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From walls to experience servitization of workplace

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Publication date

2017

Document Version

Final published version

Citation (APA)

Jylhä, T., & Junnila, S. (2017). *From walls to experience: servitization of workplace*. 293-293. Abstract from ERES 2017: 24th Annual Conference of the European Real Estate Society , Delft, Netherlands.

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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



EUROPEAN REAL ESTATE SOCIETY
24TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
28 JUNE - 1 JULY
DELFT / NETHERLANDS



279 From walls to experience - servitization of workplace

New ways of working challenge workplace management: increasing mobility and crossing of organizational boundaries require re-evaluation of both workplace design and service delivery. However, the processes and structures of workplace management are still traditional and managers, together with outsourced service providers, often fail to serve the needs of mobile employees.

The above-mentioned changes stimulate discussions about the development of workplaces. While the topic has been approached from many angles, like spatial transformation (e.g. Rytönen 2016), organizational relationship (e.g. Ross and Myerson 2006), privacy (e.g. DEGW 2001) or sharing levels (Brinko et al, 2014), literature with business perspective seems to be scarce. Termaat et al. (2014) and Cole et al. (2014) attempted to categorize workplaces from a business viewpoint within single organisation boundaries. Here, we continue with the business angle by exploring how workplace is commercialized through servitization and various business models. To answer this, we try to identify the elements that are added to the business offerings in workplace services.

This paper follows multiple case study methodology. The data is gathered as a part of a larger project and it includes: observations of various workplace settings, interviews with mobile workers and service providers. We take business model design approach in order to study business offerings. We validate our findings by exploring other industries to discover any analogies in business models.

The results of this study indicate that workplace has been transitioning from physical space being the central proposal for workplace towards an offering where physical space becomes only a component. Other elements such as services and experience are increasing in significance in total workplace offering.

This study might contribute to service providers who want not only be agile but also flexible in their service provision. Academically, the research increases the business perspective to workplace management studies, which tend to be either technical or psychological.

KEYWORDS: Workplace development, Mobile work, Services, Servitization, Business models