

Aim at Stabilization of the Management by “Green Servicing”[©]

Shuichi Ohbayashi

Planet Co. Ltd., 61-2, Motomachi, Minami-Ooshimizu, Toyohashi, Aichi 441-8132 Japan

Email: obayashi@g-planet.com

Thirty years ago in 1981 I started a plant tissue culture business. I built the production system for the plants produced by tissue culture. And I made the grower's group organization to establish the relay cultivation system for “right crop for right land.” For the stable sale of pot plants produced by the grower's group organization, I developed a sales company and began direct delivery from the farm sale.

By this process, for the stabilization of company management, I felt the necessity for both the standardization of the pot soil and the establishment of the method of plant factory production, and started hydroculture production (method of growing plants without the use of soil). Our business came to a turning point 22 years ago, and using hydrocultured plants, I diversified into a number of enterprises, such as rental, indoor tree planting, and wholesale for retail stores. Currently, I am developing an environmental tree-planting enterprise in cooperation with growers for rooftop gardening and “eco-walls.”

Moreover, this business is a high-service-type business model that adds value, it promotes conversion into active shape of the green business which is new as a higher effect of the reduction of negative environmental impact can be expected by aiming at the 2Rs (“reduction” and “reuse”). By both the “urban green-culture service” and “Vegetakul” business models, our company was admitted as “the green servicing enterprise” (company of environmental concern for plants rental business) from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan. Green servicing is a new business model in an increasingly environmentally conscious and cost-conscious world (Rothenberg, 2007). Urban green culture service is a service business which carries out circulation use of the plants which produced on rooftop garden or on eco-wall (greening of building on wall) as the indoor greens. In a conventional decorative plant renting business, plants are periodically exchanged (recycled) by trucking. This periodical exchange by a truck changes the plant's growth environment, and, as a result, the plant's rate of damage becomes high and waste increases. In addition, the exhaust gas and heat which are generated by transportation in a truck also increases environmental impact. In urban green culture service, the roof of a building plays the role of a farm. The incorporation of plants into the inside and outside (rooftop) of a building and use of a water supply system utilizing collected rainwater reduced environmental impact items in a number of ways, and high LCA evaluation in ISO14040/44 was obtained. Since the building roof and walls, which generally do not have value, now have high added value the administrative expenses of a building are reduced.

Vegetakul is a business in which the propagator cooperates with the consumer by growing plants in an on-demand system throughout the year. A build-to-order system enables stable production and stable sales for a propagator. In addition, Vegetakul is the business model of a network-type considered environment. Vegetables are being produced on the veranda in the current kitchen-garden boom in Japan. However, in cultivation on a veranda, there are problems, such as dirt from the

growing soil, management of the soil after plant cultivation, continuous cultivation methods, and the situation that the kitchen-garden boom has not stabilized. Because of these problems, I developed the Vegetakul business model <<http://www.vegetakul.com>>. This cultivation system won the Good Design Award (new domain section) by Japan Industrial Design Promotion Organization (JIDPO).

Moreover, I have expanded this system from consumers to welfare institution for the aged and vegetable gardens on railroad stations and business complex roofs. The plants grown not only contain vegetables but herbs, medicinal herb, various flowering trees, etc.

The development of a method for enjoying horticulture continuously throughout the year is presented. Japan in the future should value the environment, health, and welfare. Vegetakul is a new system which leads to an expansion of consumer's horticulture experience and vegetable production at home. I think that it is a business model which is harmonious with consumers.

LITERATURE CITED

Rothenberg, S. 2007. Sustainability through servicizing. MIT Sloan Management Review. 48:83-91.