

Study on Development Trend of Maker Space

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Abstract. This paper defines the concept of the two kinds of development paths of the maker space, which are the "Unipolar" mode and "Bipolar" mode. And then based on the comparison of the advantages and shortcomings between them, the conclusion is made that the maker space should take the "Bipolar" development path from the current situation and become the leader of the trans-business between the accelerator and co-working. Furthermore the key measurements of how to integrate different resources in "Bipolar" mode are put forward, in which the three ways of the free growth, the isolation and the "star" are identified. Finally, the development trend of maker space from "Bipolar" mode to "Three-Pole" mode is evaluated, and the characteristics of "Three-Pole" ideal mode are analyzed.

Introduction

Since the national strategy of "mass entrepreneurship and innovation" is put forward, the maker space is growing rapidly in the nationwide. In contrast of decades of construction experience overseas, the development time of maker space in China is shorter, and the related theory system has not been established [1]. But the concept, mode of operation, characteristics and other aspects about the maker space have got good performance in China as the advanced ideal and practice of both "Internet Plus" and "Sharing Economy". Summarizing the law from practice, and building the supporting theory of the domestic maker space development to guide the practice are particularly important [2, 3]. This paper put forward the concept of the "Unipolar" mode and "Bipolar" mode, and compares the development advantages and shortcomings of the two modes. And the path of how to integrate different resources under bipolar mode and the ideal mode of "Three-Pole" ideal mode are analyzed.

Maker space derives from the incubator, the maker, the co-working office. And as a new thing, the research literatures about the maker space are less than that of the incubator[4-7], accelerator[8], innovation network[9,10], venture capital[11] and other aspects, but these other field research has an important role on the understanding the maker space. In general, positioning determines the path of development and future business forms. Incubator (accelerator) and Co-working Space is the basic function of the Maker Space, which may be divided into "unipolar" mode and "bipolar" mode. The "unipolar" model includes Incubator / Accelerator (IA, for short) with co-working function and Co-working Space (CW, for short) with incubator function, which focusing on one side. "Bipolar" model is the integration of incubation and co-working dual function.

Comparison of Two Models

"Unipolar" mode and "Bipolar" mode have their own advantages respectively, both of which have successful practitioners, such as YC, RocketSpace, Sinovation Ventures, Wework, and 3WCoffee which is becoming "bipolar" from the "unipolar", and so on. Among them, the incubator "unipolar" development model has "tinny and pretty" features, but it is difficult to get bigger quickly for the incubators limited by the overweight asset model; "unipolar" development model of united office like Wework is characterized by large-scale development, but its shortage is lack of imagination in sharing high-growth cakes created by the makers in the future.

Though the "bipolar" model is not only faced with management problems from different nature of the new office and incubator, where it is extremely difficult to deal with contradictions between "tinny and pretty" features and " " features, it also has complementary advantages. On the one hand, functions between united office and incubator are quite different in the target customer, resources, location, profit model and other business strategies. Especially it is difficult for a single space to take into account of the both functions. But, on the other hand, the two have common resources, such as financing, business services and so on. Various service resources attached in the incubator is the basis to enhance the workplace attraction, and competitiveness. The internal business group formed by the workplace is the mass flow inlet and important resources of the incubator. The two can be entrance, resources and support to each other, which can meet the demands of different parties better.

In addition, enterprises who can survive and develop in this industry in the future may reach a state: the enterprise should develop a comprehensive ecological, and be associated with all kinds of industries, and maintain high growth with the frontier industry, and be the incubator and strategic investors of emerging leader enterprise, and provide a new business foundation for the new working way, organizational form, business model. It contains the attributes of united office space, deep connection, hatching investment, and has internal logic of grasping the "Unicorn" based on "hardware + software", and reconciles the basis of new business and the future. Therefore, to create a new business base is to do "CW", to master the future is to do "IA".

Integration Way of Both Powers in "Bipolar" Mode

First, the "bipolar" mode should tend to the CW pole, not the IA pole. On one hand, the maker space business is still entrepreneurial enterprise, whose basic goal is to reduce business risk and survive. In contrast, the incubator has a high demand for early input, with a high proportion of sunk costs. However, whether or not the incubation business can achieve the expected target is greatly uncertain, and the maker space operating according to the incubation logic has a greater operational risk. For the maker space to operate in accordance with the united office logic, its cost and other indicators are relatively more controllable. From the scale point of view, the global average ideal rate of the office workday is 55%. The global 1/3 firms are mobile office, and 2/3 firms plan to use flexible offices to cut cost, so united office has a large development space. On the other hand, to be bigger and stronger is a long-term strategic goal. To be bigger should rely on large-scale development and follow the business logic of "CW"; to be stronger should rely on the level of integrated service resources and use the power of "IA".

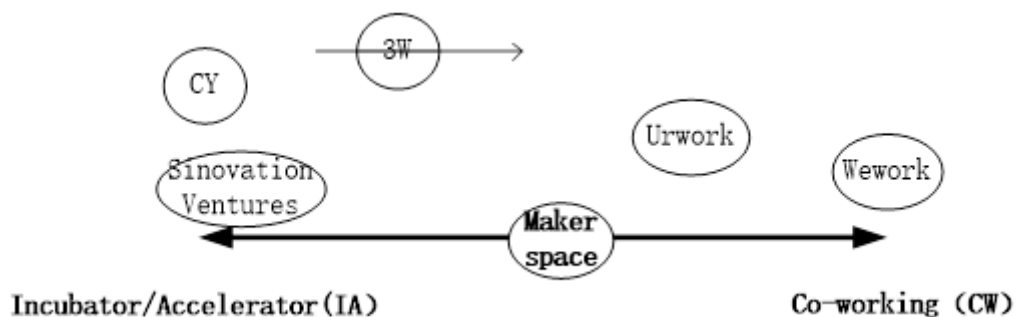


Fig.1. Different Types for the "Unipolar" mode

Second, rely on a reasonable functional layout. Isolation mode is more in line with respective development requirements and the basic laws of accelerator and united office. There may be three forms in the "bipolar" mode. The first way is free growth, where the main function of the space changes with settled enterprise, and on the whole, function and shape of subordinate space are in the change. This way may weaken hatching and accelerated functions or waste service resources. The second way is isolation, that is clearly distinguish between subordinate space function, part of the pure incubation, the other part of the pure united office. The third way is Star way, where the space

can be settled in various types of enterprises, and the space focuses on hatching the future star enterprises, with a view to achieve aggregation with these star enterprises in the future, and thus forms a more stable ecology to achieve mixed state.

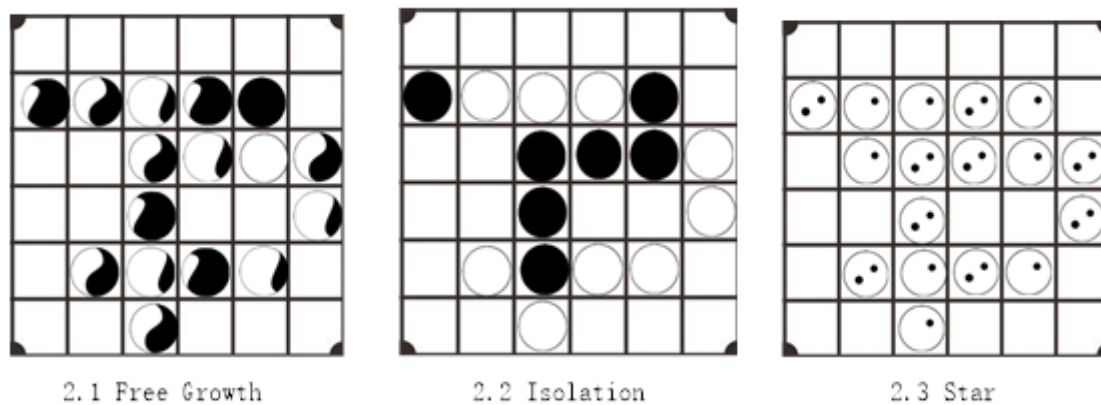


Fig.2 "Bipolar" Mode

Third, implement differentiated business strategy according to respective own logic. For example, in the choice of location, the incubator is around the source of tourists, project source, resource as the core, and united office pays more attention to location. In the way of making profit, co-working offices puts the rental as the core, and the incubator puts the service charges and investment as the core, whose operation strategy is quite different.

Fourth, form a joint force through the integration of resources and incubation services platform. On the one hand, resources should be gathered vigorously and shared with interoperability, for meeting the common requirements of both co-working and incubation functions. On the other hand, strengthen the construction of online service resources and promote the realization of online accelerated incubator service resources by the way of matching, that is, "online incubation + offline united office", thus to further integrate "bipolar".

Fifth, under ideal target the C2M way can be used to realize the "bipolar" balance, which makes use of large-scale and specialized service to meet the needs of personalized service. It is important to create an open platform to gather business services resources. And the standardization should be achieved for various types of incubators services, and the service may be provided by the matching way for non-standard part.

Ideal Model

In the long run, maker space is likely to develop into a "Three-Pole" model, in which investment and financing (called "IF") are on the basis of IA and CW. The important entrance of makers in the future is maker space, and the investment model with the incubation function will be more advantageous than the pure venture capital. The maker space of "Bipolar" model will rely on the advantages of incubators, and gradually reverse to achieve the integration of venture capital. The industry of maker space will gradually integrate the incubator, co-working office and venture capital, and then form a synthesis of capital power, real estate power, and incubator and acceleration power.

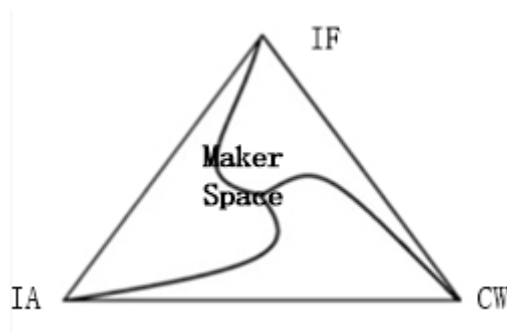


Fig.3. "Three-Pole" Model

In the form of "Three-Pole", three functions are linked and it will be more stable in relative to the "bipolar" mode. The "Three-Pole" development path of the maker space is developing from the partial "CW" to the "IA" based on the "bipolar", and then reconstructing the "IF" when large-scale of CW is achieved and high level of IA is reached.

In the future, maker space which has developed into "Three-Pole" will likely show a special organization form: there will be a closely linked ecosystem based on it in which incubation services and investment and financing are links to the "internal" large business group, and all kinds of "external" capital and organization form seem loose, and liquidity seems also high. With this ecology, maker space will be a strategic investor of leading enterprises of core industry, an accelerators of innovative companies, a provider of united office, and the best entrance for venture capital.

Conclusion

Based on analysis, maker space is expected to take the "bipolar" development path, aimed to become a leader of the cross industry of the two areas of accelerator and co-working office, and the next step is towards the "Three Pole" from differentiation integration of "bipolar". Moreover, maker space is suggested to combine the characteristics of makers, the design social products and services that can stimulate the community and online relations between the parties, and build community business social platform, so as to promote the creation of more new connections which could provide enough opportunities.

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