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Ulf Schrader

# Sustainable Embedded Lead-Users: Involving employees as customers in sustainability innovation processes

Green Talents Alumni Conference

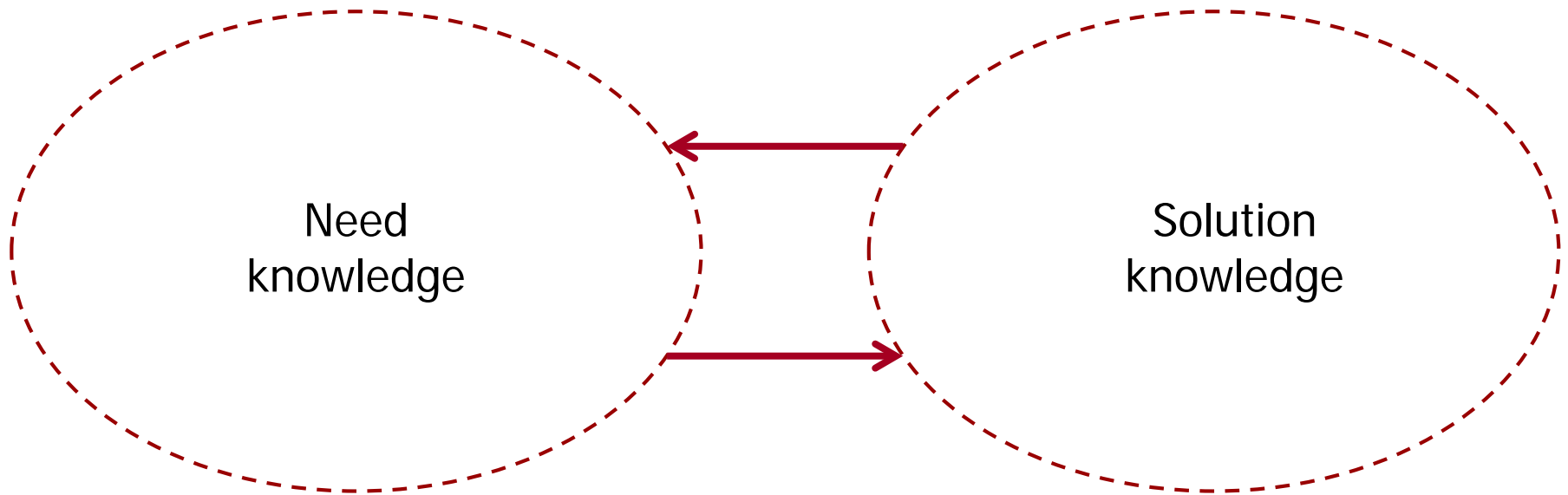
Berlin, October 27, 2016



# The Need to Open Innovation Processes

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**Innovations require:**

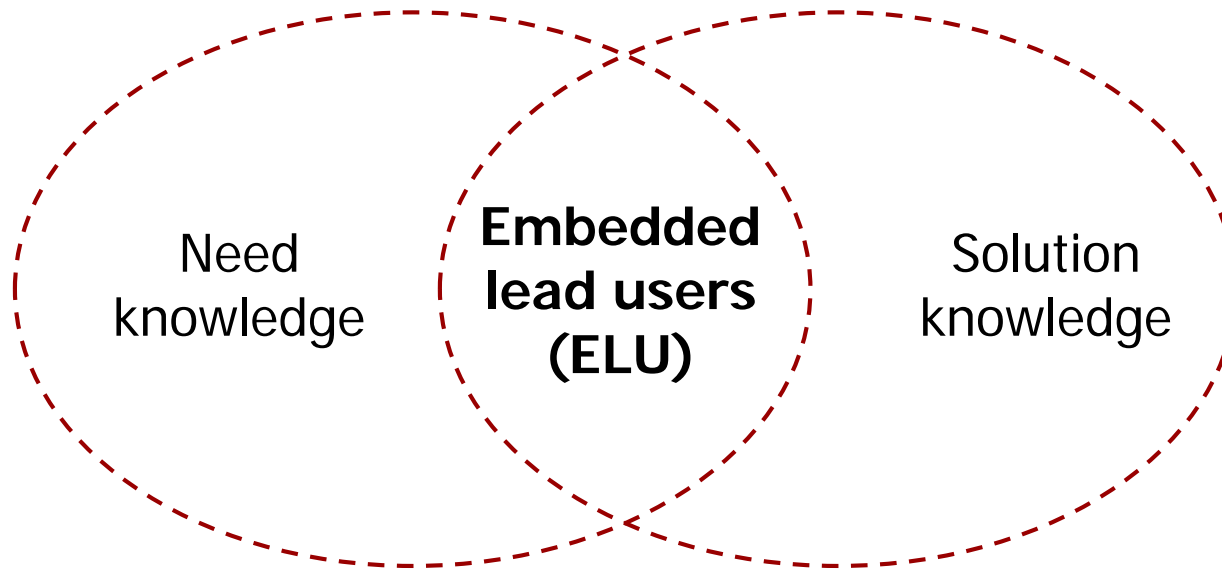


von Hippel 1994

- Integrate lead users (von Hippel 1986): (1) face needs long before the mainstream and (2) would benefit significantly by their satisfaction (and therefore often innovate themselves)
- Identification and integration of lead users is expensive (Schrader & Belz 2012)

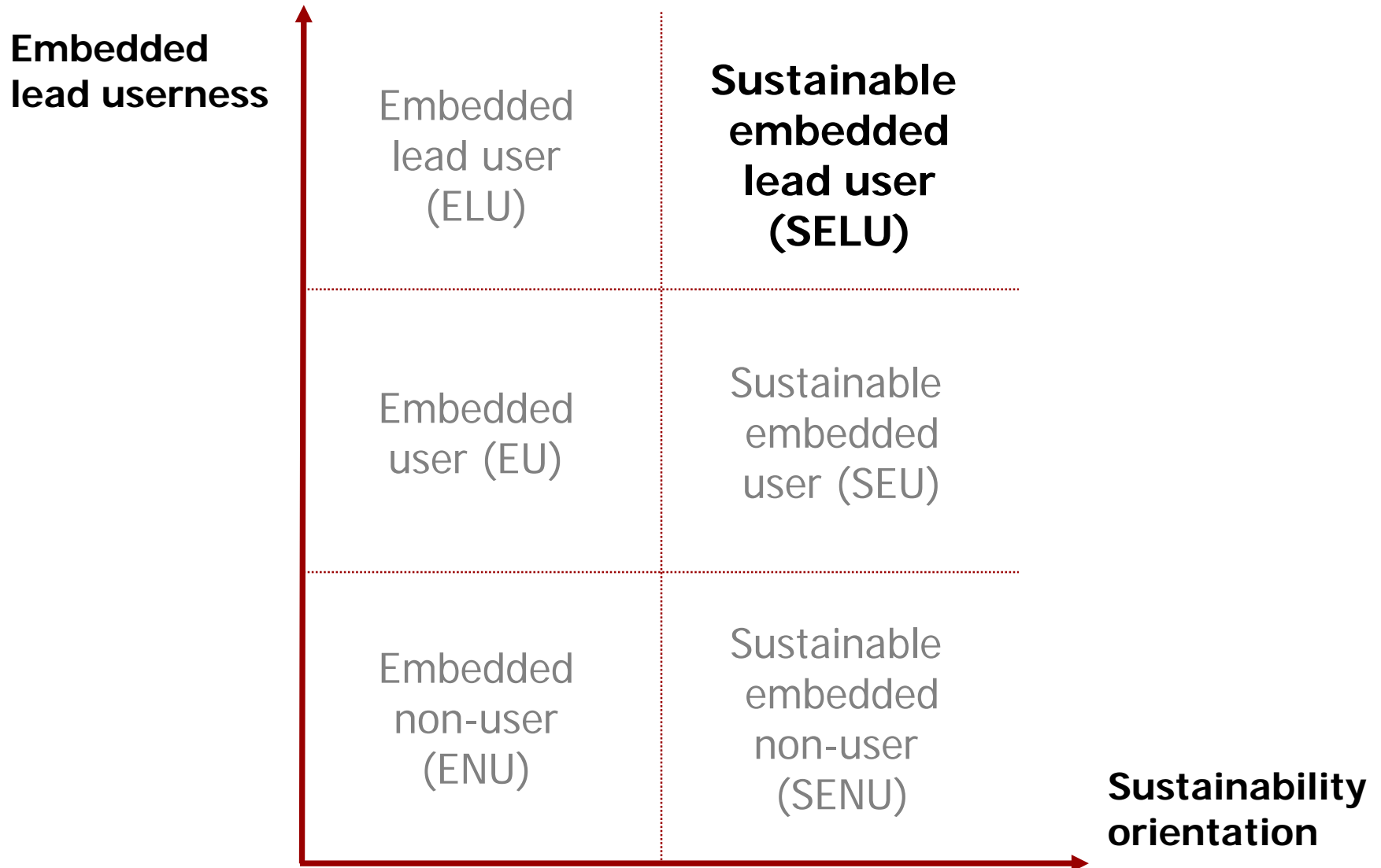
# The Embedded Lead User (ELU) Concept

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Schweisfurth 2012

# SELU Characteristics



# Opportunities and Limitations of the SELU Concept

| Opportunities   | Limitations  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Cheap” and prepared LU</li></ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited number of SELUs</li></ul>                              |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feasible, sustainable innovations</li></ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited innovativeness of insiders</li></ul>                   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved CSR performance</li></ul>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not-invented-„in our R&amp;D“ syndrome</li></ul>               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participatory corporate culture</li></ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reactance against exploitation of private life</li></ul>       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employee satisfaction, commitment and retention</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dissatisfaction due to unaccomplishable expectations</li></ul> |

# Conclusion and outlook

- Relevant concept for sustainable consumption and production
- Empirical validation is necessary
- ➔ IMKoN-Project (“Integration of employees as consumers in sustainability innovation processes”) (4/15 – 3/18)



DARK HORSE | INNOVATION

OTTO



TRIAZ  
| group



# Contact

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