

The role of smart technology in shaping value co-creation routines. A study of service ecosystem change

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Purpose: This paper aims to extend current models of ecosystem transformation. A theory of routine dynamics is used to explain the interconnections between changes in different elements and at different levels of a service ecosystem. This theoretical lens is then applied to specify the role that smart technology plays in triggering change in the performative and emotional aspects of resource integration and value co-creation.

Method: The study builds on earlier conceptualizations of service ecosystem change, technology-enabled change, and routine dynamics to propose a new, integrated framework. A qualitative case study approach is applied to empirically study service ecosystem change in elderly care case, where workshops and in-depth interviews with different actors involved were conducted to explore the adoption of new, smart technology and to learn about the process and outcome of the changes.

Findings: We show the usefulness of new, smart technology, when enacted as a resource-in-use in two micro-level routines. The analysis zooms in on how value co-creation is transformed, in not only the two routines with implications for their immediate participants but also in the other, interconnected routines in the broader service ecosystem. In this case, smart technology enabled transformative service ecosystem change, in particular with regard to the performative and emotional aspects of value co-creation.

Implications: The study demonstrates how technology shapes resource integration and value co-creation. As an enabling resource, it can form a core change mechanism, triggering multiple changes in different resource integrating and value co-creating routines in service ecosystems.

Value: The paper contributes to current calls for analyses of how a service ecosystem adjusts and transforms due to changes in its lower-level properties and configurations (Akaka et al., 2013; Frow et al., 2016; Vargo, Koskela-Huotari, et al., 2017; Carida et al., 2018; Skyler et al., 2019). Using the theory of routine dynamics, it offers a way to address interconnections between such properties and configurations in changing service ecosystem.