



openness and platform that have been discussed in other books like *Open Leadership* by Charlene Li and *Where Good Ideas Come From* by Steven Johnson. The core premise of Mesh businesses is: "When information about goods is shared, the value of those goods increases, for the business, for individuals, and for the community." The author says that, "fundamentally, the Mesh is based on network-enabled sharing--on access rather than ownership. The central strategy is, in effect, to "sell" the same product multiple times. Multiple sales multiply profits, and customer contact. Multiple contact multiply opportunity--for additional sales, for strengthening a brand, for improving a competitive service, and for deepening and extending the relation with customers." The book also references a recent study, which concluded that, "a recommendation from a "trusted source" like a friend or family members was fifty times more likely to persuade someone to buy a product or try a new brand. The same study reported that word of mouth is the "primary factor" behind between 20 and 50 percent of purchases, and emphasized the expanded role of information networks in driving this development." ---WHAT IS THE MESH

The 4 Characteristics of a Mesh Business as listed in the book are: Sharing a high code, frequently used goods Advanced Web and Mobile Information Networks Focus on Physical Goods and Materials Engage with Customers Through Social Networks

The Mesh model is based on a series of transactions, on sharing something over and over. Creating a share platform is the first, necessary-but-not-sufficient building block of the Mesh. The second is to create information infrastructure that takes advantage of mobile, Web, and social networks. Then each interaction, and transaction, becomes an opportunity to gather and exchange information with a customer.

The 7 Keys to Building Trust in the Mesh: Say What You do Use Trials Do What You Say Perpetually Delight Customers Embrace Social Networks and Go Deep Value transparency, but protect privacy Deal with negative publicity and feedback promptly and skillfully

WHY THE MESH Tomorrow's business leaders recognize that trust in a business's environmental and social practices increasingly drives informed consumers' decisions. Successful Mesh businesses harness information from customers, combine it with data from physical products and social networks, and then use that information to satisfy customers, and their friends, in ways never before dreamed of. Good Mesh businesses are smart about combining more frequent customer contact with enhanced information sources to create and refine superior experiences, partnerships, products, and offers.

MESH COMPANIES HIGHLIGHTS Zipcar is one of the companies profiled in the book. The author says that, "The robust information platform and focus on building the brand distinguished Zipcar from early car-sharing companies that were merely long on good intentions, many of which failed. In fact, Zipcar is primarily an information business that happens to share cars." So if you're in the information business, you are a Mesh business whether you realize it or not.

TCHO, a chocolate company in SF, produces "beta editions" of its dark chocolate. "Based on customer feedback and continuous flavor development, new versions of the chocolate emerge as often as every thirty-six hours. Version 1.0 went through 1,026 iterations in a year." Why did Netflix slaughter Blockbuster? Blockbuster was late in acknowledging customer resentments, and late in understanding the spreading power of social networks to shape brand perception. They created a share platform, but neglected other elements that make Mesh businesses so competitive.

This is an excellent book that could help realign the business perspective on how to succeed in the future. Embracing openness, sharing and focusing on customer satisfaction are some of the key practices that could catapult your business from mediocre to stellar now and in the future.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great Read For Business By keenanburkepitts This book was an eye-opener to the movement of business leveraging sharing as a commodity. Much of the book discusses the different ways business have been utilizing this concept and there are a bunch of mini case studies that provide insight to actual situations where sharing has helped to create or improve a company. For anyone interested in business and its evolution, this is a must-read. I have read *Collaborative Consumption* by Rachel Botsman and Boo Rogers which discusses the same implications. Both are great reads and in this book, Gansky takes a much more business approach to the movement of sharing in business in contrast to *Collaborative Consumption* that focuses more on the social, environmental, and economical implications. You can tell Gansky really knows what she is talking about and has a good deal of personal experience in the matter herself. For any aspiring entrepreneur, I believe this book can only act as a tremendous resource to accelerate the success of your future endeavors. The book also hosts a website:

A simple, powerful idea that's reinventing the way smart, adaptive companies do business. Most businesses follow the same basic formula: create a product or service, sell it, and collect money. What Lisa Gansky calls "Mesh" businesses throw this model out the window. Instead, these companies use social media, wireless networks, and data crunched from every available source to provide people with goods and services at the exact moment they need them, without the burden and expense of owning them outright. The Mesh gives companies a better understanding of what customers really want. Already, hundreds of successful Mesh companies are redefining how we interact with the people, goods, and services in our lives. These businesses are easier to start and spreading like wildfire, from bike sharing and home exchanges to peer-to-peer lending, energy cooperatives, and open source design. Consider: bull; ZipCar profits from streamlined car sharing bull; Kickstarter connects artists with funding from enthusiastic supporters bull; Music Gym makes finding a recording studio as easy as joining a gym The Mesh reveals the next wave of information-enabled

commerce, showing readers how to plug in and profit.