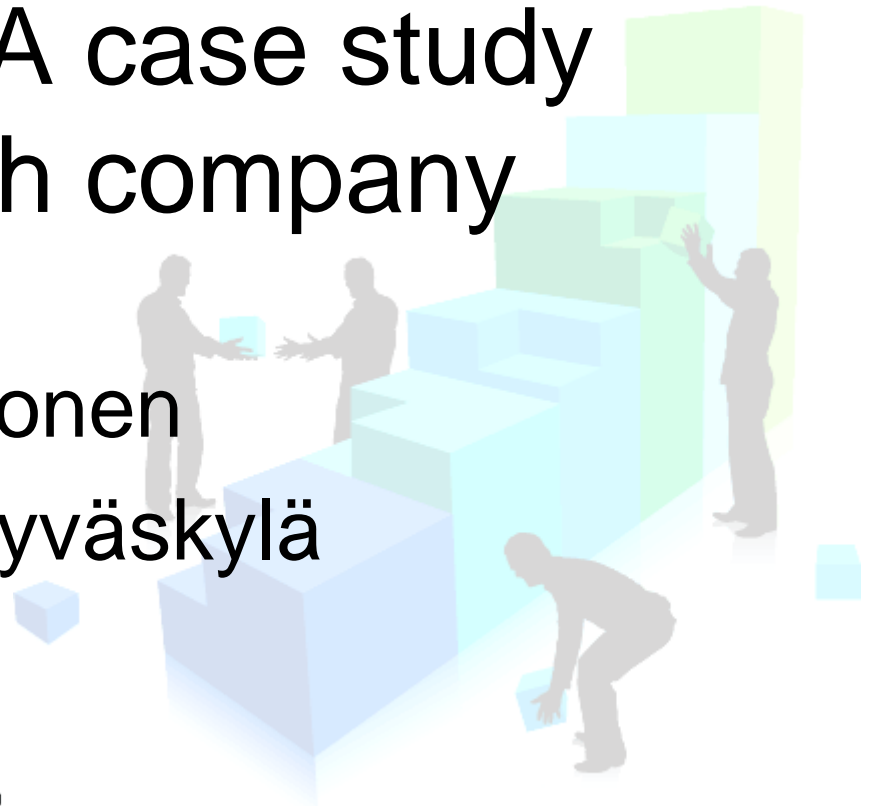


Managing global new product launch process: A case study from a high-tech company

Nora Mustonen
University of Jyväskylä



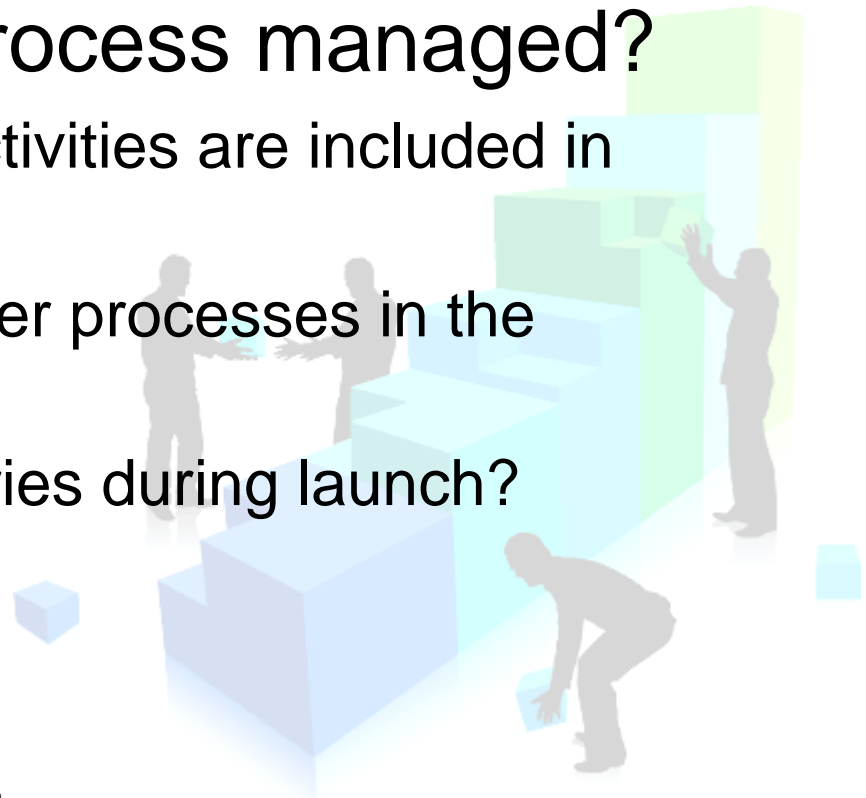
New product launch

- Bringing a product to the market for the first time (Beard & Easingwood 1996)
- The most critical phase of new product development (NPD) process (Di Benedetto 1999)
- Launch activities aim at maximizing new product performance (Guiltinan 1999)
- However, often the most poorly managed a phase of NPD (Hultink&Robben 1999)
- Often studied as a strategic matter, choices made set against product success (Page & Schirr 2008)

Objective of the study

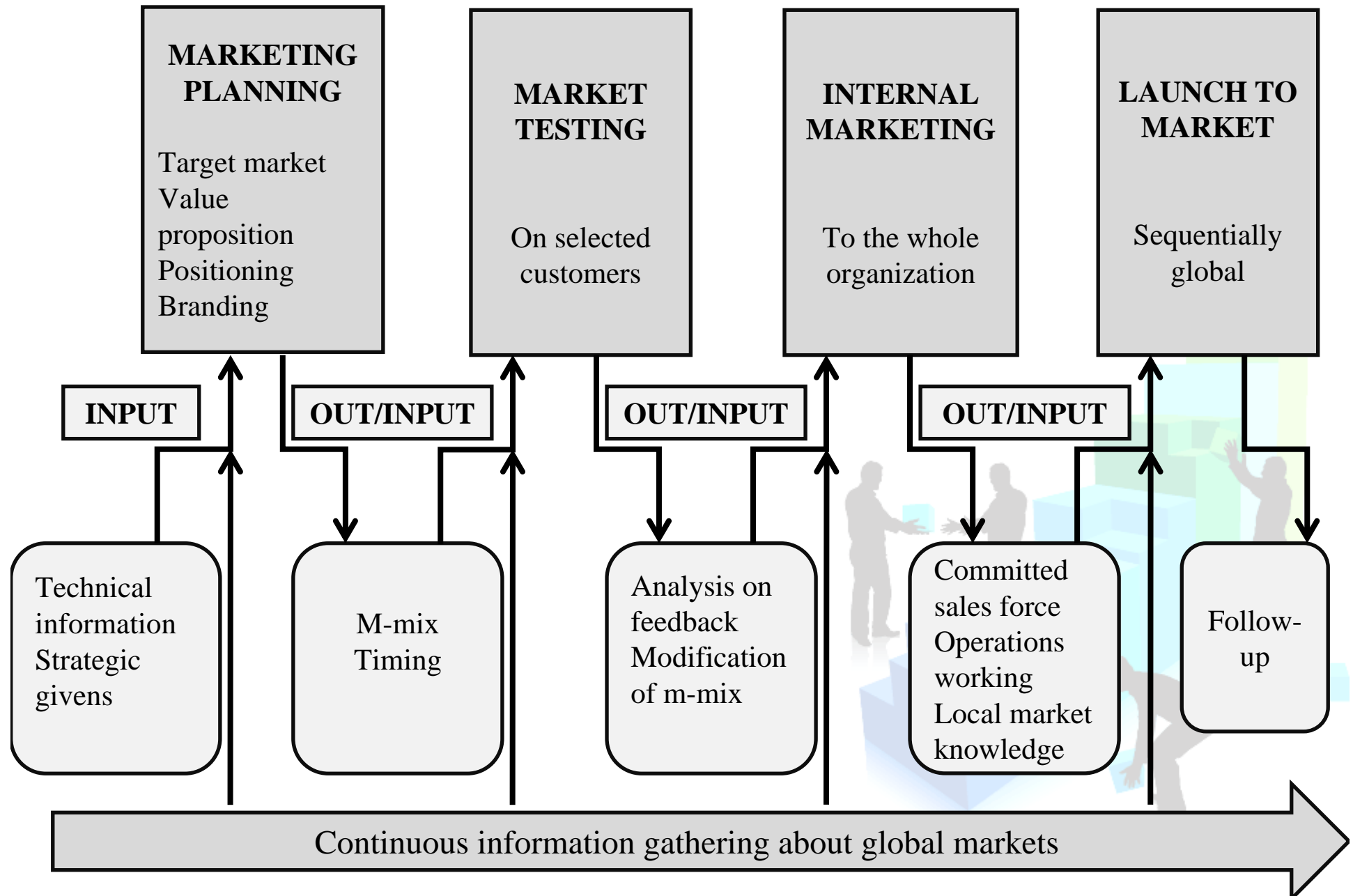
Understanding new product launch as a process, focusing on the global organization

- How is global launch process managed?
 - What kind of phases and activities are included in launch process?
 - How does launch link to other processes in the company?
 - What is the role of subsidiaries during launch?



Methodology

- **Qualitative, single-case study** (e.g. Miles & Huberman 1994, Yin 1994)
- **Abductive** (Dubois & Gadde 2002)
- **Action-oriented** (Gummesson 1988)
 - 1) Literature review on new product launch
 - 2) Formulating the theoretical framework: a process description
 - 3) 11 semi-structured interviews (Marketing, R&D, technology and sales directors, process developer)
 - 4) Additional data: workshops on the theme with the case company
 - 5) Analyzing the data (QSRN´Vivo), empirically improved process description



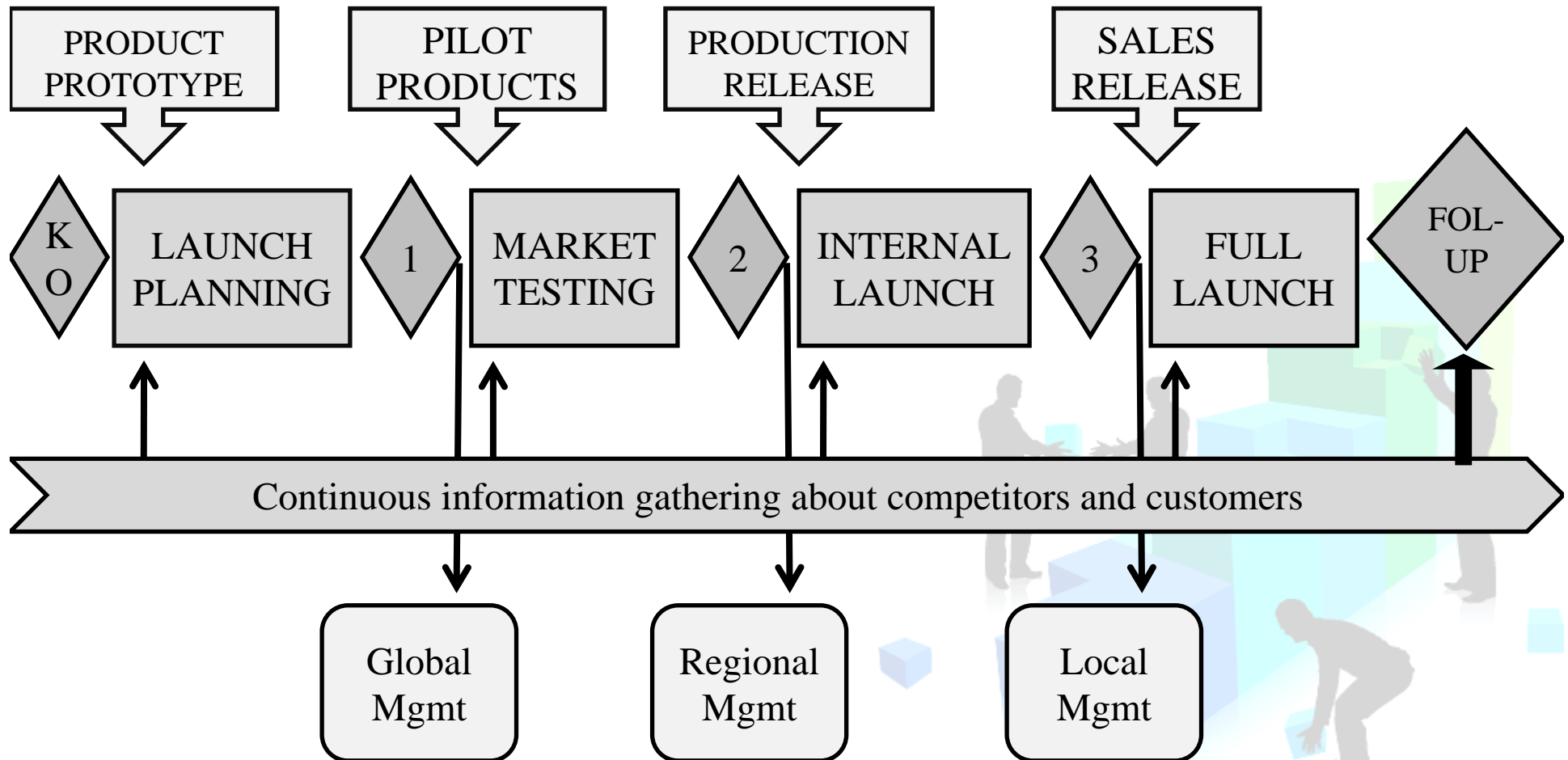
The case company

- Global supplier of electronic devices for industrial purposes
- Own brand but also OEM and brand label customers
- Globally through subsidiaries and partners
- Structural changes, towards process thinking in the organization
- More launches in shorter time spans

Findings: Launch process

- Process description needed: phases, activities, gates, cross-functional links for information exchange
- Marketing is the coordinator of launch, inputs from R&D and Sales
 - forming a cross-functional launch team for managing
- Launch phases dependent on product process, concurrent from the early NPD stages
- Market testing phase not seen as an activity of marketing

Improved framework for global launch

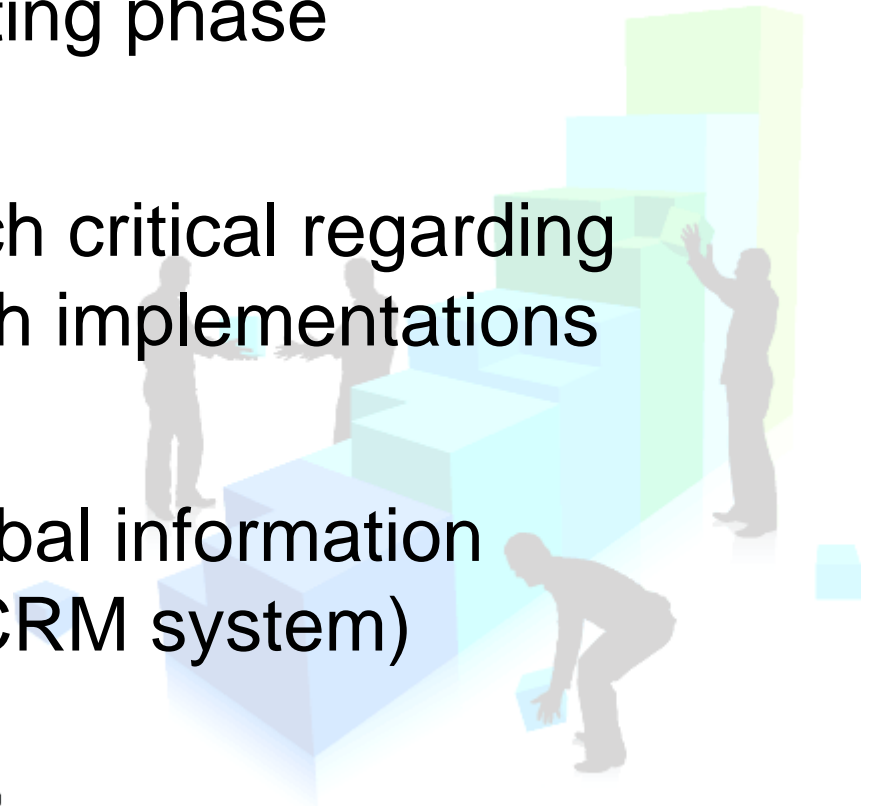


The global launch process

- Launch planning done on corporate level, regional and local organizations engaged in the process gradually
- Globally general templates but local customization of launch marketing (interaction with and support to subsidiaries)
- Appropriate amount of information given beforehand vs. information leaking outside
i.e. balance between creating internal commitment and avoiding loss of competitive advantage or launch hype if product delay occurs

Managerial implications

- Product and launch processes are concurrent and linked but launch should be a process of marketing with its own testing phase
- Execution of internal launch critical regarding commitment to local launch implementations
- Organizing continuous global information gathering and sharing (a CRM system)



Thank you for your time

Contact: nora.mustonen@jyu.fi

This study was done as a part of a Tekes-funded project (ceit.fi)

