

Foreword

Mass customizers across all product categories continuously strive to increase attractiveness of their co-design interfaces to keep ahead of their competition and increase sales. Recent studies even show that the industry is continuously growing especially driven by numerous start-ups with technological advances and new digital toolkits at the customer interface. However with the increasing proliferation of service channels and digital media at the customer interface, the need arises to better understand how these channels and media may be coordinated to increase customer value perception along the co-design process. Stefan Thallmaier addresses this challenge and his thesis provides convincing and well-founded answers. Based on multiple empirical studies he invites the reader to

- identify the key challenges for increasing the value perception of customers in the co-design process with digital media,
- differentiate online co-design interfaces according to their interaction features and dominant approaches for social co-design activities, and
- to understand the relevance of creative achievement in online customer co-design and the potential of live help.

Stefan Thallmaier empirically derives that customer value perception profits from varying levels of social presence in the co-design process. Higher social presence fosters discovery and facilitates reinforcement. Lower social presence in contrast strengthens the feeling of creative achievement. Stefan Thallmaier's thesis has been accepted as doctoral dissertation in 2014 at the HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management. It is comprehensive in its approach and reveals interesting insights for researchers and practitioners alike to better understand the process of customer co-design in mass customization. The work equally appeals by its academic scope and practical reach. It covers relevant examples from practice, which help the reader to follow the argumentation with ease and delivers useful recommendations how to adapt co-design interfaces in order to increase attractiveness. I congratulate Stefan Thallmaier on the tangible and convincing results of his research. The book is a must read for all those who have an interest in customer co-design far beyond the boundaries of the mass customization industry. I wish the book the broad dissemination it deserves and Stefan Thallmaier all the best for his future career.

Prof. Dr. Kathrin M. Mösllein

Customer Co-Design

A Study in the Mass Customization Industry

Thallmaier, S.R.

2015, XXI, 218 p. 29 illus., Softcover

ISBN: 978-3-658-07525-5