Developing a Journey Mapping Workshop for Case Company X

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Abstract

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This is a product-based bachelor's thesis to develop a journey mapping workshop for case company X. Companies that make investments in understanding the expectations of their customers and stakeholders can benefit in today's experience economy.

The purpose of the thesis was to provide the commissioning company with clear guidelines on how to hold journey mapping workshops and to create the supplemental materials needed for these workshops. The thesis begins with an introductory chapter, followed by theory, interviews with the case company's consultants and customers, general recommendations for the commissioning company, and a workshop guide, persona template, and journey mapping template. It ends with a chapter on conclusions.

Some of the topics in this thesis are relatively new, like design thinking and service design, while others like journey mapping and personas are more established. The experience economy, customer experience, design thinking, and service design are contemporary topics and represent marketing evolution. The purpose of the theoretical framework was to cultivate an enhanced awareness of design thinking, service design, customer experience, personas, and journey mapping while strengthening the author's understanding of the commissioning company's current state.

To analyze the current state of the commissioning company's journey mapping workshops, two consultants and two customers of the commissioning company were interviewed. The current state of the commissioning company's journey mapping workshops was not standardized. Therefore, these workshops were not easy to repeat because they did not have a well-defined workshop structure or standard templates or frameworks to utilize. Their most urgent needs involved developing and implementing a workshop guide and standard templates and tools and providing detailed instructions for their use.

The workshop guide, templates, and instructions were based on a combination of information from the sources and the data from the case company's consultants and customers and the theoretical framework. The workshop guidelines, persona templates, and journey mapping template were adapted to be easily implemented by complete beginners if needed.

The commissioning company was pleased with the outcome of the thesis and will potentially be implementing some of the thesis recommendations.

The thesis conclusion includes the project's critical outcomes of the project and suggestions for further projects and research for the commissioning company. Additionally, it also has a section evaluating the project based on feedback from the commissioning company and the author's self-evaluation. Finally, the author reflects on her learning related to this project.

Keywords
Customer Journey, Journey Map, Customer experience, Service Design, Design Thinking, Persona

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1 Introduction

This is a commissioned thesis for a Finnish CRM consultancy. This chapter introduces the thesis topic and its background. Then, the project objectives, tasks, structure, and management and evaluation methods are presented. Then, the international aspects of the project and the key concepts are also defined. Furthermore, the commissioning company is introduced and the benefits of the thesis for the commissioning company are discussed.

1.1 Background

The complexity of current services and the myriad ways companies can interact with their customers both present unique challenges. Today's successful services feel seamless, even with countless touchpoints and many stakeholders operating in the background. Therefore, creating services for today's demanding customers can seem prohibitively tricky for companies. Service design and customer journey mapping can simplify the complexity of delivering a service and help companies to understand the wants and needs of their customers. The ability to visualize the entire journey from the first to last interaction using customer journey mapping helps businesses differentiate themselves and deliver better value. By combining customer experience knowledge, service design, and journey mapping, companies can get both a high-level view of a service and the specific details that differentiate their services from others. (Bridgeable 2016.)

Journey mapping was chosen as the focus of this thesis because it deploys two incredibly important devices that level the playing field of understanding: visualization and storytelling. The power of storytelling and visualization lies in making complicated processes and information clear, succinct, and memorable. (Kaplan 2016.)

Additionally, customer experience, service design, and journey mapping are all current topics and should be part of any modern business's marketing plan. Therefore, this thesis is potentially beneficial for all companies in the B2B sector, seeking to implement journey mapping as part of their marketing strategy. Furthermore, the author is currently employed as a junior consultant at the commissioning company. This thesis project presents an opportunity to develop as a marketing professional and increase her expertise and job skills in customer experience, service design, customer-focused innovation, and customer journey.

The commissioning company has recognized that helping its clients define and refine their customer journey is potentially a crucial part of their service offering. The company

currently works in the Finnish B2B market with mostly mid-sized companies, some of which have not yet established their customer journey due to a lack of knowledge or resources. Also significant are the positive effects of understanding the customer journey and its implications concerning customer experience can have for clients.

1.2 Project Objective

The objective of this thesis is to select and develop a journey mapping workshop and related templates and tools for the commissioning company. Six project tasks related to completion of the final product have been determined and are detailed below in the overlay matrix. (Table 1.)

The project objective (PO) is to develop a journey mapping workshop for a CRM consultancy. It has been divided into the following project tasks (PT).

PT 1: Defining a theoretical framework for customer experience, design thinking, service design and journey mapping.

PT 2: Investigating and analyzing the commissioning company’s workshop participants and current workshop practices at the commissioning company.

PT 3: Gathering customer feedback about the commissioning company’s journey mapping workshops.

PT 4: Developing a journey mapping workshop guide and related templates.

PT 5: Introducing the workshop guide and templates to the commissioning company.

PT 6: Evaluation of the workshop guide and templates.

Table 1. Overlay matrix.

Project Tasks (PT's)	Theoretical Framework	Project Management Methods	Outcomes
PT 1. Defining a theoretical framework for customer experience, design thinking, service design and journey mapping	Customer experience, design thinking, service design, journey mapping Literature and articles (2)	Desktop study	Theoretical framework
PT 2. Investigating and analyzing workshop participants and current workshop practices at the commissioning company	Journey mapping, interviews with senior consultants, relevant theoretical literature, and articles (3)	Qualitative interviews, and documentary, qualitative and comparative analysis	Qualitative data Current customers Description of current journey mapping workshops and the methods and tools used Customer feedback
PT 3. Gathering customer feedback about the commissioning company's journey mapping workshops	Interviews with B2B customers. (3)	Qualitative interviews and documentary, qualitative, and comparative analysis	Qualitative data Feedback about journey mapping workshops
PT 4. Developing a journey mapping workshop guide and related templates	See PT 1,2&3 (4)	Desktop study Analysis of qualitative interviews of consultants and customers/qualitative data	Workshop guide Journey mapping template Persona template
PT 5. Introducing the journey mapping workshop guide and templates to the commissioning company	See PT 1,2&3 (5)	Presentation and feedback	Session agenda PowerPoint presentation
PT 6. Evaluation of the workshop guide and templates	-	Feedback from the commissioning company and self-evaluation	Ideas for improvements, suggestions, recommendations

1.3 Project Management Methods and Project Structure

In the following subchapters, the thesis project management methods, project structure, and project evaluation are discussed. The thesis is in the form of a business project that results in a product. The product consists of a workshop guide, a persona template, and a journey mapping template to be used by consultants at the commissioning company in journey mapping workshops. For the project to be successfully completed and the product produced, the project must be completed. Therefore, the six project tasks are detailed, the source of the data is listed, and the project management methods, tasks, and project outcome are organized in a project management design in Table 2. In the final related subchapter, the project evaluation is presented theoretically.

1.3.1 Project Management Design

The project management design in table 2 details the project tasks. The first task is to complete a theoretical framework using desktop study. The key concepts (chapter 1.8) related to the theoretical framework (beginning in chapter 2.1) are presented using source literature and articles.

The second task is to investigate and analyse current target customers, tools, methods, and workshop practices of the commissioning company. The source of data for this task is qualitative open interviews with two consultants from the commissioning company and two of their B2B customers who have participated in related workshops. These interviews will collect data describing the current state of the journey mapping workshops and their current challenges and development needs based on the experiences of the consultants and customer feedback. The combination of the theoretical framework and the information obtained in the interviews is essential to select and develop the workshop guide, persona template, and journey mapping template in project task 4 successfully.

The third project task is to gather feedback about the commissioning company's journey mapping workshops from a discretionary sample of customers recommended in phase two. The source of data for this task is qualitative structured interviews conducted through email.

The qualitative interviews of both the consultants and customers must be carefully formulated so that the right questions are asked of the consultants and customers and the author can understand what areas to focus on when selecting and developing the workshop guide, persona template and journey mapping template.

The fourth project task is developing a workshop guide, persona template and journey mapping template. These are chosen and developed using a combination of the theoretical framework, and the analysis of the data gathered and analysed during project task two and three.

Project task five involves creating an agenda and presenting a PowerPoint presentation introducing the workshop guide, persona template and journey mapping template. Feedback will be collected informally following the presentation.

As part of task six, a final informal feedback session will be held, and the feedback will be used to improve or alter the thesis products if necessary. Additionally, next steps will be decided so that the commissioning company's consultants can potentially start to use the thesis products in journey mapping workshops. The project will be evaluated through the feedback attained from the commissioning company as well as through the thesis author's own self-evaluation of the project.

Table 2. Project Management Design

	PT 1	PT 2	PT 3	PT 4	PT 5	PT 6
Project Task (PT)	Defining a theoretical framework for customer experience, design thinking, service design and journey mapping	Investigating and analyzing workshop participants and current workshop practices at the commissioning company	Gathering customer feedback about the commissioning company's journey mapping workshops	Developing a journey mapping workshop guide and related templates	Introducing the journey mapping workshop guide and templates to the commissioning company	Evaluation of the workshop guide and templates
Data Source	Literature and academic articles	Journey mapping, interviews with consultants, relevant theoretical literature, and articles	B2B customer interviews	See PT 1, 2&3	See PT 1, 2&3	-

Project Management Method	Desktop study	Qualitative interviews, and documentary, qualitative and comparative analysis	Qualitative interviews and documentary, qualitative and comparative analysis	Desktop study Analysis of qualitative interviews of consultants and customers/qualitative data	Preparing an agenda and presentation in PowerPoint and presenting it	Feedback from the commissioning company and the author's self-evaluation
Task Outcome	Theoretical framework	Qualitative data, Description of the commissioning company's current methods	Qualitative data, customer feedback	Journey mapping workshop guide, persona template, journey mapping template	Agenda and PowerPoint presentation	Improvements, next steps, other recommended actions
Project Outcome: Develop a journey mapping workshop for case company X						

1.3.2 Evaluation Methods

The project planning phase was done carefully and evolved over time to better meet the case company's needs. The project has been evaluated throughout to assure that the work is progressing as planned. The author met regularly with her thesis advisor, and with a general thesis advisor to confirm that the work was progressing as it should. Additionally, a final project evaluation has been conducted to ensure that the project was completed as agreed with the commissioning company. The final project evaluation also includes the author's self-evaluation and reflection on the project. Validity, reliability, and relevance of the project and outcomes have been assured through sources provided in the theoretical framework that support the project objective.

1.4 International Aspect

Case Company X has at least 20% international employees and provides all internal materials in English. English is the operational language of the company. Additionally, the commissioning company has frequent interactions with Salesforce, an American company and has recently been purchased by Visma, a company headquartered in Norway and working throughout Europe and the Nordics.

Additionally, although the concept of journey mapping and personas might be familiar to international companies, it has yet to be implemented as widely in the small and mid-sized Finnish B2B companies that make up the majority of the commissioning company's clientele. Therefore, producing a journey mapping workshop guide, persona template and journey mapping template for their consultants to use with clients in workshops has the potential to expand understanding of these topics in the Finnish business milieu.

1.5 Benefits

The most concrete benefit of this thesis project is the introduction of a new journey mapping workshop guide, persona template, and journey mapping template at the commissioning company. By creating a standardized framework that can quickly transfer from case to case with small modifications, the commissioning company's consultants can spend their workshop preparation hours on pressing tasks like understanding specific client needs instead of performing obsolete rework. The commissioning company is currently undertaking an effort to create standardized packages that can be implemented with their clients and have already built successful packages.

There are many general benefits to undertaking process standardization in the workplace, according to Brandall (2018). These benefits may include improved clarity among employees and less guesswork, guaranteed quality, enhanced productivity, boosted employee morale, and improved customer service. The commissioning company can benefit from improvements in all these areas.

There are two categories of people who stand to benefit most from the outcomes of this project. Firstly, consultants at the commissioning company can benefit from the journey mapping workshop guide, persona template, and journey mapping template. These items can improve the ease of holding a journey mapping workshop while helping consultants better understand how their clients see their typical user/buyer and customer journey. Therefore, one might surmise that consultants can benefit from a deepened and expanded understanding of their client's business, customer touch and pain points, customer goals, and even the level of client understanding about the customer journey. Once these things are clear to the consultant, this expanded understanding of their client's business can positively influence client services and projects' effectiveness and quality.

Additional beneficiaries are clients of the commissioning company that will utilize the persona journey mapping templates in workshops. Workshop participants benefit from better understanding their typical user/buyer, customer touch/pain points, and customer journey. By potentially fixing problem areas found in the workshops, customer companies

have an opportunity to increase customer loyalty. Increased customer loyalty also increases ROI on the initial workshop spend. Increased ROI and other potentially positive financial indications for clients can create more demand for the commissioning company's consulting services.

The author will also benefit professionally from the knowledge gained during the thesis process. This thesis topic combines the author's specialization studies in marketing with a new-found passion for service design and customer experience. Additionally, the thesis author would like to become the commissioning company's in-house expert on customer experience and customer journey. Therefore, this thesis project represents a fantastic opportunity to hone her knowledge on her professional journey.

1.6 Key Concepts

Customer Experience: The internal and subjective response customers have to any direct or indirect contact with a company (Meyer & Schwager 2007, 118).

Design Thinking: Design thinking is a human-centered approach to innovation that draws from the designer’s toolkit to integrate the needs of people, the possibilities of technology, and the requirements for business success (IDEO 2020a).

Service Design: Service design is the activity of planning and organizing a business’s resources (people, props, and processes) to (1) directly improve the employee’s experience, and (2) indirectly, the customer’s experience (Gibbons 2017).

Customer Journey: Customer journeys include many things that happen before, during, and after the experience of a product or service. Journeys can be long, stretching across multiple channels and touchpoints, and often lasting days or weeks. (Maechler, Neher & Park 2016.)

Journey Map: A journey map visualizes an experience over time. Journey maps help us to find gaps in customer experiences and explore potential solutions (Stickdorn, Hormess, Lawrence & Schneider 2018a, 44).

Persona: A persona is a profile representing a group of people, such as a group of customers or users, a market segment, a subset of employees, or any other stakeholder group. This profile is not a stereotype, but is an archetype based on real research. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 41.)

The key concepts will be introduced in more detail in chapter two which will present the related theories and supportive literature.

1.7 Case Company

Case company X was founded in 2007 and has its headquarters in Espoo Finland, with a second office in Oulu, Finland. It is an SME with approximately 45 employees and operates inside Finland, but there are plans to take the company into other European markets by 2022. The commissioning company's main activities center around helping customers implement and work with Salesforce solutions. Salesforce is an integrated CRM platform (Salesforce 2020). Additionally, the commissioning company provides its clients with technology consulting, business consulting, organizational change support, and continuing Salesforce support and "quick starts". In 2019 the case company's turnover was 4.7 Meur. Consultants, developers, commercial, service, and administrative staff currently work at the company's offices, remotely, or at the premises of a client, depending on the type of project being completed. The commissioning company is currently working to standardize and improve its operations, offerings, and services while growing its customer base of mid-sized Finnish companies. The company was acquired by Visma in 2020. (The Commissioning Company Website 2020.)

2 Design Thinking, Service Design and Journey Mapping Theories

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the key concepts, theories, and models involved in developing a journey mapping workshop for a CRM consultancy. The essential related topics are covered in a high-level way, but do not represent an exhaustive analysis of related topics. Instead, this theoretical framework seeks to give the reader an overview and basic understanding of customer experience, design thinking, service design and service design tools. Lastly, this chapter ends with a summary of the theory which also includes a figure representing the relationship of the different areas which are discussed in the theoretical framework.

2.1 Customer Experience Overview

According to Meyer and Schwager (2007, 118) customer experience encompasses every aspect of a company's offering—from the quality of customer care to advertising, packaging, product and service features, ease of use, and reliability. Furthermore, customer experience consists of customers' internal and subjective responses with direct or indirect contact with a company. Direct contact is usually the result of a planned interaction between the company and the customer. It can include purchase, use, or service, while indirect contact is typically the result of an unplanned interaction and involves representations of a company's products, services, or brands. (Meyer & Schwager, 2007, 119.)

Customer experience is a personal experience for each customer. It involves the level at which the customer is involved rationally, emotionally, physically, and even spiritually with a company or brand. Focusing on experience has the effect of allowing companies to move beyond simply spotlighting the concrete and functional benefits of their products. Experiences accomplish this by providing sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational values that replace the value provided by pure functionality. (Schmitt, 1999, 57.) Five categories of experience types or experiential modules have been identified. These are: sensory (sense), affective (feel), cognitive (think), physical (act), and social identity (relate) (Schmitt 1999, 61). Schmitt (1999, 63) tells us that customer experience can encompass communications, visual and verbal identity of a company or product, product presence, related electronic media, and more.

As mentioned previously, customer experience arises from interactions between a customer and a company, a company segment or part of an organization, a product or a service, and sometimes different combinations of the above. Value is then created for the customer and subsequently gained by the company through successful experiences.

These experiences can provide either functional (utilitarian) or experiential value (hedonic) for the customer. The value generated from these interactions between the customer and company has implications for the company's performance in the classical sense (market share, increased sales, increased profitability) and potentially influencing more abstract value generators like brand and customer equity. This general experience framework detailed below in figure 1 is separated into two categories around experience. These categories are company and consumer value. (Gentile, Spiller & Noci 2007, 399.) Furthermore, company and consumer value types and exchanges appear below the figure.

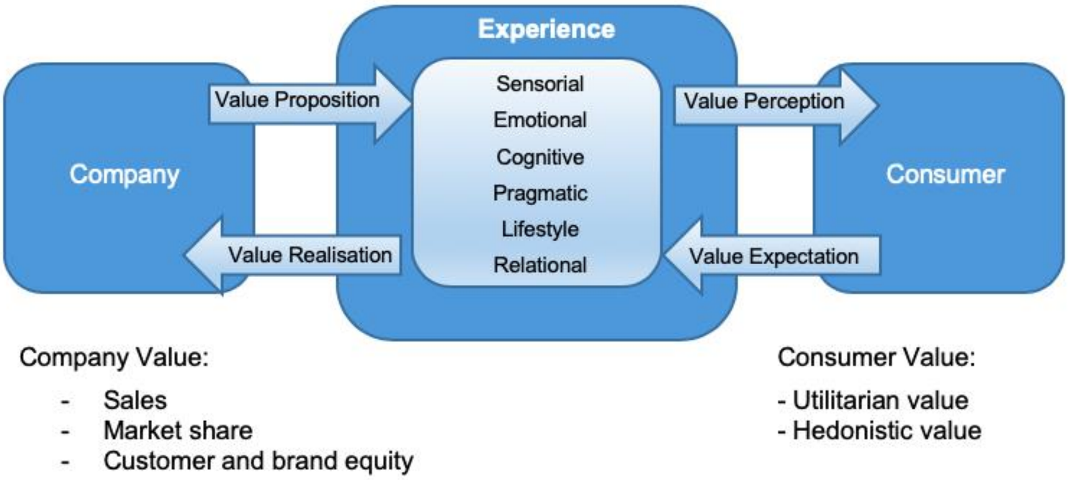

Figure 1. The General Experience Framework (Gentile et al. 2007, 400)

2.2 Defining Service

Traditionally, economics has drawn an apparent distinction between tangible consumables (goods) and intangible exchanges that do not result in ownership (services). However, in today’s business world, the line between goods and services has become increasingly blurred, and there is no longer a clear distinction between the two categories. Consider an mp3 of a song that is accessed on Spotify or purchased online through a service like Bandcamp. Accessing the music through a streaming platform like Spotify and owning the same sound file produces incredibly similar experiences and results even though the processes happening behind the scenes of each interaction are different. (Gibbons, 2017.) Stickdorn et al. (2018a, 5) sidestep this argument in favor of using the word product to describe all company offerings, even those that are intangible. Instead of speaking of goods and services, this approach advocates specifying the type of product on offer, such as physical or digital products, or even products called services.

2.3 Defining Design Thinking

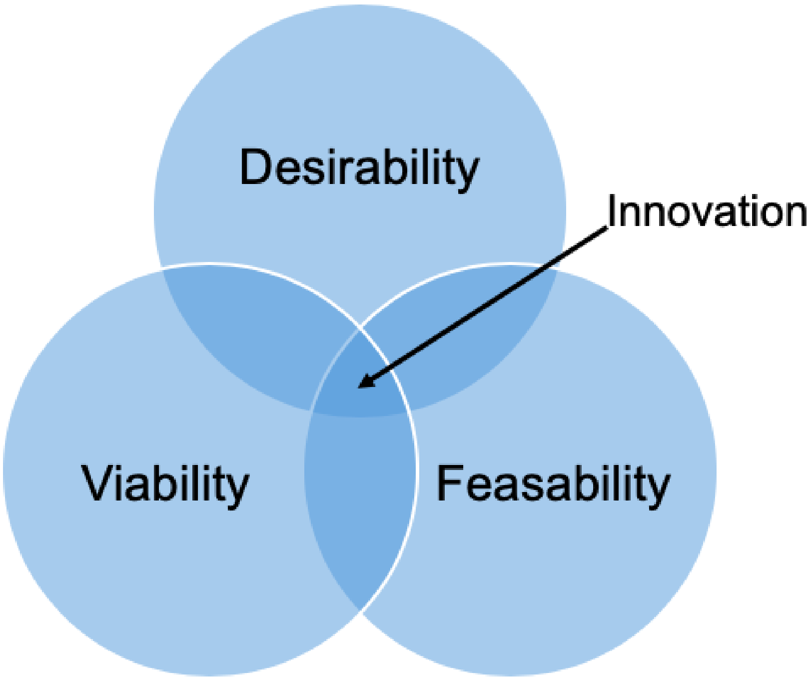

Figure 2. Innovation through design thinking lies at the intersection of desirability, feasibility, and viability (IDEO 2020b)

Design thinking is a methodology that utilizes the tools and mindset of a designer to solve problems and create solutions centered around human needs. It is used to address issues in personal, social, and business realms. Design thinking works by bringing together what people need and want with what is both economically and technologically possible and viable, as seen in figure 2. It also allows people who are not trained designers to take on challenges requiring creativity. (IDEO 2020b.) Additionally, design thinking provides a structured way to work on the creative challenges necessitated by increasingly savvy consumers in our ever more connected and changing business world (Liedtka 2017; Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 6).

2.3.1 Phases of Design Thinking

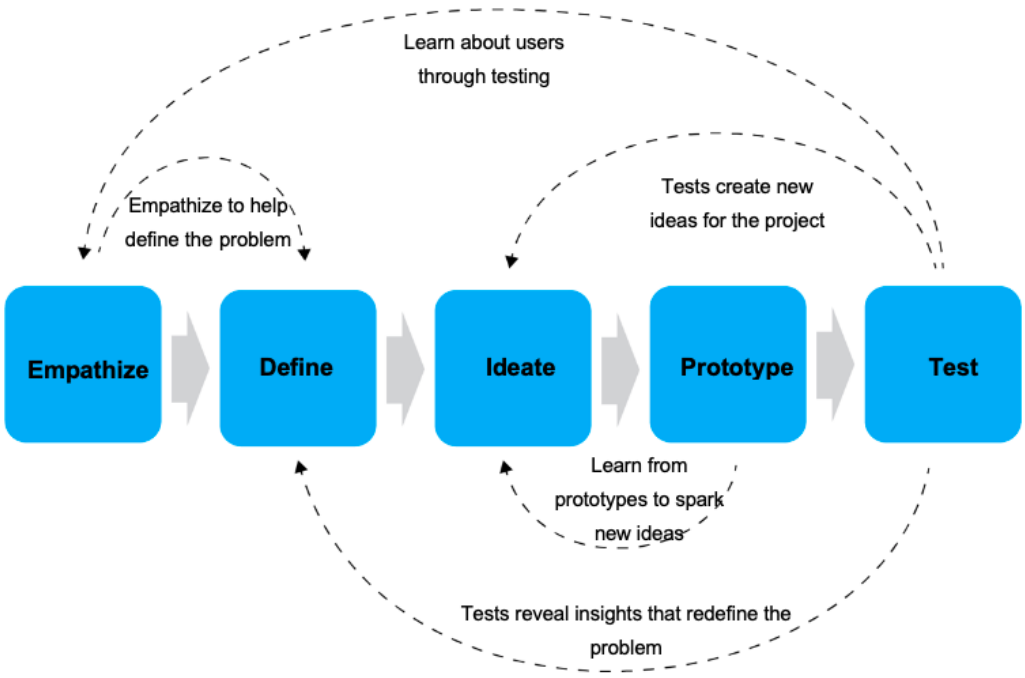

Figure 3. The Design Process is Often Non-linear (Interaction Design Foundation 2020)

For the reader to better understand design thinking as a process, the author has included the phases of design thinking below.

Empathize: with your users

The empathize mode is central to a genuinely human centered design process. Empathizing is about trying to understand people as it relates to your challenge. During this phase, it is vital to try to understand what your user is doing and why, what their physical and emotional needs are, how they think about the world and what are the things that are truly meaningful to them. (Hasso-Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford 2010, 1-2.)

Define: users' needs, problems, and your insights

This mode is focused on making sense of the information you obtained in the empathize mode to bring clarity and focus to your process while defining the problem at hand. This mode aims to create a problem statement that is both meaningful and something that one can act on. (Ibid. 3-4.)

Ideate: challenge assumptions and create ideas for innovative solutions

Ideation is the mode where one wants to cast as wide a net as possible to ensure many options and concepts. An open mind is essential in this phase because the ideas and concepts born here are utilized in the next stage, prototyping. (Ibid. 5-6.)

Prototype: start creating solutions

Prototyping mode focuses on generating iterative versions of solutions that help move toward a final solution. Prototype formats are diverse and can be anything from a physical invention to a wall of post-it notes to a role-playing exercise, but for the best outcome should always strive to be something that a user can experience. (Ibid. 7-8.)

Test: your solutions

The test mode is about asking your users for feedback concerning the prototypes from the previous phase. Ideally, this phase focuses on more than the test subjects liking of the prototype and delves more deeply into what can be learned about the person, problem, and potential solutions. (Ibid. 9-10.)

These phases are not always completed sequentially and can often occur in parallel, repetitively or in iteration, as seen in figure 3 (Interaction Design Foundation 2020).

2.3.2 Service Design Uses Design Thinking to Innovate and Solve Problems

Service design's emergence in the 21st century is reflective of how the business world itself has evolved. Service design corresponds with the economic, social, and tech needs and trends of today's world. As services evolve become ever more valuable, customer expectations rise, and the advent of digital service growth shapes the commercial landscape. Service design is becoming more worthwhile to a diverse array of organizations and businesses. (Reason, Lovlie & Brand Flu 2016, 11-12.)

Service design can improve services that already exist or create entirely new services (Interaction Design Foundation 2020). It does this by helping companies, and other organizations see and understand their services from the customer's perspective. Service design offers a path to design services that balance customers' needs with the needs of the business or organization while striving to create high-quality service experiences. Service design is firmly based on design thinking and brings creativity and human-centered processes to improving and designing services. The collaborative methods employed by service design involve both the customers and the teams delivering the service. Finally, service design strives to help companies and organizations gain a real, all-encompassing understanding of the services they offer, which can enable comprehensive and consequential improvements. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 20.)

2.4 Service Design Tools

In this subchapter service design tools and their purpose are introduced generally. In the following subchapters raw data and research methods as service design tools are presented. Later, personas and journey maps are introduced and detailed.

2.4.1 About Service Design Tools

Stickdorn et al. (2018a, 20) frame service design tools as "mind hacks" that can assist people in rethinking problems in a way that makes them easier to understand. As data can often be difficult to understand, service design tools are a strategy to take that data and shape it into humane forms and easily understood visualizations. Service design tools enable people to understand stories from many viewpoints.

Professionals working to create or improve the value generated at a business might refer to their work using different labels. These labels might include service engineering, marketing, quality, or management. Whatever the title, these areas still fall under the umbrella of service design. This is due to the similar outlooks and tools they utilize. These tools may be sourced from marketing, branding, or user experience toolsets and are combined with the design process's mindset and workflow. Connecting these tools with a focus on finding and then solving the "right" problem using a range of qualitative research methods allows the customer's needs to be genuinely understood. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 14.)

2.4.2 Raw Data and Research Methods

Figure 4. Types of Raw Data (Stickdorn et al. 2018, 38)

Meaningful empirical research data is one of the most important tools in the service design toolkit. Raw research data contains facts gleaned by the researcher, which can then be synthesized, interpreted, and analyzed. The purpose of these processes is to answer research questions or communicate findings. Raw data refers to data collected during the research that has yet to be interpreted by the researcher. In contrast, interpreted data includes the researcher's endeavors to discern and clarify the raw data. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 38.) The different forms raw data can take in this instance are presented in Figure 4.

Many data collection methods exist, accounting for both quantitative and qualitative methods. As service designers are more likely to use qualitative and ethnographic methods, those are examined in further detail below. Stickdorn et al. (2018a, 117) recommend data collection methods in the following five categories and suggest selecting

a method from each category during the research process to provide for a better baseline and understanding.

Desk research can consist of both preliminary and secondary research (Stickdorn & .al 2018a, 118-119). Preliminary research often involves going deeper into the client's viewpoint of the issue or problem and can include context, perceptions, internal conflicts, or any interplays between these. The goal of preliminary research is to learn more. One might learn about an industry, company, competitors, similar products, services, or experiences. Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 118.) Secondary research is a phase in which only existing data is used. This data may be quantitative or qualitative in nature. Secondary research data can include market reports and trend analyses, academic research, and customer data, just to name a few sources. These sources may be external, like academic papers, or internal sources from an organization. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 118.)

Self-ethnographic approaches include both autoethnography and online ethnography. Autoethnography involves the researcher analyzing an experience and using notes, audio, video, and photography to document the experience themselves. In service design team members will explore an experience contextually as a customer or an employee, for example. Well known examples of autoethnographic approaches relating to service design include both mystery shopping and mystery working. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a,119.)

Online ethnography can use mixed methods, such as circumstantial interviews conducted on the internet. There are many ways to go about online ethnography. These include self-ethnographic research where researchers become part of an online community and document it and non-participant online ethnography. During non-participant online ethnography, the researcher observes the online community, and in participant online ethnography, the researcher might shadow a participant through a form of screen sharing. The thesis author speculates that online ethnography will become more used in the future due to the advent of COVID-19 and now widely adopted online communication methods. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 120.)

Participant approaches include participant observation, contextual and in-depth interviews, and focus groups (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 120-123). In participant approaches, people that are taking part are aware that the researchers are observing them. The situations that can be followed by researchers include both physical and digital actions and interactions with people or machines/technology. (Stickdorn, Hormess, Lawrence & Schneider 2018b, 26.) These observations can occur in the workplaces and homes of participants and follow them on their journey through a process, such as taking a holiday.

An important thing to remember about these approaches is to be mindful of a participant's non-verbal cues and gestures. Some well-known participant approaches in the observation category include shadowing, a day in the life, and work-along methods. (Stickdorn et al. 2018b, 27.)

Contextual interviews and in-depth interviews are also participant approaches (Stickdorn et al. 2018b, 31, 34). Contextual interviews consist of interviews conducted with customers, employees, or any other relevant stakeholders. These interviews relate to the situational context associated with the research question. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 120.) In-depth interviews are a qualitative research method that can be unstructured, semi-structured, or unstructured. In-depth interviews are conducted with relevant stakeholders or even experts outside the organization. The purpose of in-depth interviews is to learn more about a subject's expectations, experiences, and concerns about products, services, goods, operations, and processes. These interviews can also provide a wealth of information about a subject's needs, attitudes, problems, and environment, among other things. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 121.)

Focus groups are an often-used qualitative research method in which a group of people is assembled and asked questions about products, services, problems, goods, and advertisements. Focus groups help researchers understand more about people's perceptions, attitudes, opinions about a topic. Often, focus groups are informal to create an atmosphere in which conversation flows while researchers observe via live video feed or from another room behind a one-way mirror, for example. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 122.)

Non-participant approaches consist of non-participant observation, mobile ethnography, and cultural probes. In non-participant approaches, the subjects are not aware that they are being observed, and the researchers do not actively engage with the participants. During non-participant observation, researchers observe the subjects without any interaction. The subjects might be customers, employees, or any other stakeholders relevant to the research question. The situations must also be relevant to the research question and involve using or providing a physical or even digital product. The observation can be overt, meaning the participants know they are being observed or covert, meaning the participants do not know that they are being observed. Clandestine observation is sometimes preferred due to inadvertent biases caused by the observer effect. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 123.)

Co-creative workshops include creating personas and journey mapping, as well as system mapping. Co-creative workshop quality depends on the depth and quality of the

participants' knowledge and the quality of data gathered beforehand by the researchers. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a 124-125.) One must also be aware that there are potential pitfalls associated with co-creative workshops. Firstly, the outcome of co-creative workshops that lack research data is often personas, journey maps, or system maps based upon assumptions. Assumption-based outcomes of co-creative workshops can still have value as these can be used as starting points for a research process or to help evaluate and enhance collected data. However, while utilizing assumption-based outcomes of co-creative workshops to inform the research process, one must be sure to avoid confirmation bias. Assumptions must always be challenged by continuing, solid research and develop iteratively over time into more rigorous and significant research-based tools. (Stickdorn 2018b, 53.)

Including diverse perspectives to co-creative workshops is also something important to consider, as the workshop outcomes will be solely based upon the knowledge the participants have about the subject matter. One must try to hear all opinions and perspectives during co-creative workshops so that the participants feel that their opinion matters on the project. Ideally, a co-creative workshop produces concrete results so that those who participated can leave the workshop feeling empowered, as if they have had a genuine impact on the project. (Stickdorn et al. 2018b, 53).

2.4.3 Personas

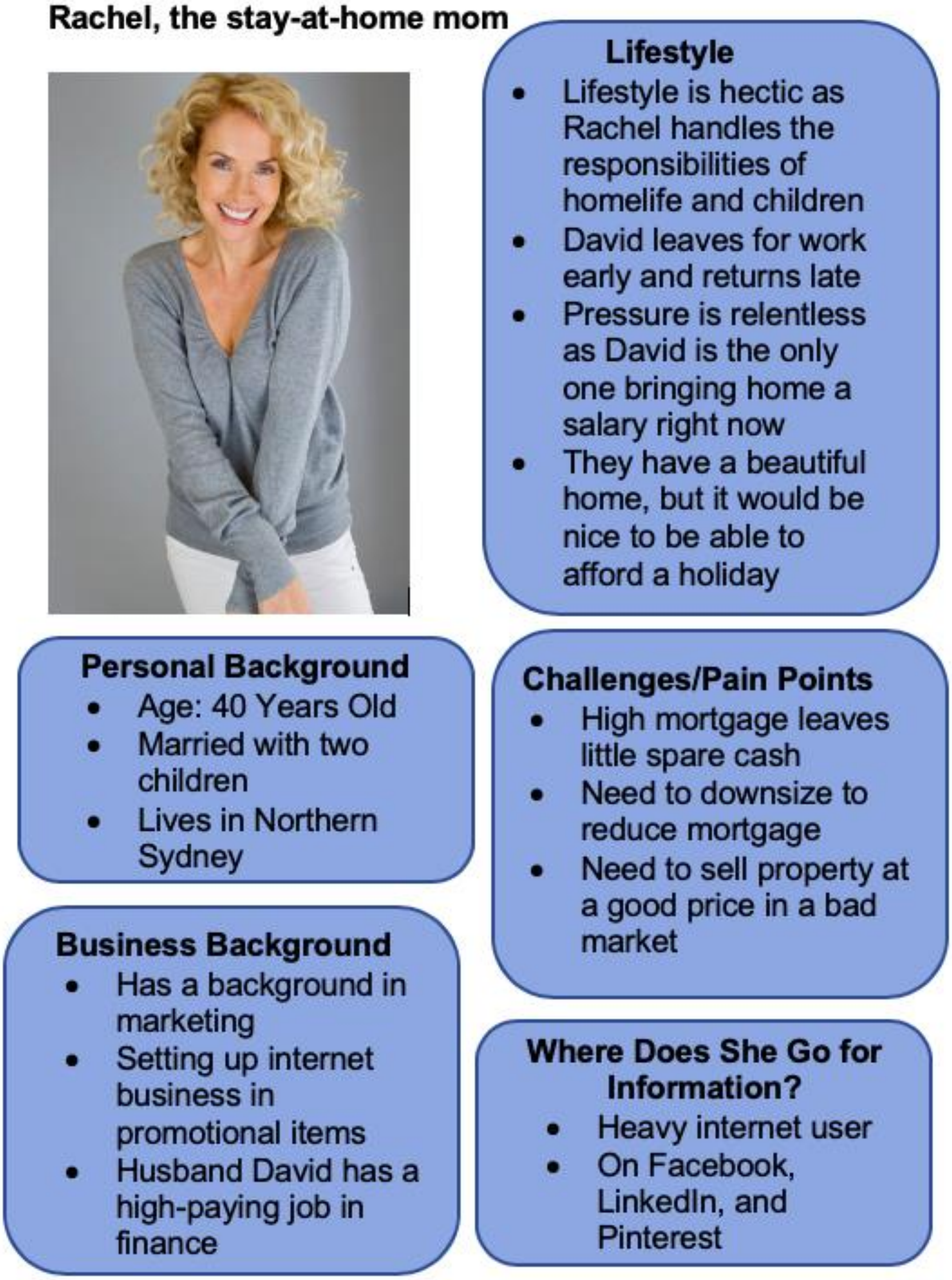

Figure 5. An example of a simple B2C buyer persona (Linde 2019)

According to Zambito (2013), personas are research-based archetypal (modeled) representations of who customers are, what they are trying to accomplish, what goals drive their behavior, how they think, how they buy, how they make decisions and where they buy. Personas are essential to customer journey mapping because the customer

journey map is the story of a customer's experience. Knowing which user, buyer or stakeholder is taking the journey is essential before that journey can begin. (Mcorpcx 2020.) These types of personas are also sometimes referred to as behavioral-based personas (Adkisson 2019). Personas can be composed of the following components:

Portrait images should be representative, and photos of celebrities should be avoided as these photos can decrease authenticity and illicit prejudicial reactions (Stickdorn et al. 2018a 40).

Names can express a persona's cultural background and their social environment. However, archetypes can also be used instead to represent stakeholders or target groups (Stickdorn et al. 2018a 40).

Demographic information, such as age, gender, or geographic location. This type of information should be handled carefully as it can lead to stereotyping (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 40).

Quotes should distill the attitude of the persona into an easy to remember sentence. Quotes can often help people to empathize with your persona (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 41).

Mood images are not included in every persona, but they can assist in cultivating context and illustrate and flesh-out the persona's environment and give it context. A common type of image that helps build context might be an image that shows what the persona might always carry with them in their bag or pocket (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 41).

Descriptions can include characteristics, personality, attitudes, interests, skills, needs, expectations, motivations, goals, frustrations, or even brands the persona likes can be used in creating buyer personas. It is essential to include details related to the research question or the company that is associated with the persona. Personas that don't contain information relevant to the specific challenge or research question at hand should be avoided. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 41.)

Statistics can help to outline applicable quantitative data. When presented visually, statistics can help to outline applicable quantitative data. Using representative statistics can help to make personas more reliable in a quantitative marketing or management scenario. Quantitative data can help to affirm some of the persona's more qualitative descriptions, for instance. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 41.)

Personas can be focused on a B2C or B2B consumer, with the B2C buyer persona format potentially being more familiar to the reader. However, it is essential to note that B2B personas will often focus on typical decision-makers, or those that influence the decision-makers at a company. (Impact 2020.) The formats of B2B personas are often different, as seen in the examples of both B2C and B2B customer personas at the beginning and end of this section.

	**Technical Decision Maker: The Transformational Leader**
	• CIO • Technical decision maker • Leads technology firm that evaluates technology options
Key Attributes	40-55 years old, master's degree in Science, executive MBA, at least 15 years of experience in enterprise leadership roles
Attitude	Leader, business savvy, frugal, skeptical of vendor claims
Reputation	Visionary, decisive, well-regarded in the industry, egotistical
Job Focus	Creating enterprise-wide change, shifting perception of technology from utilitarian to strategic
Pain Points	• Identifying most promising technology • Getting company-wide buy in for new software initiatives • Finding ways to make measurable impact
Key Words Used to Search for Information	Enterprise, software ROI, strategic software investments, breaking down departmental silos, increasing productivity
Values	• Leadership: ability to see and convey the "big picture" • Knowledge and expertise: broad IT knowledge but not interested in the technical details • Innovation: Follows latest trends, seeks proof of how others have applied new technologies • Expectations: high expectations of IT team and vendors/solutions to make strategic roadmap a reality
Fears	Making bad purchase decisions, tarnishing reputation
Pet Peeves	Self-serving vendors who don't do their homework to understand his focus, vendors who disappear after implementation
Internal Influences	Board of directors, CEO, CFO
Motivators	Bonus structure, ego, industry recognition
Information Sources	Peers, online search Gartner, Forrester, Gartner CIO Leadership Forum, CIO Magazine, Fast Company
Content Preferences	In-depth white papers, podcasts

Figure 6. An example of a B2B buyer persona (Gains 2020)

In certain circumstances, users are described in terms of role-based personas. A role refers to a group of individuals who execute the same task or activity within an organization. Roles are often synonymous with job titles and rely on the idea that their role requirements define an individual’s knowledge, skills, and behaviors. Therefore, role-based personas are focused on understanding the specific goals, demands, and challenges experienced in each role. (Adkisson 2019.)

2.4.4 Journey Maps

The journey map provides a visual method of conceptualizing a customer's experience over time and across multiple touchpoints (Lemon & Verhoef 2016, 76) and allows companies to understand how customers interact with their company or brand. Understanding how customers experience a brand is crucial for businesses that want to understand better their customers and customer expectations. (LinkedIn 2018).

Journey mapping is a visual representation of the sequence of events that occurs when an individual interacts with an organization during an entire process. The journey mapping process can be as straightforward or as complex as the journey itself and is often non-linear. (Richardson, 2010.) Journey maps should list all possible touchpoints that an individual may encounter during receiving and participating in the service (Rosenbaum, Otalora & Ramirez 2016). Steuer (2018) states that journey mapping aims to make the journey efficient, problem-free, and highly intuitive by removing any obstructions.

As one can see in Figure 7 below, a journey can be straightforward. In this high-level version of a customer journey, the customer begins by engaging with the brand or company, followed by buying the product, using it, sharing their experience of the product or service with others, and then completing their journey with the product or company as a last step, and perhaps re-buying the product or service or potentially beginning their journey again after the first journey concludes.

Figure 7. An example of a simple customer journey map (Richardson, 2010)

In today's business environment, a journey would rarely be as simple as the one in figure 7. The more touchpoints a company has with a customer, the more complex the customer journey map becomes. These more complex journeys have an even greater need to be mapped. (Richardson 2010.) The reader should note the increased complexity reflected in figure 8, which outlines a customer's journey while purchasing insurance via an online search. Figure 8 shows a customer's journey from the first step of gathering information on an insurance policy until the last step, making an insurance claim, and shows the different channels where specific actions are completed on the left-hand side.

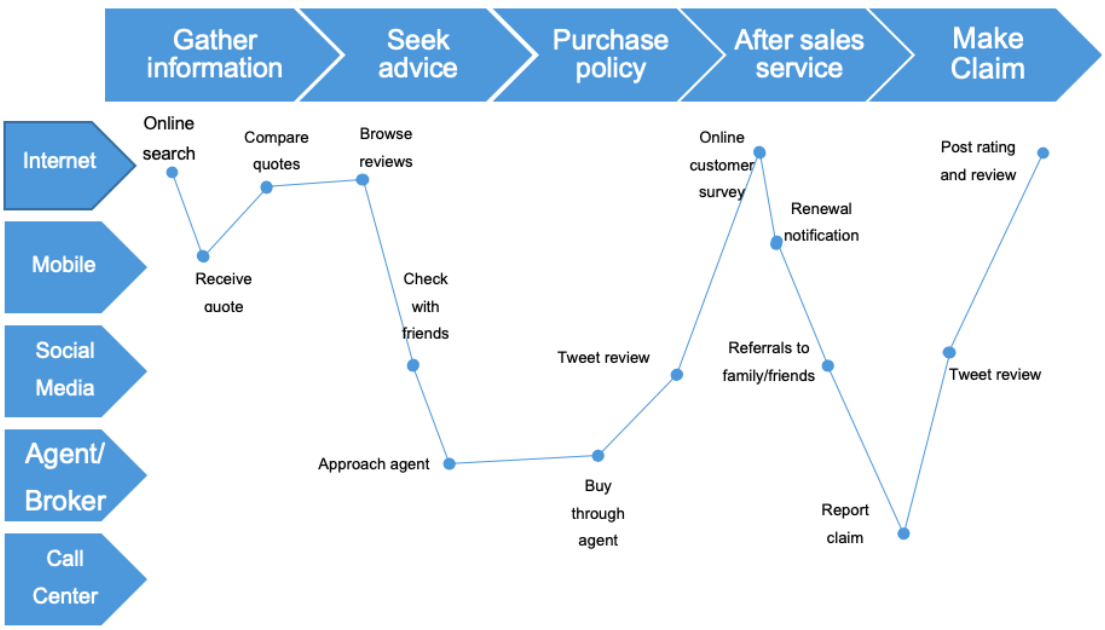

Figure 8. Customer journey for insurance purchase via online search (The Digital Insurer 2020)

Although which components are considered key can vary depending on method and publication, the journey map components are usually displayed as lanes on the journey map. Lanes (sometimes referred to as swim lanes) in customer journey maps function and look like lanes on a roadway or swimming pool. They are parallel lines dividing the chart or, in this case, the journey map. There should be one lane for each person, group, or subprocess. (Agility System 2020.) Some critical components of a customer journey map are:

Actor (Main Actor)

Journey maps always focus on one main actor and their experiences. This actor might be a group of customers for example (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 46).

Scenario and expectations

The scenario and expectations are concerned with the actor's goals and needs related to the customer journey map's specific situation. Scenarios can currently exist or might exist in the future. (Gibbons 2018.)

Journey Phases/Stages

Phases and stages of the journey represent the main parts of the actor's experience. They are specific to their scenario. For example, an e-commerce scenario might involve the stages try, buy, use, seek, and support. Phases/ stages are high level and less detailed (Gibbons, 2018) and are usually broken down into different steps (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 46). Phases and stages provide the skeleton upon which the journey map is built and organized (Gibbons, 2018).

Steps

Steps are any experience the actor has throughout the stages of the journey. Steps can be interactions with others, machines, or digital items. They can also be activities such as waiting or moving through space (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 46).

Actions, mindsets, and emotions

These can be thoughts or behaviors that the main actor might have during the journey. They are mapped within the different phases of the journey. Actions are the steps and behaviors of the main actors. Mindsets are related to the main actor's thoughts, questions, need for information, and motivations during every step of the journey. These should be taken from data obtained during the research. (Gibbons 2018.)

Touchpoints and channels

Journey maps need to have touchpoints and channels in alignment. Touchpoints occur when the main actor has interactions with the company or organization. Channels are methods for delivering or communicating services. These could include a website or a physical location, for example. (Kaplan 2016.)

Opportunities
These should be insights that have been gained through the journey mapping process. They should show a path forward for optimizing the user experience and defining where the most significant opportunities lie (Gibbons 2018).

More custom lanes can be added to a journey map concerning content specific to a project. Examples of custom lanes are lanes for key performance indicators (KPI's), references to other documents, or existing journey maps or responsibilities. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 50.)

2.5 Types of Journey Maps

Although most journey maps share elements of structure, a wide variety of journey maps exist for different business cases (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 50). Additionally, all journey maps, regardless of type, should serve to make abstract experiences clear and to cultivate a common understanding among team members (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 46). In the following subchapters, the author has endeavored to highlight three relevant journey map types.

2.5.1 Service Blueprints

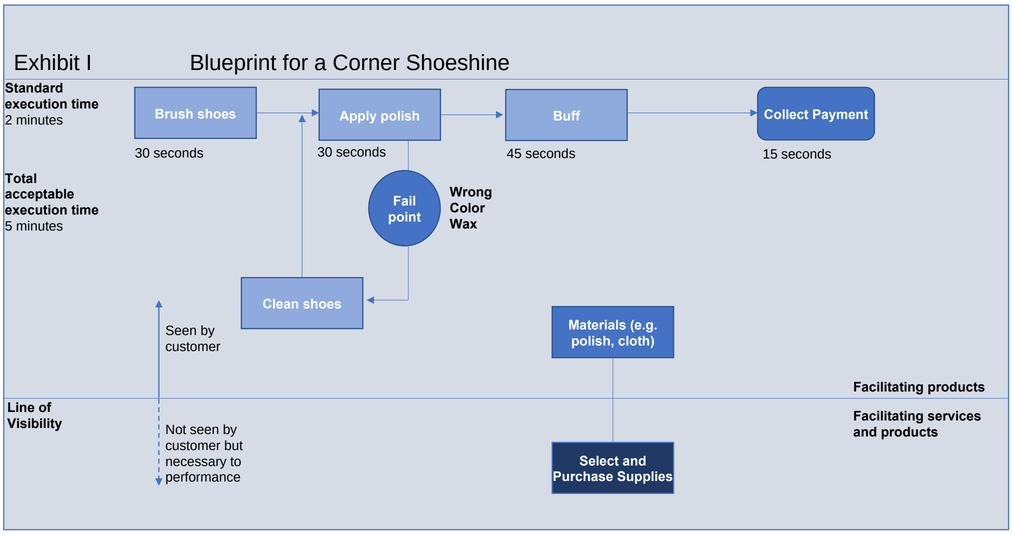

Figure 9. Blueprint for a corner shoeshine (Shostack 1984, 135)

The concept of "Service Blueprint" was first introduced by Shostack in her seminal article "Designing Services that Deliver" and has become a favored tool for journey mapping, especially in instances that require documentation of interactions both physical and digital. Essentially, service blueprints are representations of the relations between people, props, and processes related to specific touchpoints. (Gibbons 2017.) This ability to communicate the full customer life cycle and interactions across channels during the customer journey makes service blueprints practically valuable extensions of the customer journey mapping model. (Interaction Design Foundation 2020.) Blueprinting is an optimal technique to map customer experiences that stretch across multiple channels and touchpoints or require multiple departments' coordination. Service blueprints should always correlate to a specific customer journey and the associated customer/user goals of that journey. Ideally, service blueprints should always correspond to a business goal. (Gibbons 2017.) For example, in figure 9, the business goal represented is to perform an optimal shoeshine. In the figure, we see the processes, estimated execution times, facilitating products, and the line of visibility, which divides the customer experience from everything else necessary for performance but is not seen by the customer.

2.5.2 Experience Maps

The modern state of the interconnectedness of various channels has necessitated the creation of the customer experience map. Experience maps can assist when customer interactions are more complex and occurring across multiple experiences and channels

with a product, service, or even an entire ecosystem. (Adaptive Path 2013,4.) Experience mapping is valuable because it can help organizations make sense of complex cross-channel customer journeys in a holistic way (Adaptive Path 2013, 5). An experience map's basic framework consists of three pieces: the lens, the customer journey model, and the takeaways or insights.

- The lens is the filter through which the journey is viewed. For example, this can be a buyer persona.
- The customer journey model visualizes interactions customers have as they attempt to satisfy their needs.
- The takeaways are the key findings of the process and can include strategic insights and recommendations. (Adaptive Path 2013, 16.)

2.5.3 Enterprise Journey Maps

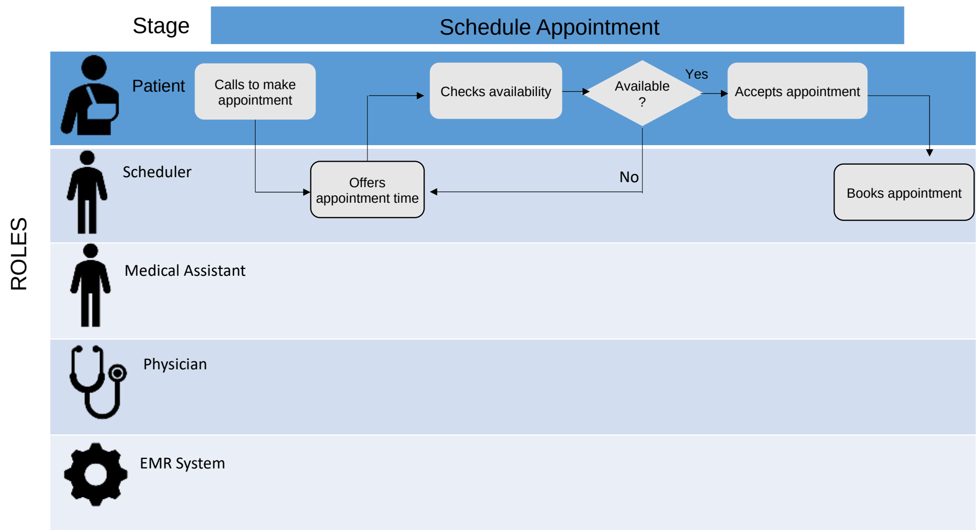

Figure 10. Stage of an Enterprise Journey Map (Adkisson 2019)

Journey maps can also help to visualize enterprise experiences. Enterprise and consumer experiences are essentially different. Enterprise journey maps are focused on an outcome, such as conducting a patient appointment or validating an insurance claim, and typically characterize their users as roles rather than personas. Roles are useful in enterprise scenarios because they can also be used to portray non-human entities, such as the EMR system represented by the gear icon in the above example in figure 10, which depicts a patient scheduling an appointment. (Adkisson 2019.)

Although enterprise journey maps often depict complex or lengthy processes, there are some advantages to representing an entire process in a single map. For instance, this consolidated way of describing the journey signals to the viewer that it is one journey and

not a set of separate processes. Minimally, enterprise journey maps need to include at least:

- the current business processes (actions, activities, tasks)
- the roles involved in the process
- touchpoints (tools, devices, information)
- pain points (inefficiencies, gaps, redundancies)

Journey maps should always attempt to give the viewer a full picture of the experience. Therefore, one might consider adding additional aspects to an enterprise journey map, which might include:

- context (environment, location.
- portions of the process performed outside the system (for example, reliance on paper or spreadsheets)
- process failure points
- current performance metrics or quotas
- relevant legal regulations

The necessary additional aspects might not become apparent until research is completed, and the “story” one needs to tell with the journey map is clarified. (Adkisson 2019.)

2.6 Evaluating Journey Maps

One must consider certain factors when evaluating a journey map for quality, focus, representation, or detail. Firstly, a journey map should be reliable. Reliable journey maps are based on research and not on assumptions. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 50.) Secondly, the evaluator must understand if the journey map is visualizing current or future experiences. Current-state journey maps should focus on how an actor is experiencing current services and/or physical or digital products. These type of journey maps are useful when looking for ways to improve services or physical/digital products that currently exist. Future-state maps focus on visualizing the experience an actor might have with a product or service that does not exist yet. These type of journey maps can assist with imagination, understanding, and experimentation with possible experiences and use cases. Finally, future-state maps can help to decide which steps need to be prototyped or tested to gain further knowledge. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 50-51). Next, one must understand if the journey map visualizes the customer or the employee experience.

Although journey maps from the customer perspective are somewhat more common, visualizing other stakeholders' journeys, like employees, can also be useful. Combined employee-customer journey maps also exist and can help shine a light on customers' problems when they perform activities that place them beyond employee reach, like what they do while waiting for their car to be repaired. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 51.) Lastly, one must consider both the scope and the scale of the journey map. Scope and scale depend

largely on how far advanced the related project is and the reason for the journey map creation. For example, a journey map made to structure research might encompass a wide area of focus, whereas communicating a specific problem might require focusing on a key part about the customer's needs and how you can meet those needs. (Stickdorn et al. 2018a, 51-52.)

2.7 Summary of Theory

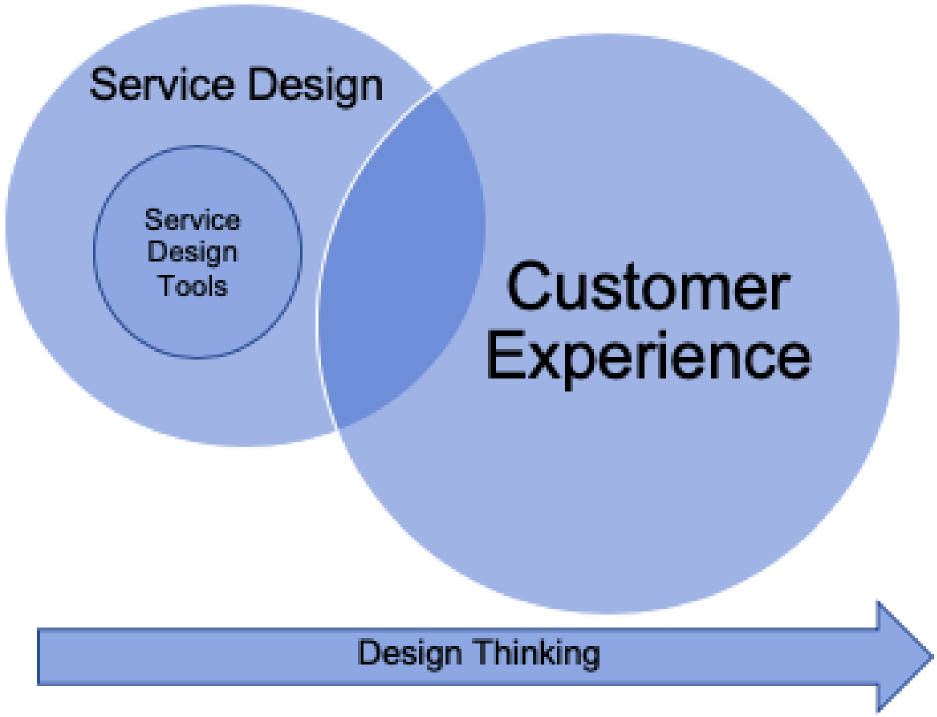

Figure 11. The relationship between the topics contained in the theoretical framework

In figure 11, the relationship between the topics contained in the theoretical framework is presented visually. Customer experience is focused on the design, implementation, and management of interactions that happen along the entire customer journey. Similarly, service design is concentrated on designing and implementing interactions that occur along the whole customer journey. However, the overlap between customer experience and service design is not complete because service designers can also design behind the scenes activities and processes that help deliver customer experiences optimally and not just what is experienced by the customer (Bodine 2013.) For this thesis, service design tools fall under the service design discipline and consist of various research methods, research data, personas, and journey maps. Lastly, design thinking is a methodology that is used to innovate and solve business problems (Rebelo 2015). Therefore, design

thinking can be applied to innovate and solve problems related to customer experience, customer journey, and the service design process.

Creating a memorable and superlative experience for customers is essential for both business and customer value creation. Customer experiences can accomplish both practical and emotional needs for customers. Companies need to fulfill customer experience expectations. Fulfilling these expectations does not happen by chance, and companies and organizations need to try to plan and use the tools and methods available to improve customer experience.

Businesspeople often relegate design to designers or artists. However, the business world has much to learn from design processes and stands to benefit significantly from the innovation and creative problem-solving design thinking makes possible. Design thinking organizes the process of design into a framework that anyone can access and utilize.

The tools and methods of service design bring a human-centered approach to creating and improving services and helping businesses and organizations see the big picture. (Catalanotto 2019.)

In the next chapter, the commissioning company's current target customers for journey mapping workshops and current workshop practices will be investigated and analyzed. Using the information presented in the theoretical framework and the analysis of the current customers, customer feedback, and current methods and tools, the workshop guide, persona template, and journey mapping template will be presented in chapter 4, while project outcome and feedback will be discussed in chapter 5.

3 Commissioning Company’s Current Workshop Practices and Typical Clients

This chapter consists of an analysis of the commissioning company’s current workshop practices and their typical clients. Data collection was conducted through qualitative interviews with consultants and current customers of the commissioning company. The interview frameworks are presented in the first subchapter, followed by the analysis and key findings of the interviews in the latter subchapters.

3.1 Data Collection

During qualitative research, participants should be thoughtfully selected to help the researcher better understand the research question, or in this case, the project objective (Creswell & Creswell 2018, 185). In other words, these subjects should be the most likely to provide meaningful responses because they possess knowledge of the topic at hand (Saldanas, Leavy & Beretvas 2011,33).

Therefore, the author chose to interview two consultants at the commissioning company to get their internal perspective. They are the commissioning company's experts in design thinking, service design, and customer journey mapping and conduct workshops with a customer journey mapping component with regularity. In addition to conducting these workshops, they are also responsible for the workshop format's content and evolution over time. Therefore, they needed to be interviewed to acquire information about the current state of the commissioning company's workshops and journey mapping processes.

Additionally, two interviews of the commissioning company's clients were performed. The interviewees were selected by the commissioning company's consultants during their interviews using discretionary sampling because they were thought to represent a typical customer of the commissioning company.

The consultant interviews were conducted in a semi-structured fashion on Google Meet on 3 September 2020. Both interviews were approximately 45 minutes in length. The interviews utilized a framework to guide the conversation while still maintaining a conversational flow to facilitate an environment in which the participants felt free to express themselves, and the discussion could be extended around specific questions or themes if needed. (Given 2008, 128). Table 3 below shows that the intended questions and potential follow-up questions and the questions' themes are delineated.

Table 3. Consultant interview framework

Questions	Potential Follow-up questions	Themes
Please describe the average workshop participant.	What do you perceive their level of knowledge to be about customer journey mapping? Which customer journey mapping tools do you think would be the most relevant to this clientele? Which customer journey mapping tools that are already in use work best with the target customer?	- Average workshop participant - Average workshop participant's knowledge level - Customer journey mapping tools
Describe the current state of the journey mapping process used in co-creative workshops.	Which journey mapping methods are you currently using? Which methods would you like to use that you aren't already using? Do you use buyer personas with clients? Why or why not?	- Journey mapping process, methods, and tools - Co-creative workshops
Please describe the feedback you have received from your clients about customer journey mapping in workshops.	How should client feedback be applied to improve the journey mapping workshops?	- Customer feedback
Which issues does the company need the most urgent help with concerning journey mapping in co-creative workshops?	How do you see these needs influencing the type of methods and tools used for customer journey mapping at the commissioning company?	- Journey mapping process - Co-creative workshops
Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the current journey mapping methods, processes, and tools used with clients.	What are the main areas to be developed? What other tools or methods do you think would help to develop these areas?	- Strengths and weaknesses of current methods - Journey mapping methods, processes, and tools.
Do you think I should contact customers and interview them about this topic from the customer point of view?	Which customers do you think I should contact?	- Customers with relevant information
Is there anything else you would like to discuss concerning customer journey mapping or co-creative workshops for this purpose that I did not bring up?		

Interviews with the commissioning company's customers were conducted in a structured fashion, and only the questions provided below in table 4 were asked. The interviewees were each given two weeks to send in their responses and the interviews were concluded on 01 October 2020. A structured interview was chosen for its expediency and lack of variation. (Saldanas et al. 2011, 33). This interview was conducted entirely via email, as the consultants emphasized that the subjects were very busy. As the interview was structured, there were no opportunities to ask follow-up questions, so table 4 contains only questions and themes.

Table 4. Customer interview framework

Questions	Themes
Please describe briefly what you knew about journey mapping before the workshop with the commissioning company.	- Level of client's knowledge about customer journey/ journey mapping
How did you feel about the tools used during the workshop? Were they easy or difficult to use?	- Feedback about journey mapping tools used by the commissioning company
Are there changes or improvements you would make to the workshop format? If so, what?	- Journey mapping methods and workshop processes at the commissioning company
Do you have any other feedback about the customer journey mapping component of the workshop you would like to share?	- Customer feedback generally

Additionally, the author is employed by the commissioning company as a junior consultant and has been casually observing consultants, customers, and workshop methods, tools, and processes as part of her daily work during the period of research. Although far from a formal ethnography on the subject, the author believes that these observations have also helped confirm the reliability and validity of the data gathered in the interviews.

The results of both the consultant and client interviews are presented beginning in chapter 3.3.

3.2 Reliability and Validity of Data

Reliability and validity must be addressed when performing and evaluating qualitative research. However, these specific terms are more often used in quantitative research. (Golafshani 2003, 601.) Therefore, some recommend the use of language that they believe suits qualitative research better. Reliability and validity in qualitative research can also be referred to as credibility, neutrality, confirmability, consistency, dependability, and transferability (Lincoln & Guba 1985, 300.) However, the author has chosen to refer to reliability and validity even though her data is qualitative to avoid any confusion.

The author made every effort to ensure that her work accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers (Hammersley 1990, 57) while also striving for a high degree of consistency by continuously observing the situation related to the phenomena (Hammersley 1992, 67) during her daily work at the commissioning company. In this case, the phenomena are related to consultants' and customers' experiences during co-creative workshop planning, execution and participation, and the internal processes and practices concerning the production and improvement of workshops at the commissioning company. Additionally, she has endeavored to remain as neutral as possible during the observation, interview, and data-gathering and analysis phases of this work.

The author has presented her findings to the commissioning company for further validation and verification. The findings were presented to company employees, including the CEO and CCO of the commissioning company. The CCO confirmed the author's findings align with the development areas he has also identified for journey mapping workshops at the commissioning company. This feedback has increased the author's surety about the reliability and validity of her findings. (Silverman 2017, 546).

3.3 Key Findings

The key findings of the qualitative interviews with the representatives from the commissioning company and their clients are presented in this subchapter. First, the current state of journey mapping workshops at the commissioning company is described and then the most urgent needs regarding the journey mapping process are detailed. Next, tools and methods for journey mapping used by consultants at the commissioning company are described. Then, the strengths and weaknesses of the current practices are introduced. Finally, the typical workshop participant, their level of knowledge about customer journey mapping and customer feedback is presented.

3.3.1 Current State of Journey Mapping in Workshops

The commissioning company does not have a fully standardized journey mapping workshop in place. Currently, only consultant interviewee 1 can hold these workshops. Consultant interviewee 1 is a very busy consultant. Although they have made strides in standardizing different elements related to the tools and templates used in the workshops, they do not have extensive time to spend on this task.

Consultant interviewee 2 has held workshops with components related to customer journey mapping but they have not been advertised or marketed. Each time consultant interviewee 2 has held a workshop, they have utilized “customized” methods for each

customer. They have not used templates or standardized workshop frameworks in past workshops

3.3.2 Urgent Needs Regarding the Customer Journey Mapping Process

The most critical issues are standardization of the tools and templates used in workshops and the lack of a workshop format. As noted by consultant interviewee 1, assistance is needed in “doing this basic setup and layout and…instructions how to do the basic stuff and decide on which is the way we go forward”. There are currently no standard company-wide procedures, toolsets, or templates in use, and the workshops are difficult to replicate. Additionally, internal training should occur so that more consultants will be able to hold customer journey mapping workshops successfully. The author would like to note that there are many risks related to the fact that only consultant interviewee 1 can consistently give journey mapping workshops. Therefore, the author has concluded that internal training for the commissioning company’s employees should also be a priority. Some templates have been identified and already used by consultant interviewee 1 and 2, but other consultants have yet to be informed about these and have not been trained in how to use them.

3.3.3 Tools and Methods Currently Used by the Commissioning Company for Journey Mapping

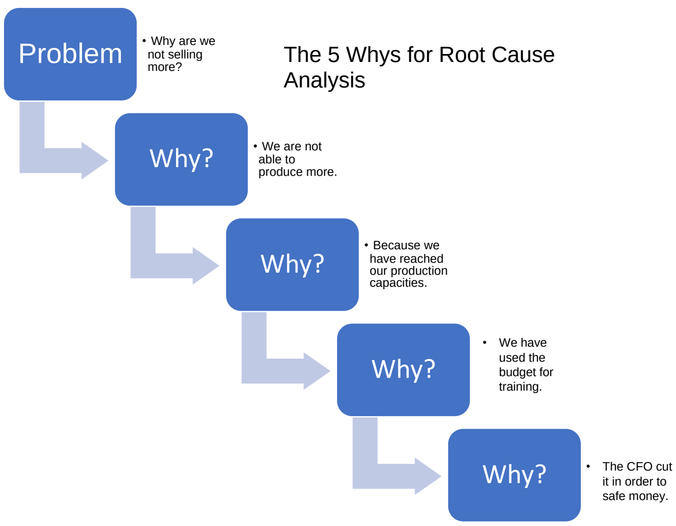

Figure 12. The Five Whys for root cause analysis (Renier Botha 2018)

Consultant interviewee 1 notes that the tools and templates they use come from various sources, including templates from Futurice on lean service creation and a user persona

template from Salesforce Einstein design workshop. They also utilize “service blueprints” and “user story mapping”, and the concept of “the Five Whys” which is a method used for root cause analysis and is presented as an example in figure 12.

Consultant interviewee 2 noted that they had used different methods in each workshop they have done. Sometimes they have assembled a customer journey with the client using “post-its.” On other occasions, they have created a “grid” with the elements of a “blueprint,” including “the customer journey, the services they need, the technology they need.” Consultant interviewee 2 also noted that they are not using personas because they “haven’t done anything related to marketing.”

3.3.4 Strengths and Weaknesses of Current Practices

Now the strengths of the current workshop arrangement seem to be tied to having an expert like consultant interviewee 1 facilitating. For instance, consultant interviewee 2 noted that the “strength (of the workshops) is that consultant interviewee 1 can do them.”

> When we start like a service blueprint workshop. It's not that like that standardized. So, it can be there are good points. Good points because it's like, you don't have to standardize everything like this process…because if you're talented enough, you can just go there…and everybody's happy. (Consultant Interviewee 1 2020.)

A surprising strength of the current workshop practices mentioned by consultant interviewee 1 is related to the current lack of standardization. According to consultant interviewee 1, this gives consultants the ability to change elements of the workshop as needed, as well as the ability to lengthen or shorten certain segments fit into the time frame.

> I tend to think that no plan survives contact with the customer so, you should be able to flow when you're doing the workshop and be able to change it. Okay, you plan it like this is what I'm going to do and when if need be you change it on the fly. (Consultant Interviewee 1 2020.)

There are also some weaknesses related to the current workshop practices. Firstly, only one person (consultant interviewee 1) appears to be fully able to facilitate these workshops. According to consultant interviewee 2 "the methodology is consultant interviewee 1's… it's in their head…whatever they do, it's the concept" as well as "…if consultant interviewee 1 dies for example…we don't have that talent anymore." The author has interpreted this to mean that although consultant interviewee 1 is an expert and can easily facilitate this type of workshop, the knowledge that this requires has not been externalized yet. Additionally, if consultant interviewee 1 leaves the commissioning company, all their related knowledge will be lost.

Lack of standardization is an issue that came up frequently in both consultant interviews and affected the workshops in negative ways. Firstly, consultant interviewee 2 explains that the lack of standardization makes it difficult for less experienced consultants to facilitate these workshops. "It (the workshop) needs…a lot. We can't get like a junior (consultant) or that you go there and just do it… there's a huge gap…we should do some kind of standardization." According to consultant interviewee 2, when a process is not standardized, it is difficult to transfer knowledge about the process to someone else and equally difficult to ensure the quality of the product. "So that if we want to spread that capability, you'll be able to do…a similar kind of…quality workshops with that we must standardize it somehow."

Consultant interviewee 1 also notes that no actual research is performed to understand the "end customer's needs" during the current process. This lack of understanding about the end customer can also create risks for the commissioning company's implementation projects. They are often planned or modeled based on information obtained from these workshops.

Lastly, another weakness is that, according to consultant interviewee 1, the current workshop format is missing a strong link to how this process creates value for the customer. As the workshops can be costly for customers a clear link to added customer value must exist.

3.3.5 Typical Workshop Participant

Generally, the commissioning company's typical workshop participant tends to be a subject matter expert who is senior enough in their role to make decisions about company processes. Specific functions that this person might hold, according to consultant interviewee 2 were "service director or CEO". In contrast, consultant interviewee 1 mentioned that most participants were working in sales in his workshops, while some were working in field service. The importance of having at least one workshop participant with internal knowledge of their company's financial flow was also deemed beneficial by consultant interviewee 1.

3.3.6 What do Workshop Participants Know about Journey Mapping?

Knowledge levels about journey mapping vary from customer to customer.
According to consultant interviewee 2 most customers have heard of customer journey mapping, and some have even already made their versions of customer journey maps before the workshop. However, consultant interviewee 1 mentions that there are also

participants that seem to have surprisingly little knowledge on the subject. Additionally, consultant interviewee 1 says that companies confuse understanding their internal processes for understanding their customer's experience. However, consultant interviewee 1's final statement on the matter seems to echo what was initially ascertained by consultant interviewee 2: "we have customers that know exactly what their customer does, and it's because they have actually spent time with the customer." Therefore, one might conclude that empathizing with one's customer is also part of having a successful journey mapping workshop. Additionally, in the customer interviews, customer interviewee 1 mentions that their company "had done a couple of iterations on customer journey maps internally before doing a workshop with the commissioning company, so we already had knowledge on the topic."

Both consultant interviewees 1 and 2 asserted in their interviews that the customer feedback they have received about customer journey mapping is positive. The findings of the customer feedback interviews initially confirm this.

3.3.7 Customer Feedback

Customer interviewees 1 and 2 found the tools used in the workshops were useful, with customer interviewee 2 noting that “We created a canvas with consultant interviewee 1 that was really useful”. Customer interviewee 2 found that because the tools used were supplemented with “face to face meetings, workshops, and using whiteboards with post-it notes” the process felt “straightforward”.

Customer interviewee 2 noted that their company felt that documentation and reporting were “a bit lacking”, while customer interviewee 1 did not identify any improvement areas.

4 Analyzing the Results

The purpose of this chapter is to further analyze the interview results and connect them to the workshop development and tools recommended for the commissioning company by the thesis author. Although the results were outlined in chapter 3, this chapter will provide deeper insight and further discussion about the same topics as well as connecting the theory in chapter 2 and the interview results. The perspective of the consultants and company will be addressed along with the point of view of the customer. Reading this chapter will give the reader a better understanding of the outcomes of the project objective and project 4. Project tasks 5 and 6 are addressed in the following chapter.

4.1 Typical Workshop Participants and Their Effect on the Workshop Development

Consultants were asked generally about the roles and knowledge level held by the participants. The customer interviewees' job titles were known prior to the interview. They were asked how much they knew about journey mapping prior to the workshop. This made the results of the interviews easy to understand and align. However, the author noticed a variation in the consultants' responses and the customers' responses concerning these questions. Consultant interviewee 1 was found to believe that some customers knew "surprisingly little" about their customers' journey or journey mapping in general.

In contrast, consultant interviewee 2 noted a wide variety of knowledge levels among customers in the areas, as mentioned earlier. There was a similar variety in the customer answers. Customer interviewee 2 seemed not to understand the question, and customer interviewee 1 noted that their company had already completed some customer journey mapping pre-work before the session.

As noted by both consultant interviews, the customers in journey mapping workshops were usually experts in their companies, sales professionals, or leadership roles that allowed them to understand their company finances and make decisions. The customer interviews confirmed this finding, as one customer interviewee 2 is a CEO and customer interviewee 1 is a VP of Sales.

However, based upon the consultant interviews, one might surmise that just because a participant is an expert in their own company, they are not necessarily an expert in their own customers' journey and experience or journey mapping. Varying levels of expertise on journey mapping and customer experience and a high level of assumed general

business knowledge possessed by the participants create a dilemma for developing a workshop guide and templates. How does one create a workshop that gives clients at least some value at different knowledge levels while simultaneously offering real value to expert participants in leadership roles? The author believes that answer lies in developing a clear workshop guide with templates that are simple enough for anyone to explain and utilize that can tolerate varying levels of complexity.

Additionally, it is crucial that consultants understand, explain, and emphasize the value generated for companies by understanding customers, their experiences, and journeys, and creating these using design thinking and service design methods and ideas. This is especially true for customers who have not done pre-work in these areas or possess less knowledge about them.

To emphasize the value that journey mapping workshops might create for companies, consultants may want to refer to the theoretical framework's implications. Customer experience can significantly affect the company's more traditional performance markers like market share, increased sales and profitability, and more abstract values generated for companies that take the initiative to understand customer experience more fully like brand and customer equity. The author believes workshop participants like the business leaders identified in the interviews in chapter 3 will undoubtedly appreciate and understand the values that investing in understanding customer experience and journey can potentially generate for a company. Additionally, as the commissioning company works with customers in many different business categories, a consultant should connect this value with a client's business specifically to ensure buy-in and trust from clients.

To sum up, the journey mapping workshop guide and templates must be sophisticated, polished, and add real value for savvy participants while being simple enough for someone who has never encountered these areas before to understand. Additionally, they must include adequate directions, guidance, and additional prompts to ensure that the consultant can act as an informed professional for experienced and inexperienced clients. Consultants also must be aware of the value these types of workshops can provide for customers generally and specifically.

4.2 The Effects of Customer Feedback on Workshop Development

Project task 3 was centered around gathering feedback from the commissioning company’s customers about their workshop experiences. Although the author did gather positive feedback from two customers, this was by no means a large enough sample to determine anything conclusively concerning satisfaction with the commissioning

company's journey mapping workshops in their current state. Therefore, the customer feedback itself influenced the workshop guide and template development relatively minimally. The author did consider that customer interviewee 2 mentioned in chapter 3 that their company performed a fair amount of prework before their journey mapping workshop, while consultant interviewees 1 and 2 mentioned a wide range of knowledge levels among journey mapping workshop participants. Therefore, all the materials produced for the thesis project had to be both be easy to use and able to accommodate complexity.

Additionally, customer interviewee 2 specifically mentioned that his company found some of the co-creative methods used in current workshops to be useful. The co-creative method mentioned positively by this interviewee was utilizing post-it notes on a whiteboard for the purpose of preliminary journey mapping. This feedback combined with the theory about co-creative workshops and journey mapping presented in chapter 2 affirmed to the author that an aspect of co-creation should be included in the resultant workshop guide.

4.3 The Effects of Current Practices on Workshop Development

The second part of project task 2 involved investigating the methods, tools, and workshop practices currently being used for journey mapping workshops. There are various tools, templates, and techniques that are now in use in workshops. Service blueprints and user story mapping were mentioned by consultant interviewee 1. In contrast, consultant interviewee 2 said that they use a "sort of blueprint", that includes customer journey, services, and technologies utilized by the customer during the journey. Consultant interviewee 1 currently employs some personas in the journey mapping workshops, consultant interviewee 2 does not, and only consultant interviewee 2 mentioned using post-it notes during workshops to help clients visualize the journey. Neither consultant uses any standard workshop framework with clients.

The consultants' current ways of working allow for complete customization for each client use case. This is potentially positive for the client but likely not sustainable over time because of the extra work involved and the inability to ensure consistency over time. However, the author acknowledges that a thorough understanding of a client business is one of the most important skills a consultant can have. The new workshop frameworks and tools should leave adequate room for customization to maximize their accuracy and added value for the client while providing a base for standardization that will smooth the new consultant workshop training process.

An interesting point in consultant 1's interview was that the consultant was not sure that the current workshop included a clear value proposition for the customer. This value proposition was also something that the author sought to define and develop further while working on the workshop guide itself. After much thought on the subject, the author believes that the value for the customer can be explained by referring to the interrelation of customer experience, service design, service design tools and design thinking that is outlined in the theory summary in chapter 2. Clients should be made aware that design thinking is a methodology used to innovate and solve business problems. Additionally, it can be used to solve problems related to customer experience, customer journey, and service design by using the tools of service design like research methods and data, co-creative workshops, personas, and journey maps. Therefore, understanding how service design tools are related to creative problem solving and innovation in business is critical for clients and consultants alike. The author theorizes that this improved understanding on both sides might assist in ensuring value for the client.

It is clear to the author that the standardization of the workshop protocols and materials is the priority for the commissioning company and can improve clarity and increase service quality and productivity by eliminating obsolete rework and detrimental service delivery variations. As to how those protocols and materials will be developed, the author noted some positive parallels between the tools in use and those used and recommended by professional practitioners of design thinking and service design that were presented within the theoretical framework. The author hopes that this knowledge of similar tools and theories will help to ease the implementation of the frameworks, tools, and methods developed by the author as part of the thesis project. The methods and tools currently in use and the recommended additions and changes will be outlined in the following subchapters and connected to the theory in chapter 2 and data gathered during the interviews in chapter 3.

4.3.1 Developing the Workshop Guide

The first part of project task 4 was also partially focused on developing the commissioning company's journey mapping workshop guide. As was mentioned in the prior section, there is currently no standard format for this. Therefore, the author created a workshop guide for the commissioning company from scratch.

As these workshops are primarily used to create journey maps and already include certain elements and methods from co-creative workshops, like the post-it notes mentioned in consultant 1's interview in chapter 3, the author has developed a co-creative workshop framework for journey mapping. The author hopes that the familiarity of these elements

will help to ease the implementation of these new guidelines for journey mapping workshops.

Prior to the creation of the journey mapping workshop guide, there were no instructions in place at the commissioning company regarding how to hold these workshops. Only one consultant consistently held workshops of this type, so the instructions included in the guide are very detailed and include a step-by-step guide for both the consultant and the customer from pre to post-workshop. There is also a list of all workshop materials included. This is to prevent confusion, aid preparation, ensure consistency, and help train new consultants in this workshop method over time.

However, co-creative workshops are dependent on more than just a knowledgeable consultant and require participants with a good depth and quality of knowledge regarding their company and industry, as noted in the theory in chapter 2 and the interview data in chapter 3. Therefore, the consultant must work with the client company to ensure that people from the client-side with the experience required are present at the workshop, that they have prepared adequately for the workshop, and that they have their research data ready if applicable, as presented in chapter 2. Therefore, the customer also has a role outlined in the workshop guide.

The author also believes it is important to note that during the workshop guide's development, she found herself adhering to the phases of design thinking described in chapter 2 of this thesis. Firstly, she attempted to empathize with her future users: consultants and their clients. Next, she tried to define the user's needs, problems, and insights gathered during the research process. Additionally, she applied the ideate phase of design thinking by creating innovative solutions for the commissioning company's current issues and their clients. She views the outcome of this thesis project as representing the prototype phase. In contrast, the final step, testing, will occur when the commissioning company tests the workshop guide and persona and journey mapping template detailed in the upcoming subchapters.

4.3.2 Developing the Persona Template

The second part of project task 4 involved creating a persona template for the commissioning company to use in journey mapping workshops. As noted in the interviews in chapter 3, there is currently only one Salesforce specific persona template that consultant interviewee 1 uses during workshops. Consultant interviewee 2 is not using personas at all in his journey mapping workshops. The consultant interviewees also made clear in chapter 3 that they felt journey mapping workshops benefitted from being more

free form as it allowed for customization to fit different customers and their needs. Theoretically, as outlined in chapter 2, customer journeys cannot exist without personas. Therefore, it was clear that for the journey mapping workshops to progress, consultants should utilize personas. However, these templates would need to be flexible to fit a wide variety of client companies.

Ideally, clients perform empirical research into their customers before creating personas in the workshop, as outlined in chapter 2. However, the author acknowledges that the mid-sized Finnish companies that the commissioning company mainly works with currently do not have the resources to conduct their own research. Additionally, as noted in chapter 2, even when personas and other outcomes of co-creative workshops are based upon assumptions, they can still have significant value in providing a base for a company's research process and an impetus to begin. Therefore, the author does not believe that lack of prior research should act as a disqualifier when it comes to co-creating personas.

The customer companies' potential lack of resources focused on conducting preliminary empirical research was also noted during the consultant interviews and factored into determining the author's solutions for persona creation. To maximize the profitability and utility of the journey mapping workshop, the commissioning company should be able to offer it to companies with differing resources. The author sees this as a conundrum requiring two solutions for persona creation: one solution for companies that have already conducted preparatory empirical research and one solution for companies that have not.

Companies that have already produced related empirical research can create personas right away during the workshop using the buyer persona template and creation guide in attachment 4 of this thesis. Companies that have not yet produced any research may utilize the Empathy Map Canvas and attached instructions and prompts detailed in attachment 3.

The buyer persona template and creation guide were developed for companies with the resources to produce empirical research for use during the journey mapping workshop. The template and accompanying instructions are laid out simply and accompanied by thorough instructions detailing both the customer and consultant responsibilities for successful persona creation. The author took extra care during the development of the persona template and guide because, as mentioned in the interviews in chapter 3, neither consultant was using personas consistently in any workshops, and customers had varying levels of knowledge and experience with personas. The resulting materials were designed to be simple enough that a consultant that is not experienced in using personas (like

consultant interviewee 2) in workshops could look at the directions and begin to use the template with customers right away.

The Empathy Map Canvas was developed for companies that do not have the benefit of using empirical research during the persona-creation component of the journey mapping workshop. Luckily, the Empathy Map Canvas can be used to create a single, less detailed persona quickly. The canvases can be compiled to form a more complex persona if there is time during the workshop. It offers a flexible format that can also be used for role-based personas if needed. The Empathy Map Canvas is not a true replacement for a persona, but it is an easy way to visualize what we know about a persona in an empathic and organized way and can function as a persona in the workshop and a starting point for future company research. The author envisions that the personas derived from the Empathy Map Canvas might evolve over time, graduating to fully formed personas informed by later research.

Additionally, both personas and the Empathy Map Canvas have a goal of helping companies empathize with their customers. This ability to provoke empathy, provide knowledge about users/buyers without the need for prior research, flexibility and customizability, and its connection to human-centered design thinking principles are why the author chose the Empathy Map Canvas.

Finally, customer companies might be interested in creating B2C or B2B personas, or some combination of the two. As noted in the theoretical framework, B2C and B2B personas can be quite different. Both the Empathy Map Canvas and the Buyer Persona Template chosen by the author were picked because they are flexible enough to be used for both B2C and B2B personas, even though they might have differing goals or attributes.

4.3.3 Developing the Journey Mapping Template

The final part of project task 4 is developing a journey mapping framework to be utilized in workshops. As noted in the interviews, consultant interviewee 1 is already using some frameworks from different sources, including materials from Futurice, service blueprints, and user story mapping. Consultant interviewee 2 is not using one framework or method but usually combines other elements as they need them.

As noted in chapter 2, journey maps are a way to visualize and conceptualize customer experience over time and across touchpoints. Consultant interviewee 2 alluded to the enhanced complexity of the commissioning company's clients' journeys in chapter 3 when they mentioned that these journeys often include the customer journey itself and the

services and technology utilized by the customer during the journey. As mentioned in chapter 2, service blueprints are valuable for their ability to portray the relations between people, props, and processes and communicate the full customer life cycle. However, as service blueprints are also viewed as extensions of the customer journey map, the author decided that they were not the best option for creating the customer journey mapping template. However, service blueprints may be utilized after the initial journey map has been created as a helpful extension if needed.

There were challenges for the author while developing a journey mapping template capable of portraying complex, multi-channel, and touchpoint journeys in an easy to use, minimal format that can accommodate customization. A second challenge is that only two consultants skilled in journey mapping and client knowledge can vary widely. Therefore, any framework that was developed should not only be intuitive and easy to use; it should also be accompanied by thorough instructions and prompts related to its use. Additionally, the commissioning company is a CRM consulting company, and CRM interacts with other technologies, software, and systems, so technology would also have to be incorporated in some way.

Although the consultant interviewees mentioned various methods and templates currently in use, they had not settled on a template they could utilize in most journey mapping workshops. The consultant interviews made it clear that certain aspects of specific methods were appealing, but each way also had certain drawbacks. Therefore, the author attempted to utilize the most useful elements of the methods currently used in her final journey mapping template and eliminate the less functional, overly complicated, or irrelevant features.

This resulted in the author choosing a journey mapping method that would represent the customer journey and include other related elements that can impact the customer's business. The final journey mapping template contains some enterprise journey map elements as detailed in chapter 2, like the "stages" lane and some of the experience maps' attributes (activities, goals, touchpoints, and experience). Some lanes help make the journey mapping workshop's findings actionable, such as the business goal, KPI's, organizational activities, and responsible lanes. This ability to act on the workshop findings adds to the workshop value proposition. Finally, a technology systems lane was added to fit the commissioning company's needs and clients' needs.

The template is accompanied by specific steps and instructions for each lane. There is also a customer journey checklist that a consultant can use with the customer to ensure

that every relevant element of the journey map has been addressed. Additionally, this ensures all the main journey steps have been included in the map and fills any potential gaps. These instructions are explicit so that a consultant and customer of any knowledge level would successfully use this journey mapping template.

5 Conclusions

In the final chapter of the thesis, first the key findings and outcomes are addressed. Next, the reliability, validity, and relevance of the findings are presented. Then, recommendations for the commissioning company and suggestions concerning further research and projects are outlined. Afterward, the project is evaluated by the thesis author and the company presentation and feedback are summarized. Finally, the author reflects on her own learning during the thesis project.

5.1 Key Findings and Outcomes

This subchapter addresses the key outcomes of this thesis project. The author is happy that she was able to accomplish all the project objectives and tasks related to this project thoroughly and within the timeframe that was agreed with the commissioning company, the thesis writer, and her main thesis advisor.

5.1.1 Project Objective

The project objective was to select and develop a journey mapping workshop for the commissioning company. The outcome of the PO was a journey mapping workshop guide, persona template, and journey mapping template.

5.1.2 Project Task 1

A theoretical framework was designed and executed with efforts made to utilize as many high-quality academic resources as possible.

5.1.3 Project Task 2

Two 45-minute qualitative consultant interviews were performed on 3 September 2020 and questions were asked about the current journey mapping workshop process, methods, and strengths and weaknesses. Then, the data collected was analyzed.

5.1.4 Project Task 3

Two qualitative customer interviews were conducted via email over 2 weeks in October 2020 to give the clients time to respond. Then the data collected was analyzed.

5.1.5 Project Task 4

The theory from project task 1 and the data which was gathered and analysed in project tasks 2 and 3 is more deeply analysed and applied to the process of developing the journey mapping workshop guide, persona template and journey mapping template.

5.1.6 Project Task 5

A presentation was held on 9 November 2020 and the thesis products and outcomes were introduced to the commissioning company.

5.1.7 Project Task 6

The commissioning company provided feedback about the thesis project and products and the author also utilized self-evaluation to determine the effectiveness and useability of the products and the general success of the project outcome. If the company decides to use the thesis products during operations the author will apply an iterative process to implementing the commissioning company’s feedback.

5.2 Recommendations for Journey Mapping Workshops

Developing the commissioning company’s journey mapping workshops involves first addressing and responding to the urgent needs that were found during the research. First, the commissioning company should begin by standardizing the workshop format, templates, and methods. These templates and methods should be simple enough that anyone with essential business knowledge can explain their use and utilize them but can still portray varying levels of journey complexity and different types of users and stakeholders. The workshop format should be easy for consultants to learn, facilitate, and repeat while still providing value for the customer. Then, training sessions should be held so that more consultants know how to hold these workshops, and a standard of quality can be established. Additionally, training more consultants in how to facilitate these workshops ensures that customer journey mapping knowledge is spread more equally throughout the company.

5.3 Evaluation of Reliability, Validity and Relevance

The author sought to remain neutral in her dealings with the consultant interviewees during the thesis process. However, her evaluation of the data obtained through their interviews is not entirely neutral because the interviewees are her co-workers and she had prior knowledge of them before the interviews took place. Additionally, the author's

understanding of the customer interviewees' job titles undoubtedly slightly influenced her perception of their related data as it appears in the customer interviews.

The sample used in this thesis project was too small to claim real reliability or validity at any level. Ideally, the project would have a larger sample of both consultant and customer interviewees before any claims in these areas would be possible. Additionally, the author interviewed both consultants at the commissioning company that had knowledge on the subject areas covered by the thesis project. Hence, the author believes she did the best she could and performed the study while working within this thesis project's timeframe and scope, and with the limitations posed by the limited number of consultants with intimate knowledge of journey mapping at the commissioning company.

Although the research is highly relevant to the commissioning company, it does not necessarily bring anything new or exciting to the established body of research on the subjects presented. However, the purpose of a commissioned thesis is to meet the commissioning company's needs, not to produce novel data or work. To ensure relevance, the author has tried to meet the commissioning company's needs while drawing from established methods and pre-existing research in the appropriate areas.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research and Projects

Areas where further research and projects might be merited, were also noted during the project. First, the author would suggest that the commissioning company develop its methods for gathering customer feedback. This feedback should then be stored, analyzed, and applied to improve their workshops and other offerings. This feedback could help the commissioning company to customize workshops to suit different types of clients.

Additionally, further training for consultants in design thinking, service design, and journey mapping should be implemented so that more consultants will have the knowledge needed for this and related workshops.

Also, further standardization of all the commissioning company's workshop offerings should be pursued. Standardization has been implemented in some of their sales-related workshops with great success. Perhaps the journey mapping workshop guide presented in this thesis could serve as a framework for developing other types of workshop guides in the future. A starting point for this project would be to establish a standard workshop format then add the elements that make each workshop unique. This project would be feasible if many basic commonalities between workshops were found during the cursory

research. An advantage of using this methodology is that it potentially makes quick work of standardizing most, if not all, the commissioning company's current workshop content. Additionally, once consultants were familiar with the general framework learning to execute different types of workshops becomes a matter of merely understanding the unique elements involved rather than relearning an entire system.

Developing the value proposition of the workshop was also noted in one of the consultant interviews. The author believes that once clients understand that journey mapping workshops may also be used to develop their processes, note areas of inefficiency and dissatisfaction for their customers, and improve their customer experience, the issue of value proposition for clients would prove to be a moot point. Therefore, the author suggests that in the future, consultants have full understanding of the implications the customer journey has on understanding how to build and integrate a customer's CRM systems into company processes and systems and how different aspects of customer experience can affect the business of their clients. The consultants need to be trained on how to communicate this to clients effectively.

The commissioning company might consider investing in a membership to an online platform or software to simulate the co-creative process and improve workshop interactivity when most are working remotely. When all participants can access the same environment, the collaborative aspect of co-creation is reinforced.

Finally, although the customers surveyed had mostly positive feedback about the workshops, a lack of documentation was noted. Therefore, the author recommends that the commissioning company develop the documentation processes for these and other workshops that are lacking documentation.

5.5 Project Evaluation

The author attempted to base this project on a complete assortment of high-quality sources while thoroughly covering the topics. However, there were issues identifying multiple high-quality academic sources in design thinking, service design, journey mapping, and personas. In some cases, this caused the author to rely more heavily on certain sources than is ideal. In other instances, non-academic sources like blogs and company publications had to be utilized. However, the author thinks that she managed to comprehensively cover these fields despite this issue and address the needs of the commissioning company during the research.

Some issues were encountered during the project's initial phases due to miscommunication related to translation and other language issues. These presented a useful learning experience for the author. The communication issues were resolved early on due to improved communication and confirmation from both the author and the commissioning company. Another issue involved identifying, contacting, and getting data from the commissioning company's customers. Although two interviewees were identified and contacted, the interview process took longer than expected and, in one case, did not achieve the level of detail sought by the author. However, the author does acknowledge the relative difficulty of locating past customers with relevant knowledge and a willingness to be interviewed.

Although the author considered interviewing best practices during her interviews, the consultant interviews' conversational nature and the fact that the author was already familiar with the subjects as co-workers may have influenced the way the author posed some questions. In retrospect, the author should have taken greater care to phrase questions in a neutral way and attempt to avoid posing questions in a manner that could be interpreted as leading.

Generally, the author thinks the project was a success. She believes that it combines the knowledge she gained in her specialization studies and the knowledge she has acquired while working for the commissioning company. Additionally, the commissioning company was happy with the project's outcome and has plans to use the materials and recommendations to develop their workshops. The author believes that this reflects well on the project outcomes and their usefulness for the commissioning company.

Lastly, time management is an issue in any project. However, the author managed to deliver the products, company presentation, and thesis on time despite difficulties related to the pandemic and potential time management issues due to her studies and working full time.

5.6 Company Presentation and Feedback

The thesis presentation for the commissioning company took place on 9 November 2020 remotely over Google Hangouts. The presentation was attended by the commissioning company CEO, CCO, and the two consultant interviewees. The feedback about the results and presentation were quite positive overall and the author received action points and feedback about the next steps involved in taking different aspects of the project into use.

5.7 Reflection on Learning

The author learned the value of having a concrete plan and schedule when completing a long-term project like a thesis. Having a good plan was essential in helping the author manage her time and complete the project and thesis as planned. The author also learned the importance of clear communication with company representatives while completing a commissioned project. Providing value is also essential when working with a company, and it is vital to find a way to make your work meet real needs within the business.

Additionally, the author also gained knowledge about her limits and her ability to manage stress and general pitfalls that generally accompany complex, long-term projects. She now feels as if she is prepared to take on more challenging and complex projects while dealing with the general everyday stressors of living in a world that is now heavily influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The inherent relational complexity of the topics in the theoretical framework of this project challenged the author. Initially, she struggled with defining the topics' relationships with each other in a hierarchical manner. However, she is glad that she continued to attempt to mind-map and organize the theoretical framework's topics throughout the first half of the thesis project. Although it was difficult, the author learned that the intricacy of creating a theoretical framework is something that can be dealt with through hard work, many readings on the topics, and making different iterations of the theoretical framework throughout the thesis process.

The author is a marketing student and initially had many preconceived notions about the type of work marketers perform. Therefore, it was interesting to learn that the topics of this thesis could be categorized as being related to marketing. For example, she discovered many service design areas that helped her combine what she learned during her marketing and service design studies at Haaga-Helia. Additionally, as was noted in the thesis, similar toolsets can be utilized for both service design, and marketing and the differences are primarily in the semantics. This was not clear until the author deep dived into readings about service design and customer experience as part of this thesis.

This project was commissioned by the author's workplace and was tailored to meet her thesis needs and educate her about in-demand knowledge areas in her work. Therefore, she feels that the thesis gave her valuable tools and knowledge to use in her career. However, the author also felt the pressure of performing commissioned, paid thesis work

for her employer keenly throughout the process. However, this pressure also motivated her to complete the thesis work to the best of her ability.

The author plans to continue her studies at the master's level and has plans to apply to programs that incorporate aspects of service design and design thinking as these were areas which she found to be of great interest during this project. She also realized that she would value a career that utilizes these methods to solve different business problems and hopes to continue to pursue this type of creative problem-solving in the future.

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Attachments

Attachment 1. Thesis Plan as a Gantt Chart

THESIS ACTIVITIES TIMECHART (GANTT)

Calendar Weeks

No.	Task	No.	Subtask	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
1	Negotiation & Consultancy	1.1	Confirming thesis topic with Biit						■																																														
		1.2	General thesis advising session 1										■																																										
		1.3	Thesis advising session 1													■																																						
		1.4	Thesis advising session 2																			■																																	
		1.5	General thesis advising session 2																																		■																		
		1.6	Thesis advising session 3																																									■											
2	Background	2.1	Research customer experience,design thinking, service design, customer journey and related topics						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■																											
		2.2	Writing																										■																										
3	Theoretical Framework	3.1	Finding source literature																				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■																						
		3.2	Reading source literature																				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■																						
		3.3	Writing																												■	■	■																						
4	Interviews	4.1	Design/writing of interviews																																		■	■																	
		4.2	Feedback about Interview																																			■																	
		4.3	Applying any changes to interview																																			■																	
5	Data Collection	5.1	Scheduling interviews																																				■	■															
		5.2	Completing Consultant interviews																																				■																
		5.3	Completing customer interviews																																						■	■	■												
6	Data Analysis	6.1	Qualitative analysis																																							■	■												
		6.2	Comparative analysis																																							■	■												
		6.3	Writing																																								■												
7	Results	7.1	Reflecting																																									■	■										
		7.2	Analysing																																									■	■										
		7.3	Writing																																									■	■	■	■	■							
8	Conclusion	8.1	Presenting conclusions to Biit																																												■							
		8.2	Obtaining feedback from Biit																																												■							

■ Activities

Attachment 2. Journey Mapping Workshop Guide

Based on Stickdorn's guide to co-creating journey maps

Guide in Brief

Co-creating Journey Maps **Using the know-how of a group of invited participants to create one or more journey maps or service blueprints**	
Duration	**Preparation:** 0,5-2 hours (depending on group size complexity of journey map, and amount of data) **Activity:** 1-8 hours (depending on group size, amount of data and journey map complexity) **Follow-up:** 0,5-8 hours (depending on complexity and intended fidelity of personas)
Physical requirements	Paper, sticky notes, pens, masking tape, paper templates (optional), personas, research data as input and inspiration for participants
Facilitators	Minimum 1
Participants	3-12 people with good knowledge of the particular experience and chosen perspective(e.g., customers of a particular target group, employees of different relevant departments
Expected Output	Drafts of journey maps (physical or digital), workshop photos, quotes of participants (audio or text), videos of the workshop progress
Note: If digital platforms are used (in the case of remotely held workshops) the needed physical requirements are substituted with their digital equivalents.	

Step-by-step guide

Pre- workshop

1.) **Plan and prepare**

Customer: Determines whom to invite as workshop participants and prepares the invitations. Describe the aim of the workshop, set expectations for your workshop, and think of an incentive for participating in the workshop if appropriate. Select and prepare a room to host the workshop.

Consultant: Make a list so no essential materials are forgotten (templates, sticky notes, pens, personas, and any research data provided by the client etc.). Write a facilitation agenda and establish facilitation guidelines to create a safe space through warm-ups and so on. Communicate with the client about the expectations and aim of the workshop.

Workshop:

2.) **Welcome and Begin the Workshop**

Consultant: Start your workshop with a welcome describing the workshop's aim and agenda and facilitate a round of introductions.

3.) **Define the main actor and the journey scope**

Customer and Consultant: Select a main actor, such as a persona or role whose shoes you want your participants to walk in. This will be defined using the Empathy Map Canvas that was created earlier. Define the timeframe (scope) of your story. For example, is this experience 10 minutes, 2 hours, 5 days, or 10 years long? Consultant can assist the customer at any part of this stage if needed.

4.) **Split into smaller groups**

Consultant: Split the participants into subgroups of 3-5 people if the numbers require it and give them clear instructions on what to do.

5.) **Identify stages and steps**

Consultant: Let the workshop participants start with the rough stages of the journey map, such as “inspiration, planning, booking experience, sharing” for a holiday. Now fill up the stages with the persona’s story together with the customer. Sometimes it helps if you start in the middle of the journey with the most crucial steps and then ask yourself what happens before and what happens after these. Use simple sticky notes for this so you can easily discard steps and stages.

6.) **Iterate and refine**

Consultant: Refine the journey with the customer by going through it from end to end to check if you need more/less detail in certain parts. You can always break up a step into two or more steps or condense several steps if necessary. Depending on the project now is the time to find a consistent level of detail throughout the whole journey map or to highlight a specific part of the journey map in more detail.

7.) **Discuss and merge**

Consultant: Give participants some time to reflect. Discuss similarities and differences between the journey maps of the different subgroups. Let the group merge the different maps in to one map (or several) but make notes on the different opinions or insights as they might be useful later.

8.) **Follow-up**

Consultant: Go through your notes and check different positions taken by your workshop participants. Now is the time to send an email to the customer potentially including indexed data or important passages. You could also include a summary of your key findings as well as a photo or a copy of the journey map and raw data

collected during the workshop. If further workshops should be scheduled, include the recommendations for these.

Customer: In some cases, during this phase the customer might process the journey map into a format that is easier to comprehend (physical or digital)

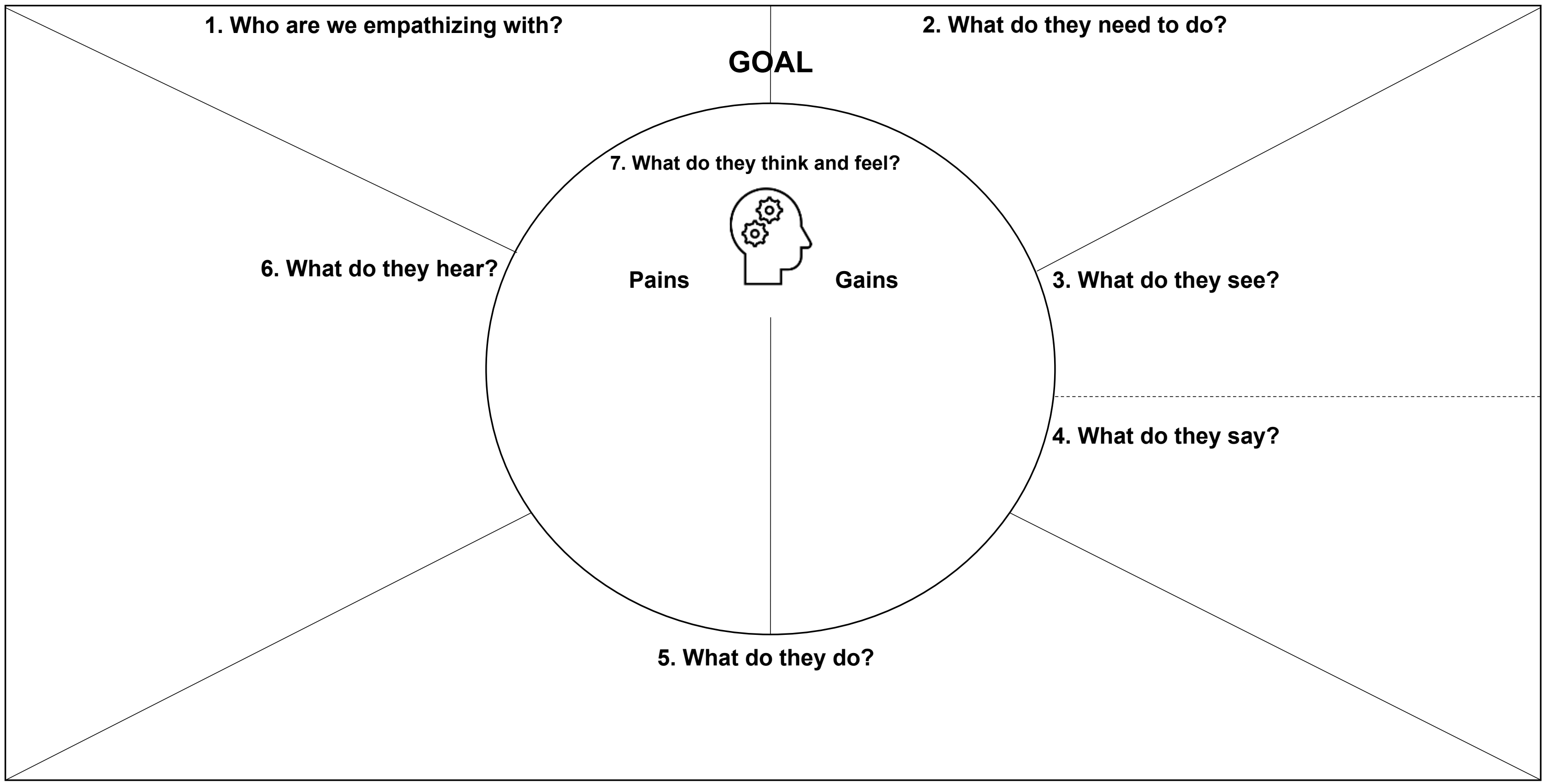
Notes on the method:

- Define the situational context of the experience you want to map in your workshop for a deep dive (weekdays vs. weekends, daytime vs. nighttime etc.). This will help workshop participants to develop a shared frame of reference.
- Consider repeating the workshop with different participants or a different situational context, or basing your journey map on different personas, to identify patterns and understand the distinctions between these.

Attachment 3. Empathy Map Canvas, How to Use and Prompts

Note: Empathy Map Canvas to be utilized when customer lacks research data

Empathy Map Canvas Designed for: Designed By: Date:



Based on “The Empathy Map Canvas” by David Gray

How to Use the Empathy Map Canvas

Note: Empathy Map Canvas to be utilized when customer lacks research data

1.) Start with the goals section by defining who will be the subject of the empathy map and a goal, which is something they need to do. This should be framed in terms of observable behaviour.
2.) Once you have clarified the goal, work your way clockwise around the canvas until you have covered the other sections: seeing, saying, doing, and hearing. The reason for this is that the process of focusing on observable phenomena (things that they see, say, do and hear) is like “walking a mile in their shoes”. It gives us the chance to imagine what their experience might be like, to give us a sense of what it might feel like to “be” them.
3.) Only after you have made the circuit of the outside elements do you turn your focus to what is going on inside their head. This is the central aspect of the whole exercise. The whole idea is to imagine what it is like to be inside someone else’s head—this is the primary power of this exercise.
4.) The empathy map serves as a time-saving way to create basic user personas. The outcome of the empathy map canvas can be used to successfully complete your journey map in afterward. However, you can also create several task-based empathy maps to feed into more detailed personas if the customer would like.

Prompts for Consultants to use During the Exercise

1.) Who are we empathizing with?

- Who is the person we want to understand?
- What is their situation?
- What is their role in this situation?

2.) What do they need to do?

- What do they need to do differently?
- What jobs do they need to get done?
- What decisions do they need to make?
- How will be know if they are successful?

3.) What do they see?

- What do they see in the marketplace?
- What do they see in their immediate environment?
- What do they see others saying and doing?
- What are they watching and reading?

4.) What do they say?

- What have we heard them say?
- What can we imagine them saying?

5.) What do they do?

- What do they do today?
- What behaviour have we observed?
- What can we imagine them doing?

6.) What do they hear?

- What are they hearing others say?
- What are they hearing from their friends?
- What are they hearing from colleagues?
- What are they hearing second-hand?

7.) What do they think and feel?

Pains

- What are their fears, frustrations, and anxieties?

Gains

- What are their wants, needs, hopes, and dreams?

Other

- What other thoughts and feelings might motivate their behaviour?

Attachment 4. Persona Template and How to Use

Note: Persona template to be utilized when the client has access to research data

FACTS: (Personal profile, who is s/he, demographics) Name: Age: Gender: Location: Job Title: Job Description: Photo Here	**PROBLEMS:** Fears, frustrations, and perceived obstacles (e.g. feeling slow and out of touch with technology, pay too much for a flight, violating my company's expenses policy.)
BEHAVIORS: A day in the life—What does s/he do? Tell stories about his/her behavior while using a service, product or site. Channel usage for various needs (internet, visiting comparable sites, mobile social media.) How important are functional, emotional, expressive benefits?	**NEEDS AND GOALS:** Wants, needs what s/he believes constitutes success. Goals can range from quite general goals (e.g. feeling confident when using technology), to product specific ones (e.g. booking a flight in under a minute). Based on Insight.com buyer persona template

Creating Personas in Brief

Note: To be utilized when the client has access to research data

Based on Stickdorn's guide to co-creating personas

Co-creating Personas **Creating a rich description of a specific fictional person as an archetype exemplifying a group of people, such as a group of customers, users, or employees.**	
Duration	0,5-8 hours (depending on complexity and amount of data)
Physical requirements	Research data, persona templates, paper, pens, masking tape
Facilitators/Researchers	Minimum 1 (a better approach is to have teams of 2-3 researchers
Participants	2-12 (optional)
Expected Output	Personas

Step by Step Guide

Pre- workshop

1.) **Prepare and Print out Data**

Customer: Prepare the research data for the workshop by printing out key pictures, quotes, or another other collected artifacts and data that might contain information to use for creating your personas in the workshop. You might also want to utilize any existing personas, journey maps, or system maps that you have created beforehand. Make sure that all the appropriate and necessary employees are invited to join the workshop.

Consultant: Upon arrival at the client premises prepare the room used for the workshop with the material needed to create personas. This includes persona templates, paper, sticky notes, and pens.

Workshop

2.) **Define Groups**

Customer and consultant work together to define groups of customers, employees, and/or stakeholders to exemplify with personas. Use research data or existing segments to define these.

3.) **Create Personas**

Customer and consultant work together to define certain criteria that differentiate the groups defined in the previous step. This is the starting point for creating personas. Create a list of other criteria together that you think should be included in the personas and start to merge this with the research data. Take a step back from time to time to cross-check if the personas are realistic or if they feel too artificial, too constructed, or too patchwork. Remember, one of the main reasons to

create personas is to empathize with them, so there must be balance among the criteria and the need for authenticity.

4.) Iterate

Consultant should help the customer validate the underlying assumptions, find gaps in the research and the customer can iterate the personas after the workshop if needed.

Some things the consultant might ask the customer to determine if iteration is needed post-workshop:

- Are you missing some data for the personas? The customer might iterate the research and formulate new research questions to fill any gaps.
- Do others agree with your personas? Customer can present personas to frontline staff and ask them to match customers with the personas created in the workshop. This allows the customer to quickly see information that is wrong or missing from the personas.
- Can you really find people that match your personas? The customer could use some existing research data if they have it or possibly conduct more research to find this out.

5.) Follow-up

Consultant: Before leaving the premises of the client document the workshop progress with photos and write a summary of what occurred to be used for documentation later.

Customer: If needed, convert your personas to a format that you can distribute within your organization if needed.

Notes on the Method:

- When creating personas, giving these fictional archetypes realistic names makes them even more approachable.
- If the customer does not have reliable research data prior to the workshop, begin with the Empathy Map Canvas to identify pains and gains and learn more about what the customers thinks, feels, hears, sees, says, and does.
- One way to take personas further during a workshop is to use a persona’s goals, issues, and unmet user needs to stimulate “What if?” scenarios and ideation sessions on iterations of an existing service or to develop a new service.
- The most common pitfall of creating personas is to create “idealized customers” not real customers. This often happens when people who are not in touch with customers daily create personas that are purely based on assumptions and not backed up by any research data. These personas might be useless or even dangerous, as they may tempt customers to base their design process on wrong

or misleading assumptions. You might develop ideas, concepts, or prototypes that do not truly fit your target group.

Attachment 5. Journey Map Template, How to Use and Checklist

Stages	Awareness	Consideration	Decision	Delivery & Use	Loyalty & Advocacy
Customer Activities					
Customer Goals					
Touchpoints					
Experience					
Business Goal					
KPI's					
Organizational activities					
Responsible					
Technology Systems					

Based on Columbia Road's journey mapping template

Instructions for Filling out the Customer Journey Map Template

Based on Columbia Road's instructions for filling in a journey mapping template

When filling in the template, start with the stages and move down the lanes in the given order.

1.) **Stages:** High level stages of your company's customer journey from awareness to the purchase to loyalty and advocacy.

Customer actions: What does your customer do in different stages of the customer lifecycle?

2.) **Customer goals:** What does the customer want to achieve in each phase of the customer journey? What is your customer's job to be done in general and how it shows in different stages?

3.) **Touchpoints & channels:** What channels and touchpoints act as the points of interaction between the customer and the organisation?

4.) **Experience:** How well do you fulfil the customer expectations? What is the perceived level of customer experience? You can also describe thoughts and feelings here or simply use a (what the heck is that line called) to chart the user's emotional journey throughout the process.

5.) **Business goal:** What is your company trying to achieve here? What is success in each point of the journey from a company's point of view?

6.) **KPI:** Measuring your business goal. How well are you doing in each stage business-wise? Are you improving toward your business goal?

7.) **Organisational activities:** What does your organisation do to support and improve customer experience in each stage?

8.) **Roles responsible:** What roles or departments are responsible for the customer experience in each stage of the journey?

Customer Journey Checklist

Based Stickdorn's customer journey checklist

About the Checklist:

This is a list of generic elements of a high-level customer journey. This list can act as a pragmatic checklist for the consultant and customer to see whether you have already included all the main steps, of if you need to do more research to fill any potential gaps. The consultant and customer can go through this list together during the journey mapping workshop.

Pre-service:

1. **Wake up: Become Aware.** The customer becomes passively aware of the service provider and/or their services.
2. **Wise up: Find out more, understand, consider.** The customer looks for more information. This includes first direct interaction with peers, review sites, or the service provider as well as the decision-making process.
3. **Join up: Enter the (service) system.** The customer co-designs and/or negotiates the service or contract and signs up or makes the purchase.

Service:

1. **Set up: Prepare the project or service, prepare the use of the product.** The customer sets up the service and prepares for the first use.
2. **Start up: Do the first real run-through, use the product for the first time.** The customer experiences the service. At this stage, some support systems for new customers might still be in place, while others for experienced customers might not yet be offered.
3. **Keep up: Co-create value repeatedly (habitual use).** The service co-creates the planned value and is experienced on a regular basis.
4. **Mess(ed) up: Resolve incidents or problems.** Something goes wrong: perhaps the customer reports an issue. The customer's questions or issues are answered and resolved.
5. **Grow up: Grow the service or use of the product. Upgrade. Add.** As the customer becomes experienced, she may start to extend her usage or add more service offerings to the existing package.
6. **Pay up: Pay for the service.** The customer pays for the service. Perhaps with money, data, attention, or another value exchange.
7. **Close up: Shut down the service or stop using the product.** The customer stops using the service (or signs up again).

Post-service:

1. **Speak up: Share your experience.** The customer shares her experience with others.
2. **Listen up: Stay in the loop.** The customer receives advertisements, occasional phone calls, or invites to events to stay in the loop even though he is not actually a client currently. This closes the loop, returning to the step "Wake up: become aware".