Foreword

by John R. Edwards

From my perspective, every business is a service business. In the past, I taught a course named Services Marketing in an Executive MBA program in Sydney, and always started the first lecture with the statement that the course was misnamed. To imply that there is a business somewhere that can succeed without service these days is clearly absurd. I know of no industry sector where shaping the offering—even a commodity—with a package of services geared to what is perceived to be the customer’s needs, is not seen to be a core process.

I have been immersed in the marketing of services for more than three decades, in Asia Pacific, Europe, and the USA—both in management consulting and B2B technology businesses. Service excellence has always been the most critical differentiator. However, service innovation has more dimensions now than ever, due to the increasing role that IT has been playing in service enablement in the last twenty years. Therefore, business leaders and service professionals alike need to master the art and science of service innovation in order to succeed in the increasingly IT-enabled service orientated business world.

Yet, professional training in service innovation appears to be a neglected discipline in industry and educational institutions alike. Additionally, I have found very few publications that deal comprehensively with the juxtaposition of service, customer, and underlying enabling systems. This book is aimed specifically at that juxtaposition.

Service innovation practice starts with clarity of strategic intent, while creating innovative service concepts that address a particular customer problem or opportunity, and ends with distinctive value co-creation in solving/fulfilling, with the customer, that particular problem/opportunity. In between, new services, marketing, delivery (implementation) practices, and other new processes might be created. From the customer’s perspective, value co-creation is optimal only when all the steps from strategy to service outcome are well designed and executed, aligned with their needs and capabilities.

This book makes an important contribution to the development of an integrative and holistic study of service innovation theories and practices, from the context of business-aligned IT strategies. To that end, this book is a welcome, timely publication that, I believe, fills a recognised gap in the literature. The graduate class that one of the authors, Professor Eng Chew, is teaching at University of Technology, Sydney (in which I am a frequently invited guest lecturer), and from which this book has evolved, has established a highly practice-oriented approach for educating professionals in the strategic management of service innovation.

I strongly recommend this book to business and IT practitioners interested in business innovation, and faculties who plan to introduce service innovation curricula to their educational institutions.

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John Edwards is Managing Director of BTS Australasia and Senior Vice President, BTS Asia. He also holds a number of directorships and advisory roles in the technology sector. He has an extensive background in top-level management consulting with major international firms, particularly in the Asia Pacific region, as well as senior roles in international operations management in the technology sector. John formerly ran Motorola’s Asia Networks business, was CEO Asia Pacific for Capgemini Telecom Media Networks, a Partner in Ernst and Young Consulting, and Senior Partner in PA Consulting. He has developed and delivered strategy, marketing, IT, and performance improvement projects for numerous major organisations. He is an acknowledged thought leader in technology and services marketing, being a regular contributor and presenter or guest lecturer in this field. John has an MBA from Wharton Graduate School, USA, and a B.Sc (Eng) (Hons). He is a member of the Beta Gamma Sigma US Honors Society, and a Fellow of the UK Institute of Directors.