

CUSTOMER-CENTRIC SOLUTIONS: THE ENABLING ROLE OF PLATFORM AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

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BACKGROUND

- Companies have started to move from the production and sale of single products or services, to the provision of **customer-centric solutions** (CCS) in order to meet several needs exhibited by customers (*Vandermerwe and Rada, 1989; Davies et al. 2004; Tuli et al. 2007; Storbacka, 2011*).
- **Digitization** and the enhancement of digital technologies such as the **mobile Internet**, the **Internet of Things** (IoT) and **cloud computing** have the potential to support this transformation leading to the shift from physical to digitized services (*Sousa and Voss, 2006*) and from traditional and relational (face-to-face) relationship to technology-driven one (*Yoo et al. 2012*).
- These developments are also paralleled (and often enabled) by **platforms** enabled by group of actors organized in ecosystems which contribute to the platform itself with product, services or technology (*Cusumano, 2010; Rong et al, 2012; Gawer and Cusumano, 2014,*).

SHIFT

From:

Product-oriented



To:

Customer oriented

Physical Face-to-face relationship



Digitized Technology-driven relationship

Dyadic (supply chain) relationship



Network (ecosystem) relationship



Digitization and platforms developed thanks to the contribution of a business ecosystem can support the creation of customer-oriented and integrated solutions



BACKGROUND

DIGITAZATION

PLATFORM



CUSTOMER CENTRIC SOLUTION

Retail



Smartphone



Domotics



Sharing economy



Reviews





OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY



Rationale

The literature provides few contributions about how the **exploitation of digitization** affects **servitization** (specific dimensions).

Moreover, the role of a **platform strategy** enabled by **business ecosystems** in the development of **customer-centric solutions** is underinvestigated.

Objective

Studying the **enabling role** of **digital technologies** and **platforms** in the provision of **customer-centric solutions** (not only manufacturing ones) focusing on the **dimensions** affected by these elements.

Methodology

- Literature review ✓
- Literature case studies ✗
- Empirical case studies ✗



PRELIMINARY RESULTS

- Definition of the boundaries of the research
- Preliminary definition of the research framework
- Preliminary identification of interesting contexts to be analysed



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1

How platform model helps companies in the development of a Customer Centric Solutions?

Understand how platforms enabled by the contribution of several firms could be adopted in the industry context and evaluate the impacts on the development of Customer Centric Solutions

RQ2

How digital technologies enable the provision of Customer Centric Solutions?

Evaluate the impacts of the main functions of digital technologies in the provision of Customer Centric Solutions



RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

RQ1



Customer centric solution



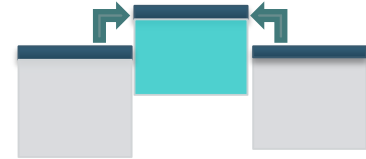
RQ2

Platform

Digitization



CUSTOMER CENTRIC SOLUTIONS [CCS]

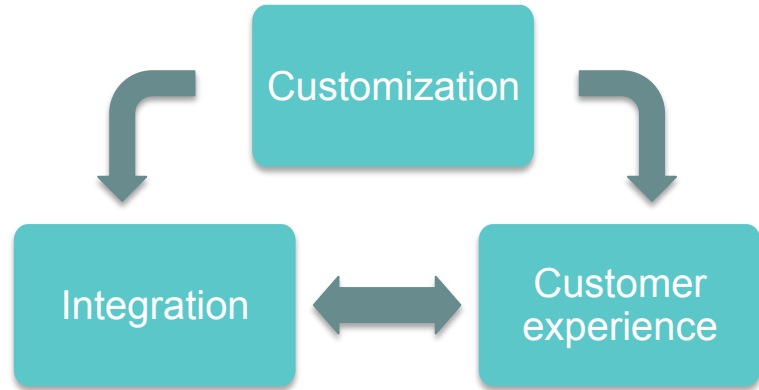


The importance for the customer does not stand in the combination of goods and services itself, but rather in the continuous relationships and support by the supplier and the possibility of customizing (Storbacka, 2011)

Customers view a solution as a set of customer–supplier relational processes comprising: 1) customer requirements definition; 2) customization and integration of goods and/or services; 3) their deployment; 4) postdeployment customer support (Tuli and Kohli, 2007).



Customer centric solution: *a customized and integrated combination of material and/or immaterial components aimed at meeting customers' needs and providing an improved customer experience*



Some references scrutinized for the definition: Davies et al (2004), Sampson and Frohle (2006), Tuli and Kohli (2007), Neely (2009), Storbacka (2011), Salonen(2011), Park et al. (2012)



PLATFORM



- ▶ The “Platform” concept has its origins in the manufacturing sector (e.g. automotive) to exploit modularization and allow easy modification of the product through the addition, removal, or substitution of features.
- ▶ Nowadays this concept does not only refer to the physical object, but also the organisation strategy in which a company allows two or more disparate groups to interact over a platform to co-create value
- ▶ Companies operating in ICT sectors such as Qualcomm, Cisco, Intel and more recently Apple, Google, Amazon and Facebook have adopted the concept of platform for their business.



PLATFORM: concept that gives other businesses the opportunity to connect their business with that of the platform and easily contribute to it with the integration of products, services or knowledge on top of it. The objective is to co-create value whose benefit will be experienced by all the actors involved (customers included).

Internal
platform

VS

External
platform

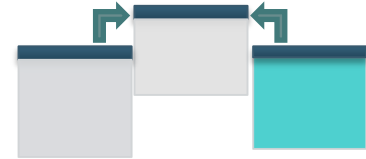


(Gawer and Cusumano, 2014)

Some references scrutinized for the definition:
Sawney (2008), Cusumano (2010), Ceccagnoli and Forman (2012), Gawer and Cusumano (2014)



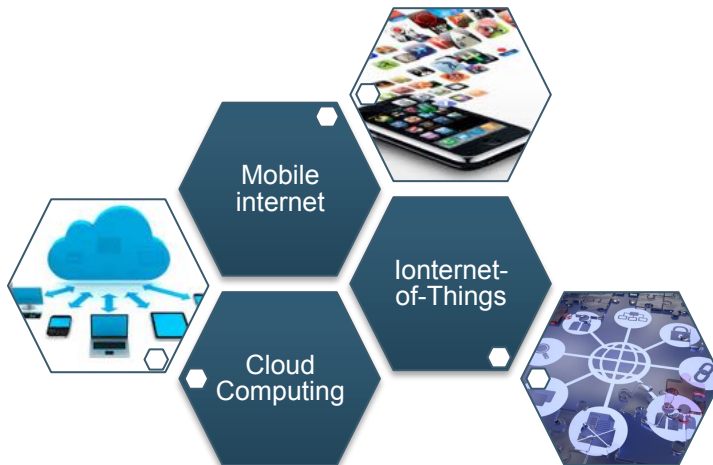
DIGITIZATION



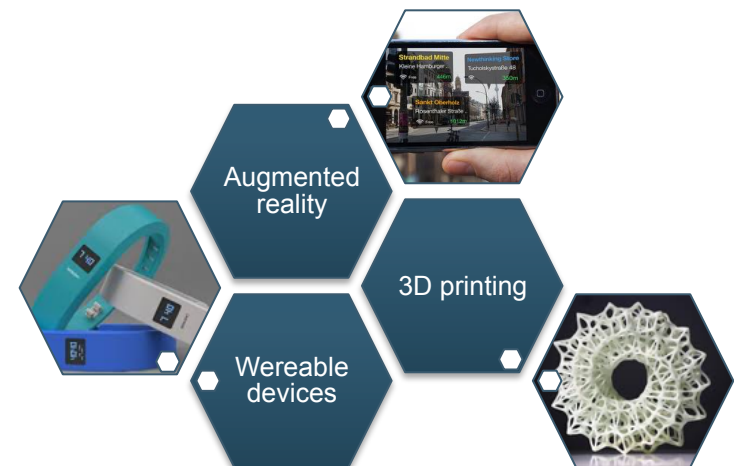
Exploitation of digital technologies has also improved the efficiency and the effectiveness of service operations such as the collection and processing of real-time information about the condition and utilization of the installed base for delivering remote monitoring services (Kowalkowski, Kindstrom and Gebauer, 2013).

To deliver advanced services manufacturers deploy ICTs that provide remote monitoring of product (asset) location, condition and use. This enables actions to manage maintenance, repair, field operation, and improvements to product design. (Baines and Lightfoot, 2014).

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES CONSIDERED:



DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES TO BE EVALUATED:





DIMENSIONS AND VARIABLES

RQ1



Customer centric solution

Dimensions and variables

- Strategy
- Operations
- Offer
- Customer
- Performances
- ...



RQ2

Platform

Configurations and characteristics

- Stakeholders
- Peer segments
- Requirements
- Types
- Architecture
- Openness degree
- Key transactions
- Multi-sided markets

Digitization

Functions

- Collecting data from the product
- Collecting data from customer behavior
- Automation
- Resource sharing
- Guaranteeing ubiquity
- Performance measuring
- ...





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