

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/blog/videos/products-for-life-customers-for-life>

McDonough + Partners lead William McDonough points out that manufacturers can utilize the same resources repeatedly, and build a lifetime buying relationship with their customer in the process. By closing the product cycle - that is, designing goods with their deconstruction and reconstruction in mind - product developers are uniquely poised to deepen their customer relationship. McDonough cites a case study of a carpet manufacturer that employs *Cradle to Cradle* design. Customers "lease" the carpet, and are offered financial incentive to return it after its term of use, where the manufacturer can strip it, reuse the backing, and replenish the fibers into new design - keeping toxic chemicals out of the environment, and unwanted product from the landfill.



Transcript

From the technical nutrient front, working with Shaw Industries, part of Berkshire Hathaway, we worked on a product of theirs called EcoWorks and Eco Solution Q, which is a carpet textile that is one of the last textile industries in the United States; the carpet business.. And developed a Cradle to Cradle carpet where the top is nylon 6 which goes back to caprolactam chemical recycling and then back to fiber.. The underlayment comes out as a thermoplastic polyolefin, gets separated and recycled as an underlayment thermoplastic polyolefin.. So the carpet can become a carpet again forever.. So the relationship with the customer becomes one effectively of leasing the carpet to them.. You sell them the carpet, you say you want it back whenever they're finished with it, and your relationship with the client and customer is maintained because you want the carpet back, they want to contact you when they finish with it because you're going to take it back, give them a discount on the new carpet.. And that relationship gets maintained.. This is a really critical part of the equation.. It is the fact that you're maintaining your customer base.. So carpet can become a carpet again forever, back through chemical recycling or thermoplastic recycling...