

## Approach for Organizational Service Climate Creation: Action Research in a Japanese Monitor Maker

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**Abstract**—In matured manufacturing industries, many companies are trying to change their business model by adding the concept of service, which is a process of value co-creation between provider and recipient. The value proposition based on value-in-use is a key direction for corporate business success. In a manufacturing company, technical personnel should have not only technology oriented thinking but also service oriented thinking to generate new value propositions. Therefore, there is a need to create a service climate in organizations. This paper proposes a methodology to transform the way of thinking and support for knowledge co-creation with others about new corporate value propositions. We combined service dominant logic (SDL) with business model generation methodology to make a new method for a service climate creation. We conducted action research by introducing the method to twenty-five technical personnel in a Japanese monitor maker and obtained data including feedback about its availability and the impact for corporate business models. This study will help personnel to generate a service-based innovation concept, thereby promoting servitization in manufacturing companies.

### I. INTRODUCTION

In the era of industrialization, manufacturing was the central focus of both researchers and management practitioners [1]. The manufacturing industry played a significant role in the world economy. In the 21st century, the importance of services has been growing in various fields that aim to add additional value. In 1988, Vandermerwe and Rada [2] already argued the tendencies to increasing the offer of fuller market packages based on resource combinations including goods and services. Desmet et al. [3] suggested that the growth of services is essential to maintain corporate sustainability. Services have become the leading sector within the global economy, and the manufacturing industry should gain a competitive advantage within a very competitive marketplace [4; 5]. Mathieu [6] and Malleret [7] specified that when organizations gain insight into their customers' needs, they need to develop more tailored offerings.

In this situation, manufactures are pursuing the way to increase the opportunity for competitive differentiation through adapting with service climate. They have already started to sustain themselves on the basis of value delivered by shifting their market share from manufacturing to more product and service-oriented systems [8;9]. Mentioned statement providing views that manufacturing companies are becoming more oriented to the use of the product-service offering rather than the pure product [10;11;12] or trying to adapting product-service oriented climate system. However, service oriented climate adaption and implementation by a

typical manufacturing firm is very difficult. It requires the redesign of the organizational philosophy and improvements in performing capacity [13] through successful management of the interaction of business, people, and technology [14].

Therefore, in order to achieve insights into the organizational service climate approach from a typical manufacturing one, this study conducted action research with executives of a leading monitor manufacturer in Japan. This company wants to adopt a servitization strategy and practice a service climate within itself.

This study aims to present an approach to transform the way of thinking and support for knowledge co-creation with others about new corporate value propositions. For that purpose, we studied both SDL (Service Dominant Logic) and business model generation methodology, and consequently made a new system for service climate creation. The rest of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the literature on expertise improvement for service climate. Section 3 proposes our approach for promoting an organizational service climate. Section 4 describes action research in a Japanese monitor maker with its effects. The final section concludes the paper with a summary.

### II. EXPERTISE IMPROVEMENT FOR SERVICE CLIMATE

In the current service focused economy, a company usually calls for people who have talents that meet the recipients' service needs. In 2008, an IfM and IBM white paper [15] argued that “the rising demand for service innovation has huge implications for skills and the knowledge base that underpins them”. This paper declared that it is necessary to identify gaps in knowledge and skills and to minimize those gaps by dealing with complex service systems, where service related skills are required. In these circumstances, T-shaped [16] professionals (who are deep problem solvers with expert thinking skills in their home discipline but also have complex communication skills to interact with specialists from a wide range of disciplines and functional areas) are supportive.

According to Magnusson and Stratton [17], the pure manufacturing company, who wants to be servitized one, was the stress placed on the need for additional service-related skills to compliment an existing manufacturing skills base. They also declared that three major employee skills—external focus, customer accessibility, and solution orientated thinking—are essential for the servitization process as “services require a different mind-set all together; the

knowledge base is more ‘intellectual’ in nature and because of the higher interpersonal involvement, interaction skills gain weight and meaning”[17]. We can provide more scholars’ opinions, namely Mills, Neaga, Parry and Crute [18] who discussed the servitization process; they suggested that an appreciation of service strategy is needed along with a plan for building imports and sustaining new skills.

However, in a technology-based or manufacturing company, people mainly have engineering and business design skills. But when the same organization is aiming to transform into one offering service-based value then the firm should take steps to cultivate their other skills from different perspectives. If this project can complete successfully, then the people may explore themselves with a new mindset as well as a team based on multi-disciplinary skills. Then, the firm can enjoy the benefits of competitive advantages over its competitors.

### III. APPROACH FOR PROMOTING ORGANIZATIONAL SERVICE CLIMATE

#### A. GDL to SDL transformation

Organizational value creation is a major as well as a critical task for a company. However, many scholars, namely Vandermerwe and Rada [2], Oliva and Kallenberg [4], Gebauer, Fleisch and Friedli [19], Neely [20], Kosaka [21], Pawar, Beltagui, and Riedel [22], Belal, Shirahada and Kosaka [23], have argued that service encapsulation is an effective technique for value creation. Consequently, traditional goods producers need to structure their organizations or companies as product-service systems [24]. In other words, organizations should transform from a GDL viewpoint to SDL viewpoint [25] to confirm the service value climate, where technology, finance, knowledge, and human assets are important players.

SDL is a new concept of service. The value determination in SDL differs from that in GDL. The value of goods in GDL is determined by products, but the service value in SDL is determined by the customer on the basis of “value in use” [26]. In this sense, in the SDL viewpoint, customer value is co-created, where service providers and recipients are the two main players. Therefore, in order to practice a service climate in business, we need to adopt the SDL concept aiming at value-in-use into a typical business corporate system based on commitment to GDL.

#### B. Business model thinking for service value creation

In 2012, Chesbrough [27] articulated that the term business model performs two important purposes: value creation and the capturing of a portion of that value. The first one involves defining a series of activities—covering the range from raw materials through to the final customer—that produces a new product or service as value. The second function requires establishing a resource or position within that series of activities so that a firm can gain a competitive advantage.

There are numerous opinions from many famous scholars about business models. Yunus, Moingeon, and Lehmann [28]

have articulated that the concept of a business model offers a consistent and integrated picture of a company and the way to generate revenues and profit. In 2011, Joseph, Edward, McConnell, and Colson [29] stated that all aspects of a company’s approach to developing a profitable offering and delivering it to its target customers constitute a business model. A business model designates the rationale of how an organization creates, delivers, and captures value [30]. Again, according to Zott, Christoph and Raphael Amit [31], a business model is a system of activities that shows the way a company “does business” among its customers, partners, and dealers.

However, business models vary depending on organizational business vision and market situation as well as customer expectations. Different types of organizations design different types of business models. Once more, according to global market change and the aim of corporate long-term sustainability, the organization often makes significant efforts to innovate their processes and products and after all their business model. Shafer et al. [32; 33] noted that business model innovation thinking is the process of exploring possible business model alternatives that can be trialed to commercialize any given idea prior to going out into the market and expending resources. Successfully thinking of a business model that is different from the current one is difficult for any organization. However, business model thinking helps companies in the product or service innovation game that can create as well as share service value in order to stay ahead.

The technology company is a good example that can give hints as to the cause of business model innovation thinking. The world of technology services is changing rapidly as on-premise technology moves to the cloud and as up-front application and user license fees are replaced by micro-transactions. This means that cloud computing is a new paradigm and an emerging technology that flexibly offers information technology (IT) resources and services over the Internet [34]. In this position, achieving the breaking up of the traditional value chains and self-transformation into sophisticated ones requires the development of business based on new business models of technology. This new business model should consider the total service orientation viewpoint. We also note that if you are a technology company, the most dramatic effect of megatrends like cloud computing, managed services, and the rise of consumer technology will not be felt in your company’s product line. The true disruption will be to your business model. Future customers, the next generation of internal leaders, and shareholders are of a different mindset. They do not want to pay enough out of big “CapEx (capital expenditure)” budgets, but they still expect or may agree to lower “cloud” prices from “OpEx (operational expenditure)” budgets [35]. When the product or service of your organization offerings create true value for recipients or if they successfully consume the business value from your organization

All over again, the world is becoming more service oriented, and the growing importance of services is one of the

key trends witnessed in recent years [36]. Manufacturing and service organizations offering only goods or services are finding it increasingly difficult to remain competitive. Companies need to move up the value chain and compete on the basis of value delivered [37] as servitized value by providing ‘fuller market packages’ or ‘bundles of customer-focused combinations of goods, services, support, self-service, and knowledge’ [2]. Here, we would like to consider the example of IBM, the world’s leading computer and technology firm. Until 1990, its business model was based on offering computer products and computer maintenance services. Then, around 1990, IBM came to realize that to maintain its leading position in the global marketplace it would have to modify its business model and that it should be based on offering a full range of total solutions to its customers (including technical support, training, know-how, knowledge, and solutions). It thus transformed or innovated its business model into one of a company focused on designing and delivering customer centric value and made itself into a successful servitized company.

*C. Approach integrating individual service oriented thinking and collective business model thinking*

An innovation is an approach that leads to new services and it improves the quality of service. We discuss several service innovation methodologies, such as the knowledge space concept [23] and recursive approach [38] for service value creation. A service innovation chart (SIC) is the integration of individual types of service oriented thinking and collective business model thinking for creating, managing, and sustaining mutual value, as shown in Fig. 1.

Redesigning and understanding the service value innovation of a company begins with a chart showing the organizations involved with its capabilities and actions that lead to the value proposition. In this research, we have developed a SIC in an attempt to answer the questions: where is value being created and what is the proper way for it to become a service value chain.

In the traditional business sense, value has usually been viewed as the assembling of a fixed set of goods that is delivered by suppliers and distribution channels. For example, high technology giants Apple or Samsung offer innovative products as value with technology and process innovation, and these companies manage value chains by responding rapidly to ever changing strategic challenges. The good capabilities of those companies is beyond doubt, but the services that are truly required by customers and their long-term sustainability are still big questions. Nevertheless, we have detected that this thinking is one kind of ‘business view myopia’ because, according to its long-term business viewpoint, the company should meet the recipients’ requirements by offering a total value package. Therefore, if an organization recognizes, produces, delivers and successfully manages recipients’ values from a long-term perspective, then all of those activities are included in service value innovation.

Therefore, according to the SIC, a company should incorporate the concept of GDL-to-SDL and business model generation thinking for value sustainability. In this chart describing traditional- or GDL-based concept goods, producers are indicating to technology as a core tool of value creation. From this perspective, they are considering economic gain as the main target. Consequently, the organizations are developing technology that suits their customer segments and offering products as value to recipients. By contrast, manufacturers based on the SDL concept are starting to think of the value propositions for existing and potential customers. They give more priority to building a continuous relationship with stakeholders’ aims to gather up-to-date knowledge applicable to long-term sustainability. Hence, if a company adapts in SDL based on GDL and confirms new value for customers by practicing business model generation thinking, then their service will be innovated and the company will become able to meet market expectations.

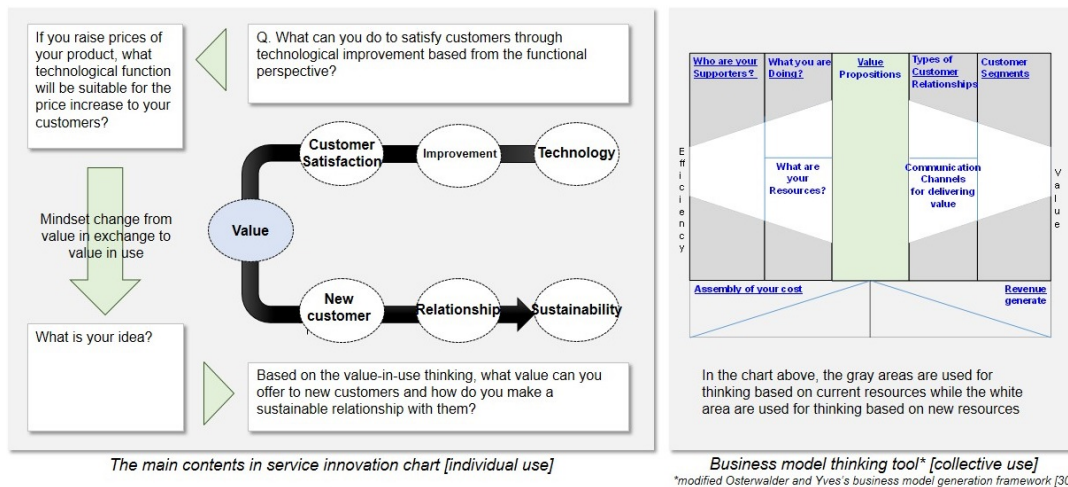


Fig. 1 Approach for creating service climate

IV. ACTION RESEARCH IN A JAPANESE MONITOR MAKER

A. Company Background

The EIZO Corporation is a leading monitor maker in Japan. It was founded as Hakui Electric Corporation. In 1968, EIZO began as an original equipment manufacturer of black and white televisions. In 1984, and capitalizing on a global PC revolution, it expanded its business overseas. After 17 years as an original equipment manufacturer, the company began a new chapter in its history by selling its display monitors.

However, to advance the company's core competences in the development of imaging equipment such as computer monitors, EIZO has built up a range of key technologies. The corporate management of EIZO focuses on building bridges between various business units and developing new products. They are differentiating from their competitors by products, such as FlexScan high-quality LCD monitors which deliver a high degree of added value. RadiForce, medical display monitors, meet the exacting requirements of the medical market. The company has also developed ColorEdge, which are calibratable LCD monitors, for the demanding graphics market.

EIZO is recognized as the world's leading specialist in high-quality visual display systems. The company promises to continue to consolidate its position with products and services that integrate excellence in technology with new, cutting-edge software applications. EIZO wish to meet

customers' expectations and maintain long-term value by offering total solutions.

B. Application

Data were collected between September to December 2013. First, we delivered several lectures on service innovation and introduced the methodology of the SIC, service approach, and business model generation framework to twenty-five personnel in technology development department of EIZO. After every lecture, we provided them with homework about service thinking, service value proposition using a business model generation framework, and how to transform the current business model into a service-based business model.

In 1<sup>st</sup> step of fig. 2 showing that by conveying lecture, we are sharing knowledge about service science and its application methodologies among EIZO corporation's peoples. In 2<sup>nd</sup> step, we divided 25 personnel in 3 sets then every set is doing group discussion and same time they are preparing feedback over SIC and business model generation thinking. In 3<sup>rd</sup> step, every group is presenting their viewpoint on mentioned space including questions and answers. We did the mentioned three steps in our every lecture schedule aim to create service climate opportunity within this monitor maker.

Additionally, we have specified them following thirteen service business related questions including 11 pre-coded queries and 2 open interrogations. In this paper, we mainly focus on the data from 11 pre-coded queries as shown in table1.



Fig. 2 An action research procedure with Japanese monitor maker

TABLE 1 FEEDBACK FORM

About the service innovation chart (SIC)	
[1]	The chart makes me think of new things.
[2]	It was easy to fill in the blanks in the chart.
[3]	The chart is useful for promoting service oriented thinking.
About the business model (BM) generation framework that we used	
[4]	It was effective to overview this company's way of doing business.
[5]	It enabled me to discuss with others about my opinions.
[6]	The framework has a close relationship with the SIC
About the lecture series and its outputs	
[7]	It is enough to take four classes on thinking service innovation.
[8]	Our company highly needs this lecture series.
[9]	The final output was beyond my expectations.
[10]	I could take part in discussions about important things for the future of this company.
[11]	I could acquire my own understanding about the concept of service.

Responses are given by indicating agreement with statements using the Likert 5-scale (from disagree (1) to agree (5))

C. Effects

The data were analyzed using SPSS software. Because of the limited sample size, we used descriptive statistics to analyze the effects of action research. The results are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

From the affirmative ratio, which was computed by summing the degree of “relatively agree” and “agree”, we found that 88% of employees agreed that the SIC contributes to thinking of new things regardless of any difficulties in filling in the chart (only 4% agreed that filling in the blanks in this chart was easy). In addition, 80% of employees agreed that this chart is useful for promoting service oriented thinking.

Again, 96% employees agreed that the business model generation framework is effective to overview the company’s way of doing business, 92% thought positively that the business model generation framework enabled them to discuss with others about their opinions, and 48% reflected that this framework has a close relationship with the SIC.

Furthermore, 16% thought that four lectures were sufficient for thinking service innovation, 92% believed that lectures of this kind are highly needed for their company, and 56% said that the final output of the lectures was beyond their expectations.

In the correlation coefficient analysis, there was a moderately positive relationship between items 3 and 6 ( $r=0.508$ ). This result indicates that there is some relationship between our activity introducing the service transformation concept and business model thinking and the fostering of service oriented thinking. In addition, the correlations between items 3 and 8 ( $r=0.418$ ), items 4 and 8 ( $r=0.455$ ), and items 5 and 8 ( $r=0.468$ ) show relatively strong

relationships. These results indicate that employees realized the importance of making a service climate in their organization. The statistics show that there was a weak inverse relationship between filling in the blanks in the SIC and the effects of this chart for innovation thinking. The effects for promoting service oriented thinking and innovation thinking also had a weak inverse relationship.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Modern corporations have recognized that designing an SDL-based or value-in-use-based value proposition is a vital route for corporate business success. Academics and experts agreed on this point that transformation to a value-in-use based value proposition from goods based or GDL based is difficult. Very few industries—notably IBM, GE, and Siemens—have been successful in this transformation from a technology-based vision to a solution as well as service-based vision. In other words, those particular companies have successfully created a service climate in their management practice from a high-tech climate.

This study was conducted in response to the methodology of transforming the way of thinking and supporting knowledge co-creation with other partners for new corporate value propositions of a technology-based company. We developed the service innovation value chart approach though a combination of SDL and business model generation thinking methodology. This enables a pure high-tech manufacturing company to obtain a service climate with itself. Moreover, this paper presented action research in a Japanese monitor maker which involved introducing this method to twenty-five technical personnel and it explained the obtained

TABLE 2 FEEDBACK RESULTS (N=25)

	Affirmative rate (%)
<i>About the service innovation chart (SIC)</i>	
[1] The chart makes me think of new things.	88
[2] It was easy to fill in the blanks in the chart.	4
[3] The chart is useful for promoting service oriented thinking.	80
<i>About the business model (BM) generation framework that we used</i>	
[4] It was effective to overview the company’s way of doing business.	96
[5] It enabled me to discuss with others about my opinions.	92
[6] The framework has a close relationship with the SIC.	48
<i>About the lecture series and its outputs</i>	
[7] It is enough to take four classes on thinking service innovation.	16
[8] Our company highly needs this lecture series.	92
[9] The final output was beyond my expectations.	56

TABLE 3 CORRELATIONS AMONG ITEMS (N=25)

Category #	Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
SIC	1 Effect for innovation thinking	1								
	2 Easy to use	-.365	1							
	3 Effect for service thinking	-.354	.284	1						
BM	4 Effect for overviewing	-.098	.026	.239	1					
	5 Effect for group discussion	-.224	-.073	.144	.211	1				
	6 Relationship with SIC	-.059	.277	<b>.508</b>	.240	.016	1			
Others	7 Time restriction	.144	.360	-.157	.008	-.337	<b>.323</b>	1		
	8 Need for service knowledge diffusion	-.243	.209	<b>.418</b>	<b>.455</b>	<b>.468</b>	.118	-.107	1	
	9 Output quality	.035	.054	-.004	-.011	.137	-.100	.197	.167	1

data and feedback analyzed by SPSS. The results show the positive influence of mentioned method for building a service-based corporate business model as a way of promoting servitization in technology-based companies. This study is a first step for generalization of practical servitization. We need more samples to test our approach for generalization of the model by focusing more about both human motivation and group diversity for promoting servitization as a future research.

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