

# **Burdens of Access: Understanding Customer Barriers and Barrier-Attenuating Practices in Access-Based Services**

## **ABSTRACT**

Evolving towards more sustainable production and consumption requires changes in traditional business models. Recent business model innovations such as access-based services (ABS) are often based on the circular, rather than linear, flow of products and services. ABS, which grant customers limited access to goods without any transfer of ownership, are unique technology-based service innovations requiring the substantial involvement and collaboration of customers, without employees' supervision. Although ABS offer several potential advantages, convincing customers to use them remains challenging. Combining 56 in-depth interviews with supplementary literature, the authors address this challenge by proposing an integrative framework that reflects the (1) barriers that prevent customers from using ABS and (2) practices that customers implement to attenuate those barriers. The complex, multidimensional barriers relate not only to the service and technology features but also to other customers. Customers can apply different practices to attenuate perceived barriers and create value, namely, "to distance," "to manage," "to elaborate," "to control," and "to relate." Yet they regard these barrier-attenuating practices as necessary sacrifices to use ABS. Contrary to suggestions that customers adopt and use ABS to escape the burdens of ownership, the current research reveals that customers actually may confront several "burdens of access." This research accordingly provides managers and policy makers with insights into both the customer barriers and barrier-attenuating practices related to ABS innovations.