Proven parenting style also works in business

New York City-based Recyclebank has been refining its business model over the last decade to connect customer behavior to tangible benefits. The company rewards people for taking greener actions, like walking rather than driving, with points that they can use to make purchases at local and national retailers. Their brand of reward/bribe/reinforcement (pick your term) has helped the city of Philadelphia boost curbside recycling by 4 percent over four years, for example.

Want to change customer behaviour? Try changing your business model, The Guardian, April 4, 2014 includes other examples like Nike, Bedsider, Google, and Nest that aim to increase "stickiness" with customers, building brand loyalty, instead of simply selling more stuff.

20 new models

Model Behavior: 20 Business Model Innovations for Sustainability explores the role and practice of business model innovation in the context of sustainability, analyzing current innovative models to better understand their origins, mechanics and implications.

Three closed loops

John Edel’s 93,500-square foot vertical farm and business incubator operates out of a repurposed meatpacking facility on Chicago's South Side. The Plant, according to Utne in Dec 2013, is taking on recycling in a complex and interrelated urban farming operation that will divert more than 10,000 tons of food waste from landfills every year while providing 125 jobs for the local community.

Dutch aWEARness Creating the First Circular Supply Chain for Textiles, according to SustainableBrands, April 2014. One of the most resource-intensive industries on the planet, the $1.2T global textile and apparel industry is built on complex linear supplier relationships. Lack of visibility over what’s happening further down the chain has often resulted in massive toxic pollution, unethical labour practices and spiralling waste, with the rise of ‘fast fashion’ sending materials hurtling towards end of life at an ever-increasing rate. Some 13m tonnes of textile waste are generated annually in the US, estimates the US EPA, with just 2 percent currently recycled. The majority ends up in landfill, wreaking untold damage on fragile ecosystems.

A small firm in the Netherlands is turning this ‘take, make, waste’ model on its head and embracing waste textiles as valuable raw materials.

There are 90 pieces of Lego for every person on the planet and the stuff is immortal. In this Guardian article from April 10, 2014, Lego's director of environmental sustainability tells of the company’s focus on eco-design and the circular economy challenges for the product with no end-of-life.

15 tools and trends to watch

Top 15 Tools and Trends to Reimagining Business Models, Strategy, and ROI from Sustainable Brands. Innovating for sustainability is going mainstream, particularly at Fortune 500 companies and among forward-looking social entrepreneurs. Stakeholders, including customers, employees, and investors, are re-evaluating their perception of value, so executives in all industries see the need to measure, analyze and innovate along their entire range of benefits and costs.

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