Chapter V

Customer Relationship Management in Service Mediary-Driven Mobile Services: Case I-Mode

Timo Saarinen
Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

Jukka Kallio, Markku Tinnilä and Jarkko Vesa
LTT-Research Ltd., Finland

ABSTRACT

In this chapter we introduce the concept of Service Mediary, which provides a conceptual and technical platform for electronic services. Our analysis shows that it pays off to outsource customer relationship management in electronic channels to a specialized service provider. The I-mode case study demonstrates clearly the benefits this kind of cooperation offers to content and service providers. Especially the built-in billing and revenue sharing logic are critical elements to I-mode's success story. Even more encouraging are the benefits of collaboration to customers, who will enjoy the fruits of the new networked e-business economy. A Service Mediary is in a position to understand the customer requirements and building a service offering which optimally matches those requirements. In the multi-channel business environment of tomorrow, no single company can develop cost efficiently all required services for every channel. The future belongs to specialized, closely
cooperating companies, which can offer superior customer experience at a competitive price. A Service Mediary like NTT DoCoMo with its I-mode service can offer a true win-win-win business model: service providers, customers and the Service Mediary all win in this game. Based on the analysis of the I-mode case, we can conclude that Service Mediary as a business model has a great potential in the future.

INTRODUCTION

During the past few years, new kinds of intermediaries and access technologies have emerged. This new situation has led us to a situation where it is sometimes difficult to tell who actually owns the customer. Despite the fact that the question of customer ownership in a networked business model is without any doubt essential for the success of a business, there has been very little research on the subject.

In this chapter we will present a conceptual model, which provides a tool for analyzing new business models in a networked business environment. We will use this model to analyze the success factors of NTT DoCoMo’s I-mode service, which represents a new type of intermediary.

Based on our I-mode case study, which consists of interviews and site visits in Japan, hands-on experiences of using I-mode services and literature review, we can conclude that I-mode has managed to solve the challenges related to sharing the customer relationship between the network members. Our analysis indicates also that when implemented correctly, all stakeholders (customer, service provider, intermediary) will win. This finding is in line with earlier research, which emphasize that clear benefits for all participants are crucial for intermediary’s success (e.g., Hagel III & Rayport, 1997; Kambil & Van Heck, 1998; Hamel, 2000).

SERVICE MEDIARY BUSINESS MODEL
Towards Multi-Channel and Info/Service Mediaries

In the near future consumers are going to have numerous ways of accessing various electronic services. We are migrating towards a new m-business paradigm, which will have a major impact on infrastructure and devices, applications and experiences, and relationships and supply chains (Kalakota & Robinson, 2001). We are witnessing the birth of a networked economy, which is characterized by customer-driven service development, by a profound understanding of customers’ requirements based on extensive customer relationship management and by taking the contextual setting into account. These business webs, where each business focuses on its core competence, will be more innovative, cost efficient and
18 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the product's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/customer-relationship-management-service-mediary/23754?camid=4v1


www.igi-global.com/e-resources/library-recommendation/?id=1

Related Content

Customers as External Sources of Knowledge to Foster Innovation
Laura Zapata Cantú and José Luis Pineda (2015). Handbook of Research on Managing and Influencing Consumer Behavior (pp. 552-564).
www.igi-global.com/chapter/customers-as-external-sources-of-knowledge-to-foster-innovation/121977?camid=4v1a

Business Ethics and Technology in Turkey: An Emerging Country at the Crossroad of Civilizations
www.igi-global.com/chapter/business-ethics-technology-turkey/39887?camid=4v1a
Point-of-Sale Technologies at Retail Stores: What Will The Future Be Like?
www.igi-global.com/chapter/point-sale-technologies-retail-stores/54383?camid=4v1a

An Exploratory Study of Customer Satisfaction in a Community Bank
www.igi-global.com/article/exploratory-study-customer-satisfaction-community/69949?camid=4v1a