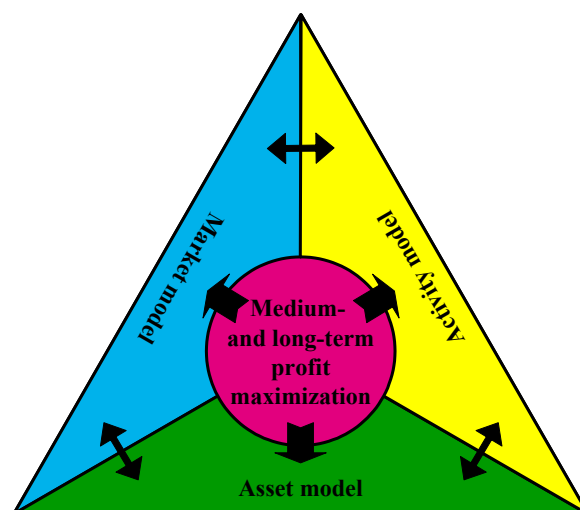


Classification and Sustainability Analysis of E-Learning Applications

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Abstract: E-learning applications become more and more important. Reasons are the paramountcy of knowledge, life-time learning, globalization and mobility. Not all providers of e-learning applications succeed in closing the gap between production costs and revenues. This results mainly from inconsistencies in composing a business model. Sustainable business models for e-learning integrate and consolidate strategic propositions concerning market model, activity model and asset model. Balancing core activities and successful revenue models is essential. At the same time the features of the provided e-learning application have to be aligned with the requirements of specific target groups. Sustainable provision of e-learning applications with different complexity, especially telling apart CBT from WBT applications, is based on different business models.

Keywords: E-learning, sustainability, business models

1 Introduction

A discrepancy can be observed: Some providers of electronic learning (e-learning) applications offer sustainable products and realize profits by offering e-learning applications. They are likely to become key players of e-learning. Others – developing with the same or even more effort – do not succeed in supplying successful e-learning applications and/or supplying e-learning applications successfully. This paper reveals that this discrepancy between "economic e-learning winners" and "economic e-learning losers" is almost nothing but a seeming contradiction. A general framework for sustainable business models for e-learning applications is presented. First, a short overview of the e-learning environment is given and types of e-learning applications are identified. After that, components and aspects of sustainability of business models are introduced. Then, conditions for a sustainable supply of e-learning applications are analyzed in order to introduce prerequisites of successful, persistent business models for e-learning.

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