

## Episode 1125 Money Monday Business Models

Hello my friends and welcome to a new episode from English Plus Podcast. This episode is for all savvy entrepreneurs, aspiring business magnets, or maybe just plain curious humans just like me. Welcome to a new Money Monday Deep Dive, where we unpack the fascinating world of finance and business in an exciting way that is useful for you, whoever you might be.

Today we're diving headfirst into a topic that's as fundamental to business as oxygen is to life. We're gonna talk about business models, from traditional to disruptive models and how to choose the right one. And yes, you heard that right, today is Money Monday.

I know, it's not the most sophisticated title for an episode, but it's something to remember. And by the way, we're gonna have some changes here on English Plus Podcast. We're gonna have our Money Mondays, we're gonna talk about business, we're gonna have Tech Tuesdays, we're gonna talk about science and technology, we're gonna talk about psychology and us on Wellness Wednesday, and we're gonna talk about history, mythology, and more on Throwback Thursday, and literature on our Fiction Friday, and we're going to improve our skills with Skill Saturday, and finally, we're gonna talk about some important social issues on guess what, Social Sunday.

And we're going to go about the episodes as usual. We're gonna start talking about what the topic is, how it relates to our lives, and then we're going to continue with focus on language, because remember, this is English Plus Podcast, so we care about your knowledge and we care about your English at the same time. Now let's get back to today's episode.

You might be thinking, business models, isn't that just how a company makes money? And while you're not entirely wrong, you're only scratching the surface of a truly captivating and often game-changing concept. Think of it this way, a business model is the secret sauce, the grand design, the very blueprint of how a company creates, delivers, and captures value. It's the ingenious architecture behind every product you buy, every service you use, and every innovation that sweeps across the market.

Today we're going on an epic journey. We're going to start by stripping away the mystique and getting to the core of what a business model truly is. We'll explore its DNA, its key components, and why understanding it is absolutely non-negotiable for anyone who wants to thrive in the modern economic landscape.

Then we'll take a delightful stroll down memory lane examining the tried-and-true traditional business models that have formed the backbone of commerce for centuries. From the good old-fashioned retail model to the reliable manufacturing approach, we'll see how these enduring structures have shaped our world. But hold on to your hats, because we're not staying in the past for long.

We're going to leap into the exhilarating present and peek into the mind-bending future as we

unpack the world of disruptive business models. These are the rebels, the innovators, the game-changers that have reshaped entire industries. Think Netflix vs.

Blockbuster, Uber vs. Traditional Taxis, Airbnb vs. Hotels.

We'll explore what makes them so potent, how they challenge the status quo, and why they often leave established giants scrambling. But this isn't going to be just a theoretical exercise. No, we're going to get down to brass tacks.

We're going to delve into the practicalities of how to choose the right business model for you, whether you're launching a new venture, rethinking an existing one, or just trying to make sense of the economic currents around you. We'll equip you with frameworks, questions to ponder, and real-world examples to guide your thinking. And because we believe that knowledge is power only when applied, we'll constantly connect these concepts back to your life.

What does understanding business models mean for your career choices? How can it help you make smarter consumer decisions? And what actions can you take today, armed with this newfound understanding, to navigate the complexities of the business world with greater confidence and insight? So grab a comfy seat, my friends, a beverage of your own choice, and get ready to unlock the secrets of business models. This isn't just about making money, it's about understanding the very fabric of our economic reality, and perhaps even discovering how you can weave your own incredible success story into it. So let's start with our deep dive first, and then I will meet you back again in our language-focused section.

Don't go anywhere. We're going to dive deep next. You don't want to miss that.

Welcome to a new Deep Dive from English Plus podcast. Today we're plunging into something that's kind of the invisible engine of our world, the secret sauce behind every company you interact with, business models. Right.

Think of it like this. A business model isn't just about what a company sells. It's the whole blueprint, how they create value, how they deliver it to you, and well, how they make sure the lights stay on.

It's really the underlying architecture. Exactly. So our mission today is to sort of crack the code on these blueprints.

We want to give you like x-ray vision to see past the fancy products and marketing and really understand the fundamental workings. Get ready for some aha moments, hopefully. Yeah, we'll be looking at the classic dependable models, the ones that have been around for ages, and then we'll dive into the more recent disruptive innovations that are changing the game right before our eyes.

All right. Let's get down to brass tacks with the old fake bulls, the traditional business models.

First up, retail.

This is the OG, right? The buy low, sell high approach. Think your local supermarket or that quirky boutique downtown seems pretty simple on the surface. It does.

Yeah. You know, get stuff, put it on shelves, people buy it. But even in this seemingly simple model, there's actually quite a lot going on behind the scenes.

Like what? Well, key activities involve smart sourcing, you know, finding the right products at the right price and efficient inventory management. That's huge. And let's not forget the crucial resource, that physical storefront.

Ah, the location. Exactly. For you, the customer, the value is that immediate convenience and accessibility.

You need milk, pop down the street. Right. But it makes you wonder, doesn't it? We all know local stores can struggle against the big online players.

What's the deal there? That's a prime example of how scale just changes the game. Online giants can often get lower costs. They can reach a much wider audience, which, yeah, it puts traditional brick and mortar retailers in a really tight spot.

So how do they fight back? Well, it makes you think, how can these local businesses not just survive, but actually thrive? And interestingly, we're seeing a real resurgence in this idea of experiential retail, you know, stores offering events, workshops, unique in-person things that an online shop just can't replicate. That's a cool twist. OK, next on our traditional tour, the manufacturing model.

This is where the magic happens, where raw materials get transformed into the finished products we use every day. Yep. Think car factories, your phone being assembled, or even, like you said, that incredible smell wafting from the local bakery.

Bakeries. Right. The core here is the transformation process itself.

Smart product design, efficient production lines, and really importantly, rigorous quality control. The essential resources are factories, machinery, and of course, a skilled workforce. So this is basically the foundation of the global economy.

Pretty much, yeah. When you step back and look at it, this model is the backbone driving those complex supply chains and providing countless jobs. It really makes you appreciate where all our stuff comes from.

It really does. OK, so from making things to getting them to us in a recurring way. The subscription model, the business model that's seemingly, well, everywhere these days.

Oh, absolutely. Newspapers, magazines, Netflix, Spotify, your cloud storage. The list just goes

on and on.

So what's the core idea here? What's fascinating is the fundamental shift from a one-time purchase to ongoing access for a recurring fee. For the business, this creates that holy grail, predictable revenue. Right.

They know money's coming in regularly. Exactly. Their key activities focus on consistently delivering value they have to keep you happy and managing those regular payments.

And for us, the subscribers, we get that continuous access and convenience. But let's be honest, doesn't it sometimes feel like you're paying for a million things a month and maybe not even using half of them? That's the million-dollar question for consumers, isn't it? While the convenience is undeniable, it's so easy for those small monthly fees to add up without us really noticing. Subscription creep.

Totally. It prompts us to be more mindful of what we're actually using and the true value we're getting from each subscription. You know, are we in control of our subscriptions or are they kind of controlling us? Deep thoughts on recurring payments indeed.

All right, moving on to something that's all about replicating success. The franchise model. McDonald's, Subway, you find them practically anywhere.

Exactly. The brilliance of franchising lies in its ability to scale a proven business concept really, really rapidly. The franchisor develops the brand, the operating system, the whole package.

And then someone else runs the local shop? Pretty much. Franchisees invest their own capital to run their own local versions. It's a bit of a symbiotic relationship.

The franchisee gets a ready-made business with established brand recognition, which ideally lowers their risk quite a bit. And for us, grabbing a quick bite, what's the benefit? Consistency is the big draw. You generally know exactly what you're going to get, whether you're in London or Los Angeles or, you know, anywhere else.

True. Though, does that consistency sometimes kill local flavor? That's a great point. It does make you wonder, how much room is there for local adaptation within such a standardized model? Can a global brand truly cater to the nuances of different cultures and tastes effectively? Interesting food for thought.

Now, the last of our traditional lineup, the advertising model. The product here isn't something you buy with money. It's your attention.

Precisely. Think traditional TV, radio, and of course, the vast majority of the Internet, right? Google, Facebook, all those guys. So how does it work? The core principle is to offer content or services for free.

I use air quotes there. And then sell the attention of the audience, of you, to advertisers. The

key resources are compelling content that attracts a large viewership or user base.

So it's an implicit exchange. We get free stuff. They get our eyeballs.

That's essentially it. We get often free information or entertainment. And in return, we see ads.

Increasingly, we also give up data. Where the data part feels huge now. As we navigate the digital world, understanding this model feels absolutely essential.

It's like being aware of the silent transaction happening every single time you scroll. It really should encourage us to think critically about the content we consume online. I mean, how does the need to attract advertisers influence what we actually see? Good question.

Does it affect quality? It definitely brings up crucial points. How does this model impact the quality, the diversity, and maybe even the objectivity of the information we access? Definitely makes you think twice about those free cat videos. Okay, let's switch gears now and dive into the disruptors.

The business models that have really, really shaken things up. First, the platform or marketplace model. Yes, the ultimate connectors.

Think Uber linking riders and drivers, Airbnb connecting travelers and hosts, eBay and Amazon connecting buyers and sellers. So they don't own the cars or the houses or the products? Often no. What's revolutionary about these platforms is that they often don't own the underlying goods or services themselves.

They simply create a space, a market for transactions, dramatically reducing friction. Okay, so what's the secret sauce there? The magic ingredient is usually the network effect. The more users on the platform, buyers and sellers, drivers and riders, the more valuable it becomes for everyone.

It's like a party, right? The more people show up, the better the party generally is. It's like they build the digital town square and let everyone else set up shop. How have these platforms changed the way you buy, sell, interact? I mean, hailing a ride used to be so different.

Oh, fundamentally, they've changed access and convenience in so many areas of our lives. But you know, this rapid transformation also raises important questions about the impact on traditional businesses and the often complex regulatory landscapes these platforms operate within. It's not always smooth sailing.

Absolutely. Okay, next up, the freemium model. You get the basic version for nothing, but if you want all the cool features, you got to pay up.

Spotify, Dropbox, Zoom, we've all seen this all. Right. The beauty of freemium is its ability to attract a massive user base with that free offering.

Then the strategy is to convert a certain percentage of them to paying customers with valuable premium features. So it's a balancing act. It's a very delicate balancing act.

The free tier has to be genuinely useful, good enough to draw people in, but not so comprehensive that there's no real incentive to upgrade. It's like the ultimate try before you buy, but what's the actual strategy behind giving away something for free? Seems counterintuitive. Well, it's all about customer acquisition at scale.

The idea is that even if only a small fraction, maybe like 2-5% of free users convert to paying ones, the sheer volume can generate significant revenue over time. So volume is key. Absolutely.

But it does make you wonder about the long-term viability. Can these companies keep offering valuable free services while still convincing enough users to pay the premium? It's an ongoing challenge. Okay, next, the on-demand model.

Instant gratification delivered right to your metaphorical doorstep. Yeah, food delivery apps, ride sharing, anything where speed and convenience are absolutely king. Think Deliveroo, Uber Eats, Lyft.

How do they make that happen? The on-demand model thrives on incredibly efficient logistics and a vast network of readily available providers, drivers, couriers, etc. And it's all powered by technology, especially mobile apps and real-time location services. It's definitely changed our expectations, hasn't it? Oh, completely.

It has recalibrated our expectations for speed and convenience. We've become accustomed to getting what we want, when we want it, usually with just a few taps on our phones. Patience isn't really a virtue here.

Yeah, patience is out the window. But what are the hidden costs, maybe, the trade-offs of this instant service? That's a really important point. Often, the trade-offs involve the individuals who actually power these services, the gig workers, their working conditions, benefits, job security.

These are all critical considerations in this rapidly evolving landscape. Definitely something to keep in mind. All right, let's move on to cutting out the middleman, the direct-to-consumer or D2C model.

Think brands like Warby Parker selling glasses online or Casper selling mattresses. Yeah, what's really compelling about D2C is the direct relationship these brands can forge with their customers. By bypassing traditional retail channels, department stores, distributors, they often have much greater control over their branding, their pricing, and the entire customer experience from start to finish.

It often feels like you're buying more than just a product. You're kind of buying into the brand's whole story, right? Exactly. They can gather direct feedback, build a loyal community around

the brand, and tailor their offerings much more effectively because they know their customer directly.

Sounds great, but what's the catch? Well, the flip side is they take on all the responsibilities that traditional retailers use to handle marketing, sales, fulfillment, customer service, the whole shebang. And it raises an interesting question about scalability. How do these brands grow and reach a wider audience without that established infrastructure of traditional retail? It's a challenge.

Good point. Now let's talk about building your own little universe, the ecosystem model. Apple and Amazon are the huge examples here.

The ecosystem model is all about creating a tightly integrated suite of products and services that work seamlessly together. Think iPhone, Mac, Apple Watch, iCloud, they all just work together. This encourages customers to stay within that ecosystem.

So convenience is the big selling point. Convenience and interoperability are key. It's designed to make your life easier, smoother if you buy into their whole world.

It really is so smooth when everything just syncs up. But is there a downside to being so deeply embedded in one company's world? It feels a bit like a walled garden sometimes. That's the potential catch, what we call vendor lock-in.

Once you've invested heavily in one ecosystem, buying all the hardware, subscribing to the services, moving your data, switching to a competitor, can become really costly and frankly, inconvenient. Yeah, I can see that. This brings up a crucial point about consumer choice and the potential for these dominant ecosystems to maybe limit competition in the market.

A valid concern about those digital comfort zones. Okay, finally, in our disruptive list, we have the as-a-service or SaaS model. That shift from owning something outright to just accessing it for a fee.

Exactly. We're all familiar with software-as-a-service or SaaS like Salesforce or Microsoft 365. But now it's extending even to things like hardware, hardware-as-a-service and mobility like car subscriptions.

So what's a fundamental change here? It's moving from a capital expenditure, a big upfront cost, to an operational expenditure, like a regular monthly bill. For the customer, this means lower upfront costs and often the benefit of always having the latest version or service without big upgrade investments. And for businesses? For businesses offering the service, it provides that sweet, sweet, predictable recurring revenue we talked about with subscriptions.

Very attractive. Does this reflect a broader societal shift, do you think? How we view ownership versus just accessing things? Are we becoming more comfortable with renting rather than owning? It certainly seems to be a growing trend, particularly in the digital realm, but also

creeping into physical goods. But yeah, it also raises questions about long-term costs.

Do you end up paying more over time? And that feeling of truly owning anything in this model, it's a different mindset. Hmm. Definitely food for thought about the very nature of possession.

Okay, so with this whole buffet of business models, traditional and disruptive, how does a company actually pick the right one? It seems complicated. It is a really strategic decision. Absolutely.

And it almost always starts with a deep, deep understanding of the core problem they're trying to solve and the unique value proposition they're offering. You know, what fundamental need are they actually meeting for the customer? Makes sense. You've got to know what you're bringing to the table first.

What makes you different? Precisely. Then they need to intimately understand their target customer. Who are they? What are their needs? What are they willing to pay? And how do they prefer to pay? That's crucial.

Customer understanding. Got it. What else? Thoroughly analyzing the industry landscape and the competition is also key.

What are others doing? Are there gaps? Are there opportunities to stand out, to disrupt the existing order or maybe just coexist effectively? So it's not just about having a brilliant idea in isolation. You need context. Exactly.

You need the context. And a realistic assessment of their own key resources and capabilities is essential. What are our strengths? What technology, people, capital do we actually have? What infrastructure will we need to build or acquire? Be honest about what you can actually do.

Absolutely. And finally, they need to consider their long-term strategic goals. Are they aiming for rapid, maybe venture-backed expansion or a more focused, maybe slower niche market growth, long-term customer relationships or more transactional ones? Wow.

Okay. Sounds like a complex puzzle with a lot of moving pieces. It really is.

Yeah. Choosing the right business model is essentially aligning all those strategic pieces, the value prop, the customer, the market, the resources, the goals into a coherent plan. So these aren't just abstract theories for, you know, MBA textbooks, are they? These models impact our lives in very real, tangible ways every single day.

Oh, absolutely. 100%. As a consumer, just understanding these models gives you insights into how things are priced.

Why is this cheap? Why is that expensive? What are the implications of those free services on your data privacy? Right. Like the advertising model. Exactly.

And it shapes your expectations for convenience. Why do we now expect things instantly? It even influences the increased product choices we see from DDC brands. It definitely makes you look at those terms and conditions with a bit more scrutiny, doesn't it? Or maybe it should.

It really should. It's important. And thinking as an employee, understanding your company's business model can shed light on things like job security, compensation structures, how does the company make money and how does that affect me and the skills that are most valuable and in demand within that company.

It's like understanding the unwritten rules of your workplace, maybe, knowing how the game is played. That's a good way to put it. And if you're an investor, the business model is absolutely critical.

It's a lens through which to evaluate a company's potential for growth, its sustainability, and assess its inherent risks. A flashy product with a flawed model is a bad bet. And even just as citizens.

Even as citizens, yeah. These models shape really important public discussions around things like the gig economy and worker rights, the rise of potential monopolies with platform and ecosystem models, and the overall direction of innovation in our society. They have broad impact.

So OK, this is super interesting. What are some practical takeaways for our listeners then? How can they use this knowledge? Great question. For anyone out there dreaming of starting their own venture, maybe an aspiring entrepreneur, design your business model with as much care and attention as you design your actual product or service.

Don't treat it as an afterthought. Design with intent. Yeah.

And validate your assumptions early on. Don't just assume people will pay for your freemium tier. Test it.

Be agile. Be ready to adapt as you learn from the market. And definitely study the successes and the failures of others who have tried similar models.

Solid advice. What about for the rest of us, just as consumers navigating this landscape? Get curious. Actively ask yourself, OK, how does this company actually make money, especially if the service seems free? Read the fine print.

At least glance at it. Be mindful of your data. It has value.

And maybe consciously try to support business models that resonate with your own values. Be a savvy consumer. I like it.

And for those of us who are part of the workforce as employees. Try to really understand the business model of your current employer. How does value get created, delivered, captured?

Look at companies with compelling sustainable models as potential career paths.

Invest in learning skills that are relevant to those growing or changing models. And maybe try to think a bit like an owner. How does my work contribute to the success of this model? Good perspective.

And finally, for us as engaged citizens in this constantly evolving economy. Stay informed. Pay attention to policy discussions surrounding the implications of different business models.

Things like antitrust, data privacy, worker classification. Be a critical thinker about the economic forces shaping our world. And where you can, support innovation that you believe is responsible and beneficial for society, not just profitable.

It's really clear this whole area is just constantly changing, constantly evolving. What exciting developments do you see on the horizon for business models? Where's it all heading? Oh, it's definitely not static. We're seeing a lot of buzz and early experiments around things like Web3 and decentralized business models, though still very nascent.

There's a growing, much needed focus on circular economy principles, designing models for sustainability and reuse. That feels important. Hugely important.

We're also seeing hyper-personalization driven by better data and AI, tailoring experiences and even pricing down to the individual. And of course, the emergence of entirely new business models built around artificial intelligence from the ground up AI native businesses. Wow.

So the pace isn't slowing down. Not at all. I think the key takeaway for the future is really adaptability, both for businesses and for us as individuals navigating their offerings.

A continuous learning mindset will be absolutely crucial. What an insightful journey into the inner workings, the architecture of the business world, from those foundational traditional models that have shaped our economy for centuries to the, well, the cutting edge, sometimes chaotic innovations that are redefining how we interact with companies. It's been fascinating to unpack these underlying blueprints.

Yeah, we really hope this deep dive is giving you a new perspective, maybe a new lens through which to view the companies you encounter every single day and understand the fundamental forces driving our whole commercial landscape. And you can ask those really key questions. How do they actually create value? How do they deliver it effectively to their customers? And ultimately, how do they capture that value to sustain themselves and grow? So take a moment next time you buy something or use a service.

Think about the business models you interact with daily. What surprised you in our discussion today? What questions are still kind of douncing around in your head? This is really just the start of a truly fascinating exploration. Absolutely.

Keep observing, keep questioning and definitely keep that curiosity alive. It makes you a smarter consumer, employee, citizen, everything. And with this, we come to the end of another deep dive from English Plus Podcast.

But don't go anywhere because coming up next is our language in context section with Danny. Don't want to miss that. Welcome back, my friends, we've just wrapped up a fascinating deep dive into the world of business models, and now it's time to refine our language skills by focusing on some of the key terms and phrases we encountered.

Understanding these words and how they're used will not only enrich your vocabulary, but also give you more precision when discussing the intricate workings of commerce and innovation. Now, let's start with a phrase that really sets the stage. Plunging into something.

Now, we used it at the very beginning when we said today we're plunging into something that's kind of the invisible engine of our world, business models. Well, to plunge into something means to dive headfirst into it, to get deeply involved or immersed very quickly. Think of it like jumping into a swimming pool.

You're fully surrounded by the water. Now, we often use it when starting a new project, a new topic of study or even a new hobby. For example, you might say after finishing my exams, I'm going to plunge into learning how to play the guitar, meaning you're going to dedicate yourself fully to it.

It conveys a sense of eager and immediate engagement. Next, we talked about the secret sauce behind every company. Well, this isn't literally a culinary ingredient, of course.

Secret sauce is an idiom that refers to a special, often unique quality ingredient or aspect that gives something its effectiveness or distinctiveness. It's the intangible element that makes a company, product or person especially successful. For instance, a successful startup might say our secret sauce is our incredibly responsive customer service, meaning that's what truly sets them apart from their competitors.

It's what makes them special and gives them their edge. So that was about the secret sauce. Then we moved into discussing traditional business models.

We encountered the term brass tacks. We said, let's get down to brass tacks with the old fake bulls, the traditional business models. Now, getting down to brass tacks means getting to the most important or fundamental details of a matter.

It's about moving past the superficial aspects and focusing on the practical realities. Imagine a carpenter measuring things very precisely with brass tacks. It's about practicalities, not abstract ideas.

You might use it in a meeting by saying enough small talk. Let's get down to brass tacks and discuss the budget. It signals a shift to serious, practical discussion.

And when describing retail, we called it the OG. Well, this is a more informal slang term, if you will, standing for original gangster. But in this context, it simply means original.

It refers to something that is the first, the earliest or the most authentic version of its kind. So when we said retail, this is the OG, we meant it's the original or most fundamental business model. You might hear someone say that classic rock band is the OG of grunge music, meaning they were pioneers of that genre.

It's a way to acknowledge something's foundational status. Moving on, we touched upon the struggles of local stores against online giants and how scale just changes the game. The phrase changes the game means to fundamentally alter the conditions, rules or dynamics of the situation, making it very different from before.

The sheer size and reach of online retailers drastically shifted how traditional stores operate and compete. Think of a new technology that makes an old one obsolete. That technology changes the game.

For example, we can say the invention of the Internet truly changed the game for information sharing. It's about a significant and often permanent alteration. Now, when discussing how traditional retailers fight back, we mentioned experiential retail, but this is a more specific term that describes a retail strategy where the focus isn't just on selling products, but on creating a memorable and engaging experience for the customer.

It's about providing unique in-person activities or environments that can't be replicated online. A bookstore that hosts author readings, poetry slams and has a cozy cafe is an example of experiential retail. It's about selling an experience alongside the product.

We then talked about the subscription model and how it creates the Holy Grail of predictable revenue. The Holy Grail is an idiom referencing a legendary artifact from Arthurian mythology, representing something that is extremely difficult to find or achieve, but highly sought after because of its immense value. In business, the Holy Grail is that ultimate elusive goal or achievement.

Predictable recurring revenue is incredibly desirable for businesses, making it their Holy Grail. You might say, for example, finding a cure for that disease is the Holy Grail for medical researchers. We also use the term subscription creep when discussing how monthly fees can add up.

Creep in this context refers to a slow, gradual and often unnoticed increase or development of something, usually something undesirable. Subscription creep specifically refers to the way multiple small monthly subscription costs can accumulate over time without the consumer fully realizing how much they are spending. It's a sneaky kind of accumulation.

You could also talk about scope creep in project management where the requirements of a project slowly expand beyond the original plan. Now, when we moved on to the platform

model, we mentioned the network effect. Well, this is a key concept in economics and business describing a phenomenon where the value or utility of a product or service increases with the number of users.

The more people who use a social media platform, for example, the more valuable it becomes to each individual user because there are more connections and interactions. Think of a telephone network. A single phone is useless, but many phones connected together create immense value.

Finally, in the disruptive models, we talked about the ecosystem model and the potential for vendor lock in. Vendor lock in is a situation where a customer is dependent on a vendor for products and services and cannot easily switch to another vendor without substantial costs, effort or inconvenience. Once you're deeply embedded in one company system like Apple's, it becomes difficult to leave because of the time, data and money you've invested.

It's like being locked into a particular supplier. All right, my friends, these were the words that I wanted to share with you or the phrases, obviously. And these are very useful, of course, for our speaking challenge.

Now that we've explored some rich vocabulary, let's put it into practice and work on our speaking fluency. Often when we learn new words, we tend to isolate them. But natural conversation involves weaving them into a broader context, connecting ideas and expressing nuances.

Today, we're going to focus on expressing opinions and elaborating on them naturally. This means not just stating a viewpoint, but also explaining why you hold that view, providing examples and sometimes even acknowledging counter arguments. This is crucial for sounding thoughtful and engaging in any discussion, especially when talking about complex topics like business models.

Let's take some of the phrases we just learned and practice building out our responses. For instance, if someone asks you, what do you think is the secret sauce behind the success of Company X? Instead of just saying their marketing, try to elaborate. You could say, for example, that's a great question.

I think the secret sauce for Company X isn't just one thing. But if I had to pick, I'd say it's their relentless focus on customer experience. They don't just sell a product, they sell an entire feeling of belonging.

For example, their customer service goes above and beyond, and they've built a really strong community around their brand. That direct connection is what truly makes them stand out. Notice how I started by acknowledging the question, then offered my main point and followed it up with an example and a concluding thought.

This structure makes your answer much more comprehensive and persuasive. That's what it

counts, right? Now let's try another one using changes the game and subscription creep. Imagine a friend says, I'm thinking of getting a dozen new streaming services.

They're all so cheap. You could respond, be careful. While streaming services have definitely changed the game for entertainment access, it's so easy to fall victim to subscription creep.

Those small monthly fees really add up. I know I've signed up for a few services in the past that I hardly ever used, and they ended up costing me a lot over time. It makes you really think about whether you're getting true value for your money.

Now here, you're not just agreeing or disagreeing, obviously. You're offering a cautionary tale, drawing on your own experience and prompting further thought. So these are just a couple of examples.

Now, your challenge for this week is to pick two or three of the vocabulary words or phrases we discussed today, like plunge into, brass tacks, experiential retail, network effect, or vendor lock-in, and incorporate them into a short conversational paragraph about a company or industry you're familiar with. Try to explain your opinion and give a small example. Record yourself, or even better, find a friend or language partner and have a mini discussion.

The more you practice elaborating on your thoughts, the more fluid and confident your English will become. And now, my friends, that we're done with our language focus section for today, let's move on to our discussion section. We've just unpacked the fascinating architecture of business models, from the time-tested traditional approaches to the agile and often disruptive innovations that are reshaping our daily lives.

As we reflected on models like retail and manufacturing, it was interesting to consider their enduring relevance, even in the face of digital transformation. While seemingly simple, their complexity lies in the underlying logistics, sourcing, and quality control that truly build the backbone of our global economy. Then we plunged into the disruptive models like platforms and freemium.

It's remarkable how much our expectations for convenience and access have been recalibrated by these innovations. Think about how we now hail a ride or order food. It's almost instantaneous.

But beyond the sheer convenience, these discussions really highlight the implicit exchanges happening in our digital world. When we use a free service, what are we truly giving up? Our data? Our attention? Our patience, perhaps? It challenges us to be more mindful consumers, to look beyond the surface, and to understand the silent transactions that underpin so much of our online existence. The rise of the gig economy, spurred by on-demand models, also brings critical questions about worker rights and job security into sharp focus.

And as for the ecosystem models, while the seamless integration offers unparalleled convenience, it also makes us ponder the potential for vendor lock-in and its implications for

consumer choice and market competition. Alright, now let's open up the discussion and hear your thoughts. We truly want to engage with you.

So don't be shy about sharing your opinions in the comments section on our website, or better yet, on our Patreon page. Now let me start with the first question. We discussed how traditional retail is fighting back against online giants through experiential retail.

Can you think of a local store or a brand you know that is doing an exceptional job of creating a unique in-person experience? What specific elements make it stand out, and does it make you want to visit more often? My second question is about the subscription model. Well, the subscription model is everywhere, from entertainment to cloud storage. What's one subscription service you absolutely couldn't live without and why? And on the flip side, what's a subscription you've recently canceled or are thinking of canceling due to subscription creep or lack of perceived value? And of course, you can tell us a funny story about how many subscriptions you found yourself paying for without realizing it.

It definitely happened to me, and I'm sure that it happened to a lot of you at some point. Or maybe it's still happening. Maybe that's a wake-up call for you.

So whatever you think, share it with us in the comments, of course, on our website [englishpluspodcast.com](http://englishpluspodcast.com) or on our Patreon page. And now let's move on to the next question. The advertising model gives us free content in exchange for our attention and data.

Well, do you feel this is a fair exchange? How has the prevalence of online advertising influenced the quality or objectivity of the content you consume online, especially news or information? Does it make you think twice about those free cat videos? Well, think about it and let us know. Now for the next question. Let's talk here about the platform or marketplace model like Uber, Airbnb or eBay.

Well, the platform or marketplace model has fundamentally changed how we interact with services. How has this model personally impacted your daily life? Has it made things significantly easier or have you encountered any unexpected downsides or frustrations? Well, share any specific experience you have here. And finally, let's talk about something that is related to the future.

Now, looking ahead, we mentioned Web3 and decentralized business models, circular economy principles, hyper-personalization and AI native businesses as exciting developments. Which of these future trends excites you the most and why? And what kind of positive or negative societal impact do you anticipate from it? Let your imagination run wild. And of course, share this wild run with us in the comments section on [englishpluspodcast.com](http://englishpluspodcast.com) or on our Patreon page.

We can't wait to read your insights and reflections. Your perspectives truly enrich this community. So keep it coming.

And with that, my friends, we wrap up another insightful deep dive here on English Plus Podcast. We've journeyed through the intricate world of business models from the timeless foundations of retail and manufacturing to the cutting edge innovations that are reshaping how we live, work and interact. Remember, understanding these underlying blueprints isn't just for entrepreneurs or economists.

It empowers you as a smarter consumer, a more aware employee and a more engaged citizen. It helps you see past the fancy products and marketing to truly grasp how value is created, delivered and captured in our dynamic commercial landscape. So the next time you tap your phone for a ride, stream a movie or even pick up milk from your local shop, take a moment, ask yourself, what business model is at play here? How does it truly work? What are the seen and unseen implications? Keep observing, keep questioning, and above all, keep that curiosity alive.

It's the secret sauce to continuous learning. And my friends, don't forget to visit our website, [EnglishPlusPodcast.com](https://EnglishPlusPodcast.com), where you can find the full transcript of this episode, dive deeper in our vocabulary and discussion sections and engage with us in the comments. We love hearing from you.

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And until then, keep learning, keep growing, and keep pushing your English and knowledge forward. And remember, never stop learning with English Plus Podcast. I'm Danny.

Thank you for listening. I will see you next time.