

How the service ecosystems lens supports valuable user innovations

Trischler Jakob, Johnson Mikael, Kristensson Per

Purpose – User innovation is conducted by millions of users (e.g., consumers) who spend their unpaid discretionary time on developing individually and socially important solutions. However, most user-driven solutions remain under-developed and never diffuse to the broader market because current innovation policies do not recognize and support these activities. The purpose of the present research is to evaluate the service ecosystems lens as a theoretical basis for building an infrastructure that supports the development and dissemination of valuable user innovations.

Design/Methodology/approach – The paper is conceptual in nature. Following the examination of the user innovation literature, the service ecosystem lens is evaluated as a possible alternative to current innovation models.

Findings – The service ecosystems lens makes three important departures from the dominant producer innovation model which assumes that innovation activities are primarily initiated and driven by firms: 1) It recognizes the dependency and influence of multiple actors on innovation activities across the systems levels; 2) It removes presumed labels and roles from actors which opens possibilities for institutionalization; 3) It focuses not on for-profit but on for-use value and changes in value creation resulting from innovation.

Research limitations/implications (if applicable) – We call for in-depth investigation into specific user innovation cases in order to better understand the factors affecting user innovation activities across the service ecosystem levels.

Practical implications (if applicable) – Policy makers receive guidance on how to create an infrastructure that supports the collaborative development and dissemination of socially valuable innovations on the consumer level.

Originality/value – This research contributes a new perspective that successfully considers the potential and contributions of user innovations, rather than assuming that innovations are primarily initiated and driven by firms based on profit incentives.

Key words User Innovation, Service Ecosystems, Public Policy

Paper type – Conceptual paper

References

- Baldwin, Carliss, and Eric von Hippel. 2011. "Modeling a paradigm shift: From producer innovation to user and open collaborative innovation." *Organization Science* 22 (6):1399-1417.
- de Jong, Jeroen PJ, Nils Lennart Gillert, and Ruth M Stock. 2018. "First adoption of consumer innovations: Exploring market failure and alleviating factors." *Research Policy* 47 (2):487-497.
- Trischler, Jakob, and Michael Charles. 2018. "The Application of a Service Ecosystems Lens to Public Policy Analysis and Design: Exploring the Frontiers." *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* online first.
- Vargo, Stephen L, and Robert F Lusch. 2016. "Institutions and axioms: An extension and update of service-dominant logic." *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 44 (1):5-23.
- Vargo, Stephen L, Heiko Wieland, and Melissa Archpru Akaka. 2015. "Innovation through institutionalization: A service ecosystems perspective." *Industrial Marketing Management* 44:63-72.