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**DEVELOPING THE SUPERVISION OF RIGHTS AND INTERESTS  
OF STUDENTS WITH THE HELP OF INCLUSIVE PRODUCTIZA-  
TION**

**The Student Union of Centria University of Applied Sciences (COPSA)**

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**ABSTRACT**

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<p>The purpose of this thesis was to develop the membership services of the Student Union of Centria University of Applied Sciences with the focus on the supervision of rights and interests of students. The aim of the thesis is to define and clarify the purpose and tools of the supervision of rights and interests and to develop the marketing of it and improve the internal documentation with the help of inclusive service productization methods.</p> <p>Service marketing and service productization theories were utilized as theory bases. Theoretical framework was applied to practice and in order to develop the marketing of the supervision of rights and interests an inclusive workshop was organized as a part of the thesis process. Service marketing theories were also applied to the supervision of rights and interests of students.</p>		
<b>Key words</b> inclusive productization, productization of services, service marketing, supervision of rights and interests		

## TIIVISTELMÄ

<b>Centria-ammattikorkeakoulu</b>	<b>Aika</b> Kesäkuu 2018	<b>Tekijä/tekijät</b> Emilia Tuura
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<b>Nimi</b> OPISKELIJOIDEN EDUNVALVONNAN KEHITTÄMINEN OSALLISTAVAN TUOTTEISTAMISEN AVULLA – Centria-ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijakunta (COPSA)		
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<p>Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli kehittää Centria-ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijakunnan jäsenpalveluita ja erityisesti opiskelijoiden edunvalvontaa. Opinnäytetyössä pyritään selkeyttämään edunvalvonnan tarkoitusta ja työkaluja, sekä kehittämään sen markkinointia ja opiskelijakunnan sisäistä dokumentointia edunvalvontaan liittyen palvelujen tuotteistamisen ja osallistavan tuotteistamisen menetelmiä hyödyntäen.</p> <p>Teoriapohjana hyödynnettiin palvelujen markkinoinnin ja palvelujen tuotteistamisen teorioita. Teoriapohjaa sovellettiin käytäntöön ja edunvalvonnan markkinoinnin kehittämiseksi järjestettiin osallistava työpaja osana opinnäytetyöprosessia, sekä palvelujen markkinoinnin teoriaa sovellettiin edunvalvontaan.</p>		
<b>Asiasanat</b> edunvalvonta, osallistava tuotteistaminen, palvelujen markkinointi, palvelujen tuotteistaminen		

## **CONCEPT DEFINITIONS**

<b>CENTRIA UAS</b>	Centria University of Applied Sciences
<b>COPSA</b>	The Student Union of Centria University of Applied Sciences
<b>ESU</b>	European Students' Union
<b>SAMOK</b>	Union of Applied Sciences Students in Finland
<b>UAS</b>	University of Applied Sciences

**ABSTRACT**  
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## 1 INTRODUCTION

For a long time the easiest way to market a Student Union membership has been student discounts and benefits that the students get an access to by joining the Student Union. However, the most important feature of the membership is the supervision of the rights and interests of students which is very complex concept and therefore difficult to market. In the near future the operational environment is also changing and any businesses can start to provide student ID:s and in that way compete with the Student Unions to a certain degree. Therefore, it is important for the Student Unions to mold into more service-oriented organizations and make the supervision of rights and interests into more marketable and sellable service.

The purpose of this thesis is to develop the membership services of Student Union COPSA and especially develop the marketing of supervision of rights and interests of students. The reason why the supervision of the rights and interests is in need of productization is that at the moment it is not easily marketable due to the complex nature of it and on the other hand the knowledge of the service is tactic and therefore not well enough documented inside the organization. The aim of this thesis is to identify the different parts, methods and tools of the supervision of rights and interests and make it more comprehensible for the members and potential members of the Student Union. Another aim of this thesis is to develop the internal documentation regarding the supervision of rights and interests because the knowledge has very tactic in nature.

Methods of inclusive service productization and service marketing theories are used as tools in developing the marketing and internal documentation of the supervision of rights and interests in this thesis. Especially a handbook for inclusive productization methods produced by a LEAPS-project is utilized in this thesis. It is important to use inclusive productization methods so that every party of the service product can affect the outcome and thus participate in the development process. It is also useful to explore service-marketing theories in order to truly understand the nature of the service in question.

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. In the second chapter the organization to which this thesis is made for is introduced, as well as what it offers. In the third chapter the supervision of rights and interests of students is explained and discussed and all the different tools and point-of-views of it are defined and introduced. The fourth chapter covers service marketing theories that are utilized in this thesis. The fifth chapter explains the service productization, features of inclusive service productization

processes and the importance of documentation. The sixth chapter covers the practical work done in this thesis; the workshop to develop the marketing of the supervision of rights and interests and the plan for improved documentation as well as an application of the Service Marketing Mix on the supervision of rights and interests. Also the results are presented in this chapter. The seventh and final chapter consists of the conclusions.



## 2 STUDENT UNION COPSA

Each University of Applied Sciences in Finland has a Student Union. The Student Unions have tasks that are ordained in the Universities of Applied Sciences Act and the Student Unions offer various services for their members. This chapter covers the Student Unions of Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland and takes a closer look at the Student Union of Centria University of Applied Sciences (COPSA) and its structure, services and membership.

### 2.1 Student Unions at Universities of Applied Sciences

Student Unions are public corporations that hold a statutory position in Finland, which means that it is compulsory for every University of Applied Sciences in Finland to have a Student Union. The position of Student Unions is defined in the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014, chapter 6 § 41). The legal duty of the Student Union is to supervise the rights and interests of students. Other legal duties of Student Unions are:

- 1) to nominate student representatives to the administrative bodies of the university of applied sciences
- 2) nominate student representatives to the student financial aid board of the university of applied sciences referred to in section 9 of the Student Financial Aid Act (65/1994); and
- 3) contribute, where needed, to the performance of the tasks relating to students' primary healthcare referred to in section 17 of the Health Care Act (1326/2010) and in Chapter 13, sections 11–14, of the Health Insurance Act (1224/2004). (Universities of Applied Sciences Act 932/2014, ch. 6 § 41).

The purpose of the Student Union is to liaise with and on behalf of its members and to promote their societal, social and intellectual aspirations and those relating to studies and the status of students in society. The Student Union also contributes to preparing students for an active, informed and critical citizenship. On top of that Student Unions generally offer many services and activities for students too, for example, peer tutoring and sports services. (Universities of Applied Sciences Act 932/2014, ch. 6 § 41).

The Student Unions are self-governing. The Representative Council, sometimes called a Student Parliament, holds the highest decision-making power in the Student Union and it decides for example the budget and bylaws and supervises the actions of the Student Union Board. Representative Council is chosen by voting and every Student Union member has the right to vote and become a candidate for

the Council. The Student Union Board is the executive body of the Student Union and normally every board member has their own area of responsibility. The Board is the operative actor of the Student Union and has the right to make agreement on behalf of the Student Union. The Board is responsible for the actions of the Student Union. The Student Union's actions are regulated by its own bylaws. Every student union has an Executive Director or General Secretary and the needed amount of other employees. (Viskari 2016, 18-19.)

## **2.2 Basic information**

The Student Union of Centria University of Applied Sciences (COPSA) was founded in 1998 and is an autonomous non-profit organization. COPSA supervises the rights and interests of the students at Centria University of Applied Sciences in Kokkola, Pietarsaari and Ylivieska. COPSA has two full-time employees, an executive director and a coordinator. The executive director takes care of finances, administration and public relations, among other things. The coordinator organizes and coordinates tutoring activities, events and student card benefits. In addition to the Representative Council and Board, there are also local departments/bodies of the Student Union COPSA: KOU (Kokkola Student Athletes), COSTO (Social and Healthcare Students) and Klaku (Culture Students). The local departments organize different activities for the students of their branch and operate under the COPSA Board. The organizational structure of the Student Union COPSA is illustrated in FIGURE 1 on the next page. (The Student Union of Centria University of Applied Sciences – COPSA 2018.)

Student Union COPSA's income consists of subsidy from Centria UAS, membership fees, event revenues and cooperation agreements with partners. Even though COPSA is a non-profit organization it can and it is even advisable to make a little profit every year so that the membership services and other necessary operations can be developed. Student Union COPSA aims to support the students in their daily life by offering sports and free time activities, peer-tutoring, events, trips and of course the supervise the rights and interests.

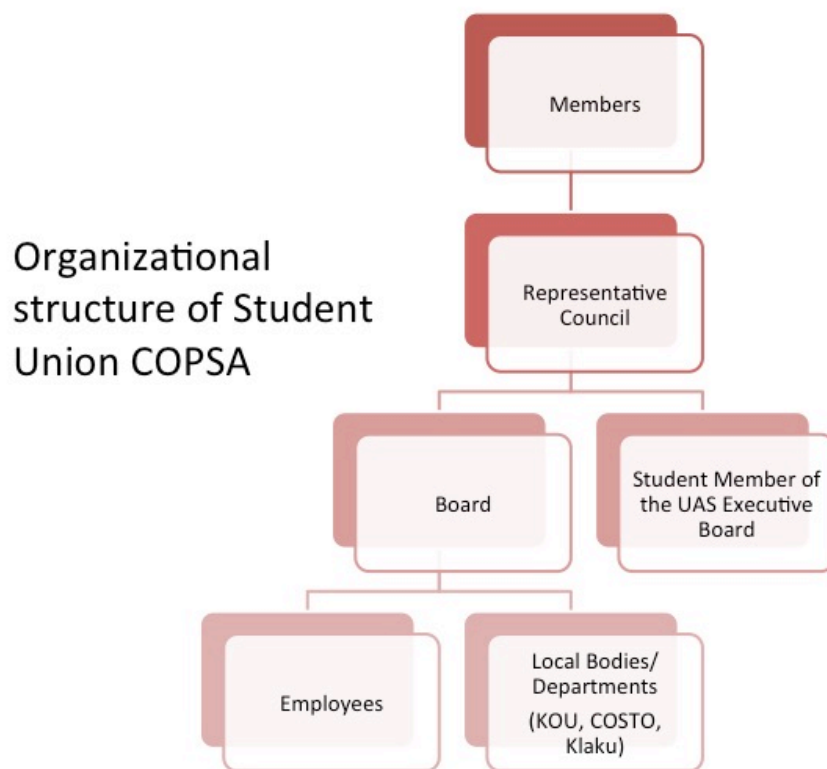


FIGURE 1. Organizational structure of Student Union COPSA

### 2.3 Student Union membership

Every degree student can become a member of the Student Union by paying the membership fee and ordering a student card. The membership grants the student an access to multiple student discounts and benefits, a right to run for the Representative Council as well as to vote in said election and most importantly receive the supervision of rights and interests. There are also special discounted prices for events and trips for the members. By far the most appealing features are the local and national student discounts that the student gets an access to with the student card after becoming a member. (Viskari 2016, 12.)

It is voluntary to become a member of the Student Union and therefore marketing the membership plays a big role. Student Union needs members to be able to function. Approximately one fourth of COPSA's revenue consists of membership fees so the fees also play an important role financially. The fees are used to provide the benefits and services for members.

Because the members have the voting right in the representative council elections and thus choose the representative council, it can be said that the members are on the top of the organization structure of the Student Union COPSA as seen in FIGURE 1 above. The Student Union COPSA's membership is illustrated in FIGURE 2 on the next page.

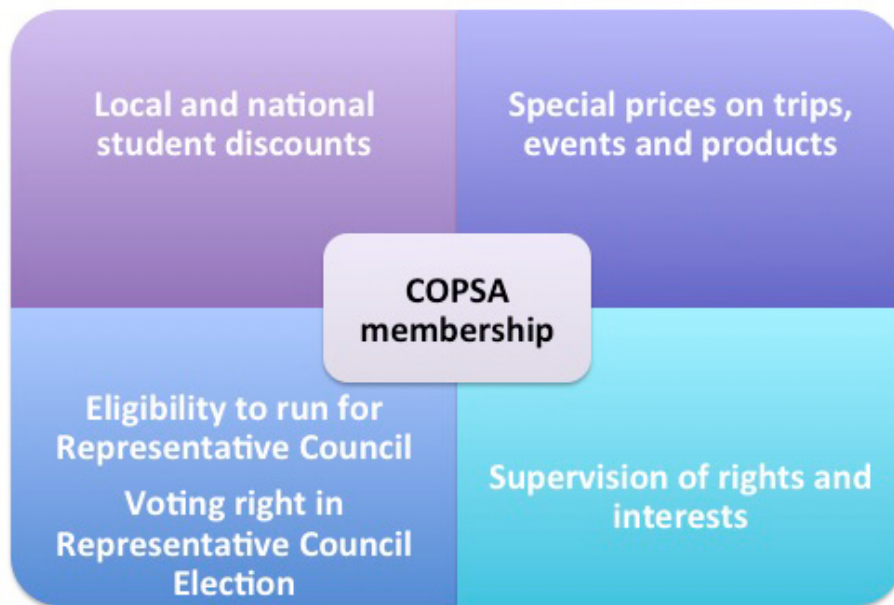


FIGURE 2. COPSA membership

## 2.4 SAMOK & ESU

Suomen opiskelijakuntien liitto SAMOK ry (Union of Applied Sciences Students in Finland – SAMOK) consists of 25 Student Unions and its main task is to supervise the rights and interests of students on a national level. SAMOK also supports the member student unions by organizing different trainings for the Student Union actives and helping in the local trusteeship work. The most important governmental partner of SAMOK is the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. SAMOK also cooperates with many other parties such as other unions of students, political parties and labor market organizations. One way how Student Union COPSA can affect the actions and agendas of SAMOK is through General Assembly where among other things the Board members, budget, operating plan and other directive documents are decided for the following year. Every member Student Union has the amount of votes in proportion to their number of members. (Suomen opiskelijakuntien liitto SAMOK ry 2018.)

The European Students' Union (ESU) is the umbrella organization of 45 National Unions of Students from 39 countries. ESU supervises the rights and interests of students in educational, social, economic and cultural matters at the European level in particular towards the European Union, Bologna Follow Up Group, Council of Europe and UNESCO. SAMOK is also a member organization of ESU. The members of COPSA can have an impact on national and international level through SAMOK and ESU. (European Students' union 2018.)

### **3 SUPERVISION OF RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF STUDENTS**

The supervision of rights and interests of students is a complex, abstract and multidimensional concept that is often hard to understand. This chapter explains what the supervision of rights and interests means when it comes to the Student Union COPSA. The supervision of rights and interests is complex and abstract to understand both when it comes to defining it and to the actual service product. In this chapter the supervision of rights and interests is divided into three different point-of-views or approaches. This chapter aims to define what it means as well as to describe what it includes as a service.

#### **3.1 Supervision of rights and interests of students at Centria University of Applied Sciences**

As stated in the Universities of Applied Sciences Act discussed in the previous chapter, the most important task of the Student Union is the supervision of the rights and interests of students in educational and social matters as illustrated in FIGURE 3 on the next page. The supervision of the rights and interests is often invisible due to the nature of it. Student Union has for example chosen student representatives to all the most important committees and teams inside Centria University of Applied Sciences and it is difficult for a student to see the supervision of rights and interests done in these teams and committees. (The Student Union of Centria University of Applied Sciences – COPSA 2018.)

Educational matters include everything related to teaching: quality, organization of lectures and study modules and the level of teaching. Feedback discussion together with the heads of degree programs and students are excellent opportunities to give feedback and improve the quality of studies inside the degree. Social matters include everything related to study subsidies and legal issues. The mental and physical wellbeing are also social matters, for example student healthcare and the accessibility of it. Student discounts, sport possibilities, different kinds of events and tutoring activities are also parts of the supervision of rights and interests. The Student Union aims to get as many discounts and benefits as possible for the students to utilize. (The Student Union of Centria University of Applied Sciences – COPSA 2018.)

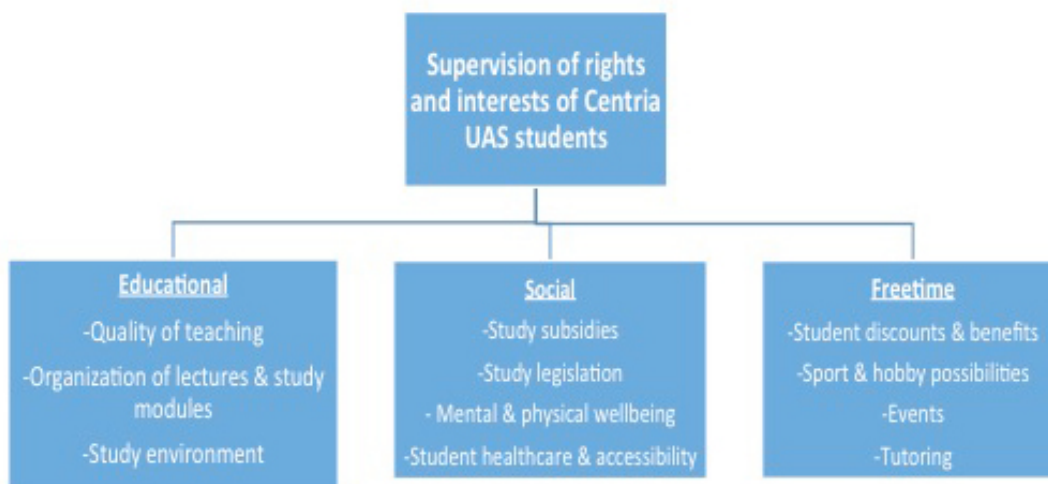


FIGURE 3. Supervision of rights and interests of Centria UAS students 1

The supervision of rights and interests can also be divided into Centria UAS level, local/municipal level, national level and international level as illustrated in FIGURE 4 on the next page. Student Union COPSA supervises the rights and interests of students on the Centria UAS level and local/municipal level. When it comes to national level SAMOK is the prominent organization supervising the rights and interests of students and on the international level SAMOK influences through ESU as explained in the previous chapter.

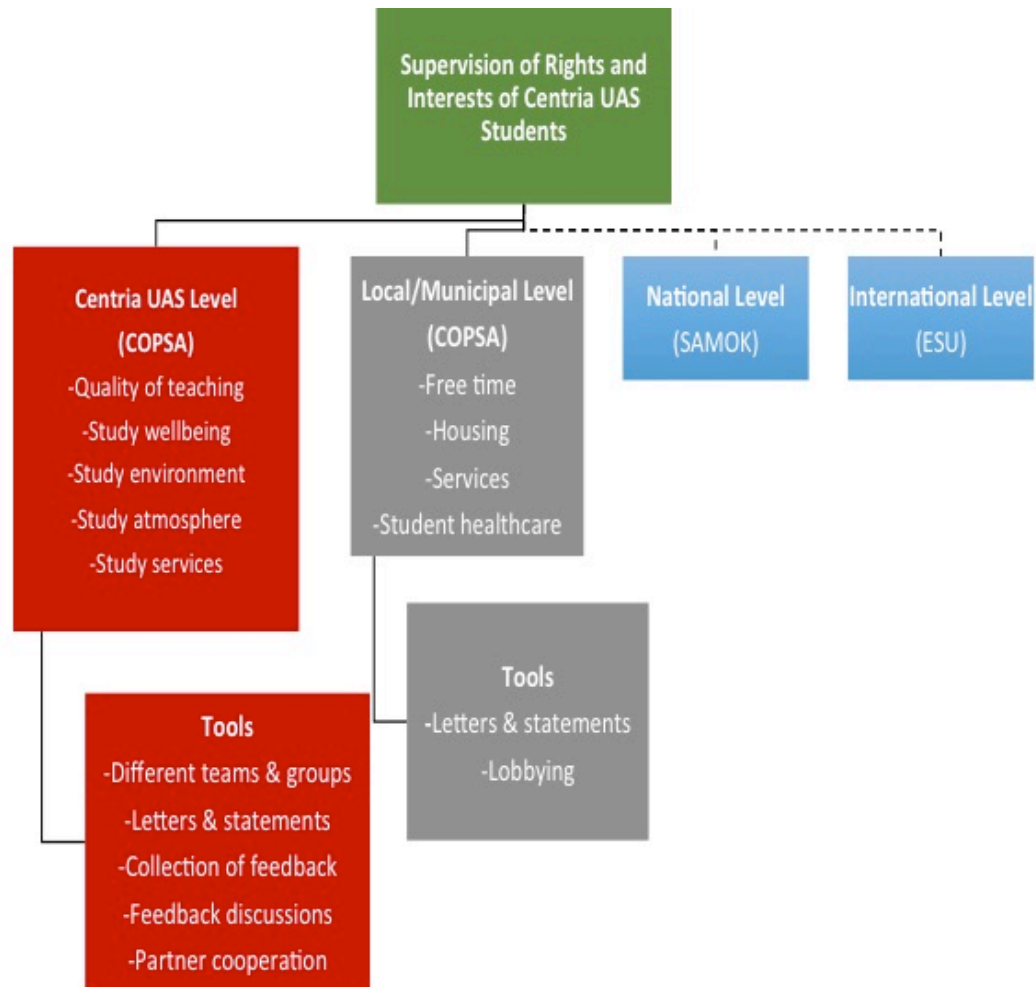


FIGURE 4. Supervision of rights and interests of Centria UAS students 2

The supervision of rights and interests can also be divided into student-commissioned and self-commissioned. Student-commissioned stands for the supervision of rights and interests when the student contacts the Student Union first and requests advice or assistance or when the Student Union reacts of feedback coming from students. Self-commissioned supervision of rights and interests is what the Student Union does continuously to improve things for students in general.

### 3.2 Tools for supervising the rights and interests of students

Student representatives in different teams, committees and groups inside Centria University of Applied Sciences is the most interactive tool to supervise the rights and interests of the students. Student Union COPSA assigns a student member to each team, committee and group inside the UAS to promote the students' opinions and views on different matters. Such groups and teams are for example Student Counselors' team, Wellbeing team and Safety team. There is a student representative also in the man-



agement group and UAS Executive Board. Representing students in these teams and groups is a good way to influence decision already from the planning phase to make sure the students' opinions are also taken into considerations. On the other hand these teams and groups are great places to take initiatives and to inform the other parties about current issues with students.

Letters and statements are a written tool to promote the interests of students. The Student Union can write letters and statements to different parties inside and outside the University when a need arises. Letters and tools are commonly used to express the opinion of students regarding different big decisions and plans and the statements can be taken to the different groups and teams inside the UAS.

Collection of feedback is another common tool. There is a system for collecting feedback regarding courses and study modules where the students can directly leave feedback to the UAS. However, there are also certain situations when the students can leave feedback to the Student Union and the Student Union will take it further. Such situations can for example be if the students feel like their feedback has not been properly processed. Sometimes Student Union representatives also participate in feedback discussions held by head of degrees when requested by the head of degree or students. The Student Union also collects feedback when needed from the students and reacts to it with the needed measures. The Student Union collects feedback about its own services and actions too.

Partner cooperation is another form of supervising the rights and interests of students. With partner cooperation, the Student Union ensures that the students get best possible services such as housing and sport services. The Student Union cooperates for example with the student housing agencies, municipal employees and sports and wellbeing related service providers.

Lobbying is an unofficial action the Student Union takes when there is a need to promote something visibly. The Student Union for example contacts the local members of the parliament regarding law proposals partially in cooperation with SAMOK. The Student Union can also use lobbying to get the attention of municipal decision makers and bring forth the issues to them.

There are also cases when two or more tools are needed in one service process. Sometimes some issues might rise from collection of feedback that require the Student Union to make a statement or discuss it in one of the teams inside the UAS. Therefore, every service situation and the process of supervising the rights and interests is different and tailored to the needs.

### **3.3 Supervision of rights and interests of students as a service product**

Supervision of rights and interests of students is very abstract and complex as a service product due to it having various forms and therefore very difficult to be comprehensibly marketed. It is a service that is statutory and therefore must be of good quality. The service has to be fairly tailored depending on the student or students' situation. As explained earlier in this chapter it also has different forms, which makes it even more difficult to be understood in its full extent.

Supervision of rights and interests can be compared to expertise services as it has many qualities of it. According to Sipilä (1998, 12) expertise services are bought because the customers are not able to solve the problem by themselves. The core of expertise services is advice, which is also a big part of supervising the rights and interests of students. Student Union actives and especially the employees are the experts when it comes to the supervision of rights and interests and therefore need to know what measures to take in each and every situation. (Sipilä 1998, 13.)

### **3.4 Students as a customer group**

The Centria UAS students can be regarded as a both heterogeneous group and a homogeneous group. The majority of students studying in full-time degrees fall between the ages of 19 and 25 and generally speaking the part-time students are a bit older. Also the Master's Degree students are generally speaking older compared to the full-time Bachelor's Degree students. Therefore, it can be said that Centria students are of a wide age span. Centria UAS is also very international and has a lot of students with different nationalities and backgrounds. However, in general students are a group with considerable discretionary income and therefore they tend to make cost effective choices. Generally speaking the international students are even less willing to spend money on anything that is not strictly necessary due to the fact that they generally do not receive any kind of study subsidy for their studies. Geographically Centria students are mainly living in the three towns where Centria has campuses, Kokkola, Ylivieska and Pietarsaari. However, as part-time studies become more and more common, there are students who live all over Finland too. All these above mentioned features must be considered when thinking about marketing of the supervision of rights and interests of students.

## **4 SERVICE MARKETING & SERVICES**

When it comes to service marketing and services it is extremely important to understand the distinctive features of services compared to tangible products. Consumers also behave differently when it comes to services and the service design differs greatly from product design. In this chapter the differences between products and services are explained and the Service Marketing Mix is explained as well as the distinctive features of service marketing in more detail. Service consumer behavior and service design are also discussed.

### **4.1 Services compared to products**

The most prominent difference between product and service marketing is that services are not tangible and therefore the service provider cannot provide a tangible product to the customer. As the nature of services is vastly different from tangible products the customers cannot carry or transport the service. Services are intangible experiences and a cerebral, physical and emotional understanding that can only be felt by being present at the service delivery. Heterogeneity is another special feature of services and means that services are oftentimes non-standard and highly variable. Services are also inseparable as they are normally produced and consumed simultaneously and with customer taking part in the process. Services are also perishable and thus cannot be stored in inventory. Because of these major differences in the natures of products and services it is apparent that the concept of services marketing vastly differs from product marketing. (Kapoor, Paul & Halder 2011, 28-29; McDonald, Frow & Payne 2011, 23.)

### **4.2 Service Marketing Mix**

Companies use Marketing Mix as a tool to help clarify a product's offering. E. Jerome McCarthy created the first version in 1960s and it consisted of 4 Ps (Product, Price, Place and Promotion). However later in the 70s three more Ps (People, Processes, Physical Evidence) were added so that the Marketing Mix could be used as a tool to market services too due to the intangible nature of services. Such Marketing Mix that consists of 7 Ps is now commonly known as Service Marketing Mix, which is illustrated in Figure 5 on the next page. (Professional Academy 2018.)



FIGURE 5. Service Marketing Mix (Adapted from Professional Academy 2018.)

The Product, or in this case Service, should be fulfilling the customers' needs, should work and should be what the customers are expecting to receive. The Place should be such that it is easy come across and find for customers to shop. The Price should be just right to be of good value to both customer and service provider. From customers' point of view it does not necessarily mean that the cheapest option available is most appealing because the customers are willing to pay more for something that works really well for them. When it comes to Promotion it is extremely important to determine the right marketing channels. Promotion tools, such as advertising, PR, sales promotions, social media and personal selling, are all in key position and should be used to put across the service providers message to the right potential consumers in the right manner. Having the right People is extremely important because especially the front office staff plays a big role in how the service is delivered to the customer but the people from front office all the way to directors are in a pivotal position when it comes to the success of the service product. Processes are important because normally the service is delivered in the presence of the customer and therefore how the service is delivered is also a part of what the customer pays for. Almost all services include some sort of physical elements regardless of the fact that services

themselves are intangible and therefore Physical Evidence is also an important part of the Service Marketing Mix. The three additional Ps are discussed in more detail later on in this chapter. (Professional Academy 2018.)

### **4.3 Distinctive features of service marketing**

Due to the fact that services are very different from products the marketing concept is also vastly different. The most important distinctive features of services are that the people are important in services marketing, special skills are required for service marketing, a different organizational structure is needed for service marketing, a different approach for product pricing is required, the combination and importance of services marketing trilogy and the management of three additional P's of services marketing mix. (Kapoor et al. 2011, 29.)

#### **4.3.1 Importance of people**

When it comes to traditional product marketing the emphasis has never really been on the quality of people but on the quality of the product itself. In service marketing it is the employee that delivers the service to customer that is in key role regarding a successful service delivery. The employees play a big role in the delivery of services in every service sector from hotels to banking and education. For this reason it is extremely important to invest in the training of the employees as they play such a big role in the marketing and selling of the services. (Kapoor et al. 2011, 29-30.)

#### **4.3.2 Need for special skills**

Service marketing companies should understand that marketing service differs from marketing products and goods. People handling is something that the marketing staff needs to be trained to do well. The front office employees come to direct contact with customers and need to have excellent customer service skills. Furthermore, after successfully delivering the service to the customer there should be post-service delivery act of keeping the customer dissonance away. Establishing good customer relationships is extremely important in order to gain permanent customers that will continue to purchase services from the company. This is where the special skills are needed because service marketing is not only about developing, selling and delivering products. Such interactive relationship marketing is crucial for service marketing. (Kapoor et al. 2011, 30.)

### 4.3.3 Need for different organizational structure

As product marketing is more about transactional marketing the authority keeps narrowing when going upwards from the bottom of the organizational pyramid. This is because the top management doesn't get to into customer contact on a regular basis. However, when it comes to service marketing the need for a close customer interaction is needed. Because physical evidence of the service requires the customer to be present at the place of delivery the pyramidal structure is reversed in the service organization. In a service company the customer is the king and his/her convenience needs to be prioritized. Such new organizational structure that is based on relationship marketing is described in FIGURE 5 below. Lower-level delivery staff is on the top because they are regularly in direct contact with customers and therefore understand the customers' expectations. It is important that the customers' expectations are understood because otherwise there is a big risk of a gap between the customers' expectations and the actual delivery of the service. Due to this it is also important that the service decisions are allowed to take place at the service lever to make sure that the customers' needs based on their expectations don't get defeated. (Kapoor et al. 2011, 30-31.)

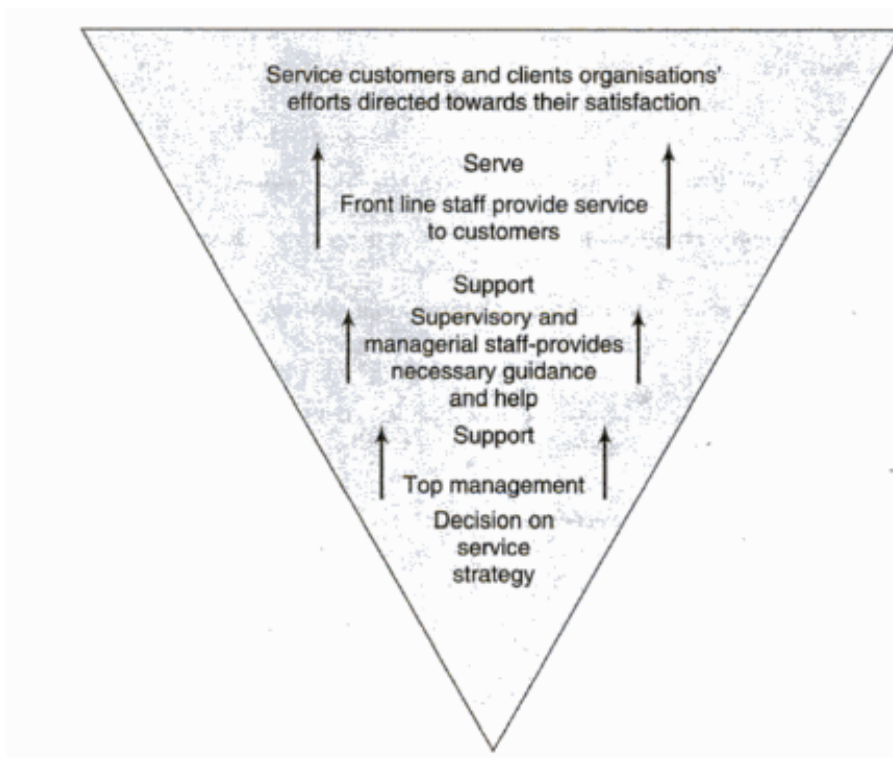


FIGURE 6. The inverted Pyramid-Service Customer at the Top Relationship Management (Kapoor et al. 2011, 31)

#### 4.3.4 Different approach on pricing

Price determination of services is more challenging compared to product pricing because of the intangible nature of services. Customers might find it difficult to understand the cost factors of the service price components. The service environment, service ambiance and service-people quality are all heterogeneous. Customers' personal experiences about the service are subjective and cannot be identically replicated to the same customer again let alone to another customer. (Kapoor et al. 2011, 31-32.)

#### 4.3.5 Combination and importance of services marketing trilogy

When it comes to product marketing the customer is usually able to see only the finished product and therefore is not aware of all the background operations led to the final product. It can be said that when it comes to product marketing the manufacturing is an internal process whereas product marketing is more of an external process and the customer cannot see a visible interaction between the two. However, when it comes to service marketing the service provider, the service delivery system and the customer are all part of the service marketing. The service production, delivery, and the service consumption by the customer all happen at the same time in the presence of each other. Therefore there are three kinds of marketing that happen simultaneously: the interactive marketing between the front office and customer, internal marketing between the front office and internal process staff, and the external marketing. The relationship of these three components is illustrated in FIGURE 6 below. (Kapoor et al. 2011, 33.)



FIGURE 7. Service Marketing Trilogy. (Adapted from Kapoor et al. 2011, 31)

Interactive marketing begins from the first contact between the service front staff and the customer when the front staff puts effort to understand the needs and expectations of the customer. Internal marketing covers the interaction that happens between the front staff and the service firm and the service firm gets to know about the service needs and expectations of the customer told by the front staff. The trilogy is completed when the service firm conveys externally to the service customers about what has been done in order to deliver the service to the customers as per their expectations. Such external marketing is expressed in the forms of advertising and other communication means as well as by the front office staff directly when dispensing the services of the firm. (Kapoor et al. 2011, 33-34.)

#### **4.3.6 Management of three additional P's of services marketing mix**

Because of the special features of service marketing (intangibility, inseparability, perishability, and heterogeneity) the service marketing mix requires three additional P's; people, processes and physical evidence as discussed earlier in this chapter.

When it comes to People, there are the three levels of involvement in service marketing. The sales and service staff are at the first level as well as the other front office people who are in direct contact with the customers. These people are in key position because if the customers are happy with their interaction with the first level people they will be satisfied and return. The same way the customers might never return if they experienced any mishandling. The company should provide skills to handle customer relationship and communication. The second level or next lever consists of the back office staff who are the processing staff that needs the technical skills in understanding the customers' needs and expectations and therefore are able to create the right service product. At the third and last level are the customers. Because the customers have to be present at the service delivery they are also involved in the service marketing. (Kapoor et al. 2011, 34.)

Oftentimes the customers have a tendency to rely on physical cues when they are contemplating on making a purchase. When it comes to service marketing the marketers develop physical evidence to replace the physical cues. The role of the marketers is to design and realize such tangible evidence. The physical environment is the venue where the customer is when consuming the service. For example for a hair cut the hair salon is the physical environment. Temperature, color, smell and sound are parts of the ambient conditions. The ambience is a combination of these fragments that consciously or subconsciously help the customer to experience the service. For example in a spa the relaxation and calmness are the ambience. A successful marketer matches the ambience and the service delivered.



Spatial layout is also a part of physical evidence as it is the way in which the furniture or machinery is set up and positioned. Spatial layout and functionality go hand in hand and are about how well suited the service environment is to play a part in the service and serve the purpose. Corporate branding like signs, symbols and artifacts are also a part of physical evidence and there are many examples of it, like packaging, brochures, uniforms and business cards to mention a few. (Marketing Teacher 2018.)

When it comes to services process refers to the system that is established to create and deliver the services to the customers and involves all the needed steps to add value to meet the customers' expectations. Often the service gaps are noticed at this level. Process can be thought of as the heart of the services delivery and operating system and therefore companies should pay attention carefully in establishing the expected quality standards. Processes include both direct and indirect activities. Direct activities are those that add value at the moment when the customer is experiencing the service and indirect activities support the service before, during and after the customer has consumed it. Process can be viewed as something that the customer takes part in at different points in time. (Marketing Teacher 2018; Kapoor et al. 2011, 35.)

#### **4.4 Services and consumer behavior**

According to Blythe (2005, 45) the consumer decision-making process starts with need recognition and is followed by information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and ends with post-purchase evaluation. The problem recognition is a stage where the consumer comes to a realization that there is a need for some item. Next the consumer conducts an information search that can be either internal, where the consumer is remembering the previous experiences and what he/she has heard about the product category, or external, which includes shopping around, reading advertisements and maybe asking tips from friends. The next step is to evaluate all the prospective alternatives found during the information search. The next step is the actual purchase successful or not. Lastly, there is the post-purchase evaluation where the customer deems the product purchase. During the evaluation the consumer compares whether the product was as expected or not. (Blythe 2005, 45-49)

When it comes to services it is very difficult to provide any samples of the service to the potential customer due to the intangible nature of it. Because of intangibility the customers are more prone to subjectivity when making decisions about purchasing a service and therefore word-of-mouth plays a big role in the decision making process. The customer wants to know about the features, advantages as

well as the convenience of the service product before making the buying decision. Image is extremely important for a service provider, as the perceived professionalism and competence are considerations that affect the buying decision because it is oftentimes difficult for consumers to distinguish service providers from another. Transparency and good service reputation are very powerful methods for service providers to distinguish themselves. When it comes to services the consumers may perceive the risk to be higher when buying a service compared to a physical product because the intangibility and subjectivity are involved in the buying decision as they cannot rely as heavily on collecting physical information as with physical products. Another reason why consumers may hesitate buying a service is the fact that most services are not standardized and therefore the outcome varies every time. Consumers also cannot evaluate services according to their senses, such as taste or touch, as heavily as they can with physical products and therefore behave differently when selecting and evaluating services compared to products. (Umamaheshwari 2016, 43.)

Gaps between the expected and perceived service are called service gaps. These gaps occur when the service does not meet the expectations of the customer. Services are prone to gaps due to the perishable and variable nature of them; perishable because they cannot be identically repeated once provided and variable because the service can differ even when provided again by the same provider. For example, in franchise restaurants the customer expects the same quality of service regardless of the location. Credibility is extremely invaluable for service providers because the consumers often lack knowledge to evaluate the service. This is because most consumers do not have the objective basis of the service because they do not have the professional knowledge to do so. The credibility is created by satisfied customers that have an objective basis to recommend the service provider to others. (Umamaheshwari 2016, 43-44.)

#### **4.5 Service design**

According to Service Design Network (2018) service design is the activity of planning and organizing people, infrastructure, communication and material components of a service in order to improve its quality and the interaction between service provider and customers. The purpose of service design is to design the product so that it is in accordance with the customers needs. Service design helps to make the service user-friendly, competitive and relevant to the customers. (Service Design Network 2018.)

Reason, Løvlie & Brand Flu (2018, 20, 5) explain that there are three critical factors in service design; movement, structure and behavior. Movement is very particular to services and therefore it is essential to understand it to design and manage services. Movement stands for the movement through a service in this context. It can describe the movement of the customers through all the steps of the service process from first awareness to the offer and buying. Movement is important quality of service because it is about how well things flow in the service and how smoothly a customer or an employee can complete tasks. When it comes to service design purposes, movement can also be described as a horizontal line going from left to right. It is very important for service providers to understand the movement through services in order to achieve customer-oriented goals. (Reason et al. 2015, 20.)

The second section is structure. As services are heterogeneous and made of many different parts combined, structure is important. When it comes to service not all the elements are present at the same time. For example a transportation service is a combination of vehicles, prices, timetables, drivers and so on. In the context of service design, structure can be the use of many channels to deliver the service. Understanding the planning of channel usage is the basis of customer engagement strategies. It can be the structure of measurements like business performance or the structure of the company regarding its teams, departments or functions. Structure contains all the different ways a service is viewed; as an experience, an engagement, and organization or as a performance. Structures can be mapped to the movement and aligned to it horizontally. It is invaluable to understand structures to be able to organize all the parts and elements of the service in a joined-up manner and maximize the performance of people and technologies. (Reason et al. 2015, 21.)

The third critical factor is behavior. According to Reason et al. (2015, 21) behavior is what happens at the intersection of movement and structure, for example how the customers behave in different situations or at different stages in their lives. Current behaviors can be better understood by placing behaviors within a framework of movement and structure. (Reason et al. 2015, 21.)

## 5 PRODUCTIZATION OF SERVICES

Productization is used to standardize service delivery processes and make them more homogenous. Furthermore, inclusive productization aims to include a participant from every level of the service process, even the customer, in the process of service productization. This chapter explains and discusses productization and inclusive productization. The different methods, tools, risks and benefits are also discussed in this chapter.

### 5.1 Productization

Productization basically means the procedures that make expertise and know-how a marketable and sellable service product. A well-productized service can be easily replicated. The knowledge doesn't disappear from the company when the employees leave but instead the next employees will be able to carry out the same steps of the service as the previous ones and therefore are able to deliver the service as high-quality as before. The secret to this is careful documentation, which is a key element in productization because it ensures continuity. The planning phase of the service, sales methods, marketing material, pricing, agreements and graphical layout all should be documented either manually or electronically. In optimal situation productization acts like a learning platform and adds value to both service provider and customer. (Parantainen 2007, 11-12; Tuominen, Järvi, Lehtonen, Valtanen & Martinsuo 2015, 5.)

Productization can be divided into internal and external. External productization is the description of those service elements that are visible to the customer. In an external productization process common vision about the most important service elements to the customer is created and typically described in a form of service description or sales material. Internal productization is the description and standardization of service production. The description and specification of service process, procedures and responsibilities are the basic actions of internal productization. It is also crucial to consider how the service process appears to the customer and what are the processes of the customer. However, productization is not the same thing as standardization; customer-specific tailoring is normal until a certain degree when it comes to service products. The goal of productization is to find a good balance between standardization and specification. (Tuominen et al. 2015, 5.)

## 5.2 Productization of expertise services

A service that is based on expertise is also productizable. Basically, duplicating expertise means that the know-how can be transferred from one professional to another without the need to personally train every new expert. There is a bunch of means how to duplicate the knowhow: publications, hand-books, instructions, check-lists, videos, charts, process descriptions, courses, training material and continuous development work of the service to mention few. Franchising-companies are based on a handbook that at its best gives instructions about even the smallest details of the business model. With the help of such Franchising handbook the entrepreneur can spread and duplicate even the whole business activity concept with new people. (Parantainen 2007, 17.)

According to Sipilä (1998, 13) the core form of expertise service is advice and therefore experts can also be thought as advisers. A remarkable part of knowledge related to expertise services is so called tactic or quiet knowledge and it might be difficult to define concretely into written words. Such tactic knowledge can also define the expert's position and that might diminish the willingness to share such knowledge. The productization should therefore be designed so that it benefits the work of the experts. To tackle these challenges it is important to plan the productization in such way that both the experts and customers can participate in the process but in different ways and at different times. (Sipilä 1998, 13; Tuominen et al. 2015, 6.)

## 5.3 Benefits of productization

Firstly, the service will become more homogenous. The standardization of procedures and sharing the knowledge will create a basis for a better service because the quality of it will not be so dependent on the person providing the service. Secondly, the service will become repeatable. The creation of common procedures and standardizing the different elements of the service make it possible for the service to become more repeatable. Thirdly, the internal sharing of information and cooperation will become easier. When the employees get to participate in the different phases of productization it makes them more committed and improves the sharing of information. The fourth benefit is that it will ease the marketing and selling of the service. When there is a common understanding about the service internally at the company it makes the communicating about the service more unified. The service descriptions and other material created in the productization process make it possible to market the product more rapidly to the customers. The fifth benefit is that the dependencies and synergies will be easily

identifiable. As a result of productization an understanding of the role of the service and how it is linked to the other services provided by the company will be clear. Lastly, the further development of the service will be easier due to the common understanding coming from the productization and thus the next steps of service development will be smoother to take. Of course there are also other benefits like keeping the knowledge in the company even when an expert leaves the company and learning platforms that are created with documentation like discussed earlier. (Tuominen et al 2015, 7; Parantainen 2007, 12)

#### **5.4 Challenges and risks**

There are also challenges and risks when it comes to productization and it is good to recognize them. Firstly, there is a risk that the customer aspect will disappear. If the customers and employees are not taken to be a part of the productization process there is a danger that the productized service will not meet the needs of customers. Secondly, there is a possibility that productization will be considered as a threat. The experts want to keep their tacit knowledge to themselves and in that case it will be difficult to get their knowledge in to the productization process. Thirdly, there is a risk that the motivation of the employees will wither. The procedures and processes created as a result of productization can be too strictly defined without any flexibility. In such case the motivation of those employees that are used to improvising and freedom will decrease. The fourth risk is that the service will become too strict. One of the biggest challenges with productization is to find a balance between standardization and customer-specific tailoring. There is the danger that the service will become too strict (over productized) and it is based on a unilateral standpoint and in that case it will not meet the customer's needs. Lastly, there is a risk that it will stop or hinder innovations. If there is too much standardization it might block the usage of new innovative ideas when it comes to developing the service. Managerial support is also extremely important for successful service productization because without the support and resources it becomes impossible. (Tuominen et al 2015, 7-8; Valtakoski & Järvi 2016, 363)

#### **5.5 The goals of productization**

It is extremely important to create a clear goal for the productization together inside the company because in this way the goal will motivate all parties. The goal of the productization can for example be boosting the service production, improve sales and marketing, improve internal cooperation and in-

formation sharing or understanding the role of the service. The features of the service can also classify the goals. The goal of the productization is to have a service that is easily sellable, well described, homogenous, repeatable and easily developable. (Tuominen et al 2015, 9.)

## **5.6 Forms of productization process**

There are different forms how the productization process can proceed. The forms can be divided to traditional, agile and iterative. In the traditional, check list-type, productization process proceeds in stages linear from one phase to next one and commonly utilizes methods from project management. Productization is seen as nonrecurring effort that enables the sales and production of the service when completed. Agile productization process utilizes methods of agile project management and is therefore chosen when the service needs to be in the market as soon as possible. The first emphasis is given to those external elements of the service that are visible to the customer. The service is often sold to the customer already when the productization process is ongoing. The further development and productization is finalized together with the first customers. There is no way that the first service productization will result in the perfect outcome and in iterative productization process the productization is carried out in stages. The priority can be given to either external or internal productization, for example. In addition the productization process is planned the way that the service is a constantly developing entity and can be developed into new and improved versions methodically. The contents of the productization process are designed to be flexible. (Tuominen et al 2015, 10-11.)

## **5.7 Inclusive productization process**

As a result of a three-year-long research project called LEAPS (Leadership in the Productisation of Services) a handbook for productization of services was created by Tuominen et al. and it concentrates on different methods for inclusive productization. Inclusive productization is based on creating a common understanding about the service between the customer and service providers. The actual productization process includes the enclosing of the service and description of the basic elements of productization (service promise, service structure, service process and resources). In other words, both internal and external productizations are taken into account. In inclusive productization process the whole process is done together. The productized service is tested and spread. The new innovated pro-

cedure will be integrated with existing ones. That ensures that the productized service and new procedures will not remain disconnected. (Tuominen et al 2015, 11.)

The inclusive productization process can be thought as a cycle that has five main steps. The first one is to clarify the goals, which means that before the actual productization starts it is important to clarify what are the aim and goals of the process. It is important to clarify the goals together because everyone has different views. The second step is to map out the current situation. In this step information is gathered and analyzed for further use. In the third step it's time to shake opinions. The purpose of this step is to get new innovative ideas regarding the service. This step helps to break old established point-of-views and create new more effective methods. In the fourth step a common vision is created. It is important that everyone will participate in this step to ensure there are multiple different views and background assumptions. The fifth step is to evaluate and simulate the final result. In this step the needs for further development are recognized and the final results of productization are evaluated. When it comes to evaluation those people who deal with the service are in key position. On top of these five steps it is also important to develop the productized service when needed. This inclusive productization process cycle is visualized in the FIGURE 8 on the next page. (Tuominen et al 2015, 12-13.)



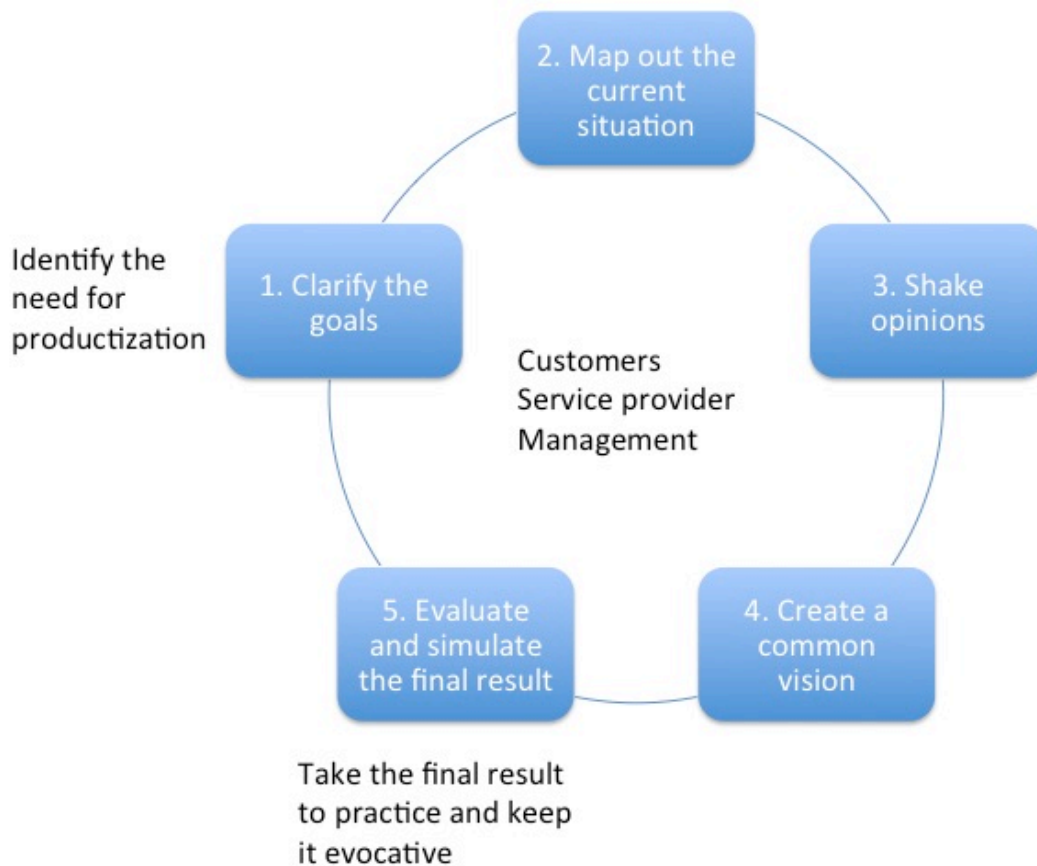


FIGURE 8. Inclusive productization process cycle. (Adapted from Tuominen et al 2015, 12.)

### 5.8 Service description

According to Tuominen et al. (2015, 14) productization often concentrates on describing the service in order to create a comprehensive, usable and commonly understood view on the service. Therefore for best productization results it is important to take all the people who deal with the service in the productization process. Before starting the productization process it is important to think through what features of the service should be describes and how, who are needed in the productization process and in what order the things will be done. (Tuominen et al. 2015, 14.)

The aim of productization is to create a common and comprehensive understanding about the service and its values. However, it is always challenging to concretize a multidimensional service. A service description is considered to be a cornerstone of productization because the descriptions help to form and communicate a common meaning to everyone in the organization. Therefore, the service descrip-

tion should be comprehensive and informative to all different parts of the organization. (Tuominen et al. 14-15.)

In order to create a service description it is important to define what parts of the service have already been described. The description can for example start with modeling the customer's problem followed by conceptualization the service promise and further to the planning of service structure, resources and processes. Another important activity is to think about what is aimed to describe now with productization. When it comes to productizing expertise services it is very challenging to define and limit what is described because the service offered is so diverse. When employees or customers are taken along in the productization process it is important to carefully plan beforehand how to limit the service elements. Despite the aim of productization process being to create a common view on the service the internal and external descriptions must be done separately. It is recommended to start the service description from the customer's point of view. (Tuominen et al. 2015, 15.)

## **5.9 Inclusive methods**

Interaction, reflexivity, narrative and visuality are all principals in inclusive productization methods. Diverse knowledge should be brought to productization process. Combining different methods in one workshop can do this. All the participants should be actively participating and interacting in workshops so that all the ideas and knowledge can be utilized. Concrete experiences of people should be included in the process and so that the experiences can be discussed the methods should support the reflexivity of participants. Narrative plays a role with sharing experiences and knowledge. The productization should also refresh new points of view and this can be ensured with different models and activities that stimulate thinking. (Tuominen et al. 2015, 30-31.)

There are different ways to use narrative methods in service productization process. Narratives are descriptions of events, actions, happening and people's experiences and thoughts. Narratives are like chains of events and they can be real or imagined. Narratives are handy in productization processes because they include descriptions of the services, how they functions and how people experience the services. Narratives include information about people, the service and service related interaction and information related to the results of the service. There are many benefits for using narratives as part of the process, such as vivid information about the background and context where the service is used. Narratives also ensure that humane point-of-views stay in the service and the participants' experiences

about the service are taken into consideration in the service process and results. Narratives also allow different interpretations and viewpoints. Everyone can use their own words with the narrative method. Experiences from the customers and employees can be collected and analyzed in a workshop or imaginary situations are created together in the workshop. Also typical service situations can be used as narratives. (Tuominen et al. 32-34.)

Visualization supports productization from four different angles. Reification: idea can easily be turned into a figure or model to be more fathomable. Also connection between different topics can be visualized and thus understood easier. Simplification: visualization simplifies ideas. Even multidimensional services can be summarized into one figure quickly. Simple models help to remember and pay attention to the different dimensions of the service, which makes it easier to develop single elements. Stimulation of thinking: Combining different styles of illustrations challenges to think from new standpoints. Visual models can reveal lacks or possibilities for improvements. Cooperation: one of the most important benefits of visualization is the fact it makes cooperation easier. Different visualizations act as boundary objects that are easy to share and work together on. Visual models also help to motivate cooperation and in the end offer a common understanding as a result. Visualizations also help to remember different parts of the process in great detail. Visualization is beneficial in every phase of the productization process. (Tuominen et al. 2015, 36.)

### **5.10 Organizing workshops**

Organization of even a small workshop should be done carefully. The workshop should give good results but should also be related to the productization process in a reasonable way. The contents as well as timetable should be carefully planned but still flexible to a certain extent. The workshop should not be too long but still long enough that there is time to go through everything needed. Around four hours long workshop is a good average length for a workshop. The workshop should have a clear start where everyone is welcomed, motivated and the contents and purpose introduced. The opinions of the participants should be shaken next in order to direct the thoughts of the participants away from old patterns and help them to focus on the theme of the workshop. Processing is the part of the workshop where the actual work is done. It is good to summarize the results together before jumping into the ending of the workshop. (Tuominen et al. 2015, 37-38.)

The physical environment of the workshop is important. The space should be big enough but not huge. It is good to have an empty wall that can be used when needed. It is a good idea to prepare the room well before the start of workshop to make sure there is everything needed. If there are foods or snacks served to the participants they should be the kind of that can be drank and eaten simultaneously with the program. During the workshop it is important to make sure that everyone has understood the tasks and that everyone feels himself or herself comfortable. There should be right time for ideas, analyzing, and critic in the contents of the workshop. (Tuominen et al. 2015 38-39.)

There should be enough participants in the workshop to ensure that there are many different views. The ideal amount is from four to twelve participants. When planning what methods to use in the workshop it is important to take into consideration the different backgrounds, positions and knowledge of the participants. Bringing together different kinds of people is both strength and challenge of workshops. There are different tools to take to the workshops, such as post-its, markers, papers, pens, tape etc. It is important to make sure that everyone participates equally, that the timetable is being followed, and that the discussions stay on the right track. (Tuominen et al. 2015, 39-40.)

## **6 INCLUSIVE PRODUCTIZATION PROCESS OF THE RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF STUDENTS**

In this chapter Service Marketing Mix is applied to the supervision of rights and interests of students. It is extremely difficult to apply every step and method of service productization when it comes to a complex service product like the supervision of interests and rights of students. However, there are many useful methods to utilize in order to make the concept and service more easily approachable from everyone's point of view. As a part of the productization process a workshop was organized to help to develop the marketing of the supervision of rights as interests. In this chapter the workshop and the results of it are explained and discussed. The inclusive productization methods used in the workshop are narratives and visualization. Documentation is another important aspect of productization and the need for improvement regarding it came up during the process. Documentation is also discussed in this chapter.

### **6.1 Service Marketing Mix for the supervision of rights and interests of students**

It is not so simple to directly apply the Service Marketing Mix discussed in chapter four to a service as complex as the supervision of rights and interests of students. This Marketing Mix is applied to the supervision of rights and interests from the student-commissioned service point-of-view. When it comes to the Product, or in this case a service, it should be what the customers expect to receive and fulfill their needs. Therefore, it is important that the student knows what to expect but the service should also be effective so that it fulfills the need of the student. Every action taken to supervise the rights and interests should be effective from beginning to end.

The primary Place in this case is the Student Union office and the office should be easy for the student to come across. The actual service delivery can happen in various places due to the nature of the service but it is important that the student knows the location of the office as the first action of the student would be to come and ask for assistance.

The Price is a bit complicated matter in this case. Basically, the price is the membership fee but the supervision of rights and interests is only a part of what the student has an access to as a member as

explained earlier in chapter two. It is impossible to give a price tag only for the supervision of rights and interests.

Promotion is in a key role when it come to the supervision of rights and interests. It is important that it is marketed in the right channels and as it is only a part of the membership services and complex in nature. Basically, the memberships are marketed in different info sessions during the orientation week, in social media, by e-mail and with posters and other printed and electronic material. It is extremely important to explain what the supervision of rights and interests means in practice and give some examples of it so that the potential members understand the importance and meaning of it.

People are also in a key role when it comes to the supervision of rights and interests of students. The people are in this case the Student Union employees and actives both, because they are the experts providing the service and present at the delivery process. The employees and actives should be professional, keep the matters confidential when needed, and be able to give advice and assist the students. Therefore, it is important that the people are well trained and have all the necessary information and understand the complex nature of the service in question. They should also be able to recognize what tools to use.

Processes of the service should be effective and the student should always be kept updated about how the case is proceeding. Afterwards it is important to make sure that the student is satisfied or see if there are any further actions to take. This also ensures that the student will ask for assistance again if needed and if the student is satisfied he/she will also talk about being a Student Union member positively. The student should be the most important party throughout the service process of supervision of rights and interests.

The Physical Evidence is a bit complicated to determine when it comes to the supervision of rights and interests of students. The office of the Student Union can be thought as physical environment but on the other hand not all the service deliveries happen there. The possible documentation is another example of what physical evidence could be in this case. Also the logo of the Student Union COPSA can be considered as a physical evidence.

## 6.2 Workshop

As a part of the inclusive productization process a workshop for the COPSA employee and actives was organized. In order to include every level of users both the employee and actives (who are students and therefore customers too) were included. Three participants were COPSA Board members, two were COPSA Representative council members and one participant was the coordinator of COPSA. One of the participants was an international degree student and five were Finnish degree students. The focus of the workshop was on the marketing aspect of the supervision of rights and interests. The narrative method was used as an inclusive method in the workshop. Visualization was used as another method during and after the workshop. Generally, the workshop followed the steps and recommendations of Tuominen et Al. (2015) regarding organizing and carrying out a workshop as a part of an inclusive productization process. The workshop was hosted bilingually in Finnish and in English.

The workshop was organized in a meeting room of a local hotel. The workshop started with some coffee, snacks and welcome words. In order to shake opinions and make everyone get their minds orientated on the topic the supervision of rights and interests of Centria UAS students was presented and discussed from the three different divisions and point-of-views discussed in chapter three; as seen in FIGURE 2 and FIGURE 3 and student-commissioned vs. self-commissioned in a part called “Supervision of rights and interests in a nutshell.”

The next part was the actual functional part “Four cases” where four different color-coded cases were introduced. The cases were different types of Centria UAS students: 1) Bob is a 20-year-old international fulltime chemistry student at Talonpojankatu campus (pink post-it notes) 2) Pekka is a 45-year-old Finnish Master’s Degree student with a family who lives in Pietarsaari but comes to take classes at Talonpojankatu campus (yellow post-it notes) 3) Liisa is a 25-year old Finnish full-time business student at Talonpojankatu campus (green post-it notes) and 4) Kerttu is a 35-year-old Finnish part-time electrical engineering student at Ylivieska campus who lives in Nivala (orange post-it notes). The participants were given four different colors of post-it notes and were told to individually think how they would market and promote the supervision of rights and interests to each of these case students and what are the most important parts of the supervision of rights and interests for each case student. The participants were instructed to write one idea per one post-it note. The four cases were chosen in order to illustrate the diversity of Centria UAS students. FIGURE 9 on the next page shows the participants working on the task.



FIGURE 9. Working on the four cases during workshop.

The participants were given 45 minutes to come up with their ideas. The task proved to be more difficult than everyone thought at the first because they had to carefully think about the special features of each of the case students. After 45 minutes it was time to check the results. All the post-its were read out aloud and discussed and then glued on the board. The results can be seen in FIGURE 10 on the next page.



Based on the ideas collected the next task was to determine whether the marketing of the supervision of rights and interests requires a more tailor-made approach or if it can be marketed with the same punchlines to every group of students. The participants unanimously agreed that tailoring should be done when marketing the supervision of rights and interests so that the background of the student or group of students is taken into a consideration. After the workshop a figure to visualize every four cases was created based on the results of the workshop to illustrate how the marketing should be tailored.

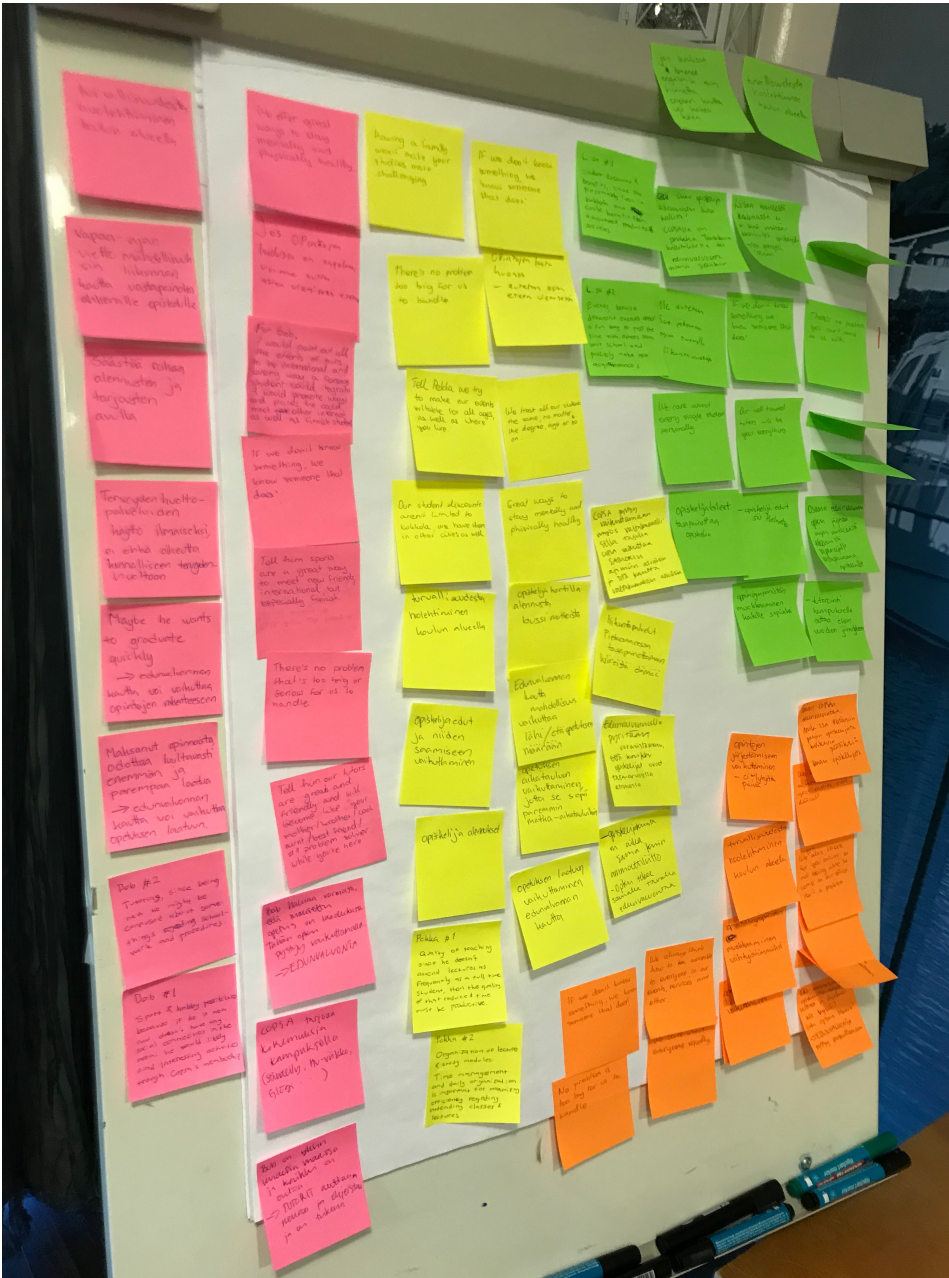


FIGURE 10. Outcome of the workshop.

The method used in the functional part of the workshop was narrative, which is discussed in the previous chapter. The participants had to imagine they are the case students and think what parts of the supervision of rights and interests they find most appealing. The three most important punchlines for marketing the supervision of rights and interests for every student case were chosen based on the answers of the participants. The punchlines are those parts of the supervision of rights and interests that were thought to be the most appealing and useful for each of the case students. To visualize the results, four different figures were created to illustrate the tree punchlines of each case.

The first case student was an international fulltime student from outside of EU & ETA countries. The three most important punchlines as illustrated in FIGURE 11 were chosen to be help with integration to Finnish culture (through tutoring, freetime activities, support), impact on the quality of teaching and student discounts and benefits. It is extremely important that a new international student becomes integrated to the new study environment, gets friends and feels like home. Tutors help a great deal when it comes to making friends, finding hobbies and getting familiar with new country and study environment. On the other hand, if the student comes from outside of EU and ETA countries, he/she is most likely to pay an academic fee and therefore will probably be extremely invested in having education of high quality. That is why the participants considered the impact the Student Union can have on the quality of teaching to be important and one of the punchlines. Thirdly, the student is likely to want to save as much money as possible and therefore student discounts and benefits were considered as one of the punchlines for marketing too.

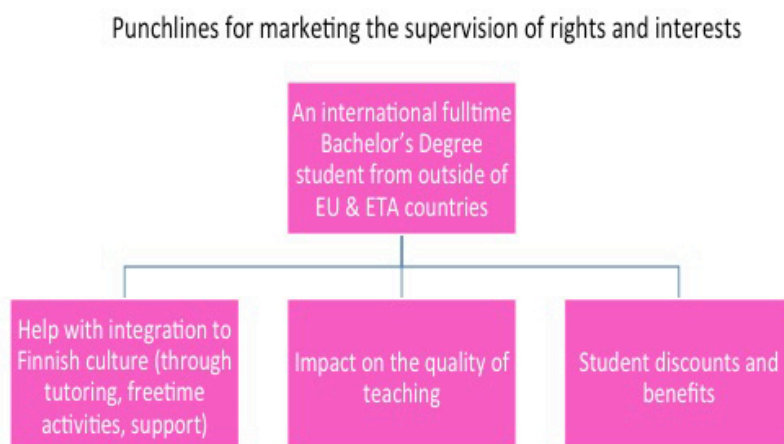


FIGURE 11. Punchlines for marketing the supervision of rights and interests in case 1

The second case student was a part-time Master's Degree student who has a family and lives in a different town. The three most important punchlines as illustrated in FIGURE 12 below chosen by the participants were impact on the quality of teaching, student discounts and benefit in other towns too (maybe student discounts on family related activities too) and impact on the organization of teaching and study modules (time management etc.). As part-time students have less contact lessons, the participants thought that it is important that the contact lessons are of high quality and on the other hand, if there are online classes it is important that those are of high quality too. Student discounts and benefits in other towns too were chosen because there actually are some student discounts in other towns too but there is actually a need for the Student Union to acquire some benefits that are for family related activities and services too because there are many students who have families. The third punchline was chosen to be the impact on the organization of teaching and study modules so that the organization of studies is for example time effective as there are less contact lessons.

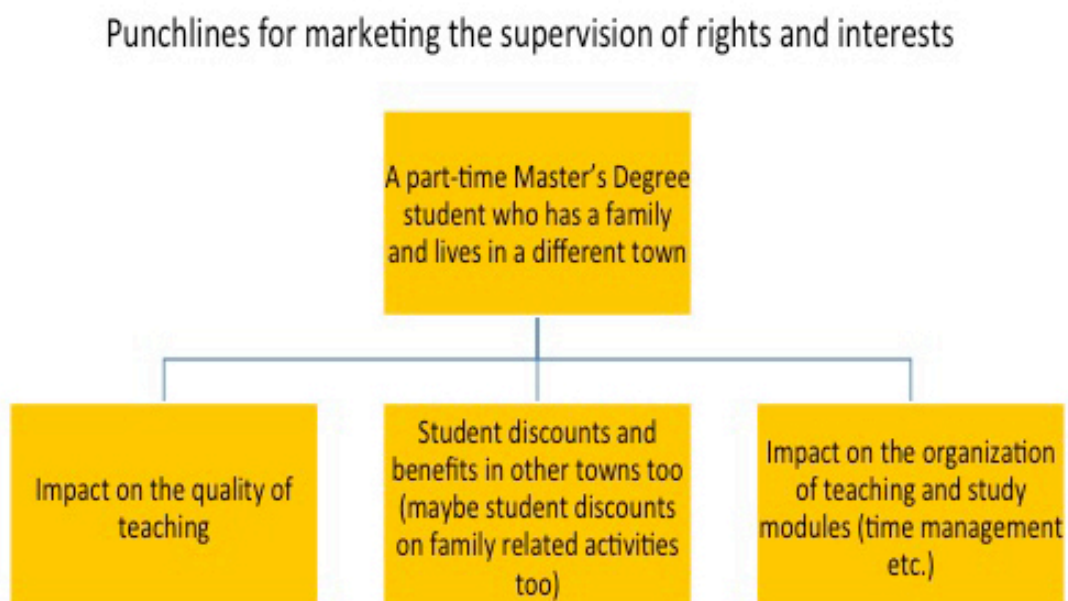


FIGURE 12. Punchlines for marketing the supervision of rights and interests case 2

The third case student was a Finnish fulltime Bachelor's Degree student. The three most important punchlines as illustrated in FIGURE 13 below chosen by the participants were events, activities and free time activities, student discounts and benefits and study environment. Usually the fulltime students are the most interested in participating different event and activities organized by the Student Union. Generally, they are also very active when it comes to utilizing student discounts and benefits. The participants also thought that the study environment is very important to the fulltime students because they spend relatively much time at the campus.

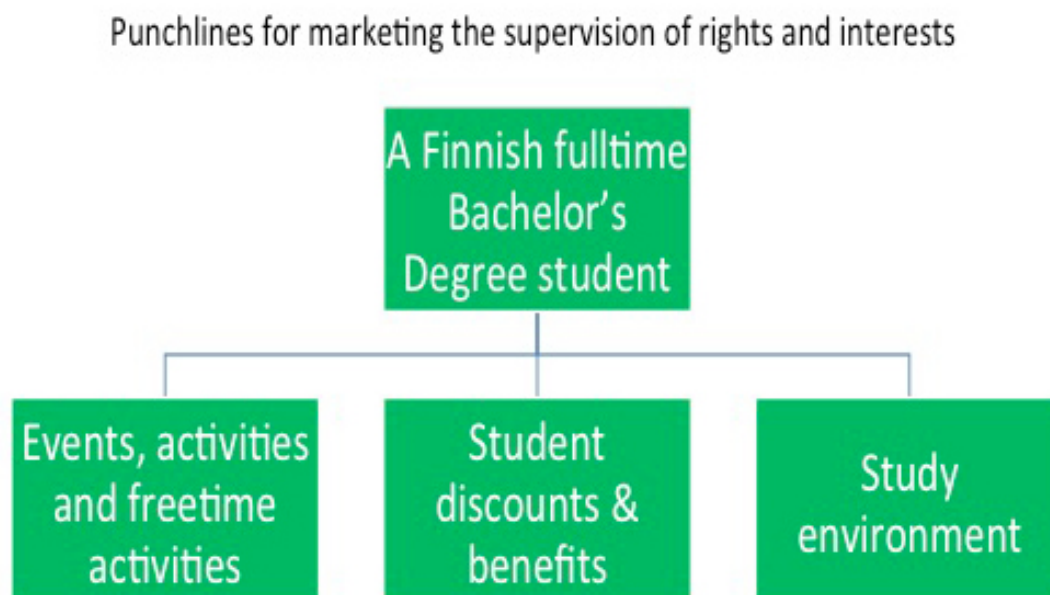


FIGURE 13. Punchlines for marketing the supervision of rights and interests case 3

The fourth and last case student was a Finnish part-time Bachelor's Degree student who lives in a different town than where the campus is. The three most important punchlines as illustrated in FIGURE 14 on the next page chosen by the participants were impact on the quality of teaching, student discounts and benefit in other towns too and impact on the organization of teaching and study modules (time management etc.). The reasoning behind these punchlines was very similar as with the part-time Master's Degree student in case two, due to both being part-time students.

### Punchlines for marketing the supervision of rights and interests

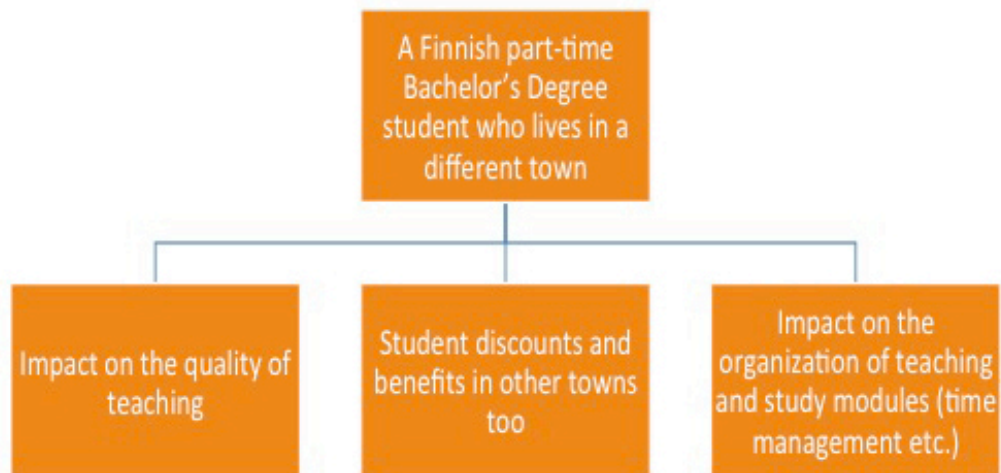


FIGURE 14. Punchlines for marketing the supervision of rights and interests case 4

All these above mentioned case-wise tailored punchlines will be taken into consideration when planning marketing and info sessions in the future. The workshop results proved that there is a great need for more tailored marketing due to different backgrounds and needs of students. It also helps when it comes to marketing the supervision of rights and interests of students as a whole when there are certain practical examples to give as supervision of rights and interests is such a complex concept to fully understand.

### 6.3 Plan for creating and updating documentation

As discussed in chapter five, documentation is a crucial part of productization as it ensures the continuity at the work place. It is also much easier when it comes to work orientation when the new Student Union active or employee gets some written material to support the work orientation process. When it comes to such an abstract and complex service product as the supervision of rights and interests of students is, it is even more beneficial to have comprehensive guide or other documentation to be able to fully understand the concept. Therefore, based on the definitions of the supervision of rights as interests, the tools and methods of it as well as the cases will be included in the orientation material given to future Student Union actives and employees.

Firstly, it is important to define what the supervision of rights and interests actually means and why it is important, which are both discussed in chapters two and three. The structure and different organs of the Student Union, but also of the University of Applied Sciences, should be explained in detail. All the different point-of-views and tools, as explained in chapters two and three in this thesis, should be discussed. There are so many different ways to carry out the supervision of rights and interests so it is important to explain those one by one. Also the importance of feedback should be explained. The documentation should also include some cases from real life so that the reader can get the idea what to do in different situations.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to develop the membership services of Student Union COPSA and especially develop the marketing of supervision of rights and interests of the members. The aim of this thesis was to develop the supervision of rights and interests as a service and the marketing of it. Another aim of this thesis was to develop the internal documentation regarding the supervision of rights and interests because the knowledge is very tactic.

Even if I consider myself as somebody who knows a lot about supervising the rights and interests of students I was surprised about how many different ways it can be divided into and looked at. I knew beforehand that it is a complex concept but I became surprised by the true complexity of it during this thesis project. Before starting this thesis project I was convinced that supervision of rights and interests can be fully productized but when I started to go deeper into the subject it became clear that it is not possible to fully standardize a service so complex. Even applying the service and service marketing theories fully was difficult for the same reason.

However, productization offers many ideas, tools and methods that could be at least partially applied to the supervision of rights and interests. In addition, the inclusive productization methods turned out to be something that fits very well into the style of the Student Union COPSA, as it aims to be as inclusive as possible in all of its actions anyhow. Some of the methods learnt from this thesis process will surely be utilized during other development projects too. The workshop organized as a part of this thesis process gave a lot of valuable information and ideas regarding the marketing of the supervision of rights and interests and it will help greatly in the future. It proved that the marketing needs to be more tailored and targeted depending on the student or student groups. The marketing should also aim to make the supervision of rights and interests more comprehensible. The workshop helped the participants to also understand how complex the supervision of rights and interests truly is.

Another important thing that resulted from looking into productization is the need for more detailed documentation. The knowledge of supervision of rights and interests is very tactic and therefore it would help a lot if there is more detailed information regarding it. The next step after this thesis project is to update and add more detailed information in the orientation guide given to new Student Union COPSA actives and employees to ensure the continuity. Especially the different example cases and

different divisions of the supervision of rights and interests should be added to the documentation/orientation guide for new actives and employees.

This thesis has been advancing relatively smoothly. At some point it was frustrating to notice that it is not so easy to apply the productization methods on the supervision of rights and interests but I got over those times quite fast. At times it was challenging for me to write and explain things in a detailed manner because my writing style tends to be very straightforward and I tend to summarize everything. Another challenge was to keep in mind that even though I am myself very familiar with some topics I have to be able to explain them in such manner that someone who does not have prior knowledge about the topic can understand what I am writing about.

All in all, I am satisfied with the outcome because it can be utilized in the future. Despite the fact I could not utilize the productization methods as fully as I would have preferred to, the methods that I could use were very good and effective. The methods and tools I have learnt from this thesis project I will continue to utilize when it comes to solving issues in the future too so this has truly been a learning experience.



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24.5.2018 ORIGINAL SOKOS HOTEL KAARLE

## **DEVELOPING THE MARKETING OF SUPERVISION OF RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF STUDENTS – WORKSHOP**

### **OHJELMA / PROGRAM**

- 16.30** Tervetuloa, kahvia ja purtavaa  
Welcome, coffee & snacks
- 16.40** Tietoisku opiskelijoiden edunvalvonnasta  
Supervision of rights and interests of students in a nutshell
- 17.00** Neljä keissiä  
Four cases
- 17.45** Keissien purku  
Checking the results
- 18.10** Edunvalvonnan tärkeimmät piirteet markkinoinnin näkökulmasta  
The most important features (punchlines) of supervision of rights and interests from marketing point-of-view
- 18.45** Yhteenveto  
Conclusion
- 19.00** Lopetus  
Ending