

## **Co-creating community solutions with customers: The case of First ScotRail**

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### **Abstract**

Creating customer solutions is said to embody the new service-dominant logic (Sharma, Iyer, & Evanschitzky, 2008; Tuli, Kohli, & Bharadwaj, 2007); the elaboration of solutions is likely to result from a value co-creation process involving actors from both the supply network and the customer network (Cova and Salle, 2008). This paper will explore how solution orientation can extend beyond B2B and B2C settings to include the co-creation of solutions for communities, consistent with a social marketing community partnership approach (Peattie & Peattie, 2009). First ScotRail offers a public service, privately delivered and is responsible for much of the daily operation of Scotlands rail network including the leasing of 343 stations. Many station buildings were built in the heyday of Britains railway industry and are often unsuitable for contemporary transport needs, in a state of disrepair and, given the leasing context, there was a need to develop solutions to make better use of the facilities. Within this context the 'adopt-a-station' scheme was created whereby communities of rail passengers can contribute to the upkeep of the station through gardening or, in several cases, by using unused parts of station buildings at low rent. Stations now contain coffee shops, laundry firms and even an art gallery. For customers, stations become a community hub, enhance perceptions of the community to other rail users and generate civic pride. For the firm, stations are better utilised, customer satisfaction is 8% above the national average and customer journey hours are up. As a direct result Transport Scotland (rail network owners) have launched a £1 million 'Stations Community Regeneration Fund' to create new community and business projects. Using a series of interviews with key stakeholders the solution process and benefits are further developed.