Abstract:

Integrated product-service packages (hybrid products) can open new markets and target groups to companies. However, existing approaches to service or product development do not sufficiently address simultaneous development and domain-specific issues. A very promising new field for such bundles is the health and fitness industry. In this research, we designed and built an IT-supported training system for running (the Mobile Sports Companion, MSC) that closely interlocks a product and corresponding services using an iterative development process. We tested the pilot system with 14 recreational athletes. The results of the field test show that the MSC proved to be a promising tool to offer athletes an effective individual, flexible and mobile training. However, the system, as it is, did not sufficiently represent the human trainer behind it, thus lowering its acceptance and the credibility of its recommendations. Our next step is to integrate features that could strengthen the athlete-trainer relationship. The
MSC could turn out to be a promising field for future ebusiness applications.

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