The Convergence of Content and Commerce: Exploring a New Type of Business Model

Full Paper

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Abstract

Media companies and retailers make increasing efforts to integrate content-oriented and commerce-oriented business models online. This has led to the emergence of a new type of business model called content-driven commerce, which has yet to be examined in any depth. In this study, we adopt a phenomenon-based approach and investigate how both media companies and retailers implement content-driven commerce. Using the business model concept as a framework, we conduct a dual case study on an outdoor retailer and a gardening magazine, both of which offer products as well as content online. Our results indicate that the value proposition and the customer relationships of the companies’ online business models are similar, whereas their organizational infrastructure and revenue model differ. When pursuing content-driven commerce, media companies have to ensure not to harm their credibility, while retailers have to overcome the problem of free riding.

Keywords

E-commerce, business models, retailers, media companies, content-driven commerce.

Introduction

Traditionally, media companies and retailers have fulfilled different purposes along the consumers’ buying decision process (Engel et al. 1968). Media companies provided content to attract attention and sell advertisements, raising awareness or creating needs for products and services. Accordingly, media companies focused on producing, collecting and/or publishing content. Retailers would step in at a later stage of the buying decision process and build their businesses around the final purchase decision. The main reason for this division between media companies and retailers was a discontinuity between the channels that served to distribute content and those that could be used to place an order for a product or service (Spann 2013). While media companies broadcast or printed their content, a purchase always had to be made by mail, phone, or in person within a store. The advent of the Internet has lifted this restriction. Retailers have been enabled to help their customers make more informed decisions by preparing detailed product information (Amit and Zott 2001; Subramaniam et al. 2000) and sales of non-content products or services have become an optional revenue source for media companies (Gallaughier et al. 2001). Nevertheless, e-commerce and providing content are commonly classified as distinct business models (Rappa 2004; Wirtz et al. 2010).

Now, however, media companies and retailers are increasing their efforts to integrate e-commerce into their content websites and vice versa. This trend has been denoted as content-driven commerce (Alexander and Parsehian 2014) or narrative retailing (Firnkes 2014). For retailers, the rationale behind such efforts is to differentiate themselves from competitors, to create a shopping experience that allows customers to not only search for specific products, but also to browse, and to establish solid customer relationships. Prominent examples are the fashion store Nasty Gal with extensive look books and a blog, or the online shop of the British supermarket Waitrose, which offers recipes and video cooking classes. Media companies, on the other hand, are in need of viable online business models (Chyi 2012; Clemons 2009). Transaction-based monetization of online content opens up an additional revenue stream. The cooking magazine Taste of Home, for instance, sells cookbooks and kitchen appliances online and the broadcasting network CBS Local runs its own platform for local deals.
Besides these opportunities, content-driven commerce poses challenges to online shops and content providers. Firstly, producing editorial content and selling products or services requires different capabilities (Tucker 2015). Second, the credibility of promotional content is lower than that of independently produced content (Cheng et al. 2014; Firnkes 2014). Third, the integration tendencies along the buying decision process may turn former advertising partners into competitors. Therefore, we conduct a dual case study to investigate the following research question: How do media companies and retailers implement content-driven commerce? Our cases consist of an outdoor retailer that publishes extensive content on travelling, clothing, and outdoor activities, and a gardening magazine that runs its own online shop. The business model concept is used as a guiding framework throughout the analysis. Thereby we are able to identify differences and similarities between media companies and retailers in the integration of content and commerce on the Internet. Our research offers first insights into a new approach to e-commerce and online content monetization and adds to the literature by describing a new type of business model that has yet to be explored.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: Firstly, we give an overview of the literature on business models. The methodology section contains the explanation of our case study design, data collection methods and analysis techniques. Subsequently, we present the results of our within-case and cross-case analyses and discuss these. The paper closes with the conclusion, which comprises the limitations of our study and suggestions for further research.

The Business Model Concept

The scientific interest in business models began to grow in the second half of the 1990s and was closely related to the question why some firms were more successful in conducting business on the Internet than others (Osterwalder et al. 2005; Steininger et al. 2011; Zott et al. 2011). Since then, a myriad of business model definitions and conceptualizations has been proposed, which has resulted in a lack of consensus about what actually constitutes a business model (Weill et al. 2011; Zott et al. 2011). However, most definitions have in common that the business model is supposed to convey information about how a company creates value and how this value is turned into revenue. The latter part is sometimes specifically referred to as the revenue model of a company (Amit and Zott 2001). Following Pateli and Giaglis (2004), Osterwalder et al. (2005), Zott et al. (2011) and Veit et al. (2014), the business model literature may be divided into four groups: definitions and conceptualizations, components, taxonomies and typologies, and representations. Our literature review concentrates at first on business model components, which we draw upon to structure our case study analysis. We then synopsize the literature on business model classifications.

Components of a Business Model

The sets of components that have been suggested to make up a business model are as diverse as its definitions and have been subject to several literature reviews (Al-Debei and Avison 2010; Morris et al. 2005; Osterwalder et al. 2005; Pateli and Giaglis 2004; Steininger et al. 2011; Zott et al. 2011). Three of these reviews set up integrated frameworks to synthesize their findings. Osterwalder et al. (2005) put forward nine building blocks, which can be grouped into four business model pillars, Morris et al. (2005) cluster the foundational factors that characterize a business model by formulating six questions, and according to Al-Debei and Avison (2010), a business model can be described by four value dimensions. A comparison of the three syntheses reveals only subtle differences. Osterwalder et al. (2005) give more weight to the customer perspective and distinguish between the customer segments that are targeted, the channels that are used to do so, and the resulting relationships. Morris et al. (2005) pose a specific question to address the commitment and willingness to invest of the entrepreneur. This issue is especially relevant for start-up companies and not considered within the other two frameworks. Al-Debei and Avison (2010) emphasize the role of a company as part of a business network by dedicating their own dimension to inter-company relationships. However, we observe that despite the diversity of the underlying literature, the aggregated frameworks cover similar aspects. For the purpose of our paper we may conclude that a thorough description of a business model needs to contain information about four aspects: the value a company creates (value proposition), to whom and how this value is offered (customers), the resources, competencies and partners and how these are organized (organizational infrastructure), and how the company earns profits (revenue model).
Business Model Classifications

In addition to crafting definitions and identifying components of the business model concept, scholars have tried to classify different types of business models (Veit et al. 2014; Zott et al. 2011). Early contributions to this field of study have been summarized by Lambert (2006). Additional work has been published by Clemons (2009), Wirtz et al. (2010) and Weill et al. (2011). Because each of the classifications is based on other differentiation criteria, the outcomes vary widely. Some typologies focus on the value creation (Weill and Vitale 2002), others are more revenue-oriented (Rappa 2004). Our review concentrates on content-oriented and commerce-oriented business models (Wirtz et al. 2010).

The latter cover steps that are necessary to process a trade transaction on the Internet and may be divided into four subcategories: manufacturers, retailers, brokers, and marketplaces (Afuah and Tucci 2003; Laudon and Traver 2014; Rappa 2004; Turban et al. 2000). While manufacturers sell goods, which they have produced themselves, retailers buy and resell goods. Both have in common that they are responsible for the fulfillment of each order and earn money with the margin. Brokers and marketplaces, on the other hand, make revenues by collecting commissions. To do so, they supply mechanisms or platforms to match supply with demand and settle transactions. The fulfillment is done by the sellers. In marketplaces, which are also called e-mails, buyers and sellers are their own agents, whereas brokers act on behalf of either party.

Content-oriented business models comprise the selection, collection, compilation, and distribution of content online and are usually subsumed under the term online content provider (Eisenmann 2001; Laudon and Traver 2014; Weill and Vitale 2002). The revenue models of online content providers can be clustered into direct and indirect revenue models. Direct revenues are paid by the customer and comprise subscriptions, usage-related fees, and licenses, while indirect revenues are paid by third parties such as in advertising or affiliate programs. (Gallaugher et al. 2001; Ha and Ganahl 2004; Katsma and Spil 2010; Mings and White 2000; Tomsen 2000; Zerdick et al. 2000).

Table 1 synopsizes commerce- and content-oriented business models. To the best of our knowledge, the only studies considering a business model that integrates content and commerce stem from Gallaugher et al. (2001) and Ha and Ganahl (2004). They investigate revenue sources of magazines and webcasters respectively and also take into account cross-financing content with e-commerce. However, both do not elaborate further on how e-commerce is actually integrated into the content offering. It is disputable whether e-commerce can be classified as a mere revenue model for online content providers since offering products or services next to content may not only affect revenues, but also change the value proposition and the necessary organizational infrastructure. Our case study seeks to provide the first description of content-driven commerce in terms of all four business model components.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commerce-oriented Business Models</th>
<th>Value Proposition</th>
<th>Revenue Model</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturer</td>
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<td>Markup-based</td>
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<td>Retailer</td>
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<td>Commission-based</td>
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<td>Broker</td>
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<td>Pay-per Access/Unit/View</td>
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<td>Content-oriented Business Models</td>
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<td>E-commerce</td>
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Table 1: Synopsis of Commerce-oriented and Content-oriented Business Models
Methodology

Because content-driven commerce constitutes a new way of conducting business on the Internet and has not yet been subject to scientific inquiry, we follow von Krogh et al. (2012) and adopt a phenomenon-based research methodology. They argue that research on a phenomenon goes through three stages of development (embryonic, growth, and mature) and comprises five research strategies (distinguish, explore, design, theorize, and synthesize). Our literature review indicates that the research on content-driven commerce is in its embryonic phase and the goals of this paper are therefore to investigate how content-driven commerce is currently implemented by retailers and media companies and to describe this new type of business model. To accomplish these goals we employ a case study design since case studies are suitable to answer “how” and “why” questions and to explore recent phenomena (Benbasat et al. 1987; Yin 2014). Case studies have a long-standing tradition in information systems research (Lee 1989) and have been applied to analyze business models previously (Chesbrough and Rosenbloom 2002; Kinder 2002). To meet concerns regarding the scientific rigor of case study research we closely adhere to the methodological recommendations by Yin (2014) and Dubé and Paré (2003). In doing so, we choose the business model as our unit of analysis. At the same time, the business model components serve as a framework which ensured the necessary focus throughout the data collection and analysis process and defined the scope of our study (Miles and Huberman 1994).

Case Selection

How many and which sites a case study should comprise depends upon its research question and theoretical propositions (Benbasat et al. 1987; Dubé and Paré 2003; Yin 2014). Although single-case studies are common and have led to important scientific contributions, multiple-case designs are preferred, especially for descriptive purposes, because they allow for a cross-case analysis and are less vulnerable to criticism regarding the generalizability of the results. When studying a phenomenon at the organizational level, cases may be chosen “based on the characteristics of firms” (Benbasat et al. 1987, p. 373) or “to fill theoretical categories and provide examples of polar types” (Eisenhardt 1989, p. 537). Yin (2014) differentiates between literal replication, which aims at identifying similar cases, and theoretical replication, whereby contrasting results are supposed to be generated. Our case study sites were chosen in two steps. First, we searched for companies that both conduct e-commerce and provide editorial content online. Among those we applied a theoretical replication logic and selected a traditional media company, the gardening magazine Mein schöner Garten, and a traditional retailer, the outdoor retailer Globetrotter, to compare the implementation of content-driven commerce between these types of businesses. Since our study uses a single unit of analysis it can be classified as a holistic, multiple case design (Yin 2014).

Data Collection and Analysis

One of the advantages of case study research is that evidence from different sources can be triangulated (Yin 2014). Thus, we collected three different kinds of data: coverage in national newspapers and business magazines from the years between 2010 and 2015, archival records of website traffic and sales figures from the German Audit Bureau of Circulations for the Mein schöner Garten magazine from 2002 onwards and financial reports from the Federal Gazette for the years 2009 until 2013, and semi-structured face-to-face interviews with employees. As in most case studies, the interviews represent our primary source of data (Dubé and Paré 2003). All interviews were conducted on the companies’ sites at the beginning of 2015 by the same investigator and in accordance with the guidelines proposed by Myers and Newman (2007). The interview guide was reviewed by a fellow researcher prior to the interviews and covered the major components of the companies’ online business models. Our interview partners were the head of e-commerce, the online marketing manager, and the senior editor from Globetrotter and the brand manager, the senior e-commerce manager and the online editor of Mein schöner Garten. The interviews lasted 25 to 45 minutes, were tape-recorded, and were transcribed verbatim as suggested by McLellan et al. (2003). Subsequently, we used ATLAS.ti to gather and code all our evidence. The coding scheme was of descriptive nature, deduced from the business model components literature, and refined during the analysis (Miles and Huberman 1994; Paré 2004). Based on the coded material, we compiled detailed descriptions of each single case and carried out a cross-case analysis within the coded categories afterwards (Eisenhardt 1989; Yin 2014).
Results

Globetrotter

With an annual gross turnover of €230 million in 2013 and 1,400 employees, Globetrotter is Germany’s largest outdoor retailer and operates 13 stores throughout the country. The company was founded in 1979 in Hamburg, where it is still based. During the 2000s, Globetrotter took advantage of a rapidly expanding market and realized double-digit growth rates. This success attracted competitors. Manufacturers opened brand stores both on and offline and pure online players entered the outdoor market with low prices. With the market becoming more and more saturated, the revenues of Globetrotter started to decrease from 2012 onwards, which led to losses and job cuts. Globetrotter pursues a differentiation strategy based on large experience stores with professional sales advisors. This strategy has been transferred to the online business, which earns one third of the company’s revenues.

Value Proposition

As in its stores, Globetrotter tries to win customers online by offering a carefully selected range of products with detailed information about their quality and guidance on how to use them. The online shop on globetrotter.de is characterized by own product descriptions, images and tests as well as advisory texts within a special product category system. Furthermore, Globetrotter publishes outdoor-related content on four partner websites. On reiseberichte.com users can list their travelogues. 4-seasons.de is the website of Globetrotter’s customer magazine. 4-seasons.tv is a web TV station with twelve channels on outdoor, travelling, and equipment and contains purchase advice videos for each of Globetrotter’s product categories featuring the sales personnel from the Globetrotter stores. Outdoor.de covers similar topics to 4-season.de and 4-season.tv but mainly serves the purpose of securing a strategically important domain. While 4-seasons.de and reiseberichte.com are only loosely connected to the online shop, Globetrotter displays a banner with all product categories on outdoor.de and individual product recommendations below the videos on 4-season.tv.

Customers

Generally, the customers of Globetrotter can be divided into two groups: professional or semi-professional adventurers, and day-to-day users of outdoor equipment. More than half of the traffic on Globetrotter’s online shop is direct and organic traffic. This indicates that globetrotter.de is well optimized for search engines, which is also due to the content, and has a certain amount of deliberately recurring visitors. Other important traffic sources are advertising and price search engines. However, price-sensitive customers often use globetrotter.de to find out about certain products but buy elsewhere because Globetrotter demands higher prices than most online competitors. The head of e-commerce concluded, “To convert the added value we provide with our content into sales is a challenge we face every day.” Despite the substantial effort that Globetrotter puts into online content, its effect on sales is difficult to measure. Nevertheless, the interviewees were convinced that the content serves to establish long-term customer relationships. “Although content is a tedious marketing tool,” the online marketing manager said, “it is the most suitable to foster customer loyalty.”

Organizational Infrastructure

While the content on 4-seasons.de, 4-seasons.tv, and outdoor.de is assembled by external agencies, Globetrotter employs six editors, a photographer and additional freelancers to produce the content on globetrotter.de. The knowledge about the products and how to use them outdoors is provided by employees throughout the company. They have the option to order free sample products for themselves and test them in their leisure time. Some of the store assistants who have been featured in several videos on 4-seasons.tv even have become recognized experts in their field. To ensure the correctness of the product descriptions, each editor accompanies a buyer when visiting a trade fair and is also involved in the purchasing decision. At the time when Globetrotter still published an extensive annual catalog, the editorial unit also belonged to the purchase department. After this handbook had been abandoned in favor of a quarterly catalog, the processes were adjusted to meet the requirements of digital publishing and the editors became part of the e-commerce unit.
Revenue Model

Globetrotter pursues a markup revenue model. The partner websites are financed by advertising and sponsoring but earn no more than is needed cover the operation and content creation costs. The interviewees agreed that the content Globetrotter provides is costly if compared to other marketing tools but of strategic importance. Nonetheless, the company constantly questions whether the investments in content can still be afforded or whether costs should be cut.

Mein schöner Garten

The gardening magazine Mein schöner Garten was launched in 1972 and has been published by the Burda Senator Verlag as part of the Hubert Burda Media Holding ever since. After losing readers in the 2000s, the magazine managed to stabilize its sales over the last five years and is still the best-selling gardening magazine in Germany. Today, the magazine has a paid circulation of approximately 360,000 copies at a price of €3.80. Mein schöner Garten's website, mein-schoener-garten.de, was introduced in 1998. In 2011, the formerly autonomous gardening shop Garten-Arkaden was affiliated and relaunched under shop.mein-schoener-garten.de. The websites have an average reach of 2.3 million visits per month, around 260,000 of those in the shop, 280,000 registered users, and 82,000 newsletter subscribers.

Value Proposition

What distinguishes mein-schoener-garten.de from other gardening websites is its strong and traditional brand, the comprehensive knowledge of the editors about gardening and plants, and the offer to conveniently order respective products within the online shop. The brand manager emphasized that Mein schöner Garten wants to provide its readers not only with information and ideas on gardening, but with complete solutions for their problems. Thus, the articles on certain plants or yard work on the magazine website or in the newsletter contain links or widgets, which lead to respective products or product categories in the shop where users can obtain additional information about the products such as the flowering period. Besides the articles from the magazine, the website contains how-to videos and several user-based features such as a plant exchange, a forum, and a gardening wiki. To facilitate switching between the magazine and the shop website, the logins for both can be used interchangeably.

Customers

The majority of the users of mein-schoener-garten.de are at least 40 years old, have an above-average education and income, and are experienced in gardening. More than half of the users reach mein-schoener-garten.de via a search engine because the website ranks high within the search results due to its content but also has a URL that is cumbersome to type and hampers direct traffic. Mein schöner Garten has a very active community both on the website and on Facebook. However, the community members on the website interact more among themselves than with the content provided by the editor and also refuse ads for the shop displayed next to or within their user-generated content. On the other hand, the text links in the articles both on the website and in the newsletter are a major traffic source for the shop. Although some users respond critically to content that appears to be unduly promotional, a newsletter survey revealed that the subscribers perceived the connection between the content and the shop as appropriate.

Organizational Infrastructure

The online shop and the magazine website of Mein schöner Garten are operated by a single editor and two e-commerce managers. This is possible because the content on the website is mostly taken from the printed magazine, which is created by a team of 20 editors, and because the online shop pursues a marketplace model. The marketplace model was chosen to offer a wide product variety without having to invest in warehousing or shipping capacities. Instead, the order fulfillment is processed by one of the 20 partner retailers. However, the whole checkout process takes place within the online shop of Mein schöner Garten and some customers therefore mistake it for a retailer and ask for support regarding the fulfillment. The editor and the senior e-commerce manager share the same office so they can cooperate closely. In addition to the in-house support in ad design and sales from the publisher, Mein schöner Garten has external partners for the hosting and the content management system of the website, the marketplace technology, and the newsletter administration.
Revenue Model

For each transaction Mein schöner Garten realizes in its online shop it receives a commission fee between 10% and 20% of the order value. The marketplace can be operated at low costs and thus with low risk but the commission fees do not allow Mein schöner Garten to invest in expensive online marketing campaigns. Because the content is produced for the printed edition anyway it is a cheap means to attract customers. Apart from the transaction revenues, which account for a quarter of the online income, the magazine website is monetized by advertising.

Cross-Case Analysis and Discussion

Comparing the value proposition of Globetrotter and Mein schöner Garten we find that both integrate providing content and product sales in similar ways. Both keep contextual content apart from the online shop and try to integrate links or widgets with product recommendations instead. The editor of Mein schöner Garten pointed out that they have to be very careful not to threaten the credibility of their content and the reputation of the brand by becoming too promotional. Media companies are expected to act independently of commercial interests. If they engage in e-commerce, they become self-interested in the information they publish, which may harm their credibility. Retailers do not face these expectations and therefore do not have to fear a loss of credibility that much.

In contrast, the main threat for Globetrotter is that users take advantage of its content willingly but do not purchase anything, which we may refer to as free riding. As a retailer, Globetrotter depends on its sales revenues and creates own content to convey its expertise and justify higher prices. However, this content is a very expensive marketing tool and its users cannot be bound also to buy within the Globetrotter shop. At Mein schöner Garten free riding is perceived as a minor problem because the content is not produced as a marketing means in the first instance but constitutes the core of the company’s value proposition, which can be monetized in several ways. Whilst the commission fees from the online shop are of increasing importance, ads are the original revenue source. For Globetrotter, advertising is meant to reduce the costs of the content on the partner websites but is insufficient as a revenue source to cover the costs of the e-commerce business.

Globetrotter and Mein schöner Garten both target two customer groups. The first group consists of customers who have a broad knowledge about the products and topics covered by the companies’ content and judge these very critically. These customers account for steady direct traffic on the websites, contribute content themselves, share their knowledge with others, and are willing to spend substantial amounts on gardening or outdoor activities. The second group comprises customers who are less dedicated to these activities and visit the companies’ websites by chance or very irregularly. Both companies face the challenge of offering products and content that are sufficiently sophisticated to satisfy the first customer group without excluding the second by being overwhelmingly complex or specialized.

Globetrotter and Mein schöner Garten have in common that their employees have detailed knowledge about both the products and the topics covered in the content but the tasks and workflows of the editorial teams differ. The editors of Globetrotter are concerned with product descriptions and photography for the online shop, while the contextual content on 4-seasons.de and outdoor.de is produced by external agencies. Which products and topics are to be covered next is decided by a product manager. At Mein schöner Garten, the product-related content originates from the shop partners and the editors focus on the contextual content for the magazine and its website. Planning the topics for the website rests with the editor and the promotional activities are aligned accordingly.

Overall, our case study reveals substantial similarities between the online business models of Globetrotter and Mein schöner Garten, considering that they traditionally performed very different value creation activities. Both have in common that they provide added value by combining content and product offerings that address the interests of specific customer groups. However, Mein schöner Garten and Globetrotter have different revenue models and organizational infrastructures. Globetrotter still follows a product-driven logic, whereas the processes of Mein schöner Garten are editorially governed, which reflects the differences in the companies’ traditional businesses. As a consequence, Globetrotter and Mein schöner Garten have to deal with different obstacles in implementing content-driven commerce. Our results are summarized in Table 2.
The Convergence of Content and Commerce

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Proposition</th>
<th>Retailer</th>
<th>Media Company</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>create added value by offering products or services and appropriate content in a common context of expertise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers</td>
<td>address a specific community of interest while remaining attractive for less knowledgeable customers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Infrastructure</td>
<td>creates own product-related content and acquires contextual content externally; product management decides on topics</td>
<td>creates own contextual content and acquires product-related content externally; editorial team decided on topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue Model</td>
<td>relies on transactions as major source of income; content as a costly, strategic marketing tool</td>
<td>uses transactions as additional source of income; little marketing apart from content</td>
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Table 2: Implementation of Content-driven Commerce by Retailer and Media Company

Conclusion

Implications

The purpose of this study was to compare how content-driven commerce is implemented by retailers and media companies and to describe it in terms of a business model. To meet this purpose we provided and compared in-depth accounts of two content-driven commerce examples: a retailer that employs its own editorial team to create content for its online shop and a media company that runs a marketplace as additional service for its users. Both companies draw upon advertising as a revenue source, although to a largely different extent. For the retailer, the markup-based revenue model is the main source of income, whereas the magazine publisher collects commission fees in its marketplace as an additional revenue stream. Because combinations of these value propositions and revenue models have yet to be classified, we may conclude that content-driven commerce denotes a new type of business model at the nexus of content and commerce.

Besides the description of a new type of business model, our research provides valuable insights for practitioners. When investing in content for their online shops, retailers should focus on converting interest in the content into sales of products. If this is not done, content may become too costly as a marketing tool. In contrast, media companies have to find ways to connect product offerings with their content without losing their editorial independence and thus harming their credibility. Keeping the editorial and the commerce department apart may alleviate this issue.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

Our cases were chosen because both companies run an online shop and create their own editorial content. Both companies also operate on and offline. On the one hand, this makes them more comparable. On the other hand, it influences our results because these companies can make use of resources or cross-subsidies that are not available for pure online players. Thus, future research may be dedicated to the question of how these companies realize content-driven commerce. Furthermore, additional combinations of value propositions from the commerce domain and the content domain should be investigated (e.g. a marketplace that invests in content or a media company that integrates a retail business).

Additionally, our study gives rise to several issues regarding the interplay between content and commerce: How is the credibility of a media company affected if it pursues content-driven commerce? Can proper online content promote customer loyalty or even stimulate willingness to pay? Which kinds of content and products or services are suitable for content-driven commerce? How do relationships between media companies and retailers change if both integrate the value creation activities of each other? These questions are viable subjects for future investigations.
REFERENCES


