



Science on the Run: Information Management and Industrial Geophysics at Schlumberger, 1920-1940 (Inside Technology)

Geoffrey C. Bowker

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This is the story of how one company created and codified a new science "on the run," away from the confines of the laboratory. By construing its service as scientific, Schlumberger was able to get the edge on the competition and construct an enviable niche for itself in a fast-growing industry. In this engaging account, Geoffrey Bowker reveals how Schlumberger devised a method of testing potential oil fields, produced a rhetoric, and secured a position that allowed it to manipulate the definition of what a technology is. Bowker calls the heart of the story "The Two Measurements That Worked," and he renders it in the style of a myth. In so doing, he shows seamlessly how society becomes embedded even in that most basic and seemingly value-independent of scientific concepts: the measurement. Bowker describes the origins and peregrinations of Schlumberger, details the ways in which the science developed in the field was translated into a form that could be defended in a patent court, and analyzes the company's strategies within the broader context of industrial science. Inside Technology series

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