framework.

It seems obvious from the case studies that the four companies are benefiting from their alumni programmes for among other things: recruiting, flexible labour, brand value, business development, innovation, and knowledge management since otherwise limited resources and capital would not be allocated in this area. At the same time, the benefits to alumni from these programmes are not identical across the case study programmes and is representative of the difference orientations stemming from among other things the factors mentioned above. Programmes with a more balanced mix of components with regard to their win-win offerings could possibly also be viewed as either potentially or in practice as more advanced alumni communities.

The case study companies have been categorized using the stages of evolution (Gongla and Rizzuto, 2001) model and appear in the table below (table 21) followed by explanations.

Table 21: Fundamental Functions, Stages of Evolution (Gongla and Rizzuto, 2001) and assigned corporate case study examples

<u>Stage</u>	Potential	Building	Engaged	Active	Adaptive
<u>Fundamental Function</u>	Connection	Memory and context creation	Access and learning	Collaboration	Innovation and generation
<u>Example</u>	HSBC	HSBC	Chevron	BCG	IBM
<u>Programme Focus</u>	Recruiting	Recruiting	Knowledge Management	New clients Recruiting	Develop new capabilities
<u>Key Components</u>	Website Social Network	Success Stories alumni profiles	Flex Labour - mentoring,etc.	Culture/Brand components	Collaboration Tools

The alumni programme of HSBC fits the definition of the first and second stages of the communities evolution (“potential”, “building”) where the Bank through its alumni website section, social network group on Facebook, and “success stories” alumni profiles facilitates bringing members together and sharing stories.

Chevron’s alumni programme through its bridges flexible labour scheme for alumni enables former employees to return on a part-time or contract basis in order to share their valuable expertise with the organization and in particular with new novice employees. The acts of socializing new members, developing communications, and exchanging tacit knowledge are representative elements of the third stage of community evolution (“engaged”) which is the reason for assigning Chevron to this category.

The fourth stage of the communities evolution (“active”) describes groups which focus on business problems and opportunities by tapping into the knowledge of members which to a certain extent can be said to be the case with the BCG alumni programme. BCG alumni are privy

to firm research, news, contacts, learning and are expected in turn to support the organization in the capacity as new clients, business partners, etc.

There is a great deal of overlap between IBM's alumni programme and the last stage of the communities evolution ("Adaptive") which is characterized as flexible, innovative and dynamically changing in form with the purpose of producing and exploiting knowledge for the benefit of the organization. These types of communities are also integrated with organizational processes, focused on enhancing learning opportunities, and linked with other groups which are all traits shared with the Greater IBM connection.

This typology is useful since, in essence, it emphasizes the different roles that alumni programmes can play in organizations, the expanding benefits of alumni networks as their community aspect is developed, and proposes that different tools and strategies are needed in order to achieve each stage.

Chapter 6 Conclusions and recommendations

In this chapter a summary of the research will be provided followed by conclusions. The chapter will also address the limitations of this research and options for future research.

6.1 Summary

As stated, research in the area of corporate alumni programmes is lacking with the most recent study having been published over a decade ago (Iyer et al., 1997). The evolution of these programmes illustrates their wide range of forms as well as associated benefits for both firms and alumni members. This inherent flexibility represents a valuable feature for firms who must adapt their practices to the changing business environment characterized, among other things, by a shift in the mindset of employees towards a free agent mentality, as well as the need to accommodate the needs of both aging baby boomers who are either retiring or seeking more flexible work arrangements, and the younger Generation X currently entering the workforce.

This first phase of this research involved a survey of corporate alumni programmes and components in a selection of firms (appendix 3) which suggested that the phenomena in its full form was not as prevalent as commonly perceived, and existed primarily in traditional sectors such as professional firms (accounting, law, and consulting). At the same time, individual practices related to alumni relations were observed among a much broader segment of firms indicating that these were being utilized on a micro level for particular objective and at times by multiple functions within the same organization.

One unexpected observation was the involvement of external and unrelated parties (i.e. firms active in the area of alumni relations and individuals) as owners of alumni programmes with membership levels of hundreds and even thousands, of large multinational firms which did not yet have formal programmes of their own. The motivations for these activities remains unclear and out-of-scope for this particular research effort but represents a potential risk for firms since among other things this may impact the perceptions of alumni with regard to the organization, and could also have security implications.

The survey phase of the study helped both redefine the research design and make the selection of case study subjects from among university and business alumni programmes. The communities of practice theory was identified as a potentially useful framework which could serve as an analytical lens for understanding how individual components of each programme matched the particular and somewhat unique characteristics of both alumni and the organization. It also highlighted the potential benefits associated with engaging alumni as communities instead of just generic individuals and applied a typology model illustrating this point.

6.2 Limitations

Given the exploratory nature of this research the researcher has had to take judgement calls with regard to the data assessment therefore human error should be considered as a possible limitation. Also, the conclusions drawn from the reviewed cases can not be applied to other cases and were only used to explore dimensions of corporate alumni programmes in a variety of settings using the communities of practice framework as an analysis lens. The communities of practice framework may be incomplete and not sufficiently developed to serve within the capacity that it has been used in this research. Furthermore, there is a debate among researchers with regard to the ability of organizations to manage communities of practice which would limit the usefulness of the framework in this specific context.

6.3 Future research

There is a wide area of research that can be studied in this area. It is not possible as part of this work to review all types of corporate alumni programmes therefore it might be useful to conduct similar research using other cases as examples. Further evaluation with regard to the effectiveness of individual components and programme models in achieving specific objectives (i.e. recruiting, innovation, knowledge management, etc) would also be of great practical interest to businesses. On a broader level, it might be interesting to evaluate the influence of these programmes on both current and former employees with regard to motivation and performance. For example, what impact, if any, can these programmes have on extending the psychological contract beyond the formal departure of the employee from the firm? Also, what role do workforce generations (i.e. baby boomers, Generation X, etc.) play in defining employee perceptions with regard to their alumni identities?

6.4 Conclusions

Corporate alumni programmes and practices are becoming a common feature within many firms. Despite the growing interest in this area this remains an unexplored research topic. The last substantial work related to corporate alumni programmes in accounting firms was published over a decade ago (Iyer et al., 1997). The authors found that alumni benefitted their alma mater firms and suggested that it was possible for firms to manage alumni as assets. Their article also identified a need for additional research into the specific programmes and practices dealing with the alumni-firm relationships. The purpose of this thesis was to explore the area with regard to current programmes and practices and using the communities of practice framework gain further insight as well as propose a typology.

Overall, this research has achieved two goals. First, it has provided a snapshot of current alumni programmes and practices among a large selection of firms revealing that while the number of formal corporate alumni programmes seems to be relatively low that the number of firms with some type of alumni practice was much higher and substantial. Second, it has highlighted

distinctions between university and corporate alumni programmes which were useful for both identifying traits of these programmes and proposing a basis for a classification system using communities of practice stages of evolution (Gongla and Rizzuto, 2001).

The two sets of case studies suggest that different scopes of programmes may exist at universities and corporations. Universities seem to have both a broader range of programme components, and a more balanced service mix with regard to the respective benefits from the alumni programme for both the organization and its alumni members. Firms were found to possibly possess a much more goal oriented approach to their alumni programmes with less of a balance with regard to the benefits of the programme to their alumni employees. An additional difference between the university and firm case studies was the strength of the community element of the alumni network, as well as the identification of alumni with their alma mater which were both perceived as being stronger within university settings. One possible explanation for this beyond the obvious differences between the student and employee induction experience may be that the well established concept of a university alumni programme is more familiar and understandable than the much more recent concept of corporate alumni programme.

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Appendix 1: Alumni programmes - glossary of terms

A

Alumni Association: A governance/representation structure of the alumni community through which the alma mater organization can engage with alumni leaders. Association officers can either be elected by members or selected by the alma mater organization.

Alumni Chapters: Local governance/representation structures of the alumni community which serve primarily as a platform for organizing various activities for members within a specific geographic region (i.e. city, country)

Alumni Directory: A resource for finding contact information and employment details of alumni which is typically available as a feature of an online platform but can also be in print form. Access to information can be limited to a particular year and programme.

Alumni Day: An annual event focused on highlighting the importance of alumni to the alma mater organization which typically includes a variety of components like social activities, professional conferences, etc.

B

Blogs: A feature of an online platform which enables individual members to share information, thoughts, observations, etc. on a recurring basis. Readers of blogs can choose to be notified when new postings are available.

Business Directory: An online platform for displaying information about professional services provided by alumni to other alumni.

C

Career Fairs: Recruiting events for new employees and interns where a firm may ask its alumni members to participate and share their experiences with prospective candidates.

Career Opportunities: A feature of an online platform which displays employment opportunities within the alma mater firm.

Company History: Content (stories, photos, videos) which focuses on the past experiences of alumni in their alma mater organization and their respective contributions to its evolution and development.

Company News: Content (stories, photos, videos) which focuses on current events related to the alma mater organization of particular relevance or interest to alumni.

D

Discussion Boards: A feature of an online platform in which members can both post items and comment on existing posts relevant to the particular discussion board subject.

E

F

Firm Research: Professional content which is created by the alma mater firm as part of its business activities which is not typically publicly available but it shared with alumni.

G

Guest Speaker Opportunities: Alumni members volunteer or are selected to share experiences or professional knowledge with other alumni, employees, or students.

H

I

J

Job Postings: An online platform displaying job openings available outside the alma mater firm submitted either by individual alumni or partner firms.

K

L

Lifetime Career Support: The alma mater organization provides alumni with a variety of resources for their professional development and career advancement which can include both content (text, video) and personalized advice.

M

N

Networking Events: Face-to-face meetings with the purpose of bringing alumni members together as a group and facilitating relevant introductions.

Newsletters: Recurring publication sent to alumni either electronically or via post which can include various types of content like news, alumni profiles, professional articles, etc.

O

P

Profiles: Content (written/video/audio) which focuses on the accomplishments and activities of individual alumni members.

Polls: One feature of an online platform which engages members through surveys which can be used to gauge alumni needs or assess/affirm business attitudes.

I

Insurance: An example of a benefit typically offered to large alumni groups by commercial entities such as insurance firms.

Interaction with Executives/Administration: Events which typically bring together a selective group of alumni chosen for their particular background (current/previous positions, skills, success, etc) where they are joined by senior executives/administrators of the alma mater organization.

Q

R

Refer a friend: One feature of an online platform which provides alumni with the ability to recommend a friend or an acquaintance as either a prospective employee or undiscovered alumni.

Retiree Work Options: Flexible work programmes which enable retired employees to return to work for their alma mater firm on a part-time, short-term, or contract basis without affecting their pension benefits.

S

Segmented Networks: Sub-groups of alumni created by the alma mater organization where membership can follow a gender, professional, sectorial, ect. basis.

Social Activities: Social gatherings (i.e. parties, sport events, picnics) which are meant as mechanisms for developing relationships between alumni members.

Social Networks: An online collaborative platform which enables members to both create their own groups and customize their interaction with these networks.

Share Ideas: A feature of an online platform which solicits suggestions from alumni with regard to future activities for their programmes.

T

Technical Training: Industry approved education modules for alumni provided by the alma mater firm which are recognized as fulfilling professional requirements necessary for particular practices (i.e. law, accounting)

Trade Shows: Events for securing future sales or new clients where a firm may ask its alumni members to participate and share their knowledge with other participants.

U

V

Volunteer Activities: Community service projects undertaken by alumni groups as part of either a formal programme or on a grassroots basis.

W

X

Y

Z

Appendix 2: Alumni programmes - case studies data

Nyenrode Business School - alumni programme components

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities
Alumni Print Publication i.e. Nyenrode Now, VCV magazine	"Magazine for the Nyenrode Community" Student activities, Faculty news, professional content, history/stories regarding the estate, castle or the student experience, letter from the School president, School strategic direction, Dutch business entrepreneurship, Alumni Leaders, Alumni Spotlight, Career Trajectories, Staff Profiles, "In Memoriam", Born, "Jobbing", "Startup.com", Homecomings, Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Students • Faculty • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Connectivity • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Community E-newsletter i.e. News@Nyenrode, Ezine	News, Programme Information, Faculty News, News from campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Students • Faculty • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Chapters i.e. Circles	"... place of choice for alumni to meet (informally) and inspire one another (businesswise)... The Circles can be divided into five different categories: 1. Regional Circles, 2. Theme Circles, 3. Study Circles, 4. Sporting Circles, 5. Other Circles".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Leadership • Connectivity • Membership • Projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Scholarships	"Scholarships can make it attractive to follow an MSc or MBA at Nyenrode ... The additional benefit is ... attracting excellent students, who in turn become excellent alumni. The Nyenrode Fund actively seeks out scholarship sponsors... An additional dimension ... is the active guidance offered ... (through) an experienced coach."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Association i.e. VCV	"The Main Board is accountable to the Council of Representatives ... This ... consists of Class Representatives ... These represent all VCV members from their class"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Connectivity • Projects • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Nyenrode Fund	"Stichting Nyenrode Fonds (SNF) ensures that the unique Nyenrode philosophy is kept alive by supporting various key projects for Nyenrode and its students... The fund has already financed a number of initiatives, such as setting up scholarships, supporting key research projects and arranging temporary chairs with high profile professors."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Administration • Companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Connectivity • Projects • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Career Counseling	"... focuses mainly on the existing opportunities: the optimal use and development of qualities and ambitions, discovering any 'blind spots' and mapping out areas for development"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Database/Directory i.e. VCV Address Book	Paper version and online version	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Nyenrode Business Accelerator	"... encourage and facilitate the setting up of new businesses by (former) Nyenrode students"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Faculty • Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities
Business Topics Online	"... latest insights about relevant and contemporary issues in Dutch and intl. business life".	• Alumni • Faculty	• Connectivity • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Award i.e. Member of Merit	Annual award for an alumni who has contributed to the alumni community.	• Alumni • Students	• Events • Leadership • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Social Gatherings i.e. Nyenrode Rally, Christmas Drinks, Jazznight: Gala of the Year, Convertible Day, VCF Golf Tournament,	Annual parties and traditions of more a social nature than professional nature.	• Alumni • Students	• Events • Connectivity • Projects	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

Rotterdam School of Management (RSM) - alumni programme components

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities
Company Events i.e. Adidas Networking Event	"Unique networking event at the adidas-Salomon premises in Herzogenaurach ... during this event alumni, students and staff will have the opportunity to learn about adidas-Salomon's position in today's market"	• RSM Alumni • INSEAD Alumni • adidas-Salomon • Students	• Event • Connectivity • Membership • Projects	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Keynote Speakers	"event series for alumni and corporate relations focusing on topics of current interest. All sessions are interactive-starting with a presentation and follow by a dialogue between the speakers and audience participants"	• Alumni • Faculty • Corporations	• Event • Artifacts • Connectivity	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Study Trips	"... opportunity for RSM alumni to enjoy traveling together to exciting intl. destinations ... while simultaneously offering them a chance for continuous learning and engagement with each other on current topics of business interest"	• Alumni	• Event • Connectivity	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
RSM Symposium/Day	"... international conference ... This learning and networking event aims to create a platform for the examination of a wide range of issues", "Parallel events held by ... local (alumni) chapters."	• Students • Alumni • Industry Leaders • Policy Makers	• Event • Connectivity • Leadership • Projects • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Database/Directory	"... great tool for networking. Alumni information will include data on education, current employer and address, making it easy to maintain contact with former classmates"	• Alumni • Students	• Connectivity • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Class Reunions	"...15, 10, and 5 year RSM reunion attract(ed) alumni from all over the world to view the school and socialize with their classmates"	• Alumni • Administration	• Event • Connectivity • Membership • Projects • Artifacts • Leadership	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
MBA Boost Programme	"... interactive workshops designed for and by our MBA alumni. These evening sessions offer MBA alumni a chance to boost their knowledge, update their skills and network informally".	• Alumni • Faculty	• Event • Connectivity	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities
Functional Area Panels	"... allow current students to meet experienced alumni, and alumni to come back to meet up with staff, current students and fellow alumni working in their own functional area"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Faculty • Students • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event • Connectivity • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
MBA Fair Alumni Ambassadors	"Alumni are invited to attend these events to speak with potential RSM students"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Prospective Students • Students • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Information Sessions	"Alumni panels ... provide 'the voice of experience' about the value of RSM programmes"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Prospective Students • Students • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Admissions Interviews	"Because our applicants span so many companies ... our Admissions teams rely upon local alumni to interview and report upon potential candidates"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Prospective Students • Students • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Career Fairs i.e. STAR Erasmus Days	"Talent recruitment event (where) ... alumni ... are often the 'connectors' between soon-to-graduate RSM students and their future employment"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Students • Corporate Recruiters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Student Clubs i.e. Finance Club, Sailing Club	Student elected board manages club activities with a mission that includes, "Promot(ing) alumni involvement with the club by making them its active part"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Alumni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event • Connectivity • Membership • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Award i.e. Distinguished Alumni Award	"showcase ... alumni ... who have truly distinguished themselves through business excellence and as exemplary representatives of RSM's core values"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Administration • Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artifacts • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
RSM Intl. Charity Foundation	"... aims to: coordinate charitable efforts ... encourage alumni and students to work together ... ensure documentation and continuity of best practices"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Students • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Leadership • Projects • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni (Advisory) Board	"The elected group ... analyzes and contributes to the School's strategic plans, and it tries to discover what the alumni want and to deliver on accordingly".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Receptions/Dinners with administration members	"...chance to welcome and discuss the future with our new dean ... we learnt about new plans and continued ambitions"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event • Connectivity • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni E-newsletter i.e. MBA e-News	"news and updates to alumni"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
MBA Booklist	"best new publications on business; this list helps (alumni) cut through the overwhelming number of books on business that come out each year"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Faculty • Students • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Student Mentoring	"... alumni can help students to think about their career goals and their strategy for achieving them, and support them in assessing what the practical challenges are"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Students • Administration • Faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities
Local Alumni Chapters	"Through Local Chapters, ... RSM alumni keep the spirit of the school alive ... organizing meetings, keeping discussions alive, facilitating new ideas, new events and social connections.", "...begun as a joint initiative between local alumni and the Alumni offices"	• Alumni	• Connectivity • Membership • Leadership • Projects	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Print Publication i.e. RSM Outlook Publication (published quarterly)	Programme Rankings Faculty Updates (i.e. awards) Student activities Administration updates (i.e. new staff) Book Reviews Business Profiles/Interviews Faculty Profiles/Interviews Programme Profiles Alumni News Alumni Involvement Alumni Leaders Alumni Profiles	• Alumni • Faculty • Administration • Corporations • Students • Prospective Students	• Connectivity • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Supervisory Board	"First year students ... present their Strategic Business Plan (SBP) as part of a core course. A board of our experienced alumni provide their expertise and critical thought in helping students to focus and hone their SPB ... We seek the assistance of alumni volunteers to act as members of a Supervisory Board. Spend a half day with students and share your invaluable knowledge"	• Alumni • Faculty • Administration • Students	• Leadership • Connectivity	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Campus Ambassadors i.e. Shell Campus Ambassadors	"... the face of the organization on campus. Being RSM alumni themselves, they offer first-hand experience to current students on what it's like to work ... they also work closely with faculty, the alumni office and study associations to support internships, guest lectures and knowledge exchange forums"	• Alumni at Shell • Shell employees • Students • Faculty • Administration	• Connectivity • Membership	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Leadership Summit	"... bring(s) together leaders from business, politics and academia to exchange ideas on strategies that will drive business ..."	• Alumni • Students • Faculty • Corporations	• Event • Connectivity • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

TiasNimbas Business School - alumni programme components

Alumni Database/Directory i.e. Who-is-Who" directory	"... search by name and affiliation of fellow alumni. Advanced search by class year, occupation, expertise or other particulars is possible."	• Alumni • Students	• Connectivity • Membership • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
TiasNimbas Alumni Day	"... place-to-be to meet your fellow graduates again, grow and optimize your network, and 'experience' your alma mater anew through the substantive content of the event"	• Alumni • Faculty • Administration • Students	• Events • Connectivity • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Network Groups i.e. Entrepreneurial Network	"... alumni groups centered on themes like strategy, entrepreneurship, HR, etc".	• Alumni • Faculty	• Events • Connectivity • Membership • Projects • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Classmate Group Alert	"... send messages to all the members of your cohort."	• Alumni	• Connectivity	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

Knowledge Updates	"... offers a choice of 8-10 modules in several executive master programmes and gives the alumni the possibility to embark on the learning process again."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Inspire and get inspired referral programme	"... 20% of new participants to our programmes find us through alumni... if you ... know a friend ... who's interested in taking an Executive Master or MBA programme, please link ... us up ... Your reward: ...a(n) KnowledgeUPDATE voucher."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Work Colleagues • Friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

ITC - alumni programme components

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities	
Alumni Print Publication i.e. ITC News	"... quarterly published magazine that focuses on ITC's alumni". Book Reviews, job openings, certificate programmes, new additions to the library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Administration • Faculty • Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni E-Newsletter i.e. ITC Update	"... information on recent and upcoming ITC events"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Administration • Faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Gatherings	"Wherever and whenever possible, ITC organizes meetings, workshops, seminars and receptions linkedin with the missions of its staff"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Administration • Faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Mailbox	"... free e-mail account. This lifelong account enables ... (alumni)... to keep in touch with each other and with us too"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Database/Directory i.e. Alumni Who's Who	"... email addresses of ... fellow course participants ... keep personal information up to date"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Chapters	"The mission ... of the ITC alumni associations is to enable people all over the world who have studied ... at ITC ... to build personal networks and share knowledge, ideas and experience with one another", "ITC alumni associations can give information about living and studying in the Netherlands and at ITC"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Students • Prospective Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Leadership • Connectivity • Membership • Projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Certificate Programme	"... conducted at ITC, on line and even in your own region - offers concentrated practical punchy courses to keep you at the cutting edge"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Faculty • Professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Linkedin Group i.e. ITC Alumni	"... enable all the ITC Alumni, (former) staff and students to get together, and expand our network of people and ideas".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Students • Administration • Faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Ambassadors i.e. ITC representatives	"... appointed to represent and promote ITC in his or her country/region. The representative shall ... provide information ... and...facilitate the application process".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Prospective Students • Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

IBM - alumni programme components

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities
Public Social Networks i.e. LinkedIn, Xing, Facebook, Second Life, Google Group, Twitter	"we are IBM alumni and current IBM employees interested in staying in touch with each other to collaborate on new ideas, partner for mutual benefit and discuss issues with high caliber minds" "provides a global network where more than 90,000 ... keep(ing) their connection with colleagues around the globe" " ... a channel for people who have worked at IBM and want to remain connected to IBMers past, present and future in a new kind of network that will serve new kinds of relationships"	IBM Employees IBM Retiree Alumni IBM Alumni	• Connectivity • Membership • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Reification Design Emergent Local Global Identity Negotiability
Blogs i.e. Greater IBM weblogs	"share ... observations, ideas and experiences"	IBM Employees IBM Retiree Alumni IBM Alumni Prospective Workers Prospective Clients	• Connectivity • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Reification Design Emergent Local Global Identity Negotiability
FedExperience	"... the U.S. Department of Treasury and IBM are currently working on a project to identify and recruit skilled IBM workers and retirees and match them to mission critical Treasury jobs"	IBM Employees IBM Retiree Alumni IBM Alumni U.S. Dept. of Treasury	• Connectivity	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Reification Design Emergent Local Global Identity Negotiability
Core Connector	" ... reaching out ... invite former and current IBMers into the network ... encourage new members to invite their contacts into the network ... make introductions to connect members for business and innovation opportunities ... help new members take advantage of network features ... start innovation initiatives related to one's work ... start and participate in the forum dialogues, post news, share ideas.	IBM Employees IBM Retiree Alumni IBM Alumni	• Leadership • Connectivity • Membership	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Reification Design Emergent Local Global Identity Negotiability
E-Newsletter i.e. Greater IBM Connections e- magazine	"News and information for current and former IBMers and retirees" Sections: Careers and Collaboration; Technology and the Future; Business and Innovation; Community	IBM Employees IBM Retiree Alumni IBM Alumni Researchers	• Connectivity • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Reification Design Emergent Local Global Identity Negotiability
face-to-face/online events	" ...hear and interact with leaders shaping our industry and culture... spoke to IBM alumni in the job search during a Career OnTrak webinar ... instructed IBM alumni how to pick an industry to work in, target it, and transition to it" "we'll provide tools and resources that can help ... host a successful event." "Audio and Web Conference ... Satellite Audiences	IBM Employees IBM Retiree Alumni IBM Alumni	• Events • Projects • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Reification Design Emergent Local Global Identity Negotiability
Job Listings	"This recent job listing on Greater IBM's Career Center is an example of the many jobs available ... In addition, Greater IBMers can reach out to other members with their own job postings"	IBM Employees IBM Retiree Alumni IBM Alumni	• Connectivity	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Reification Design Emergent Local Global Identity Negotiability

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities
Directory	"... other Greater IBMers can use the network search tools to find you... you can find that friend who went through sales school with you or worked on the same development project. And you can look for someone in the community who shares your interest in collaborating on a new project"	IBM Employees IBM Retiree Alumni IBM Alumni	• Connectivity • Membership • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Country Alumni Programme	"... alumni programme launch", "In person events ... Greater IBMers and the country's HR Manager ... will get together to share ideas", "New Member Welcome Call", "Town Meeting"	IBM Employees IBM Retiree Alumni IBM Alumni	• Events • Connectivity • Membership • Projects • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Project Reach Out!	"Opportunities for retired IBM employees ...A new approach to Talent Management ... to continue using ... skills and expertise in a new and different environment ... work for IBM in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam" "As IBMers, we have what many people don't have. We have worked for the best company in the Western world. Coming to China, or going to any other such country that needs us, is what we are all about .. and what better time to do it than when we are seasoned and experienced and know what we would want to share ..."	IBM Retiree Alumni	• Projects	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

Boston Consulting Group (BCG) - alumni programme components

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities
E-Newsletter i.e. ePanorama	Firm news, Alumni Profiles, Professional Content, Alumni accomplishments, Promotions at BCG	Alumni Employees	• Connectivity • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Jobs Database	"... a listing of current job openings that is continually updated ... search vehicle for finding a position ... or for helping a fellow alumnus ... find a job"	Alumni Employees	• Connectivity	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Alumni Directory i.e. Online & Print	"valuable tool for finding and reconnecting with former colleagues... it is also a business tool ... to enter a new field or a specific company ... or (for) ...starting a business" "elegantly bound ... book that included ... reminiscences from alumni, and a cross-referenced index of over 3,000 alumni	Alumni	• Connectivity • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
BCG'S latest thinking	"Industry-specific alumni communications highlight ... ideas on the most important business issues."	Alumni Employees	• Connectivity • Artifacts	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Worldwide Alumni Day	"A global celebration held annually in more than 50 cities around the world."	Alumni Employees	• Events • Connectivity • Membership	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities	
Alumni Benefits Guide	"... encourage alumni to take advantage of the BCG Alumni Network ... unique and distinctive keepsake"	Alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Artifacts• Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engagement• Imagination• Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

Chevron - alumni programme components

Component	Description	Constellations	Elements	Modes	Dualities
Alumni Community Website	" ... designed to reach out to former Chevron employees ... serves as an online networking community, which enables former employees to consider regular <u>career opportunities</u> and <u>contract assignments</u> with Chevron, refer colleagues, and keep abreast of corporate activities.	Alumni	• Connectivity	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Bridges Program	"... allows ... (alumni) to be considered for specific contract assignments in the technical disciplines supported by Upstream, Global Gas, and the Energy Technology Company (ETC). Contract opportunities include project assignments as technical specialists, partner representatives, guest speakers, recruiters, mentors, peer reviewers, and advisors to focus areas.	Alumni HR/Managers	• Connectivity	• Engagement • Imagination • Alignment	Participation Design Local Identity Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

HSBC - alumni programme components

"Success Stories"	Read what people have to say about their time at HSBC, and find out what they've been getting up to since leaving ... If you have a success story to tell, let us know and we'll add it to the site.	Alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Social Network i.e. HSBC alumni group on Facebook	"... designed to help past employees keep in touch - with each other, with HSBC, and with potential future career opportunities."	Alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Membership • Artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability
Job Postings i.e. Top Jobs	"As a former HSBC employee, you enjoy privileged access to our in-house recruitment consultants. They can provide you with all kinds of career advice, as well as telling you more about the current opportunities we have on offer."	Alumni HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Imagination • Alignment 	Participation Design Local Identity	Reification Emergent Global Negotiability

Appendix 3: Alumni programmes - review data

The data section begins on the following page - please note that due to the landscape view of the spreadsheet page numbers in this section appear centered on the right side of each page.

Corporate Alumni Programmes - Review of Current Trends & Practices				
Source:	100 Best Companies to Work For (Fortune Magazine, Jan. 2009), The 50 Most Innovative Companies (Business Week, April 2009), Fortune 500 - Annual ranking of America's largest corporations (Fortune Magazine, May, 2009) - top 100 firms included			
Glossary:	Size: workforce size (based on publications).			
	CAP: Existence of a formal corporate alumni programme. Y*: Firm supported independent alumni group			
	LI (C) : Linkedin group(s) created by employees; N - No, Membership - E(Employees), A (Alumni), W (Women). C (Customers)			
	Owner: Title of the person responsible for the creation or administration of the "company" Linkedin group.			
	LI (E): Company Linkedin group(s) created by people outside of the organization (Number of groups)			
	Program Focus: Programme components and company philosophy related to former employees			
Summary:	Number of Firms:	222	100%	
	Firms with CAPs:	33	15%	
	Firms with LI (C)s:	124	56%	
	Firms with LI (E)s:	147	66%	
	Sectors w/ CAPs:	Professional Firms (Law, Accounting, Consulting), Healthcare, Biotechnology, IT, Financial Services, Chemical, Aerospace/Defense, Automotive, Retail		
	Function Areas:	Communications, Business Development, Marketing, IT, Recruiting, Talent Management, HR, Knowledge Management, Outsourcing Management, Innovation, Client Collaboration, E-Business, Emerging Media, Sales, Business Integration, Strategic Planning, Staffing, Web Portal, Civic Affairs, Alumni Affairs, Service Representative, Professional Development, Training, CRM		

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Facebook	Social Media	700	No	N		N	
Griffin Hospital	Healthcare	1100	No	N		N	
Arnold & Porter	Legal Services	1300	No	E	Associate	N	
Johnson Financial	Financial Services	1300	No	N		N	
Shared Technologies	IT	1500	No	N		1	
Plante & Moran	Public Accounting	1500	Yes	E/A	Webmaster; Staffing Consultant	N	Welcome to Plante & Moran's Alumni Site, where firm alumni can: <u>Maintain contact with the firm as well as former staff</u> , <u>View Plante & Moran job opportunities</u> , <u>Stay abreast of recent developments</u> such as mergers, management changes, and other news worthy items., <u>Search our alumni directory</u> and post a personal profile that includes current contact information, <u>Participate in discussion boards</u> , <u>Search for information</u> about happenings within the firm and <u>post information</u> that you'd like to share with other alumni, <u>Learn about upcoming firm events</u> such as trade shows and career fairs - <i>As alumni, you remain valued members of the Plante & Moran family.</i>
American Fidelity Assurance	Life Insurance	1500	No	N		N	
Nugget Market	Grocery Retail	1536	No	N		N	
Zappos	Retail	1600	No	N		1	
NUStar Energy	Oil & Gas	1600	No	N		N	
DreamWorks Animation	Motion Pictures	1600	No	N		N	
Bingham McCutchen	Legal Services	1700	Yes	N		1	We are pleased to invite you to participate in the Bingham Alumni Center. As a valued member, you will have the opportunity to <u>renew old friendships</u> , <u>establish new ones</u> , <u>network with colleagues</u> and <u>enjoy a variety of events and benefits</u> designed especially for your needs.
Umpqua Bank	Commercial Banks	1700	No	N		N	
Alston & Bird	Legal Services	1700	Yes	N		N	
TDIndustries	Construction	1700	No	N		N	
Perkins Coie	Legal Services	1700	No	N		N	
Camden Property	Residential Property	1800	No	N		N	
Scottrade	Discount Brokerage	1900	No	N		N	
Kimley-Horn & Associates	Engineering Services	2100	No	E	Director of Communications	N	
EOG Resources	Petrochemical	2100	No	N		N	
Southern Ohio Medical Center	Healthcare	2100	No	N		N	
Gilbane	Construction	2100	No	N		N	
Robert W. Baird	Financial Services	2200	No	N		2	
Stew Leonard	Grocery Retail	2200	No	N		N	
Rackspace Hosting	Internet hosting	2300	No	E	Strategic Alliance Manager, Business Development	1	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe	Law	2300	Yes	E/A	International Associate	N	We are pleased to invite you to participate in the Orrick Alumni Network. As a valued member, you will have the opportunity to <u>renew old friendships, establish new ones, network with colleagues</u> and enjoy a variety of events and benefits designed especially for your needs.
Quicken Loans	Finance & Mortgage	2800	No	N		N	
Burns & McDonnell	Engineering Design	2800	No	N		N	
Salesforce.com	Software	2900	No	E/A	Sr. Manager, Customer Marketing Programs	1	The Salesforce.com Professional Network <u>connects former and present salesforce.com users, administrators and employees</u> , allowing them to <u>expand their professional development, exchange ideas, network</u> and <i>continue to be a part of the Salesforce.com community</i>
King's Daughters Medical	Healthcare	3000	No	N		N	
Murphy Oil	Oil & Gas	3200	No	N		N	
Northwest Community Hospital	Healthcare	3300	No	N		N	
Arkansas Children's Hospital	Healthcare	3500	No	N		N	
Container Store	Retail	4000	No	N		N	
Nintendo	Games	4130	No	N		2	
Aflac	Health/Life Insurance	4400	No	E	Key Account Manager	N	
Liberty Mutual Insurance	Insurance Brokers	4500	No	E	Insurance Agent	1	
JM Family Enterprises	New/Used Cars	4600	No	N		1	
Stanley Works	Hardware	4800	No	E/A	Global SAP Subject Matter Expert		
National Instruments	Technology	5000	No	N		1	
Devon Energy	Oil & Gas	5200	No	E/A	Database Administrator	N	
Tesoro	Oil & Gas	5600	No	Interns	Recruiting Specialist	N	
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta	Healthcare	5800	Yes	N		N	While employees occasionally leave Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, we've found Children's rarely leaves them. Our alumni are a talented and accomplished group. We're proud to be associated with them and we're extremely grateful when their career paths lead them back to us—many of our hires have worked with Children's before. We welcome former employees back anytime, but for those who return within a year, the benefits include: No new employee orientation required; Paid Time Off (PTO) accrual dates back to original hire date; Vesting level of retirement funds remains the same as when you left
Build-A-Bear Workshop	Toys	6000	No	N		N	
Juniper Networks	Networking Hardware	6100	No	E/A	Recruiter	3	
Herman Miller	Design	6300	No	N		2	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
MITRE	Scientific Research	6400	No	E/A	Manager of Media, Corporate Citizenship, and Brand	1	
Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants	Hospitality	6400	No	N		1	
SRA International	IT Services	6400	No	E/A	Computer Incident Response Team Operations Manager	1	
BCG	Man. Consulting	6500	Yes	E/A/W	Online Marketing Manager, Recruiting Specialist	1	<i>BCG alumni belong to a unique, dynamic, global community. We support the continued growth of this network through a variety of communications, events, and services, such as: Lifetime career support, Online directory, Alumni newsletters, BCG's latest thinking, Worldwide Alumni Day. Our goal is to encourage each other, share ideas, and foster success—thus creating relationships that are personally and professionally rewarding.</i>
Chesapeake Energy	Petroleum	6800	No	E/A	Director of Recruiting	N	
Atlantic Health	Healthcare	6900	No	N		N	
Adobe System	Software	7000	No	N	Computer Scientist	4	
Cardinal Health	Healthcare	7200	No	E/A	Senior Associate, Strategic Intelligence / Analytics	1	
TIAA-CREF	Insurance	7400	No	A	TIAA-CREF Alumni Group Manager	N	
NetApp	Data Storage	8000	No	E	Professional Services Consultant	2	
W.L. Gore	Textile Industrial	8000	No	N		1	
Intuit	Software	8100	No	A	HR Communications & Alumni Network Leader	1	Welcome to the Intuit Alumni Community on LinkedIn. This group is designed to help former Intuit employees to <u>reconnect</u> , <u>build their networks</u> and <u>gain access to the latest news</u> for alumni from Intuit. At this time, this group is <u>ONLY</u> open to former Intuit employees.
Lehigh Valley Hospital	Healthcare	8800	No	N		N	
Milliken	Textile & Chemicals	9500	No	N		1	
REI	Sporting Goods	9700	No	E	Internet Marketing Program Manager	N	
AmerisourceBergen	Drugs Wholesale	9700	No	E/A	Director, Client Support & Service	N	
SAS	Software	10000	No	E/C	Account Executive	N	
PCL Construction	Construction	10000	No	N		N	
Quiktrip	Convenience Stores	10100	No	N		N	
Scripps Health	Healthcare	10300	No	A	Talent Manager	N	
Occidental Petroleum	Oil & Gas	10400	No	E/A	Reservoir Engineer,	N	
Methodist Hospital Sys.	Healthcare	10500	No	N		1	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Baptist Health South Florida	Healthcare	10600	No	E/A	Recruiter	N	
Erickson Retirement Comm.	Continuing Care	10800	No	E/A	Manager, Financial Planning & Analysis at Erickson/ VP Information Technologies	1	
Genentech	Biotechnology	11000	Yes	E/A	Division Manager	2	At Genentech, we place great importance on our employees, and we know they are critical to our mission to develop therapies for people suffering from serious diseases. We're proud of the talented people at Genentech and know we hire great people who do great things. For this reason, <i>when our employees move on to pursue new opportunities, we want to stay in touch and continue to support them in their future endeavors.</i> Through early 2009, we will be adding additional functionality as outlined below: <u>Stay connected with former colleagues and friends</u> , <u>Keep up-to-date on the latest Genentech news and events</u> , <u>Uncover new career and business development opportunities</u> , <u>Gain access to cost-effective individual and small business insurances and benefits</u> , <u>Collaborate with peers.</u>
S.C. Johnson & Son	Consumer Products	11500	No	E/A	New Channels Manager,	1	
Ohio Health	Healthcare	11800	No	N		N	
Paychex	Process Outsourcing	12200	No	N		1	
Research in Motion	IT	12800	No	N		1	
Hess	Oil & Gas	13500	No	N		N	
Sunoco	Oil & Gas	13700	Yes	N		N	
Qualcomm	Communication Equip.	14000	Yes*	E/A	Manager, Services Strategy and Business Development; Staffing/Employee Relations Specialist	N	Qualcomm Alumni Link is a quarterly update of our new technologies, programs and Qualcomm employees; providing a <i>link for you to rediscover Qualcomm.</i>
Ingram Micro	Computer Products	14500	No	E/A	Business Manager, HR Associate	4	
Alcon Laboratories	Ophthalmology	14600	No	N		1	
New York Life Insurance	Insurance	14800	No	E		N	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Principal Financial Group	Asset Management	15000	Yes	A	Talent Search Consultant	2	<i>Our people, past and present, are our most valuable asset. You may have moved on in your career but we'd like to keep in touch and invite you to join this network. Stay informed & connected-Take a moment to invest in your career by completing this form. In return, we'll keep you informed about networking events and career opportunities that match your interests-as they become available. Job opportunities for retirees</i> of The Principal - We have a special arrangement through Manpower to offer our retirees the opportunity to come back to work without interruption to their benefits. The Happy Returns program™ allows you to work on a full-time, part-time or temporary basis, without any adverse impact to your retiree benefits.
eBay	Auction	15300	No	E/A	Senior Director & Counsel - Intellectual Property, Head of Buying and Search, Strategy & PMO,	2	
Goldman Sachs	Financial Services	16000	Yes	E/A	Vice President	13	<i>"Even after our people leave Goldman Sachs, they still identify with the firm and we want to foster that connection. We have a rich history and tradition, and we invest in it. Our alumni help us recruit. They participate in volunteer activities. They come back to speak to our people, and they do business with us. Not only does this help validate our culture, it provides a real, tangible value that transcends any single generation."</i> Services include: <u>Directories</u> , <u>News</u> , <u>Events</u> , <u>Opportunities</u> , <u>Market Places</u> .
CarMax	New/Used Cars	16100	No	N		1	
Men's Wearhouse	Retail	16400	No	N		N	
Bright Horizons	Education	16500	No	N		N	
Booz Allen Hamilton	Consulting	19200	Yes	E/A	Senior Consultant, Associate	>10	Welcome to Booz Allen Hamilton's online source for alums to stay connected to the firm. Once you login to Alumni Connections, you can: <u>Access a global database of Booz Allen alums</u> , <u>Search for alums by industry, city, or country</u> , <u>Search for hundreds of jobs opportunities on Careers@Alumni Connections</u> , <u>Find interesting news about the firm and exclusive alumni events</u>
Google	Internet	19500	No	N		3	
Amazon	Online Retail	20700	No	E/A	Recruiting Coordinator	1	
Valero Energy	Energy	21000	No	N		N	
Vanderbilt University	Education	21000	No	N		N	
Medco Health Solutions	Healthcare	21800	No	N		1	
Lenovo	Personal Computers	22500	No	E	Senior HR Partner	2	
GMAC	Financial	22700	No	N		3	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
CH2M HILL	Construction	23800	No	E/A	Talent Recruitment Center Manager/Recruiting Services Manager	N	
Novo Nordisk	Pharmaceuticals	26000	No	E	Senior Outsourcing Manager, Communication Manager	1	
General Mills	Consumer Goods	27500	No	N		1	
Archer Daniels Midland	Agriculture	27600	No	E/A	Manager Plant Applications, Business Analyst	N	
Iberdrola	Energy	28000	No	N		N	
Humana	Insurance	29100	No	E	E-Business & Marketing	N	
Cisco	Computer Networking	30000	No	N		6	Cisco Alumni Association
PricewaterhouseCoopers	Professional Services	30000	Yes	E/A	Senior Manager Business Development, Online Client Collaboration Innovation Leader	>10	<p>Welcome to the alumni key, an organization of, by and for the alumni community of PricewaterhouseCoopers. While you were at PwC, you helped build our reputation as a place of excellence and we truly value the contributions you made to our culture and our business. While your day to day connection to the Firm has changed, we want to ensure the strong relationship does not end. You are still part of the Firm, and through The Alumni Key program, you can have continued access to the broad PwC community and the knowledge, talent, and diversity that you enjoyed while you were here. We will also share what exciting changes have occurred at PwC since you departed and what unique and distinctive opportunities are available to our people and our clients.</p> <p>By joining The Alumni Key, you'll be able to take advantage of opportunities specifically created for our alums—networking events, social activities, career guidance, technical training as well as access to firm publications and other resources.</p> <p>The gateway to many of these benefits is the PwC Alumni Key website, which can be accessed via the Log In link on the left. Highlighted features of the site include access to our ongoing series of continuing professional education webcasts, monthly thought leadership articles, access to search for fellow alums, the ability to submit or search for open positions, and alumni newsletters distributed semiannually.</p> <p>Regardless of where your life and your career take you over the long term, we hope your association with PwC will remain a constant and valuable resource in all of your endeavors.</p>

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Texas Instruments	Semiconductors	30000	Yes*	E/A		>10	The mission of the TI Alumni Association is to serve the needs that reflect the camaraderie and diverse interests of Texas Instruments retirees around the world.
ConocoPhillips	Oil & Gas	30000	No	N		N	
Marathon Oil	Oil & Gas	30300	No	N		1	
Mattel	Toys & Games	32000	No	N		1	
Apple	Personal Computers	32000	No	E/A	Recruiter, Business System Analyst, Assistant Store Manager	6	
McKesson	Healthcare	32000	No	E	Senior Financial Advisor	5	
Nike	Textile Apparel	32500	No	N		4	
Travelers Cos.	Financial Services	33000	No	E/A	Account Executive, Recruiter	1	
Tata Group	Conglomerate	33200	No	N	Director of Corporate Solutions, Talent Acquisition - Manager, HR Strategy - Assistant Manager	2	
Four Seasons Hotels	Hotels	34000	No	A/Interns	Management Recruitment and Selection	N	
Virgin Group	Conglomerate	35000	No	E	IT Director, Investment Professional, Associate Director - Corporate Development, Website Editor	4	
Southwest Airlines	Travel	35400	No	C/E	Emerging Media	1	
Aetna	Insurance	35500	No	N		3	
Edward Jones	Investment Services	37000	No	E	Financial Advisor	1	Strengthen Relationships
Wegmans Food Mkts	Grocery Retail	37000	No	E	Content Coordinator & Designer	N	Connect Wegmans employees together, engaging in continuous networking and career growth opportunities.
Allstate	Insurance	38000	No	E/A	Market Sales Leader, Senior Marketing Analyst,	N	
T-Mobile	Telecom	39800	No	E/A	Head of Venture Development, Social Media Specialist, Business Integration Team Leader, Development Lead, Store Manager, Senior Engineering Manager,	2	
Prudential Financial	Financial Services	41000	No	N		2	
Mayo Clinic	Healthcare	41900	Yes	N		N	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
WellPoint	Healthcare	42900	No	E/A	Staff Vice President-Executive Communications	N	This group for WellPoint and Anthem LinkedIn members is a <i>new kind of collaborative community: a national business and social network for associates past and present to <u>connect</u>, <u>interact</u> and <u>innovate</u></i>
Morgan Stanley	Financial	44200	No	E/A	Vice President	5	
Deloitte	Professional Services	45000	Yes	E/A	Senior Consultant	>10	At the Deloitte U.S. Firms, our vision is simple -- to be the standard of excellence in everything we do. We're committed to being the <i>First Choice of the world's most coveted talent, and the First Choice of the most sought after clients</i> . This vision extends to our alumni and Retired Partners as well since, without you, we would not be the organization we are today. We invite you to log into the site to <u>update your personal/professional profile</u> , and then <u>build your alumni network</u> and <u>take advantage of our other alumni offerings</u> . Thank you for visiting!
Dow Chemical	Chemical - diversified	46000	Yes	N	Global Marketing Team	2	Dow Alumni and retirees can now <u>reconnect, sustain and build relationships</u> with current and other former employees <u>and retirees</u> through My Dow Network, Dow's new corporate social network. Alumni and retirees who have a Dow ID number will be able to join www.mydownetwork.com , create an account and explore the site, fill out their profile, and utilize the Refer a Friend feature to let as many former Dow colleagues as possible know about the site to <i>create a robust internal and external community! While Dow enjoys a successful present and a bright future, we cannot forget those who contribute to our proud heritage and growth. That's why we've created this network as a valuable shared resource.</i> As members, alumni and retirees will be able to <u>expand their professional network, renew old friendships</u> with other retirees and current and former employees, <u>establish new relationships, share ideas and have access to events, news and career opportunities</u> . <i>It's a way to keep Dow people connected and enable future successes through collaboration.</i> Women alumni, once they have registered, can also enjoy My Women's Network, a part of My Dow Network. <i>By keeping in touch with former colleagues, members can build relationships to create referrals and potential rehires, potentially develop valuable business contacts, share advice and experiences that can help each other develop personally and professionally.</i> We look forward to seeing more of our former employees and retirees and hope they will join My Dow Network.
Reliance Industries	Oil	48000	No	E/A	Strategic Planning & Execution	2	
Nordstrom	Retail	49200	No	N		1	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Sysco	Food Wholesale	50000	No	E/A	Staffing Manager	N	
Whole Foods Market	Grocery Retail	52000	No	N		N	
Sprint Nextel	Wireless Comm.	56000	No	N	Manager, Planning & Optimization, Solutions Consultant,	>10	
Deere & Co.	Industrial Goods	56600	No	N		1	
MetLife	Life Insurance	57000	No	E	Manager - Web Portal Product Development, Executive Recruiter	7	
Rite Aid	Drug Stores	57600	No	N		1	
DuPont	Chemicals	60000	Yes	E/A	Global Business Intelligence Architect	2	
International Paper	Paper Products	61700	No	E/R	Manufacturing Track Lead	1	
News Corp.	Media	64000	No	N		N	
Motorola	Communication Equip.	64000	No	E/A	Senior Pre-sales Technical Architect	>10	
American Express	Financial	66000	No	N	Manager - Membership Rewards Planning	4	
Chevron	Oil & Gas	67000	Yes	E/A	Technology Assessment/New Business Development	4	The Chevron Alumni Community Web site was launched to reach out to former Chevron employees. This online networking community enables former Chevron employees and former employees of legacy companies to <u>consider career opportunities</u> , <u>refer associates</u> , and <u>keep abreast of corporate activities</u> at Chevron. As an Alumni Community member, you can <u>learn about Chevron recruiting events</u> and <u>build your network connections</u> by keeping in touch with other former employees. In addition, interested technical/professional former employees can use the Alumni site to sign up for Chevron's Bridges program (Bridges). <i>Bridges allows you to be considered for specific contract assignments in the technical disciplines supported by Upstream, Global Gas, and the Energy Technology Company (ETC).</i> Contract opportunities include project assignments as <i>technical specialists, partner representatives, guest speakers, recruiters, mentors, peer reviewers, and advisors to focus areas.</i>
State Farm Insurance Cos	Insurance	68600	No	N		3	
Abbott Laboratories	Pharmaceuticals	69000	No	E/A	Director - Strategic Evidence-based Reimbursement Planning, Director of Compensation, Technical Scientist	2	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
UnitedHealth Group	Healthcare	75000	No	E/A	Regional Recruitment Operations Head	2	
Costco	Discount Retail	75000	No	N		3	
Philip Morris	Consumer Goods	75600	No	N		3	
Dell	Personal Computers	76500	No	N		>10	
Vodafone	Mobile Operator	79000	No	E/A	Head of Operational Management, Principal User Experience Manager, IT Office Technologies Manager, Marketing Assistant, Corporate Strategy and Intelligence Director	2	
3M	Conglomerates	79100	No	E/A	Content & Data Services	8	
Pfizer	Pharmaceuticals	81800	No	E/A	Communications Network Specialist	6	
Intel	Semiconductors	83900	Yes	E	Analytics Architecture & Engineering, Litigation & Competition VP	>10	<p>Today there are over 3,000 US Intel retirees. Our group consists of a board of directors with site coordinators in Oregon/Washington, Folsom, Santa Clara, New Mexico, Arizona and Massachusetts. In November 2008, Intel Corp. accepted our <u>charter</u> and <u>bylaws</u> and we became the official Intel Retiree Organization. Mission: To make a meaningful and positive difference for Intel Retirees, the Company, our local communities and current employees planning for retirement. We invite you to <u>join us</u> and participate with your local retiree group at whatever level you choose. For 2009 our focus areas are partnering with Intel both on healthcare options for retirees and on improving the retiree experience (especially the transition stages for pre-retirees & retirees) and improving our communication infrastructure, which is primarily our website. We now have 5 committees established working on these areas. If you wish to join any of these, please click on the committee tab to see who to contact.</p> <p>Intel retirees interested in reconnecting with colleagues, who also used to work at Intel but left prior to retiring, can join the Intel Alumni Network. The Intel Alumni Network was formed by several volunteers in 2007 and has ~2000 members with social and professional networking activities around the world. It features a private, members only social network, a series of get together events, and a linked-in group. For <u>more information</u>, check out their website.</p>
Time Warner	Entertainment	87000	No	E/A		N	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Alcoa	Aluminium	87000	No	E/A	Manager, Digital Marketing and E-Business	1	
Microsoft	Software	90000	Yes*	E	Technical Account Manager/ Program Management - Global Competitive Programs	7	The official organization for Microsoft alumni worldwide. Over the past 30 years, the ideas and innovations of Microsoft employees have changed the way the world communicates and does business. As a former employee of Microsoft, you are a part of this history. Now that you're moving on to meet new challenges, the Microsoft Alumni Network (MSA) can help support you with valuable connections, career opportunities, exclusive discounts on products and services, and even some of the benefits you received as a Microsoft employee.
General Dynamics	Aerospace/Defense	92300	No	E/A	International Programs/Strategic Business Development	4	
Coca Cola	Beverages - Soft Drinks	92400	No	E/A	Strategic Planning Specialist, Assistant Director, Marketing Director, Talent Coordinator,	>10	
Kraft Foods	Food Diversified	98000	No	E/A	Brand Manager	3	
BMW	Automotive	100000	No	E	Warehouse Manager, Senior Engineer, Business Development Manager,	1	
Comcast	Services	100000	No	E/A	Sr. Software Engineer/Patent Scientist, Executive Coordinator, Senior Product Manager, Manager - Workforce Operations	3	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Royal Dutch Shell	Oil & Gas	102000	Yes	E/A	IT Audit Manager, HR Advisor	6	Would you like an opportunity to re-connect with individuals you have not seen or heard from since you left Shell? AlliancexShell offers you an opportunity to do just that and more. The Alliance provides you the platform for maintaining relationships, professionally, socially and personally, with work colleagues who have left regular employment with Shell. In addition, AlliancexShell will provide you the opportunity to register your interest in short term assignments or permanent opportunities with Shell. Already a number of former employees are doing short term assignments from their homes or at Shell offices. Expand your personal and business network. Register for membership in this unique Alliance and enjoy a rewarding relationship with your previous work colleagues and the company you invested your working life in
Caterpillar	Heavy Equipment	103000	No	N		3	
ExxonMobil	Oil & Gas	104700	No	N		5	
Infosys	IT	104900	Yes (inter)	E/A	HR Associate Manager, Principal (Consulting), Senior Associate,	>10	
Tyson Foods	Meat Products	107000	No	E/A	Manager of Business Intelligence and Enterprise Information Delivery, Microsoft SQL Server Support Engineer	N	
Johnson & Johnson	Healthcare	118700	No	E/A		4	
Northrop Grumman	Aerospace/Defense	123600	No	E/A	Engineering Manager, Manager, Communications and Civic Affairs, Business Development, Organizational Effectiveness and Leadership Development	5	
Nokia	Communication Equip.	125800	No	E/A	Regional Talent Acquisition, Marketing Director - Search & Social, Competence Development - Manager, Senior Engineering Manager	8	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Honeywell Intl.	Aerospace/Defense	128000	No	E/A	Materials Engineer, Director - Corporate Communications,	>10	
Ernst & Young	Professional Services	130000	Yes	E/A	Senior Consultant, Senior Consultant Employee Branding	>10	Ernst & Young's alumni are its rich legacy of achieving potential. Our 200,000-plus alumni across North America helped build Ernst & Young into the values-based, leading-class organization it is today. This website is designed to honor our alumni and to make it easy for alumni to stay connected with Ernst & Young and its people, as well as to each other. Ernst & Young is committed to building long-lasting, mutually beneficial relationships with our alumni. We hope you find this site helpful in that respect, and will come back often for the latest alumni news, developments and networking opportunities.
P&G	Consumer Goods	138000	Y	E/A	Purchase Manager	2	The P&G Alumni Network is a nonprofit organization founded by alumni to help former P&G employees stay connected. Our mission is to share ideas, talents and resources with each other and with our communities. We will donate any profits to charitable groups around the world. We are not formally connected with the Procter & Gamble Company, but they are supportive of our efforts and we have obtained a trademark agreement to use the P&G name. P&G's different types of businesses under one roof offer a challenging and diverse career for the majority of our people. However, some of our people choose new opportunities. Did you know that many of today's top "movers and shakers" in many industries are former P&G employees. Check the P&G alumni site and find out what they're doing now.
Marriott International	Hospitality	140000	No	E/A	Property Systems Manager	1	
Johnson Controls	Auto Parts	140000	No	E/A	Business Applications Leader, Talent Acquisition Supervisor, Manager - Global Web & Communications Technology, HR Manager	2	
Emerson Electric	Industrial Products	140700	No	E/A	Enterprise Program Management Organization, Communication Manager	3	
Publix Super Markets	Retail	141300	No	N		1	
Lockheed Martin	Aerospace/Defense	146000	Yes	N		3	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Walt Disney	Entertainment	150000	No	E/A	Project Technical Specialist, Senior Marketing & Promotions,	>10	
Best Buy	Electronic Stores	155000	No	E	Social Media Manager	2	
KPMG	Professional Services	160000	Yes	E/A	Head of alumni, National Alumni Manager, Chief Knowledge Officer, Chief Marketing Officer	>10	Welcome Back! As a former KPMG professional, you are an important member of the KPMG family. We hope you will continue to use KPMG Connect to: Renew relationships with old friends and colleagues, Find out what's new at KPMG, Find new career opportunities, Learn about special alumni events and programs, We invite your feedback. If you have additional questions, please contact your <u>alumni relations manager</u> . If you are thinking about returning to the firm, please contact Lori Carlson, human resources manager.
Boeing	Aerospace/Defense	162200	s (retiree	E	Technical Fellow	3	
Walgreen	Drug Stores	163000	Yes	E	Store Manager	1	
Lowe's	DIY Stores	164000	No	N	Sales Readiness Manager, College Recruiting and University Relations	2	
Macy's	Department Stores	167000	No	E/A	Executive Recruiting, Director of Recruiting, Assistant Buyer	3	
Banco Santander	Financial	170900	No	E/A	Service Representative, Professional Development Advisor	E/A	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Accenture	Consulting	171800	Yes	E/A	Recruitment Marketing	4	I am delighted to have this opportunity to connect with each of you...and for you to reconnect with Accenture. I just celebrated 30 years with our company and it is still a very special place. We have a unique culture, a strong brand and identity in the marketplace, and a true passion for helping our clients achieve and sustain high performance. We also have an enduring commitment to our six core values, especially stewardship, which really defines Accenture in my mind. We appreciate the stewardship contribution you have made to our company...you are members of our extended Accenture community...no matter where your career or life has taken you. With more than 100,000 Accenture alumni around the world, we are committed to fostering and maintaining a robust alumni network. We hope that this enhanced website, our quarterly newsletters and local alumni events will help you to locate former colleagues and friends, learn about internal and external job opportunities or find out what is new at Accenture. We appreciate your continued interest in Accenture and the Accenture Alumni Network. Thanks for stopping by...and for reconnecting. Member Directories provide a highly-searchable database where alums can find each other and their businesses. Whether you're looking for an old friend or want to make a new acquaintance, the Member Directories could be the best place to start. A directory of richly-profiled colleagues can help you open doors to new business opportunities; provide referrals or references for you; or just provide an easy way to reconnect. In the NewsRoom stay up-to-date on the latest news from Accenture and alumni. In one convenient and easy-to-use place you can post news about you or fellow alums; and search for company, industry and
LG Electronics	Electronics	177000	No	E	Project Manager, Training Manager,	2	This group is for the free exchange of information and discussion of topics for current employees of the North American divisions
Supervalu	Grocery Retail	178000	No	E/A	Manager, Diversity and Inclusion	N	
Honda	Automobile	178900	No	No		No	
Sony	Electronic Equipment	180500	No	E/A	IT Manager	1	
Hospital Corporate of America	Healthcare	191000	No	N		1	
Safeway	Grocery Retail	197000	No	N		3	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
PepsiCo	Consumer Goods	198000	No	E/A	Category Analyst, HR Outsourcing, Manager, Industry Relations & Business Development, Human Resource Manager, Recruitment Manager	3	
Fiat	Automotive	198300	No	E	WWW Platform Marketing Manager	N	
Starbucks	Retail Beverages	206000	No	E/A	Product Manager	7	
Home Depot	DIY Stores	209300	No	N		4	
Ford	Automotive	213000	No	E/A	eCommerce & CRM Manager,	7	
CVS Caremark	Drug Stores	215000	No	N		2	
United Technologies	Conglomerates	223100	No	N		2	
Verizon	Telecom	223900	No	E/A	Principal Consultant, Analyst, Consultant	8	
JPMorgan Chase	Financial	224900	Yes	E/A	Global Operations Center Specialist	>10	<p>Welcome to Continuum – a site dedicated to the Alumni of J.P. Morgan.</p> <p>Continuum is the corporate-sponsored alumni program of J.P. Morgan Investment Bank. The website has been created to provide a forum of opportunities for the alumni of J.P. Morgan and the Corporate/Investment Banks of its predecessor organizations including Chase, Chemical, and others.</p> <p>On this site you will have the opportunity to renew old friendships, establish new ones, expand your professional network, and enjoy a variety of events and benefits designed especially for you. We hope this will be the continuation of a lifelong relationship with you.</p> <p>We also hope the site will enhance the efforts of the Firm in building long term relationships with its alumni who have gone on to take up new challenges in fields where J.P. Morgan can continue to help them in their corporate endeavors.</p> <p>We have always known that our success is due to our people and now we invite you to join this network to celebrate and build on the things we have achieved together.</p>
General Motors	Automotive	244500	s (retiree	N		6	<p>As a General Motors Retiree, you're provided with a wide array of benefits. Use the resources here to take advantage of these benefits and make the most of your retirement.</p> <p>Access important forms, planning tools, helpful links, and more — all in one convenient place. History, Newsletter, Discounts</p>

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
Samsung	Electronics	254000	No	N	Internet & Contents Responsible, Product Manager, Product Marketing Manager, Senior HR executive	>10	
Telefonica	Telecom	257000	No	E/A	R&D Business Consultant, IT Consultant	2	
United Parcel Service	Air Delivery	260000	No	N		2	
Wells Fargo	Financial Services	272800	No	N		8	
Daimler	Automotive	273200	No	E/A	Project Analyst, Senior Manager	1	
FedEx	Delivery	274000	No	N		7	
Nestle	Food	283000	No	E/A	Manager-Category Development, Business Solution Analyst, Marketing Manager,	>10	
Bank of America	Financial	284400	No	E/A	Senior Marketing Advisor	7	
AT&T	Telecom	302600	No	E/A	Senior IT Analyst	>10	
Citigroup	Financial	309000	No	E/A	Assistant Vice President, Director of Customer Experience	8	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
HSBC	Financial	312800	Yes	E/A	Human Resource Manager,	>10	Welcome to the official HSBC alumni network – a site for anyone who has ever worked at HSBC, where you can share your success stories, reminisce about the past, and look forward to an exciting future. Travel back and forth along our timeline to find out more. This site will grow over time. Why not join our network for updates so we can let you know about the latest developments as they happen? You can also keep in touch with former colleagues by joining the HSBC alumni group on Facebook . The world's local bank today launched a revolutionary new alumni network, together with a website and Facebook group designed to help past employees keep in touch – with each other, with HSBC and with potential future career opportunities. While the size and scope of HSBC means that it is usually able to provide its people with whatever development opportunities they're looking for, it also recognises that sometimes it can be good for your career to move on. In launching its alumni network, however, HSBC demonstrates that there's no reason why such moves should spell the end of productive and mutually beneficial relationships. The HSBC alumni network website is a site for anyone who has ever worked at HSBC, providing a platform on which to share success stories, reminisce about the past, and look forward to an exciting future. It is available for anyone to view, but visitors need to register if they wish to contribute.
ArcelorMittal	Steel	316000	No	E	Cluster Buyer Industrial Services	2	
Toyota	Automobile	320000	No	E	Senior Administrator	3	
HP	IT	321000	Yes*	E/A		>10	
General Electric	Conglomerate	323000	No	E/A	Director, IT Project Manager, VP-HR	12	
Sears	Department Stores	324000	No	E/A/Friend	Talent & Human Capital Services (Military & Diversity), District Service General Manager	5	This is a group for Retail professionals that have been part of the SHC team, for those that are currently in the family, and those that would have interest in joining. Call it an Alumni group, a Recruiting group, etc...it's simply a excellent networking tool centered on a Fortune company.
Kroger	Grocery Retail	326000	No	E/A	IT Customer Relationship Manager, Technology Engineer II - Corporate Information Security	N	
Target	Discount Retail	351000	No	E/A	Finance Manager,	2	
Volkswagen	Automobile	369900	No	E/A	Market Analyst, Human Resource Analyst	2	
McDonald's	Restaurants	400000	No	E/A	Retail IT Product Manager	1	

Company	Sector	Size	CAP	LI (C)	Owner	LI (E)	Programme Focus
IBM	Computer Systems	410000	Yes	E/A	Operations Manager & Producer, Sr. Media Relations Manager, Research Staff Member and Program Manager,	>10	Welcome to the Greater IBM Connection, a worldwide business and social network created by and for current and former IBMers and retirees. As a member, you can connect with current and former colleagues, read interesting news articles, participate in events and discussion forums, gain business insights, and learn about exciting job opportunities.
Wal-Mart	Discount Retail	2100100	No	E/A	Planning & Strategy - Senior Manager, Marketing - Senior Manager, Technical Support	4	