
Christian Kowalkowski  
Linköping University  
Wolfgang Ulaga  
INSEAD

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Abstract

In recent years, the global subscription economy has seen tremendous growth in consumer industries. While subscription business models are today also increasingly regarded as a strategic imperative for business-to-business (B2B) firms, especially goods-centric B2B players suffer from low subscription maturity and struggle with implementation of such disruptive go-to-market approaches. Against this backdrop, we (1) delineate what makes subscription offers in B2B markets unique, (2) present a classification framework for B2B subscriptions, and (3) discuss how firms can leverage growth through subscriptions. Relying on depth interviews with 24 executives responsible for subscriptions, we outline key characteristics of B2B subscriptions and propose a new typology. We further show how subscriptions can help firms accelerate monetization opportunities, test drive innovations, and enhance the customer experience. This study also highlights the need for fundamental changes in marketing, sales, and other functions.

Subject Areas: Business-to-Business Marketing, Marketing Strategy, Service Marketing

Track: Business-To-Business Marketing & Supply Chain Management