Developing components of communication through service design: Case study Radisson Blu Royal

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Developing components of communication through service design: Case study Radisson Blu Royal
The purpose of this project is to develop the current communication process of ordering catering service in room at the case company Radisson Blu Royal by the use of service design tools. The importance of communication should not be ignored or underrated as it directly affects the experience of employees and the end user. The research was carried out by two students, where one had experience of internal communication in the organization through work as an intern and the other had been able to observe the room service process externally, as a customer. Due to this combination of internal and external observations, a new service product was innovated as an application. The result of this research will make the communication flow better and assist the core business of the organization.

The theoretical framework of this report explains about the understanding of communication, its components and channels. In addition, this chapter also reviews the communication in the organizations, reasons for communication gap and the significant role of digital media that effect the buying behavior of consumers. It also explains the flow of communication within the organization.

The project was conducted by using the tools of service design. The service design approach offers the users a wide range of research methods in different phases. According to the need of the project, methods such as contextual interview, persona, brainstorming and service design were selected. Service design tools are effective in creating innovative solutions in the service field.

The implementation of this project in the case company will reduce the workload of employees in the reception and restaurant department of the hotel with the help of application that we have innovated during the project, the kitchen chef will receive the food orders directly from the customers. At the same time, the customers will also get real-time information about their orders. This research will help in reducing the touch points like reception and restaurant department in the room service process and make the service smooth and fast.

Keywords, Communication, Service Design, Digital Media, Room Service, Customer Satisfaction
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1 Introduction

The purpose of the thesis report is to visualize the readers about the utilization of service design methods for the innovation and development of the communication system in a profit and service oriented business. The thesis is written with an aim of improvement in the existing communication process in an innovative way for the chosen Case Company “Radisson Blu Royal”. Customer satisfaction with increased value in their services will be our end-result. Moreover, the knowledge gained during our studies are applied in this research and concluded up with development proposal.

Two students will be responsible for the co-ordination to complete this thesis project. The observation is done closely with two different perspectives with the help of Radisson Blu members. While one perspective is prepared from external point of view, the other observation is done from a staff’s viewpoint too as one of us has already been an intern for the case company.

The concept of offering hospitality services can be dated back to the evolution of human civilization. The development of the civilization has also led to the change in the industry. The continuous development has created opportunities for the entrepreneurs to compete against each other and improve their existing services. As services are intangible, there is always space for the development of services from the customer’s point of view in this sector. Radisson Blu already have their set standards of quality services offering to its customers. But, as the customers tend to keep their expectations high every day, the company have to maintain their quality of service each day focusing on the changing trends in order to keep growing.

Communication is one of the most crucial factor in organizations. Communication exists in many levels. Mesasges are coommunicated by words, body language, acts and values. Communication in the hospitality industry is challenged especially by cultural and language barriers. This is an important factor that must be taken into account when closing communication gaps within the hospitality industry. Communication is different between customer and employees, and managers must be able to understand these differences. Messages are delivered through many channels in the 21st century. One significant change is the common use of technology and access to the world wide web. Technology is so common, that mangers must understand how communication is evolving within the world of technology. For example, people access more internet through their smart phone and mobile applications rather than from the standard desktop computer or PC. The evolution in communication affects organizational communication in marketing, Public Relation and almost every aspect of their day-to-day activities.
During Jaree’s internship in Radison Blu, the challenges in the communication process within the hotel was observed. And after further discussion with Sandip, we figured out a slight communication gap between the two departments, Kitchen and Room Service. It has been observed that the room service order of customers passes through the reception which increases the work load for the employees of reception department. This also builds a bridge between customer and kitchen to go through reception and we think that this gap can be resolved with the help of latest technology.

1.1 Company background

Radisson hotel brand started after the famous french traveller opened Pierre Radisson in Minneapolis that was bought by Curt Carlson in 1962 who was a businessman and entrepreneur from Minneapolis. Carlson got popularity in 1940’s-50’s because of their unique customer loyalty concept (Programe). They have also launched many other popular brands in USA such as first travel agency Programe with the concept of “look to book”. They are one of the oldest well known brands of United States. (Radisson History 2015)

According to the corporate site of Radisson (2015), “It is one of the largest and leading hospitality Brand in the world”. It provides out standing services, contemporary hospitality services with “yes I can” attitude. Radisson promises 100% guest satisfaction with first class service and this full service hotel has been featured according to the requirements of this modern travel world. (About Radisson 2015)

Radisson is a well-known brand in the world that offers full holistic services, resort services and it also covers mid services for prime users. Hotels of this chain can be found mostly in basic public places like airports, city center, train stations and leisure destinations around the globe. Radisson is expanding their business constantly and currently running 430 hotels with 103 projects ongoing. (About Radisson 2015)

This research will focus on one of the Radisson hotel located in the center of Helsinki, Finland "RADISSON BLU ROYAL". Radisson Blu Royal is basically designed for businessmen and customers who visit Helsinki for professional purposes. The idea of this hotel and resort is to offer best hospitality services and serve their customer at best. It offers all the services required in hospitality industry. There are 262 rooms including VIP rooms and big room resorts for family. Hotel offers cozy and “family environment to make customers feel like home. More over customers are called by their name to create such environment. The hotel is located in the heart of Helsinki by the side of Kamppi which is one of the famous shopping center in Finland. (Radisson Blu Hotel Royal Helsinki 2015)
1.2 Research objective and question

The objective of this thesis is to improve the current communication process of ordering foods in the room service department in Radisson Blu Royal. This will be carried out by service design tools and other methodologies. Moreover, the use of our studies in the research and come up with development proposal and if possible, bring new services or ideas to Case company “Radisson Blu royal”.

With an aim of solving and developing the process of communication in Radisson Blu’s room service department, we have come up with suitable questions. Based on our observations, the questions are sorted out carefully. The answers to these questions will provide key informations which will lead us to our final goal.

1. How to improve communication process for room service?(food delivery)
2. How to recover and develop services through service design methods?
3. How to make service quality better upto customer’s expectation?

1.3 Structure of thesis

The research is structured on the concept of pyramid. The pyramid starts of as a base which is very general and very broad. As the pyramid is being built, the structure and the content become very concise. As every step goes into depth, the idea narrows down and it brings the research into next stage. The first phase elaborates the introduction of this research, Company background and Research objective. As pyramid narrows down, research goes in more depth in second phase. This phase includes the theoretical framework presenting the importance of communication, organisational communication and factors involving in circulating the information with in the organization. This phase also illustrates the Service design tools, its importance and the ways of using these tools. Chapter four explains the methodology and findings of the case study while the summit of the pyramid shows the conclusion of the whole research. The pyramid of the thesis structure is visualized in Figure 1 below.
Communication is the term used to elaborate process of sending or receiving information between two entities. It includes two entities, the one encodes (Sender) and other decodes (receives) the information through different means. For example, when someone contacts a classmate to inform him/her about the cancelation of class, the individual who calls, is sending the information and the fellow classmate is considered as a receiver. In the same way if a company's manager sends an email to complete assigned tasks, he is considered as a sender and the employee as a receiver. (Collins 2012, 404)

Communication is a necessity since the age of human evolution, it developed with the passage of time. People used to communicate by giving direct messages, in forms of letters and signs as communication developed and now information can be shared or received from all over the world in a few seconds. It is also important to develop communication methods, as development is important in other sectors. A simple text message is the easiest example of development as a evolved source of communication in our daily life. Messaging is an efficient tool to uphold communication as compared to writing letters. (Dr. Collins 2012, 404)
A simple text message has totally changed the use of cell phones and make manufacturers prospective of new innovation. (Collins 2012,404)

According to Walker, communication is an organized system of delivering and receiving of meaningful information (Walker 2013, 608). From Walker's point of view, the main purpose of communication is not sending the message but making it concise and to the point so the receiver can easily understand the highlights of the message. The information is irrelevant for the organization if the employee receives the message in a language that the employee isn't familiar with. The perfect form of communication is where both the sender and the receiver can contemplate each other's thoughts and ideas.

2.1 Components of communication

Communication is an exchange of verbal or in verbal data between two entities and the initial stage of this process is a plain message. This message needs a medium to convey it to the receiver. It is essential that the receiver interprets the information accordingly from the sender and then responds back within a reasonable time frame. Communication is a co-operative process and it requires feedback and understanding from the receivers end to complete the cycle. Kliem,L (2008)
As shown in the Figure 3, it is vital for organizations to understand the factors that affect communication process. This process of communication consists of six components: 1) Context, 2) Sender (encoder), 3) Message, 4) Medium, 5) Receiver (Decoder), 6) Feedback.

**Context**: Communication always takes place in a certain context and it revolves around another context. The environment where communication takes place can be physical, social, or cultural. Context is crucial to start any sort of communication, this is the form of communication chosen by the sender to start the whole process of conveying information. For example, a text message or a phone call.

**Message**: According to Kliem, L (2008) The next and main part of this communication process is messaging, it is the main context of a specific message. The goal of the message is to send required or delivered data to the receiver. A message can be sent for various purposes, it can be informative, entertainment or persuasive. In the work force, it is mostly persuasive or informative. Persuasive if an organization is trying to persuade its consumers with a message that works more like a structured ad. The message should be clear and logical and should have a specific structure defined by the organization, so the recipient can understand the whole content of it.

**Medium**: The channel used to convey this message is called a medium. It is essential for a sender to choose the right medium for this process. Variety of media is available now a days and currently, technology can be face to face communication, through phone, application, email and voicemail. The selection of media depends on various factors and demand of the organization such as; written material can be used to communicate with a small group of people, while oral communication can be used to convey the message to a immense audience where feedback is required.
Decoder: The person who receives the message is called decoder. The decoder's ability to interpret a single message depends on different factors. It depends if the reader has any prior knowledge about the context, or his/her first interpretation of the message.

Feedback: Feedback has the same level of importance as the message, the actual motive of the message is that recipient understood it and that can only be achieved by feedback. The sender cannot assume any results without receiving healthy feedback from the audience. Feedback can be positive or negative but it is important to receive it. In some cases, people don’t send feedback because they are shy to share any criticism or they may assume their criticism may be offensive, but critics are important to shed some light on topics the presenter may have missed.

2.2 Communication as bridge

Communication skills are a necessity when joining the work force because it is beneficial for the business and the individual him/herself. Good communication makes decisions more persuasive and its very efficient for the company because workflows smoothly and increases the productivity of the organization. Communication develops business relationship and enhances companies over-all professional image. Within the organization, it increases employees satisfaction and turnover, as a result investor and the firm get better financial results. (Collins 2012, 405)

![Figure 4: Methods of communication (Collins 2012, 406)](image-url)
The figure 4 above shows mostly used methods of communication in College Board. We can see emails and presentations are used more frequently in workplaces. and organizations or firms need to adopt and develop their communication channels to go with the flow of trend. (Collins 2012,406)

2.3 Organizational Communication

We experience Organizational communication in our everyday life from school to Part time job, from summer job to full time working life or while volunteered worker for any organization. There are many different ways or channels of communication depend on the position or situation, one might experience it as an interviewee, being a new employee or as a manager. Hence, we are surrounded by organizations and most of our waking time is spent for any organization. Communication exists in the center of every organization. (Laura, Lippert, Scott, n.d)

To understand Organizational communication it is important to understand organization. Amitai Etzioni (1964) states, “We are born in organizations, educated by organizations, and most of us spend much of our lives working for organizations” in another words Communication is the key to achieve any goal while working in teams or groups, Organizational communication doesn’t only include Manufacturing, profitable and corporate organizations. It also includes Schools, Non-profit organizations, governments and other society sectors. All these Organizations need strong communication, hence we can say Organizations can not work without communication (Laura k, Lippert, Scott T, n.d)

Communication is defined above that it is the process of receiving and sending information. In organizational communication, it involves the same process but different factors are involved in making it successful. For an example while making and sending the sales report it goes through the same process of sending and receiving, but the report must address to someone at a specific position and must contain the required information for the decision.

According to Laura, k et all, 1 "We define organizational communication as the sending and receiving of messages among interrelated individuals within a particular environment or setting to achieve individual and common goals” Organizational communication is not separate phenomena, Team in the organization use it to communicate with each other through different means or channels. Organizational communication helps to build the good relationship with internal and external organizations member.

Organizational communication includes all different forms of communication it might be a network, system or any other form that held between departments, employees, groups or
individuals within the organization. Organizational communication includes “formal vs informal communication and communication flow patterns that include formal and informal communication networks. (Walker 2013, 614)

Formal and informal communications are the two major types of Organisation communication. Formal communication follows the official structure. Managers used this way to communicate with the employee for job requirements. Formal communication takes place when the manager gives the weekly schedule or any notice to the employee, Hence all the matters should be job-related or required by employment.

Informal communication doesn't follow the same official chain of communication or companies specific sequence of rules. The subject can be job-related but it doesn't necessarily have to be, it can be the conversation between two employees at the water fountain, during lunch or at any other gatherings. Relationships develop among employees in all organizations, it might lead them to be a close friend or just college. Employees use informal communication to develop their social relationship and it can increase Companies Performance because of employees better relationship. It also reduces the communication gap and develop communication Channels among employees. "The Grapevine" is a form of informal communication. ((Laura k et all, 614) The Grapvine” is a form of informal communication. ((Laura k et all, 614)

2.4 Communication Flow

In an organization Communication flows in four different directions Upward communication, Downward Communication, Lateral Communication, and Diagonal communication. Upward communication occurs when managers or supervisors take their employees feed back under consideration or, in other words, they rely on their employees. This type of Communication is very important for managers because they can find out their employees satisfaction level about job or surroundings. At some places, Managers ask their subordinates for new ideas for the development of the organization. This kind of Communication is significant to improve the Employees satisfaction and their relationship with managers. Upward communication includes surveys, managers performance reports, feedback from employees, suggestion and group conversations with other workers.

Downward Communication takes place when information moves from Managers to Employee. This type of communication is used to describe employees their work, companies policies, employees evaluation, future of workers and to describe the procedure of achieving the goals
to workers, moreover it is used to inform employees their duties, coordinating with each other and to evaluate the employees.

Communication occurs between the employees at the same level in the heretical level of Company is called lateral communication. Employees used this channel to discuss their environment and the company in general. Cross-functional teams use this way to communicate more efficient, it is important for employees to inform their managers about the decisions.

This type of communication takes place when employees from same department communicate.

Communication between the employees of different departments in the organization is called Diagonal communication. The example of this is communication of chef with reception, Both employees have the different hierarchical level in the organisation. Workers in almost all organizations communicate through emails but in lateral communication workers should update their managers about the decisions.

It has been explained how communications work in an organization, the relationship of Organization with communication and the importance of communication in the development of any Organization whether it is Profitable or non-profitable. The later phase of theory will focus on Communication Gap and communication models.

2.5 Communication Gap

Communication Gap is a lack of communication, nowadays Consumers demands have increased, they not only expect high-quality product but a customer service as well. All well-established manufacturing companies even, car, mobile or other big Organizations can not gain the customers satisfaction without providing them good services along with Reliable physical product according to their demand. Nowadays customer service is also considered as a part of the product.

(Parasuraman, Zeithalm & Berry 1988,41-45) Presented the SERVQUAL (Service quality gap model) in 1988. SERVEQUAL is a gap model to measure the service quality, This tool can be used by managers of any industry to find out the gaps in services. The aim of this method is to find out the gaps between customer expectations and the services provided to them during the delivery of services at different stages. It also focuses on reducing the gap and developing the service.
The SERVEQUAL model identifies five different gaps:

1) The customer gap: This gap is due to the customers' expectations and their perception about the services. The customer expects what they see around them, which might be influenced by cultural influence, family background, or available online information. Customer perception varies from individual to individual and is totally subjective. It is based on their experience with the product and service they interact with. Customer satisfaction, quality of product, and delivering the service derive the perception about the whole service. The customer gap is the biggest gap, in the ideal world, the customer satisfaction and their perception should be identical. It is very important to be well aware of the target market. The best way to close this gap is to find out the customer needs and their expectations which are based on their background and their resources.

2) The knowledge gap: Customer expectations compared to management perception. This gap occurs due to managers' lack of information about consumers' expectations about the services or products of the company. Due to this gap, companies may approach the wrong customer or try to meet the needs that don't exist. This gap requires a lot of market research to close. The third gap is

3) The service delivery gap: This gap occurs due to discrepancies in service delivery compared to expected service. It is crucial to understand how customers perceive the service and ensure that the service delivery meets those expectations.

4) The quality gap: This occurs when the service quality specifications differ from the expected service. It is essential to define clear service quality expectations and ensure that these expectations are met.

5) The communications gap: This gap is about the information gap between the contractor and the customer. It is essential to communicate effectively to minimize this gap and ensure customer satisfaction.

This model highlights the importance of understanding customer expectations and ensuring that the service delivery meets these expectations.
arises due to employees weakness, Companies usually have guidelines for employees, but sometimes fail to train their employees up to the expectation of a customer. Employees play the vital role in delivering the services and creating the consumers perception. This gap affects the services delivery that directly affects the consumers thinking about services quality perception.

The fourth gap is 4) Service Delivery - external communication gap, This gap occur when companies promise more through media and communication, it raises customer expectation and when companies fail to deliver the same quality services it impacts on customer perception. This fifth Proposition is 5) Expected service- Percieved consumer Gap, The study shows that the key to this gap is to assist consumer more than their expectation, for an example if repairmen not only fix but also explain the way to fix it by themselves will definitely raise their satisfaction level.

3 Digital Consumer

The human progress in technology has brought revolutionary trends as never seen before. It had an influence on daily lives of human and changed the ways of performing day-to-day activities. The modern-day technology has influence on everyone from students to corporates and from producers to consumers. The modern technology can also be referred as digital technology. Everything are being digitalized as people are gaining easy access to digital devices and internet. It can be said that we live in a digital world at this moment. Modern technology have entirely intertwined most of the consumer’s daily lives and their digital lives. According to the Nielsen Company (2014, 2), “In 2013, the Oxford Dictionary officially codified the term digital detox - “a period of time during which a person refrains from using electronic devices such as smartphones or computers...” - by adding it and the definition to its online version (which, ironically, is accessible only via a digital device.)”. From this sentence, we can have a rough idea of how digital technologies are replacing our traditional ways of everyday lives.

Current world consumers have been dependent with the facilities accessible by the digital companies. They have easy access to all the contents with just a click of hand from anywhere. With the options of choosing different forms of digital devices, the consumers can also have their own decision of choosing the fields of information by providers. This can have added benefit of saving time as the consumers can access or purchase from any place and any time. The only disadvantage that can be claimed is the risk of sharing personal information to the advertisement firms.
Digital devices are handy to use, easily portable and accessible in a lot of public as well as private places. As the trend of traditional ways of consumer habits are altering into digital ways, service providers are also shifting their old-fashioned trends of reaching their customers. Majority of producers and advertising companies are targeting the digital consumers using the digital media platform. Digital Medias also facilitates the consumers from different cultural backgrounds. (The Nielsen Company 2014, 1-6)

Organizations are not limited within customers and clients of same cultural background. They have to deal with clients from several countries and cultures. The communication occurring between people from diverse cultural backgrounds can be termed as cross-cultural communication. Dealing the customers without enough knowledge of their cultural manners can lead to miscommunication. Verbal and non-verbal manners of communication should also be taken into consideration with respect to cultural information. The barriers which might come while cross-cultural communication are language barriers, nonverbal behaviors of communication and stereotyping. (Reynolds & Valentine 2011, xv)

Languages sometimes can be pretty misleading. A lot of words are written as well as spoken in the same but contain two different meanings. Let’s take an example of a word “Close”. The word “close” have several meanings depending on the dialogue situation. It can mean either to accomplish or come / gather around. This barrier can come often while communicating with customers who come from non-English speaking country. This simple language barrier can be pretty easy to remove when pictures or visual representation comes into play. When offering services to the customers, a touch of visual guidelines can assist a lot to reduce miscommunication between parties. Digital customers always have this benefit of understanding the services easily as they can access the services in both language form and visual form too. (Reynolds & Valentine 2011, 53-54)

4 Service Design

Service design may be defined as the approach of innovating or improving the existing services ensuring them to be more effective and valuable. Service design uses different tools and methods to add increased value for the company. The design has developed as a process of the 4Ds; discover, design, define and deliver. It is related with the understanding of clients, organization and market, develop ideas, translate them into solutions and help to implementing them. Service design is in-volved in the ongoing life cycle of services and offers continuous evaluation. Service is constantly changing in accordance with time as it is an ongoing process. Its work with components, work-shops, and projects into integrate new service practice into organizations. (Stefan Moritz. Service Design. 2005)
Services are an important part of business. To make them work more productive, effective and efficient they have to be designed. Service design is the new field of tools which improves quality or recognizes needed improvements. It has become a fast-growing field but still, it is not enough good for recognizing problems related to service work. (Stefan Moritz. Service Design. 2005)

All the organizations, whether in public or private sector, need to deal with change in the working environment. The same old routine and ways of dealing with the business will not be effective with time. The business needs to upgrade their working procedures according to time while understanding the need of their customer. Service design emerges as a helpful approach to help business improve their services for increased profit and value of the firm. Different existing design tools and methodologies can be applied according to the nature of the business firm or the problem.

Service design process is divided into four distinct phases; Discover, Define, Develop and Deliver. It shows how the design process passes from point of thinking to situations where they are focused on distinct objectives. There are several tools and methods connected with four distinct phases. Design tools and methods help to face business challenges and to familiarise with design ways of working. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

A short information regarding the process of service design is explained below in Figure 6. First, we start with the discovering and getting brief information about the project while we end after developing services and delivering it to the customer with increased value of the service. The different design tools have significant role according to the phase of designing.
Figure 6: Service design tools (own)
4.1 Discover

The start of a project is a period of discovery, gathering information, identifying user needs and developing basic ideas. User journey mapping, contextual interview (user diary), service safari and user shadowing are some methods in discover phase in service design.

User journey mapping is representing a user’s progress through the service, from the beginning to end. A user journey map is a visual representation of a user’s journey through a service. This shows all the different interactions of users with the service. In this method we can see what part of the service is for the user and what parts is needed to improve. In user journey map it explains the user’s point of view and their actual experience of the service. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

The aim of this method is to identify the key elements of a service, understand the links between all the different elements over time. Identifying problem areas in a service help to add new things to create empathy with different types of users. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

Contextual interview or user diary is a method for gathering in-depth qualitative information from users. User diaries give chance people to tell about their own experience and explain what they do over a number of days or weeks. User Diaries usually consist of some personal background information and a ‘diary’ style format for capturing information over time. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

Aims of this method are to gather information about real user needs, get understanding and empathy about other people’s experiences. User diaries are created based on the context of the project and needs of the design team. Completed user diaries give information of a set of users over time. It may include videos and photographs as well as written descriptions. User Diaries help to identify important needs and insights of users and provide inspiration to design teams. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

A service safari is a research method for understanding services. Researchers experience a service first hand to find out what service experiences are like. A service safari might be focused on a particular service or a type of services. A wider range of services provide to get an idea about what is a positive service experience. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

Aims of this method are to gather information about a service and to identify what makes for a good service experience across many different service types. Service safaris are a useful
exercise at the beginning of any design process. They help to gain a rich understanding of services. In this method each participant records their experience by writing, or by using video and photography. Engaging with a service, observing the users and documenting the environment and materials, helps to identify how services value to customers. Through sharing their experiences the team can define what makes a great service experience. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

Shadowing is a research method for understanding how people interact with the world around them. In this method, users will be observed directly to identify and understand their needs. Researchers follow a particular person as they go about their lives or use a service and document what happens in the way. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

Aims of this method are to gather information about real user needs and empathy about other people’s experiences. Understand the different parts of a service such as staging, interactions, touch points, barriers and opportunities in service innovation. This helps to develop real understanding of service interactions and help to see the differences between what people say and what they do. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

4.2 Define

User personas, brainstorming, and design brief are the common methods in define phase. In this phase, ideas are combined and arranged with business objectives to face business challenge.

4.2.1 Persona

A User Persona is a character that helps the user research in an easily identifiable and understandable form. It brings together lots of information about similar people to create a single character that represents the group. Personas are normally created as a set, showing different types of users with different needs. A Person can cover information such as name, age, occupation, where they live, family, hobbies & interests, likes & dislikes, and most importantly needs. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

A persona can be described as a character which transforms the user research into a simple and logical form. This character makes it possible to combine similar behavior and interest of different individuals and group them accordingly. The end result of a Persona provides information to the researcher about different kinds of users with different requirements. There is no set rule to be included in a Persona. This can be made in a number of ways according to the need of the re-searcher. But a general Persona combines information such as
name, demographics, likes, dislikes and needs of a user. (Design methods for developing services N.D)

A benefit of using the tool is that user goals and needs become a common focus. Using personas make it easier to understand the service users. Personas help to sort customers into smaller groups. Personas enhance the focus, communication and collaboration aspects in any project. These are all valid reasons for using the tool in this particular project as well.

The use of Persona is beneficial only in certain field of research. The researcher should know the timing of using this tool. Applying the tool without any knowledge of its usefulness will only become useless and time consuming. It is easy to know on when to use a Persona in a research. The researcher should know the background and context of the subject matter. Without knowing the subject makes it illogical to use any kind of service design tool. And while making a Persona, the users should be chosen wisely considering the nature of subject and user interests. The researcher should be conscious about avoiding the stereotypes while making a Persona as the tool should be based on archetypes. (Curedale 2013, 219)

While Persona is a tool to gather information about people of similar interest, inaccurate Personas can bring trouble to the whole research. The data in Personas should be fetched out from real users. Imaginary data cannot be relied and presented out as a part of research. A researcher should be well-prepared for taking interviews and making observations around the field. After gathering the information, data should be sorted out properly which will ensure the quality to the research. (Curedale 2013, 219)

4.2.2 Brain Storming

Brainstorming is used to generate alternative solutions and opportunities quickly. They identify the most interesting and important ideas to take forward as part of the design process. It is particularly useful to break out of established patterns of thinking, and develop new ways of looking things. It also helps to overcome many of the issues. Aims of this method are generate a large number of potential ideas, identify key ideas to develop further and create a shared understanding of potential opportunities around a topic or theme. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

As the name suggests, brainstorming is an effective technique to create more ideas in a short time. The brain is forced to exercise quickly to generate solutions alternatively. The purpose of using the method is only to generate a lot of possible ideas from other people or group. After the results from this method, the most creative and important concepts will be chosen from a huge number of ideas created.
Brainstorming comes as a convenient tool for student researching. It is easy to use the method in the classroom with other classmates. Smaller groups can be created to discuss and share the ideas on a given topic or problem. As individuals have the potential of thinking differently than each other, this ensures that the groups will come out with different pattern of ideas and thoughts. Brainstorming is also a common method for the students to use to get different kind of ideas from other skillful minds.

4.3 Develop

Design-led solutions are developed, prototyped, tested and performed in this phase. This helps designers to improve and refine their ideas. Service blue printing, experience prototyping, business model canvas are some methods in this phase.

An experience prototype is important in the design process. Experience Prototyping is used to test ideas and gather feedback on potential design solutions. Experience Prototyping is a way of testing new service ideas or designs for specific touch points. Experience Prototypes are about communicating what the experience will be like and allow the design team to test and refine their solutions with potential users. They also help build buy-in from partners and other stakeholders. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

The Business Model Canvas is a visual tool for describing and developing business models. In the Deliver phase, the Business Model Canvas provides an important reference for implementation, which helps to translate service concepts into business processes. It can also be used at different points in the design process. In discover phase can to explore current offerings, but in the develop phase can test viability of new business models in development. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

4.3.1 Service Blueprinting

A Service Blueprint is a detailed visual representation of the total service over time. It shows the user’s journey, all the different touch points and channels, as well as the behind scenes. A Service Blueprint helps everyone involved in delivering the service and ensures the user’s coherent experience. It allows users to see the interaction between the front and back stages, ensuring links between different service elements are coherent. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)
The whole process of blueprinting is shown in Figure 7. All the actions of blueprinting service can be divided into ‘onstage’ area and ‘backstage’ area. ‘Onstage’ actually considers what customer sees, but ‘backstage’ shows the provider’s actions which customer is not able to see. As blueprinting actually is map of actions in the paper, ‘onstage’ and ‘backstage’ usually is separated with visibility line. It determinates service actions which customer has to see and which actions has to be left invisible to customer so that it is not bothering customer. Although ‘backstage’ actions has to be done according to actions, which are going on ‘onstage’ area as they have to work smoothly for the best achievement.

Another key component of service blueprinting is vertical line in the actual paper. Vertical lines are made to show the interaction between service provider and consumer. Interaction points help to notice weaknesses and also improved steps in the whole service process. In fact, that is the place where moment of truth appears. Moment of truth can be defined as a contact between customer and company and this moment gives a possibility to customer to form the first impression about upcoming service. Moment of truth is significant as it can make or even break customer relationship with company, therefore big attention has been paid to it(Service marketing - Moment of truth 2015.). In the service blueprint, two kind of interactions can be mentioned. Firstly, on ‘on-stage’ area line of interaction shows the real customer and employee action which can form some kind of opinion about the service. Secondly, on ‘backstage’ area line of internal interaction makes contact between front desk employees and back desk employees, which can be determined as support processes.
Other features of blueprint are the service evidence and support processes. Firstly, service evidence can be defined as tangibles which customer perceive as a tool for influencing customer’s quality perceptions. Physical evidence is established to reinforce the total impression about upcoming service. Evidence is one of the best opportunities how to establish good relationships with customer, how to attract him. Definitely not all services can offer real physical evidence, but they do it through conversations, interviews, and explanations and involve other tools for establishing good impression. Secondly, support processes belong to ‘backstage’ area and have to be done to make real service functional. There is big variety of support services and they differ from the needs of real service, however all of them are significant as it can increase or decrease the success of the real service. The complete service blueprinting shows how all the components behave with each other and how customer forms it through expectations. It is possible that the ‘onstage’ and ‘backstage’ actions make imbalance and it shapes bad experience for customer. Also lack of ‘onstage’ actions may not cause feeling of progress from customer’s side or at least the understanding what customer might expect from the certain service. Blueprinting is a great tool for service providers to identify their faults in service process and to find out what can be improved or invented for success of service and satisfaction of customers. (Bitner, M, J, Ostrom, A, L, Morgan, F, N. 2007)

Service blueprint is a service process control technique, so it also represents several advantages. Blueprint is flexible and powerful tool as it can promote the effectiveness of each service process step separately or the whole service process in the general. For creating good customer experience, blueprint directs company to act upon customer insights, and concentrate on what’s working in the process, what’s not working and what needs to be changed. Even blueprint is customer minded innovation tool as it represents some benefits to the employees and the company.

Firstly, customer is the significant part of service. Without customer service cannot function which is why blueprint is tended to meet customer’s expectations and find out what has to be improved to make customer satisfied. On the whole ‘onstage’ and ‘backstage’, actions influence customer satisfaction with actual operations. It is important to define what customer needs to see and what should be kept invisible. Usually too big activity from employee’s side can create bad experience for customers as they may perceive it as peskiness. Definitely too small activity from employee’s side may be also bad sign. Therefore the right amount of ‘onstage’ actions have to be determined for creating good customer experience. Employee’s outlook, knowledge and behaviors means a lot for the customer. As a result, the best team of employees has to be presented on ‘onstage’ area. In a word for customer main benefit from service blueprint is that it designates all failures of the service and improve service for meet-
ing customer expectations. Customer just wants to get out the best of the service and blueprint is that technique which helps to do it.

Secondly, blueprint tells to employees how the actions should be done to give the best of the service to the customers. Line of interaction between customers and employees explain the customer role in the service process and where the customer is experiencing quality. So that employee can monitor ‘onstage’ and ‘backstage’ actions in such a way that it supports creation of good experience. In spite of this it is not enough to have good contact with customer for establishing good impression, relationship with other employees play big role in service function. Line of internal interaction shapes interfaces across different departmental lines in the company. If inside the company peace and order are not established, then it is less likely that employees can act peacefully and nicely. The employees from ‘backstage’ and support services have to determine their failures and find out the way how to improve their actions. Support service is the bottom function, it has almost the same importance as customer, because without support service in some cases service cannot even start to operate therefore good contact with ‘backstage’ employees has to be framed.

Finally, the benefits of blueprint for company are the combination of benefits for customer and employees, because if employees and customer are happy, then company can be satisfied as well. Blueprint defines the fail points and helps to see the weak points in the whole service process which is the most important part of customer expectation achievement. Besides that blueprint helps to find out which employees do not have needed skills for work or which employees are in a need for training. Within the company members blueprint conduces discussion about new service development or service improvement. Blueprint is technique, which promotes the effectiveness of company as provides a basis for identifying the cost, revenue, and capital invested in each element of the service. Therefore company can think for which actions the money should be spent more and which actions should have less expense for supporting company’s profitability. Blueprint helps to develop a step by step strategies and time required to achieve company’s goals.

Companies cannot afford to lose customer because of the bad service and as a result they tend to do everything for service development. Blueprint is one of the technique which helps mainly to company and employees to determinate actions needed for customer satisfaction. (Service Blueprinting 2008.)

4.4 Deliver

In the phase, the product or service is taken through final testing. Design scenario is the common method in this phase. Design scenarios are stories of a future situation or service.
Design Scenarios can be used in different ways at different times of the service design process. Scenarios can be used in the deliver phase to communicate preferred outcomes to stakeholders, help them understand and buy the service vision. Creating a story through the scenario (perhaps using a previously developed person) helps to make it accessible and engaging. Scenarios may text outputs or image outputs, or a combination of both. Design Scenarios should create a compelling story that communicates potential futures in an engaging way. (Service design methods for developing services. 2012)

5 Research and Results

This chapter of thesis will provide an overview of our research process and findings. It also discusses the present situation of Radisson Blu’s communication processes for ordering food by in-room customers. Some of the qualitative service design tools such as interviews, persona, brain-storming and blueprinting are used to conclude results. Furthermore, a proposal is recommended based on the research process.

5.1 Staff Interview

Hotel Staff from different departments of Radisson Blu Royal were interviewed to get to know their existing ways of communication in Hotel. For this purpose, Staff from Hotel, Reception and kitchen were asked about their day-to-day activities.

(Väosänen 2015 Personal communication) Service Manager of front desk told there are three different ways of ordering the food in room. Customers can order through phone, Television and by in person at reception or Restaurant. Furthermore, he told they have one touch service in which customers can call to reception by just clicking one number and can order the food. After which the receptionist informs the order to restaurant or chef. When using the Television ordering system, customers can see menu in Television application and order though one touch service.

During my (Junbah 2014. Internnee) internship in Radisson blu, i find out that chef receives the order as other normal orders. He has to then inform room service in person to waiter about the ready order. Waiter then makes the room service tray and bring the order to room. This ordering service has many touch points which are not needed such as reception, waiter or phone. The service can be developed with some new innovative approaches which can pro-
vide added benefit to both consumer and the service provider. It has been also observed that waiter or receptionist has to update the bill in profile it also takes time.

While as an internee in reception, I observed it was complicated for customers to order the food via phone. There were many reasons behind the complications. While sometimes dialects were misleading, language barriers were becoming obstacles and understanding the menu for customers were taking more time of staffs. In conclusion new there were unnecessary touch points that were causing hurdles in regular communication flow in the organization. This communication over-load can be reduced by bringing new solutions.

While interviewing with receptionist’s daily activities about taking the order told it is an extra duty for Reception to deliver order in kitchen. We have to go to kitchen in person to order or to inform waiter about the order. In the rush hour sometimes it gets really difficult for them to communicate for Room service. (Jonu Väosänen 2015 Personal communication)

The sous chef (Korkka 2015 personal communication) told there are many touch points in the service and that reduces the process of communication. On asking any suggestions, he gave the example of Radisson Blu plaza that they have tablets on all tables. But he informed at the same time that these are really slow and customers use them rarely for that purpose. He suggested to have something similar that can make the process fast and easy for both the chef and the customer while it will reduce work load from reception. He also mentioned these tablets cost a lot for Hotel to have really good brand, at the same time customers are not used to all the operating systems.

Bar tender (Hukanen 2015. Personal communication) mentioned receptionist sometime forgot to ask about the tenderness of food and its always confusing for the chef, it effects the taste of customer as well. More over she said trainees don’t know much about the food and they some times hang the phone to ask from the kitchen, this delay the whole process. She also mentioned about the language barrier and accent also sometime cause problems while taking the order over phone.

5.2 Service Blueprint:

The following Blueprint was based on research made through Interviews with hotel staff mentioned in user diary, observation and personal experience during internship.
The blueprint in the Figure 8 is a visual presentation of the current scenario in Radisson Blu which is made by us. This includes the scene of how the room service performs its operations. The journey starts with the check-in of the guest into the hotel. When a guest fulfills his or her entry in the hotel, they will have the option to either order the food in-person or from their own room. Until the food order reaches to the chef of the kitchen, the ordering process passes on from different phases.

When a guest is willing to order food from the room, they will have different mediums from which they can select to use and start the ordering process. The options will include mediums such as Hotel Menu, Directory, Phone and Television. The Menu and Television will represent visual display of the menu while directory and phone can be used to look for the phone numbers and call to the reception respectively. Similarly, if a guest wants to order food in-person, then they will have to walk to either reception or restaurant department.

After the selection of the ordering mediums, the next action will be to take order of the guest which is done by the hotel. This action happens on-stage in front of the guest. Subsequently, back-stage action will occur to fulfill the request of the guest. If the order is handled by reception, one of the receptionist should be available to inform about the order to the restaurant in-person or by call. Afterwards, the restaurant employees will be responsible to forward the order request to the chef of the kitchen through the use of the software “Hisi”.

Figure 8: Service Blueprint of Radisson
Otherwise if the order is taken by the restaurant directly because of the guest’s request, the order will be forwarded to the chef through the use of “Hisi” which reduces some workload of the receptionist.

Further actions will still occur backstage by the hotel employees. When the order is received by the chef through Hisi, the same information will also be updated in the software “Opera”. Finally, the chef informs the waiter after the food is ready to be delivered and served to the guest. The whole process of ordering a food connects a lot of departments to work on it and communicate in a perfect way so that the request would not be mishandled.

5.3 Persona

The purpose of this persona is to gather personal view of users from different nationalities. The benefit of using multinational views will provide suggestions for the effective development of the research process. As per this plan, users from different demographic backgrounds were given the task to complete a persona according to the needs of our research. The need of the research includes information about the preference of communication channel for the individual customer in a hotel room. The expectation from the Persona workshop was to sort customers into smaller groups which will make it clear to understand the service, users.

The workshop was conducted in Laurea University of Applied Sciences in Leppävaara with the help of teachers. Twenty-two students from Hotel Management from different nationalities participated in twenty minutes’ workshop. As explained in the beginning, users were provided with Persona templates to fill in the needed details. At the end of the workshop, user’s understanding and ideas were discussed in details. Finally, various personas were analysed based on our data collection and a representative persona was developed built on the average outcome.
Figure 9: Figure 9 Persona of Asian demographics
Figure 10: Persona of European demographics

The results from Persona were divided into two distinct categories based on the demographics where the user originated from as shown in Figure 9 and 10. Demography plays vital role in bringing out different results based on the user’s thoughts, values and beliefs. We have categorized the common results into two demographics as Europe and Asia. We will evaluate their personas and sort out the differences and commonness.

After carrying out the persona session, it was figured that demographics plays key role on user’s thoughts. People of eastern world and western world behave totally different in every situations. So it is obvious that they have different consumer behaviour and buying habits too. According to the aim of our research, we asked the user’s about their knowledge on digital media and provide us their thoughts about it.

Although both of the demographics spoke different languages, English was found as a common language between both. But it was later realized that the tone and accent of both were not matching accurately and created some problems while verbal communication. And their activities and goals contrasted totally with each other.

They were provided with a section with different options for preference of communication style when they were making food orders in a hotel. The choices consisted both verbal and non-verbal form of communication. While users from European demographics preferred to choose verbal way of communicating, Asians favoured more of a non-verbal form. Europeans felt that it was ideal for them to make orders using any options such as telephone and digital medias. It proved that their language efficiency would not be a barrier while communicating with hotel employees. While on the other hand, Asians favoured mostly to digital options. But if that option was not available, then they could manage to make orders in-person. They informed that ordering in phone might be confusing to both the service provider and them.

From this session, we found that highlighting verbal and non-verbal form of communications are important in any service organizations. And different options should be provided to the customers for the purpose of communication by understanding their cultural and consumer behaviour.

5.4 Brain Storming

The brainstorming workshop was organized with the purpose of generating new and creative ideas to approach the need of end-users. The subject of the workshop session was to have the
user’s ideas about reducing communication load from reception and restaurant department in Radisson Blu. The further aim of the session was to reduce the delivery time of employees of room service department. Moreover, generating innovative and effective communication channel in the hotel’s ordering system.

The workshop was arranged in the Laurea University of Applied Sciences with the help of Teach-ers. All the required material like sticky notes, pens, chart papers and Projecter were provided to participants. Twenty two individual students from different nationalities participated in thirty minutes workshop. Students were divided into five different teams with four members in each team. After dividing, the teams were illustrated about the structure and purpose of the Brain storming session. Further instructions were distributed in the printed form to all the teams. Every members of the team were explained detailly about the brainstorming tool of service design to avoid confusion and to collect best possible results.

As each team was provided with sticky notes, they were guided to write one idea on one sticky note. The groups were assigned the task to note down all the ideas that evolved in their mind. This process of collecting group ideas took almost 20 minutes. After the completion of the task, all the sticky notes were pasted in a chart paper in front of the class. Then, all the teams were requested to post common ideas on separate chart.

The workshop was successful upto our expectations. As stated in the brainstorming tool that this technique can provide crazy ideas, those crazy ideas can turn into the best ideas also. To complete the task, all the common and similar kind of ideas were sorted out to generate best possible ideas. The ideas generated in the end of the brainstorming session were to have separate chef only for room service orders, provide Menu ordering service in the room television, to offer mobile application system, to provide separate waiters for each of the floors of the hotel and also the possibility for the customers to call the restaurant department directly.

5.5 Current Situation and Problem in Radisson Blu

This segment will explain the current medium of communication available in Radisson Blu for ordering the room service (Catering). Radisson Blu is using the traditional ways of communication such as Phone, Television and in-person as shown in the blueprint in figure 7. The Blueprint was created based on the interviews on daily working life of the employees. During interview and visiting the case hotel it has been observed that they are using One touch service. One touch service is a unique and quick option for customers to call reception by just tapping one button.
The other available option in Radisson Blu is In-Person, where customers can order food directly to reception or in restaurant face to face. Customer can order the food while checking in. Moreover Television option can be used to check the menu with pictures available in it.

5.6 Problems:

The current communication process of ordering the food by customers contains unnecessary touch-points in the hotel. The main problem due to the current ordering system is hampering the reception department. It is increasing work load for the employees of reception department as handling food orders becomes an additional task for them.

Moreover Hannele hakunen (bar tender and waiter) informed as mentioned in the interview; some times receptionist forgot to ask aditional information regarding preparation of food. It may affects the customer satisfaction level as they might not received the desired meal for an example Receptionist sometime forgot to write the degree of tenderness of food such as medium cooked or well done. Chef also get confused because of lack of exact information.

We found out customer can order through phone by one touch service to reception. But receptionist has to inform kitchen manually about the order. It makes the process slow in busy hours and increases the work load. Moreover Jaree have observed during internship (March 2014) that language and accent sometimes makes difficult for customer to order. This accent and language problem misleads the customer to order and takes lot of receptionists’ time to explain. Selection of media plays vital role in customer satisfaction in this digital world as described in the literature review (Digital Consumer).

From the interview of sous chef Samuel Korka we find out that there are many unnecessary touch points that makes the process slow. And as described earlier in the Communication gap theory; External communication Gap affects customer satisfaction if they don’t get the same level of service mentioned in the marketing. (Korkka 2015 personal communication)

5.7 Proposed Solutions (Application)

Without the problems, no new creativity will occur. It means that to create new innovations and development, problems and obstacles are the best guides. The important thing to note is the solutions and approach to the problems. Without the suitable approach, the path will create even much trouble for the existing problem.
Without losing the focus, one needs to create their own path that will lead them to their goals. In this thesis report, the main goal was to create sustainable and innovative solutions to the problems which were recognized. As the realized problems are discussed in the chapter above, applicable solutions were the main target of this whole research.

As mentioned above in the Digital consumer literature review, customers are turning towards the digital world, we have come up with the innovation of an “Application”. Based on the above findings, it has been noticed that touch points can be reduced by using the new application Technology. In which customers can order directly to chef by choosing the menu in application or in their browser. Chef can then accept the order by just clicking accept on tablet placed in the kitchen. Chef can also tell customer about the estimated time of delivery. This way chef can see the situation of the orders and can tell the exact estimated time. Consumers prefer real-time information and this can be achieved by just implementing this new feature. Application can also allow customer to pay from card or to attach the bill with, that can be paid later during checking out. As in now they have to walk all the way down to reception if they want to pay on the spot. The example of application is shown in the Appendix 3.

Medium plays a vital role in sending and receiving the information as mentioned in the Components of communication (Literature review). It is important for Encoder and decoder to understand the exact context of communication. Language is a big barrier between both entities while communication in multicultural environment and as Radisson Blu is a multinational company, a lot of customers also stay there who can not read or write English and Finnish. Pictures are the most helpful tool to assist in these conditions. This application will also assist customers to order by selecting the pictures. More over consumer will be more comfortable in ordering the food by just selecting them instead of explaining it on phone or by travelling all the way to restaurant.

The application will reduce the touch points like reception and restaurant department. Orders will go directly to chef and will be updated automatically hence it will reduce load from restaurant and reception department. More over the consumer can comment and will choose all the options, it will not create confusion for chef and his team. Due to all above-mentioned factors, application will reduce the time of room service (catering services).
The current situation is shown in Figure 11 and the above blueprint is showing the ordering channel after implementing the application. It can be seen clearly that a lot of touch points are reduced without affecting the communication process.

6 Conclusion

In conclusion, service design tools are effective in creating innovative solutions in the service field. The tools guided us in every step of our thesis research process and gave us ideas on creating a new innovational idea for the case company. As we were familiar with the use of design methods from our previous studies, we had chosen appropriate methods that supported our thesis process. The service design tools are so effective that the result of one tool provides assistance to another upcoming tool which leads the user to reach its final goals. The results achieved after the use of methods will promote better service to customers, save time and reduce work load for the employees.
The theories utilized in the thesis process were applied practically later in the research period. The research process was carried out into four distinct phases as Staff interview, creation of Persona, Brainstorming session and Service Blueprinting.

The research journey started with the staff interviews and observation. On the basis of the results achieved from interviews, a service blueprint showing current communication system in the case hotel was created later on. The creation of Blueprint provided a clear picture of the food ordering service to the guests. All the touchpoints were properly examined and added to the Blueprint lay-out. This played important role while analyzing the unnecessary touchpoints that could be removed from the current system. We came one step closer to our final results after concluding these datas.

After discovering the obstacles in Radisson Blu, the research was carried out with the purpose of reducing work load for the employees and increase efficiency in communication system between departments. We wanted to develop something which would remove unnecessary touchpoints as well as make service faster at the same moment.

The medium of communication plays vital role for efficient management and work in any organization. Communication process should be given the same attention as other services in the hotel industry and it needs to be developed with the current trend as well. Communication is the important segment which can make or break the efficiency of organization.

After the utilization of design tools and working those to resolve the problems that we found out in Radisson Blu, we came up with an solution of Digital application while keeping the current communication trend in mind. The proposed idea of digital application will help the employees of the hotel as well as customers due to its quick and easy-to-use facility. Communication flow will be better between customer and the kitchen team while removing any barriers which might come because of too many touchpoints.
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Appendix 1: Brain Storming Workshop

The purpose of the brainstorming workshop is to gather more information to help us further in our thesis process. The workshop will be done in small group of 3-4 students.

Subject of the workshop:
- Removing communication load from Reception Department and Restaurant.
- Reducing delivery time of Room Service Department.
- Making convenient ordering system for the room customers.

Workshop:
Workout your brains and provide us your best possible ideas. Sticky notes are provided.

Best Regards,
Jaree Ullah Jünbah and Sandip Ranjit
Facility Management 11
Appendix 2: Persona

Persona Template

Persona Name: Jukkä
Age: 22
Demographics: Europe
Language: Finnish, Swedish, English, German
Occupation: Student
Education: Bachelors
Activities: Music, Travelling, photography, football, writing

Goal in life: Successful manager in a real estate company

Communications Preference: □ Phone □ In Person □ TV Web
□ WebPage □ Mobile Application
Appendix 3: Application Example

Client

[Image showing a mobile application interface with options for User Name, Password, and login, along with a menu for Food, Drinks, and Other, and a list of recent items with check marks and status options.]
You order has been received.

TIME REMAINING

Kitchen
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>ITEM NAME</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Customer NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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