

**Mapping Implemented Strategies of  
Bringing Internet-based Software  
Applications to Market Using Storytelling  
Research Methods**

by

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requirements for the degree of

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## **CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP / ORIGINALITY**

I, Hugh Matthew Pattinson, certify that this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of the requirements for a degree.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and in the preparation of the thesis has been recognised and acknowledged. **In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used** are indicated in the thesis.

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## **Abstract**

The research offers an advanced hermeneutic framework for the study of B2B decision-making processes for software application development. The proposal builds dynamic sensemaking elements onto existing hermeneutic analysis frameworks used in marketing research (Arnold & Fisher 1994; Thompson Pollio & Locander 1994; Thompson 1997).

The “hermeneutic circle” is extended to a multilevel “hermeneutic system” starting with written accounts of the decision-making associated with the development and delivery of new software applications – these accounts are then revisited (Langley et al. 1995) through multiple rounds of etic and emic interpretation.

An extended form of marketing Decision Systems Analysis (DSA) that complements the advanced hermeneutic analysis framework is also proposed and applied, building on existing B2B Marketing DSA (Hulbert, Farley & Howard 1972; Woodside & Samuel 1981; Woodside 1994; Woodside & Voss 1999) with extended DSA Models, events chronology maps, and cognitive maps. The proposed framework and supporting analysis are applied to six application software houses that created new Internet-based software applications which were either disruptive (Christensen 2003) or supporting disruptive software applications.

Findings from six case studies suggest that the hermeneutic research framework proposals provide a strong systematic platform for analysing and interpreting decision-making with deep prospective, introspective, retrospective, and with imaginatively unbounded current and future perspectives. Individual case-study and cross-case findings were incorporated into a set of new and revised theory propositions for software application developer Structuration at individual, firm (including multi-firm) and industry levels. The propositions provide a base of knowledge for the further development of a cognitive view of a software application development firm.