THÈSE POUR OBTENIR LE GRADE DE DOCTEUR
DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTPELLIER

En Sciences de Gestion – Section CNU 06

École doctorale d'Economie et de Gestion de Montpellier – ED 231

Unité de recherche Montpellier Recherche en Management – EA 4557

Legitimation of digital platforms in the sharing economy amidst multiple actors in times of crisis

The case of Airbnb in New-York City during the COVID-19 pandemic

Légitimation des plateformes digitales de l'économie collaborative face à de multiples acteurs en temps de crise

Le cas d'Airbnb à New-York pendant la pandémie de COVID-19

Présentée par Catherine A. LECUYER

Le 03 juillet 2024

Sous la direction de Calin GURAU, Directeur de Thèse
Et Magalie MARAIS, Directrice de Thèse

Devant le jury composé de

Franck BRULHART, Professeur des Universités, Aix-Marseille Université	Rapporteur
Corentin CURCHOD, Professeur Associé, University of Edinburgh	Examinateur
Calin GURAU, Full Professor, Montpellier Business School	Directeur de Thèse
Frédéric LE ROY, Professeur des Universités, Université de Montpellier	Président de Jury
Magalie MARAIS, HDR, Professeure Associée, Montpellier Business School	Directrice de Thèse
Gilles PACHE, Professeur des Universités, Aix-Marseille Université	Rapporteur

UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTPELLIER

"Never let a good crisis go to waste."

Winston Churchill, 1940

“L’Université de Montpellier n’entend donner

aucune approbation ni improbation aux opinions émises dans cette thèse.

Ces opinions doivent être considérées comme propres à leur auteur”

To you, Candee and Helen.

Legitimation of digital platforms in the sharing economy amidst multiple actors in times of crisis

The case of Airbnb in New-York City during the COVID-19 pandemic

Légitimation des plateformes digitales de l'économie collaborative face à de multiples acteurs en temps de crise

Le cas d'Airbnb à New-York pendant la pandémie de COVID-19

Catherine Appleton LECUYER

Montpellier, le 3 juillet 2024

MRM – Montpellier Recherche Management
Institut Montpellier Management – Université de Montpellier
Espace Richter, Rue Vendemiaire
34960 Montpellier

UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTPELLIER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

C’est un honneur de pouvoir mentionner les organisations ou personnes « à impact » rencontrées dans ma sphère professionnelle.

C’est avec beaucoup de gratitude et un honneur que je remercie les membres de mon jury de soutenance de thèse. Pour votre temps, votre intérêt pour mon sujet et engagement durant l’évaluation de ce travail doctoral, pour me permettre de vivre cette dernière étape du cheminent de doctorante, un moment de partages et d’apprentissage.

A Frédéric Le Roy et son équipe qui m’ont accueillie au sein du Groupe Stratégie du Laboratoire MRM de l’Université de Montpellier où j’y ai fait mes premiers pas, en présentation orale lors de séminaires internes et notamment la participation à un atelier doctoral structurant avec l’opportunité d’être confrontée, dès la première année, à Aurélien Acquier, auteur d’un papier référent sur la contestée « sharing economy » dont ses avis sur le projet de thèse et l’intérêt m’ont renforcée.

A l’Ecole Doctorale pour ses « temps forts » de rentrée et de formation proposées et son accompagnement administratif, ainsi que les équipes de Montpellier Management.

A Annabelle Jaouen et Emmanuelle Reynaud, mes membres du CSI qui m’ont éclairé chaque année avec de fines analyses et recommandations au gré de l’évolution de la thèse.

C’est avec beaucoup d’émotions et un profond respect que je souhaite remercier mes directeurs de thèse, Calin Gurau et Magalie Marais.

Je réalise pleinement que j’ai bénéficié d’un encadrement exceptionnel et unique, d’un soutien constant, d’une bienveillance stimulante, de discussions riches accélérant la compréhension d’une posture de recherche et nourrissant les interprétations de nos nombreuses données, d’un « *interplay* » de deux perspectives complémentaires, l’une stratégique et l’autre institutionnelle, qui s’expriment dans ce travail de thèse.

Vous m’avez touchée et stimulée par votre générosité, en offrant votre temps dès que nécessaire.

Votre m’avez enrichi par votre capacité de rebondir sur les événements inattendus, comme le COVID-19. Ce co-pilotage m’a permis de tenir, de grandir, de garder le cap et de produire.

Je vous témoigne ici ma profonde reconnaissance pour votre confiance et générosité.

TABLE OF CONTENT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 6
TABLE OF CONTENT 7
List of Figures 16
List of Tables 19
Acronyms 20
List of Appendix 21
Abstract 22
INTRODUCTION 24
CHAPTER 1. 32
DIGITAL PLATFORMS IN THE SHARING ECONOMY: 32
A MULTI ACTOR PERSPECTIVE 32
1.1. Emergence and evolution of the Sharing Economy (SE) 33
1.1.1. Sharing Economy: a contested umbrella construct 33
1.1.2. Definition of the SE 35
1.1.3. Origin of the SE 38
1.1.3.1. Web.2.0 38
1.1.3.2. Economic 2008 crisis and a more sustainable consciousness 39
1.1.4. Controversies and paradoxes in the SE 40
1.1.4.1. Paradoxes and multi-dimensional cores 40
1.1.4.2. Contrasted participants motivations 41
1.1.4.3. Effects of the SE 42
1.1.5. The evolution of the SE 44
1.1.5.1. New markets and behaviors 44
1.1.5.2. Grey Regulations 45
1.1.5.3. Typology of DP in the SE 46
1.1.5.3.1. Types of transactions and assets 46
1.1.5.3.2. Co-ops platforms 47
1.2. Digital platform ecosystems at the very heart of the SE 48
1.2.1. The three multi-dimensional constructs 48
1.2.1.1. Access economy 48
1.2.1.2. Platform economy 49
1.2.1.3. Community based economy 49
1.2.1.4. Joint-multiple cores framework 50
1.2.2. Digital Platforms (DP) 53
1.2.2.1. Digital Platform ecosystem (DPE) 54

1.2.2.2. Power 55
1.2.2.3. Network effects 55
1.2.3. DP in the SE 56
1.2.3.1. Internal and external factors impacting DPs in SE 57
1.2.3.2. Specificities of DP in the SE 57
1.2.3.2.1. Disruptive innovation 58
1.2.3.2.2. Facilitating offline transactions 58
1.2.3.2.3. Peer-to-peer transactions 59
1.2.3.2.4. Temporary access to underutilized capacity 60
1.2.3.2.5. Community-based trust systems 60
1.2.3.2.6. Labor flexibility 61
1.2.4. An Ecosystemic relational view 62
1.3. Digital platforms in the SE: a multi-actor perspective 64
1.3.1. "The need to work together" 65
1.3.2. Multiple actors perspectives 67
1.3.2.1. Relational business model 67
1.3.2.2. Service ecosystem 69
1.3.2.3. Social License to Operate 69
1.3.2.4. A meta-organization perspective 69
1.3.2.5. An evolutionary multi-actors perspective 70
1.3.3. Example of a multi-actors perspective: Airbnb 72
CHAPTER 2. 75
DIGITAL PLATFORMS IN THE SHARING ECONOMY: 75
A LEGITIMATION PROCESS 75
2.1. Fundamentals in legitimacy 76
2.1.1. Introduction 76
2.1.2. Legitimacy by Suchman (1995) 79
2.1.2.1. Definition 79
2.1.2.2. Two-dimensional organizational legitimacy: strategic and institutional 80
2.1.2.3. Three types of organizational legitimacy 81
2.1.2.3.1. Pragmatic legitimacy 81
2.1.2.3.2. Moral legitimacy 82
2.1.2.3.3. Cognitive legitimacy 82
2.1.3. Legitimacy by ALDRICH and FIOL (1994) 83

2.1.4. Legitimacy by SUDDABY et al., (2017) 84
2.1.4.1. Legitimacy as a property 85
2.1.4.2. Legitimacy as a process 85
2.1.4.3. Legitimacy as a perception 86
2.2. Legimacy and DP in the SE 86
2.2.1. DP challenges 87
2.2.2. Complexity 88
2.2.3. Issues impacting SE legitimacy 88
2.2.4. Case of Uber 89
2.2.4.1. Regulative legitimacy 90
2.2.4.2. Normative legitimacy 90
2.2.4.3. Cultural-cognitive legitimacy 90
2.2.5. Legal and Regulatory issues 91
2.3. Strategic perspective 93
2.3.1. Introduction 93
2.3.2. Platform Dependent Ecosystem (PDE) 93
2.3.3. Entrepreneurs as key resources 94
2.3.4. Customer management 95
2.3.4.1. Market intelligence 95
2.3.4.2. Ressources coordination 95
2.3.4.3. Customer orientation 96
2.3.5. Power asymmetry 97
2.3.6. Role conflict 98
2.4. Institutional perspective 98
2.4.1. Introduction 98
2.4.2. Collective view of legitimating actors 99
2.4.3. Institutional complexity: coexistence of multiple logics 100
2.4.4. Institutional work 100
2.4.4.1. Definition 100
2.4.4.2. Institutional work by Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006 102
2.4.4.2.1. Create institutions 102
2.4.4.2.2. Disrupt institutions 103
2.4.4.3. A holistic approach 104
2.4.4.4. New arrangements of institutional strategies 105

2.4.5. An ecosytem collective view 105
2.4.5.1. Ecosystem identity 106
2.4.5.2. Three processus fuelling the ecosystem 106
2.5. Cognitive and Sociopolitical legitimacy 107
2.5.1. Two challenges at once: Cognitive and Sociopolitical legitimacy 107
2.5.2. Cognitive legitimacy 108
2.5.2.1. Orchestrating resource 108
2.5.2.2. Incentivizing providers 109
2.5.2.3. Providing consumers non-monetary benefits 110
2.5.2.4. A twofold customer orientation: buyers and sellers 111
2.5.3. Sociopolitical legitimacy 111
2.5.3.1. Creating institutions 112
2.5.3.2. Disrupting institutions 112
2.5.3.3. Grey regulations impacts 113
2.6. Legitimacy of DPs in the SE: 114
2.6.1. DP Legitimacy and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) 114
2.6.1.1. CSR strengthening legitimacy 114
2.6.1.2. “Doing good versus doing harm” 114
2.6.1.3. CSR communication improves legitimacy 116
2.6.2. Example of a sociopolitical and cognitive legitimacy: Uber (Garud et al., 2022) 117
2.6.2.1. “Move fast, break things” mindset 118
2.6.2.2. Challenge n°1: Management of supply and demand 119
2.6.2.3. Challenge n°2: Managing regulations 120
2.6.2.4. Challenge n°3: Factors impacting the strategy: Local regulatory market 120
2.6.2.5. Political actors and self-governance Interactions 121
2.6.2.6. Continual adjustments 121
2.7. Conclusion 126
2.8. CRISIS 127
2.8.1. Crisis management 127
2.8.1.1. Economic, psychologic and social externalities 128
2.8.1.2. Crisis Communication 129
2.8.2. The context of COVID-19 - Crisis 130

2.8.2.1. Crisis and Tourism 131
2.8.2.2. Hospitality and Tourism industry culture of crisis 131
2.8.2.3. Travelers preferences in time of COVID-19 132
2.8.2.4. An interpretation of Airbnb actors' management during COVID-19 133
CHAPTER 3. 139
METHODOLOGY 139
Introduction 140
3.1. Research Design 140
3.1.1. Research question and sub-questions 140
3.1.2. Epistemological orientations 142
3.1.3. Research design 143
3.1.3.1. Qualitative research 144
3.1.3.2. Single case study 144
3.1.3.3. Interpretivism 145
3.1.3.4. A holistic research approach: 146
3.1.3.5. An hybrid research processus 147
3.2. Empirical settings 148
3.2.1. Research in an emerging field: 148
3.2.1.1. A flourishing research stream 148
3.2.1.2. Multiple actors perspective 149
3.2.1.3. Digital platforms' legitimacy 150
3.2.2. Case selection: an emblematic player of DPE in the SE: Airbnb in NYC 151
3.2.2.1. A disruptive innovation in the tourism industry 152
3.2.2.2. Airbnb in the SE 155
3.2.2.3. Regulations 156
3.2.3. The Research Context of New York City (NYC) 159
3.2.3.1. NYC: "au Coeur de la fronde anti-Airbnb"* 160
3.2.3.2. NYC specificities 161
3.2.3.3. NYC as the epicenter of COVID-19 162
3.2.4. Data collection 164
3.2.4.1. Semi-structured Interviews 164
3.2.4.1.1. Mapping our respondents 164
3.2.4.1.2. Groups of actors 166

3.2.4.1.3. The snowball effect *170*
3.2.4.1.4. First round in "business as usual" context *170*
3.2.4.1.5. Second round in a crisis context *171*
3.2.4.1.6. Transcriptions *171*
3.2.4.2. Openness and interest from top executives 178
3.2.4.3. Documents 179
3.2.4.3.1. Unique access to inner circle groups *180*
3.2.4.3.2. Data source triangulation *182*
3.2.5. Data analysis 182
3.2.5.1. A multi-stage process of coding 182
3.2.5.2. Strategic perspective coding 184
3.2.5.3. Institutional perspective coding 184
3.3. Personal notes 191
CHAPTER 4. 197
STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE: 197
Airbnb's relational strategies 197
4.1. NYC STRATEGIC CONTEXT 201
4.1.1. AIRBNB 201
..... 202
4.1.2 HOSTS 207
4.1.3. GUESTS 209
4.1.4. THIRD PARTIES 210
4.1.5. INVESTORS 211
4.2. Relational strategies pre-COVID-19 (January 2018 to March 2020) 215
4.2.1. Identity strategy 215
4.2.1.1. Identity strategy: Empowering brand identity 215
Trust appeals 215
4.2.1.2. Identity strategy: Fostering technology with a twofold concern: technology and design 220
4.2.2. Professionalization strategy 223
4.2.2.1. Professionalization strategy: Strategic partnership and acquisitions 224
4.2.2.2. Professionalization strategy: From the "Mom and Pop" model to Pro 226
4.2.2.3. Professionalization strategy: "Third parties" role 228
4.2.2.4. Professionalization strategy: Educating hosts by professionals 229

4.2.2.5. Professionalization strategy: Capital funding 235
4.2.3. Selection strategy 245
4.2.3.1. Selection strategy: Categorization 245
4.2.3.2. Selection strategy: Mass tourism destination 248
4.2.3.3. Selection strategy: Development of an ecosystem 250
4.2.4. Effects on the cognitive legitimacy 253
4.3. Relational strategies, Period 2 (March1–July 31, 2020) 255
4.3.1. Identity Strategy 257
4.3.1.1. Identity strategy: Resource loss with employees 257
4.3.1.2. Identity strategy:Resource loss with hosts and third parties 260
4.3.1.3. Identity strategy: Resource gain with guests 261
4.3.1.4. Identity strategy: Resource gain with investors 262
4.3.1.5. Identity strategy: Contested understanding of belonging and solidarity 262
4.3.2. Professionalization Strategy 266
4.3.2.1. Professionalization strategy: Enhanced Clean Program 266
4.3.2.2. Professionalization strategy: Normative control and new market trends 267
4.3.2.3. Professionalization strategy: Capital funding 269
4.3.3. Selection strategy 272
4.3.3.1. Selection strategy: Managing the community: Guests first, hosts sacrificed 272
4.3.3.2. Selection strategy: Regulating internal pressure 274
4.3.3.3. Selection strategy: Hosting certifications 275
4.3.3.4. Selection strategy: Seizing new business opportunities 276
4.3.4. Effects on cognitive legitimacy 278
4.4. Relational strategies post-COVID-19, Period 3 (August 1 – December 31, 2020) 279
4.4.1. Identity strategy 279
4.4.1.1. Identity strategy: A crisis DNA business model 280
4.4.1.2. Identity strategy: Back to the roots narrative 281
4.4.1.3. Identity strategy: Start-up Tech attractiveness 283
4.4.2. Professionalization strategy 286
4.4.2.1. Professionalization strategy: Compliance driven 287
4.4.2.2. Professionalization strategy: Hosts driven 288

4.4.2.3. Professionalization strategy: The process of an initial public offering (IPO) 289
4.4.3. Selection strategy: Normative control and empowerment 291
4.4.4. Effects on the cognitive legitimacy 292
CHAPTER 5. 298
INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE: 298
Institutional work mechanisms 298
5.1. Introduction 299
5.2. NYC INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT 301
5.2.1. Various layers of influence 303
5.2.2. Impacts of elected political party 305
5.2.3. The bill process and collective action 305
5.3. Who are the other actors? 306
5.3.1. Local community: tenant advocate groups 306
5.3.2. Government officials 307
5.3.2.1. Office of Special Enforcement (OSE) 307
5.3.2.2. Senate 308
5.3.2.3. The New York City Council 309
5.3.2.4. President of Borough of Manhattan 309
5.3.3. Market actors 310
5.3.3.1. Hotel industry and associations 310
5.3.3.2. Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) 313
5.4. Institutional work pre-COVID-19 313
5.4.1. Introduction 313
5.4.2. Political work 314
5.4.2.1. Airbnb > Defining 314
5.4.2.2. Other actors > Engaging in lobbying 322
5.4.3. Normative work 336
5.4.3.1. Airbnb > Constructing identities 336
5.4.3.2. Other actors > Challenging normative associations 343
5.4.4. Socio-cognitive work 351
5.4.4.1 Airbnb > Educating 351
5.4.4.2 Other actors > Educating 352
5.5. INSTITUTIONAL WORK: COVID-19 355
5.5.1. Introduction 355

5.5.2. Political work....356
5.5.2.1. Airbnb > Defining and advertising....357
5.5.2.2. Other actors....364
5.5.3. Normative work....365
5.5.3.1. Airbnb....365
5.5.3.2. Other actors....367
5.5.4. Socio-cognitive work....368
5.5.4.1. Airbnb....368
5.6. INSTITUTIONAL WORK, POST-COVID-19....369
5.6.1. Introduction....369
5.6.2. Political work....370
5.6.2.1. Airbnb....370
5.6.2.2. Other actors....374
5.6.3. Normative work....379
5.6.3.1. Airbnb....379
5.6.3.2. Other actors....382
5.6.4. Socio-cognitive work:....383
5.6.4.1. Airbnb and other actors....383
CONCLUSION....384
CHAPTER 6....387
DISCUSSION....387
6.1. FINDINGS SUMMARY....388
6.2. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS....395
6.2.1. The relational dimension of the DP process of legitimation....396
6.2.2. The institutional dimension of the DP process of legitimation....399
6.2.3. The crisis as an “accelerator” of legitimacy....401
6.2.4. The “interplay” of relational and institutional mechanisms of the DP process of legitimation during a crisis....402
6.2.5. Ethical issues of the legitimation process during the crisis....407
6.3. METHODOLOGICAL AND MANAGERIAL CONTRIBUTIONS....410
6.4. Managerial contributions....411
6.5. Conclusion, limits, and avenues for future research....412
APPENDIX....414
REFERENCES....434
RESUME EN FRANCAIS

List of Figures

Figure 1: Thesis structure 31
Figure 2: The scientometric mapping of the SE scholarship 33
Figure 3: Combining the cores of the sharing economy 50
Figure 4: Analysis of the literature categorizations of SEBMs in relation to the framework by Laukkanen and Tura (2020) 52
Figure 5: Platform's management of PDEs relations within a specific PDEEs to gain strategic legitimacy: A dynamic relational view 63
Figure 6: Relational business models 70
Figure 7: Airbnb ecosystem 71
Figure 8: Year-over-year change in cancellations (2019-2020) 134
Figure 9: Gain legitimacy: "Move fast and break things" 136
Figure 10: Maintain legitimacy: "continual adjustement" 137
Figure 11: Research question and sub-questions 141
Figure 12: The research "onion" 143
Figure 13: Number of documents on digital platform query 148
Figure 14: Number of documents on Sharing Economy query 148
Figure 15: Mapping Airbnb's actors 149
Figure 16: Number of articles on digital platform and legitimacy query 150
Figure 17: Number of articles on sharing Economy and legitimacy query 150
Figure 18: Global distribution systems 152
Figure 19: Online travel agencies 153
Figure 20: Metasearch platforms 154
Figure 21: Airbnb revenue worldwide from 2017 to 2022 (in billion U.S. dollars) 155
Figure 22: Typology of STR policies 158
Figure 23: Airbnb OSE litigation files at the OSE office 159
Figure 24: First meeting of the opponents of Airbnb Paris coalition 160
Figure 25: View of Manhattan from Line 7 161
Figure 26: New York Times January 22, 2006 161
Figure 27: Daily laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases, associated hospitalizations and deaths, New-York City. From February 29-June 1, 2020 163
Figure 28: Walking directions in Manhattan 164
Figure 29: Office of the President of Manhattan Borough 166
Figure 30: State Senator office 168
Figure 32: REBNY offices 168
Figure 31: OSE office 168
Figure 33: Manhattan Borough Executive Offices 169
Figure 34: Example of a snowball effect at Washington DC, Hotel Industry at the Federal level recommended by the NYC Hotel Association, at the City level 170
Figure 35: REBNY Governor and Public Affairs VP at the Chrysler Building 170
Figure 36: Founder of NYC Tenants Associations and his dog 172
Figure 37: Bobst Library access card 178
Figure 38: NYU at the Tisch Center 179
Figure 39: Shift of the host profile 180

Figure 40: Business model evolution 180
Figure 41: Coding scheme: Strategic perspective P1: Airbnb legitimation strategies 185
Figure 42: Coding scheme: Strategic perspective P2: Airbnb legitimation strategies 186
Figure 43: Coding scheme - Strategic perspective P3: Airbnb legitimation strategies 187
Figure 44: Coding scheme: Institutional perspective P1: Airbnb legitimation strategies 188
Figure 45: Coding scheme: Institutional perspective P2: Airbnb legitimation strategies 189
Figure 46: Coding scheme: Institutional perspective P3: Airbnb legitimation strategies ..... 190**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
Figure 47: Interview with NY Stern scholar 193
Figure 48: CNN COVID-19 update 195
Figure 49: My Airbnb in Queens 196
Figure 50: Host Facebook Group 197
Figure 51: An early stage of AirBed&Breakfast, promoting a clear, distinctive narrative: "Book rooms with locals, rather than hotels." 201
Figure 52: Airbnb triadic relationship 202
Figure 53: Funding the startup with Obama cereal boxes 202
Figure 54: Last logo before the belo and red Airbnb logo 203
Figure 55: Airbnb website homepage 204
Figure 56: The law firm representing Airbnb 206
Figure 57: The origins of Airbnb: convincing pitches attracting hosts and investors 215
Figure 58: Airbnb experience: Guided Tour in Brooklyn targeting tourists and locals. 218
Figure 59: Airbnb experience: Improv'Class weekly afterwork of New Yorkers 218
Figures 60 et 61: The Airbnb "host experience" proposing Tote Bag session is also an Uber Driver. 218
Figure 62: Airbnb video on its website 218
Figure 63: Referral message on its website 219
Figure 64: Smartphone Airbnb photography guide 220
Figure 65: Airbnb homepage 221
Figure 66: Inner Circle Zoom meeting presentation 223
Figure 67: From extra space to professional host 226
Figure 68: Airbnb NYC typologies of hosts. 230
Figure 69: Airbnb investors by type 236
Figure 70: Airbnb: cumulative funding and valuation history 238
Figure 71: From Hectic host to Millionaire Manager 246
Figures 72 and 73: Zoom meeting interactions with a Super Legend iconic host 247
Figure 74: NYC annual visitors 248
Figure 75: Technological innovation relationships among ecosystem 251
Figure 76: Technology driven for hosts 252
Figure 77: Nights and experiences booked with Airbnb from 2017 to 2022 254
Figure 78: How hard has Airbnb been hit by the pandemic? 256
Figure 79: CNBC cascading the Airbnb corporate communication 263
Figure 80: Sequoia Capital Black Swan Dark memo: "Prepare for the worst" 269
Figure 81: Global Active Venture and Alternative Investors 271
Figure 82: Airbnb refund policy: origin of an endogeneous crisis 272
Figure 83: Airbnb's sacrificed and privileged actors 279
Figure 84: Comparison of Uber and Airbnb Fundraising 284

Figure 85: IPO market capitalization benchmark first day in stock exchange market..... 285
Figure 86:Bloomberg 290
Figure 87:Sequoia Capital promoting Airbnb IPO 291
Figure 88:Opponents discursive claims 298
Figure 89: The process of enacting a bill 304
Figure 90: Tenants Association of Crown Heights protesting during a hearing. 305
Figure 91: NYC change in hotel room supply by borough from 2007 to 2017 310
Figure 92: A two-bedroom apartment from the hotel chain Wyndham listed on Airbnb with a description in the Airbnb cultural tone, not Wyndham's corporate one 316
Figure 93: The lobbying Bureau ensures compliance with the Lobbying law..... 319
Figure 94: Persuasive advertising comparing with hotels..... 332
Figure 95: Hotels.com launched a campaign introducing the term "hate-like", "Be there. Do that. Get Rewarded". Here in NYC subway, in 2019. 334
Figure 96: Awareness campaign informing about short-term rentals and enforcement 335
Figure 97: Call "311": a behavioral campaign from the OSE..... 335
Figure 98: Airbnb NYC campaign: "Airbnb is great for New York City" 338
Figure 99: Airbnb petition to support NYC hosts 338
Figure 100: Airbnb co-founder presenting "his vision for the 21st century multi-stakeholder organization" hosted by New York University's Stern School of Business. 341
Figure 101: Market actors: incumbents fight against "illegal hotels"..... 345
Figure 102: Coalition against "illegal hotels" 347
Figure 103: "Illegal hotels" working group 347
Figure 104: Community-based organizations: NYC tenants advocacy groups 349
Figure 105: Tenants alliances funding 350
Figure 106: New York Governor Andrew Cuomo holds a news conference on COVID-19 355
Figure 107: Airbnb headquarters at COVID-19 period: "We miss traveling too."..... 357
Figure 108: Airbnb "Open Home" Program (..... 362
Figure 109: Captain Obvious Campaign: "Just stay home"..... 364
Figure 110:Sequoia Capital "COVID-19 matrix"..... 366
Figure 111: App with new flexible dates for long-duration stay 371
Figure 112: Airbnb IPO in Times Square, NYC..... 373
Figure 113: Airbnb's IPO and first day of trading: +113% at the closing bell..... 374
Figure 114: NYC hotels buckling under weight over COVID-19 rules and debts 374
Figure 115: Global venture investment network expansion from 2011 to 2020..... 380
Figure 116: Airbnb designed web page was updated in April 2020 in 60 languages displaying the new product offerings..... 387
Figure 118: During the crisis: Effect of the crisis on the interplay between strategic relational strategies and institutional work mechanisms characterized by lower tensions with a positive effect on the socio-political legitimacy. 394

List of Tables

Table 1: SE description 37
Table 2: Summary of Airbnb literature Scopus search for papers from Jan.2009 to July 2020 66
Table 3: Impacts of Airbnb on communities 74
Table 4: Evolution in defining legitimacy over the years 80
Table 5: Legitimacy strategies 83
Table 6: Three research streams of legitimacy 84
Table 7: Issues impacting legitimacy of the SE and consequences 89
Table 8: Uber main issues per legitimation type 91
Table 9: Institutional work 103
Table 10: Legitimacy dynamics in four stages 124
Table 11: Research approaches 147
Table 12: Regulatory approaches in European and American cities 157
Table 13: Perspective in the Sharing Economy 165
Table 14: Matrice of a semi-structured interview 167
Table 15: Primary data collection (2019 and 2020): Two rounds of semi-structured interviews 173
Table 16: Primary data collection (2019): semi-structured interviews 175
Table 17: Primary data collection (2020): semi-structured interviews 177
Table 18: Secondary data collection 181
Table 19: Primary coding (Sources: Gioa et al., 2013; Strauss and Corbin, 1990) 183
Table 20: Airbnb milestones from 2008 to 2020 213
Table 21: Selected investments by Airbnb between 2017 and 2019 (Source: Balech, 2019) 224
Table 22: Inner Circle Facebook Meeting Agendas (Source: self-elaborated from 2020 to 2021 meetings) 231
Table 23: Engaging the community with Hosts Facebook Groups 233
Table 24: Chronological capital funding 241
Table 25: Airbnb median nights booked per type of listings from June 2015 to June 2016 249
Table 26: April 2020 Airbnb investors, prior to the IPO 293
Table 27: How opponents actors defined Airbnb 317
Table 28: Airbnb in NYC lobbying budget 319
Table 29: Historical decade battle between NYC and Airbnb from 2013 to 2020 331
Table 30: Marketing budget in $ millions 333
Table 31: Illegal short-term rental complaints by borough in 2019 343
Table 32: Respondents defining the crisis and its impacts 375
Table 33: An overview of COVID-19 cleaning and safety initiatives in the hospitality industry 382

Acronyms

ABNB	Airbnb code name in Stock Exchange or Air bed and breakfast originally
AHLA	American Hotel & Lodging Association
AI	Artificial intelligence
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DP	Digital Platforms
DPE	Digital Platform Ecosystem
ESG	Environmental Social Governance
EU	European Union
FTC	Federal Trade Commission
GDS	Global Distribution Systems
HANYC	Hotel Association of NYC
IPO	Initial Public Offering
IT	Information Technology
MBS	Montpellier Business School
NASDAQ	National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations
NYC	New York City
NYU	New York University
S&P 500	Standard and Poor index of top 500 US companies
OSE	Office of Special Enforcement in New York
OTA	Online Travel Agencies
P1	Period 2018 to Feb 2020
P2	Period March 2020 to July 2020
P3	Period August 2020 to December 2020
P2P	Peer to Peer
PDEs	Platform-Dependent Entrepreneurs
PDEEs	Platform-Dependent Entrepreneurial Ecosystems
PAC	Political Action Committee
PR	Public Relation
RBV	Resource-Based View
REBNY	Real Estate Board of New York
SE	Sharing Economy
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SLO	Social License to Operate
STRs	Short-Term Rentals
SVP	Stakeholder Value Proposition
VRBO	Vacation Rental By Owners

List of Appendix

Appendix 1: Mission letter 415
Appendix 2: Semi-structural interviews 417
Appendix 3: Co-hosting model 421
Appendix 4: AHLA 424
Appendix 5: New York Times article 2006 429
Appendix 6: President TRUMP 431
Appendix 7: Paper Journal of Cleaner Production, November 2023 433

Abstract

Digital platforms (DP) in the Sharing Economy (SE) transformed sectors and disrupted well established institutions and organizations. Prior studies have noted the central role of legitimacy when DP entered a market as disruptive innovation reshaping the relationships between the market, regulators, and the society at large. Very few studies have studied the building and maintenance of legitimacy in the case of a crisis amid multiple actors. Consequently, our thesis explores how digital platforms in the SE manage multiple actors' relationships to build and maintain their legitimacy in times of crisis. By focusing on a single case study – Airbnb in New York City – we analyze how a DP can navigate multiple relationships in times of crisis, by developing relational strategies – that we characterized as identity, professionalization, and selection – in combination with institutional work mechanisms to build and maintain its cognitive and socio-political legitimacy. We open the black box of this "interplay" by underlying the required balance that has to be found over time between these two types of legitimacy. We describe the social forces at hand and the consequences of the DP strategies on its ecosystem. Indeed, although the crisis can be seen as an "accelerator" of legitimacy for the DP, it also reveals tensions, ethical issues, and the DP's paradoxes in the SE.

Keywords:Sharing economy, Digital platforms, Legitimacy, ecosystem, crisis, legitimation

Résumé

Les plateformes digitales (DPs) de l'économie collaborative (EC) ont transformé les institutions et les organisations établies dans de nombreux secteurs d'activité. Des études antérieures ont souligné le rôle central de la légitimité lorsqu'une DP entre sur un marché en tant qu'innovation de rupture remodelant les relations entre le marché, les régulateurs et la société dans son ensemble. Très peu d'études ont étudié la construction et le maintien de la légitimité en cas de crise au milieu de multiples acteurs. En conséquence, notre thèse explore comment les DPs de l'EC orchestrent les relations entre plusieurs acteurs pour construire et maintenir leur légitimité en temps de crise, la pandémie COVID-19. En nous concentrant sur une étude de cas unique – Airbnb à New York – nous analysons comment une DP peut gérer des relations multiples en développant des stratégies relationnelles – que nous avons qualifiées d'identité, de professionnalisation et de sélection – en combinaison avec des mécanismes de travail institutionnels pour construire et maintenir sa légitimité cognitive et sociopolitique en temps de crise. Nous ouvrons la boîte noire de cette « interrelation » en soulignant le nécessaire équilibre à trouver au fil du temps entre ces deux types de légitimité. Nous décrivons les forces sociales en présence et les conséquences des stratégies d'une DP sur son écosystème. En effet, bien que la crise puisse être considérée comme un « accélérateur » de légitimité pour la DP, elle révèle également les tensions, les problèmes éthiques et les paradoxes des plateformes digitales de l'économie collaborative.

Mots clés: Economie collaborative, plateformes-digitales, légitimité, légitimation, écosystème, crise.

INTRODUCTION

Context

July 2023, hundreds of Uber and Lyft rideshare drivers protested in front of Massachusetts' state house for unionization rights impacting a press conference handled by Uber-backed groups. Two coalitions were formed, each claiming to represent the voice of rideshare drivers and funded differently. They released dueling ballot initiatives to decide the rights of Uber and Lyft drivers. Uber and Lyft spent $43 million on a campaign to face ballot initiatives that would give ride-sharing drivers to unionize. Drivers joining unions could advocate for changes in the industry. Accordingly, Uber or Lyft did not only fund campaigns, but they also supported the anti-union drivers. In exchange for speaking at rallies, they received gas certificates, and free lunches.

This example shows that Digital Platforms (DPs) in the Sharing Economy (SE) are confronted with new demands or unanticipated concerns while engaging with market or non-market actors, representing threats or opportunities, leading to legitimacy challenges. After entering existing markets, DP are still facing legitimacy challenges and consequently must deploy strategies to maintain their legitimacy adapting to local contexts constantly. Interestingly, the process of legitimation of DP in the SE is not limited to the first year while entering existing market as the "newest value proposition" or "liability of newest" (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994), but it might be understood as a dynamic process involving heterogeneous actors.

DPs in the SE transformed sectors and disrupted well established institutions and organizations, attracting a new type of entrepreneurs driven by technology allowing low entries cost market (Sundararajan, 2016, Van Alstyne and Choudary, 2016). However, DPs in the SE face many challenges explored in several studies (CHAPTER 1), such as (1) the chicken and egg problem (i.e., the balance between direct and indirect network effects) (Caillaud and Jullien, 2003), (2) the "local network effects" complexifying the scale-up of operations with critical local mandatory adjustments to the local context (Sundararajan, 2016).

We highlight the controversies of the SE and the still pending discussion on positive and negative externalities along with CSR topics that applied to DPs in the SE. Opposing societal rules conformity with the societal and environmental claims of DPs in the SE, we address in this research the legitimacy discussion of the SE. According to Suchman (1995), one key factor of the success of an organization

is legitimacy on the strategic (resource management) and institutional approach (fulfillment with the norms and values).

DPs in the SE seeking legitimacy are "filled with conflict, tensions and contestation" (Thornton et al., 2012). Legitimacy is a necessity for organizations to act and is granted by others; whereby legitimation is the process whereby organizations gain and maintain their legitimacy (Suchman, 1995). Scholars consider legitimacy as a relational notion that reveals the dialogue between the society and the organization. Indeed, Suchman (1995) pointed out the crucial role of legitimacy for the success of an organization as it attracts stakeholders allowing resource and support from stakeholders. Scholars revealed that appropriate management of cognitive, normative, and regulative institutions, such as public opinion and regulations, is as central to organizational performance as business marketplace performance (Marquis and Qian, 2014; Seelos and Mair, 2007).

Prior studies have noted the central role of legitimacy when DP entered a market as disruptive innovation reshaping the relationships between the market, regulators, and the society at large (Garud et al., 2022). Very few studies have studied, however, the building and maintenance of legitimacy in the case of a crisis in the midst of multiple actors. In consequence, our thesis explores how digital platforms in the SE manage multiple actors' relationships to build and maintain their legitimacy in times of crisis.

Theoretical framework

Legitimacy has appeared as a crucial but often complicated construct in management theory. Prior studies have noted the central role of legitimacy when DP entered a market as disruptive innovation reshaping the relationship between the market, regulators and the society at large.

The work of Aldrich and Fiol (1994) represents a major source of inspiration for empirical research in legitimacy for industry and entrepreneurs facing the "liabilities of newness" such as the ones in the sharing economy (Garud et al., 2022) and our research project. "Among the many problems facing innovating entrepreneurs, their relative lack of legitimacy is especially critical, as both entrepreneurs and crucial actors may not fully understand the nature of the new ventures, and their conformity to established institutional rules may still be in question." According to Aldrich and Fiol (1994), enterprises based on new business models encounter lack of recognition i.e., cognitive

legitimacy and therefore face issues to appeal resources. It is particularly true for digital based business models in the SE with the "chicken and egg" problem introduced chapter one. The second form of legitimacy is the socio-political legitimacy that refers to "stakeholders, the general public, key opinion leaders, or government officials accept a venture as appropriate and right, given existing norms and laws" (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994, p. 648).

Garud et al., (2022) examined the challenges that DP face when entering markets while violating existing regulations and what strategies are implemented studying how Uber succeeded to increase its socio-political legitimacy convincing the regulators about the societal benefits of Uber services. In that vein, the authors define Uber activities as "regulatory entrepreneurship" (Pollman and Barry, 2016) in the sense that its business plan seeks to influence and change existing regulations e.g., requiring users to lobby policy makers on behalf of the DP. By transposing the concept of "liminality" as a "betweenness" or "transitional state that is messy and unclear" (Turner, 1995), Garud et al., (2022) refers to "liminal movement" as the deployment of efforts by the DP to establish itself in between a regulatory framework by taking advantages of market actors, interested social groups and regulators interactions i.e., window of opportunity for the DP.

In their study, the increase in visibility of Uber reinforced tensions with regulators enhancing its lack of sociopolitical legitimacy while establishing itself in the market and convincing regulators about Uber positive externalities. The concept of liminal movement proposed by Garud et al. (2022) refers as "to the venture's efforts to establish itself between existing regulatory categories within a window of opportunity that changes dynamically due to its interactions with market actors, regulators, and other interested social groups". Garud et al. (2022) argued that the first movement allows first entrants to create exclusive relations with service providers, structure institutions and markets (Schilling, 2020) despite the resources required to entry or create the market. Liminal movement conceptualizes initiatives (i.e., market and nonmarket strategies) by the DP to establish itself "between existing regulatory categories and between critical events". Their findings highlighted that gaining cognitive legitimacy increases the lack of sociopolitical legitimacy. Nonmarket strategies are characterized by avoidance and defiance strategies allowing network effects facilitating afterwards "the positive effects to society at large".

Because DPs in the SE face institutional pressures and strategic business challenges, we take a twofold perspective, strategic and institutional to overlook the managerial view and the institutional society view perspectives (CHAPTER 2). We aim at looking at both ways and examine how legitimacy

undertakes the role of a "manipulable" resource and the role of a "taken for granted belief system" (Swidler, 1986). Although some authors have recognized the conjoint role of relational and institutional mechanisms in the DP process of legitimation, our work contributes to open the "black box" of this interplay (Garud et al., 2022). We responded to the call of Dumay et al. (2015) referring to its paper: *"prior work focuses on either the institutional or strategic arms of legitimacy theory but rarely considers the interrelationships between both."*

Research questions

Very few studies have studied the building and maintenance of legitimacy in the case of a crisis where legitimacy represents, even more, a critical resource for the platform (Breitsohl, 2008). Crises may create managerial challenges triggered by harmful events and political conflicts resulting from actors' deliberate attempts to discredit the existing systemic order. At the same time, during crises, organizations can experience legitimacy loss if their actions no longer conform to what is considered an appropriate organizational behavior (Breitsohl, 2008; Massey, 2001). Our project attempts to extend our understanding of the process of legitimation of DP in the SE after entering the market, creating, maintaining their legitimacy while facing a crisis.

Addressing this knowledge gap, our thesis explores "**how digital platforms in the sharing economy manage multiple actors' relationships to build and maintain their legitimacy in times of crisis?"** This question outlines three fundamental constructs: (1) the legitimation process as a major challenge for digital platforms in the SE questioning their growth or survival, (2) the strategies deployed by all actors of the DP ecosystem impacting the cognitive and socio-political legitimacy of the DP, (3) the crisis as an unexpected jolt influencing the relationships interactions among all groups of actors resulting in a change in the processus of legitimation.

First, we investigate and explain the relationships dynamics between a platform and its key contributors to build and maintain its cognitive legitimacy before and during a crisis. We thus respond to our first sub-question: "*What are the relational strategies put in place by the DP towards its contributors to build/maintain its cognitive legitimacy?"* Then, we study the institutional work conducted by the platform to sustain its socio-political legitimacy in the midst of multiple actors. We thus respond to our second sub-question: "*What are the institutional work mechanisms used by the DP to navigate multi-actors' strategies to build/maintain its socio-political legitimacy?***"** We then examined the interplay between both.

Methods

Given the complexity of our research topic, as well as the uniqueness and the novelty of the investigated phenomena, we adopted a qualitative methodology (Gehman et al., 2018) rooted in a case study (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2017). An inductive and abductive interpretative approach was adopted using rigorous qualitative methods (Saunders et al., 2011). Our research strategy (CHAPTER 3) is based on a single case study because a case study investigates a phenomenon or a research topic within real-life-contexts (Yin, 2009). The case study is appropriate as we aim at better understanding the context of the research and the processes being established (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Our starting point in this research project was to identify the internal and external actors of the DP ecosystem and examine their roles and relationships. We chose, Airbnb, as a single case because it refers to a critical case and notably represents one of the most successful models in the SE (Fagerstrom et al., 2017) with a major impact on the traditional business in the hospitality sector (Zhu et al., 2017). It is the aim of this thesis to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the processus of legitimation of digital platforms-based ecosystems in the sharing economy during a crisis. At the time we started the research project of my PhD, the Mom and Pop model prevailed and we observed the phenomena of the exponential growth of the platform in such a short period of time and in all cities of the world.

Our primary data is robust and exclusive. The first set of 34 interviews was conducted between May and September 2019 in NYC, in face-to-face settings, which allowed us to better understand the specific characteristics of this unique metropolis. We collected information about the structure and function of the Airbnb NYC ecosystem – including the main categories of stakeholders, their characteristics, their relations with Airbnb and their consequences on the platform's organizational legitimacy. We were permitted to record the 34 interviews in 2019 in total making sure to record respondents' exact words. Due to COVID-19, we conducted a second set of 21 interviews between March and August 2020, using the Microsoft Teams application, by selecting available interviewees from our 2019 respondents' list, and adding three new respondents identified through the snowballing method. From 2018 to 2020, we collected secondary data amounts to over 1500 pages of documentation or records of relevant notes, reports, videos, posts on social networks, press articles, and media releases regarding the Airbnb's NYC entrepreneurial ecosystem and the impact of the pandemic on its structure and functioning. We examined how Airbnb has developed short-term rentals (STRs) into a novel source of income for property owners, which includes both commercial professional entities and family-run operations, the "Mom and Pop" model. The impact of Airbnb has been significant, leading to increased

property costs, a reduction in available housing, shifts in neighborhood demographics and the emergence of new actors advocating diverse models of property tenure, which could further destabilize the housing security landscape.

Results and contributions

By focusing on a single case study – Airbnb in New York City – we analyse how a DP can navigate multiple relationships in times of crisis by developing relational strategies (CHAPTER 4) – that we characterized as identity, professionalization, and selection – in combination with institutional work mechanisms to build and maintain its cognitive and socio-political legitimacy (CHAPTER 5). We open the black box of this "interplay" by underlying the required balance that has to be find over time between these two types of legitimacy. We describe the social forces at hand and the consequences of the DP strategies on its ecosystem. Indeed, although the crisis can be seen as an "accelerator" of legitimacy for the DP, it also reveals the tensions, ethical issues, and paradoxes to DP in the SE.

Our contributions are threefold (CHAPTER 6). Theoretically speaking, we contribute to the understanding of the legitimation process of DP in the SE through the (1) identification of relational strategies implemented by the DP to maintain its cognitive legitimacy; (2) specification of the institutional work at hand between the DP and the key actors within its local institutional context and; (3) characterization of the interplay between a DP's cognitive and socio-political legitimacy and the associated relational and institutional mechanisms. Methodologically speaking, we collected unique data to which we try to give sense and meaning through a narrative and analytical approach. We believe that our embeddedness in the field was a great way to capture emotions, perceptions and tensions in a complex context such the one of the studied crisis. Last, managerially speaking, our research can be useful for DP in their attempt to navigate multiple expectations during their legitimation process and to co-create value within their ecosystems. Understanding the complex, interdependent relationships which characterize the DP's ecosystem – and the relational strategies and institutional mechanisms used to coordinate its functioning can also help regulators to introduce laws that limit domination tendencies within DPs' ecosystems and reduce the negative migratory effects towards the most vulnerable stakeholders.

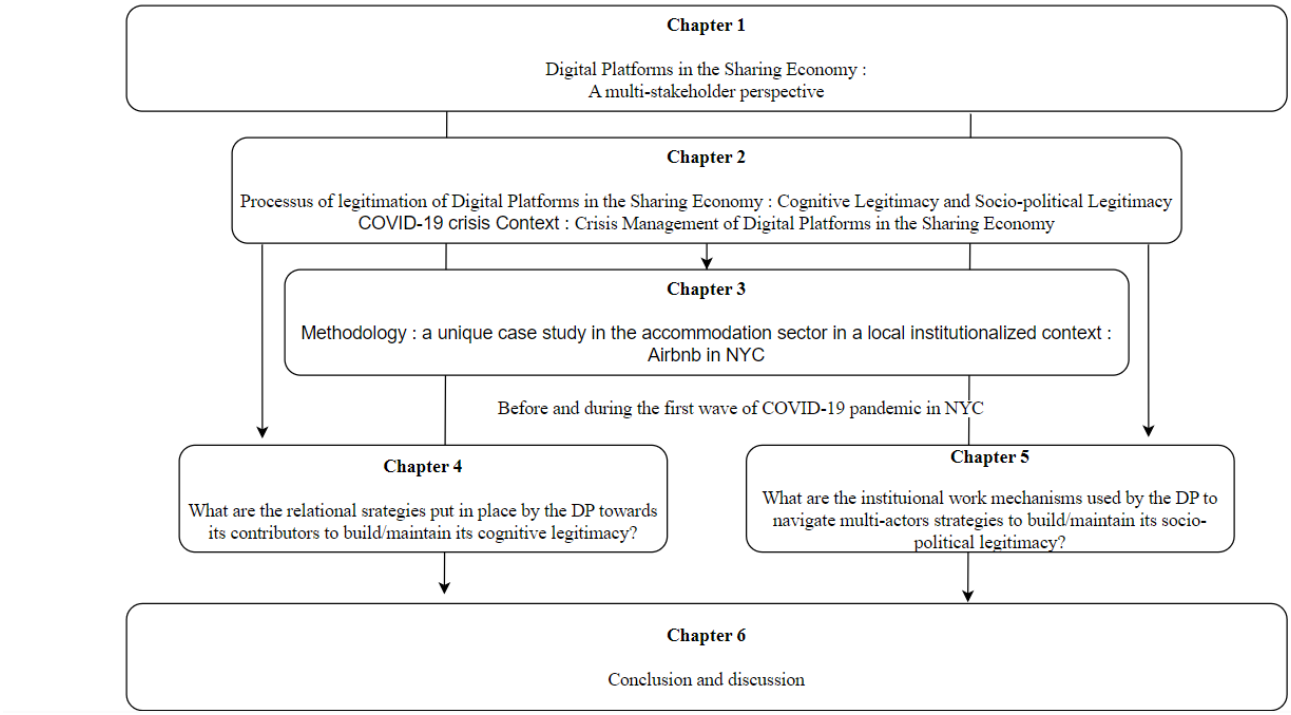


Figure 1: Thesis structure

CHAPTER 1.
DIGITAL PLATFORMS IN THE SHARING ECONOMY: A MULTI ACTOR PERSPECTIVE

1.1. Emergence and evolution of the Sharing Economy (SE)

1.1.1. Sharing Economy: a contested umbrella construct

Through the academic debate about its mapping, boundaries, and definitions, we refer to the SE as an umbrella construct, with polysemic meanings that encompasses pluralism of organizational forms and practices. There is a research common agreement to acknowledge the complexity, paradoxical, new, and contested, growing and broad, ambiguous character of the SE (Figure 2) (Acquier et al., 2017, 2020; Baumber et al., 2019; Gurau and Ranchhod, 2020 ; Gerwe and Silva, 2020 ; Maurer et al., 2020).

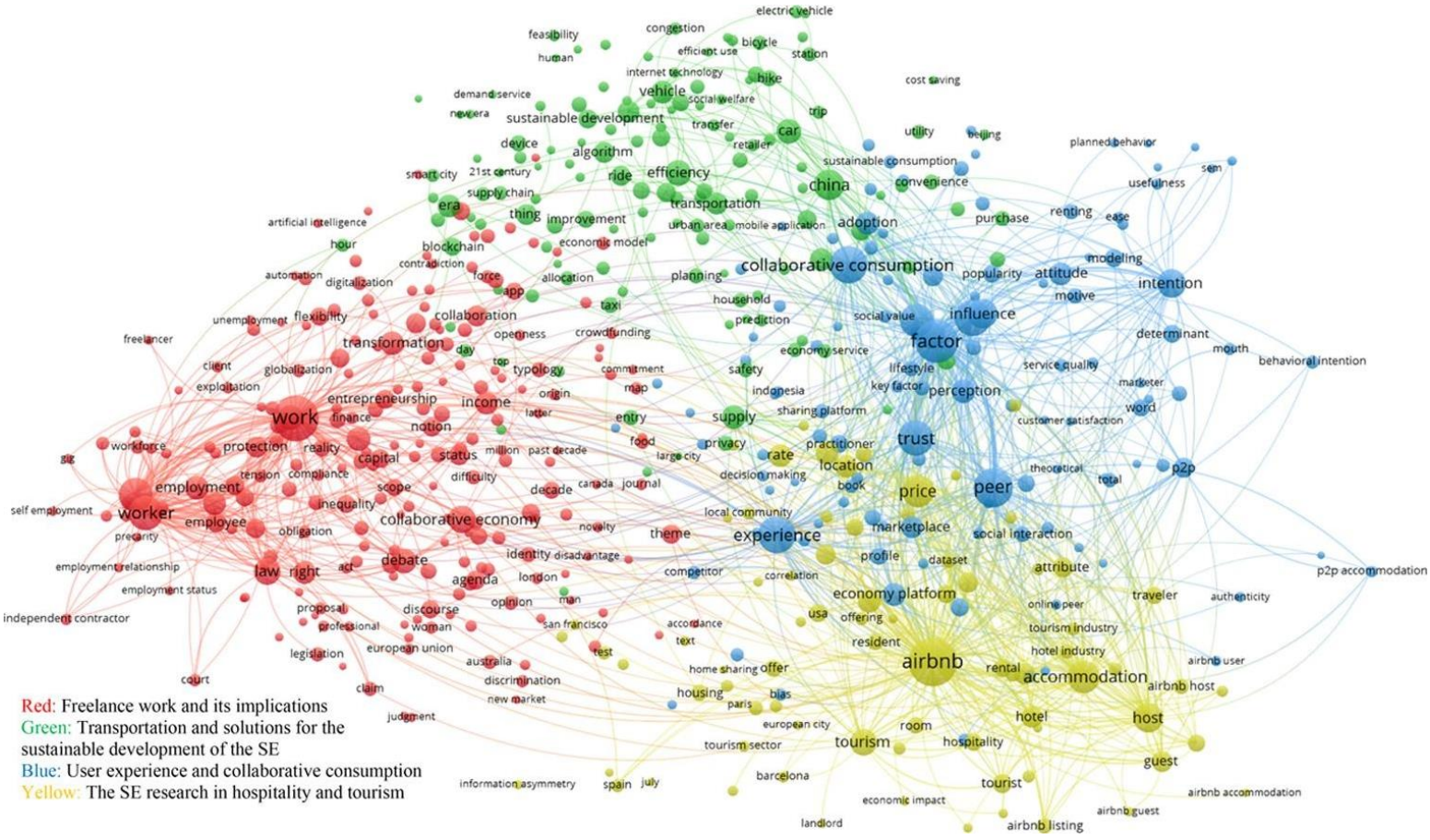


Figure 2: The scientometric mapping of the SE scholarship (Source: Klarin and Suseno, 2021)

Since its rise in the 2000s, the SE embrace two essential pillars “shared” and “internet” inspiring a diversity of terms: collaborative consumption, collaborative economy, peer-to peer economy, platform economy, gig economy. (Rojanakit et al., 2022).

Scholars have shown a growing interest in the emerging field of the SE (e.g., special issues in Academy of Management Discoveries, 2018; Journal of Business Ethics, 2019; Journal of Management Studies, 2020). Despite its increasing interest, ambiguities and contradictions in literature prevail today. Acquier et al. (2017) address the paradox and tensions of the SE concluding that those are inherent of the SE.

The SE is an invitation to use, to take advantage of existing resources, “idle resources” to satisfy needs for the period chosen (Botsman and Rogers, 2010; Rifkin, 2014). In 2010, Botsman and Rogers introduced “collaborative consumption” as another term associated with the concept of sharing. An academic debate started while trying to differentiate the two concepts. In 2013, Belk challenged Botsman and Rogers (2010) arguing that they “mix practices like sharing with trading (a type of marketplace exchange) and gifting, both of which involve a change in ownership that is distinct from sharing.” . In 2012, “Access-based consumption” was created by Bardhi and Eckhardt and refers to “instead of buying and owning things, consumers want access to goods and prefer to pay for […] temporarily accessing them” (2012, p. 881). In 2015, Hamari et al. established that technological and social elements should be included in any SE definition to integrate the exchange of digital assets or physical resources.

Scholars found a consensus that the umbrella concept labelled the sharing economy as a term “sharing” provides such a positive resonance. In reference to Gerring (1999), favorable connotations of new term contribute to the acceptance of the term. Rhetoric and identity dimensions of the SE are one of the controversial discussions among scholars and media. As profit digital platforms emphasize incremental revenues for middle class or climate alternative solutions whereas non-profit platforms profess community spirit. (Geissinger et al. 2019; Schor and Vallas, 2021). The polysemic notion of sharing fuels its controversies from an idealistic illusion driven by altruism rhetoric opposed with the search of profit and misalignment of institutional logics i.e., market, state, corporations and professions (Frenken et al., 2020). Scholars highlight the “utopian discourse to support profit making” promoting (1) entrepreneurship driven by autonomy of work, freedom and entrepreneurship (Acquier et al., 2020; Sundararajan, 2016), (2) social openness creating social bonds especially for the social minority

(e.g., racial ethnic groups, unfavorable districts) (Zanoni, 2019) and (3) reduction of carbon emissions (e.g., avoidance of building new infrastructures, accessing rather owing a car for example).

We will start this research by defining the SE through a summary of the key definitions. “Sharing is as old as mankind. It involves distributing what is ours to others for their use, and/or receiving or taking something from others” (Belk, a.2013, b.2007).

1.1.2. Definition of the SE

The Sharing Economy (SE) refers to a new way of consuming even though sharing has always existed in human society. Botsman (2013) defines the SE as “an economic system based on sharing underused assets or services, for free or for a fee, directly from individuals”. The SE driven by digital platforms is a socioeconomic system with five key attributes “temporary access, transfer of economic value, platform mediation, expanded consumer role, and crowdsourced supply” (Eckhardt et al, 2019).

The Sharing Economy is based on sharing, rather than owning, goods or services, through peers-to-peers exchanges orchestrated through digital platforms. The diversity of organizational forms with sharing as the central focus englobes all sectors and markets and is supposed to represent $335 billion by 2025 (PriceWaterhouseCoopers 2015).

There is no academic consensus or “shared” definition of the Sharing Economy. Apart from having so many definitions in the literature, many organizations took advantage of this positive undefined buzzword claiming that they belong to the SE which complexified what activities and boundaries represent the SE (Görög, 2018). Schlagwein et al., (2020) identitied 36 understandings of the SE term and provided a definition integrating the characteristics from 125 sources. The following table proposes a selection of major definitions or concepts associated with the sharing economy (e.g., collaborative consumption) (Görög, 2018).

Gerwe and Silva (2020) investigated the differential tensions in the SE literature and proposed a typology of SE organizations. Promoted as a path to sustainability (Martin, 2016) and one the “10 ideas that will change the world” (Walsh, 2011), it is today perceived as a highly contested field driven by profit-making organizations (Lee, 2015), a type of platform capitalism (Srnicek, 2017), far away from the principle of sharing (Scholz, 2017).

Botsman and Rogers (2011) defined the SE as a “economic model based on organized sharing, bartering, swapping, trading, or renting products and services, prioritizing access over ownership.” Belk (2014) found that this definition mixed sharing activities i.e., monetary activities with gift giving activities and therefore proposed a narrow definition of the SE encompassing free sharing services. For example, the platform Couchsurfing belongs to the SE, while Airbnb does not because users sell the sharing of their assets. In 2013, Botsman defined the SE as “an economic model based on sharing underutilized assets from spaces to skills to stuff for monetary or non-monetary benefits”. In her definition, it suggests that profit platforms are part of the SE because they provide access to idle capacity. Since this debate, scholars include both capitalistic and non profit platforms in the SE (Mair and Reischauer, 2017; Sundararajan, 2016).

As a contested concept with its complexity, pluralism of forms and contradictions, Acquier et al (2017) summarize two definitional strategies of the SE. (1) The broader definition of the SE encapsuling diversified business models and organizational forms from business to peer-to-peer platforms promoting the socio-economic outcomes of the SE (Filippova, 2015; Sundararajan, 2016) and (2) the narrowed that exclude from SE all transactions business to peers, second-hand selling focusing exclusively on “temporary access to idle capacity, possibly for money” (Frenken and Schor, 2017).

Table 1: SE description (Source: Codagnone and Martens, 2016; Curtis and Lehner, 2019; Görög, 2018)

Author	Label	Description
Bostman (2013)	Sharing Economy	'An economic model based on sharing underutilized assets from spaces to skills to stuff for monetary or non-monetary benefits'
Belk (2014)	Highlights two types of sharing: True sharing versus pseudo-sharing	Belk defines "true sharing" as "entailing temporary access rather than ownership, no fees or compensation, and use of digital platforms". Pseudo-sharing is a "phenomenon whereby commodity exchange and potential exploitation of consumer co-creators present themselves in the guise of sharing." (p. 7), or "business relationship masquerading as communal sharing" (p.11). Profit platforms are "pseudo-sharing" and should not belong to the SE.
Eckhard and Bardhi (2016)	Access-based consumption	"The access economy, […] also known as the sharing, or peer-to-peer, economy, […] provides temporary access to consumption resources for a fee or for free without a transfer of ownership" (p.210).
Munoz and Cohen (2017)	Sharing Economy	"A socio-economic system enabling an intermediated set of exchanges of goods and services between individuals and organizations which aim to increase efficiency and optimization of sub-utilized resources in society"
Frenken and Schor (2017)	Sharing Economy	"When consumers or firms granting each other temporary access to their under-utilized physical assets (idle capacity), possibly for money" (pp.4-5)
Hamari et al. (2015)	Collaborative consumption	"A peer-to-peer-based activity of obtaining, giving, or sharing the access to goods and services, coordinated through community-based online services"
PriceWaterhouse Coopers, (PwC)	Sharing Economy	The "sharing economy uses digital platforms to allow customers to have access to, rather than ownership of, tangible and intangible assets"
Schlagwein et al. (2020)	Sharing Economy	The "sharing economy is an IT-facilitated peer-to-peer model for commercial or non-commercial sharing of underutilized goods or service capacity through an intermediary without transfer of ownership."

1.1.3. Origin of the SE

Key factors could explain the emergence of the SE: technological innovations, cultural changes with new user practices and economic situation.

1.1.3.1. Web.2.0

In 1990s, World Wide Web was created and became the "terreau" of start-ups embrasing the idea that the internet would become the "Eldorado" for business (Curran, 2012) against traditional actors. The first peer to peer marketplace is Ebay founded in 1995 where for the first time the public could make profit proposing goods or services to web users thanks to sophisticated algorithms, followed by Craigslist in 1996. For the first time, people experienced sharing activities (i.e., information, goods or services) to strangers through the web. At the very early stage of this sector, algorithms management would be the strategic priority allowing trust in peer-to-peer transactions. Trust mechanisms emerged through the crowdsourcing ratings aiming at generating quality metrics (Schor, 2014).

Web 2.0 allowed the development of new internet business models where value creation came from the co-creation of users that became both providers and customers i.e., "prosumers" (e.g., Youtube, Facebook) (Howard, 2015). In the late 1990s, emergence of platforms as intermediaries between buyers and vendors announce their power in shaping the markets and sectors. Digital platforms would then take this role to intermediate commercial and social activities (Van Dijck et al., 2018). The explosion of social networks instilled the spirit of online community (Benkler, 2004). Major technological innovations accelerated the growth of on-line transactions, for example the GPS localization. The historical launch of the iphone in 2007 provided another alternative to Microsoft, introducing a revolutionary convenient way to connect users and business activities accelerating the digital platform growth with app developers.

The rise of the sharing culture with its utopian connotation supported by technological progress has allowed the rapid expansion of sharing platforms with a consumer shift from owning towards accessing. (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012). The digital culture among users has been influenced by the open source movement referring to collective initiatives led by benevolent users and contributors fueled

by mutual support, open-source technologies based on non-reciprocity and non-monetized transactions and accessible to anyone for free, i.e. the digital commons (e.g., Wikipedia). (Acquier et al, 2017, Schor and Vallas, 2021).

inally, the economic context of the early 21st century marked by low interest rates has contributed to the expansion of the SE encouraging investors to direct their choices to tech stat-ups as well as the super performance of technology stocks in the eighties i.e., rise of 300% from 1997 to 2000 (Schor and Vallas, 2021).

1.1.3.2. Economic 2008 crisis and a more sustainable consciousness

The 2008 crisis could be the "catalyst" of the sharing economy. The 2008 crisis revealed to the all-world the consequences of the financial culture at the heart of the US economy based on addiction to self-centered consumption, corporate conglomerate driven by short term profit evolving in high institutionalized context (Castells et al. , 2012; Gansky, 2010; Howard, 2015; Stephany, 2015, Schorr and Vallas, 2021). The concept to share few assets to a larger group echo with the environmental trend calling for a change in the mass consumerism society and for a shift from buying to accessing (Buhalis et al., 2020). The 2008 financial crisis has provoked a need for population to find other alternatives to produce and gain revenues at a time where unemployment rate skyrocketed. DP like Uber appeared as an interesting alternative for the ones who tried to find new job opportunities (Kathan et al., 2016). From that time, sharing represents alternatives creating social bonds and optimizing resources.

Users perceive the SE as a socialization tool allowing cultural exchange motivated by financial benefits instilling a self-entrepreneur mindset (Gul, 2022). Tourists have changed their behaviors due to new technologies allowing access to more information with new tools (e.g.; comparative websites). Before, owners will list their home on the classified section of the local newspaper. The internet improves the level of transactions allowing "ordinary people" to list their properties on VRBO, Airbnb. Competition to established traditional hospitality actors, especially critic for the hotel industry, increased with the rise of Airbnb users (Zervas et al., 2017). Scholars have focused on the "fairness of competition" (Gurran, 2018; Kennedy et al., 2019). Mass media and scholars have largely covered tax implications and need for regulation.

To sum up, the drivers of the SE are technologic, economic with the crisis of 2008 opening new markets within a more sustainable mindset.

1.1.4. Controversies and paradoxes in the SE

The controversies of the SE start with the opposition between altruistic sharing (e.g., CouchSurfing) and monetary sharing characterized by an exponential growth (e.g., Airbnb).

"We think as sharing as non-commercial, person-to-person, social interaction. It suggests exchanges that do not involve money, or that are at least motivated by generosity, by a desire to give or to help. Economy suggests market transactions, the self-interested exchange of money for goods and services" (Slee, 2015, p.3).

Through their promises, sharing economy platforms are confronted by socio-economic expectations and economic and societal impacts. Scholars studied how the SE contributed to significant societal changes: (1) shift of paradigm from ownership or consumption to accessibility of services, (2) trust building relying on user reviews and ratings impacting societal interaction and community relationships, (3) promoting sustainable practices optimizing the use underutilized resources with a promise to move society toward a more environmentally friendly practices, (4) changes in employment structure offering a more flexible work structure, altering the traditional employment income models, leading to societal changes in the work experience, (5) socio-economic inequality based on the principle that the ones owning assets can generate extra income while those without cannot (Belk, 2014; Hwang et al., 2020; Martin, 2016).

1.1.4.1. Paradoxes and multi-dimensional cores

At the early stage of this emerging field, in contrast to the idealistic vision of the SE where individuals and entrepreneurs would compete with traditional business thanks to decentralized power, scholars emphasized the paradox and controversies behind the environmental, societal and economic promises of the SE (Frenken and Schor, 2017). Firstly, the environmental promises driven by the intrinsic offer to access instead of owning. The environmental promise of the SE, by its nature, encourages more efficient use of resources. For example, ridesharing platforms like Uber pool allow multiple people to share a ride, thus reducing the number of cars on the road. Similarly, accommodation sharing platforms like Airbnb make use of idle housing capacity. By promoting the shared use of goods and service, the SE can potentially reduce environmental impacts associated with production and

consumption. The SE could be considered as a transition towards a more circular economy. However, empiric research showed that environmental concerns are not users' motivations (Böcker and Meelen, 2017; Wilhelms et al. 2017) and therefore the SE poses potential sustainability challenges. For example, the rise of ST rentals might encourage more travel, thus increasing carbon emissions (Acquier et al., 2017; Geissinger et al., 2020). Secondly, the social promise allowing cheaper access to services or leveraging social connections are not demonstrated in latest case studies. Finally, the economic promise perceived as an alternative with decentralized operations via peers to peers versus centralized traditional economic and political is also contested because of the social inequalities (Schor et al., 2016). This model often bypasses traditional business (Zervas et al., 2017), allowing more use of private resources and can provide individuals with new ways to earn income. It has given rise to new forms of work and redefined employment relationships. This evolution raises questions about job security, benefits and the nature of work in the 21st century (Sundararajan, 2016).

1.1.4.2. Contrasted participants motivations

Gewer and Silva (2020) reviewed the studies about consumers'motivations with a richer literature focusing on profit-driven capital platforms in the SE about individuals' characteristics such as individual motivations (Hamari et al., 2016), perceived trust (Wu et al., 2017), personal values (Piscicelli et al., 2018), sociodemographic features (Lindblon and Lindblon, 2017). Literature has also examined the customer service experience perspective i.e., social interactions (Parigi et al., 2013), characteristics of assets providers (Wu et al., 2017), products and services attributes (Guttentag et al., 2018).

The providers participation motivations in the SE are different for money-based platform (i.e., additional income) and non-monetary platforms (i.e., altruistic motivations) (Bucher et al., 2016). Many motivational factors are to be considered in consumers' SE participation with the utilitarian and economic ones as dominant for money-based platform (Guttentag et al., 2018).

For example, Böcker and Meelen (2017) investigated the motivations of SE participants quantitatively amongst 1330 respondents from Amsterdam using DP in the SE as providers or customers for rides, accommodation, tools, cars and meals. Its research based on a cross-sectors SE participants' motivations highlighted that economic, social and environmental motivations vary depending on type of sectors. For example, environmental motivation concerns ride and car-sharing

whereas economical motivations concerns accommodation. About socio-demographic groups, (1) women are more environmental sensitive and motivated, the "sharing idealists" (Hellwig et al., 2015), (2) higher-educated, higher income and younger groups are less socially motivated whereas low-income and younger groups as customers or providers are more economically motivated. Interestingly, the literature review of Gerwe and Silva (2020) highlighted that factors of success or a DP in the SE are twofold, (1) on macro external factors i.e., technological, economic, political, legal, social and idle capacity supply (2) on platform factors i.e., service quality control, network effects, digital reputational systems, financial incentives. Not surprisingly, the environmental issues are considered as the less important drivers for the growth of the DP in the SE (Barnes and Mattsson, 2016).

1.1.4.3. Effects of the SE

Several studies highlighted the broad effects of the SE socially (e.g., rental market, providers working conditions, consumers discrimination), and economically (incumbent firms, employment in the industry) (Gewe and Silva, 2020).

On consumers, the positive effects of the capitalist DP in SE are access to a diversity of experiences like personalization, at lower prices (Calo and Rosenblat, 2017), and facilitate social cohesion thanks to online and offline peer-to-peer exchanges (Mody et al., 2017). However, the consumers negative effects highlighted by the authors are racial discrimination (Edelman et al., 2017).

On providers, Sundararajan (2016) highlighted that empowerment, job opportunities and more over a creation of a type of new entrepreneurs as major beneficial externalities to participate in the SE. Flexibility is also a major positive effect allowing non-full-time workers to access to job opportunities due to family or health issues (Calo and Rosenblat, 2017). However, scholars claim the negative effects with increasing power of DP and information asymmetries (e.g., data manipulation) controlling how providers perform. For example, studies showed how Uber controlled drivers 'behaviors impacting their autonomy. (e.g., Rosenblat and Stark, 2016). The income dependence of the supplier could cause the rise of a new type of labor uncertainty i.e., "precariat" (Slee, 2015).

On the industry, the impacts of the SE is also source of academic controversies where the two pioneers lead the empirical studies. When services proposed by DP substitute directly with the activities of incumbents "firms" (e.g. hotel versus Airbnb), the firm incumbents "performance might decrease" (Guttentag and Smith, 2017; Sundararajan, 2016). Zervas et al., (2017) showed that a decrease in hotels

revenues is caused by an increase in the Airbnb market growth in Texas and that lower category hotels are more impacted. Calo and Rosenblat (2017) pointed out the unfair competition between DP in the SE and firms' incumbents: "their cost advantage may come from some form of regulatory arbitrage". Edelman (2017) reinforced that DP in the SE's costs advantages come from regulations and requirements avoidances. Another effect on the industry observed is the domination of DP reducing the competition in a certain market; due to the power of network effects.

On a broader context, some scholars promote the SE as a friendly environmental phenomen optimizing use of idle capacity avoiding manufacturing new infrastructures (Frenken and Schor, 2017) while opponents argue that SE stimulate consumption and increase environmental issues (Codagnone et al., 2016) and to society at large e.g., regulatory and safety issues, pollution, real estate market on local communities directly affected especially urban communities (e.g., renters facing increased costs of housing) (Baumber et al., 2019; Edelman and Geradin, 2016, Malhotra and Van Alstyne, 2014). Schor (2017) pointed out labor inequality in the SE describing the profile of DP providers with a full time job and high level of education. Interestingly, Gewer and Silva (2020) argued that "this may signal a crowding-out effect in the labor market, as these providers now do the type of work that is traditionally done by less educated people." They also considered labor platform (e.g., Uber) more dominant than capital platform (e.g., Airbnb) in their efforts to set up powerful algorithmic management to control their providers (Casilli, 2019; Choudhary, 2018). For example, Rosenblat and Stark (2016) studied Uber drivers working conditions and concluded that drivers could be defined as "managed labor force". The passioned debate about uberization of work, a concept associated with rationality of algorithms aiming at an optimized labor organization originally, promotes independence, freedom and flexibility. Highly controverted by the society and some scholars, uberization would induce "fake independence", and position a worker as a sum of data interpreted by algorithms free of humanity, a category of worker exploited to optimize profit (Vercher-Chaptal et al., 2021). An IBM survey highlighted that executives from established industries and traditional business models fear uberization putting at risk the traditional business models versus novel business models (IBM, 2015).

1.1.5. The evolution of the SE

The field of the SE has grown and matured. Digitalization and trust mechanisms have made the emergence of the sharing economy and the exponential growth of the pioneers that became global (e.g., Uber, Airbnb, Blablacar). Considered as a disruptive socio-economic system, built on sharing assets through the internet, the SE became a threat for the traditional market actors where hyper consumption and ownership are key drivers. Technology allowed non-specialized professionals at a large scale to offer their services web users. Chip Conley, Airbnb Head of Global Hospitality and Strategy, hospitality entrepreneur, confessed that the challenge was to create a community of non-expert in tourism, hosting tourists. (Martos-Carrion and Miguel, 2021).

1.1.5.1. New markets and behaviors

The evolution of the SE is crucial to point out for several reasons (1) its economic impact: because the SE has disrupted traditional business models in various industries, such as transportation and accommodation, understanding its evolution helps to analyze its relations with actors of its ecosystem and the other actors and how it's changing the socio-economic structures, (2) the societal change: digital platforms in the SE has transformed societal attitudes towards ownership and consumption (Botsman and Rogers, 2010). The shift from "ownership" to "access" has broad implications for societal behavior (Sundararajan, 2016). (3) policy and regulation: the SE operates in "uncharted water" where policy makers oppose innovation, fair competition, consumer protection and public safety (Zervas et al., 2017), (4) sustainability: the SE had the potential to lead to more sustainable use of resources by maximizing their utilization and reshape economies and societies promoting sustainable consumption and reduce environmental impact.

All sectors are impacted by the SE however the tourism sector seems to be the most affected sector. Dolnicar (2020) highlights the consequences of an increase of self-entrepreneurs in the tourism industry (e.g., long-term employment at risk, strong market competition with services, neighborhoods and real estate impacts) and the need for a projective perspective of the SE digital platforms impact on the tourism industry and hospitality industry.

1.1.5.2. Grey Regulations

The evolution of SE is characterized by "grey" regulations and taxations and initiatives all over the world, at the regional, country, state or city level. Collective efforts aimed at adapting regulation mechanisms to exert a control over the DP and tried to embedded them into the local context (Vercher-Chaptal et al., 2021). All the actors' groups involved are affected by regulatory issues: (1) consumers exposed to risks due to lack of rules and consumer protection, (2) providers or "micro-entrepreneurs" exposed to the loss of labor rights, (3) the DP is highly impacted by regulatory decisions, (4) formal incumbents facing unfair competition, (5) society at large with risk of security, erosion of taxe base (Codagnone and Martens, 2016). Regulatory bodies and policy makers all over the world face the challenge to overcome tax erosion, labor rights defense, consumer protection. In Europe, end of 2015, the European Parliament and the EU Economic and Social Committee took action launching a public consultation on the SE and DP. In the US, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) launched workshops on the SE to modify regulation for consumer protection.

Kobis et al (2021) enhance the financial benefits of DP for providers that tend to minimize the "dark side" where they actually benefit from the unregulated institutional context. "Ambiguity allows people to justify violating rules" (Shalvi et al. 2011). Grey regulations allow participants to interpret information in a "self-serving way" (Epley and Gilovich, 2016). Especially when the narrative of the digital platform nourishes their roles of "doing good" for the society when participating to the sharing economy, "sense of belonging" to reinforce the spirit of dualistic relationship or membership (Kramer, 2010). To reduce SE tensions, Köbis and al. (2021) proposed a transparency-based sharing framework arguing that opacity of regulations generate negative externalities (e.g., opaque insurance policy, status of workers). The authors attribute the role of DP as a financially interested actor and a regulator, in the sense that they are responsible for consumer protection (e.g., cancellation fees) whereas for traditional business laws and rules are set by the government which provide protection. The authors highlight the role of behavioral mechanisms in shaping awareness. The novelty of the framework is that it considers both positive and negative consequences of sharing and considers transparency as a tool to reduce the negative consequences of sharing.

Berkowitz and Souchaud (2019) pointed out that DP in the SE evolve in a regulatory or governance gap where sectoral legislation of the incumbents' firms do not match with the DP practices. Between the two possible approaches i.e., (i) highly regulated framework at national and local institutional level, or (ii) self-regulated. There is still no agreement on the appropriate way to solve this regulatory gap in the sense that self-regulation would not be appropriate for digital platforms considered at "embryonic" stage (Chaffee and Rapp, 2012) whereas some suggest that self-regulation by the DPs could instill innovation and development (Sundarajan and Talgam-Cohen, 2016).

1.1.5.3. Typology of DP in the SE

1.1.5.3.1. Types of transactions and assets

Gerwe and Silva (2020) proposed two dimensions to better understand the heterogeneity of actors in the SE: (1) money based transactions or not, to cover costs (e.g., Blablacar using the prorated fees for the trip) or, to generate incremental revenue (e.g., Airbnb hosts gaining additional income) and (2) access to physical assets i.e., capital platforms (e.g., homes with Airbnb) or access to human assets i.e., labor platforms (e.g., ride with Uber). Through those two dimensions, the authors argued that value propositions of SE organizations should rely on the type of transactions and type of assets. "Platforms that facilitate money-based transactions, such as Airbnb, will emphasize economic gains, while platforms whose transactions are nonmonetary, such as Couchsurfing, will emphasize social benefits (e.g., the chance to meet new people)" (Gerwe and Silva, 2020). DP in the SE that leverage incentives to generate additional income i.e., "the money-based transactions" are the biggest players of the SE (e.g., Uber and Airbnb) instilling innovation to mitigate digital risks uncertainty (e.g., pricing system, insurance). Their exponential growth is associated with tensions amongst stakeholders combined with a financial dependency from the providers who make money on SE digital platforms. The authors highlighted that the increased dedication of time and assets of providers i.e., their professionalization conduct to rise of the bargaining power of the DP especially in the case of labor platforms where service providers could be assimilated to employees.

For example, Xu et al. (2021) pictured three business models of DP in the SE classified by two criteria: level of control by the DP over the contributors and the "who" owns the shared assets (1) "decentralized" platform (e.g., Airbnb), (2) "centralized" platform (e.g., Zipcar), (3) "hybrid" platform (e.g., Uber).

1.1.5.3.2. Co-ops platforms

Finally, the typology of SE has evolved associated with the uberization of the economy conducted to stimulate a reactive movement to favor cooperation in favor to technical and social innovation (Durand Folco, 2016). Alternative platforms prototypes emerge to better respond to social and environmental challenges (Vercher-Chaptal et al., 2021). The future of a truly Sharing Economy would be driven by cooperative platforms. Scholtz (2015) argued that even though they are technology driven, as opposed to capitalistic DP, cooperative platforms ownership models are inspired by democratic values, (e.g., profits not restricted to a few) and solidarity principles (e.g., multi-actors ownership). Scholtz and Schneider (2016) proposed a typology of platform "co-ops" platform: (1) Online Labor Brokerages and Market Places, the co-op version of TaskRabbit or Amazon, (2) City-owned platform cooperatives where fees could be dispatched between the providers (e.g., hosts) and the municipality, the co-op version of Airbnb; (3) "Producer"-owned platforms to as a response to platforms that monetize our data as Google, (4) Union-Backed Labor Platforms created by unions, for example for taxi service. "Platform cooperativism is a rectangle of hope. It's not a concrete utopia; it's an emerging economy" Scholtz (2015).

In brief

The concept of the SE was introduced by Lessig (2008), and largely advertised by Botsman and Rogers (2010). It started with the increase of online technology in the early 2000s forming communities. The SE is a complex and diversified field, not representing a monolithic phenomenon but a variety of business models and diversified platforms from local platform cooperatives (Orsi, 2013) to capitalistic platforms confronting altruism and sharing with money-making principles (Schor, 2016). The SE evolved rapidly from nonprofit (e.g., Couchsurfing in 2004) to money making digital platforms (e.g., Airbnb in 2008) and platform "cooperativism", a movement emerging in reaction to multibillion dollar platforms owned by venture capital (Scholz and Schneider, 2015) promoting collective governance and management (e.g., the ride-hailing app "Green Taxi Cooperative" in Denver, Colorado, owned and managed by its drivers).

1.2. Digital platform ecosystems at the very heart of the SE

1.2.1. The three multi-dimensional constructs

In order to respond to the complexity of the SE and the pluralism of organizational forms and practices highlighted by Mair and Reischauer (2017), this research project will refer to Acquier et al. (2017, 2020) contribution to the SE literature. The authors propose a clarification of the SE through a dialogue among the different perspectives of the SE with an organizational framework integrating the three-multi-dimensional constructs organizing the SE, (1) access economy, (2) platform economy, (3) community-based economy.

1.2.1.1. Access economy

Access economy refers to the consumerism era's shift where accessing or using a service or a good replaces long-term owning. Access economy, perceived as a response to the environmental crisis, is not new where profit or non-profit organizations propose "sharing underutilized assets" (goods or services), not intended to be purchased (e.g., car rental, borrow a book). Today, the shift from owning to accessing has developed a mosaic of business models and modes of collaboration and governance from profit, non-profit, collaborative models in all fields (e.g., clothes, transport, house amenities). More and more organizations propose access instead of owning for example cars, houses, luxury clothes, and appliances (Botsman and Rogers, 2010).

Access economy also carries paradoxes and tensions. The controverse around the environmental promise is portrayed opposing (1) the careless attitude of users of a temporary service reinforcing the need for a strong social control community with mutual reciprocity as a key principle with (2) intensive use of products conceptualized by the "rebound effect". For example, providing car-sharing systems more practical and cheaper to collective transportations services is detrimental to the environment (Demailly and Novel, 2014).

1.2.1.2. Platform economy

Platform economy refers to initiatives that "intermediate decentralized exchanges among peers through digital platforms" whose key driver is the network effect (i.e., number of users). Platform economy creates value by (1) connecting users and (2) organizing transactions, not producing themselves. Considered as disruptive innovation with lower transaction costs than traditional businesses, they are digitally driven and operate their marketplace remotely via algorithms with direct access to data, control mechanisms settings, securing transactions, and reputation of their users via evaluations ratings. The platform economy driven by market logic embraces liberal values and non-conventional entrepreneurial culture (Turner, 2006, Acquier et al. 2017, Srineck, 2016) explaining the tensions between platforms and institutions.

Platform economy is contested with the use of power asymmetries associated with network effects capturing the value from users facilitating the emergence of giants (e.g., Airbnb, Uber, Blablacar). The "massive scaling" of transactions among strangers as a phenomena called "stranger sharing" is fueled by network effects positioning the pioneer of the SE leader in their sector (Acquier et al., 2017; Benkler, 2004).

1.2.1.3. Community based economy

Community based economy refers to a type of organization sharing experience, knowledge and interests animated by strong sense of community tied with social bounds (Marquis et al., 2011) for example open-source initiatives such as Wikipedia (Jemielniak, 2014). Associated with the notion of "commons" or true sharing (Belk, 2010), motivations are cooperatilvely oriented, not materially associated (Bradley and Pargman, 2017). The structures recall the past non-profit and cooperative governance structures (Scholz, 2016).

1.2.1.4. Joint-multiple cores framework

Acquier et al. (2017) took a more nuanced framework of the three organizational cores, access, platform and community-based economy. For example, rental companies do not consider themselves as part of the SE even though they belong to the category access economy. Therefore, the authors invite us to look at SE initiatives associating two or three cores. Initiatives are more likely to be considered part of the sharing economy when they combine different cores, building on dual or triple cores (Figure 3). In building on multiple cores, sharing-economy initiatives can navigate some of the tensions and paradoxes related to each core.



Figure 3: Combining the cores of the sharing economy (Source: Acquier et al., 2017)

Access economy combined with platform economy forms “access platform” defines as “give access to underutilized resources, or services, through digital platforms” (e.g., Airbnb). This research uses this framework and definition. Access platforms optimize the usage of durable goods and allow greater access to expensive goods, and thus help to fulfil the environmental and social promise of the access economy (Eckhardt and Bardhi, 2016). In addition, they benefit from the advantages of the platform economy (Srineck, 2016). They drastically reduce the risk of moral hazard by leveraging the monitoring properties of digital platforms such as digital tracking, peer-evaluations, and insurance contracts. Transaction costs are reduced considerably by facilitating connections between supply and demand (Williamson, 2000). If access platforms adopt a capitalistic governance scheme, they can aim for high scalability on a global scale in the short run.

Advantages: Those two cores unified allow to leverage the positive outcomes of this model of the SE that are access to goods benefiting from the platform economy advantages (e.g., trust mechanisms, reduction of costs transactions, high scalability in a short time) (Srineck, 2016; Williamson, 2000). **Disadvantages**: However, Dreyer et al. (2017) highlight the stockholders orientation of access platforms seeking profits with negative externalities for the community at large, “the unbalanced contribution to the well-being of stakeholders”. The scalability is source of tensions and amplify them. The environmental benefits are also under questioned due to an increase in consumption (Parguel et al., 2017).

Second, community-based platforms labelled “platform cooperativism”. It attempts to “make the most of the promises of the platform economy without losing sight of the promises of the community-based economy. They harness the scaling power of platforms for the good of the community, either by using a governance mechanism that ensures redistribution to balance stakeholder interests or by orienting the purpose of the platform towards the community interest. For example, Citiz, a French network of car sharing companies that share around 1000 cars in 80 different cities where consumers, employees, investors, public authorities, main contractors and providers are all partners in the cooperative and vote on the main decisions. The second case refers to ‘mission-driven platforms’ whose main purpose is increasing a community's well-being”. Tensions arise with the paradox of scalability and community interests.

Third, community-based access. It "combines the promises of the access economy and the community based economy. They afford greater access to underutilized resources and services at the community level and thus aim to fulfil the economic, social, and environmental promises". Those encapsule initiatives with non-monetary and non-hierarchical organizations that promote sharing practices in a well specified physical space such as fablabs, and repair cafés fit this category (Fabbri, 2016; Kostakis et al., 2015). "The association of these two cores is fruitful since community bonds solve some tensions associated with the access economy". It is interesting to highlight that scalability does not exist here because this category refers to proximity between members. It reduces the moral hazard and self-interest posture that could harm the community (Schor et al., 2016).

In conclusion, Acquier et al., (2017) take a paradoxical perspective on the promises of the SE avoiding the idealistic perspective or dark side, inviting us to accept the paradoxes of the SE and examine SE initiatives with this paradoxical lens supported by the three cores of the SE framework (access, platform and community). In building on multiple cores, sharing-economy initiatives can navigate some of the tensions and paradoxes related to each core.

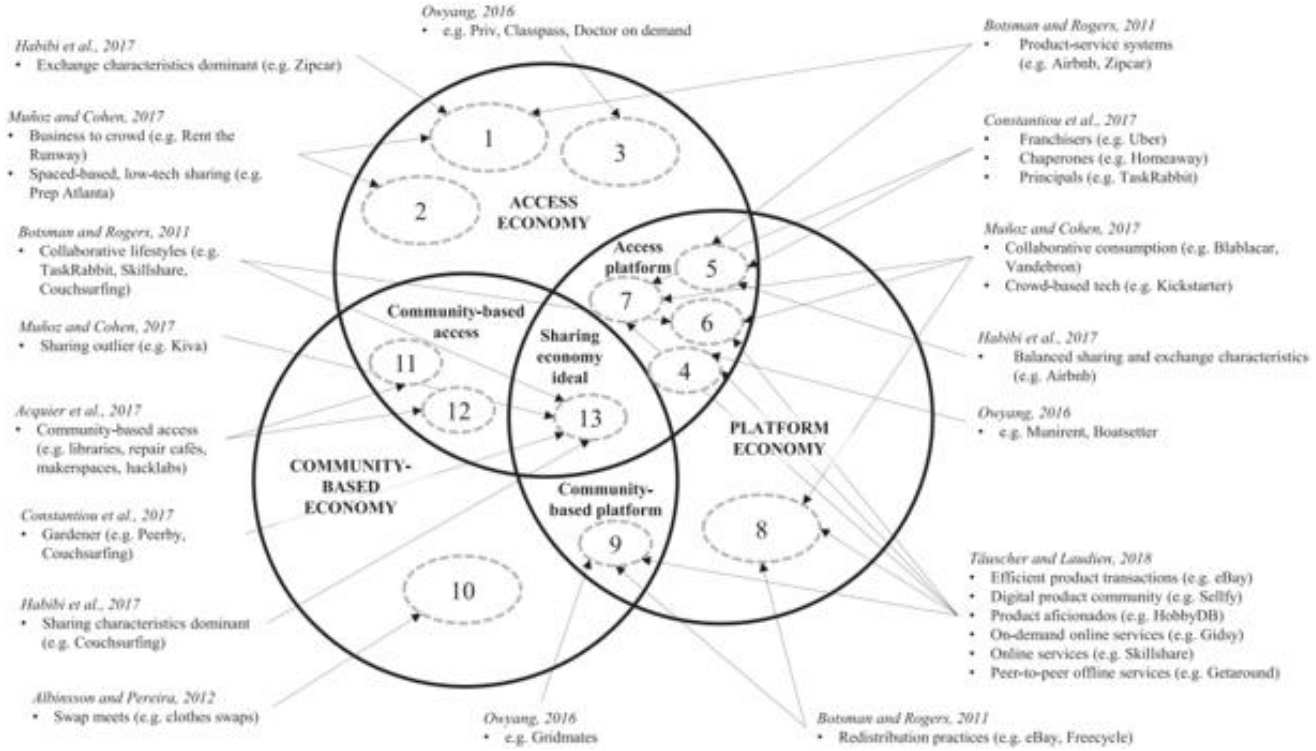


Figure 4: Analysis of the literature categorizations of SEBMs in relation to the framework by Laukkanen and Tura (2020)

The recent work of Laukkanen and Tura (2020) transposed the Acquier et al., (2017) framework categorizing the Sharing Economy business models supporting the view to examine SE through different aspects of sustainability (Geissinger et al., 2019). It contributed to estimating the potential sustainable value of different types of SE business models by identifying the main issues on the economic, environmental, and social perspectives. The conceptual model emphasizes the importance for entrepreneurs to design new sustainable business models comparing SE business models' sustainable value creation potential.

1.2.2. Digital Platforms (DPs)

The pervasiveness of DPs in the economy is one the two major phenomena in our history.

Digital platforms can be defined as symbiotic combinations of technology, multisided markets and entrepreneurial ecosystems (De Reuver et al., 2018; Nambisan et al., 2019), representing "evolving organizations or meta-organizations that: (1) federate and coordinate constitutive agents who can innovate and compete; (2) create value by generating and harnessing economies of scope in supply or/and in demand side of the markets; and (3) entail a modular technological architecture composed of a core and a periphery"(Gawer, 2014: 1240).

Designed specifically to facilitate transactions and other valued exchanges of goods or information, on online places or infrastructures (i.e., websites and mobile apps), DPs have become powerful thanks to (1) network effects, (2) modularity or "chameleon" side, (3) data collection (Eaton et al., 2011; Gawer, 2020). From Kenney et al (2021), the insights from the case study of Amazon, illustrates the scale and scope that platform firms can develop, as they enter and transform the dynamics of previously self-contained industrial sectors. While Amazon's growth is exceptional, it provides insight into expansion dynamics common to platform firms. To illustrate, Uber began in black limousines, but now has many different types of services, including UberEats, JUMP Electric Bike Share, UberCash and Uber Health. As another example, Airbnb expanded globally from accommodation to other services such as vacation rentals, and then added multi-family property owners and hosting teams, experiences and neighborhoods. Another promising field of research would be understanding the motivations and dynamics of platform expansion.

1.2.2.1. Digital Platform ecosystem (DPE)

Research has shown that digital platforms create value the way they coordinate their ecosystems. **Ecosystems** can be defined as a set of interacting producers, providers, innovators, customers, and regulators that shape geographically- and sector-bound collective outcomes (Jacobides, 2019). DPs have been linked to entrepreneurial ecosystems (De Reuver et al., 2018; Thomas and Ritala, 2021) which represent self-organized, scalable, sustainable, and interactive environments involving and facilitating entrepreneurial attitudes, abilities and aspirations of individuals committed to carry out entrepreneurial action (Autio and Levie, 2017). In comparison with classical entrepreneurial ecosystems that depend on government support or a collective implication of actors (Autio and Levie, 2017), platforms act as intermediaries, brokering (Bessy and Chauvin, 2013), or curating (van Dijck et al., 2018) relations between users to facilitate economic exchanges of content, goods, or services (Schüssler et al., 2021). In particular, transaction platforms - such as Airbnb – "connect two or more market sides for the purpose of linking buyers and sellers, exchanging information, or arranging for purchase or rental of a product or service" (Cusumano et al., 2020: 5).

According to Hein et al. (2020: 90), "the digital platform ecosystem comprises a platform owner that implements governance mechanisms to facilitate value creating mechanisms on a digital platform between the platform owner and an ecosystem of autonomous complementors and consumers."

DPs represent thus the focal point of digital entrepreneurial ecosystems (Van Alstyne, 2019), exercising an active role over actors' selection and behavior (Helfat and Raubitschek, 2018). DP ecosytem encompass a variety of mutually resource-dependent actors that jointly develop a set of complementary assets (Gawer and Cusumano, 2014; Jacobides et al., 2018), capabilities (Helfat and Raubitschek, 2018) or routines (Seidel et al., 2020) to successfully co-create, deliver and capture value. Although the participating entrepreneurs and customers have some freedom to shape their profile and activities, and pursue their interests, the platform develops and implements policies to facilitate interactions, drive ecosystem-level convergence, represent various actors in media and government relations, and initiate collective actions to legitimize and support PDEE's existence and functioning (Cutolo and Kenney, 2021; Garud et al., 2022; Thomas and Ritala, 2021).

1.2.2.2. Power

The concept of power is interrelated with platform ecosystem (Parker et al., 2016; Cusumano et al., 2019). Studies show that power of DPs relies on (1) the software and algorithms structures enabling or blocking activities, (2) the terms and conditions set up by the platforms that actors engaged with the platform have to agree (Barrett et al., 2016; Cutolo and Kenney, 2021). Kenney et al. (2021) highlight the power of DPs who shape terms and conditions freely (e.g., . amazon, Google Search and Booking can change the vendor's placement lists). Their case study of Amazon and its exceptional growth shows the scale and scope of a digital platform and highlights the pervasiveness of platforms in today global economy. One key attribute of DPs (mega-platforms like amazon or sectorial ones like Airbnb) is their ability to expand into many industries thanks to "generativity" (Zittrain, 2008) and "recombinability" (Henfridssson et al., 2018). According to Plantin et al. (2018), "platforms are infrastructure of and intermediaries for an ever-larger number of industrial sectors of the economy".

Positive societal externalities of digital platforms depend on how policy is being formulated thanks to a better understanding of the expansion dynamics of platform (Kenney et al., 2021).

Once established, digital platforms can scale quickly and globally due to the digital nature of their operations and network effects. This is in contrast to traditional businesses that often require significant physical infrastructure to scale.

1.2.2.3. Network effects

DPs in the SE benefit significantly from network effects. The more users a platform has, the more valuable it becomes to each individual user. For example, the more people listing and renting homes on Airbnb, the better the selection and pricing for guests, and the larger potential guests inventory for hosts. Network effects play a central role in a DP success, growth or survival leading to economies of scale and strong productivity. They are considered the most important measurement indicators of a DP ecosystem's health (Iansiti & Levien, 2004). Direct effects are when an increase of users on one side of the network is more or less valuable to the other users on the same side. Indirect effects are when an increase of users on one side of the network is more or less valuable for the other users on the other side. The attractiveness of the DP relies on strong and positive direct and indirect effects (Chu and Manchanda, 2016) which conduct to rise in market shares and therefore to market concentration in

sectors. At one particular point, an increase in the network size (i.e., indirect effects reach optimal point) can generate negative externalities i.e., inner competition, time and effort to search reducing the attractiveness of the DP (Wirtz et al., 2019; Xu et al., 2021). It is important to note, however, that indirect network effects may reach an optimal point beyond which any increase in the network size may create within-platform competition, enhance search costs, and thereby reduce the overall platform's network attractiveness (Cennamo and Santalo, 2013; Rochet and Tirole, 2003; Tiwana, 2015; Wirtz et al., 2019).

1.2.3. DPs in the SE

A DP in the SE organizes exchange between users, coordinates interdependencies and orchestrates resources in an ecosystem. They reduce transaction costs, enable value creation and exchange facilitating network effects (Thomas and Ritala, 2022).

The recent work of Markman et al. (2021), aiming at delimiting boundaries (e.g., what digital platforms are part of the SE or not), proposed a definition as "users, asset providers, and multisided platforms that facilitate temporary access to – rather than ownership of – assets that are rivalrous in their use, and that are not owned by said platforms."

DPs in the SE boundaries are associated with two notions (1) absence of ownership (e.g., ZipCar owns their assets and therefore is not part of the SE) and (2) being rivalrous (i.e., a digital platform is part of the SE if the usage is rivalrous in their use). The shift from ownership to access is a key characteristic of the sharing economy, enabled by digital platforms.

Gerwe and Silva (2020) pointed out the ongoing debate about the SE boundaries including its principles (i.e., profit or gift sharing), types of assets (e.g., human, capital). They provided an insight on the socio-economic system characterizing the DPs in the SE with a combination of 4 features: (1) online transactions are being organized by DPs allowing offline transactions (Belk, 2014; Frenken and Schor, 2017), (2) peer-to-peer transactions orchestrated by the SE organizations are between private individuals not professional (Hamari et al., 2016), (3) promoting access rather than ownership (Stefany, 2015), (4) focusing on underutilized capacity (e.g., home, skills, physical assets) (Constantiou et al., 2017). Based on those 4 features, they defined the SE as a "socio-economic system that allows peers to grand temporary access to their underutilized physical and human assets through online platforms".

Studies mentioned the positive benefits of DPs in the SE especially regarding environmental and societal issues such as interpersonal connection, pollution and poverty through the principle of shared consumption (Hamari et al., 2016). The concept of sharing services, skills, assets instead of owning coupling with the concept of matching supply and demand through DPs provide the benefits to society (Retamal and Dominish, 2017). “This stresses the power of high resource and capability accessibility which comprises the availability of those resources and capabilities in a latens stage (sharing) and connection between people (internet).” (Rojanakit et al., 2022)

1.2.3.1. Internal and external factors impacting DPs in SE

Interestingly, Rojanakit et al., (2022) considered that “SE is anti-capitalist in terms of production and pro-capitalist in terms of trade practice”. Their literature review of Rojanakit et al. (2022) classified factors impacting SE platforms: external factors (i.e., sociocultural, legal and political, technological and economic) and, internal factors (i.e., platform strategy). (1) The sociocultural aspect focuses on trust and customers motivation, (2) Technology encompasses technological evolutions and infrastructure (e.g., transaction security system) (Hasan and Birgach, 2016; Pazaitis et al., 2017). Development of technology allows reduction in transaction costs contributing to the SE growth (Acquier et al., 2017), (3) legal and political factors focus on regulations impacting the SE platforms growth (e.g., taxation) (Belarmino and Koh, 2020), (4) the economic factor is based on incremental revenue among individuals and equilibrium between providers and consumers (Peticca-Harris et al., 2018), (5) Lastly, the platform strategy through the lens of stakeholder management is addressed suggesting that the growth of a DP is subject to synergy and value between the platform and its actors (Fehrer and Nenonen, 2019; Laczko et al., 2019).

1.2.3.2. Specificities of DP in the SE

The academic literature found a consensus on the fact that (1) the SE relies on digital platforms allowing access rather than ownership by matchmaking resources or services (Evans and Schmalensee, 2016; Gawer and Cusumano, 2014) and (2) on two core foundations: sharing and connection (Stokes, 2017). The SE DP create commercial interactive ecosystems that are less hierarchically centralized and

less bureaucratic than traditional firms (Bai and Velamuri, 2021; Rojanakit et al., 2022). The DP in the SE is made of technical aspects (e.g., app) and social (e.g., people) (Dabbous and Tarhini, 2019).

1.2.3.2.1. Disruptive innovation

DPs in the SE represent disruptive business models with new activities and actors constituting an ecosystem defined as "a network of interdependent organizations linked to or operating around a focal firm or a platform" (Adner, 2017; Autio and Thomas, 2014).

We define disruption "as a process whereby a start-up with few resources is able to effectively challenge established incumbent businesses" (Christensen et al., 2015), therefore generating tensions to traditional business on a variety of sectors they serve, from transportation (e.g., Uber) to accommodation (e.g., Airbnb). For example, Ridesharing impacts not only the taxi industry, but also the mass transit and rental car market. (Parrot and Reich, 2018; Pan and Qiu, 2018; Reints, 2019). Home sharing impacts not only the hotel industry but also the real estate market and long-term rental (Wachsmuth and Weiser, 2018).

Pioneers in the emerging field of the SE (e.g., Uber, Airbnb) have in common the absence of clear identifiable ways of interaction among them. Whereas the incumbents' firms (e.g. taxi drivers, hotel industry) as very mature field, evolve in high institutionalized infrastructure with established "collective actors" (e.g., industry association), "social control agent" (Greenwood et al., 2002; Greve et al. 2010) and with processes characterized by the field (e.g., certifications) and logics transposed into regularized practices (Quinn et al. 1999).

1.2.3.2.2. Facilitating offline transactions

Shared access to resources can also contribute to community building. By sharing resources, people can interact with a larger community and foster connections that might not have been made in a purely ownership-driven economy. SE as multisided platforms, that do not own any assets, create value for providers and customers facilitating transactions reducing transaction costs by making investments for example (e.g., in technology and advertising) (Edelman and Geradin, 2016) and enforcing trust mechanisms (e.g., reviews system) allowing transactions amongst strangers. Gerwe and Silva (2020) argued that DP in SE are different than traditional platforms in the sense that transactions

are orchestrated online but operationally carried out offline with human interactions (e.g., a ride in a car, host a guest) (e.g., Ebay) and where both parties are highly exposed to risks as opposed to pure digital platforms (e.g., personal safety, care of the accessed asset). For example, online purchases are less risky than sharing a room or taking a ride with unknown people.

1.2.3.2.3. Peer-to-peer transactions

In the SE, digital intermediation serves as the foundational basis for the functioning and success of this new economic model. The rise of DPs has paved the way for a peer-to-peer (P2P) marketplace that leverages underused assets or services, facilitated by a third-party digital platform. Digital intermediaries act as matchmakers that connect supply and demand. In other words, these platforms bring together users who offer a service or product and those who seek that service or product. For instance, Airbnb connects homeowners offering short-term rentals (supply) with travelers seeking unique and homely lodging experiences (demand). Digital intermediation simplifies transactions by automating various processes, such as payments, reservations, and customer service. This automation reduces transaction costs and increases the efficiency of exchanges in the sharing economy. Participants of DPs are less likely to join and be affiliated to multiple platforms to avoid new technological complexity challenges, time and effort to maintain the affiliation and reputational status to create (Liang et al., 2017). For some DP, the multi-homing might reinforce the monopolistic position for example Airbnb especially for the providers. Xu et al., (2021) argue that the domination of DP is induced by the concept of multi-homing (i.e., affiliation with multiple platforms). DP leverage digital infrastructure for scalability, flexibility, and data-driven decision-making while promoting cost-effectiveness.

Gerwe and Silva (2020) pointed out that the term “peer-to-peer” induces “a sense of egalitarianism” (John, 2017) and could be applied to some SE platforms where peers can hold two roles as providers and customers. For example, this sense of equality is applicable to Airbnb where providers (i.e., hosts) can be also customers (i.e. guests). Peer-to-peer transaction occur when private individuals The Peer-to-peer transactions managed by non-professional individuals generate important regulatory impacts compared to traditional businesses (e.g., consumer protection). The DP strategic decisions are based on data knowledge management (e.g., eviction of an host). By contrast, traditional business operate under government regulation (Hati et al., 2021).

1.2.3.2.4. Temporary access to underutilized capacity

DPs in the SE are characterized by temporary access to assets without permanent ownership that differentiates with the second hand digital platform (Frenken and Schor, 2017). Access over ownership allows for more efficient use of resources. Access over ownership provides users with flexibility. They can access different products or services according to their changing needs and preferences, without the constraints that come with ownership. Ownership often comes with responsibilities such as maintenance, insurance, and depreciation. By shifting to an access model, users can enjoy the benefits of use without having to worry about these aspects. Participants of the DPs in the SE access to idle capacity or excess or underused capacity i.e., physical or human assets (e.g., rooms, skills), not additional specifically new dedicated capacity. For example, Zipcar is not a DP in the SE as vehicles are purchased to be rented. Gerwe and Silva (2020) pointed out that DPs in the SE can grow faster than traditional incumbents because they are light assets business models. For example, acquiring real estate is not required for Airbnb but attracting providers to offer their spare assets is vital (Parker et al., 2016).

1.2.3.2.5. Community-based trust systems

Community-based trust systems are an integral part of digital platforms in the sharing economy. This form of trust system, facilitated by user reviews, ratings, and often peer verification processes, creates a self-regulating ecosystem that fosters trust among strangers. DPs in the SE foster trust between strangers through systems such as user profiles, reviews, and ratings. These mechanisms create a shared reputation system that incentivizes proper behavior from both parties involved in a transaction. Community-based trust systems are an integral part of DPs in the SE. This form of trust system, facilitated by user reviews, ratings, and often peer verification processes, creates a self-regulating ecosystem that fosters trust among strangers.

Real-time interaction: DPs often provide features for real-time interaction, such as messaging systems. This allows users to communicate directly with each other, ask questions, clarify details, and establish a sense of trust before entering a transaction.

Dispute resolution and insurance: To further foster trust, many platforms offer mechanisms for dispute resolution, and some provide insurance policies. This provides users with a sense of security, knowing that if something goes wrong, the platform has mechanisms in place to help resolve the issue.

Community norms and guidelines: DPs often establish community norms and guidelines that outline the expected behavior of users. These norms and guidelines can create a shared understanding of how users are expected to interact with each other, further fostering trust.

1.2.3.2.6. Labor flexibility

One of the most significant benefits for those who offer services on sharing economy platforms is the ability to work flexible hours. Drivers for Uber or hosts on Airbnb, for example, can choose when they want to work and how much. Digital platforms allow individuals to earn money from assets they already own (like a car or home) or skills they have. This diversification can provide a secondary source of income or act as a safety net in times of financial instability.

There are typically low barriers to entry and exit for service providers on DPs in the SE. This allows individuals to start or stop providing services relatively easily, depending on their needs and circumstances. The nature of work in the sharing economy is often decentralized and can be performed independently. This aspect can be appealing to entrepreneurial mindset or wishing to avoid the horizontal hierarchical organizations. DPs, unlike traditional businesses, are not tied to a specific physical location and can typically operate wherever there is an internet connection. This makes them scalable across different regions and markets. While there are clear benefits to the flexibility and casual labor opportunities offered by DPs in the SE, there are also challenges and criticisms. Independent contractors on these platforms do not have the same job security as traditional employees. They also typically lack benefits like health insurance, paid leave, and retirement plans. This issue has led to ongoing debates about the classification of workers in the sharing economy. While the opportunity to earn, extra income can be beneficial, it can also be unpredictable and inconsistent with the uncertainty of not knowing their exact income in a given week or month.

However, the evolution and growing importance of the SE foster a reevaluation of labor laws to protect users, ensure public safety and competition by reducing the monopolistic power of the dominant SE platforms, develop effective privacy data regulations and understand impacts on urban planning and infrastructure (Schor, 2016).

1.2.4. An Ecosystemic relational view

The advent of the DPs in the SE created new opportunities for entrepreneurial activities structured in ecosystems orchestrated by platform owners (Cutolo and Kenney, 2019; Nambisan, 2017). In the last 10 years, a rapidly expanding literature attempted to identify and explain the structural and functional characteristics of these platform-dependent entrepreneurial ecosystems (Autio et al., 2018; Cusumano et al., 2019; Cutolo and Kenney, 2019; Garud et al., 2022; Gawer, 2014; Jacobides et al., 2018; Kenney and Zysman, 2016; Nambisan, 2017; Nambisan et al., 2019; Sussan and Acs, 2017). Within this diverse literature, a central research issue is the relationship between platforms and platform-dependent entrepreneurs (PDEs) (Cutolo and Kenney, 2019; Kenney and Zysman, 2016; Nambisan and Baron, 2019; Srinivasan and Venkatraman, 2017) that ultimately determines the functionality and success of the DP ecosystem. The existence of these relationships is determined by specific objectives and strategies that are likely to evolve over time depending on the DP's strategic priorities (O'Mahony and Karp, 2022).

Adopting a relational view, Schlüssler et al. (2021) (Figure 5) describe three types of relationships which determine, through their dynamic complementarity and interdependence, the structure and functioning of DP ecosystem. The logic of "mutuality" emphasizes reciprocity and sharing around relations that can be distinct from conventional commercial exchanges. The platform often promotes horizontality and solidarity using a sharing economy rhetoric (Schor and Vallas, 2021), as mobilizing a sense of community can be useful - beyond instrumental perspectives - to elicit users' active participation in the self-regulation of peer-to-peer exchanges and to deal with relevant trust issues (Celeta et al., 2017). These mutual relations may lead in time to practice-sharing or knowledge-sharing routines or to the co-development of goods and services from common resources.

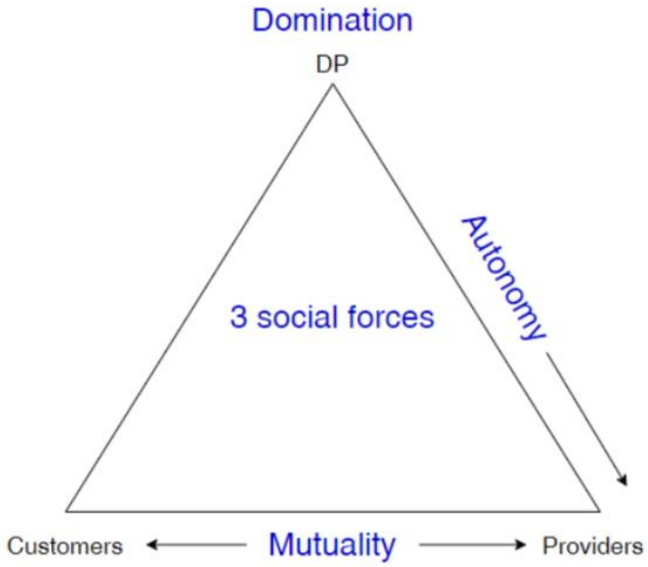


Figure 5: Platform's management of PDEs relations within a specific PDEEs to gain strategic legitimacy: A dynamic relational view (Source: Schlüssler et al., 2021)

"Autonomy" relates to the search for freedom and independence that characterize digital platforms in opposition to the conventional economy, which is often based on hierarchy and control (Sundarajan, 2016): while traditional firms create value within the boundaries of a company or supply chain, digital platforms utilize an ecosystem of autonomous agents to co-create value (Hein et al., 2020). DPs' users are considered free to access or leave the platform when they wish, and to decide the volume of activity and the intensity of their relationship with the platform or other users. In consequence, the platform owner must cope with varying levels of control, scalability, and flexibility (Parker and Van Alstyne, 2018) that leads to practices of open governance, low-entrance barriers, joint decision-making processes, or work flexibility (Hein et al., 2020; Josserand and Kaine, 2019), as freedom and autonomy are highly important for platform users (Fitzmaurice et al., 2020).

Finally, the "domination" perspective highlights mutual interdependencies between various actors and power asymmetries between platform and users – both customers and micro-entrepreneurs (Cutolo and Kenney, 2021). For instance, platforms can implement and use mechanisms to discipline, control or even ban complementors, which raises fundamental questions regarding the values of freedom and sharing they promote (Buhalis et al., 2020; Shibata, 2020).

Studies highlight that internal and external factors play a significant role in influencing and facilitating the emergence and acceptance of the DP ecosystem in the SE; as well as the dyanmics relationships and practices amongst multiple actors. Existing research on ecosystem highlights that DP collaborating with their ecosystem of actors (e.g., consumers, providers, local communities and governments) bring sustainable competitive advantage and stimulate innovation within the platform ecosystem (Adner, 2017; Laczko et al., 2019).

1.3. DPs in the SE: a multi-actor perspective

Much of the literature about the positive effects of DPs in the SE deals with trust building, flexibility, optimal reach, social ties among actors (Hawlitschek et al., 2018; Sutherland and Jarrahi, 2018). However, many empirical studies examined issues encountered by actors facing new actors disrupting institutionalized industries such as Airbnb in the accommodation sector. Sthapit and Björk (2019) focused on guests' issues, Ert et al. (2016) on hosts issues, Schäfer and Braun (2016) on the government issues, Roelofsen and Minca (2018) on communities' issues, Ginindza and Tichaawa (2019) on competitors' issues.

Thomas and Ritala (2022) define ecosystems as "communities of interdependent yet hierarchically independent heterogeneous participants who collectively generate an ecosystem value proposition often emerge through collective action, where ecosystem participants interact with each other and the external environment". They highlight the positive externality of heterogenous independent participants' interactions through collective actions, driving ecosystem legitimacy. The interaction amongst actors of the ecosystem and their environment generates collectively the ecosystem value proposition. Ecosystem literature has focused on how independent and nonhierarchical actors are interrelated due to an economic and technological complementary (Thomas and Autio, 2020). Interactions amongst multiple actors conducting collective action is central to the ecosystem value proposition.

1.3.1. "The need to work together"

Pioneered DPs Uber or Airbnb introduction on their respective markets generated negative externalities on incumbents firms (Zervas et al., 2017) and on local communities where they operate (Ricart et al., 2020). For example, multiple riding options might increase the urban traffic; cheapest travel accommodations might develop mass tourism in tourist destinations. Incumbent firms' responses are to search establishing barriers to DPs by creating coalitions (e.g., with an industry association or with the government), especially when it is not costly (Ansari et al., 2016). Reactions from individuals who do not benefit from the DPs may lead to collective resistance against the DPs by influencing local regulatory bodies. Cities responses to DPs differ; some facilitating market opportunities whereas some others restricted or banned digital platforms (Uzunca et al., 2018). This leverages the need for digital platforms to "work together". Ricart et al. (2020) newest contribution is to focus on local actors, not limited to incumbents' firms. On a multi-actor's perspective, a large and growing body of literature has investigated the spectacular growth of Airbnb in tourism cities. These studies analyzed the impacts of Airbnb presence in major cities, on the local population, on the hotel industry, on the rental market and real estate market (Horn and Merante, 2017; Quattrone et al., 2018), and zoning and Airbnb distribution (Lagonigro et al., 2020).

Table 2: Summary of Airbnb literature Scopus search for papers from Jan.2009 to July 2020 (Source: Hati et al., 2021)

Actors	Themes	Authors
Hosts	Decision to take guests Hosts status and reviews Hosts market listings Hosts motivations Host-guest interactions Host-platform and host-community relationships Host perceptions Host demographics Host pricing and performance	Abrate and Viglia (2019); Cai et al. (2019); Dolnicar and Talebi (2020); Ert and Fleischer (2019), Fudurich and MacKay (2020); Jaeger et al. (2018); Leoni and Parker (2019); Scerri and Presbury (2020); Sun et al. (2019); Tang et al. (2019) Törnberg and Chiappini (2020); Wang et al. (2020); Zhang et al. (2020);
Guests	Purchase intention Repurchase intention Satisfaction Loyalty	Ert et al. (2020); Huarng and Yu (2019); Mody et al. (2019a) Nathan et al. (2020) ; Tran and Filimonau (2020) ; Yi et al. (2020) ; Xu et al. (2019a, 2019b)
Communities/ neighbors	Geographical characteristics of cities (e.g., distance to center) Social characteristics of cities (e.g., population density) Economic characteristics of cities (e.g., number of housing units)	Domènech et al. (2019); Lagonigro et al. (2020); Quattrone et al. (2018); Xu et al. (2019a)
Competitors	Impacts of Airbnb Brand equity Light asset model Regulations Digital and technology driven or not	Boros et al. (2018); Dogru et al. (2019); Dolnicar, (2019); Manning et al. (2018); Varma et al. (2016); Zervas et al. (2017)
Employees	Not Airbnb employees but statut of the hosts	Munkoe (2017)
Government and regulators	Community issues related to Airbnb Suggested regulatory framework	Chen et al. (2020); Frenken et al. (2019)

The environmental impact of Airbnb has not yet been studied a lot. Alvarez-Herranz and Macedo-Ruiz (2021) have attempted to study the impact of Airbnb using the concept or "overtourism" on Madrid neighborhoods. Overtourism is defined as: "the excessive growth of visitors leading to

overcrowding in areas where residents suffer the consequences of temporary and seasonal tourism peaks, causing them permanent changes to their lifestyles" (Milano et al., 2019). They examined the impacts of Airbnb accommodations in Madrid neighborhood on the economic dimension (i.e., variation in purchase price, rental price m2 from the previous year, variation average household income), on the social dimension (i.e., safety and social and economic cohesion) and on the environmental dimension (i.e., tertiary activity, waste production and noise). This support the phenomena of "Airbnbfication" first studied by Guttentag (2015) and Quattrone et al., (2018). Higher demand for tourism accommodation increases the real estate value and reduction in housing for local population with direct social and economic consequences on neighborhoods i.e., gentrification (Smith, 1979). Alvarez-Herranz and Macedo-Ruiz (2021) questioned sustainable tourism with the destination carrying capacity especially in urban areas: "Resources are limited, so there will always be a maximum number of tourists that a destination can support without causing irreversible damage to the social, economic and environmental structure".

1.3.2. Multiple actors perspectives

Aligned with the stakeholder theory, DPs management oriented towards salient stakeholders would benefit societal support (Mitchell et al., 1997). For DP, in addition to the users and providers, stakeholders' groups are citizens and local regulatory authorities which deliver license to operate and impact each DP's market.

In respect to Freeman (1984) stakeholder management framework, management decisions should be focused on "all those who may affect or be affected by a business organization." Post et al. (2022) pointed out that any organization should aim at creating value in various ways for different groups of actors. Institutional and socio-economic context matter on SE business models but little is known about the impact of SE on social life and how it differs in diverse institutional and local contexts (Mair and Reischauer, 2016).

1.3.2.1. Relational business model

To reduce the escalation of tensions, Ricart et al. (2020) proposed a relational business model to facilitate joint value creation among actors. This relational business model combines a proactive

inclusive stakeholder value proposition (SVP) with an ecosystem-centered governance. The SVP consists in including affected actors in their business model which could reduce actors resistance. The ecosystem-centered governance would propose new roles to the existing disadvantaged local ecosystem actors (e.g., residents) and municipalities, i.e., a multi-sided business model structure rather than a typical two-sided relation. It would avoid the exclusion of actors that could lead to escalating conflict with local actors provoking reaction from the local, regional and national regulatory bodies (i.e. ban the DP). For example, Ricart et al. (2020) studied Airbnb in Barcelona and the escalating conflicts between the DP and the City (e.g., fines on Airbnb and hosts with recidivism) that made trust recovery with neighborhood associations and other actors very difficult. Interestingly, the authors considered that exclusion of actors not only strengthen conflicts and send a signal to actors that the DP is not motivated to be "engaged in communal sharing with the local ecosystem".

Zeng et al. (2021) pointed out that DPs' innovation relies on the capabilities to generate and develop sustainable reciprocal relationships with all external actors (beyond providers and consumers) (i.e., co-creation process) (Garud et al., 2022). Karanovic et al., (2020) shows that curative solutions emerge in the case of Uber whereby drivers provided solutions when facing some local regulatory constraints.

Carrasco-Farré et al. (2022) investigated how DPs deliver their value proposition to its urban actors focusing on the central role of city though a study of Airbnb in Barcelona. They showed that a rise of conflict with the city occurred when the stakeholder value proposition (SVP) is not respected by the digital platform whereas under conditions of mutual adjustment and business model adaptation, a process of "joint value creation" is possible between the platform and its actors.

1.3.2.2. Service ecosystem

Multi-actors engagement is examined by Breidbach and Brodie (2017) through the concept of "service ecosystem". Actor engagement defined as "the actor's disposition to engage, and the activity of engaging in an interactive process of resource integration within a service ecosystem" is central in the co-creation process (Storbacka et al., 2016, p. 3008). Interestingly, policy regulators and media are considered as actors playing "equally important roles in the dynamics of service ecosystems in the context of the sharing economy". However, civil community actors and policy regulators issues have not been considered in their work.

1.3.2.3. Social License to Operate

Interestingly, Baumber et al., (2019) proposed a SE Social License to Operate (SLO) framework to overcome the negative impacts of the SE on some actors and build social license in the SE. The SLO framework previously used in controverted sectors such as extractive industries (e.g., mining) would be applicable to the SE and "act as an early warning system to help avoid losing an existing regulatory approval, having new regulations imposed on them or encountering additional costs associated with community conflict." The SLO concept would require adaptations for the SE but still proposes insights on high-relational and trust-building strategies with actors and examine the potential to integrate legitimacy frameworks into SLO strategies (Laïfi and Josserand, 2016).

1.3.2.4. A meta-organization perspective

Berkowitz and Souchaud (2019) examined how DP in the SE "meta-organize" to self-regulate and regulate their practices i.e., actions at the industry level lead by DPs. They proposed an hybrid governance combined with (1) "a multi-agency regulation", (2) "self-regulation via a process of partial meta-organizing" and (3) "direct civil participation". They studied a main French meta-organization in participative crowdfunding. Because DP in the SE play a major role in the economy today and because the sectorial existing regulations do not respond to the SE specificities (Cohen and Sundararajan, 2015), the authors proposed to address those regulatory challenges trough the concept of meta-organizations i.e., organizations of organizations (Arhne and Brunsson, 2005). The concept of meta-organizations

concerns multi-actors' initiatives at the industry level (e.g., industry association) allowing self-regulation. Their case study on the French crowdfunding platform, Financement Participatif France (FPF) traces the co-construction of the regulatory framework with policymakers and with self-regulation via the DP meta-organization i.e., joint self-regulation including multiple actors. The authors highlighted that DP meta-organization are characterized by "unique organizational form and coordination mechanisms". (Figure 6)

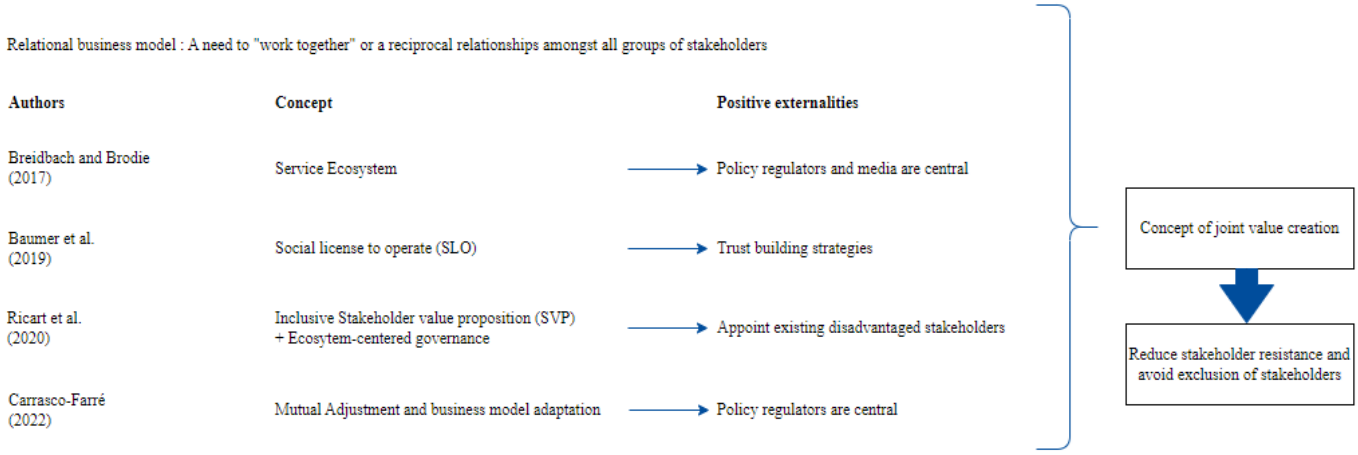


Figure 6: Relational business models (self-elaboration)

1.3.2.5. An evolutionary multi-actors perspective

Heterogenous multiple level actors interacting shape the ecosystem and its evolution and impact its markets (Zervas et al, 2017), especially DP in the sharing economy in the hospitality market (Xu et al., 2021). Xu et al. (2021) contributed to a better understanding of the evolving dynamic changes of DP ecosystem in the SE and interaction among actors. Their original contribution inspired by ecosystem ecology and socio-cultural evolution allow a classification of micro-and macro level actors. At the micro level, are the focal DP, customers, providers, facilitators with direct interaction with customers and complementors. At the macro level are competitors, non-platform users, incumbents' firms, regulators and media. At the macro and micro level, groups of actors interact in a reciprocal relationship, whereas interactions of actors within the same group could be twofold (1) cooperative and/or (2) competitive, as well as between micro and macro environments. For example, Lyft and Uber compete directly but cooperate creating an alliance to influence and lead lobbying activities to promote

peer-to-peer ridesharing (Xu et al., 2021). Their contribution points out the importance to consider DP ecosystem with an evolutionary perspective i.e. “co-evolving actors tied together by multiple relationships” by fostering cooperative interactions and relational capabilities to maintain strong market leadership position (Xu et al., 2021). They proposed an in-depth analysis of interactions and relationships amongst actors at the micro or macro level. For example, the interactions between the DP and the customers point out that customer loyalty is driven by (1) improved customer experience (e.g., suggested preferences), (2) indirect interactions (e.g., privacy data protection through allowed communication between peers on the platform exclusively), and (3) “institutionalized” reviews and rating process as trust mechanisms.

Transposing Xu et al. (2021) multiple actors classification to Airbnb ecosystem (Figure 7).

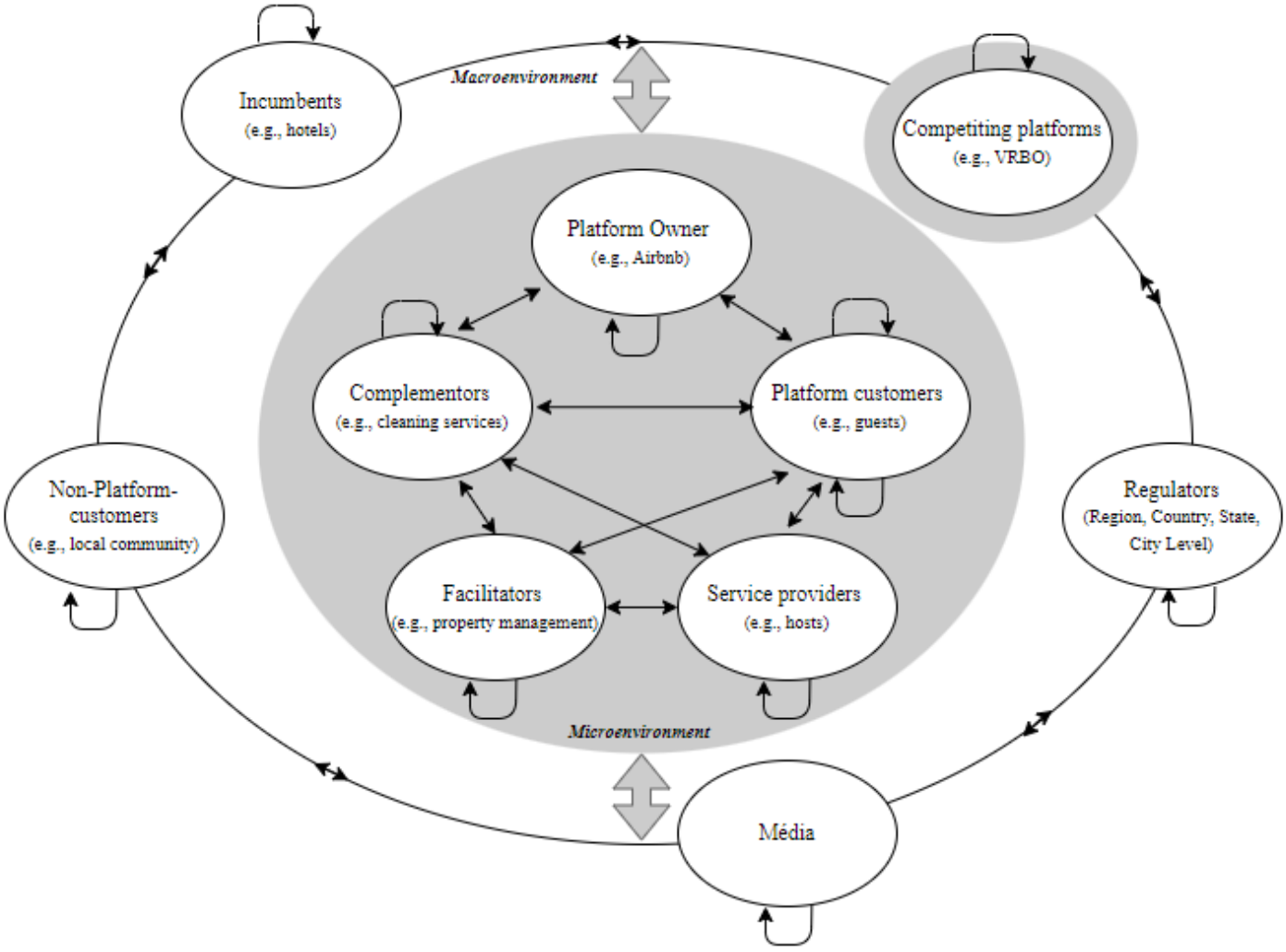


Figure 7: Airbnb ecosystem (self-elaboration inspired by Xu et al., 2021)

Xu et al., (2021) introduce constantly business model variations as solutions to overcome difficult situations enhancing the constant evolutive nature of DP ecosystem (Xu et al., 2021). DP performance and survival within its ecosystem relies on the abilities to cope with those variations, i.e., the DP network's health (Iansiti & Levien, 2004).

Xu et al., (2021) highlighted the dynamic and evolving capabilities of DP to "better fit their changing institutional and resource environment" (Thomas et al., 2014). For example, in 2018, Airbnb decided to evolve its business model opening the platform to boutique hotels and bed and breakfasts, changing the profile of Airbnb service providers, adding internal competition with new professional hotel quality standards. This shift provided a network effect with an increase of hosts and guests. Guests returned to book a home or a room on Airbnb after their first experience with the booking of a hotel room (Airbnb 2019).

1.3.3. Example of a multi-actors perspective: Airbnb

The case of Airbnb reveals the potential of a DP in the SE revolutionizing the accommodation sector disrupting local community and incumbents' firms institutionalized in their local context since a century such as Marriott. In more than a decade, Airbnb has become one of the most predominant digital platform in the sharing economy even though is not the unique peer-to-peer short-term rentals accommodation DP. Who would have thought 10 years ago that Airbnb could disrupt the hotel industry, could transform the concept of hospitality with peer-to-peer transactions, create a new type of entrepreneurs and put short term regulations on the agenda of worldwide cities?

Hati et al. (2021) proposed a systematic literature review on Airbnb examining the relationships with its various actors. They provided an in-depth analysis of six groups of Airbnb actors i.e., employees, guests, hosts, competitors, communities and policymakers by assessing their level of influence and power. A large body of literature has investigated Airbnb customers i.e., guests, hosts, communities, competitors, government (see table 3). Their study examined the level of power and influence of each group of actors. Referring to Spitzeck and Hansen (2010), power is defined as "the level of authority one stakeholder has in the organization" and influence as "the level of involvement the party has" (Hati et al., 2021). The results showed that the 6 groups of actors have various levels of influence and power. Peer-reviewing process fuel the influence. For example, by evaluating hosts, guests have an important role and influence the status of the hosts (Gunter, 2018). Hosts provide the

physical assets to Airbnb to operate and therefore are vital to the DP and by reciprocity, the platform Airbnb provides the technical infrastructures for hosts allowing them to earn additional revenues. Hati et al. (2021) argued that (1) the triadic relation between guests, hosts and Airbnb is a cooperative relationship, (2) local government and regulators power is strong impacting seriously the DP operations (Grimmer et al., 2019), (3) local community and competitors as groups of actors impacted negatively with no power on the DP but strong influence on policy makers handling the conflictual relation with Airbnb by collective action at the community neighborhood level (Cheng and Foley, 2018) and at the hotel industry association level. Interestingly, in 2018, Airbnb allowed boutique hotels and bed and breakfasts to list their unoccupancy rooms on the platform shifting from competitor's role to hosts (4) and finally employees as a group of actors with low influence and power in reference to the management of the COVID-19 context and layoff of workers.

Table 3: Impacts of Airbnb on communities (self-elaboration, inspired by Alvarez-Herranz and Macedo-Ruiz, 2021; Hati et al., 2021)

	Positive consequences		Negative consequences	
Economic	Extra income and lower prices alternatives to traditional options.	Apostolidis and Haeusseler, 2018	Providers dependence	Dredge, 2017; Zervas et al., 2017
	Business opportunities	Dillahunt and Malone, 2015; Farmaki and Kaniadakis, 2020, Petruzzi et al., 2020	Tax evasion	
	Job employment		Impact on sales revenue of incumbents firms	
	Strenghtening the local economy			
Social	Social interaction with strangers and for providers generate a feeling of achievement and empowerment	Al-Ani and Stumpp, 2016; Gunter, 2018; Foster et al., 2013 Lee and Kim (2018)	Increase of housing prices and long lease rental converted into short term rental.	Balampanidis et al., 2019 Benner, 2017, Cheng et al., 2018 ; Chica-Olmo et al., 2020 ; Edelman et al., 2017; Farmaki and Kladou, 2020; Guttentag, 2015 Quattrone et al., 2018; Mashhadi and Chapman, 2018; Petruzzi e tal., 2020; Stergiou and Farmaki (2019); Wachsmuth and Weisler, 2018; Wegmann and Jiao, 2017; Yrigoy, 2019
	Bilateral reviews allowing certifications tactics "Superhost"		Existing systemic bias in the reviewing mechanism of the DP	
	Residents confidence in their neighborhood infrastructure		Digital discrimination	
			Gentrification	
			Change in local culture impacting the authenticity	
			Neighborhoods impacts on safety, "illegal hotels"	
			Overtourism Increasing tensions between residents and tourists	
Environnemental	Increase maintenance and natural environment preservation	Suess et al., 2019	Water scarcity	Alvarez -Herranz and Macedo-Ruiz, 2021; Prinsloo and Fitchett, 2023
	Maximize the use of underutilized capacity. (Ferreri and Sanyal, 2018)		And Waste management issues	
			Overtourism with pollution, garbage and noise	

CHAPTER 2.
DIGITAL PLATFORMS IN THE SHARING ECONOMY: A LEGITIMATION PROCESS

2.1. Fundamentals in legitimacy

2.1.1. Introduction

> "Do Uber and Lyft drivers want to preserve their "flexibility and independence" as independent contractors? Or do they want to unionize and fight the companies for the pay and benefits they deserve?[1]"

July 2023, hundreds of Uber and Lyft rideshare drivers protested in front of Massachusetts' state house for unionization rights impacting a press conference handled by Uber-backed groups.

Two coalitions were formed, each claiming to represent the voice of rideshare drivers and funded differently. They released dueling ballot initiatives to decide the rights of Uber and Lyft drivers. Uber and Lyft spent $43 million on a campaign to face ballot initiatives that would give ride-sharing drivers to unionize. Drivers joining unions could advocate for changes in the industry. Accordingly, Uber or Lyft did not only fund campaigns, but they also supported the anti-union drivers. In exchange for speaking at rallies, they received gas certificates, and free lunches.

This example shows that DPs in the SE are confronted with new demands or unanticipated concerns while engaging with market actors and social groups, representing threats or opportunities leading to new legitimacy challenges. After entering existing markets, DP are still facing legitimacy challenges and consequently must deploy strategies to maintain their legitimacy adapting to local contexts constantly. Interestingly, the process of legitimation of DP in the SE is not limited to the first year while entering existing market as the "newest value proposition" or "liability of newest", but as a dynamic process involving heterogeneous actors.

DPs in the SE transformed sectors and disrupted well established institutions and organizations, attracting a new type of entrepreneurs driven by technology allowing low entries cost market (Sundararajan, 2016, Van Alstyne and Choudary, 2016). However, DPs in the SE face many challenges explored in several studies and explained in the first chapter, such as (1) the chicken and egg problem

[1] https://www.fastcompany.com/90933621/how-uber-and-lyft-quietly-fund-worker-groups-to-pump-the-brakes-on-drivers-organizing?utm_source=newsletters&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=FC%20-%20Compass%20Newsletter.Newsletter%20-%20FC%20-%20Compass%208-9-23&leadId=548193&mkt_tok=NjEwLUxFRS04NzIAAAGNeRhsORtHdPnJI7qGsqhv54h_J32qn3QrYmYEsbodPg1ylUvz_y9XNNzeg-vYY-0X5968hysrBR3tGi7eiGktDj3Or-rChtmLTuG_KUE_Accessed Accessed August 09 2023

(i.e., the balance between direct and indirect network effects) (Caillaud and Jullien, 2003), (2) the "local network effects" complexifying the scale-up of operations with critical local mandatory adjustments to the local context (Sundararajan, 2016).

In chapter one, we highlighted the controversies of the SE and the still pending discussion on positive and negative externalities along with CSR topics applied to DP in the SE. Opposing societal rules conformity with the societal and environmental claims of DP in the SE, we address in this chapter the legitimacy discussion of the SE. According to Suchman (1995), one key factor of the success of an organization is legitimacy on the strategic (resource management) and institutional approach (fulfillment with the norms and values).

Indeed, Suchman (1995) pointed out the crucial role of legitimacy for the success of an organization as it attracts actors allowing resource and support from actors. Scholars revealed that appropriate management of cognitive, normative and regulative institutions, such as public opinion and regulations, is as central to organizational performance as business marketplace performance (Marquis and Qian, 2014; Seelos and Mair, 2007).

Digital platforms in the sharing economy seeking legitimacy are "filled with conflict, tensions and contestation" (Thornton et al., 2012). Legitimacy is a necessity for organizations to act and is granted by others; whereby legitimation is the process whereby organizations gain and maintain their legitimacy (Suchman, 1995). Scholars consider legitimacy as a relational notion that reveals the dialogue between the society and the organization.

Why is it critical to study legitimacy of DPs in the SE? Legitimacy is central in DPs' entry market dynamics because their business models is built on network effects i.e., scaling their market actors as fast as possible. We refer to market actors as users of a DP either buying the service (e.g., Uber passenger or Airbnb guest) or providing the service (e.g., Uber driver or Airbnb hosts). Aldrich and Fiol (1994) pointed out that legitimacy is central in the sense that it allows those new business models to access to vital resources i.e., cognitive legitimacy while not fulfilling the existing regulations i.e., a lack of sociopolitical legitimacy.

Legitimacy has appeared as a crucial but often complicated construct in management theory. Prior studies have noted the central role of legitimacy when DPs entered a market as disruptive innovation reshaping the relationship between the market, regulators and the society at large.

Überbacher (2014) summarized the literature on legitimation mechanisms of new ventures defined as "nascent organizational entities in their first years of existence" (Garnter, 1985) through the review of 60 studies highlighting the five perspectives of new ventures legitimation research: institutional perspective, cultural entrepreneurial perspective, ecological perspective, impression management perspective and social movement perspective.

It is also a critical topic in many sciences, political science (Lipset, 1959), psychology (Tyler, 2006), philosophy (Habermas, 1975). Starting in the seventies, scholars started examining how institutions affected organizational and economic activity (Scott, 2011). Institutional theories discussed the scope of the organizational environment and opened the debate around symbols, beliefs, rituals and cultural norms, not limited to technological or material imperatives (Suchman, 1995). In organization studies, the research stream was focused on the ability of institutions "to control and constrain organizational behavior by defining legal, moral and cultural boundaries and distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable behavior" (Scott, 2014). Basically, legitimacy is associated with the idea of a "social contract" (Adler et al., 2018) where organizations are part of a broad social system and their survival requires them to appear as they should operate in conformity with "the multitude of implicit and explicit expectations that society has about how an organization should conduct its operations" (Deegan, 2018).

When an organization does not fulfill the requirements and expectations i.e., "social contract", the legitimacy of the organization is being challenged. Empirical studies focused on how cultural and social requirements influence an organization to satisfy and "legitimate practice" within an institutional field (Davis, 1991), i.e., the isomorphic forces in organizational fields.

Later, the research interest shifted to explore the active role of how actors challenge the pressures from social and cultural expectations (Marquis & Lounsbury, 2007) i.e., research on institutional work and institutional entrepreneurship considering that actors create new institutions or transform the existing ones by leveraging symbolic resources and material (Lawrence et al., 2009).

In this intellectual debate came the concept of organizational legitimacy addressing the cognitive and normative dimensions that "constrain, construct and empower organizational actors" (Suchman, 1995). After three decades, research in legitimacy studied (1) legitimacy in a pragmatic view of actors' relations, (2) legitimacy in a normative evaluation of moral propriety and (3) legitimacy in a cognitive dimension of interpretability and appropriateness.

2.1.2. Legitimacy by Suchman (1995)

2.1.2.1. Definition

There is no debate about the need to start with Suchman (1995) masterpiece on organizational legitimacy "that is, in reality, several distinct literatures strategic and institutional; pragmatic, moral and cognitive; legitimacy building, legitimacy maintaining and legitimacy repairing".

A variety of definitions of legitimacy has been proposed by scholars in social science summarized in table 1. For example, Maurer (1971) depicted legitimacy with an evaluative dimension as an "hierarchical and evaluative" process, in which Pfeffer and Salancick (1978) adding the "cultural conformity" dimension. In other views, organizations are legitimate when they are "understandable, rather than when they are desirable" (Meyer and Acott, 1983) i.e., with a focus on the cognitive dimension. "Organizational legitimacy refers to… the extent ot which the array of established cultural accounts provide explanations for an organization's existence" (Meyer and Scott, 1983).

In this research project, we refer to Suchman (1995) organizational definition who adopted a broad definition of legitimacy that integrates both the cognitive and evaluative dimension.

We referred to his definition of legitimacy as "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions".

In short, this definition induces that legitimacy is "socially constructed" reflecting a compatibility between the "behaviors of the legitimated entity and the shared beliefs of some social group", thus legitimacy is dependent on a collective audience i.e., public approval.

Table 4: Evolution in defining legitimacy over the years (self-elaboration inspired by Maurer, 1971; Pfeffer, 1981; Meyer and Scott, 1983; Suchman, 1995)

	Dimension	Definition
Maurer (1971)	Hierarhical, evaluative	"Legitimation is the process whereby an 80organization justifies to a peer or superordinate system its right to exist"
Pfeffer (1981; Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975)	Evaluation and cultural conformity instead of "self-justification"	"congruence between the social values associated with or implied by organizational activities and the norms of acceptable behavior in the larger social system"
Meyer and Scott (1983, Scott, 1991)	Focus on the cognitive than the evaluative dimension	"organizations are legitimate when they are understandable, rather than when they are desirable"
Suchman (1995)	Inclusive: evaluative and cognitive dimensions	"Legitimacy is a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions"

2.1.2.2. Two-dimensional organizational legitimacy: strategic and institutional

Suchman has yielded significant contributions to the management of organizational legitimacy taking a strategic and institutional perspectives. Strategic legitimacy considers legitimacy as an "operational resource" that induces a high level of managerial control over the legitimation process whereas institutional legitimacy considers legitimacy as "a set of constitutive beliefs" (Suchman, 1988). According to Suchman (1995), all audiences of an organization cannot be completely satisfied. However, management of activities can create desirable, appropriate, and proper perception of the focal organization emphasizing the role of communication between the organization and its audiences. Three legitimation challenges are described (1) gaining legitimacy, (2) maintaining legitimacy, (3) repairing legitimacy highlighting the different legitimation dynamics and legitimation as a non-homogenous process. According to Suchman (1995), one key factor of the success of an organization is legitimacy on the strategic (resource management) and institutional approach (fulfillment with the norms and values).

Interestingly, Suchman (1995) introduced organizational legitimacy by questioning "legitimacy for what?". Legitimation efforts deployed by organizations could be important, difficult, or effective depending on the objectives set up and efforts measured. Two dimensions are to consider: (i) Does an organization seek to pursue continuity or credibility and (ii) Does an organization seek active or passive support?

2.1.2.3. Three types of organizational legitimacy

Suchman (1995) proposed one of the most influential typologies of legitimacy defined as "(1) pragmatic, based on audience self-interest), (2) moral, based on normative approval and (3) cognitive, based on comprehensibility and taken-for-grantedness" and highlighted the disparities and similarities between the institutional and strategic approaches. Today, researchers refer to those three different perspectives: (i) legitimacy grounded in pragmatic assessments of actors relations, (ii) legitimacy grounded in normative evaluations of moral propriety and (iii) legitimacy grounded in cognitive definitions of appropriateness and interpretability (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994).

2.1.2.3.1. Pragmatic legitimacy

Pragmatic legitimacy is defined as "self-interested calculations of an organization's most immediate audiences" (e.g., cost reduction), meaning direct exchange between the organization and its constituencies evaluating the organizational behavior's practical consequences on them. Suchman proposes two types of pragmatic legitimacy: (1) exchange legitimacy refers to the fact that there are favorable exchanges between the organization and its constituents who support the organization inducing a notion of power-dependence relations (Pfeffet and Salancik, 1978) and influence and (2) dispositional legitimacy considering the organizations as individuals "have our best interests at heart", "share our values".

2.1.2.3.2. Moral legitimacy

Moral legitimacy considered as "sociotropic" is defined as "it rests not on judgments about whether a given activity benefits the evaluator but rather on judgments about whether the activity is "the right thing to do". This type of legitimacy, considered as moral judgments of the organization and its activities, evaluate (i) its outputs and consequences, (ii) its techniques and procedures, (iii) its categories and (iiii) its structures (Scott and Meyer, 1991). (i) Organizations produce socially valued consequences named the consequential legitimacy where "organizations should be judged by what they accomplish". (ii) Procedural legitimacy embraces socially accepted techniques and procedures as implementation of discrete routines. For example, does the organization inspect its products for defects? (iii) Structural legitimacy represents its structural and category characteristics. For example, does the organization have a quality control department? (iiii) Personal legitimacy is related to the charisma of individual organizations' leaders.

2.1.2.3.3. Cognitive legitimacy

Cognitive legitimacy is a type of legitimacy based on cognition rather than interest or evaluation (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994) with two variants (i) legitimacy based on comprehensibility and (ii) legitimacy based on taken-for-grantedness. Cognitive legitimacy is managed indirectly by the organization and determine whether organizations' results, leaders visions and business practices are necessary of inevitable. (i). Comprehensibility: "Legitimacy, according to this view, stems mainly from the availability of cultural models that furnish plausible explanations for the organization and its endeavors" (Scott, 1991; Wuthnow, Hunter, Bergesen, & Kurzweil, 1984).

(ii) Taken for granted legitimacy: "According to this view, institutions not only render disorder manageable, but they also actually transform it into a set of intersubjective "givens" that submerge the possibility of dissent".Suchman (1995) studied the management of legitimacy consequently proposing a set of appropriate techniques and actions i.e., strategies to gain, maintain and repair legitimacy at the pragmatic, moral and cognitive levels. Table 2 presents concisely the legitimation strategies corresponding to the acquisition, maintenance, and repair strategies whereas the vertical dimension represents the pragmatic, normative and cognitive type of legitimacy.

Table 5: Legitimacy strategies (self-elaboration inspired by Suchman, 1995)

	Gain	Maintain	Repair
Pragmatic	Conform to demands Select markets	Monitor tastes Protect exchanges	Deny Create monitors
Normative	Conform to ideals Select domains	Monitor ethics Protect propriety	Excuse_justify Dissasociate
Cognitive	Conform to models Select labels	Monitor outlooks Protect assumptions	Explain

2.1.3. Legitimacy by ALDRICH and FIOL (1994)

The work of Aldrich and Fiol (1994) represents a major source of inspiration for empirical research in legitimacy for industry and entrepreneurs facing the "liabilities of newness" such as the ones in the sharing economy (Garud et al., 2022) and our research project. "Among the many problems facing innovating entrepreneurs, their relative lack of legitimacy is especially critical, as both entrepreneurs and crucial actors may not fully understand the nature of the new ventures, and their conformity to established institutional rules may still be in question."

Entrepreneurs launching new activities in new industries "without having role models" face many constraints starting with the lack of credibility and familiarity, that are essential to establish ties and generate interaction and cooperation, within an environment that might not recognize or comprehend their reality, however considered as windows of opportunity. The authors argued that trust relations to be developed by founders is central to win actors and institutional support "making it a powerful weapon against the vicious cycle of social barriers to innovation" (e.g., lobbying activities).

Sociopolitic and cognitive legitimacy

The two key core frameworks of legitimacy offered by Aldrich and Fiol (1994) are sociopolitical legitimacy defined as "a degree of congruence between a focal organization's characteristics or behaviors and the normative expectations in the cultural meaning system of the other organizations that surround it". Whereas, cognitive legitimacy is defined as "an extension of sociopolitical legitimacy that occurs when there is such a high degree of congruence or acceptance between the normative expectations of the organization and its environment that they are unquestioned or taken-for granted."

2.1.4. Legitimacy by SUDDABY et al., (2017)

Recently, Suddaby et al. (2017) reviewed the legitimacy construct reviewing and synthesizing past academic research through a thematic analysis allowing to determine three views of legitimacy. The thematic analysis addressed three key questions: "What is legitimacy? Where does it occur? How does it occur?" with results in table 6. (1) legitimacy as a property, a resource focused on the organization and its environment where actors "are seen to possessor own legitimacy"; (2) legitimacy as a process (i.e., legitimation) with a larger perspective that examines legitimacy as the result of multiple actors 'interaction where actors are considered "change agent" interfering in the process; (3) legitimacy as a socio-cognitive perception at a cross level process of judgments where actors have the role of evaluators.

Table 6: Three research streams of legitimacy (self-elaboration inspired by Suddaby et al., 2017)

What is legitimacy?	**Construct**	**Where does it occur? Actors engaged in measuring, producing or evaluating legitimacy**	**Roles of actors**	**How does it occur?**
Legitimacy as a thing, an asset	Legitimacy as property	2 primary actors: the organization and its external environment	"Own or possess legitimacy"	The outcome of congruence Degree of "fit" between the attributes of an organization and the normative expectations of its external environment
Legitimacy as a interactive process	Legitimacy as a process: "legitimation"	The product of interaction of multiple actors	"Change agent"	A product of how the congruence is achieved, agency, the purposive role of actors explaining how legitimacy is socially constructed.
Legitimacy as a form of socio-cognitive perception or evaluation	Legitimacy as perception	Cross-level process of perceptions, judgments of appropriateness and actions in interactions between the collective and the individual.	"Evaluator"	From judgment of appropriateness from evaluators at different level of analysis.

2.1.4.1. Legitimacy as a property

Legitimacy is "a property, an asset, or a resource possessed in measurable quantity by some legitimacy object in relation to others". The legitimacy as property studies two primary actors: the organization and its external environment. By examining the institutional environment surrounding the organization from which it is supposed to have gained its legitimacy, legitimacy can be measured. Those environmental measures are media content analysis (Bansal and Clelland, 2004) and regulatory authorizations (Tost, 2011). The degree of "fit" between the organization attributes and its environment takes various terms: "congruence" (Suchman, 1995), "consistency" (Ruef and Scott, 1998), "cultural alignment" (Scott, 1995), "acceptance" (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975). Interestingly, Suddaby et al., (2017) illustrates the "fit" between the organization and its various environments such as (1) its administrative environment referring to managerial legitimacy such as the way the organization manages its employees or fulfills accounting or financial procedures or (2) technical legitimacy referring to the fit between the organization and its professional technical environment such as professional standards, control quality. Scholars studied three organizational strategies in order to reach the "fit" or "congruence" between the organization and its environment, (1) conforming, (2) decoupling and (3) performing/learning.

2.1.4.2. Legitimacy as a process

The legitimacy as a perception focuses on the "judgements of appropriateness" and actions among collective and individual level. Some researchers have focused on "delegitimation" or "the process of social construction of illegitimacy or stigma" (Maguire and Hardy, 2009). Scholars have identified three processes of legitimation (1) "persuasion/translation/narration", (2) "theorization", (3) "identification/categorization". Empirical research found that a central element of legitimation is communication referring to "framing" (Benford and Snow, 2000) or "rhetoric" (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005). Interestingly, legitimation as a process is the outcome of cocreation and contestation of social actors at multilevel, not of a single actor, each actor working at their own self-interest (Maguire and Hardy, 2009).

2.1.4.3. Legitimacy as a perception

Legitimacy as a perception refers to legitimacy as a property in the sense that property as "taste, assessment or judgment of the appropriateness of an organizational product, practice or characteristic." The perception lens posits legitimacy as a process i.e., processes of making judgments focusing at the micro level on the individual who assesses organizations, act by consequences and could create macrolevel effects (Hoefer & Green, 2016). Scholars referring to this perspective, legitimacy is formed by individual's judgment combined with a set of collective judgment and individual's beliefs.

In brief, Suddbay et al. (2017) work contributed to clarify the rich literature on legitimacy as a complex construct identifying three complementary conceptions of legitimacy, legitimacy as a property, as a process or as a perception across multiple level of analysis and different actors.

Our research project refers to legitimacy with two lenses (i) legitimacy as a property in the sense that legitimacy is conceptualized as an intangible asset to acquire, maintain and repair and (ii) legitimacy as a process, i.e., legitimation in the sense that legitimacy is not acquired and is continually negotiated involving multiple social actors.

In this research project, we will examine legitimacy of DP in the SE taking the two approaches: (1) the strategic: "the ways in which organizations instrumentally manipulate and deploy and evocative symbols in order to garner societal support" (e.g., Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990) (2) the institutional: "emphasizes the ways in which sector-wide structuration dynamics generate cultural pressures that transcend any single organizations' s purposive control" (e.g., Di Maggio and Powell, 1983) and investigate the different strategies taken by entrepreneurs facing the "liabilities of newness". to gain cognitive and sociopolitical legitimacy taking the view of Aldrich and Fiol (1994).

2.2. Legimacy and DPs in the SE

How can an "illegal organization" be listed on the US market?

That was the question repeatedly addressed by respondents during the first round of data collection in 2019. The Airbnb future IPO was mentioned by respondents as the objective of the CEO of Airbnb. Actors in NYC could not imagine that the platform could succeed in conforming to the rules of the corporate world. In December 2020, the platform did it the worst economic year i.e., the collapse of the worldwide economy but was considered the most successful IPO of the year.

2.2.1. DPs' challenges

Scholars highlighted the dynamic and complex nature of legitimacy challenges for DP, not specifically, DP in the SE (Zietsma et al., 2018). For example, Google or Facebook's negative externalities appear on the scene long after their launch. Their quick adoption and recognition by society were based on the access for free to information search or to social network. Many years after their launch, the fact that those two platforms monetize data users raised concerns about data privacy (Zuboff, 2019). Negative externalities are a loss of legitimacy, legal battles with penalties and new regulatory frameworks (Stewart, 2018).

Debates oppose values of sharing and democratization of collaborative and economic relations (Bostman and Rogers, 2011; Belk, 2010) with controversies such as working conditions, privacy, sustainability, taxation (Murillo et al., 2017), racial bias (Vallas and Schorr, 2020). "The extant literature on SE seemingly reconducts the classical opposition between "economy" and "values" by opposing market and nonmarket logics" (Mercier-Roy and Mailhot , 2019). SE is still portrayed in two ways either as an alternative to hyper consumption (access over ownership) (Bostman and Rogers, 2011) and other as profit and capitalistic driven (Murillo et al., 2017).

DPs in the SE do not fit with existing norms and cultural beliefs addressing specific normative and regulative issues different than traditional actors who accused them of unfair competition and questioned the legality of DPs in the SE. For example, Ackermann et al., (2022) work on the accommodation sector argued that the fact that personal assets are listed on the DP digital infrastructure on which personal information is published and visible to anyone would have been unrealistic more than 10 years ago. They argued that: "like any new form of organization operating in a new market category, sharing economy platforms need to achieve comprehensibility and acceptance among their target market actors to operate, grow and survive" (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994; Humphreys & Latour, 2013). "Such support is granted in the form of legitimacy, defined as a generalized perception of organizational actions as desirable or appropriate within a social system" (Suchman, 1995).

2.2.2. Complexity

DPs as matchmaker need to attract users while responding to market actors, regulatory bodies and third parties. Mair and Reischauer (2017) argued that legitimation challenges are more complex for DP in the SE in the sense that DPs in the SE provide the same service as traditional business (e.g., a room) by facilitating access to existing private assets. Therefore, there is a diversity of approaches such as the need to harmonize with the existing traditional business regulatory framework for some policy makers whereas some argue that they are not tailored to DPs in the SE (Garud et al., 2022).

Firstly, one of the complexities of the legitimacy challenges is that network effects are localized. For example, Sundararajan (2016) argued that Uber riders are exclusively concerned with the ride sharing service experience in their cities. In other words, the cognitive legitimacy is localized which complexifies the DP entry on market to adapt to specific local contexts (Garud et al., 2014).

Secondly, by addressing the "chicken and egg" problem (Caillaud and Jullien, 2003) when entering the market, DPs in the SE must encounter adverse tensions and pressures with regulators i.e., "game of chicken" (Schelling, 1960).

2.2.3. Issues impacting SE legitimacy

The global phenomenon of the SE and the network effects have expanded exponentially the use of DPs' services and disrupted badly incumbent firms. For example, traditional taxi cabs companies face strict regulations and very expensive licenses to operate whereas Uber does not. Studies showed the negative impact on traditional taxicab companies sales e.g., -65% in San Francisco in 2 years. Hwang (2019) provided an interesting in-depth discussion about the legitimacy and social responsiveness of DP in the SE (i.e., societal and economic impacts) and role in the society at large opposed to their claims. He investigated how the negative externalities of the SE impact the legitimacy of the field and how to repair its legitimacy.

Table 7: Issues impacting legitimacy of the SE and consequences (self-elaborated inspired by Hwang, 2019)

Issues impacting the legitimacy of the SE	Impacts	Consequences
Limited or biased data access	Reduce power of local governments to regulate Convince people to join	Difficulties to make policy decisions A narrative controlled by the DP
Worker classification	Lack of protection of workers	Absence of minimum wage, unemployment insurance, overtime pay. Control of the DP
Business practices	Violation of anti-trust laws "Illegal Homes" "Illegal Hotels"	Surge in pricing (rental prices) Tensions on supply/demand (e.g., long versus short term lease)
Taxation rules	Shift profit to tax havens	Missed tax revenues for countries
Consumer protection	Misrepresenting rating systems	Safety
Communication	Narrative with a confident tone and biased data analysis Terminology "sharing"	Manipulation

2.2.4. Case of Uber

> "Uber provides users with an opportunity to rate drivers on its mobile app, but these ratings are the lightest form of consumer protection".[2] (Jericho G (2016))

The controversies that characterize the SE give a unique opportunity to examine the legitimation processes in order to better understand why some digital platforms succeed and some don't. In this vein, Zhang et al., (2017) studied the formation of institutional legitimacy identifying the legitimacy issues faced by Uber using textual analysis techniques from media articles between 2009 to 2016. The study of Uber by Zhang et al., (2017) allowed to better understand the legitimacy issues specific to a DP classified by the three types of legitimacy: regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive (Scott, 1995).

[2] Source: The dark side of Uber: why the sharing economy needs tougher rules. https://www.theguardian.com/business/grogonomics/2016/apr/18/uber-Airbnb-sharing-economy-tougher-rules-australia. accessed August 17, 2023.

2.2.4.1. Regulative legitimacy

Regulative legitimacy refers to existing laws using "coercive pressure to conform" (Zhang et al., 2017), to the establishment of regulation and mechanisms that enforce regulation compliance and solve tensions. Regulative legitimacy is discussed with authorities, with the government, town councils and legislators. In the regulative legitimation process, there are two types of approaches: (1) disruptive strategies where platforms test and challenge existing laws, (2) contestation from providers (i.e., taxi driver) through demonstrations.

2.2.4.2. Normative legitimacy

Normative legitimacy refers to shared norms and values that drive appropriate and expected behaviors or acceptable practices in the industry. "What people should do or should not do" (Di Maggio and Powell, 1983).

Normative legitimacy is negotiated at industry level. There are three types of normative issues: (1) contestation visible through market growth and moves from the competition and (2) attractiveness of "reputed" funders allowing to build the norms of the industry, (3) the rhetoric of SE influencing the collective mindset from a "disruptive innovation" to a progressive and efficient innovation.

2.2.4.3. Cultural-cognitive legitimacy

Cultural-cognitive legitimacy refers to "cultural beliefs rooted in an institutional environment that shape the interpretive schemas or frames people use when selecting and processing information" (Scott, 1995)

It involves the interpretation of human activities filtering a mix of appreciation, belief, perception and progresses through social interaction and learning experiences influenced by pressure to conform (i.e., "what people typically do or not do") to be legitimate. Cultural-cognitive legitimacy is negotiated at the individual level calculating the perceived value and utility (e.g., oppose the benefits of the service against concerns). In the case of Uber, there are two types of cultural-cognitive-legitimacy issues (1) safety concerns fueled by the news (e.g., rape, attack), (2) features of the app (e.g., price, free rides).

Table 8: Uber main issues per legitimation type (self-elaboration inspired by Zhang et al., 2017)

Type of legitimacy	Issues	Actors engaged
Regulative	Legality: testing of existing regulations Drivers'right	Authorities at government
Normative	Disruptive innovation Cooperation and competition Investment funding	Industry level
Cultural-cognitive	Safety Features	Individual perception level

Interestingly, Zhang et al., (2017) showed that Uber started facing legitimation issues in 2012 with major issues on the regulative and normative legitimacy among the three types of legitimacy. Normative legitimacy represents the major issues for Uber in searching to attract funding, in growing market share, in influencing to be seen as innovative. Equally important is the need to increase regulative legitimacy, highly contested by the authorities. Zhang et al., (2017) argued that the cultural-cognitive legitimacy issues are less omnipresent because Uber can directly react in fighting those issues (e.g., technological enhancement of the app).

The study of Zhang et al., (2017) also analyzed the legitimation issues across the three regions in the world (i.e., North America, Europe and Asia). In North America, the normative legitimacy issues were predominant (i.e., legality issues) whereas in Asia, the cultural-cognitive legitimacy issues prevailed (i.e., safety concerns) followed by the cultural-cognitive legitimacy issues with strong competition with the expansion of the ride-sharing market. As opposed to Europe where regulative legitimacy issues are predominant.

2.2.5. Legal and Regulatory issues

Regulators, local, national and regional institutions considered SE as a promising field at its emergence reporting its potential to endeavor a new sustainable way of consuming with optimized use of assets, allowing cheaper access to services, providing extra revenues, and fueling a new entrepreneurial dynamic. However, years later, tensions arise mainly from incumbents' firms, local community, SE workers about unfair competition, consumer security and safety, worker status, personal data privacy.

In the US, there are a myriad of local court rulings or ordinances at the state level but there is not one regulation at the federal level affecting the SE. Recently, California and Florida stated that Uber drivers are no longer independent contractors but employees. As opposed to some other countries, such as China, where a national framework has been set up to proactively promote and strengthen local SE digital business initiatives and consequently, endangers the implementation of US pioneered DP abroad (e.g., Airbnb failure in China).

According to Hwang (2019), the abuses of DP in the SE increased negative perceptions about SE's legitimacy impacting its cognitive legitimacy (Suchman, 1995) i.e., number of litigations.

On the other hand, the cheaper prices and easy access contributed to its pragmatic legitimacy. The detailed descriptions of the DP actions in various topics by Hwang (2019) lead to question the legitimacy and responsibility of the DP in the SE.

The narrative of DPs is fueled by a positive tone and big data analysis that portrayed them as the solution to improve workers' life conditions with significant increases in their revenues optimizing their unexploited assets. For example, Uber claimed that a driver's average income per year is $90k but did not specify that this average concerns NYC drivers with more than 40h rides per week and no reference to charges (e.g., gas, insurance).

Hwang (2019) listed the "socially irresponsible practices" (table 3) in regulatory, labor and taxation issues orchestrated by DPs in the SE impacting the legitimacy of the SE i.e., limited data access, worker classification, business practices, taxation rules, consumer protection, communication.

Chapter two starts by laying out the theoretical dimensions of legitimacy and looks more specifically at the challenges, issues and complexity of legitimacy for DP in the SE. It will then go on to the strategic and institutional perspectives.

Strategic legitimacy examines legitimacy as an "operational resource" that organizations obtain competitively from their cultural environments and use to achieve their objectives inducing a managerial control at high level of the legitimation process especially aiming at "tangible real outcomes" such as profits and sales (Pfeffer, 1981; Suchman, 1988). Therefore, the strategic view of legitimacy is characterized by oppositions between constituents and managers encompassing legitimation activities that are calculated and purposive. As opposed to strategic legitimacy, institutional legitimacy is not an operational resource but "a set of constitutive beliefs" (Suchman, 1988) "where external institutions construct and interpenetrate the organization in every respect".

Because DPs in the SE face institutional pressures and strategic business challenges, we take a twofold perspective, strategic and institutional to overlook the organizational managerial view and the institutional society view perspectives. We aim at looking at both ways and examine how legitimacy undertakes the role of a "manipulable" resource and the role of a "taken for granted belief system" (Swidler, 1986).

2.3. Strategic perspective

2.3.1. Introduction

From a strategic perspective, legitimacy is a resource which facilitates the attraction of other resources necessary for the survival and growth of an organization, such as capital, technology, talents, clients, networks, etc. (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994; Scott, 1995; Zimmerman and Zeitz, 2002).

2.3.2. Platform Dependent Ecosystem (PDE)

DPs need organizational legitimacy to attract users and resources that are necessary for growth and success i.e., the orchestration of their ecosystem. Ecosystems are defined as "communities of hierarchically independent yet interdependent heterogeneous participants who collectively generate an ecosystem value proposition (Thomas and Autio, 2020) and are typically orchestrated by a focal actor that possesses key technology (such as platform) or other resources" (Adner, 2017). In the literature, ecosystems analysis is commonly portrayed as a structure composed by the digital platform (i.e., orchestrator) and the participants (i.e., contributors). Ecosystems are characterized by complex interdependencies constituted by autonomous heterogeneous actors.

It is thus important to identify the means through which a platform may come to be seen as legitimate by its main actors (Ingram Bogusz et al., 2019). This is even more important for DP and their ecosystem, as digital platforms remain organizations with a legitimacy under construction (Garud et al., 2022), contested by criticisms of their business models, their regulation and their promise to be part of the sharing economy (Ansari et al., 2016; Snihur et al., 2018).

DPs are different than traditional organizations' value creation architectures. One of the value creation characteristics of DP is that DP orchestrate transactions or exchanges connecting platform participants without any production or ownership of products by themselves (Chen et al., 2018). The revolution of digital platform era is marked by the engagement and connection capabilities between users accessing to the services at a very low cost for DPs. Their focal position in creating and capturing value through external value orchestration within its ecosystem serves different interdependent customer groups (Andersson Schwarz, 2017; Sun and Zhang, 2021). According to Barnes and Mattsson (2016), it is crucial that people are aware and personally motivated to participate in the SE. Technological barriers, ability to use the service (Apte and Davis, 2019) influence DPs' success (Gupta et al., 2019). DPs in the SE orchestrate an ecosystem of external players and communities. Ecosystems created by DPs allow to reduce business "friction" facilitating transactions between suppliers and buyers thanks to peer reviewing systems and algorithms (Markman et al., 2021).

The legitimacy of an emerging ecosystem is more difficult to be established because of (1) the liability of newness and the heterogeneity of actors (e.g., markets and industries) participating in the ecosystem (Yan and Aldrich, 2017). The "liability of newness" (Freeman et al., 1983) faced by ecosystem's emergence reinforces the importance of legitimacy exposed to doubts about their growth and survival (Ansari et al., 2016). Moreover, legitimacy is central in the case of DP ecosystem facing the "chicken-and-egg" problem (i.e., appeal sufficient participants) enabling the value proposition attractiveness of the ecosystem (Thomas and Ritala, 2022). According to Adner and Feiler (2019), the economic, technological and cognitive interdependencies among the ecosystem participants call for collaborative framework "routines" and establishment of coherent frontiers among participants roles.

2.3.3. Entrepreneurs as key resources

From a strategic perspective, entrepreneurs represent both key actors and key resources for digital platforms, their profile and activity signalling the economic potential of the platform dependent entrepreneurs (PDEs), which can attract further resources and opportunities. PDEs thus appear as boundary resources and digital platforms can strategically influence – through rules, sanctions and incentives (Nambisan et al., 2019), both the type of attracted complementors and their evolution in time (Cennamo and Santalo, 2013; Logue and Grimes, 2019). PDEs have also been described as legitimacy buffers since digital platforms are in search of "high-status" complementors for legitimacy

building (Taeuscher and Rothe, 2021). Considering the way in which digital platforms manage their relationships with PDEs is therefore central to understand the role of complementors in the construction of its PDE's legitimacy.

2.3.4. Customer management

2.3.4.1. Market intelligence

In chapter one, we summarized the stream of research about understandings sources of motivation of users of DPs in the SE and especially focusing on customers 'motivations (i.e., economic gains, societal considerations). Literature outlined the importance for DPs in the SE to be recognized as legitimate by consumers to facilitate their expansion. Therefore, we seek to better understand the customers "acceptance" of this new innovative form of consumption because customer support is vital to the growth of emerging DPs in the SE.

Customer orientation relies on an organization focusing on customers and in market intelligence responsiveness to create superior value to them (Narver and Slater, 1990). From the cultural perspective, it is perceived as "a set of beliefs that puts the customers interests first and being a part of an overall much more fundamental corporate culture" (Deshpandé et al., 1993).

Information systems research showed that data quality and quantity contribute to value creation and source of performance (Constantinides et al., 2018). Market intelligence feeds interaction and communication in the digital world and therefore has a critical role. (Castell et al., 2023). The literature review on customer orientation has been carried out that market intelligence gives current and future customer preferences (Kohli et al., 2019). Moreover, a positive customer orientation generated by customer understanding relies on external data in addition to internal selected data of the market and customers. For digital platforms, challenges are the management of unstructured real-time data with customer privacy concerns, the high velocity of information on time and complexity of data (Kennedy et al., 2003).

2.3.4.2. Ressources coordination

Zeng et al. (2021) propose a framework to better understand the value creation process of DP in the SE through resource allocation characterized by three patterns (i.e., on-demand resource adaptation, big data driven network effect and ecosystem resource coordination). The DP role of coordination and orchestration of their resources is twofold oriented towards (1) their external resources (i.e., engagement of groups of consumers and suppliers) and (2) internal resources (i.e. data collection from platform participants and data analytic) to create value (e.g., customized user experiences). They highlighted the role of big data as a central internal resource and allowing artificial Intelligence capabilities defined as "the ability of a platform to learn from data to continuously improve its products or services for each user, gives rise to new platform externalities, where a user's utility of a platform is a function of the scale of data-driven learning and improvements realized with AI" (Gregory et al., 2020: p5). Predicting future consumers' expectations, attitudes and emotional reactions composes competitive advantages and valuable resources in the sense that they are difficult to imitate. (Zang et al., 2022). The synergy between external and internal resources can facilitate the focal organization's internal capabilities (Chesbrough, 2003).

2.3.4.3. Customer orientation

In the digital platform literature, surprisingly, customer orientation research in digital platform context highlights that digital platform chooses a traditional customer relation directing its efforts to one independent, single customer group (Castell et al., 2023). In contrast, Chakravarty et al. (2014) proposed the term "platform customer orientation" referring to (1) customer orientation asymmetry (i.e., customer orientation for one market side preferred to another one) and (2) the sum of customer orientation toward each market side.

Despite the growing expansion of the leading DPs in the tourism sector (e.g., Uber and Airbnb) for 15 years, the maintenance of their legitimacy is still a challenge competing with traditional actors active in their markets for over a century. The work of Ackermann et al., (2022) focusing on the accommodation sector contributed to a better understanding of the customers "acceptance" i.e., how legitimacy of DPs in the SE affect tourist intentions using the three legitimacy framework by Scott (1995), (i) cultural-cognitive (i.e, "the degree to which an organization fits the existing cultural schemas", (ii) regulative (i.e., "the degree to which an organization conforms to the institutionalized

laws and regulations within a system") and (iii) normative (i.e., "the degree to which an organization adheres to the norms and aligns with the values in the social system").

Ackermann et al., (2022) contribution to the legitimacy literature is the customer focus adoption in the accommodation sector. On the customers perspective, the SE as a new field has a lack of (1) cultural-cognitive legitimacy as customers do not have the cultural experiences of the service (Humphreys and Latour, 2013), a lack of (2) regulative legitimacy due to legal sanctions (Dogru et al., 2020) and a lack of (3) normative legitimacy due to absence of norms and misalignment with values (Jordan and Moore, 2018). For example, the unfair consideration of hosts does not fit with the norms of the hospitality sector and with the community values of DPs in the SE and would cause a deficit in normative legitimacy (Newlands and Lutz, 2020).

The study of Airbnb (Ackermann et al., 2022) outlined that there is an increasing cultural understanding using services of the digital platform that leverages its cultural-cognitive legitimacy (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994). However, regulative and normative legitimacy issues arise among customers due to the consideration of the negative societal consequences of Airbnb comparing it with traditional legitimate actors in the hospitality sector. The other contribution of Ackerman et al., (2022) is to integrate the concept of relativism on consumers perceptions of DPs in the SE. Relativism refers to "the extent to which individuals reject universal moral rules when drawing conclusions about moral questions (Forsyth, 1980). Individuals with high relativism are more likely to believe that there are other perspectives apart from universal rules that should be applied when considering the moral appropriateness of a behavior." They concluded that individuals with high relativism neglect more regulative and normative issues than the ones with low relativism.

2.3.5. Power asymmetry

In this process of legitimacy construction, academic discourse has often neglected the power asymmetry between the platform and its PDEs (Cutolo and Kenney, 2020; Nambisan and Baron, 2021). According to the power-dependence theory (Emerson, 1962) power stems from control over valued or needed resources by others, and the availability of alternative sources for these resources. In PDEs, although most actors represent independent organizations that are not engaged in hierarchical relationships (Jacobides et al., 2018), the platform (i) controls data collection, flow and processing, (ii) codifies and enforces procedures, quality standards and certifications, (iii) provides incentives and

distributes resources, and (iv) from a market perspective, it often has a monopoly position (Schüssler et al., 2021) that ensures a critical mass in terms of networks, brand recognition, reputation, and competitive advantage – both in relation to other platforms and to traditional market actors (Cutolo and Kenney, 2020). All these elements reinforce the power of the platform, which is only limited by its resource-dependency on physical and cultural assets controlled by PDEs (Srinivasan and Venkatraman, 2018). Curchod et al., (2020) described power asymmetries through three mechanisms orchestrated by the DPs (i) role of employee monitoring, (ii) online users evaluation and (iii) mediator in discussion.

2.3.6. Role conflict

On their side, PDEs may experience an inherent role conflict: on the one hand, as ecosystem members, they must work within the vision, goals, and structures defined by the platform (Nambisan and Sawhney, 2011); on the other hand, they have to ensure the long-term survival of their ventures, implementing, when necessary, a different strategy from the advocated by the platform (Nambisan and Baron, 2021). PDEs' fragmentation and their relative competition with each other often prevents the possibility of spontaneous collective action to defend their interests (Kenney and Zysman, 2016; Kuhn and Maleki, 2017), an independent market strategy remaining the only alternative. However, in time, most PDEs evolve towards a locked-in situation, becoming more are more dependent on platform's technology, market system and ideology, and thus reducing their chances to regain control and autonomy (Cutolo and Kenney, 2020; McIntyre et al., 2020).

2.4. Institutional perspective

2.4.1. Introduction

The remaining part of this section takes an institutional perspective presenting the other actors (e.g., regulatory and policy makers, media, local community, incumbent firms) with a collective view followed by a focus on the institutional complexity characterizing the SE and institutional work.

2.4.2. Collective view of legitimating actors

Thomas and Ritala (2022) identified the legitimating actors (i.e., ecosystem actors and external actors) to be considered as contributor in the rise of the ecosystem value proposition (e.g., media or the regulators). Ecosystem-legitimating actors defined are:

(1) the orchestrator as the "keystone actor" (Iansiti and Levien, 2004) coordinating the connection with users and designing the ecosystem (e.g., identity) through relational and technical governance mechanisms (Iansiti and Levien, 2004; Wareham et al., 2014). Emerging ecosystems are specific in the sense that there is a need to convince contributors about their role in the value creation i.e., co-creation and meanwhile convince users and external audiences of the ecosystem's dynamic (Dattée et al., 2018).

(2) complementors as providers or contributors to the ecosystem value proposition (Jacobides et al., 2018) and consequently vital to the ecosystem as there is no ecosystem without complementors. Interestingly, Thomas and Ritala (2022) highlighted that complementors contribute to the normative legitimacy "through the mere act of participating" and to the cognitive legitimacy in fueling the discourse around the ecosystem (Autio & Thomas, 2018). Through their qualitative contribution, complementors participate in the ecosystem viability individually (Taeuscher & Rothe, 2020). More specifically, in the case of emerging ecosystems, complementors urge to build their individual and collective legitimacy (Swaminathan and Wade, 2001).

(3) users by essence fuel the emergence of normative and cognitive legitimacy by using the ecosystem value proposition and benefiting from it.

(4) external actors. Interestingly, Thomas and Ritala (2022) consider external actors of an ecosystem as legitimating actors such as regulators (by establishing new norms), competitors (by adopting the system) media (by influencing general public perceptions), financial analysts (by addressing the ecosystem value) (Beunza and Garud, 2007).

2.4.3. Institutional complexity: coexistence of multiple logics

Institutional theory offers an interesting theoretical foundation to examine SE.
The SE is characterized by pluralism of forms and practices i.e., institutional complexity perspective allowing to better investigate the plural organizational forms. (Mair and Reischauer, 2017). The institutional complexity perspective refers to emphasize how organizations respond to institutions and stresses the exposure to coexisting and multiple logics that create different and conflicting demands (Greenwood et al., 2011). The concept of institutional logics refers to "a set of material practices and symbolic constructions" (Friedland and Alford, 1991). Each logic refers to a group of values, rules, beliefs and practices and "legitimacy is established within the order a logic provides". (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005). For example, traditional actors established their legitimacy on their market position (Thornon et al., 2012). Researchers have shown that multiple and competing logics coexist and interplay structuring the relational dynamics among actors (Mair and Hehenberger, 2014). There could be three situations to illustrate the competing interplay between logics (1) one logic prevails and the others are inferior (e.g., Airbnb dominant logic is commercial and the community logic is secondary); (2) "battling with each other for supremacy until ultimately one logic wins out—becoming the new dominant institutional logic for a period of time" (Goodrick and Reay, 2011: 376); (3) a contingency relation between logics depending on the activity and geographical scope. Organizations face multi-faceted logics differently, some experience a good number of logics or some face incompatibility, some being challenged (Greenwood et al., 2011) and some other showed opportunities (Kraatz and Block, 2008).

2.4.4. Institutional work

2.4.4.1. Definition

Institutional complexity i.e., multiple logics and institutional work are complementary in the sense that institutional complexity relates to how institutions impact organizations whereas institutional work deals with how organizations influence institutions (Mair and Reischauer, 2017). The institutional work perspective provides an interesting framework to investigate the pluralism of practices and have an in depth understanding on how organizations attempt to shape institutions (Mair and Reischauer,

2017). Institutional work refers to "the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions" (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: 215).

Practices undertaken by organizations are classified by three types: create, maintain and disrupt institutions to gain legitimacy. (1) Practices to create institution means the establishment of practices to legitimate a new institution; for example, the use of a new app on a cellular phone relates to the creation of a new institution in the sense that new apps have replaced the old institution to use a telephone to call. (2) Practices to maintain institutions show why original configuration dominates despite efforts to change institutions. (3) Practices to disrupt institutions to modify existing institutions (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). The driving forces to apply those practices described above and engage organizations in institutional work corresponds to the wish to become or stay legitimate (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006; Mair and Reischauer, 2017).

We propose to highlight what characterizes institutions as permanent, stable and resistant to changes (Strang and Sine, 2002). Disrupting existing markets and institutional context results in (i) political power between competing actors in the industry, (ii) conflicts within organizations, (iii) contradictions of institutions and interdependence (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Levy and Scully, 2007; Zhang et al, 2017). Institutional legitimacy is obtained through the creation of meanings and the use of symbols and language. (Munir and Philips, 2005; Suchman 1995). In other words, these are institutional works defined as "the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions" (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006).

Institutional theorists also refer to institutional entrepreneurs who propose new solutions within a new organizational framework to spread the innovation, negotiating with key strategic actors (Tracey et al., 2011) whereas traditional actors react through defensive actions and maneuvers with more actors (e.g., trade associations, regulators, customers). The confrontation between the old and new logics might result in different situations (e.g., new institutions succeed, or the old institutions prevail or a more hybrid format).

2.4.4.2. Institutional work by Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006

DPs in the SE challenge social norms, beliefs and regulatory frameworks. Recent studies have examined the ways DPs work to encounter contestation, tensions and conflicts in the sense how they aspire in creating or disrupting institutions. The institutional work perspective from Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) contribute to better understand the mechanisms used by DPEs to "engage in institutional creation and disruption" strategies and tactics initiated by DP (Mair and Reischauer, 2017; Thornton et al., 2012; Zvolska et al., 2019).

Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) proposed the original framework on "how organizations create, maintain and disrupt institutions" and examined how organization engage in institutional work, a process defined as "the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions" (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: p.25).

Institutional environments, defined as "the rules and requirements to which individual organizations must conform in order to receive legitimacy and support"(Scott, 1995 p.132), impact organizations; however organizations can also create, construct or break into institutions (Thornton et al., 2012).

2.4.4.2.1. Create institutions

Three types of institutional works are undertaken by actors to create institutions: (1) working to modify regulatory institutions i.e., "political work" with three mechanisms i.e., "advocacy, defining and vesting", (2) working to alter normative institutions and actors' beliefs, (3) working to alter cognitive institutions (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). A detailed description of the mechanisms is summarized in the table 9.

Table 9: Institutional work (self-elaboration inspired by Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006; Zvolska et al., 2019)

Institutional work to create new institutions	Mechanisms	Definition
Political work	Advocacy: Use of direct techniques of persuasion a prerequisite to define rule	3 forms of advocacy: lobbying, advertising and litigation
	Defining: A prerequisite for advocacy	Define SE and elaborate rules systems that shape identity, practice standards (e.g., certification of actors)
	Vesting	Change in market regulations by governmental agencies to support the DP
Reconfiguration of actors' belief systems	Constructing identities	Build DP individual identity and image to compete it the market
	Challenging normative associations	Reconfiguration of relations between moral foundations and practices.
	Constructing normative networks	Creation of inter-organizational connections
Altering boundaries of meaning systems	Mimicry	Mixing old and new practices or technologies
	Theorizing	Developing new categories and concepts to facilitate the acceptance (e.g., "we are Airbnbing")
	Educating	Creation of platforms for knowledge learning, workshops, training sessions.

2.4.4.2.2. Disrupt institutions

Creating institutions is linked to disrupting institutions. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) highlighted that actors active in creating new institutions could disrupt existing practices and Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) identified three types of mechanisms of institutional disruption: (1) "disconnecting sanctions/rewards", (2) "disassociating moral foundations gradually", (3) "undermining assumptions and beliefs".

2.4.4.3. A holistic approach

We refer to Uzunca et al.(2018) work to present (1) the strategies that DP deploy to shape the institutional environment and (2) how actors 'contestations affect the implementation of those strategies.

The work of Uzunca et al., (2018) is valuable to our research project in the sense that it analyzed the legitimation strategies deployed by DPs in different countries but with a holistic view discussing the key actors' perspectives and interactions with DPs. Uzunca et al. (2018) highlighted that the positive externalities of DP in the SE for the society at large might not clearly be understood since their institutional strategies deployed are unclear (i.e., avoid regulations). The study compared the two pioneered DP in the SE, Uber and Airbnb in three very different countries i.e., the UK, the Netherlands and Egypt. Their work identified the way DP in the SE deployed non-market strategies i.e., transformative versus additive approaches (Dorobantu et al., 2017) to legitimize their activities. Transformative or disruptive strategies consist in breaking existing regulations and give fast but short-term legitimacy whereas additive or relational strategies aim at complementing existing regulations and contribute to long-term sustainable legitimacy. Two contingent roles are identified impacting the legitimacy. (1) The institutionalized degree of the context or country impacts the deployment and success of the DP' strategies. For example, Egypt, as a country with lower degree of institutionalization, provides more opportunities for DPs than higher institutionalized countries. It allows DPs to shape their institutional environment e.g., leveraging the benefits of their activities for the local society. (2) The role of national government endorsing a proactive role in regulating (e.g., political participation of industry associations) contributes to facilitate the legitimacy of the DP.

Uzunca et al., (2018) concluded that "legitimization as an endogenous process whereby different stakeholders' perceptions about SE firms are formed as a result of the negotiations and interactions between key stakeholders, such as consumers, incumbent firms, and local and central governments. In this way, we draw attention to the coevolution of firm strategies and the institutional environment".

2.4.4.4. New arrangements of institutional strategies

Recent literature proposed new arrangements of institutional strategies. For examples, Marquis and Raynard (2015) proposed three institutional strategies: (1) relational strategies refers to the management of "dependency relationships with the government and key stakeholders", (2) infrastructure-building strategies respond to absence or inappropriate technological or physical or regulatory infrastructures that refers to strategies that foster business operations, (3) socio-cultural bridging strategies uncover demographic or socio-cultural issues (e.g., mistrust, corruption).

Dorobantu et al., (2017) drew our attention on the ability of an organization to either choose adaptive strategies (i.e., acceptation of the institutional environment as it is for all its actors with no willingness to modify institutional costs), or additive strategies ("keep the costs of other stakeholders unaffected after institutional change") or transformative strategies increasing the costs of other actors.

2.4.5. An ecosystem collective view

Thomas and Ritala (2022) studied the emergence of ecosystem legitimacy with a collective action view considering legitimacy-as a process where both participants of the ecosystem and external actors together contribute to the legitimacy of the ecosystem. The authors contributed to the literature of legitimacy questioning how an emerging ecosystem can be perceived as legitimate by ecosystem participants and other actors and proposing a process model of ecosystem legitimacy emergence and proposed three legitimation processes (1) discursive legitimation (i.e., process for ecosystem to be accepted and comprehended), (2) performative legitimation (i.e., ecosystem sustainability), (3) ecosystem identity construction (i.e., shared identity and beliefs). Thomas and Ritala (2022) work is valuable in the sense that it is a necessity for them to consider external actors to the ecosystem when examining ecosystem legitimacy emergence (e.g., media, competitors and regulators). The authors contributed to a better understanding of how external actors (e.g., media, competitors, regulators) collectively contribute to build the legitimacy of emerging ecosystems (Ansari et al., 2016). They argued that (1) collective actors' participation within the ecosystem contributes to the emergence and legitimacy of the ecosystem; (2) the identity of the ecosystem facilitates legitimation through respective understanding of the ecosystem value proposition.

2.4.5.1. Ecosystem identity

Although most of the studies focused on economic and technological interdependencies, the authors highlighted the cognitive interdependencies built by discursive processes fostering the ecosystem identity. Ecosystem identity is defined as "a set of mutual understandings among ecosystem participants regarding the central, enduring and distinctive characteristics of the ecosystem value proposition". The ecosystem identity as a "collective view" from ecosystem participants and external actors promotes legitimation (Thomas and Ritala, 2022). They proposed four discursive processes: (1) framing (i.e., construction of meaning), (2) sensemaking (i.e., social learning forming shared views), (3) positioning (i.e., collective agreement on the ecosystem value proposition), (4) recognizing (i.e., recognition by the media or regulators). Taking the example of amazon, the important media coverage contributed to legitimize amazon to investors (e.g., SEC for the IPO) (Snihur et al., 2018).

Referring to social movement theory, the identity of ecosystem is built through the promotion of collective actions whereas the institutional entrepreneurship theory explains how an orchestrator fosters collective action by promoting a mutual understanding of the ecosystem value creation (Thomas and Ritala, 2022). Even though conflicts and contestations often characterized legitimation processes (Creed et al., 2002) ecosystems are still legitimated thanks to legitimation processes and collective identity.

2.4.5.2. Three processus fuelling the ecosystem

Thomas and Ritala, 2022 described the three processes fueling ecosystem collective action i.e.:

(1) discursive legitimation processes are "those activities that motivate and convince others to accept and participate in the ecosystem as well as build a shared understanding of its purpose with the wider economic and social environment" (i.e., framing, sensemaking, positioning, recognition) causing the cognitive legitimacy. In the discursive legitimation process, external actors (e.g., media, analysts) contribute to build legitimacy of the ecosystem recognizing its existence (King and Soule, 2007). For example, Gurses and Ozcan (2015) explained how a new TV offering in the United States succeed in building its legitimacy despite the coalition from incumbents. They showed how framing focusing on "public interest" provides legitimacy whereas Snihur et al. (2018) explained that framing focusing on "market leadership" conducts to legitimacy.

(2) performative legitimation processes relate to the ecosystem performance (i.e., strategic action, value realization, adoption, external intervention) causing the normative legitimacy. For example, Uzunca et al. (2018) showed how Uber' strategic actions in Egypt reinforced its legitimacy with local actors by contributing to the optimization of the Global Positioning System (GPS) or by customizing its payment options. Thomas and Ritala (2022) explained that external interventions from the financial community necessary to scale the ecosystem contribute to building the legitimacy (e.g., venture capitals, initial public offerings).

(3) ecosystem identity construction defined as "a set of mutual understandings among ecosystem participants regarding the central, enduring and distinctive characteristics of the ecosystem value proposition" (ecosystem value proposition and characteristics commonly understood by ecosystem participants).

2.5. Cognitive and Sociopolitical legitimacy

2.5.1. Two challenges at once: Cognitive and Sociopolitical legitimacy

The discrepancy between traditional business models and digital based business models do not allow to transpose existing regulations which reinforce DPs lack of legitimacy for the society at large including policy makers (Garud et al., 2022).

Research in legitimacy provided many forms of legitimacy. For DP, we selected Garud et al., (2022)'work on legitimacy to refer to two forms (i) cognitive and (ii) socio-political legitimacy (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994). Cognitive legitimacy is defined as "the spread of knowledge about a new venture" (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994, p. 648).

According to Aldrich and Fiol (1994), enterprises based on new business models encounter lack of recognition i.e., cognitive legitimacy and therefore face issues to appeal resources. It is particularly true for digital based business models in the SE with the "chicken and egg" problem introduced chapter one.

The second form of legitimacy is the socio-political legitimacy that refers to "stakeholders, the general public, key opinion leaders, or government officials accept a venture as appropriate and right, given existing norms and laws" (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994, p. 648).

The key actors are regulators who design regulations in response to market transactions (Coase, 1960), considered by Raubistschek (2018) as institutional actors who "interact with or affect the value and development of a multi-sided platform can be viewed as part of a broader ecosystem".

2.5.2. Cognitive legitimacy

2.5.2.1. Orchestrating resource

One major challenge encountered by DPs in the SE is the coordination of suppliers and consumers. Resource orchestration on both sides of the platform is key for DP with the need of creating value by participants on one side to attract others on the other side i.e., the so-called network effects. The impact of participants' numbers on one side of the platform impacts the other side (i.e., the chicken-and-egg problem) (Caillaud and Jullien, 2001).

Regarding the coordination of decentralized participants within its PDE, research on the resource orchestration provides significant contributions. Zeng et al. (2021) analyzed it with the resource-based view perspective (RBV). The RBV suggests that the performance of firms relies on non-inimitable, valuable, non-substitutable resources of firms (Barney et al., 2011). The value creation of firm's competitive advantage is not about possessing static resources but about the dynamic evolution and orchestration of resources (Barney et al., 2011) transforming them into capabilities (Chadwick et al., 2015). The suggested literature on dynamic capabilities to describe how firms' access, configure and orchestrate their resources combined with the literature on RBV (Simon and Walker, 2011) highlights the importance of resource orchestration source of value creation challenging firms how to best optimize resources to improve performance.

Orchestration boosting the motivations of participants is central to DP accelerating their market share and growth driving monopolistic position of offensive digital platforms (e.g., Uber) (McIntyre & Srinivasan, 2017). In brief, the chicken and egg problem of a DP requires incentivizing participants (e.g., technological and economic incentives) (Parker and Van Alstyne, 2005; Schilling, 2020).

2.5.2.2. Incentivizing providers

SE DPs value creation rely on (1) an effective orchestration and coordination of resources avoiding the chicken-and-egg problem, and on (2) incentivizing suppliers to keep proposing their labor or/and capital. DP develop transactional regulatory framework that platform suppliers follow (e.g., quality requirements, entry rules and transactions fees) (Nambisan and Baron, 2013). Consequently, DP suppliers benefit from marketing and technological resources co-created within the ecosystem (Zeng et al., 2021). The consumers also benefit the multiple services guaranteed by the DP (e.g., quality certification).

Zeng et al. (2021) highlighted the coordination role of DP within their ecosystem aimed at "incentivizing individuals to share their labor and capital to become active and direct value providers." Phung et al. (2021) showed that the relations between the DP and the drivers are complex despite the flexibility in work organization and the pay (Chen et al., 2019; Hall and Krueger, 2018). Markman et al. (2021) explained that "the enthusiasm for the platform has been significantly stronger from consumers than from Uber's drivers". Interestingly, from a customer perspective, in the case of a market creation or a new market category i.e., innovation, the adoption and acceptance of an industry differs from an institutional perspective (Ackermann et al., 2022). Marketing customer studies showed that a market is created and accepted when a product or an organization satisfies unmet needs or when it proposes a new technology. The acceptance of the new market by customers induces a process of legitimation through a shared recognition of what is exchanged (Humphreys, 2010). Whereas an institutional perspective views market creation and acceptance as a social and political process by which companies acquire legitimacy (e.g. Handelman & Arnold, 1999; Humphreys, 2010). It involves individual and collective actors such as key opinion leaders, general public, government agencies, media evaluating that "the features and activities of organizations are appropriate and desirable within a system of norms or social codes" (Ackermann et al., 2022; Aldrich and Fiol, 1994; Cattani et al., 2008).

2.5.2.3. Providing consumers non-monetary benefits

Markman et al. (2021) gave a more concrete view on how digital platforms in the SE allow value creation by reducing costs studying the two pioneers of the SE (i.e., Uber and Airbnb). They argued that digital platforms in the SE allow business expansion by decoupling assets and labor limiting mistrust, transaction costs and business friction while increasing engagement, safety and ease of access. For example, in the accommodation many functions have been automated by Airbnb while hotels require human interactions. Automation allows higher use in accessing assets. Uber maximizes resource optimization labor and capital (i.e., driver, car and fuel) compared with the traditional taxi service. Taxi drivers operate more with less time to wait for passengers, allowing better utilization of resources.

DPs also provide non-monetary benefits (e.g., search optimization, ease of use tracking system). For Uber, instead of calling a taxicab, riders enjoy the app offering functionalities like the tracking system securing the time variable of the ride. Non-monetary benefits are also the degree of security guaranteed by the ID or drivers and riders archived by the platform or access to other services provided by Uber platform (e.g., Uber Eats).

Markman et al. (2021) analyzed the Airbnb's value creation highlighting that value distribution is different than Uber. Sharing capital for Uber (car vehicle) and Airbnb (real estate) does not represent the same asset value in the sense that a vacant accommodation is more wasteful than an unused vehicle. The accommodation industry is more complex and diverse than the taxi industry. Because the hotel industry uses performance indicators for full service of the infrastructure (e.g., occupancy rate), the Airbnb performance to resource optimization compared to hotel performance is impossible to compare. Like Uber, Airbnb provides non-monetary benefits (e.g., search optimization, assurance systems). The difference in Airbnb and Uber is the value distribution among actors showing that Airbnb economic value contributes more to both parts compared to Uber where the satisfaction of consumers prevails. The other difference is the creation of an ecosystem with entrepreneurs serving the asset owners (e.g., check-in or cleaning services) strengthening Airbnb ecosystem.

2.5.2.4. A twofold customer orientation: buyers and sellers

Recent marketing research literature provides an interesting lens on digital platform's customer orientation. Customer orientation in digital platform is associated with multiple customer groups (Homburg et al., 2014) or toward a group of customers and other actors (Greenly et al., 2005). Castell et al. (2023) contributed to a better understanding of customer orientation in digital platform context by suggesting four contradictions comparing contextual parameters of the traditional customer and market orientation with the digital platform. The four specific contextual parameters are nature of intelligence, groups of customers, value creation's type, and customer value contribution.

In the management and Information System literature, traditional firms focus on one independent customer group with no interdependencies with other groups of customers. Customer orientation is one single group focused. In contrast, digital platforms as intermediaries have to manage multi groups of customers (i.e., buyers and sellers) (Hagiu, 2007) that are interdependent (i.e., direct and indirect network effects) (Evans and Schmalensee, 2016; de Reuver et al., 2018). Castell et al. (2023) suggested that digital platforms might deployed multiple customer orientations towards different groups of customers and prioritize activities, marketing budget.

2.5.3. Sociopolitical legitimacy

Zvolska et al. (2019) contributed to the literature of legitimacy of DP in the SE examining how DPE engage in institutional work a process defined as "the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions" (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: p.25) using the original framework on "how organizations create, maintain and disrupt institutions" (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Three types of institutional work are undertaken by actors to create institutions and summarized in section 2.4.4.2.1.

2.5.3.1. Creating institutions

In political work, DPs in SE are strongly engaged in advocacy by lobbying and litigating at the city level and is considered as an essential activity to facilitate their activities in the cities they operate. Zvolska et al. (2019) showed that Uber used litigations to appeal against the London called Transport for London and engaged with the Mayor of London's Office to position car sharing as a new sustainable mode of transport in London. In the same vein, a for-profit bike sharing DP in London seek to demonstrate to London municipality that bike sharing is positive for people health and the environment while facing critiques about disordering the streets.

"Defining", as a political work mechanism, is frequently used by DP in the SE to avoid regulations. For example, Uber should be considered as a tech-company instead of a taxi service or ride-sharing company. Interestingly, Zvolska et al. (2019), pointed out that as DPs in the SE grew, they lost the community and ethical values in which they built their business model, challenging normative associations. Another form of political work emerging is the organization of DP through industry associations in the mobility and accommodation sectors e.g., non-profit NGO promoting car and bike sharing in London. The third group of institutional work refers to "altering boundaries of meaning systems" where DP in the SE mimic institutionalized practices. For example, Airbnb decided to create a sustainability advisory board, or to set up its headquarters in Dublin like Apple or Google (Worstall, 2013). Another mechanism used by DPs is educating. Zvolska et al. (2019) also highlighted that Airbnb organized meetings to teach its hosts how to lobby local policy makers or Uber requesting its community to take a voice in "the name of technological progress" (Sundararajan, 2014).

2.5.3.2. Disrupting institutions

Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) highlighted that actors active in creating new institutions could alter existing practices. Creating institutions is linked to disrupting institutions. For example, Uber is considered an institutional disruption because they succeeded in expanding existing markets (Laurell and Sandström, 2016). Interestingly, according to Zvolska et al. (2019), the disruption of markets, employment, and practices as well as the resources redistribution is not conducted by DP alone, but by other institutional actors (e.g., entrepreneurs, policy makers, scholars, users).

In brief, DPs in the SE deployed many forms of institutional work, especially engaging in (i) advocacy mechanisms such as lobbying or litigation, or (ii) mimicking practices from incumbent firms or (iii) educating or (iiii) establishing normative frameworks to gain legitimacy.

2.5.3.3. Grey regulations impacts

Since the emergence of DPs in the SE, the regulatory framework is still vague or flout allowing the major actors (Uber and Airbnb) to take advantages and encounter regulations that established industries are subject to (Coa, 2017). However, since decades, hospitality and transportation industry operate within a highly regulatory framework set up to defend consumers, workers and property owners at the local, state and federal level to comply with safety and health issues. For example, actors in the hotel industry are being inspected regularly and must train their employees to reply to on-site needs. Standards could be about stairways and elevators, ventilation and lighting, smoke detectors and sprinklers. Like many major cities, such as San Francisco and New York, the Administrative Code allocates zoning regulation for rental activities to guarantee access to housing to permanent residents. Cao (2017) argued that "government lack a strong regulatory framework by which to control and normalize new technologies of the sharing economy".

By avoiding regulations, Uber and Airbnb allowed its users to enter existing market (i.e., hospitality or transportation) but pass over regulatory constraints and operate in a regulation free model. Cao (2017) studied how Airbnb challenged the regulations in place in San Francisco putting at risk customers, using residential zoning for business purpose and operating even though short-term rentals is an illegal activity referring to the Administrative Code in San Francisco. Hosts used Airbnb as a source of income without any compliance with the hotel industry. He argued that Airbnb deliberately flouted regulations and for example lobbied spending 8 million in 2014 to react against a project constraining short term rentals and succeeded in passing an amendment legalizing short term rentals. The absence of a clear regulation seems to generate problems such as background checks, safety and insurance coverage whereas Airbnb declares self-regulation through tools such as the "Verified ID" or "Host Guarantee" and insurance policy. Overall, the work of Cao (2017) argue that it is required that government regulate the digital platforms considered as "lawbreakers" for public safety, health and consumers protection and questioned how DP can operate benefiting deregulation or a lower degree of regulation compared to traditional actors.

2.6. Legitimacy of DPs in the SE:

2.6.1. DP Legitimacy and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

2.6.1.1. CSR strengthening legitimacy

Interestingly, Hwang (2019) argued that DPss in the SE could reinforce their legitimacy i.e., "normative conformity with social environment" through their CSR activities and an effective CSR communication, despite their dark side profile. Companies embracing CSR activities and programs are considered "socially responsible" and lead customers positive satisfaction toward the brand as well as financial performance, Brulhart et al., (217) demonstrated that "proactive environmental strategies" stimulates economic performance. The work of Du and Vieira (2012) studied the CSR communication of one of the most controverted sectors i.e., the oil companies and demonstrated that effective CSR communication practices can strengthen their legitimacy. They provided recommendations to foster credibility by (i) using social media platforms and multi-media, (ii) CSR message framing communication with two-sided messages (i.e., negative and positive information), (iii) factual tone (i.e., what for, to whom, what results), (iv) corporate missions and values integrating CSR, (v) social concerns being addressed to demonstrate the leadership of the organization, (vi) valorize certifications and awards. Hwang (2019) argue that the use of storytelling i.e. developing stories in an affective tone about CSR initiatives is very effective as well as use of social media.

2.6.1.2. "Doing good versus doing harm"

DPs in the SE, that have to cope with competing perceptions i.e., providing sustainable solutions oppose to creating unethical and unregulated business places (Etter et al., 2019; Martin et al., 2016), need to overcome with strategies minimizing the negative outcomes of their activities (Mercier-Roy and Mailhot, 2019).

Schneckenberg et al., (2023) contributed to the literature on legitimacy studying the strategic decision making process of CEOs of sharing economy ventures addressing the paradox of "doing good versus doing bad" overcoming the paradoxical nature of the SE. "Sharing ventures, which facilitate collaborative transactions through digital platforms and operate at the intersection of hierarchy and market principles, often face significant legitimacy concerns" (Garud et al., 2022; Powell et al., 1990). Knowing that negative externalities of DPs in the SE put at risk their legitimacy, the authors examined how DP respond to the need to balance contradictions and tensions and highlighted the importance of understanding how organizations in the SE deal with paradoxes. As already developed in chapter one, on one hand, DPs in the SE could be perceived as aligned with three pillars of sustainability (i.e., economic, ecological and social interests) and on the other hand, it threatens socio-economic and business structures, increases resource consumption (Martin and Shaheen, 2011). The paradoxical tensions of the SE at the macro-level, "may create meso-level tensions and organizational responses from ventures operating within that environment" (Gilbert et al., 2018).

They studied the decision-making of senior managers and founders of DP facing the paradox of "doing good versus doing harm" and argued that in addition to being profit oriented, their strategic decision-making process is driven by their value types and societal contributions. They categorized DPs into three types of values driving the strategic orientations (1) values environmentally focused labelled the "Earth keepers", (2) values socially focused labelled the "Community Builders", (3) values aligned with both orientations labelled "Visionaries". By conducting 38 interviews with founders in four European countries and executive managers of SE platforms, they identified five mechanisms aligned with their values orientation used to prevent divulging SE paradoxes. Apart from addressing the negative externalities associated to their value focus, they "deparadoxify" the other negative impacts of their activities hiding them focusing exclusively on one central value. For example, for DP with environment as the central value and focus, they hide their responsibility for social damage.

Their findings outline that (1) strategic decisions are oriented towards the three pillars of sustainability aiming at gaining legitimacy by minimizing the negative externalities of their digital business model; (2) one central type of value fuels the strategic decision making process, (3) to differentiate themselves, the strategic plan of DPs in the SE refers to one of the three CSR pillars. They concluded that their value focused justifies their strategy making "salient paradoxes latent".

Schneckenberg et al., (2023) pointed out the "paradox of doing good versus doing harm presents significant challenges for sharing ventures in their strategies" (Klarin and Suseno, 2021) Their work studied the strategic decision-making processes of DP in the SE taking into consideration those tensions and contradictions, seeking to gain legitimacy in their markets (Garud et al., 2022). The decision-making processes of DPs in the SE would be driven by the societal contributions and values focus of DPs. For example, they identified three core values of DPs in the SE (i.e., environmentally focused, socially focused, and both orientations). Apart from proposing a value proposition framework that categorizes DP in the SE, their study points out that DPs take strategic decisions based on the three cores of sustainability while coping with legitimacy issues specific to their business models (Garud et al., 2022).

The management of legitimacy seeking normative legitimacy occurs to be the most challenging issue for organizations operating globally. Hwang (2019) argued that the assumption that legitimacy is based on the "conformity with societal rules as the predictor of legitimacy does not work well in the global business context because there are no globally accepted legal or moral normative standards".

Referring to Palazzo and Scherer (2006) work on a communication framework of legitimacy, cognitive legitimacy is deteriorated due to globalized society e.g., context of "shareholder-value ideology" while pragmatic legitimacy (e.g., branding, lobbying, public relations) faces more and more resistance (e.g., social movements anti-globalization). Along this line, Hwang (2019) argued that moral legitimacy is central as a source of social acceptance.

2.6.1.3. CSR communication improves legitimacy

More and more organizations communicate on their CSR projects directed towards a pragmatic and cognitive legitimacy demonstrating that they comply with external expectations and act as "corporate citizenship" (Waddock, 2004). Using different channels and tools in communication such as corporate web site, annual CSR reports to enhance their CSR initiatives (Birth, 2008), DP in the SE seek to influence actors directly i.e., pragmatic legitimacy or indirectly i.e., cognitive legitimacy. However, literature suggests a high degree of hypocrisy in proactive CSR communication i.e., "corporate hypocrisy" (Wagner et al., 2009) and influencing negatively consumers 'attitudes (Hwang, 2019).

DPs in the SE have used CSR communication to influence their legitimacy while facing regulation and social issues. For example, Uber launched a wide program of targeted CSR actions donating and funding programs to non-organizations (domestic and sexual violence, after school immersion programs, senior support, technology coding program). The management of its social media is mainly focused on customers reporting negative experiences. In 2017, Uber started to handle a proactive CSR communication on social media for example sharing data security incident willing to gain a more "ethical" role in the society.

In brief, Hwang (2019) argue that DPs in the SE has succeeded to maintain their pragmatic legitimacy in the sense that (1) "the benefits are overall clearly recognized by self-interest stakeholders" and (2) they make profit which is the pre-requisite to be socially responsible (Palazzo and Scherer, 2006). However, DP in SE has more challenges in legitimacy due to their negative social behaviors such as regulations, legal, tax and labor issues, economic and societal impacts (e.g., social inequality). This work contributes to associate CSR with legitimacy arguing that CSR initiatives can enhance cognitive legitimacy and states that DP should improve their communication in CSR, include key actors in their processes and decisions (e.g., local community). Hwang (2019) concluded that DPs in the SE should reinforce the "doing good for the society" and use CSR as a strategic means to maintain legitimacy through proactive CSR commitment and communication like the oil industry did and succeeded to.

2.6.2. Example of a sociopolitical and cognitive legitimacy: Uber (Garud et al., 2022)

The last section of this chapter presents the strategies that a DP in the SE deployed when entering existing markets and its legitimacy dynamics. To do so, we refer to the work of Garud et al., (2022) studying Uber entering four US cities, using strategic and sociopolitical perspectives.

In this chapter, Garud et al., (2022) provide us with a number of important findings based on Uber case study entering four cities in the US describing its markets and non-market strategies impacting its cognitive and sociopolitical legitimacy as a dynamic process in "continual adjustments".

Garud et al., (2022) work is a major contribution to the literature on legitimacy of DPs in the SE investigating how Uber entered the market of transportation in four major US cities. This study provides an interesting opportunity to explore the two dimensions of legitimacy i.e., cognitive and socio-political legitimacy. Interestingly, Garud et al., (2022) argued that by entering a market without any regulatory alignment, a DP purposely focuses on gaining visibility to market actors, i.e. cognitive legitimacy though network effects. Meanwhile strengthening cognitive legitimacy to acquire more customers or providers leads to an increase in the lack of socio-political legitimacy when there is no compliance with existing regulations or willingness to obtain regulatory approvals.

Garud et al., (2022) examined the challenges that DP face when entering markets while violating existing regulations and what strategies are implemented studying how Uber succeeded to increase its socio-political legitimacy convincing the regulators about the societal benefits of Uber services. In that vein, the authors define Uber activities as "regulatory entrepreneurship" (Pollman and Barry, 2016) in the sense that its business plan seeks to influence and change existing regulations e.g., requiring users to lobby policy makers on behalf of the DP. By transposing the concept of "liminality" as a "betweenness" or "transitional state that is messy and unclear" (Turner, 1995), Garud et al., (2022) refers to "liminal movement" as the deployment of efforts by the DP to establish itself in between a regulatory framework by taking advantages of market actors, interested social groups and regulators interactions i.e., window of opportunity for the DP.

2.6.2.1. "Move fast, break things" mindset

The lack of permission to market from regulators was first demonstrated and emphasized the fact that Uber did not pursue any regulatory compliance before entering the market. Five months after entering the market in 2010, despite a serious call from the regulatory bodies to cease their activities with jail time and penalties threats, Uber issued a statement: "UberCab is a first-to-market, cutting edge transportation technology and it must be recognized that the regulations from both city and state regulatory bodies have not been written with these innovations in mind."

In this vein, other scholars reported this “move fast, break things” mentality arguing that pioneered DP in the SE business models are “intentional illegality” and “predicated on law-breaking” based (Edelman, 2017; Rosenblat, 2018). Garud et al., (2022) reported that Uber strategic decisions aimed at promoting and defending its value proposition (i.e., innovative efficient and reliable transport solutions app) by acquiring more users (i.e., drivers and riders) and by contesting and taking legal actions against policy makers at the state and city level. Few initiatives were launched to reassure the digital innovation profile of the DP. For example, the identity of the DP changed from UberCab to UberTechnologies to leverage the rupture with traditional businesses and a transport technology driven solutions. An app called the “Greyball” tool was developed allowing drivers to identify city officials to avoid taking a ride from them.

2.6.2.2. Challenge n°1: Management of supply and demand

The management of supply and demand is a priority for DP in the SE, i.e., network effects. In the case of Uber, it was particularly difficult when entering a market. Drivers sign up for the app because of a valuable number of riders, same for the riders seeking for a fast service. To seduce users (i.e., riders and drivers), Airbnb implemented three strategies: (1) orchestrating supply and demand as number one priority (e.g., partnering, with transportation services, concentration on busy areas if limited number of drivers) (2) proposing economic incentives (e.g., free iPhones to early adopters drivers, $25/hour income guarantee, discount for ambassadors users, payment of fines)(3) launching high visibility events (e.g., media launch invitation, celebrities endorsement, sponsorships associating those events with other local high-visibility events). The quest for a fast-growing network of drivers and riders propagating cognitive legitimacy was critical when entering cities. The point in increasing the number of customers as fast as possible is determining in reducing the power of policy makers (DeAmicis, 2017).

2.6.2.3. Challenge n°2: Managing regulations

Uber was confronted to each different local city context to enter the market impacting the choice of non-market strategies to use. Garud et al., (2022) showed that Uber used four non-market strategies (Oliver, 1991): avoidance (i.e., avoiding existing regulations as a tech company different than taxicab companies), defiance (contesting regulations that could affect its business model like the classification of Uber driver as independent contractor versus employees), manipulation (i.e., deploying targeted lobby activities to regulators at city or state level and supporting key social groups like the Mothers Against Drunken Driving, or the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and compliance (i.e., accepting categorization of its service in some local context or ceasing its operations waiting for an expected favorable regulatory framework).

2.6.2.4. Challenge n°3: Factors impacting the strategy: Local regulatory market

Interestingly, Uber promotes empowerment of local management teams to conduct the best strategies adapted to their local regulatory context. For example, interestingly, as opposed to San Francisco, NYC favorable sponsor of new tech and services allowed Uber to agree with existing regulations and comply (i.e., acceptance of the service categorization as a PHV requiring drivers fingerprint background checks). “NYC has a long tradition of adapting its rules and regulatory structures to the changing needs of the for-hire vehicle industry and its passengers” (Office of NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio, 2016).

In this example, compliance was considered as the most efficient non-market strategies to choose for such a large market as NYC (Lashinsky, 2017; Stone, 2017) allowing cognitive and socio-political legitimacy simultaneously.

Garud’s examination of four cities allow to understand that a DP uses multiple nonmarket strategies to enter the market depending on the local context but with the focus on gaining cognitive legitimacy. For non-supportive local policy makers (e.g., San Francisco) or context compromising its business model, avoidance or defiance strategies are preferred by the DP as opposite to “supportive” local policy makers (e.g., NYC), where the DP chose to comply with existing regulations.

2.6.2.5. Political actors and self-governance Interactions

When regulators or the local government propose new regulations or enforce the existing ones, Uber alerts its users by the Uber app, recommends them to actively take actions and encourage them to become "political actors" (e.g., email templates to respond, social media or online petition). Another positive effect of the interaction among non-market and market actors is the fact that the DP could deploy self-governance solutions proactively to acknowledge and respond to their concerns. For example, the rider safety issue was solved by implementing the peer-review system (e.g., deactivation from the app of any driver with low rating).

2.6.2.6. Continual adjustments

Even though Uber succeeded in creating its cognitive legitimacy using non-market strategies, however, its socio-political legitimacy was as a major challenge fueled by scandals relayed by media and calls for more severe regulatory framework. For example, the Greyball tool on the app enabling drivers to identify city law officials and reject the ride requests impacted public opinion. "These events and the public response to such events, as well as other negative publicity we have faced in recent years, have adversely affected our brand and reputation…" IPO prospectus (2019, p. 46)

Interestingly, the authors pointed out that this negative overall context allowed Uber to accelerate its cognitive legitimacy and meanwhile contributed to mitigate regulatory tensions.

Garud et al., (2022) claimed that the adoption of a new service category governing ridesharing companies (i.e., Transportation Network Company, TNC), permitted its socio-political legitimacy and at the meantime impacted incumbents' firms 'regulations. In NYC, all actors providing riding services (taxicab, limo, TNC) converged in 2016 as a unique category "blurring the regulatory boundaries between those once-distinct categories" (Office of NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio, 2016).

The collaboration with insurance companies is another example of conducting adjustments to provide a legal framework protecting better Uber drivers. The most challenging adjustments the DP had to face is the classification of Uber drivers as independent contractor versus employees. For example, some states would impose to consider Uber drivers as employees therefore entitled to obtain benefits and protections (e.g., California State). Uber responded by joining litigation efforts with another DP seeking to ban the law at the federal level.

In their study, Garud et al., (2022) argued that despite the fact that Uber is perceived as a ridesharing legitimate actor, it requires to readjust its strategies continuously. Interestingly, Uber keeps its actors informed about those strategies. For example, the IPO prospectus presents strategic responses in response to safety related issues or the use of artificial intelligence on the app to better operate.

Based on the study of Uber when entering 4 US cities, Garud et al., (2022) highlighted the strategic necessary moves of the DP i.e., "liminal movement" when entering a market sequencing it in four stages summarized in table 10.

In brief, what is revelatory about the Uber study is the strategic tactics that a DP in the SE undertake starting when entering existing ecosystems characterized by established actors and regulatory context and facing legitimacy threats. Garud et al., (2022) traced the development of market and non-market strategies, their interactions generating positive and negative externalities and the need for the business model to be continually adjusted. The authors unpacked those strategic moves under the concept of "liminal movement". First movement represents many advantages i.e., allowing the first mover (1) to establish unique first contacts with providers and building strong ties with users (Zhu and Iansiti, 2012), (2) to structure institutions and markets. However, shaping the market requires major resources for the first mover bearing the risks. The concept of window of opportunity is associated with the first movement within limited timeframe (Grodal and Gotsopoulos, 2015). The concept of liminal movement highlights the efforts that the DP launched to enter the market facing existing regulatory challenges in a limited timeframe or "window of opportunity" and between "critical events" through the implementation of market and non-market strategies. Garud et al., (2022) argued that "Ironically, initial efforts by the venture in the market domain to gain cognitive legitimacy and generate network effects deepen its sociopolitical legitimacy deficit. In other words, the window of opportunity itself is endogenously shaped by the (inter)actions of the venture, regulators, and other social groups."

When entering the market, non-market strategies such as avoidance or defiance allow the DP to focus on network effects and therefore encounter the deficit in socio-political legitimacy. Interestingly, the growing community of users legitimize the DP by fueling studies based on data collection promoting the benefits of the novel digital business model. This allows the DP to interact and influence regulations putting the regulators in a dilemma situation of either supporting or constraining new ecosystem e.g., non-supportive regulators could delegitimize the existing regulations.

Garud et al., (2022) argued that DPs in the SE should be focused on increasing visibility when entering a market despite the violation with existing regulations. This is a novel contribution in the sense that past literature highlighted other entry strategies for new business models e.g., “under the radar” (Christensen, 1997) or “camouflaged entry” (Gurses & Ozcan, 2015). Those are not possible for DP in the SE because of the need to gain network effects as fast as possible. Seeking cognitive legitimacy, DPs set up market strategies and non-market strategies to rapidly expand their network effects in each local context before regulators could constrain the DP expansion.

Table 10: Legitimacy dynamics in four stages (Source: self-elaborated inspired by Garud et al., 2022)

	Context	DP moves	Legitimacy dynamics
Stage 1 Prior to the entry of the DP: "Existing ecosystems"	Existing ecosystems are characterized by interactions among groups of actors governed by regulated frameworks that respond to identified concerns and externalities.	Opportunity to propose a new business model i.e., digital platform based. => offer a novel value proposition different than the one proposed in the existing ecosystem =>first movers shape the new market	Difficult cognitive legitimacy: Difficult with no recognition or acceptance by the existing ecosystem and other actors' groups. Sociopolitical challenges with regulatory pushback at the local level protecting market actors Impact on the legitimacy
Stage 2 "Entry the market with permission or not"	DP with permission to entry the market	Search for compliance with regulatory and safety requirements.	Immediate sociopolitical legitimacy acquisition attracting resources facilitating the cognitive legitimacy
	DP with no permission to entry the market	Game of chicken with regulators Avoidance of regulatory permission Permissionless entry is the means (1) to leverage the novelty of the business model and jump on a "window of opportunity" and (2) to be the first to gain visibility and attract the support of groups that benefit from the services (3) generate ambiguities and difficulties in assessing externalities	Absence of sociopolitical legitimacy might be "a pragmatic way to proceed" while support of users instills cognitive legitimacy
Stage 3 Market strategies	Supply and demand management Economic incentives High visibility events	Focus on market actors to generate network effects. Monetary or non-monetary incentives Mindshare and common knowledge	Increase of visibility allows a rise in cognitive legitimacy and in the sociopolitical crisis (e.g., events publicize to regulators and impacted social groups the misalignment with existing regulations)

	Context	DP moves	Legitimacy dynamics
Non market strategies	Avoidance, defiance, manipulation, compliance	1.If business model is compromised by regulations: avoidance or defiance strategies 2.If business model is not compromised by regulations but face inflexible regulators: avoidance or defiance strategies until critical mass is achieved. 3. If business model is not compromised by regulations but face favorable regulators: compliance strategies including possible manipulation and selective defiance.	1+2 Build Cognitive legitimacy 3.Gain sociopolitical legitimacy while engage in cognitive legitimacy
When market strategies and non-market strategies interact	Positive externalities: After critical mass is obtained and cognitive legitimacy obtained: 1.settings of self-governance mechanisms (e.g., insurance policy for users safety) 2.market actors as legal actors lobbying regulators on behalf of the DP.	Optimization of the app via artificial intelligence and algorithms putting the app as a digital mediated social movement tool used to mobilize market actors and put pressure on regulators.	Positive impact on cognitive and sociopolitical legitimacy
	Negative externalities Market strategies considered as unfair by market actors	"Non-ethical" optimization of the app (e.g., Greyball scandal) High visibility events	Loss of cognitive and sociopolitical legitimacies Tradeoff between cognitive and sociopolitical legitimacy
Stage 4 Continuous adjustments	Identified externalities, and established groups of actors allow evolving regulations aiming at both traditional and digital based business models.	Reorientation of the DP selecting business models features matching the local context.	New legitimacy challenges associated with new regulatory boundaries

2.7. Conclusion

Digital platforms face specific challenges entering or transforming markets. In regulated markets, incumbents' businesses work together with local authorities and establish barriers in reaction to digital platforms.

This chapter aimed at providing an in-depth understanding of the legitimation process that encounter DP in the SE. Some studies using the institutional work framework highlighted the legitimacy challenges encountered by DPs in the SE. The previous studies were mainly focused on the legitimation process when entering the market (Cao, 2016; Mair and Reischauer, 2017); Zhang, 2017). Until now, platforms and PDEs have been studied only in relation to strategies facilitating and managing the emergence of legitimacy, expressed through pioneering innovation (Hwang, 2019), liminal movements (Garud et al., 2022) or collective actions (Thomas and Ritala, 2021). The work of Garud et al. (2022) is central to our research project in the sense that it contributed to a better understanding in the way a DP in the SE manages its cognitive and socio-political legitimacy emphasizing the paradox of a DP entering a market with lack of conformity to regulations, prioritizing the network effects and therefore the cognitive legitimacy. Asymmetries of cognitive and socio-political legitimacy are at the very heart of the DP management of actors i.e., deploying efforts with a strategic and institutional perspectives.

In their study, the increase in visibility of Uber reinforced tensions with regulators enhancing its lack of sociopolitical legitimacy while establishing itself in the market and convincing regulators about Uber positive externalities. The concept of liminal movement proposed by Garud et al. (2022) refers as "to the venture's efforts to establish itself between existing regulatory categories within a window of opportunity that changes dynamically due to its interactions with market actors, regulators, and other interested social groups". Garud et al. (2022) argued that the first movement allows first entrants to create exclusive relations with service providers, structure institutions and markets (Schilling, 2020) despite the resources required to entry or create the market. Liminal movement conceptualizes initiatives (i.e., market and nonmarket strategies) by the DP to establish itself "between existing regulatory categories and between critical events". Their findings highlighted that gaining cognitive legitimacy increases the lack of sociopolitical legitimacy. Nonmarket strategies are characterized by avoidance and defiance strategies allowing network effects facilitating afterwards "the positive effects to society at large".

We can conclude that little has been written on the active role that digital platforms must play over time to maintain and extend their organizational legitimacy through relational strategies targeting specific actors' groups.

Very few studies have studied the building and maintenance of organizational legitimacy in the case of a crisis where organizational legitimacy represents, even more, a critical resource for the platform (Breitsohl, 2008). Crises may create managerial challenges triggered by harmful events and political conflicts resulting from actors' deliberate attempts to discredit the existing systemic order. At the same time, during crises, organizations can experience legitimacy loss if their actions no longer conform to what is considered appropriate organizational behavior (Breitsohl, 2008; Massey, 2001).

In conclusion, our project attempts to extend our understanding of the process of legitimation of DP in the SE after entering the market, maintaining their legitimacy and facing a crisis.

2.8. CRISIS

Chapter one addressed the specificities of digital platforms ecosystems at the very heart of the SE and this chapter summarized the strategies deployed by digital platforms to gain legitimacy "in normal business time". A crisis impacting business practices and social interactions can affect the way platforms orchestrate their key actors putting at risk the maintenance of their legitimacy adding institutional pressures in relation to crisis responses. Crisis are obviously critical events threatening legitimacy usually mobilizing wider social issues causing change in values and perceptions (Marcus and Goodman, 1991). Therefore, this section of chapter 2 attempted to summarize the literature on crisis management and digital platforms.

2.8.1. Crisis management

Definition

A crisis could be defined as a "low probability, high-impact situation that is perceived by critical stakeholders to threaten the viability of the organization" (Pearson and Clair, 1998). Crisis are characterized by unexpectedness and unpredictability requiring immediate responses from organizations accelerating decision-making processes. Putting at risk its goals and values, crisis damages its reputation. (Doern et al., 2019; Hermann, 1963; Fink, 1986).

2.8.1.1. Economic, psychologic and social externalities

Crisis management literature encompasses a wide range of theories, strategies, and for best practices dealing with crises in different contexts. We propose a summary of some key literature on crisis management. The inevitability of crises is highlighted by Fink (1986) who proposed a comprehensive framework for crisis management, including prevention, containment, and recovery. Pearson and Clair (1998)'s fundamental article defining crisis management proposed a model of crisis management process with jointly psychological, socio-political, and technological-structural research perspectives. The psychological view of organizational crisis puts individual as central to the crisis caused by cognitive limitations or behaviors of employees interacting with the organization. The socio-political perspective of an organizational crisis focuses on the cause as a "collective breakdown in sense making and role structuring" impacting beliefs and values. Interestingly, the socio-political crisis could provoke a "legitimacy crisis" questioning motivations to be part or to support decisions makers impacting beliefs and values to them. From a technological-structural perspective, the cause of an organizational crisis is "interactive, coupled technologies interacting with the managerial, structural and other factors inside and outside the organization in possible incomprehensible ways". Interestingly, their processed model of Crisis Management highlighted that organizational crisis could lead to failure and success for the organization and its actors. The failure outcomes are more visible and measurable (e.g., media coverage) than success outcomes.

While crisis could conduct to negative consequences widely studies with economic business failure affecting the market, headcount, profitability, cash flow (Runyan, 2006) and psychological effects on entrepreneurs, crisis could provide new opportunities instilling "ingenuity" in the development of products and services (Irvine and Anderson, 2004).

Entrepreneurship literature highlights that entrepreneurs embedded in their community can socially reduce the negative impact of a crisis because "they are well positioned to address the needs of its communities" (Grube and Storr, 2018).

James and Wooten (2005) investigated the role of leadership in crisis management arguing that the mismanagement of a crises could have more consequences than the crisis itself. According to the authors, leading organizations in crisis times are led by displaying competence, maintaining a focus on the organization's core values, and demonstrating empathy and concern for actors. They proposed a model of six leadership competencies for effective crisis management aiming at promoting organizational change (1) building trust, (2) creating a new corporate mindset, (3) identifying the organizational vulnerabilities, (4) making rapid decisions, (5) taking courageous actions, (6) learning from crisis.

2.8.1.2. Crisis Communication

Coombs (2013) focused on the communicational aspect of a crisis with the concept of sub-arena focusing on how the reactions of actors to crisis communication messages in different social media channels can impact the crisis response of the organization. Crisis communication role is to generate positive impacts on actors and therefore are critical assessments of communication effectiveness in the quest of repairing their organizational reputation (e.g., Benoit, 1995; Jin and Cameron, 2007).

The value of crisis communication rests on the belief that the messages will have positive effects on crisis publics and those positive effects will benefit the organization. Analyzing social media contents' messages allows to "observe publics' responses to crises" (Schwarz, 2012) and evaluate if the desired effects are achieved (Coombs and Holladay, 2012a).

The model of Rhetorical Arena (Frandsen and Johansen, 2010) relies on the approach of multiple voices, where the receivers of the organization's messages react, and communicate at the same time supporting or not the organization crises messages. Anyone communicating about the crisis becomes a voice as a crisis communicator. Furthermore, this concept of "rhetorical arena" enriched by Coombs (2013) induces the receivers to become crisis communicators sending messages in various sub-arenas defined as "spaces where crisis publics may express and hear ideas about the crisis".

Researchers and practitioners have examined the role of social media in crisis context accelerating the scale of crises and offering new online communication channels. (Coombs and Holladay, 2012b). When a story provokes many reactions on social media or blogs, a sub-arena is created (Coombs et al., 2013). Organizational reputations are influenced by public messages where social media play a role in fragmenting the rhetorical arena into different sub-arenas with their own crisis messages. It helps assess how people react to the organization's crisis communication messages (Carroll and McCombs, 2003). Coombs studies on blogs and social media indicated that the pre-disposed favorable voices expressing online support to an organization during a crisis are assets that support the organizations' management crisis efforts. Interestingly, if those "pre-disposed publics", originally in favor of the organization, react negatively in sub-arenas, the communication crisis of the organization fails.

2.8.2. The context of COVID-19 - Crisis

Zenker and Kock (2020) argue that COVID-19 pandemic effects have the same patterns as disasters (i.e., an external event over which the organization has no control) and crisis (i.e., some internal organizational failure to act) (Ritchie and Jiang, 2019). In this research, we examine COVID-19 pandemic as a crisis on the organizational dimension focusing on the digital platform management.

The COVID-19 pandemic started from the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus with rapidly an human-to-human transmission starting in China in Wuhan affecting countries rapidly such as France, Italy, Spain, UK, Brazil and the U.S. The impact on tourism is huge with frontiers closed, air fleets all over the world grounded, restaurants and touristic activities are closed, cruise boats docked (Zenker and Kock, 2020).

Cortez and Johnston (2020) proposed recommendations on crisis management based on the analysis of the specificities of COVID-19 crisis compared to past crisis in finance (e.g., lockdowns accelerating the challenges for digitalization as opportunities for e-commerce and social media). Authors highlighted that from a business perspective, COVID-19 crisis as an organizational crisis in a health pandemic context is considered as more difficult to manage than other types of crises due to its global scale uniqueness different than local epidemic crisis (e.g., Ebola in 2014 2015) or financial crisis (Cortez and Johnston, 2020). For example, what makes the pandemic unique are (1)

the diffusion of the crisis is uncontrollable with a spread on socio-biological factors, (2) uncertainty for the economy and fear for anyone in organizations (e., possible death in case of infection) (3) crisis time duration (e.g., hazardous quarters forecasting), (4) empowerment and central role of governments (e.g., lockdowns, closure of businesses), (5) no preparedness for the society and the organizations, (6) working conditions with virtual meetings as the new normal impacting psychological tensions. The authors classified four categories of key practices from B2B firms that successfully managed the crisis (1) digital transformation, (2) decision-making processes, (3) leadership and (4) emotions and stress with an interesting focus on the decision-making processes "pertain to the relational norms, social obligations, intra-organizational justice and inter-organizational justice". Decentralizing power, operating with agility, defending strategic long term goals, promoting relationship (Cortez and Johnston, 2020).

2.8.2.1. Crisis and Tourism

Responding to globalization by expanding their operations, actors in the tourism sector are more exposed to "global risks" requiring effective crisis management (Ritchie, 2003). Even though scholars have tempted to provide framework of strategic crisis management (Kash and Darling, 1998; Richie, 2003) and crisis preparedness (Wang and Ritchie, 2012), to set up proactive strategy and planning of crisis, we argue that the uniqueness of the COVID-19 crisis, its complex nature made implementation of prevention plan impossible to implement.

2.8.2.2. Hospitality and Tourism industry culture of crisis

The hospitality industry has been one of the most impacted sectors by the pandemic with a collapse of tourism and business travels (Benitez-Aurioles, 2021; Gussoy and Chi, 2021). The literature review of Brown et al. (2017) provides a better understanding of the hotel industry's vulnerability and exposure to crisis and disasters, and its ability or not to pursue its activities and profitability. The needs for hotels in crisis management are to ensure safety and security of staff and tourists. The hospitality industry has always been exposed before to crisis (e.g., Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in 2001, 2003 SRAS epidemic, Hurricane Katrina) (Brown et al., 2017).

However, COVID-19 has shown the vulnerability of the actors in tourism and hospitality with an unprecedent impact at the global level at the same time. In addition, the majority of countries around the world faced different intensity and multiple waves. (Kourtit et al., 2022).

Kourtit et al. (2022) studied how much, where and why the COVID-19 impacts Airbnb market within six major cities of the world. The concept of resilience is a useful framework to capture the ecosystems adversity of digital platforms and to analyze how the COVID-19 crisis impacted the hospitality market as a shock (Kourtit et al., 2022). Studies in the case of natural disaster highlight that resilient entrepreneurs are the ones who "create change and opportunities with the resources available". Literature in tourism has studied the tourist choices 'change sentiments during the pandemic.

2.8.2.3. Travelers' preferences in time of COVID-19

Research in psychology provides interesting insight into the change in tourist and resident behavior during the pandemic emphasizing the impacts of a virus threat. 1. A collectivistic behavior, the "ethnocentrism" choosing domestic destinations to support the local economy with close distant destinations preferred (Koh et al., 2019), 2. Avoidance of mass-tourism destinations (Wang and Ackerman, 219), 3. Xenophobia with tourists' anxiety avoiding new things and a tendency of less inclusive local community (Koh et al., 2019).

Because COVID-19 virus spread was intensified in indoors settings, the medical community Health World Organizations issued safety measures during the pandemic mainly focused on masks, cleaning protocol and physical distancing. Physical distancing was aimed at reducing individuals' contacts with others and was declared as one of the mandatory regulations (e.g., lockdowns) depending on the country. Physical distancing was considered as a measure to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 at a time when hospitals capacities are challenged and with no therapeutic treatment (CDC).

Bresciani et al., (2021) proposed three experimental studies to test the choice of travelers'accomodation (i.e., entire unit, shared one or hotel room) during two different context (i.e., non-pandemic and pandemic). The findings reveal that entire units are preferred during the pandemic compared to shared units or hotel rooms where physical distance motivations impact this choice. According to the literature, the challenge of the hospitality industry was to guarantee physical distance to travelers.

In the tourism literature, studies showed that travelers are not motivated to share accommodation (Bresciani et al., 2021). Studies showed that travelers prefer booking a full flat unit rather than a shared one. This change in travelers' preferences contrasts with the original motivations of using peer to peer accommodations (i.e., unique interactions with local hosts) (Bresciani et al., 2021; Tussyadiah and Pesonen, 2016). Even though previous studies before COVID-19 showed that the interaction between the hosts and the travelers depends on whether it is an entire unit or not (Guttentag et al., 2018). Before COVID-19, the preference for a shared unit than a full one was motivated by the search for social benefits (Tussyadiah, 2016). Osman et al. (2019) highlighted that the social distance between guests and hosts impact the experience of guests' stays with shared accommodation fueling personal connection and "feeling at home". During COVID-19 pandemic, the shared unit is the least preferred. (Bresciani et al., 2021).

2.8.2.4. An interpretation of Airbnb actors' management during COVID-19

Kourtit et al. (2022) (Figure 8) conducted a survey about the COVID-19 impact on Airbnb booking data in 6 major cities (i.e., Barcelona, New York, Paris, London, Milan and Beijing) from January 2020 to August 2021 to better understand what types of Airbnb accommodations and what urban density were affected by the pandemic. Findings showed that urban accommodations are more vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic.

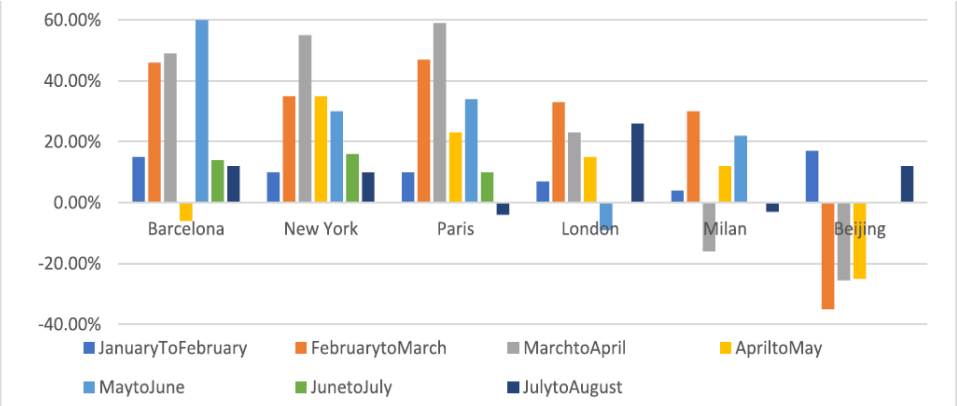


Figure 8: Year-over-year change in cancellations (2019-2020) (Source: Kourtit et al., 2022)

What is specific to the COVID-19 crisis is its magnitude to the individual, organization and communities' level and for each nation in the world.

Crisis impacting business practices and social interactions can affect the way platforms manage their key actors putting at risk the survival of the platform due to the loss of strong lies with their key actors.

Although some research has been carried out on the impact of crisis on the management of key platforms' actors and its survival consequences, little attention has been paid to how the platform handles its triadic relations during a crisis setting up business practices in a crisis context affecting or not trust. Recently, Siebold et al. (2023) analyzed how Airbnb's include or not its key actors during the COVID-19 crisis and the impact on trust. From March to June 2020, Airbnb took and applied three business decisions (1) refund ad-hoc cancelations to guests putting hosts in very difficult economic situation, (2) communicated offering a host relief fund, (3) asked guests to support hosts via "kindness cards". The implementation of those practices showed that the platform failed stakeholder management highlighting the gap between what they said and what they implemented putting at risk its key contributors (i.e., Airbnb hosts) and losing their trusts. Airbnb stakeholder management in times of crisis, implementing urgent business decisions caused mistrust (i.e., non-inclusion) and disengagement of hosts.

Referring to psychology literature, the approach of Siebold et al. (2023) considered that the way Airbnb tried to mitigate the negative impacts on bookings due to COVID-19 crisis conducted to blindness "looking without seeing". The authors acknowledged that Airbnb failed to consider its key actors. Referring to psychology research, authors explained how Airbnb managed hosts poorly through the concept of inattentional blindness (i.e., cognitive issue to look at facts during a crisis) justifying why the platform acted in detriment of hosts in March 2020.

Their results based on (1) 11 secondary interviews online, (2) emails sent to guests and hosts, (3) Airbnb community forum of hosts, (4) newspaper articles indicated that hosts were not considered as platform partners with no consideration of the outcomes (i.e. hosts' economic shock or worse some hosts' financial bankrupts) and of the decisional process (i.e., not to consult them prior to any decision). Authors argue that the leaders of Airbnb could not see the reality and therefore "becoming victims of cognitive condition of inattentional blindness". According to Mack (2003), the concept of "inattentional blindness" due to inability to "look" at facts in difficult times conducts mismanagement or misinformation.

After this decision, distrust amongst hosts occurred due to lack of consultation before business decisions were made about reimbursement, requesting donations from guests, and reduction of its customer service. Referring to "violation of hosts partnership, reinterpretation of their role and meanings as partners of the platform", Siebold et al., (2023) posited inclusion of actors as central with the implementation of processes enacting the voice of key actors. For example, Airbnb apologized, recognized its mistake, and proposed a new governance through the creation of the Advisory Host board whose raison d'être is to represent the voice of hosts. The governance structure with the Advisory Board of Hosts institutionalized the role of hosts, tempted to reduce power asymmetries between platform and service providers, and searched for feedback mechanisms.

Chapter summary

Legitimacy of DP in the SE: Acquisition and maintenance

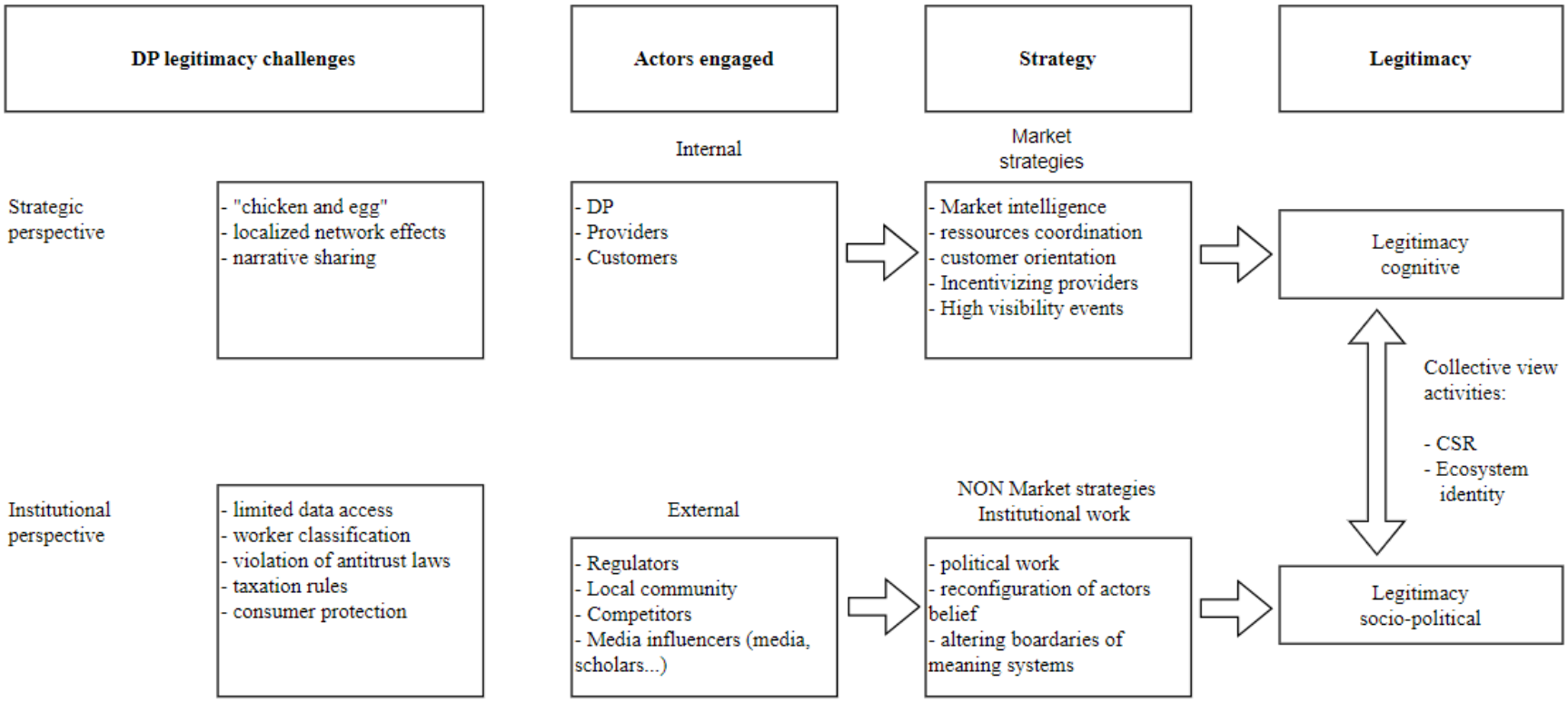


Figure 9: Gain legitimacy: “Move fast and break things” (self-elaboration inspired by Garud et al., 2022)

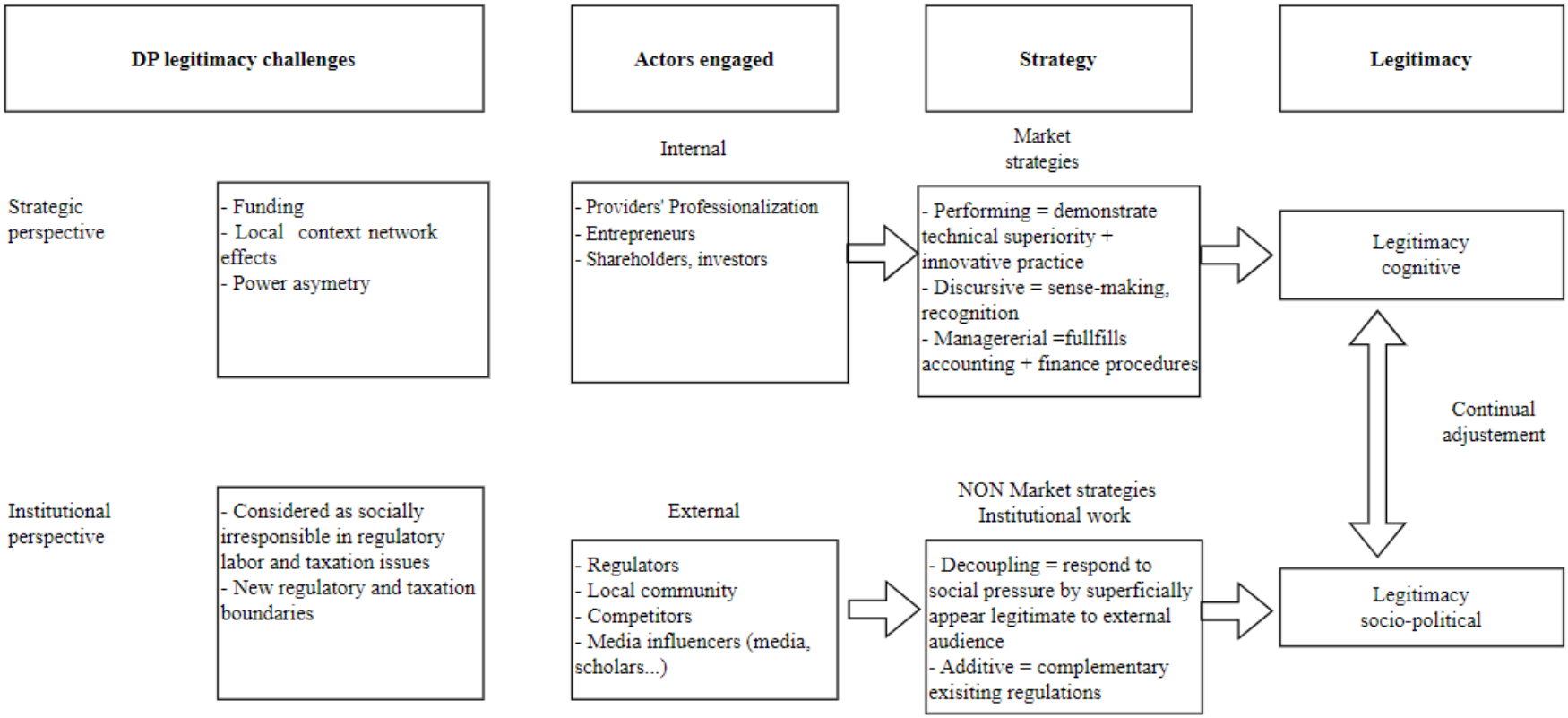


Figure 10: Maintain legitimacy: “continual adjustment” (self-elaboration inspired by Garud et al., 2022)

Summary

The advent of the DP in the SE created new opportunities for entrepreneurial activities structured in ecosystems orchestrated by platform owners (Cutolo and Kenney, 2019; Nambisan, 2017).

Within this diverse literature, a central research issue is the relationship between platforms and platform-dependent entrepreneurs (PDEs) (Cutolo and Kenney, 2019; Kenney and Zysman, 2016; Nambisan and Baron, 2019; Srinivasan and Venkatraman, 2018) that ultimately determines the functionality and success of platform-dependent entrepreneurial ecosystems (PDEEs).

However, despite the knowledge accumulated in extant studies, little is known about the ways in which these relationships change and evolve when confronted with a sudden and major crisis and the outcomes on the cognitive and socio-political legitimacy.

Addressing this knowledge gap, chapter 4 investigates and explains the relationships dynamics between a platform and the PDEs involved in its ecosystem to create and maintain its cognitive legitimacy before and in times of crisis. It responds to the first research sub-questions: What are the relational strategies put in place by the DP towards the PDEs i.e., guests and hosts?

Chapter 5 aims at responding to the second research sub-question that is: how those strategies before and during a crisis impact the socio-political legitimacy focusing on the other actors external to the PDEs (e.g., municipality, tenants' associations, incumbents, real estate).

The next chapter introduces our research question and presents the methodology aligned with our research objectives, methodology and philosophical position. I considered this chapter, in between the theoretical and empirical parts, as a "window of opportunity" to share a little bit of my personal motives and PhD experiences during this journey.

CHAPTER 3.

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

After presenting the conceptual framework of our research, this chapter aims at describing our methodological choices that shaped our empirical study providing details about the research design and empirical settings. The research design is justified by the philosophical position and the methodological approach whereas the empirical settings clarify the unit of analysis, the data sources, and data analysis.

This section allows us to present our research objectives, issues from our research questions, indicate our sources from which we propose to collect data and analyze them, evoke ethical issues and constraints encountered (e.g., data access).

This methodological chapter aims at demonstrating the consistency of the design of research and specifying our methodological choices to ensure the validity of the findings.

3.1. Research Design

In this section, we develop how the philosophical position impacts the research process and the methodological approach in collecting and interpreting the data (Darby et al., 2019).

We will start presenting our qualitative research approach based on an interpretivist epistemological positioning and on inductive and abductive reasoning. Then, we will explain our strategy of research based on two phases of empirical investigation to respond to our research questions. In chapter 4 and 5, we developed our interpretive study embedded in the context of NYC that we would need to learn about (e.g., NYC regulations).

3.1.1. Research question and sub-questions

In view of all the literature that has been covered in the three chapters, through our thesis, we aim at responding to the following research question: **how do digital platforms in the SE manage multiple actors'relationships to build/maintain their legitimacy in times of crisis?**

This question outlines three fundamental constructs: (1) **the legitimation process** as a major challenge for digital platforms in the SE questioning their growth or survival, (2) **the strategies and mechanisms deployed by the platform and its actors** impacting the cognitive and socio-political legitimacy of the DP, (3) **the crisis** as an unexpected jolt influencing the relationships interactions among all groups of actors resulting in a change in the processus of legitimation.

Our thesis contributes to both literature streams in the sharing economy literature and digital platform economy by focusing on the process of legitimation.

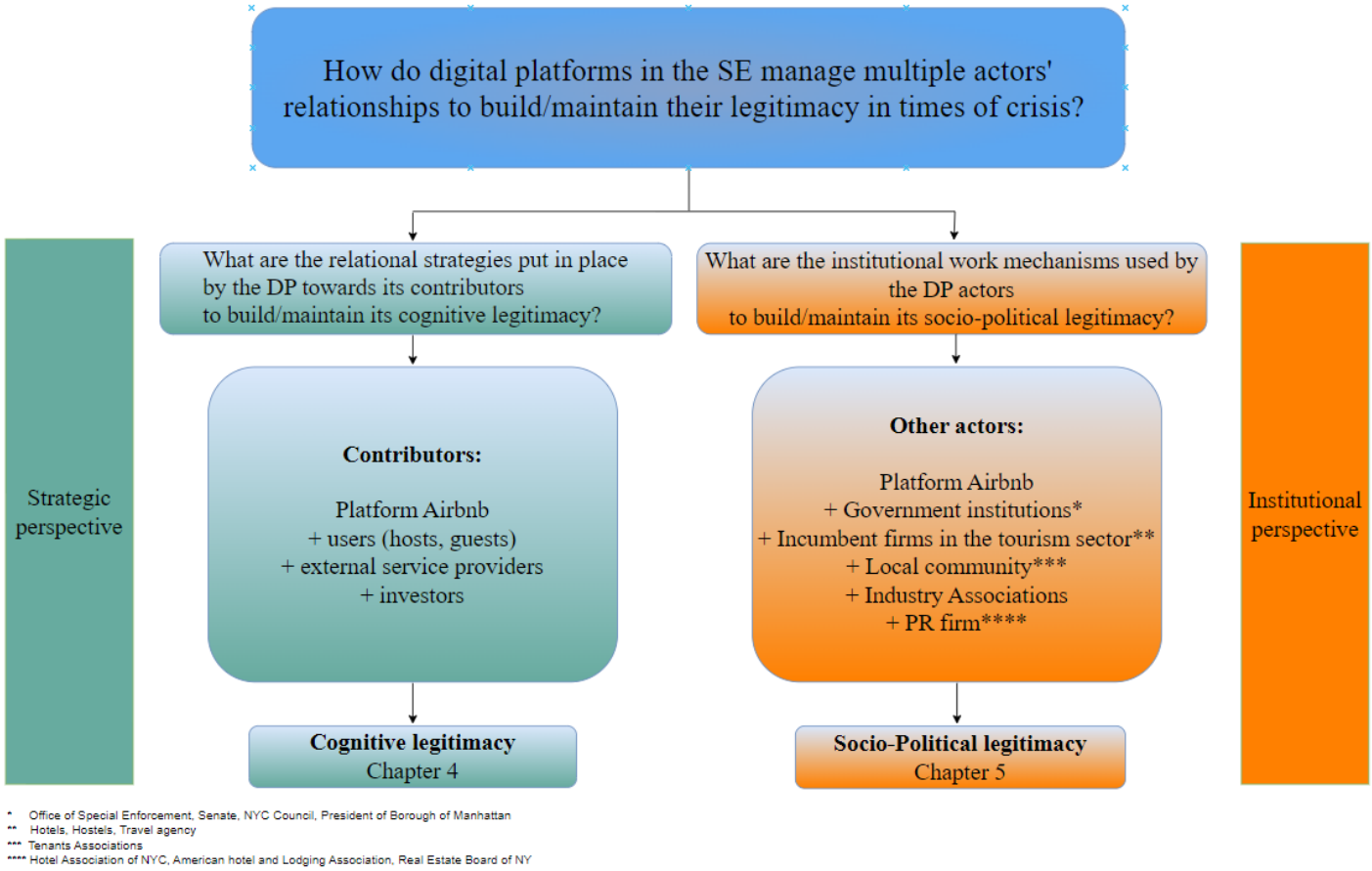


Figure 11: Research question and sub-questions (self-elaboration)

3.1.2. Epistemological orientations

> "Your assumptions about human knowledge and about the nature of the realities you encounter in your research inevitably shape how you understand your research questions, the methods you use and how you interpret your findings." (Crotty ,1998)

Management scholars use four epistemological positions: positivism, critical realism, interpretivism and pragmatism (Saunders et al., 2009) (Figure 12).

In the present research, we adopt an "interpretivist" orientation as we recognize that the world is made with many possibilities defined by an interaction between the subject and the studied object of research (Cherkaoui and Haouata, 2017). We aim at understanding in depth the motivations of actors within the process of legitimation of Airbnb as well as the strategies or institutional work mechanisms used by the DP to navigate this subjective and complex strategic and institutional reality in NYC. We recognized the subjectivity of actors and of the researcher as well as the importance of feelings and empathy to reveal living experiences. The reliability of our research thus lies on the richness of the collected data and on our capacity to give sense and explain situated and multiple experiences in a coherent framework (Girod-Seville and Perret, 1999).

Our research philosophy is interpretivism characterized by three features (1) power of surprise, commitment to (2) understand context and (3) to use research findings. The first feature is to "reveal something surprising, startling or new; that is to present information that disrupts conventional thinking. The intent to surprise, by challenging conventional or taken-for-granted thinking about "what's happening here" or "what's going wrong" and what might be done about it is one hallmark of interpretive research". The second one is "the commitment to the idea that a difference in views arises from the way people learn to think about and work on things in the socially and culturally organized context of their lives". The last one is to exploit research findings to improve "communication and understanding across human groups" (Eisenhart, 1998).

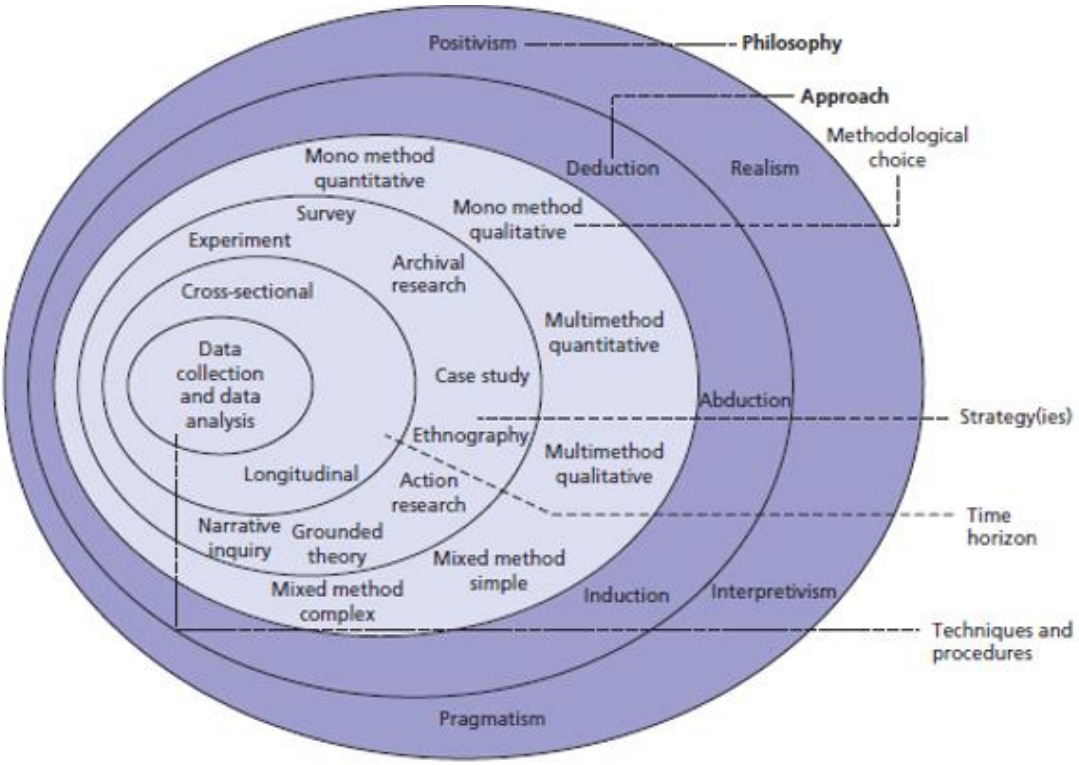


Figure 12: The research "onion" (Source: Saunders et al.,2011)

As mentioned above by (Saunders et al., 2011), we will develop a research design combining inductive and abductive reasoning – using the single case study of Airbnb and different qualitative methods – to interpret our studied reality longitudinally.

3.1.3. Research design

As our literature review has shown, the SE is a contested umbrella construct representing a mosaic of business models. Our thesis is focused on capitalistic platforms.

As our literature review has shown, the definition of affinity relationships varies depending on the view of individuals as well as the social, historical and cultural contexts in which they occur develop. It therefore seems essential to us to study affinity relationships through the lens subjective of individuals. Above all, it seemed necessary to us to consider the professional and organizational contexts in which affinity links were studied.

Given the complexity of our research topic, as well as the uniqueness and the novelty of the investigated phenomena, we adopted **a qualitative methodology** (Gehman et al., 2018) rooted in **a single-case study** (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2017) and a combination of induction and abduction to qualify the legitimation process of Airbnb within its ecosystem during a crisis.

Case study: There are three main reasons why case study research is an effective strategy for management research. Firstly, it enables researchers to examine management practices in their natural context, comprehend and derive theories directly from practice. Secondly, the case study method provides a means to investigate the "how" and "why" behind management dynamics, thus facilitating a deeper comprehension of existing complex processes. Thirdly, the case study approach is particularly suitable for investigating topics where there is a lack of extensive research.

Benbasat et al. (1987, p. 370) suggest that "a case study examines a phenomenon in its natural setting, employing multiple methods of data collection to gather information from one or few entities (people, groups or organizations)".

3.1.3.1. Qualitative research

Qualitative research allows researchers to explore a phenomenon for an exploration and a better understanding of relational dynamics of social relations by examining respondents 'meanings using a large amount of data collected and to benefit from the pluralism of diverse realities. With a qualitative research perspective, our project aims to study the unexplored phenomenon of the processus of legitimation of DP in the SE during a crisis. For this research project, qualitative research allows an in-depth expression of the interactions amongst actors of a digital platform ecosystem in the SE.

3.1.3.2. Single case study

Our research strategy is based **on a single case study** because a case study investigates a phenomenon or a research topic within real-life-contexts (Yin, 2009). The case study is appropriate as we aim at better understanding the context of the research and the processes being established (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Research traditions proposed several research strategies i.e., experiment, survey, archival research, case study, ethnography, action research, grounded theory

and narrative inquiry. Our choices seek to achieve a reasonable level of coherence in our research design which allows us to answer our research questions. Our research strategy is oriented by our research questions and the coherence with our philosophy and research approach.

"A case study examines a phenomenon in its natural setting, employing multiple methods of data collection to gather information from one or a few entities (people, groups, or organizations). The boundaries of the phenomenon are not clearly evident at the outset of the research and no experimental control or manipulation is used." (Benbasat et al., 1987)

In qualitative research, the decision to choose a unique case or multi-cases relies on the unit of analysis and research question.

3.1.3.3. Interpretivism

Qualitative research is mixed with an **interpretative philosophy** (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) incorporating the researcher reflexivity i.e., acknowledging the role and influence of the researcher in the process (Finlay, 2002).

Interpretivism emerged as a critique of positivism, adopting a subjective perspective. It focuses on exploring in-depth variables and factors specific to contexts, recognizing that humans differ from physical phenomena. Interpretivism posits that humans add layers of meaning to their actions and experiences, making it inappropriate to study them in the same way as physical phenomena. Thus, the interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods allow researchers to achieve deeper insights by exploring the experiences and perceptions within a specific social context. (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020)

As interpretivists, our goal is to get multiple ways of understanding the world, valuable understanding to create meaning (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). Understand refers to identifying shared meanings within language, discourse, rituals, roles, gestures.

The aim of our research goal is to understand interactions among actors with the DP as the focal point within the sharing economy social phenomena i.e., considering actors as "social actors" and therefore adopt the interpretivist philosophy. Interpretivist approach provides (1) in-depth and detailed exploration of cases (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011), (2) adaptability to changes that emerge during the study especially in dynamic and complex environments, (3) a voice to participants in

the sense that capture experiences, emotions, beliefs and perspectives (Geertz, 1973), (4) evidence that the research findings are situated and relevant to a particular setting or group (Schwandt, 2000).

We attempted to dive into the social world of our research subjects and understand their world from their views.

Among the principles outlined by Klein and Myers (1999), we applied the following ones as a foundation for our interpretive epistemologist posture:

1. The Principle of the Hermeneutic Circle: This principle posits that understanding is achieved through an iterative process of analyzing the interdependent meanings of parts and the whole they constitute. It is foundational to all other principles.

2. The Principle of Contextualization: This principle emphasizes the necessity for critical reflection on the social and historical context of the research setting. This principle helps the audience understand how the current situation being investigated has developed. We explain below the social and historical context of our case study in NYC.

3. The principle of dialogical reasoning: this requires awareness of potential contradictions between the theoretical assumptions that guide the research design and the actual findings, conducting to series of revisions based on the "story which the data tell".

4. The principle of suspicion: This principle involves recognizing and questioning potential biases and systemic distortions in the narratives provided by participants.

3.1.3.4. A holistic research approach:

The concept of "multiple actors'perspective" in qualitative research allows a more holistic and nuanced understanding of a phenomenon and refers to considering and integrating various viewpoints from diverse actors acknowledging that individuals' experiences and perceptions differ based on their contexts, cultures, and backgrounds. The multiple actors perspective is characterized by (1) the richness of data in the sense that we capture a variety of viewpoints providing depth and richness to the data, making findings more comprehensive, (2) the complexity recognizing the multiple layers and dimensions of a phenomenon, (3) validity by cross-checking and triangulating data from various sources, (4) inclusivity by ensuring that less dominant voices are hard and considered and (5) reflexivity bringing a new perspective to research which is a pivotal trait of my research posture (Creswell and Poth, 2016).

3.1.3.5. An hybrid research processus

The originality of our work combined inductive (chapter 4) and abductive (chapter 5) research processus.

"An abductive approach is fruitful if the researcher's objective is to discover new things — other variables and other relationships." (Dubois and Gadd, 2002)

An inductive approach, usually associated with qualitative research, refers to generating theories based on observed patterns in the data. It starts with specific observations and detects regularities enabling hypotheses to explore and finally develop conclusions. We chose an inductive approach as we started the project, collecting data to explore the interactions amongst actors of the ecosystem and external actors and the strategies deployed by the platform seeking legitimacy. Secondly, to make sense of our very rich data collection, we combine inductive reasoning with abductive reasoning tracing the work of actors using the institutional framework of Suddaby et al., (2017). In our process our research, we recognize the multiple interactions that we made over time between the specific and the general to engage a dialogue between existing theoretical frameworks and empirical data.

Table 11: Research approaches (Source: Saunders et al.,2011)

	Deduction	**Induction**	**Abduction**
Logic	In a deductive inference, when the premises are true, the conclusion must also be true	In an inductive inference, known premises are used to generate untested conclusions	In a abductive inference, known premises are used to generate testable conclusions
Generalizability	Generalizing from the general to the specific	Generalizing from the specific to the general	Generalizing from the interactions between the specific and the general
Use of data	Data collection is used to evaluate propositions or hypotheses related to an existing theory	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns and create a conceptual framework	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns, locate these in a conceptual framework and test this through subsequent data collection and so forth
Theory	Theory falsification or verification	Theory generation and building	Theory generation or modification, incorporating existing theory where appropriate, to build new theory or modify existing theory

3.2. Empirical settings

3.2.1. Research in an emerging field:

3.2.1.1. A flourishing research stream

The increasing interest of scholars in the SE and on digital platforms and the emergence of a critical perspective, i.e., the dark side of the SE and on the "capitalist" digital platforms such as Airbnb and Uber contributed to a better understanding of the diversity of research streams. i.e., business models (Teece, 2010), organizational power (Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003), ecosystems (Moore, 1993; Rong and Shi, 2014), paradoxes (Acquier et al., 2017). Figures 13 and 14 illustrate the increasing interest for the academic community in the sharing economy and digital platforms using Scopus from a period to 2008-2022 in five interdisciplinary fields i.e., Business, Management and Accounting (BUSI), Computer Science (COMP), Economics, Econometrics and Finance (ECON), Psychology (PSYC) and Social Sciences (SOCI).

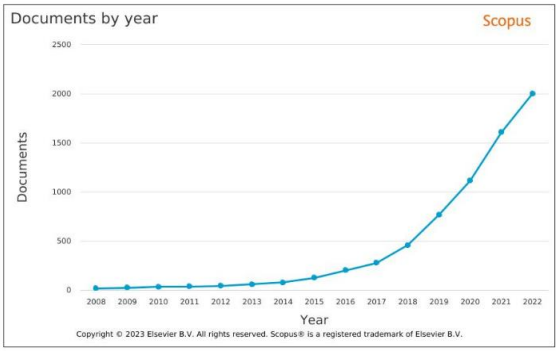


Figure 13: Number of documents on digital platform query (Source: Scopus, 2023)[3]

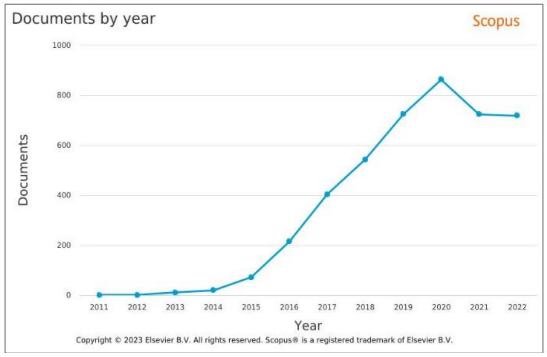


Figure 14: Number of documents onsSharing Economy query (Source: Scopus, 2023)[4]

[3] TITLE-ABS-KEY ("digital platform") AND PUBYEAR > 2007 AND PUBYEAR < 2023 AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "COMP") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ECON") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "PSYC"))

[4] [TITLE-ABS-KEY ("sharing economy") AND PUBYEAR > 2007 AND PUBYEAR < 2023 AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "COMP") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ECON") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "PSYC"))]

3.2.1.2. Multiple actors perspective

In 2018, no attempts from researchers have been made to analyze the sharing economy platform with a **multiple actors perspective**. Given the sparse research on a multiple actors' perspective, we shaped our research project with a multi-actors perspective aiming at providing a better understanding of the interactions amongst the various groups of actors i.e., actors of the DP ecosystem and external actors. We first attempted to discuss (1) who are the internal actors gravitating and evolving within the DP ecosystem but also the external actors and (2) how do they interact and what are the relational dynamics amongst them.

As mentioned, our starting point in this research project was to identify the internal and external actors of the DP ecosystem and examine their roles and relationships. Our first contribution was the multi-actor's perspective with the case study of Airbnb i.e., "Mapping the stakeholders and their relationships in the Sharing Economy" (Figure 15) presented at the International Workshop of the Sharing Economy (IWSE) at Mannheim University and selected as one of the best paper published in "Perspectives on the Sharing Economy" (2019).

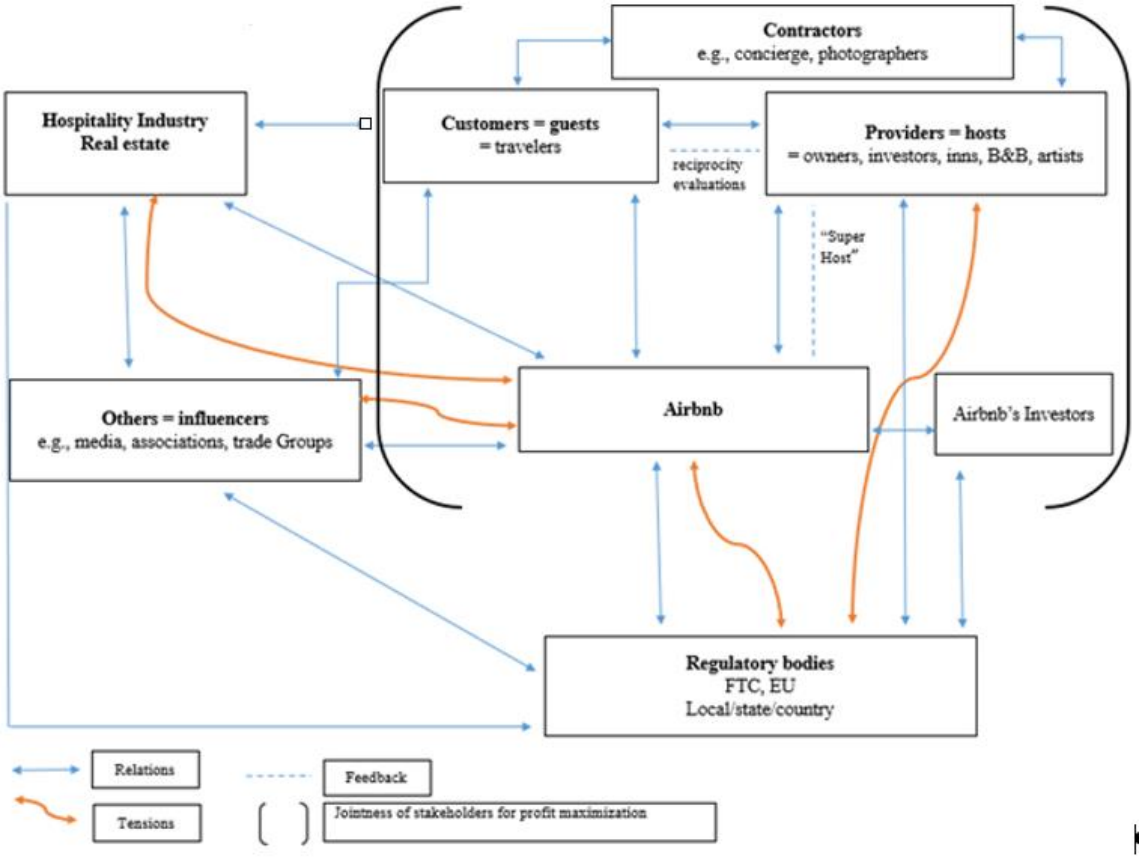


Figure 15: Mapping Airbnb's actors (Source: L'Ecuyer, 2019; Maurer et al, 2019)

3.2.1.3. Digital platforms' legitimacy

But, the heterogeneity of digital platforms' actors, their rapid growth and need to develop their ecosystem to a critical mass benefiting from network effects, generate tensions and contradictions within their ecosystems. The coexistence of multiple uncoordinated actors and their respective logics increase the diversity of expectations DPE may compete. This indicates a need to understand how DP manage their legitimacy along the multiple logics of the SE. Those growing tensions amongst actors started being publicly known through regular media coverage fueled by protests and collective actions from external actors such as incumbents and local communities. This media arena addressed questions as to the role of DP in society and their survival. Not surprisingly, the same year, the "big idea" of our research project was inspired by the call from the editors of Academy of Management Discoveries, highlighting the importance of legitimacy in the Sharing Economy. "This requires study and learning of how sharing-economy organizations coordinate with other stakeholders (governments, suppliers, platform owners, customers and affected citizens) to gain legitimacy and regulatory approvals to operate in the regions they serve" (Laamanen et al., 2018).

Scopus highlights the emergence of legitimacy as a research stream with case studies on the pioneered digital platforms in the sharing economy (Figures 16 and 17).

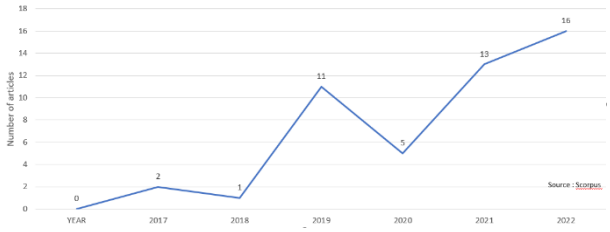


Figure 16: Number of articles on digital platform and legitimacy query (Source: Scopus, 2023)[5]

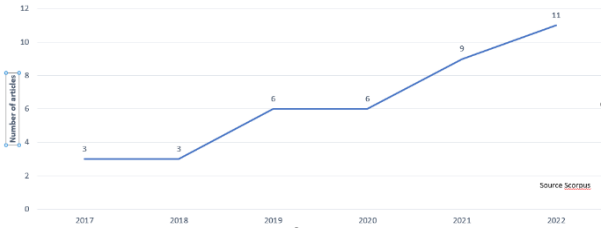


Figure 17: Number of articles on sharing Economy and legitimacy query (Source: Scopus, 2023)[6]

[5] [(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("sharing economy") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (legitimacy) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (legitimation)) AND PUBYEAR > 2016 AND PUBYEAR < 2023 AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ECON") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "PSYC") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "COMP"))]

[6] [(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("digital platform") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (legitimacy) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (legitimation)) AND PUBYEAR > 2016 AND PUBYEAR < 2023 AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ECON") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "PSY") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "COMP"))],

3.2.2. Case selection: an emblematic player of DPE in the SE: Airbnb in NYC

The research approach of a case study involves in-depth investigation of a single case within a real-life context (Yin, 2013).

We chose, Airbnb, as a single case because it refers to a critical case and notably represents one of the most successful models in the SE (Fagerstrom et al., 2017) with a major impact on the traditional business in the hospitality sector (Zhu et al., 2017). It is the aim of this thesis to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the processus of legitimation of digital platforms-based ecosystems in the sharing economy during a crisis. At the time we started the research project of my PhD, the Mom and Pop model prevailed and we observed the phenomena of the exponential growth of the platform in such a short period of time and in all cities of the world.

The reasons for choosing the platform Airbnb rather than another platform in the SE such as Blablacar are: (1) the cultural cognitive acceptance of hosts and guests choosing to use the platform for their travel in a sector previously driven by professionals in hospitality highly experienced in-service quality. Who would have thought 12 years ago that landowners would host strangers in their "privacy" spheres (e.g., sharing beds and bathrooms)? (2) the ecosystemic dynamic fueled by the nature of hosting such as property management services or conciergerie or need for automation with tech start-ups more limited with the riding activity, (3) the coming Initial Public Offering announced in 2018 which would complexify the legitimation process of Airbnb (4) my personal life where I "survived" financially during one year thanks to Airbnb allowing me to pay my loans and bills before the sale of the house which was converted at that time in a 5 bedrooms Airbnb listing. Economic and social motivations have been my main drivers and became a family weekend activity cleaning and preparing the house for guests. One of my daughters oversaw the garden and the other one helped with the laundry preparing the beds. This experience is a permanent marker in our family story.

3.2.2.1. A disruptive innovation in the tourism industry

All sectors are impacted by the SE however the tourism sector seems to be more affected by the SE. Users perceive the SE as a socialization tool allowing cultural exchange motivated by financial benefits instilling a self-entrepreneur mindset (Gul, 2022). The tourism industry is composed of five groups of actors: (1) Global Distribution Systems (GDS) that connect travel data networks from service providers (airlines, hotels, cruises, car rental companies, tour companies) with travel agents and provide IT solutions (e.g.., Amadeus, Travelport, Sabre) (Figure 18).

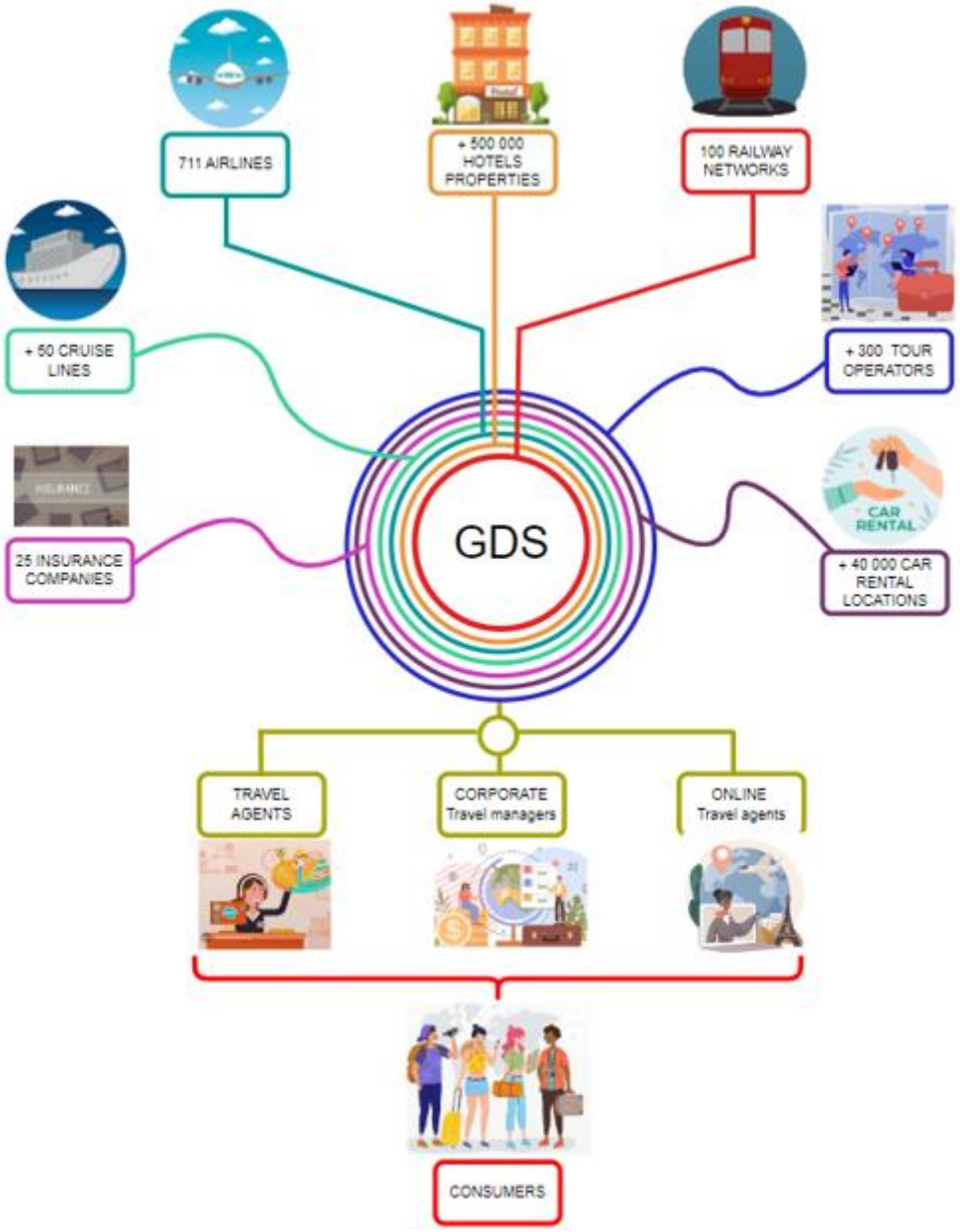


Figure 18: Global distribution systems (Source: Traveltech, 2019)

(2) Online Travel Agencies (OTA) are consumer-facing platforms that allow to compare and buy travel services such as flights tickets, hotels, rental cars, and other travel services (e.g., booking, expedia, eDreams, Priceline Group) (Figure 19).

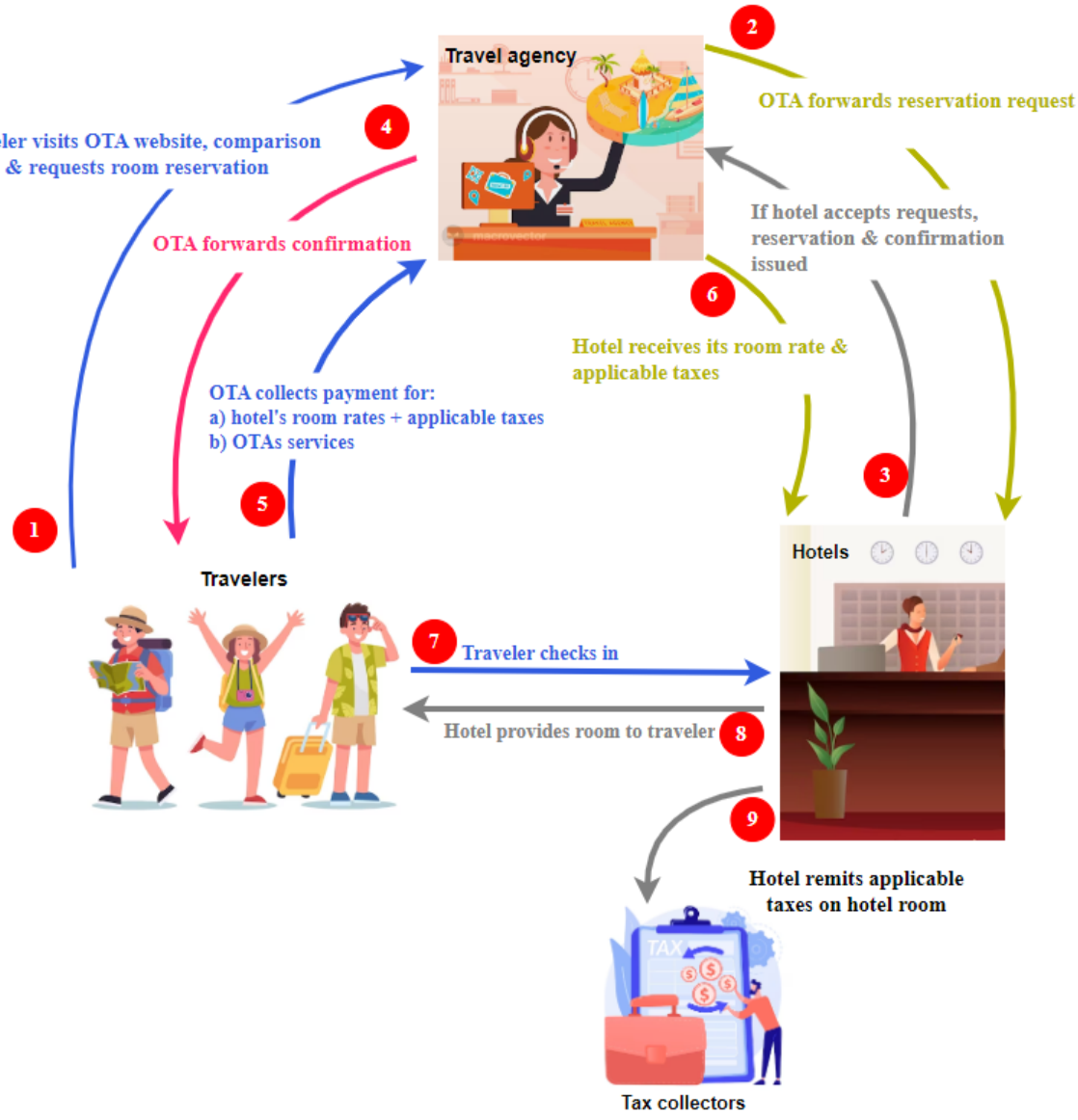


Figure 19: Online travel agencies (Source: Traveltech, 2019)

(3) Short-term rentals that allow homeowners to reach millions of interested travelers and earn extra income (e.g., Airbnb, VRBO, Homeaway);

(4) Metasearch engines empower consumers proposing travel options and orienting them to suppliers (e.g., tripadvisor, Kayak) (Figure 20);

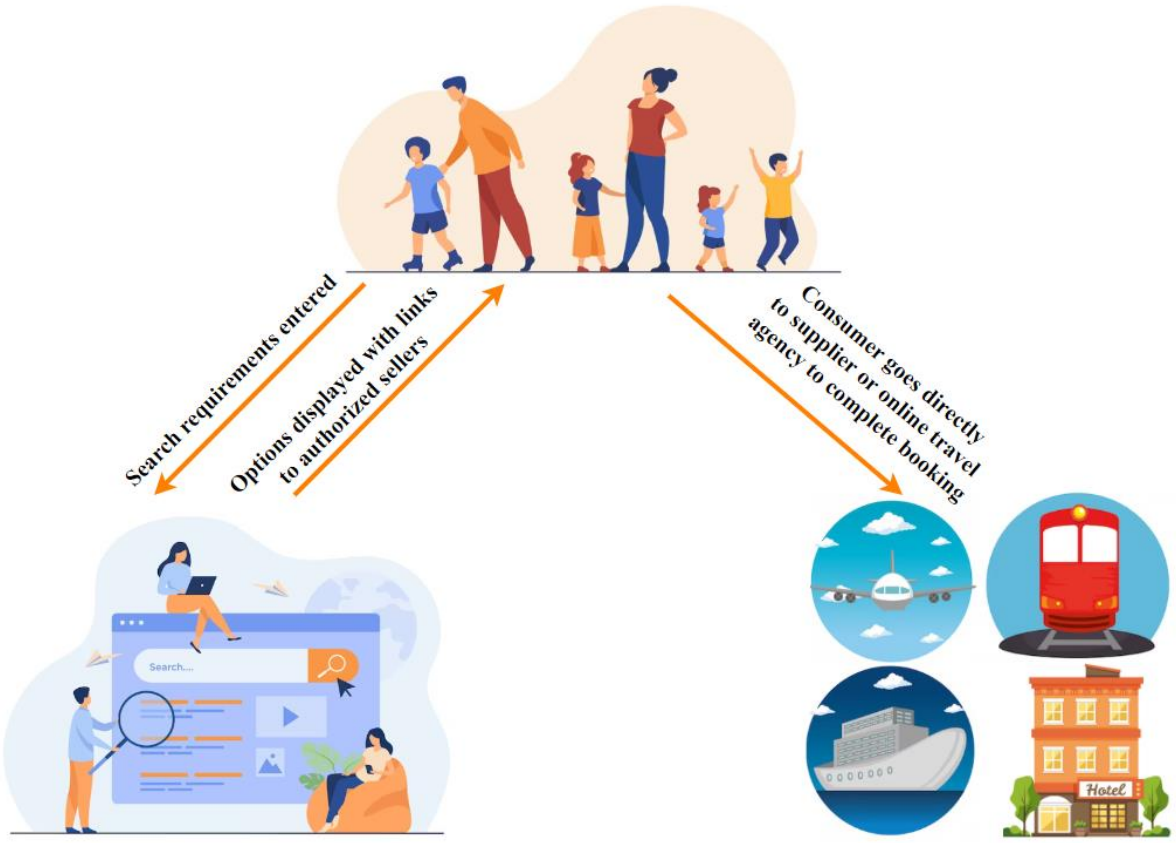


Figure 20: Metasearch platforms (Source: Traveltech, 2019)

(5) Travel Management Company (TMC) using innovative technology to support organizations save time (e.g., American Express Global Business Travel, BCD Travel, Carlson Wagonlit Travel).

Tourists have changed their behaviors due to new technologies allowing access to more information with new tools (e.g.; comparative websites).

Before, owners will list their home on the classified section of the local newspaper. The internet improves the level of transactions allowing "ordinary people" to list their properties on VRBO or Airbnb. Scholars have focused on the "fairness of competition" (Gurran, 2018; Kennedy et al., 2019) as well as mass media covering tax implications and need for regulation. However, Dolnicar (2020) highlighted the consequences of an increase of self-entrepreneurs in the tourism industry (e.g., long-term employment at risk, strong market competition with services, neighborhoods and real estate impacts) and the need for a projective perspective of the role of DP in SE impacting the overall tourism industry.

3.2.2.2. Airbnb in the SE

Since its creation in 2008, Airbnb has become a serious menace to traditional businesses (e.g., the hotel industry, and housing market). (Zervas et al., 2017; Li et al., 2019). When our study started at the end of 2018, the company was valued at nearly $ 40 billion on secondary transactions. Despite its resilient business model and its worldwide growth, the platform has historically faced criticisms about its social impact on the housing market and on the hospitality industry. In the massive impressive and contradictory sharing economy's literature from scholars, some view Airbnb's business model as predator or capitalist profit-driven platforms (Munoz and Cohen, 2017).

As a pioneered digital platform, Airbnb accommodation solution disrupts the traditional business offering more rooms than the key traditional actors (Marriott International, Hilton, Wyndham Worldwide, Accor Hotel, Intercontinental Hotel Group) (Dolnicar and Zare, 2020). Moreover, recent findings show a value of $113 billion in 2021 and a reported net income of $1,983 in 2022 (Statista) (Figure 21).

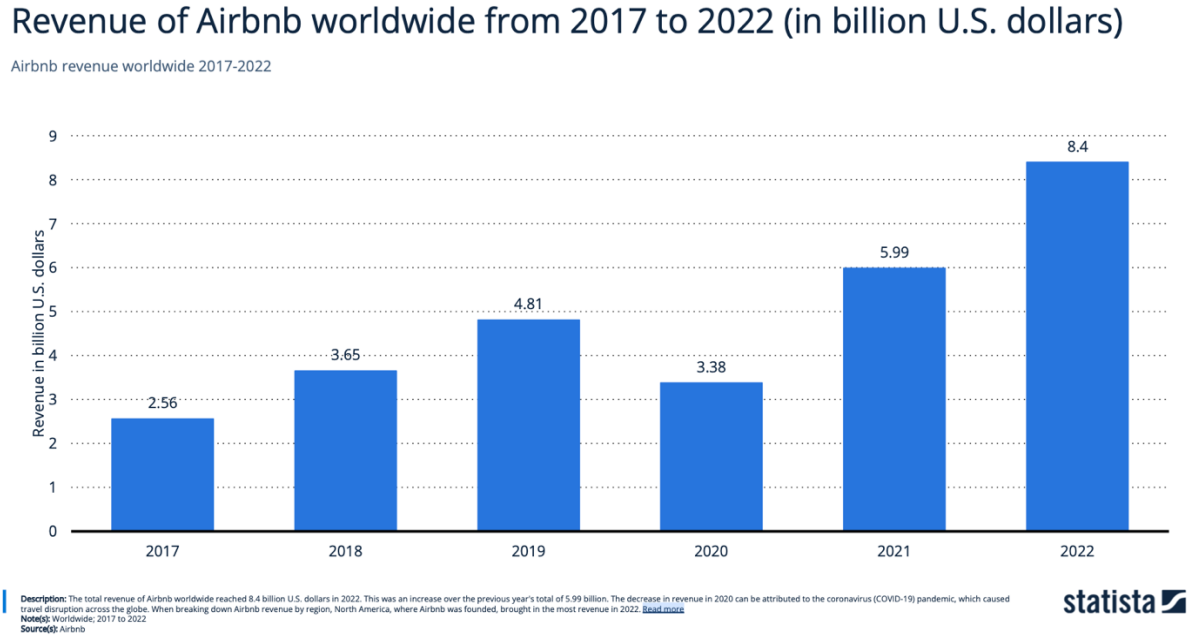


Figure 21: Airbnb revenue worldwide from 2017 to 2022 (in billion U.S. dollars) (Source: Statista, 2023)

The authenticity of hospitality experience (i.e. social interaction) and the economic profits for hosts and guests are the two main drivers of its rapid growth in its early years (Gansky, 2010; Guttentag, 2013; Hamari et al., 2015). The mainstream revenue of the platform comes from the fees commission paid by the guest (6 to 12%) and hosts (3%) (Guttentag, 2013). The platform markets a "sense of belonging" and community fed by a DNA narrative to attract users and enhance its "unique selling proposition" compared to the traditional vocational rental market (e.g., VRBO). Robust trust mechanisms increase the attractiveness, thereby facilitating transactions (e.g., peer reviewing, pricing tools, insurance) and strengthening its growth revenue (Figure 21). Traditional hospitality actors' debate about unfair competition (i.e., regulations, taxations and safety standards) while Airbnb defends its "complementary offer since 70% of the listings is outside central districts" (Airbnb 2013). The professionalization of hosts holding multiple listings relaunch the discussion about Airbnb as an actor of the SE and its repositioning (i.e., a business to consumer rather than peer to peer accommodation solution) (Demir and Emekli, 2021).

Its two contributors are the hosts, renting their property or part of it, travelers for leisure or business searching for an accommodation solution and investors (i.e., venture capital firms, business angels, private equity funds).

On the economic sector, Airbnb PR leveraged its positive economic impacts around the rental places with longer stays travelers where more jobs could be generated but at the detriment of low-end hotels (Zervas et al., 2017). Considered as a disruptive innovation for the traditional hospitality industry (Guttentag, 2015), unfair competition is often pictured in studies with hosts free of safety measures or insurance requirements (Oskam and Boswijk, 2016).

3.2.2.3. Regulations

Complaints from local community about Airbnb negative impacts of short-term rentals in neighborhood rise worldwide (e.g., waste management, safety concerns, congestion) (e.g., Gurran and Phibbs, 2017). The work of Nieuwland and van Melik (2020) clarified the role of regulations in mitigating neighborhood impacts.

Table 12: Regulatory approaches in European and American cities (Source:Nieuwland and Van Melik, 2020)

	FULL BAN	
	Anaheim	Full ban whole city Start phasing out existing STRs January 2018
Partial ban for new licences in Old Town, Barcelona Quantitative: one listing per property owner, no more people than property is built for Qualitative: Hygiene, contact details provided for neighbors	**Barcelona**	
	New Orleans	Partial ban in Vieux Carre, New Orleans Quantitative: One party of guests per unit Qualitative: Insurance, safety and emergency precautions, contact details provided, information about trash collection and noise provided, no nuisance
Restrictions Santa Monica Quantitative: one listing per property owner Qualitative: no entire units, host present during rental period, only in spaces intended for living, emergency information provided	**Santa Monica**	
	New York	Restrictions New York Quantitative: Only one listing per address Qualitative: Permanent resident needs to be present during rental period in multifamily dwellings
Restrictions San Francisco Quantitative: maximum 90 unhosted nights Qualitative: permanent residents only, safety precautions provided	**San Francisco**	
	Berlin	Restrictions Berlin No entire apartments, only allowed if at least 50% of apartment is used by property owner
	LAISSEZ-FAIRE	

From Nieuwland & Rianne van Melik (2020), in terms of regulations, Nieuwland & Rianne van Melik (2020) classified three natures of restrictions for Airbnb: (i) full prohibition (i.e., ban of Short-term rentals), (ii) the laissez faire (i.e., no measures against), (iii) the limitation with 4 types of restrictions (Guttentag, 2015; Jefferson-Jones, 2014; Miller, 2014). The limitation is the most common restriction with either (1) quantitative restrictions (limit number of units or of visitors or days rented or number of days/year available for rent), (2) locational restrictions for specific area (Gurran & Phibbs, 2017); (3) density restrictions (limited number of STRs in neighborhood's; (4) qualitative restrictions defining the type of accommodation). According to Nieuwland & Rianne van Melik (2020) proposing a typology of STR policies (in Figure 22), regulating instead of prohibiting is preferred by local government to allow revenues (Jefferson-Jones, 2014) in a context of strong litigations while Airbnb would be very active and powerful in legal battles with key cities making officials more difficult to design regulations (Benner, 2016). Studying the case of Denver, the authors described the licensing and enforcement settled by the city of Denver.

For all cities, in order to track illegal hotels, municipalities invested in enforcement policies. Officers have the mission of checking licensing numbers of hosts operating on Airbnb using online research and door to door visits.

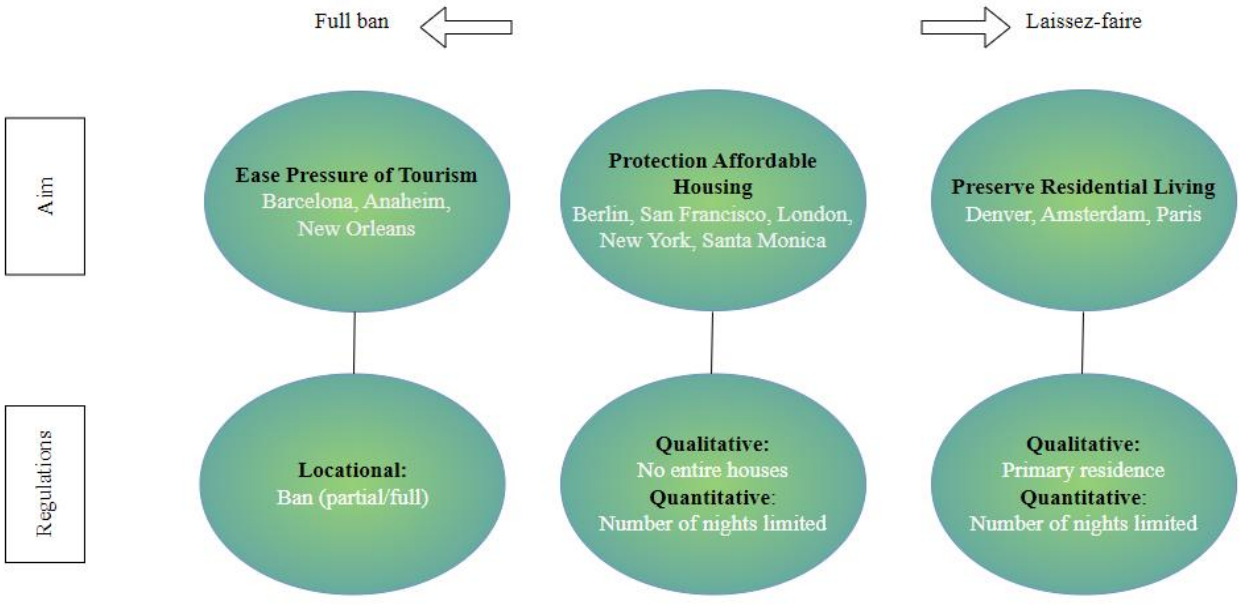


Figure 22: Typology of STR policies (Source: Nieuwland and Van Melik, 2020)



Figure 23: Airbnb OSE litigation files at the OSE office

Risks for hosts operating an Airbnb are tensions with (1) guests damaging the property or with (2) local community. A rise in tourists in residential districts, with misbehaviors, lack of concerns for the area by guests impact the relations between landowners and the local community. Since 2020, Airbnb launched a process allowing residential neighborhood to declare nuisances through its website "neighborhood section" or (3) regulatory bodies not complying with local regulations. Popular cities confronted by over tourism have the most restrictive government regulations implemented (e.g., Paris, San Francisco, or New York) forcing Airbnb to collect local occupancy taxes from hosts directly to tax authorities (Reinhold and Dolnicar, 2021).

3.2.3. The Research Context of New York City (NYC)

"I want to be a part of it. New York, New York…
If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere.
It's up to you New York, New York". Frank Sinatra

Relationships and interactions amongst actors vary depending on the social and cultural context in which they occur. The Big Apple is certainly one of the most institutionalized contexts marked by its emblematic, powerful, and influential role in the world (e.g., New-York Stock Exchange). Interestingly, NYC is given as "role model" in the way the heterogenous groups of actors have structured and organized the opposition against Airbnb.

3.2.3.1. NYC: “au Coeur de la fronde anti-Airbnb”*



Figure 24: First meeting of the opponents of Airbnb Paris coalition

Originally, when we started the project, we selected Paris as the biggest Airbnb market. September 2018, I attended the first meeting with a group of actors having in common the fight against Airbnb, in the process of forming a coalition, at an iconic revolutionary Parisian location, place de la Bastille.

Those actors represented neighborhood association in Paris 12 district, tenants’ association and landowners. Because our research objectives are not to examine the emergence of coalition and social movement but to focus on the legitimation process of DP, we decided to reorient our choice for a more “mature” city with established existing organizational responses to fight the platform. We finally embedded our study in the market and environment of New-York City (NYC), the Airbnb’s largest market in the United States in 2016[7]. Interestingly, the French media, Le Figaro, titled “NYC, au Coeur de la fronde anti-Airbnb” referring to a conference “ReformBnB-winning the fight against Short Term Lets” organized at the InterContinental New York Barclay in November 2018. This first international conference on illegal short-term rentals organized by the Hotel Association of New York City highlighted the advanced organization settled in NYC against Airbnb and its powerful role worldwide[8]

[7] https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/22/technology/new-york-passes-law-Airbnb.html
[8] http://www.lefigaro.fr/conjoncture/2018/11/18/20002-20181118ARTFIG00128-new-york-coeur-de-la-fronde-anti-Airbnb.php15

3.2.3.2. NYC specificities

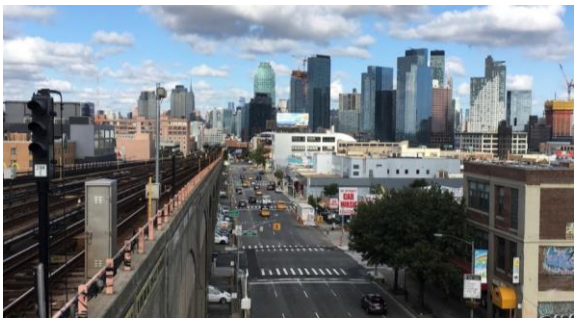


Figure 25: View of Manhattan from Line 7

Along the Northeast coast of the US, NYC is characterized by unique ethnic and social diversity. "The city that never sleeps" (Sinatra, 1952), became the first global megacity in the world in 1950 (Chandler, 1987). Among all US municipalities, NYC is the most dense and populous one (10 630 residents km2) and ranks as one of the world's largest megacities with 8.3 million residents in the municipal city (NYC) divided in boroughs (i.e., Manhattan, Queens, Bronx, Brooklyn and Staten Island) (Mackun and Wilson, 2010). NYC population density matches with its cultural diversity (McPhearson et al., 2014).

The choice of NYC as the context is driven by NYC's (1) reputation as a tourism destination and the importance of the NYC market for Airbnb (2) reputation as the center of world finance and economic power, key to seduce for a highly expected IPO (3) position as the first U.S. city to be exposed to the virus and as its epicenter with no point of reference to guide it, (4) resilience culture that is showed after September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Sandy devasting hurricane and the 2008 financial crisis and (5) economic power among the traditional hotels groups, (6) very restrictive regulations introduced by the Multiple Dwelling Law in 2010. in place putting the rental activities in most of the case illegal with the host not being present during the stay and limited to 30 days a year and (7) organized form of resistance from market actors (e.g., hotels industry) and non-market actors (e.g., local community).


THE NEW YORK TIMES METRO SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2006[9]

Tenants Are Losing to Tourists, Room by Room

Figure 26: New York Times January 22, 2006

We consider important to highlight those tensions about permanent affordable housing in NYC already existed, before Airbnb was created.

[9] Source: New York Times 2006/01/22

> "Even before Airbnb showed up, the idea of turning your apartment into a hotel was becoming a thing. It was such a-- it was such an opportunity for making money with the uptick in tourism, global tourism." Interview n°22

> "New York City has always had a housing problem, a housing shortage, going back to the 19th century. So the fact that we have a housing shortage is nothing new. There's more people than there are housing units. And as population grows, as people from all over the world come here and the housing supply either remains static or grows very little". Interview n°22

In 2006, the New-York Times' article: "Tenants are losing to tourists, room by room" (Appendix 1) described the new situation with landowners converting existing units into accommodations for tourists most of them located in Manhattan with a short supply of low costs rentals units while an increase in tourists' rooms' demand. "People can make a lot more money from transient use than by using a room has a permanent residence" Deborah Rand interviewed by the journalist. Interestingly, this article discusses the role of Craigslist as the "online classified advertising service" listing illegally converted apartments for "short-term visitors" and the difficulty for officials to track landowners. In 2007, neighborhood tenants' associations emerged: "I have been volunteering to fight to stop transient rentals in residential buildings on 2006". Interview n°22

The NYC city codes prohibit a building to operate as a hotel because of the residential area zoning and building codes safety. In 2006, officials pointed out that the complex multi-layers jurisdictions (e.g., multiple city agencies and inspectors) did not allow illegal conversions to be easily identified and violations to be traced.

3.2.3.3. NYC as the epicenter of COVID-19

> *"I could not think that we had used the term ground zero yet again because I was here in New York, obviously, during 911. And ground zero might be New York City and the World Trade Center. But now, New York has become ground zero, again, because we had the most deaths."* Interview n ° 7

March 2020, New-York City was the epicenter of COVID-19 outbreak in the US. Communities of colors, low-income areas and individuals aged >75 years represented the highest rates of cases of hospitalizations and deaths (Thompson et al., 2020).

Weekly press conferences transmitted on TV, led by the governor of NYC, Andrew Cuomo provided rich data on the COVID-19 evolution, challenges (e.g., the private hospitals system needed to be managed governmentally), measures for emergency hospital procedures, and the solutions undertaken by the city (e.g., testing, social behaviors).

At the early stage of the surge, New York faced ventilator shortage and hospital gown. Ventilators "are to this war what missiles were to World War II."[10]

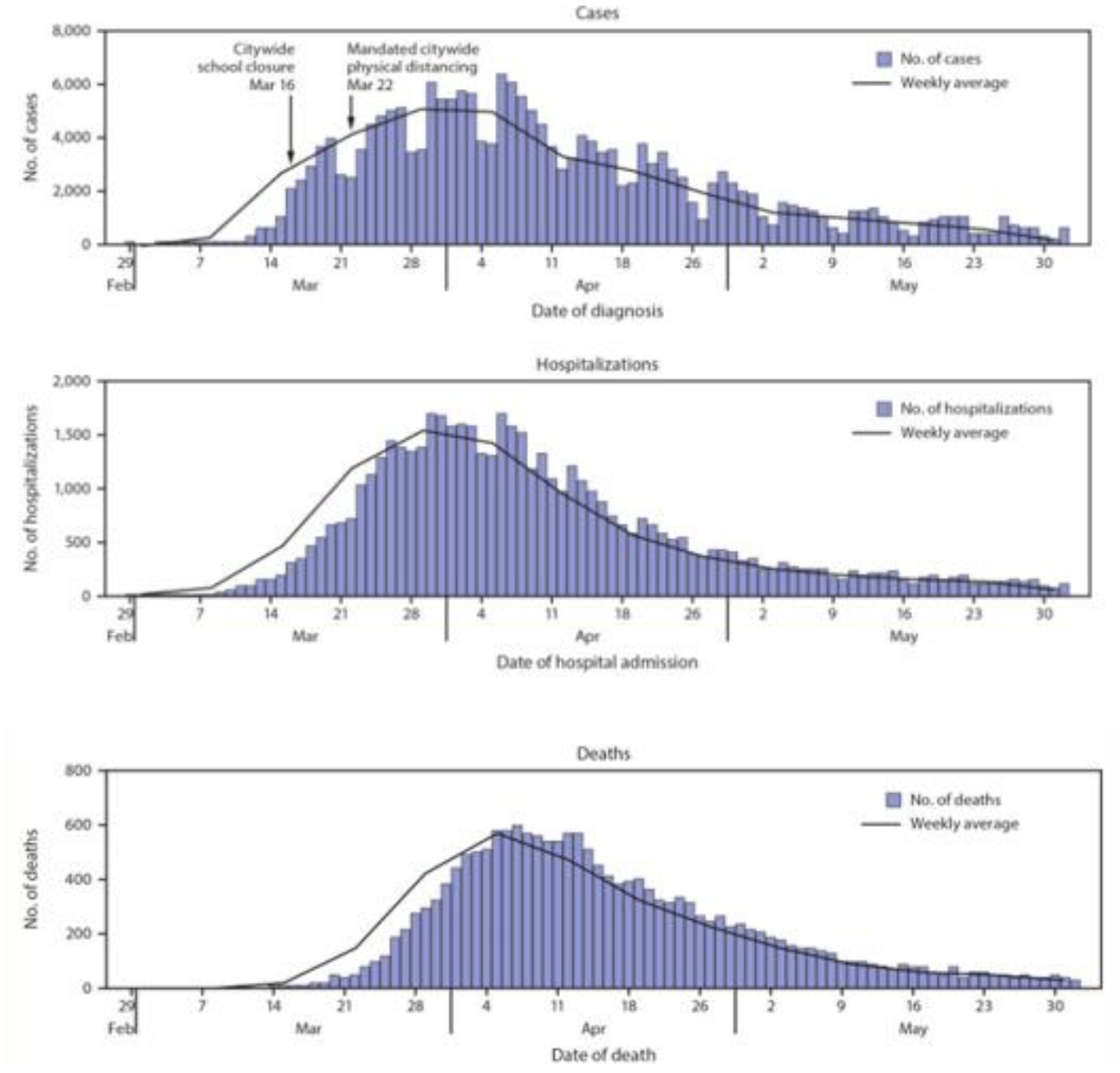


Figure 27: Daily laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases, associated hospitalizations and deaths, New-York City. From February 29-June 1, 2020 (Source: Thompson et al., 2020)

[10] https://edition.cnn.com/2020/03/21/politics/new-york-andrew-cuomo-coronavirus-spread/index.html

3.2.4. Data collection

3.2.4.1. Semi-structured Interviews

3.2.4.1.1. Mapping our respondents

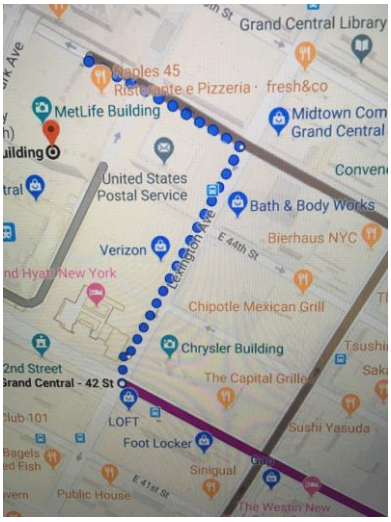


Figure 28: Walking directions in Manhattan

Our primary data is robust and exclusive. We started with a three-month investigation of the Airbnb ecosystem in NYC aiming at identifying the key actors via the newspapers (i.e., New York Times) and our news databases (i.e., europress). It allowed us to draw a rough mapping of our initial understanding of the Airbnb ecosystem in NYC identifying (1) ones 'own benefit from the platform: users (i.e., hosts and guests), investors, start-ups, property management; (2) the opponents: travel agencies, hotel industry, the mayor of NYC through its Criminal Justice Department represented by the Office of Special Enforcement (OSE), the regulatory bodies and (3) the influencers (i.e., New-York University). This first work was presented at the International Workshop of the Sharing Economy in Mannheim. The novel stakeholder approach that we presented in our research project was recognized as a "promising perspective to future research" and subsequently our presentation was awarded with the contribution of the chapter Management and Strategy Research in the book Perspectives on the Sharing Economy, (Maurer, and Oberg, 2019).

Table 13: Perspective in the Sharing Economy (Source: Maurer et al., 2019)

Chapter	Perspective	Author(s)	Paper
1.1	Business and Economic History	Mosmann	Renaissance of shared resource use? The Historical Honeycomb of the sharing economy
1.2		Gruber	Can the sharing economy regulate itself? A comparison of how Uber and Machinery Rings link their economic and social goals
2.1	Economics	Hofmann,Hartl, Sabitzer, Marth, Penz & Hoelzl	Regulating consumers' contributions and usage of a shared good: An experimental approach
2.2		Gyódi & Nawaro	Determinants of accommodation prices provided by Airbnb in four EU cities
2.3		Hermann, Zaal, Chappin & Schemmann	Does education still matter in online labor markets?
3.1	Organization Studies	Wruk, Oberg, Maurer & Klutt	Types of business models in the sharing economy: An exploratory study in Germany
3.2		Hartl, Penz, Schüßler & Hofmann	Shared mobility business models – Trust building in the sharing economy
3.3		Farstad & Landa Mata	From shared mobility to shared lifestyles – Understanding whether and how household carsharing practices spread into other sectors
3.4		Schölhom	Theorizing technologies for the sharing economy: The Blockchain example
4.1	Management and Strategy Research	Oliver & Statler	Stakescholder theory and the sharing economy: Toward a research agenda
4.2		**L'Ecuyer**	Mapping the stakeholders and their relationships in the sharing economy: The case of Airbnb
4.3		Plewnia & Guenther	A collaborative energy system – How business models of the sharing economy may drive the energy transition
4.4		Guyader & Piscicelli	Car as a service platform

3.2.4.1.2. Groups of actors



Figure 29: Office of the President of Manhattan Borough

We conducted our interviews over a short period of time in 2019 from May to September 2019 for the first round followed by a second round from March to August 2020. In this objective, we developed an interview guide (see Table 14) based on our research questions and included elements about relational dynamics within Airbnb ecosystem, strategies of multiple-actors, industry realities, legitimacy, etc. We set many actors' groups identified from the mapping including traditional actors (guests, hosts, ect.) and less traditional players that were however of primary importance for the NYC context. We describe thereafter some of these groups that might be less known and easier to understand by our readers.

Table 14: Matrice of a semi-structured interview

Demographic Info	Name, first name, age, job title, education? For how long have you been working in the real estate industry? In this company? Number of employees, historical data (headquarters and date)
	Could you present the services proposed and latest innovations?
Industry general information	What are the major changes in the real estate industry in NYC?
	In your opinion and from your experience, how do you explain those changes?
	Are those changes the same for the hospitality industry?
	Who has a major role influencing the accommodation industry?
	How do you explain the crisis of affordable housing market in NYC? When has it started?
Mapping the actors	Could you draw the mapping of your actors?
	Can you explain the roles of each group today and with whom you interact? (e.g. tenants, landlords, NYC municipality, digital platforms)
	What are the major developments?
Interaction amongst actors	With whom do you create value?
	With whom do you have tensions?
	How do you explain that Airbnb is worth more than 30 billion dollars, by passing the brand like Marriot and Hilton in 10 years?
	Is Airbnb the "sharing economy", "peer to peer community", "collaborative economy", "digital platform economy"?
	How do you interact with digital platforms like Airbnb?
	About the latest news: what are your thoughts?
	Who has the power today to regulate the short-term rentals market?
Strategies	How should the real estate industry reshape its business model?
	How should the real estate industry reshape its business model?
	How do you think digital platforms are going to gain legitimacy?
	What is your employees 'opinion about short term rentals (e.g. Airbnb, Vrbo) ?
	How does the digital platform economy influence your business model?

Housing advocates are groups that advocate on behalf of tenants. Tenant organizers provide legal assistance for tenants, who do policy advocacy work for housing rights or rental protections. The 70 different groups of tenant's associations created an alliance called the Upstate Downstate Alliance around one fight (i.e., rent control).

In 2016, 55% of Airbnb listings in NYC were illegal (Malik et al., 2022). The proliferation of illegal hotel operations has removed thousands of affordable apartments from an already tight housing market. It is illegal to rent an apartment for less than 30 days unless the owner resides in the same dwelling. However, Airbnb estimated that its economic impact in NYC was $1.15 billion in 2014 and supported 10,000 jobs (Airbnb, 2015).

> ” Airbnb is making New York more affordable for more families.” Max Pomeranc, Airbnb’s regional head of public policy

The City is focused on improving affordability and access to permanent housing. Protecting and building a new generation of affordable housing stock are their priorities. According to the City, the proliferation of “illegal hotels” contributed to (1) lack of compliance with applicable fire and safety laws, (2) disrupting lives of permanent residents, (3) decrease the hotel taxes revenue for the City. **The Senate District** is at the origin of the creation of the “Illegal Hotel Task Force” empowering enforcement agencies (i.e., Office of Special Enforcement-OSE) by modifying the legislation. The power of NYC could influence the other cities in the US and in the world.



Figure 30: State Senator office



Figure 31: OSE office

The OSE is the Department of the Mayor’ office of Criminal Justice. OSE office’s mandate, originating from a Mayoral Executive Order in 2006, is to focus on addressing issues affecting public safety, community livability, and property values that can lead to the growth of serious crimes.

The Hotel Industry Association of NYC (HANYC) took a central role as advocates in the fight against Airbnb, lobbying at the City, State and Federal level and testifying in hearings to settle legislation against Airbnb. The HANYC is the oldest Hotel Industry Association in the US created in 1878 to serve as a voice for the hotel industry. In 2020, HANYC represented 300 hotels (i.e., 80,000 rooms and 50,000 employees). The primary interest of this Association is focused on member advocacy and pertains to current issues that ensure the vitality of the industry.



Figure 32: REBNY offices

The Real Estate Board of New-York (REBNY): "over 100 years of building and serving New York City"

REBNY played a key role in the fight against "illegal hotels" (1) educating the real estate actors about the evolution of legislation enhancing the security of tenants (2) supporting the municipality call for additional budget to increase the OSE team. REBNY is the "City's leading real estate trade association." Founded in 1896, REBNY is a trade association with over 17,000 members comprised of owners, builders, investors, brokers, managers, lenders, architects, contractors and other real estate professionals active in New York City. REBNY conducts research on various civic matters including tax policy, city planning and zoning, rental conditions, land use policy, building codes, and other city, state, and federal legislation.



Figure 33: Manhattan Borough Executive Offices

The Manhattan Borough President Office

It acts as advocates for Manhattan at the Mayor Office, the City Council and the New-York State Government. Protecting New York City's stock of affordable housing is one of the central missions of the City. Short Term rentals 'regulations in NYC are some of the strictest in the US to prevent illegal short-term rentals taking housing units off the market. The historical litigation between Airbnb and NYC started in 2015. Since then, the city has placed strict limits on short-term rentals, including a required physical presence of people who rent out and limiting two guests per rental. In 2016, a law prevented owners from advertising illegal units. In 2022, The New York City Council approved Local Law 18 that goes into effect in Jan 2023 and will require more than 37,000 homes listed on Short-Term Rental platforms to register their units with the City (e.g., pay a $154 fee with inclusion of a diagram showing the rental space.)

3.2.4.1.3. The snowball effect



Figure 34: Example of a snowball effect at Washington DC, Hotel Industry at the Federal level recommended by the NYC Hotel Association, at the City level

Few key interviews happened to be organized through the snowball effect. The "snowball effect" in research, often referred to as "snowball sampling" in the context of qualitative research methods (Goodman, 1961), is a technique where existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances. We identified initial participants related to our topic i.e., the guests, the hosts, the hospitality industry and short-term rentals 'experts. These participants then refer us to others who have had the experience or characteristic of interest (figure 34). The snowball technic was very successful in accessing groups of actors that are normally difficult to study such as Tenants Advocates Groups (Atkinson and Flint, 2001). We continued this process until we reached data saturation, and the desired sample size was achieved.

3.2.4.1.4. First round in "business as usual" context

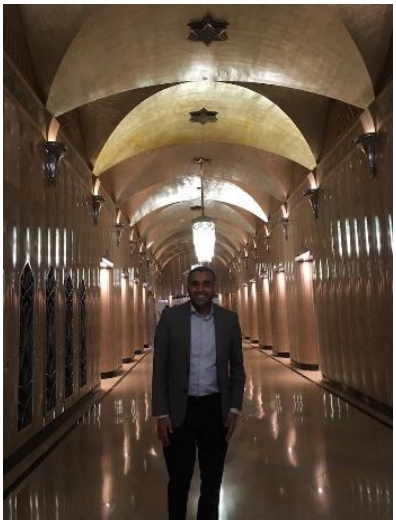


Figure 35: REBNY Governor and Public Affairs VP at the Chrysler Building

The first set of 34 interviews was conducted between May and September 2019 in NYC, in face-to-face settings, which allowed us to better understand the specific characteristics of this unique metropolis. We collected information about the structure and function of the Airbnb NYC ecosystem – including the main categories of actors, their characteristics, their relations with Airbnb and their consequences on the platform's organizational legitimacy. I was permitted to record the **34 interviews in 2019** in total making sure to record respondents' exact words.

Along with rigorous continued qualitative analysis, I asked each respondent in face to face to draw a mapping of the Airbnb ecosystem. This would also allow us to achieve saturation once new information no longer emerged from those mappings.

I took very detailed notes during and immediately after meetings to adjust the interview questions through the progress of the research to capture who did what when.

In respect to the interpretivism philosophy, as part of the process of collecting data as "feelings" researchers, I interacted with the respondents framing the questions knowing that I would not address every respondent the same question the same way.

3.2.4.1.5. Second round in a crisis context

Due to COVID-19, we conducted a second set of **21 interviews** between March and August 2020, using the Microsoft Teams application, by selecting available interviewees from our 2019 respondents' list, and adding three new respondents identified through the snowballing method. The interviews focused on the same themes selected in our first interview, as a guide to build upon actors' perceptions, opinions, and experiences regarding impact of the pandemic on the Airbnb ecosystem and its subsequent dynamics of change. This time, the circumstances surrounding data collection were completely different, as most respondents were working from home and experiencing high levels of stress and uncertainty. I felt shocked and was emotional, as the evoked situations were often dramatic. One top executive shared his feelings regarding the delivery of masks to various NYC hospitals while trucks were packed to transport the deceased. Many interviewees mentioned that NYC looks and feels like a ghost town.

3.2.4.1.6. Transcriptions

Transcription is a critical step in qualitative research, as it converts oral data (such as interviews, focus groups, or recordings of natural settings) into written text for analysis. Accurate transcription is fundamental to maintaining the reliability and validity of the data. We used verbatim transcription capturing every utterance from the respondent, including filler words (e.g., "uh", "um"), pauses, emotions and background sounds (Green, J., Franquiz, M., & Dixon, C.,1997).



Figure 36: Founder of NYC Tenants Associations and his dog

About background sounds, an unforgettable one reminded me the conditions of the interview with the Founder and Treasurer of the Tenants Association of NYC in his condo in Greenwich playing with his dog to calm him down at the beginning of the interview which makes a rhythmic sound of a ball followed by the dog noise during 20mn!

Table 15: Primary data collection (2019 and 2020): Two rounds of semi-structured interviews

Code	Organization	Status/Position	Date of interviews	Duration
1	Intercontinental DC and NYC H2 Sustainability Consulting	ExGeneral manager and founder; expert in Hospitality	August 2019 June 2020	76’ 70’
2	Pratt Institute	City planner and urbanist; full professor	August 2019 July 2020	103’ 83’
3	Lodging Advisor New York University Tisch Center of Hospitality	CEO, assistant professor	August 2019 July 2020	59’ 56’
4	New York University Stern School of Business	Professor of Entrepreneurship and of Technology	August 2019	76’
5	New York University Expert in international hospitality and tourism	Associate professor	June 2020	46’
6	New York University Tisch Center of Hospitality	Associate professor	August 2019	66’
7	Hotel Association New York City (HANYC)	President and CEO NYC	August 2019 June 2020	78’ 53’
8	Starwood Hotels & Resorts	VP Sales and marketing	June 2019	77’
9	Wyndham Hotels & Resorts	President and CEO	August 2019	41’
10	Wyndham Hotels & Resorts	Vice President, Channel & distribution strategy	August 2019	43’
11	Indagare Travel	Founder and CEO	August 2019	33’
12	Real Estate Board of New York City	Senior VP, Government affairs	August 2019 June 2020	52’
13	Orsid Realty. Corp. Co-Ops Management	General manager	August 2019	64’
14	NYC Hostel	General manager	August 2019 June 2020	140’ 69’
15	Inside Airbnb	Founder	August 2019 June 2020	120’ 77’
16	Office of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer	General council	August 2019 June 2020	67’ 39’
17	New York State Senate Liz Krueger Senator	Deputy chief of staff	August 2019 June 2020	53’ 61’
18	New York City Council	Legislative and communication director	August 2019	45’
19	NYC Mayor ‘s Office of Special Enforcement	Director	August 2019 June 2020	154’ 57’
20	American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA)	Senior VP, Government affairs & industry relations	August 2019 June 2020	66’ 49’
21	HANYC’s Public Relations	President and CEO NYC	August 2019	52’

22	Tenants Association PAC	Founder and treasurer	August 2019	40’
23	Affordable Housing Coalition	Founder	July 2020	91’
24	Activist	Collecting Airbnb data for NYC	July 2020	212’
25	Airbnb Attorney NYC Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	Director	August 2019	47’
26	Airbnb Mastery Summit	Host and mentor	August 2019 April 2020	42’ 63’
27	Airbnb partner DEEMLY Start-up	Co-Founder and CEO	June 2019	43’
28	AIRBNB Guests in NYC Student	Student in Queens	August 2019	47’
29	Airbnb Guests in NYC Business	Business in Brooklyn	August 2019	21’
30	Airbnb Guests in NYC Leisure	Leisure in Queens	August 2019	35’
31	New Yorker traveler using Airbnb Guests	Leisure in Manhattan 6 trips in EU	August 2019	32’
32	New Yorker traveler using Airbnb Guests	Leisure in Greenwich 1 trip in EU	August 2019 May 2020	55’ 68’
33	Hosts Airbnb experience	Improvisation class	August 2019	21’
34	Airbnb Host Brooklyn	1 apartment ‘Mom and Pop’	July 2020	41’
35	Airbnb Host Queens	10 rooms	August 2019 July 2020	28’ 34’
36	Airbnb Host Manhattan	1 room	August 2019 July 2020	17’ 34’
37	Airbnb Host	1 studio	February 2019 June 2020	32’
38	Airbnb Host	1 room	February 2019 July 2020	23’ 37’

In total, we recorded 54 hours and 36 minutes of interviews, and completed detailed field notes generated during and immediately after each interview. All interviews were transcribed in a total of 733 pages and used as primary inputs for inductive analysis (Gioia et al., 2013).

Table 16: Primary data collection (2019): semi-structured interviews

Code	Name	Date	Duration	Registered	Nb pages of transcription
1 A	Intercontinental DC and NYC H2 Sustainability Consulting	August 2019	76’	Yes	17 pages
2 A	Pratt Institute	August 2019	103’	Yes	20 pages
3 A	Lodging Advisor New York University Tisch Center of Hospitality	August 2019	59’	Yes	11 pages
4	New York University Stern School of Business	August 2019	76’	Yes	17 pages
6	New York University Tisch Center of Hospitality	August 2019	66’	Yes	18 pages
7 A	Hotel Association New York City (HANYC)	August 2019	78’	Yes	19 pages
8	Starwood Hotels & Resorts	June 2019	77’	Yes	19 pages
9	Wyndham Hotels & Resorts	August 2019	41’	Yes	7 pages
10	Wyndham Hotels & Resorts	August 2019	43’	Yes	9 pages
11	Indagare Travel	August 2019	33’	Yes	8 pages
12	Real Estate Board of New York City	August 2019	52’	Yes	13 pages
13	Orsid Realty. Corp. Co-Ops Management	August 2019	64’	Yes	14 pages
14 A	NYC Hostel	August 2019	140’	Yes	43 pages
15 A	Inside Airbnb	August 2019	120’	Yes	30 pages
16 A	Office of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer	August 2019	67’	Yes	14 pages
17 A	New York State Senate Liz Krueger Senator	August 2019	53’	Yes	11 pages
18	New York City Council	August 2019	45’	Yes	8 pages
19 A	NYC Mayor ‘s Office of Special Enforcement	August 2019	154’	Yes	36 pages
20 A	American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA)	August 2019	66’	Yes	11 pages
21	HANYC’s Public Relations	August 2019	52’	Yes	10 pages
22	Tenants Association PAC	August 2019	40’	Yes	10 pages
25	Airbnb Attorney NYC Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP	August 2019	47’	Yes	10 pages
26 A	Airbnb Mastery Summit	August 2019	42’	Yes	9 pages

27	Airbnb partner DEEMLY Start-up	June 2019	43’	Yes	9 pages
28	AIRBNB Guests in NYC Student	August 2019	47’	Yes	11 pages
29	Airbnb Guests in NYC Business	August 2019	21’	Yes	8 pages
30	Airbnb Guests in NYC Leisure	August 2019	35’	Yes	10 pages
31	New Yorker traveler using Airbnb Guests	August 2019	32’	Yes	8 pages
32 A	New Yorker traveler using Airbnb Guests	August 2019	55’	Yes	16 pages
33	Hosts Airbnb experience	August 2019	21’	Yes	6 pages
35 A	Airbnb Host Queens	August 2019	28’	Yes	8 pages
36 A	Airbnb Host Manhattan	August 2019	17’	Yes	5 pages
37 A	Airbnb Host	February 2019	32’	Yes	10 pages
38 A	Airbnb Host	February 2019	23’	Yes	6 pages
Total in 2019			**1948’ ou 32h46’**		**472 pages**

Table 17: Primary data collection (2020): semi-structured interviews

Code	Name	Date	Duration	Registered	Nb pages of transcription
1B	Intercontinental DC and NYC H2 Sustainability Consulting	June 2020	70’	Yes	14 pages
2 B	Pratt Institute	July 2020	83’	Yes	14 pages
3 B	Lodging Advisor New York University Tisch Center of Hospitality	July 2020	56’	Yes	11 pages
5	New York University Expert in international hospitality and tourism	June 2020	46’	Yes	10 pages
7 B	Hotel Association New York City (HANYC)	June 2020	53’	Yes	11 pages
12	Real Estate Board of New York City	June 2020	20’	Yes	5 pages
14 B	NYC Hostel	June 2020	69’	Yes	17 pages
15 B	Inside Airbnb	June 2020	77’	Yes	15 pages
16 B	Office of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer	June 2020	39’	Yes	8 pages
17 B	New York State Senate Liz Krueger Senator	June 2020	61’	Yes	12 pages
19 B	NYC Mayor ‘s Office of Special Enforcement	June 2020	57’	Yes	12 pages
20 B	American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA)	June 2020	49’	Yes	11 pages
23	Affordable Housing Coalition	July 2020	57’	Yes	14 pages
24	Activist	July 2020	212’	Yes	37 pages
26 B	Airbnb Mastery Summit	April 2020	63’	Yes	12 pages
32 B	New Yorker traveler using Airbnb Guests	May 2020	68’	Yes	15 pages
34	Airbnb Host Brooklyn	July 2020	41’	Yes	9 pages
35 B	Airbnb Host Queens	July 2020	34’	Yes	8 pages
36 B	Airbnb Host Manhattan	July 2020	34’	Yes	9 pages
37 B	Airbnb Host	June 2020	32’	Yes	8 pages
38 B	Airbnb Host	July 2020	37’	Yes	9 pages
Total in 2020			**1307’ ou 21h45’**		**261 pages**

3.2.4.2. Openness and interest from top executives

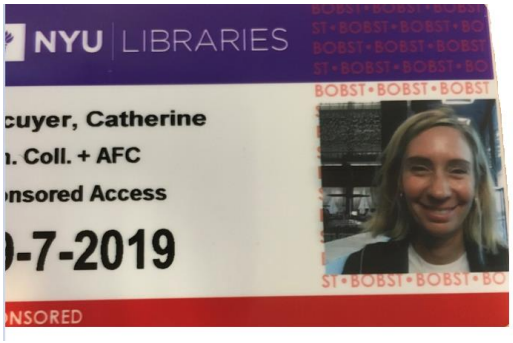


Figure 37: Bobst Library access card

The list of respondents fulfills our requirements of actors listed in our initial mapping.

The first group of respondents I met were scholars from the (1) NYU-Stern, Tisch Center and granted access for my use of their facilities, in addition to the unique NYU's academic library in the heart of Greenwich Village until at 1am and Pratt Institute. The objective was twofold: to acquire an accelerated understanding of (1) the hospitality industries, rise of short-term rentals and the sharing economy and (2) the local specificities of NYC (i.e., zoning, and regulations). Scholars very well embedded in the NYC hospitality context, nominated other profiles to interview, i.e., the "snowball" effect (Goodman, L. A., 1961).

We were fortunate to be able to meet the key respondents of the Airbnb ecosystem in NYC, all at the executive level i.e., CEO, General Manager or in charge of the "Airbnb file". Our respondents are experts providing unique insights, frequently being interviewed by the local newspaper (NY Times). We collected detailed data due to the length of each interview. Considering the profile of respondents, their availability and rigor in responding to our questions (e.g., sharing reports or internal notes) surprised me. In the US, a profound respect for academic research is one of the most beautiful and unexpected situations I have experienced throughout my doctoral process. Our profile as a French based research team planning to explore the phenomena in Paris was also a source of interest for our respondents who perceive NYC far more advanced in the "Airbnb battle".

According to our data, the high contribution of our respondents in the process of data collection and commitment is not limited to the "fit" reason. In 2018, the Hotel industry Association of New York City tactically searched for developing an open dialogue with scholars by inviting them to examine the impacts of the SE on the hospitality market, more specifically the impact of Airbnb in NYC. We took advantage of this situation in contrast with the research posture of Airbnb. However, it was difficult to engage with Airbnb in NYC. At a conference in a Uber NYC office, I met an Airbnb manager who agreed to be interviewed. Two days later, his supervisor sent me an email cancelling the interview meeting. Nevertheless, thanks to a local contact, we successfully collected the voice of Airbnb through an interview with their legal advisor in a major NYC law firm representing Airbnb in NYC. The contrasted profile of this Airbnb respondent (i.e., legal logic) along with the opposed research posture (i.e., opacity versus openness) highlights the specificities of the NYC context characterized by tensions and conflicts and the existence of multiple perceived realities.



Figure 38: NYU at the Tisch Center

3.2.4.3. Documents

From 2018 to 2021, we collected secondary data amounts to over 1500 pages of documentation or records of relevant notes, reports, videos, posts on social networks, press articles, and media releases regarding the Airbnb's NYC entrepreneurial ecosystem and the impact of the pandemic on its structure and functioning (Tables 16 & 17).

New York is a city characterized by the presence of robust information providers such as Bloomberg or the New Yort Times as well as government departments undertaking surveys or trade associations like the Hotel Association New York City (HANYC) collecting data from their members i.e., hotels. All those secondary data are from the same geographical basis i.e., "area-based data sets" (Hakim, 2000).

We used documentary secondary data compiling transcripts of speeches, text of web pages of Airbnb platforms and other actors such as REBNY and official financial documents (e.g., SEC IPO).

Easy 24/24 access to data was possible through the portal of Montpellier Business School leaning center, using our library access to companies and markets database (e.g., statista, Euromonitor, Marketline) and Bloomberg Terminal.

Furthermore, social networking media and groups allow interest groups to host their web pages and represent a large number of members 'posts and photographs. Social networking groups are "open" for everyone, and some are private groups.

3.2.4.3.1. Unique access to inner circle groups

From 2018 to 2020, what is unique about our research project is that I succeeded in joining private Facebook groups dedicated to hosts profile as professionals. Hosts are encouraged to form a community and ecosystem around Airbnb and join inner circle groups on Facebook allowing access to pedagogical tools (e.g., video, hosts manual) and to weekly zoom meetings with clear agenda settings.

Examples of topic covered at the Zoom weekly meeting are shown in the power point presentation.



Figure 39: Shift of the host profile

Zoom meeting about scaling the number of units to promote the concept of autonomy due to business success.

Zoom meeting about the evolution of the business model i.e., co-hosting model.



Figure 40: Business model evolution

Table 18: Secondary data collection

Type of data	Sources	Amount of data	Time of collection
Archival, journal newspapers and special reports	Bloomberg, New York Times, The Financial Times, Wall Street, Wireless News, dedicated websites (e.g., Skipt)	800 articles representing 1400 pages	2018-2020
Websites and Intranet	The American Hotel & Lodging Association: database hospitality sector & private access to the New York Hotel Association's Intranet	150 pages	2019-2020
	Airbnb website and newsroom		2018-2020
Conferences and workshops	STR Academy Summit: 20 hours 2 conferences at NYU Stern	15 recorded interviews	2019
Social media	Member of 3 private Airbnb hosts Facebook groups: Inner Circle, Airbnb Professional Hosts, Airbnb Profit Club	250 posts	2019-2020
Access to expert training and educational resources for Airbnb hosts, investors, operators, service providers	Videos: COVID-19 survival mini-Series (e.g., Current state of industry systems, processes and playbooks)	30	2020
Access to the Inner Circle community designed as a board of Airbnb advisors	Weekly Zoom meetings, Facebook posts.	45 hours	2020

3.2.4.3.2. Data source triangulation

Data source triangulation consists in drawing from different data sources (e.g., different groups of people or types of documents). The combination of primary and secondary data allowed us to apply triangulation, i.e., looking at various events, concepts and processes from different perspectives to provide a stronger substantiation of the resulting constructs (Eisenhardt, 1989). Triangulation facilitates validation of data through cross-verification from multiple sources. It involved using multiple data sources to validate and enrich the findings. One strong asset of our research project is the triangulation technique mobilizing unique multiple sources and helping us to interpret the large among of data knowing that we used two rounds of interviews, FB groups posts, recording of weekly online meetings, reports and a large amount of media articles).

We aimed at producing a more comprehensive and validated set of findings using triangulation and helped in eliminating biases.

3.2.5. Data analysis

Our data analysis process - based on a rigorous analysis of collected data (Gehman et al., 2018) - combines inductive and abductive approaches that suit our exploratory approach and the different research questions that we investigated along the way.

. Considering the novelty, complexity and actuality of the investigated phenomena, we followed the interpretative analysis path advocated by Gioia et al. (2013), applying first a multi-stage process of coding, analysis, interpretation, and abstraction. Then, we confront our data to theory and develop different coding schemes that helped us to reinforce the strength of our interpretation.

3.2.5.1. A multi-stage process of coding

In the first stage of data analysis, we aimed to generate a detailed description of Airbnb's context, and actors' relationships and behaviors. This stage began with transcribing the interviews and reading attentively the material. For each semi-structured interview, we first composed a short summary of the main events and critical facts, and then grouped the data into broad domains. Two researchers have been separately engaged in this exercise, meeting at the end to discuss the differences and similarities in their perceptions.

In the second stage, we began to examine, compare and categorize data to reduce data heterogeneity. The coding process moves from the most specific observations (primary coding) to broader and more abstract themes and constructs (aggregate) and is summarized in the table.

Table 19: Primary coding (Sources: Gioa et al., 2013; Strauss and Corbin, 1990)

Primary coding	**Break down raw data into manageable chunks**
First-order codes	Emerging basic themes or codes directly derived from the data and often presented in the participants 'own words and/or from existing theoretical frameworks.
Second-order codes	Group initial codes into larger categories or themes (i.e., "axial coding"). Those codes represent the researchers 'interpretation of data and/or existing labels from existing theoretical frameworks.
Aggregate	Highest level of abstraction where themes are aggregate into theoretical constructs or dimensions guiding the narrative of the researcher findings.

By focusing on the similarities and differences between first-order descriptions, we identified the emerging themes that could help us describe and explain the investigated phenomena and/or these that were coherent with existing theoretical categories or labels. These second-order themes were then either categories already developed in extant studies or novel concepts. Each researcher independently verified the correspondence between the resulting data categories and collected data, eliminating inappropriate or reductive themes, while allowing the emergence of relevant, explanatory concepts. At the end of this stage, we engaged in a direct dialogue, debating and deciding the final list of second-order themes/concepts.

In the third stage, we aimed to further integrate the second-order themes by grouping them into larger, aggregate dimensions. As in the previous stage, we independently analyzed and interpreted the themes/constructs considering the prior literature, identifying the main aggregate constructs involved in the deployment of the investigated structures and processes (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). We then repeated this process collectively with our co-directors until we reached consensus on the final coding scheme and data structure (Gioia et al., 2013). During this iterative process, we also developed a contextual understanding of the investigated phenomena, thanks to the large amount of secondary data that we collected, analyzed, and triangulated with primary data. Three coding processes are proposed respecting the two perspectives of the research project and the three phases of data collection, pre- COVID-19 (i.e., P1), during the crisis of COVID-19 (i.e., P2) and after the COVID-19 (i.e., P3).

3.2.5.2. Strategic perspective coding

At the very end of the coding process, our data structure comprised three emerging aggregate constructs representing categories of relational strategies used by the platform towards its PDEs actors i.e., hosts, guests and Airbnb platform: (i) identity strategy; (ii) professionalization strategy, and (iii) selection strategy. These elements were identified using inductive reasoning as no previous research has qualified yet these relational strategies, defined as strategies of co-construction/dialogue with Airbnb's contributors during its process of legitimation. In addition to these core elements, we also identified the consequences of these relational strategies on contributors and on Airbnb's cognitive legitimacy. To qualify the consequences of these strategies on cognitive legitimacy, we considered legitimacy as a property – we selected tangible information about the success or performance of the platform within its ecosystem – and as a perception – we identified the positive or negative issues mentioned by actors with regards to cognitive legitimacy. We qualified the evolution of these elements (relational strategies, impacts on contributors and on legitimacy) before, during and after the crisis using a temporal bracketing method (Langley, 1999)

3.2.5.3. Institutional perspective coding

We also coded our database to characterize the institutional work undertook by Airbnb and the actors of its ecosystem. To do so, we use an abductive approach by confronting our data with an existing framework of the institutional work of DP in the SE that qualifies regulatory, normative and cultural-cognitive mechanisms. We did not test these categories on our case study but rather tried to explain, characterize and enrich them with regard to the richness of our collected data. Again, to qualify the consequences of these institutional work mechanisms on socio-political legitimacy, we considered legitimacy as a property – we selected tangible information about the image or brand reputation of the platform within its ecosystem – and as a perception – we identified the positive or negative issues mentioned by actors with regards to socio-political legitimacy.

We completed the coding and were able to identify the repeated activities and the actors engaging in those activities during our three periods of analysis.as mentioned above.

STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE (P1, P2, P3)

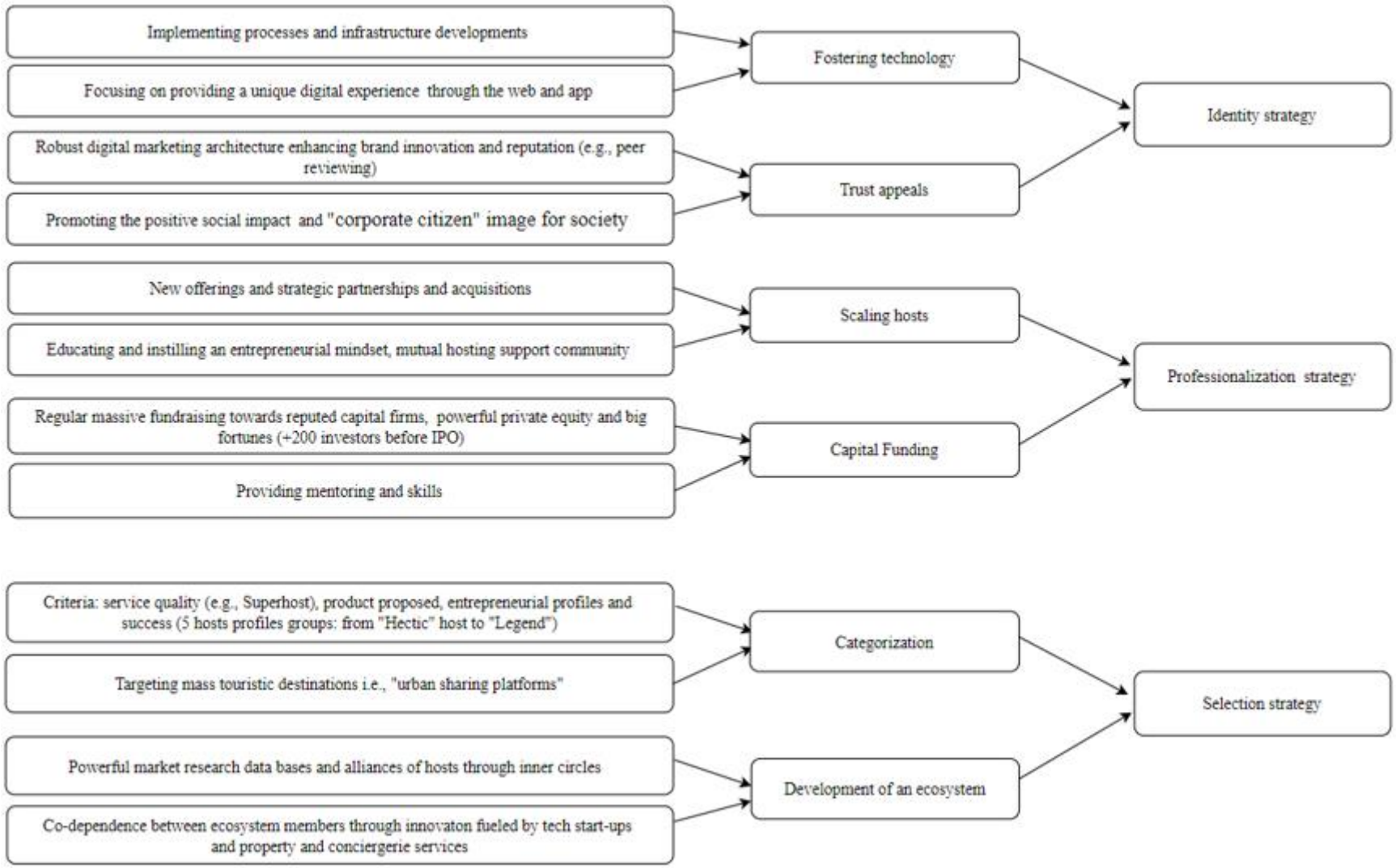


Figure 41: Coding scheme: Strategic perspective P1: Airbnb legitimation strategies

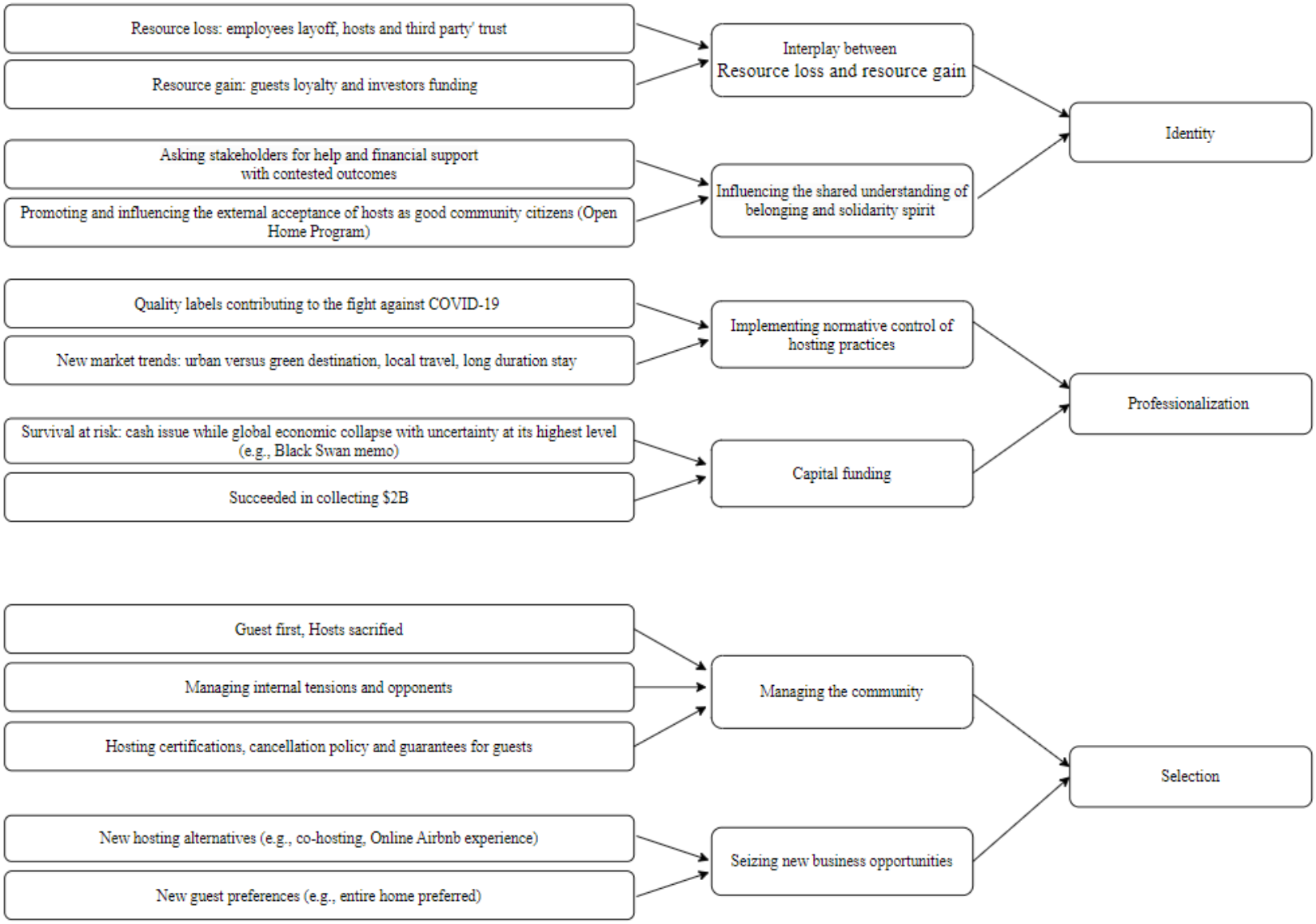


Figure 42: Coding scheme: Strategic perspective P2: Airbnb legitimation strategies

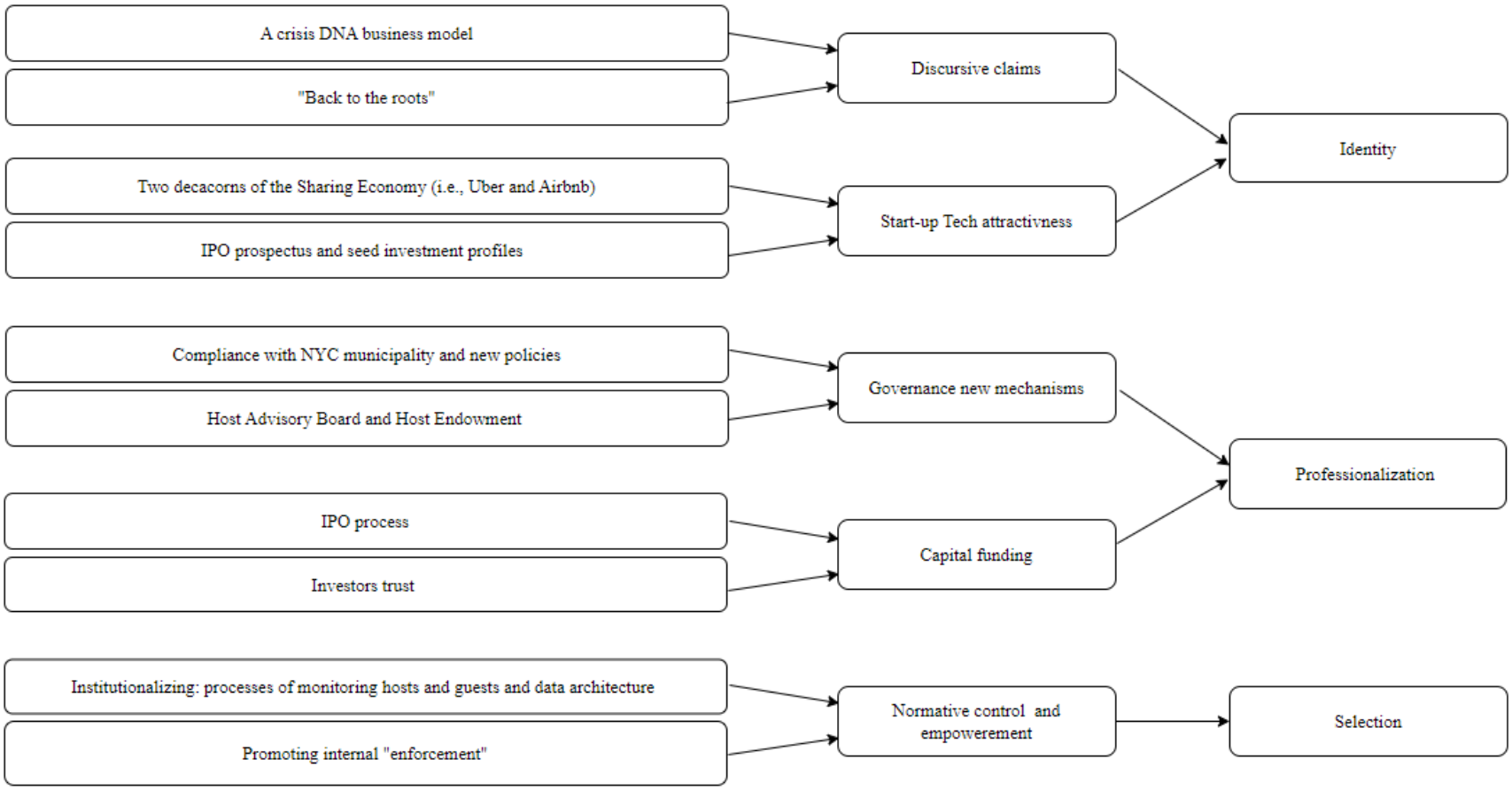


Figure 43: Coding scheme - Strategic perspective P3: Airbnb legitimation strategies

INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE (P1, P2, P3)

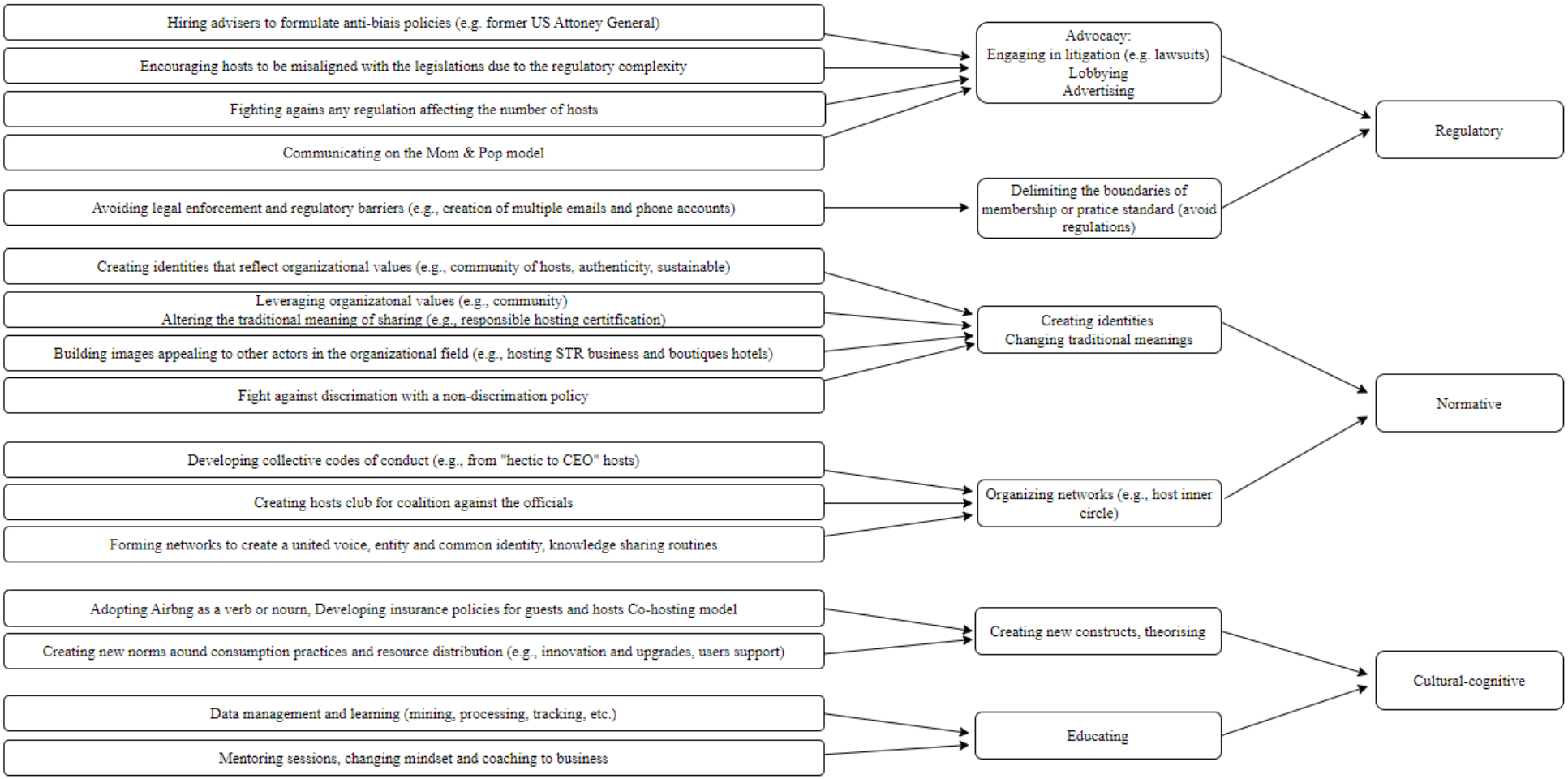


Figure 44: Coding scheme: Institutional perspective P1: Airbnb legitimation strategies

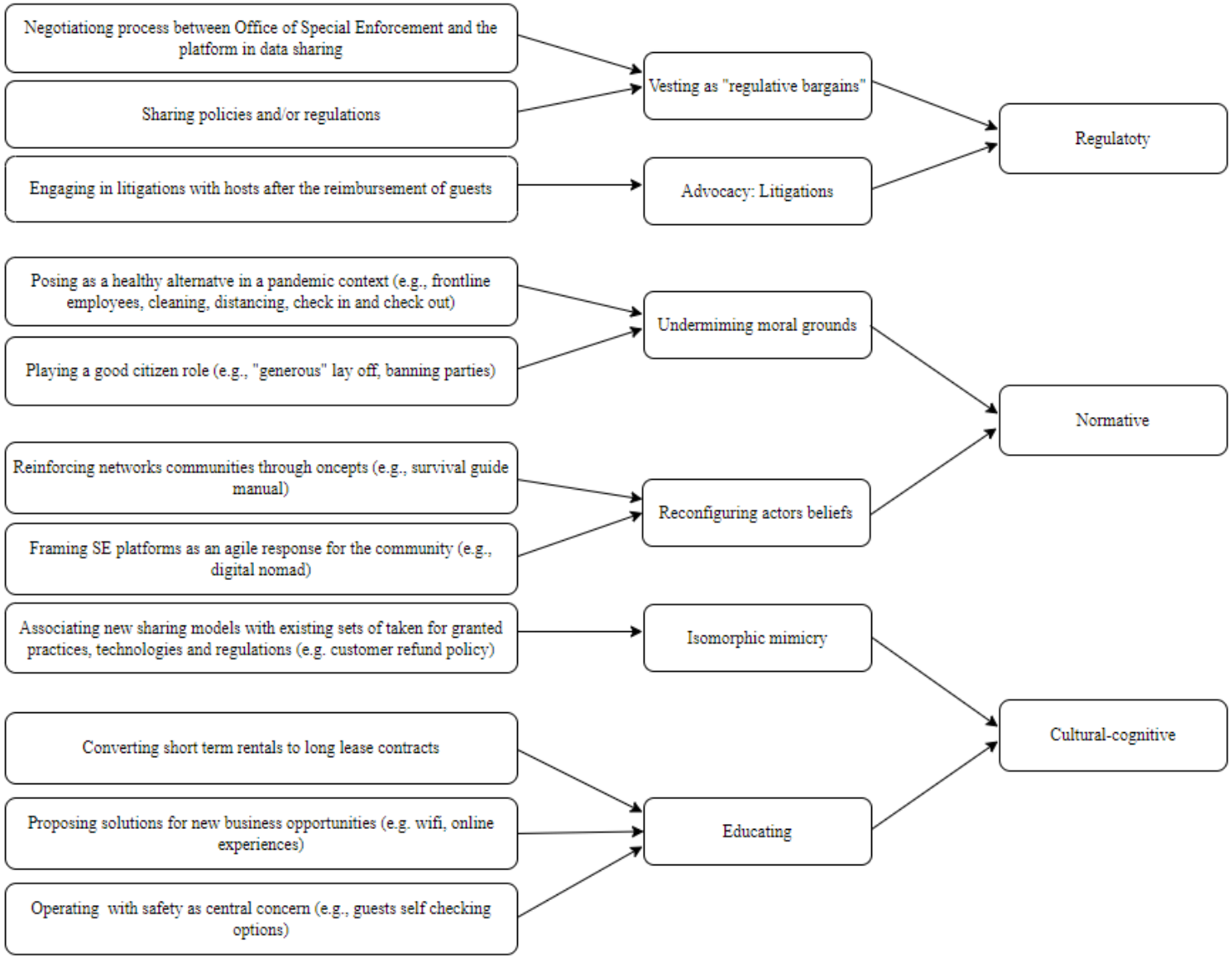


Figure 45: Coding scheme: Institutional perspective P2: Airbnb legitimation strategies

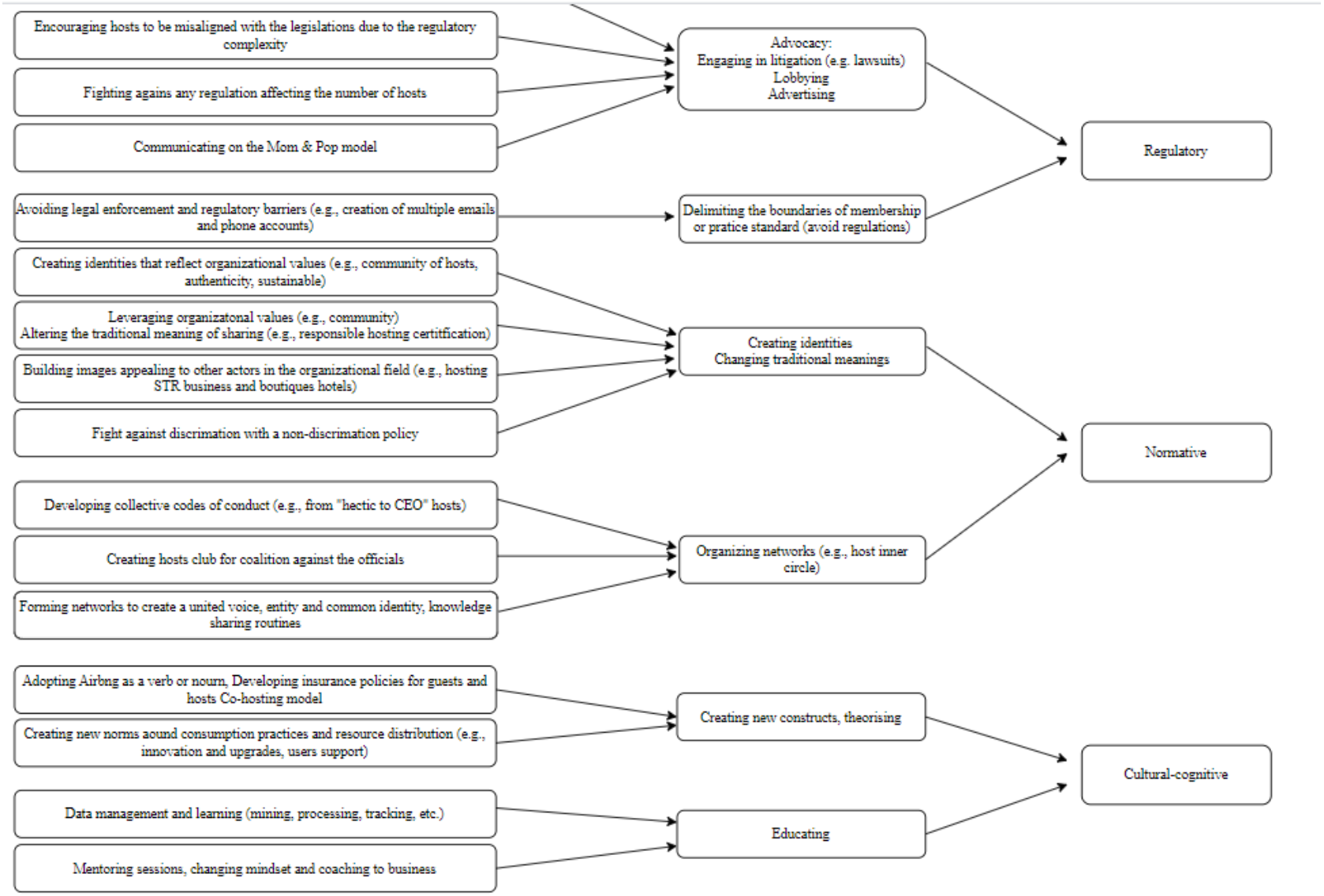


Figure 46: Coding Scheme Institutional perspective P3: Airbnb legitimation strategies

3.3. Personal notes

At the end of the methodology section, I decided to share the experiences we encountered, my assumptions about the way in which I viewed my PhD project after 25 years of professional experience and how we shaped our research project exploring deeply my motives inspired by my past experiences leveraging my senior profile as a PhD fellow.

In other words, the decision undermining the research design (e.g., a multiple actors-perspective, the crisis context, choice of the single case study) is not just based on a gap in literature or epistemological orientations, but it is also influenced by personal and pivotal assumptions.

I acknowledged that the tone might not be appropriate with the PhD manuscript standard, but I wanted my loved fellows, supervisors and any senior PhD candidates to share the behind the scenes of a 5 year journey, as a dynamic and unique processus.

Inspiration

Coming from the pharmaceutical industry, research has always been central to my professional environment, a source of respect, admiration, and interest. My experience in corporate reputation has influenced the orientation of my PhD four-fold: (1) interest for opposed logics (i.e., a pharmaceutical culture blockbuster logic versus a biology vaccine public health logic), (2) interest for strongly embedded regulated and institutionalized contexts (e.g., authorization to market driven by regulatory affairs and quality control) impacting day-to-day operations (e.g., product reimbursement, marketing campaign, clinical studies), (3) interest for a multi-actors perspective with various actors' groups' interests (e.g., employees, prescribers, shareholders, local community, NGOs) and finally (4) interest for crisis management (e.g., avian influenza outbreak, high pathogen virus spread in the countryside of a production site).

My posture: An ex-corporate communication Director

The decision to examine the legitimation process of Airbnb with a multiple actors' approach might have been influenced by my experience in corporate communication with two major pharmaceutical companies (i.e., Merck and Sanofi). I have always been fascinated by the relational dynamics amongst the heterogenous groups of actors and their impacts on the organization and more specifically the role of institutional actors (e.g., regulatory bodies in approving a new

treatment). This experience of managing corporate communication by exploring the environment, informing actors, relating actors to create stronger relationships and negotiating skills aim to reach solutions reflecting mutual dependencies (Van Woerkum and Aarts, 2008) has motivated the naturel interest and choice for a multiple actor's perspective, despite its complexity in the data collection settings. Having a corporate communication background in handling media relations, public affairs, crisis management and investor relations facilitated (1) conducting interviews with top senior respondents in a trusting and respectful relationship while avoiding the "langue de bois" and (2) interpretating data with an understanding of the PR tactics used by organizations.

A "Botox" option

Frequent informal discussions with my supervisor, at a nice restaurant "La Cantoche" close to the campus, guided me for the next step. The decision was made to not direct the research project on the pharmaceutical industry. Despite a strong network and easy access to the pharmaceutical field, my supervisor encouraged me to dive into a new emerging field to vitalize my research profile i.e., in my fifties and, contribute to a new research stream i.e., the "peer to peer economy, collaborative economy, sharing economy", characterized by heterogeneity of stakeholders" interests, institutional complexity and multiple conflicting logics, controversies, paradoxes and tensions, and an unregulated growing field (Acquier et al., 2017; Laurell and Sandström, 2016). The insight offered by my supervisor in guiding this decision was invaluable to the trajectory of my project.

In brief, at the early stage of my PhD project in 2018, my research interests were widely focused on a broad perspective characterized by multiple actors, embedded in institutionalized context with multiplicity of logics and power asymmetries, exposed to crisis management.

Learning by interacting

I enjoyed stepping back and found aeras for personal improvement taking note in a diary the key learnings of what went well or not during this PhD journey with the continuous support of my PhD supervisors at frequent research meetings. Member of local research groups in France, attending many in-house research seminars (e.g., Management and Organization of Sustainable Transformations Group of MBS, MRM Strategic Group of University of Montpellier) and in Europe IWSE (International workshop in Sharing Economy), I took note of key discussions or

suggestions (e.g., useful articles) willing to facilitate the shift from a professional to academic profile.

At my first conference (AIMS, 2018, Montpellier), the first year of my PhD, with Aurélien Acquier member of the jury, I presented the initial aim of our research project highlighting the emerging field of the Sharing Economy and its multiple core frameworks i.e., access economy, digital platform economy, collaborative economy and its tensions (Acquier et al., 2017). When presenting our choice of Airbnb as a unique and single case, my overall evaluation of the platform at that time was very "rosy", with fascination over the agility of the start-up e.g., Airbnb experiences as a new service launched (Moro et al., 2019) and its exponential growth and a capitalization superior to traditional hospitality businesses 100 years old (e.g., Marriott). What a journey since that conference where the jury recommended me to be more critical and step back from data!

Six months emailing exchanges



Figure 47: Interview with NY Stern scholar

The step consisted of contacting the listed actors via email was a full-time job. Through this obvious exercise, the NYC culture was expressed through the tone and sentence formulation of our respondents. The emailing communication codes differ from my past experiences as an ex-executive based within US pharmaceutical organizations. The invaluable support and guidance offered by a local New York executive provided insight into the nuances experienced through written email communications. This aided in solving administrative requirements (i.e., a confidential research contract, an investigation of my ID and background from the OSE), necessary for the establishment of emailed agreements; a requirement for face-to-face interviews in July 2019 (Appendix 2).

The 2019 and 2020 primary data collection and participation with inner circle groups contributed to the "behind the scenes" reality of Airbnb allowing us to get an in-depth understanding of the battle between Airbnb and multiple actors embedded in the very institutionalized NYC context. Having no past interactions or cultural experience with the respondents, here in NYC (e.g., hotel industry, NYC neighborhood communities), or not claiming knowledge of them, allowed us not to alter or shape biased imagery (Eisenhart, 1998).

An interview in Washington with the VP of Government Affairs in the American Hotel Lodging Association (AHLA) represents a haunting memory (i.e., the bus breakdown on a highway from NYC to DC during a hot and humid summer day, prior to an important meeting, less than a mile from the White House and further interrupted by the takeoff of Trump's helicopter).

An unexpected "event" the 3rd year of my PhD

Since the first years of our research project, the legitimation process of DP in the SE facing heterogenous actors 'expectations have been our focus questioning about the DP's growth or survival. For example, intense legislation battles with municipalities set stricter regulations impacting Airbnb's key markets in 2018 (e.g., Paris or NYC). What we had not planned happened to be an historical crisis i.e., the COVID-19 pandemic impacting all sectors in the global economy and more specifically the hospitality industry (Kourtit et al., 2022). During the 3rd year of my PhD, the corona crisis led to an unprecedent global economy collapse in March 2020 seriously affecting the high urban density hub and aera of tourists' mass concentration. One of my supervisors proposed taking advantage of this historical situation and suggested collecting a second round of data. Having established a relationship and trust between the interviewees in face to face in July 2019 eased the organization of zoom meetings. What I did not expect was to face a totally different reality.

An emotional research context embedded in fear and uncertainty.

> *"We had a ton of sanitizer. And it was like you felt like you were going into a war zone."* Interview n°37



Figure 48: CNN COVID-19 update

During the second round of interviews, it was difficult not to ignore the individualistic brutal aspect of the pandemic lifestyle of our respondents. During the first part of all interviews, the details of the respondents 'personal situation were described, which I did not expect. It helped me to capture the behavioral consequences of the COVID-19 on the respondent's life dealing with fear and uncertainty in the first American city hit by the virus with the highest death rate.

Surprisingly, the tone of the interviews was totally different from August 2019 to June 2020. The established relationship in 2019 with respondents allowed trust and mutual respect facilitating an open dialogue and an opportunity for them to share their emotions and feelings in such unprecedent context. At the beginning of the interviews, very often, I felt I played the role of a friend more than a researcher, listening to their narratives. Given that "Americans are positive people" (Ehrenreich, 2009), the tone of the interviews was very pessimistic which contrasted with the New Yorkers' resilience culture (i.e., Sept 11 and Sandy trauma events) and my experiences (i.e., an American mother and 12 years within US organizations).

Not surprisingly, I felt destabilized with the emotion transmitted by the respondents such as the interview of the CEO of the most powerful US Hotel Association. Their voices, postures and shifts in attitude were recorded in my notes, helping me to capture rapidly that the COVID-19 crisis context was unique.

A contrasted emotional research context

> *"It's never a good idea to plan in the midst of a crisis for a future when you're out of the crisis…"* Interview n°7

During the period of the global collapse (March to June 2020), I collected data from first respondents (e.g., incumbents) and at the same time from Airbnb DPE. The data collection during this very specific period stressed out the major differences in business models and crisis management strategies 'response between traditional and digital business models. It was a unique and somehow uncomfortable situation to absorb such differences highlighting the hotels' embeddedness in norms and rules, applying rules and strategies they had not chosen.

Embedded in the NYC context with ethical dilemmas

"Airbnb micro entrepreneurs" profit driven culture

"Sharing" issues and co-creation (e.g., co-hosting model) are relational mechanisms to reach solutions in a "community spirit". Topics could be about HR regulations, decoration and boosting the listing itself on the Airbnb website.

Attending the Tuesday weekly Zoom meeting from 2018 to 2020 allowed us to dive into the relational tactics amongst Airbnb complementors orchestrated by the "mentor" (i.e., educational program lead by super champion of hosting with real estate backgrounds). After the "win win" starter institutionalized as a routine, an open dialogue and supportive community reaction prevailed to cope with any type of issues i.e., legal, taxes, cleaning enforcement. The behavioral practices shocked me when raising some sensitive issues regarding the quality of recommendations or suggestions proposed. For example, during an inner circle group "just fill in the form and do a CTRL F and you get the COVID-19 CLEANING PROTOCOL LABEL to add to your listings on the Airbnb website".

Being hosted in "an illegal hotel"



Figure 49: My Airbnb in Queens

The primary data collection in NYC prompted a stay in the city for more than 30days. For budget reasons, my choice was to stay in an Airbnb creating opportunities to interview travelers staying in an Airbnb. My choice was a one-bedroom accommodation with a shared bathroom and kitchen in a home located in Queens and close to public transportation. My accommodation selection fulfilled the NYC regulations (e.g., duration of the stay), an important personal priority in regard to my values and the respondents to meet (e.g., NYC Hotel Industry Association, officials from the state and the municipality). After a few days at home, the number of travelers met in the kitchen surprised me. In fact, in the basement, the host doubled the number of units. As a researcher, I was embedded into the NYC local context and experienced the very situation expressed by the opponents and our respondents i.e., I was staying in an illegal hotel.

Those unexpected situations and ethical dilemmas are unforgettable experiences and part of my unique non-conventional PhD journey.

CHAPTER 4.

STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE:

Airbnb's relational strategies

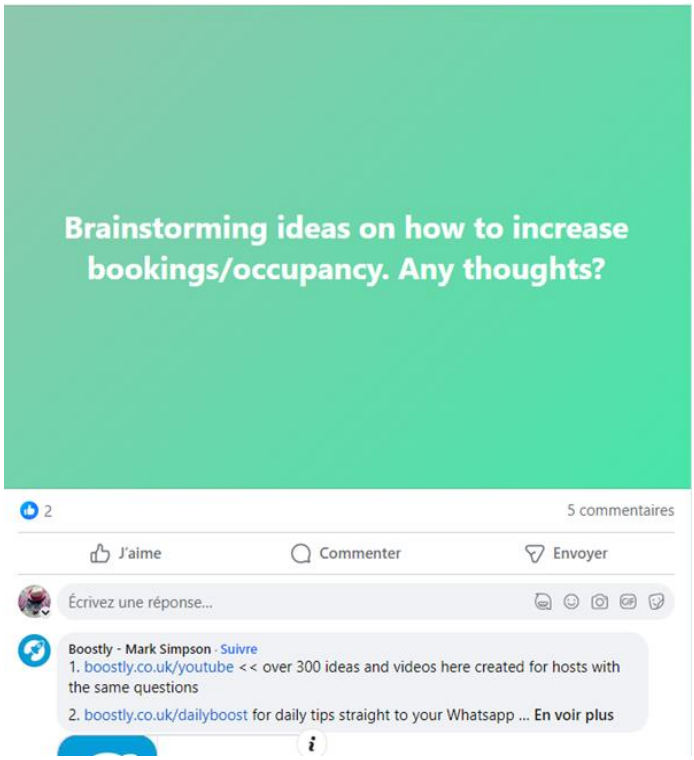


Figure 50: Host Facebook Group

Introduction

Strategic legitimacy, which is considered to be an "operational resource" (Suchman, 1988), helps organization attracts necessary resources such as clients, networks, technology, and capital (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994; Zimmerman and Zeitz, 2002). Within the sharing economy (SE) and digital platform (DP) literature, a central research issue is the relationship dynamics between DPs and their customers and providers i.e., the triadic relationship that determines the functionality and success of DPs as multi-sided intermediaries working on matching supply and demand sides of the marketplace. Facing the liability of newness, DPs in the SE need legitimacy to attract resources and orchestrate their ecosystem. From a strategic perspective, past studies examined the platform relationship dynamics with its users and their critical role as vital resources to the platform.

In Chapter 4, we study the relational strategies with a holistic approach, not taking the narrow view of resources such as providers and buyers but by providing new insights integrating other contributors, such as investors and providers of resources affecting the relational strategies. As Brophy (1992:396) stated, "New ventures by definition have no history and often provide an inadequate basis for making accurate predictions. 'Gut feel' and the netting of a lot of variables and complex relationships play vital roles in new venture financing decisions."

The engagement of contributors is a signal of the platform's economic potential for inducing investors. This, is turn, can attract new resources, allowing the DP to gain visibility, in other words, cognitive legitimacy. We refer to cognitive legitimacy as "the spread of knowledge about a new venture," based on research by Aldrich and Fiol (1994) and Garud et al. (2022).

All these providers of resources interconnected with the platform represent the contributors to the DP ecosystem. In this chapter, we identify the relational strategies through which a platform may come to attract contributors necessary for its growth and success. Then, we discuss the effects of those relational strategies on the DP cognitive legitimacy in attracting and maintaining its resources.

Despite their debated legitimacy (Ansari et al., 2016, Deephouse et al., 2017), DPs in the SE are organizations that capture value through the orchestration of their contributors' ecosystem; thus, we investigated and evidenced the change dynamics of a specific DP's ecosystem: Airbnb's contributors in New York City (NYC) at three time periods before, during, and after a crisis. In fact, very little is known about the ways in which these relationships change and evolve when confronted with a sudden and major crisis and their impacts on cognitive legitimacy.

On the one hand, Airbnb is one of the best-known DPs, that successfully developed a novel ecosystem and significantly disrupted the classical business model of the hotel industry, thereby creating multiple tensions in society. On the other hand, NYC represents a highly important urban ecosystem (Stabrowski, 2017) and financial center, which hosts the US Stock Exchange, and that was both the largest Airbnb market (Ferré-Sadurní, 2019) in the United States and the urban area most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (Romei and Burn-Murdoch, 2020). Although the tourism sector was previously confronted with other crises, the impact of COVID-19 has been exceptional because of the global scope, quick spread, and high risk of this pandemic. For these reasons, we posit that a case study encompassing a DP in this sector and geographical location represents a useful critical event to better understand relational change dynamics in a crisis context. We argue that this chapter contrasts with other studies because it integrates the analysis of relational strategies into three periods: Period 1, pre-COVID-19; Period 2, during COVID-19; and Period 3, after COVID-19.

As mentioned earlier, Chapter 4 responds to the first research sub-questions: What are the relational strategies put in place by the DP toward its contributors, and what are the effects on the cognitive legitimacy?

To do so, this chapter begins by introducing NYC's context with the strategic evolution of Airbnb followed by the guests, the hosts, third parties such as suppliers of services facilitating hosts' activities, and, finally, the investors. Then, we explore the relationship dynamics between the platform and its contributors in normal business times, during the historical global crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, and post-COVID-19. We conclude by examining the change dynamics between the DP and the contributors and the effects on cognitive legitimacy during each of the three periods.

As a reminder, the findings of the survey presented in Chapter 4 are based on the interviews conducted with various groups of actors and other secondary data. We interviewed (1) representatives of Airbnb's law firm, representing the voice of Airbnb and another STR actor, HomeAway; (2) two types of hosts, the Airbnb accommodation host and the Airbnb experiences host, both from different districts in NYC; and (3) guests. We also participated in weekly Inner Circle Zoom meetings; Airbnb coaching systems, with hosts from NYC and other cities around the world; and Airbnb summits with third parties from August 20, 2019, to February 23, 2021. We collected data from investors through the Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC) initial public offering (IPO) prospectus[11] and financial sources such as Bloomberg Terminal and FactSet data bases.

[11] https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000119312521056952/d147144dex991.htm

4.1. NYC STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This chapter introduces the strategic context of Airbnb, including its business model evolution. Our data collection started in 2018, however, we briefly summarize the origins of Airbnb, presenting interesting data about the company, highlighting the immediate orientation to supply the platform with hosts in the early days and the distinctive feel-at-home identity recognized by investors who have fueled the growth since the beginning.

4.1.1. AIRBNB

> "If eBay grew into a billion-dollar company by allowing people to monetize the stuff in their home, why can't we do the same by letting them monetize their house?"[1] —Brian Chesky



Figure 51: An early stage of AirBed&Breakfast, promoting a clear, distinctive narrative: "Book rooms with locals, rather than hotels." [12]

The business model of Airbnb is a multi-sided platform model in which the platform mediates two sides, the asset owner i.e.,(the hosts), who are providing experiences or available space and are willing to share a talent and passion or rent a room or the entire property for a short-term duration (i.e., short-term rentals or STRs), and the asset user i.e.,(the customers), who are looking for travel experiences and accommodations. In the case of Airbnb, assets owners are independent actors and can leave the platform at any time (Mont et al., 2021).

[12] Source: https://vator.tv/news/2016-02-26-when-Airbnb-was-young-the-early-years

The value proposition is conceptualized with the triadic relationship (i.e., Airbnb, hosts, guests), and the third parties that are behind the scene representing entrepreneurs who supply general hosting services (e.g., co-hosting) or specific services (e.g., conciergerie, cloud-based solutions). The third parties increase the guest's satisfaction experience and the number of units per hosts by automatizing hosts' operations, all beneficial to Airbnb and its ecosystem (Adner, 2017) and contributing to the pluri-sided platform evolution.

Since Airbnb's creation, the challenge has been to work on matching the supply and demand sides of the market and to attract, retain, and increase users of the platform, the so-called network effects (Hagiu and Wright, 2015). The scaling of network members (i.e., hosts and guests) increases the value of the service. Airbnb also took advantage of cross-pollination; for example, a Parisian back from a week at an Airbnb in NYC might consider hosting and/or sharing their experience to the network. Interestingly, NYC has been an emblematic city for Airbnb since the early days.

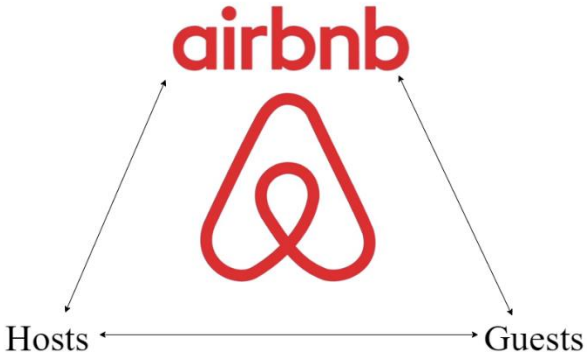


Figure 52: Airbnb triadic relationship



Figure 53: Funding the startup with Obama cereal boxes

In 2007, Airbnb's concept was founded by Brian Chesky and Joe Gebbia, based on the story of sharing an air mattress (an airbed) in the living room of an apartment in San Francisco. Positioned originally between non-profit accommodation solutions such as couch surfing and business forms such as hotels, bed-and-breakfasts, and hostels, the concept of sharing an extra room from peers to peers started with the AirBed&Brekfast.com website in August 2008 and the arrival of co-founder Nathan Blecharczyk.

The profiles of two of the founders, Brian and Joe, graduated from the Rhode Island Design School, suggested that design and the look and feel would be central settings to the business concept, while Nathan as a Harvard engineer, was motivated by the innovation and technological performance of the platform.

We agree that the profiles and educational backgrounds of the three founders have inspired their project. Joe and Brian's design experience embraced Apple co-founder Steve Jobs' three-click theory and ended with a simple three-click website experience; whereas Nathan designed a light technological infrastructure relying on a new solution offered by Amazon Web Services, a revolution at that time.[13]

In 2008, they collected $30,000 to fund their startup by selling 800 self-customized cereal boxes during the presidential election between Barack Obama and John McCain (Figure 54). A year later, they enrolled in an incubator, Y Combinator, that provided $20,000 in funding. The three founders' big idea was revealed in a 2008 presentation (Appendix 1), in which they pitched to Interestingly, in 2008, Brian Chesky and his co-founders promoted to investors their start-up with a vision based on a solution with three clicks allowing users to book a room with a local resident rather than with hotels. The "see big" vision was illustrated by the estimated sales revenue reaching $2.1 billion within three years with an initial first investment opportunity, i.e., an angel round of $500,000.



Figure 54: Last logo before the belo and red Airbnb logo

As presented in Chapter 1, the 2008 global financial crisis could be considered the catalyst of the SE, with people forced to find other ways to generate money in the middle of a recession, with unemployment at 9.5%. According to Bloomberg's newswire in 2010, "Homeowners use[d] Airbnb's room-renting site to dodge foreclosure."[14]

[13] https://inspire-media.fr/airbnb-2-comment-airbnb-est-devenue-un-phenomene-mondial/
[14] Source : Bloomberg newswire July 2010

In NYC, this period of recession was described as scary, as homeowners saw their tenants move out because they lost their jobs. Advertising the availability of Airbnbs on Craigslist not only boosted the visibility of AirbedandBrekfast but also allowed the San Francisco start-up to drive traffic and to increase listings on their own site by manually emailing homeowners and proposing listings on Airbnb. They finally succeeded in creating a script that would automatically reach all homeowners posting new rental listings on Craigslist, informing them about Airbnb. Interestingly, the founders intuitively focused on automating attracting Craigslist homeowner. This step allowed them to quickly recruit hosts and propose new properties on their website Airbedandbreakfast.com.[15]

In 2009, the web identity changed from Airbedandbreakfast to Airbnb.com and the listings were expanded from airbeds to shared rooms or entire apartments or homes. Amazingly, at that time, the listing indicated the type of bed i.e., a "real bed" versus an air mattress (Figure 51).

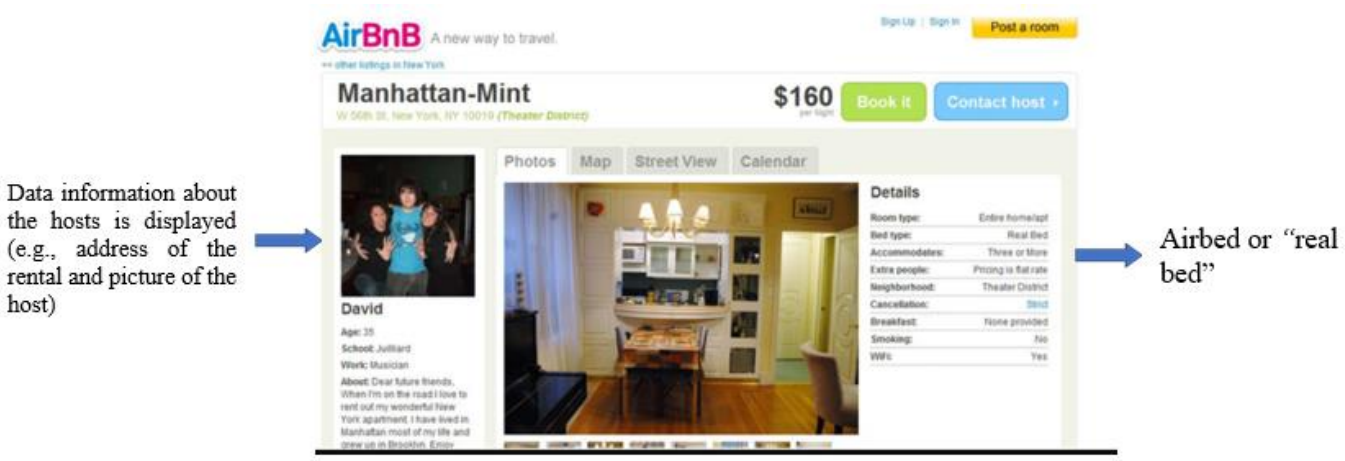


Figure 55: Airbnb website homepage

In NYC, the founders visited hosts, stayed with them, wrote reviews, and personally advised them on photos. Airbnb's first business model was transparent to users, i.e., for every booking on the website, Airbnb took a 10% commission.[16] By 2023, Airbnb's commission had risen to 17%.

[15] https://blinks.bloomberg.com/news/stories/L5OEEA1A74E9
[16] https://vator.tv/news/2016-02-26-when-Airbnb-was-young-the-early-years

In the last six months of 2010, the popularity and visibility of Airbnb had skyrocketed, reaching more than 50,000 listings in 8,000 cities.

The year 2011 represented the global expansion of the platform with the opening of international offices in London, the acquisition of a German competitor Accoleo in 2011, and the 1 millionth booking achieved. A year later, the bookings had increased fivefold, reaching 5 million. Technological improvements such as a 24-hour hotline and the use of PayPal or credit card payments on the website were considered innovative in 2011 and facilitated the users' experience. Joe, Airbnb's co-founder and CEO, told The Washington Post in 2011, "With this expansion, we've now made it possible for even more people to find liquidity in their greatest assets, their homes, by creating a more flexible platform for rentals that fits the needs of anyone."[17]

From 2012 through 2014, Airbnb and HomeAway had nearly equivalent annual sales but, in the years that followed, Airbnb grew faster. HomeAway's sales also included spending on the rental platform VRBO, which HomeAway bought in 2006. From 2013 to 2018, Airbnb's annual sales increased 12-fold.

In 2014, Airbnb launched a new brand identity with "Bélo" as a symbol of belonging, "a mosaic of concepts: people, locations, love and A like Airbnb." The massive media campaign was accompanied by an ambassador program connecting hosts and guests at monthly meetups in promising locations.

The same year, tensions in NYC escalated as city leaders debated categorizing Airbnb as a hotel service and requiring the payment of occupancy taxes, which were estimated at $21 million annually. On its blog, Airbnb informed its community that its activities in NYC would generate $768 million for the city and support 6,000 jobs, promoting its positive sustainability impacts on the city. We argue that Airbnb was favorable to being taxed as the hotel industry to be institutionalized using the same norms such as asking customers to pay the occupancy tax. It could be perceived to all actors that Airbnb attempt to maintain existing institutions complying with the norms of the hospitality sector. The accommodation platform blamed the city for not willing to collect the $21 million in taxes from Airbnb customers.

[17] Source: Washington post _ Sep/01/2011 20:53 GMT https://blinks.bloomberg.com/news/stories/LQV3CX3HBS3K

Meanwhile, Airbnb communicated through the NYT about its $10 billion valuation, stating that:

> "It would join the ranks of the most highly valued private U.S. technology companies, which includes Dropbox and Palantir Technologies Inc. It would also be worth more than twice as much as publicly traded vacation-rental site HomeAway Inc."[18]

In 2014, Manhattan Borough President A. Brewer called on City Hall to reject Airbnb's business model and to fight its efforts to legalize the "illegal" use of apartments for commercial use:

> Illegal hotels have plagued New York City for over a decade, and this problem has recently reached a critical new stage. With the arrival of online sites brokering illegal hotel activity, such as Airbnb, we have seen a rise in short-term stays on a larger scale, often bringing unsavory and illegal activities into apartment buildings. The short-term commercial use of residential units creates a host of problems for our communities, ranging from quality-of-life issues for tenants to grave fire and safety hazards for tenants and visitors to our city. (A. Brewer)[19]

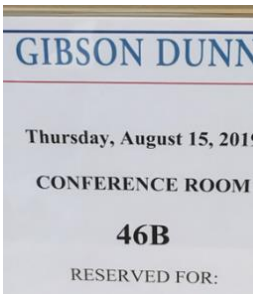


Figure 56: The law firm representing Airbnb

Airbnb was represented in NYC by the law firm Gibson Dunn, the famous NYC law firm that originally started the collaboration with Airbnb and became the legal spokesperson of the platform from 2014.

Airbnb professionalization value proposition is described as a comfortable alternative, as Uber is for a taxi ride. Interviewee n°25 stated, "So you have what I would call the traditional stakeholders. So in Uber's context it's taxi cab drivers … suddenly you have a different way of doing business and they are now competing with each other for customers. I think Airbnb, it's similar."

[18] https://blinks.bloomberg.com/news/stories/N9XO126K50Z8
[19] https://www.nysenate.gov/sites/default/files/articles/attachments/illegal%20hotel%20letter%20to%20mayor_0.pdf

Airbnb's legal department is headquartered in San Francisco but "they have many staff here in New York City" recognizing that Airbnb is a disruptive accommodation solution for the hotel industry with different regulations, "where they need to be compliant with fire and all sorts of building codes," and argue that Airbnb could be perceived by the industry as:

> *"a financial threat and might impact labor. In New York, many hotels are unionized, so employees have good jobs, and they argue that Airbnb impacts the economy negatively and causes people who have good jobs to be laid off. … So, I think that the New York City government is very opposed to Airbnb and the sharing economy, full stop."* (Interview n°25)

Gibson Dunn also defends the interests of HomeAway, with Interviewee n° 25 stating,

> ." "The bigger providers try to be more organized, just have common interest. So it makes sense to try to be on the same page. That's always helpful

The two DPs successfully blocked preliminary injunctions against their platforms, stating that they violated the guarantee against illegal searches provided in the Fourth Amendment:

> *"The federal government has passed a law which prohibits anybody really from going after an internet service provider for providing information. So, in other words, if I am Craigslist or Facebook and somebody posts something, I'm not responsible for the content because, as you can imagine, that would be quite complicated. So, Airbnb challenged the advertising law on that basis."* (Interview n°25)

4.1.2 HOSTS

Connecting guests and hosts has been the core value of Airbnb since its creation in 2008, using web technologies to establish direct contact, thereby bypassing intermediaries and reducing transaction costs (Mont et al., 2021). Promoting a room or an entire home on a personal website does not allow the same value as listing on Airbnb. The Airbnb value proposition designed and developed since its creation focuses on (1) allowing hosts to access a large number of potential guests and to reduce the risk of letting strangers enter private spaces (i.e., mechanisms requiring verification of all Airbnb members, insurance for property damage protection);

(2) facilitating, managing, and securing administrative tasks (e.g., cancellations, deposit hold 24 hours after check-out, and payments); (3) optimizing revenues (e.g., pricing recommendations); and (4) instilling a sense of a host community to share issues and solutions (e.g., Inner Circle groups), thereby leading to continuous improvements. The diversity of hosts' motivations has been studied by scholars, who arrived at different classifications. For example, Hardy and Dolnicar (2018) proposed three types of non-professional hosts: i.e., capitalists, befrienders, and ethicists.

In the SEC prospectus,[20] hosts are defined by Airbnb as "the foundation of our community and business," and their motivations are threefold: (1) maximize revenues "helping them to stay in their homes for half of hosts"; (2) connect guests to the local community (e.g., through restaurants); and (3) share their passions and skills with the Airbnb experiences offering.

Hosts are categorized as either professionals or non-professionals (Farmaki et al., 2022), and the profile of NYC hosts is not homogeneous. On the one hand, there are families, labeled "mom-and-pop" hosts, who occasionally offer spare rooms to supplement their revenues and meet new people; on the other hand, there are a large number of professional hosts, representing individuals or organizations that acquire property and offer it for rent as a regular business activity (Donilcar and Zare, 2020).

In NYC, strict regulations affect the business plan of hosts, putting at risk the financial equilibrium of those who invested their personal assets. Local community fuels the debate Airbnb's social impacts on the quality of life for New Yorkers, increasing tensions between neighbors and hosts. Hosts face neighborhood opposition organized to express their concerns to powerful actors such as city officials or residential managers:

> *"There's been neighbors who didn't like that I did Airbnb. But in New York I'm allowed to do it this way. So they couldn't stop me. If I didn't live here then I couldn't do the Airbnb here. They tried contacting the building manager, or they tried calling New York City to report me."* (Interview n°33)

[20] https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000119312521056952/d147144dex991.htm

Airbnb started with a business model based on peer-to-peer model and shifted to a business-to-consumer model. One of the specificities of NYC is that there is another category of hosts, i.e., those who sublet their room or home when they go on holidays or business trips; this is the so-called the re-rent model. In 2014, entire homes and apartments represented the highest number of listings in the city.[21] In NYC in January 2010, there were only 150 Airbnb listings, whereas in August 2019, more than 90,000 NYC units were listed on Airbnb, the most of any city.

4.1.3. GUESTS

According to data from AirDNA, NYC was the second-most popular US location in 2019, after Florida, and is still considered to be the summer hotspot for Airbnb listings. International travelers are common Airbnb guests in NYC. Airbnb allows guests to (1) book according to searchable criteria, thanks to a detailed description of the accommodation with pictures (e.g., a room or an entire home or apartment), its amenities, and its equipment (e.g., fireplace, air conditioning); (2) benefit from convenient booking, easy and quick especially with the "instant booking" feature chosen by hosts; and (3) mitigate risk (e.g., peer-reviewing and star ratings affecting the host's reputation).

Tourists who choose Airbnb in NYC typically stay an additional two days and spend approximately $200 more at local establishments than those who opt for hotels. One reason is Airbnb's ability to offer diverse accommodations at prices often lower than the city's expensive hotels. Additionally, while most NYC hotels are concentrated in midtown Manhattan, in 2013, 82% of Airbnb listings were located throughout other parts of the city. While New York is Airbnb's primary market, similar trends have been observed in other regions (Lazarow, 2015).

[21] https://www.statista.com/statistics/1330605/airbnb-listings-by-room-type-new-york-city-united-states/

Surprisingly, for the guests in NYC we interviewed, the easy and reliable access to the rental space prevails over the social ties:

> *"They just give me a code for the place, and I have my own place, or I find just the cleaner maybe, whoever, gives me the keys, and that's it. We always chat vertically"* (Interview n°28).

As one interviewee said, the first filter used is the number of rooms and beds, explaining that homes with high capacity are preferred, as NYC remains a family destination. Because NYC is a top tourist destination for families, Airbnb provides a convenient accommodation solution with hosts adjusting their listings to families searching for a full unit with amenities and rooms at a good rate. Our data revealed that Airbnb is described as an economical solution for the family traveling in NYC:

> *"But if you're a family and you don't want to stay in a hotel and if you could stay in an apartment, there's obviously advantages to having a kitchen and a bathroom and a place to cook breakfast. And you can maybe spend your money differently."* (Interview n°25)

Our study integrated data from the COVID-19 crisis affecting the top urban destinations. There was a 96% decline in international guest arrivals in the United States in 2020, and the number never returned to its pre-pandemic level, highlighting the change in guests' intentions to choose domestic or rural destinations. Experts were pessimistic about NYC's future: "It won't recover until 2024."[22]

4.1.4. THIRD PARTIES

Third-party contributors are entrepreneurs supplying general hosting services (e.g., co-hosting) or specific services (e.g., conciergerie, cloud-based solutions). They increase the guests' satisfaction experience and the number of units per hosts by automatizing host operations, all beneficial to Airbnb, and its ecosystem (Adner, 2017) contributing to the evolution of the

[22] Source: https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/nyc-tourism-down-two-thirds-with-only-23-millionpeople-visiting-in-2020/

pluri-sided platform. Property management and conciergerie businesses facilitate hosting activities and play a pivotal role in embedding the Airbnb host community in a professional logic, applying professional standards and norms:

> "We are responsible for everything: cleaning, directions, instructions, all communications. The homeowners just receive a check, monthly statement. We oversee all the care for the home and all the communication for the guests." (Interview n°39)

4.1.5. INVESTORS

Investors are behind the exponential growth of DPs that are rooted in California, interacting within ecosystems of successful technology entrepreneurs that are driven by research. The first two investors in Airbnb were the Y Combinator, an incubator that provided seed funding for three months in 2009, and Sequoia Capital, a venture capital company. Others who invested in Airbnb were (1) four venture capital firms: Andreessen Horowitz, Greylock Partners, General Catalyst, and DST Global; (2) two private equity firms: TPG Growth and Silver Lake Partners; (3) two mutual funds: Fidelity Investments and T. Rowe Price; (4) corporate investors: Capital G (formerly Google Capital) financed by Alphabet Inc., Google's parent company; (5) sovereign wealth funds: Singapore's Temasek Holdings; and (6) celebrities and individual investors: Ashton Kutcher and Jeff Bezos.

Prior investors supplied innovative solutions, introducing new settings and increasing the digital experience of users. For example, Jumio, a payment company backed by Andreessen Horowitz, launched payment from an app in the one-click "Pay with Passbook" in 2013.[23]

[23] https://blinks.bloomberg.com/news/stories/QBSAIDEIXI1D

We posit that investors played a critical role in shaping Airbnb's strategy, based on a deep understanding of tech industry start-ups and networks. In 2014, Bloomberg highlighted that tech startups with app usage represented the largest valuations in the private market, with Airbnb in the second position ($10B) after Uber ($17B).[24]

After introducing NYC's strategic context and presenting Airbnb contributors, we describe the relational strategies of Airbnb with its contributors during the three periods, P1: pre-COVID-19, P2: during COVID-19, and P3: post-COVID-19.

[24] https://blinks.bloomberg.com/news/stories/N9XO126K50Z8

Table 20: Airbnb milestones from 2008 to 2020 (Sources: Airbnb.com, Craft.co; Dolnicar, S. [2021]; Skift.com; Techcrunch.com)

DATE & MILESTONES	GUESTS	HOSTS	INVESTORS	MACRO EVENTS
2008–2009 Start-up creation	Airbedandbreakfast.com -Website launch Aug. 2008 -Democratic convention -Name change to Airbnb (March 2009) -In 2008, once per day, a night of travel was booked on Airbnb. -In 2009, every five minutes, a night of travel was booked on Airbnb.	Obama Cereal boxes	Y Combinator $0.02M Seed funding Sequoia $0.615M	Financial crisis Oct. 2008
2010–2011 Initial business model	-In 2010, every minute, a night of travel was booked on Airbnb. -In 2011, every 10 seconds, a night of travel was booked on Airbnb. -1 million bookings in 89 countries (Feb. 2010) -First foreign office (Aug. 2011)		Series A funding $7.2M Series B funding $114.9M	
2012–2013	-10 million bookings (June 2012)	$1 m Hosts Guarantee (May 2012)	Series C funding $200M	
2014–2015	-More than 100,000 guests during the Rio de Janeiro World Cup (July 2014)	Airbnb law in SF (Oct. 2014) Airbnb Superhost program Friendly buildings program (Nov. 2015)	Series D funding $520M Series E funding $1.7B	
2016–2017 Extension model		Airbnb Experiences (Nov. 2016) Acquisition of luxury retreats (Feb. 2017) Niido home-sharing apartments partnership (Nov. 2017)	Series F funding $1B	

2018–2019 Extension model	5 million hosts who have welcomed over 1.5 billion guest arrivals in almost every country across the globe (191 countries).	Superhosts and Superguests program Airbnb Plus & Concerts (Feb. 2018) Gaest.com acquisition (Jan. 2019) HotelTonight acquisition (April 2019) 9-year sponsorship with Olympic Games (Nov. 2019)		
2020 **P1 Jan.–Feb. 2020** Pre-COVID-19 **P2 Mar.–Jul. 2020** COVID-19 jolt **P3 Aug.–Dec. 2020** Post-COVID-19 jolt Airbnb IPO launch	Extenuating circumstances policy (March 2020) Airbnb faced more than $1 billion in guest cancellation requests (Cox and Chon, 2020)	$250 m host relief package (April 2020) layoff of 1,900 people, 25% workforce cut (May 2020)	Private equity $1B +$1B in debt (April 2020) Initial public offering (IPO Dec. 2020) NASDAQ entry Market launch valuation for $100B (Dec. 2020)	**COVID-19 crisis** **China** **Pandemic** **COVID-19 crisis** (March 2020) Pandemic **COVID-19 crisis** (March 2020)

4.2. Relational strategies pre-COVID-19 (January 2018 to March 2020)

4.2.1. Identity strategy

Our data suggest that the first relational strategy orchestrated by Airbnb was the identity strategy, encompassing trust appeals through powerful brand management and by fostering technology through processes and infrastructure developments.

4.2.1.1. Identity strategy: Empowering brand identity

Trust appeals

> "Airbnb is a company that was founded by hosts, for hosts," said co-founder Brian Chesky[25]

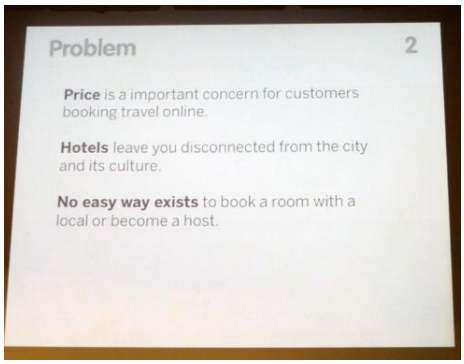


Figure 57: The origins of Airbnb: convincing pitches attracting hosts and investors[1]

The uniqueness of the platform relies on the distinctive marketing proposition compared to the multitude of solutions and other existing booking engines presented in Chapter 3 such as Hotels.com, Booking.com, Expedia, VRBO, and HomeAway. Host interviewees expressed this uniqueness:

> *"Airbnb started with an extra room or extra space in the basement. HomeAway and VRBO never started with that type of accommodation solution."* (Interview n°39)

[25] https://blinks.bloomberg.com/news/stories/QBSALMEIXHMM

Feeling at home: In recent decades, tourism activities have moved toward sustainability, in other words, the need to travel to destinations promoting authenticity in the engagement with the tourists (Cole, 2007). Airbnb created a travel community image associated with authentic experiences such as a sense of belonging fostered by the sharing experience to any destination. The platform operates on the premise that guests can access exclusive spaces reserved for the local community, which extends beyond conventional tourism promotion (Garay-Tamajon and Morales Perez, 2022).

In the highly competitive tourism sector, the concept of "feel at home, live like a local" offers distinctive positioning and, thus, represents a social promise based on the community and a sense of belonging. Airbnb succeeded in designing a brand identity platform alongside powerful and innovative marketing and communication initiatives, for example, co-branding with famous places such as the "one night at the Louvre" promotion, street marketing actions, the Airbnb magazine, and the Livethere campaign, which makes the claim "Live there. Even if it's just for a night." The signature "belong anywhere" illustrates the feeling of being a local wherever you are. This comment from a famous boutique hotelier, who joined Airbnb as a mentor, states Airbnb's marketing challenges:

> *"It's a delicate balance, but the bottom line is both our hosts and guests at Airbnb need to feel like they're having a phenomenally different experience. In the host case, they would not need to put their rooms on booking.com instead of us, or in the case of the guests, they would not stay at a hotel or VRBO instead of us."* (Interview n°26)

Guests participating in our study affirmed that the first reason for using Airbnb is economic, and the second is about "feeling at home," which reinforces Airbnb's identity:

> *"Airbnb is the better place, I guess, for saving and just to save money. Sometimes, you find it very cheap. It depends on the season. ... Hotels are nice, but I would prefer something that looks like a home and when I need to have access to a kitchen."* (Interview n°29)

[26] https://youtu.be/X5X4VT8t34U?si=bbtCxZSENsaDzeDV

Our study highlighted that Airbnb gained a reputation for delivering a positive accommodation experience with cost-effective services and choices compared to hotels, allowing for travel and stay in an expensive city such as NYC:

> *"I'm so glad there was something like this invented recently. It's like life changed. Save lives, honestly, how could we do without having Airbnb? Let me tell you something. For example, here in New York, or in the US, in general, it's very hard to rent a place."* (Interview n°28)

> *"It's not like I prefer Airbnb to something else because I've never actually looked at something else other than a hotel. But, yes. This is better than a hotel. It's cheaper than a hotel."* (Interview n°29)

To attract hosts, the roots of Airbnb represented in the first campaign, "Don't go there, live there," promote the opportunity to travel while experiencing the life of a local, with a place to stay where one feels at home. In a highly saturated market, Airbnb distinguished itself by providing rooms other than hotels with listings on a website that represent homes of ordinary people who are willing to host and socialize. Said Interviewee n°30: "You are not renting a room or an apartment. You are renting a style of life. I mean, they gave me more amenities than we get in hotel rooms."

Experts in tourism confirmed the distinctive and unique accommodation solution proposed. According to Interviewee n°1, "Airbnb says, if you have a room or an apartment to rent, put it on the site, try. So, I think Airbnb is there at exactly the right time, when the uniqueness of each property is a real benefit."

To enrich the "live like a local" concept, the launch of the Airbnb experience concept was a prominent example of the community's role fueling the social identity of Airbnb. In NYC, a host is a multi-faceted supplier embracing the SE. For example, one respondent started listing a one-bedroom shared apartment in Times Square until they invested in a house in New Jersey and finally proposed improvisation class sessions as an Airbnb experience. Hosts often are willing to share a passion or a talent, in theater or art, considering those activities as a part-time or secondary professional activity.



Figure 58: Airbnb experience: Guided Tour in Brooklyn targeting tourists and locals.



Figure 59: Airbnb experience: Improv'Class weekly afterwork of New Yorkers





Figures 60 et 61: The Airbnb "host experience" proposing Tote Bag session is also an Uber Driver.



Figure 62: Airbnb video on its website

Message framing ties back to Airbnb's brand ethos of community and belonging: "Make yourself at home at Paul and Virginie's home." Video is used frequently to support the storytelling narratives that Airbnb uses as a strong and powerful technique of persuasion, such as for the celebration of the half a billion check-ins on Airbnb around the world in May 2019.

Hosts from all over the world testified to how happy they are with their experience as hosts, off ering both social proof and economic proof: “Hosting has helped me pay for a new kitchen,”[27] and “In 2019, Airbnb’s host and guest community generated $117 billion in estimated direct economic impact across 30 countries alone, a 16% increase over the $100 billion our community generated in 30 markets in 2018.”[28]

Referral program: “Invite a friend” or “Share with a friend” campaigns were launched in 2011 and are often still used. The referral program aims to maximize the chances of users spreading Airbnb as a source of more ways to earn.

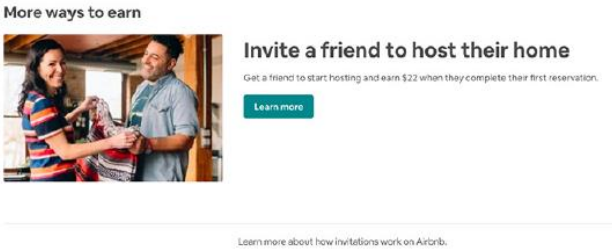


Figure 63: Referral message on its website

Corporate social responsibility involvement with Airbnb.org: The Airbnb brand has gained visibility for its social inclusiveness through its “Open Homes” initiative carried by Airbnb.org, a nonprofit association supporting individuals providing emergency and temporary Airbnb properties in times of need such as disasters, crisis, or wars. By alerting hosts in affected areas, the DP asks hosts to make their space available for free or at a very low price.

Innovation: The uniqueness of the platform relies on innovation creating new norms in the sector, distinguishing the Airbnb identity from the multitude of solutions and other booking engines proposed such as Hotels.com, Booking.com, Expedia, and STR actors such as VRBO and HomeAway. A recurrent theme in the interviews was a common view about Airbnb as a disruptive innovation in the user digital experience, inducing behavioral changes in the relationship among actors. The peer-review process was an innovation revolutionizing the feedback standard throughout the hospitality sector. A hotelier highlighted the gap with the hotel industry that did not integrate customer satisfaction feedback process as central. For example, at that time, feedback measures were not cascaded to hotel employees, so they could not perceive the impacts of their roles. Moreover, direct competitors such as STR actors transformed their processes and mimicked Airbnb; according to Interviewee n°39, “Reviews are very important these days. Airbnb was the

[27] www.airbnb.com
[28] https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/airbnb-announces-new-partnerships-to-support-local-economic-growth-new-campaign-to-support-domestic-travel-301074183.html

first one to ask the guests to be reviewed. HomeAway and VRBO copied that after, and it had an impact on the relations with guests."

We argue that peer evaluations, as a new feedback mechanism, reinforced the identity of Airbnb to the degree that the platform creates an institution leveraging trust and innovation while influencing the triadic relationship.

4.2.1.2. Identity strategy: Fostering technology with a twofold concern: technology and design



Figure 64: Smartphone Airbnb photography guide

Digital experience. The success of the Airbnb identity is the equilibrium between technology and design, the look and feel of the website and app, user-friendly, visual, and using personalization for a better experience without the feeling of overwhelming images such as at booking.com. The evolution of the homepage year after year characterizes this ability to guide the navigation even though there are 7 million listings in 2023. The digital experience integrates the process of producing visuals such as high-quality photos, which play an essential role in the selection process. In 2011, when the quality of smartphone photos was not as good as it is today, Airbnb offered hosts the free service of professional photographers to improve the navigation experience by displaying the top photos on the front of the property pages. Today, the DP proposes a "smartphone Airbnb photography guide," delivering tips and a checklist to take photos like a professional.

For example, Interviewee n°38 said: "I think good photos [are] key, and that's really important, and to take several angles." Added Interviewee n°39,

> *"Airbnb has such a good reputation. They provided a very clean, fresh platform, very easy way to search, very friendly marketing type, and easy to work with. Airbnb does a great job in marketing to attract American tourists and international ones, which is not the case of VRBO and HomeAway."*

Airbnb's spectacular growth is technology-driven, including an iPhone application to allow people to search for and book a place to rent from their mobile phone. For example, in 2013, Airbnb improved iOS and Android apps to give hosts the ability to manage multiple bookings in one stream.[29] Accessing and interacting with Airbnb is easy through its website or app for rooms or experiences, making it the dominant digital channel for travel experiences and discoveries.

Thus, Airbnb as a digital platform explored all aspects of the web and social media to facilitate the relationship with its community members. We argue that Airbnb succeeded in digitally connecting the brand with the product experience, thereby accelerating Airbnb's cognitive legitimacy.

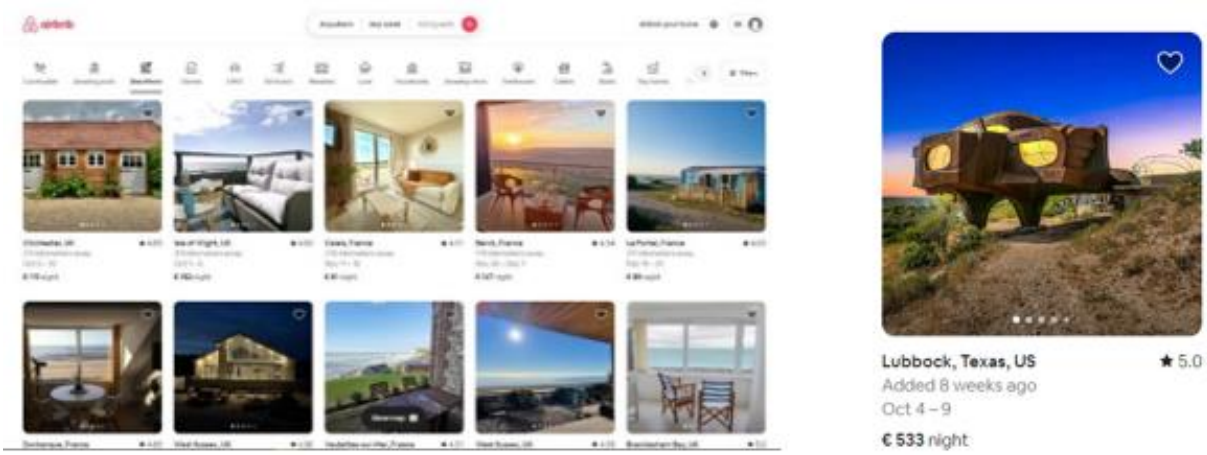


Figure 65: Airbnb homepage

For example, the screen shot illustrates the simplicity of the homepage, with a classification according to the typology of houses (e.g., historical homes, iconic cities, national parks, design). Attractive and clear descriptions of products generate trust reinforced by a qualitative selection of visuals.

The phrase "Airbnb your home" recalls the need to continuously attract hosts. Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and Instagram are the three main social media that Airbnb uses to attract and engage with guests and hosts. These DPs offer new environments for networking opportunities where sociability is central through the interaction of users. Instagram is perfect for sharing images

[29] https://blinks.bloomberg.com/news/stories/QBSALMEIXHMM

of Airbnb rooms or homes or to depict Airbnb experiences. Engaging users this way creates fun, interactive, motivational, and affective stories, thereby strengthening the Airbnb community. A multitude of Facebook groups have emerged on the web, such as guest Airbnb Facebook Group profiles and a variety of Airbnb Facebook host profiles.

Infrastructure developments. Our respondents compared the "massive infrastructure" requirements for the hotel industry with the technology developments for Airbnb. According to Interviewee n°1:

> *"Airbnb is fundamentally a business-to-consumer model that, because it's web-based, is arguably going to [have] lower overhead costs. Fundamentally, you build a website. You continue to invest in how you develop that technology. The hotel industry, meanwhile, is … more of an investment, through which, then, the major hotel companies have to invest tens upon tens of millions with infrastructure to drive that business."* (Interview n°1)

Airbnb's career section reflects the DP's technological culture and its organizational framework, seeking the best talents to continuously develop innovative technological infrastructure through the recruitment of analysts, engineers, product managers, data scientists, and designers. The following are three examples of Airbnb divisions. The Media Foundation team comprises cross-platform engineers who build infrastructural and user-facing product solutions for all of Airbnb's front-end media needs, seeking to improve the performance and reliability of media infrastructure using practices in Web development and media processing. The Marketplace team comprises data scientists who research models to build pricing products for Airbnb hosts, such as measuring the impact of new pricing features and providing insights to understand the effects of pricing feature launches. The Localization team supports translation needs for Airbnb's international growth with the launch of machine translation engines that are capable of translating all user-generated content and providing cultural insights. Resources needed to scale up the international dimension of the platform were covered rapidly, such as cross-currency booking issues in which guests' payments are in different currency from the one established by the host listing.

The LinkedIn profile of Airbnb's NYC senior account manager highlights the multimillion-dollar sales growth in 2019 through data analyses and enterprise technology companies, allowing data-driven decisions to optimize strategies.

4.2.2. Professionalization strategy

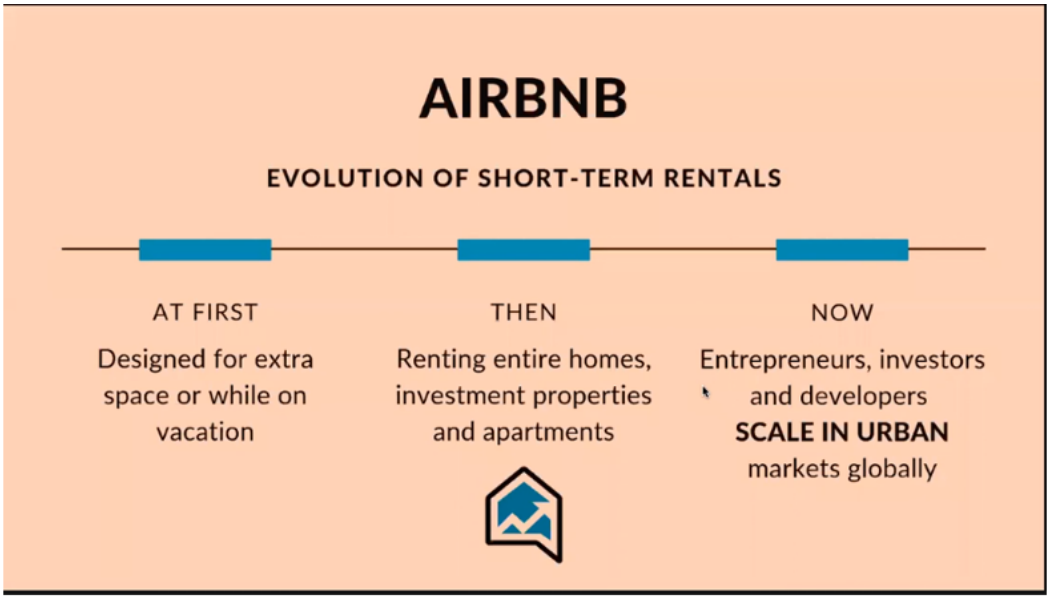


Figure 66: Inner Circle Zoom meeting presentation

As mentioned previously, digitalization is integrated into Airbnb's strategic identity as a brand and customer experience. Our data revealed that the professionalization strategy is another relational tactic deployed by Airbnb that is embedded in the digital environment. Consequently, Airbnb provides a series of online applications for (1) property listing; 2) matchmaking, exchanging, mining, and processing information and transactions; and (3) personal reputation management accelerating the professionalization of hosts.

Airbnb has focused intensively on its professionalization strategy, aiming at (1) scaling hosts through new upscale offerings and strategic partnerships and acquisitions, online applications, and educational initiatives for hosts and integration of hospitality market actors, and (2) securing capital funding through regular fundraising and developing skills through mentoring by venture capital firms.

4.2.2.1. Professionalization strategy: Strategic partnership and acquisitions

A series of partnerships, acquisitions, and the launch of new segments has had a ripple effect on professionalizing the Airbnb platform and its contributors, which is summarized in Table 21.

Table 21: Selected investments by Airbnb between 2017 and 2019 (Source: Balech, 2019)

Date	Company (short description)
September 2017	Resy (restaurant reservations)
November 2017	Accomable (accessible travel startup)
December 2018	Luckey Homes (concierge services / property management corporation)
January 2019	Gaest (booking site for off-site meetings/events)
March 2019	HotelTonight (mobile-first last-minute hotel travel)
April 2019	OYO (discount hotel chain)
April 2019	Lyric (multi-family apartments rental manager)
August 2019	Urbandoor (managed apartments for business travel and relocation)
October 2019	Tiqets (ticketing for experiences)

Competitors: In the early stage of its growth, Airbnb led a series of acquisitions to freeze potential local competitors in their domestic markets by migrating their hosts' accounts and listings to the Airbnb platform, thereby increasing the number of its host communities worldwide (e.g., Accoleo in Germany in 2011, Crashpadder in UK in 2012).

Tech companies' competencies:[30] The continuous acquisition of high-tech companies allowed Airbnb to improve its users' experience and trust (see Table 21), such as the DailyBooth app in 2012, allowing users to enhance design through photos, and the trust reputation app, Fondu, also in 2012; the scheduling app Pencil Labs in 2014; Tilt, a digital payment solution for online payments, in 2017; Luckey Homes, property management software, in 2018; and Trooly, a trust and safety analysis solution, in 2019. Luckey Homes was a start-up created by three French

[30] https://www.businessinsider.in/slideshows/miscellaneous/here-are-all-the-companies-airbnb-has-acquired-to-help-it-grow-into-a-31-billion-business/slidelist/73216414.cms#slideid=73216418

entrepreneurs who sought to standardize the hosting experience in Paris (e.g., concierge service) to reduce tensions with local communities and municipalities.

New luxury segment: In 2016, Airbnb created a premium service called Airbnb Plus, a selection of luxury, up-scale accommodations with professionalized services at the highest quality standards of the hospitality industry. The hosts selected for this category represent the ones with luxury standards (e.g., attention to detail, face-to-face quality control inspection of 100 criteria, and human check-in) as well as top reviews above 4.8. This new luxury premium segment is driven thanks to the home portfolio of Canadian Luxury Retreats acquired in 2017.

Social inclusiveness: In 2017, facing social issues regarding alleged discrimination by hosts (i.e., race and travelers with disabilities), Airbnb acquired Accomable, a London based start-up that features listings of places adapted to travelers with disabilities.

Launch of a new peer-to-peer activity, Airbnb Experiences: In 2017, Airbnb acquired two online platforms that connect travelers with local activities and experiences: Trip4real and Vamo. A few months later, it introduced "Airbnb Experiences," allowing hosts to offer activities or excursions to travelers in the same vein of "living like a local."

Hotels segment: Since February 2018, the company has officially welcomed and encouraged boutique hotels[31] to use its platform as a distribution channel, forming partnerships with companies such as SiteMinder to make it easier for hotels to list on Airbnb. In 2019, Airbnb purchased HotelTonight, a website and app for last-minute booking in hotels, which is recognized for its easy navigation compared to Booking.com. It also has partnered with cloud-based hotel solutions to offer better service to professional hosts (Ting, 2018), allowing original mom-and-pop Airbnb hosts to compete with professional hoteliers.

Real estate partnerships: Airbnb has continued diversifying its operations by launching or acquiring new activities with other organizations. In Florida, Airbnb partnered with Niido in 2017, a real estate group in Miami, that allows tenants to rent their units up to 180 days per year, sharing revenues with landlords. According to the official announcement, "This partnership shows how landlords, developers, and Airbnb can work together to create value for everyone and better serve tenants."[32]

[31] https://skift.com/2018/02/27/this-is-how-Airbnb-plans-to-win-over-hotels/
[32] https://news.Airbnb.com/Airbnb-niido-to-partner-to-support-home-sharing-in-apartments accessed August 5 2023

In NYC in 2019, Airbnb partnered with a major real estate developer, RXR Realty, to convert portions of commercial properties into what it called a "new category of urban lodging." The effort started with the iconic Rockefeller Plaza in Manhattan, designating 10 floors of suites that can be booked only through Airbnb, while RXR is responsible for the management of the units.

These acquisitions and new segments have allowed Airbnb to access to ongoing data collection about professionals in tourism and real estate (Reinhold and Dolnicar, 2021) and, therefore, better understand and track customers' behaviors.

Global travel platform: In 2019, Airbnb pursued its ambitious diversification with the creation of a Transport Division; it was presented as a 360-degree travel platform to reinvent travel offerings in one marketplace, covering accommodation, activities, and transport for travelers, with the ultimate goal of improving travelers' experience. That year, the founder of Virgin America was appointed as the global head of Airbnb's Transport Division.[33]

4.2.2.2. Professionalization strategy: From the "Mom and Pop" model to Pro



Figure 67: From extra space to professional host (Source: INNER CIRCLE)

Scaling: DPs in the SE expanded in the urban high-density context referred to by a few scholars as urban sharing organizations (USOs).[34] In NYC, the hosts' profile shifted rapidly from a listing of one extra room to the management of multiple units. The results of our study indicated that NYC Airbnb hosts tended to be motivated by the economic outcome of their activities, with the main reason for continuing and expanding their listings being profit, relegating the creation of social ties to a motive of the past. All hosts interviewed said they started by sharing one bedroom

[33] https://www.usine-digitale.fr/article/et-maintenant-airbnb-s-attaque-aux-transports.N804135
[34] Zvolska et al. (2019)

in their home, the original model of Airbnb, and rapidly converted the other spare rooms in the same unit. Some followed by acquiring other properties to expand their Airbnb activities, choosing locations where regulations are more flexible, such as New Jersey, which is only 20 minutes from Manhattan. A few hosts shared the following experiences:

> *"In November last year, I bought a house and then, about one month, two months later, I started a business with three other friends, and then we did it more in New Jersey where it is more friendly for Airbnb also."* (Interview n°33)

> *"We needed some income, and we started with the one room. And then it was going very well and then we started the second room … and now seven rooms in this home, four bedrooms on the second floor and three on the basement. Before I was getting more social, but right now, I cannot do it more."* (Interview n°35)

> *"I used to interact with the guests more, but now, the guests just use the room and just leave and go. Over time, that got easier because after more years, I installed a lock with a combination. In the beginning, I didn't have that, yeah. Now, it's easier for me."* (Interview n°33)

> *"But if you take out the bulk of Airbnb, that's going to be a big hole in my income."* (Interview n°38)

The professionalization of hosts is characterized by their willingness to perform and deliver a qualitative guest experience. They outsource activities that they were handling originally. Issues related to cleaning were prominent in the interviews, with a clear understanding that cleaning should comply with industry standards for hostels or hotels, requiring all profiles of hosts to oversee cleaning like a professional.

> *"I don't give too much time to my son and to my husband. That's the reason I am trying to find someone who can help me, [so] I can give more attention to my family. Because it's taking the time."* (Interview n°35)

> *"[The] home has to be spotless even if there are lots of personal items. Cleaning is the first key success factor."* (Interview n°39)

Low entry barriers: Our data revealed that the professionalization of hosts is facilitated by economic and technological factors. The fact that Airbnb does not charge hosts subscription fees when listing their homes on the platform is new and innovative. For example, property management companies were seduced by this practice. Our data indicate that the Airbnb revenue stream based

on transaction fees instead of subscription fees led to an increase of all types of hosts. One property manager shared the following:

> *"The success of Airbnb is due to a very clean marketing platform and the fact that, as a property manager, I do not have to pay a subscription, which is a big difference for VRBO. It makes it so much easier for us to get on there, as they don't charge us. It is a fairly new industry. At the same time, Airbnb positioned itself very quickly on the international market, proposing a new type of travelers and customers."* (Interview n°39)

The low barrier to entry is also characterized by an easy technological process for an ordinary non-technology expert to be registered as a host on the platform. Hosts joining Airbnb start with the elaboration of their listings on the site. This process is facilitated by the Airbnb host call center, which provides guidance if necessary and tips to attract guests.

> *"Airbnb has been most supportive when I call them. I get them within a minute or two, and they've helped me enormously. I am very impressed for that."* (Interview n°38)

Social ties: As our data indicated, hosts felt an attachment to Airbnb in the sense that they connected to the purpose of the platform. They developed a sense of accomplishment with their first satisfied hosting experience, stimulating pleasant outcomes with self-recognition, thus accelerating the desire to shift from one unit to multiple units.

4.2.2.3. Professionalization strategy: "Third parties" role

Airbnb activity has spawned a significant number of partners, who include entrepreneurial complementors such as third parties that provide resources to participants in its ecosystem, such as management accommodations solutions for hosts and professional drivers. Within the ecosystem, start-ups contribute to creating new standards and norms, innovating, and professionalizing central activities. In our data set, the effectiveness of the third-party role in professionalization was exemplified at an Airbnb Mastery Summit, as a series of entrepreneurs or summit sponsors shared their vision for hosting or presenting hospitality solutions. An example was a start-up selling customer relationship management solutions, whose representative stated, "How to scale a business as an entrepreneur? What vision solving problems? I have stayed at 100 Airbnb all over the world.

What are the best Airbnb hosts? What are they doing differently? They select their guests. CRM helps scale your business." Among these entrepreneurs and tech types, the mentor of Airbnb's CEO proposed his vision for the future of STRs, shared his CEO mindset, and demonstrated how he has contributed to professionalize Airbnb from his role as one of the most influential boutique hoteliers in the United States. During these summits, multiple start-ups have promoted the latest innovations and services to (1) manage issues faced by hosts, such as how to minimize parties and noise, message guests via autopilot, manage cleaning systems, address changes in the law, and understand insurance needs; to (2) maximize profits with dynamic pricing or through creative interior designers' services or virtual assistants; and to (3) develop real estate and financial solutions to acquire Airbnb properties.

Consequently, professionalization induces an entrepreneurial and creative mindset. Third-party contributors have developed new practices that the entire ecosystem progressively adopted and perceived as appropriate and useful. For example, a start-up promoted a marketplace providing cleaning solutions that are considered crucial for the hosts' reputation. This start-up redefined the quality standards around cleaning:

> *"In this industry, it's not just about cleaning. It is about checking amenities, closets, and, most importantly, staging. I created an interactive checking cleaning list displaying photos of rooms to be staged. The cleaning teams are our eyes to restage the house, thus, every room is staged the same way as displayed on the listing. Importantly, we reviewed cleaning crews on their performance, punctuality, and cancellations on the interface."* (Interview n°39)

This example demonstrates that the new institution, in other words, evaluation through peer reviews created by Airbnb, is established as a norm in the STR sector. Through an app, individuals delivering a service are being evaluated at the end of the transaction (e.g., digital evaluation of the cleaning crew by the property management firm).

4.2.2.4. Professionalization strategy: Educating hosts by professionals

The primary concern in scaling the hosts community is to connect hosts with other hosts, allowing them to share issues and best practices aimed at reinforcing their sales performance as

well as the host community spirit or the sense of belonging. Our data highlighted that hosts or real estate professionals have created what is known as participatory architecture, realizing collective action aimed at achieving common objectives such as hosts scaling and professionalizing. Consequently, Inner Circle groups are created by professionals, mostly from the real estate industry, whose priority is to profit from investing in properties. Real estate professionals are embedded in professional and market logics with strong local networks, experience in investing in properties, skill in staging interiors, and advertising properties. Consequently, those mentors played a structural role in shaping the professionalization of hosts through online interactions via Zoom meetings established before COVID-19, with the capability to share issues, clarify Airbnb news and developments, and establish pedagogical resources available on Facebook.

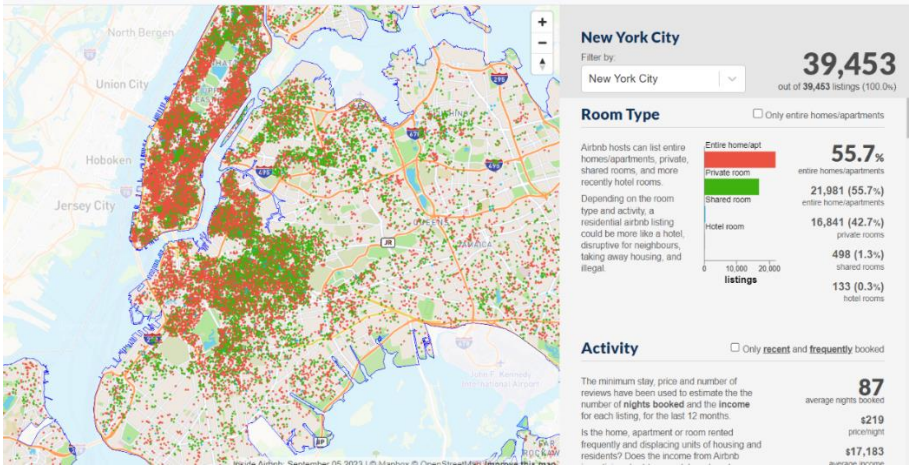


Figure 68: Airbnb NYC typologies of hosts. Source: Inside Airbnb in NYC[35]

These groups rely on digital architecture, such as Facebook, coordinated and animated by real estate professionals who act as mentors in the hosts' professionalization process. Topics developed during meetings could be about technological, cultural, organizational, profit-making, and marketing challenges. A weekly Inner Circle Zoom meeting would last one hour with an agenda typically sent few days before. Meetings start with the win:

"All right, so I also wanted to go into the Facebook Group page and see what people have been talking about and answer some questions there. Let me see, shall I share my screen? So yesterday I posted Winning Wednesdays. It's just fun to share things. It's just motivating, it's

[35] http://insideAirbnb.com/new-york-city

inspiring, and so if you haven't shared your win yet, even though it's Thursday, you can still do so. A lot of people commented with wins, which is awesome. And it's really cool to see what people are up to, right? (Inner Circle group)"

Our data revealed that Inner Circle groups represent a powerful "acting together" coordination of concerted efforts involving multiple contributors with significant positive externalities (e.g., issues management). The detailed agenda of the Inner Circle Facebook Group revealed not only the diversity of topics but also represented the different issues working toward a shared goal, such as finding solutions. From 2020 to 2021, we infiltrated this group (see Table 22) whose raison d'être is expressed here:

> *"The Inner Circle Facebook Group is the home of our community. This is where we connect [and] post wins, experiences, and questions."* (Interview n° 22)

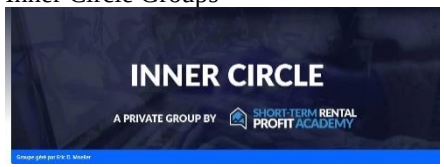
Table 22: Inner Circle Facebook Meeting Agendas (Source: self-elaborated from 2020 to 2021 meetings)

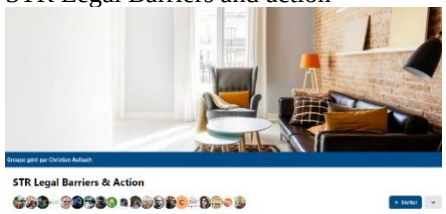
Topics	**Detailed agendas**
Technological	"Defining your guest avatar" "Presenting an affordable PMS systems with the start up Your Porter" "Covering the 100+ updates on Airbnb. What are the major changes ?"
Cultural	"Cultivating the right mindset to make the move from being self-employed to business owner"
Organizational	"Time Management to maximize your productivity" "Managing cleaners how to pay them" "Using job score cards to manage your employees and their motivations"
Profit	"Reviewing the STR goal sheets market" "Introducing to a new tool: Airbnb Deal Analyzer to estimate how much profit to make from buying, leasing or managing a new property!"
Marketing	"Improve your writing client facing content: listing descriptions, caption, guest retargeting emails, business acquisitions emails, website content, social media content". "Wi-fi Marketing: how you can collect email addresses from your guests automatically" "Before summer, get our Airbnb listings top notch!" "Revamping listings" "Driving direct bookings though an add with your listing with Google adds"

The selection of Airbnb Facebook host groups (see Table 22) indicates the characteristics of the hosts community operating through collective action within a diversified group of profiles, collaborating and co-creating toward a shared goal with a hybrid logic, in other words, profit and professional logics. This can be illustrated by Inner Circle group discussions:

> "Back then, Airbnb came on the scene and they were really servicing people that just had an extra room or a space or to rent out their property when they were on vacation, right? So, it was really focused on an individual connection, on an individual space, okay? People then quickly started realizing that they were making more money on their properties when they were on vacation than when they were living there, right? And I remember this time. And this is when I first started getting into short-term rentals. But then they never moved back into their house. They would rent another house. They would rent out another apartment and continue renting their homes on Airbnb." (Inner Circle Zoom meeting)

Table 23: Engaging the community with Hosts Facebook Groups

Inner Circle Groups  https://www.facebook.com/groups/strprofitacademy	"Welcome to the Inner Circle! This is made up of the world's leading short-term rental investors, operators, and service providers. The Inner Circle is designed to act as a board of advisors for your Airbnb/Short-Term Rentals business and an educational resource for everything." 400 members
Airbnb Profit Club  https://www.facebook.com/groups/airbnbprofitclub	"Airbnb Profit Club is a collective of professional Airbnb hosts from all around the world who seek to learn, share, and connect with other pros in the industry. Want to grow your Airbnb business?" 11,748 members
New to STR, AIRBNB and HOSTING  https://www.facebook.com/groups/1741548169478525	"Welcome to the new to vacation rentals and hosting group. This group has been set up for vacation rental owners and hosts at any level! The goal of this group is for owners and hosts to work as a community and share information. This group is intended for owners, hosts and industry experts to offer advice, discuss issues, etc. Members are free to post whenever they like and are encouraged to comment on other member posts. Please be kind, considerate and constructive. We reserve the right to remove any posts deemed inappropriate. This is a professional group and unprofessional behavior will not be tolerated." 12,315 members
The Hosts of Airbnb Automated  https://www.facebook.com/groups/442411303158530	"The Hosts of Airbnb Automated is a community for entrepreneurs and Airbnb hosts to list their first Airbnb, increase their amount of bookings, automate their business, learn how to manage slow seasons (for good), and much more. The group is brought to you by Sean Rakidzich & The Million Dollar Renter Team. We are dedicated to allowing you to step into your fullest potential when it comes to building your Airbnb/short-term rentals business so you can build the business of your dreams. And we are here to help you do exactly that with... ✅ Value-driven interviews ✅ Collaborative Q&As ✅ Exclusive training videos (for free)

	✅Airbnb Courses & Coaching Programs ✅and an awesome community of some of the world's top short-term rental entrepreneurs! Just a few housekeeping rules: 🛑No links (unless specified in a post by the admin) 🛑No asking for Personal Messages 🛑No Facebook Lives Thank you so much for being here – it's time to enroll like a boss." 56,130 members
Vacation Rental Best practices  https://www.facebook.com/groups/vacationrentalbestpractices	"Welcome! I'm Sheila and the admin of this group, and I am thrilled that you're interested in joining our community of hosts who are committed to achieving short-term rental success through knowledge, education, and best practices! As a hospitality specialist with over 25 years of experience managing commercial as well as residential properties, I know what it takes to run a successful vacation rental. And now I'm excited to share that knowledge with you! In this group, we believe in mutual respect as well as reciprocal support and creating an environment where every host can thrive. As an admin, I am committed to keeping our community spam-free, so that you only receive valuable information that helps boost your bookings and keep your guests happy and ready to further support your business with 5-star reviews." So join us to connect with fellow hosts, learn new tips & tricks, and take your vacation rental business to the next level. See you inside!"
STR Legal Barriers and action  https://www.facebook.com/groups/airbnblegalbarriersandaction	"STR Legal Barriers and Action was formed in June 2018 by Christian Aulbach. The goal of the group is to provide STR (short-term rental) and vacation rental hosts a platform to discuss and share legal issues and other barriers impeding their growth in cities across the United States and beyond! We are not formally endorsed by any platform or any short-term rental company. We welcome all short-term/vacation rental hosts and ask that you keep discussion friendly and professional."
Short Term Rental University STRU SHORT TERM RENTAL UNIVERSITY https://www.facebook.com/groups/struniversity	"This is a public group for Airbnb, HomeAway, VRBO hosts, and all Short-Term Rental entrepreneurs. The purpose of this group is to help each other grow our short-term rental business by sharing ideas, best practices, and asking questions for fellow members to answer in a positive and constructive way. Negativity or complaining will not be tolerated in this group."

4.2.2.5. Professionalization strategy: Capital funding

Entrepreneurs are basically characterized by a lack of resources and asymmetries of information between potential investors and themselves. Thus, we consider this period as interesting to analyze, focusing on the capacity of the Airbnb founders to reduce uncertainty from investors and convince them to play a role in the legitimation process. In this section, we focus on the relations between Airbnb and its investors, mainly the venture capital and equity firms.

We collected data from various sources, including Bloomberg, Reuters, FactSet, CNBC, and SEC IPO prospectus as well as SEC[36] Form D: Notice of Exempt Offering of Securities. We used triangulation to validate the figures and identity of investors. However, some data have been difficult to obtain or to validate, such as the initial capital invested by the three funders. Airbnb, which received its first seed funding in 2009 from Y Combinator, which has funded more than 4,000 startups, has since garnered investments from renowned venture capital firms such as Sequoia Capital, First Mark Capital, Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, and Andreessen Horowitz.

Our data are compiled in Table 24, and we incorporated Airbnb valuation before it went public for each series of funding from 2011 to highlight the capitalistic attractiveness of Airbnb and its future earnings and potential growth from a shareholder perspective.

The year 2011 marked a key milestone for Airbnb with a valuation of $1 billion, indicating high investor confidence and market potential. Entering the select club of unicorns only three years after its creation represents a major milestone and legitimates the accommodations platform within the Silicon Valley venture capital industry and business angel community.

According to our data, Airbnb succeeded in raising nearly $6.4 billion in 10 years, which is quite rare. For example, before their respective IPOs, Facebook raised $2.3 billion, and Uber raised $25 billion. According to an Airbnb press release,

> "Airbnb's explosive growth and passionate community of users reinforce the uniqueness of what they're doing, and in the same way eBay redefined online shopping, Airbnb is redefining the way the world thinks about accommodations".[37]

[36] https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000119312521056952/d147144dex991.htm
[37] https://assets.Airbnb.com/press/press-releases/Airbnb_PressRelease_SeriesB_07252011.pdf

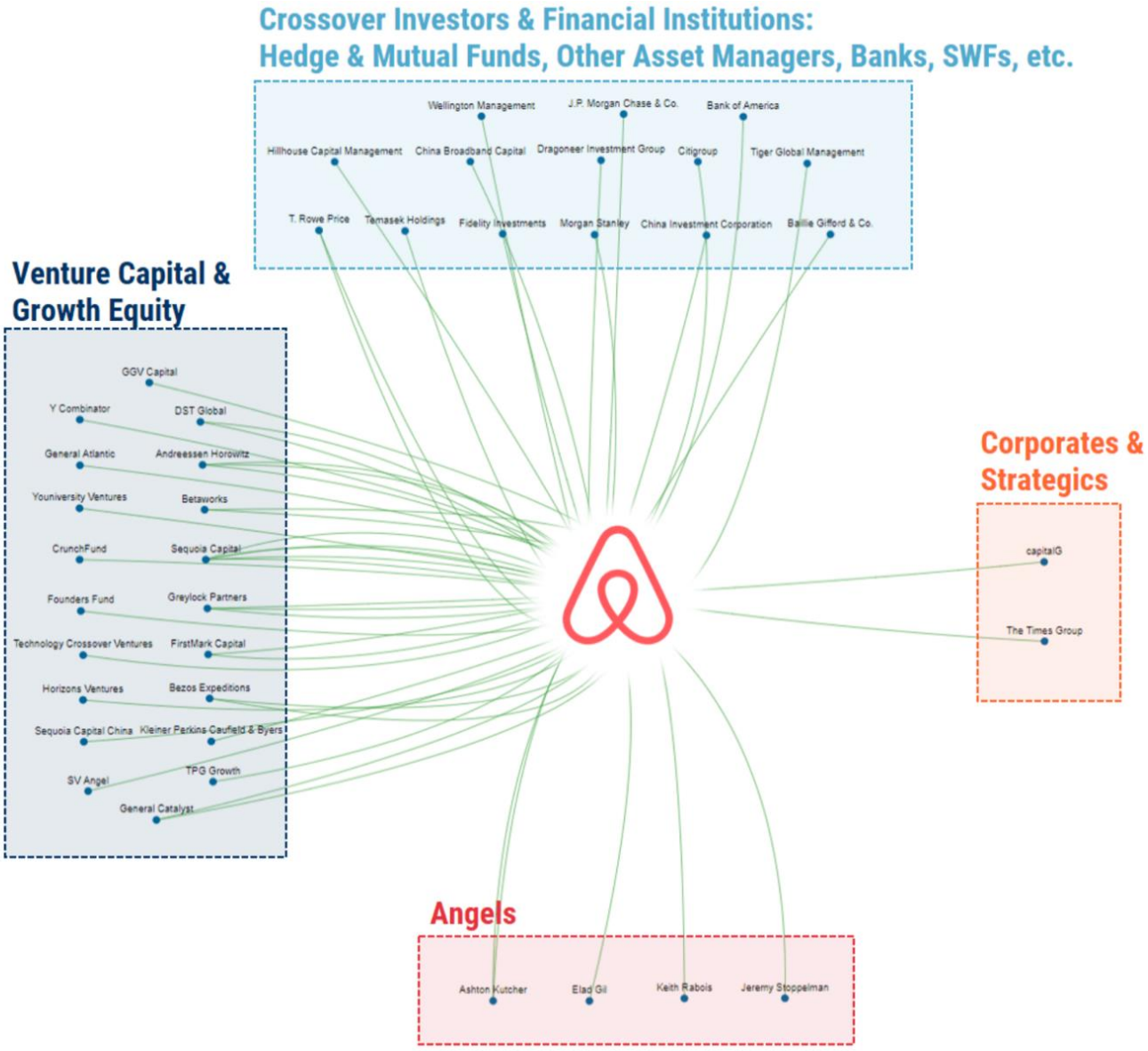


Figure 69: Airbnb investors by type (Source: https://www.cbinsights.com/research/Airbnb-strategy-teardown-expert-intelligence/#final)

Figure 69 illustrates how Airbnb has secured funding from a diverse group of investors, ranging from conventional venture capital firms and private equity funders to major financial institutions, hybrid investors, and hedge and mutual funds.

Increasing competencies: The professionalization of Airbnb is also fueled by investors who provide mentoring and incremental competencies to the platform. Investors have provided not only capital but also strategic guidance, operational expertise (e.g., the name change from "AirbedandBrekfast" to "Airbnb"), and networks to shift from a disruptive start-up to the leader in the STR industry.

Airbnb's rapid expansion has been fueled by consistent funding from investors in Silicon Valley and beyond. The DP successfully increased its capital each year through a diverse range of investors, from capital funds to corporate investors. We propose to classify the historical investors in Airbnb since its creation by the types of investment firms.

Early angel supporters in its Series A round included personalities bringing not only financial backing but also expertise and networks. For example, Ashton Kutcher, a well-known actor and tech investor, naturally attracted public attention and enhanced Airbnb's credibility when he invested in 2011. Keith Rabois, a tech industry executive, brought his expertise in scalable technology companies (e.g., PayPal, LinkedIn, and Square). Elad Gil contributed to the global expansion of Airbnb with his experience working with technology companies and involvement in Twitter and Google. Jeremy Stoppelman's insights were about trust mechanisms, as the co-founder of Yelp.

Later in its investment cycle, Airbnb raised money from growth equity firms and large institutional and crossover investors. Its $1.5 billion Series E round in 2015 included General Atlantic, T. Rowe Price, and Tiger Global Management, among other investors.

A continuous financial support: Figure 70 presents the successive series of funding from 2008 to 2017 to raise capital for Airbnb with a diversified portfolio of venture capital and equity firms, institutional investors, and private funds. Series A is considered seed capital, Series B comes from private equity funds and venture capital helping new companies grow, and Series C is a positive signal indicating that the start-up is ready to expand to new markets or develop new products. Most of the time, organizations finish raising capital with Series C. However, Series D or E could occur for expansion or acquisitions before a future IPO.



Figure 70: Airbnb: cumulative funding and valuation history (Source: https://research-assets.cbinsights.com/2017/10/31092336/Airbnb-funding-and-valuation-history.png)

It is exceptional for a startup to manage nine successive funding rounds in 10 years without going public and to raise a total of $6.4 billion. Every year, Airbnb has found new investors capable of providing fresh capital and increasing its financial valuation while funding its expansion and acquisitions. This demonstrates the company's strong appeal to the financial community and its ability to sell its vision and future potential prior to its IPO.

The chronological Table 24 aims to highlight (1) Airbnb's ability to become a unicorn in three years based on the idea of selling a night on an air mattress; (2) Airbnb's strong capacity to convince investors to finance its growth while improving its marketplace, increasing financial and human resources, such as the development of patents or the recruitment of top talents to absorb the scaling of the community; and (3) Airbnb's persuasive messages allowing nine funding series in a row, each year increasing the capitalization by more than 10,400 times from 2009 (a valuation of $2.98 million) to $31 billion in 2017.

At its creation, the CEO of Airbnb promoted the success of the platform, emphasizing its geographical expansion—the numbers of cities and countries covered—to position itself as an attractive partner. This sentiment was relayed by media such as Bloomberg in 2010:

> Airbnb is now used by homeowners in more than 5,700 cities in 148 countries. Revenue is doubling every three months, Chesky said, declining to give specific figures. The company charges an average fee of 10% to travelers and 3% to the homeowner. (Bloomberg)[38]

From 2008 to 2011, shareholders' capital funding increased tenfold, to reach $112 million in 2011. The founders of Airbnb made significant efforts to prove their perceived advantages to attract investors by continuously emphasizing innovative services driven by the California tech start-up ecosystem, thereby increasing the value assigned by investors. For example, in 2014, the adaptation from internet access platforms to increasing app usage seduced the financial community, which widely recognized the innovative performance of tech companies, making "taxi-booking app Uber, vacation-rental app Airbnb, and messaging app Snapchat three of the five most-valued tech startups," according to Bloomberg.[39] In 2014, Airbnb became a decacorn ($10 billion value), making Airbnb the most valuable privately held company in the world at the time.

[38] https://blinks.bloomberg.com/news/stories/L5OEEA1A74E9
[39] https://blinks.bloomberg.com/news/stories/N9XO126K50Z8

In April 2014, Airbnb made headlines regarding market valuation in the financial media and for litigation considered to be secondary news:

> Airbnb, a website and app…, would be worth more than some established hotel chains like Wyndham Worldwide or Hyatt. Airbnb is also to set to meet NY State's attorney general, Eric Schneiderman, in court this week related to a subpoena filed last fall to identify bad actors and illegal activity on the platform.[40]

In 2015, the expansion of the platform was global, with a capitalization of $25 billion, in other words, 25 times more than the 2011 value. Moreover, Airbnb succeeded in raising $1.5 billion from 115 diverse investors around the globe, signaling the exponential growth in Airbnb investors. In 2017, Airbnb was valued $31 billion above traditional hospitality actors such as Marriott, Hilton, and Hyatt. To compare with other platforms, the French ridesharing service, Blablacar, raised $115 million in 2021 and $200 million in 2015. In the United States, the rideshare platform Uber was the champion in raising capital with a historical performance of $25 billion from Japanese, Chinese, Indian, and Saudi Arabian private investors before its IPO.

[40] https://blinks.bloomberg.com/news/stories/N4DQM76JTSEL

Table 24: Chronological capital funding (Sources: Bloomberg, Reuters, CNBC and SEC IPO prospectus[41] and SEC forms D i.e., Notice of Exempt Offering of Securities)

Year	Events	Investors	Comments	Total Amount	Source and additional information
2008	Creation	Brian Chesky Jo Gebbia then Nathan Blecharczyk Y combinator	Founded in August 2008, based in San Francisco, California Airbedandbreakfast Y Incubator invest	Initial capital NC **$20,000**	https://vator.tv/news/2016-02-26-when-Airbnb-was-young-the-early-years https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000119312520294801/d81668ds1.htm
2009	Airbnb Serie A **Valuation 2.98 M$**	Y combinator Sequoia capital	Incubator First venture capital fund.	**$600,000**	https://archive.nytimes.com/bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/11/10/Airbnb-books-more-cash-to-connect-travelers-with-cheap-digs/?searchResultPosition=3
2010	Airbnb Serie A **Valuation 71.78 M$**	Sequoia capital Greylock partners Others investors Asthon Kutcher SV Angel Youniversity ventures	Sequoia capital and Greylock partners lead this fundraising.	**$7,2M**	https://research-assets.cbinsights.com/2017/10/31092336/Airbnb-https://research-assets.cbinsights.com/2017/10/31092336/Airbnb-funding-and-valuation-history.pngfunding-and-valuation-history.png

[41] https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000119312521056952/d147144dex991.htm

2011	Airbnb Serie B **Valuation $1B**	Airbnb serie B lead by Andreessen Horowitz DST Global, General Catalyst partners Or Jeff Bezos	Aiming at financing international growth led by Andreessen Horowitz ($60M), well-known due to major investments in tech companies (e.g., Facebook, Foursquare, Groupon, Skype, Twitter) $40 million from DST and $5 million from General Catalyst, — the rest coming from previous investors and a newcomer Jeff Bezos.	**$112M**	https://www.crunchbase.com/funding_round/Airbnb-series-b--d2e9a4b6 https://techcrunch.com/2011/07/24/Airbnb-bags-112-million-in-series-b-from-andreessen-and-others/ "Airbnb has experienced explosive growth over the past year, doubling the benchmark of 1 million nights booked in just four months. The company now has over 2 million nights booked, receives over 30 million page views per month and has seen the number of Airbnb Social Connections triple to 54 million since launching the feature in May. As the company poises itself to meet the growing demand in international markets like Germany, the United Kingdom, France and Brazil, this investment will help position Airbnb as the leader in the broader vacation rental market in 2012."
2013	Airbnb Serie C Valuation **$2,5B**	Funder Fond Sequoia capital Andreessen Horowitz General Catalyst T. Rowe Price Dragoner investment group	Funder Fond lead this fundraising.	**$200M**	Source: CrunchBase

2014	Airbnb Serie D **Valuation $10B**	TPG Capital Dragoner Invest. T. Rowe Price Sequoia capital	Market capitalization higher than Wyndham Worldwide or Hyatt.	**$475M**	https://techcrunch.com/2016/09/22/Airbnb-files-555m-round-with-the-sec-led-by-google-capital-and-tcv/
2015	Airbnb Serie E Valuation **$25,6B**	General Atlantic, Tiger Global, Hillhouse Capital Group, Horizon ventures, Baillie Gifford, Wellington Management, Temasek Holdings	General Atlantic, Tiger Global lead this fundraising.	**$1,5B**	https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000116840415000029/xslFormDX01/primary_doc.xml https://www.wsj.com/articles/Airbnb-raises-1-5-billion-in-one-of-largest-private-placements-1435363506 https://techcrunch.com/2015/12/07/Airbnb-confirms-its-massive-1-5-billion-raise/
2016	Airbnb Serie F Valuation **$30B**	Google Capital and TCV T. Rowe Price Fidelity Investments	Lead by Google Capital In parallel of this new round of fundraising, Airbnb secured $1B debt facility from JP Morgan, Citigroup, Bank of America, Morgan Stanley	**$850M** + **$1B** in debt facility	https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000155972016000001/xslFormDX01/primary_doc.xml https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-06-16/Airbnb-said-to-get-1-billion-debt-facility-from-big-u-s-banks?leadSource=uverify%20wall#xj4y7vzkg https://techcrunch.com/2016/08/06/Airbnb-raising-a-reported-850m-at-a-30b-valuation/ https://www.wsj.com/articles/Airbnb-plans-dual-stock-sales-to-push-off-ipo-1467226873 https://techcrunch.com/2016/09/22/Airbnb-files-555m-round-with-the-sec-led-by-google-capital-and-tcv/

2017	Airbnb Serie F Valuation **$31Billion**	Google Capital	Lead by Google Capital Fundraising at	**$1B** approx.*. $1,003,312,065	https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000155972017000001/xslFormDX01/primary_doc.xml
2018	Airbnb Serie F	Mighty Venture Capital and Manhattan Venture partners		NC	Source: CrunchBase
2020	Last private fundraising April 20 Valuation **$18B** IPO dec 20 Initial valuation **$42B** 1st Closing Day: Market capitalization: **$100B** Final Market capitalization **$84B (dec 20)**	Silver Lake Sixth Street Partners Oaktree Capital Management, Owl Rock, Appollo Global Management Fidelity investments	Airbnb raised $1 billion in debt and equity from private equity firms Silver Lake and Sixth Street Partners. 8 months after valuation was X 5 time higher. Airbnb secured commitments of $1 billion for a syndicated term loan from institutional investors "Airbnb valuation surges past $100B in biggest historical US IPO of 2020, elipsing that of online travel agency booking Holding Inc and hotel chain Marriot International Inc"	**$1B** + **$1B** in debt facility	https://techcrunch.com/2020/04/06/Airbnb-turns-to-private-equity-to-raise-1-billion/ https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/06/technology/Airbnb-coronavirus-valuation.html?smid=em-share
2021	Valuation $ 100 billions	Shareholders			Bloomberg
2022	Valuation $ 48 billions	Shareholders			Bloomberg
2023	Valuation $ 88 billions	Shareholders			Bloomberg

4.2.3. Selection strategy

Our data revealed that actors in the ecosystem contribute to the selection strategy. In fact, the selection strategy is indebted to interactions among ecosystem members, largely attributed to peer-reviewing or co-creation mechanisms forming a categorization process.

4.2.3.1. Selection strategy: Categorization

The peer-reviewing mechanisms assess the hosts and guests and simultaneously categorize them. When guests rate the hosts with a high degree of satisfaction, the hosts could be eligible for another status, such as Superhost. The quality of the hosts' listings affects the attractiveness of the platform. The peer-reviewing system is a strong trust mechanism serving and strengthening the community. A host writing a positive review after the stay of a guest will provide information about this guest to the other hosts and, therefore, influence future transactions. The quality of the hosts' listings is also a quality control mechanism for hosts to collect constructive guest feedback for improvement that normally is posted in the private message section during the reviewing process. Additionally, Airbnb acknowledges the best hosts with higher visibility, and the 5-star-rated hosts potentially become eligible for the Superhost label created in 2018. Hosts simultaneously meeting four criteria—minimum 10 stays per year, maintaining a quick and minimum response rate of 90%, five-star reviews from at least 80% of guests, and honoring confirmed reservations—qualify for a Superhost status that provides some advantages, such as a better position in Airbnb's listings. In this study, the reviewing process was not perceived positively by hosts and was contested by all of the hosts interviewed. It was cited as a source of stress (Interview n°35) or as biased ("I just try to find ways to make sure the review is good.")

> *"It's kind of annoying. Because some people are positive and will always leave a good review. And some people are negative people. And then they'll leave not so good reviews. Even though it's the same room for both people."* (Interview n°33)

> *"And then he did a nice review and a nice writing in the guestbook, but he didn't review on the Airbnb site. And reviews are really important for hosts. He's the third person who I've given my all to and hasn't done it. So there's nothing I can do about that."* (Interview n°38)

In our study, all of the guests considered the reviews to be a central decision metric to select or not a host for a stay.

> *"Absolutely, yes. I always read reviews. If it's bad, if I read so many bad reviews that definitely means a no with that host."* (Interview n°28)

Hosts should perform well in listing, in other words, presenting the place they are sharing. Guests should rate and review their experience with the hosts and vice versa. This existing relationship fosters mutuality as one of the social forces among the triadic relationship involving Airbnb, the hosts, and the guests.

By evaluating guests, hosts shape and categorize the reputation of the guests. The Inner Circle groups stimulate hosts to perform, co-create, and move to the most lucrative category: "Super Legend" Hosts.

> Legends X is where you need to be. I know that I will be using this information and working with this group for years to come. And my goal when I started was to be able to sell and retire within the next three or four years. And I'm going to make it happen. (Inner Circle Group)

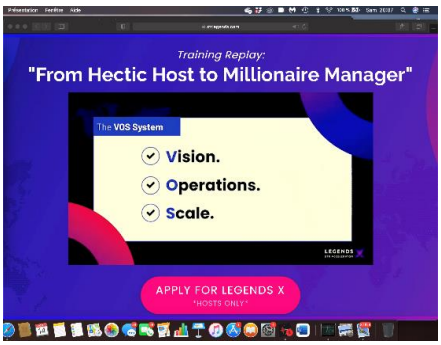


Figure 71: From Hectic host to Millionaire Manager (Source: INNER CIRCLE)

"There are five different stages of being a host, and each host should be able to identify itself from the original host model to the host owning more than 100 units." Supported by former real estate executives acting as gurus, hosts are categorized into five groups. Moving to the next stage is part of the education process through adequate mentoring that enables the selection strategy. The ideal host status is to be a legend, inspired by three pillars of hosting: vision, operations, and scale.

Inspired by the tech company trait of success in a short-term perspective, Inner Circle founders endorse the role of mentors teaching hosts how to perform, by promoting successful entrepreneurs who started with one property. Inner Circle groups act as a central arena for community building, accelerating the professionalization of hosts and, thus, the selection process.

Inner Circle Facebook Groups have mimicked the Airbnb principle of categorizing hosts. These groups of realtors, developers, and property managers have sought to attract entrepreneurs who wish to accelerate their business. The selection criteria are the number of units managed by the hosts. For example, the process to become eligible for the Legend X program and to become a Super Legend is explained in the following:

> *"We did raise the count from 25 to 30 units and are actually thinking about raising it to 50. But we decided to put it at 30 just to make it a little bit more accessible."* (Interview n°26)

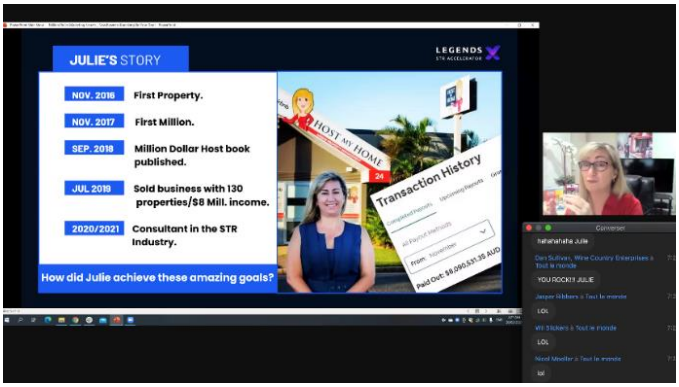
In one of the Zoom meetings, Julie George appeared; she joined Airbnb as the host of one unit in 2016 and has become a Super Legend iconic entrepreneur, recording a $1.43 million in bookings in a year and scaling up her business to 130 properties. Promoting her book, Million Dollar Host, she naturally encouraged hosts to scale up their business and offered to coach the ones embracing this entrepreneurship vibe. She focused on developing shared views around issues that hosts might face to ease their growth strategies. The expected outcome is to accelerate the business of hosts via programs such as the Super Legend program.

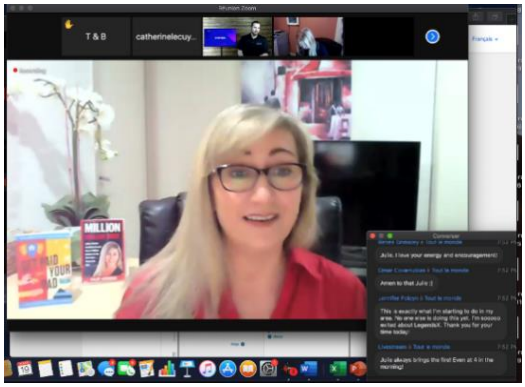
Her narratives covered:

(1) sensemaking: "starting a company without having to borrow any money, establishing an innovative business that could be scaled up and applied anywhere in the world";

(2) sense-giving, emphasizing a safe and easy business model: "developing a business that would change the lives of all involved (employees, contractors, property owners)"; and

(3) the autonomy: "creating a business that worked for me rather than being a slave to it. This means I could still develop other ideas and have a life."





Figures 72 and 73: Zoom meeting interactions with a Super Legend iconic host (Source: Inner Circle Group)

4.2.3.2. Selection strategy: Mass tourism destination

The urban SE phenomenon contributed to the selection strategy, underlining the role of tourism destinations in the expansion of Airbnb and, consequently, the hosts' categorization by travel destination data. First, NYC has a special meaning in the eyes of the Airbnb founders, since it was the origin of the expansion of the platform:

> "Go to New York to build your company. Don't stay in Mountain View. Go to New York." That was the best advice we ever got. When New York took off, we flew back every weekend. We went door to door with cameras taking pictures of all the apartments to put them online. And home by home, block by block, communities started growing. (Brian Chesky)[42]

NYC's tourist appeal is not a recent phenomenon; by 2019,[43] the tourist count had almost tripled since 1991 (see Figure 74).

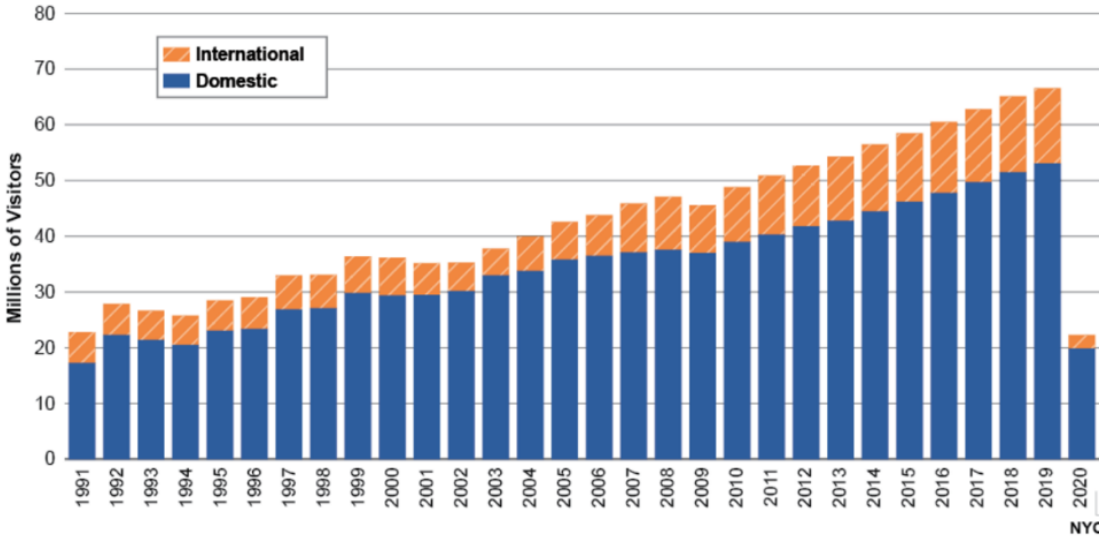


Figure 74: NYC annual visitors (Source: https://www.osc.state.ny.us/reports/osdc/tourism-industry-new-york-city#)

[42] https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/08/Airbnb-ceo-brian-chesky-on-building-a-company-and-strating-a-sharing-revolution/278635/
[43] https://www.osc.state.ny.us/reports/osdc/tourism-industry-new-york-city#

Second, in 2019, NYC celebrated its 10th consecutive year of tourism growth, boasting 66.6 million visitors. This accounted for nearly one quarter of the 265.5 million visitors to the state of New York. Leisure tourists represented 80% of tourism in NYC in 2019. Additionally, international tourism has seen a steady upward trend over the years: Between 2009 and 2019, the rate of international tourism growth surpassed that of domestic tourism. An Airbnb-sponsored study in 2015 highlighted that while the average nightly rate for a hotel stay in NYC was a staggering $295, Airbnb accommodations were more affordable, at $160 per day (HR&A Advisors, Inc., 2015). There were 767,000 Airbnb guests in NYC in 2015, marking an 85% surge from the previous year. Aligning with this data, 87% of these guests said they chose Airbnb due to budget considerations, which our data confirmed.

Table 25: Airbnb median nights booked per type of listings from June 2015 to June 2016 (source: https://www.Airbnbcitizen.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/OneHostOneHomeNewYorkCity-1.pdf)

Borough	**Entire Home**	**Private Room or Shared Space**	**Total**
Bronx	175	354	529
Brooklyn	7,401	8,533	15,934
Midtown Manhattan	3,325	1,351	4,676
Other Manhattan	9,964	6,622	16,586
Queens	1,178	2,008	3,186
Staten Island	71	121	192
Unknown	139	131	270
New York City Total	22,253	19,120	41,373

Our data Period 1 confirmed that hosts were satisfied with their rental business activity: “Almost every day there’s somebody here.” Despite the fact that they were not hospitality specialists, Airbnb hosts were rapidly motivated to expand their business through the acquisition of new units in the quest for profit.

> *“I also have a regular job during the day, which I wanted to quit and just do more Airbnb. But I guess I’m waiting to see how the regulation will turn out … It’s tough because I put my life savings into the investment in New Jersey so I’m hoping that, in the future, this will continue the same way.”* (Interview n°33)

Thus, the common Airbnb narrative highlights its role in the local economy and for small businesses. Tourism plays a pivotal role in NYC’s financial landscape, supporting more than 376,800 jobs, which accounts for nearly 10% of all private employment.

4.2.3.3. Selection strategy: Development of an ecosystem

Third-party businesses or complementors determine the technological or professional solutions required to manage issues and ease access to the top category of hosts. The role of Inner Circle groups, as liaisons with Airbnb, is to create network effects by attracting and selecting hosts with entrepreneurial ambitions. These groups also select start-ups providing solutions that contribute to the ecosystem.

For example, a host communicated about their last Inner Circle interaction, diffusing the positive outcome of the "sharing together" logic:

> "To continue evolving, continue growing personally, you need to surround yourself and enhance yourself with people that are going to challenge you and be able to share their information… The last meeting we had, I learned from a guy called XX, he doesn't manage over 17 properties himself, it's all about his techniques, all about his business model. He was willing to share all of his secrets…" (Inner Circle Group)

The selection strategy demonstrates the ecosystem relationship dynamics between the hosts community and start-ups, thereby co-creating solutions. Among the multitude of solutions, we took the example of NETGEAR aligned with the digital DNA of Airbnb, which cares about speed and quality of the Wi-Fi network. Not surprisingly, Airbnb partnered with NETGEAR, which provided a box to hosts to plug into the wall, running a speed test and sending the results to Airbnb. After few days of testing, the host property is identified with a speed rating and categorized with a reliability number displayed on the listing at that time.

Infiltrating the Inner Circle group allowed us to examine the phenomenon of the ecosystem dynamics, recognizing that, since April 2019, there has been a shift in the industry toward a strong technology-driven entrepreneurial ecosystem promoting autonomy and flexibility attributed to automation, for example, smart home tech. Mentors promote a new type of entrepreneur organizing their work from home and representing the new hosts' lifestyle, allowing a balance between personal and professional lives. At that time, it appeared very attractive. With no idea of a pandemic on the horizon, Airbnb trained its key contributors to operate and perform remotely. Only when the virus forced a global lockdown did working remotely become the new normal.



Figure 75: Technological innovation relationships among ecosystem (source: self-elaborated, inspired by Inner Circle)

Tech start-up firms and property management firms: Airbnb growth fueled the deployment of tech start-ups whose role was to provide innovations aimed at managing any problems, such as late check-in (i.e., smart lockers), nighttime noise pollution (i.e., noise detectors), quick-response messages, and a booking calendar (i.e., automated messaging and scheduling systems).

Those technological start-ups developed efficient solutions strengthening market actors. This was best explained by a start-up providing solutions to DPs on individuals' social media reputation:

> *"If users are active quicker, that is a financial benefit for the platform, because acquiring new users is really very expensive. [In] acquiring them, you want them to be as active as possible and active as quickly as possible. If we can increase the speed first and the level of trustworthiness, that increases the number of transactions. And that is more money. For the platform, there is a clear financial benefit."* (Interview n°27)

For example, smart locks provide comfort to the hosts, but noise remains a severe threat, because it potentially creates tensions with neighbors. Airbnb Inner Circle groups provided solutions to eliminate these risks by proposing a noise-monitoring device created by a start-up.

With increased competition among the hosts community, hosts saw a need to provide professional-level services to attract and retain guests. Concierge and management services offered an easy way for hosts to elevate their offerings, providing a mosaic of services around the activity of hosting and contributing to mutual success:

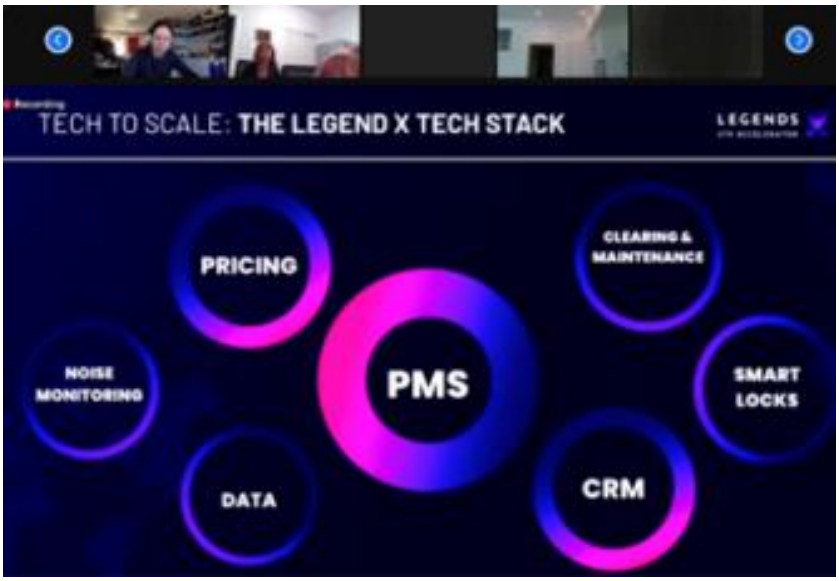


Figure 76: Technology driven for hosts (Source: Inner Circle group)

- Property management firms: These firms offer comprehensive management of rental properties, including listing the property on platforms, suggesting pricing strategies, communicating with guests, and overseeing maintenance and cleaning.

- Conciergerie services: These provide more specialized services, focusing on enhancing the guest experience. This might include arranging tours, transportation, or grocery deliveries, or providing local insights and recommendations.

- Cleaning services: These focus on cleanliness, especially adhering to the new protocols during COVID-19.

- Tech solutions: Numerous tech startups have emerged offering solutions to hosts, including dynamic pricing tools, unified inbox solutions, and security solutions such as noise sensors or smart locks.

- Insurance and legal services to respond to the unique challenges associated with STRs.

Representatives of property management companies interact with hosts during Inner Circle group meetings as well as sharing tips and resources on social media and forums. Regulatory issues in cities have pushed platforms and property management companies to create solutions such as the co-hosting model.

4.2.4. Effects on the cognitive legitimacy

Our data revealed the strong ability of Airbnb to attract contributors before the COVID-19 pandemic, thereby guaranteeing its growth. The relationship dynamics between the platform and its contributors evolved permanently depending on the market context and their objectives and interests involved in this complex ecosystem. We demonstrated that Airbnb led a powerful identity strategy, leveraging its core values based on marketing that framed the dual goals of traveling or hosting.

We argue that the effects of the identity, professionalization, and selection of relational strategies allowed Airbnb to strengthen its cognitive legitimacy, thereby enabling the platform to pursue its growth. The acquisition of HotelTonight demonstrated the professionalization of the platform in the sense that Airbnb hosts now had to compete directly with hoteliers.

On brand awareness: A Statista survey[44] conducted in the United States to determine the brand awareness of online travel companies revealed that 73% of respondents were aware of Airbnb, very close to Booking.com (78%) but far ahead of VRBO (16%), its direct US competitor. This illustrates the strong Airbnb brand empowerment with travelers using Airbnb as an online travel agency.

[44] Latana. (August 23, 2022). Brand awareness of online travel companies in the United States as of August 2021 [Graph]. In *Statista*. Retrieved January 27, 2024, from https://www.statista.com/statistics/1331144/online-travel-companies-brand-awareness-us/

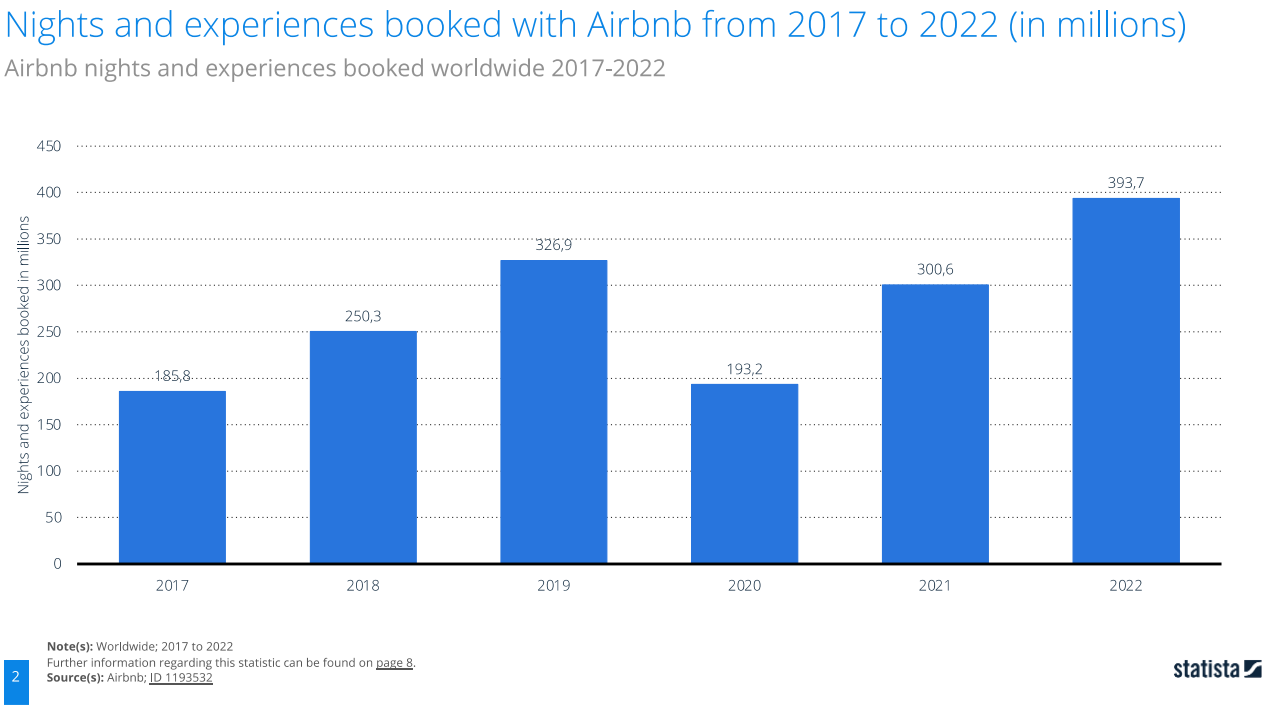


Figure 77: Nights and experiences booked with Airbnb from 2017 to 2022 (Source: Stastista)

On sales: Figure 77 presents the combined total of booked nights for stays and reserved seats for experiences, highlighting the 3.5-fold increase in nights and experiences bookings in just five years. Airbnb's performance regarding market share and sales increase revealed the effects of the three strategies; in other words, sales tripled from 2015 to 2018, allowing Airbnb to capture a 19% share of the US hospitality market in 2018.

On hosts listings: Finally, the cognitive legitimacy is strongly evident in the number of listings displayed on the Airbnb website: 48,864 Airbnb are listed in NYC, of which 51.8% represented entire homes or apartments, 45.8% private rooms, and 2.4% shared rooms, according to iProperty Management (2020).

> *"Every property I manage is listed on Airbnb and VRBO and other websites. Airbnb is number one platform so far."* (Interview n°39)

4.3. Relational strategies, Period 2 (March1–July 31, 2020)

> The year that's gone by has been one of the most defining years of my life. In eight weeks, we lost 80% of our revenue. It's like a car going 80 miles an hour, then slamming on the brakes. There's no way that ends well. (Brian Chesky)[45]

The World Health Organization announced that the COVID-19 global pandemic was "the most challenging crisis we have faced since the Second World War," producing an emergency on a global scale. Countries worldwide were obliged to take urgent decisions to fight the outbreak of the virus.[46]

The year 2020 marked the collapse of the global economy due to the pandemic.

Our respondents expressed NYC's unique context as the first US epicenter with a significant amount of emotion:

> *"The governor signed that order on the 20th of March. It came into effect on the 22nd. Business went from 85, 90% occupancy to zero."* (Interview n°7)

> *"I might want to get out of New York with everything that's been going on. But, yeah. It's been just so many different emotions, like we've been sort of just trapped in our apartment, our small apartments for the past three months."* (Interview n°7)

> *"But what I'm seeing dramatically is the total absence of people, New Yorkers; the vibrancy of New York is based on the people everywhere. It's almost, for the first weeks in March and almost all of April, there was nobody on the streets. Almost nobody. Just a few. And also, a lot of homeless people on the streets. So those are all big changes. Across the street, the big building is empty. It's all black. Nobody's there."* (Interview n°7)

In mid-February 2020, Airbnb announced the suspension of all bookings in Beijing until end of February.[47] Between early January and March 2020, 96% of Airbnb bookings dropped for Beijing, 71% in Shanghai, 46% in Seoul, and 41% in Rome.[48]

In March 2020, when uncertainty was at its highest level, the media argued that Airbnb could not go public with declining and continued losses: "So what does Airbnb do? I have no idea. But it's hard to find an option for the firm that looks good at this point."

---

[45] https://mastersofscale.com/we-died-and-were-reborn-brian-chesky/
[46] World Health Organization, 2020
[47] https://www.cityam.com/airbnb-swings-to-a-loss-ahead-of-2020-market-debut/
[48] https://www.axios.com/2020/03/13/coronavirus-hits-airbnb-already-facing-widening-losses

In March 2020, Airbnb was one of the DPs most affected by the pandemic, especially in virus epicenters, where a crash in bookings took place (Curry, 2022). Brian Chesky declared that in eight weeks, the platform lost 80% of its sales revenue.[49] According to Bloomberg, by the middle of March, bookings in NYC declined by more than 50% compared to the week of January.

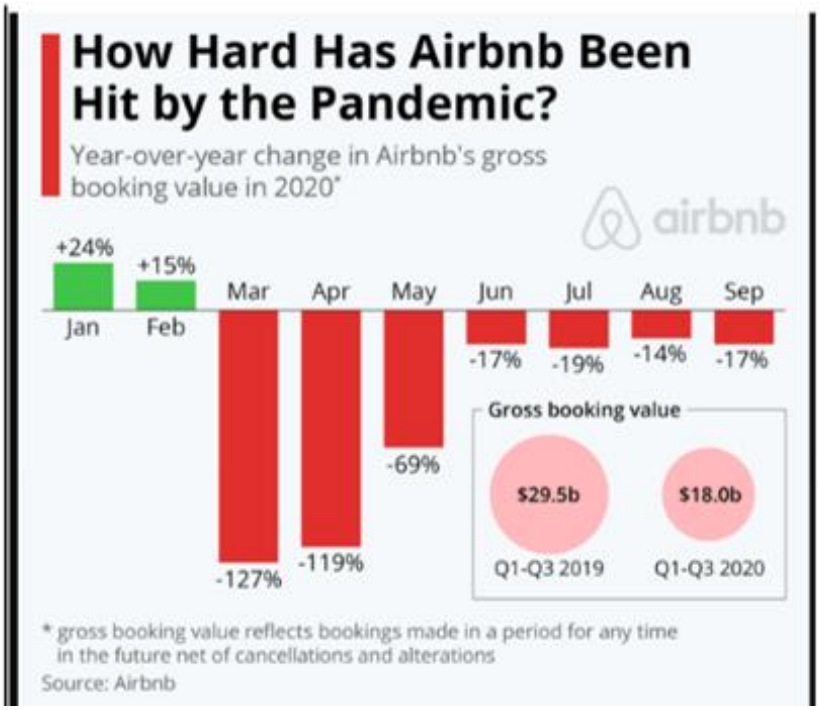


Figure 78: How hard has Airbnb been hit by the pandemic? (Source: Statista)[50]

In May 2020, in addition to anxiety caused by COVID-19, the interviewees in this study described violence in NYC related to mass protests following George Floyd's death at the hands of police in Minneapolis.

> *"And then all the chaos with the protests, and every day there's helicopters flying around."* (Interview n°37)

> *"It's been the fourth day now that there have been protests, and with each one, it seems they're getting a little bit more violent, a little bit more … damage to property. Then, last night was the first time we had a curfew. So yeah, it seems to be escalating."* (Interview n°33)

[49] https://mastersofscale.com/we-died-and-were-reborn-brian-chesky/
[50] https://www.statista.com/chart/23717/monthly-gross-bookings-on-Airbnb/

The pandemic created a sudden worldwide collapse of short-term reservations on the Airbnb platform:

> *"I think my last guest was at the end of January, and then we began to hear in February about COVID-19. People were not coming to me anymore, and so, by March, I decided that I'm not going to accept anybody."* (Interview n°34)

This crisis situation affected not only Airbnb but also the NYC hospitality industry as a whole:

> *"In NYC, hotels were not obliged to close, but they decided to do so because of the 1 to 2% occupancy rate."* (Interview n°1B)

> *"They announced yesterday: We as an organization are not going to open until August 1."* (Interview n°14)

4.3.1. Identity Strategy

Beginning in March 2020, Airbnb's identity strategy was exposed to an interplay between opposite forces: resource loss (i.e., employees laid off and the policy of reimbursement affeccting hosts) and resource gain (i.e., guests' satisfaction and loyalty and investors' funding). Meanwhile, the identity strategy sought to strengthen the solidarity and spirit of the Airbnb community (e.g., hosts opening homes to frontline workers and guests supporting hosts).

4.3.1.1. Identity strategy: Resource loss with employees

Airbnb's community-centered mission regarding a sense of belonging and its positive reputation as "the best place to work" was underscored in the interviews.

> *"Airbnb has good people. In fact, Airbnb, I believe, is one of the top places to go if you're a software engineer."* (Interview n°29)

Airbnb's founders made the difficult decision to lay off 25% of their employees, justifying their decision in the following:

> "First of all, just to lay the context, the press articles, the headlines of Airbnb last April involved: Will Airbnb exist? Can Brian Chesky save Airbnb? These were the headlines

> (…). It was clear at that moment that we couldn't afford to continue to keep everyone. And to that began a process." (Brian Chesky)[51]

Travel experts characterized the context differently, claiming that COVID-19 offered the company a way to avoid further investor pressure:

> *"COVID-19 has given the company a reason to reduce its workforce, although growth was already weak before the pandemic."* (Interview n°5)

At a time when hosts needed Airbnb assistance, they were affected by the platform's decision to reduce customer service headcount, justified by the travel ban, as illustrated in this tweet:

> "I have received the worst customer service as a host. There has been no resolution offered by your company after my message thread on Airbnb was deleted, and I have been disconnected after multiple attempts of waiting 50+ minutes to be connected to a customer service rep." (cassidy@italgeneral, June 24, 2020)

Our data revealed the challenges encountered by the platform under high levels of uncertainty and pressure during the pandemic, as seen in this statement made by the Airbnb CEO:

> "We want to reassure you that despite reductions to our workforce, we are fully staffed to support you. ... There have been some big changes to our teams, and there could be delays while we adjust."[52]

However, in those challenging moments, Airbnb took the time to build a strong public relations (PR) campaign, announcing a "generous severance" package to its laid-off staff in an internal memo to employees from Brian Chesky:

> "I actually began working on that letter as we began planning for the layoff because I wanted to work backwards from what I had to explain to the employees." (Brian Chesky)[53]

[51] https://mastersofscale.com/we-died-and-were-reborn-brian-chesky/
[52] https://www.airbnb.com/resources/hosting-homes/a/may-13-its-time-to-start-looking-ahead-192
[53] https://mastersofscale.com/we-died-and-were-reborn-brian-chesky/

Our data found that the letter to employees announcing the layoffs was fruitful and strengthened the company's Airbnb. The management of employee layoffs was recognized as very generous and appropriate, thereby reducing stress and anxiety as employee resources were being lost. The platform created an outplacement service to relocate employees at other companies, established a talent directory on LinkedIn, allowed employees to take home their Apple computers, and provided one year of health insurance coverage. The PR campaign after COVID-19 portrayed this announcement with emotions:

> "It was absolutely the hardest thing I ever did, certainly professionally. I delivered it over a video camera. I was basically in tears delivering it." (Brian Chesky)[54]

The platform announced these moves publicly and provided updates on Twitter. For example, it claimed the following in a satisfied tone:

> "Wow. 250,000 people have visited our Airbnb departing employee directory. Thank you to everyone for considering our former teammates." (Brian Chesky, @bchesky, May 11)

Airbnb served as a role model for how to manage employee layoffs. In fact, Uber followed suit by launching a talent directory for laid-off Uber employees.

> "Yesterday @Uber lost many talented, capable, high potential people who would be an asset to any company. With a hat-tip to @bchesky and @airbnb, we've launched an Uber Talent Directory. If you're hiring, please take a look: uber.com/talent." (Dara Khosrowshahi, @dkhos, May 20, 2020)

Chapter 5 highlights the positive reaction of incumbent firms on the ways in which Airbnb managed the layoff of its employees.

[54] https://mastersofscale.com/we-died-and-were-reborn-brian-chesky/

4.3.1.2. Identity strategy:Resource loss with hosts and third parties

In March 2020, Airbnb hosts were directly affected by COVID-19, due to a rise in guest cancellations and a decrease in new bookings. Airbnb cancellation's policy allowed guests to receive full refunds on their bookings. However, hosts faced empty calendars and uncertainty regarding their mortgage payments, bills, and property taxes. Many hosts felt betrayed as they found themselves in an "extremely vulnerable position,"[55] prompting them to initiate a petition for a class-action lawsuit against Airbnb and attempting to increase their operational and technological autonomy:

> Airbnb simply doesn't understand or value hosts and what we bring to them. We're now trying to build our own booking site and strategically place it in our videos and house manual, to capture repeat bookings and gather referrals. I am looking at 3rd party apps to integrate and manage myself the information processing and calendar syncing. (Host, online forum)

NYC hosts had invested in properties in New Jersey and other states, considering Airbnb to be a source of significant income and referring to it as "magical money." They did not expect to be sacrificed in March 2020. As the travel industry froze and refunded $1.5 billion in bookings to guests by mid-March, hosts holding more than 24 properties worried that they were "about to lose everything." A few converted their units into long-term rentals and dropped their Airbnb listings, saying that they "don't want to bargain with the devil anymore."[56]

Through Zoom meetings, question-and-answer sessions were set up between the Airbnb CEO and hosts:

> "I'm Sarah from Salt Lake City in Utah. I wonder, why does it feel like Airbnb policies are geared so much toward the guests and not so much supporting the hosts? … I want to know that our guests and our hosts are equally important and I don't want you to ever feel like we're favoring the guests over the hosts." (Airbnb.com)

Some hosts with tenant profiles found that they were about to go through eviction proceedings, because they were "struggling to make ends meet."[57]

---

[55] https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/19/coronavirus-airbnb-hosts-angry-at-refunds.html
[56] https://www.proquest.com/docview/2395275266/fulltext/C258A914919A4758PQ/14?accountid=130809
[57] https://www.abc57.com/news/airbnb-hosts-seek-government-assistance-with-loss-of-guests

> *"The hosts don't have any other place to go. Airbnb is like Amazon. It is a mere monopoly."* (Interview n°2)

Third parties such as property managers, conciergeries, and cleaning and maintenance contractors were also affected, as their activity for Airbnb represented their primary source of income.

4.3.1.3. Identity strategy: Resource gain with guests

Airbnb announced changes to its circumstances policy to better satisfy guests whose travel plans were affected by COVID-19 and international travel bans. "Today, we are announcing changes to our extenuating circumstances policy to better serve our community," Airbnb said. "The extenuating circumstances policy allows guests to cancel eligible reservations without charge."[58]

Airbnb took the side of guests regarding the cancellations of bookings made before March 14, asking hosts to issue refunds regardless of the penalty window. This decision ensured guests' satisfaction and loyalty. "Thank you for doing the right thing," an Airbnb guest posted on Twitter.[59] Guests typically received refunds for discretionary vacation funds. However, these refunds created a wave of protests from the host community, who felt betrayed and abandoned by the platform in difficult times. Many Airbnb hosts relied on their earnings to cover essential expenses such as mortgage or rent. The attachment the platform had developed to the hosts through a sense of connection to Airbnb's mission (i.e., the "sense of belonging") and through interpersonal relationships with other hosts and guests lost its meaning. Many hosts publicly declared that Airbnb failed to keep its community promise because they were not associated with the decision processes. The platform also declared that home-sharing could be allowed only for emergency workers:

> *"When, I first learned this, I was quite nervous because I pay my mortgage with the revenue I generate through Airbnb."* (Interview n°37)

> "They changed a policy for us without our permission. These were contracts with our guests. Airbnb had no right to change them. I've lost $4,000 so far. We have bills to pay too! 100% of the cost shouldn't be on the hosts!" (Melanie, @novocainemel on Twitter)

[58] https://www.ibtimes.com/airbnb-updating-extenuating-circumstances-policy-better-serve-guests-affected-covid-2939765
[59] https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnkoetsier/2020/03/15/airbnb-coronavirus-cancellations-guests-cancel-for-free-hosts-pay-the-costs/

4.3.1.4. Identity strategy: Resource gain with investors

In April 2020, the agility of Airbnb's business model was recognized as it managed the worst of the COVID-19 crisis by raising an additional $2 billion, led by Silver Lake and Sixth Street Partners, followed by more than 115 funds from equity firms and major institutional investors. Sixth Street Partners and Silver Lake declared, "We made this investment because we believe in Airbnb's leadership, beginning with Brian, and look forward to partnering with them in our role as a strategic investor."[60]

Silver Lake is the global leader in technology investing, with more than $43 billion in combined assets under management. Silver Lake's portfolio of investments collectively generates more than $230 billion of revenue annually, and the company employs 370,000 people globally. Sixth Street Partners is a global multi-asset class investment business with more than $34 billion in assets under management as of December 31, 2019. Founded in 2009, Sixth Street has more than 275 team members, including 140-plus investment professionals.

Investors such as Sixth Street Partners played a central role in promoting Airbnb as leveraging its global community built around trust:

> Airbnb created an enormous new category, underpinned by the leading brand and technology platform, as well as a community founded on trust. ... We're pleased to partner with this unique company as they navigate through this period focused on hosts, guests, employees, communities, and shareholders.[61]

4.3.1.5. Identity strategy: Contested understanding of belonging and solidarity

To mitigate this unprecedented conflict with its host community, Airbnb launched an identity strategy, recalling through press releases and corporate communications the spirit of belonging and solidarity that historically represented a central value of the company. In a "host update" with CEO Brian Chesky on May 13, 2020, he stated,

> "My title isn't just CEO but also head of community, and I want to commit to you that we are going to get through this together. We are resilient." (Brian Chesky)

[60] https://www.proquest.com/docview/2387072936/fulltext/142CC5DDC2644F45PQ/6?accountid=130809)
[61] https://sixthstreetgrowth.com/silver-lake-sixth-street-partners-invest-1-billion-in-Airbnb/



Figure 79: CNBC cascading the Airbnb corporate communication[62]

Airbnb paused its marketing campaign, the company's executives renounced half of their salaries for six months, and the company stopped any non-essential hiring. Then, using money donated by its employees, founders and investors, Airbnb opened an additional $16.8 million fund dedicated to Superhosts and Airbnb Experiences Hosts. However, there is scarce evidence that this money reached its destination, reinforcing the hypothesis that it mainly represented a PR campaign.

The platform encouraged hosts to look for external support and financial help. Guided by Airbnb, 105,000 hosts called or emailed members of Congress, asking for relief measures granted by the approval of new legislation to make hosts eligible for operating costs coverage, small business loans, unemployment assistance, tax rebates, and forbearance of certain mortgage loan payments. In addition, Airbnb asked guests to support the hosts community by sending kindness cards and donations, but the request backfired:

> "Why would I donate to my host? I can't even afford one house," wrote one Twitter user.

Airbnb declared it would financially support the affected hosts by reimbursing 25% of the amount they would have received for cancellations made between March 14 and May 31, 2020. However, many hosts complained on social and mass media that the $250 million relief fund announced by the platform in March 2020 had limited or no effect on their situation:

[62] https://www.cnbc.com/video/2020/03/30/Airbnb-to-pay-hosts-250m-due-to-coronavirus-outbreak.html

> "There was no help for Superhosts after stringing me along for two months. I am about to lose everything." (Host, online forum, June 2020)

> *"Airbnb said that they are going to help us with $5,000 or $6,000, but they did not give us anything."* (Interview n°36)

The measures announced to help hosts did not reduce the hosts' criticism of the company's lack of fiscal and moral preparedness in case of emergency. On mass media and social media, hosts contested Airbnb's strategic choices, harming the platform's ethical reputation as never before.

Open Homes program: During this period, Airbnb also launched new identity strategies, emphasizing its citizenship role. To maintain public trust and enhance virtue signaling, Airbnb announced a global initiative to house 100,000 healthcare professionals, pandemic relief workers, and first responders, by connecting them with willing hosts and waiving all fees for their stays. In practice, this program created some controversy, especially in NYC, where STR laws require the host to be present in the housing unit during the guest's stay. NYC hosts who were interviewed at the time were emotional, sharing their fear and anxiety about opening their homes to the virus. This Brooklyn host stated the following:

> *"I would have joined the effort to fight the coronavirus, but my brother lives with me and he doesn't want to be contaminated. He is pretty COVID-19-afraid."* (Interview n°35)

Although Airbnb announced that "hosts in Paris, New York City, and London each offer over 2,000 places for those doing lifesaving work," it was not clear how much this project was concreted.

On LinkedIn, we found that an Open Homes program team member was concerned by the layoff, as suggested by this post:

> "Worked on Airbnb's Open Homes program, which connects people with a free place to stay in times of need (airbnb.com/openhomes). Before Airbnb, I've been at Facebook (building social good products like Safety Check and Fundraisers) and at the American Red Cross."[63]

[63] https://www.airbnb.com/d/talent?function=&location=NYC&uuid=&relocation=&remote=&page=1&employmentType=f

Officials pointed the false information communicated by Airbnb about the role it played in supplying homes and claimed that the profit logic prevailed, as illustrated by a representative of the Manhattan Borough Office:

> *"They said they are making homes available. Some of them were for free, [but] tweets from Brian Chesky revealed that only 10% of those were for free and the rest were a profit for the hosts."* (Interview n°16)

Airbnb's strategy differed from that of hotels, which organized a collective action to supply needed accommodations. NYC spent $250 million to provide hotel accommodations for at-risk residents, homeless people, and healthcare workers. A representative of the New York City Hotel Association claimed,

> *"From March to May, we would hear from lots of doctors and nurses who were constantly calling us to guide them to a hotel room. (…) Either medical worker who were coming to New York from elsewhere in the country to volunteer or healthcare workers who work in NYC hospitals but who didn't feel safe going home because they were so afraid of infecting their family. It took a while for the city to set up this."* (Interview n°18)

Contribution to fight against COVID-19: The CEO of Airbnb justified the choice to fully refund guests under its extenuating circumstances policy to respond to global travel restrictions and lockdowns implemented by governments worldwide. Moreover, Airbnb claimed that it prioritized health and safety: "I believe we did the right thing in prioritizing health and safety."[64]

[64] https://news.airbnb.com/a-letter-to-hosts/

Airbnb supported the fight against COVID-19 by facilitating accommodations for frontline workers and by implementing policies to prevent the spread of the virus that were presented in the section on professionalization. The promotion of hosts as good community citizens was driven by the supply of free or reduced-priced accommodations to healthcare professionals, frontline workers, and emergency responders. This initiative aimed to provide a secure location for frontline workers battling the COVID-19 to safely isolate from their families.

> "Together, we are helping to house over 100,000 healthcare providers, relief workers, and first responders by providing housing to them for free or with a subsidy. Over 40,000 of you have already raised your hands to help."[65]

4.3.2. Professionalization Strategy

The relational strategy between Airbnb and its contributors was focused on professionalization during the COVID-19 crisis. Airbnb promoted new hosting practices (e.g., hygiene and cleanliness protocols and long-duration stays) and effectively attracted the resources needed from investors.

Data collected from the Inner Circle hosts groups provided deep knowledge of hosts' concerns during this period, allowing the platform to take an empathetic posture and to orient its messages at shifting the mindset of hosts.

> "We've heard that almost half of you are not comfortable hosting right now because of concerns on health and safety. Cleaning guidance and protocols are one of the biggest requests that you have, and it's come up in literally all of our sessions that we've done with you."[66]

4.3.2.1. Professionalization strategy: Enhanced Clean Program

In response to COVID-19, Airbnb launched the enhanced Clean Program consisting of cleaning and sanitization guidelines aiming at ensuing cleanliness and safety standards across all Airbnb listings worldwide to protect both hosts and guests. It included a detailed cleaning checklist that allowed hosts to follow instructions on how to clean, sanitize, and prepare their spaces between guest stays to reduce

[65] https://news.airbnb.com/a-letter-to-hosts/
[66] https://www.airbnb.com/resources/hosting-homes/a/may-13-its-time-to-start-looking-ahead-192

virus spread. In its communications, Airbnb highlighted that hosts were required to complete an online tutorial to learn about the new cleaning guidelines. After completing the training, hosts could have a special "Enhanced Clean" badge added to their listings. However, our respondents stated that those measures were not taken seriously by the hosts. For example, during an Inner Circle Zoom meeting, Airbnb recommended a 24-hour waiting period between bookings to reduce the risk of airborne particles. However, hosts considered the guideline to be unrealistic in practice.

> "To get the label certified cleaning protocol, it takes you 10 mn using CTRL F." (Inner Circle post)

Quality labels and standards: Airbnb conducted awareness campaigns to encourage the community to follow public health guidelines, such as social distancing and handwashing. The company collaborated closely with local, regional, and national authorities to support efforts to combat the spread of the virus, ensuring that its initiatives aligned with public health policies and provided useful information to its users.

> "We're going to anchor everything we do in official sources and health authorities. So to start, we publish resources on Airbnb.com/COVID-19. This includes sanitation protocols and a checklist based on CDC standards. By following scientific advice and precautions, our homes can be a force for good."[67]

4.3.2.2. Professionalization strategy: Normative control and new market trends

As NYC was an epicenter of COVID-19, it experienced a significant decline in population as residents migrated to less dense areas in nearby counties or states. This movement was driven by a desire for more spacious living conditions and remote work from home, as well as concerns over population density and virus spread.

During the lockdown, Airbnb proposed workshops to acknowledge the shock and reinforced confidence in its business model through Q&A sessions, surveys, and documentation.

[67] https://www.airbnb.com/resources/hosting-homes-172

> *"All these hosts that are failing right now; they're not 100% sure how to make the business with the marketing and with the management side. So, if they got opportunities to take over these properties, run them lean until COVID-19 is out of the way and travel starts coming back. There are a lot of opportunities."* (Interview n°26)

Inner Circle groups allowed hosts to understand new guest expectations and behaviors and adjust their listings to include new check-in processes and long-duration stays. They also began preparing for summer 2020 with new travelers' needs such as vacation accommodation within driving distance of their homes. Townhouses or apartments were replaced by private spaces and entire homes.

> *"Realizing that many of you experience the same issues and challenges, I've decided to bring you all together to this open Zoom meeting. How can we start making money in this COVID-19 crisis? What happens if there is no future in this industry?"* (Interview n°26)

The trends were shared within the community and support provided to "change the mindset" (e.g., shift from short stay to long stay, avoid physical check-in).

> *"This is what we're teaching right now in-depth inside of our accelerator program is how to switch the mindset from short-term rentals and go further into longer-term stays."* (Interview n°26B)

> *"So, in my approach with my interaction with the guests, it's really only to be there when needed. So, it's really possible for them to arrive and do what they want to do without really ever even seeing me."* (Interview n°38)

> *"Hey, what's up? This is Jasper here. I am going to be one of your coaches in the Inner Circle. I'm very excited to have you in the Inner Circle. I think, together, we are going to get through this crisis. We're going to do everything we can to help you survive and thrive through the crisis and be ready to jump on opportunities that certainly will come along. Every crisis has opportunities, right? So right now, the most important thing for us is to stay in business. So, the question is, 'How do we survive this crisis?"* (Interview n°26B)

Leadership and mentoring practices were deployed to enhance community cohesion and push future developments through webinars.

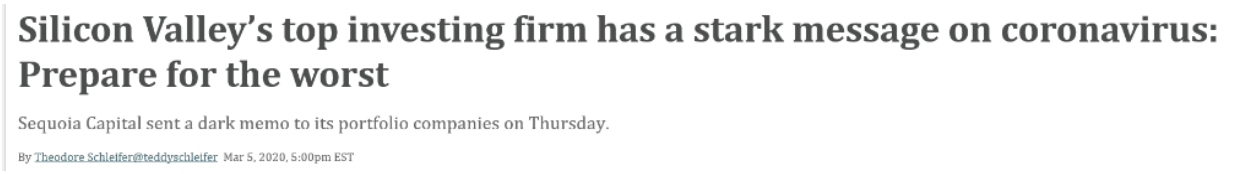
> "The stress or the uncertainty of things like COVID just happen to the point where you go, 'Wow. What am I doing this for? What happens if there is no future in this industry? What am I going to do differently?' So, I guess for a few months, it was very shaky. In the last probably three to four weeks, I feel like everybody has kind of put that aside and is looking to the future, and it is an opportunity to reassess your business, look at your structure, look at your systems, see this as a way to improve even if you're not getting a lot of bookings and a lot of activity now happening day-to-day." (Inner Circle group)

Meanwhile, online experiences were still on the scene (e.g., "drawing with a New York artist,"[68] which was very famous, using Zoom for creative connections among team members).

4.3.2.3. Professionalization strategy: Capital funding

> "This is the end?"[69] (iconic music used in the film Apocalypse Now)

Black perspective: In March 2020, the Sequoia Capital investment firm sent a memo to its portfolio investors sharing its perspectives on the pandemic in a dark tone, recalling the 2008 financial crisis. Sequoia Capital emphasized the critical importance of not underestimating the risks posed by the current crisis and advised them to assess their cash reserves and prepare for a challenging fundraising context, potential decreases in sales, reductions in staff numbers, and cutting down on expenditures.[70] This is exactly what Airbnb did.



Silicon Valley's top investing firm has a stark message on coronavirus: Prepare for the worst

Sequoia Capital sent a dark memo to its portfolio companies on Thursday.

By Theodore Schleifer@teddyschleifer Mar 5, 2020, 5:00pm EST

Figure 80: Sequoia Capital Black Swan Dark memo: "Prepare for the worst" (Source: https://www.vox.com/recode/2020/3/5/21166839/sequoia-capital-coronavirus-silicon-valley)

[68] https://www.airbnb.com/experiences/1655361
[69] https://youtu.be/VScSEXRwUqQ?si=REpuO3DVCal8dJkt
[70] https://medium.com/sequoia-capital/airbnb-ipo-embracing-the-adventure-4565bd825cc4

Airbnb burned in 2020? Airbnb faced an 80% revenue decline as global travel and bookings plummeted at the outset of the pandemic. For the first time, Airbnb had been weakened on the investor front by its drop in market capitalization from $31 billion to $18 billion, a loss of 42%; on the business front with the ban on operations in certain states due to lockdown; on the host front through revolts; and on unprofitable revenues in 2019 due to major investments (e.g., the HotelTonight acquisition).

Finally, the refunds issued for all guest reservations under the extenuating circumstances policy allowing "guests to cancel reservations with no charge or penalty" imperiled the survival of the platform in March 2020.

The platform's trajectory could have been significantly altered, potentially jeopardizing its survival and future growth, if it failed to secure the $2 billion investment from investors during the pandemic. That was a pivotal moment for Airbnb. We posit that it is a strong indicator of the maintenance of the platform's cognitive legitimacy, alleviating financial pressure for the implementation of its recovery plan (i.e., relief plan and infrastructure developments for the changing market dynamics).

Following Sequoia's issuance of the Black Swan memo on March 5, Airbnb's board convened almost weekly from early March to May to navigate the evolving situation. Our secondary data revealed that investors received verbal commitments from Airbnb to cut $800 million in expenses and freeze hiring in late March.

$2 billion in capital injected: With 2019 revenues estimated at $4.8 billion, Airbnb succeeded in leading funding rounds for $2 billion during the worst period of 2020 while facing unprecedented situations and when uncertainty was at the highest in all domains, with no responses yet from public health officials and everyone on the planet locked down in their homes.

Indeed, in terms of investor attractiveness, in this period of historically high uncertainty, investors operated differently for the first time with two rounds of funding—the first $1 billion in private equity and the second $1 billion in debt—while setting their conditions. To share the risk, investors joined forces to form a 250-member investment pool, thus securing the $1 billion loan. In addition, for the first time, the investors demanded warrants (e.g., conversion into shares) and required repayment with interest superior at 10%,[71] higher than the inflation rate of 1.2%.[72] Airbnb's new investors got free warrants based on the company valuation of $18 billion.

---

[71] Eaglesham, J., & Grind, K. (2020, Apr 08). Airbnb paying more than 10% interest on $1 billion financing announced monday; airbnb's new investors get free warrants based on company valuation of $18 billion. *Wall Street Journal (Online)* Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/airbnb-paying-more-than-10-interest-on-1-billion/docview/2387086340/se-2

[72] : https://www.statista.com/statistics/191077/inflation-rate-in-the-usa-since-1990/

In a joint statement, Silver Lake and Sixth Street said:

> "While the current environment is clearly a difficult one for the hospitality industry, the desire to travel and have authentic experiences is fundamental and enduring. Airbnb's diverse, global, and resilient business model is particularly suited to prosper as the world inevitably recovers."
>
> "The company's achievements speak for themselves and we are excited by the opportunities on the horizon as they continue to grow their geographic footprint, accommodations, and experiences."[73]

Contrary to what the Sequoia Capital memo indicated, the technology sector experienced major growth during the pandemic and benefited from it (Figure 81). The rapid rebound of start-up activity contrasted with that for non-tech sectors and small businesses.

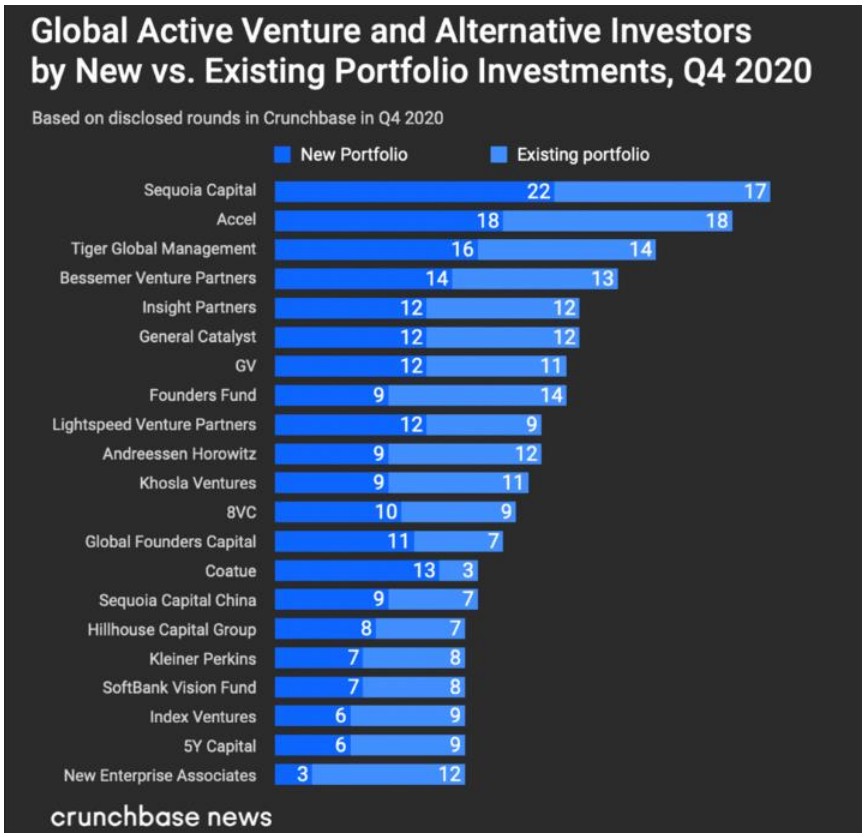


Figure 81: Global Active Venture and Alternative Investors (Source: https://news.crunchbase.com/venture/global-2020-funding-and-exit)

[73] Eaglesham, J., & Grind, K. (2020, Apr 08). Airbnb paying more than 10% interest on $1 billion financing announced monday; airbnb's new investors get free warrants based on company valuation of $18 billion. *Wall Street Journal (Online)* Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/airbnb-paying-more-than-10-interest-on-1-billion/docview/2387086340/se-2

4.3.3. Selection strategy

After COVID-19 was classified as a global pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11, the management of the crisis by Airbnb in the following weeks revealed its selection strategy and changed the status quo of the triadic relationship. We argue that the COVID-19 cancellation policy induced the asymmetric burden between guests and hosts, emphasizing the unbalanced consideration of hosts putting guests' satisfaction first versus the supply role of hosts. For example, on blogs, hosts said that Airbnb treated them as "hotel chains,"[74] and social media reported hosts' situations:

> "No help for Superhosts after stringing me along for 2 months. About to lose everything." @SealJodie, June 15, 2020

4.3.3.1. Selection strategy: Managing the community: Guests first, hosts sacrificed

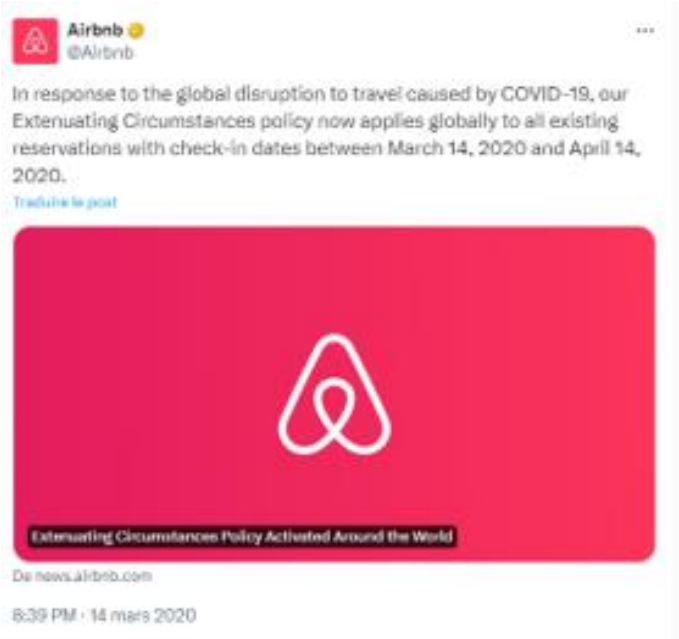


Figure 82: Airbnb refund policy: origin of an endogenous crisis

[74] https://community.withairbnb.com/t5/Community-Cafe/The-end-of-Airbnb-as-we-know-it/m-p/1285557

On March 14, Airbnb announced on Twitter and in its newsroom the cancellation policy—the extenuating circumstances policy—allowing guests to receive a full refund of their bookings from March 14 to April 14 with no penalty. What happened to the hosts when the guests were refunded? On March 16, the media reported the financial effects on hosts. According to our data, the guests' and hosts' community sense of belonging collapsed. Not only were hosts not consulted during the cancellation policy decision process even though they had contracts with guests, but they had to wait until March 30 to receive information from the CEO of Airbnb: "I'm sorry that we communicated this decision to guests without consulting you, like partners should," the statement said.[75]

The fact that the refund policy was concentrated exclusively on guests evoked the need to secure customers, as expressed by one respondent: "It was doubly the smartest move they ever made to reimburse the guests. In the service industry, shopper loyalty is everything." (Interview n°2)

Moreover, VRBO did not apply the same policy, promoting a more balanced approach by refunding guests but also hosts and, thus, we argue that hosts were sacrificed by Airbnb. On March 22, 2020, an angry host's post went viral on Twitter. The video tweet titled "Airbnb landlords are losing their minds because people canceled their trips due to the global pandemic," hit 5.6 million views:

> "This message is for Brian Chesky of Airbnb."
>
> "We, hosts, we are collectively outraged. We thought you cared until you stabbed us in the back and left us to die. You give us the illusion of stability (…). Maybe you're good at big numbers, engineering the perfect algorithm, designing the perfect culture, building systems and gravity-defying scale. … You will not have an empire without us. It's our homes on your platform. It's our face on millions of listings. It's our soul that brings the magic. It's our thoughtful touches they love. It's our coffee they drink each morning. You may have started this company, but we helped you build it. You are nothing without us. We are not numbers. We are not data. We are people …"

Some hosts joined collective actions. On the one hand, they addressed an open published letter arguing that the "unilateral decision to give refunds to all guests after April 1st will be absolutely devastating to hosts."[76] On the other hand, they considered filing a class-action lawsuit against Airbnb. Hosts argued that they were bearing the costs of COVID-19 cancellations that Airbnb allowed.

To repair the relationship, Airbnb announced that it would provide financial support for hosts by establishing a $250 million fund to help hosts compensate for up to 25% of their lost income. An

[75] https://news.airbnb.com/a-letter-to-hosts/
[76] https://hostgpo.com/blog/the_business_side/open-letter-to-airbnb-from-hosts-about-the-coronavirus-cancellation-refund-policy/

additional $10 million was designated for Superhosts. Later, Brian Chesky reshaped the narrative to highlight the hosts' community as the essence of the platform:

> "We took $250 million from our balance sheet and gave it to hosts to help them make it through. This was at a time when we were having trouble raising equity. We ended up going with debt and gave more than 10% of that cash to hosts. That may have seemed crazy until you ask yourself, 'Why do we exist in the first place?' Our hosts are our lifeblood. If they aren't solvent, we are not solvent."[77]

For NYC hosts, an unexpected agreement was reached with the city of New York requiring the platform to provide hosts' listing information on a quarterly basis. Chapter 5 examines the institutional work mechanisms put in place at a time when the recovery of NYC's tourism economy was expected.

4.3.3.2. Selection strategy: Regulating internal pressure

Employees' stock option expiration: It is rare that employees feel comfortable releasing organizational issues to the press. Choosing to communicate about concerns or problems and conveying information about issues to the media demonstrate the context of Airbnb employees' concerns about the future IPO in March 2020.

Airbnb employees' broad stock option plans, restricted stock units, was the most common method to motivate employees. However, they released their concerns about the expiration of their stock option plan by December 2020.[78] Was the top management of Airbnb approachable and responsive at that time? Was the Airbnb culture supportive in the COVID-19 context? We argue that fear and uncertainty about the consequences of the pandemic affected Airbnb employees.

Hosts: Our data revealed that hosts' dissatisfaction came from the extenuating circumstances policy imposed on the hosts, freshly designed by Airbnb in March 2020. Airbnb created new cancellation norms deployed for unexpected events without consulting the hosts. This meant that all prior cancellation policies, ranging from flexible to strict, were canceled and replaced by these new terms in favor of the guests.

---

[77] https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-21st-century-corporation-a-conversation-with-brian-chesky-of-airbnb

[78] https://www.theinformation.com/articles/as-airbnb-ponders-timing-of-listing-stock-grants-impose-deadline

4.3.3.3. Selection strategy: Hosting certifications

The Responsible Hosting certification was launched in June 2020, comprising a set of rules that outlined the responsibilities of Airbnb hosts. To obtain the Airbnb verified quality label, selected Superhosts were required to pass a thorough online inspection:

> "Thanks again for taking the time to speak with me today, and for taking me on a virtual tour of your space. Our team will continue to refine the virtual home inspection process based on your feedback. Later this year, we'll reconnect with you to either (a) confirm your acceptance into the verification program or (b) let you know if there are any additional actions required on your behalf to become verified." (Email sent to a Superhost)[79]

> *"They have a new category they want to offer to Superhosts, called Airbnb Verified. If I get it, they'll put some symbol by my picture on the site."* (Interview n°36)

In parallel to this selection strategy, Airbnb also took strong initiatives to orchestrate peer-to-peer professionalization within its host community. Airbnb now relies on selected regional community leaders to meet hosts' needs in terms of information and training within local community centers and host clubs. For instance, Airbnb launched new online community forums to assist hosts in securing their business by accessing investment funds, using data mining and processing, or tracking and implementing best practices shared by successful Superhosts. In this process, the platform collaborates with several complementor organizations (e.g., Learn Airbnb, BNB Profit Academy, the Short-Term Rental Profit Academy) that offer courses on how to develop a successful property rental business. By training and supporting hosts in their renting activities and business expansion, Airbnb reinforced its capacity to take advantage of the weak position of traditional hotels during the pandemic, while incentivizing them to move toward higher resource dependency and a locked-in position.

[79] Email sent to a superhost July 24 2020

4.3.3.4. Selection strategy: Seizing new business opportunities

Co-hosting: The evolution of the Airbnb hosts' community led to the coexistence of three business models—own, co-host, or re-rent—and to a growing number of entrepreneurial ventures that provide products and services that facilitate guest and property management. During the pandemic, the model of co-hosting was promoted as the most robust and successful solution, allowing professional property managers to partner with passive owners and increase the number of Airbnb listings.

> *"That's where we go out and we find owners that have vacant properties, and we partner with them and bring those properties onto the Airbnb platform and host guests in those properties. And we, as managers, as co-hosts, we manage the entire process."* (Interview n°27)

Community events allowed interested hosts to efficiently interact and co-create business solutions by establishing STR cohosting contract templates, defining services, or developing quality standards and procedures.

> "And last time I spoke to this host, he's averaging $300 to $1,000 per listing. Raise your hand or drop me a yes if this excites you, right?" (Inner Circle group meeting)

Online Airbnb experiences: After the initiatives undertaken to mitigate the initial shock produced by the pandemic, Airbnb launched new services and hosting alternatives to reposition its groups of contributors in a market highly restricted and modified by sanitary measures, and to seize new business opportunities.

To diversify offers and provide additional sources of revenue, the platform had already launched in 2016 its Experiences program, which gave hosts the possibility to develop, promote, and deliver various activities for tourists desiring to be immersed in the local culture through cooking, arts, language lessons, or physical tours related to the local history, traditions, sports, and way of life. The hosts affiliated with the Experiences program were required to maintain a high level of service quality, avoiding negative reviews and paying Airbnb a 20% fee from the price charged for each activity. According to Brian Chesky, the program was a clear success, growing 13 times faster than the Airbnb rental business itself.

However, in-person experiences were banned due to COVID-19 restrictions, as expressed by one respondent:

> *"Airbnb Experiences were closed in 2020 in the US from mid-March to September 2020. My tourist season was just about to start when COVID-19 hit in March and the city went into lockdown, and our season here ends in October."* (Interview n°34)

To replace and complement the Experiences program, Airbnb launched the Online Experiences program in April 2020, including:

> "classes, performances, and shows offered by hosts online. Guests pay a fee to hosts to book an online experience, much like with regular experiences. The only difference is that guests can now enjoy an experience from the comfort of their own homes. As of August 2020, Online Experiences have brought in more than $2 million for hosts around the world." (Airbnb website)

To leverage the inclusivity of the platform and to demonstrate the support provided by the community of hosts, Airbnb promoted the launch of Online Experiences accessible for anyone on Twitter:

> Launching Online Experiences celebrating accessibility, designed by Airbnb hosts who are passionate about accessibility. Created to all to enjoy from home (e.g., from $20/person, sign language and music interpreting. From $13/person: wheelchair workout with a Pro Trainer). #Joe Gebbia, Twitter @jgebbia, May 21, 2020

New guest preferences: COVID-19 guest preferences in accommodation types were focused on full access to the property. The selection strategy was naturally affected by COVID-19. Due to social and physical distancing guidelines, the pandemic had a particular impact on hosts sharing rooms, as a proportion of guests were reluctant to share living spaces with other people. Consequently, the preference for types of accommodation (between sharing a house or having an entire house), together with the inconvenience of social and physical interaction and the growing fear of infection, significantly shifted the demand.

In conclusion, the actions taken by Airbnb to mitigate the initial shock of the crisis led to an unprecedented breach of trust with its host community, unveiling the asymmetric power of the platform that was expressed through unilateral decision-making and its lack of operational and financial support:

> *"Airbnb has shown that they can do essentially whatever they want. If overnight they want to put you out of business, they have that ability."* (Interview n°34)

These failures significantly eroded its legitimacy from travel industry analyst:

> "Airbnb's slow delivery of the relief fund's payments threatens to drive hosts to competing services and will not benefit the company in the long run. It also brings into question whether the company has a strong enough executive team. None of this will be ignored when Airbnb does go public. It can expect to be grilled about this by potential investors."[80]

4.3.4. Effects on cognitive legitimacy

We posit that this period represented a community breakpoint, affecting the equilibrium of the triadic relationship and ecosystem dynamics. We categorized actors as sacrificed actors versus privileged actors. Hosts, as key contributors, felt betrayed and abandoned by the platform, denouncing a logic of domination. Surprisingly, Airbnb orchestrated the management of the crisis using mimicry tactics of incumbent firms such as placing customer satisfaction first by choosing to reimburse the guests. However, despite dissatisfaction, the number of hosts remained stable due to a lack of alternatives and new trends. The platform

> *"Hosts don't have any other place to go but Airbnb. It's a monopoly."* (Interview n°3)

[80] https://community.withAirbnb.com/t5/Community-Cafe/Is-This-The-End-Of-Airbnb-Hosts-Are-Calling-It-The-Airbnb/m-p/1285005

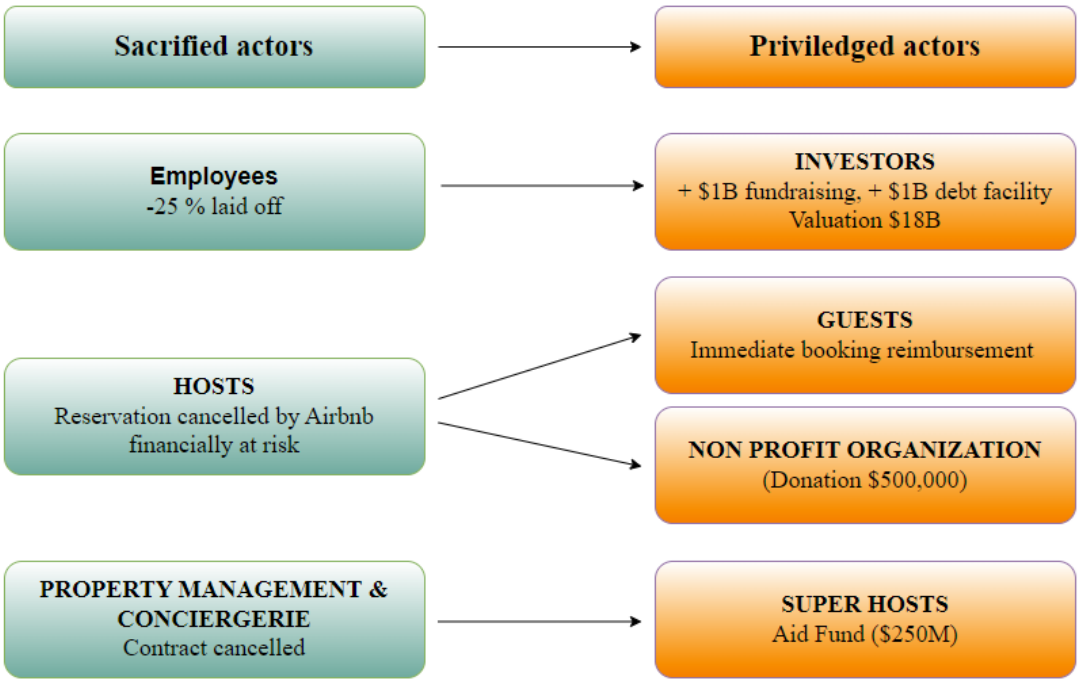


Figure 83: Airbnb's sacrificed and privileged actors (Source: Lecuyer, 2024)

4.4. Relational strategies post-COVID-19, Period 3 (August 1 – December 31, 2020)

This period is characterized by the preparedness of the IPO, fueling the relational strategies of Airbnb with its contributors, in which the identity and professionalization strategies prevailed and ended with the most successful IPO of the year.

4.4.1. Identity strategy

Our data indicated that Airbnb's origins played a significant role in how the company managed the COVID-19 crisis. Airbnb was founded in 2008 during the economic recession with the goal to offer affordable accommodation solutions for travelers and profitable opportunities for hosts. The origin of Airbnb, constantly diffused in its communication, instilled a culture of resilience and adaptability in the face of crises.

> "Now, this isn't the first crisis we've been through as a community. Airbnb started in the crisis of 2008. That crisis didn't stop us then. This one won't stop us now."[81]

4.4.1.1. Identity strategy: A crisis DNA business model

During COVID-19, Airbnb demonstrated that its origins contributed to its ability to innovate by quickly adapting its business model to new markets and consumers' changing needs, such as long-duration stays and online experiences. Under the pressure created by sanitary restrictions, the rental market evolved rapidly, as tourists were replaced by new profiles of guests (e.g., students, professionals, families of hospitalized patients) and demand pivoted toward mid-term stays. At the same time, the platform introduced new cleaning and safety guidelines. The platform claims that 80% of its hosts accepted longer stays and about half of its active listings offered discounts on stays of one month or more:

> *"There has been a 20% increase in long-stay bookings in the last two weeks compared to the same period in 2019."* (Interview n°37B)

> *"I think there [are] fewer people who are taking short vacations for pleasure, and it's more they're just wanting somewhere else to stay on a long-term basis."* (Interview n°35)

Interestingly, NYC residents interviewed said they were searching for an office (i.e., a place to work), as their companies switched to digital operations and closed their city offices:

> *"This has accelerated the trend of people working from home, or, more importantly, from 'homes away from home.' People are looking for one- to two-month stays in drive-to destinations to work from. Some people have even canceled their lease to live like a digital nomad."* (Interview n°3A)

For these digital nomads, high-speed internet was essential, as well as a comfortable, quiet location, often in the surrounding suburbs or in the countryside:

> *"That's where the opportunity lies: to provide connected and comfortable work-from-home environments for people looking to adopt this lifestyle."* (Interview n°3B)

[81] https://www.airbnb.com/resources/hosting-homes/a/march-30-a-message-to-hosts-from-ceo-brian-chesky-172

The quick adaptation of many Airbnb hosts to these market changes, often as a result of implementing professionalization initiatives, enhanced the platform's cognitive legitimacy for guests:

> *"I will rent again through Airbnb. For me it is safer than a hotel because there are fewer rooms to clean and less personal interaction to manage. I'll also be able to go online and read reviews to compare various offers."* (Interview n°32)

4.4.1.2. Identity strategy: Back to the roots narrative

During this period, prior to its IPO, Airbnb promoted its identity based on its roots, declaring a re-centering on its traditional activities with the promotion of the original mom-and-pop model. Thus, it paused its investments in transportation, hotels, and luxury properties, something that Chesky labeled a "big awakening" for him:[82]

> "When we started Airbnb, it was about belonging and connection. This crisis has sharpened our focus to get back to our roots, back to the basics, back to what is truly special about Airbnb—everyday people who host in their homes and offer experiences."[83]
>
> "In early 2020, as COVID-19 disrupted travel across the world, Airbnb's business declined significantly. But within two months, our business model started to rebound even with limited international travel, demonstrating its resilience. People wanted to get out of their homes and yearned to travel, but they did not want to go far or to be in crowded hotel lobbies. Domestic travel quickly rebounded on Airbnb around the world as millions of guests took trips closer to home. Stays of longer than a few days started increasing as work-from-home became work-from-any-home on Airbnb."
>
> "We believe that the lines between travel and living are blurring, and the global pandemic has accelerated the ability to live anywhere. Our platform has proven adaptable to serve these new ways of traveling."[84]

Some respondents interpreted these changes as opportunistic behaviors designed to improve Airbnb's organizational structure for its IPO.

---

[82] https://shorttermrentalz.com/news/airbnb-chesky-blank-cheque-acquisition/
[83] https://news.Airbnb.com/a-message-from-co-founder-and-ceo-brian-chesky/
[84] https://www.cnbc.com/2020/11/16/Airbnb-s-1-ipo-filing-drops.html

IPO prospectus: In the same vein, in the preparation of its IPO, Airbnb tackled guest discrimination based on personal profile or appearance. The process required the platform to exert stronger normative controls over hosting practices, restricting hosts' access to guests' pictures or personal information, while eliminating specific cancellation policies and associated guarantees for hosts.

Praising the resilience of its business model, in July 2020, Brian Chesky declared that Airbnb would come back stronger once life returns to normal:

> "People have an innate desire to travel and, following this crisis, they're going to want to satisfy that need more than ever." (Brian Chesky, Airbnb website)

The IPO prospectus revealed Airbnb's identity construction used to attract investors through persuasive communication, storytelling, and narratives. To attract capital providers, the Airbnb story was told around the founders and their start-up in a short and impactful narrative:

> "In the beginning, two friends opened their door… Brian and Joe, our first hosts. Thirteen years later, 4 million Airbnb hosts have opened theirs. Airbnb started with two designers trying to solve a problem: how to pay their rent."

The "back to the roots" message framing reshaped Airbnb's story regarding the resilience of its business model and its ability to secure capital investment. We argue that the story of Brian Chesky and his co-founders helped them attract capital by shaping the start-up identity through factual information in a meaningful and consistent tone:

> "Our platform has proven adaptable to serve these new ways of traveling. And just as when Airbnb started during the Great Recession of 2008, we believe that people will continue to turn to hosting to earn extra income."

We note that the narrative about Airbnb's response to crises reduced the uncertainty and risks associated with the pandemic context. For example, consider how the ways in which Brian Chesky described the collapse of March 2020 in conversations with audiences such as journalists, venture capitalists, and consulting firms strengthened the identity of Airbnb:

> "Like many people, I came back from holidays in 2019 thinking my life would go in a certain direction in 2020. Then, all of a sudden, I felt like a captain whose ship was hit by a torpedo. Within eight weeks, our business dropped 80%. I have been in crises before. Airbnb, in a sense, was started during my own personal crisis when I could not afford to pay rent. One of the first lessons I learned is that in a crisis, you have to move much more quickly." (Brian Chesky)[85]

The process of writing the Airbnb IPO prospectus by the CEO and co-founders represents a story by itself, easy to remember, impactful, and shared to the media.

> "So, we'd rewrite the S1 (the prospectus). I personally rewrote 14,000 words … So we file the S1, and then, we start working on everything related to going public, in sweat pants in front of iMac and Zoom." (Brian Chesky)

Airbnb's identity was presented in a temporal sequencing re-casting the platform's history and fostering trust in its ability to grow. This is the Airbnb IPO identity package that was promoted by its co-founders:

> "I said, Airbnb was founded during the Great Recession. It was an inflection point in the world. Mobile was rising, 2008. The iPhone came out in 2007. So you have mobile. You have social media, Facebook is ascending. So you have these new technological forces. The internet is globalizing, right? So mobile, social, global, internet, combined with the rise of a new generation."[86] (Brian Chesky)

4.4.1.3. Identity strategy: Start-up Tech attractiveness

Airbnb is frequently associated with Uber, the two pioneers of the SE with a common trajectory toward an IPO. We suggest examining the two DPs that were founded within a year of each other. For 10 years, Airbnb has been the second most-valuable private start-up in the San Francisco Bay Area after Uber Technologies.

[85] https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-21st-century-corporation-a-conversation-with-brian-chesky-of-airbnb
[86] https://mastersofscale.com/we-died-and-were-reborn-brian-chesky/

Until 2011, Airbnb competed with other new tech companies, including Uber, to raise funds from the Silicon Valley investors ecosystem. Many financial articles outlined the competition between Airbnb and Uber and contributed to the legitimation process of the two DPs among the venture capital and private equity firms in California, and progressively, year after year among reputable US and international financial institutions.

Uber largely won the fundraising battle with $25 billion compared to $6.4 billion for Airbnb before its IPO. Uber attracted investors by promoting compelling new projects. For example, Uber launched an autonomous vehicle without a driver through its Uber Advanced Technologies Group supported by Saudi funds, Toyota, SoftBank, and Denso. In 2016, it created the Uber Eats app dedicated to food ordering and delivery.

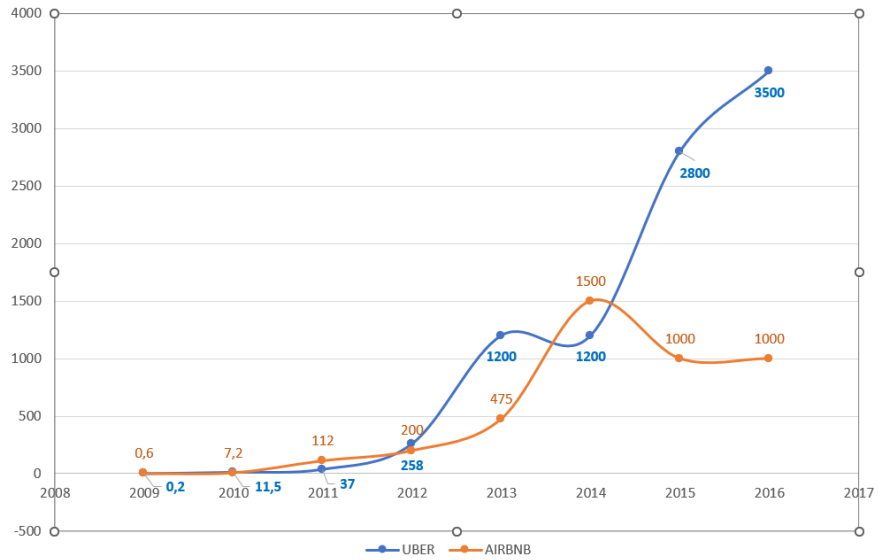


Figure 84: Comparison of Uber and Airbnb Fundraising (Source: Bloomberg)

This stimulating competition between Uber and Airbnb continued with their respective IPOs, through which Uber generated less market capitalization than expected ($84 billion), while Airbnb, on its first day on the New York Stock Exchange, surpassed expectations in terms of market capitalization with $100 billion, taking the lead over Uber (see Figure 85).

.

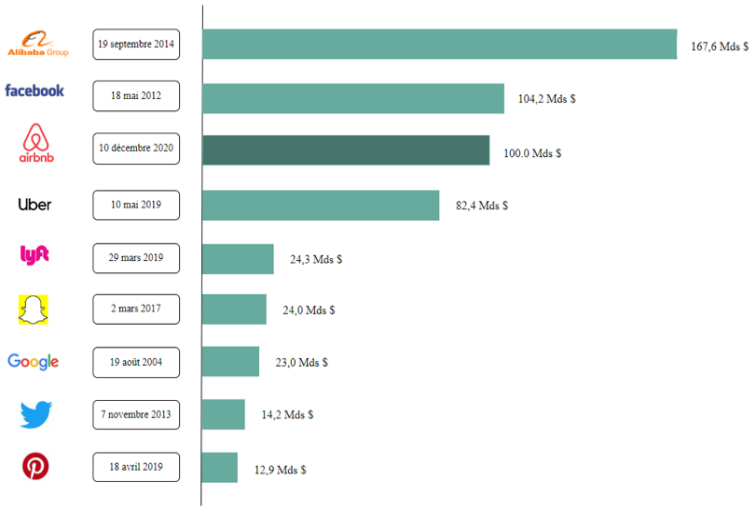


Figure 85: IPO market capitalization benchmark first day in stock exchange market (Source: Statista and Bloomberg data)

Seed investment profiles: The identity of capital firms that invested in Airbnb in exchange for equity comprise interesting data, sending a signal of Airbnb's legitimation process in the sense that partnering with reputable organizations or names is a strategic tactic to gain legitimacy (see Table 25).

The internal stockholders are, naturally, the founders, co-founders, and board of directors, and the external stockholders depicted in Table 25 are the ones owning more than 5% of Airbnb. The three founders of Airbnb—Brian Chesky, Nathan Blecharczyk, and Joseph Gebbia—not only succeeded in raising $6.4 billion in 10 years but also succeeded in retaining a majority of shares, owning 43.8%. Belinda Johnson, former legal and public policy counsel for Yahoo and Airbnb's previous chief legal officer, who was responsible for the legal battle with municipalities including the decision to sue cities such as New York, owned the greatest number of shares among the other directors.

Among the external stockholders, one who favored the platform since before the IPO is Sequoia Capital, which boasts a successful California tech investment portfolio (e.g., Apple, Instagram, and Google) and which owns 16.6% of Airbnb. The venture capital firm is one of the earliest Airbnb investors, offering a seed investment when Airbnb had only 2,500 listings. As the main external stockholder, Sequoia Capital is indicative of the historical trusted-based collaboration and relationship with the three founders, since counseling the entrepreneurs and using its network with existing tech companies in San Francisco contributed to Airbnb's legitimacy.

The hotelier Marriott appears in the SEC document, item 16, exhibit 4.3, which presents all stockholders, including the ones owning less than 5%. The participation in Airbnb by the Marriott Group, one of the major reputable hospitality actors, a century old and highly institutionalized, can be considered to be a symbolic affiliation, suggesting that an incumbent firm is willing to contract with the platform and to provide resources to Airbnb. We argue that this could lead to institutionalizing Airbnb, providing socio-political legitimacy to the platform and perhaps behind-the-scenes avenues to strategic alliances (e.g., a luxury segment discussed between Marriott and Airbnb).

Interestingly, our data also contains other shareholder performance indicators for the hospitality sector, such as scaling the number of units. For example, the CEO of a hotel chain explained the necessity for hotels to increase their number of rooms:

> *"The success of publicly traded major global hotel companies is driven so much upon their growth in terms of the number of new rooms added every year. So, it's either rooms or hotels. So, let's say this year there's 600,000 rooms with Marriott, and Marriott will be judged based upon whether it goes to 620,000 or 660,000 and so on. So, to do that, the big brand, multi-brand hotel companies continue to look for footprint growth opportunity."* (Interview n°9)

In brief, Airbnb succeeded in attracting and retaining heterogenous investors, raising $6.4 billion in 10 years and starting with a major venture capital organization, Sequoia Capital, that favorably evaluated the accommodation platform and continuously invested in it. Through multiple series of funding, the so-called liability of newness allowed Airbnb to benefit from investors' resources, such as capital funding, access to local tech companies, and expert financial advisors. For example, the three founders were advised not to go public in the first years so that private investors could realize gains from their initial investment before the sale of shares to the public at a high valuation (see Table 22).

4.4.2. Professionalization strategy

The shift in hosts' mindset was actively supported by a Community Leaders Program through Facebook Groups to encourage hosts to contribute to the development of these new opportunities by sharing their best practices in this new period:

> *"This is what we are teaching right now in our accelerator program: how to switch the mindset from short-term rentals and go into longer-term stays."* (Interview n°26B)

Their role was to facilitate and accelerate the changes:

> *"Hey, what's up? I am going to be one of your coaches in the Inner Circle […]. Every crisis has opportunities. Right now, the most important thing for us is to stay in business. So, the question is: How do we survive this crisis?"* (Interview n°34)

4.4.2.1. Professionalization strategy: Compliance driven

The professionalization of hosts induces an escalation of tensions regarding opponents and enforcement efforts (see Chapter 5). In the COVID-19 context, which was characterized by pressure and ambiguity about the hosts' status, pending regulatory issues added to the hosts' uncertainty and dissatisfaction. For example, during an Inner Circle meeting, a host complained:

> "And then the biggest challenge that everybody around the world is running into right now is regulations, right? And there's no golden ticket. There's no secret to how to deal with regulations because they're so up in the air right now. Some cities ban it. Some cities restrict it. Some cities ignore it. Then some states actually support it, right? But the challenge is once you put all this money into your leases, all this money into your deposit, your furnishings, your carrying costs, all of that, and the city changes the laws, you're stuck." (Inner Circle group)

In May 2020, after years of costly litigation and lobbying activities, the platform agreed to share data with the city of New York about its hosts' profiles and activities (see Chapter 5). Our respondents considered this new Airbnb regulatory compliance operational framework as an artifact to institutionalize the platform before its IPO at a time when "the state and the city budget is in such bad shape because of COVID-19" (Interview n°24) and "priorities have changed; the Office of Special Enforcement is now involved in enforcing COVID-19 guidelines around what businesses and stores can be open or cannot" (Interview n°19).

Thus, prior to the IPO, professionalization as a relational strategy was marked by regulatory changes, requiring hosts to comply with new rules and adjust their operations related to data sharing and normative controls by the platform. The result was that hosts were required to be more diligent in managing their listings. Then, in September 2020, Airbnb launched the online data dashboard City Portal that connects the platform with governments and tourism organizations in 15 pilot cities around the world (Khaled, 2020).

4.4.2.2. Professionalization strategy: Hosts driven

Host Advisory Board: To avoid future open conflicts with the host community and empower the voices of hosts, Airbnb announced in October 2020 the creation of a global Host Advisory Board, including 17 hosts selected from 14 countries and four regions to be a voice to "present ideas and provide input on Airbnb practices and shape investments from a newly created Host Endowment Fund."[87] For example, during an Inner Circle group Zoom meeting session, a host was congratulated on being selected for the Host Advisory Board and attempted to mobilize other hosts to continue this journey despite the negative COVID-19 effects on the hosts' community.

> *"I am Omar, part of the Hosts Advisory Board, passionate about hosting. Omar is famous on the Airbnb website; we tell our background and passion about hosting."* (Interview n°26)

Host endowment: In the same vein, another move was the announcement of a host endowment, with Brian Chesky promising 9.2 million shares of company stock to hosts to "ensure that hosting is always at the center of Airbnb."[88] This initiative sought to reduce tensions in the NYC local context, with officials and the hosts community allowed to promote the design of new governance mechanisms and accommodate hosts' opinions. It clearly reinforced the agility of the platform and contributed to a stronger organizational legitimacy among investors, facilitating Airbnb's successful IPO in December 2020.

[87] Airbnb, 2020
[88] https://mastersofscale.com/we-died-and-were-reborn-brian-chesky/

4.4.2.3. Professionalization strategy: The process of an initial public offering (IPO)

In this chapter, we have demonstrated the role of investors as central contributors, facilitating the acquisition of resources. The decision for a firm to go public through the process of an IPO is a major milestone and is considered as a pivotal stage in a company's growth. Our data revealed that the Airbnb IPO largely contributed to its legitimation and resulted from the relational strategies deployed.

An IPO is highly promising for founders and investors who bought stocks early, since a strong offering means high returns. When companies decide to launch an IPO, it means they will sell stock for the first time to the public and become a publicly traded company. Shares are traded on the open market after the initial sales, and any public investor can make a trade.

The largest IPOs ever in the United States were $21.8 billion for Alibaba Group Holding Limited in 2014 and $17.8 billion for Visa in 2008.[89]

For Airbnb, the ultimate path to public investors was the announcement of the IPO in January 2019; the company was valued at that time by private investors at $31 billion. Airbnb stated that it had profitable earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization, whereas Lyft and Uber were still unprofitable.

In mid-August 2020, Airbnb discreetly submitted an IPO application to the NASDAQ through the SEC.[90] Airbnb hired Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs to lead its IPO process, preparing the SEC financial communication prospectus.[91] In October 2020, Airbnb announced its willingness to list its common stock on NASDAQ.[92] Other advisers contributed to the IPO proceeds, such as Allen & Co, BofA Securities, Barclays Capital, and Citi Group. It is important to note that all of these reputable names contributed implicitly to Airbnb's legitimation process.

On November 11, 2020, Airbnb Inc. announced an IPO in the e-commerce/services industry. On December 12, 2020, the per-share offering price was at $68, and a total of $3.83 billion was raised that day.

---

[89] Source: Statista April 23
[90] Source: https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/airbnb-announces-confidential-submission-of-draft-registration-statement-301115194.html
[91] https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000119312520294801/d81668ds1.htm#toc81668_1
[92] https://www.airbnb.com/

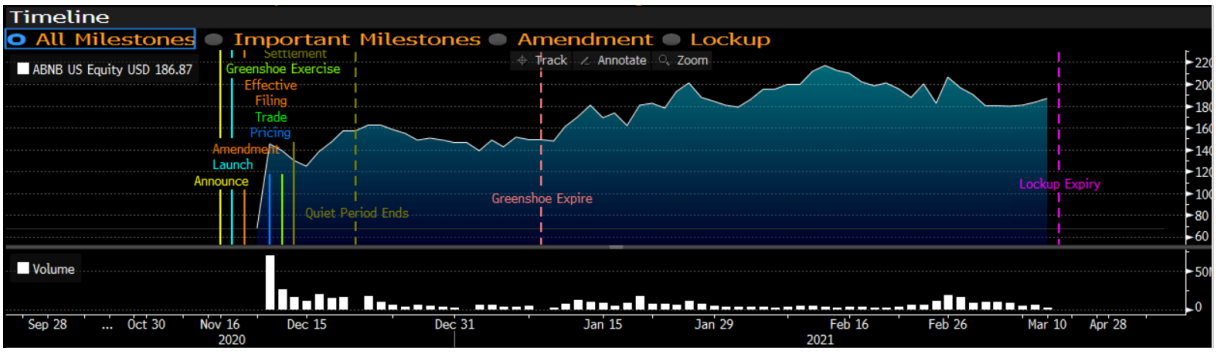


Figure 86: Bloomberg

Airbnb was considered to be the largest IPO of 2020 with a market capitalization at $84 billion, despite the tensions in its key markets and the collapse of the global economy due to the COVID-19, as relayed by the newswire, "Airbnb (ABNB) shares skyrocketed almost 118% after the accommodation rental company made its debut on the NASDAQ Global Select Market on Thursday."[93]

Investors trust: Investors valued Airbnb at $84 billion, higher than Booking Holding Inc. and Marriott, the century-old hospitality industry leader. We believe the successful Airbnb IPO had been influenced by the support from past venture capital funds and private investors since Airbnb's creation (see Table 22), which provided not only resources to the platform but also played a role in the legitimation process for other asset holders. Indeed, their support signaled to the financial community that a start-up with such investors is worth funding. Interestingly, the day of the IPO, the early investor Sequoia Capital deployed PR efforts to promote the Airbnb IPO with the following:

> "Today is a momentous day for Airbnb because it marks one of the most incredible turnaround stories in business history. Airbnb consistently reaches for higher heights from the trenches, and this global pandemic was no exception."[94]

[93] Source: MT Newswires
[94] https://www.sequoiacap.com/article/airbnb-ipo-embracing-the-adventure/

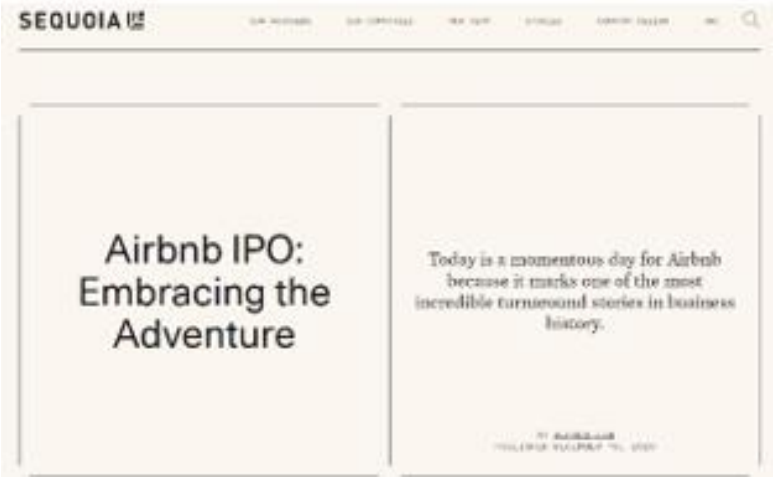


Figure 87: Sequoia Capital promoting Airbnb IPO (Source: https://www.sequoiacap.com/article/airbnb-ipo-embracing-the-adventure/)

4.4.3. Selection strategy: Normative control and empowerment

Institutionalizing through data: From the beginning, Airbnb used machine learning models to optimize its users' experience, which was enriched later with algorithms and artificial intelligence. Incorporating data science and research to match guests with the relevant hosts and secure transactions allowed the platform to identify fraud and regulate tensions among hosts and users. The platform was able to forecast the probability of booking per borough per period and shared this data with hosts. Thus, Airbnb monitored hosts through a combination of automated systems, peer-review processes, and reports from neighbors. When necessary, Airbnb also conducted manual reviews of hosts.

In June 2020, Airbnb agreed to share hosts listings information with the city of New York on a quarterly basis.[95] Since then, Airbnb has been required to report hosts' revenues for each transaction and quarterly total bookings, which are publicly co-announced with the Office of Special Enforcement in NYC.

> *"With this agreement, the NYC will have a powerful tool to detect those who hide behind fake accounts."* (Interview n°19)

[95] https://news.airbnb.com/a-message-to-our-new-york-city-hosts/

Promoting "internal enforcement"

Under the umbrella of the Airbnb Responsible Hosting program, the platform announced that it would identify hosts that did not comply with legal requirements. Our data indicate that Airbnb relied on Hosts Facebook Groups and Inner Circle groups to present internal controls and promote full compliance with legal requirements, prior to the IPO. Within these groups, Airbnb's internal enforcement was cascaded through mentors who were encouraged to reinforce the removal or suspension of hosts from the platform and, more specifically, those who were "breaking local laws and regulations, violating Airbnb hosting or safety standards, and misalign[ing] with Airbnb non-discriminatory policies."

We argue that this selection strategy institutionalized the platform through a strong technology strategy and hosts' community groups playing the role of internal controllers to reduce risks prior to the IPO.

4.4.4. Effects on the cognitive legitimacy

Groups of investors contributed to strengthen the attractiveness of the DP ecosystem and fueled the ecosystem's relational dynamics. The relational strategies between Airbnb and the venture capital firms demonstrated the dynamics and, specifically, the co-relational dependency between the DP and these financiers. We argue that partnering with reputable and institutionalized private investors, venture capital firms, and private equity companies (e.g., Marriott, Delta Airlines, Jeff Bezos, Bernard Arnault, Google Capital) allowed a successful IPO. Consequently, prior investors legitimized Airbnb business activities in the eyes of other investors and indirectly supported the DP in navigating tensions with its hosts community.[96]

The successful IPO is an indicator of the investors' confidence in its business model and its future potential growth. It demonstrates to investors that the platform has acquired the resources to continue its expansion by investing in opportunities and reducing debt. Implicitly, the successful IPO demonstrated that Airbnb achieved rigorous scrutiny from regulatory bodies such as the SEC. Complying with the strictest legal and financial reporting requirements increased the cognitive legitimacy of Airbnb.

---

[96] *Source: Item 16. Exhibits and Financial Statement Schedules: 4.3: Amended and Restated Investors' Rights Agreement, dated April 17, 2020, by and among the Registrant and the investors listed therein*

Table 26: April 2020 Airbnb investors, prior to the IPO (Source: SEC Item 16, exhibits 4.3 and Financial Statement Schedules: Amended and Restated Investors' Rights Agreement, dated April 17, 2020, by and among the Registrant and the investors listed therein)

	Shares Beneficially Owned Prior to this Offering						
	Class A		Class B		Class H		% of voting power before this offering
Name of beneficial owner	Shares	%	Shares	%	Shares	%	
Executive Officers and Directors							
Brian Chesky	-	-	76,938,518	15.4%	-	-	15.3%
Nathan Blecharczyk	-	-	70,093,067	14.2%	-	-	14.2%
Joseph Gebbia	-	-	70,093,135	14.2%	-	-	14.2%
Dave Stephenson	-	-	46,666	-	-	-	-
Aristotle Balogh	-	-	152,496	-	-	-	-
Greg Greeley	-	-	277,776	-	-	-	-
Catherine Powell	-	-	37,916	-	-	-	-
Angela Ahrendts	-	-	11,848	-	-	-	-
Kenneth Chenault	-	-	1,526,160	-	-	-	-
Belinda Johnson	-	-	2,531,978	-	-	-	-
Jeffrey Jordan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Alfred Lin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ann Mather	-	-	16,692	-	-	-	-
All current executive officers and directors as a group (13 persons)	-	-	221,726,252	43.8%	-	-	43.6%
5% Stockholders							
Entities Affiliated with Sequoia Capital	691,612	4.0%	81,277,532	16.6%	-	-	16.5%
Entities Affiliated with Founders Fund	-	-	26,556,110	5.4%	-	-	5.4%
Entities Affiliated with Silver Lake	5,026804	23.5%	-	-	-	-	-
Entities Affiliated with Sixth Street	3,967,398	18.5%	-	-	-	-	-
Entities Affiliated with DST Global	3,053,922	17.5%	11,093,112	2.3%	-	-	2.3%
Jonathan Poulin and Affiliated Entities	2,279,756	13.1%	-	-	-	-	-
Entities Affiliated with Greystar Real Estate Partners	936,052	5.4%	-	-	-	-	-
Entities Affiliated with Accel	919,308	5.3%	-	-	-	-	-
Airbnb Host Endowment LLC	-	-	-	-	9,200,000	100.0%	-

CONCLUSION

Studying the relationships between Airbnb and its main stakeholders during the first wave of COVID-19 pandemic in New York City, our work identified three relational strategies - identity, professionalization, and selection - implemented by the platform to reinforce its cognitive legitimacy whose impacts are summarized on table. We demonstrated that the search for legitimacy in the eyes of its key contributors has had migratory effects on other actors at the expense of social concerns. Our findings highlighted the pivotal role of investors continuously funding the platform and allowing Airbnb to reach decacorn status in six years.

.

Chapter 4 Summary: Relational strategies per period

Period 1 (2018–February 2020; source: Lecuyer, 2024)

Relational strategies	Key findings	Impacts on cognitive legitimacy
Identity	A social identity sponsored by "live like a local" and the community as a driver	Brand empowerment
	A cost-effective travel solution	The preferred family travel accommodation option
	An ergonomic digital technology experience	A "three-click" solution
	A disruptive innovation creating institutions (e.g., peer-to-peer reviewing)	A trusted solution
Professionalization	Ecosystem dynamics through external growth and new segments	Scaling the hosts community
	Hub of start-up tech companies	Supply of digital solutions leveraging hosts' autonomy
	Ecosystem dynamics through investors supplying capital and competencies	A unicorn in three years (2011), a decacorn in six years (2014) Market capitalization above all traditional hospitality actors (2017)
	Business model shifts reinforced by collective action (e.g., educating hosts)	Service quality like a hotelier
Selection	Hosts categories (e.g., Superhosts)	Trust mechanisms (e.g., Superhost filter)
	Urban destination and mass tourism area	More accommodation listings and hosts competition
	Superiority of entrepreneurial hosts	Shared opportunistic beliefs

Period 2 (March 1–July 31, 2020; source: Lecuyer, 2024)

Relational strategies	Key findings	Impacts on cognitive legitimacy
Identity	Internal: Identity jolt: 25% of employees laid off announced through PR campaign highlighting the beneficial measures taken for the laid-off employees Hosts and third-party contributors exposed to financial uncertainty and to a vulnerable situation (e.g., mortgage, property taxes) while guests received full refunds	Criticism of arbitrary decision-making processes and values system A contested "sense of belonging" to a community (i.e., guests' satisfaction versus hosts' mistrust)
	External: Identity of Airbnb as a good corporate citizen actor proposing free or reduced-price housing (e.g., Open Homes program) and active about human rights (e.g., George Floyd protests)	A resilient adaptative business model (i.e., reliable housing response to disasters or crises) and donation to Black movement association
Professionalization	Setting up new hosting cleaning practices (e.g., Enhanced clean badge)	A contributor fighting the pandemic
	Collective action from unsatisfied hosts searching for other alternatives (e.g., launch of websites)	Domination of the platform
	Educating hosts to adapt listings aligned with travelers' new preferences (e.g., long-duration stays, rural destinations, privacy, and entire homes)	Agile business model
	Increasing capital funding by $2 billion	A resilient business model supported by the investors
Selection	Unbalanced policy between sacrificed hosts and fully refunded guests. Airbnb behaved as a traditional actor (i.e., mimicry on customer satisfaction first) but suggested that guests support hosts financially (i.e., part of the relief program)	Disequilibrium among the triadic relationships and lack of shared beliefs; a misalignment between hosts, guests, and platforms interests' decisions: hosts protests, guests' unwillingness to support hosts
	Hosts categories (e.g., Responsible Hosting certification)	Creation of institutions through quality standards labels
	Tactics and alternative activities (e.g., co-hosting, online Airbnb experience)	Relational opportunism scaling number of hosts

Period 3 (August 1–December 31, 2020; source: Lecuyer, 2024)

Relational strategies	Key findings	Impacts on cognitive legitimacy
Identity	Culture of resilience (i.e., born in 2008)	Agile business model: "ability to live anywhere" (i.e., digital nomad)
	"Back to the roots:" sense of belonging	Authentic and unique accommodations solution: "feel safe at home"
Professionalization	Adaptability of hosts (e.g., long-duration stays, high-speed Wi-Fi)	Flexible hosting solutions
	More rigorous guidelines and processes in preparation of its IPO (i.e., ban onparties, anti-discriminatory rules)	Normative domination of the platform
	Market capitalization at $84 billion	Historically largest IPO in 2020
Selection	Selection of hosts to accept and comply with NYC rules	A DP complying with a local context (i.e., sharing hosts data with city of New York)
	Selection of Superhosts to join the Global Host Advisory Board	Inclusive governance mechanism

CHAPTER 5.

INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE:

Institutional work mechanisms



[97]

Figure 88: Opponents discursive claims

[97] https://www.theinvisibletourist.com/why-you-shouldnt-use-airbnb-issues-you-didnt-know/

5.1. Introduction

Over the past decade, there has been less debate on the new paradigm encouraged by the academic, political, and economic spheres to switch to inclusive stakeholder satisfaction; in other words, the capacity to meet stakeholders' social and economic expectations, thereby reorienting the purpose of a firm to deliver benefits to multiple stakeholder groups. Moreover, external institutions play an important role in orienting CEOs in their decision-making process to reconcile stakeholders' management toward their interests at first.

In Chapter 4, the empirical reality of our study presented the narrowed perspective focusing on Airbnb's relational strategies with its key contributors—hosts, guests, and investors—during three periods, in normal business time, during a crisis, and after a crisis. Thus, a broad and multi-actor perspective is necessary to better understand the role of external actors in the process of Airbnb legitimation in the case of NYC. Moreover, the SE as a catalyst forces groups of actors to maintain, disrupt, or change institutions through mechanisms we study in this chapter, in other words, political, socio-cognitive, and normative work (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006).

Indeed, the legitimacy theory applies to the relationships between the organization and society at large. Consequently, Chapter 5 focuses on three groups of actors from the case of Airbnb in NYC: (1) government officials, referring to institutional actors governing at the borough, city, state, or federal levels (i.e., Senate, Borough of Manhattan, City Council, Office and Special Enforcement); (2) incumbents, referring to traditional business actors supplying accommodations in the tourism sector with a focus on the hotel industry (i.e., hotels) and their representing industry associations (the Hotel Association of New York City [HANYC] and the American Hotel & Lodging Association [AHLA], and actors in the real estate business [i.e., REBNY]); and (3) the local community (e.g., tenant advocacy groups, neighborhood associations).

Not much has been written about the process of legitimation of a digital platform in a highly institutionalized environment amid market and non-market actors with a temporality marked by an economic collapse. Using an institutional perspective, we applied the initial framework of Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) to explore the different mechanisms of the institutional work practiced by the DP and the three other groups of stakeholders. According to Lawrence et al. (2011, p. 55), institutional work is a process encapsulating efforts deployed by actors to "cope with, keep up with, shore up, tear down, tinker with, transform, or create new institutional structures within

which they live, work, and play, and which give them their roles, relationships, resources, and routines." The researchers say the actors engaged in this process are "often powerful and have strategic resources or skills, whether they be individuals who act as leaders or take on the form of a collective" (Lawrence et al., 2013).

The empirical focus of this study is on the examination of the legitimation process of Airbnb from 2018 to end of 2020, divided into three phases: (1) the pre-COVID-19 phase from 2018 to February 2020, in other words, the normal business time context; (2) the COVID-19 jolt with the collapse of the economy from March 1 to July 31, 2020, characterized by Airbnb's attempt to be institutionalized while securing customer loyalty; and (3) from August 1 to December 31, 2020, when Airbnb had accomplished its IPO, promoting the robustness of the platform while traditional hospitality actors were still closed or were struggling to reopen.

The uniqueness of our approach is twofold: (1) investigating the interplay of market actors (resource owners and resource users, incumbents), with non-market actors (policy makers, labor unions, trade associations, municipality, borough services, community associations as tenants, data provider, scholars, PR agencies, law firms) and (2) examining the effects on the cognitive and the socio-political legitimacy of the digital platform with a temporality marked by the first lockdown due to COVID-19 and the collapse of global tourism.

We draw on and develop the analytical framework introduced by Zvolska et al. (2019) and use it to explore the institutional work of actors in NYC by presenting the three mechanisms of institutional work that actors and non-actors could conduct: (1) political work to change regulatory institutions, (2) normative work to reconfigure actors' belief systems, and (3) cognitive work to alter the boundaries of meaning systems.

Zvolska et al. (2019) described the first category of institutional work, **political work,** which "consists of advocacy, defining, and vesting. The three mechanisms work in a reinforcing loop, in which advocacy is a prerequisite for defining rules. This provides a foundation for the vesting work, which, in turn, increases or reduces the actors' power to advocate." The second category is **normative work,** which consists of a "reconfiguration of actors' belief systems [and] consists of three mechanisms: constructing identities, changing normative associations, and constructing normative networks. The aim is to change the roles, values, and norms that underpin normative institutions." The last category, **cognitive work,** refers to "altering boundaries of meaning systems

[and] consists of mimicry, theorizing, and educating. These mechanisms focus on the beliefs, assumptions, and frames that inform action."

We look at institutional work as a period of tensions and cooperation between old and new institutions and start by presenting the NYC institutional environment. Then, we continue presenting the diverse actors engaged in institutional work and the mechanisms of institutional work being used. **We acknowledge that there might be some repetitions with Chapter 4 in describing the institutional work of Airbnb.**

5.2. NYC INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Our research objective consists of describing and understanding a phenomenon, in other words, the process of legitimation influenced by the context in which the institutional work of actors and non-market actors took place. NYC contextual elements and external factors are described in this section.

Institutions must, at their core, coordinate economic actors through laws and rules. While Silicon Valley represents an innovation hub with strong industrial activities and knowledge in technology, such as tech clusters, NYC represents an economic hub. It is here that 65% of the US treasury is cleared through the Bank of New York, with powerful financial and media institutions leading the country, making NYC a unique institutionalized context. Many respondents referred to the influential role of NYC, such as:

> *"Well, I mean, New York City is the largest city in the United States and one of the largest in the world, and, culturally, [it] has a profound impact on anything that goes on in the world. … [The] New York City Council is an important role; … if we pass a bill it gets a lot of attention across the country because it's a marker or symbol of, 'If New York is doing this, then it's a headstream mainstream thing, at that point,' so if we push radical ideas we can make them more commonplace."* (Interview n°18)

We assume that the Silicon Valley adage of "don't ask permission, ask forgiveness"[98] conflicts with NYC's institutional environment, in which influenced actors create, disrupt, or change institutions. Disrupting existing markets, capitalist DPs such as Uber and Airbnb rooted their success in creating institutions in urban environments, bypassing established institutions and opposition from incumbent firms and the local community. The success of Airbnb started in NYC, where it expanded its community of hosts in 2009; today, it is a city with high tensions,[99] the strictest regulations in the United States, and critical housing issues. In other words, thousands of apartments have been converted into STRs, altering the housing market and placing it under strong pressure. This was described by a respondent as, "When we have the prices and lack of availability that we do, it's hard to justify any use of residential housing … for short-term rentals" (Interview n°17).

In 2014, a report from the NYC attorney general stated that more than 70% of Airbnb listings "could be illegal," a statement that captured significant media attention around the world.[100] Our data indicated that tenants in NYC could be opportunistic, subletting their apartments and generating incremental revenue in an area with a strong demand, despite a very strict rent regulation context. We refer to those hosts as hosts–tenants:

> *"Well, so now I got rid of my West Village apartment, but I had been subletting it."* (Interview n°37)

Consequently, hosts–tenants, taking advantage of NYC as an attractive tourism destination, fueled tensions in their neighborhoods and among their landlords (i.e., REBNY), as well as market actors.

[98] Kenney and Zysman (2016)
[99] http://www.lefigaro.fr/conjoncture/2018/11/18/20002-20181118ARTFIG00128-new-york-coeur-de-la-fronde-anti-Airbnb.php15
[100] https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/oct/16/airbnb-illegal-hotels-new-york-city-schneiderman

5.2.1. Various layers of influence

Each state in the United States has its own government, establishing its own regulations and laws. This adds numerous players in every layer, making the local context highly complex. This increases the game of influence and fuels political work, such as lobbying by various actors including associations, local communities, and firms, thereby producing inter-layer conflicts. In this section, we describe how formal institutions influence a bill as a progression from the project to its signature, highlighting the different pressures and variety of actors.

The process of establishing a bill

The political work underlying how a bill becomes a law in New York State is characterized by a five-step process coordinated by the Senate, whose role is to work with the Assembly and the governor to draft, discuss, and approve bills and resolutions (see Figure 83).

Step 1: The idea of a new bill carried by a senator can come from many sources or influences, such as a state official or an organization calling for a new law, for example, the hotel industry or the Office of the Mayor.

Step 2: A bill is drafted by the staff of New York State's Legislative Bill Drafting Commission or a private attorney or state agency lawyer.

Step 3: The bill is introduced by legislators or by Senate and Assembly committees. The bill goes to the Introduction and Revision Office with an allocated number and is sent to the appropriate committee.

Step 4: The bill is evaluated by the Standing Committee, which decides whether to report the bill or not. A committee agenda is issued each week listing the bills to be handled the following week.

Committees often hold public hearings on a bill to gather opinions; these are considered an important moment for local associations and citizens to share their views on a proposed bill with their Senate representative.

After consideration, the committee may report the bill, amend, or reject it.

Step 5: After discussion, debate, and explanation, the vote is taken. If the bill is approved by the Senate and then the Assembly without any amendment, it goes to the governor for signature. If it is changed by the Assembly, it returns to the Senate.

Final step: The governor has 10 days to sign or veto bills passed by both houses (the Senate and the Assembly).

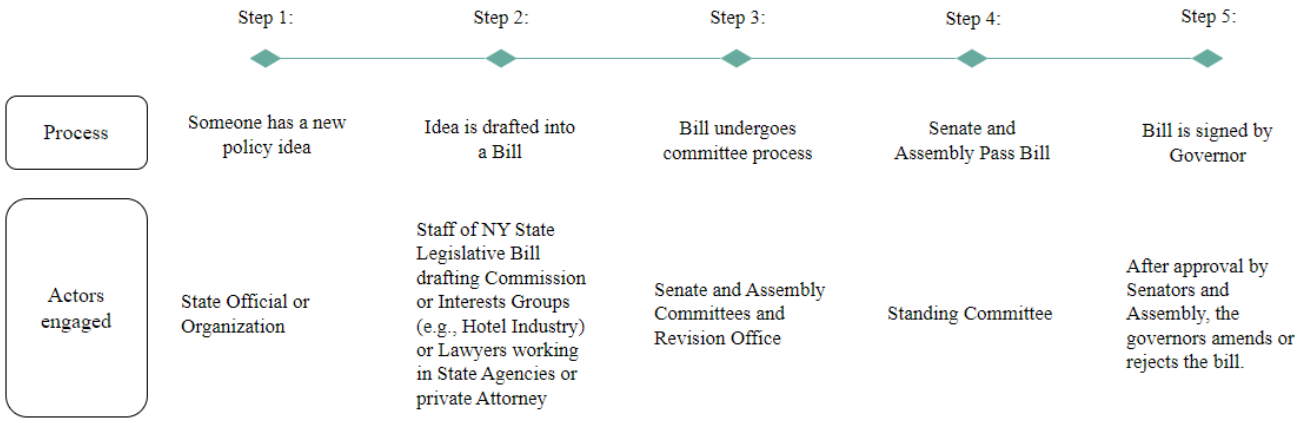


Figure 89: The process of enacting a bill

In 2010, the city of New York introduced the multiple dwelling law, which regulates the renting of apartments in buildings. The multiple dwellings are divided in two classes. Class A multiple dwellings are permanent residences occupied by tenants for 30 consecutive days, while Class B multiple dwellings are occupied temporarily, such as hotels and lodging houses.

The NYC Administrative Code, under Chapters 31 and 32 of Title 26 ("Housing and Buildings") contains NYC's STR registration law. An STR is defined as "a rental for fewer than 30 consecutive days of a dwelling unit within a private dwelling or Class A multiple dwelling, or in the case of a mixed-use building, a rental of a Class A dwelling unit therein for fewer than 30 consecutive days."[101]

The law that regulates STRs in NYC constrains hosts (owners or tenants) to the narrowest restrictions in comparison to other tourist destinations regarding the rental duration (no fewer than 30 days), the number of guests (two maximum), and the presence of the host in the same unit. Any host violating the law would be fined a maximum $5,000 or three times the revenue generated by the STR unit.

[101] https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/newyorkcity/latest/NYCadmin/0-0-0-133488

5.2.2. Impacts of elected political party

Our data revealed that NYC's institutionalized context is dependent on the principal political party in place, either Democrats (blue) or Republicans (red). Our data indicated that the blue or red majority influences the political work of actors from both sides. For example, an election would affect the ability to protect affordable housing and prompt senators to introduce bills favorable to housing advocates.

In 2019, the majority turned blue, empowering the voices of tenants and housing advocates.

> *"But having said that, up until this past year, or this past legislative session, Senator XX, when the Democrats had been in the minority party in the Senate, which meant that their ability to pass major new legislation was substantially diminished."* (Interview n°19)

5.2.3. The bill process and collective action



Figure 90: Tenants Association of Crown Heights protesting during a hearing.

The process of enacting a bill into law reveals (1) the need to influence many groups of stakeholders at multiple layers from Steps 1 to 5 and (2) the various layers of influence and lobbying engaged in the process of enacting a bill. Specifically, Step 4 represents an opportunity for communities to express their voices and defend their perspectives; it has been used by many groups representing local communities, such as tenant associations, hotel industry labor forces, hosts communities, or trade associations such as the NYC Hotel Industry Association and the NYC Real Estate Board. The institutional process of amending a bill allows stakeholders to organize themselves through collective actions taking place at demonstrations or hearings. To influence the process, actors often engage in training sessions to define powerful and impactful spokespersons to better defend their ideas and to gain visibility.

5.3. Who are the other actors?

After presenting the institutional context of NYC, in the following section we describe the NYC actors and non-market actors interacting with Airbnb, followed by our findings regarding how these actors and institutional work mechanisms influence the process of creating legitimation and maintaining or disrupting institutions.

5.3.1. Local community: tenant advocate groups

The NYC rental regulation system is highly specific to NYC, "certainly like no other city in this country," as was explained by our respondent at the New York State Senate (Interview n°17). A total of 1 million NYC apartments fall under a "very strict" rent regulation system that defines how apartments can be rented (e.g., rental fees, type of apartments), ensuring protection and rights for tenants but constraining them to respect the defined regulatory system. This context explains the original fight of tenants to protect their rights, posing tenants as activists with influential tenant advocacy groups. NYC tenant associations are organized by districts or dwellings and are groups that advocate on behalf of tenants. Tenant organizers provide legal assistance for tenants, who do policy advocacy work for housing rights or rental protections, improving their living conditions and battling for changes that could affect their affordable neighborhood.

> *"Well, there are tenant advocates who are, many tenants themselves who are tenant activists and tenant advocates."* (Interview n°17)

One of our respondents has been a community organizer for 49 years in Chelsea, with a mission to "work as an organizer with tenants and as an advocate for tenants' rights" (Interview n°22).

These tenant community groups are powerful in NYC, working to protect affordable housing for the 450,000 low- and middle-income New Yorkers and communities across the five boroughs. They are represented by housing and neighborhood associations organized by borough and districts. The Tenants PAC (political action committee) identifies itself as a "coalition against the illegal hotels"; it meets once a month at the Manhattan Borough president's office.

Activists are organized by boroughs or neighborhoods advocating for the affordable, safe, and respected character of their neighborhoods that attract a population of mixed incomes and backgrounds. As one said:

> *"Our whole fight has been preserving places for people to live. People need places to live. If you work here, where do you live?... "* (Interview n°22)

Community members of those disparate neighborhood associations (e.g., Chelsea, Hell's Kitchen) join together to strengthen their efforts, building coalitions such as the West Side Neighborhood Alliance. The cost of living in NYC and affordable housing have always been on the agenda of neighborhood communities and at the state level. An example of historical NYC tensions with the real estate and rental housing market was explained in the following:

> *"Obviously in Manhattan, a building with rent-stabilized tenants will not sell for very much money because they're seen as a liability because you won't make that much money on them. So, an empty building, by contrast, can be worth millions. And West 86th Street, … the Upper Westside … was never really a slum but it was Bohemian. It was a place where there were a lot of single-room-occupancy buildings because performers, actors, dancers would come and stay for short periods, and that's why those buildings were very good. And they were in our building still. And they're still there. Some of them are actors and … performers. One of my main allies in the tenant movement was a yoga teacher, and she had been there for many years."* (Interview n°22)

5.3.2. Government officials

5.3.2.1. Office of Special Enforcement (OSE)

The Office of Special Enforcement (OSE) is a department in the office of the NYC mayor, first created to fight illegal human business (e.g., massage parlors) as best described by one respondent:

> *"The agency OSE was originally founded to shut down adult business in Times Square. They were also charged with [regulating] black-market goods, the Chanel handbags on Canal Street."* (Interview n°22)

Progressively, its mission was to ensure the safety of NYC residents (1) by addressing building conditions that could pose fire and safety risks, (2) by collaborating with various city departments to address violations, (3) by coordinating city services for displaced tenants, and (4) by conducting inspections and enforcement against property owners and managers who violate the law and respond to quality-of-life issues in NYC.

The rise of STR platforms, and more specifically Airbnb in NYC, has completely re-oriented the work of OSE; in other words, its mission is to oversee legal battles surrounding the STR market in NYC.

5.3.2.2. Senate

New York State has two houses of its Legislature: the New York State Senate and the New York Assembly. The New York State Senate is composed of 63 members, with senators serving two-year terms. The leadership of the State Senate includes the majority leader and the minority leader. The lieutenant governor of New York serves as president of the Senate but votes only in case of a tie. The party in power can influence how the legislative districts are drawn. Both the Senate and the Assembly must pass a bill in identical form for it to be sent to the governor for signature. In our study, the most significant relevant bill was passed in 2008, regulating STRs at the state level and enabling enforcement by the OSE.

> *"So, our office and me in particular, we do a mix of drafting legislation in response to issues that come to us, both very local issues that come to us from constituents that we see from community and neighborhood organizations to much broader public policy issues that may come to us through researchers, through local governments, a whole wide range of issues. So, people call us with problems with literally everything under the sun, whether it's a problem with their landlord, something that they're seeing in their building."* (Interview n°17)

5.3.2.3. The New York City Council

The City Council is the legislative branch of the NYC government and plays a crucial role in the city's law-making processes and budget decisions. The council ensures the availability and accessibility of affordable housing across NYC boroughs. It is composed of 51 members representing districts from all five boroughs: Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Staten Island. Numerous committees focus on specific issues, such as education and housing, where the principal focus is on ensuring the availability and accessibility of affordable housing across boroughs.

> *"Well, so we as a City Council, we function in two ways. We pass legislation, like the short-term rental oversight bill that we did. And then we also work on a constituent level. If somebody our calls our office and has a problem, we liaise with agencies that would be relevant."* (Interview n°18)

After the September 11 terrorist attacks and Hurricane Sandy, the City Council played a pivotal role in the city's recovery.

5.3.2.4. President of Borough of Manhattan

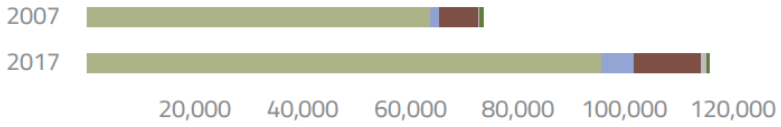
The borough president's office, created in 1898 to consolidate NYC, represents the official head of government at the borough level in NYC. The office makes recommendations on land use and zoning, advocates for the municipal budget, and advises the mayor and the City Council on local issues and needs. Each of the five boroughs has a president. In our case study, we focused on Manhattan, where the tensions over affordable housing are very high. At the time our data was collected, the Manhattan borough president was Gale A. Brewer, who was elected in 2014. The respondent introduced her role:

> *"Well, my mission is to preserve as much existing affordable housing as possible. That's a big mission… Because I come from a housing advocacy background, we are very concerned with the affordable housing market."* (Interview n°16)

5.3.3. Market actors

5.3.3.1. Hotel industry and associations

Prior to COVID-19, the NYC hotel industry was economically strong, with 700 hotels and more than 127,000 rooms in January 2020 (NYC Department of City Planning, 2020). Most hotel rooms are located in the borough of Manhattan, with 28 million people staying in these hotel rooms every year. From 2007 to 2019, NYC increased its number of hotel rooms by 73%, adding 54,000 rooms; this means that the majority of hotels in NYC are new. NYC zoning is composed of three zoning districts: commercial (which is home to approximately two thirds of hotel rooms), manufacturing, and residential. There is a diversity of hotel types and room sizes categorized as economy (Econolodge, Rodeway Inn, Days Inn); mid-scale (Best Western, Quality Inn, Ramada); upper mid-scale (Best Western Plus, Comfort Inn, Clarion, Hampton Inn); upscale (Best Western Premier, Radisson, Hyatt Place, Doubletree, Hilton Garden Inn); upper-scale (Hilton, Radisson Blu, Kimpton, Sheraton, Hyatt Regency, Marriott, Wyndham; and luxury (Ritz Carlton, JW Marriott, Conrad, Andaz, Grand Hyatt, Intercontinental). An estimated 30% of the recently built hotel rooms in NYC are located outside Manhattan (i.e., in Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Staten Island). This spatial redistribution of hotel rooms increased the competition between Airbnb and the hotel industry.



	2007	2017	% CHANGE
MANHATTAN	64,144	95,449	48.8%
BROOKLYN	1,911	5,953	211.5%
QUEENS	6,553	12,264	87.2%
BRONX	597	1,088	82.2%
STATEN ISLAND	487	778	59.8%
TOTAL	**73,692**	**115,532**	**56.1%**

Figure 91: NYC change in hotel room supply by borough from 2007 to 2017 (Source STR, 2017)[102]

[102] https://www.nyc.gov/site/planning/planning-level/housing-economy/housing-economy.page

Manhattan is the core of the hotel industry with 81% of NYC's hotel rooms and more unionized hotels (193) than Brooklyn (4) or Queens (5). NYC enjoys the highest hotel occupancy rates of any market in the country. However, in 2019, hotel revenue per available room declined due to rising labor costs, high commission fees from online booking sites, and growth in the number of hotels.

In brief, prior to COVID-19, NYC represented one of the hotel industry's largest markets with investments allowing a supply of new rooms; however, 2019 marked the lowest year-over-year quarterly growth since the Great Recession.[103] In 2017, NYC was the third largest market in the United States based on the number of rooms, behind only Las Vegas and Orlando, Fla. NYC hotels are owned by private developers based in New York and nationally, investment partnerships, and real estate investment trusts. More than 60% of NYC hotel rooms are affiliated with a national brand through a franchise agreement.

> *"We are in the business of branding, of creating and marketing brands that serve the everyday traveler. Being a franchise company is what our shareholders and investors want to see … because it is very low capital intensity, very low capital investments and requirements, and very strong and high cash flow with very high margins."* (Interview n°10)

Our respondent explained the role of a franchisor and emphasized how branding is powerful in the hotel industry through the franchisor (e.g., 70% of brands have equity in the United States).

> *"I would say, over time, all hotel companies have been able to build stronger relationships with their franchisees because franchisees need their brand more than ever. And what I mean by that is if you're an independent, and you do not have a relationship with Marriott or a Hilton or a Wyndham or a Starwood, for example, you're out on your own with your business being disintermediated by third-party providers who have no investment in your business but are charging 25, 26, 27% commissions and receiving 25% of your revenue with no skin in the game. And 70% of your revenue may be coming through Expedia.com."* (Interview n°10)

---

https://www.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/plans-studies/m1-hotel-text/nyc-hotel-market-analysis.pdf page 21

[103] https://www.businesstravelnews.com/Procurement/PwC-2020-US-Hospitality-Outlook-Relatively-Flat

Our respondent provided further insight into the evolution of channels of distribution:

> *"It's very hard to compete with the marketing capabilities of Expedia and Booking.com. But there are some strategic partnerships that you can create with meta-search vendors such as Cody Kayo, DDI, or Derby Soft. And meta-search really kind of has been a game-changer, especially over the last few years."* (Interview n°10)

In NYC: the Hotel Association of New York City (HANYC)

HANYC is one of the oldest hotel associations in the country, having been founded in 1878. The association plays an active role in advocating on behalf of the hotel industry on various issues, such as tourism promotion, taxes, and other relevant legislative matters. Our respondents highlighted the major challenges faced by the industry, such as online travel agencies presented in Chapter 3.

> *"Booking as meta-search sites and they also have regular search platforms. So, the biggest change that has occurred is [that] the hospitality industry has lost some degree, if not a substantial degree, of control of that distribution. Between Expedia and Booking, the two biggest giants, they spend something like $20 billion on ads alone, Google ads. So, it's enormous."* (Interview n°7)

The association represents a vast majority of hotels in NYC, encompassing major chains, boutique hotels, luxury hotels, and independent establishments. It serves as a liaison between the hotel industry, government officials, and the general public. During COVID-19, HANYC played a critical role in advocating for relief measures and assisting its members during this crisis.

In Washington, D.C.: The American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA)

The AHLA was founded in 1910 and represents a strong voice in the hospitality industry, representing thousands of luxury and boutique hotels, motels, resorts, and other lodging businesses across the United States. It advocates for the industry's interests on key issues such as labor regulations, taxation, and travel promotion and offers industry-specific training and certification programs. During COVID-19, the AHLA promoted safe domestic travel by ensuring health and safety measures.

5.3.3.2. Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY)

REBNY is a real estate trade association in NYC founded in 1896; in 2022, it had 17,000 members. It represents influential real estate professionals, from brokers and owners to builders and managers. REBNY has a strong presence in legislative affairs, representing its members at the city, state, and federal levels. This organization has played a prominent role in shaping the real estate landscape of NYC for more than a century and in advocating for tax incentives for new construction, zoning changes, and other significant real estate concerns. As our respondent indicated,

> *"Many of the issues that we face sometimes are government-led. So, the government may propose a policy or propose a law that could have a significant impact on the real estate industry as a whole. And when I say the real estate industry as a whole, [inaudible] is the only trade organization in real estate that represents pretty much every component of the real estate industry. So, we represent owners, we represent brokers, we represent architects, engineers, everybody that's involved."* (Interview n°12)

5.4. Institutional work pre-COVID-19

After presenting the group of external actors to the Airbnb ecosystem in NYC, we propose to examine the various activities they undertook in the process of institutional work, referring to the original framework of Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) and utilized by Zvolska et al. (2019) through the three periods: pre-COVID-19 (2018–2019), during COVID-19 (March–June 2020), and post-COVID-19 (July–December 2020).

5.4.1. Introduction

Focused on creating institutions, Airbnb is engaged in various forms of institutional work among its groups of stakeholders. First, we presented the institutional work with **its proponents,** in other words, (1) the hosts (i.e., political work such as advocacy and definition, cognitive work such as education, and normative work such as constructing an identity; (2) the guests (i.e., political work such as advertising and normative work such as creating identities; and (3) the

investors (i.e., political work such as definition and normative work such as constructing identities and changing normative associations. Second, we highlighted the political work that targets **the opponents and regulators** (i.e., political, normative, and socio-cognitive work) and their responses. This chapter describes the institutional work mechanisms deployed by Airbnb and the other actors for each sub-sections.

5.4.2. Political work

5.4.2.1. Airbnb > Defining

According to Lawrence (1999), "Defining allows actors to construct rule systems that grant status or identity or that define boundaries of membership or practice standards (e.g., accreditation or certification of actors within a field)." Defining is crucial work for DPs in the SE, which seek to define themselves and their roles and, therefore, is considered to be a prerequisite before advocacy work (Zvolska et al., 2019). For instance, Uber claimed to be a tech company rather than a mobility, taxi, or ride-sharing organization to avoid being regulated as a taxi service. Our respondents made it very clear that Airbnb followed the same route, defining itself as a digital platform protected by Section 30 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act, which was written 30 years ago in the primitive internet era.

> *"So, the Communications and Decency Act, Section 230 of that Act, protects platforms—an interactive computer provider is what they call them—from any liability on account of a posting or a listing by someone. So, Airbnb has always claimed around the country, in the last 10 years, that they're just a platform."* (Interview n°7)

> *"This is critical to understanding Airbnb in the United States. The federal law that they used saying they were immune from prosecution of the advertising ban is because of the Communications Decency Act [Section] 230. That is the reason they can exist in the United States is because they can't be held accountable for the illegal actions of their hosts."* (Interview n°19)

Section 230 provided Airbnb with a degree of immunity from being held liable for content posted by its users. This includes listings, reviews, and other user-generated content. For example, if a hosts posted a misleading description of their rental property, Airbnb was not legally responsible for this content.

> *"But you must have a rule against Airbnb and make them pay. Right now, they do not have that ability because they have this protection from what I said at the beginning, Section 230."* (Interview n°7)

A host is defined as a member of a community of hosts who are passionate about embracing a sense of belonging. Airbnb had established specific criteria and guidelines to define and manage the status of hosts on its platform, and these guidelines were designed to maintain a high standard of quality, safety, and guest satisfaction. Airbnb developed a star rating system through which guests could rate their experience in various categories such as cleanliness, communication, and check-in. For example, Airbnb created the status of Superhost to recognize hosts who received high rankings from guests (above 4.8), positive feedback, low cancellation rates, high response rates, and number of stays booked.

Data collected highlighted that hosts could be considered a category of hoteliers who define Airbnb as an online travel agent comparable to Booking.com, thus listing their units on the platform (see Figure 18).

> *"So, if Airbnb can offer distribution power and fill some of those room nights and maybe do it at a lower cost than some other distribution channels, then I think any hotelier would say, 'You know what? I would look at that.'"* (Interview n°10)

> *"It's been from the proliferation of distribution partners and particularly from online travel agents. And so, the biggest challenge for the hotel business has been how to try to keep the customer from gravitating toward online travel agents or how to minimize the growth of the commission charges that those agents levy."* (Interview n°9)

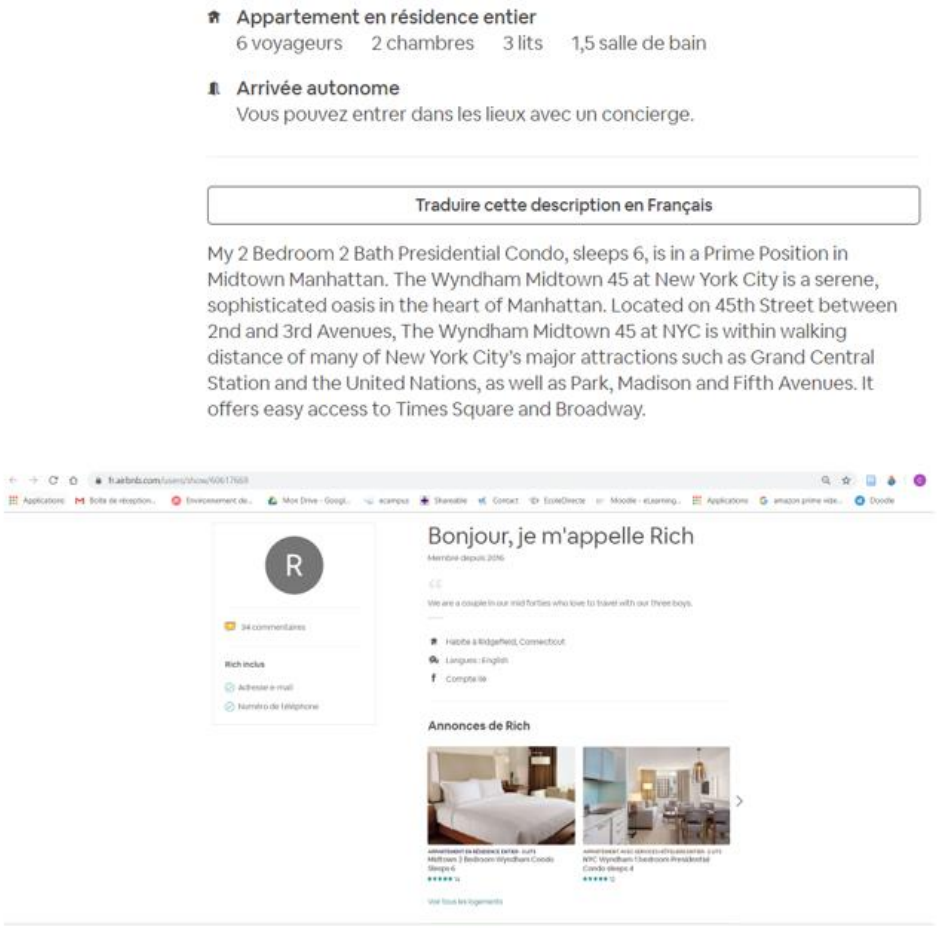


Figure 92: A two-bedroom apartment from the hotel chain Wyndham listed on Airbnb with a description in the Airbnb cultural tone, not Wyndham's corporate one (Source: Airbnb.com)

Consequently, we argue that this situation revealed intra-group tension in which some market actors (hotels) listed on Airbnb would create new institutions whereas others would maintain existing ones.

Other actors > Defining

For opponents, our data highlight that defining Airbnb represented critical institutional work by opponents who sought to maintain existing institutions, thereby influencing general public perception. Table 29 summarizes the way our respondents defined Airbnb. For example, the New York City Council defined and characterized an Airbnb unit with the following:

> "A lot of these buildings have been transformed into what we call illegal hotels where the worst-case ones are studio apartments converted into four-bedroom apartments; there are bunk beds stacked on top of each other" (Interview n°18)

The message framing defining Airbnb and its contributors revealed strong criticism from HANYC. For example, the respondent from HANYC defined hosts as "the who's doing the drug dealing over here is the host, who's doing the illegality, it's the host." (Interview n°7)

Table 27: How opponents actors defined Airbnb (self-elaborated based on interviews)

Opponents and regulators	Airbnb defined as
American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA)	"illegal hotel"
Hotel Association New York City (HANYC)	"a company as a source of illegality," "illegal activity," "model of illegality"
Hotel Group X	"OTA: online travel agency"
New York State Senate	"illegal hotel industry," "illegal hotel operators," "illegal activity," "illegal hotels"
Real Estate Board of New York City (REBNY)	"illegal short-term rentals"
Housing advocate groups	"illegal hotel," "illegal commercial activity," "business totally illegal"
Office of Special Enforcement (OSE)	"illegal hotel," "illegal short-term rentals"
New York City Council	"illegal hotels"
Office of Manhattan Borough	"illegal use of apartment"
Travel agency	"digital platform"

Airbnb > Engaging in lobbying

Advocacy "refers to the mobilization of regulatory and political support through direct techniques of persuasion" (Zvolska et al., 2019). There are three forms of advocacy: lobbying, litigation, and advertising (Suchman, 1995). Our data indicates that, since its creation, Airbnb has built ties with key influencers by funding politicians, hiring lobbyist firms, and employing political organizers and former campaign managers close to power.

Our data reveal that tenant advocacy groups were actively opposed to tourists staying in residential apartments in 2004, before Airbnb's founding: "… residents noticed that there were constantly strangers coming in and out of apartments with suitcases. And so there was just a lot of concern and confusion, and then some people started telling us that they were seeing listings for their buildings online."[104] When entering the NYC market, Airbnb began engaging in lobbying in 2008, the year it was founded.

> *"Before the State Senate actually voted to pass the bill, I remember distinctly Airbnb first started to get engaged … with legislators on the topic. I was here in New York City, and I remember receiving a call from Senator X, saying, 'I just met with a lobbyist from some company called Airbnb who's concerned about this bill that we're trying to pass. Have you ever heard of them?'"* (Interview n°17)

> *"But they've certainly been actively working with lobbyists and a couple of legislators to try to change New York state's laws."* (Interview n°17)

> *"Everyone they hire, they hire for name recognition or political connection."* (Interview n°19)

[104] NYT Article: appendix 5



Figure 93: The lobbying Bureau ensures compliance with the Lobbying law

Lobbying in the city of New York is governed by Administrative Code §§ 3-211 through 3-223 and Chapter 1 of Title 51 of the Rules of the City of New York, collectively known as the lobbying law. The 2018 and 2019 NYC clerk's annual lobbying reports mention Airbnb as one of the 10 companies that spent the most money on outside lobbying firms. In 2018, in NYC, Airbnb paid five lobbying firms a total of $377,500, and in 2019 paid four companies a total of $430,000. By comparison, Uber spent $163,552 on lobbying in NYC in 2018.

Table 28: Airbnb in NYC lobbying budget (source: Lobbying Bureau of the Office of the City Clerk https://www.cityclerk.nyc.gov/assets/cityclerk/downloads/pdf/annual-report-20190301.pdf)

2018

AIRBNB, Inc.	Bolton-St. Johns, LLC	$150,000.00
	Brown & Weinraub, PLLC	$100,000.00
	G. Fontas Advisors Inc.	$52,500.00
	Kirsten John Foy	$70,000.00
	Stanley K. Schlein, Esq.	$5,000.00
		$377,500.00

2019

AIRBNB, Inc.	Bolton-St. Johns, LLC	$150,000.00
	Brown & Weinraub, PLLC	$150,000.00
	Stanley K. Schlein, Esq.	$30,000.00
	Steel Lion Strategies, Inc.	$100,000.00
		$430,000.00

Our data indicate that donations are perceived as a lobbying mechanism used by Airbnb to influence public opinion. According to XX, "They donated millions of dollars to a number of not-for-profit [agencies] in the city, all of which were heavily politically connected." Additionally, recruiting influence from powerful people who are active in the political sphere constitutes lobbying:

> *"In New York, when they sued on the advertising law, they hired XX, who was a mentor to my boss, at the time my direct supervisor, who had almost been the fire commissioner, who was personal friends with the corporation counsel, right? They knew that she was heavily politically connected."* (Interview n°19)

Our data reveal that Airbnb's strategy in NYC is twofold: (1) increase the number of hosts to force the municipality to make it legal and (2) create tensions between the two layers—the city and the state—by trying to get the state to regulate in a way that limits the municipality taking advantage of the tensions among the governor and the mayor of NYC at that time.

The political work of Airbnb, engaged in lobbying aimed at influencing local communities, is best summarized by the following quotes:

> *"They gave $10 million as grants to community groups. Some groups refused to take their money. When you're running a nonprofit organization, and somebody comes to you and says, 'We'd like to give you $500,000,' or 'We would like to give you $1 million,' it takes a lot of guts to say no. But some groups said, 'No. We don't want your money.' But there were groups that did take it."* (Interview n°22)

> *"And there's no question that over the years Airbnb and HomeAway and some of the other platforms have spent a lot of time and money lobbying Albany to try to change the law that was put in place in 2008. They've not gotten very far."* (Interview n°19)

In the legal battle opposing Airbnb and the city of New York, hosts in NYC face a strong coalition of opponents such as HANYC, with strong ties to political consultants and politicians who oppose STR platforms. The legal battle required Airbnb to accelerate the empowerment of hosts as ambassadors of Airbnb. Professionalizing hosts includes giving them the means and tactics to defend their rights to operate through Inner Circle groups, as presented in Chapter 4. Thus, our data reveal that hosting in NYC is risky, as an active coalition of opponents makes their daily operations unsecure. For this reason, hosts alert guests not to respond to neighbors' questions regarding their travel motives or their identity.

Airbnb > Grassroots lobbying

> "Thank you for coming with us to Albany to talk with decision-makers about your hosting experience."

We found that Airbnb engaged in mobilizing hosts to appeal official decisions, reflecting the reciprocity of interests and the domination of the platform as hosts became more dependent on it.

> *"I think one unique aspect of Airbnb is just that we have our payment systems; all the payments are handled via the platform. We have our insurance policies for guests and then hosts the guarantees that we offer and so on."* (Interview n°38)

Airbnb, like other DPs, deployed other lobbying initiatives complementary to the traditional ones, such as grassroots lobbying. The principle is to mobilize its community of users to lobby directly and influence deregulation or to stop proposed laws or their enforcement by officials. The diversity of efforts recalls the civil society practices targeting politicians, such as online petitions, hearings, partnerships with civil society groups, and protests. Hosts clubs such as the one presented in Chapter 3 provide strong support for hosts, including discussions of issues faced by the hosts community. This allows hosts to create new relationships that provide support in finding information about local rules or to co-create solutions, and this is coordinated discreetly by Airbnb.

An important point revealed in our study is that the platform engaged the resource owners (i.e., the hosts) in the advocacy process by encouraging them to participate in bill polls. To do so, the platform provides guidance and materials for hosts performing in this role.

> *"Several years ago, they paid for attorneys to defend the hosts at the administrative level. They've now funded a host who received violations to sue the city to say that he got them because he testified against the bill."* (Interview n°19)

Airbnb's strategy is to establish its hosts community as a constituency by converting hosts into lobbyists who play a pivotal role in defending the platform. This started in 2013 in NYC and was publicly advertised with a personal video from NYC Airbnb hosts congratulating Bill de Blasio on his election as mayor and inviting his family and friends to their homes to celebrate his inauguration.[105]

Airbnb started its first grassroots lobbying campaign through an organization called Peers, which called itself a member-driven organization that supports the SE movement. Under the direction of a former employee of the Obama administration, Peers volunteered to lobby New York State to amend the hotel bill, and it provided recommendations for how to use online petition tools to target city commissions.[106]

5.4.2.2. Other actors > Engaging in lobbying

> "The proliferation of illegal hotel operations has removed thousands of affordable apartments from an already tight housing market, disrupted the lives of countless permanent residents who live in the buildings where the illegal hotels are operating, decreased the revenue the city receives from hotel taxes, and ruined many tourists' visits in New York. The internet has made it easier than ever to advertise illegal hotels, which are residential units that are designated under the New York State Multiple Dwelling Law and city zoning rules as permanent residences but are improperly used as transient hotel rooms. Even a brief search of the internet reveals hundreds of advertisements for illegal hotels." (State Senator Liz Krueger, testifying before a New York City Council committee)[107]

As described previously, NYC social and economic causes mobilized social actors who were engaged in advocacy through collective action. Our data indicates that Airbnb opponents were connected through a series of direct and indirect relationships, empowering the coalition against the platform Airbnb. For example, REBNY and tenant advocacy groups funded lobbying activities against Airbnb to fight hosts–tenants subletting their apartments illegally or landlords with multiple unauthorized rental properties.

---

[105] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFV5wFF-Y-I
[106] https://www.fastcompany.com/3022974/is-peers-the-sharing-economys-future-or-just-a-great-silicon-valley-pr-stunt)
[107] *(Testimony of State Senator Liz Krueger, Before the New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings, , Regarding Intro 404 to Increase the Fines Levels for Illegal Hotel Violations, December 13, 2011)*

> *"Well, we've been trying to protect laws because Airbnb has been trying to introduce legislation on a state level that would legalize what they do. So we've had to lobby in Albany quite a bit this past year. XXXX and other people from HTC [Hotel Trades Council] and those coalitions, we had to do a slide presentation for legislators in Albany. So they understood why this is a problem. There are multiple attacks. … Airbnb has a lot of money, and they're spending a lot of money to try to persuade this."* (Interview n°22)

The political work against Airbnb was coordinated mainly by the OSE and the State Senate interacting with local community, for example, through tenant advocacy groups, to face powerful NYC market actors: HANYC defending hotels' interests and REBNY representing the landowners in NYC. Government officials who were interviewed reported the collective dynamics among actors despite opposite beliefs and value systems. For example, the Hotel Trades Council (HTC) worked with the hotel industry in 2017, lobbying for increased resources to target Airbnb, "playing a behind-the-scenes role on the advocacy side" (Interview n°17).

In brief, New York state legislation opposing STRs united powerful actors and less powerful actors (e.g., landlords, the hotel industry, tenant advocacy groups, and unionized workers) around a shared goal.

> *"When you're looking to pass legislation or to try to get more money for an agency, you work with whatever allies you may have, even if they're people who you normally disagree with, like the landlords. "* (Interview n°17)

> *"Airbnb fights very hard in Albany and in our local city government. There is this entity ShareBetter. We work together with them. They are a coalition, but, to be honest with you, they are also lobbyists. So there is a lot of involvement from the hotel industry. So we work together but we're not that in mesh because not all of our interests overlap. So that's what we do."* (Interview n°16)

The three-year plan of the American Hotels and Lodging Association (AHLA; see Appendix 4) precisely addressed the strategic actions to be deployed aggressively against Airbnb at the national level. This plan combined political, normative, and cognitive work at the federal and state levels with an emphasis on (1) enforcing regulations and taxes on STRs to dismiss potential litigation threats; (2) working in a broad coalition of affordable housing advocates, community groups, neighborhood associations, labor and attorneys general; (3) providing resources and support to HANYC; and (4) coordinating the narrative and launching an advertising campaign on paid media called "My Neighborhood" to aggressively counter the Airbnb narrative of helping the middle class make ends meet.

OSE > Advocacy as a pivotal role

The OSE as a governmental body and the Tenants Association as a community representative played a key role in the NYC battle alongside the New York State Senate and the Borough of Manhattan.

The Department of Criminal Justice of NYC created the OSE in 2007 for traditional criminal enforcement targeting trademarks, illegal massage sex businesses, and the like. Since 2015, however, it has focused predominantly on enforcing what is known as transient lodging." "Transient lodging is an umbrella layperson's term that is commonly used to refer to buildings that provide temporary housing for fewer than 30 days at a time. Nonetheless, we are committed to working with the City Council on addressing all forms of transient lodging, as this issue remains important and complex," Christian Klossner testified at a June 13, 2017, hearing before the New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings.

The OSE is a multi-agency task force that comprises an executive team (the CEO, deputy director, and advisor for research and policy) and a field force (Department of Buildings, NYC Fire Department, inspectors, police officers, and the legal and PR teams from the NYC Criminal Justice Department). Since its origin, OSE has played a central role in coordinating activities for the safety of New Yorkers:

> *"My office's mandate, originating from a Mayoral Executive Order in 2006, is to focus on addressing issues affecting public safety, community livability, and property values that can lead to the growth of serious crimes."* (Interview n°19)

Our data reveals that the OSE coordinated the tracking of so-called illegal hotels with other state services such as the Fire Department and NYC inspectors, ensuring compliance with zoning regulations and NYC construction codes. OSE teams interacted with the Tenants Neighborhood Coalition whose cooperation strengthened the opposition, as one member said:

> *"And the whole idea there is that you have a DOB inspector and a policeman and fireman, and I think a public health. So, it's multiple people from multiple agencies working together. They go in there and they find out what's going on and they write up violations and they can bring a court case. But without that agency, we floundered for years. We had to do rallies. We had rallies in front of the building. I mean, if anyone complained about conditions in our building to the management, they would be laughed at and ridiculed… The agency OSE has been a fantastic help."* (Interview n°22)

The mission became more nuanced in 2018, evolving and focusing on transient lodging, in other words, ensuring that residential buildings were not being used illegally as hotels, which can affect the security and quality of life of residents and create shortages in the housing market.

> *"So, one of the things that Senator XX spent time on, and a lot of this was informal but also just advocating with the mayor, with the City Council for additional funding to be provided to the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement."* (Interview n°17)

> *"My office's mandate, originating from a Mayoral Executive Order in 2006, is to coordinate efforts across city agencies to problem-solve around emerging issues adversely affecting neighborhood cohesion, livability, and safety."* (Interview n°19)

Through the years, the OSE seems to have become more proactive through organizational changes, evolving into a multi-agency team of inspectors responding to complaints or undertaking proactive assignments, collecting data, and strengthening cooperation with the City Council and key partners.

Our data reveals that the role of OSE is to educate the hosts while being the voice of the coalition against Airbnb, organizing meetings with tenant advocacy groups and institutional leaders, such as senators and Manhattan borough officials. Indirectly, the role of the OSE is to influence other key actors in NYC, such as real estate conglomerates that could contribute funding to the OSE, enabling the recruitment of more human resources, in other words, the number of inspectors tracking so-called illegal hotels.

Technological and organizational resources

Our data reveal that the institutional work of the non-market actors was to increase the resources and skills to fight illegal hotels. OSE's headcount increased from 11 people in 2015 to 36 in 2015 to 50 in 2019, with all involved using new tools to track illegal hotels. The OSE's annual budget was $6.25 million in 2019. Effective enforcement required tactics calibrated for NYC specificities. It also involved OSE gathering additional data to arm the City Council with a better understanding of the universe of violators so that it could respond appropriately. Thus, the Senate and City Council employed a powerful tool to crack down on illegal hotels and to prevent new ones by imposing substantial monetary penalties and passing a bill to clarify the term "permanent residency" and the duration of stay (< 30 days is illegal).

> *"And so now we've got a whole lot more data to be able to figure out when we're doing work, which of the people who are doing it on a commercial level, who are the people who are doing it with connections, what's the right approach."* (Interview n°19)

The OSE also focused on increasing enforcement by recruiting qualified new inspectors, a legal team, and a PR expert. Our respondent explained that the required skills for the team are "trained litigators working previously for the government, which is pretty rare" (Interview n°19) or those who are experienced in investigative settings and issuing subpoenas. Additional resources required were promoted by the coalition, whose initial request came from the City Council and was supported by REBNY.

> *"Currently our budget is $6.25 million. We have an authorized head count of 67, about 50 of which are currently here. And [with] each of those expansions, the idea was more tools to be able to meet the scale of activity of illegal short-term renting in New York. I mean, we're also fighting in the way that we have the resources to. So I don't think there's been a situation where we've said, "We'd like to do this. We don't have the money or the resources for it, so we won't do it."* (Interview n°19)

Mediatic arena

The OSE continuously communicated through the mass media to reinforce its efforts to constrain the DP and disrupt Airbnb, becoming the the institutionalized voice of the opponents. The New York Times was regularly informed and was able to mobilize the society at large, thereby enhancing pressure on the platform. For example, the OSE hired a communications manager in 2019, and our data indicate that, during this period, the OSE's reports focused on data regarding illegal hosts that illustrated the platform's lack of corporate responsibility.

Our data reveal that the OSE and Airbnb used The New York Times as an indirect communication channel with the media serving as an intermediary in covering the discourse of both parties.

> "Obviously, those interactions are much different. We receive their input largely through their comments in the press, through their lobbying activities. We understand the way they try to impact policy decisions. Occasionally, they've written letters directly to me, not very often."

> "And so, the communications are all done in the world of public communications. So, if they give me a letter, before I get it a reporter has it and is calling to ask us for comments on the letter that they sent us. We're like, 'Well, we'll have to see the letter, right, to be able to comment on it.' So, there isn't actual dialogue other than in the context of either litigation or subpoenas."

Tenants > Engaging in lobbying

The HCC resisted the growth of Airbnb, alleging the harm it caused to the local environment and its impact on the housing market and affordable housing. As the main orchestrator of the tenants' opposition, the HCC identified key spokespersons and educated them to raise their voices; lead action; work collectively with city agencies such as the OSE; collect funds from tenants, private foundations, and charitable causes; and conduct lobbying activities. For example, the HCC spent $960, 000 on lobbying activities in NYC in 2018.[108]

Hotel industry > Engaging in lobbying

After having reported lobbying efforts directed at government officials, we now focus on the hotel industry and the real estate community, both of which worked to protect fair competition and the interests of landowners and developers. To introduce this section, the abstract of an email (dated August 16, 2019) sent to HANYC members reflects the legal battle between the hotel association and Airbnb:

> "As you are aware, HANYC, in conjunction with other local organizations, has been at the forefront of fighting the broad campaign against illegal hotel operators enabled by short-term rental (STR) platforms. Today, I wanted to share with you some positive developments in this space at the federal level. Congressman Ed Case (D-HI-1) is calling for increased accountability for STR platforms like Airbnb and HomeAway. The Congressman shares many of our coalition's concerns about these platforms profiting from the illegal activity conducted on their sites and is introducing federal legislation titled: the Protecting Local Authority and Neighborhoods (PLAN) Act."

---

[108] *Source: Lobbying Bureau of the Office of the City Clerk https://www.cityclerk.nyc.gov/assets/cityclerk/downloads/pdf/annual-report-20190301.pdf)*

HANYC, which represented hotel industry actors from hostels to large chains such as Marriott, was quite active in litigation and lobbying against Airbnb. A member of the association, the director of an NYC hostel, indicated that each member of the association was required to contribute to the lobbying expenses.

> *"Look, there is an expense budget line named Airbnb. We all have to pay for the lobbying activities against Airbnb."* (Interview n°14)

Airbnb and other actors > Engaging in litigation

As expressed by one respondent, "everything is difficult in New York City. We're bigger. It's 8 million people" (Interview n°25).

NYC's STR regulations are considered to be the strictest in the nation. The fight between the platform and NYC began in 2014. That year, Airbnb CEO Bryan Chesky positioned this DP as an actor in the SE, a field that was not yet regulated. This was best expressed in Chesky's 2014 interview with The Wall Street Journal: "There were laws created for businesses, and there were laws for people. What the sharing economy did was create a third category: people as businesses, to which the application of existing laws is often unclear."[109]

However, the same year, Airbnb proposed to change the New York law to allow the platform to collect and redistribute the city hotel room occupancy tax, an amount estimated at $20 million annually, from its hosts to the city of NY. This Airbnb proposal was rejected.[110]

Airbnb and its hosts community operating in NYC faced regulatory and legal issues such as taxation and housing laws; in 2018, a legal battle erupted over Airbnb's refusal to provide monthly data about its online transactions to NYC. Airbnb and HomeAway sued the city, hiring one of the most famous lobbying and law firms in NYC.

> *"So I think that the New York City government is very opposed to Airbnb and the sharing economy full-stop. And I think there are different reasons for that, including their long-term relationship with the hotel industry, but, and with some landlords who are very, very concerned about how their property's being used because many leases prohibit the rental. So I think the city—that's their position. I think the state is more open. But I think it's just."* (Interview n°25)

---

[109] Andy Kessler, The Weekend Interview with Brian Chesky: The 'Sharing Economy' and Its Enemies (Wall St J Jan 17, 2014)
[110]Beth Goldman, Letter Responding to Request for Ruling Regarding New York City Hotel Room Occupancy Tax *5 (New York City Department of Finance Aug 21, 2013), online at http://www.nyc.gov/html/dof/downloads/pdf/redacted /o201etter/o20rulings/ hotel/lr13_4939.pdf (visited Feb 23, 2015)

We found that Airbnb's normal business activities included filing lawsuits against the city to defend its status as a platform under the Communications and Decency Act, a law established in 1997 when Craigslist was created. The law was meant to "protect platforms, just platforms, preventing them [from being] responsible for content provided by users," according to Interviewee n°7, who added the State Senate declared that "litigation is one of Airbnb's go-to business tools."

The platform historically has targeted against any regulation that would affect the number of hosts on its platform, as the success of the platform is interrelated with the number of hosts. Heavy regulations could slow the growth of the platform.

The evolution of the STR legislation and institutional changes in NYC are marked by four periods for Class A multiple dwellings, characterizing the legal battle taking place in NYC as summarized in Table 30. All actors were engaged in the litigation against the platform.

> *"We, ourselves, are involved in, at this point, one litigation against Airbnb, and the litigation centers around Miami. We're a New York City Hotel Association, but I'll tell you why we have this litigation going on in Miami."* (Interview n°7)

> *"We fight to support provisions, both in the state legislature and the city council, to get better enforcement of the existing laws against transient rentals."* (Interview n°16)

2010: New York State passed a law making it illegal to rent out an entire apartment for fewer than 30 days. In 2010, New York State's Multiple Dwellings Law established the rule that now governs all STR operations that register with the city: Individuals in NYC apartment buildings may not rent out their entire apartments or multi-family homes for fewer than 30 days.

2014: NYC clarified the 2010 law, emphasizing that it is illegal to advertise such rentals. The new regulations made home-sharing practices illegal in most cases.

2016: In 2016, NYC was Airbnb's largest market in the United States.[111] In October 2016, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed a bill to prohibit advertising that promotes the use of dwelling units in Class A multiple dwellings for other than the purpose of permanent residence.[112]

---

111 https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/22/technology/new-york-passes-law-Airbnb.html
112 https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2015/2015-a8704c

2018–2019: The year 2018 was emblematic of the legal battle between NYC and STR platforms. The New York City Council amended the city's administrative code in relation to STRs, requiring STR platforms to provide information about transactions to the mayor's OSE. Information to be reported included the address of the STR, the name and address of the host, the URL of the listing, whether the rental was for the entire unit or a portion thereof, the number of days rented, the fees collected by the online platform, and, where available, the rent collected by the booking service. Non-compliance with this law resulted in a fine of more than $1,500 per listing for information not provided or the total amount of the collected fees the preceding year. A few weeks later, Airbnb sued the city, challenging the new law. HomeAway filed a similar lawsuit, and both were fighting the city as a DP coalition. The law firm explained that,

> *"We also represent HomeAway; I think that the bigger providers try to be more organized; just have common interest. So it makes sense to try to be on the same page. That's always helpful."* (Interview n°25)

However, Airbnb was mindful of its public image as it began preparing for its IPO:

> *"But I see a lot of that with this housekeeping that they have to do before they want to do their IPO, because New York is one of their biggest markets. And so you can't go IPO with this big pending lawsuit because investors don't like unknown risks like that, so they're trying to get some certainty there to calm the investors."* (Interview n°23)

June 2020 marked an important historical milestone in the relationship between Airbnb and NYC, resulting in a settlement of the lawsuit in which Airbnb agreed to disclose information about hosts as part of "the recovery of New York's tourism economy."

Table 29: Historical decade battle between NYC and Airbnb from 2013 to 2020 (inspired by Rashaad Jordon SKIFT, 31/08/2023)

Date	Title/actions	Who
October 2013	Airbnb faced subpoena for user data in NYC, Airbnb saying, "it would not cooperate".	Eric Schneiderman, NY Attorney General David Hantman, Airbnb public policy division
February 2014	A significant proportion of Airbnb's NYC listings are unlawful. "2/3 Airbnb's NYC listing were breaking the law"	Eric Schneiderman, Connotate
May 2014	Judge declared Airbnb's subpoena overreaching	Judge G.W. Connolly Eric Schneiderman
January 2015	NYC debated the short-term rental sector: 8 hours on STR discussion. Airbnb expressed its desire for a revision in the state's legislation, which currently prohibits renting out an entire apartment for less than 30 consecutive days in NYC.	NYC Council Advocates Airbnb
November 2015	NYC allocated $10 Million to monitor Airbnb and Hotel Activities Budget was designed to find illegal operators and advertising campaign	OSE
June 2016	New York introduced advertising restrictions, overruling Airbnb's preferences. Violation would be penalized by $1,000 for a first-time offense, $5,000 for a second, and $7,500 for third.	
October 2016	Governor Cuomo endorsed legislation targeting unlawful short-term lodgings and ratified a bill focusing on unauthorized short-term lodgings and hotels across NYC and the state.	Governor Cuomo
July 2018	NYC mandated Airbnb to reveal host information $ 1,500 for each listing undisclosed	NYC Council OSE
August 2018	Airbnb challenged NYC in court	US district judge Paul Engelmayer
January 2019	NYC's data disclosure law temporarily halted by judge. (violation the fourth Amendment protecting against unlawful search)	US district judge Paul Engelmayer
June 2020	Settlement reached between Airbnb and New York City	

In Chapter 4, we described the evolution of the hosts' profile as landowners starting an Airbnb listing with one unit and scaling it to multiple properties. However, as mentioned previously, with the exponential growth of Airbnb in NYC as a tourist destination, a growing number of host–tenants converted their rental apartments into Airbnb, thereby violating their leases:

> *"The problem with Airbnb is that it empowers tenants to do it themselves. And tenants will turn their apartments into a hotel. What they don't mention is that sometimes that's a violation of the tenant's lease. They'll get evicted for doing it. And if you're a rent-stabilized tenant and you're making all this extra money, you're profiteering for well, on this lease, you can be evicted. Airbnb doesn't say that. If a lot of New Yorkers are staying someplace else and renting their place out for the weekend, that's very common on Airbnb. If you do it occasionally, it's not a big deal, but if you're doing it all the time, we have people who are hoteliers."* (Interview n°24)

Airbnb > Engaging in advertising

The myriads of actors in the tourism industry presented in Chapter 3 helped leverage the uniqueness of Airbnb, claiming it distinctiveness as an actor of the SE driven by community values. Those attributes are promoted and advertised through symbols and claim a sense of belonging.

Beginning in 2016, Airbnb invested in mass and social media to promote Airbnb experiences through Instagram feeds, story ads, and television and print campaigns. Year after year, by capitalizing on earned content, Airbnb succeeded in competing with other accommodation solutions. Airbnb extended its user-generated content campaign to Experiences by wrapping content around the AirbnbExperiences hashtag. It continues to build their community and establish trust by putting people first.



Figure 94: Persuasive advertising comparing with hotels

The Belong Anywhere campaign and the Belo logo launched Airbnb as a super brand. We argue that the most powerful facet of Airbnb growth is its success in building a brand. This is demonstrated in Table 32 indicating that Booking.com and Expedia spent more than $10 billion in marketing in 2019, while Airbnb spent 77% less than its rivals. The Airbnb brand allowed the platform to bypass the Google race because it receives online traffic directly.

Table 30: Marketing budget in $ millions (Source: https://skift.com/2020/11/16/Airbnb-gets-more-brand-punch-from-its-marketing-spend-numbers-show/)

	Airbnb	**Booking Holdings**	**Expedia Group**
2020 YTD	$295	$1,793	$1,395
2019	$1,140	$4,967	$5,043
2018	$666	$4,956	$4,670
2017	$548	$4,596	$4,360

This is not the case for online travel agencies and hotels who lack brand loyalty.[113] In 2017, Airbnb responded to accusations that some of its hosts were discriminating against guests on the basis of race and gender by introducing a nondiscrimination policy on its site. The platform's "We Accept" campaign was launched to underpin Airbnb's long-held values of community-led and culturally diverse travel.

Other actors > Engaging in advertising

Hotels face the challenge of distribution channels, with powerful actors such as booking.com considered to be costly, causing hoteliers to balance existing distribution channels with the optimization of their websites. For example, hotels.com was created in 1990s in the early days of the internet, seeking to gain market share in the growing online travel booking space.

[113] https://skift.com/2020/11/16/Airbnb-gets-more-brand-punch-from-its-marketing-spend-numbers-show/



Figure 95: Hotels.com launched a campaign introducing the term "hate-like", "Be there. Do that. Get Rewarded". Here in NYC subway, in 2019.

Moreover, hotels can be frustrated by the fees that online travel agents charge and seek to stimulate more direct bookings through marketing strategies aimed at generating traffic on the hotels.com website. The famous Captain Obvious campaign, one of the most recognizable mascots in travel advertising, aimed to develop brand recognition for Hotels.com with a massive investment in media including TV, print, radio, and online ads. The Captain Obvious character states the benefits of using Hotels.com in various scenarios.

OSE > Engaging in advertising

The OSE launched an awareness campaign to sensitize New Yorkers and tourists about what it termed illegal STR activity in the city.[114] The objectives were to (1) raise awareness and understanding of the OSE's mission, (2) improve public trust in the OSE, and (3) build momentum around housing issues in NYC, especially regarding the impact of Airbnb listings.

The campaign targeted three key audience segments—hosts, neighbors, and tourists (both domestic and international)—and was executed in six languages and across various channels, including digital ads, outdoor ads in traffic areas such as airports and bus shelters, and print media.[115]

> "We contracted with an outside firm to develop a campaign. So, we wanted people to know A, it can be illegal; B, you can come to our website for information on what the law is; and C, if you want to report you can find out how to on our website, right? So, we really wanted to drive people to our website with the goals of educating them on what the law is and giving them a conduit to the right way to report it to us. And so, we launched ads in April 2018. Some of them are still up."

[114] https://www.nyc.gov/site/specialenforcement/about/data-reports.page
[115] https://esmtheagency.com/project/ose/

"And then we did a lot of digital placement ads targeting just readers of key news outlets in specific neighborhoods. We did pay search returns, right? So, you Google NYC Airbnb and chances are the first one would say, 'Airbnb,' and the second one would say, 'Stay in the now.' And then we did some targeted traveler ads also with specific ads about coming to New York City."

"Our main target audiences were hosts … including people who were actively hosting or people who were considering being hosts, and non-hosts, right, the neighbors, the tenants, the people who were experiencing the impact, and then also guests." (Interview n°19)

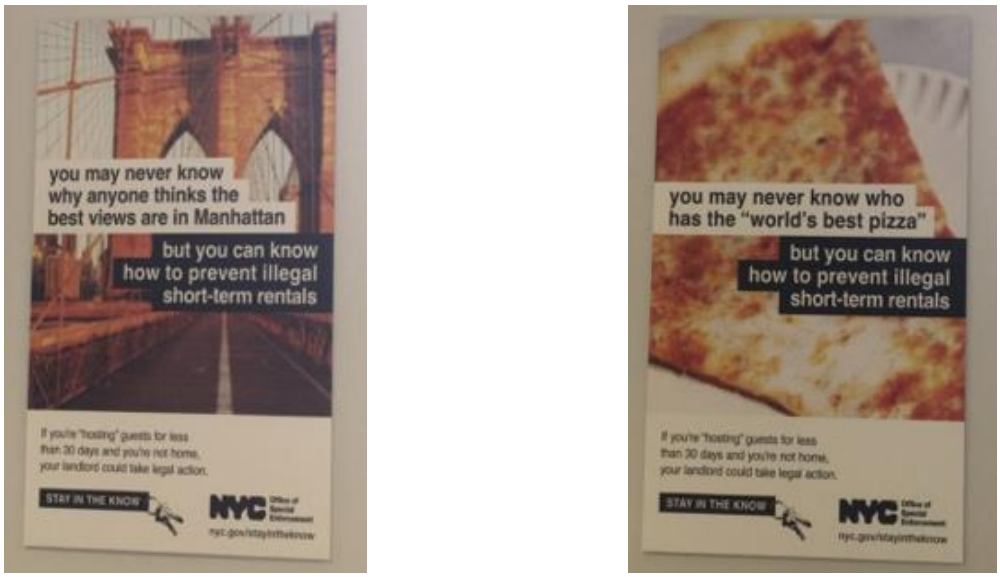


Figure 96: Awareness campaign informing about short-term rentals and enforcement



Figure 97: Call "311": a behavioral campaign from the OSE

5.4.3. Normative work

Affordable housing has always been a major issue in NYC, before the emergence of STR actors, when tenants' associations, the City Council, and the Senate district of the borough would address the issues, focusing mainly on stabilizing rental fees, ensuring safety and hygiene, and facilitating access to permanent housing. The proliferation of STRs in NYC has **vitalized the interrelationships among them** and has framed the fight against illegal STRs as **a shared belief and a self-identification component.** The following testimony was offered at two Committee on Housing and Buildings hearings in June 2018:

> "We are committed **to working with the Council on addressing all forms of transient lodging, as this issue remains important and complex**. By working to stop the proliferation of these illegal short-term rentals, OSE's enforcement efforts advance key goals of this administration: to help preserve affordability and community livability; prevent harassment and displacement of permanent residents; and increase access to permanent housing. Our enforcement efforts protect residents and visitors to New York City from dangerous violations of the City's building and fire safety standards, while striving to ensure that New Yorkers are not disturbed by illegal commercial activity in their residential neighborhoods and buildings."[116]

> "Our enforcement efforts protect residents and visitors to New York City from dangerous violations of the city's building and fire safety standards, while striving to ensure that New Yorkers are not disturbed by illegal commercial activity in their residential neighborhoods and buildings."[117]

5.4.3.1. Airbnb > Constructing identities

Doing Good

The controversies start with the identity of Airbnb embedded in its origin as a mom-and-pop model. The sharing of one room with a guest to provide incremental revenues allowing hosts to pay their bills is the narrative of Airbnb but is considered to be a compelling story by critics:

> *"And so, Airbnb is routinely trying to lift up sort of their front line, right, of the hosts who aren't doing it a lot, making some money but not a lot, aren't*

[116] Committee on Housing and Buildings Hearings of June 26, 2018
[117] Committee on Housing and Buildings Hearings of June 28 2018

> *commercial actors, have compelling stories about why they're doing it—to pay medical bills, to stay in their home, to deal with losing a job. And those are compelling, but they are the tip of the iceberg as far as who's using Airbnb and who's making the money at Airbnb."* (Interview n°19)

Promising that guests will live like a local, Airbnb proposes accommodations that are in non-mass tourism zones, allowing tourists to experiment with residential neighborhoods. Thus, in the case of NYC, while most hotels are in Manhattan, the Airbnb accommodations are widely dispersed throughout the city (e.g., Queens, Brooklyn), allowing lower prices than hotels. Our data highlight that the spatial dimension forged the identity of Airbnb—in other words, the "doing good" identity for the hosts who do not live in upscale units in Manhattan and need to collect extra income to build a better life.

In the same vein, the responsiveness of Airbnb providing free housing to victims of catastrophes or crises such as natural disasters and wars remains a strong way for the platform to leverage its role as a community leader, aiding in relief efforts around the world as part of its philanthropic activities.

We traced the philanthropic Airbnb initiatives in NYC and considered the 2013 Hurricane Sandy initiative to be interesting. It reflects the role of philanthropic initiatives in building identity, creating institutions, and leveraging the socio-political legitimacy of Airbnb. During Hurricane Sandy, NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg partnered with Airbnb to provide a dedicated website to connect hosts offering free housing to the hurricane's victims, thereby legitimizing the platform. Bloomberg said, "Since Sandy hit, we've seen numerous examples of the private sector using technology to find new ways to help people. This new offering from Airbnb is another great way to match New Yorkers in need with those who have something to give."[118]

In 2014, Airbnb launched an extensive campaign in NYC to gather support from locals to leverage the social benefits of the platform with the following message: "Airbnb provides supplemental income for tens of thousands of New Yorkers. It also helps the local business in our neighborhoods and strengthens our communities."

---

[118] https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/401-12/mayor-bloomberg-Airbnb-new-platform-help-victims-hurricane-sandy-free



Figure 98: Airbnb NYC campaign: "Airbnb is great for New York City"

The "doing good" narrative is perpetuated by hosts representing the Black community or those in dire economic situations, such as a laid-off single mom with two sons, in which Airbnb is presented as a social game-changer contributing to a better life. Airbnb created a mini-site, airbnbnyc, depicting on the landing page a video of a host calling for signatures on a petition to support NYC hosts: "If you agree that the thousands of Airbnb hosts like Carol should be able to rent out the home they live in, then please add you name and join us."[119]

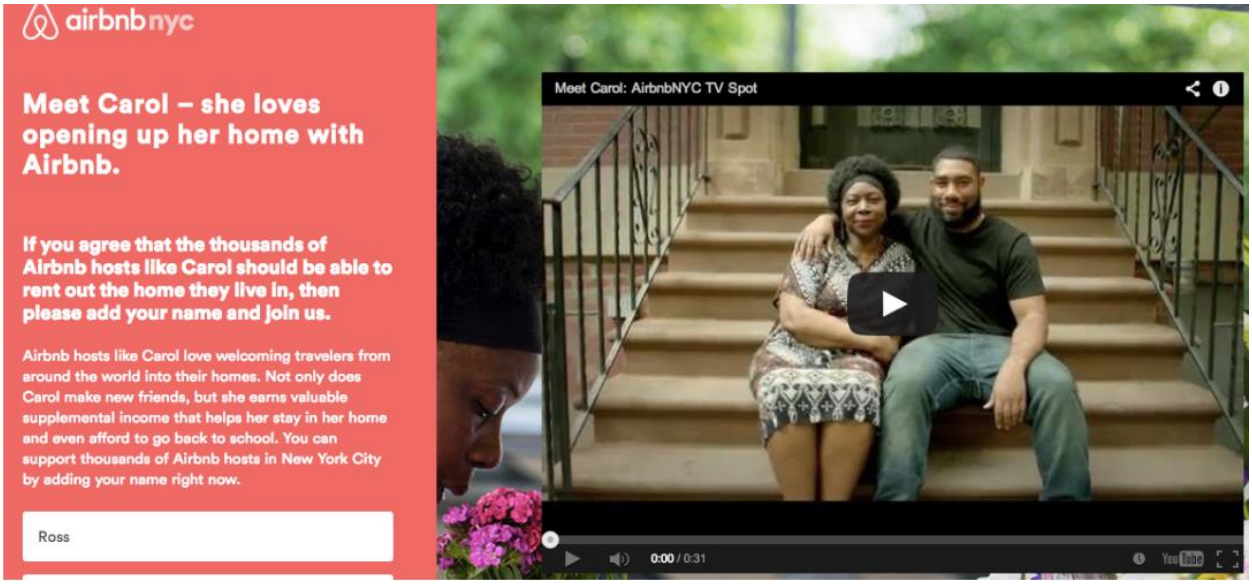


Figure 99: Airbnb petition to support NYC hosts

[119] https://parmarossa.wordpress.com/2014/09/09/how-airbnbs-new-york-ad-campaign-worked/

We consider that this "doing good" narrative has a powerful echo during a crisis and represents a trait of Airbnb's identity, being widely promoted during PR campaigns in time of crisis. In the narrative, Airbnb responds to the basic need of housing and allows immediate response from its hosts community through technology. In the absence of clear evidence (e.g., number of individuals hosting for free), we consider crisis to be a window of opportunity for Airbnb to increase its cognitive and socio-political legitimacy. For example, the 2008 global financial crisis fueled Airbnb storytelling, and natural disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina or Sandy enhanced the "doing good" profile of the platform.

In brief, we take a skeptical view of those philanthropic initiatives that legitimate the platform by partnering with key officials:

> "Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Airbnb today announced the launch of a new platform to help connect victims of Hurricane Sandy with free housing options. Airbnb is now providing a platform to connect those who are eager to offer free housing to those who have been displaced by the storm. The entire process will be free, but Airbnb will still provide customer service, insurance for hosts, and other services. New Yorkers can now list their homes and extra space easily and immediately, and people who are looking for a place to stay can access these free spaces via Airbnb's Donated Sandy Housing Directory at https://www.Airbnb.com/sandy."[120]

One interviewee explained how Airbnb legitimized itself (1) by enhancing its "doing good" profile: "Below the water, from the tip of the iceberg, is a vast majority of illegal activity that will sink. So, they try to legitimize themselves by saying, 'we're helping these people,' completely ignoring whether or not they're helping these people break the law or create unsafe conditions"; (2) by promoting their contribution to cities: "And they try to legitimize themselves by saying, 'We can generate revenue for the city'"; and (3) by enhancing their pioneered inclusion policy in favor of diversity and minority:

> *"The other thing they try to do to legitimize themselves is when they do pick the people to be the face of Airbnb, they are pretty; what's the right word—they're very careful on who they select. They try to … recruit hosts of color in Black and Brown communities."* (Interview n°19)

[120] https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/401-12/mayor-bloomberg-Airbnb-new-platform-help-victims-hurricane-sandy-free

Other respondents supported this by saying:

> *"This is the lion's share of Airbnb's market in NYC. The lion's share of the Airbnb profit comes from illegal hotels. Airbnb does everything they can to cover those facts up; all of their advertising features people of color living in Brooklyn. It is totally misleading, their advertising."* (Interview n°22)

Our data reveal that, before COVID-19, Airbnb was already promoting the Responsible Hosting certification to its stakeholders. Government officials contested this concept, drawing a distinction between acting responsibly and acting legally. The complexity of legislation and lawsuits encouraged the hosts to ignore the legal requirements of the activity and induce misalignment with the latest regulations.

Constructing identities through data provider and academic influences

Our study highlights how data are manipulated to measure the impacts of STRs to influence public perception through media coverage. Claims regarding the lack of legitimacy were made frequently, supported by data opposing the impact of Airbnb on NYC. Two websites have arisen—AirDNA in support of Airbnb and Inside Airbnb for opponents—both of which offer data to journalists and scholars and contribute to nourishing the controversies. Both websites are active in educating visitors about the positive and negative externalities of Airbnb activities through data collection and PR events. "XX now spends about 10 hours a week parsing statistic from listings in more than 100 cities and fielding half a dozen queries from academics and journalists around the world."[121]

For example, in August 2019, Arun Sundararajan presented his research on platform governance sponsored by Uber at NYC's Uber office. In February 2020, just before the COVID-19 crisis, he hosted Nathan Blecharczyk, one of Airbnb's founders, at a conference titled "Platform Responsibility and Global Leadership" at New York University's Stern School of Business, introducing Airbnb as an organization driven by multiple stakeholders with a societal role. Conversely, HANYC collaborated with scholars at McGill University, Penn State University,

[121] https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-05-23/meet-murray-cox-airbnb-s-public-enemy-no-1-in-new-york

Florida International University, and the University of North Carolina and sometimes funded studies focused on tax revenues, discrimination, and public safety.

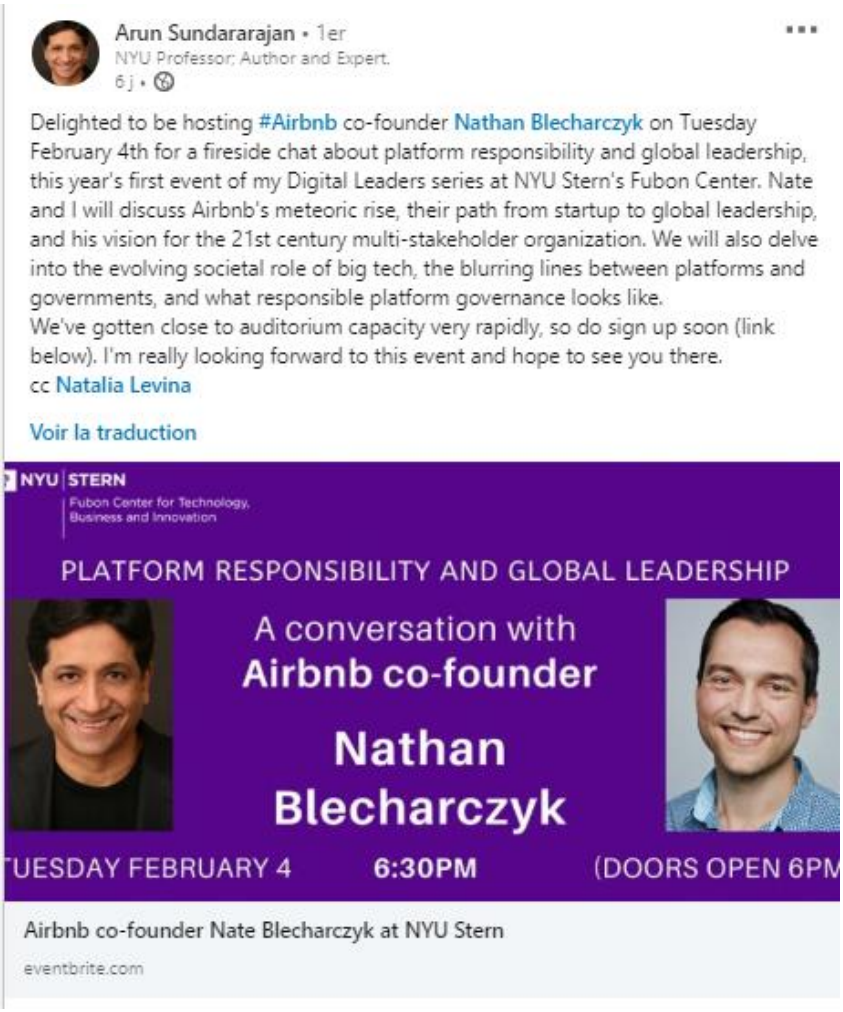


Figure 100: Airbnb co-founder presenting "his vision for the 21st century multi-stakeholder organization" hosted by New York University's Stern School of Business.

Constructing identities through media influence

Media outlets that describe Airbnb as a provider of illegal hotels in NYC have more than an indirect influence on stakeholders' opinions, directly evoking the illegal dimensions of the platform. We argue that they are an influential factor in the process of legitimation of Airbnb. Interviewee n°19 supports this assertion: "We receive their input largely through their comments in the press, through their lobbying activities, right? We understand the way they try to impact policy decisions."

Airbnb > Challenging normative associations

The nature of sharing, initially perceived as "the oldest form of mutual distribution among family, friends, and neighbors" (Belk 2017), has been seriously altered in NYC with home sharing operated by Airbnb. It has eroded social cohesion and has generated tensions within residential neighborhoods, harming community values in favor of profits. This was best explained by one interviewee:

> *"I told all the people that were subletting my place if they saw any of the neighbors, if they could just say that they were my friend and just not say they were subletting and just say, 'Oh, yeah. I'm friends with XX. I'm staying here.'"* (Interview n°37)

In the same vein, Airbnb hosts–tenants challenged the normative associations of NYC's strictest STR legislation and regulatory framework. Our findings reveal that a minority of Airbnb hosts–tenants in NYC operated under stabilized rent arrangements. Typical of the responses explaining the issue are the following:

> *"Airbnb empowered people to do this, ordinary people. Tenants put themselves in danger, or they're abusing the laws because they want to make money. And renting to tourists is very big money."* (Interview n°24)

> *"We also have received calls from constituents sometimes who are renters who have … gotten in trouble with their landlords because they were renting their apartments on Airbnb and didn't know that they were breaking the law. Though usually, they were in less trouble for breaking the state law in illegal hotels. And the real problem that they faced was that they violated their lease and so could face eviction. And so we've been doing a lot of work for years to educate our constituents that they can really put their own … homes at risk if they're doing this."* (Interview n°17)

Hosts–tenants initiated some alternatives, as expressed by one respondent:

> *"I'm posting it on Listings Project and just doing short-term, month-long rentals when we traveled because I was scared of getting in trouble because I wasn't technically allowed to sublet. So I liked Listings Project and some of the less visible platforms."* (Interview n°37)

5.4.3.2. Other actors > Challenging normative associations

A previous section presented the work of the OSE targeting hosts engaged in illegal activity while creating awareness among New Yorkers about STR regulations through advertising campaigns. We argue that the OSE adopted the role of reconfiguring relations between moral foundations and practices, presenting the social impacts and positive externalities of its actions. The general manager of the OSE stated,

> *"In 2017, OSE received a total of 1,800 complaints through 311 reports of … illegal and problematic short-term rentals. In 2017, OSE conducted 3,800 inspections and issued approximately 3,050 violations, amounting to nearly $7.2M in fines imposed on those violations that have been adjudicated. OSE has a track record of effectively fielding complaints, conducting investigations, and taking appropriate enforcement actions."* (Interview n°19)

Each year, the OSE must report the number of active registrations and their status (granted, refused, revoked, and pending) with a summary of the reasons for refused or revoked registrations and the fines or penalties imposed and collected.

In 2019, the OSE received a total of 3,871 complaints, a 215% increase over the 1,800 filed in 2017. Although the number of locations in Manhattan receiving complaints decreased by 9%, the total number of complaint locations in Brooklyn and Queens increased by 74% and 56%, respectively, compared to 2018. Brooklyn and Queens accounted for the majority of locations receiving complaints, at 29% and 22%, respectively.

Table 31: Illegal short-term rental complaints by borough in 2019 (Source: https://www.nyc.gov/site/specialenforcement/about/data-reports.page)

Illegal Short-Term Rental Complaint Locations by Borough Year Over Year					
Borough	**Locations with Complaints, 2018**	**Share of 2018 Complaint Locations**	**Locations with Complaints, 2019**	**Share of 2019 Complaint Locations**	**Percent change in Locations with Complaints**
Bronx	37	2%	92	4%	149%
Brooklyn	425	21%	738	29%	74%
Manhattan	1.229	59%	1.119	44%	-9%
Queens	357	17%	557	22%	56%
Staten Island	22	1%	33	1%	50%
Total	**2.070**	**100%**	**2.539**	**100%**	**23%**

Airbnb > Constructing normative networks

Our data reveal that Airbnb is actively communicating directly with its community of hosts through the hosts club, educating them to defend their status to officials. Hosts are encouraged to claim that they are not motivated by self-interest and that they represent a strong community. Over time, this increases the hosts' dependency on the ecosystem and, thereby, on the platform. A representative of the NYC mayor claimed that Airbnb is dishonest, diffuses false information through its networks, and uses normative control:

> *"They are trying to create a movement, especially in New York City, to change the law to allow something that's illegal to become legal. They have paid organizers who recruit hosts and who band them together and have them force host clubs. They intersect in different ways in different places. I wish it were easier. So, the lack of clarity and then the intentional message from Airbnb is: 'The government is coming after you, stand up for your rights.' They're basically saying 'Stand up for your rights to break the law.'"* (Interview n°19)

Other actors > Incumbents: Constructing normative networks

Airbnb opponents have mobilized regulatory and political support by forming coalitions. They refer to traditional business actors supplying accommodations in the tourism sector with a focus on the hotel industry, actors in the real estate business (REBNY), and industry associations such as HANYC and AHLA. In NYC, a coalition of hoteliers, unions, and landlords successfully communicated a shared vision with policymakers by leveraging their resources. Market actors combined their authority and resources to advance a shared regulatory agenda with the unions, bringing together moral and economic motives. This unexpected coalition reflects economic and moral interests to influence regulatory policy, bringing moral authenticity to the cause.

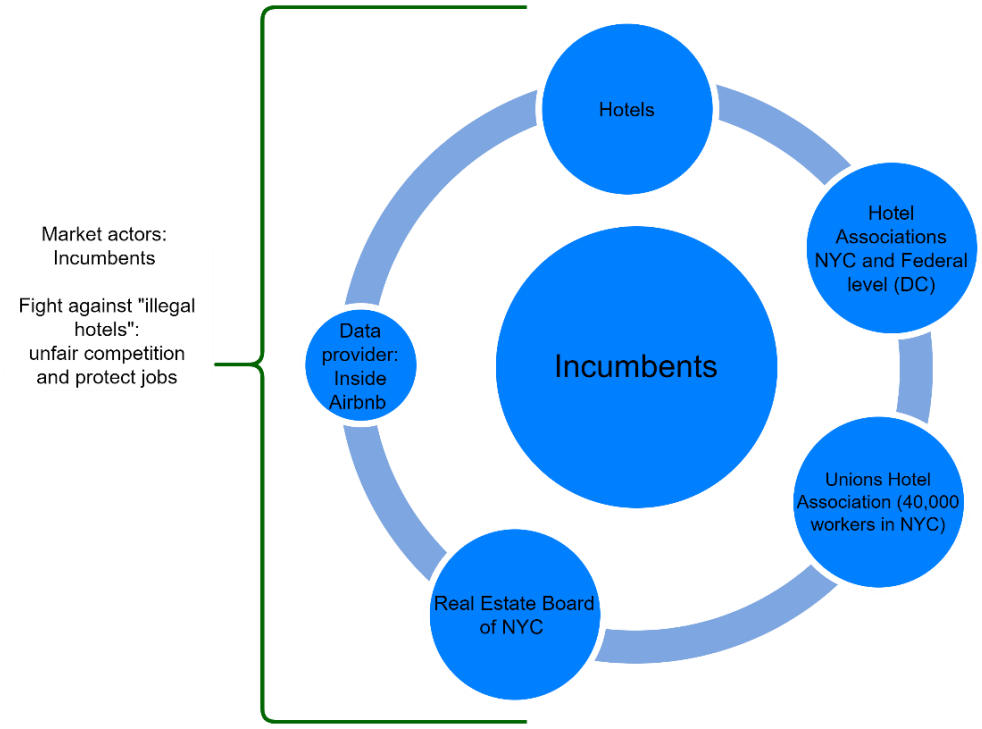


Figure 101: Market actors: incumbents fight against "illegal hotels" (Source: Lecuyer, 2024)

Other actors > Tenant advocacy groups: Constructing normative networks

As a social group voice in NYC, tenants are influential non-market actors suggesting structural social inequality with NYC landowners. Indeed, tenants associations represent pivotal community-based organizations in a limited resource context. As presented in Figure 101, NYC community-based tenants associations are organized in two groups:

> *"We have two groups, the coalition against the illegal hotels, which is the communities group; we met usually once a month. And there is the illegal hotel working group, a separate group with the same community groups but with the elective officials who are opposed to Airbnb. We met at the office of the President of Borough of Manhattan."* (Interview n°22)

They succeeded in creating a growing coalition driven by the Tenants PAC, representing one voice in sharing information, strengthening tenant associations, and operating programs for low- and moderate-income tenants to become activists in their communities.

The Senate formed an Illegal Hotel Task Force and created powerful tools to crack down on illegal hotels and prevent new ones from entering the industry, imposing substantial monetary penalties and promoting a bill to clarify the term “permanent residency” and the duration of stay (< 30 days is illegal).

> *“After discovering that many of my colleagues in the City Council and State Legislature were receiving similar complaints from their constituents, I, along with City Councilmember XX and Assemblymember XX, formed an Illegal Hotel Task Force, which grew to include dozens of city and state elected officials, neighborhood organizations, and housing advocates. Over the next few years, the task force held countless meetings with city and state agencies and hosted multiple town hall meetings across the city with hundreds of residents directly affected by illegal hotels operating in their buildings.”*
>
> *“New York City’s enforcement agencies need the tools provided by Intro 404 in order to effectively crack down on illegal hotel operations that are endangering public safety, taking desperately needed affordable apartments away from residents, and reducing tax revenue. … Given the fact that many illegal hotel operators charge hundreds of dollars a night for units that could only be legally rented for a tiny fraction of that amount, it is absolutely critical for the ECB to have the power to impose substantial monetary penalties.”* (Interview n°17)

Tenant advocacy groups considered the emergence of Airbnb to be a direct threat to the rent-stabilized market, allowing tenants to turn their apartments into a hotel. Figures 102 and 103 present the evolution of the collective action undertaken by these heterogeneous actors representing the tenants and neighborhoods against Airbnb in NYC.

> *“The responses explaining the opposing organizational form [are] best summarized as the coalition against illegal hotels that we all belong to that Airbnb’s strategy would be to insert themselves into negotiations over rent control and try to get some weakening amendments.”* (Interview n°22)

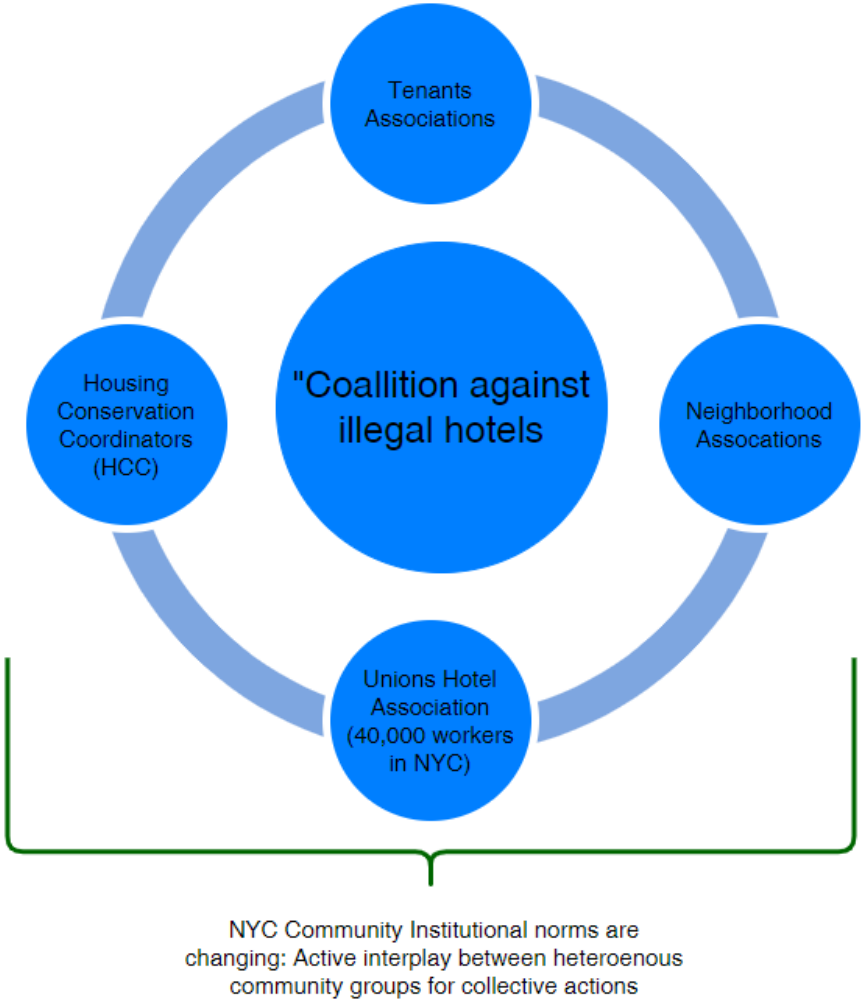


Figure 102: Coalition against “illegal hotels” (Source: Lecuyer, 2024)



Figure 103: “Illegal hotels” working group (Source: Lecuyer, 2024)

The Housing Conservation Coordinators (HCC) nonprofit organization sponsored NYC tenant advocacy groups and began playing a pivotal role in 2006, as described in the following:

> *"The organizer at HCC contacted me and said he was forming a coalition of people to address the issue of illegal hotels. And I met with a large group of tenants that included XX at a meeting at HC. It was spring 2006."* (Interview n°22)

Their role and power increased with the emergence of Airbnb in residential rentals, transforming some quiet neighborhoods into so-called chaos and creating sanitary and health issues:

> *"And you had people like a friend of mine who was trying to deal with cancer. She was suffering from cancer and she wound up having to open doors all night while people knocked, 'Let me in. Let me in. Let me in.' Though they get into the building sometimes if they lose their keys, they'll palm the buzzer. They'll just press all the buzzers in the building, it doesn't matter what time of night. So you're constantly being awakened by chaos. You just never know what's what from one week to the next what to expect."* (Interview n°23)

> *"New York City did not have a problem with bedbugs, and after the hosteling took off, that's when it all started. It's a terrible problem if you have bedbugs."* (Interview n°22)

As low-income tenants NYC tenants struggled to pay their rent, the community-based organizations did not disband. Their integration into the local community accelerated through social ties, leading to a stronger mission bond. The Tenants PAC unified other community associations in NYC and played a determining role in influencing local elections:

> *"We helped turn the New York State Senate blue, meaning flipped from Republican to Democratic control. … Now there are 40 Democrats and 23 Republicans. And we had a very central role in making that happen."* (Interview n°22)

They succeeded in sustaining themselves over time by collecting funds from various sources, from "people who believe in what we do, such as labor unions, and allowing to collect $120,000 to support Senate candidates' campaigns." In 2019, for the first time, the Tenants PAC spent money on lobbying, advocating for tenants' rights and strengthening protections for New Yorkers living

in rent-controlled or rent-stabilized apartments. Changes related to rental units approved by the state Legislature just before COVID-19 made it more difficult for landlords to evict tenants. According to a press release from the New York Assembly, "These reforms give New Yorkers the strongest tenant protections in history. For too long, power has been tilted in favor of landlords and these measures finally restore equity and extend protections to tenants across the state."[122]

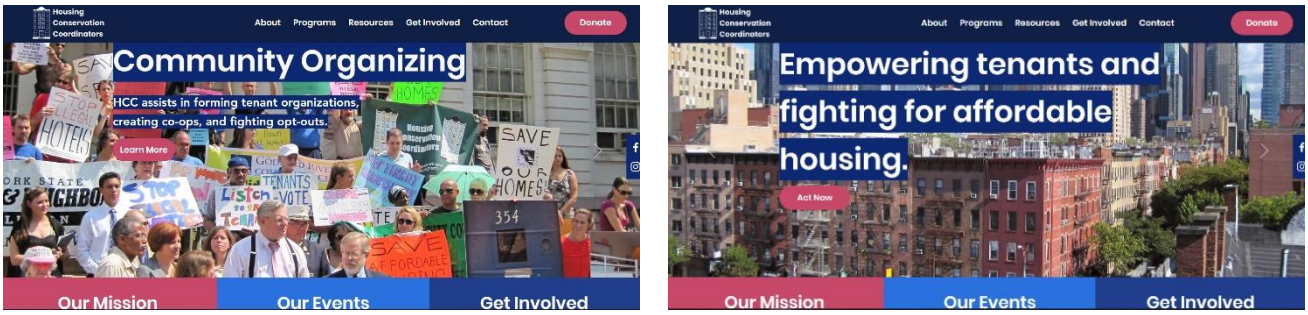


Figure 104: Community-based organizations: NYC tenants advocacy groups (Source: https://www.hcc-nyc.org/)

Tenants used different means to spread their messages, disrupting institutions through activism and protests but, most importantly, organizing themselves.

> *"Airbnb has a huge impact on the market and contributes to increased rentals, especially in some neighborhoods (Williamsburg, Central and North Brooklyn). Landlords have discovered that they can make more money renting night by night instead of permanent rental. When an apartment becomes vacant, instead of putting it on the rental market for one- or two-year lease, they start renting it on Airbnb by the night."* (Interview n°22)

The tenant advocacy groups used institutional work tended to strengthen their resources and become active citizens, allowing them to better understand the influence of legitimacy in community-based organizations. For example, tenant associations leverage the community logic, activating manipulative tactics to influence elections and asking tenants to do volunteer work.

> *"Door-knocking, phone-banking, what's called get-out-the-vote work, so on election day, you have people who are out in the field helping pull people to the polls. We call it 'get out the vote.'"* (Interview n°22)

[122] https://nyassembly.gov/Press/files/20190611a.php

For example, regular campaigns are set up to mobilize resources to influence varied groups of actors, including tenants, senators, and leaders at the borough, city, and state levels. According to a Tenants PAC email in 2020:

> "Because of your generosity, Tenants PAC has been able to contribute $14,400 to State Assembly candidates and $91,100 to State Senate candidates this year, so far. While this is a drop in the bucket compared to the landlords' outlays, our targeted contributions have been crucial to helping our candidates win."[123]

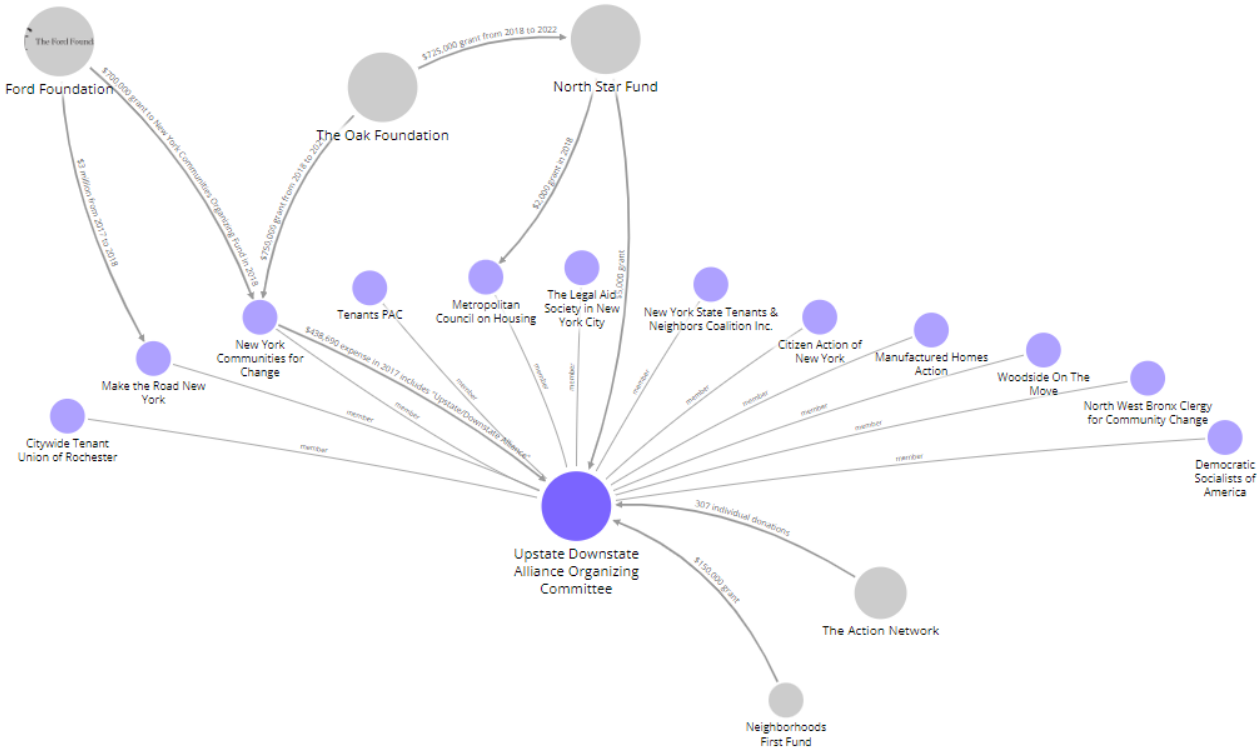


Figure 105: Tenants alliances funding (Source: https://littlesis.org/oligrapher/4293-upstate-downstate-alliance-funding)

In essence, the Tenants PAC serves the interests of the tenants and intrinsically encapsulates a social dimension, in other words, social acceptance within the NYC community. In contrast, the hosts community has a capitalistic dimension with no adherence to institutional norms, thus having

[123] *Tenants PAC Email Oct 27, 2020*

controversial legitimacy. Tenant associations are embedded in the established NYC environment and are associated with other community institutions, while the hosts community is not.

Our respondent went a bit further in revealing Airbnb's efforts to collaborate with the Tenants PAC and related community groups:

> *"At a time, they were looking for support. And I was not going to give them any support. I knew from the beginning that it was going to be a very bad thing for New York City and for affordable housing…"* (Interview n°22)

5.4.4. Socio-cognitive work

The third category of institutional work focuses on reshaping the framework of meaning systems via mimicry, theorizing, and educating. These mechanisms center on influencing the beliefs, assumptions, and interpretative frameworks that guide actions. Mimicry entails adopting established behavioral patterns. Theorizing is essential for formulating new beliefs and notions that underpin emerging institutions, while educating allows knowledge, enabling people to engage in new practices.

Mimicry is a form of institutional work allowing actors to mirror others' behaviors and practices. When introducing new regulations, practices, or technologies, it is valuable to use existing ones that are already recognized. Linking new methods with established ones increases the likelihood of novel concepts and structures being accepted as legitimate (Zvolska et al., 2019).

5.4.4.1 Airbnb > Educating

Airbnb engaged in various initiatives to educate and support its community of hosts, providing online resources, webinars, and local events to help hosts improve their listings and guest experiences. Airbnb developed and maintained online forums in which hosts could ask questions. The categorization of hosts, for example, as a Superhost, came with various educational resources through regular emails to help hosts maintain high standards.

Chapter 4 presented a list of hosts groups that organized and interacted through Facebook groups.

We succeeded in joining an Airbnb Inner Circle exclusive group aimed at fostering closer relationships between high-potential hosts and Airbnb mentors.

> *"We always start our meetings with our win. Who would like to share their wins today?"* (Interview n°26)

Inner Circle members benefited from sharing practices and receiving early or exclusive information about Airbnb's strategic moves and customer behavior trends fueled by Airbnb's real-time data collection. Special events were organized occasionally, such as summits facilitating networking and direct interaction with Airbnb ecosystems.

As presented below, Airbnb actively educated hosts on issues they might face through Inner Circle groups and on its communication platform, such as their web section titled "Airbnb's Terms of Service and Responsible Hosting Pages to inform hosts about the importance for being a good neighbor and understanding local laws."[124] Airbnb also educated hosts about grassroots lobbying and discursive strategies to manipulate general opinion and influence government officials to change regulations.

5.4.4.2 Other actors > Educating

OSE

The complexity of regulations regarding STRs can result in confusion for hosts about their possibly illegal efforts. The role of government is to educate hosts about local laws (in this case study, NYC laws).

> *"Airbnb only mentioned state law. They don't mention the local laws that make it illegal in all situations, right? They're intentionally misleading all New Yorkers [about] what the rules are. In fact, they're advocating that the rules aren't what they are, right?"* (Interview n°19)

Our data reveal that the role of the OSE was to open a dialogue with the guests and hosts who were violating NYC laws.

[124] https://www.congress.gov/116/meeting/house/110075/documents/HHRG-116-IF16-20191016-SD0009.pdf

> *"The things I took away were that they really desperately wanted to know what the rules were, right? They genuinely did not understand the rules, the process, etc. The woman who was renting out the two units in her building had received a lot of violations from us. [She] didn't understand what they all were. Didn't understand what her rights were, and so after the meeting, I spent some time talking her through. Our goals have been to improve our ability to deal with big targets, and we've done that. We've wanted to change the press posture and be able to have a steady stream of articles generated from the office that show what we're doing in our work, that highlight various harms, that highlight the lack of corporate responsibility, that highlight the amount of money being made by people, that it isn't just people making a few extra dollars. I think we've done that successfully."* (Interview n°19)

Senate

Our respondent highlighted the importance of educating officials at the city level and coordinating efforts to mobilize actors at the various layers such as the City Council and the mayor's office.

> *"We helped educate many of her colleagues in the council about the work that we had done as part of the working group and then to see if there were ways then that the City Council could take action on its own without having to go back to Albany to strengthen the laws further or other tools like trying to get additional data to the city or exploring other options."* (Interview n°17)

One of NYC's laws specifically relates to hosts who are tenants subletting their apartments and educating them about the consequences of listing their rentals on Airbnb.

> *"And so we've been doing a lot of work for years to educate our constituents that they can really put their own … homes at risk if they're doing this. So that's sort of our informal advocacy and education role that we've played. And we do this, I mean, just through our newsletters, through working with [the] community and tenant advocates.*
>
> *"[What] we've done continuously is to educate our constituents about … what's legal …, we get complaints from constituents on a very regular basis about illegal activity going on in their apartments."* (Interview n°17)

REBNY

REBNY is a powerful actor in the sense that it actively engaged in lobbying and litigation to defend its interests in both commercial and residential sectors in a flourishing economic context, with a 4% year-over-year increase in the average sale price of homes in NYC in 2015. Through direct communication to its members, REBNY played a key role in educating real estate actors about the need to enforce legislation on STRs, supporting the call for additional money to fund the resources needed for the OSE, such as increase the size of the OSE staff to protect the safety of tenants.

> *"Last week, a group of City Council members called for increasing the size of the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement (OSE) to address the rising concerns surrounding Airbnb and other short-term rental services. More importantly, REBNY members share the Council's concerns about the safety of all tenants. What happens when the keys to the front door are shared, or a security code is given out? These keys or passcodes can be duplicated and given to others. We are concerned about the safety of the tenant in an apartment staying with a stranger."* (Interview n°12)

Tenant advocacy groups

All members of the coalition against Airbnb took a role in educating non-market actors. For example, tenant advocacy groups educated policy makers on the impacts of Airbnb operations to the neighborhood:

> *"But they have not gotten very far at all. I think both the elected officials who worked hard to pass the 2008 law have been very, very resolute in working with their colleagues in trying to educate them about how important the existing laws for New York City, and then also the tenant advocates have done a very good job, as well, of educating legislators."* (Interview n° 17)

Theorizing, defined as "developing new categories and concepts to facilitate acceptance," reveals the power of the Airbnb brand. "We have a tremendously strong brand and our brand, it's both a verb and a noun."

5.5. INSTITUTIONAL WORK: COVID-19

5.5.1. Introduction



Figure 106: New York Governor Andrew Cuomo holds a news conference on COVID-19

NYC, one of the most densely populated cities in the world, was the first epicenter of COVID-19 in the United States. All interviewees, who were reached through Microsoft Teams, were locked down in their homes in NYC during COVID-19. Some deemed the isolation to be difficult:

> *"I might want to get out of New York."* (Interview n°32)

> *"It's been just so many different emotions, like we've been sort of just trapped in our apartment, our small apartments for the past three months. And then all of the chaos with the protests, and every day there's helicopters flying around, and the looting has pretty much stopped. But it's just been non-stop chaos."* (Interview n°37)

Others were luckier:

> *"We still need to get air fresh and, thank God, I have a back yard."* (Interview n°35)

All resulted in expressing the new face of the city:

> *"What I'm seeing dramatically is the total absence of people. New Yorkers, the vibrancy of NY, is based on the people everywhere. Then all month of March, there was nobody on the streets. You could go through Central Park. That's about all you can do in New York right now."* (Interview n°7)

The high death rate created anxiety that was visible in our respondents:

> *"It makes me very anxious. I mean, [President Donald] Trump has always made me anxious, but it's just another layer of anxiety, I suppose."* (Interview n°31)

During our second round of data collection, another crisis occurred in the United States related to the death of George Floyd, launching the Black Lives Matter movement advocating for justice for Black people. The video of Floyd's brutal death at the hands of police officers in Minneapolis went viral and crossed continents, where activists saw his death as a symbol of injustice.[125]

This situation mobilized waves of protests in NYC, with chaotic scenes increasing the level of anxiety felt by New Yorkers, which our respondents expressed in the following:

> *"I would urge the protesters to respect the curfew, and looting is criminal behavior, pure and simple…You have the COVID-19 crisis, you have the murder of Mr. Floyd, two very different situations, but both critical in and of themselves and both happening at the same time."* (Interview n°32)

The tensions allowed Airbnb to valorize its anti-discrimination policy and its "doing good" profile, expressed by its CEO on Twitter:

> "We stand with BlackLivesMatter. We are donating a total of $500,000 to the @NAACP and the @Blklivesmatter Foundation in support of their fight for equality and justice, and we will be matching employee donations to both groups. Because a world where we all belong takes all of us. Black lives matter. We stand with those using their voices and peacefully calling for justice, fairness, and racial equality." (Brian Chesky on Twitter, @bchesky, June 1)

5.5.2. Political work

In 2020, the travel sector was drastically affected by COVID-19. With borders closed and travel halted, Airbnb's gross bookings plummeted approximately 80%, not accounting for cancellations and changes.

---

[125] https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/30/nyregion/nyc-protests-george-floyd.html

5.5.2.1. Airbnb > Defining and advertising

During COVID-19, Airbnb defined new measures to produce a "healthy community." Initiatives introduced by Airbnb aimed at refining its cleaning procedures, evolving constantly with new information about virus transmission. The platform also provided real-time information on travel restrictions, helping hosts and guests plan their future activities considering guidelines for testing and mask-wearing. One major work in defining was the shift in guest preferences toward private homes in less densely populated areas (e.g., rural), with longer stays. Both Airbnb and the individual hosts redefined the nature of belonging. Indeed, Airbnb characterized its business model as "resilient and adaptable" and defined new ways of traveling and living during COVID-19 (i.e., as a digital nomad).

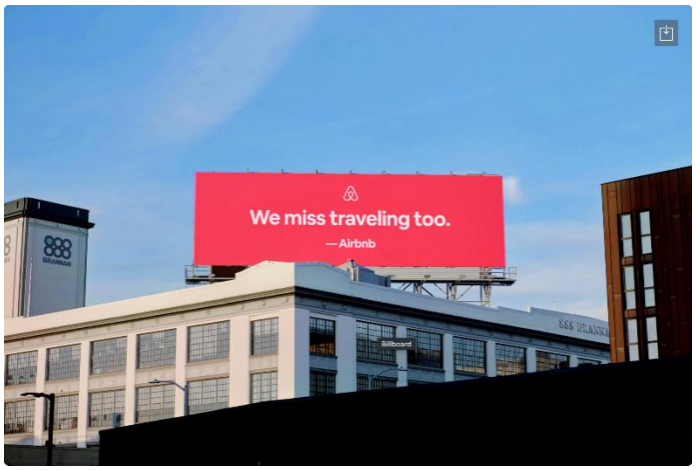


Figure 107: Airbnb headquarters at COVID-19 period: "We miss traveling too." Source: https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000119312521056952/d147144dex991.htm

> "Our selling point is that we don't view marketing with a capital M like most companies do; everything we do starts with the community first."[126]

[126] https://econsultancy.com/10-examples-of-great-Airbnb-marketing-creative/

After the decision to reimburse guests and sacrifice hosts, Airbnb acknowledged its mistake and advocated on behalf of the US hosts community by asking the White House and Congress to consider hosts to be eligible for the federal government relief package and proposing measures for hosts' support and financial aid. In this context, Airbnb defined hosts as hoteliers, seeking government assistance due to the shutdown of tourism activities and entitled to the same rights as the hotel industry:

> "It seems fairly likely at this point that the major hotel chains will receive some relief as part of the economic recovery package and for our hosts who are really on the front lines of the modern tourism sector, they believe should be a part of that as well."[127]

In this communication, Airbnb placed hosts on the same professional level as hotels and categorized them as representing "modern tourism." Airbnb's advocacy for the same measures as hotels institutionalized the platform, and it used mimicry to leverage its socio-political legitimacy among market actors and government officials.

Airbnb > Vesting: Reaching an agreement with NYC

The US response to COVID-19 was constantly evolving. In early March, the federal government began suggesting how to reduce the virus' spread, such as limiting gatherings to no more than 50 people; a day later, the president recommended avoiding groups of 10 or more people. States and cities implemented policies and measures to fight the virus in all sectors of society: shuttering schools and issuing stay-at-home orders requiring the closure of businesses except for essential sectors such as those required for economic needs, safety, and security.

In this unprecedented context, contrary to our first data collection, the NYC coalition against Airbnb refocused its priorities in the context of crisis management (e.g., hotels converted to hosting the homeless). In the absence of any opposition from critics and the need for the city to collect funds, the OSE and Airbnb reached a settlement agreement.

[127] https://news.airbnb.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/03/House-Airbnb-economic-recovery-letter.pdf

> *"We have long wanted to work with New York City on an effective regulatory framework, including information sharing—this agreement achieves that," said Christopher Lehane, senior vice president for global public policy and communications for Airbnb. "As we look toward the recovery of New York's tourism economy, we hope this settlement will represent a continuing relationship and the first step on a path forward for our community citywide."*[128]

> *"We will be able to better protect our communities and visitors, and more fully understand the impacts of the illegal short-term rental market. Now, more than ever, transparency is vital to the city's ability to keep residents and travelers safe." (Interview n°19)*

In June 2020, Airbnb agreed to dismiss its lawsuit against NYC and share its listing information on a quarterly basis, according to the settlement agreement. The agreement established a new framework for the city's local approach, requiring STR platforms to share information about their listings. Per this agreement, Airbnb withdrew its federal lawsuit against NYC, and the New York City Council agreed to introduce a revised local law. This allowed both parties to halt litigation at a time when the city faced declining state tax revenues; receipts from April through December were $2.5 billion below the same period a year earlier. "This settlement will establish an ongoing relationship and serve as the initial step toward progress for our entire community," ushering in the expected recovery of NYC's tourism industry.

During the first wave of COVID-19, the context forced a sudden reordering of priorities for all groups of stakeholders, acknowledging the impacts of the pandemic on their organizations. Some businesses envisioned a future reopening of activities and others prioritized solutions to survive, such as freezing property taxes, reducing penalties and fees, implementing flexible payment plans.

> "With NYC, as the national epicenter of this global public health crisis, it's no surprise that, along with everyone else confronting the current humanitarian crisis, our industry is deeply shaken." (Statement by REBNY)[129]

[128] https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/432-20/city-new-york-Airbnb-reach-settlement-agreement

[129] https://www.rebny.com/press-release/the-real-estate-board-of-new-york-announces-broker-confidence-hits-record/

For example, for the Senate, the priority was to avoid tenant evictions. For the hotel industry, the alignment with governmental requests—converting hotels into places to welcome medical staff, patients recovering from COVID-19, and homeless people—was on the agenda while preparing for a full reopening and negotiating with labor unions. REBNY responded to the crisis by supporting a bill to avoid eviction for 90 days to protect tenants and launched Project Parachute[130] to support 3,000 New Yorkers who needed assistance.[131]

This situation allowed Airbnb to leverage its Responsible Hosting program as a crisis-resilient model supporting a vulnerable population and by supporting municipalities that were struggling financially through the payment of taxes. For the OSE, its original mission of enforcing the law against illegal Airbnb hotels shifted to guarantee the adherence to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommended COVID-19 guidelines and protocols. In summary, Airbnb was no longer a priority for its critics, whose survival became the priority. This was best explained in the following interviewee response:

> *"Relations with external constituencies had changed … four months ago. Before, we had an array of issues that we were working on from short-term rental, Airbnb-type issues to taxes to stopping human trafficking in hotels to immigration to create a vibrant workforce. It's all gone to survival mode right now."* (Interview n°19)

The coalition against Airbnb, which had been active since 2014 in institutional work such as litigation and lobbying, was lowering its weapons and making a radical change in posture amid the first wave of COVID-19. The respondents interviewed lauded the platform's choices and actions; indeed, the crisis turned enemies into friends. This is also the case for how Airbnb treated its laid-off employees. One of the respondents commented on the letter addressed to staff in a clear and compassionate way:

[130] "Parachute Project" is a coalition of owners, non-profit organization and Enterprise Community Partners.
[131] Source: https://www.rebny.com/press-release/new-rebny-report-reaffirms-the-importance-of-real-estate-industry-to-new/

> *"He (Brian Chesky) amazed me. They laid off 1,900 people, I believe, a quarter of the staff. I found that Airbnb did a good job in HR (human resources). I saw Chesky's letter to this staff; they did a good job at that level. You know, there are 35 million unemployed people in the United States. Not all companies have been in this situation. I was really surprised by everything that was written by Brian Chesky, and writings remain. A generous health coverage is proposed, and it is very important in the US."* (Interview n°1)

Another respondent, whose primary mission was to track down illegal Airbnb hotels, became a spokesperson for the platform by saying,

> *"There's not a lot of news about Airbnb as an industry leader losing half its valuation, having to take out billions in loans through investors, laying off a quarter of its staff, and dealing with an 85% cancellation rate or decline in activity."* (Interview n°19)

Airbnb > Engaging in litigation with hosts

Contrary to expectations, our findings uncovered an unexpected turn of events during the collapse of the economy in the first wave of COVID-19, with NYC as the US epicenter. First, NYC hosts invested in properties in New Jersey and other states, considering Airbnb as a source of significant income and referring to it as "magical money." They did not expect to be sacrificed in March 2020. As the travel industry froze, hosts holding more than 10 properties were "about to lose everything," and a few converted their units into long-term rentals not listed on Airbnb any longer, saying that they "don't want to bargain with the devil anymore."[132] Conciergerie services companies such as cleaning or maintenance teams were the most unprotected groups of workers, because of their status with no employment-based social security (Sundararajan, 2016).

[132] https://www.proquest.com/docview/2395275266/fulltext/C258A914919A4758PQ/14?accountid=130809

Airbnb > Engaging in advertising



Figure 108: Airbnb "Open Home" Program (Source: https://brainstation.io/magazine/airbnb-to-host-healthcare-workers-for-free-during-COVID-19-crisis)

> "Medical professionals and emergency responders play a critical role in combatting the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, and Airbnb is committed to aiding them. Numerous hosts globally have expressed their willingness to offer a warm, welcoming home to these valiant first responders," explained Joe Gebbia, a co-founder of Airbnb.[133]

Airbnb announced that it would partner with nonprofit organizations in supporting relief workers fighting the pandemic, including the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Rescue Committee, and the International Medical Corps. To provide accommodations for healthcare workers and other COVID-19 responders, Airbnb partnered with businesses, non-profits, and government and emergency management agencies that support these frontline workers. Hosts could participate in the program by offering their homes for free through Airbnb's Open Homes platform, which was established in 2012 to assist individuals in need of emergency housing. If hosts were unable to provide free accommodations, Airbnb said it would still waive all fees associated with the stay.

[133] *https://news.airbnb.com/airbnb-to-help-provide-housing-to-100000-covid-19-responders/*

> "As medical and relief workers require accommodation for response and preparedness, the Airbnb community is in a unique position to help. I applaud Airbnb for working under conditions of such uncertainty to provide housing for first responders and medical staff working in this pandemic." (Dr. Larry Brilliant, epidemiologist)[134]

> *"As you know, we have a database of all the travel nurse companies in the US with contact details. And we've also provided you with a swipe email copy, so you can … jump on that right now and start emailing these companies and letting them know that you have perfect space for a travel nurse, right? So, you have to think about what are their needs, right? They probably need a washer and laundry. They need a kitchen to cook food and that kind of stuff. In your marketing, you really want to emphasize what you're doing to keep your space clean, right? (Interview n° 26)*

Airbnb > Engaging in grassroots lobbying

Airbnb succeeded in mobilizing its hosts community through grassroots lobbying actions to include its hosts as beneficiaries of the US government's stimulus bill:

> "This legislation now allows for US hosts to take advantage of many relief measures, including small business grants, small business loans, and unemployment assistance. A huge thank you for the more than 105,000 calls and emails you made to members of Congress." (Airbnb letter to hosts)[135]

Airbnb > Defining: Digital nomad

The demand for long-term rentals was affected by the evolving work culture, inspiring people to choose long-term leases and live as digital nomads, settling down at home to work. Considering the increase in STRs in the market, hosts were also cash flow-oriented and were willing to fulfill this new segment's needs and reduce fixed charges. Another factor contributing to its attractiveness was the reduction of maintenance and cleaning expenses.[136] This strategic move elevated long-term rentals to one of Airbnb's primary business categories, with more than 1 million properties now available for monthly leasing, including private rooms and entire homes.

---

[134] https://brainstation.io/magazine/airbnb-to-host-healthcare-workers-for-free-during-covid-19-crisis
[135] https://news.airbnb.com/a-letter-to-hosts/

[136] https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesrealestatecouncil/2020/07/20/why-long-term-rentals-are-more-strategic-than-short-term-rentals/

This pivot came as a response to the significant drop in travel business due to the pandemic, coupled with a surge in demand for monthly rentals. Airbnb aimed to respond to the demand for monthly rentals rather than STRs. This pivotal change suggested that Airbnb disrupted the actors in real estate, in other words, landlords, rather than the hotel industry, which was concerned about a three-day stay.

> *"And I've been very lucky, knock on wood, so far, that it's stronger now than it's been. It's my strongest year."* (Interview n° 38)
>
> *"People will book stays closer to home, at the last minute."* (Interview n°22)

5.5.2.2. Other actors

Hotels > Advertising

Hotels spent their advertising budgets on the social distancing and "stay at home" messaging via the Hotels.com mascot, Captain Obvious. This advertising campaign titled "Hotels.com: Social Distancing" was published in United States in March 2020.



Figure 109: Captain Obvious Campaign: "Just stay home"

5.5.3. Normative work

> "I am Omar, part of the Hosts Advisory Board, passionate about hosting. To push the hosts to continue the journey despite COVID-19; we lost so many people. Our role is to restore confidence for the hosts all over the world." (Interview n°26)

5.5.3.1. Airbnb

Airbnb > Constructing identities: A resilient platform

Learning from the COVID-19 period, Airbnb repositioned its mission to become "anyone can belong anywhere," reconfiguring its business categories by leveraging long-duration stays. This business category is designed to fill a niche for individuals who need accommodation for a few months, adjusting their lives in a new home without committing to a yearlong lease. The shift toward long-term stays is seen as crucial for Airbnb's business recovery, in which its identity has evolved, defined as "single long-term tenants" or "long-term rentals" rather than "short-term rentals."[137]

> *"Nobody wants to be in downtown New York right now. We see a lot of houses in smaller markets, in remote markets, in the mountains and small beach towns; those are the places that people want to go and sit out the storm."*
>
> *"There's going to be a lot of shorter rental houses that are going to be shifting to the long-term renting model. And so if you're ahead of the curve, you're going to be able to get a better price for your unit than if you wait too long." (Interview n°26)*
>
> "In early 2020, as COVID-19 disrupted travel across the world, Airbnb's business declined significantly. But within two months, our business model started to rebound even with limited international travel, demonstrating its resilience. … A hotel company might not be able to say 'belong anywhere' because hotels are not everywhere, and interaction with the reception desk is not the same as with an Airbnb host." (Brian Chesky)

[137] Source : https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesrealestatecouncil/2020/07/20/why-long-term-rentals-are-more-strategic-than-short-term-rentals/

Airbnb and other actors > Challenging normative associations: Foes and friends

The relationships between Airbnb, the hotel industry, and other critics shifted into a type of cooperative relationship and rivalry during the first wave of COVID-19. Airbnb and hotel owners or operators were focused on preparing contingency plans to cope with this level of disruption and were requesting the support of the government at the federal level. Comparing the devastating effects of COVID-19 on their businesses served as shared pain. Airbnb's situation, having its number of rental nights decline by 127% in March 2020 and remaining economically fragile during the first wave, mattered to the hotels, which were likely to feel most threatened with their business models vertically organized and unionized.

Airbnb > Investors: Constructing normative networks

Macro Scenarios (Outside Our Control)

Potential Strategies (In Our Control)

	Scenario A 3 months lockdown X% Revenue Loss	**Scenario B** 6 months lockdown Y% Revenue Loss	**Scenario C** 12 months lockdown Z% Revenue Loss
Plan A No change to plan	12 months runway $XM cash EO2020	9 months runway $XM cash EO2020	6 months runway $XM cash EO2020
Plan B -15% Opex	18 months runway $XM cash EO2020	12 months runway $XM cash EO2020	9 months runway $XM cash EO2020
Plan C -25% Opex	24 months runway $XM cash EO2020	18 months runway $XM cash EO2020	12 months runway $XM cash EO2020

**Key: Columns represent drops in operational expenditures, rows revenue losses.*
**Source: A Sequoia-backed company*

Figure 110: Sequoia Capital "COVID-19 matrix"

On March 20, 2020, 15 days after the Black Swan memo was issued and in the middle of the pandemic-related economic collapse, Sequoia Capital developed a COVID-19 matrix to assess the risks to its investments and addressed it to their portfolios, including start-ups and unicorns such Airbnb in which they had invested consecutively. The matrix combined two perspectives: (1) macro events "outside our control" with three possible scenarios based on the duration of a lockdown (three, six, or 12 months) with the expected impact on revenues and (2) potential strategies "in our control" through three hypotheses (i.e., no change in operational expenditures, a drop of 15%, or a drop of 25%). The macro events and potential strategies allowed the definition

of nine possible scenarios, and Sequoia Capital advised: “After using this framework, you should update your strategy every few weeks. Circumstances are changing rapidly; adaptability will determine the winners.”[138] The goal of this matrix was to evaluate the cash flow needed to keep the company running if the return to normal business and pre-crisis activity took between six and 24 months, which was considered the worst-case scenario.

This advice from Sequoia Capital to its investment partners was valuable in the sense that it facilitated the estimation of resources required to survive. In April 2020, Airbnb rapidly re-estimated its needs from $1 billion to $2 billion and succeeded in raising funds led by Sequoia Capital and Sixth Street.

5.5.3.2. Other actors

Hotels > Constructing identities: Embracing a public health mission

The hotel industry was devastated by the COVID-19 crisis and its ban on leisure and corporate travel. Occupancy rates were about 85% in early 2020 and dropped to 30% in summer 2020 with two thirds of the bookings being for the government to host homeless people and frontline workers. Manhattan, representing the greatest number of unionized hotels, was the epicenter of the first COVID-19 wave, putting the management of the crisis as central to the survival of hotel businesses.

Our findings suggest that the pandemic context reshaped the priorities for the hotel industry, thereby freezing its institutional work with Airbnb and leading to a total halt to litigation during this period. The situation that the hotel industry faced in this period defined is best explained by the following quotation:

> *“The governor signed that order on the 20th of March. It came into effect on 22nd. Business went from 85, 90% occupancy to zero. So, the week after the 22nd, citywide occupancy was 14%, and the total revenue fell 85%.”* (Interview n°7)

[138] Source Sequoia March 20 2020
https://medium.com/sequoia-capital/the-matrix-for-covid-19-c25bd5195f46

The role of HANYC was central to coordination between the city government and the hoteliers.

> *"At the same time, NYC Hotel Association was quickly repurposed to office services to the city within a week. They needed to move homeless people into hotels as they could not stay in a shelter where social distancing is impossible. So, we helped move them. I had to hire two people to manage the complexity of finding hotels and putting homeless people there. We have 110 hotels at this point doing this work."* (Interview n°7)

> *"And I think now that things have calmed down in our hospitals, thank goodness … I know there are tens of thousands or at least I know the city's Department of Homeless Services is currently renting over 10,000 hotel rooms for homeless people who had previously been in shelters. But in homeless shelters where people lived in either dormitories or big rooms, … it was just not safe for everyone to be living together."* (Interview n°17)

Traditional businesses were fully involved in NYC's response to state and local guidelines and requirements. The role of the hotel industry was to partner with the local authorities to (1) host homeless people to avoid the spread of the virus in the streets of NYC, (2) host the crew members of hospital ships or medical workers, and (3) host COVID-19 patients as they are self-isolated. In summary, the city's hotels were used as a resource to fight the virus and played a pivotal role as a public health actor.

5.5.4. Socio-cognitive work

5.5.4.1. Airbnb

Educating

This period was marked by efforts to educate actors about safety protocols and guidelines. Our data indicate that market and non-market actors were focused on designing, transposing, implementing, and controlling the measures. For example, Airbnb educated its hosts through pedagogical COVID-19 survival kits and interactive sessions detailing the best practices to avoid the spread of the virus.

> *"Also, if you want to make sure that you're not getting exposed to the virus or your cleaning team doesn't get exposed to the virus, one thing you want to do is, in between bookings, you want to keep your place empty for three days because the virus can live up to 72 hours."* (Interview n° 26)

As active players in the fight against COVID-19, the platform recommended that hosts opt for long-term rentals for digital nomads, avoiding contact and ensuring social distancing using an online locker, as expressed by our respondents:

> "*We want to keep our distance from each other. And so, by doing that, we're actually contributing to stopping the spread of the virus."* (Interview n°26)

> *"So, I'm completely comfortable with not being there, with the guests getting the key."* (Interview n°38)

> *"Another thing that is important to note is that right now you really want to have the self-check-in option available, right? That's for your own safety but that's also for the safety of the guests, right? The less we have to interact with each other; it's called social distancing."* (Interview n°26)

Our data reveal that the hosts' autonomy was reinforced in the management of COVID-19. For example, Airbnb asked hosts to self-collect information about healthy measures and did not attempt to control them in the management of COVID-19, through inspections, for instance.

> *"And do your research on the virus. I'm not a virus expert. This is just what I have seen."* (Interview n°26)

> *"But, in fact, there was no way for Airbnb to really control it. And so I just went along—I paid no attention to it."* (Interview n° 38)

5.6. INSTITUTIONAL WORK, POST-COVID-19

5.6.1. Introduction

By October 2020, NYC's economy had been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The unemployment rate had more than doubled compared to 2019, reaching an average of 9.8% for the year. More than a million jobs were lost, especially in low-wage sectors such as restaurants, hotels, and retail. The tourism industry, which had seen a decade of growth, experienced a 67% decline in visitors to 22.3 million in 2020, down from 66.6 million in 2019, leading to a 75% drop

in its economic impact from $80.3 billion in 2019 to $20.2 billion in 2020. This created a challenging economic landscape with a slow and difficult recovery ahead for all actors.[139]

Changes in routines and structures generate market turbulence in times of crisis (Williams et al., 2017). During the COVID-19 crisis, all market actors in the tourism industry were significantly affected, ranging from small and medium-sized enterprises such as Airbnb hosts and property management companies to global organizations such as Marriott. The difference for start-ups was the weekly projections regarding survival and the need for assistance and support from government.

As described previously, in April 2020, Airbnb borrowed $2 billion to support its cash reserves. In May, the company announced its decision to lay off 1,900 employees, accounting for one quarter of its workforce, and suspend investments in non-essential operations. Additionally, Airbnb reduced its expenditures in marketing and other significant areas.

5.6.2. Political work

5.6.2.1. Airbnb

Airbnb > Defining

In response to a surge in domestic bookings, Airbnb reconfigured the meaning of travel in a pandemic context, defining it as a secure experience at a nearby location. The new COVID-19 standards of hosting echoed the "back to our roots" narrative. In contradiction with the past strategic acquisition of HotelTonight, this involved a simplification of its business units to recentralize its initial business model.

We argue that Airbnb succeeded in defining a new concept of travel as a socially distanced travel experience and promoted health and safety standards and norms.[140] For example, hosts whose listings mentioned an "enhanced cleaning protocol" had more bookings than those who were not enrolled in the program. The pandemic required a health-focused approach to hosting, in contrast to pre-pandemic standards in which safety measures were not central to the hosting experience.

[139] https://www.osc.ny.gov/reports/osdc/tourism-industry-new-york-city#
[140] https://news.airbnb.com/health-and-safety-mandate/

Airbnb > Engaging in advertising

Airbnb advertised the opportunity for people to "go somewhere and isolate, quarantine, and work."

> *"If you want a quarantine yourself for two weeks or a month, you need a quiet space to work from. I am offering incredible rates right now, right?"* (Interview n°26)

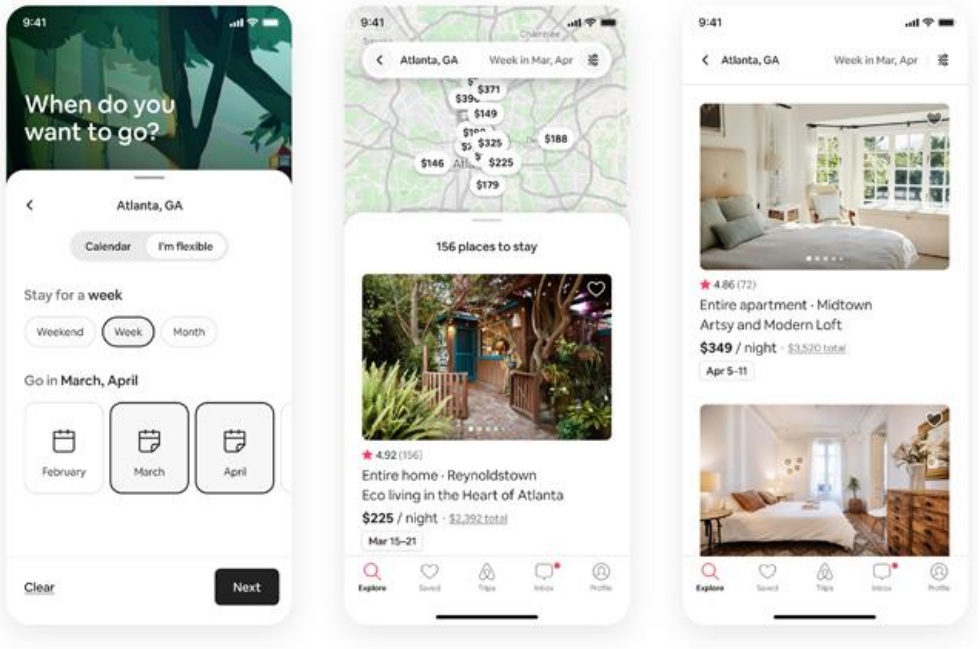


Figure 111: App with new flexible dates for long-duration stay (Source: https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000119312521056952/d147144dex991.htm)

According to Airbnb, "the lines between travel and living are becoming increasingly blurred." With more people working from home, there is flexibility when it comes to deciding where and when to travel. As a result, a shift in the way people search for accommodations on Airbnb altered the website navigation. For example, the flexible dates feature enabled guests to search for homes for a weekend, weeklong vacation, or monthlong stay "sometime in the next few months." In the past, guests were required to select exact dates for their trip. This flexibility promoted more scheduling options without being tied down to specific travel dates.

Airbnb > Engaging in lobbying

> "NYC and State lost $1.4B in tax revenue due to a significant decline in real estate market activity. As real estate market activity remains at a historic low, the negative impacts are being felt every day by millions of New Yorkers who rely on publicly funded services that will continue to struggle without necessary tax revenues." [141]

Both DPs and traditional business models, such as Airbnb and hotels, required support from Congress during the pandemic. While Airbnb urged Congress to pass tax relief and offer low-interest loans to its hosts, the hotel industry—represented by the leaders, Hyatt, Marriott, Best Western, and Hilton, as well as hostels and small hotels—asked Congress to change the existing rules of the Main Street Lending Program. The program offered loans ranging from $250,000 to $300 million for companies with fewer than 15,000 employees. A representative of the American Lodging and Hospitality Industry based in Washington, D.C., explained,

> *"There have been a few different occasions when hotel CEOs or my boss have been to the White House. All of them have been related to different ways the federal government could provide relief to our industry and the economy more broadly. So there have been, at this point, I think five or six major pieces of legislation that the United States Congress has passed and the president has signed to provide relief in some form to the United States, whether it's directly to small businesses or hotels, or to American taxpayers specifically. There are continued needs for relief for the hotel industry."* (Interview n°20)

Airbnb > Investors: Defining

Since Airbnb's creation, the venture capital firm Sequoia Capital fueled its growth as a seed/early partner known for working with founders from their original concept to their IPO. In April 2009, the collaboration between Airbnb and Sequoia Capital started at $585,000. At this time, Airbnb's online visibility was minimal, with only 2,500 listings and 10,000 registered users. Nonetheless, Airbnb had cultivated constant and strong trust with Sequoia Capital, which is driven by its mission, "We help the daring build legendary companies," including Apple, Google, Oracle, PayPal, and WhatsApp. Sequoia Capital's vision is based on three principles: (1) the profile of the

[141] https://www.rebny.com/press-release/new-report-new-york-city-and-state-lost-usd1-4-billion-in-tax-revenue-due-to/

founders, (2) the product or service's unique selling proposition, and (3) an ambitious vision for tapping into a vast market through innovative and disruptive business models.

> "Sequoia's partnership with Airbnb's barebones website with 2,500 listings and 10,000 registered users, and a roadmap for 'creating a better way to travel,' inspired by the creative fire, entropy, and spirit of a design-led company with the strong operating discipline required in a hospitality business."[142]

This close partnership played a decisive role in Airbnb's development. Sequoia Capital sponsored the platform by providing not only capital but also strategic guidance, networking opportunities, and operational support. We argue that Sequoia's reputation as one of the most respected and successful venture capital firms in the world contributed to the cognitive and socio-political legitimacy for Airbnb's IPO, highlighting the agility of the platform during COVID-19:

> "It is that very culture that allowed Airbnb to consistently rise to the occasion in those critical, make-or-break moments."[143]

With the contribution of Sequoia Capital, in December 2020, Airbnb successfully launched its IPO and was **defined as ABNB** (its NASDAQ code) on the stock market.



Figure 112: Airbnb IPO in Times Square, NYC (Source: https://www.marketwatch.com/story/airbnb-stock-more-than-doubles-after-ipo-making-it-worth-more-than-larger-rival-booking-11607626276)

[142] https://www.sequoiacap.com/people/alfred-lin/
[143] https://www.sequoiacap.com/people/alfred-lin/



Figure 113: Airbnb's IPO and first day of trading: +113% at the closing bell (Source: https://www.marketwatch.com/story/airbnb-stock-more-than-doubles-after-ipo-making-it-worth-more-than-larger-rival-booking-11607626276)

5.6.2.2. Other actors

Other actors > hotels: engaging in political work, embedded in institutionalized context



Figure 114: NYC hotels buckling under weight over COVID-19 rules and debts

Traditional business models embedded in their institutional context considered the COVID-19 crisis to be a business jolt, whereas Airbnb considered it as an opportunity and created new reconfigurations.

Table 32: Respondents defining the crisis and its impacts

Traditional business	Digital platform
"It's never **a good idea to plan in the midst of a crisis** for a future when you're out of the crisis." Interview n°7	"We're going to do everything we can to help you survive and thrive through the crisis and be ready to jump on opportunities that certainly will come along. **Every crisis has opportunities**…" Interview n°26
"All of them have predicted that it will not be before 2024 that we see something like what New York is normally used to. So this year is finished." Interview n°7	"Number one, we have to adapt, right? Number two, we have to adapt fast. And number three, we have to choose one of the strategies based on our markets and based on our personal situation." Interview n°26
"You can stay in New York and work with Zoom, or whatever the case may be." So then it resulted in zero business. Zero, zero business from business travel." Interview n°7	"Share your craziest experience from the past, just really, really fun—because everyone's got something fun, something crazy, and so now, I want to encourage everybody to go ahead and share your story. I really liked Vicky's story, actually." Interview n°26

One respondent explained that NYC hotels, which were embedded in NYC's institutionalized context with multiple layers of norms and rules and no experience with COVID-19, undertook their first strategic action to secure employees and guests' experiences:

> *"With colleagues we will try, we will help hotels and restaurants in sanitization, hygiene, cleaning, using ultraviolet, electrostatic cleaning."* (Interview n°1)

Hotels had to constantly refer to the CDC's evolving cleaning protocols and negotiate with employees to strictly apply them.

> *"We are 3/4 colleagues, we will use the professionalism of each, the knowledge of each to respond to the request. I reread the CDC which modified its text."* (Interview n°1)

While Airbnb laid off 25% of its employees and promoted the LinkedIn profiles of the laid-off people, its CEO declared:

> "We want to reassure you that despite reductions to our workforce, we are fully staffed to support you ...There have been some big changes to our teams that advertised their profile on LinkedIn." (Brian Chesky)[144]

Meanwhile, the hotel industry communicated about their human capital, considering its workforce to be an asset reinforcing its social dimension during and after the crisis:

> "By far, the best strength is human capital. 320,000 people working for Accor. They are not only good, but they are caring. They have the expertise and the robustness to accept the crisis." (S. Bazin, CEO of Accor)[145]

Hotels faced new operating costs in the COVID-19 context, placing some in a situation in which they preferred to remain closed. Negotiating a deal with the 130 unionized hotels and guaranteeing strict sanitary standards was a major milestone for hotel owners. The Coronavirus Safety Protocol Agreement aimed to protecting employees and hotel guests through a mask policy, deeper and longer room cleanings, 48-hour check-in/check-out, a new team devoted to hourly cleaning of lobbies and hallways, and 20 paid days off for hotel employees or 45 days if COVID-19-positive.[146]

---

[144] https://finance.yahoo.com/news/Airbnb-boss-brian-chesky-called-151408035.html
[145] https://www.straitstimes.com/business/companies-markets/hotel-group-accor-to-cut-1000-jobs-after-coronavirus-loss
[146] https://nypost.com/2020/06/19/nyc-hotels-agree-to-strict-cleaning-protocols-amid-coronavirus/

Our data reveal that the Hotel and Lodging Association, representing all actors in the US hotel and lodging industry, asked the president of the United States to publicly support the wearing of masks indoors, claiming that "presidential support for this policy will ultimately lead to more travel and a quicker return to full employment in our industry."[147]

In the summer of 2020, the economic situation of the NYC hotels made headlines, contrasting the situation of greater hotels rooms capacity in NYC since 2017 but the absence of tourists that summer, placing hotels in dire financial uncertainty.[148]

A spokesperson for the hotels in NYC stated the following:

> *"I've spoken to many hotel owners. There's zero business for this year and they're desperate just to make the real property tax, which is a huge burden in NYC."* (Interview n°7)

When the COVID-19 rate was finally at its lowest, the post-pandemic business period was characterized by unexpected additional constraints on NYC hotels in mid-August: Mayor Bill de Blasio issued an executive order requiring a two-week quarantine for travelers coming from 35 US states. According to the Hotel Industry Association, this order stopped the restart of the activity as soon as the city put it in place. To no avail, the association lobbied the city to allow COVID-19-free travelers to avoid a quarantine, such as was the case in other US states.[149]

In the same vein, the New York State Department of Health required hotels to develop a written safety plan presenting how the workplace would prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the event of an inspection. Additionally, all businesses in New York State were required to fill out a "Reopening Safety Plan" template. These two examples highlight the embeddedness of the incumbent firms facing ongoing regulations with layers of constraints, putting the relaunch of their activities at risk.

---

[147] Letter AHLA : appendix
[148] https://www.cnbc.com/video/2020/08/21/nyc-hotel-market-is-under-pressure-as-few-travel-to-new-york-city.html
[149] https://www.travelweekly.com/Travel-News/Hotel-News/NYC-hotels-buckling-under-weight-of-Covid-rules-and-debt)

Housing market tensions in NYC: Converting devastated hotels into housing

Because some hotels were devastated by the shutdowns and the ban on international tourism, city and state officials considered using unoccupied hotels to respond to the ongoing housing crisis in NYC. They had the opportunity to acquire sites at an affordable price in April 2021, because NYC hotels had $1.8 billion in unpaid balances on their mortgages. The city of New York and New York State considered converting unoccupied hotels into housing. However, not all NYC hotels were eligible for conversion to housing depending on their location.

Other actors > REBNY: engaging in lobbying to rebuild their business

Other actors were busy maintaining or disrupting institutions. After COVID-19, REBNY was focused on joining building industry actors to engage in political work, such as lobbying for fast and easy licensing to obtain permits and remobilize the construction industry:

> "Rebuilding public infrastructure, while creating incentives to rebuild the private real estate market, will increase tax revenue and improve New York's social infrastructure."[150]

Like the hotel industry, the real estate industry was embedded in its institutional and highly regulated environment regarding employee safety:

> "Building owners and managers are working together with labor to ensure that workers coming back to their offices are safe, comfortable, and productive. This health and safety guidance should reassure everyone that their work environment is safe, and that we are getting back to normal, which is what is needed to bring New York City back to the vital and thriving place it has always been." 151

---

150 https://www.rebny.com/content/rebny/en/newsroom/press-releases/2021_Press_Releases/NEW_ANALYSIS_New_York_City_Construction_Activity_in_2020_Was_Citys_Lowest_in_Nearly_a_Decade.htm

151 https://www.rebny.com/content/rebny/en/newsroom/press-releases/2021_Press_Releases/NEW_ANALYSIS_New_York_City_Construction_Activity_in_2020_Was_Citys_Lowest_in_Nearly_a_Decade.htm

5.6.3. Normative work

5.6.3.1. Airbnb

Airbnb > Constructing identities

As described previously, in response to crisis, Airbnb activated its platform dedicated to nonprofits, Airbnb.org, to providing temporary housing to victims including frontline workers. The crisis gave Airbnb a window of opportunity to leverage its "doing good" mission, contributing in a positive way to society, strengthening its social ties as a sharing platform, and reinforcing its socio-political legitimacy. In October 2020, in preparation for its IPO, Airbnb launched two projects to seduce future shareholders: (1) the Airbnb Host Advisory Board, made up of 17 hosts representative of the community whose mission is to communicate community interests and concerns to Airbnb executives, and (2) the Airbnb Host Endowment, a fund financed by Airbnb stocks to support host communities. According to Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky, the endowment aimed to provide support in areas such as education and financial resources. The Airbnb Host Advisory Board met montly with Airbnb officials and was responsible for making investment suggestions for the endowment.[152]

COVID-19 naturally shifted the hospitality market from urban to rural areas. Cities were empty of international travelers, but Airbnb's strength was to offer a response anywhere, which is not the case for the traditional urban-based business model. Airbnb's escape from cities meant creating institutions with rural towns and launching mediation with new regulatory bodies in less institutionalized contexts. The so-called urban sharing operations described by Zolska et al. (2019) shifted to home-sharing in green and rural environments.

COVID-19 also allowed Airbnb to shift from STRs to a long-term rental model. Thus, through its communications and community, such as Inner Circle Zoom meetings, Airbnb educated hosts and built new beliefs. In the words of a mentor in the Inner Circle:

> *"We can have a positive impact on society. More people want to escape from the chaos. We have the ability to make people disconnect from the situation by renting a house with all their family in the countryside."* (Interview n°26)

[152] https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000119312521056952/d147144dex991.htm

Airbnb > Investors: Challenging normative associations within the entrepreneurial finance start-up ecosystem

We would like to highlight the increasing number of accelerators offering not only capital to start-ups but also services and mentoring. Consequently, business angels and venture capital firms are funding start-ups as well as providing non-monetary contributions, sharing their experience as mentors with entrepreneurs, participating in guiding their operations and strategy. As described in Chapter 4, we argue that the financial investors' experience with funding Uber through 15 rounds in less than seven years (business angel, venture capital, private equity, and debt financing rounds) allowed them to mentor Airbnb. Thus, investors are engaged in constructing normative networks for start-up entrepreneurs in the sense that they share their reputation within the financial community, industry knowledge, and a network of relationships with future company stakeholders (Bonini and Capizzi, 2019).

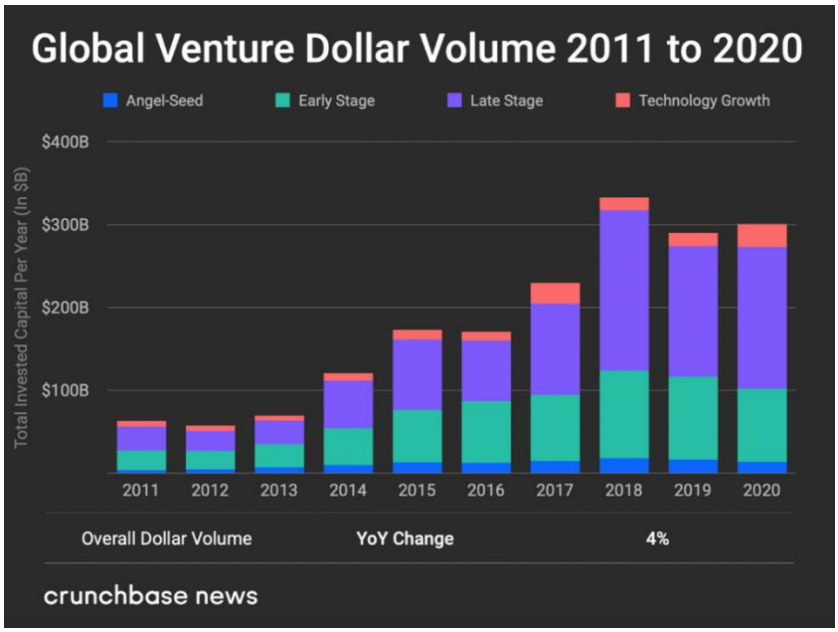


Figure 115: Global venture investment network expansion from 2011 to 2020 (Source: Crunchbase (2020)[153])

[153] https://news.crunchbase.com/venture/global-2020-funding-and-exit/#seed

There are four levels of venture capital funding:

(i) The business financing network evaluates how any start-up company has the capacity to raise capital from venture capital firms. It represents a crucial and visible achievement for start-ups, which helps in later stages. Specialized angel seed funds, such as Y Combinator, accompany start-ups in their early stages, signing agreements and managing approximately 3,000 start-ups per quarter, investing a total of $3 billion per quarter in seed projects.

(ii) The second stage involves venture capital funds specializing in early-stage venture capital, which select approximately 1,200 start-ups and help promising business ideas to grow, before handing them over to the bigger fish, known as last-stage venture capital or private equity firms (investing a total of $20 billion per quarter).

(iii) Step 3: "Late-stage" is characterized by powerful financial institutions that have experience in operating in the capital markets and investing in late-stage and mature companies; they are increasingly diversifying their investment portfolios in an attempt to enter "the venture game." Investment tickets can be as high as $1 billion per company, as in the case of Airbnb with Sequoia or Sixth Street, while waiting for their future IPO (an investment total of $50 billion per quarter).

(iv) Step 4: Technology growth specialists complete the ecosystem.

Figure 115 depicts the surge in global venture capital investments from 2011 to 2020 in the United States, from $60 billion to $300 billion. Despite the COVID-19 crisis in 2020, the volume of capital invested has more than tripled since 2011. Global venture capital firms represent alternative sources of early-stage funding, reconfiguring the start-up ecosystem. These include angel groups, business angel networks, and angel investment fund, seed funds, incubators, and accelerators supporting the growth of start-ups before their potential IPOs.

In the venture capital environment, it is common for a business to go through multiple types of investments to complete a growth path. These investments may involve giving rise to Series A, B, and C funding rounds, as Airbnb did and that were described in Chapter 4. This also represents inter-organizational connections.

5.6.3.2. Other actors

Other actors > hotels: Challenging normative associations

NYC hotel managers were not ready to identify the risks of COVID-19 for their employees and guests or to respond to the need to formulate appropriate strategies allowing hotels to minimize risks. Understanding what the main types of risks were to hotels' key stakeholders, such as physical or financial threats, would lead to the implementation of appropriate solutions. For example, if the main perceived risk for hotel guests was physical (e.g., share an elevator with others), hotel managers would have to disinfect all zones where customers may come into contact with each other. This would involve the choice of chemicals and disinfection techniques. Table 33 lists the cleaning and safety initiatives chosen by hospitality groups; Airbnb's "Enhanced Cleaning Initiative" guidelines were not described.

Table 33: An overview of COVID-19 cleaning and safety initiatives in the hospitality industry (Source: https://www.oracle.com/industries/hospitality/covid-19-resource-center/)

Company	Initiative	Guidelines
Mariott	Marriot Global Cleanliness Council	Commitment to Clean
Hilton	Hilton Cleanstay	New Standard of Cleanliness
Accor	ALLSAFE	The ALLSAFE Label Framework
IHG	IHC Clean Promise	IHC Way of Clean Enhancements
Hyatt	Global Care & Cleanliness Commitment	Global Cleanliness Accreditation
Omni	Omni Safe & Clean	Stay A Part of Safety
Four seasons	Lead With Care	Global Program Guidance
Wyndham	Count On Us	Health & Safety Protocols
Choice Hotels	Commitment to Clean	Protocols and Products
Best Western	We Care Clean	Five Key Areas
Loews Hotels	Safety & Well-Being Protocols	Service Promise and Protocols
Airbnb	Enhanced Cleaning initiative	ECI Teaser

However, hotels were unable to automate the customer experience while Airbnb was educating its hosts community to automate each step of the experience, starting with the check-in (e.g., key lockers to avoid personal contact). Consequently, hotels marketed their special cleaning efforts to regain customers' confidence and trust and also offered promotions such as room discounts and free upgrades.

5.6.4. Socio-cognitive work:

5.6.4.1. Airbnb and other actors

Airbnb and other actors: Educating

In this post-COVID-19 era, Airbnb educated its hosts community "to go through the crisis" and adopt its messages.

> *"But first, I want to cover a few things that's good advice for anybody, regardless of your situation. What you want to do right now is you want to look at your costs, and you want to preserve as much cash as possible, right? This means that you want to have a conversation with your landlord if you're renting, right?*
>
> *"So, if you're renting, you want to hit up your landlord, and you want to talk about a solution." (Interview n°26)*

Through the online sessions and pedagogical tools on its website, Airbnb educated its hosts community about understanding the guests' new needs. Doing so increased the attractiveness of the platform and facilitated the adaptation of hosts to new demands. One Zoom meeting agenda was titled "COVID strategies" and went further in promoting the myriads of opportunities to restart hosting activities for countryside and urban hosts profiles. Once again, the flexibility and agility of the DP is an accelerator of its recovery. CHECK DATA EDUCATING COVID-19

> *"But if you're in an urban market, it looks a little grimmer. There's still demand from people that need accommodation right now. Especially near hospitals, near universities, we've seen a lot of houses are getting increase from travel nurses, from doctors, but also from students because a lot of campuses are closing, and those students might not want to go home because maybe they're worried that they'll pass the virus to their parents."* (Interview n°26)

For the hotel employees, steady hygiene maintenance and respect for preventive measures such as masks, hand washing, the use of hand sanitizers, and social distancing were adopted in almost every hotel to guarantee a healthy environment. What was new was the effort deployed to deliver the same quality of service through contactless service—for example, hotel staff members did not escort guests to their rooms any longer—and a focus on maintenance and cleaning of high touch points.[154]

CONCLUSION

Chapter 5, which focuses on the institutional perspective, propose to examine the institutional work mechanisms deployed by actors to create, maintain or disrupt institutions and the effect on socio-political legitimacy. We introduced the context of our case study, embedded in NYC considered as a global center of finance, business, education, arts and culture, and one of the most popular US destinations. NYC represents one of the most institutionalized local contexts embedded in one of the strictest STRs' regulations with powerful actors. For example, the OSE has the legal power to enforce DPs in the SE. Despite problems with illegal STRs long before Airbnb (Stabrowski, 2017), the launch of the DP and its aggressive strategy to quickly expand the number of hosts and listings triggered a strong opposition from the local administration. Far from being deterred, Airbnb engaged in litigations. We applied the institutional work framework of Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) to address the political, normative, and socio-cognitive work mechanisms of the DP. Our temporality is during the three periods before COVID-19, during the collapse, and after. Testing the institutional work theoretical framework, we described the "purposive actions" of the DP and presented the multitude of mechanisms engaged in reaction to regulations, as well as the institutional environments responses represented in the following tables.

[154] https://www.who.int/news-room/ q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-staying-at-hotels-and-accommodationestablishments.

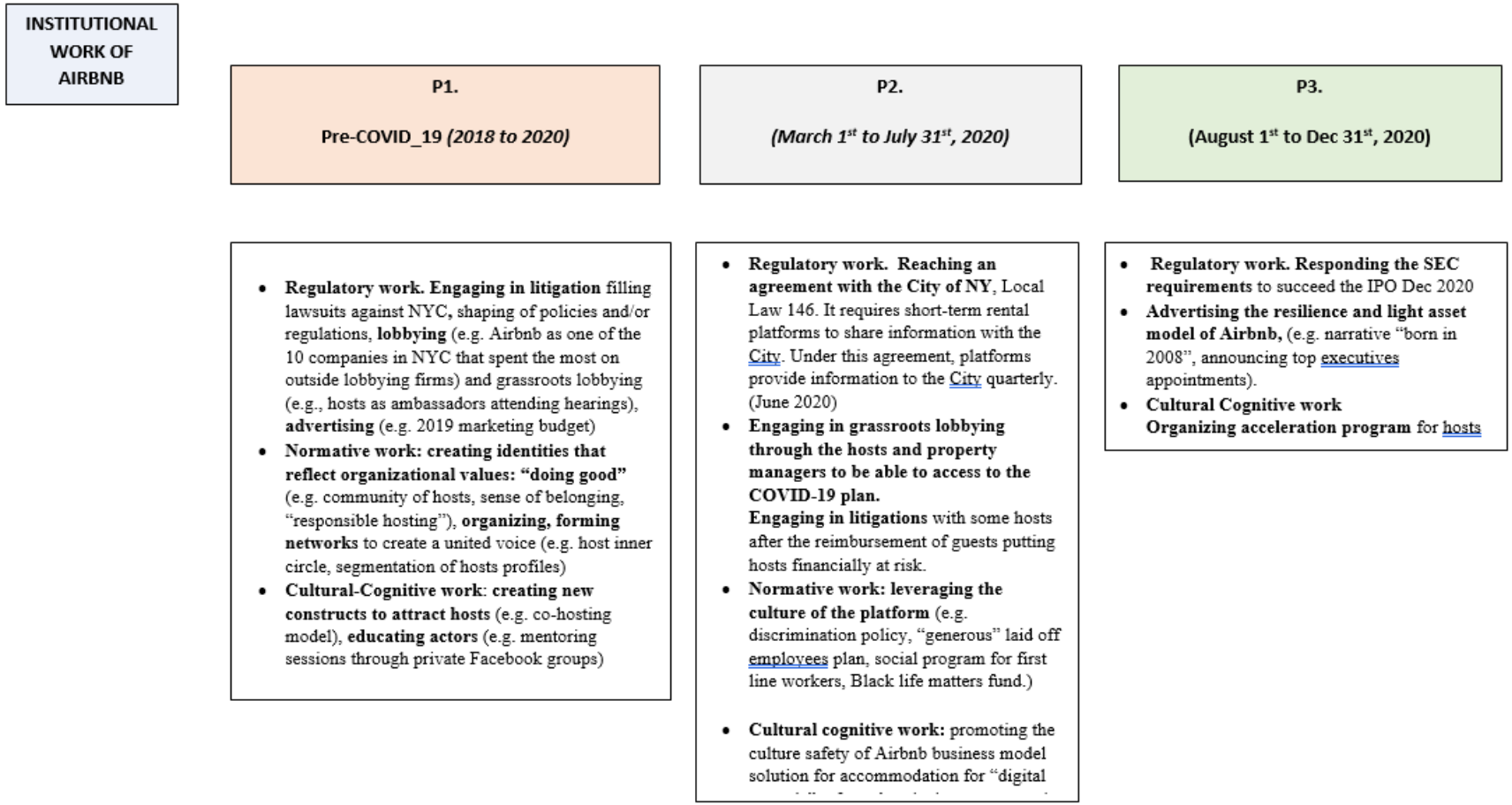


Figure: Airbnb Institutional work during three periods. (Lecuyer, 2024)

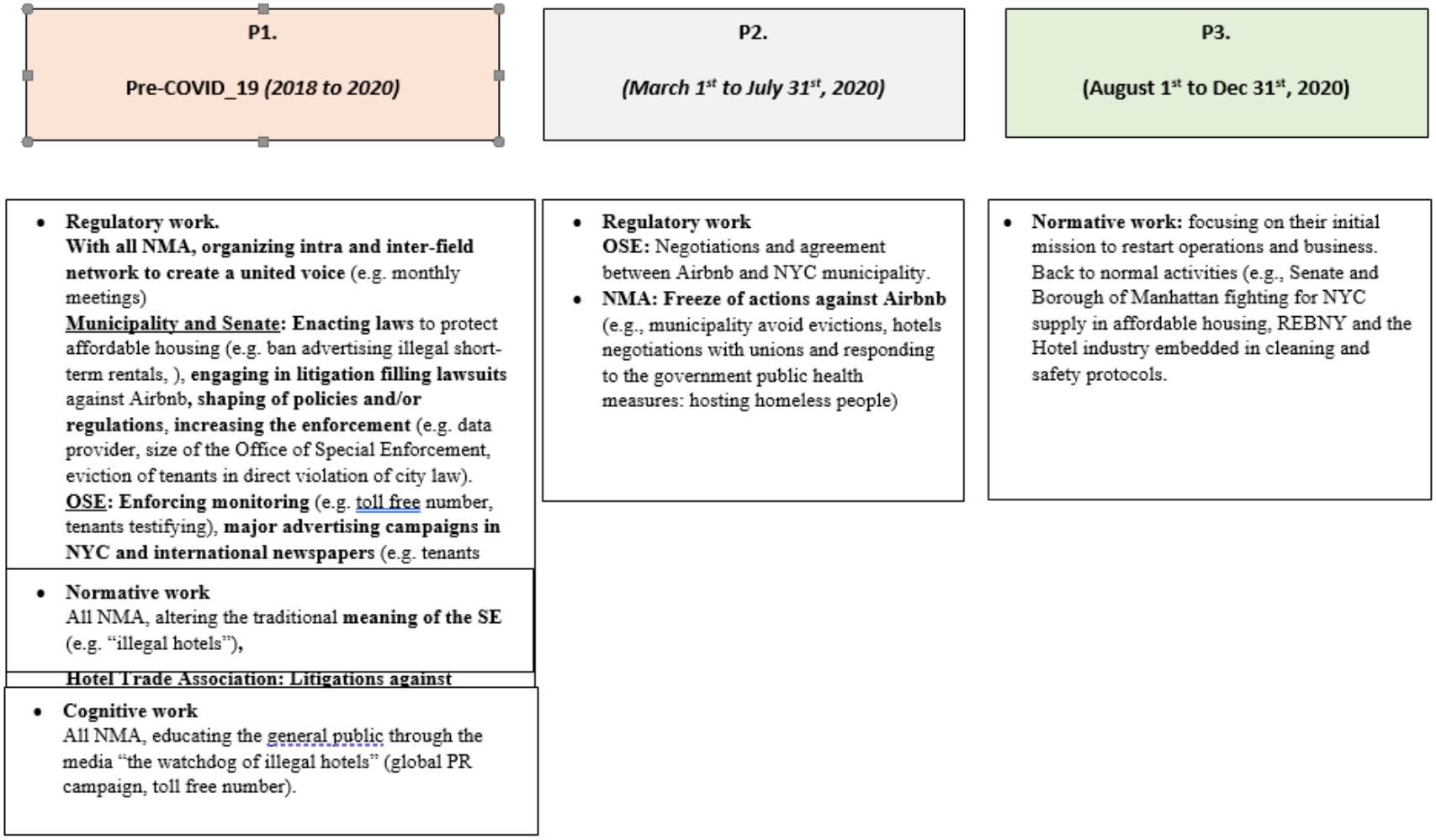


Figure: Other actors Institutional work during three periods. (Lecuyer, 2024)

CHAPTER 6.

DISCUSSION

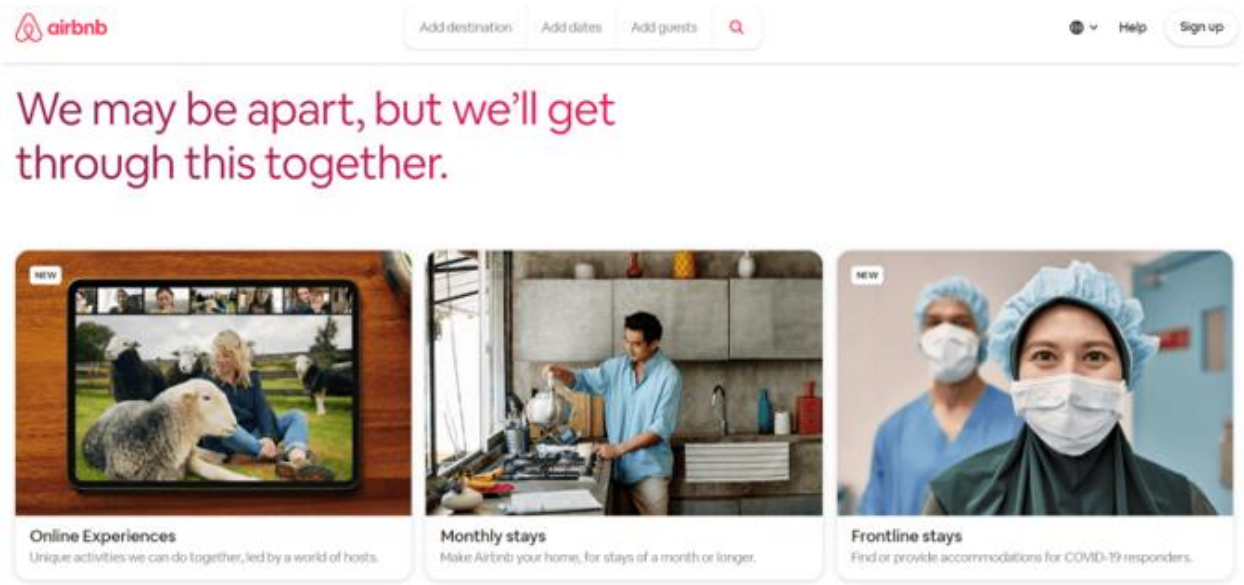


Figure 116: Airbnb designed web page was updated in April 2020 in 60 languages displaying the new product offerings[155] (Source **:** https://d3.harvard.edu/platform-digit/wp content/uploads/sites/2/2020/04/Airbnb.png)

[155] https://techcrunch.com/2020/04/24/covid-19-forced-airbnb-to-rethink-its-product-offerings-heres-some-of-what-it-came-up-with/?guccounter=1

6.1. FINDINGS SUMMARY

This thesis seeks to make several theoretical contributions on how a digital platform in the sharing economy creates and maintains its legitimacy strategically and institutionally, managing multiple actors in times of crisis.

Strategic perspective

Chapter 4 respond to the question: What are the relational strategies put in place by the DP towards its contributors to create/maintain its cognitive legitimacy? Thus, it proposes to identify the relational strategies orchestrating by the DP.

Our work identifies three relational strategies - identity, professionalization, and selection - implemented by the platform to reinforce its legitimacy within its local ecosystem. We identify and describe the arbitrations and opportunistic choices made by Airbnb to manage its various stakeholder groups, to maintain its legitimacy during the COVID-19 crisis.

Before the crisis, Airbnb succeeded in projecting the ideal of authentic tourism in urban environments, constructing its foundational sense of belonging by "living like a local." This projected **identity** positions users as non-conventional tourists and increases the attractiveness of the platform (Garay-Tamajon and Morales Perez, 2022). In addition to the strategy of booking rooms with locals, our findings highlighted that Airbnb deployed an identity relational strategy empowering the brand and a technological and trusted digital experience. The **professionalization** of hosts converting residential units in permanent STRs indicated to the hospitality sector that Airbnb succeeded in providing flexible accommodation solutions from non-amateur hosts. By 2016, the types of listings on the platform had shifted from traditional home sharing to professional offerings with boutique hotels, bed-and-breakfasts, condos, holiday homes, and luxury villas under the label "Beyond by Airbnb." Meanwhile, an ecosystem of start-ups and third-party contributors educated hosts and instilled a community spirit. Our work illustrates the pivotal role of investors continuously funding the platform and allowing Airbnb to reach decacorn status in six years. The **selection** strategy emerged through the categorization of hosts (e.g., Superhosts), the adoption of mechanisms (e.g., pricing), and the entrepreneurship of an elite mindset stimulating co-creation and internal competition.

In March 2020, during the collapse of the economy due to COVID-19-inducing worldwide travel bans and lockdowns, Airbnb applied a **selection** strategy favoring guests by applying a full refund policy and jeopardizing the hosts' financial situations. By taking the side of the guests regarding the cancellation of bookings, Airbnb behaved as a traditional actor by prioritizing customer satisfaction and causing a wave of protests from hosts. Meanwhile, Airbnb took inventory of the Superhosts by verifying their homes to create an upscaling categorization, Verified Superhosts.

Airbnb launched an **identity** strategy recalling the sense of belonging and solidarity. Under the pressure created by travel and sanitary restrictions, the platform introduced new cleaning and safety guidelines while the **professionalization** strategy aimed at adapting the hosts to the new market trends and market opportunities (i.e., long-duration stays, local travel, entire homes, and the co-hosting model). The digital culture of the platform allowed online community forums to assist hosts on Facebook accounts and through Inner Circle groups. The crisis revealed that many hosts were financially dependent on the effective functioning of Airbnb, reinforcing the coordinating role of the platform. Our findings indicate a rather low performance of these identity strategies, as the solidarity requests formulated by Airbnb had very limited effects, while many unsatisfied hosts remained because of extant resource dependencies and the lack of better market alternatives. Investors recognized Airbnb's business model resilience and funded the platform with $2 billion in April 2020. However, in May 2020, 25% of Airbnb's employees were laid off.

After the collapse, our data revealed a strong emphasis on community support associated with the preparation of the IPO, demonstrating new inclusive modes of governance such as a global Host Advisory Board and an endowment to offer stock options to hosts. The **identity** strategy acted as a fundamental tool to convey the "back-to-the-roots narrative" to potential investors assessing the platform. The **professionalization** strategy shifting the mindset of hosts to adjust and adapt to market circumstances and real-time customer trends (e.g., long-duration stays) thanks to robust data collection was marked by a normative control of the platform to institutionalize Airbnb through new policies (e.g., bans on parties, anti-discriminatory rules). The challenging role of Inner Circle groups was to promote the positive relationship between management practices and hosts' performance on the road to the IPO. The **selection** strategy encompassed the identity and professionalization strategies implementing a selection process of hosts not limited to service quality but, most importantly, focusing on compliance aligned with the IPO requirements (e.g.,

obey the rules, give data to the city of New York, adhere to new inclusive policies) and flexibility (i.e., entrepreneurial hosts with a profit logic demonstrated more adaptability).

To conclude the strategic perspective, we identified three relational strategies i.e., identity, professionalization, and selection implemented by the DP to increase its resources and reinforce its cognitive legitimacy. We demonstrated that the search for legitimacy in the eyes of its key contributors has had migratory effects on other actors at the expense of social concerns. We argue that the interplay of the three relational strategies—identity, professionalization, and selection—contributed to the DP cognitive legitimacy. **Investors** emerged as the pivotal contributor continuously funding the platform, allowing the DP to reach decacorn status in six years, and to create new norms and maintain institutions before, during, and after the COVID-19 economic collapse.

Institutional perspective

Chapter 5 responds to the question What are the institutional work mechanisms used by the DP and its actors to create/maintain its socio-political legitimacy? It proposes to examine the institutional work mechanisms deployed by actors to create, maintain, or disrupt institutions and the effect on socio-political legitimacy. We introduced the context of our case study, embedded in NYC, one of the most institutionalized local contexts with powerful actors and one of the strictest STRs' regulations. For example, the OSE has the legal power to enforce DPs in the SE. We applied the institutional work framework of Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) to address the political, normative, and socio-cognitive work mechanisms of the DP. Testing the institutional work theoretical framework, we described the "purposive actions" of the DP and presented the multitude of mechanisms engaged in reaction to regulations, as well as the institutional environments responses.

Our detailed analysis demonstrates that the **pre-crisis period** represents the most intense period in political work characterized by a high degree of tensions and, specifically, litigation and lobbying activities. Interestingly, the institutional work is characterized by (1) **a coalition** of market actors such as hotels and REBNY, and the other actors, such as unions and tenant advocacy groups as well as government officials such as regulators and tenant associations; and (2) by the

engagement of all actors in more than one form of institutional work before COVID-19, such as normative and socio-cognitive work. Contrary to expectations, this study did not find a significant difference between the political work of Airbnb and the political work engaged in by actors critical of Airbnb. Thus, **litigation and lobbying** represented the pivotal activities of the DP and the other actors. For example, tenants and unions, the so-called poor, were engaged in major lobbying activities involving an increase in both competencies and budget. We also argue that Airbnb mimicked the practices of incumbent firms to gain socio-political legitimacy. For example, both Airbnb and OSE were recruiting the most talented people with strong litigation experience and a political network to manage their lawsuits.

During the crisis, our data exacerbated the brutal jolt re-orienting priorities for all actors, revealing the plummet of exogenous tensions between the DP and its environment, allowing to engage a legal agreement and create norms together.

Our data revealed the **unbalanced regulatory context** experienced by hospitality and accommodation actors during and after COVID-19. While Airbnb operations did not need to comply with rules or state orders, the hotel industry was embedded into the local context, obeying the rules, negotiating with unions, and putting in place safety conditions that resulted in rising operational costs and placed their activities at risk. Conforming to an executive order, such as a 14-day quarantine upon travelers' arrival in New York State in August 2020, is a significant example revealing the authority and coercive power of the regulators constraining the hotel industry but not Airbnb.

We demonstrate that the DP played with the institutional environment to shape and to disrupt institutions (i.e., the complexity of laws made it difficult to follow and justified the lack of hosts' compliance). The media were a significant player used by all actors: (1) to be informed about the tactics of both parties (information source), (2) to communicate performance (number of lawsuits, ability to scale up), and (3) to undermine moral grounds (portrayed as the "ugly" host). Enforcement of "illegal hosts" by the OSE was communicated through the media, putting pressure on the DP and prompting Airbnb to change its relationship with a few hosts who violated the laws by delisting them on its website.

Interplay between the relational strategies and the institutional mechanisms engaged

Interestingly, we posit that **before the crisis**, the successful identity and professionalization relational strategies described chapter 4 increased the cognitive legitimacy but intensified the institutional pressures between the DP and its environment. It stimulated the aggressive conflict between the two blocks, the DP with its contributors opposed to regulators, local community and incumbents. On the opposite, during the crisis allowed the DP to strengthen its socio-political legitimacy as actors re-orientated their priorities debating internally on survival scenario while dealing with internal tensions.

Our findings highlighted the interplay between relational strategies described in chapter 4, and the work mechanisms described chapter 5. For example, the identity strategy during COVID-19 aiming at promoting a “good corporate citizen” with open home against COVID-19 for front office workers or the qualitative measures addressed to employees laid-off, influenced regulators and institutional environment towards a stronger socio-political legitimacy.

We posit that this study provides an important insight on the literature of legitimacy demonstrating the interplay between the relational strategies and institutional work mechanisms. Figure 117 presents the interplay between strategic relational strategies and institutional work mechanisms at a period “business as usual”, before crisis: Robust and successful relational strategies enable a strong cognitive legitimacy meanwhile increasing exogeneous tensions conducting to a ”debated legitimacy”. As opposed to figure 118 that represents the effects of a crisis on the relational dynamics within the environment characterized by endogenous tensions with a positive effect on the socio-political legitimacy.

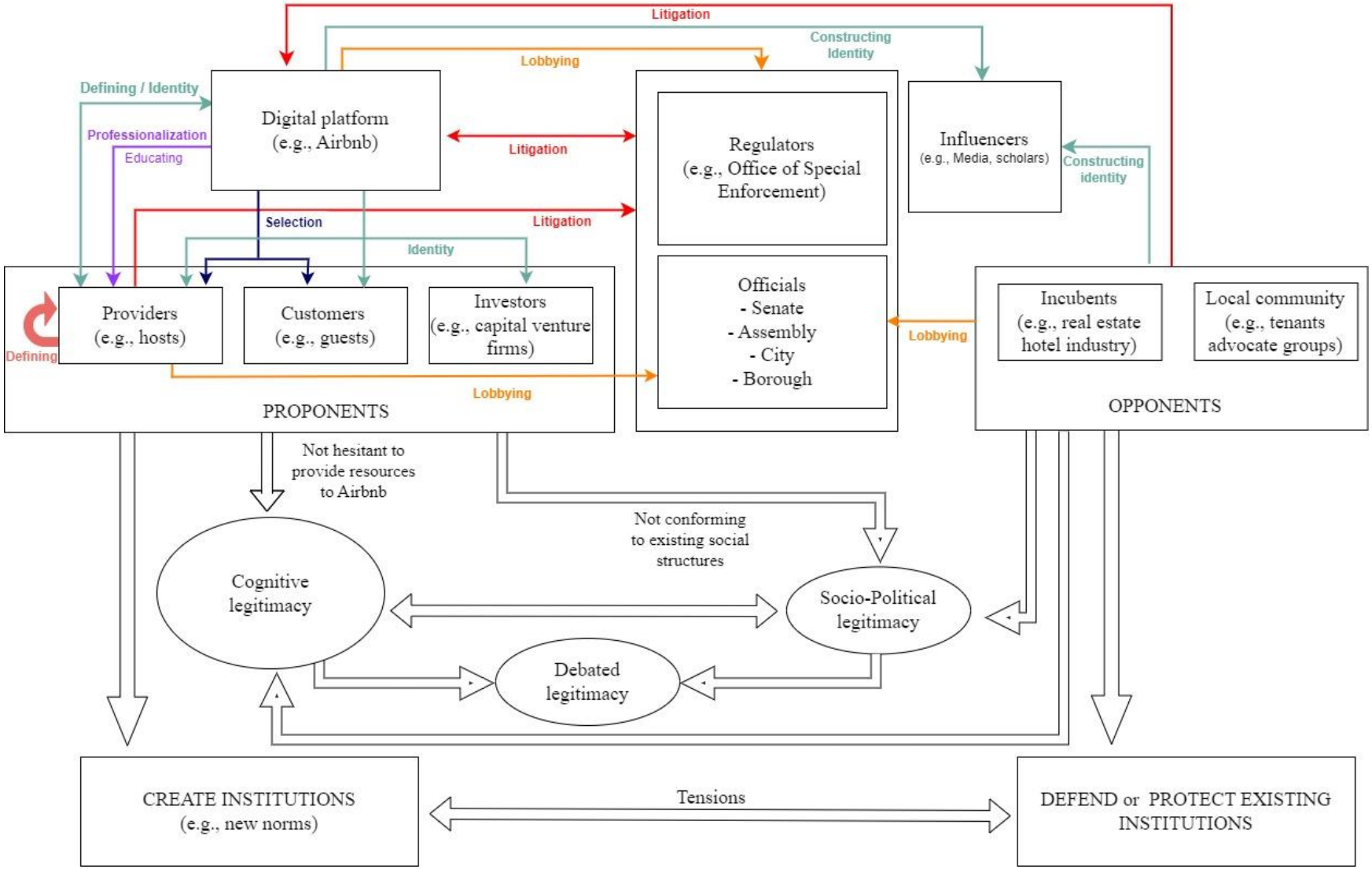


Figure 117: Before crisis: Debated legitimacy fueled by the level of tensions from the interplay between strategic relational strategies and institutional work mechanisms enabling a strong cognitive legitimacy. (Source: Lecuyer, 2024)

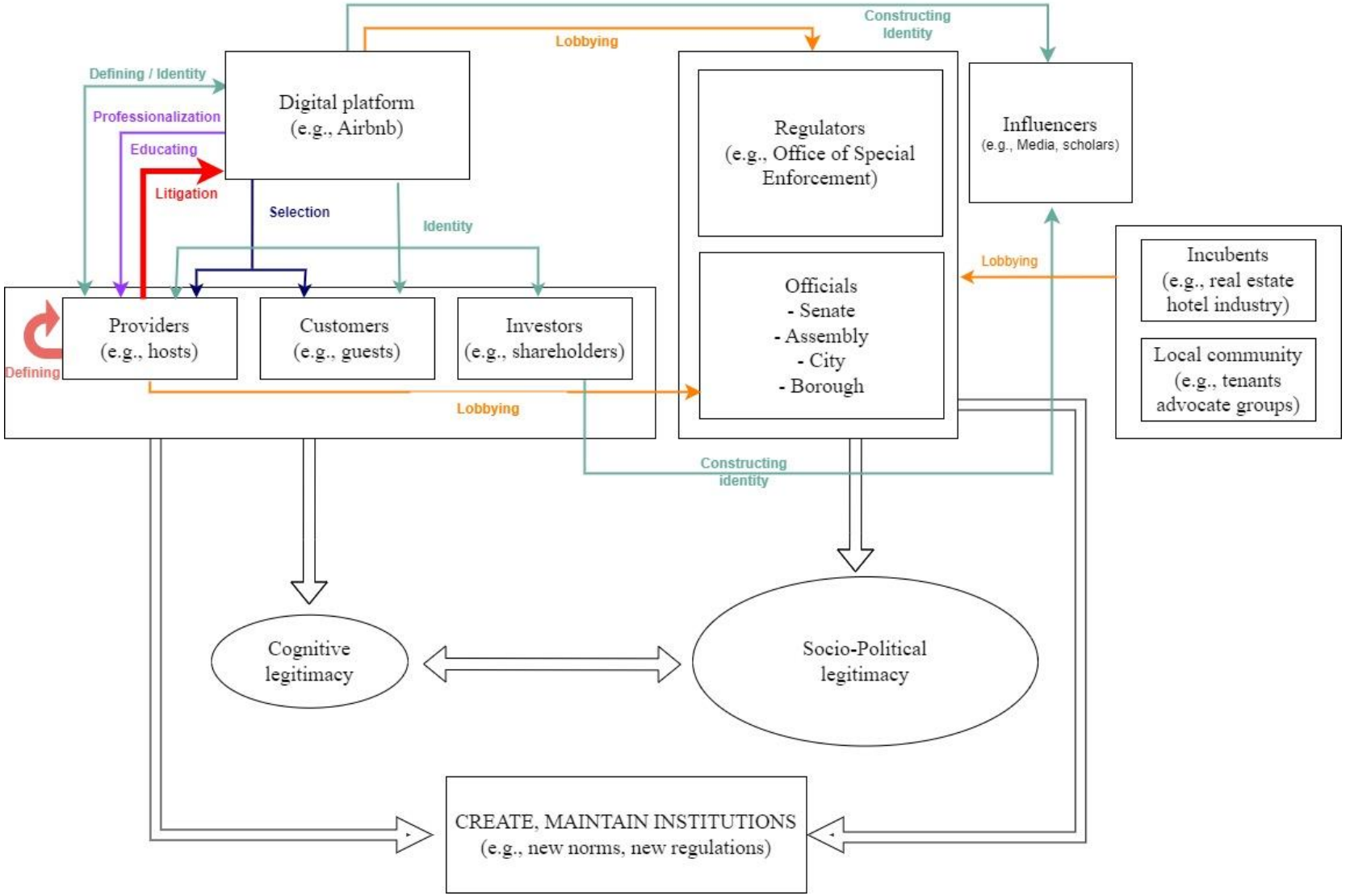


Figure 118: During the crisis: Effect of the crisis on the interplay between strategic relational strategies and institutional work mechanisms characterized by lower tensions with a positive effect on the socio-political legitimacy. (Source: Lecuyer, 2024)

6.2. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This thesis seeks to make several theoretical contributions on how a digital platform in the sharing economy creates and maintains its legitimacy strategically and institutionally, managing multiple actors in times of crisis.

First, the legitimacy acquisition and maintenance of a DP in the SE facing a crisis remains understudied. Literature pointed out the controversies and paradoxes inherent to the field of the SE (Acquier et al., 2017; Gerwe and Silva, 2020). Those controversies represent a unique opportunity to better understand why some DPs succeed and some don't. Most studies analyzed pioneered DPs in the SE and how they disrupted incumbents' firms (Adner, 2017), succeeding in entering markets and scaling up their resources (Cusumano et al., 2020, Hein et al., 2020) despite controversies and tensions conducting to a "debated" legitimacy (Deephouse et al., 2017). DPs are considered legitimate if they are perceived as "desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions" (Suchman, 1995). Legitimacy matters for DPs because it enables them to engage with vital stakeholders (i.e., providers and customers) and other actors within their ecosystem. Although many studies have underlined the importance to take into account the multi-actor relationships within DP's ecosystems, very few of them have managed to characterize in detail the mechanisms at hand. Moreover, past studies focused on the DP legitimacy challenges entering markets and overcome its "liability of newness" while depending on support and resources to survive and growth (Fisher et al., 2017). However, some significant gaps remain in our understandings of the process of legitimation when a DP existing on its market is confronted with "taken for granted by consumers' meanwhile not accepted by others, disrupting institutions and in addition subject to a crisis.

Our study and its key findings – presented in the previous chapters – thus allows making three key contributions to the existing literature: (1) identification of relational strategies implemented by the DP to maintain its cognitive legitimacy; (2) specification of the institutional work at hand between the DP and the key actors within its local institutional context and; (3) characterization of the interplay between a DP's cognitive and socio-political legitimacy and the associated relational and institutional mechanisms.

This study thus underscores how legitimacy is built and maintained not only by the DP but also by all ecosystem' actors. It suggests the evolving role of actors contributing as a whole to the legitimation process and more specifically the investors providing financial resources and therefore affecting market capitalization and the value of initial public offerings (IPOs). Finally, this thesis allows to better understand (4) the role of the crisis as an "accelerator" of legitimacy and as a highlighter of the (5) ethical paradoxes inherent to DP in the SE.

.

6.2.1. The relational dimension of the DP process of legitimation

Our findings evidence how Airbnb has successfully assumed the role of stakeholder relations' orchestrator during the COVID-19 crisis to preserve its already debated legitimacy (Deephouse et al., 2017). We shed light on the selection strategy implemented by the platform to direct its engagement towards key salient stakeholders – in our case, guests and investors – and the migratory effects (Kuruppu et al., 2019) these choices can have on other stakeholders such as hosts, employees, or municipalities. These choices can be explained by the platform's willingness to sustain at all costs its cognitive legitimacy – expressed through its capacity to attract and manage resources, although they can led to value co-destruction when the process is accelerated in times of crisis and neglects the interests of other stakeholder groups (Buhalis et al., 2020).

Taking into account the underlying power-relations and asymmetries that structure the platform ecosystem, the study shows the capacity of a SEP to orchestrate competition and rivalry between stakeholders (Constantiou et al., 2017) – such as different categories of hosts - to create and capture value by framing new business opportunities in times of crisis (Kretschmer et al., 2020). Professionalization can accelerate - in this case - the competitive dynamics of the ecosystem (Li and Srinivasan, 2019). Finally, we demonstrate the mutually reinforcing influences that exist between the selection and professionalization strategies, as the control and selection mechanisms provide financial and psychological levers, which, properly manipulated, can lead to the emergence of an "elite" category of hosts, who are usually following the path of profit-oriented professionalization (Gil and Sequera, 2022).

Relational dynamics

The three identified strategies are novel, and they describe how the platform manage to build "converging" interests with the actors that contribute the most to its value creation. We see that contributors might find an opportunity to engage with the platform for instrumental (i.e., money, listing, security, etc.) interests and for identity interests (i.e., image, trust, community of value, etc.). These strategies also underline that the search for autonomy and mutuality as described by Schlüssler *et al.* (2021) are important forces to build cohesion between the platform and its contributors. The dynamic of "*mutuality*" emphasizes reciprocity and sharing around relations that can be distinct from conventional commercial exchanges. *"Autonomy"* relates to the search for freedom and independence that characterize digital platforms in opposition to the conventional economy, often based on hierarchy and control (Sundarajan, 2016). However, the peaceful and win-win relations that the DP had managed to create with its key stakeholders were threatened during the crisis. Indeed, by sacrificing its "hosts" – even temporally- the DP has demonstrated its capacity to prioritize and create hierarchy between its contributors to maintain its legitimacy. Indeed, DP's users are considered free to access or leave the platform when they wish, to decide the volume of activity and the intensity of their relationship with the platform or other users.

Our study thus reveals the prevalence of domination – through a form of "relational opportunism" – when the DP uses the strength of established and trustworthy relationships to reach its own interest in times of crisis. In consequence, the "domination" force – defined by Schlüssler *et al.* (2021) as the mutual interdependencies between various actors, and the power asymmetries that can exist between platform and users – both customers and micro-entrepreneurs (Cutolo & Kenney, 2021), appears at the very heart of the search for cognitive legitimacy of the DP. Professionalization strategy aimed to transform hosts' profile and practices from an amateurish to an profit-oriented entrepreneurial perspective. While overtly based on a logic of autonomy and empowerment, this evolution covertly increases hosts and third parties' resource dependency and reinforces platform's dominance, as the host community becomes more homogeneous and embedded into a highly competitive, profit-oriented business system.

We acknowledge that despite criticisms and tensions, a key factor of success of DP lies in their capacity to develop strong relational strategies within their ecosystem to minimize resistance and enhance their cognitive legitimacy and associated performance (Ricart et al., 2020). Our data also revealed a form of co-opetition (Le Roy and Czakon, 2016) among hosts by co-creating and

cooperating while competing, leading a "superior performance" We confirm that the perceived equity of relational strategies is highly important in this interconnected digital context, as actions favoring some stakeholders may have migratory effects on other ecosystem actors (Kuruppu et al., 2019).

Investors as "key contributors"

This work examines the relational strategies orchestrated by the digital platform amongst its contributors. Some studies have hinted at digital platforms' triadic relations and the scaling of suppliers and customers through network effects (Iansiti and Levien, 2004), described as the "move fast" tactic inducing cognitive legitimacy (Garud et al., 2022).

While our work highlights the relational strategies among the triadic relation i.e., Airbnb, hosts and guests and third parties; it also suggests that investors played a pivotal role in the legitimation process of the DP. DP legitimacy process is multifaceted involving capital funding, business model trust and brand empowerment. Fisher et al., (2017) work on *what entrepreneurs might do to establish legitimacy for a new venture*" proposed identity, associative and organizational mechanisms. We contribute to the discussion emphasizing the role of identity to attract investors in the DP legitimation process. The DP identity was portrayed as (i) a disruptive innovation creating institutions, (ii) a social and economic solution "live like a local", (iii) a culture of resilience leveraged in times of crisis.

Our work claims that powerful identity strategies fueled cognitive legitimacy towards investors. We relate identity strategy with financial performance measures i.e., the capital injected by investors. Year per year, we described the continuous flow of capital invested by heterogeneous profiles of investors (angel investors, venture capitalists and corporate venture capitalists). We also argue that the context in which investors decide to provide capital shows the ability of the DP in convincing and represents another performance measure of cognitive legitimacy. For example, succeeding in collecting $2B in April 2020 during the most uncertain period in the world and during the collapse of the global economy validates the strong DP cognitive legitimacy. The successful IPO in Dec 2020 is another example. Airbnb demonstrated to the public that its value proposition based on the equilibrium between providers on one side and customers on the other side. Airbnb appeals as a solid installed base digital platform and used its dominant position in the tourism

industry to convince investors and future shareholders to make its IPO an historical success in a pandemic context.

Finally, a DP in the SE joining the S&P 500 illustrate a cultural shift in investment patterns and legitimate the disruptive business model of the DP. Being listed in the index S&P 500 reflects a significant indicator of a company's market value. The index includes around 500 of the largest publicly traded companies in the US. September 2021, Airbnb's inclusion in the S&P 500 showed the significant economic impact of the DP and, the recognition of the SE to the financial community.

6.2.2. The institutional dimension of the DP process of legitimation

Our study highlighted that institutional work stream represents a rich and suitable theoretical framework to describe institutional tactics of a DP in the SE and to underly power asymmetries among actors. Applying Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) framework, the pre-established classification of institutional work mechanisms allows us to understand and classify political, normative, and socio-cognitive works.

Zwork et al., (2019) work provided an inspiring contribution to the institutional theory. Our project enriched this work in the sense that we described the institutional work not just at "normal business time" but during and after a historical global crisis. Interestingly, our findings demonstrated that during a crisis, institutional work deployed by the DP and other actors rely on the same institutional work mechanisms but are used towards other actors and when tensions are at their lowest intensity. For example, lobbying served to influence municipalities to launch economic favorable aids for business or protect vulnerable groups of actors. We highlight thereafter some institutional mechanisms that were key for maintaining the socio-political legitimacy of the DP during the crisis.

Grassroot lobbying

We enriched the theoretical framework adding "grassroot lobbying" as a category of political work largely used by DP in the SE. It consists in mobilizing the users of the platform to advocate on behalf of the DP and strategically influence local legislation and gain acceptance. Airbnb's

approach to grassroots lobbying has been a significant part of its political work to influence local legislation and gain acceptance in various markets worldwide. Historically, the DP has turned to mobilizing its hosts and users to advocate on its behalf, especially when facing regulatory challenges that could impact its operations. In NY State, Airbnb mobilized its hosts and educate them to participate in city council hearings to "stop the ban" using discursive claims (i.e., hosts' economic and social motivations). Those efforts are combined with strong identity campaigns to educate the public and policymakers about the benefits of the DP and its community at large (e.g., local businesses) backing up local hosts groups (e.g., Keep our Homes in NYC).

Thus, grassroot lobbying tactically combined with identity campaign, is a strong institutional work mechanism used by DP in the SE to advocate for favorable regulations, aiming at manipulating general public and regulators.

Creating new institutions

We demonstrate that a pioneered DP created and institutionalized new norms by normative and socio-cognitive works. The COVID-19 crisis revealed the power of the platform to create institutions by shaping and involving members in adapting their activities to the new customers' expectations. Hosts reconfigured their listings for long duration stay and attracted rural area or "digital nomad" when many businesses transitioned to remote working. To do so, it shaped behaviors in adopting new standards through normative network associations and educating. Forms of cooperation were initiated via social media Groups, i.e., Facebook Groups, where participation was stimulated by mentors educating on best practices and strategies to manage and grow business. In our study, we demonstrate that host community groups co-created, shaped and promoted new hosting standards i.e., (i) automation of tasks (e.g., instant bookings, automatic email responses, digicode locker) and (ii) on-line interactions (e.g., instant messengers with guests, online meetings with hosts inner circle and video conferencing).

Before COVID-19 crisis, DP already operated digitally successfully infusing digitalization as the new norm of hosting confronting its communities in transitioning to digital technology and adopting new innovative routines (e.g., peer-reviewing, self-check in for Airbnb guests). Digitalization constituted the operational norms making a remarkable advantage to the DP. Consequently, we argue that a DP gradually affirmed its capacity to influence its community

through digital norms. For example, the agenda of inner circles groups overcome hosts issues discussed during zoom meetings. During summits organized for hosts, start-ups part of the Airbnb ecosystem proposed technological, organizational, and financial solutions (e.g., a new device as a noise-detector to alert the hosts in case of a party or an integrated booking calendar).

6.2.3. The crisis as an "accelerator" of legitimacy

Our results show that Airbnb has not only managed to maintain its legitimacy during the pandemic of COVID 19 but has also managed to improve it in times of crisis. The first element that may explain this counter-intuitive result lies in the quality of the business model of Airbnb and to its resilience. The second element concern the weakening of Airbnb's opponents in times of crisis in their inability to regulate the DP and to bring opportunities for the city.

The global crisis caused by COVID-19 was the "great accelerator" in embracing emerging technologies, use of digitalization in work-patterns and transformations in lifestyle (Amankwah-Amoah et al., 2021). We contribute to the discussion arguing that the crisis has been a "catalyst" for accelerating the institutionalization of DP, increasing its socio-political legitimacy indicating the ability to face global crisis despite new norms (e.g., work remotely, remote operations) due to its community technological advanced and digitally business model.

Our project highlighted how disruptive is a digital platform and the gaps with incumbent firms. Our data revealed how the local institutional context had a normative control over incumbent firms opposed to the ability of Airbnb to adapt fast and "freely" without industry and regulatory constraints. Airbnb successfully adopted its business model to new customers' trends (e.g., local tourism, long duration stay); while it successfully promoted inclusive development (1) solving tensions with actors harming the platform (i.e., finding an agreement with the Municipality of NYC after years in litigation) and, (2) establishing new governance mechanisms to fix the relations with hosts (e.g., Advisory Board) and (3) normative control (anti-discrimination policy).

Whereas hotels embedded in the local context were directly engaged with the Municipality of NYC to supply accommodation and challenged in mobilizing internal actors such as employees while responding to the Municipality order to provide rooms for heterogenous population (from homeless people to doctors). Meanwhile they had to overcome institutional and regulatory constraints (e.g., 14 days quarantine for tourists arriving in NYC). Our data posits that incumbent

firms have not succeeded in developing novel solutions to tackle the crisis as opposed to DP who adopted agile reactions strategies intended to grow the business while addressing the pandemic.

6.2.4. The "interplay" of relational and institutional mechanisms of the DP process of legitimation during a crisis

Although some authors have recognized the conjoint role of relational and institutional mechanisms in the DP process of legitimation, our work contributes to open the "black box" of this interplay (Garud et al., 2022). We responded to the call of Dumay et al. (2015) referring to its paper: *"prior work focuses on either the institutional or strategic arms of legitimacy theory but rarely considers the interrelationships between both."* We highlight how relational strategies are useful to build peaceful and win-win relationships with key providers of resources or contributors to enhance cognitive legitimacy, while institutional work is useful to minimize resistance and to fight against potential opponents. We show the equilibrium that must be found over time on these two aspects of the legitimation process. Moreover, we show how the different actors may move from different positions – i.e. from opponents to contributors – and the dynamic evolutions of relationships within Airbnb ecosystem during the crisis.

Some actors reveal, in our findings, the important interplay between cognitive and social-political legitimacy and the underlying relational and institutional mechanisms.

- *Investors at the "heart" of the interplay*: Collaborating with reputable investors or business angels can open doors on providing strategic partnerships opportunities. Those investors bring valuable expertise and experience that can guide funders in strategic and operational decision making. Their involvement in governance can also reassure other actors about the management and sustainability of the business (e.g., Sequoia partner). Investors ecosystem in tech companies who have stakes on multiple companies occupy unique position to instill their insights and guide strategic decisions specifically around technological investment, regulatory strategies, and rapid scaling (e.g., Andreessen Horowitz with Uber and Airbnb). We demonstrate the pivotal role of the finance and investment ecosystem encapsulating heterogeneity of investors in the survival and growth of the DP. We argue that they represent a persuasive form of "evaluative institutions" (Überbacher, 2014) with determinant positive effect on the cognitive and socio-political legitimacy, more powerful than other forms of evaluative institutions such as government or regulatory institutions.

- *Providers at the "heart" of the interplay*: Our work revealed the operational perspective of the professionalization relational strategy fueling the ecosystem. The community logic takes the form of local "*inner circle*" groups organized at regular intervals, which encouraged many hosts to engage "*in experimentation and a search for good practices*" (Autio and Thomas, 2018). These initiatives were supported by "*Community Leaders program*" which identified, trained and provided resources to successful hosts in order to organize and animate meetings with host groups, in which they shared their best practices and professional experience. "*Inner circle*" events were later transformed in problem-solving workshops, in which the newly professionalized hosts collaborated to increase the effectiveness of their rental activity (e.g., establishing cohosting contract templates, defining services, or developing quality standards and procedures). Providers here provide key resources but also a strong socio-political legitimacy through the emergence of new norms and beliefs with the NYC ecosystem.

The crisis also reveals the "interplay" of relational and institutional mechanisms of the DP process of legitimation by emphasizing the "moves" and "evolutive roles" of some actors. We captured the evolving roles and identified typology of actors before and after COVID-19: orchestrator, contributors, opposants, influencers, regulators and neutral and described them in a table 34.

Table 34: Co-evolving roles of actors before and after COVID-19

	Orchestrator	Contributors	Opposants	Influencers	Regulators	Neutral
AIRBNB	X X				X	
Hosts		X	X			
Guests		X X				
Investors	X	X		X		
Hotel Industry Association			X	X		X
Municipality State Senate			X	X	X	X
Office of Special Enforcement (OSE)			X		X X	
Neighborhood Associations			X			X
Real Estate (REBNY)			X			X
Journalists				X X		
Scholars				X X		

(X: before COVID-19 – X: after COVID-19)

Actors	Orchestrator	Contributors	Opposants	Influencers	Regulators	Neutrals	Description
AIRBNB	X						DP operating under the Multiple Dwelling Law, orchestrates as a digital platform the triadic relations promoting the sense of belonging of a community of suppliers and customers, providing the technological infrastructure and marketing operations mitigating tensions through active lobbying and lawsuits, engaged in policy advocacy and negotiations with local government.
	X						Leadership in crisis management with loan of $1B, IPO preparedness with the SEC, shift in listing offerings (e.g., digital nomad), restructuration.
					X		Regulator in (1) mitigating the reimbursement of guests scarifying hosts (2) creating a win win agreement and dialogue with local policy makers and institutional
Hosts		X					Suppliers of physical assets (e.g. entire property or rooms) or skills (e.g. Airbnb experience) listing their property on the platform. They play a crucial role as service providers maintaining the property, communicating with potential guests and ensuring a pleasant experience.
			X				Victims Suppliers with brutal reallocation of their revenues and drop of bookings causing uncertainty and financial instability. Flexible Suppliers with the necessity to adapt their listings and services (e.g., new cleaning protocols, long stay duration)
Guests		X					Customers who rent short-term rentals and could contribute to the local economy.
		X					Customers but with New needs (e.g., green environment, wifi access, long term stay).
Investors		X					Investors contribute to finance Tech and Competitors acquisitions (e.g., Hotel tonight, Luxury retreats...)
				X			Investors influence Board decision as shareholders of Airbnb
Hotel Industry Association			X	X			Traditional incumbents fighting against unfair competition (i.e., taxes, regulations and safety standards).
						X	Supplier of rooms for the municipality (homeless people), crisis management during collapse of activities.

Municipality State Senate		X	X		Active litigator against Airbnb trough creation and enforcement of regulations, focusing on taxations, safety standards, affordable housing, consumer protection, neighborhood quality of life.
				X X	Facilitator to define an agreement and collect taxes due to collapse impact as a moderate regulator.
Office of Special Enforcement (OSE)		X		X	Police and guardian of the MDL which prohibits rentals less than 30 days in NYC by inspecting buildings, investigating possible violations and pursuing legal actions.
				X	Guardian of COVID safety measures for traditional business (e.g., restaurants, shops). No more investigation and litigation against Airbnb.
Neighborhood Associations		X			Protector of the local community and the neighborhood acting against noise, safety and cultural district changes.
				X	Protector of tenants 'rights to avoid eviction. No more investigation and litigation against Airbnb.
Real Estate (REBNY)		X			Conglomerate composed by heterogenous parties impacted on long term rental and real estate price market and housing supply and availability (e.g., short term rental versus long term).
				X	Crisis Management focusing on new safety measures and drop of transactions
Journalists			X		Information canal playing a key role in influencing public opinion and policy discussion. Media relate the role of (1) digital platform and impact of STR in the context of NYC and (2) other actors reactions (e.g., lawsuits or litigations wit the OSE). Media investigated and reported on various aspects related to Airbnb presence.
			X		Information canal
Scholars NY Stern			X		Academic partner with DP in the SE and industry leaders to foster dialogue and knowledge exchange by hosting conferences, workshops and panel focus on SE with guest speakers of leading DP in the SE. Scholars are engage in public debate advocating for responsible and sustainable practices within the SE.
			X		Academic partner

Our data highlighted the complexity of the "*massive exogenous shock*" (Carmine et al., 2021) of COVID-19 crisis for private and public actors and society at large. Given that tensions are multi-faceted and multi-level, our study over three periods revealed that the crisis impacted the degree of exogenous tensions between proponents and opponents. Actors re-oriented their priorities and engaged in new dialogues with other actors. In fact, it forced actors to conflict with new endogenous tensions developing quick material, cognitive and emotional responses while shaping prospective strategies. We demonstrate how the magnitude of a crisis could reduce pending profound and exogenous tensions lying opportunities while undergoing major changes. For example, the COVID-19 "window of opportunity" enabled the DP to strengthen its socio-political legitimacy in NYC conducting an agreement with the Office of Special Enforcement after 14 years of litigations.

Based on inner circle groups data collection, we demonstrate that the digital community and entrepreneurial logics rapidly posit COVID-19 not as an object of tension itself. It tackled the entrepreneurial mindset stimulating a race to grow aiming at exploiting the cultural changes of customers such as local tourism and long duration stay. As opposed to incumbents' firms, DP maximized the benefits of the crisis.

6.2.5. Ethical issues of the legitimation process during the crisis

Given the controversial nature of the SE, its frameworks and boundaries, our data echoed the multi-faceted identity and discursive claims of pioneered DPs in the SE. The pioneered DP professing community spirit fueled controversies with the profit orientation and misalignment of institutional logics (Frenken et al., 2020; Schor and Vallas, 2021). The "Move fast break things" strategy of pioneered DP (Garud et al., 2022) fueled tensions inherent to the SE (Acquier et al., 2019) navigating under grey regulations.

The literature has largely focused on the DP relationships with its providers, animated by social forces and dichotomy (i.e., domination versus autonomy and mutuality) and information asymmetry (Davlembayeva and Papagiannidis, 2023), or labor conditions and status (Pache, 2021). The pandemic significantly affected Airbnb and led to a drastic decline in bookings impacting host earnings. The conflict of interest between guest and hosts was arbitraged in guests' favour, who were essential for the long-term survival of the Airbnb's economic activity. Doing so, the platform

took the responsibility to transfer the financial responsibility of the crisis to its hosts to sustain its cognitive legitimacy. This decision created internal tensions that threatened the social sustainability and cohesiveness of the ecosystem, as well as the "debated" legitimacy of the platform.

Although many hosts launched individual or collective protests, their strong dependency to the platform prevented them to leave the ecosystem. At this point, Airbnb launched a series of identity-reinforcing initiatives – to sustain its socio-political legitimacy - stating the reconstruction of ecosystem's social sustainability and to gain support for local actors. Indeed, the local field in which the platform is embedded in NYC is characterized by strong controversies and litigations with local actors such as officials, during the crisis. At the same time, professional and selection strategies were launched to seize new opportunities in the NYC market and to demonstrate the resilience and economic potential of the platform for investors. Crisis, however, reveals the "dark sides" of these choices for hosts and vulnerable stakeholder groups (e.g., employees) and their consequences with regards to social and environmental issues.

Our study highlighted that the DP did not behave in alignment with its discursive claims, "delegitimating"[156]its identity "sense of belonging" and its community logic during March 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. We posit that hosts were not associated in the decision-making process and sacrificed. Siebold et al. (2023) also traced the way Airbnb carried out COVID-19 crisis applying three strategies (1) refund ad-hoc cancelations to guests, (2) communicated offering a host relief, (3) asked guest to support hosts via "kindness cards". The authors acknowledged that Airbnb failed to consider its key stakeholders due to "becoming victims of cognitive condition of inattentional blindness" (i.e., cognitive issue to look at facts during a crisis). We provided evidence that the DP was mainly engaged in institutionalized dialogue with its investors. Considered as evaluative institutions, investors arbitrated decisions and balanced short-term survival with long-term sustainability via the IPO.

Moreover, our study highlights differences between the promises of sustainability of the DP – at the heart of its identity and "citizenship role" and its real behavior. We found that platform legitimacy and ecosystem sustainability are interdependent phenomena (Hossain, 2018; Krouk and Almeida, 2020), as SEP are evaluated by the main stakeholders on their capacity to effectively

[156] Etchanchu, 2016

orchestrate the functioning of the ecosystem, assuring economic performance and competitiveness, a convergence of main stakeholders' interest, and credible justifications of a positive sustainability impact. However, this alignment is fragile and fragmented (Ko et al., 2022) and can be threatened by relational strategies that do not promote mutuality and autonomy, but rather domination and control (Schlüssler et al., 2021), when platform's legitimacy is debated in times of crisis.

6.3. METHODOLOGICAL AND MANAGERIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Methodological contributions

Our methodological contributions are interrelated with an asserted "embeddedness" research posture possible through access to robust and unique data collection echoing the importance of context. Starting with a three-month investigation of the Airbnb ecosystem in NYC via secondary data allowed us to have a rough overview of the actors involved in the local context, for example, the central role of the Office of Special Enforcement, Criminal Justice Department of the NYC Mayor Office.

We have adopted a truly on-board posture allowing us - in our interpretive approach - to immerse ourselves as closely as possible to the perceptions of the actors of NYC. Pictures, feelings, emotions, and discussions were key for giving sense and meaning to our interviews in such a complex context. We think that our research is unique in this regard. We emerged ourselves in a context of worldwide crisis that we also experiment in our mind and body and to which we manage to describe the specificities in a context different than ours. In a timeframe, from 2018 to 2020, we established three different periods that characterize Airbnb's strategic and institutional orchestration of actors. This timeframe corresponds to the periods before, during and after the global economic collapse, the COVID-19 pandemic, a multi-faceted crisis that we characterized and narrated while collecting our data (Langley, 1999).

This embeddedness in the field is also revealed by the uniqueness of the collected data. We have had access to very rare respondents and collected data coming from alternative and unique sources of documentation. For example, the professionalization strategy emerged immediately through the weekly participation of inner circle groups. The quality of interviews due to the profile of the interviewees and the time devoted to the interview allowed us to capture the tensions, the battle taking place and the work mechanisms in presence. Triangulation enabled to gather biased information based on data from their sources (e.g., AirDna versus InsideAirbnb).

We also collected unique financial data throughout this process. Two robust financial data based were used i.e., FactSet and Bloomberg. From the data collected that emerged, we captured the pivotal role of investors in the legitimation process. Bloomberg Terminal considered as a premier resource in financial markets provided us exhaustive information on DP in the SE

financials but also on the hotel industry with analytical tools for market trend analysis in COVID-19 period. Its research reports and key functions on Airbnb and Uber clarified the IPO process on its specific developments. FactSet is a much more user-friendly complementary database that eases the process of collecting valuable archived information (e.g., media articles).

6.4. Managerial contributions

"In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity" Alber Einstein

For brevity, we argue that this work provides managerial contributions in two aeras or domains:

For the DP, the management of COVID-19 crisis management deeply affected the relations with the providers. Literature highlighted that during crisis, leading companies maintain a focus on the organization's values and demonstrate concern and empathy to stakeholders (James and Wooten, 2005). We argue that during a crisis considered as a critical event threatening legitimacy (Marcus and Godman, 1991), DP in the SE should strengthen cognitive institutions reinforcing the sense of beliefs and implement inclusive organizational behaviors. In particular, evaluating the consequences of platform's decision for various stakeholder categories (Kuruppu et al., 2019) can limit negative effects – in particular in socio-political legitimacy - and preserve the ecosystem's stability. In this regard, the relational capacity of DP (Ricart et al., 2020) lies in finding and preserving a fine balance between mutuality, autonomy, and domination within its ecosystem (Schlüssler et al., 2021). The foundation of these relational dimensions lies in a strong collective identity, community engagement, and the associated platform's legitimacy (Hossain, 2021). Our study indicates how DP can build innovative forms of multi-stakeholder governance and enhance value co-creation within their ecosystems by framing new business and societal opportunities (Buhalis et al., 2020).

For the incumbents and regulators, COVID-19 fostered quick decision-making processes embedded in tech companies' norms and beliefs. Addressing a sense of urgency, firms had to deliver survival responses on a global scale. It was a delicate experimentation for incumbents' firms to readapt their vertical decision process and sectorial decisions architecture (e.g., trade associations). Moreover, complex, and paradoxical regulations constrained them.

Thus, our study revealed how institutional embeddedness minimized the opportunity for incumbents' firms to benefit from the crisis. Understanding the complex, interdependent relationships which characterize the DP's ecosystem – and the relational strategies and institutional mechanisms used to coordinate its functioning (Autio and Levie, 2017) – can help regulators to introduce laws that limit domination tendencies within DPs' ecosystems and reduce the negative migratory effects towards the most vulnerable stakeholders. This relational approach thus provides potential levers to safeguard public interests, sustainability, and better control the platforms (Frenken et al., 2020).

6.5. Conclusion, limits, and avenues for future research

Our thesis investigates the relational strategies and institutional work mechanisms implemented by Airbnb to maintain its legitimacy in the eyes of its key stakeholders/actors during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, and their consequences for its ecosystem. Doing so, our research theoretically contributes to the relational, institutional, and multi-stakeholder perspective of the DP ecosystem (Schlüssler et al., 2021; Ricart et al., 2020). On the one hand, we investigate the platform's initiatives in relation to various stakeholders, designed to reinforce its debated legitimacy in times of adversity (Deephouse et al., 2017). On the other hand, we describe the consequences determined by Airbnb's orchestration to manage and transform its NYC ecosystem, in order to preserve identity and reputation (Buhalis et al., 2020). Managerially speaking, our research is useful for DPs and their key stakeholders to better understand the network of relationship within platforms' ecosystems and the opportunities of shared governance to achieve business development. In addition, our findings may also help regulators to better understand and interact with DPs' ecosystems in order to enhance their sustainability (Mosaad et al., 2023; Zmyślony et al., 2020).

The present work benefits from studying the interplay between the cognitive and socio-political legitimacy of a global DP in a highly institutionalized context before, during and after a crisis, i.e., Airbnb in NYC. It thus represents a unique empirical opportunity thanks to a rich collection of interviews and in-dept access to community groups, media articles and financial databases. This allowed to identify the emerging relational strategies of the DP with its contributors (i.e., identity, professionalization, and selection) as well as classify the institutional work

mechanisms framework (i.e., political, normative, and socio-cognitive work). For example, we identified grassroot lobbying as a specific advocacy work used by DP to ban unfavorable regulations. This study underscores how legitimacy is built and maintained not only by the DP but also by all ecosystem' actors. It suggests the evolving role of actors contributing as a whole to the legitimation process from a temporality starting before the crisis and ending after. Finally, this thesis allows to highlight the role of the crisis as an "accelerator" of legitimacy as well as the social forces and emerging new tensions at stake.

Our study presents several limits that opens related avenues for future research. First, we might have collected data on a longer period of time to better compare and understand the relational strategies and institutional work mechanisms implemented by a DP, their interplay and their consequences for legitimacy. Second, limited time and resources forced us to focus on few categories of key stakeholders within Airbnb's NYC ecosystem. We might also have compared our results with contrasted situations developed in diverse locations and for different DPs during the COVID-19 crisis. Despite these limitations, our findings represent an essential step in developing further research in various multi-actors DP ecosystems, to better understand and characterize the relational dynamics and the governance structures mobilized in times of crisis (Breitsohl, 2008). This can be useful to understand how DP are likely to manage multi-actors' conflicts and tensions within their ecosystems, in order to enhance legitimacy and sustainability.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Mission letter

Montpellier Business School since 1897

Dr. Elsa Kassardjian
Head of Faculty Development- Research
Montpellier Business School
2300, avenue des Moulins
34185 Montpellier, Cedex 4, France
Email: e.kassardjian@montpellier-bs.com

Montpellier, 15/05/2019

To whom it may concern

Object: Letter of mission

As part of its research activities, MBS has initiated a research project on the Sharing Economy in the hospitality industry with an in-depth analysis of Airbnb. Primary data is being collected through interviews with the key stakeholders (e.g. users of Airbnb, hotels 'industry, OTA, policy makers, property managers, regulatory bodies).
The research team comprises Dr. Calin GURAU Associate Professor., Dr. Magalie MARAIS Associate Professor and Catherine L'ECUYER, Associate Professor who is undertaking her PhD.

The PhD thesis is dedicated to exploring the interrelations amongst groups of stakeholders within the sharing economy. The project aims at providing a more nuanced understanding of the stakeholders' relations and tensions that characterize the sharing economy.

The project proposes that a clearer understanding of tensions will support entrepreneurs, business leaders and policymakers alike to more efficiently promote the mainstreaming process of the sharing economy and find adequate ways to regulate new business models affiliated with the sharing economy.

2300, avenue des Moulins
34185 Montpellier cedex 4
France

Tél : + 33 (0)4 67 10 25 00
Fax : + 33 (0)4 67 45 13 56

montpellier-bs.com

Association loi 1901
Enseignement supérieur privé d'intérêt général - Loi du 22.07.2013
Siret : 79026124200016 - APE : 85422

Since 2008, Airbnb has revolutionized the accommodation and hospitality industries. Even if the subject is highly covered through academics and practitioners, the global perspective of all its stakeholders has not been treated.
Stakeholders 'interviews will contribute to a better understanding of the roles of each group of stakeholders, the contradictions and tensions and the process of value creation.

The purpose of this work is purely academic.
All interviews are conducted, transcribed and coded using Nvivo12 software by the Phd fellow, Catherine L'Ecuyer. Therefore, all data will be treated with complete anonymity. It will not be possible for any individuals to be recognized.

If you wish to receive the findings of this research project, this could be made available to you, respecting the academic calendar process. Please find attached the information request form which should be completed and returned

We would like to thank you for your contribution to this research project.

Best Regards

Dr Elsa Kassardjian

Montpellier Business School
2300 Av. des Moulins
34185 MONTPELLIER
CEDEX 4
Tél. 04 67 10 25 00
www.montpellier-bs.com

Montpellier Business School since 1897
Making a Difference

montpellier-bs.com

Appendix 2: Semi-structural interviews

HOST

Interviewees Info: Hosts Profile	Name, first name, age, job title, education? For how long have you been listed on Airbnb? How many listings, locations?
	Is that your Airbnb activity as incremental revenue or as your unique source of revenue?
	What is your ranking and status (e.g., superhost) ?
Interactions between the hosts and the platform	Why have you chosen to list on Airbnb? Are you listed on other platforms?
	How do you interact with the platform? (e.g., call center, emailing)
	What support does Airbnb provide you with?
	What are the major challenges in listing your property on Airbnb?
Description of Hosting activities	How would you describe the life of an Airbnb host?
	How do you manage the different activities such as the management of messaging, cleaning, welcoming, responding to requests, peer reviewing?
	Do you think that technological solutions facilitate and allow hosts to perform better?
Development of social relations	With whom do you have support apart from the platform?
	With whom do you have tensions? How are those tensions expressed?
	How do you explain that Airbnb worth more than 30 billion dollars, by passing the brand like Marriot and Hilton in 10 years?
	Is Airbnb the “sharing economy”, “peer to peer community”, “collaborative economy”, “digital platform economy”?
	How do you interact with the community of hosts?
	What are your motives about hosting?
	How are the interactions with the guests?
Regulations	Who has the power today to regulate the short-term rentals industry?
	Do you feel being part of a community?
	How do those social relations influence the decisions you take?
	What is your opinion about regulations in NYC?
	With whom do you address questions about regulations?

OSE

OSE general information	What is the mission, budget, headcounts, and other major elements of the OSE? When was the Office created and under what law? Can't you find this online? What are the most important skills do you require for members of your team? Is housing the main activity of the OSE today? Who contributes to the funding of the OSE? With what group(s) have you faced opposition? (Do you mean Air BnB? If so just say Air BnB. except the digital platform) What resources do you need to succeed your mission? Do not understand – money, people skills, support of the Mayor, City Council, State of NY? How do you evaluate the success of the OSE? How do you work with the platform Air BnB?
Regulations:	How do you explain this decision? How do you cope with that kind of news for you and your team? what you are looking for? "Last January, a federal judge on Thursday blocked a recent New York City law intended to crack down on Airbnb and other online home-sharing sites that city officials say have essentially turned residential apartments into illegal hotels and have aggravated the city's housing shortage. Airbnb called the decision "a huge win for Airbnb and its users," including "thousands of New Yorkers at risk of illegal surveillance." The law, which was enacted summer 2018 and was to go into effect in Feb 2019, would have required the home-sharing services to disclose monthly to the city detailed information about tens of thousands of listings, and the identities and addresses of their hosts". Do you think that mandating platforms to share information will solve the issue of local regulations?
Airbnb focus	Legitimate home sharing as an economic resource in NY State is the objective of the bill sponsored by Assemblyman Joseph Lentol (Broolyn district) and Senator James Skoufis (Woodbury district). They claim that "The growth of this emerging industry offers governments new opportunities to collect, or recapture, tax revenues through digital regulatory tools and to nurture economic development in their communities."

	What is the role of the digital platform Air BnB? in the peer to peer economy? What should be the role of the digital platform in the peer to peer economy?
	Can you guide me to the major laws or regulations that guide or help OSE perform its functions?
	Does OSE become involved in legal/judicial disputes with Airbnb? How? Briefs? Plaintiff or defendant roles?
	From your perspective, how does Airbnb legitimize its strategy? Do not understand.
PR and Communication	What is the role of the media in this fight against Airbnb? What kind of stories do they cover? Can't you find this yourself? You have so many stories in your files. How do you publicize OSE and how it can help tenants, communities etc.? How is your communications staff organized to manage press, public inquiries? (e.g.Ballpark budget)
	You launched a campaign: Who are your audiences and media plan? What is the "big idea"? .
	How do you decide the message strategy (e.g. "you may never know…").
	How do you measure the effectiveness of your campaign?
	The hotel industry is launching a campaign at the same time, is that an hazardous?

HOTEL

Hotel general information	For how long you have been working in the hospitality industry?
	Hotel industry has been through major changes: growth of the big groups like Accor, Wyndham, Hilton, Mariott. Then tour operators (Thomson, Club Med…) Travel agencies with American Express Then web 2.0 with expedia, booking.com
	In your opinion and from your experience, what is your definition of a boutique hotel?
	What did I forget that represents a group of actors providing services for travelers?
	Can you explain to me the roles of each group today ? Ex: tour operators survival/travel agency
	What are the major developments?
Function	How does the industry function? Fees? & How does the industry function? Fees?
	Before web 2.0 who used to impact who? Now in 2019, who impacts who?
	How do you explain that Airbnb worth more than 30 billion dollars, by passing the brand like Marriot and Hilton?
Perspective	How Airbnb impacts the hotel industry?
	From your perspective, who leads the change?
	What is the role of the policy makers?
	What are the key regulatory bodies and what is the connexion with legislation?
	Could you specify the legislator bodies?
	Who has the power today to regulate the short-term rentals market?
	What associations might be worth considering?
Business model	How has Wyndham Group reshaped its business model?
	What are the strategic responses?
	What is your opinion based on the latest news from Airbnb (HotelNight acquisition?)
	How does it influence your business model (fees, marketing…)
	Does it change the client base?

Appendix 3: Co-hosting model

Property Address: _____

Company Name, LLC
Short-term Rental Cohosting

[Your Name]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

[Company address]
[City]
[State]

Overview

[Company] is a professional short-term rental cohosting company that partners with landlords and developers to fill their vacancies with short-term travelers, business and/or leisure guests. We offer professional Short-term rental cohosting to landlords, investors and property managers.

Services

COHOSTING

[Company] acts as a partner on your vacant homes, vacation rentals, and Airbnb listings. Our teams step in and handle all aspects of the short-term rental process from marketing, guest communication management, vendor management, unit inspections, key management, revenue projections and asset management and inspections (The A to Z of the Airbnb experience)

Subscription: 30% of booking revenue

Start Date: Upon signing

Currency: USD

Technology Fee: $500

Service End Date: 90 days after a written request has been received

Payout frequency: 30 Days

Service Details

[Company] Cohost Services:

- Listing Optimization & Marketing
- Guest Support & Approval
- Communication & Reservations
- Key Exchange & Management
- Dynamic Pricing
- Welcome Kit Creation
- Listing Advertising & Marketing
- Vendor Management

- Airbnb, VRBO, HomeAway, Tripadvisor, Booking.com
- Asset management**
- Monthly property inspection reports**

1. [Company] manages cleanings by approved cleaning partners before and after each guest, who will wash and replace all linens and towels for the property.

2. [Company] agents respond to booking inquiries received for Airbnb, HomeAway/VRBO, TripAdvisor and booking.com and book guests based on the homeowner's calendar availability.

3. [Company] pricing algorithm matches market demand. Homeowners can also set can pricing at request.

4. Should a home need maintenance repair or someone to troubleshoot an issue at the property, [Company] may dispatch a certified vendor or skilled professional to resolve the issue. All costs at homeowner's responsibility.

5. [Company] writes the listing description and ensures good pictures for all homeowners to generate guest interest. [Company] will also market the home across multiple platforms, namely HomeAway/VRBO and Airbnb.

6. Restock supplies as needed. The supplies consist of toilet paper, trash bags, paper towels, dish soap, dishwasher detergent, and toiletries which includes hand soap, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, and lotion.

7. [Company] uses instant booking to increase bookings. and the guests using instant booking may not be vetted

8. Standard Service Payment method: OTA payout method (When available) or Credit or debit card Service (4.5% service fee may apply)

9. [Company] may collect 100% of rental income on behalf of the owner, pay monthly expenses (agreed upon by the owner). [Company] will complete monthly payouts by the 15th of the following month.

11.. Garbage Management: Full-time garbage management is an extra $150 fee per month. *prices subject to change

10. Service cancellation: Upon canceling the service, [Company] must receive a cancellation notice in writing 90 days prior to the intended cancellation date. The homeowner is obliged to uphold any reservations made for the remaining 90 days and allow {Company] to service those guests. A full commission will be paid out to [Company] on all bookings that remain outside the 90 day cancellation period that was a direct result of [Company] efforts.

ADDITIONAL:

Maintenance: Maintenance dispatches and repairs by a [Company] vendor or professional under a minimum of $250 per instance as needed* Charged to the card on file or subtracted from collected rents\

Cleaning: - [Company] will coordinate and manage approved cleaning companies for each respective turnover. Cost of each cleaning will be passed on to the guest. The homeowner is responsible for monthly Supplies: Toilet paper, trash bags, paper towels, dish soap, dishwasher detergent, hand soap, shampoo, conditioner, surface cleaners, window cleaners, floor cleaners, bathroom cleaners, and ext. *Owner may incur extra cleaning and linen fee outside the cleaning fee charged to the guest.

[Company] **Fees:** [Company] will collect all funds pertaining to short-term rental stays. All expenses, cleaning fees, and [Company] fees will be removed from these funds. Owner will receive payouts on the 15th of the following month.

Appendix 4: AHLA

BACKGROUND

The hotel industry is extremely fragmented in term of the market power of participants - in comparison to the market power of the online travel agencies. Last year, by opposing the Expedia acquisition of Orbitz, AHLA brought to the attention of the public, regulators and Congress, the negative consequences for consumers and hoteliers of increased consolidation in the OTA market. We believe it is clear that this trend toward search bias and pay-for-play rankings is a consequence of the new Expedia-Priceline duopoly facing hoteliers and consumers.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS

- ***AHLA Position:*** *AHLA believes that there should be a level and legal playing field within the lodging sector, and that regulations and taxes with respect to short-term rentals should be strictly enforced. We support the rights of property owners to occasionally rent out a room or their home, but commercial operators within the short-term rental industry should not be allowed to operate outside of the law.*

IMPACT

AHLA continues to move the needle in key areas for short term rentals, working with a broad coalition of affordable housing advocates, community groups, neighborhood associations, labor, and other progressive entities. Notable accomplishments from this year include:

- New York – The New York State legislature passed, and the Governor signed, a precedent-setting bill impacting Airbnb's largest U.S. market. The legislation strengthens existing law (applicable only in New York City) that prohibits short-term rentals in multi-unit dwellings unless the permanent occupant is home during the rental. The new law prohibits the mere *advertising* of such rentals (as opposed to an actual rental transaction) which will help with enforcement of the un-hosted rental prohibition. AHLA provided resources and support to the Hotel Association of New York City and other parties advocating for this legislation.

- Chicago - AHLA, along with the Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association, played a pivotal role in the passage, in July, of an ordinance in Chicago that heavily regulates short-term rentals. Chicago was the first major U.S. city to take action. Among the notable provisions are a 4% surtax on short-term rentals levied in addition to the regular hotel occupancy taxes, as well as a provision that allows apartment and condo buildings to prohibit short-term rentals by registering with the city. To date, more than 700 buildings in Chicago have opted out of short-term rentals.

- San Francisco – Working with our state and local partners, AHLA has been actively engaged in the San Francisco debate. In June, the Board of Supervisors passed important enforcement legislation that prohibits short-term rental platforms from listing rentals that are not properly registered with the City. More recently, additional legislation has been introduced that would establish a 60-day annual cap on all short-term rental units. Under current law, "un-hosted" rentals are capped at 90 days per year, while "hosted" rentals are not capped. In addition to *lowering* the caps, this provision will make the cap more enforceable, because it is difficult to for

3

authorities to discover and demonstrate that the permanent resident was not home during a rental. We are hopeful that this legislation will be approved by the Board of Supervisors in the coming weeks.

- Los Angeles - The City Planning Commission released a draft ordinance in the spring that includes a prohibition against non-owner occupied rental units, a prohibition on short-term rentals operated out of rent-stabilized housing units, registration requirements for hosts, data collection requirements, and a hard cap on the number of days per year a host can rent out their residence. AHLA continues to work with our state and local partners to push for City Council action before the end of the year, which looks likely.

- State Action - This year, working alongside our partners, we have been successful in key states (i.e. Virginia, Tennessee, and Utah) in stopping Airbnb-backed pre-emption bills. We also worked to improve an Arizona bill that unfortunately provided some degree of preemption from local legislation. Several state legislatures have created interim study committees that will produce recommended legislation for the 2017 sessions, and AHLA has been actively engaged in those discussions.

- Federal Conversation – After working closely with AHLA for several months, Senators Brian Schatz, Elizabeth Warren and Dianne Feinstein sent a letter to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in July raising concerns about the short-term rental industry with respect to housing costs, racial discrimination, consumer protection, community safety, and inconsistent tax compliance. Further, the Senators requested the FTC to provide data on the degree to which the short term rental industry is comprised of commercial operators. The letter highlights our strategy of pushing for transparency while calling out the public policy issues and the need for a level playing field. Senator Warren's status as one of the most prominent lawmakers among progressive activists has helped mobilize additional grassroots and political support.

- Research and National Narrative – AHLA continues to change the narrative of the short-term rental debate toward the predominance of commercial operators on Airbnb and other sites through the dissemination of research performed by Penn State and funded by AHLA and AHLEF. In addition to the national report first released in January, we released city-specific reports in 14 markets throughout this year. Working with our partners, AHLA also stood up AirbnbWATCH.org, an online portal dedicated to gathering stories of short-term rentals harms and highlighting Airbnb's lack of transparency. AirbnbWATCH has become an active coalition of diverse organizations, all working to ensure responsible short-term rental regulation.

BACKGROUND

Airbnb has grown exponentially in recent years and has an estimated market cap greater than any hotel company, and although it is the largest player in the short-term rental market, it does face competition from HomeAway (now owned by Expedia), Flipkey, and others. Policy debates are taking place around in the country in cities of all sizes, as well as in state capitals, and increasingly in Congress, about the appropriate regulation and tax collection for short-term rentals.

2017 SHORT-TERM RENTAL STRATEGY

Objective: Build on the success of 2016 efforts to ensure comprehensive legislation in key markets around the country and create a receptive environment to launch a wave of strong bills at the state level while advancing a national narrative that furthers the focus on reining in commercial operators and the need for commonsense regulation of short-term rentals.

To accomplish our objectives, we are focused on the following key strategic imperatives:

- Build on the national narrative that commercial operators are driving a large portion of revenue for short-term rental companies like Airbnb by advancing new research to keep the story in the news and these entities on the defensive;
- Continue to actively coordinate with state and local hotel associations, along with affordable housing, neighborhood and tenant groups, consumer groups, labor and others to drive common sense laws forward in key cities and states;
- Aggressively counter Airbnb's "we're just helping the middle-class make ends meet" narrative with a wave of personal testimonials of consumer harm through a "My Neighborhood" paid and social campaign;
- Advance federal legislative efforts to level the playing field in specific areas and push back on Airbnb's offensive within the Beltway;
- Build a case for allies to dismiss potential litigation threats; and
- Advance work with Attorneys General to encourage action and/or enforcement in their jurisdictions.

Research: To drive earned media, AHLA plans to roll out research that builds on the foundational data we compiled this year in conjunction with Penn State University, which revealed the rise of commercial operators. Topics under consideration are as follows:

- Rutgers discrimination report: This research, which illustrates discrimination and lack of accessible short-term rentals for those with disabilities, will be released in November 2016, but will have spillover effects into 1Q17 as we work with our partners to use this data to advocate for enforcement actions and regulatory changes.
- CBRE studies on "Millionaire Airbnb Landlords" and taxes owed by Airbnb: This research will shine a spotlight on the individuals who are the most egregious commercial operators in key markets to then be used to re-engage media who are looking for a new angle. The second part of the research will focus on examining Airbnb's true tax obligation in select markets to illustrate that, in many cases, it's not paying its fair share.
- Florida International University study on safety and security: This research will support our fundamental argument about the harms that short-term rental companies pose to consumers and communities, and provide data to buttress testimonial campaign.
- University of North Carolina short-term rental legality survey: This research will provide important information to advance our State AG enforcement efforts as it will highlight where short-term rentals are currently illegal and what laws are being violated.
- Select Penn State commercial operator reports: We will update the existing report to provide fresh news hooks for upcoming key markets (i.e. Boston, D.C., Miami) as well as



major cities that continue to grapple with the right solution (i.e. Honolulu, New Orleans, Portland, OR).

Testimonial Campaign – "My Neighborhood": To provide a counter-weight to Airbnb's strategy of presenting a unified, working-class face, a cornerstone of the 2017 communications strategy will be our own testimonial campaign. We will harness the countless stories of real people across the country who have been negatively impacted by short-term rentals in their neighborhoods, whether it's the working teacher whose apartment complex is overrun by drunken tourists, to the tenants who are evicted so their landlords can create an illegal hotel, these stories will resonate more profoundly with stakeholders and allow us to tap "ambassadors" for key campaign milestones. To accomplish this, we will:

- Secure video footage of the individuals telling their personal story, shot in a similar style and consistent format, and produce short, compelling narratives that can be woven together into a geographic-agnostic message highlighting the harm that is being done to their communities.
- Aggressively pursue leads from aggrieved individuals around the country and identify stories of harm caused by illegal hotels and commercial operators to neighborhoods.
- Once the stories are developed, the deployment and amplification opportunities are substantial. They can be put out on multiple platforms and through multiple channels, including on social media, through broadcast (TV and radio), in static displays (bus shelters, billboards, print). Additional traction can be gained by making the individuals available to print reporters for quotes, at press conferences and media availabilities and broadcast interviews and other key stakeholder meetings at all levels of government.

Federal Legislation & Enforcement: As short-term rentals and the "sharing economy" increasingly permeates the Beltway conversation, AHLA plans to press our position, either ourselves or through our allies, utilizing Congress and the legislative process. To that end, we have developed multiple legislative ideas, detailed below, that will also be an important mechanism to help us defend against messaging and initiatives by Airbnb or Expedia (on behalf of its subsidiary, HomeAway/VRBO):

- **Federal Worker Illegal Hotel Ban** – Not allow federal workers on official travel to stay in short-term rentals that violate local law.
- **Federal Worker Fire Safety** - Ensure that short-term rentals are subject to the Hotel-Motel Fire Safety Act. At least 90% of room nights purchased by federal workers must be in lodging that is on the FEMA fire-safe list, which means they meet basic fire safety requirements.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** – Revise the ADA statute or ADA regulations to subject certain commercial operators of short-term rentals to ADA requirements.
- **Discrimination** – Urge DOJ to report on the application of civil rights laws to short-term rentals or investigate potential violations.
- **Subsidized Housing** - Prohibit or enforce restrictions on short-term rentals in any federally subsidized residences.
- **Tax Collection** - Adjust rules for 1099s to ensure better income tax compliance by hosts.

Legal Response: Airbnb has filed or threatened lawsuits against several local and state ordinances claiming protection under the first amendment and a federal statute called the Communications Decency Act, specifically Section 230 of that Act. Airbnb claims it cannot be liable for policing its hosts, even with respect to the simplest of regulations such as outright bans on short-term rentals or licensing requirements. Holding Airbnb and the other short-term rental companies accountable is crucial, given the difficulty in enforcing the rules host by host, and our efforts for 2017 are focused on the following:

- Arming allies with arguments as to why these lawsuits are flawed in order assuage the fears of legislators who are considering legislation but are reticent to have their policies challenged in court;
- Identifying academics to publicly express doubts about Airbnb's legal claims;
- Engaging the copyright holder community which has similar concerns with an expansive interpretation of the CDA; and
- Evaluating whether an amicus brief is warranted and feasible.

State and Local Engagement: At the outset, AHLA's first priority will be to get the job done in outstanding major metro markets that we have previously identified as critical: Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, Washington D.C. and Miami. Further, while we will be encouraging state lodging associations to push legislation at the state level across the country, our targeted efforts, and greatest resource focus, will be on states and localities where we believe the right political conditions exist for us to push legislation across the finish line and that could be considered precedent setting. Today, these state target include (but are not limited to): Maryland, Michigan, Ohio, Colorado, Louisiana, Indiana, Hawaii, Florida, Massachusetts, New York State, Virginia, and West Virginia.

In contrast, in certain states, primarily those with Republican legislative majorities, AHLA will be focused on stopping Airbnb's efforts to pass statewide preemption language that would prohibit local municipalities from enforcing local zoning laws to restrict short-term rentals. Today, we believe these states are the most vulnerable to such legislation: Texas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Utah, and Virginia.

Given the massive resources of Airbnb and other short-term rental companies to invest in every state and local battle, AHLA will also be focused more broadly on monitoring legislative activity. Building on this year's early warning system with the state lodging associations, we want to make sure Airbnb doesn't introduce harmful pre-emption bills or try and push tax collection only without our side mobilizing.

With the state AGs, we will build on the foundation from this year where we educated multiple AGs about the impact of short-term rentals on tax revenues, affordable housing, discrimination, and public safety. We will aggressively push state AGs to investigate short-term rentals that are in violation of existing state law. Additionally, we will encourage them to become advocates with their legislatures to encourage enactment of new laws that will allow them to better enforce short-term rental activity in their states, as well as engaging them in the unfolding litigation landscape where possible.

Appendix 5: New York Times article 2006

The New York Times

Copyright © 2006 The New York Times NEW YORK, SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2006 $4.50 beyond t

Tenants Losing To the Tourists, Room by Room

By JANNY SCOTT

Strange things started happening in Vivian Riffelmacher's building in the summer of 2004. It was hard to miss the foreigners in the lobby, the luggage in the elevator, the bunk beds on the ground floor. To Ms. Riffelmacher, who has spent nine years in the building, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, her home seemed to be morphing into a hotel.

Ms. Riffelmacher was not the only one left with that impression. Irritated residents began rounding up evidence, then fired it off to the city's Department of Buildings. Now the city is suing Ms. Riffelmacher's landlord over what it says is the illegal conversion of moderately priced permanent housing for New Yorkers into something more lucrative: rooms for tourists.

As the city faces a serious shortage of low-cost housing for its own residents, building owners are turning existing units into hotel rooms, hostels and corporate housing for out-of-towners. The trend is most noticeable in Manhattan neighborhoods where the supply of low-cost units was already dwindling and the demand for tourist rooms has shot up.

There are no reliable estimates of how many units of permanent housing are being used by short-term visitors. Housing advocates say they know of dozens of buildings where they estimate hundreds of units have

Continued on Page 30

CO N THE NEW YORK TIMES METRO SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2006

Tenants Are Losing to Tourists, Room by Room

Continued From Page 1

been illegally converted.

"I would say in the last two years it's become like wildfire," said Bob Kalin, a tenant organizer for Housing Conservation Coordinators, an advocacy group.

The conversions often violate many city codes, officials say. Some buildings are barred from operating as hotels because they are in areas zoned as residential. Many are also prohibited from taking short-term tenants. To do so legally, they would have to apply to the city for a new certificate of occupancy, a process that is not simple, speedy or cheap.

In the meantime, illegal conversions can be hard to prove, city officials say. Violations fall under the jurisdictions of multiple city agencies, and inspectors can have a hard time getting into units. While buildings openly advertise budget hotel rooms on the Internet, the only building that

As low-cost dwellings disappear, some are converted into hotel rooms.

the city has taken to court recently is the one where Ms. Riffelmacher lives, in a 10-by-12-foot room for $450 a month.

"Unfortunately, this is happening at a time when we need permanent housing very badly," said Deborah Rand, deputy general counsel for litigation for the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development and the lawyer on one earlier case. "But people can make a lot more money from transient use than by using a room as a permanent residence."

Housing advocacy groups have compiled lists of dozens of buildings they say tenants have told them are being illegally converted. On the online classified advertising service Craigslist, there are dozens of apartments for rent by short-term visitors. And Jennifer Givner, a spokeswoman for the city's Department of Buildings, said her agency was investigating nine buildings it had received complaints about.

In the Chelsea and Clinton neighborhoods in Manhattan, Housing Conservation Coordinators has counted three dozen buildings that it believes are being used at least in part as hotels, youth hostels, vacation rentals or temporary quarters for corporate employees. In some of those buildings, the group believes, only a handful of long-term tenants remain.

On the Upper West Side, Terry Poe, a supervisor at the Goddard Riverside West Side S.R.O. Law Project, said his agency was aware of at least eight buildings that it believed were being used illegally at least in part as hotels. They are single-room-occupancy buildings, a disappearing breed that is one of the last remaining sources of low-cost housing on the gentrified Upper West Side, and one that is especially vulnerable in a strong real estate market. S.R.O. quarters are roughly defined by the lack of either a private bath or a kitchen.

On tourism Web sites, including hostelz.com and tripadvisor.com, one can find listings for buildings like the Dexter House, the S.R.O. where Ms. Riffelmacher lives, on West 86th Street near Riverside Drive. "Dexter House Hostel," one listing reads. The description states, among other things, "Dorm rooms sleep six to eight people and are air-conditioned in the summer."

According to tenants in the building and a lawyer for the Dexter House, the building has long had some short-term hotel guests. But Ms. Riffelmacher and other tenants say that after it was sold several years ago, the new owners began eviction proceedings against some long-term tenants, altered the building and started taking in more tourists.

Lisa Beth MacKinlay, who has lived in the Dexter House for 10 years, said the lobby was sometimes so crowded with tourists and luggage that it was hard to get through. Vickie Labosky, a yoga teacher and a resident since 1991, said the building's management put multiple bunk beds in rooms, then filled them with tourists who overwhelmed the communal bathrooms.

In June, the city sued the owners of the building in State Supreme Court to stop them from using it as a transient hotel. The suit accused them of illegally modifying the building without the city's permission, of violating the terms of the certificate of occupancy and of violating the city's zoning rules by operating a hotel in a residential zone.

The suit said the owners, , Jay Wartski and Robert Goicochea, had violated a city law barring S.R.O. owners from removing units or making alterations without first certifying that no long-term tenants had been harassed. It also accused them of violating a law forbidding S.R.O. units to be rented for less than one week.

Todd Nahins, a lawyer representing the Dexter House, said in an interview that his clients had done nothing wrong. He said the building had been used in part as a transient hotel since at least the 1940's. He said S.R.O. owners were unable to keep up with rising expenses, like fuel bills and taxes, because of rent regulations. As a result, he said, they may depend on taking in weekly guests.

Mr. Nahins said his clients simply wanted to renovate the bathrooms in



the Dexter. They hoped to get a higher rent for rooms rented by the week. "At no point were we displacing any tenants," Mr. Nahins said. He added, "Believe me, this is not about putting out permanent tenants."

Mr. Nahins also said the zoning law allows his clients to rent rooms by the week. He said the business from shorter-term visitors "subsidizes the rest of the building."

Gabriel Taussig, chief of the administrative law division in the city's Law Department, said in an interview that the owners of buildings like the Dexter House, intended for long-term occupancy, cannot simply start using them for short-term stays without first addressing "a whole host of issues involved, including building code safety issues."

For example, different fire-protection and safety requirements apply to buildings with short-term occupants, who will most likely be less familiar with a building's layout. Requirements for fire alarms, exit signs and emergency lights are more stringent in buildings with transient occupancy, said James Colgate, executive architect at the Department of Buildings.

In Chelsea and Clinton, Mr. Kalin of Housing Conservation Coordinators said his organization had found different types of illegal conversions: rent-regulated apartment buildings being run largely as hotels, rent-regulated apartments being used as short-term vacation rentals, residential apartments being chopped up into single rooms for European students, residential buildings being leased commercially for use as corporate housing.

"This is a neighborhood that has tremendous gentrification going on" he said. "It's in transition and buildings are changing hands all the time. So, while you're getting out of your building and emptying it down, you do these temporary things to squeeze the last buck out of it before you go."

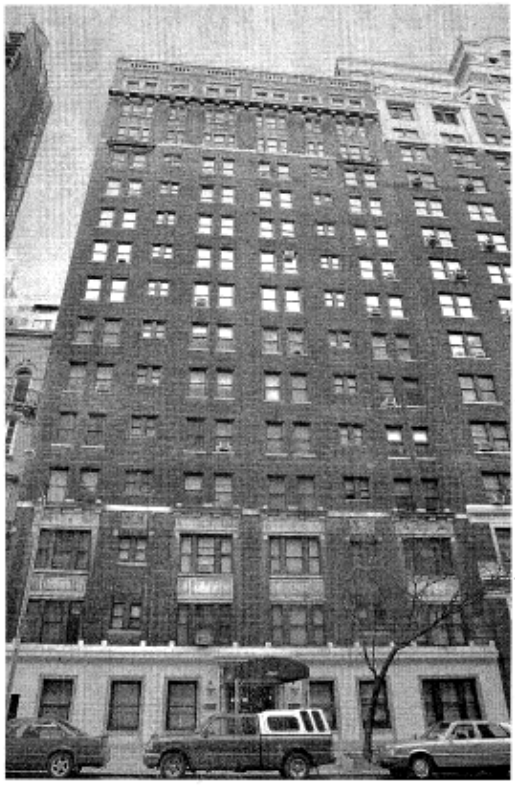
Prices for converted rooms generally range from $40 a night for hostel-style accommodations to $150 a night for a room with a private bath.

John Raskin, a community organizer with Housing Conservation Coordinators, said that complaints about illegal conversions were bounced from one city agency to another and that there was little coordination.

To address that problem, housing advocates and local politicians like City Councilwoman Gale A. Brewer, who represents the Upper West Side and has brought the issue to the city's attention, have begun organizing an interagency task force to tackle the problem of illegal conversions and consider legislative solutions.

"Some of what is at stake in this is a stable affordable housing stock that people in our neighborhood depend upon," Mr. Raskin said. "I think this sort of illegal use threatens our visability as a residential community. It merges us inappropriately into the theater district and the office district when we've been working for years to keep our neighborhood as a residential community."

He added: "It gets to the heart of a conversation we have all over the place when we try to defend affordable housing in our neighborhood. We think it's important to the identity of our neighborhood and the city to preserve diversity and preserve stability in some of the neighborhoods that make up New York, including those at the city's core. It may be a more efficient use of real estate to segregate people by income and segregate land by use, but I think it ignores the thread of community that people in our neighborhood and elsewhere find so valuable about living in New York."



Photographs by Ruth Fremson/The New York Times

City officials say the Dexter House, an Upper West Side S.R.O., is being illegally converted for tourists. A lawyer for the building says it has been used in part as a transient hotel since at least the 1940's.

Appendix 6: President TRUMP

AHLA
AMERICAN HOTEL & LODGING ASSOCIATION

July 15, 2020

The Honorable Donald Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W,
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), the sole national association representing all segments of the U.S. lodging industry, including iconic global brands, hotel owners and franchisees, lodging real estate investment trusts (REITs), hotel management companies, independent properties, bed and breakfasts, state hotel associations, and industry suppliers, we thank you for your leadership during this unprecedented public health and economic crisis. The economic impact of the COVID-19 health crisis on the hotel industry is the worst our industry has ever faced. As a result of the sharp drop in travel demand from COVID-19, more than half of all U.S. hotel employees remain out of work today.

We are grateful for your leadership in re-opening our economy and returning us to the economic growth we enjoyed just six months ago. As our nation responds to the ever-changing landscape presented during this period of the Coronavirus pandemic, we believe standardizing certain safety practices will encourage a return to travel. Currently about half of all U.S. states and many large cities require the wearing of a face covering in public indoor spaces. We support such a policy as an important part of protecting all guests and employees. Unfortunately, because this policy is not uniform, it ultimately harms domestic travel by increasing uncertainty among travelers and would-be travelers.

The hotel Industry respectfully requests that your administration publicly support the wearing of face coverings in public indoor spaces. Presidential support for this policy will ultimately lead to more travel and a quicker return to full employment in our industry.

To support your leadership, we will soon be expanding our industry guidance to identify requirements for our guests, including the wearing of face coverings in indoor public spaces, practicing social distancing and reducing in-person contact by selecting contactless options. This guest checklist will be incorporated into AHLA's Safe Stay guidelines, an industry-wide enhanced health and safety protocols designed to provide a safe and clean environment for all hotel guests and employees.

1250 EYE STREET, N.W. SUITE 1100 | WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005 | 202 289 3100 | WWW.AHLA.COM

Among those planning to travel in 2020, 68 percent of expectant travelers say they are likely to stay in a hotel. As such, a guest checklist will serve as a tool to educate guests on new industry norms, based on guidance from the CDC, reflecting the industry's commitment to advancing public health precautions during the pandemic.

The health and safety of our guests and employees is our industry's top priority. We realize economic and physical safety should not be separate issues which is why we stand with you in rebuilding our national economy as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Chip Rogers
President & Chief Executive Officer

1250 EYE STREET, N.W. SUITE 1100 | WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005 | 202 289 3100 | WWW.AHLA.COM

Appendix 7: paper Journal of Cleaner Production, November 2023

Journal of Cleaner Production 430 (2023) 139670

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Cleaner Production

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jclepro

Maintaining legitimacy in times of crisis for sharing economy platforms: Airbnb's relational strategies during COVID-19 and impacts on sustainability

Catherine Lecuyer *, Magalie Marais, Călin Gurău

Montpellier Business School, 2300 Avenue des Moulins, 34185, Montpellier, France

ARTICLE INFO

Handling Editor: Jian Zuo

Keywords:
Sharing economy platform
Relational strategies
Crisis
Debated legitimacy
Sustainability
Stakeholders

ABSTRACT

Sharing economy platforms hold a promise of more sustainable uses of resources. However, their legitimacy remains "debated" as various ecosystem stakeholders hold different opinions, challenging platform's values and activities. One key contested aspect is their capacity to contribute to sustainability beyond a search for economic performance. Despite these criticisms, sharing economy platforms have managed to grow and spread worldwide. Nevertheless, little is known about how a sudden market crisis affects an online platform characterized by a debated legitimacy. Studying the relationships between Airbnb and its main stakeholders during the first wave of COVID-19 pandemic in New York City, our paper identifies three relational strategies - identity, professionalization, and selection - implemented by the platform to reinforce its legitimacy within its local ecosystem. Based on secondary and primary data analyses, we identify and describe the arbitrations and opportunistic choices made by Airbnb to manage various stakeholder groups, to maintain its legitimacy during the COVID-19 crisis, and their impact on sustainability.

1. Introduction

The sharing economy is often heralded as a "new and sustainable form of consumption based on individuals accessing rather than owning resources" (Martin and Upham, 2016, p. 154). Sharing activities and assets are transacted globally within online markets organized around various Sharing Economy Platforms (SEPs) that offer "a peer-to-peer based sharing of access to goods and services" (Mi and Coffman, 2019, p. 1). As focal points of multiple relationships with various stakeholder groups - sellers, buyers, local communities, employees, investors, regulators, etc. (Mont et al., 2020), SEPs hold a promise of more sustainable uses of resources by "voluntarily applying practices to reconcile environmental preservation, social equity and economic demands" (Font et al., 2016, p. 1439) within their ecosystem.

However, many studies have criticized the capacity and the willingness of SEPs to contribute to sustainability beyond a search for economic performance (Geissinger et al., 2019; Griggio and Oxenswärdh, 2021; Laukkanen and Tura, 2020). In this context, SEPs' legitimacy remains highly "debated" (Deephouse et al., 2017; Garud et al., 2020) as various stakeholders hold different opinions, challenging platforms' values and activities (Hwang, 2019). Despite these criticisms, SEPs have managed to grow and spread worldwide (Jacobides, 2019). A key success factor is their capacity to develop strong relational strategies within their ecosystem to minimize resistance and enhance performance (Ricart et al., 2020). Indeed, as SEPs do not have the structure and power of traditional organizations based on hierarchies and contractual relations, the participation in platform-centred markets is purely consensual, fuelled by the specific – and often converging - interests of various categories of actors (Ritter and Schanz, 2019). SEPs are thus obliged to implement and coordinate multiple relational strategies (Li et al., 2019; Ricart et al., 2020) to maintain their legitimacy within the ecosystem.

However, little is known about how a sudden crisis – such as the COVID-19 pandemics – is likely to affect the already debated legitimacy of SEPs, and how can they act strategically to preserve key relationships. In times of adversity, an organization should often manipulate the judgments and actions of its key stakeholders to protect its survival (Suchman, 1995). Characterizing the SEP's relational strategies towards is key stakeholders during a crisis is thus of primary importance (Mont et al., 2021) as a search for legitimacy with some salient stakeholders may have migratory effects on other ecosystem actors (Kuruppu et al., 2019) and important consequences for sustainability (Hossain, 2021). On this basis, our study investigates: *What are the relational strategies*

* Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: c.lecuyer@montpellier-bs.com (C. Lecuyer), m.marais@montpellier-bs.com (M. Marais), c.gurau@montpellier-bs.com (C. Gurău).

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2023.139670
Received 4 April 2023; Received in revised form 28 October 2023; Accepted 6 November 2023
Available online 10 November 2023
0959-6526/© 2023 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

REFERENCES

Aarikka-Stenroos, L., Ritala, P., & Thomas, L. D. (2021). Circular economy ecosystems: A typology, definitions, and implications.

Ackermann, C. L., Matson-Barkat, S., & Truong, Y. (2022). A legitimacy perspective on sharing economy consumption in the accommodation sector. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *25*(12), 1947-1967.

Acquier, A., Carbone, V., & Vasseur, L. (2020). The sharing economy as an emerging and contested field–how classic and institutional entrepreneurs cope with plural theoretical frames. In *Theorizing the Sharing Economy: Variety and Trajectories of New Forms of Organizing* (Vol. 66, pp. 107-129). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Acquier, A., Daudigeos, T., & Pinkse, J. (2017). Promises and paradoxes of the sharing economy: An organizing framework. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *125*, 1-10.

Adner, R. (2017). Ecosystem as structure: An actionable construct for strategy. *Journal of management*, *43*(1), 39-58.

Adner, R., & Feiler, D. (2019). Interdependence, perception, and investment choices: An experimental approach to decision making in innovation ecosystems. *Organization science*, *30*(1), 109-125.

Ahrne, G., & Brunsson, N. (2005). Organizations and meta-organizations. *Scandinavian journal of Management*, *21*(4), 429-449.

Aldrich, H. E., & Fiol, C. M. (1994). Fools rush in? The institutional context of industry creation. *Academy of management review*, *19*(4), 645-670.

Allen, M. W., & Caillouet, R. H. (1994). Legitimation endeavors: Impression management strategies used by an organization in crisis. *Communications Monographs*, *61*(1), 44-62.

Álvarez-Herranz, A., & Macedo-Ruíz, E. (2021). An evaluation of the three pillars of sustainability in cities with high Airbnb presence: A case study of the city of Madrid. *Sustainability*, *13*(6), 3220.

Amankwah-Amoah, J., Khan, Z., Wood, G., & Knight, G. (2021). COVID-19 and digitalization: The great acceleration. *Journal of business research*, *136*, 602-611.

Andersson Schwarz, J. (2017). Platform logic: An interdisciplinary approach to the platform-based economy. *Policy & Internet*, *9*(4), 374-394.

Ansari, S., Garud, R., & Kumaraswamy, A. (2016). The disruptor's dilemma: TiVo and the US television ecosystem. *Strategic management journal*, *37*(9), 1829-1853.

Ansari, Shahzad, Raghu Garud, and Arun Kumaraswamy. "The disruptor's dilemma: TiVo and the US television ecosystem." *Strategic management journal* 37.9 (2016): 1829-1853.

Apostolidis, C., & Haeussler, S. (2018). Sea, sand and shadow economy–consumer acceptance of shadow hospitality in Greece. *Hospitality & Society*, *8*(3), 205-227.

Apte, U. M., & Davis, M. M. (2019). Sharing economy services: Business model generation. *California Management Review*, *61*(2), 104-131.

Ashforth, B. E., & Gibbs, B. W. (1990). The double-edge of organizational legitimation. *Organization science*, *1*(2), 177-194.

Autio, E., & Levie, J. (2017). Management of entrepreneurial ecosystems. *The Wiley handbook of entrepreneurship*, 423-449.

Autio, E., & Thomas, L. (2014). *Innovation ecosystems* (pp. 204-288). The Oxford handbook of innovation management.

Autio, E., & Thomas, L. D. (2018). Tilting the playing field: Towards an endogenous strategic action theory of ecosystem creation. In *World Scientific Reference on Innovation: Volume 3: Open Innovation, Ecosystems and Entrepreneurship: Issues and Perspectives* (pp. 111-140).

Autio, E., & Thomas, L. D. (2020). Value co-creation in ecosystems: Insights and research promise from three disciplinary perspectives. *Handbook of digital innovation*, 107-132.

Bai, G., & Velamuri, S. R. (2021). Contextualizing the sharing economy. *Journal of Management Studies*, *58*(4), 977-1001.

Balech, Sophie. *L'institutionnalisation des plateformes : Les cas d'Airbnb et Uber à Paris*. Diss. Université Paris Nanterre, 2019.

Bansal, P., & Clelland, I. (2004). Talking trash: Legitimacy, impression management, and unsystematic risk in the context of the natural environment. *Academy of Management journal*, *47*(1), 93-103.

Barari, M., Paul, J., Ross, M., Thaichon, S., & Surachartkumtonkun, J. (2022). Relationships among actors within the sharing economy: Meta-analytics review. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *103*, 103215.

Bardhi, F., & Eckhardt, G. M. (2012). Access-based consumption: The case of car sharing.

Barnes, S. J., & Mattsson, J. (2016). Building tribal communities in the collaborative economy: an innovation framework. *Prometheus*, *34*(2), 95-113.

Barnes, S. J., & Mattsson, J. (2016). Understanding current and future issues in collaborative consumption: A four-stage Delphi study. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *104*, 200-211.

Barney, J. B., Ketchen Jr, D. J., & Wright, M. (2011). The future of resource-based theory: revitalization or decline?. *Journal of management*, *37*(5), 1299-1315.

Barrett, M., Oborn, E., & Orlikowski, W. (2016). Creating value in online communities: The sociomaterial configuring of strategy, platform, and stakeholder engagement. *Information Systems Research*, *27*(4), 704-723.

Bashir, M., Yousaf, A., & Verma, R. (2016). Disruptive business model innovation: How a tech firm is changing the traditional taxi service industry. *Indian Journal of Marketing*, *46*(4), 49-59.

Baumber, A., Scerri, M., & Schweinsberg, S. (2019). A social licence for the sharing economy. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *146*, 12-23.

Belarmino, A., & Koh, Y. (2020). A critical review of research regarding peer-to-peer accommodations. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *84*, 102315.

Belk, R. (2007). Why not share rather than own?. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *611*(1), 126-140.

Belk, R. (2010). Sharing. *Journal of consumer research*, *36*(5), 715-734.

Belk, R. (2013). You are what you can access: Sharing and collaborative consumption online.

Belk, R. (2014). You are what you can access: Sharing and collaborative consumption online. *Journal of business research*, *67*(8), 1595-1600.

Belk, Russell. 2014. 'Sharing Versus Pseudo-Sharing in Web 2.0.' *The Anthro- pologist* 18 (1): 7–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/09720073.2014.11891518

Benbasat, I., Goldstein, D. K., & Mead, M. (1987). The case research strategy in studies of information systems. *MIS quarterly*, 369-386.

Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (2000). Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual review of sociology*, *26*(1), 611-639.

Benítez-Aurioles, B. (2021). A proposal to regulate the peer-to-peer market for tourist accommodation. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, *23*(1), 70-78.

Benkler, Y. (2004). Sharing nicely: On shareable goods and the emergence of sharing as a modality of economic production. *Yale Lj*, *114*, 273.

Benner, K. (2016). Airbnb in disputes with New York and San Francisco. *New York Times*.

Benner, K. (2017). Inside the hotel industry's plan to combat Airbnb. *The New York Times*, *16*.

Benoit, W. L. (1995). Sears' repair of its auto service image: Image restoration discourse in the corporate sector. *Communication Studies*, *46*(1-2), 89-105.

Berkowitz, H., & Souchaud, A. (2019). (Self-) regulation of sharing economy platforms through partial meta-organizing. *Journal of business ethics*, *159*, 961-976.

Bessy, C., & Chauvin, P. M. (2013). The power of market intermediaries: From information to valuation processes. *Valuation studies*, *1*(1), 83-117.

Beunza, D., & Garud, R. (2007). Calculators, lemmings or frame-makers? The intermediary role of securities analysts. *The sociological review*, *55*(2_suppl), 13-39.

Bianco, M., Bontempi, M. E., Golinelli, R., & Parigi, G. (2013). Family firms' investments, uncertainty and opacity. *Small Business Economics*, *40*, 1035-1058.

Bieger, T., & Reinhold, S. (2011). Das wertbasierte Geschäftsmodell–ein aktualisierter Strukturierungsansatz. *Innovative Geschäftsmodelle*, 13-70.

Biswas, B., Sengupta, P., & Chatterjee, D. (2020). Examining the determinants of the count of customer reviews in peer-to-peer home-sharing platforms using clustering and count regression techniques. *Decision Support Systems*, *135*, 113324

Böcker, L., & Meelen, T. (2017). Sharing for people, planet or profit? Analysing motivations for intended sharing economy participation. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, *23*, 28-39.

Bonini, S., & Capizzi, V. (2019). The role of venture capital in the emerging entrepreneurial finance ecosystem: future threats and opportunities. *Venture Capital*, *21*(2-3), 137-175.

Bostman, R., & Rogers, R. (2011). What's mine is yours: How collaborative consumption is changing the way we live. *London: Collins*.

Botsman, D. V. (2013). *Punishment and power in the making of modern Japan*. Princeton University Press.

Botsman, R., & Rogers, R. (2010). Whats mine is yours: the rise of collaborative consumption. *Collins: London, UK*.

Bradley, K., & Pargman, D. (2017). The sharing economy as the commons of the 21st century. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, *10*(2), 231-247.

Breidbach, C. F., & Brodie, R. J. (2017). Engagement platforms in the sharing economy: Conceptual foundations and research directions. *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, *27*(4), 761-777.

Breitsohl, H. (2008). *Exploring organizational crises from a legitimation perspective: Results from a computer simulation and illustrative cases* (No. 2008-005). Schumpeter Discussion Papers.

Bresciani, S., Ferraris, A., Santoro, G., Premazzi, K., Quaglia, R., Yahiaoui, D., & Viglia, G. (2021). The seven lives of Airbnb. The role of accommodation types. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *88*, 103170.

Brophy, D. J., & Shulman, J. M. (1992). A finance perspective on entrepreneurship research. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *16*(3), 61-72.

Brown, R., & Mason, C. (2017). Looking inside the spiky bits: a critical review and conceptualisation of entrepreneurial ecosystems. *Small business economics*, *49*, 11-30.

Brulhart, F., Gherra, S., & Marais, M. (2017). Are environmental strategies profitable for companies? The key role of natural competences from a resource-based view. *Management Decision*, *55*(10), 2126-2148.

Bruton, G. D., Filatotchev, I., Chahine, S., & Wright, M. (2010). Governance, ownership structure, and performance of IPO firms: The impact of different types of private equity investors and institutional environments. *Strategic management journal*, *31*(5), 491-509.

Bucher, E., Fieseler, C., & Lutz, C. (2016). What's mine is yours (for a nominal fee)–Exploring the spectrum of utilitarian to altruistic motives for Internet-mediated sharing. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *62*, 316-326.

Buhalis, D., Andreu, L., & Gnoth, J. (2020). The dark side of the sharing economy: Balancing value co-creation and value co-destruction. *Psychology & Marketing*, *37*(5), 689-704.

Burn-Murdoch, John, Valentina Romei, and Chris Giles. "Global coronavirus death toll could be 60% higher than reported." *Financial times* 26 (2020).

Bynander, F., & Nohrstedt, D. (Eds.). (2019). *Collaborative crisis management: Inter-organizational approaches to extreme events*. Routledge.

Caillaud, B., & Jullien, B. (2001). Chicken and egg: Competing matchmakers. *Available at SSRN 278562*.

Caillaud, B., & Jullien, B. (2003). Chicken & egg: Competition among intermediation service providers. *RAND journal of Economics*, 309-328.

Calo, R., & Rosenblat, A. (2017). The taking economy: Uber, information, and power. *Colum. L. Rev.*, *117*, 1623.

Cao, D. (2016). Regulation through deregulation: sharing economy companies gaining legitimacy by circumventing traditional frameworks. *Hastings LJ*, *68*, 1085.

Cao, S. (2017). Airbnb Disrupts Traditional Housing Market—For the Better, Study Says.

Carrasco-Farré, C., Snihur, Y., Berrone, P., & Ricart, J. E. (2022). The stakeholder value proposition of digital platforms in an urban ecosystem. *Research Policy*, *51*(4), 104488.

Carmine, S., Andriopoulos, C., Gotsi, M., Härtel, C. E., Krzeminska, A., Mafico, N., ... & Keller, J. (2021). A paradox approach to organizational tensions during the pandemic crisis. *Journal of management inquiry*, *30*(2), 138-153.

Carroll, C. E., & McCombs, M. (2003). Agenda-setting effects of business news on the public's images and opinions about major corporations. *Corporate reputation review*, *6*, 36-46.

Casilli, A., & Posada, J. (2019). The platformization of labor and society. *Society and the internet: How networks of information and communication are changing our lives*, 293-306.

Castell, C., Kiefer, J., Schubach, S., Schumann, J. H., Graf-Vlachy, L., & König, A. (2023). Integrating digital platform dynamics into customer orientation research: A systematic review and research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, *163*, 113911.

Castells, M., Caraça, J., & Cardoso, G. (Eds.). (2012). *Aftermath: The cultures of the economic crisis*. Oxford University Press (UK).

Celata, F., Hendrickson, C. Y., & Sanna, V. S. (2017). The sharing economy as community marketplace? Trust, reciprocity and belonging in peer-to-peer accommodation platforms. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, *10*(2), 349-363.

Cennamo, C., & Santalo, J. (2013). Platform competition: Strategic trade-offs in platform markets. *Strategic management journal*, *34*(11), 1331-1350.

Cepeda, G., & Martin, D. (2005). A review of case studies publishing in Management Decision 2003-2004: Guides and criteria for achieving quality in qualitative research. *Management Decision*, *43*(6), 851-876.

Chadwick, A., Dennis, J., & Smith, A. P. (2015). Politics in the age of hybrid media: Power, systems, and media logics. In *The Routledge companion to social media and politics* (pp. 7-22). Routledge.

Chaffee, E. C., & Rapp, G. C. (2012). Regulating online peer-to-peer lending in the aftermath of Dodd-Frank: In search of an evolving regulatory regime for an evolving industry. *Wash. & Lee L. Rev.*, *69*, 485.

Chakravarty, A., Kumar, A., & Grewal, R. (2014). Customer orientation structure for internet-based business-to-business platform firms. *Journal of Marketing*, *78*(5), 1-23.

Chen, G., Xu, B., Lu, M., & Chen, N. S. (2018). Exploring blockchain technology and its potential applications for education. *Smart Learning Environments*, *5*(1), 1-10.

Chen, Y., & Wang, L. (2019). Commentary: Marketing and the sharing economy: Digital economy and emerging market challenges. *Journal of Marketing*, *83*(5), 28-31.

Cheng, M., & Foley, C. (2018). The sharing economy and digital discrimination: The case of Airbnb. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *70*, 95-98.

Chesbrough, H. W. (2003). *Open innovation: The new imperative for creating and profiting from technology*. Harvard Business Press.

Choudhary, M., & Choudhary, P. K. (2018, December). Sentiment analysis of text reviewing algorithm using data mining. In *2018 International Conference on Smart Systems and Inventive Technology (ICSSIT)* (pp. 532-538). IEEE.

Christensen, L. T., & Cheney, G. (2015). Peering into transparency: Challenging ideals, proxies, and organizational practices. *Communication theory*, *25*(1), 70-90.

Chu, J., & Manchanda, P. (2016). Quantifying cross and direct network effects in online consumer-to-consumer platforms. *Marketing Science*, *35*(6), 870-893.

Ciulli, F. and Kolk, A. (2019) Incumbents and business model innovation for the sharing economy: Implications for sustainability, Journal of Cleaner Production, 214, 995-1010, DOI: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.12.295

Coase, R. H. (1960). The problem of social cost. *The journal of Law and Economics*, *3*, 1-44.

Codagnone, C., & Martens, B. (2016). Scoping the sharing economy: Origins, definitions, impact and regulatory issues. *Cristiano Codagnone and Bertin Martens (2016). Scoping the Sharing Economy: Origins, Definitions, Impact and Regulatory Issues. Institute for Prospective Technological Studies Digital Economy Working Paper*, *1*.

Cole, Stroma. "Beyond authenticity and commodification." *Annals of tourism research* 34.4 (2007): 943-960.

Constantinides, P., Henfridsson, O., & Parker, G. G. (2018). Introduction—platforms and infrastructures in the digital age. *Information Systems Research*, *29*(2), 381-400.

Constantiou, I., Marton, A., & Tuunainen, V. K. (2017). Four models of sharing economy platforms. *MIS Quarterly Executive*, *16*(4).

Coombs, W. T. (1998). An analytic framework for crisis situations: Better responses from a better understanding of the situation. *Journal of public relations research*, *10*(3), 177-191.

Coombs, W. T. (2014). State of crisis communication: Evidence and the bleeding edge. *Research Journal of the Institute for Public Relations*, *1*(1), 1-12.

Coombs, W. T. (2021). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing, and responding*. Sage publications.

Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2013). *It's not just PR: Public relations in society*. John Wiley & Sons.

Corley, K. G., & Gioia, D. A. (2011). Building theory about theory building: what constitutes a theoretical contribution?. *Academy of management review*, *36*(1), 12-32.

Cortez, R. M., & Johnston, W. J. (2020). The Coronavirus crisis in B2B settings: Crisis uniqueness and managerial implications based on social exchange theory. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *88*, 125-135.

Creed, W. D., Scully, M. A., & Austin, J. R. (2002). Clothes make the person? The tailoring of legitimating accounts and the social construction of identity. *Organization science*, *13*(5), 475-496.
Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.

Crotty, M. J. (1998). The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process. *The foundations of social research*, 1-256.

Curchod, C., Patriotta, G., Cohen, L., & Neysen, N. (2020). Working for an algorithm: Power asymmetries and agency in online work settings. *Administrative science quarterly*, *65*(3), 644-676.

Curran, J. (2012). Reinterpreting the internet. *Misunderstanding the internet*, *3*, 33.

Curran, K., & George, C. (2012). The future of web and mobile game development. *International Journal of Cloud Computing and Services Science*, *1*(1), 25.

Curtis, S. K., & Lehner, M. (2019). Defining the sharing economy for sustainability. *Sustainability*, *11*(3), 567.

Curtis, S. K., Singh, J., Mont, O., & Kessler, A. (2020). Systematic framework to assess social impacts of sharing platforms: Synthesising literature and stakeholder perspectives to arrive at a framework and practice-oriented tool. *PloS one*, *15*(10), e0240373.

Cusumano, M. A., Yoffie, D. B., & Gawer, A. (2020). The future of platforms. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, *61*, 26-34.

Cutolo, D., & Kenney, M. (2019). Dependent Entrepreneurs in a Platform Economy: Playing in the Gardens of the Gods. *Berkeley Roundtable on the International Economy Working Paper*, *3*.

Cutolo, D., & Kenney, M. (2021). Platform-dependent entrepreneurs: Power asymmetries, risks, and strategies in the platform economy. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *35*(4), 584-605.

Cutolo, D., Kenney, M., & Zysman, J. (2019). *Platform-dependent entrepreneurs as private regulators in the platform economy*. Berkeley, University of California, Berkeley Roundtable on the International Economy.

Dabbous, A., & Tarhini, A. (2019). Assessing the impact of knowledge and perceived economic benefits on sustainable consumption through the sharing economy: A sociotechnical approach. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *149*, 119775.

Dann, D., Teubner, T., & Weinhardt, C. (2019). Poster child and guinea pig–insights from a structured literature review on Airbnb. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *31*(1), 427-473.

Darby, F., & Lang, J. M. (2019). *Small teaching online: Applying learning science in online classes*. John Wiley & Sons.

Darby, J. L., Fugate, B. S., & Murray, J. B. (2019). Interpretive research: A complementary approach to seeking knowledge in supply chain management. *The International Journal of Logistics Management*, *30*(2), 395-413.

Dasilas, A., & Karanović, G. (2023). The impact of FinTech firms on bank performance: evidence from the UK. *EuroMed Journal of Business*.

Dattée, B., Alexy, O., & Autio, E. (2018). Maneuvering in poor visibility: How firms play the ecosystem game when uncertainty is high. *Academy of Management Journal*, *61*(2), 466-498.

Davlembayeva, D., & Papagiannidis, S. (2023). Platform-provider relationship dynamics in the sharing economy: Challenges and implications. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *111*, 242-256.

De Reuver, M., Sørensen, C., & Basole, R. C. (2018). The digital platform: a research agenda. *Journal of information technology*, *33*(2), 124-135.

De Vaujany, F. X., Leclercq-Vandelannoitte, A., & Holt, R. (2020). Communities versus platforms: The paradox in the body of the collaborative economy. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, *29*(4), 450-467.

Deephouse, David L., et al. "Organizational legitimacy: Six key questions." *The SAGE handbook of organizational institutionalism* 4.2 (2017): 27-54.

Demailly, D., & Novel, A. S. (2014). The sharing economy: make it sustainable. *Studies*, *3*(14),

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). The SAGE handbook of qualitative research.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2011). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. sage.

Deshpandé, R., Farley, J. U., & Webster Jr, F. E. (1993). Corporate culture, customer orientation, and innovativeness in Japanese firms: a quadrad analysis. *Journal of marketing*, *57*(1), 23-37.

DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American sociological review*, 147-160.

Doern, R., Williams, N., & Vorley, T. (2019). Special issue on entrepreneurship and crises: business as usual? An introduction and review of the literature. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *31*(5-6), 400-412.

Dogru, T., Hanks, L., Mody, M., Suess, C., & Sirakaya-Turk, E. (2020). The effects of Airbnb on hotel performance: Evidence from cities beyond the United States. *Tourism Management*, *79*, 104090.

Dolnicar, S. (2017). *Peer-to-peer accommodation networks: Pushing the boundaries* (p. 284). Goodfellow Publishers.

Dolnicar, S. (2020). Designing for more environmentally friendly tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *84*, 102933.

Dolnicar, S. (2021). Sharing economy and peer-to-peer accommodation–a perspective paper. *Tourism Review*, *76*(1), 34-37.

Dolnicar, S. (2021). The evolution of Airbnb's business model. Airbnb Before, During and After COVID-19.

Dolnicar, S., & Zare, S. (2020). COVID-19 and Airbnb–Disrupting the disruptor. *Annals of tourism research*, *83*, 102961.

Dorobantu, S., Kaul, A., & Zelner, B. (2017). Nonmarket strategy research through the lens of new institutional economics: An integrative review and future directions. *Strategic Management Journal*, *38*(1), 114-140.

Douglas, M., Wuthnow, R., Hunter, J. D., Bergesen, A., & Kurzweil, E. (1984). Cultural Analysis: The Work of Peter L. Berger, Mary Douglas, Michel Foucault, and Jürgen Habermas.

Dowling, J., & Pfeffer, J. (1975). Organizational legitimacy: Social values and organizational behavior. *Pacific sociological review*, *18*(1), 122-136.

Dredge, D., & Gyimóthy, S. (2015). The collaborative economy and tourism: Critical perspectives, questionable claims and silenced voices. *Tourism recreation research*, *40*(3), 286-302.

Dreyer, B., Lüdeke-Freund, F., Hamann, R., & Faccer, K. (2017). Upsides and downsides of the sharing economy: Collaborative consumption business models' stakeholder value impacts and their relationship to context. *Technological forecasting and social change*, *125*, 87-104.

Du, S., & Vieira, E. T. (2012). Striving for legitimacy through corporate social responsibility: Insights from oil companies. *Journal of business ethics*, *110*, 413-427.

Dumay, J., Frost, G., & Beck, C. (2015). Material legitimacy: Blending organisational and stakeholder concerns through non-financial information disclosures. *Journal of Accounting & Organizational Change*, *11*(1), 2-23.

Eaton, B., Elaluf-Calderwood, S., Sorensen, C., & Yoo, Y. (2011). Dynamic structures of control and generativity in digital ecosystem service innovation: the cases of the Apple and Google mobile app stores.

Eckhardt, G. M., & Bardhi, F. (2016). The relationship between access practices and economic systems. *Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*, *1*(2), 210-225.

Eckhardt, G. M., Houston, M. B., Jiang, B., Lamberton, C., Rindfleisch, A., & Zervas, G. (2019). Marketing in the sharing economy. *Journal of Marketing*, *83*(5), 5-27.

Edelman, B., & Geradin, D. (2016). Android and competition law: exploring and assessing Google's practices in mobile. *European Competition Journal*, *12*(2-3), 159-194.

Edelman, B., Luca, M., & Svirsky, D. (2017). Racial discrimination in the sharing economy: Evidence from a field experiment. *American economic journal: applied economics*, *9*(2), 1-22.

Ehrenreich, B. (2009). *Bright-sided: How positive thinking is undermined America*. Metropolitan Books.

Einav, L., Farronato, C., & Levin, J. (2016). Peer-to-peer markets. *Annual Review of Economics*, *8*, 615-635.

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Making fast strategic decisions in high-velocity environments. *Academy of Management journal*, *32*(3), 543-576.

Eisenhardt, K. M., & Graebner, M. E. (2007). Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges. *Academy of management journal*, *50*(1), 25-32.

Emerson, T. I. (1962). Toward a general theory of the First Amendment. *Yale Lj*, *72*, 877.

Epley, N., & Gilovich, T. (2016). The mechanics of motivated reasoning. *Journal of Economic perspectives*, *30*(3), 133-140.

Etchanchu, H. (2016). *The Roles of Discourse, Legitimacy and Power in Enabling and Hindering Institutional Change towards Sustainability*. ESSEC Business School (France).

Etter, M., Colleoni, E., Illia, L., Meggiorin, K., & D'Eugenio, A. (2018). Measuring organizational legitimacy in social media: Assessing citizens' judgments with sentiment analysis. *Business & Society*, *57*(1), 60-97.

Etter, M., Ravasi, D., & Colleoni, E. (2019). Social media and the formation of organizational reputation. *Academy of management review*, *44*(1), 28-52.

Evans, D. S., & Schmalensee, R. (2016). *Matchmakers: The new economics of multisided platforms*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Fabbri, J. (2016). Les espaces de coworking : ni tiers-lieux, ni incubateurs, ni Fab Labs. *Entreprendre & innover*, (4), 8-16.

Fagerstrøm, A., Pawar, S., Sigurdsson, V., Foxall, G. R., & Yani-de-Soriano, M. (2017). That personal profile image might jeopardize your rental opportunity! On the relative impact of the seller's facial expressions upon buying behavior on Airbnb™. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *72*, 123-131.

Farmaki, A., Stergiou, D., & Kaniadakis, A. (2022). Self-perceptions of Airbnb hosts' responsibility: a moral identity perspective. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *30*(5), 983-1003.

Farmaki, Anna, et al. "Hotel CSR and job satisfaction: A chaordic perspective." *Tourism Management* 91 (2022): 104526.

Fehrer, J. A., & Nenonen, S. (2020). Crowdfunding networks: Structure, dynamics and critical capabilities. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *88*, 449-464.

Ferré-Sadurní, L. (2019). Inside the rise and fall of a multimillion-dollar Airbnb scheme. *The New York Times*.

Ferré-Sadurní, L. (2019). New York empire of illegal Airbnb rentals booked 75,000 guests, suit says. *New York Times*.

Filippova, D. (2015). Société collaborative. *La fin des hiérarchies*.

Fink, S., & American Management Association. (1986). *Crisis management: Planning for the inevitable*. Amacom

Finlay, L. (2002). Negotiating the swamp: the opportunity and challenge of reflexivity in research practice. *Qualitative research*, *2*(2), 209-230.

Fiol, C. M., Pratt, M. G., & O'Connor, E. J. (2009). Managing intractable identity conflicts. *Academy of Management Review*, *34*(1), 32-55.

Fisher, G., Kuratko, D. F., Bloodgood, J. M., & Hornsby, J. S. (2017). Legitimate to whom? The challenge of audience diversity and new venture legitimacy. *Journal of Business Venturing*, *32*(1), 52-71.

Fischer, S. L., Pahus, H. S., & Bager, A. (2019). What motivates people to become Airbnb hosts–do we know enough?—an exploration of the literature. *Research in hospitality management*, *9*(2), 83-88.

Fitzmaurice, C. J., Ladegaard, I., Attwood-Charles, W., Cansoy, M., Carfagna, L. B., Schor, J. B., & Wengronowitz, R. (2020). Domesticating the market: moral exchange and the sharing economy. *Socio-Economic Review*, *18*(1), 81-102.

Foramitti, J., Varvarousis, A., & Kallis, G. (2020). Transition within a transition: how cooperative platforms want to change the sharing economy. Sustain Sci 15, 1185-1197.

Forsyth, D. R. (1980). A taxonomy of ethical ideologies. *Journal of Personality and Social psychology*, *39*(1), 175.

Frandsen, F., & Johansen, W. (2010). Crisis communication, complexity, and the cartoon affair: A case study. *The handbook of crisis communication*, *425*.

Freeman, E., 1984. *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Boston: Pitman.

Freeman, J., Carroll, G. R., & Hannan, M. T. (1983). The liability of newness: Age dependence in organizational death rates. *American sociological review*, 692-710.

Freeman, R. E., Harrison, J. S., Wicks, A. C., Parmar, B. L., & De Colle, S. (2010). Stakeholder theory: The state of the art.

Frenken, K., & Schor, J. (2017). Putting the sharing economy into perspective. *Environmental innovation and societal transitions*, *23*, 3-10.

Frenken, K., Vaskelainen, T., Fünfschilling, L., & Piscicelli, L. (2020). An institutional logics perspective on the gig economy. In *Theorizing the sharing economy: Variety and trajectories of new forms of organizing* (pp. 83-105). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Fudurich, G., & Mackay, K. (2020). Greening the guest bedroom: Exploring hosts' perspectives on environmental certification for Airbnb. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, *20*(4), 423-434.

Gallagher, L. (2017). *The Airbnb Story: How Three Guys Disrupted an Industry, Made Billions of Dollars... and Plenty of Enemies*. Random House.

Gansky, L. (2010). *The mesh: Why the future of business is sharing*. Penguin.

Garud, R., Kumaraswamy, A., Roberts, A., & Xu, L. (2022). Liminal movement by digital platform-based sharing economy ventures: The case of Uber Technologies. *Strategic Management Journal*, *43*(3), 447-475.

Garud, R., Schildt, H. A., & Lant, T. K. (2014). Entrepreneurial storytelling, future expectations, and the paradox of legitimacy. *Organization science*, *25*(5), 1479-1492.

Gawer, A. (2014). Bridging differing perspectives on technological platforms: Toward an integrative framework. *Research policy*, *43*(7), 1239-1249.

Gawer, A. (2020). Digital Platforms' Boundaries: The Interplay of Firm Scope, Platform Sides, and Digital Interfaces.

Gawer, A., & Cusumano, M. A. (2014). Industry platforms and ecosystem innovation. *Journal of product innovation management*, *31*(3), 417-433.

Gawer, A., & Phillips, N. (2013). Institutional work as logics shift: The case of Intel's transformation to platform leader. *Organization studies*, *34*(8), 1035-1071.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures* (Vol. 5019). Basic books.

Geertz, C. (2008). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In *The cultural geography reader* (pp. 41-51). Routledge.

Gehman, J., Glaser, V. L., Eisenhardt, K. M., Gioia, D., Langley, A., & Corley, K. G. (2018). Finding theory–method fit: A comparison of three qualitative approaches to theory building. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, *27*(3), 284-300.

Geissinger, A., Laurell, C., & Sandström, C. (2020). Digital Disruption beyond Uber and Airbnb—Tracking the long tail of the sharing economy. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *155*, 119323.

Geissinger, A., Laurell, C., Öberg, C., & Sandström, C. (2019). How sustainable is the sharing economy? On the sustainability connotations of sharing economy platforms. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *206*, 419-429.

Gerring, J. (1999). What makes a concept good? A criterial framework for understanding concept formation in the social sciences. *Polity*, *31*(3), 357-393.

Gerwe, O., & Silva, R. (2020). Clarifying the sharing economy: Conceptualization, typology, antecedents, and effects. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *34*(1), 65-96.

Gil, J., & Sequera, J. (2022). The professionalization of Airbnb in Madrid: Far from a collaborative economy. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *25*(20), 3343-3362.

Gilbert, S., & Kelloway, E. K. (2018). Self-determined leader motivation and follower perceptions of leadership. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *39*(5), 608-619.

Gilpin, D. R., & Murphy, P. J. (2008). *Crisis management in a complex world*. Oxford University Press.

Ginindza, S., & Tichaawa, T. M. (2019). The impact of sharing accommodation on the hotel occupancy rate in the kingdom of Swaziland. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *22*(16), 1975-1991.

Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational research methods*, *16*(1), 15-31.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research (grounded theory). *Taylor & Francis eBooks DRM Free Collection*.

Goodman, L. A. (1961). Snowball sampling. *The annals of mathematical statistics*, 148-170.

Goodrick, E., & Reay, T. (2011). Constellations of institutional logics: Changes in the professional work of pharmacists. *Work and Occupations*, *38*(3), 372-416.

Görög, G. (2018). The Definitions of Sharing Economy: A Systematic Literature Review. *Management (18544223)*, *13*(2).

Grabher, G., & König, J. (2020). Disruption, embedded. A Polanyian framing of the platform economy. *Sociologica*, *14*(1), 95-118.

Green, J., Franquiz, M., & Dixon, C. (1997). The myth of the objective transcript: Transcribing as a situated act. *Tesol Quarterly*, *31*(1), 172-176.

Greenwood, R., Raynard, M., Kodeih, F., Micelotta, E. R., & Lounsbury, M. (2011). Institutional complexity and organizational responses. *Academy of Management annals*, *5*(1), 317-371.

Greenwood, R., Suddaby, R., & Hinings, C. R. (2002). Theorizing change: The role of professional associations in the transformation of institutionalized fields. *Academy of management journal*, *45*(1), 58-80.

Grimmer, L., & Vorobjovas-Pinta, O. (2020). From the sharing economy to the visitor economy: the impact on small retailers. *International journal of tourism cities*, *6*(1), 90-98.

Grodal, S., Gotsopoulos, A., & Suarez, F. F. (2015). The coevolution of technologies and categories during industry emergence. *Academy of Management Review*, *40*(3), 423-445.

Grube, L. E., & Storr, V. H. (2018). Embedded entrepreneurs and post-disaster community recovery. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *30*(7-8), 800-821.

Gul, I. (2022). Understanding the Sharing Economy. *The Sharing Economy and the Tourism Industry: Perspectives, Opportunities and Challenges*, 23.

Gul, O. M. (2022). Blockchain-enabled Internet of Things (IoTs) platforms for vehicle sensing and transportation monitoring. *Machine Learning, Blockchain Technologies and Big Data Analytics for IoTs: Methods, Technologies and Applications*, 351-373.

Gulati, R., Wohlgezogen, F., & Zhelyazkov, P. (2012). 573 The two facets of collaboration: Cooperation and coordination in strategic alliances. *Academy of Management Annals*, *6*(1), 531-583.

Gupta, R., Mejia, C., & Kajikawa, Y. (2019). Business, innovation and digital ecosystems landscape survey and knowledge cross sharing. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *147*, 100-109.

Gurău, C., & Ranchhod, A. (2020). The sharing economy as a complex dynamic system: Exploring coexisting constituencies, interests and practices. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *245*, 118799.

Gurran, N. (2018). Global home-sharing, local communities and the Airbnb debate: a planning research agenda. *Planning theory & practice*, *19*(2), 298-304.

Gurran, N., & Phibbs, P. (2017). When tourists move in: how should urban planners respond to Airbnb?. *Journal of the American planning association*, *83*(1), 80-92.

Gurses, K., & Ozcan, P. (2015). Entrepreneurship in regulated markets: Framing contests and collective action to introduce pay TV in the US. *Academy of Management Journal*, *58*(6), 1709-1739.

Gursoy, D., & Chi, C. G. (2021). Celebrating 30 years of excellence amid the COVID-19 pandemic—An update on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic and COVID-19 vaccines on hospitality industry: Overview of the current situation and a research agenda. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, *30*(3), 277-281.

Gursoy, D., Chi, C. G., & Chi, O. H. (2021). Effects of COVID-19 pandemic on restaurant and hotel customers' sentiments towards dining out, traveling to a destination and staying at hotels. *Journal of Hospitality*, *3*(1), 1-17.

Guttentag, D. (2015). Airbnb: disruptive innovation and the rise of an informal tourism accommodation sector. *Current issues in Tourism*, *18*(12), 1192-1217.

Guttentag, D. A., & Smith, S. L. (2017). Assessing Airbnb as a disruptive innovation relative to hotels: Substitution and comparative performance expectations. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *64*, 1-10.

Guttentag, D., Smith, S., Potwarka, L., & Havitz, M. (2018). Why tourists choose Airbnb: A motivation-based segmentation study. *Journal of Travel Research*, *57*(3), 342-359.

Hagiu, A. (2007). Merchant or two-sided platform?. *Review of Network Economics*, *6*(2).

Hagiu, A., & Wright, J. (2015). Multi-sided platforms. *International Journal of Industrial Organization*, *43*, 162-174.

Hakim, C. (2000). *Work-lifestyle choices in the 21st century: Preference theory*. OUp Oxford

Hall, J. V., & Krueger, A. B. (2018). An analysis of the labor market for Uber's driver-partners in the United States. *Ilr Review*, *71*(3), 705-732.

Hamari, J., & Koivisto, J. (2015). Why do people use gamification services? *International journal of information management*, *35*(4), 419-431.

Handelman, J. M., & Arnold, S. J. (1999). The role of marketing actions with a social dimension: Appeals to the institutional environment. *Journal of marketing*, *63*(3), 33-48.

Hannah, D. P., & Eisenhardt, K. M. (2018). How firms navigate cooperation and competition in nascent ecosystems. *Strategic Management Journal*, *39*(12), 3163-3192

Hardy, A., & Dolnicar, S. (2018). 16 Networks and Hosts–Love-Hate Relationship. *Peer-to-Peer Accommodation Networks*.

Hardy, Anne, and Sara Dolnicar. "15 Types of Network Members." *Peer-to-Peer Accommodation Networks* (2018).

Hasan, R., & Birgach, M. (2016, June). Critical success factors behind the sustainability of the Sharing Economy. In *2016 IEEE 14th International Conference on Software Engineering Research, Management and Applications (SERA)* (pp. 287-293). IEEE.

Hati, S. R. H., Balqiah, T. E., Hananto, A., & Yuliati, E. (2021). A decade of systematic literature review on Airbnb: the sharing economy from a multiple stakeholder perspective. *Heliyon*, *7*(10).

Hatzopoulos, V., & Roma, S. (2017). Caring for sharing? The collaborative economy under EU law. *Common Market Law Review*, *54*(1).

Hawksworth, J., & Vaughan, R. (2014). The sharing economy–sizing the revenue opportunity. *PricewaterhouseCoopers.(available at http://www. pwc. co. uk/issues/megatrends/collisions/sharingeconomy/the-sharing-economysizing-therevenue-opportunity. html)*.

Hein, A., Schreieck, M., Riasanow, T., Setzke, D. S., Wiesche, M., Böhm, M., & Krcmar, H. (2020). Digital platform ecosystems. *Electronic markets*, *30*, 87-98.

Hein, L., Bagstad, K. J., Obst, C., Edens, B., Schenau, S., Castillo, G., ... & Caparrós, A. (2020). Progress in natural capital accounting for ecosystems. *Science*, *367*(6477), 514-515.

Helfat, C. E., & Raubitschek, R. S. (2018). Dynamic and integrative capabilities for profiting from innovation in digital platform-based ecosystems. *Research policy*, *47*(8), 1391-1399.

Hellwig, K., Morhart, F., Girardin, F., & Hauser, M. (2015). Exploring different types of sharing: A proposed segmentation of the market for "*sharing*" businesses. *Psychology & Marketing*, *32*(9), 891-906.

Henfridsson, O., Nandhakumar, J., Scarbrough, H., & Panourgias, N. (2018). Recombination in the open-ended value landscape of digital innovation. *Information and Organization*, *28*(2), 89-100.

Hermann, C. F. (1963). Some consequences of crisis which limit the viability of organizations. *Administrative science quarterly*, 61-82.

Hoefer, R. L., & Green Jr, S. E. (2016). A rhetorical model of institutional decision making: The role of rhetoric in the formation and change of legitimacy judgments. *Academy of Management Review*, *41*(1), 130-150.

Homburg, C., Vollmayr, J., & Hahn, A. (2014). Firm value creation through major channel expansions: Evidence from an event study in the United States, Germany, and China. *Journal of Marketing*, *78*(3), 38-61.

Horn, K., & Merante, M. (2017). Is home sharing driving up rents? Evidence from Airbnb in Boston. *Journal of housing economics*, *38*, 14-24.

Hossain, M. (2021). The effect of the Covid-19 on sharing economy activities. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *280*, 124782.

Howard, B. (2015). *We-Commerce: How to create, collaborate, and succeed in the sharing economy*. TarcherPerigee.

Hudson, L. A., & Ozanne, J. L. (1988). Alternative ways of seeking knowledge in consumer research. *Journal of consumer research*, *14*(4), 508-521.

Humphreys, A. (2010). Semiotic structure and the legitimation of consumption practices: The case of casino gambling. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *37*(3), 490-510.

Humphreys, A., & Latour, K. A. (2013). Framing the game: Assessing the impact of cultural representations on consumer perceptions of legitimacy. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *40*(4), 773-795.

Huynh, G., Chung, N., & Phung, T. (2021). How to purchase an order from brick and mortar retailers during COVID-19 pandemic? A rise of crowdshipping. *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, *5*(3), 439-450.

Hwang, J. (2019). Managing the innovation legitimacy of the sharing economy. *International Journal of Quality Innovation*, *5*(1), 1-21.

Hwang, J., Grinevich, V., Knight, E., Pascucci, S., Querbes, A., & Guo, Y. (2020). Advances in Sharing Economy. *Advances in Sharing Economy*, 331.

IBM, 2015. Redefining Boundaries – Insights From the Global C-suite Study. IBM Global Business Services, Somers, NY.

Hybels, R. C. (1995, August). On legitimacy, legitimation, and organizations: A critical review and integrative theoretical model. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* (Vol. 1995, No. 1, pp. 241-245). Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510: Academy of Management.

Iansiti, M., & Levien, R. (2004). Keystones and dominators: Framing operating and technology strategy in a business ecosystem. *Harvard Business School, Boston*, *3*, 1-82.

Ingram Bogusz, C., Teigland, R., & Vaast, E. (2019). Designed entrepreneurial legitimacy: the case of a Swedish crowdfunding platform. *European Journal of Information Systems*, *28*(3), 318-335.

Irvine, W., & Anderson, A. R. (2004). Small tourist firms in rural areas: agility, vulnerability and survival in the face of crisis. *International journal of entrepreneurial behavior & research*, *10*(4), 229-246.

Jacobides, M. G., Cennamo, C., & Gawer, A. (2018). Towards a theory of ecosystems. *Strategic management journal*, *39*(8), 2255-2276.

Jacobides, M. G., Sundararajan, A., & Van Alstyne, M. (2019, February). Platforms and ecosystems: Enabling the digital economy. In *Briefing paper world economic forum* (pp. 1-32). Cologny/Geneva, Switzerland: World Economic Forum.

James, E. H., & Wooten, L. P. (2005). Leadership as (Un) usual: how to display competence in times of crisis. *Organizational dynamics*, *34*(2), 141-152.

Jefferson-Jones, J. (2014). Airbnb and the housing segment of the modern sharing economy: Are short-term rental restrictions an unconstitutional taking. *Hastings Const. LQ*, *42*, 557.

Jericho, G. (2016). The dark side of Uber: why the sharing economy needs tougher rules. *The guardian*, *18*.

Jetten, J., Iyer, A., Branscombe, N. R., & Zhang, A. (2017). How the disadvantaged appraise group-based exclusion: The path from legitimacy to illegitimacy. In *European Review of Social Psychology: Volume 24* (pp. 194-224). Routledge.

Jin, Y., & Cameron, G. T. (2007). The effects of threat type and duration on public relations practitioner's cognitive, affective, and conative responses in crisis situations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *19*(3), 255-281.

Jin, Y., Pang, A., & Cameron, G. T. (2007). Integrated crisis mapping: Toward a publics-based, emotion-driven conceptualization in crisis communication. *Sphera Publica*, (7), 81-95.

John, N. A. (2017). *The age of sharing*. John Wiley & Sons.

Johnston, M. P. (2014). Secondary data analysis: A method of which the time has come. *Qualitative and quantitative methods in libraries*, *3*(3), 619-626.

Jordan, E. J., & Moore, J. (2018). An in-depth exploration of residents' perceived impacts of transient vacation rentals. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *35*(1), 90-101

Josserand, E., & Kaine, S. (2019). Different directions or the same route? The varied identities of ride-share drivers. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, *61*(4), 549-573.

Karunakaran, A. (2022). In cloud we trust? Co-opting occupational gatekeepers to produce normalized trust in platform-mediated interorganizational relationships. *Organization Science*, *33*(3), 1188-1211.

Kash, T. J., & Darling, J. R. (1998). Crisis management: prevention, diagnosis and intervention. *Leadership & organization development journal*

Kathan, W., Matzler, K., & Veider, V. (2016). The sharing economy: Your business model's friend or foe? *Business horizons*, *59*(6), 663-672.

Kennedy, H. R., Jones, V. C., & Gielen, A. (2019). Reported fire safety and first-aid amenities in Airbnb venues in 16 American cities. *Injury Prevention*, *25*(4), 328-330.

Kenney, M., & Zysman, J. (2016). The rise of the platform economy. *Issues in science and technology*, *32*(3), 61.

Kenney, M., Bearson, D., & Zysman, J. (2021). The platform economy matures: measuring pervasiveness and exploring power. *Socio-economic review*, *19*(4), 1451-1483.

King, B. G., & Soule, S. A. (2007). Social movements as extra-institutional entrepreneurs: The effect of protests on stock price returns. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *52*(3), 413-442.

Klarin, A., & Suseno, Y. (2021). A state-of-the-art review of the sharing economy: Scientometric mapping of the scholarship. *Journal of Business Research*, *126*, 250-262.

Köbis, N., & Mossink, L. D. (2021). Artificial intelligence versus Maya Angelou: Experimental evidence that people cannot differentiate AI-generated from human-written poetry. *Computers in human behavior*, *114*, 106553.

Koh, Y., Belarmino, A., & Kim, M. G. (2019). Good fences make good revenue: An examination of revenue management practices at peer-to-peer accommodations. *Tourism Economics*.

Kohli, A. K., Jaworski, B. J., & Shabshab, N. (2019). 2. Customer Centricity: A Multi-Year Journey. *Handbook on Customer Centricity: Strategies for Building a Customer-Centric Organization*, 14.

Kostakis, V., Niaros, V., & Giotitsas, C. (2015). Open source 3D printing as a means of learning: An educational experiment in two high schools in Greece. *Telematics and informatics*, *32*(1), 118-128.

Kourtit, K., Nijkamp, P., Östh, J., & Turk, U. (2022). Airbnb and COVID-19: SPACE-TIME vulnerability effects in six world-cities. *Tourism Management*, *93*, 104569.

Kramer, R. M. (2010). Collective trust within organizations: Conceptual foundations and empirical insights. *Corporate Reputation Review*, *13*, 82-97.

Kretschmer, T., & Khashabi, P. (2020). Digital transformation and organization design: An integrated approach. *California Management Review*, *62*(4), 86-104.

Kuhn, K. M., & Maleki, A. (2017). Micro-entrepreneurs, dependent contractors, and instaserfs: Understanding online labor platform workforces. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *31*(3), 183-200.

Kuruppu, S. C., Milne, M. J., & Tilt, C. A. (2019). Gaining, maintaining and repairing organisational legitimacy: When to report and when not to report. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, *32*(7), 2062-2087.

Laamanen, T., Pfeffer, J., Rong, K., & Van de Ven, A. (2018). Editors' introduction: Business models, ecosystems, and society in the sharing economy. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, *4*(3), 213-219.

Laczko, P., Hullova, D., Needham, A., Rossiter, A. M., & Battisti, M. (2019). The role of a central actor in increasing platform stickiness and stakeholder profitability: Bridging the gap between value creation and value capture in the sharing economy. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *76*, 214-230.

Langley, A. (1999). Strategies for theorizing from process data. *Academy of Management review*, *24*(4), 691-710.

Laukkanen, M., & Tura, N. (2020). The potential of sharing economy business models for sustainable value creation. *Journal of Cleaner production*, *253*, 120004.

Lagonigro, R., Martori, J. C., & Apparicio, P. (2020). Understanding Airbnb spatial distribution in a southern European city: The case of Barcelona. *Applied Geography*, *115*, 102136.

Laïfi, A., & Josserand, E. (2016). Legitimation in practice: A new digital publishing business model. *Journal of business Research*, *69*(7), 2343-2352.

Lashinsky, A. (2017). *Wild ride: Inside Uber's quest for world domination*. Penguin.

Laurell, C., & Sandström, C. (2016). Analysing Uber in social media—Disruptive technology or institutional disruption ?. *International journal of innovation management*, *20*(05), 1640013.

Lawrence, T., Suddaby, R., & Leca, B. (2011). Institutional work: Refocusing institutional studies of organization. *Journal of management inquiry*, *20*(1), 52-58.

Lawrence, T. B., Leca, B., & Zilber, T. B. (2013). Institutional work: Current research, new directions and overlooked issues. *Organization studies*, *34*(8), 1023-1033.

Lawrence, R. D., Almasi, G. S., & Rushmeier, H. E. (1999). A scalable parallel algorithm for self-organizing maps with applications to sparse data mining problems. *Data Mining and Knowledge Discovery*, *3*, 171-195.

Lawrence, T. B., & Suddaby, R. (2006). 1.6 institutions and institutional work. *The Sage handbook of organization studies*, 215-254.

Lazarow, A. (2015). Airbnb in New York City: Law and Policy Challenges.

Le Roy, F., & Czakon, W. (2016). Managing coopetition: the missing link between strategy and performance. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *53*(1), 3-6.

Lee, I., & Lee, K. (2015). The Internet of Things (IoT): Applications, investments, and challenges for enterprises. *Business horizons*, *58*(4), 431-440.

Lessig, L. (2008). *Remix: Making art and commerce thrive in the hybrid economy* (p. 352). Bloomsbury Academic.

Leung, X. Y., Xue, L., & Wen, H. (2019). Framing the sharing economy: Toward a sustainable ecosystem. *Tourism Management*, *71*, 44-53.

Li, J., Chen, L., Yi, J., Mao, J., & Liao, J. (2019). Ecosystem-specific advantages in international digital commerce. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *50*, 1448-1463.

Li, H., & Srinivasan, K. (2019). Competitive dynamics in the sharing economy: An analysis in the context of Airbnb and hotels. *Marketing Science*, *38*(3), 365-391.

Liang, X., Zhao, J., Shetty, S., Liu, J., & Li, D. (2017, October). Integrating blockchain for data sharing and collaboration in mobile healthcare applications. In *2017 IEEE 28th annual international symposium on personal, indoor, and mobile radio communications (PIMRC)* (pp. 1-5). IEEE.

Lin, P. M., Qiu Zhang, H., Hung, K., Lin, B., & Fan, D. X. (2019). Stakeholders' views of travelers' choice of Airbnb. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *36*(9), 1037-1049.

Lindblom, A., & Lindblom, T. (2017). De-ownership orientation and collaborative consumption during turbulent economic times. *International journal of consumer studies*, *41*(4), 431-438.

Littau, P., Jujagiri, N. J., & Adlbrecht, G. (2010). 25 years of stakeholder theory in project management literature (1984-2009). *Project Management Journal*, *41*(4), 17-29.

Logue, D., & Grimes, M. (2019). Platforms for the people: The cultivation of institutional infrastructure for civic-crowdfunding. *Strategic Management J., ePub ahead of print November*, *7*.

MacIntyre, C. R., & Chughtai, A. A. (2020). A rapid systematic review of the efficacy of face masks and respirators against coronaviruses and other respiratory transmissible viruses for the community, healthcare workers and sick patients. *International journal of nursing studies*, *108*, 103629.

Mack, A. (2003). Inattentional blindness: Looking without seeing. Current directions in psychological science, 12(5), 180-184.

Mackun, P., & Wilson, S. (2010). Census Briefs, Population distribution and Change: 2000 to 2010.

Maguire, S., & Hardy, C. (2009). Discourse and deinstitutionalization: The decline of DDT. *Academy of management journal*, *52*(1), 148-178.

Mair, J., & Hehenberger, L. (2014). Front-stage and backstage convening: The transition from opposition to mutualistic coexistence in organizational philanthropy. *Academy of Management Journal*, *57*(4), 1174-1200.

Mair, J., & Reischauer, G. (2017). Capturing the dynamics of the sharing economy: Institutional research on the plural forms and practices of sharing economy organizations. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *125*, 11-20.

Malhotra, A., & Van Alstyne, M. (2014). The dark side of the sharing economy… and how to lighten it. *Communications of the ACM*, *57*(11), 24-27.

Marcus, A. A., & Goodman, R. S. (1991). Victims and shareholders: The dilemmas of presenting corporate policy during a crisis. *Academy of management journal*, *34*(2), 281-305.

Markman, G. D., Lieberman, M., Leiblein, M., Wei, L. Q., & Wang, Y. (2021). The distinctive domain of the sharing economy: Definitions, value creation, and implications for research. *Journal of management studies*, *58*(4), 927-948.

Marquis, C., & Raynard, M. (2015). Institutional strategies in emerging markets. *The Academy of Management Annals*, *9*(1), 291-335.

Martin, C. J. (2016). The sharing economy: A pathway to sustainability or a nightmarish form of neoliberal capitalism?. *Ecological economics*, *121*, 149-159.

Martin, E. W., & Shaheen, S. A. (2011). Greenhouse gas emission impacts of carsharing in North America. *IEEE Transactions on intelligent transportation systems*, *12*(4), 1074-1086.

Martos-Carrión, E., & Miguel, C. (2022). The Sharing Economy History, definitions and related concepts. *The Sharing Economy and the Tourism Industry. Perspectives, Opportunities and Challenges*, 8-10.

Martos-Carrión, Esther, and Cristina Miguel. 2021. 'Sharing Economy: History, Definitions and Related Concepts.' In *The Sharing Economy: Perspectives, Opportunities and Challenges*, edited by Babak Taheri, Roya Rahimi, and Dimitrios Buhalis. Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers.

Massey, J. E. (2001). Managing organizational legitimacy: Communication strategies for organizations in crisis. *The Journal of Business Communication (1973)*, *38*(2), 153-182.

Maurer, I., Mair, J., & Oberg, A. (2020). Variety and trajectories of new forms of organizing in the sharing economy: a research agenda. *Theorizing the sharing economy: Variety and Trajectories of New Forms of Organizing*, *66*, 1-23.

Maurer, I., Oberg, A., & Wruk, D. (Eds.). (2019). *Perspectives on the sharing economy*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Maurer, J. G. (1971). Readings in organization theory: Open-system approaches. *(No Title)*.

Mazzella, F., Sundararajan, A., D'Espous, V., & Möhlmann, M. (2016). How digital trust powers the sharing economy. *IESE Insight*, (30), 24-30.

McIntyre, D. P., & Srinivasan, A. (2017). Networks, platforms, and strategy: Emerging views and next steps. *Strategic management journal*, *38*(1), 141-160.

Mercier-Roy, M., & Mailhot, C. (2019). What's in an app? Investigating the moral struggles behind a sharing economy device. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *159*, 977-996.

Milano, C., Novelli, M., & Cheer, J. M. (2019). Overtourism and tourismphobia: A journey through four decades of tourism development, planning and local concerns. *Tourism Planning & Development*, *16*(4), 353-357.

Miller, S. R. (2014). Transferable sharing rights: A theoretical model for regulating Airbnb and the short-term rental market. *Available at SSRN 2514178*.

Mitchell, R. K., Agle, B. R., & Wood, D. J. (1997). Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: Defining the principle of who and what really counts. *Academy of management review*, *22*(4), 853-886.

Mody, M. A., Suess, C., & Lehto, X. (2017). The accommodation experiencescape: a comparative assessment of hotels and Airbnb. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *29*(9), 2377-2404.

Mont, Oksana, Steven Kane Curtis, and Yuliya Voytenko Palgan. "Organisational response strategies to COVID-19 in the sharing economy." *Sustainable Production and Consumption* 28 (2021): 52-70.

Moore, J. F. (1993). Predators and prey: a new ecology of competition. *Harvard business review*, *71*(3), 75-86.

Moorman, C., Deshpande, R., & Zaltman, G. (1993). Factors affecting trust in market research relationships. *Journal of marketing*, *57*(1), 81-101.

Morales-Pérez, S., Garay-Tamajón, L. A., Corrons-Giménez, A., & Pacheco-Bernal, C. (2022). The antecedents of entrepreneurial behaviour in the creation of platform economy initiatives: An analysis based on the decomposed theory of planned behaviour. *Heliyon*, *8*(10).

Muñoz, P., & Cohen, B. (2017). Mapping out the sharing economy: A configurational approach to sharing business modeling. *Technological forecasting and social change*, *125*, 21-37.

Muñoz, P., & Cohen, B. (2018). A compass for navigating sharing economy business models. *California Management Review*, *61*(1), 114-147.

Murillo, D., Buckland, H., & Val, E. (2017). When the sharing economy becomes neoliberalism on steroids: Unravelling the controversies. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *125*, 66-76.

Nambisan, S., & Baron, R. A. (2013). Entrepreneurship in innovation ecosystems: Entrepreneurs' self–regulatory processes and their implications for new venture success. *Entrepreneurship theory and practice*, *37*(5), 1071-1097.

Nambisan, S., & Baron, R. A. (2019). On the Costs of Digital Entrepreneurship: Role Conflict, Stress, and Venture Performance in Digital Platform-based Ecosystems.

Nambisan, S., & Baron, R. A. (2021). On the costs of digital entrepreneurship: Role conflict, stress, and venture performance in digital platform-based ecosystems. *Journal of Business Research*, *125*, 520-532.

Nambisan, S., & Sawhney, M. (2011). Orchestration processes in network-centric innovation: Evidence from the field. *Academy of management perspectives*, *25*(3), 40-57.

Nambisan, S., Wright, M., & Feldman, M. (2019). The digital transformation of innovation and entrepreneurship: Progress, challenges and key themes. *Research policy*, *48*(8), 103773.

Narver, J. C., & Slater, S. F. (1990). The effect of a market orientation on business profitability. *Journal of marketing*, *54*(4), 20-35.

Newlands, G., & Lutz, C. (2020). Fairness, legitimacy and the regulation of home-sharing platforms. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *32*(10), 3177-3197.

Nieuwland, S., & Van Melik, R. (2020). Regulating Airbnb: how cities deal with perceived negative externalities of short-term rentals. *Current issues in tourism*, *23*(7), 811-825.

Nohrstedt, D., & Weible, C. M. (2010). The logic of policy change after crisis: Proximity and subsystem interaction. *Risk, hazards & crisis in public policy*, *1*(2), 1-32.

O'Mahony, S., & Karp, R. (2022). From proprietary to collective governance: How do platform participation strategies evolve? *Strategic Management Journal*, *43*(3), 530-562.

Oliver, C. (1991). Strategic responses to institutional processes. *Academy of management review*, *16*(1), 145-179.

Oliver, D. (2020). Travelers are flocking to Airbnb, Vrbo more than hotels during COVID-19 pandemic: but why? *USA Today*.

Orsi, J. (2013). The sharing economy just got real. *Shareable. net*.

Oskam, J., & Boswijk, A. (2016). Airbnb: the future of networked hospitality businesses. *Journal of tourism futures*, *2*(1), 22-42.

Pache, A. C., & Santos, F. M. (2021). When worlds keep on colliding: Exploring the consequences of organizational responses to conflicting institutional demands. *Academy of Management Review*, *46*(4), 640-659.

Palazzo, G., & Scherer, A. G. (2006). Corporate legitimacy as deliberation: A communicative framework. *Journal of business ethics*, *66*, 71-88.

Pan, Y., & Qiu, L. (2018). Is Uber helping or hurting mass transit? An empirical investigation. *An Empirical Investigation (October 1, 2018) .NET Institute Working Paper*, (18-11).

Parguel, B., Lunardo, R., & Benoit-Moreau, F. (2017). Sustainability of the sharing economy in question: When second-hand peer-to-peer platforms stimulate indulgent consumption. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *125*, 48-57.

Parker, G. G., & Van Alstyne, M. W. (2005). Two-sided network effects: A theory of information product design. *Management science*, *51*(10), 1494-1504.

Parker, G., & Van Alstyne, M. (2018). Innovation, Openness, and Platform Control. *MANAGEMENT SCIENCE*, *64*(7), 3015-3032

Parker, G., Van Alstyne, M. W., & Jiang, X. (2016). Platform Ecosystems: How Developers Invert the Firm. *Boston University Questrom School of Business Research Paper*, (2861574).

Parrott, J. A., & Reich, M. (2018). An earnings standard for new york city's app-based drivers. *New York: The New School: Center for New York City Affairs*.

Patriotta, G., Gond, J. P., & Schultz, F. (2011). Maintaining legitimacy: Controversies, orders of worth, and public justifications. *Journal of Management Studies*, *48*(8), 1804-1836.

Pazaitis, A., De Filippi, P., & Kostakis, V. (2017). Blockchain and value systems in the sharing economy: The illustrative case of Backfeed. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *125*, 105-115.

Pearson, C. M., & Clair, J. A. (1998). Reframing crisis management. *Academy of management review*, *23*(1), 59-76.

Perrow, C. (1970). Organizational analysis: A sociological view. *(No Title)*.

Peticca-Harris, A., DeGAMA, N., & Ravishankar, M. N. (2020). Postcapitalist precarious work and those in the 'drivers' seat: Exploring the motivations and lived experiences of Uber drivers in Canada. *Organization*, *27*(1), 36-59.

Pfeffer, J. (1981). Understanding the role of power in decision making. *Power in organizations*, *404*, 423.

Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. (2003). The external control of organizations: a resource dependence perspective (New ed.).

Phung, K., Buchanan, S., Toubiana, M., Ruebottom, T., & Turchick-Hakak, L. (2021). When stigma doesn't transfer: Stigma deflection and occupational stratification in the sharing economy. *Journal of Management Studies*, *58*(4), 1107-1139.

Piscicelli, L., Ludden, G. D., & Cooper, T. (2018). What makes a sustainable business model successful? An empirical comparison of two peer-to-peer goods-sharing platforms. *Journal of cleaner production*, *172*, 4580-4591.

Plantin, J. C., Lagoze, C., Edwards, P. N., & Sandvig, C. (2018). Infrastructure studies meet platform studies in the age of Google and Facebook. *New media & society*, *20*(1), 293-310.

Pollman, E., & Barry, J. M. (2016). Regulatory entrepreneurship. *S. Cal. L. Rev.*, *90*, 383.

Powell, R. G., & Harville, B. (1990). The effects of teacher immediacy and clarity on instructional outcomes: An intercultural assessment. *Communication Education*, *39*(4), 369-379.

Prinsloo, A. S., & Fitchett, J. M. (2023). A nexus between Airbnb and inequalities in water use and access. *Environmental Development*, *47*, 100879.

Pwc, L. L. P. (2015). The sharing economy: Consumer intelligence series. *PwC: London, UK*.

Quattrone, G., Greatorex, A., Quercia, D., Capra, L., & Musolesi, M. (2018). Analyzing and predicting the spatial penetration of Airbnb in US cities. *EPJ Data Science*, *7*(1), 31.

Quinby, D., & Gasdia, M. (2014). Share this! Private accommodation and the rise of the new gen renters. *Report. PhoCusWright*.

Quinn, J. B. (1999). Strategic outsourcing: leveraging knowledge capabilities. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, *40*(4), 9.

Reinhold, S., & Dolnicar, S. (2018). The sharing economy. *Peer to Peer Accommodation Networks: Pushing the boundaries; Goodfellow Publishers: Oxford, UK*, 15.

Reinhold, S., & Dolnicar, S. (2021). The evolution of Airbnb's business model.

Reinhold, S., & Dolnicar, S. (2022). Airbnb Value. In Encyclopedia of Tourism Management and Marketing (pp. 83-86). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Reints, R. (2019). Consumers say they want more sustainable products. Now they have the receipts to prove it. *Fortune, November*, *5*, 2019.

Retamal, M. L., & Dominish, E. (2017). The sharing economy in developing countries.

Ricart, J. E., Snihur, Y., Carrasco-Farré, C., & Berrone, P. (2020). Grassroots resistance to digital platforms and relational business model design to overcome it: A conceptual framework. *Strategy Science*, *5*(3), 271-291.

Richter, A. (2020). Locked-down digital work. *International Journal of Information Management*, *55*, 102157.

Riemer, K., Ciriello, R., Peter, S., & Schlagwein, D. (2020). Digital contact-tracing adoption in the COVID-19 pandemic: IT governance for collective action at the societal level. *European Journal of Information Systems*, *29*(6), 731-745.

Rifkin, J. (2014). *The zero marginal cost society: The internet of things, the collaborative commons, and the eclipse of capitalism*. St. Martin's Press.

Ringel, L., Hiller, P., & Zietsma, C. (2018). Toward permeable boundaries of organizations? In *Toward Permeable Boundaries of Organizations?* (pp. 3-28). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Ritchie, B. W., & Jiang, Y. (2019). A review of research on tourism risk, crisis and disaster management: Launching the annals of tourism research curated collection on tourism risk, crisis and disaster management. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *79*, 102812.

Ritchie, D. (2003). "*Argument is war*"-or is it a game of chess? Multiple meanings in the analysis of implicit metaphors. *Metaphor and Symbol*, *18*(2), 125-146.

Rochet, J. C., & Tirole, J. (2003). Platform competition in two-sided markets. *Journal of the european economic association*, *1*(4), 990-1029.

Roelofsen, M., & Minca, C. (2018). The Superhost. Biopolitics, home and community in the Airbnb dream-world of global hospitality. *Geoforum*, *91*, 170-181.

Rojanakit, P., de Oliveira, R. T., & Dulleck, U. (2022). The sharing economy: A critical review and research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, *139*, 1317-1334.

Romei, V., & Burn-Murdoch, J. (2020). Real-time data show virus hit to global economic activity. *Financial Times*.

Rong, K., & Shi, Y. (2014). *Business ecosystems: Constructs, configurations, and the nurturing process*. Springer.

Rosenblat, A. (2018). *Uberland: How algorithms are rewriting the rules of work*. Univ of California Press.

Rosenblat, A., & Stark, L. (2016). Algorithmic labor and information asymmetries: A case study of Uber's drivers. *International journal of communication*, *10*, 27.

Ruef, M., & Scott, W. R. (1998). A multidimensional model of organizational legitimacy: Hospital survival in changing institutional environments. *Administrative science quarterly*, 877-904.

Runyan, R. C. (2006). Small business in the face of crisis: identifying barriers to recovery from a natural disaster 1. *Journal of Contingencies and crisis management*, *14*(1), 12-26.

Salancik, G. R., & Pfeffer, J. (1978). A social information processing approach to job attitudes and task design. *Administrative science quarterly*, 224-253.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research methods for business students*. Pearson education.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A., (2007). Research methods. *Business Students 4th edition Pearson Education Limited, England*, *6*(3), 1-268.

Schäfer, P., & Braun, N. (2016). Misuse through short-term rentals on the Berlin housing market. *International journal of housing markets and analysis*, *9*(2), 287-311.

Schall, D. (2020). The Future of Short-Term Rentals After the Pandemic and an Airbnb IPO.

Schelling, T. C. (1960). The strategy of conflict
`

Schlagwein, D., Schoder, D., & Spindeldreher, K. (2020). Consolidated, systemic conceptualization, and definition of the "*sharing economy*". *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, *71*(7), 817-838.

Schneckenberg, D., Roth, S., & Velamuri, V. K. (2023). Deparadoxification and value focus in sharing ventures: Concealing paradoxes in strategic decision-making. *Journal of Business Research*, *162*, 113883.

Scholz, T. (2017). *Uberworked and underpaid: How workers are disrupting the digital economy*. John Wiley & Sons.

Scholz, T., & Schneider, N. (2015). The people's Uber: Why the sharing economy must share ownership. *Online verfügbar unter http://www. fastcoexist. com/3051845/the-peoples-uber-why-the-sharing-economy-must-shareownership*.

Scholtz, T., & Schneider, N. (2016). Ours To Hack and Own: The Rise of Platform Cooperatives.

Schor, J. (2016). Debating the sharing economy. *Journal of self-governance and management economics*, *4*(3), 7-22.

Schor, J. B., & Vallas, S. P. (2021). The sharing economy: Rhetoric and reality. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *47*, 369-389.

Schüßler, E., Attwood-Charles, W., Kirchner, S., & Schor, J. B. (Eds.). (2021). *Understanding the Platform Economy: Socio-Economic Dynamics in new Digital Markets*. Oxford University Press.

Schüßler, E., Attwood-Charles, W., Kirchner, S., & Schor, J. B. (2021). Between mutuality, autonomy and domination: rethinking digital platforms as contested relational structures. *Socio-Economic Review*, *19*(4), 1217-1243.

Schüßler, E., Attwood-Charles, W., Kirchner, S., & Schor, J. B. (Eds.). (2021). *Understanding the Platform Economy: Socio-Economic Dynamics in new Digital Markets*. Oxford University Press.

Schwandt, T. A. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: Interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructionism. In *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 189-213). SAGE Publishing.

Schwarz, A. (2012). How publics use social media to respond to blame games in crisis communication: The Love Parade tragedy in Duisburg 2010. *Public Relations Review*, *38*(3), 430-437.

Scott, W. R. (1995). Institutions and organizations. Foundations for organizational science. *London: A Sage Publication Series*.

Scott, W. R., & Meyer, J. W. (1991). The organization of societal sectors. In, The new institutionalism in organizational analysis.(pp. 108-140). WW Powell & P. DiMaggio.

SEC.gov Airbnb 10K
https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000155972021000010/Airbnb-10k.htm

Seelos, C., & Mair, J. (2007). Profitable business models and market creation in the context of deep poverty: A strategic view. *Academy of management perspectives*, *21*(4), 49-63.

Seidel, S., Grisold, T., & Berente, N. (2020). Modular change in platform ecosystems and routine mirroring in organizations.

Sengupta, P., Biswas, B., Kumar, A., Shankar, R., & Gupta, S. (2021). Examining the predictors of successful Airbnb bookings with Hurdle models: Evidence from Europe, Australia, USA and Asia-Pacific cities. *Journal of Business Research*, *137*, 538-554.

Sengupta, T., Narayanamurthy, G., Hota, P. K., Sarker, T., & Dey, S. (2021). Conditional acceptance of digitized business model innovation at the BoP: A stakeholder analysis of eKutir in India. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *170*, 120857.

Shalvi, S., Dana, J., Handgraaf, M. J., & De Dreu, C. K. (2011). Justified ethicality: Observing desired counterfactuals modifies ethical perceptions and behavior. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, *115*(2), 181-190.

Shibata, S. (2020). Gig work and the discourse of autonomy: Fictitious freedom in Japan's digital economy. *New Political Economy*, *25*(4), 535-551.

Siebold, N., Oelrich, S., & Roche, O. P. (2023). "*I Am Your Partner, Am I Not?*" An inquiry into stakeholder inclusion in platform organizations in times of crisis. *Journal of Business Research*, *160*, 113776.

Simon Nobre, F., & Walker, D. S. (2011). An ability-based view of the organization: Strategic-resource and contingency domains. *The Learning Organization*, *18*(4), 333-345.

Slee, T. (2015). What's yours is mine: Against the sharing economy. 2017.

Smith, N. (1979). Toward a theory of gentrification, a back to the city movement by capital, not people. *Journal of the American planning association*, *45*(4), 538-548.

Snihur, Y., Thomas, L. D., & Burgelman, R. A. (2018). An ecosystem-level process model of business model disruption: The disruptor's gambit. *Journal of Management Studies*, *55*(7), 1278-1316.

Snihur, Y., Thomas, L. D., & Burgelman, R. A. (2018). The performative power of words: How business model innovators use framing for strategic advantage. In *Cognition and innovation* (pp. 13-44). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Song, X., Gu, H., Li, Y., & Ye, W. (2023). A systematic review of trust in sharing accommodation: progress and prospects from the multistakeholder perspective. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *35*(4), 1156-1190.

Srinivasan, A., & Venkatraman, N. (2018). Entrepreneurship in digital platforms: A network-centric view. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*, *12*(1), 54-71.

Srnicek, N. (2017). *Platform capitalism*. John Wiley & Sons.

Stabrowski, F. (2017): 339. 'People as businesses': Airbnb and urban micro-entrepreneurialism in New York City. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, *10*(2), 327-347.

Stephany, A. (2015). *The business of sharing: Making it in the new sharing economy*. Springer.

Stokes, M., Baeck, P., & Baker, T. (2017). What next for digital social innovation. *NESTA. Mayo*.

Stone, B. (2017). *The upstarts: How Uber, Airbnb and the killer companies of the new Silicon Valley are changing the world*. Random House.

Storbacka, K., Brodie, R. J., Böhmann, T., Maglio, P. P., & Nenonen, S. (2016). Actor engagement as a microfoundation for value co-creation. *Journal of business research*, *69*(8), 3008-3017.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research*. Sage publications.

Suchman, L. A. (1988). Representing practice in cognitive science. *Human Studies*, *11*(2-3), 305-325.

Suchman, M. C. (1995). Managing legitimacy: Strategic and institutional approaches. *Academy of management review*, *20*(3), 571-610.

Suddaby, R., & Greenwood, R. (2005). Rhetorical strategies of legitimacy. *Administrative science quarterly*, *50*(1), 35-67.

Suddaby, R., Bitektine, A., & Haack, P. (2017). Legitimacy. *Academy of Management Annals*, *11*(1), 451-478.

Sun, X., & Zhang, Q. (2021). Building digital incentives for digital customer orientation in platform ecosystems. *Journal of Business Research*, *137*, 555-566.

Sundararajan, A. (2014). Peer-to-peer businesses and the sharing (collaborative) economy: Overview, economic effects and regulatory issues. *Written testimony for the hearing titled The Power of Connection: Peer to Peer Businesses*, 1-7.

Sundararajan, A. (2017). *The sharing economy: The end of employment and the rise of crowd-based capitalism*. MIT press.

Sundararajan, M., & Talgam-Cohen, I. (2016). Prediction and welfare in ad auctions. *Theory of Computing Systems*, *59*, 664-682.

Sussan, F., & Acs, Z. J. (2017). The digital entrepreneurial ecosystem. *Small Business Economics*, *49*, 55-73.

Swaminathan, A., & Wade, J. B. (2001). Social Movement Theory and the Evolution of New Organizational Forms.: In The Entrepreneurship Dynamic in Industry Evolution. Edited by CB Schoonhoven and E. Romanelli. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Swidler, A. (1986). Culture in action: Symbols and strategies. *American sociological review*, 273-286.

Taeuscher, K., & Rothe, H. (2021). Optimal distinctiveness in platform markets: Leveraging complementors as legitimacy buffers. *Strategic Management Journal*, *42*(2), 435-461.

Teece, D. J. (2010). Business models, business strategy and innovation. *Long range planning*, *43*(2-3), 172-194.

Thomas, L. D., & Ritala, P. (2022). Ecosystem legitimacy emergence: A collective action view. *Journal of Management*, *48*(3), 515-541. http://doi.org/10.1177/0149206320986617

Thompson, C. N., Baumgartner, J., Pichardo, C., Toro, B., Li, L., Arciuolo, R., ... & Fine, A. (2020). COVID-19 Outbreak—New York City, February 29–June 1, 2020. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, *69*(46), 1725.

Thompson, D. C., Barbu, M. G., Beiu, C., Popa, L. G., Mihai, M. M., Berteanu, M., & Popescu, M. N. (2020). The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on long-term care facilities worldwide: an overview on international issues. *BioMed research international*, *2020*

Thornton, P. H., Ocasio, W., & Lounsbury, M. (2012). *The institutional logics perspective: A new approach to culture, structure and process*. OUP Oxford.

Ting, M. G. Y. (2018). *Institutional Transformation through Digital Platforms: Enablers and Inhibitors of Growth in Emerging Ecosystems* (Doctoral dissertation, National University of Singapore (Singapore)).

Tiwana, A. (2015). Evolutionary competition in platform ecosystems. *Information Systems Research*, *26*(2), 266-281.

Tost, L. P. (2011). An integrative model of legitimacy judgments. *Academy of management review*, *36*(4), 686-710.

Turner, P. D., & Pol, L. G. (1995). Beyond patient satisfaction. *Marketing Health Services*, *15*(3), 45.

Tussyadiah, I. P. (2016). Factors of satisfaction and intention to use peer-to-peer accommodation. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *55*, 70-80.

Tussyadiah, I. P., & Pesonen, J. (2016). Impacts of peer-to-peer accommodation use on travel patterns. *Journal of travel Research*, *55*(8), 1022-1040.

Überbacher, F. (2014). Legitimation of new ventures: A review and research programme. *Journal of management studies*, *51*(4), 667-698.

Uzunca, B., Rigtering, J. C., & Ozcan, P. (2018). Sharing and shaping: A cross-country comparison of how sharing economy firms shape their institutional environment to gain legitimacy. *Academy of management discoveries*, *4*(3), 248-272.

Vallas, S., & Schor, J. B. (2020). What do platforms do? Understanding the gig economy. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *46*, 273-294.

Van Alstyne, M. W., Parker, G. G., & Choudary, S. P. (2016). Reasons platforms fail. *Harvard business review*, *31*(6), 2-6.

Van der Haak, B., Parks, M., & Castells, M. (2012). The future of journalism: Networked journalism. *International journal of communication*, *6*, 16.

Van Dijck, J., Poell, T., & De Waal, M. (2018). *The platform society: Public values in a connective world*. Oxford University Press.

Van Doorn, N. (2020). A new institution on the block: On platform urbanism and Airbnb citizenship. *New media & society*, *22*(10), 1808-1826.

Van Doorn, N., & Badger, A. (2020). Platform capitalism's hidden abode: producing data assets in the gig economy. *Antipode*, *52*(5), 1475-1495.

Van Woerkum, C., & Aarts, N. (2008). Staying connected: The communication between organizations and their environment. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, *13*(2), 197-211.

Varma, A., Jukic, N., Pestek, A., Shultz, C. J., & Nestorov, S. (2016). Airbnb: Exciting innovation or passing fad?. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *20*, 228-237.

Vaskelainen, T., & Münzel, K. (2018). The effect of institutional logics on business model development in the sharing economy: The case of German carsharing services. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, *4*(3), 273-293.

Vercher-Chaptal, C. (2021). Note de Synthèse-There Are Platforms as Alternatives. Entreprises plateformes, plateformes collaboratives et communs numériques.

Vercher-Chaptal, C., Alvarado, A. S. A., Aufrère, L., Brabet, J., Broca, S., Smichowski, B. C., ... & Wanner, P. (2021). *There Are Platforms as AlternativeS. Entreprises plateformes, plateformes collaboratives et communs numériques* (Doctoral dissertation, DARES-Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et du Dialogue social; DREES).

Verma, S., Warrier, L., Bolia, B., & Mehta, S. (2022). Past, present, and future of virtual tourism-a literature review. *International Journal of Information Management Data Insights*, *2*(2), 100085.

Vogus, T. J., & Sutcliffe, K. M. (2007, October). Organizational resilience: towards a theory and research agenda. In *2007 IEEE international conference on systems, man and cybernetics* (pp. 3418-3422). IEEE

Wachsmuth, D., & Weisler, A. (2018). Airbnb and the rent gap: Gentrification through the sharing economy. *Environment and planning A: economy and space*, *50*(6), 1147-1170.

Waddock, S. (2004). Creating corporate accountability: Foundational principles to make corporate citizenship real. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *50*, 313-327.

Wagner, T., Lutz, R. J., & Weitz, B. A. (2009). Corporate hypocrisy: Overcoming the threat of inconsistent corporate social responsibility perceptions. *Journal of marketing*, *73*(6), 77-91.

Walsh, R. (2011). Lifestyle and mental health. *American Psychologist*, *66*(7), 579.

Wang, I. M., & Ackerman, J. M. (2019). The infectiousness of crowds: Crowding experiences are amplified by pathogen threats. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *45*(1), 120-132.

Wang, J., & Ritchie, B. W. (2012). Understanding accommodation managers' crisis planning intention: An application of the theory of planned behaviour. *Tourism Management*, *33*(5), 1057-1067.

Wang, Y., Xiang, D., Yang, Z., & Ma, S. S. (2019). Unraveling customer sustainable consumption behaviors in sharing economy: A socio-economic approach based on social exchange theory. *Journal of cleaner production*, *208*, 869-879.

Wareham, J., Fox, P. B., & Cano Giner, J. L. (2014). Technology ecosystem governance. *Organization science*, *25*(4), 1195-1215.

Weber, M. (1978). *Max Weber: selections in translation*. Cambridge University Press.

Weber, M. (2013). *L'éthique protestante et l'esprit du capitalisme*. Presses éléctroniques de France.

West, J. (2003). How open is open enough? Melding proprietary and open source platform strategies. *Research policy*, *32*(7), 1259-1285.

Wilhelms, M. P., Henkel, S., & Falk, T. (2017). To earn is not enough: A means-end analysis to uncover peer-providers' participation motives in peer-to-peer carsharing. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *125*, 38-47.

Wirtz, J., So, K. K. F., Mody, M. A., Liu, S. Q., & Chun, H. H. (2019). Platforms in the peer-to-peer sharing economy. *Journal of Service Management*, *30*(4), 452-483.

Wolverton, B. C. (2020). *How To Grow Fresh Air: 50 Houseplants To Purify Your Home Or Office*. Orion Spring.

Wu, W. L., & Lee, Y. C. (2017). Empowering group leaders encourages knowledge sharing: integrating the social exchange theory and positive organizational behavior perspective. *Journal of knowledge management*, *21*(2), 474-491.

Xiang, Y., Liu, L., & Dolnicar, S. (2021). Airbnb in China–before, during and after COVID-19. First Published in 2021 by The University of Queensland Copyright© The University of Queensland, 2021, 155.

Xiong, J., Lipsitz, O., Nasri, F., Lui, L. M., Gill, H., Phan, L., ... & McIntyre, R. S. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health in the general population: A systematic review. *Journal of affective disorders*, *277*, 55-64.

Xu, Y., Hazée, S., So, K. K. F., Li, K. D., & Malthouse, E. C. (2021). An evolutionary perspective on the dynamics of service platform ecosystems for the sharing economy. *Journal of Business Research*, *135*, 127-136.

Yang, T., & Aldrich, H. E. (2017). "*The liability of newness*" revisited: Theoretical restatement and empirical testing in emergent organizations. *Social science research*, *63*, 36-53.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Vol. 5). sage.

Yin, R. K. (2013). Validity and generalization in future case study evaluations. *Evaluation*, *19*(3), 321-332.

Yrigoy, I. (2019). Rent gap reloaded: Airbnb and the shift from residential to touristic rental housing in the Palma Old Quarter in Mallorca, Spain. *Urban Studies*, *56*(13), 2709-2726.

Zang, S., Wang, H., & Zhou, J. (2022). Impact of eco-embeddedness and strategic flexibility on innovation performance of non-core firms: The perspective of ecological legitimacy. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, *7*(4), 10026

Zanoni, P. (2019). Labor market inclusion through predatory capitalism? The "*sharing economy*," diversity, and the crisis of social reproduction in the Belgian coordinated market economy. In *Work and labor in the digital age* (Vol. 33, pp. 145-164). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Zeng, J., Tavalaei, M. M., & Khan, Z. (2021). Sharing economy platform firms and their resource orchestration approaches. *Journal of Business Research*, *136*, 451-465.

Zenker, S., & Kock, F. (2020). The coronavirus pandemic–A critical discussion of a tourism research agenda. *Tourism management*, *81*, 104164.
Zervas, G., Proserpio, D., & Byers, J. W. (2017). The rise of the sharing economy: Estimating the impact of Airbnb on the hotel industry. *Journal of marketing research*, *54*(5), 687-705.

Zervas, G., Proserpio, D., & Byers, J. W. (2021). A first look at online reputation on Airbnb, where every stay is above average. *Marketing Letters*, *32*, 1-16.

Zhang, L., Yan, Q., & Zhang, L. (2020). A text analytics framework for understanding the relationships among host self-description, trust perception and purchase behavior on Airbnb. *Decision Support Systems*, *133*, 113288.

Zhang, Z., Chen, R. J., Han, L. D., & Yang, L. (2017). Key factors affecting the price of Airbnb listings: A geographically weighted approach. *Sustainability*, *9*(9), 1635.

Zhu, F., & Iansiti, M. (2012). Entry into platform-based markets. *Strategic management journal*, *33*(1), 88-106.

Zhu, J., Cheng, M., & Li, Z. (2021). Peer-to-peer accommodation experience and guest actual recommendations: A novel mixed-method approach. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *38*, 100816.

Zietsma, C., & Toubiana, M. (2018). The valuable, the constitutive, and the energetic: Exploring the impact and importance of studying emotions and institutions. *Organization Studies*, *39*(4), 427-443.

Zimmerman, M. A., & Zeitz, G. J. (2002). Beyond survival: Achieving new venture growth by building legitimacy. *Academy of management review*, *27*(3), 414-431.

Zittrain, J. (2008). *The future of the internet--and how to stop it*. Yale University Press.

Zuboff, S. (2019, January). Surveillance capitalism and the challenge of collective action. In *New labor forum* (Vol. 28, No. 1, pp. 10-29). Sage CA: Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.

Zvolska, L., Palgan, Y. V., & Mont, O. (2019). How do sharing organizations create and disrupt institutions? Towards a framework for institutional work in the sharing economy. *Journal of cleaner production*, *219*, 66

RESUME EN FRANÇAIS

Abstract

Les plateformes digitales (DPs) de l'économie collaborative (EC) ont transformé les institutions et les organisations établies dans de nombreux secteurs d'activité. Des études antérieures ont souligné le rôle central de la légitimité lorsqu'une DP entre sur un marché en tant qu'innovation de rupture remodelant les relations entre le marché, les régulateurs et la société dans son ensemble. Très peu d'études ont étudié la construction et le maintien de la légitimité en cas de crise au milieu d'acteurs multiples. En conséquence, notre thèse explore comment les DPs de l'EC orchestrent les relations entre plusieurs acteurs pour construire et maintenir leur légitimité en temps de crise. En nous concentrant sur une étude de cas unique – Airbnb à New York – nous analysons comment une DP peut gérer de multiples relations en développant des stratégies relationnelles – que nous avons qualifiées d'identité, de professionnalisation et de sélection – en combinaison avec des mécanismes de travail institutionnel pour construire et maintenir sa légitimité cognitive et sociopolitique en temps de crise. Nous ouvrons la boîte noire de cette « interrelation » en soulignant le nécessaire équilibre à trouver au fil du temps entre ces deux types de légitimité. Nous décrivons les forces sociales en présence et les conséquences des stratégies d'une DP sur son écosystème. En effet, bien que la crise puisse être considérée comme un « accélérateur » de légitimité pour la DP, elle révèle également les tensions, les problèmes éthiques et les paradoxes des DPs de l'EC.

INTRODUCTION

Contexte

« Juillet 2023, des centaines de chauffeurs de covoiturage Uber et Lyft ont manifesté devant la State House du Massachusetts pour défendre leurs droits syndicaux lors d'une conférence de presse. Deux coalitions se sont formées, chacune prétendant représenter la voix des chauffeurs de covoiturage. Uber et Lyft ont dépensé 43 millions de dollars en campagne pour faire face à des initiatives électorales qui permettraient aux chauffeurs de covoiturage de se syndiquer. Uber ou Lyft ont non seulement financé des campagnes, mais également soutenu les chauffeurs antisyndicaux. En échange de prendre la parole lors des rassemblements, ils recevaient des certificats d'essence et des déjeuners gratuits. »

Cet exemple démontre que les interactions entre acteurs locaux et plateformes digitales (DPs) pionnières de l'économie collaborative (EC) sont soumises à de nouvelles natures de tensions et des enjeux inattendus. A travers cet exemple, nous relevons l'importance d'étudier le processus de légitimation des DPs de l'EC qui ne se limite pas à un enjeu dès la première année lors de l'entrée sur un marché (i.e. *"newest value proposition*" ou *"liability of newest*" (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994) ; mais qui s'inscrit bien dans un processus dynamique impliquant des acteurs hétérogènes en évolution.

Après avoir pénétré les marchés existants, les DPs sont donc toujours confrontées à des enjeux de légitimité et, par conséquent, déploient des stratégies et mécanismes institutionnels visant à maintenir leur légitimité dans des contextes locaux évolutifs.

Les DPs font partie de notre quotidien. Les DPs sont entrées sur des secteurs hautement concurrentiels et ont su créer des nouvelles normes. C'est Airbnb qui est le partenaire officiel des JO depuis Tokyo et a l'exclusivité pour la catégorie hébergement touristique éliminant Marriott. Or, ces plateformes évoluent dans un environnement caractérisé par des tensions relayées par les médias sur les sujets réglementaires ou de sécurité par exemple. Certaines plateformes connaissent des croissances exponentielles malgré les controverses et les tensions, d'autres ne survivent pas.

Les DPs de l'EC ont transformé les secteurs et profondément déstabilisé et impacté les institutions et les acteurs traditionnels, tout en captivant un nouveau type d'entrepreneurs portés par la technologie avec de faibles coûts d'entrée de marché (Sundararajan, 2016, Van Alstyne et Choudary, 2016). Ce contexte nous interpelle et nous interroge **sur l'institutionnalisation des DPs de l'EC**.

En effet, les DPs de l'EC sont confrontées à de nombreux défis traités dans plusieurs études (i.e., chapitre 1), tels que (1) le problème de «chicken and egg» (c'est-à-dire l'équilibre entre les effets de réseau directs et indirects) (Caillaud et Jullien, 2003), (2) les « effets de réseaux locaux » complexifiant le déploiement des opérations avec des ajustements critiques nécessaires au contexte local (Sundararajan, 2016).

L'EC : Un champ contesté (chapitre 1)

Nous soulignons les controverses de l'EC et les discussions actuelles sur ses externalités en transposant les dimensions de la RSE aux promesses économiques, sociétales, environnementales de l'EC. Qualifiée de concept ombrelle, l'EC réunit une mosaïque de business models conceptualisée par Acquier et al., (2017). Notre recherche se concentre sur le modèle des plateformes d'accès qui se définissent comme des marketplaces permettant l'accès temporaire à des biens sous-utilisés alimentés par des mécanismes de confiance. La proposition de valeur est la mise en relation avec les acteurs contributeurs vitaux à son développement. Par exemple, Blablacar met en relation des propriétaires de véhicules proposant des places inoccupées à des passagers en quête d'une solution de transport prônant une promesse environnementale.

Inspiré de la théorie des parties prenantes, les DPs de l'EC se doivent de créer de la valeur selon différentes manières pour différents groupes d'acteurs ou parties prenantes. Or, la littérature a soit traité de la relation triadique entre la DP et ses contributeurs clés soit entre la DP et les autres acteurs. Par exemple, les travaux de Schussler et al., (2021) nous éclairent en identifiant trois forces sociales relationnelles à multiples facettes (e.g., la domination) prônant l'autonomie et valorisant la réciprocité mutuelle entre ses utilisateurs (i.e., fournisseurs et clients). Mais aussi plus récemment, avec Carrasco Farré et al., (2022) qui a cherché à représenter une vision plus holistique caractérisant le processus évolutif d'ajustement entre les acteurs comme les régulateurs au fil de la progression de la DP. Cependant, à notre connaissance, la relation entre les acteurs contributeurs

orchestrés par la DP et les autres acteurs a été peu étudié. Naviguer au sein d'acteurs multiples dans un champ contesté pose le sujet de la légitimité de la DP.

La légitimité en central (chapitre 2)

Par conséquent, l'architecture de notre travail doctoral traite de la légitimité en partant des travaux fondateurs de Suchman. Il définit la légitimité comme *une « perception ou hypothèse selon laquelle les actions d'une entité sont attendues, appropriée au sein d'un système de normes, de valeurs, de croyances, et de définitions socialement construits* » (Suchman, 1995).

Les chercheurs considèrent la légitimité comme un construit relationnel qui révèle le dialogue entre la société et l'organisation. En effet, Suchman (1995) a souligné le rôle crucial de la légitimité au succès d'une organisation dans le sens où elle attire des parties prenantes, favorisant l'apport de ressources et un soutien d'autres parties prenantes. Les chercheurs ont démontré qu'une gestion appropriée des institutions cognitives, normatives et régulatrices, telles que les opinions publiques et les réglementations, est aussi essentielle à la performance organisationnelle que la performance business du marché (Marquis et Qian, 2014 ; Seelos et Mair, 2007). Selon Suchman (1995), un des facteurs de réussite d'une organisation est la légitimité sur la dimension stratégique (gestion des ressources) et la dimension institutionnelle (alignement avec les normes et valeurs).

Or, les DPs de l'EC, en quête de légitimité, sont « *remplis de conflits, de tensions et de contestations* » (Thornton et al., 2012). Des études antérieures ont souligné le rôle central de la légitimité lorsqu'une DP est entrée sur un marché en tant qu'une innovation de rupture qui remodèle les relations entre le marché, les régulateurs et la société dans son ensemble (Garud et al., 2022).

Notre travail cherchera à analyser les deux types principaux de légitimité étudié selon Aldrich and Fiol (1994) : la légitimité cognitive et socio-politique. La légitimité cognitive se définit comme *« la connaissance nécessaire d'une nouvelle activité pour réussir dans un secteur* ». La légitimité socio-politique fait référence à « *l'acceptation de ces activités par les autorités politiques et les normes culturelles* ». Ils ont souligné que pour qu'une nouvelle industrie puisse s'établir avec succès, elle doit acquérir à la fois les deux formes de légitimité. Selon Garud et al., (2022), pour la légitimité cognitive, elle peut être obtenue en navigant habilement grâce à des stratégies de marché et non marché. Selon Lawrence and Suddaby (2006), pour la légitimité socio-politique, on mobilise

les mécanismes de travail institutionnel. Un constat : Les études passées ont étudié les enjeux de légitimation des DPs en entrant sur des marchés et faisant face à l'effet de nouveauté. Or, la légitimité ne se limite pas à des enjeux dès la première année. Que deviennent les enjeux de légitimation après l'entrée réussi sur des marchés et que se passe t'il en période de crise ?
Grâce à ce travail doctoral, nous contribuons à la discussion sur la légitimité des DPs de l'EC, en opposant attractivité et conformité aux règles sociales, dans un contexte de déclarations discursives sociétales et économiques des contributeurs de la DP et autres acteurs.

Cadre théorique (chapitre 2)

La légitimité est apparue comme un construit crucial mais souvent complexe en management. Dans le cas des DPs, des études antérieures ont souligné le rôle central de la légitimité lorsque la DP est entrée sur un marché en tant qu'innovation de rupture remodelant la relation entre le marché, les régulateurs et la société au sens large.

Comme souligné précédemment, les travaux d'Aldrich et Fiol (1994) représentent une source d'inspiration majeure pour des recherches empiriques sur la légitimité sur les industries émergentes. Les entrepreneurs comme ceux de l'EC exposés également à la "liabilities of newness" ou (effets de nouveauté) sont naturellement confrontés à des enjeux de légitimité. *« Parmi les nombreux problèmes auxquels font face les entrepreneurs innovants, le manque de légitimité est particulièrement critique. En effet, la compréhension de la nature de ses nouveaux business models et leur conformité aux règles et normes institutionnels sont questionnés »*.
Selon Aldrich et Fiol (1994), les entreprises basées sur les nouveaux modèles d'affaires se heurtent à un manque de reconnaissance, i.e. légitimité cognitive et donc font face à des problèmes pour attirer des ressources. Garud et al. (2022) ont examiné les défis auxquels les DPs sont confrontées lors de leurs entrées sur les marchés en étudiant leurs stratégies de marché et de non marché. Ils ont étudié comment Uber a réussi à accroître sa légitimité sociopolitique en convainquant les régulateurs des avantages sociétaux de la plateforme Uber. Dans cette optique, les auteurs définissent les activités d'Uber comme « regulatory entrepreneuship» (Pollman et Barry, 2016) visant à ce que son business plan cherche à influencer et à modifier les réglementations existantes, par exemple en exigeant que les utilisateurs fassent pression sur les décideurs politiques au nom de la DP. En transposant le concept de « liminalité » comme un « entre-deux » ou « état de transition

désordonné et peu clair » (Turner, 1995), Garud et al., (2022) font référence au « mouvement liminal » comme le déploiement d'efforts par la DP pour s'établir entre un cadre réglementaire en tirant parti des acteurs du marché, des groupes sociaux mobilisés et des interactions avec les régulateurs, i.e., une « fenêtre d'opportunité » pour la DP. Leur étude démontre que l'augmentation de la visibilité d'Uber (i.e., la légitimité cognitive), renforce les tensions avec les régulateurs et par conséquent accentue le déficit en légitimité sociopolitique alors que la DP s'établit sur le marché en cherchant à convaincre les régulateurs des externalités positives d'Uber. Le concept de mouvement liminal proposé par Garud et al. (2022) fait référence aux « *efforts de l'entreprise pour s'établir entre catégories réglementaires existantes dans une fenêtre d'opportunité qui évolue de manière dynamique en raison de ses interactions avec les acteurs du marché, les régulateurs et d'autres groupes sociaux intéressés* ». Garud et al., (2022) soutiennent que le premier mouvement permet aux premiers entrants de créer des relations exclusives avec les prestataires de services, structurer les institutions et les marchés (Schilling, 2020) malgré les ressources nécessaires pour accéder ou créer le marché. Le mouvement liminal conceptualise les initiatives (i.e., les stratégies de marché et non-marché) par la DP pour s'établir *« entre les catégories réglementaires et entre événements critiques »*. Leurs conclusions ont souligné que les stratégies de non-marché sont caractérisées par des stratégies d'évitement et de défiance permettant des effets de réseau facilitant ensuite « les effets positifs sur la société dans son ensemble ».

Questions de recherche (chapitre 3)

Parce que les DPs en SE sont confrontées à des défis de marché stratégiques et des pressions institutionnelles, nous avons adopté une double perspective, stratégique et institutionnelle. Nous avons examiné comment la légitimité assume le rôle de ressource « manipulable » et le rôle d'un « un système de croyance acquis » (Swidler, 1986). De plus, nous avons répondu à l'appel de Dumay et al. (2015) se référant à son article : « *les travaux antérieurs se concentrent sur, soit les bras institutionnels ou stratégiques de la théorie de la légitimité, mais considère rarement relations entre les deux*. »

Par ailleurs, très peu d'études ont étudié la construction et le maintien de la légitimité dans le cas de crise où la légitimité représente, encore plus, une ressource critique pour la plateforme (Breitsohl,2008). Les crises peuvent créer des défis managériaux déclenchés par des événements néfastes et des conflits politiques résultant des tentatives délibérées des acteurs de discréditer

l'ordre systémique existant. Dans le même temps, pendant les crises, les organisations peuvent subir une perte de légitimité si leurs actions ne sont pas prises en compte ou ne se conforme plus à ce qui est considéré comme un comportement organisationnel approprié (Breitsohl, 2008 ; Massey, 2001). Notre projet a tenté d'élargir notre compréhension du processus de légitimation des DPs dans l'EC après leur entrée sur le marché, tout en faisant face à une crise.

Pour combler ce manque de connaissances, notre travail a exploré « comment les DPs de l' EC gèrent les relations de plusieurs acteurs pour construire et maintenir leurs légitimités en temps de crise ? Cette question décrit trois constructions fondamentales : (1) le processus de légitimation comme un enjeu majeur pour les DPs de l'EC, (2) la perspective multi-acteurs et le rôle central de tous les acteurs impactant la légitimité cognitive et sociopolitique d'une DP, (3) la crise comme choc inattendu influençant les relations, les interactions entre tous les groupes d'acteurs, entraînant un changement dans le processus de légitimation.

Premièrement, nous étudions et avons expliqué la dynamique des relations entre une DP et ses contributeurs clés pour construire et maintenir **sa légitimité cognitive** avant et pendant une crise. Nous avons répondu ainsi à notre première sous-question : « Quelles sont les stratégies relationnelles mises en place par les DP envers ses contributeurs pour construire/maintenir sa légitimité cognitive ?

Ensuite, nous étudions le travail institutionnel mené par la plateforme pour soutenir **sa légitimité sociopolitique** dans le au milieu de plusieurs acteurs. Nous avons répondu ainsi à notre deuxième sous-question : « Quels sont les mécanismes de travail institutionnels utilisés par le PDD pour naviguer dans les stratégies multi-acteurs afin de construire/maintenir sa légitimité sociopolitique ? ». Nous avons ensuite examiné l'interaction entre les deux.

Méthodologie (chapitre 3)

Compte tenu de la complexité de notre sujet de recherche, ainsi que du caractère unique et de la nouveauté du phénomène étudié, nous avons adopté une méthodologie qualitative (Gehman et al., 2018) ancrée sur une étude de cas unique (Eisenhardt, 1989 ; Yin, 2017). L'étude approfondit un phénomène ou un sujet de recherche dans des contextes réels (Yin, 2009). Ici, l'objectif de cette recherche était de contribuer à une compréhension plus nuancée du processus de légitimation des

écosystèmes basés sur les DPs de l'EC pendant une crise. Nous avons choisi un cas unique car il permet une exploration approfondie et contextuelle. Les DPs ont des caractéristiques communes mais leurs manifestations peuvent être différentes d'un contexte local à l'autre. Le nombre d'acteurs et la complexité des relations au sein de l'ecosystème ne sont pas les mêmes d'une ville à l'autre. Il est donc nécessaire d'aller en profondeur et décrire les mécanismes à l'œuvre sur un contexte.

Une approche interprétative a été adoptée cherchant à valoriser le caractère émergent de la recherche par un processus couplant l'inductif et l'abductive.

Nous étudions la plateforme Airbnb car elle fait référence à un cas critique et représente notamment l'un des modèles les plus aboutis en EC (Fagerström et al., 2017), très contestée et pionnière de l'EC marquée par une croissance exponentielle dans des contextes locaux hautement institutionnalisés, avec un impact majeur sur l'activité traditionnelle du secteur hôtelier (Zhu et al., 2017).

La ville choisie est celle de New-York car destination touristique, puissance économique et financière mondiale, culture résiliente (e.g., September 11, et Sandy), épicentre du virus COVID-19. Le processus émergent de ce travail doctoral a permis d'identifier les acteurs internes et externes de l'écosystème de la DP et examiner leurs rôles et leurs relations.

Sur le plan méthodologique, nous avons collecté des données uniques auxquelles nous avons essayé de donner du sens à travers une approche narrative et analytique. Nous pensons que notre ancrage dans le terrain était un excellent moyen de capter les émotions, les perceptions et les tensions dans un contexte complexe.

Nos données primaires sont exclusives avec deux séries d'interviews enregistrés dans leur totalité afin de préserver les mots exacts des répondants.

La première série d'entretiens a été menée entre mai et septembre 2019 à New York, en présentiel, ce qui nous a permis de mieux comprendre les spécificités de NYC. Nous avons collecté des informations sur la structure et la fonction de l'écosystème d'Airbnb NYC, y compris les principales catégories de parties prenantes, leurs caractéristiques, leurs relations avec Airbnb en dessinant des schémas des acteurs et les liens.

La deuxième série d'interviews s'est tenue entre mars et août 2020 en distanciel, en utilisant les applications Microsoft Teams en raison du confinement, en sélectionnant les personnes interrogées disponibles parmi nos répondants 2019. Au total, les interviews ont représenté 54h00 d'entretiens. Les données secondaires sont robustes et ont été collecté de 2018 jusqu'à décembre 2020, représentant plus de 1 500 pages de documentation ou d'enregistrements de notes, rapports, vidéos, publications sur les réseaux sociaux, 45h00 en distanciel de participation aux réunions Inner Circle via Zoom dès 2018, mobilisation de base de données comme Bloomberg et Factset, articles de presse et communiqués de presse pertinents concernant l'écosystème entrepreneurial d'Airbnb à New York et l'impact de la pandémie sur sa structure et son fonctionnement. Nous avons examiné comment Airbnb a développé la location à court terme en une nouvelle source de revenus pour les propriétaires immobiliers, qui comprend à la fois les revenus commerciaux d'entités professionnelles et exploitations familiales.

Nous avons conduit une démarche processuelle à partir de ces données favorisant une compréhension riche et contextuelle. Notre recherche est marquée par la crise du COVID-19 et pose une temporalité répartie en trois périodes, avant (janvier 2018 à février 2020), pendant (de mars au 31 juillet 2020), après COVID (du 01 août au 31 décembre 2020).

Le traitement des données (chapitre 3)

Nous avons d'abord effectué une première lecture de la retranscription des entretiens pour réaliser un codage thématique initial. Ensuite, nous avons dégagé les premières catégories de codes en analysant plus précisément les transcriptions. Sont apparus des thèmes spécifiques en rapport avec les stratégies relationnelles. Tandis que pour les mécanismes de travail, nous avons classifié selon les trois catégories de travail institutionnel : travail politique ou régulatoire, puis normatif et enfin le socio-cognitif. De plus, dans une approche interprétative, cela nous semblait important d'avoir une lecture évaluative et perceptuelle de ce que les acteurs disaient. De plus, ce travail s'inscrit dans une analyse favorisant les ressentis, les émotions et l'usage de la photographie. Nos données ne se limitaient pas à des contenus de verbatims. Des notes d'observation ont été tenues riches avant et en période de crise, voir surtout en période de crise.

Résultats (chapitres 4 et 5)

En nous concentrant sur une seule étude de cas – Airbnb à New York – nous avons répondu à notre question de recherche : « Comment les DPs de l'EC orchestrent les relations entre plusieurs acteurs pour construire et maintenir leur légitimité en temps de crise? »
Premièrement, nous étudions et expliquons la dynamique des relations entre une plateforme et ses contributeurs clés pour construire et maintenir sa légitimité cognitive en temps normal et pendant une crise. Nous répondons ainsi à notre première sous-question : « Quelles sont les stratégies relationnelles mises en place par les DP envers ses contributeurs pour construire/maintenir sa légitimité cognitive ? »
Ensuite, nous avons étudié le travail institutionnel mené par la DP pour construire et soutenir sa légitimité sociopolitique. Nous répondons ainsi à notre deuxième sous-question : « Quels sont les mécanismes de travail institutionnels utilisés par la DP pour naviguer dans les stratégies multi-acteurs afin de construire et maintenir sa légitimité socio-politique ? »

Dans un premier temps, nous avons analysé et décrit comment une DP a orchestré ses relations à multiples facettes avant et pendant une crise en développant des stratégies relationnelles auprès de ses acteurs contributeurs afin de développer sa légitimité cognitive i.e., perspective stratégique. Dans un second temps, nous avons décrit les mécanismes institutionnels utilisés par la DP et les acteurs afin de développer et maintenir des institutions et sa légitimité socio-politique, i.e., perspective institutionnelle.

Perspective stratégique (chapitre 4)

Le chapitre 4 répond à la question : Quelles sont les stratégies relationnelles mises en place par la DP envers ses contributeurs pour créer/maintenir sa légitimité cognitive ? Ainsi, il propose d'identifier les stratégies relationnelles orchestrées par le DP.

Les acteurs en présence

Nos résultats ont permis d'identifier les acteurs de l'écosystème de la plateforme Airbnb avec une mise en évidence de la relation triadique de la DP avec ses contributeurs clés, utilisateurs de la plateforme (i.e., les fournisseurs dits « hosts » et les clients dits « guests »), mais aussi le développement d'un ecosystème de contributeurs et surtout les investisseurs. Nos travaux identifient trois stratégies relationnelles – identité, professionnalisation et sélection.

Les stratégies relationnelles

En effet, nos travaux identifient trois stratégies relationnelles – identité, professionnalisation et sélection – mises en œuvre par la DP pour renforcer sa légitimité au sein de son écosystème local. Nous identifions et décrivons les arbitrages et choix opportunistes opérés par Airbnb pour gérer ses différents groupes de parties prenantes, afin de maintenir sa légitimité pendant la crise du COVID-19.

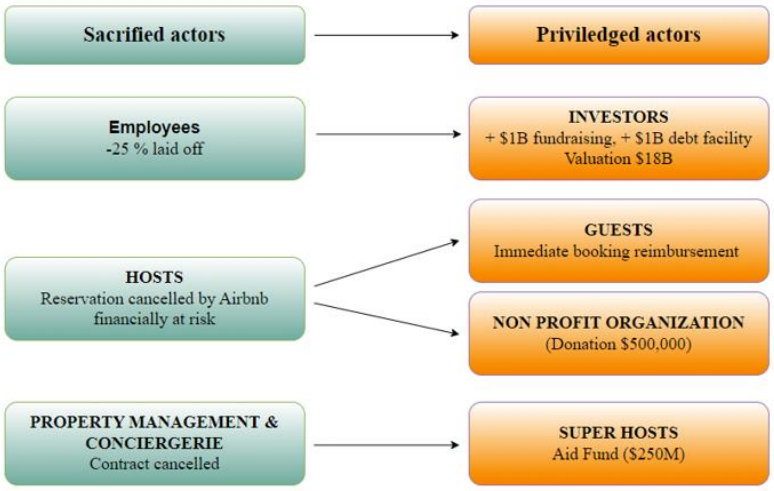
Avant la crise, Airbnb a réussi à projeter l'idéal d'un tourisme authentique en milieu urbain, en construisant son sentiment d'appartenance fondamental en « vivant comme un local ».

Cette **identité** projetée positionne les utilisateurs comme des touristes non conventionnels et augmente l'attractivité de la DP (Garay-Tamajon et Morales Perez, 2022). Nos résultats ont mis en évidence qu'Airbnb a déployé une stratégie relationnelle identitaire renforçant la marque et une expérience numérique technologique digitale fiable. **La professionnalisation** des hôtes convertissant des unités résidentielles a montré au secteur hôtelier qu'Airbnb a réussi à fournir des solutions d'hébergement flexibles à des hôtes non amateurs. D'ailleurs, dès 2016, les types d'annonces sur la plateforme étaient passés du partage de logement traditionnel à des offres professionnelles avec des boutiques-hôtels, des chambres d'hôtes, des condos, des maisons de vacances et des villas de luxe sous le label « Beyond by Airbnb ». Pendant ce temps, un écosystème de start-ups et de contributeurs tiers a formé les hôtes et insufflé un esprit communautaire.

De plus, notre travail illustre le rôle central des investisseurs qui ont financé de façon continue la DP et ont permis à Airbnb d'atteindre le statut de décacorne en six ans. La stratégie de **sélection** a émergé à travers la catégorisation des hôtes (par exemple, les Superhosts), l'adoption de mécanismes (par exemple, la tarification) et l'entrepreneuriat d'un état d'esprit d'élite stimulant la cocréation et la concurrence interne.

En mars 2020, quand la crise COVID-19 est pandémique provoquant l'effondrement de l'économie et des politiques de confinements sans réponse vaccinale, Airbnb a réussi à séduire les investisseurs permettant à la DP de survivre grâce à un apport de 2 milliards de dollars en avril 2020. Les stratégies relationnelles sont alors orchestrées par la DP et les investisseurs. Airbnb a appliqué une stratégie de **sélection** favorisant les clients en appliquant une politique de remboursement intégral et en mettant en péril la situation financière des hôtes. En prenant le parti des clients concernant l'annulation des réservations, Airbnb s'est comporté comme un acteur traditionnel en privilégiant la satisfaction client et en provoquant une vague de protestations de la part des hôtes. Airbnb a lancé une stratégie **identitaire** rappelant le sentiment d'appartenance et de solidarité. Sous la pression créée par les restrictions de voyage et sanitaires, la DP a promu l'introduction de nouvelles directives en matière de protocole de nettoyage et de sécurité tandis que la stratégie de **professionnalisation** visait à adapter les hôtes aux nouvelles tendances et opportunités du marché (i.e., les séjours de longue durée, les déplacements locaux, les maisons entières et le modèle de co-hébergement). La culture digitale de la DP a permis aux forums communautaires en ligne d'aider les hôtes sur les comptes Facebook et via les groupes Inner Circle.

La crise a révélé que de nombreux hôtes étaient financièrement dépendants du bon fonctionnement d'Airbnb, renforçant ainsi le rôle de domination de la DP. Nos résultats indiquent une performance plutôt faible de ses stratégies identitaires, dans la mesure où les demandes de solidarité formulées par Airbnb ont eu des effets très limités, tandis que de nombreux hôtes insatisfaits sont restés en raison de dépendances existantes (i.e., réputation des hosts basée sur les avis acquis) et du manque de meilleures alternatives de marché. Par ailleurs, en mai 2020, 25 % des employés d'Airbnb ont été licenciés. Nos données nous ont permis de catégoriser les acteurs en deux groupes : les sacrifiés et les privilégiés.



Les contributeurs vitaux nécessaires au développement de la DP, les employés et les hosts ainsi que les start-ups ou TPE comme les conciergeries ont été sacrifié.

Après le collapse due au COVID-19, nos données ont révélé une forte importance accordée au soutien de la communauté associé à la préparation de l'introduction en bourse, démontrant de nouveaux modes de gouvernance inclusifs tels qu'un conseil consultatif mondial des hôtes et une dotation pour offrir des options d'achat d'actions aux hôtes.

Les trois stratégies alimentent le processus d'institutionnalisation de la DP pour sa préparation à son introduction en bourse couronnée de succès en décembre 2020. La stratégie d'**identité** a agi comme un outil fondamental pour transmettre le « récit de retour aux racines » aux investisseurs potentiels évaluant la DP. La stratégie de **professionnalisation** qui a fait évoluer la mentalité des hôtes pour s'ajuster et s'adapter aux circonstances du marché et aux tendances des clients en temps réel (par exemple, les séjours de longue durée) grâce à une collecte de données robuste a été marquée par un contrôle normatif de la DP pour institutionnaliser Airbnb à travers de nouvelles politiques (par exemple, interdiction des fêtes, règles antidiscriminatoires). Le rôle difficile des groupes Inner Circle était de promouvoir la relation positive entre les pratiques de gestion et les performances des hôtes sur la voie de l'introduction en bourse. La stratégie de **sélection** englobait les stratégies d'identité et de professionnalisation mettant en œuvre un processus de sélection des hôtes non limité à la qualité du service mais, surtout, axé sur la conformité alignée sur les exigences de l'entrée en bourse (par exemple, obéir aux règles, fournir des données à la ville de New York,

adhérer aux nouvelles politiques inclusives) et la flexibilité (c'est-à-dire que les hôtes entrepreneurs avec une logique de profit ont fait preuve de plus d'adaptabilité).
Nous concluons que la légitimité cognitive a été renforcée grâce aux trois stratégies relationnelles soulignant les capacités adaptatives et opportunistes de la DP.

Pour conclure la perspective stratégique, nous avons identifié trois stratégies relationnelles à savoir l'identité, la professionnalisation et la sélection mises en œuvre par la DP pour augmenter ses ressources et renforcer sa légitimité cognitive. Nous avons démontré que la recherche de légitimité aux yeux de ses principaux contributeurs a eu des effets migratoires sur les autres acteurs au détriment des préoccupations sociales. Nous soutenons que l'interaction des trois stratégies relationnelles – identité, professionnalisation et sélection – a contribué à la légitimité cognitive de la DP. **Les investisseurs** sont devenus les principaux contributeurs au financement continu de la DP, lui permettant d'atteindre le statut de décacorne en six ans, de créer de nouvelles normes et de maintenir les institutions avant, pendant et après l'effondrement économique de la crise COVID-19.

Perspective institutionnelle (chapitre 5)

Le chapitre 5 répond à la question « Quels sont les mécanismes de travail institutionnel utilisés par la DP et ses acteurs pour créer/maintenir sa légitimité sociopolitique ? Il propose d'examiner les mécanismes de travail institutionnel déployés par les acteurs pour créer, maintenir ou perturber les institutions et leur effet sur la légitimité sociopolitique. Nous avons présenté le contexte de notre étude de cas, ancré à New York, l'un des contextes locaux les plus institutionnalisés avec des acteurs puissants et l'une des réglementations les plus strictes en matière d'immobilier et d'hébergement touristique. Nous avons appliqué le cadre de travail institutionnel de Lawrence et Suddaby (2006), reprenant les travaux de Zwolska et al., (2019) sur Airbnb pour aborder les mécanismes de travail politiques, normatifs et socio-cognitifs.

En testant le cadre théorique du travail institutionnel, nous avons décrit les « actions intentionnelles » de la DP et présenté la multitude de mécanismes engagés en réponse aux environnements institutionnels.

Tout d'abord, il est intéressant de noter que le travail institutionnel est caractérisé par une coalition d'acteurs de marché tels que les acteurs traditionnels de l'hébergement touristique, association de l'hôtellerie et le secteur immobilier (i.e., REBNY), mais aussi d'autres acteurs, tels que les syndicats et les groupes de défense des locataires ainsi que les institutions politiques et autorités régulatrices. Nos résultats ont mis en exergue la coalition d'acteurs hétérogènes réunis sous le nom de « Groupe de Travail des Hotels Illégaux ». Cette coalition d'acteurs hétérogènes rares réunit les hôtels et promoteurs immobiliers avec les syndicats par exemple.

Notre analyse détaillée démontre que la période **précédant la crise** représente une bataille entre deux blocs i.e., les contributeurs à la DP et les opposants à la DP. Cette période, la plus intense **du travail politique**, caractérisée par un degré élevé de tensions exogènes et, en particulier, par des activités litigieuses et de lobbying. Nous mettons en évidence le *« grassroot lobbying »* comme une technique donnant le pouvoir aux individus pour influencer collectivement au nom de la DP et faire pression. Par exemple, les hosts ont été formés par Airbnb pour rédiger des tracts, collecter des voix et participer à des auditions.

Contrairement aux attentes, cette étude n'a pas trouvé de différence significative entre le travail politique d'Airbnb et le travail politique engagé par les acteurs critiques à l'égard d'Airbnb. Ainsi, **les litiges et le lobbying** représentaient les activités centrales de la DP et des autres acteurs. Par exemple, les locataires et les syndicats, les soi-disant « pauvres », se sont livrés à d'importantes activités de lobbying impliquant une augmentation à la fois des compétences et du budget. Nous avons soutenu également qu'Airbnb a imité les pratiques des entreprises historiques pour acquérir une légitimité sociopolitique. Par exemple, Airbnb et OSE recrutaient les personnes les plus talentueuses, possédant une solide expérience en matière de litiges et un réseau politique pour gérer leurs procès.

Pendant la crise, nos données ont exacerbé le choc brutal et soudain de la crise COVID-19, réorientant les priorités de tous les acteurs vers leurs stratégies de survie, révélant l'effondrement des tensions exogènes entre la DP et son environnement, permettant d'engager une négociation et un accord historique avec la mairie de NYC. Le collectif et les coalitions cessent. Cependant, nos résultats ont révélé que les tensions deviennent endogènes (Airbnb et les hosts, les hôtels avec leurs

salariés). Nos données ont révélé **le contexte réglementaire déséquilibré** vécu par les acteurs de l'hôtellerie et de l'hébergement pendant et après le COVID-19. Alors que les opérations d'Airbnb n'étaient pas tenues de se conformer aux règles ou aux ordonnances de l'État, l'industrie hôtelière encastrée dans le contexte local, obéissait aux règles, négociait avec les syndicats et mettait en place des conditions de sécurité qui ont entraîné une augmentation des coûts opérationnels et mis leurs activités en danger. Le respect d'un décret, comme l'imposition d'une quarantaine de 14 jours à l'arrivée des voyageurs dans l'État de New York en août 2020, est un exemple significatif révélant l'autorité et le pouvoir coercitif des régulateurs qui contraignaient l'industrie hôtelière mais pas Airbnb.

Après la crise, les résultats ont souligné que la DP a bien manœuvré en travail politique pour s'institutionnaliser et préparer son entrée en bourse en optimisant ses process internes. Cette période exacerbe le décalage avec le travail normatif entre les acteurs traditionnels encastrés dans des normes freinant la réouverture des activités. L'historique succès de l'entrée en bourse à Wall Street d'Airbnb soulignait son institutionnalisation réussie et l'augmentation de sa légitimité sociopolitique. En décembre 2020, l'action ABNB est née avec une augmentation de plus de 113% à la clôture du premier jour quand la cloche sonnait à Wall Street.

Co-évolution du rôle des acteurs

Nous avons mis en évidence le rôle des acteurs dans le processus de légitimation (tableau 34). Certains étaient orchestrateurs, contributeurs, opposants, influenceurs, régulateurs ou neutres. Agents de changement, ils ont joué un rôle central et évolutif. Prenons l'exemple des investisseurs qui sont passés de contributeurs de capital à orchestrateurs ; ou encore les opposants qui sont devenus neutres pendant la crise. Par ce changement de rôles, d'une légitimité débattue, les acteurs ont contribué à créer et maintenir des institutions. Par cette description des rôles des acteurs comme acteurs de changement, nous avons valorisé l'apport d'une approche multi acteurs.

	Orchestrator	Contributors	Opposants	Influencers	Regulators	Neutral
AIRBNB	X X				X	
Hosts		X	X			
Guests		X X				
Investors	X	X		X		
Hotel Industry Association			X	X		X
Municipality State Senate			X	X	X	X
Office of Special Enforcement (OSE)			X		X X	
Neighborhood Associations			X			X
Real Estate (REBNY)			X			X
Journalists				X X		
Scholars				X X		

(X: before COVID-19 – X: after COVID-19)

Tableau 34 : Co-évolution des rôles des acteurs avant et après la crise COVID-19 *(Source : C. Lecuyer)*

Interaction entre les stratégies relationnelles et les mécanismes institutionnels engagés (chapitre 5)

Enfin notre travail a cherché à mettre en relation les résultats les deux sous-questions de recherche visant à étudier l'interrelation entre les stratégies relationnelles et les mécanismes de travail sur le processus de légitimation.

Il est intéressant de noter **qu'avant la crise**, les stratégies relationnelles réussies d'identité et de professionnalisation décrites au chapitre 4 augmentaient la légitimité cognitive mais intensifiaient les pressions institutionnelles entre le DP et son environnement décrites chapitre 5. Nous avons confirmé que lorsque la légitimité cognitive est forte, cela entraîne des tensions exogènes fortes et provoque un déficit de la légitimité socio-politique. Cela a conduit à une légitimité débattue définie par Deephouse et al., (2017).

À l'inverse, **la crise** a permis à la DP de renforcer sa légitimité sociopolitique alors que les acteurs ont réorienté leurs priorités en débattant en interne sur le scénario de survie tout en faisant face aux tensions endogènes. Par exemple, la stratégie d'identité pendant la crise du COVID-19 visait à

promouvoir une « bonne entreprise citoyenne » avec le programme « Open Home » (i.e., proposant aux professionnels « front office » d'avoir un hébergement) ou par la promotion des mesures qualitatives adressées aux salariés licenciés sur les réseaux sociaux. Nous avons suggéré que les les régulateurs et l'environnement institutionnel ont été influencé par ces mesures permettant à la DP de renforcer sa légitimité sociopolitique. Les acteurs contributeurs ont cherché à maintenir les institutions tout comme les autres acteurs. La légitimité débattue a cédé sa place à un équilibre fragile entre légitimité cognitive et sociopolitique.

Nous postulons que cette étude fournit un aperçu important de la littérature sur la légitimité démontrant l'interaction entre les stratégies relationnelles et les mécanismes de travail institutionnel.

La figure 117 présente l'interrelation entre les stratégies relationnelles stratégiques et les mécanismes de travail institutionnel dans une période de « statu quo ». Avant la crise, des stratégies relationnelles robustes et réussies ont permis une forte légitimité cognitive tout en augmentant les tensions exogènes conduisant à une « légitimité débattue ».

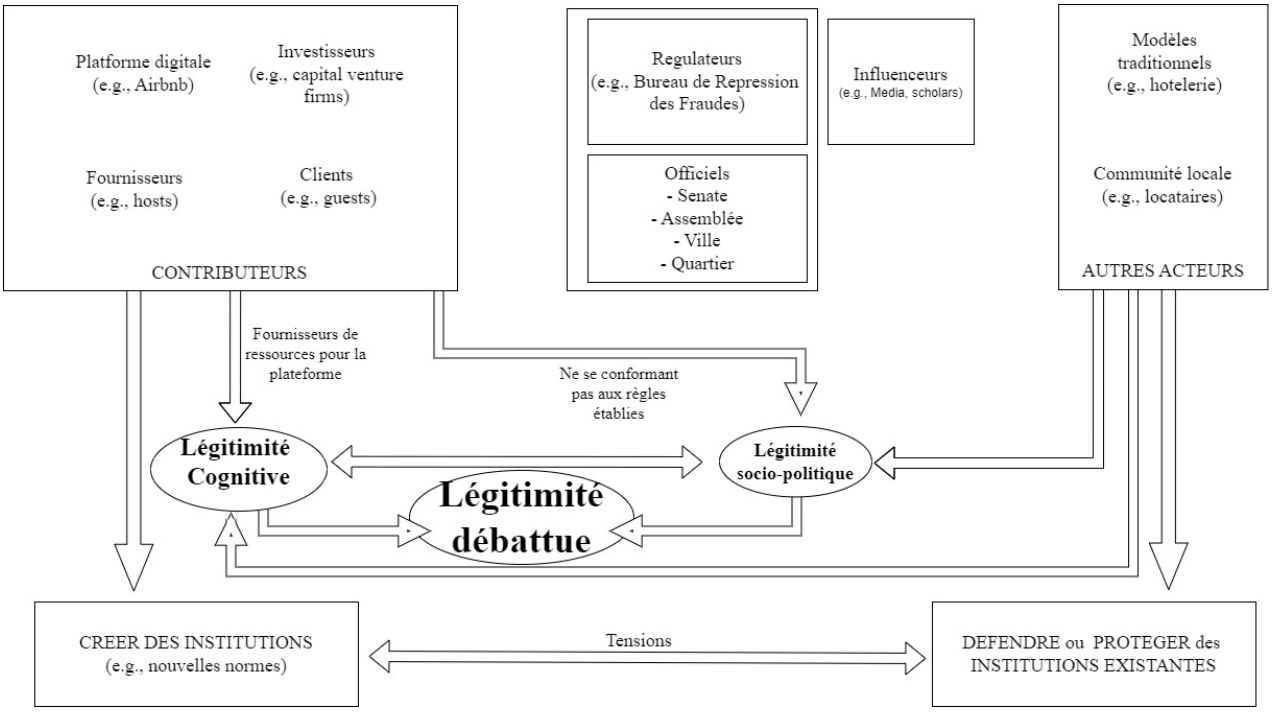


Figure 117 : Avant la crise : La légitimité est débattue nourrie par des niveaux de tensions exogènes dues aux interrelations entre les stratégies relationnelles et les mécanismes de travail institutionnel renforçant la légitimité cognitive de la DP. (Source : Lecuyer, 2024)

A contrario, la figure 118 représente les effets d'une crise sur les dynamiques relationnelles au sein d'un environnement caractérisé par des tensions endogènes avec un effet positif sur la légitimité sociopolitique.

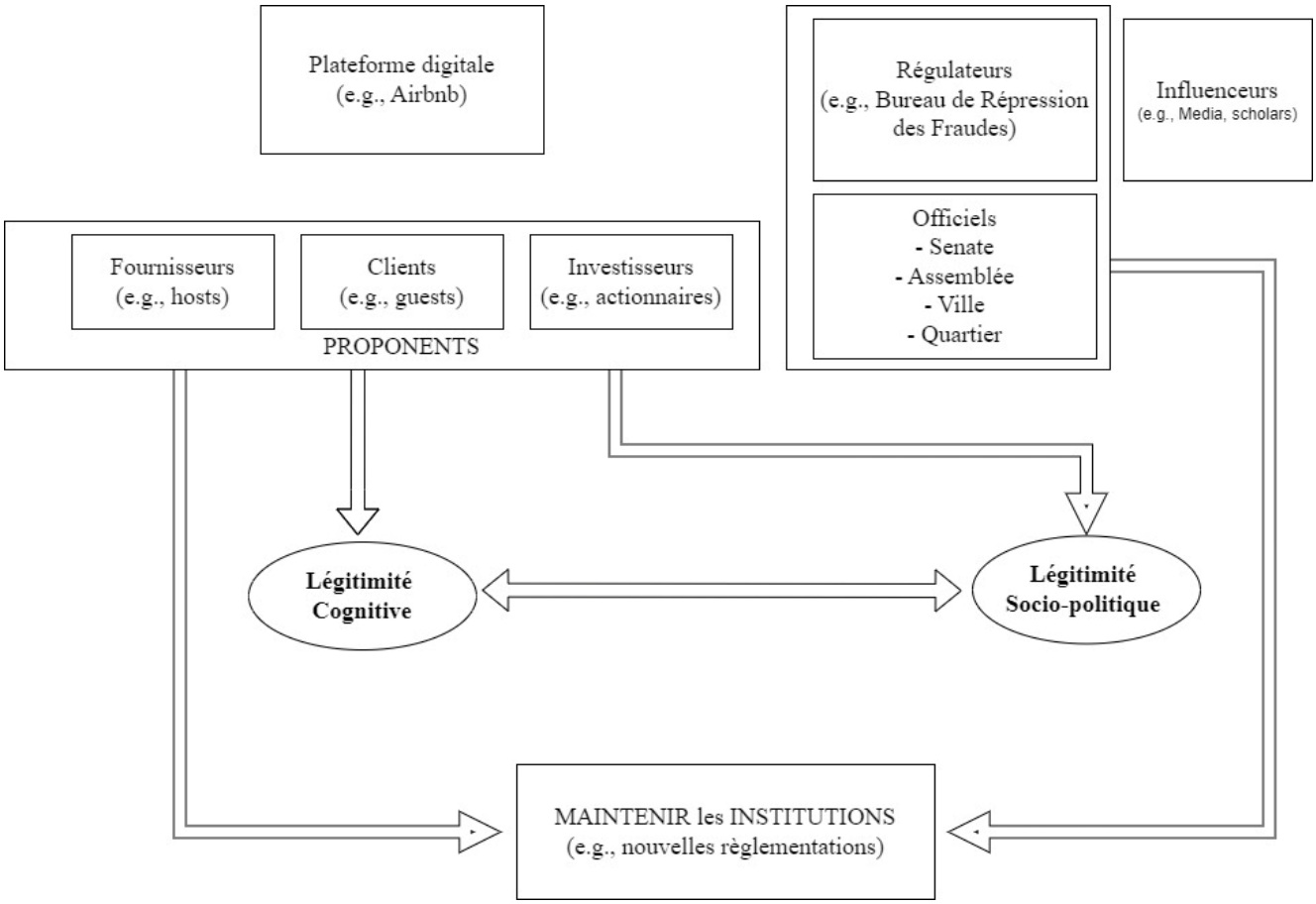


Figure 118 : Pendant la crise : L'effet de la crise sur l'interrelation entre les stratégies relationnelles et les mécanismes de travail institutionnel caractérisés par des tensions exogènes faibles et de nouvelles tensions endogènes avec un effet positif sur la légitimité sociopolitique (Source : Lecuyer, 2024)

CONTRIBUTIONS (chapitre 6)

L'objectif de cette recherche fut de répondre à la problématique en apportant des contributions d'ordre théorique, méthodologique et empirique.

Sur le plan théorique, nous contribuons à la compréhension du processus de légitimation d'une DP dans l'EC à travers :

(1) **L'identification des stratégies relationnelles mises en place par la DP** pour maintenir sa légitimité cognitive. La stratégie identitaire par exemple a permis de poser le portrait d'une plateforme disruptive créant des institutions, une alternative sociale et économique et une culture résiliente. Le rôle des investisseurs dans le processus de légitimation cognitive a été identifié.

(2) **La transposition du cadre théorique de Lawrence et Suddaby avec ses 3 formes de travail institutionnel**. Cela a facilité une meilleure compréhension des mécanismes à l'œuvre. Avant la crise, le travail politique prévaut. Et nous permis de faire ressortir une forme de lobbying singulier aux DPs, i.e., le **« *grassroot lobbying* »** ou lobbying citoyen comme une stratégie d'influence reposant sur la mobilisation des citoyens pour faire pression sur les décideurs politiques en plus du lobbying traditionnel souvent mené par des professionnels ou groupes d'intérêt.

(3) **L'interaction entre les mécanismes institutionnelles et les stratégies relationnelles** qui s'expriment par l'analyse des rôles de l'ensemble des acteurs. Nous avons proposé une mise en évidence du rôle central des acteurs mais aussi de leur rôle évolutif dans le processus de légitimation. Agents de changement, les acteurs ont été intentionnellement impliqués dans le processus de légitimation. La crise a révélé le rôle évolutif des investisseurs comme orchestrateur et la surprenante place des fournisseurs comme opposants en raison de la stratégie déployée par la DP en termes de management de ressources pourtant vitales. Il est tout aussi surprenant de constater que les opposants ont neutralisé les tensions dans leur changement de rôle qualifié de « neutre ». Par ce changement de rôles, d'une légitimité débattue, les acteurs ont contribué à créer et maintenir des institutions. Par cette description des rôles des acteurs comme acteurs de changement, nous avons valorisé ici l'apport d'une approche multi acteurs.

Nous avons mis en discussion les auteurs de la légitimité sur le rôle central des acteurs tant du point de vue de la construction, maintenance ou disruption des institutions et tant du point de vue de l'impact d'une crise sur l'évolution de leurs rôles.

(4) **La crise comme catalyseur de l'institutionnalisation de la DP** démontrant sa capacité d'adaptabilité aux nouvelles exigences (télétravail), trouvant un accord historique avec NYC, établissant une gouvernance plus inclusive avec un board de hosts par exemple. Nous ouvrons la boîte noire de cette « interrelation » en soulignant le nécessaire équilibre à trouver au fil du temps entre ces deux types de légitimité. Nous avons décrit les forces sociales en présence et les conséquences des stratégies d'une DP sur son écosystème. En effet, bien que la crise puisse être considérée comme un « accélérateur » de légitimité pour la DP, elle a révèlé également les tensions, les problèmes éthiques et les paradoxes des DPs de l'EC.

Sur les contributions managériales, nous avons souligné l'importance de de trouver **l'équilibre entre les forces sociales relationnelles** (domination/autonomie et mutualité) **par une gouvernance mutualisée** sur des principes de co-création. Nous avons mis en discussion la réflexion **sur les conséquences de l'encastrement des acteurs traditionnels** contraints par les autorités et de la **mise en place de réglementions réduisant la domination des DPs**.

Limites de la recherche

Nous avons présenté un cas unique dans un secteur hautement concurrentiel (e.g., hôtellerie) et une ville en ordre de bataille. Nous avons souligné le caractère « inédit» de la crise COVID-19.

Futures directions

Il serait intéressant de transposer la perspective multi-acteurs au sein d'autres ecosystèmes de DPs mais aussi d'utiliser d'autres cadres théoriques complémentaires (e.g., théorie des Ressources, coopetition).

En conclusion, ce travail doctoral a cherché à apporter plusieurs contributions sur la manière dont une DP dans l'EC crée et maintient sa légitimité stratégique et institutionnelle, en gérant de multiples acteurs en temps de crise. Il suggère le rôle évolutif des acteurs contribuant dans leur ensemble au processus de légitimation et plus particulièrement des investisseurs fournissant des ressources financières et affectant ainsi la capitalisation boursière. Enfin, cette thèse permet de mieux comprendre le rôle de la crise comme « accélérateur » de légitimité et comme révélateur des paradoxes éthiques inhérents au DP dans l'EC.

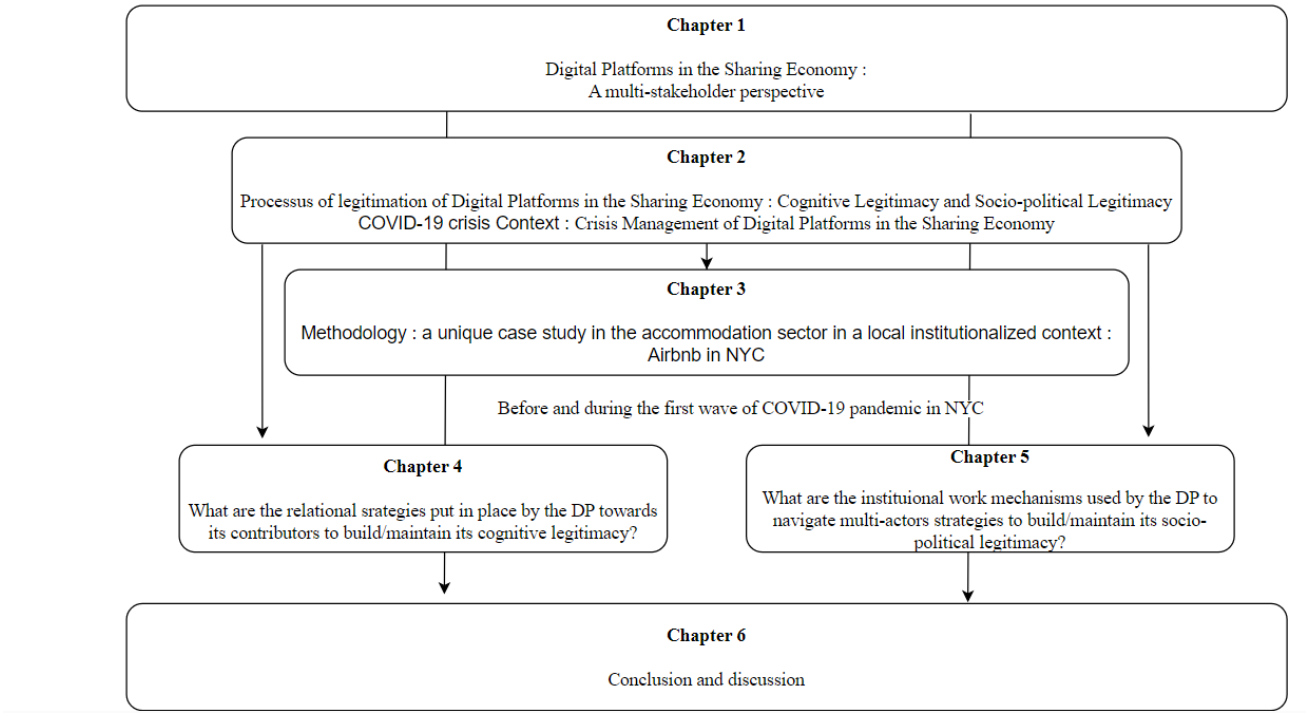


Figure 1: Structure de la thèse