

Article

Taking the Customers Journey

A Roadmap for Digitizing Business Services – Part II

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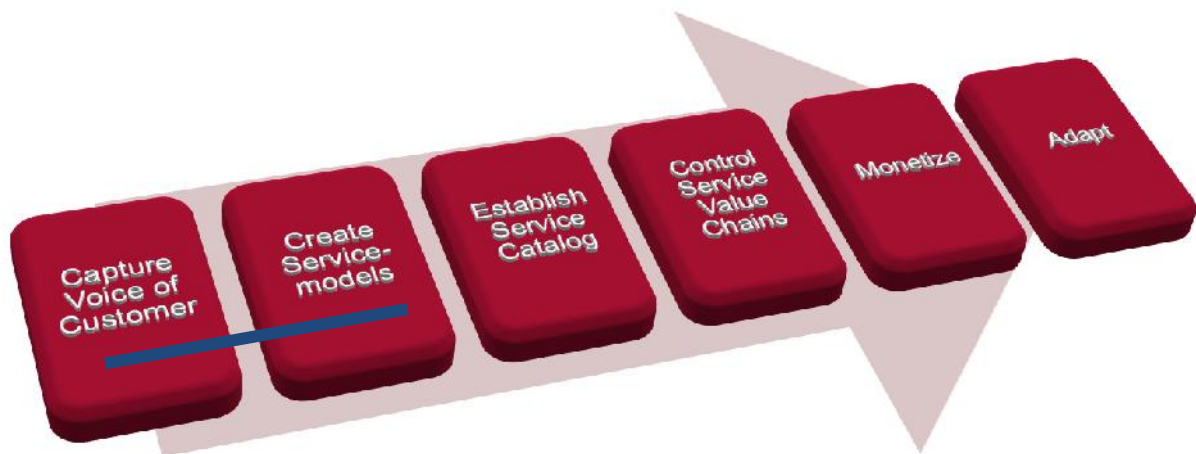
Summary

Having success with digitalized services depends on one factor: producing benefit for your customers. Produce it permanently – if not, you are lost!

This means that you as service architect should hear the same sounds (as from a radio station) like your potential customer. Remember they hear **WI4ME** (What's in for me?). So, you should stay tuned on the same frequency to recognize the Voice of Customer.

The challenge: rarely has one of us taken the challenge of transforming the experience of a customer journey along a service relationship to guarantee the success of the own services offered on the market.

Where the first part of this series of whitepapers has shown the whole roadmap on how to digitalize services, in this paper we focus on those parts of best practice which are sometimes cryptically described within the literature on Service Strategy and Service Design.



Hopefully this will be in a way that you as the reader can follow...

The Customers View and its expression in the Patterns of Business Activity

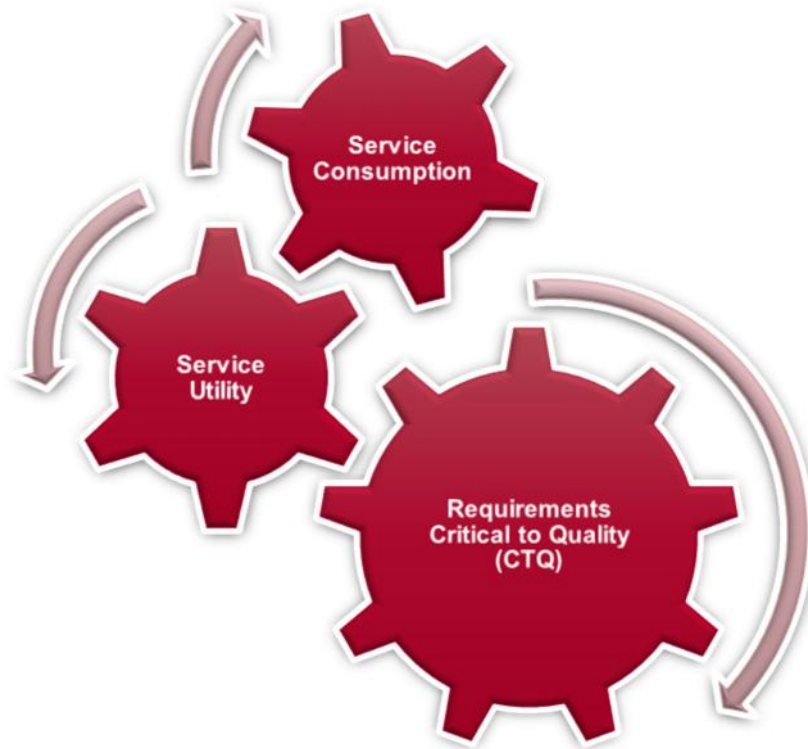
Take the view of the customer when you want to improve your service provisioning.

A service for this customer is perceived as having value if new possibilities of solving issues are offered, the achievement of a specific outcome is simplified, facilitated or accelerated and finally if the provisioning itself is supported with enough sustainability (availability, capacity, continuity and security).

So, it is important to know about the workflows and procedures a customer uses in solving their issues with an actual or potential service and it is crucially about all emotions along the touchpoints a customer reaches through their service voyage.

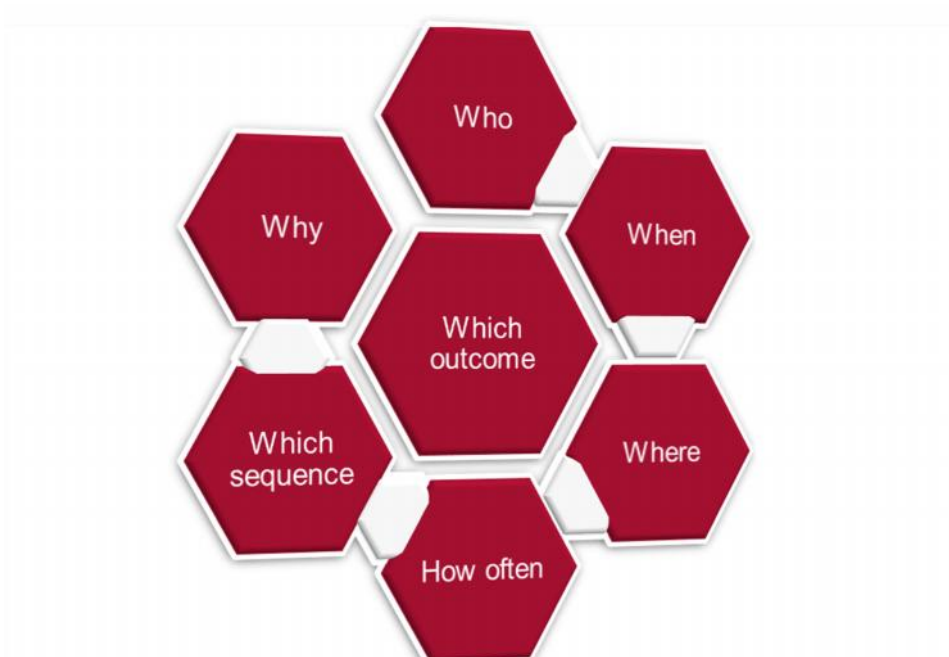
A customer experience analysis can be performed in three phases. **Phase one** is around the utility and warranty-factors of the service itself (capturing the pattern of business activity)

Phase two is about the consumption experience of the service during the whole lifecycle of the service relationship. Both tracks are analyzed at the end and will give the input for the service-requirements list, where one attribute will be outstanding: What is critical to quality (CTQ)?



The service utility journey and its expression in the Patterns of Business Activity

This part of the customer journey seems that simple that it is often “assumed” without any verification, or skipped altogether: asking the customer how they solve and consume a service during achieving their very personal outcome in everyday situations.



Who (the user or customer) uses when (what gives the frame for support and operation time), where (what gives coupling and decoupling points in service consumption), how often (performance timeframe), in which sequence (to figure out utility potentials) and why (to frame outcome and service context) a specific service to achieve a specific outcome?

With these quite simple sounding questions you can draft patterns of business activity and basic requirements which are critical to quality for the service itself.

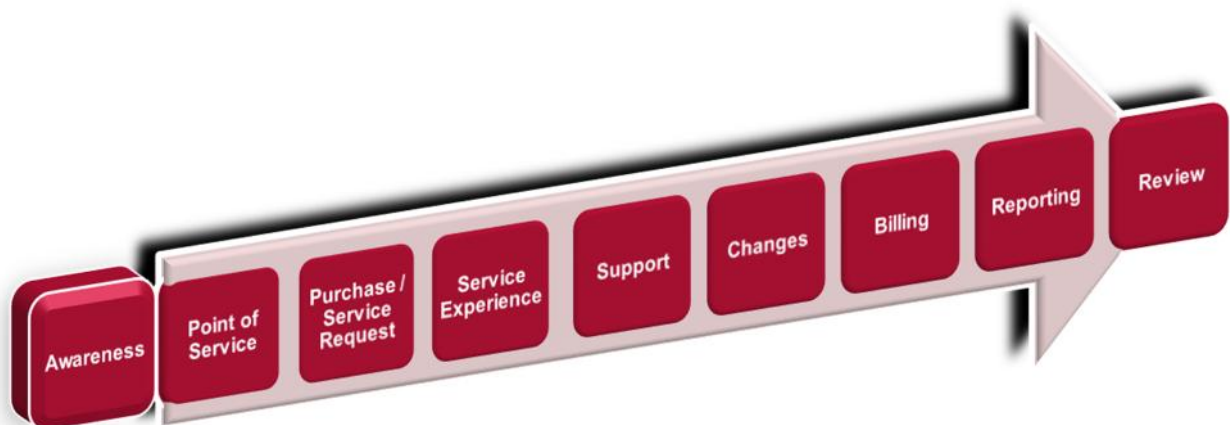
So you have captured the basic groove of service music your customer prefers, but not the sound of emotions and expression he feels during the whole service relationship. This would be more likely if you go one step further...

The service consumption journey and its touchpoint approach

Satisfaction of service customers is not made only with the utility and warranty of a service design: it is made and improved along all the touchpoints that a service consumer experiences when they enter into a service relationship until the point when they leave you as customer.

Example: even the best service proposition in supporting a mobile workplace solution would fail if potential customers and users:

- Do not know about it (awareness)
- Have real difficulties to access at the defined point of service
- Are not able to purchase their desired service features in a simple way
- Are guided through the service consumption in an awkward way
- Feel lost in space in a “support situation”
- Are not involved or informed about service changes
- Are annoyed about the billing process and the lack of transparency of invoices
- Get reports about service fulfilment they do not really understand
- Have to complete reviews, where they know that there are neither consequences nor improvements afterwards



By focusing on exactly on these “touchpoints” you as a service provider, service architect or even as a relationship manager can realize previously non-recognized benefits which guarantee the sustainability of a service relationship.

Which eventually means not only happy customers but ongoing revenue.

This only happens if you consider all captured information and bring it into a consolidated view of requirements, where you measure not only what is critical for delighting your customer, but also what is critical to quality (CTQ).

Service Requirements and their criticality to overall service quality

Capturing the Voice of the Customer during those Customer Journeys is one thing. To bring all those tones, rhythms and emotions of customer experience into a sound model which gives you a baseline in drafting a high quality service solution model is quite another.

Phase three in this journey is bringing all that information into one consolidated requirements list, where you can figure out at which touchpoint of the customer journey you should consider which attributes, criteria or focus further on service features which makes your potential service customer happy.

There you can determine which features are critical to quality and later which should be seen as service acceptance criteria.



Finally you will have a consolidated and balanced service requirements list. This list will be your partner, friend and source of discipline, starting in the “planned” phase of a service and ending at the operational and improvement phases of the lifecycle.

For your service customer this approach will deliver sustainable value, a sound service and enough motivation to stay with you as a provider.

Final recommendations

- Use customer journeys as instrument at the beginning and within transition phases of a service relationship
- Look at the patterns of business activity your potential customers have
- Figure out where you can offer new possibilities
- Think permanently about simplifying your customers life
- Think on all potential touchpoints between you and your customer
- Give your requirements priority and direction via Kano-Ratings
- Bring your analysis results in a requirements list
- Draft a service model
- Read the next instalment of this whitepaper series!

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