

Supporting Service Innovation through Knowledge Management: Practical Insights and Case Studies

(A book by the KnowledgeBoard and the Swiss KM Forum Communities for the Global Knowledge Community)

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After the success of its first two books on “[Real-Life Knowledge Management: Lessons from the Field](#)” and “[Hands-On Knowledge Co-Creation and Sharing: Practical Methods and Techniques](#)” and requests from the community, the editors are happy to launch a call for contributions for a new book on ‘**Supporting Service Innovation through Knowledge Management: Practical Insights and Case Studies**’. For the first time, this book will be developed in strong cooperation with the Swiss Knowledge Management Forum (SKMF, see <http://www.skmf.net/>), a Community that incubates and promotes new ways of thought in the area of KM in Switzerland. Again for the first time, this book will be supported by a number of sponsors from industry.

We invite authors to submit extended abstracts covering case studies and other practical insights on how knowledge management methods, techniques or tools have successfully helped innovation in the service industry. The principal audience of the book are practitioners, CEOs and innovation managers. This book will equip them with a set of usable and practical examples of the different KM methods, tools and instruments that support service innovation.

Background:

The term ‘services’ covers an extremely diverse set of economical and organisational activities. Services are economic activities offered by one party to another, most commonly employing time-based performances to bring about desired results in recipients themselves or in objects or other assets for which purchasers have responsibility (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). Services involve the application of specialized competences (knowledge and skills), through deeds, processes, and performances (Lusch & Vargo, 2006). Normally, customers act in the role of co-producers (Fitzsimmons & Fitzsimmons, 2003).

Service providers range from small, labour intensive companies with a low use of technology to capital intensive, big organisations that are major users of information and communication technologies. They can operate in highly specialised niche markets with little competition or in highly competitive markets; they can focus on local, national or international markets (Windrum & Tomlinson, 1999¹).

Service innovation involves changes in the process of delivering existing services or the development of completely new kinds of services (Leiponen, 2005²). Service innovation is said to be different from innovation in the manufacturing sector due to the more informal and ad hoc nature of the innovation activities (Sundbo, 1997³) and to what Barras (1986⁴) calls ‘the reversed innovation cycle’ compared to manufacturing innovation: technology adoption ignites service process innovation, which

¹ Windrum, P. and Tomlinson, M. (1999), Knowledge-intensive services and international competitiveness: a four country comparison, *Technology Analysis and Strategic Management*, Vol.11, No.3, pp.391-408.

² Leiponen, A. (2005) Organization of knowledge and innovation: The case of Finnish business services, *Industry and Innovation* Vol.12, pp.185-203.

³ Sundbo (1997) Management of innovation in services, *The Service Industries Journal*, Vol.17, No. 3, pp.432-455.

⁴ Barras, R. (1986). *Towards a theory of innovation in services*, *Research Policy*, 15, pp. 161–173.

eventually leads to service product innovation. A recent study on the innovative capabilities of service providers in Germany⁵ confirms these differences: 80% of the surveyed participants do not have any innovation management system in their company, 57% do not possess a clear innovation strategy, 47% do not have clear responsibilities in the innovation management process, 66% do not systematically measure the success of their innovation activities and 12% believe that their innovation culture does not enable innovative activities. However, competitive advantage in the Europe of the future will be gained mainly through developing innovative services. Understanding innovation in service companies is becoming acute as the share of the service sector in terms of gross domestic product and employment keeps rising, but service industries' productivity growth has been slow or even negative (Leiponen, 2005²).

We believe that, despite the obvious differences between the manufacturing and the service industry, there is a massive potential and need for the improvement of service innovation. Knowledge Management has the potential to support service innovation as it provides methodologies that help organizations to uncover knowledge and create new knowledge.

Overall Objective

This book aims to investigate and show case different industrial experiences and practical insights in to the role of knowledge management to support service innovation within and across organisations. Knowledge Management is said to support the management of innovation through creating and integrating new knowledge with existing organisational knowledge in order to increase the organisations ability to achieve service innovation (Numprasertchai and Igel, 2004⁶).

But how exactly can Knowledge Management support service innovation? How can an organisation utilize the potential of its collective knowledge to provide new, better or smarter services? How can knowledge be exploited to differentiate service provision? Further, how can a manufacturer transform its mindset from being a provider of products to being a provider of products and related services, making best use of its traditional manufacturing knowledge?

Recommended Topics:

The book invites practical insights in the form of case studies that can serve as examples for successful practice in supporting service innovation through different knowledge management methods, techniques, tools etc. These case studies should address but are not limited to the following sub questions (you are more than welcome to propose your own topics):

1. How are KM and Innovation Management in the specific environment of service innovation intertwined? What is special about these innovation processes, and how can they be supported by KM?
2. How do innovative service ideas emerge? What is the mindset that divides the innovative from the non-innovative, and how can KM methods support innovativeness amongst employees?
3. How does the interaction between service providers and their clients impact on the innovativeness of the service provider, and what KM tools and methods support such processes like idea gathering and development?
4. What organisational structures enable the smooth flow of knowledge and support efficient innovation management in service environments? What specific learning contexts are needed, what is the role of R&D? Furthermore, what is the role of technology and IT infrastructures in service innovation management?

⁵ See. PwC, DLR & EBS (2007): Innovation Performance. Das Erfolgsgeheimnis innovativer Dienstleister. Online available at http://www.pwc.de/fileserver/EmbeddedItem/PwC-EBS-DLR_Innovation-Performance_0606_low.pdf?docId=e5862c43f75d959&componentName=pubDownload_hd

⁶ Numprasertchai, S. and Igel B. (2004) Managing knowledge in new product and service development: A new management approach for innovative research organizations, *International Journal of Technology Management*, Vol.28, No.7/8., pp.667-684.

5. What kind of leadership and organisational culture does support the development of innovative ideas and their transformation into services? How can Knowledge Management help to establish or nurture leadership and organisational culture that favour innovation?
6. What KM methods should be used for organisational communication and decision making in order to foster service innovation? Just to name a few: How do KM and risk management, KM and trend analysis or KM and innovation controlling interplay?
7. What specific KM approaches and methods facilitate the transformation from the product to the service paradigm? How can existing product knowledge be converted into valuable service offerings? How does an organisation “remember” what it needs to preserve to successfully transform itself – and how does it “forget” what is obsolete?

Target Audience:

The prime audience of the book is industry practitioners, CEOs and innovation managers from service companies, further consultants, researchers, and academics with an interest in the use and development of effective techniques and mechanisms to foster service innovation through Knowledge Management. This book will equip them with a set of usable practical insights into the different KM methods, tools and instruments that support service innovation.

Submission Procedure:

We would like to invite expressions of interest in the form of extended abstract proposals from authors wishing to contribute to this book. We welcome especially contributions from author teams (2-3 authors). Proposals should clearly outline the addressed topic area and specific question (e.g. how do KM methods support service provider – client communication and thereby impact innovation processes of the service provider). Extended abstracts should be around 1500-2000 words and should be presented in the following form:

Title	The chapter title should be 10 words or less
Author(s)	Provide contact details for each author including name, surname, organisation, and email
Keywords	Provide up to 5 keywords
Question(s)	Describe the topic area and specific question (e.g. how do KM methods support service provider – client communication and thereby impact innovation processes of the service provider).
Objectives	Define the "tangible and measurable" objectives of the use of the KM method/ technique in service innovation processes.
Approach	Briefly describe the overall approach used in the method/technique.
Results	Provide a short summary of the types of results that may be achieved.
Practical Insights & Case Studies	Briefly describe 1-2 cases where the method/technique has been used.

All submissions should be sent to the editors of the book: kb-book3@unbla.org

Key Dates and Publication Timeline:

- Submission of expression of interest (extended abstract of up to 2000 words): **31 March 2008**
- Notification of abstract acceptance and invitation to full chapters: **30 April 2008**
- Submission of full chapters: **31 August 2007**
- Reviewers' comments e-mailed to authors: **30 September 2008**
- Submission of revised formatted (ready for print) chapters: **31 October 2008**
- Publication of book in both digital and print form: **Book launch at the SKMF spring event 2009 in Zürich, authors will be invited to present their chapters.**

Publication Details:

The peer-reviewed book, “**Supporting Service Innovation through Knowledge Management: Practical Insights and Case Studies**” will be published in both digital (online at www.knowledgeboard.com and www.skmf.net) and print form by KnowledgeBoard and SKMF and disseminated to their communities and affiliates at large. To ensure wide distribution and ensure your rights, the book will be released under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivativeWorks License. Under this license, readers will be free to copy, distribute, and perform the work presented in the book under the following conditions: they must give the original author credit for the work; they may not use it for commercial purposes; they may not alter, transform, or build upon the work. You can find more information on the terms and conditions of this license at (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5).

Inquiries and Submissions should be forwarded to the editors at: kb-book3@unbla.org