



Sustainable Consumer Services: Business Solutions for Household Markets

Minna Halme

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The goal for consumer oriented business should be to make a profit and to do it without costing the Earth. Yet exactly how to satisfy the needs and wants of consumers without contributing to environmental degradation is proving to be the essential, but elusive goal for businesses in the 21st century.

The leading solution is to substitute material consumption with the consumption of services that offer consumers convenience and value but eliminate much of the inefficiency and waste associated with our throw-away society. Sustainable consumer services for households - services that are delivered to consumers at the premises such as home delivery of organic food, appliance leasing, mobile laundry services, internet marketing of homeservices or car pool schemes - provide a key part of the answer of how to reduce material consumption and waste while still turning a profit. Yet until now there has been little information to guide the development of such business models and practices, and to develop ways to make service-based consumption more attractive to consumers than object-ownership-based models.

This book, equally a practical business handbook and business course text, provides the missing link in sustainable household service competitiveness by examining the issues, looking at business models, providing dozens of real-life best-practice examples and presenting data from the first large-scale consumer survey that explains consumer behaviour and what they want from home service provision. The book is an essential resource for businesses and public or nonprofit organizations and housing organizations entering the growing consumer services market. It provides a wealth of business know-how on what works and what doesn't, how to avoid potential pitfalls, and how to provide consumer services at the household level that are profitable, environmentally sustainable and that add to consumers' quality of life.

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