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TERRITORIAL INTELLIGENCE AND GOVERNANCE

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HEADING : IMPLICATION OF ACTORS, PEDAGOGY OF GOUVERNANCE

Summary: As with European experiments, in various regions in France, territorial intelligence projects have been initiated since 2003. (see the regions of Lower Normandy, Lorraine, Réunion Island, the Aquitaine region, etc.). The objective of these is to gather and exploit information which is not confined to particular sectors and the collective processing of which can contribute to durable development. Apart from institutions, civil society and the inhabitants of the territory, it is observed that companies and in particular small and medium sized enterprises are natural partners who show interest in such initiatives. Both the different economic chains and the participating organizations thus derive considerable benefit in terms of the anticipation of threats and in the reaffirmation of the territory as a common resource worth defending. Above and beyond the information processing systems operating within these organizations or economic chains, the articulation of internal actions to generate informational capital in terms of local territorial intelligence, produces a leverage effect with visibility of European or even worldwide visibility (Herbaux, 2007)¹. Nonetheless these experiments lead to widely differing results, of which the progressive abandonment of the project by the companies involved is one of the most commonly observed..

To support a theoretical contribution as a thread for this communication, we report on the results of a Delphi type survey completed in 2006 and covering 53 companies in the Nord-Pas de Calais region involved in a process of territorial intelligence since 2003. This revealed that 43 companies out of the 53 concerned had not followed through on their internal information sharing project and contented themselves, by default, with the results by economic sector derived from public regional surveillance.

Beyond this apparent disengagement from the process initiated, we may be curious about this apparent discretion of a group of actors concerning local government. This work nonetheless did generate a consensus around certain observations among the actors questioned, particularly as regards an initiative for which they did not deny the final utility but for which the requirements necessitated a significant modification to their internal culture. After the initial conventional responses : « *security of patrimonial data, new choices in investment of time, lack of means, different priorities, etc.* », repeated and differentiated questioning of

¹ Herbaux Ph., *Intelligence territoriale, repères théoriques*. Editions Lharmattan 2007.

those concerned revealed that the progressive abandonment of these practices and commitments bore a relationship with a number of human factors of relational and cognitive nature, thus depriving the project of its founding principles. This observation echoed that of the implication suggested by Girardot en 2005² on the theme of multi-level governance. Although the financial aspect is a factor in the long term survival of regular investments of man-hours, this criterion appeared progressively more marginal to the general project among the actors surveyed, as against several positions cited as pre-requisites. Based on a synthesis of the results of the study, we propose five key success factors to promote within organizations to promote the logic of information sharing. To this effect, our proposal for a model named in French « CADIE » (Communication, Appui, Durée, Implication, Ecoute – or, in English, Communication, Support, Duration, Attentiveness) suggests several attitudes to which organizations must adhere to develop long-term integration in a territorial intelligence network..

The limitations of our proposal arise from the small size of the sample at our disposal and the regional limits of our data gathering. This experimentation, duplicated in various European regions would benefit from a multi-cultural gloss and thus would provide the template for a preliminary European approach to the logic of territorial intelligence.

Keywords : CADIE, territorial intelligence, sustainable territorial development, SME, mutualisation.

² Girardot J. J., « intelligence territoriale et participation » 5° colloque TIC et territoire, Besançon 2006.

1 INTRODUCTION

The setting-up of a logic of information mutualisation and treatment within an organisation is a long and perilous exercise. This undertaking is one of the pillars of an anticipative vision on risks and breaches within countries and organisations.

Here are the results of a survey linked with the economic aspect of an experimental regional territorial intelligence plan within a political territory (the Nord-Pas de Calais region in France). This enquiry questions the permanence of practices of information treatment enforced as part of the regional plan. Among other things, it highlights the difficulties SMEs have to keep mutualised information systems animated. In short, it offers a few preliminary postures to be developed in order to make an action of collecting and treating information within SMEs inside a territorial intelligence logic last.

2 TERRITORIAL INTELLIGENCE

2.1 INTELLIGENCE?

If intelligence is considered an individual attribute in most cases, its collective aspect – which can express itself within a territory – is often disregarded. Each inhabitant's implicit adherence to common resources, as a political space, encourages him or her to participate in its preservation. In the case of territory, intelligence – from Latin *inter* (between) and *ligare* (to link with), becomes a collective posture of management of knowledge whose aim is to preserve – if not to develop – existing resources.

This aim seems to be the thread and the very reason for territorial intelligence logics. One of the aspects of this posture is naturally linked to the anticipation of risks

and breaches capable of reaching the existing capital, especially in its relationship to employment – employment being a major preoccupation in the eyes of the resident (Herbaux, 2006).

Yet, this conclusion must not submit territorial intelligence to the 'all economic', which would be a bit simplistic; if employment, by and large economy, is one of the keys to multiple awareness a systemic vision is required here. It was developed by Girardot (2004), among others, in his multi-level governance concept. To back up this statement, it is to be noted that the treatment of information in economics – and especially so within competitiveness poles – undergoes a structure pressure, that of its participants' cultural heterogeneity. Strategic cursors do not lie at the same level; regional or almost Europeans for some, and *de facto* worldwide in the case of international firms' branches.

Hence the necessity for a preliminary conclusion:

Within these organisations, the spreading of information oscillates between the landmarks of local polarisation of worldwide diffusion.

2.2 A DOUBLE MOVEMENT

2.2.1 Local polarisation.

The initiated movement of cognitive concentration within the territorial intelligence collective logics is now being amplified in France through the existence of competitiveness poles³. Nevertheless and according to Musso (2005), one should differentiate between the aspect of

³ Initiated in France as soon as 2004, competitiveness poles make a few of Porter's statements – from his June 1998 publication, *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* – theirs. In short, This is about taking the global strategy for a territory so as to enforce a common strategy of economic development into account.. The latter aims at gaining a critical mass in order to bring some high added value technology to markets with a serious potential for development.

knowledge management dealing with cognitive capacities and knowledge management dealing with the field of applied knowledge, which generates a capacity for apprenticeship. In this last instance, the tacit (individual capitalisation) turns into explicit (formalisation of knowledge) and allows what we call 'individual unformulated' (Herbaux, *ibid*) to become shared knowledge. This is what network adherence implicitly benefits.

The territory or *country* is where informal communication per se and combined with unspoken things gives a rhythm to exchanges between humans. Somehow, this equates a capitalisation of culture in the best possible scenarii by placing itself within the development project. At a local level, rites, heroes, symbols and values which make up its genesis, create the stage for signs and postures (Bourdieu's *habitus*, 1994), thus establishing some grammar for communication which founds the local group's identity. Therefore, the combination of scientific, experiment, empiric and industrial inputs turn the local into a place of generation of rare resources (Bertacchini, 2005).

2.2.2 Worldwide diffusion

Indigenous traditional undertakings, a few spin-offs and quite often branches of worldwide firms which like to immerse their research and development services blossom on this concentrated knowledge soil. The outcome of that research then feeds a worldwide spreading of processes into established networks, in a logic of globalisation.

It can be then considered that local resources (or the management of knowledge) is perceived and these majors' branches take part in it before they spread them throughout the world in order to conquer new markets. This conclusion is linked with what Polanyi (1983) observed: 'the expression of the tacit is linked with geographical proximity; its scattering is tied to the progressive codification of

unformulated knowledge which progressively turns it into explicit knowledge⁴.

2.3 ELABORATION OF LOCAL CONSTRUCTION

A paradox lies in the fact that the building up of explicit knowledge within a territory may eventually be used by those whose power allows them to access worldwide network diffusion. Concretely and among other things, the existing nuances of culture between big and small businesses translate into a relationship which is different from information systems.

The *majors* established their network on the basis of an interactive system where information lies at the heart of strategic survival. Thus, the capacity a decision centre takes to react live conditions its access and its duration on new high added value markets. There, the mutualisation of information through a substantial use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) is of a structural nature.

The local SME, sometimes involved in a competitiveness pole, more seldom has expertise in this culture of mutualisation and if technical tools do exist, practices are not in accordance with expected uses. Obstacles seem to be of a more cultural nature (power and information) rather than technological. 'Language and writing are two distinct sign systems: the second one's sole reason for being is to represent the first one', de Saussure said. Wouldn't the difficulty to overcome the 'coffee machine' transmission phase be linked with lived deals? And for some structures: limited to SME confinement?

⁴ Therefore, tacit knowledge is more difficult to manage and to exploit. Its explicit knowledge valuability then is transferable and explainable through a code, i.e. a scientific or technical language.

3 THE DELPHI SURVEY

3.1 EXPERIMENTAL SCHEME

Since 2001, the research-action endeavour led on the regional environment Nord-Pas de Calais was part of a survey on the treatment of information at a territorial level. The aim was to back up enforcement on territorial intelligence scheme and question its efficiency.

Backing up a regional programme funded accordingly to State guidelines had allowed this research-action in a programme which had made many actors from institutional, economic and academic background sectors involved⁵. Within this regional plan, 53 companies were thus helped in their enforcing an integrated information system and this is the object of the survey dealt with here.

3.2 INTEREST

When having to express themselves publicly on a personal position, some individuals taking part in a workshop do not always give their genuine opinion. Pressure coming from the group and from the expressed or tacit majority creates self-censorship limiting some participants to silent agreement. Therefore, it is important to address what Neumann⁶ named *a spiral of silent*, i.e. the growing pressure individuals within a group undergo to preserve their opinions whereas feeling they are a minority.

The choice of investigation method must allow all opinions to spring while minimising active and implicit pressures. Anonymity is part of this expression. In a context of SMEs involved in a quality survey, it is important that each actor has a good understanding of the project, of the analysis mechanism and of the aims sought by the initiator. This is an essential factor for the success of a quality survey. Among

the few existing quality survey techniques (individual interview, experience investigation, projective case study etc.), the Delphi method appeared to be the most compatible with the sought goal: use the experience feedback from a population initiated to territorial and economic intelligence processes.

Initially, the Delphi method was elaborated by RAND Corporation as soon as 1969 and it is a process of group decision following a classical thesis, antithesis and synthesis structure. It is led via successive – and if possible anonymous – questions asked by a group of actors, in most cases experts in the specific field. Used among other things in the field of human sciences, it allows to find better consensus answers to a controversy complex topic or offers a debated alternative to the issue studied. A final meeting physically gathering participants validates a collective opinion on each topic tackled.

3.3 METHODOLOGY

The classical Delphi methodology was adapted to the context. Some aspects were adapted or rehandled.

The survey led during the last three months of 2005 benefited from three Master 1 students' implication. It was about a group of companies who had taken part in the 2001-2005 experimental regional plan. Out of the 53 companies involved in this regional action, only 47 (their spokespersons) did effectively take part in this survey. The typology of these structures, designated as employing between 2 and 200 people, was established in sectors of metal undertaking, biochemistry, printing, services, food industry and manufacture.

In order to escape group pressure, and thanks to an individual number, each actor anonymously and electronically⁷ replied to the conclusion proposed by collective thoughts. The use of electronic work group may be perceived as a 'facilitator' for that type of survey. Yet, it does not prevent

⁵ 534 companies were made aware, 134 individuals representing institutions 400 or so students. Training for 104 SME actors and 80 consultants. Initiation and follow-up for 53 companies and 162 executives and managers.

⁶ Elisabeth-Noelle Neumann, sociologist and professor emeritus from the University of Mainz.

⁷ Questionnaire electronically treated as Adobe Reader® file

physical gatherings between all the experts when discussing its synthesis.

Progressive agreements reshape the answers which are then processed with each occurrence⁸. Extreme views are mentioned during general debates until a consensus is possibly come to. Nonetheless, the latter is not always reached and it must end up on two detailed positions.

The three survey themes were put to participants in the form of a questionnaire made up of 18 propositions, i.e. six for each theme.

Procedure: following an individual phone interview during which the participant agrees to be part of the survey, a message of explanation is sent by e-mail bearing the campus and survey address. Answers are continuously recorded under an electronic Adobe® file. Data are filed automatically then put into a chart on Excel®.

Graphic results after each occurrence (Delphi1, 2,3...) are then sent to each participant and simultaneously capitalised on the campus. Thus, experts can appreciate the evolution of agreements and disagreements on the discussed issues progressively thanks to the synthesis graphic changes and thanks to the capitalised footprints of respective opinions.

4 THE CSDIL SYSTEM

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the context of this summary, the reader is spared the whole survey process for the benefit of a synthesis on the three aspects of questions.

The analysis of exchanges and their being put into perspective allowed to suggest a few recommendations – gathered together under the acronym 'CSDIL' (CADIE in French) – to the operators involved in the territorial intelligence logics.

This acronym, CSDIL, sums up the five aspects of recommendations born from the

⁸ Repetitive process represents between 2 and 4 minutes for each occurrence and allows each expert to refine his or her opinion as exchanges go by.

analysis the group of experts consulted came up with, namely:

- Communication
- Support
- Duration
- Implications
- Listening

It does not pretend to be an unchangeable rule but it expresses the return of experience of a group of actors having taken part in a regional experimental territorial intelligence scheme. For each item, a few conclusions and suggestions agreed to by experts, executives or officials from partner SMEs were presented.

4.2 COMMUNICATION

- a) The communication plan for territorial intelligence grounds must insert itself in time; without being continuous it still must provide support for key phases of the operation.
- b) Institutional communication tends to swallow the part of actors or reduce them to a mere witness function.
- c) The managing of the communication budget is most often secured by the project manager; partners too ought to be associated to it.

4.3 SUPPORT

- a) Institutional financial support to organisations participating should last several years.
- b) There can be two types of technical support:
 - endogenous support by a qualified and competent consultant.
 - exogenous support by a benchmarking of practices within a company club that gathers monthly.

4.4 DURATION

The enforcement of an information treatment system must comply with existing information systems within the administrative Region as well as the State.

This action bearing a systemic feature cannot be subjected to precipitation.

- a) The lay-out of a territorial intelligence scheme over 7 or 8 years allows non-continuous interventions, be they technical or of a financial support nature. Globally, this does not increase the cost.
- b) The preparation of a territorial intelligence plan often depends on State and regional services. An agency effect⁹ occurs in that the initiator and the beneficiary naturally have different visions of the future programme (e.g.: set over time for involved organisation and short-term aims for the project management).

4.5 IMPLICATIONS

Experts recognised the existence of considerable dynamics for enforcement between SMEs and the whole of partners within experimentation. But this tie needs to be fuelled, animated and valued throughout time on the basis of a few pre-requisites:

- a) Check prior aware adherence of SMEs wishing to get involved in a regional territorial intelligence scheme;
- b) Choose consulting cabinets genuinely specialised in association with younger cabinets;
- c) Make information transfers between institutions (customs, police, county authorities, tax administration etc.) and SMEs more fluid.

4.6 LISTENING

- a) Collective elaboration of the regional territorial intelligence (institution, company, civilians)

- b) Acknowledging a company's facts in a momentary interruption of its participation (choice of human resources affectation with regards to emergency).
- c) Gradual and personalised access (assimilation time for various practices, according to organisations).

5 CONCLUSION

If public investment generated short-term results in terms of territorial intelligence in the SME sector, it globally did not resist the ordeal of time in order to go from an initiation phase to a development one.

The operational taking over, inherent to the weight and burdens of State initiatives and Regional ones, must be established in the first stages of a regional territorial intelligence scheme. It thus avoids a gap in the help provided for actors and organisations involved, and therefore acts towards a capitalisation of processes and results.

Throughout exchanges, the word 'culture' was regularly used: 'this is not our culture', 'this is about a radical change in culture', 'you cannot achieve a revolution in culture every day'. In such cases, how could SMEs be better associated with a logic of territorial governance without them thinking they might lose their 'soul' in it? The issue is not of a technical or a technological nature but rather of an anthropological one. Time is the most demanding factor within a SME' one participant said.

The management of time is the main critical factor yet to be tamed for the enforcement of a regional territorial intelligence plan.

⁹ Agency effect: unbalance caused by the knowledge one of the parties may have of the future development of a convention.

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ANNEXE

Annexe 1 - TRAITEMENTS GRAPHIQUES SIMPLES DES ENQUETES PAR DELPHI

entièrement d'accord ■ plutôt d'accord ■ indécis ■ plutôt peu d'accord ■ pas d'accord ■ opinion non exprimée

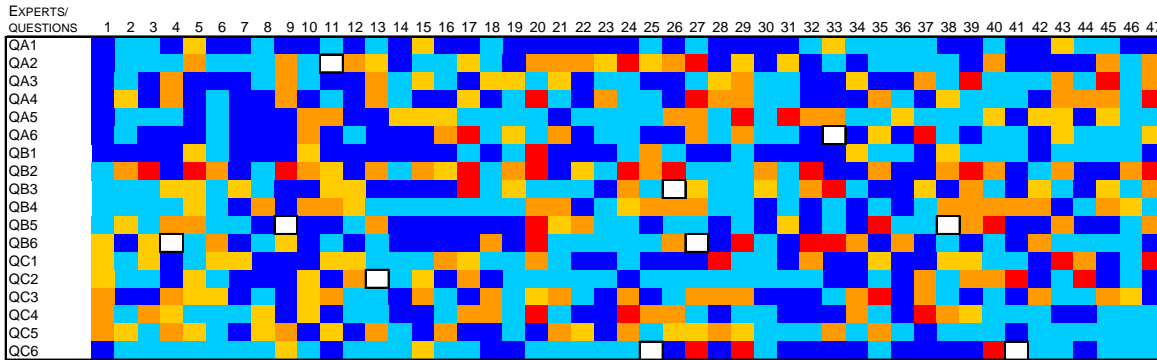


Fig 1 - Recueil et ventilation des réponses par question et par participants en Delphi 1

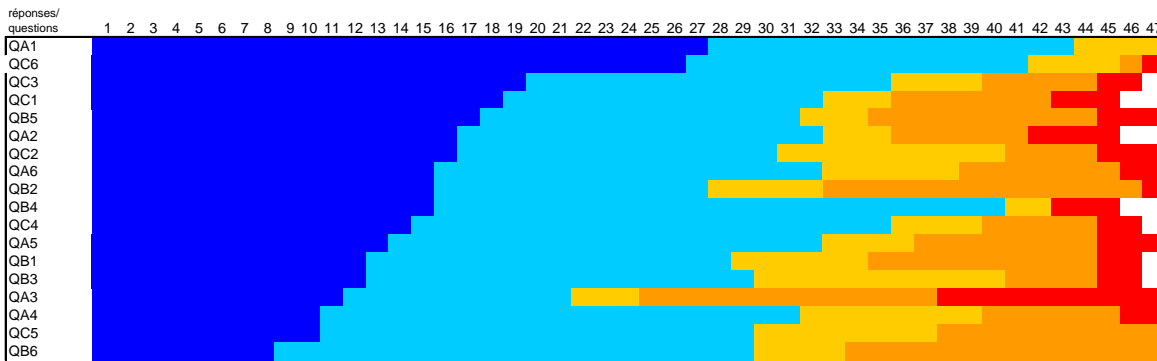


Fig 2 Tri des réponses du Delphi 1

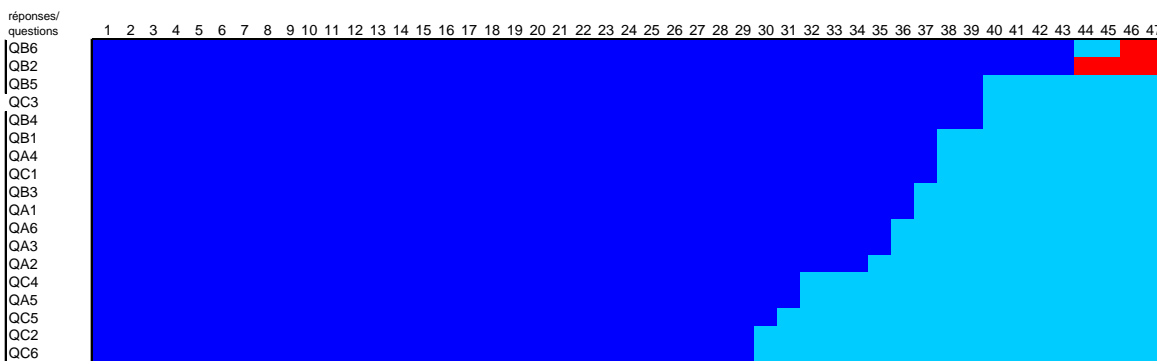


Fig 3 : Traitement de synthèse du Delphi 5

ENQUETE – questionnaire-

Les trois volets d'affirmations inductives comportent 18 items. Les réponses se ventilent en six options : a) entièrement d'accord b) plutôt d'accord c) indécis d) plutôt peu d'accord e) pas d'accord f) opinion non exprimée. Les participants sont invités à renvoyer le questionnaire électronique à nouveau coché après chaque échange collectif. Les synthèses graphiques paraissent aussitôt sur le groupe de travail électronique Claroline® ; elles traduisent l'évolution des positions du groupe.

A) VOLET PARTENARIAT ET DUREE

- Item A1 : A votre avis, le partenariat est-il nécessaire à la réalisation de votre projet intégré de système de collecte et de traitement de l'information ?
- Item A2 : Pensez vous qu'une durée d'accompagnement technique de 6 mois est suffisant pour la mise en œuvre d'un dispositif de traitement de l'information dans une Pme/Pmi ?
- Item A3 : Jugez vous que l'accompagnement ne tient pas assez compte des variations brutales du plan de charge de l'entreprise engagée (commande urgente, rupture de stock etc.)
- Item A4 : Êtes vous d'accord avec cette remarque : « la multitude de partenaires engagée dans l'opération expérimentale d'intelligence territoriale en rend progressivement la finalité floue » ?
- Item A5 : Pensez-vous que le système partenarial devrait s'inscrire pour chaque enjeu (recueil, traitement, formation etc.) de façon articulée et pour une période plutôt pluri-annuelle ?
- Item A6 : Avez-vous l'impression que la lisibilité des missions pour chaque partenaire est claire pour chaque entreprise (institutions, prestataires choisis par appel d'offre, financeurs etc.)

B) VOLET SOUTIEN PUBLIC

- Item B1 : Considérez-vous que le financement public est déterminant pour l'engagement de la Pme/Pmi dans un processus d'intelligence territoriale ?
- Item B2 : Jugez-vous les financements subsidiaires accordés aux Pme/Pmi engagées dans le processus d'intelligence territoriale insuffisants ? tardifs ? trop contraignants par les rapports et données à établir ?
- Item B3 : Avez-vous le sentiment, et ce dans le cadre d'un programme régional, que les administrations et institutions partenaires sont très accessibles à vos requêtes ?
- Item B4 : Vous constatez que le soutien public est fixé pour une durée continue ; concevez-vous qu'il puisse être séquencé sur plusieurs années ?
- Item B5 : Jugez vous que les structures bénévoles de conseil (ressources humaines, information, communication etc.) sont peu ou pas représentées dans le plan régional d'intelligence territoriale ?

Item B6 : Pensez-vous que la mise en œuvre d'un système intégré de traitement de l'information pour une Pme/Pmi, demande une discrétion qui n'est pas obtenue dans le cas d'une adhésion à un programme régional ?

C) VOLET INFORMATION ET POUVOIR

Item C1 : Concevez-vous que la mise en œuvre d'un système de traitement de l'information dans une entreprise renforce le pouvoir du dirigeant ?

Item C2 : Pensez-vous que l'organisation du système d'information dans l'entreprise le rend plus accessible à la malveillance ?

Item C3 : Etes-vous sensible au fait que l'apprentissage puis la pratique de mutualisation de l'information peut agir sur le climat social de l'entreprise ?

Item C4 : Considérez-vous que le décideur doit bénéficier seul des ultimes informations stratégiques ?

Item C5 : Constatez-vous que la compréhension du projet de l'entreprise par les partenaires d'un plan régional d'intelligence territoriale est bien souvent limitée ?

Item C6 : Etes-vous de ceux qui avancent que mettre en œuvre un système mutualisé de traitement de l'information au sein de l'entreprise, c'est offrir des clés de décision au tiers.