The Collaborative Economy - Digital Platforms for Reinventing Sharing?

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My trajectory

- BSc in Cybernetics, 1981 (Bucharest, RO)
- Career in software development
- PhD in IS focusing on the Evaluation of Information Systems defended in 2001 (Bucharest, RO)
- How do people collaborate/learn/know/share in specific communities?
- Local Communities, Civic engagement, Social Media, Location-Based Social Media, DIY, Community Gardens, Biodiversity, Sustainability (2008-2013)
- Collaborative Economy (2017-2021)
Research Topics

- Citizen Engagement
- Cultural Heritage Communities
- From Sharing to Caring
- Smart Textiles
- Global Software Development
Why the Collaborative Economy?

- In 2015 – a group of CSCW ‘usual suspects’ started working on a Marie Curie ITN project proposal- deadline in Jan 2016
- In early 2016, the focus changed toward a COST action proposal; topic: the Sharing Economy
- In March 2016, we submitted the proposal
- In Oct 2016, we received notification that our action was selected for funding
- First Management Committee meeting on March 24, 2017 in Brussels
Introduction into the Collaborative Economy
Early publications

What's Mine Is Yours
The Rise of Collaborative Consumption
by Rachel Botsman, Roo Rogers

2010
Related terms

- Sharing Economy
- Peer Economy
- Collaborative Consumption
- Collaborative Economy
- Gig Economy
Previous CSCW events

- “Studying the Sharing Economy: Perspectives to Peer-to-Peer Exchange”, Panel at CSCW’15
- “Does the Sharing Economy do any Good?” Panel at CSCW 16
- “The Future of Platforms as Sites of Work, Collaboration and Trust”, Workshop at CSCW 16
Some previous publications:


The scope of collaborative consumption (Botsman)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILDREN</th>
<th>ELECTRONICS</th>
<th>ENTERTAINMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EQUIPMENT</td>
<td>FASHION</td>
<td>FOOD</td>
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<td>HOME</td>
<td>LEARNING</td>
<td>LEISURE</td>
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<td>LUXURY GOODS</td>
<td>MONEY</td>
<td>PETS</td>
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<td>SPACES</td>
<td>TASKS</td>
<td>TRANSPORT</td>
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<td>TRAVEL</td>
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The spectrum of goods, resources and services

On the for-profit side:

- Space (Airbnb, ParkEx)
- Transport (Uber, Lyft)
- Fiverr, TaskRabbit (care giving, house keeping, baby sitting)
- Crowd work (Amazon Mechanical Turk)
- Crowdfunding (Kickstarter, Indiegogo)
The spectrum of goods, resources and services

On the not-for-profit side:

- Collaborative production: makerspaces, OpenStreetMap, community gardens
- Collaborative consumption and lifestyles: Zipcar, Street feasts, Food is Free, tool libraries
- Collaborative distribution: from farm to table
- Collaborative learning: ravelry, Wikipedia
- Collaborative finance: local currencies, mutual help cooperatives
The actors involved:

- individuals
- communities
- companies
- NGOs
- governmental organisations
- public authorities
Motivations quoted:

- efficient utilisation of resources,
- economic gain or savings
- practicality
- resilience and sustainability
- protecting the environment
- strengthening local communities
Obstacles

- lack of regulations
- lack of quality standards
- unfair competition to existing businesses
- perceived risks
- cultural factors
Conditions that make it possible:

- the technical infrastructures relying on web and mobile technologies,
- the availability of unutilised or underutilised goods and resources,
- socio-economic ability
- other favourable conditions.
New (old?) phenomena

- Platform workers leveraging technology to create solidarity and community - usually happens outside of online marketplaces (Facebook groups, forums)
- Users going behind the platform to close private deals
- Micro-work as part of modern life
- The commons concept being extended to intangibles
Who gets involved?

Gig work, online selling appeal to different segments of the population

% of U.S. adults in each group who have earned money in the last year by...

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Using digital work or task platforms</th>
<th>Selling something online</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All adults</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>2</td>
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| White                               | 5                        |
| Black                               | 14                       |
| Latino                              | 11                       |
| High school grad or less            | 9                        |
| Some college                        | 9                        |
| College+                            | 6                        |
| Household income less than $30K     | 10                       |
| $30k - $75K                         | 8                        |
| $75K+                               | 4                        |

Source: Survey conducted July 12-Aug. 8, 2016. “Gig Work, Online Selling and Home Sharing”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
Making the gig economy attractive
OpenCoop movement - open.coop

- Trebor Scholz, 2016
- Platform capitalism vs Platform cooperativism

Scholz defines Platform Cooperatives as businesses that “clone the technological heart” of firms such as Uber, Task Rabbit or Airbnb, but are owned and operated by unions, cities, worker-owned co-ops or other forms of cooperatives.
The Care/Caring Aspect

In order to go beyond neoliberal understanding of digital platforms, we should ask ourselves some fundamental questions:

- What are the opportunities in collaborative economy practices to leverage new digital platforms and emerging networks?
- How might these lead to new social imaginaries and economic endeavours that co-create more just and livable futures?

We should be going beyond the current dominant narratives of sharing and move towards “care” as a notion and a social practice.

Workshop at C&T: “Collaborative Economies: From Sharing to Caring”
Selected Publications

More recent resources on the Collaborative Economy
The collaborative economy encompasses a variety of for-profit and non-profit initiatives and transactions and involves users ranging from individuals to businesses and public institutions. Digital platforms are a key element of the collaborative economy as they enable matchmaking between providers and users of goods and services at very low costs, and facilitate participation of individuals as providers in this market place. Without an anchored place in existing legal frameworks, regulatory uncertainty emerges as one of the key concerns.
The future of the EU collaborative economy: Using scenarios to explore future implications for employment

Welcome to the Collaborative Economy Library
Curating the highest-quality research being done on the collaborative economy

What do you want to learn about?

MARKET UNDERSTANDING
TRANSPORTATION
SPACES
UTILITIES
GOVERNMENT
IMPACT
From Sharing to Caring: Examining the Socio-Technical Aspects of the Collaborative Economy
Main Objective of CA16121

- to develop a European network of actors (including scholars, practitioners, communities and policy makers)
- focusing on the socio-technical aspects of the European collaborative economy,
- through a practice-focused approach - a qualitative and constructivist approach anchoring technology design in social practice.
Specific Objectives

- To develop a deeper understanding of the collaborative economy phenomenon in all its aspects, by studying the socio-technical systems and human practices involved, comparing and reflecting upon local, regional, national and international initiatives.

- To discuss and critique the current discourse on the sharing/collaborative economy, and propose a richer definition and characterisation of the phenomenon.

- To articulate a European research perspective on the collaborative economy based on EU values of social innovation.

- To formulate a European research agenda for the socio-technical aspects of the collaborative economy, including [specifically] the design of future technological platforms, the technical infrastructure, the legal, ethical and financial implications.
Stakeholder Groups

- Academic researchers investigating the collaborative economy from a variety of disciplines.
- Practitioners and activists engaged in collaborative economy initiatives and related projects.
- Businesses with an interest in collaborative economy platforms and in relevant business models.
- Community organisations and interested citizens.
- Public bodies at regional and national level engaging with collaborative economy issues and related policies.
Participating Countries

Also joined: Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia
NNC: Albania IPC: Australia
30 members, 2 observers
Working Groups

- WG1 Collaborative Economy Practices and Communities
- WG2 Platforms for the Collaborative Economy
- WG3 Impacts of the Collaborative Economy
- WG4 Mechanisms to Activate and Support the Collaborative Economy
Tasks and Deliverables
WG1 - Collaborative Economy Practices and Communities

Task list
- T1.1 Coordinating online and face to face ethnographic research on selected case studies
- T1.2 Development of a socio-technical theoretical framework for the collaborative economy

Deliverable list
- D1.1 Online repository of case studies and online directory of people – m24
- D1.2 Peer-reviewed publication on the theoretical framework and taxonomy – m42
Tasks and Deliverables
WG2 Platforms for the Collaborative Economy

Task list

- **T2.1** To identify sets of technical features of existing collaborative digital platforms
- **T2.2** Definition of challenges and opportunities for design and development

Deliverable List

- **D2.1** Catalogue of technical platforms and mechanisms they use to support the collaborative economy (section of the SharingAndCaring website)- m42
- **D2.2** White Paper on the technical design and development of future platforms (downloadable from the website)- m46
Tasks and Deliverables
WG3 Impacts of the Collaborative Economy

**Task list**
- T3.1 Develop a methodology to assess the social impact of collaborative platforms
- T3.2 Identify social and technical guidelines for the design of new platforms

**Deliverable list**
- D3.1 Specific section on the online repository on the social impact of the studied cases - m35
- D3.2 White paper on the social implications of design and development of future platforms (downloadable from the website) - m46
Tasks and Deliverables
WG4 – Mechanisms to Activate and Support the Collaborative Economy

Task list
- T4.1 Socio-technical study of the emergence of the selected cases
- T4.2 Inductive elaboration on the role of governance and work in achieving success

Deliverable list
- D4.1 Specific section on the online repository on the governance of the studied cases- m36
- D4.2 White paper on the policy briefs to support future platforms (downloadable from the website)- m46
CA16121 activities

- STSMs
- Working Group meetings
- Training Schools
- Workshops and conferences
Planned activities for 2017-2018

Year 1: 1 May 2017- 30 Apr 2018

• 24 March 2017 MC meeting 1, COST Association, Brussels
• First STSM Call
• 24 June 2017 WG1 meeting, Troyes, France

• 27 August 2017 Workshop: Digital Platforms for the Collaborative Economy, Sheffield, UK
• Training School: 20-24 November 2017, Funchal, Madeira, Portugal

• 27 November 2017, WG1&WG3 meeting, Funchal, Madeira, Portugal
• 28 November 2017, MC meeting 2, Funchal, Madeira, Portugal
• 15 March 2018 WG1&WG3 meeting, Tarragona, Spain

https://sharingandcaringcostaction.wordpress.com/activities/
WG1 work so far

- 25x2 brief case studies
- 24 country reports
- Some preliminary findings:
  - Few established definitions- EC, OuiShare
  - For profit and not-for-profit aspects
  - Platforms and smartphones as key enablers
  - Stakeholders: governments, local authorities, start-ups, nonprofit organisations, grassroots/self-organised communities.
  - Mostly in the urban areas
  - Accommodation, mobility, goods exchange, finance, time banks, community projects
Upcoming ECSCW 17 workshops

Digital Platforms for the Collaborative Economy – COST workshop

Monday, 28th of August, 2017

Organisers:
- Gabriela Avram Myriam Lewkowicz
- Matthias Korn Volkmar Pipek
- Ann Light Antonella de Angeli

- focusing on digital platforms seen as enabler of the collaborative economy.
- We will consider the relation of design and politics in the wider socio-technical context in which these platforms operate, and deepen its understanding as a CSCW phenomenon.

Upcoming ECSCW 17 workshops

WS7 – Nomadic Culture Beyond Work Practices
Tuesday, 29th of August, 2017

Organisers:
Chiara Rossitto (Stockholm University),
Aparecido Fabiano Pinatti de Carvalho (University of Siegen),
Luigina Ciolfi (Sheffield Hallam University),
Airi Lampinen (Stockholm University),
Breda Gray (University of Limerick)

Website: https://nomadicculturews.wordpress.com/
Thank you!

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