

Foreword

The approach to understand companies as complex systems of business processes has become a central theme of Information Systems and a major instrument to reflect and solve business challenges. Process models are the fundamentals of Business Process Management and crucial to understand, analyze and design processes. Therefore it is quite surprising and astonishing, that the processes of the customer are just sparsely considered in science and practice. Although customer orientation is seen as one of the most essential aspects for a long-lasting success in business, Business Process Management tends to focus on the production processes of the supply side – sometimes with the inclusion of external factors from the customer (“customer integration”). Yet, in order to increase the worth of one’s offers, it is important to understand where and how value originates for the customer. In order to do so, one needs to establish a process-based customer intelligence which reflects current and future needs, especially with regard to the processes on customers’ side.

In this book the author approves by a comprehensive literature review the lack of customer process models, calls for further research in this area and points with the development of a method to an approach that may solve this problem.

By reflecting the transformation on value creation in marketing from a product-over-service to an experience-oriented focus, the author underpins in detail the importance of a process-based customer orientation, which is barely implemented in Business Process Management. The literature review shows that only a few publications mention customer processes – quite apart from customer process models. In this respect, Michael Hewing succeeded very well with his in-depth study to present the current state of research and identify a highly relevant and quite visible research gap.

Further, the author presents with the Business Process Blueprinting a method to visualize customer processes in a consistent and structured way. As a first step, the marketing approach “Service Blueprinting”, which assigns process elements depending on the managerial context to specific activity levels, has been combined with established modeling languages. Next, the logic has been expanded towards customer processes. Empirical data has been collected by a field study in cooperation with the medical

technology company BIOTRONIK SE & Co. KG, which is one of the biggest producers of implantable electronic cardiovascular devices worldwide.

This book addresses a problem of academic and practical relevance and includes, with the Business Process Blueprinting, a first solution. Most important, Michael Hewing links with his approach two disciplines that usually operate independently from each other. The Business Process Blueprinting bridges the existing gap between the two fields and incorporates the respective other point of view into their familiar perspective. This way, a dialogue with experts outside the respective subject area can be initiated that seems long overdue, yet very promising.

For the sake of the professions, I hope that Michael Hewing's plea for a process-based customer orientation will meet high response in academic and practical communities and initiate further research.

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Business Process Blueprinting

A Method for Customer-Oriented Business Process
Modeling

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