Developing the Member Application Process

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Abstract
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This master's thesis development project focuses on developing the application process of the new members of the Trade Union Jyty. The current member application process needs improving because it is complicated and time consuming for the applicant and for the member registry team. The organization would benefit from more productive and more efficient process.

The organization introduced a new Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP) a few years ago. Members of the Trade Union Jyty have contacted the Jyty's member registry team with problems concerning logging in the application and the e-services. Also, the member registry team have noticed issues with reliability and user-friendliness. This is a good time to review the process from the perspective of service design and identify points of improvement and development.

Data for this qualitative study was collected by observing and in a workshop that was held for the member registry team. The theoretical framework consists of service design, customer journey, and process development. First the process description of the current member application process was visualized in a swim lane diagram. It was used as a base for the workshop.

Several small but meaningful areas of improvement were identified, which would make a significant difference for the customer, for the member registry team, and benefit the organisation.

Concerning the ERP, the service provider needs to address the reliability issues and fix the faults in the system much faster than they do now. The login to the application and the e-services Jässäri and Operetti creates a bottleneck that causes most inconvenience for the members and for the member registry team. Electronic trust service identification would fix the issues. Member registry team wishes for more automation and suggests some clarifications for making the filling in the application easier for the new members.

The member registry team could increase phone customer service hours to better meet the needs of the members.

Keywords
Service Design, Customer Journey, Process Development

Contents

Abbreviations

ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning

A software for managing day-to-day business processes

KVTES, KirVESTES	Kunnallinen yleinen virka- ja työehtosopimus and Kirkon virka- ja työehtosopimus

1 Introduction

Trade Union Jyty is one of the oldest trade unions in Finland, founded in 1918. Its members work mainly within the basic and welfare services in municipalities, joint municipal authorities, parishes, the private sector, and non-profit organisations. It is a member of the Finnish Confederation of Professionals STTK. Jyty has 50 000 members in Finland, and negotiates for 18 collective agreements for the municipal, private, and church sectors (Kunnallinen yleinen virka- ja työehtosopimus KVTES and Kirkon virka- ja työehtosopimus KirVESTES among many). Collective agreements are generally binding terms and conditions of the minimum employment conditions and basic employment standards for a sector or an industry. Collective agreements are negotiated between a trade union and employer’s federation or an individual employer. KVTES, KirVESTES and other collective agreements negotiated by the Trade Union Jyty are binding for the sector or industry even if the employer or employee are not members of any union. (Trade Union Jyty 2021.)

In just few years the number of workers, who are members of any trade union in Finland, has declined rapidly. Less and less workers join unions and especially young people do not feel that they benefit from the membership and join only to unemployment funds or nothing.

Only a few decades ago almost all the labour force of Finland were members of trade unions. In 2017 the percentage was 59,4 and in just four years it had declined 5,1 %. This means that in 2017 there were 100 000 unionized persons less than in 2013. In the public services the unionization is 72,8 %, industry sector 71,8 %, and in private sector less than half of the workforce, 47,9 %, are union members. Women are more often members of a trade union than men. 55,9 % of union members are women, when women make 48 % of the working force of Finland (Ahtiainen 2019, 29, 39). 84 % of the members of Trade Union Jyty’s are women (Trade Union Jyty 2021). This means that there is a growing number of people whose interests are not represented at all. The number of potential members of trade unions, i.e., the number of all currently employed and unemployed members of Finnish labour force is 2,38 million persons. Of them only 1,4 million are unionized and have their interests represented. (Ahtiainen 2019, 37-43.)

The Trade Union Jyty is active in taking part in business fairs, expos, and other professional events, usually there are several professional lectures and training courses held every year. During the Covid-19 pandemic the personal visits to workplaces around the country as well as participating in fairs or other events have been on hold. Also, in many workplaces people have changed over to working from home, so there is less interaction and discussion between colleagues. Reaching out to members via Zoom and Teams has been successful but reaching potential members has been difficult. In 2020 there were only 76 live visits to workplaces and regional associations and around 1 700 persons were reached. Around 4 400 persons took part in meetings and events online via Microsoft Teams and in webinars 1 590 members (Trade Union Jyty 2020, 12). In 2019 in total of 514 workplace and regional association visits alone reached 10 400 persons (Trade Union Jyty 2019, 8-9).

During the year 2020 the monthly number of new members dropped towards end of the year. The reason seems to be the Covid-19 pandemic because quite many of the members join by recommendation of a colleague, after a company visit by a regional representative of Jyty, the shop steward or a member of one of the regional associations.

In year 2020, 41 % of the new members joined the union by recommendation. In year 2019, 31 % of the new members joined by recommendation. (Trade Union Jyty 2020, 12, Trade Union Jyty 2019, 8-9.) In May 2019 Trade Union Jyty introduced a rewarding campaign and started to reward the members who will get new members to join. The rewards are gift cards, and the value of the gift cards depends on the number of the new members they have been able to get to join. That is why the numbers of new, joined members are not completely comparable in 2019 and 2020 (Trade Union Jyty 2019, 8).

This thesis project is important to the organization because it needs to have all their processes and strategies working effectively and reliably in order to keep up with the changes in working life and in competition between other trade unions. During my time in the member registry, I have noticed that there is a need of development especially regarding the member application process. The organization needs to make sure that inoperative processes do not create bottlenecks or have a bearing on the decision to join the union.

I work in the member registry of the Trade Union Jyty. The member registry team handles tasks related to keeping all the member information up to date. The team provides customer service via phone, email, post and via Jyty’s e-service Jässäri. The member registry team assists the actives of Jyty’s 148 member associations as well as provide help concerning problems with the registration and the e-services. In addition to that, the member registry team organizes training sessions in the use of the e-services Jässäri and Operetti. This thesis project focuses on finding out the ways to develop and make improvements on the member application process.

The member registry team consists of two full-time member secretaries, a database officer and one part-time member secretary. In this thesis project, the member registry is described as a team according to the definition by Thompson (2015, 20-21). Team is a group of people that work together to achieve a shared goal. Team members have collective responsibility of the outcome of their work, and they are interdependent, i.e., the members need each other to achieve the goal and they could not achieve it alone. Also, membership in a team is quite stable and identifiable for the team members and non-members. (Thompson 2015, 20-21.)

The work of the member registry team needs clarification and increasing of effectiveness. The Trade Union Jyty has introduced a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system two years ago and these past few years since have been a struggle because the system is not working as promised. However, this study will not handle any technical details of the IT systems.

Details about the tasks and working practices described without a mention of a reference are according to my own knowledge and observation. Also, information about the processes have been gathered from colleagues during this thesis process.

Hopefully, the improvements and ideas will make the member registry team a better place to work and improve communication and cooperation especially now while everyone mainly works from home. It is very important to keep all tasks under control and provide good service to all members in a reasonable time.

2 Objectives and scope

In Trade Union Jyty, the duration of the membership is long but many of the members are getting older and they are retiring in faster rate than new members join in. Now, in general, it seems that the length of the membership is shorter, and people change workplaces and industries many times during their careers and in consequence, trade unions. The organization cannot risk losing any potential member due unreliable IT systems and problems in membership processes. As a relatively middle-sized union the Trade Union Jyty cannot compete by size or authority, but it can offer excellent and specialized service for current and future members.

2.1 Current situation

The first step and output of this development project was to describe the member application process and create a flow chart in form of a swim lane diagram. This thesis development project is based on the need to improve the current member application process because based on the experience and feedback from members, it is complicated for the customer and time consuming for the organisation. The process description diagram formed the base for the workshop that was held for the member registry team. In the workshop the idea was to collect experiences and views of the member registry team members and encourage to look the processes with fresh eyes and collect new ideas. The current process is described in more detail in appendix 1.

There are several situations when the member or a potential member is in contact with the member registry team during their membership. Also, there are many processes involving the member registry team during the lifecycle of the membership. The responsibilities of the member registry team are listed in figure 1. I have created the list of the responsibilities and tasks of the member registry team based on my own observation and it is visualized according to the stages of the life cycle of the membership.

Customer service	Beginning and end of membership	During membership	Other responsibilities	Tasks concerning associations and member actives
• Customer service by phone, email, post and e-Services • Assisting in the use of e-services and application to join • Keeping member registry up-to-date • Training events in the use of e-services	• Answering questions about joining, resigning and membership in general • Online application, paper or pdf-form • Ending membership due change of profession, retiring or for another reason • Senior memberships and changes to it • Membership cards, subscriptions and certificates	• Changes (contact details, work place, association within the Union) • Authorization to deduct membership fee from salary • Following up the membership fee together with the financial department	• Assisting in elections (employee representatives, the Jyty central council and executive committee members, board members of associations) and updating information to member registry • Contact between Unemployment fund Aaria • Database queries, statistics and listings	• Tasks concerning the members of merging or dissolving of associations • Assisting member actives, memberlists etc

Figure 1. Responsibilities of the member registry team

According to Kalbach (2018, 256), the lifecycle of the customer ship can be visualized in a customer lifecycle map. The viewpoint is the loyalty and emotional connection of the customer to the organization, not just the product or service. The lifecycle of the member of Jyty starts from the potential member's interest to join to the Trade Union Jyty and it ends when the member resigns, and they will receive a request for a feedback from the trade union for research purposes.

2.2 Expected outcomes and scope

The aim of this thesis project is to add value for the members and improve the service they are provided by the member registry team. The member registry team is for the customers, the members, and it is important to provide them good service in a reasonable time. In any work it is important to have functional equipment, facilities, and enough knowledgeable personnel. In Trade Union Jyty it is important to offer accurate service the members need reliably, promptly, and as they expect.

The member is in contact with the member registry team in several stages during the lifecycle of the membership. Initially, the intention of this thesis project was to create customer journey maps and develop more of the processes of the member registry team. Due the Covid-19 pandemic and other circumstances, the decision was made to focus on the most important process, the member application process. Often it is the first time a person is in contact with the Union. A person applying as member is very important for the Union and process of becoming a member needs to run smoothly. The process is time consuming for the member registry team and sometimes complicated for the new member. The process needs to be seen from the member's point of view and improved to be more customer centric. Also, there are problems with the ERP regarding the process. Problems and unreliability of the ERP and the service provider causes extra work and stress for the member registry team.

2.3 Research questions

Main research question is:

How the current member application process can be improved from the views of the new member and the Trade Union Jyty?

Sub-question is:

What is the current member application process of the Trade Union Jyty?

3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework in this development project consists of service design, customer journey, and process development.

3.1 Service design

Development methods are service design and process development. According to Lawrence, Hormes, Schneider & Stickdorn (2019, Chapter 1.), service design is about customer experience that in today's world is more than just the core offering of the service provider. Traditionally companies were focusing on providing best possible service of their business, for example hotels provided hotel rooms for travellers. Now, we know more about customer behaviour and the customer has become more knowledgeable and empowered, the previous traditions and structures of the needs of customers are out of date. Customers want and need great experiences, not just good service, and products. Service design is needed and can be applied to physical and digital products as well as services in public and private sector as well as non-profit organisations. (Lawrence et al. 2019, Chapter 1.)

The customer is in the centre of service design. Tuulaniemi (2011, 29) states that the simplified idea of service design is to provide service that makes customers happy i.e., better service, more customers, more profit for the company. The company benefits from loyal customers and their willingness to pay more in one time purchase or on the long run.

The idea of service design is to optimize the experience of the customer by optimizing the service process, ways of working, premises where the service is provided, and interaction to create the most positive service experience as possible. Service design is a process of systematic and holistic set of tools and methods to develop a business. Also, all parties that take part in the service process, such as the customer segments, stakeholders, and service providers, are included in the service design process. All the factors and elements affecting the service are identified to make an overall picture that is visualized. A visual chart or a map is easier to understand and see all the elements it has. The overall picture can be divided in smaller parts to make sure that all elements can be optimized in the process. (Tuulaniemi 2011, 24-29.)

3.1.1 Value

Service design enables companies and organizations to create and implement new services that create value for their customers. With service design, it is possible to find ways to add value for customers and organization itself (Tuulaniemi 2011, 96).

According to Tuulaniemi (2011, 30-42) the basic task of an organization is creating value for customers, value of which the customers are willing to pay for. In case of organizations, the value means the relation of benefit to cost. For the customer, the cost or value is not always monetary but investment, for example inconvenience, that a customer is willing to make in order to receive the service. So, the value depends on what a customer or stakeholder values and wants and what creates value to one, does not necessarily be valuable to someone else.

Tuulaniemi (2011, 30-31) mentions as an example a group of collectors of a special, narrow field of interest. In my opinion, this holds true to the work of trade unions, too. The value in trade union membership are the collective agreements, trusteeship, representation of interest and the support that the union gives, in other words, the service of a trade union provides security and help in case of problems at workplace. Obviously, the unemployment benefits that comes with the membership are important, too.

The value proposition of an organization or a company sums up what they offer for their customers and how they differ from competitors. Value proposition consists of defining the product or service, who it is intended for, what is the value for the customer and why it is better or more unique than other companies' similar service in the way that it is easy to understand. The customers have their expectations of the value they will get from the service and it is formed of the contact and relations they have with the organization, previous experiences, hopes, needs, reputation, and brand of the company and its communication. For example, customer service, website and online presence, products, and services among many have a role in creating value for the customer as well as the opinion of received service. For the organization, the value of the customer is refined by the amount of money they bring in, how much services they use and how much they profit the company (Tuulaniemi, 2011, 33). Concerning trade unions, the most valuable customer is a long-standing member.

Tuulaniemi (2011, 34-35) mentions that the organization needs to pay attention to the several elements that impacts the value creation:

- What is the value of the organization and its services for the customer?
- What is the problem of the customer that the organization solves?
- What need of the customer the organization meets?
- What kind of service portfolio the organization offers to their customer segments?

Value creation of a service differs in some extent from the value creation of a product. According to Tuulaniemi (2011, 40), service value is a better measure for services. Service value means the value that the customer gets when using the service which they have purchased. Brand and status of the organization plays an important role in value creation. Customers often choose a brand that is known to them and they have good experiences of. Cost, that does not always mean monetary costs as previously mentioned, is an element in value creation as well as features the service or product has or which can be added to it. Elements of value creation according to Tuulaniemi (2011, 70) are needs, expectations, habits, customs, views of the other people, cost and features of a service, and cost of similar services.

In this development project I am hoping to tackle the element of user-friendliness, which is very important. Tuulaniemi (2011, 34) notes that user-friendliness creates significant value for the customer. In case of new technology, for example, the idea is to make things easier and more convenient and if adopting it in the use is complicated, customers will not buy it. Regarding the ERP of the Trade Union Jyty, the technology is not providing value regarding user-friendliness. As Tuulaniemi (2011, 34) mentions, it is easy for the customer not to buy a service if taking it into use is not made easy enough. After the needs and situations of operation are understood, the organizations can design services and technologies that meets the needs of the customers and are easy to use. Concerning this development project, there are almost daily contacts from the customers about the e-services and problems they have with them. That may suggest that the target customer and their needs and knowledge of technology are not taken in to account while designing the services.

3.1.2 Service design in developing services

Service design can mean both, designing services and products, but the processes differ. When designing services, the focus is on the customer and their needs that must be met. Without a customer, there is no service. In product design there is a product that can be sold, and value can be added to it by additional services and products. Services consist of several physical and virtual environments, systems, and interactions between different people. Customers, customer service persons and other elements that are involved in providing the service have an impact on the process. (Tuulaniemi 2011, 66; 71.)

Tuulaniemi (2011, 67, 71) describes service as an interactive process between a service provider and a customer. In the centre of providing and designing services is the understanding of peoples' needs, and motives, what are the values the customer's decision to purchase is based on and what kinds of expectations they have. Also, a service is a part of a bigger entity. Services are often provided or consumed with other services that are connected and the elements support each other. It means involving the needs and motives of the customer as well as the customer service personnel and other elements affecting the service into design process.

A successful service meets the needs of the customer and reaches the business targets of the organization. For the customer, the main characteristics of a service are practicality, usefulness, user-friendliness, and desirability. Other important points that impact on their purchase decision are individuality, easiness, and reliability. The service needs to profit the customer, too, and be worth the money and effort. Organizations have their business and financial objectives. (Tuulaniemi 2011, 103-105.)

3.1.3 Customer experience

As mentioned before, in the centre of a service is the customer and their experience of the service. According to Tuulaniemi (2011, 74-75), customer experience includes:

- marketing and all contacts concerning the service and organizations offering
- quality of the customer service
- features of the service
- user-friendliness of the service
- reliability

Tuulaniemi (2011, 74-75) divides customer experience in three levels: action, emotional and meaning. Action, or the "*hygiene level"* of the service, are the factors that determine, will the service have chances on the market and that includes the practicality and perceivability of the processes, usefulness, effectiveness and variety of the service, and answers to the need of the customer. Emotional level refers to immediate reactions and experiences of the customer like pleasantness, effortlessness, attractiveness, atmosphere, and such that affect one's senses. The third level, the level of meaning, includes the senses and impressions, cultural codes, promises, stories and dreams as well as personal relationships between customer's way of life and identity.

In addition to Tuulaniemi, Vesterinen (2014, 11-12), too, mentions customer centricity, i.e., the customer is in the centre of the service. It is a key element of business success. According to Vesterinen, the customer is very empowered in today's business world and listening to the customers and understanding their views, what they expect and how they act, and staying alert, will have direct impact on companies' success, growth, and financials. Companies need to include customer centricity as their strategy and create a customer centric attitude that reach from the leaders through all levels of employees. Often, the companies seem to think that they are customer centric because they have such topics as core values and strategies. From the customers' point of view the perception can be opposite because for them, the attitudes and practical actions of the company matters. The customer experience includes the personnel's behaviour, customer service and what is the product or received service like. (Tuulaniemi 2011, 74-75, Vesterinen 2014, 11-12.)

3.2 Customer journey and customer journey map

Customer journey can and should be studied in every organization. Studying the customer journey (front office and behind the scenes) of what your company is offering and creating a customer journey canvas, or a map, will help to create new and improve existing services (Lawrence, A. & al. 2019, Chapter 2).

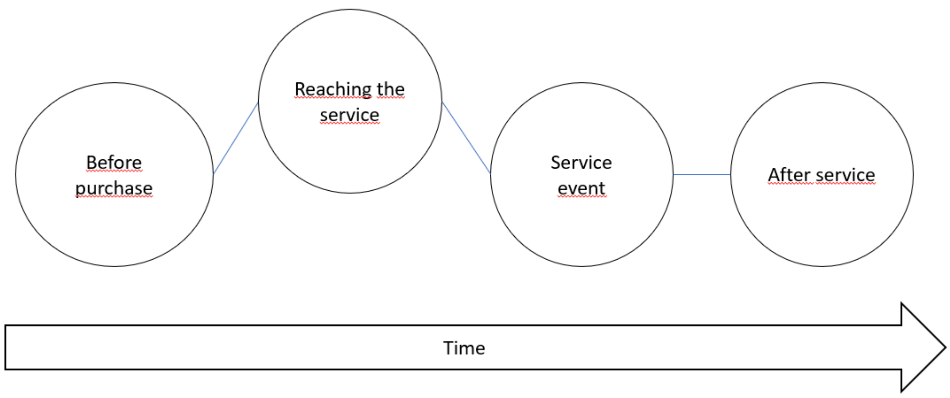

Figure 2. Three stages of customer journey (translated from Tuulaniemi, 2011, 79).

Tuulaniemi (2011, 78) describes the customer journey of a service as customer experience under a period of time. Customer journey consists of touchpoints, during which the customer is in contact with the service, organization, or some part of the business. The three phases of customer journey of a service are before purchase, during the purchase or service event and after it, as shown in figure 2. There are several touchpoints already before the customer makes their decision to purchase. Every time a customer interacts or is in contact of the brand or organization are called touchpoints. Touchpoints can be designed to make an impact on the customer and give a certain impression of the brand or the organization. Sometimes the touchpoints can give a negative or wrong impression. It is important to recognize that even though some services, for example customer service or data systems, are outsourced and not provided by your organization, the customer do not distinguish them to be different from your brand. Data system that does not work or is difficult to use, or bad customer service will affect on the customer's views. All the touchpoints are identified and marked down in order to create a customer journey map.

According to Kalbach (2018, 260.) the customer journey maps, or canvases, are versatile and have many uses. The stages of the customers journey can be mapped by focusing different areas of the experience frontstage and backstage, like decision making, service and expectations of the customer as well as how the service provider manages all the components of the experience. Visualizing the stages can help in understanding them and eventually improving them.

A customer journey map can be used in describing all the steps the customer takes when they do business or runs errands somewhere. The idea is to map all details including the points of interaction of the experience the customer has and create a canvas or a table-like-format. It is easier to gain understanding of complex processes in single overview and identify needs of improvement, and re-design along all stages of the customer journey. (Tomitsch, Wrigley, Borthwick, Ahmadpour, Frawley, Kocaballi, Nunez-Pacheco, Straker, and Loke 2018, 128-129.)

3.3 Process development

Developing processes in an organization can help in many ways, keeping up with the changes in working life, technology or improving productiveness. It is useful for organisations to know, how their processes work and asses them time to time. Reasons to assess current processes can be for example complaints from stakeholders or customers, errors and problems regarding daily work, or a need to improve efficiency and productivity. (Kalbach 2018, 86-89.)

Myllymäki (2020, 8-9) notes that systematic and planned approach is important in process development. It is teamwork and everyone knows, what they are doing and why, and are working in interaction with others.

3.3.1 LEAN strategy

The Lean strategy is one of the strategies that has been adopted in many organizations around the world. The strategy is originally Japanese, and the idea is to develop every level of the organization and their every process into as seamless flow of processes as possible in order to create a resilient organization that can adapt changes and grow. By thinking differently, solving problems at the right time, and avoiding wasteful solutions, it is possible to create solutions and continuous improvement as well as better quality, flexibility, better cost efficiency and profitability. (Ballé, Jones, Chaize & Fiume 2017, 6-11.)

LEAN strategy centres around thinking differently and gaining advantage from competitors by learning how to better satisfy their customers' needs. The strategy is people oriented and the aim is to encourage people to continuously improve and develop in what they do. Organization will create a culture of problem solving and gain deeper understanding of their work which leads to innovative thinking and collaborative teamwork. Everyone can improve their skills and competencies in all levels of the organization resulting in adding more value to the customer, services, and stages of production. Also, engaging employees to self-development and learning new skills will benefit the organization, too, because it will improve teamwork and bring out new capabilities and competency. (Ballé & al. 2017, 8-11, 50.)

The basic idea of LEAN leadership is to cut down the bureaucracy and engage all levels of organization to improve and develop their work and skills, not to dictate strategy and plan of execution from above. The person doing the job is usually most knowledgeable in improving it. (Ballé & al. 2017, 58-59). In this thesis project the LEAN leadership strategy is suitable to follow because the Jyty's member registry team can plan and develop their own day-to-day working methods quite freely. The team needs help in improving the work, cutting waste, and developing better understanding of customer-oriented services. Also, discussing problems together with the team and bringing in everyone's opinions, ideas and experiences will improve relationships and collaboration between the team members. Being able to take part in improving one's work and developing knowledge will hopefully have an influence on the employee commitment. In the past few years there has been almost a complete change of personnel in the member registry team. Engaging people to their work and lengthening the time they stay in the organization would make the member registry less stressful and vulnerable. The leaving of one employee puts a load on remaining team members and to the organization. After the employee has left the organization and taken their know-how with them, the remaining team members must figure out how to handle the tasks themselves.

3.3.2 Service design in developing organization's internal processes

Service design is one tool available to help in improving and developing processes and services. In addition to studying the offering and adding value to the service from the customer's point of view, service design can benefit organization's internal processes, too. Organization needs to profit financially from their business and provide their services in a way that is economically viable. With the help of service design, it is possible to cut costs and increase effectiveness of their processes by identifying the unproductive, unprofitable, or missing elements. Tuulaniemi (2011, 101) notes, that both the customer and the organization benefits from a successful service. According to Tuulaniemi (2011, 98-100), organization can benefit from service design the most when developing new services and products. The focus of this thesis is in improving an existing process.

Organization can benefit from service design concerning the internal processes of existing services, too. Among many, the benefits include:

- visualization of processes helps to understand the elements and touchpoints of the service process for all participants,
- bringing together customer and business perspectives,
- providing tools for improvement and development
- helping in identifying points in which it is possible to lower production costs
- defining the resources and elements which add most value, are missing or are unnecessary for the customer and service and
- developing measures to follow up and collect feedback about the service in order to improve and develop offering further (Tuulaniemi, 2011, 98-100).

3.3.3 Co-creation and testing

As mentioned before, the customer is in the centre of the service, so involving all parties, including the customer, the end-user, in developing services is useful. There are several parties involved in providing services and development process can benefit from an approach that acknowledges wider viewpoints and experiences. Customers views can be obtained by customer surveys and from feedback. A ll parties involved in providing the finished service will not necessarily take part in final decisions. Also, co-creation commits the parties in development process and providing services. Good situations for co-creation are for example workshops, which can be organized virtually, too. Tuulaniemi (2011, 116) recommends that visualizing the concepts and ideas and testing them in all stages of the developing processes will benefit in reaching understanding between parties and defining objectives (Tuulaniemi 2011, 116-117).

3.4 Value proposition canvas

Value proposition canvas is a tool that can help an organization to understand, what is the value of the service or the product you are aiming to create for the customer and clarify the customer profile. The value proposition helps by detailing the service by products and services, pain relievers and gain creators. Defining the service and its parts on a canvas will make it easier to see at a glance the connection of the service with what matters for the customer. (Osterwalder, Pigneur, Smith, Bernarda & Papadakos, 2014, chapter 1.)

- How does the services and products the organization offers create gain or value for the customer?
- How does your product help the customer to relieve their pain i.e., help solve their problems and needs?

- What products and services company offers that builds the value proposition?

The value proposition canvas is completed by defining customer profile from the customer's point of view. (Osterwalder & al. 2014, chapter 1.)

- What are the concrete benefits and outcomes the customer wants to gain with your service?
- What risks, obstacles, and bad outcomes there are?
- What jobs the customers are trying to get done?

When the organizations product or service can relieve the pain and create value to customer, i.e., the value proposition meets the customer profile, the product or service is addressing the customer's needs, as seen in figure 3. (Osterwalder & al. 2014, chapter 1.)

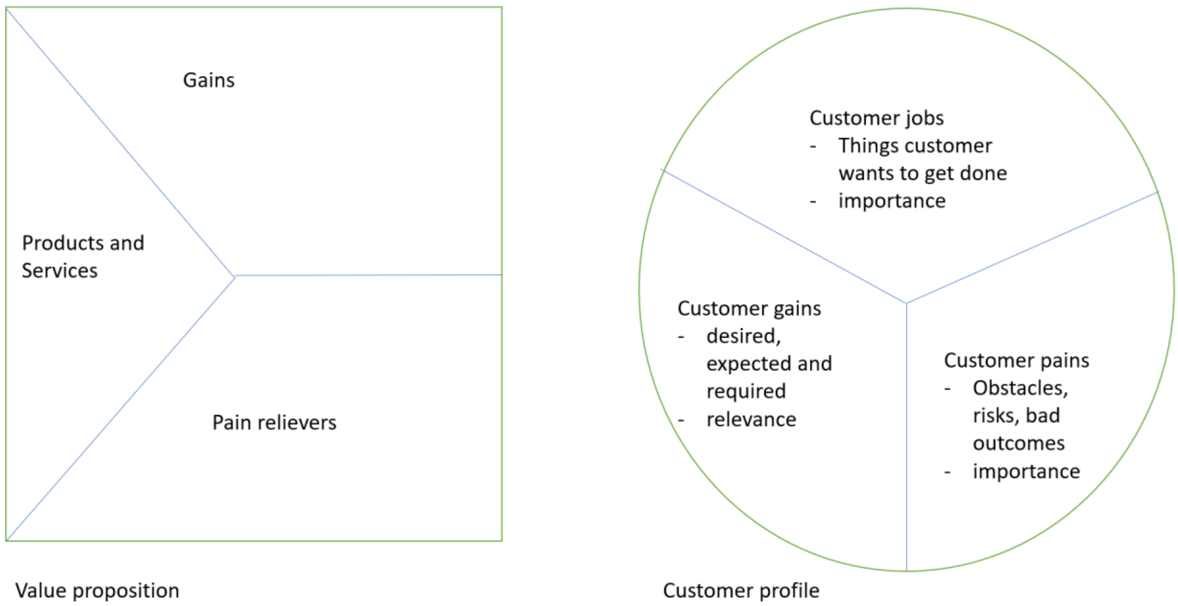

Figure 3. Value proposition canvas and customer segment canvas (modified from Osterwalder & al. 2014, chapter 1.)

Often there are more than one service or a product which has physical, intangible, digital and financial elements. Also, the relevance of the service or product varies depending on the customer's needs. Some can be essential for them when others are nice to have or unimportant. (Osterwalder & al. 2014, chapter 1.)

4 Methodology

Data for this thesis project is collected by holding a workshop, using available information and by observing. All the used methods are qualitative. Observation is used in data collection because I have worked in the member registry team for over a year. Also, I conducted an interview with the information management officer of the organization to present the development ideas, get feedback, and hear her views about them.

4.1 Research strategy

Research strategy of this study is action research. Action research is a good method in exploring and solving problems concerning human relationships and the goal is to improve practices through change. Action research is a continuous search and a self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing, evaluating, and re-planning. This method combines practice and theory implementing value to organization and in personal level. Action research requires the involvement of people in addition to the involvement of the researcher. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019, 203-204.)

Action research is a suitable method in business processes because it handles and engages in action and problems that needs change and improvement in individual and organizational levels (Saunders & al. 2019, 203-2014). In this thesis project the aim is to improve and develop existing process in my work, so the researcher is a part of the study.

4.2 Observation

According to Saunders et al. (2019, 378-387) there are three kinds of observation methods: participant observation, structured observation, and internet-mediated observation. Of those three, I will focus on participant observation method and especially on the role of participant-as-observer. There are some risks in this method, mainly concerning objectivity and ethical issues. The objectivity of the data collected by this method rely on the researcher's perspective and interpretation of it. Researcher's objectivity can be challenged for example by how his/her background (gender, cultural, social etc.) may affect on the interpretation, analysis, and data collection. (Saunders & al. 2019, 378-387.)

Ethically it is questionable, if it is ethical to collect and use data without the consent and knowledge of the person observed (Saunders & al. 2019, 387). In this study this is not a relevant concern. I have been part of the member registry team for some time and the team has consented to my data collection and helped me a lot during the thesis project.

Data collected by observation is not always of good quality and that is why it is important to record well the situations where and how the observations have been made. It is not always possible to make extensive notes while observing but the recording must be done as close to the observing as possible (Saunders et al. 2019, 395). Also, participant observer may take a more dominant role in discussions because it is an interactive process (Saunders et al. 2019, 392-393).

4.3 Secondary data

Answers of a previously conducted member survey were used as secondary data. A member survey for members was conducted in 2019 by the Trade Union Jyty and the results were published in year 2020. In all 889 members took part in it. The member survey was conducted to find out the views of the members concerning the membership, their reasons to join as members and what are their experiences about the Union and its services. Some of the results of the survey was presented to the member registry team in the workshop because it gave some insight of the views of the members and the results had not been shared with the team before. In my opinion the answers of the members were in line with the issues the member registry team has observed when being in contact with the members of the Union.

Saunders et al. (2019, 338-341) describe secondary data as quantitative or qualitative raw data or previously published summaries collected in other purposes. There are many sources of secondary data available, and many organizations have collected various data during the years of operation, for example reports, survey results and statistics. These can be used and analysed to provide different or additional interpretations, knowledge, and conclusions. The survey secondary data can be a good source of additional information in a thesis study to help to answer the research questions and compare or support findings (Saunders et al. 2019, 345). Regarding this thesis study, the secondary data has provided more context and support for the research results. Also, it has been interesting to discuss about the previously conducted survey with the member registry team in the workshop.

4.4 Workshop

Planning and developing together with people involved in the service is one of the methods of service design (Tuulaniemi, 2011, 118). In this development process one method of data collection is to organise a workshop with the member registry team. The base of the workshop is the current member application process. The aim is to discuss about the joining process and find suggestions and ideas how to develop and improve it together with the team from the premise of the customer i.e., members and other stakeholders.

Successful workshop has an agenda and timetable of all topics that should be discussed but not to control or direct the discussion too much. Keeping the discussion in topic and scheduled time without controlling it can be difficult. It is important to ensure a relaxed and open atmosphere in which everyone can feel comfortable and safe to express their ideas and comments. It is more beneficial for the workshop and its results when everyone takes part and shares their expertise and views, it is easy for the more shy and quiet persons keep in the background when a few talks. It is important for the workshop leader and other members not to be too criticizing or censor others' ideas and views. (Aalto 15.4.2015.)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the workshop was organized online via Teams. More detailed description and analysis of the ideas are presented in chapter 5. Workshop is a suitable method in development projects because it is a good way to come up with new approaches, developing ideas and brainstorming together in a group. It is possible to come up with all kinds of ideas, some that are developable, some not, but together in a group the ideas can be developed further and benefit from different views.

4.5 Interview

For a researcher, an interview is a method of gathering data that seeks answers to questions. It is a valid and reliable source of information as long as the interviewer is objective (Saunders & al. 2019, 437-438). According to Saunders et al. (2019, 437) interviews can be divided by their type as structured, semi-structured and unstructured research interviews. Structured interview is conducted by standardised, pre-set questions that are the same in all interviews and are presented in neutral tone to avoid indicating any bias. Non-standardised, semi-structured interviews are *qualitative research interviews* according to Saunders et al. (2019, 437). The interviewer has a list of themes and maybe some key questions to conduct the interview and guide the flow of discussion. The questions and shared data can differ and develop from previously conducted interviews, depending on participants' interpretations, findings of previous interviews or other reasons. Semi-structured interviews can be very useful in finding out new views, interpretations, and themes of the research.

5 Developing joining process

This development project begun by studying theory about process development. I am interested in service development and customer centric approach, which in my opinion are very suitable approaches in this development project. Trade unions represents interests of their members and as a representative of very diversified field of trades and professions, providing excellent customer experience for all members is not always simple for the member registry team of the Trade Union Jyty.

5.1 Creating the process description in the beginning of the project

In this development process the first step was to identify and write down the current member application process from the student's view. I created a swim lane diagram, as seen in figure 4, according to my understanding and knowledge of the process. Findings of the member survey 2019 gave some information from the members' views of the matter. Also, the experience of working in the member registry has given an understanding of common issues that the members have in regards of the member application process.

5.2 Swimlane diagram

A swim lane diagram is suitable and often used in visualizing workflow because its focus is on fitting together different tasks and interactions of several parts and operators of a process. It consists of rows or columns, hence the name swim lane diagram. Even though the swim lane diagram does not usually contain specific details or information of for example emotions, the flow of tasks, information and different actors is visualized in chronologic order and interaction is easy to see. (Kalbach 2018, 282-283.)

In my opinion, in this thesis project the swim lane diagram was the most suitable way to visualize the member application process. All the activities and interaction between the three actors, the applicant, the member registry team, and the ERP, are clearly visible as a swim lane diagram.

The swim lane diagram I created was the base for the workshop, and description in detail can be found in attachment 1. In the workshop with the member registry team on 24th March 2021 I presented the swim lane diagram as seen in figure 4 and the corrected version of it is in figure 5.

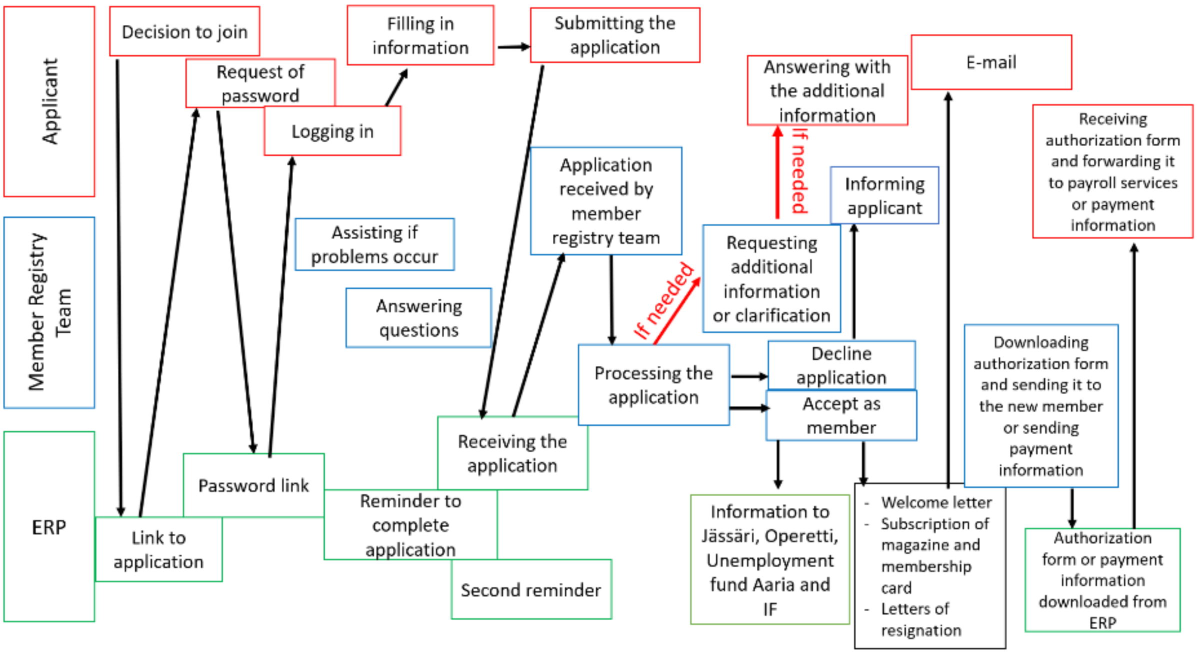

Figure 4. First version of the swim lane diagram of the member application process from the student’s view

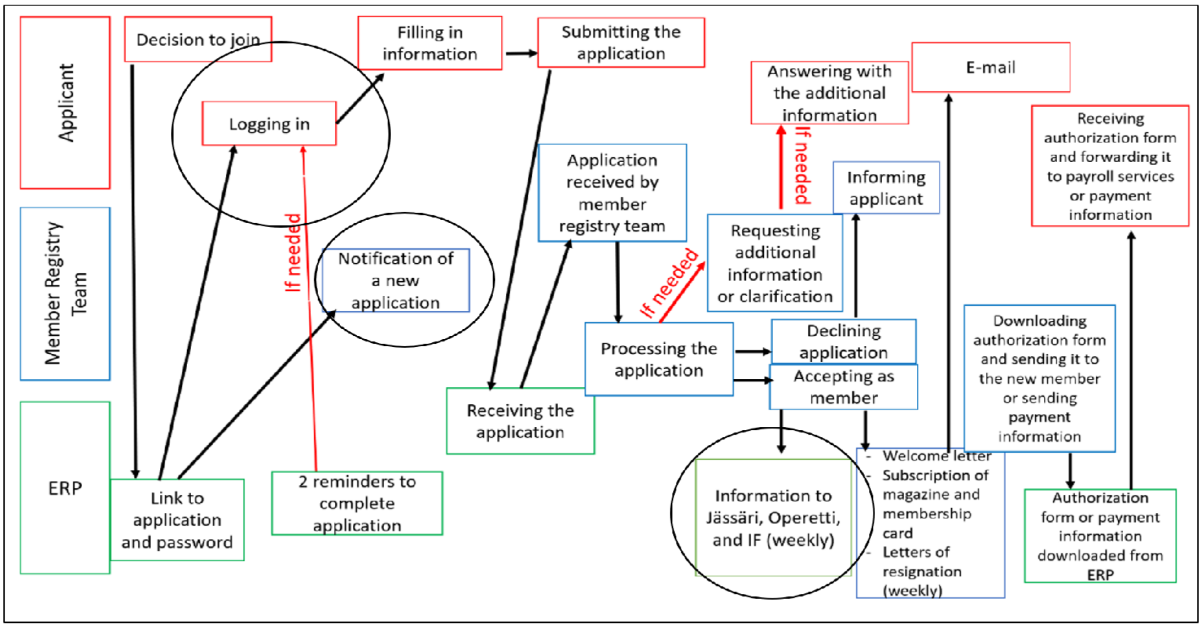

Figure 5. Corrected version of the swim lane diagram of the member application process after workshop

5.3 Developing the process with the member registry team

One method of collecting information and ideas for this thesis was to hold a workshop and discuss about the topic with the member registry team. In the beginning of the workshop, we discussed about the value proposition canvas and watched a short video about it as an introduction to the topic. After that I presented the description of the swim lane diagram of the member application process. The swim lane diagram was modified together with the team. Three modifications came up, which are circled on the diagram in figure 5. The more detailed description of the differences can be found in attachment 2.

5.3.1 Fixing the process description with the team

During the workshop three modifications to the process description in figure 4 were identified. The member registry team noted that the applicant will receive the link automatically after they have started to fill in the online application and there is no need to request one. Also, the ERP automation creates a notification of a new application to the member registry team's job queue at the same time. In case the applicant never finishes and submits the application, the notification, partly filled application and the information of the applicant disappears after 30 days.

During the thesis project the member application process changed due the forming of the Unemployment fund Aaria on 1.1.2021. Trade Union Jyty's unemployment fund The Public and Private Sector Unemployment Fund JYTK and the Unemployment fund Statia merged with the Unemployment fund JATTK as the Unemployment fund Aaria. Due to the merge, there were some changes in the process. The Public and Private Sector Unemployment Fund JYTK was sent lists of new members, the Unemployment fund Aaria receives member information via monthly software updates. The fixed swim lane diagram is in figure 5 and more detailed description can be found in attachment 2.

In addition to the changes and modifications, during the thesis project it emerged that the automatic transfer of the membership information to the insurance company has not worked properly at least for a year, probably not at all since the change over to the new ERP. All the members of the Trade Union Jyty have leisure time accident and travel insurance cover and the automation was supposed to keep the information of insured members up to date with the insurance company. The service provider was informed about this immediately. This has not caused any problems for the members or in their insurance coverage.

5.3.2 Value proposition with the team

Concerning this thesis project, one of the topics of the workshop was to create a value proposition canvas about the membership and responsibilities and tasks of the member registry team to help in answering the research questions. Also, it was a good opportunity to look at the process description together, identify some points that annoy the members along the member application process and identify possible obstacles and difficulties.

During the workshop on 24th March 2021, the team came up with a value proposition from the views of the member registry team and the member, as seen in figure 6. The member registry team identified and went through the pains, gains and jobs of the customers and discussed about how the issues can be fixed.

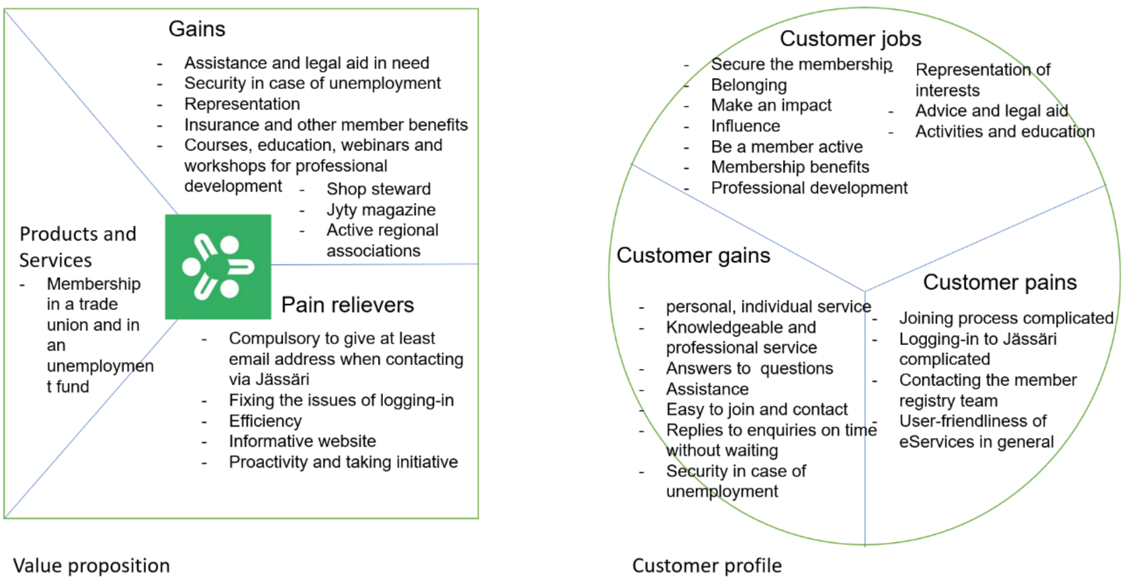

Figure 6. Value proposition canvas by the member registry team

First the member registry team discussed about the reasons and expectations the member wants to gain or get done by joining a trade union and an unemployment fund. These points and observations are important but not directly linked in the member application process. These will be forwarded accordingly.

The member registry team agreed that in their opinion the most important reason to join a trade union is to secure the membership fast and easy, and make sure they are covered in case of unemployment and/or problems regarding their employment occur. Other reasons can be for example the member's will:

- to belong to a community and be part of a group
- to make an impact, be a part of the decision making, do their part in improving the working life or become a member of the union's federative council or executive committee
- to become a member active in the regional association, trade union and/or a shop steward
- to be able to benefit from membership benefits such as the insurance cover

- to improve their skills and professional knowledge, and take part in training courses
- to take part in member activities like excursions, expos, and seminars
- to have their interests represented
- to receive representation and legal aid in need

The key issues that came up in the workshop concerning the member application process according to the member registry team, are the problems in logging-in to the membership application and the e-services. Many members consider the application process complicated. Also, the e-services Jässäri and Operetti are not very user-friendly. These issues are known and needs to be fixed by the service provider.

The member registry team can do their part in helping the members to get the most of their membership. The member registry team needs to be easy to reach and provide professional service during all stages of the membership. Also, being able to answer questions with expertise and without too much delay. The member registry team noted that many times a potential member contact when they are thinking about joining or hesitating between two different unions, so the team can help them in choosing the best one for them.

The member would benefit from

- effective, functioning, and user-friendly way to handle contacting online via Jässäri
- informative website with easy to find contact details and more information such as frequently asked questions section

In addition to the reasons the member joins in a trade union, they have expectations of the membership and service. The member registry team can meet the expectations by for example:

- replying to their enquiries in time and meeting deadlines even when the member registry is overloaded
- answering to the members’ questions, even to some they do not know to ask
- making sure that the application process works smoothly
- providing professional and knowledgeable service

Member registry team can add more value for the customers by creating unexpected gains:

- by providing personal, individual service, though it was noted that people have different expectations and wishes
- providing positive, focused customer experience for all members, stakeholders and everyone that contacts the member registry team

- being well organized, having things under control, and taking care of the big picture for the member
- being proactive and taking initiative, for example if noted that the member would benefit more from transferring to another regional association

5.4 Summary of the workshop

In the workshop the team members discussed about the value proposition and an ideal member application process. Also, some problems which the members face were identified and discussed about. The changes and points that need developing were small but meaningful. According to the member registry team, increasing the automation in the process and a more reliable ERP would benefit the team's work the most. The member would benefit from more simple way of logging in the system and adding some boxes of information to aid in filling in the application form. The current member application process will be the ideal process after the issues with the login are resolved.

Bottlenecks or unnecessary steps in the member application process were not identified in addition to the first step of the application. The member registry team feels that the most questions and problems the applicants have are about the logging in to the system. It applies to the logging in to the e-service Jässäri, too. In case the applicants are not able to log in, they cannot access the application and apply for membership. Also, there are very few ways for the member registry team to provide any help in this issue. Many times, the applicant starts over from the beginning if they are unable to log in and then the system breaks down completely because the social security number is already in use.

The solution to this would be a different way of identification and logging in the service. Authentication of identity via internet banking codes or mobile ID i.e., electronic trust service, would be a big improvement and in addition to being easier for the members, it is a very data secure way to use the services.

More of the requested information in the online application form should be mandatory to fill. The system allows the application to be submitted without some important details of the applicant and for example about their employment. This applies to the student member applications, too. Currently it is possible to submit the application for a student member by filling out either information of their studies or work. It is not allowed to accept a person as a student member if they are not students. Also, it is possible to fill in the information of employment incompletely. The member registry team must contact all applicants who have submitted incomplete applications and the student members who have filled in information about employment but have not chosen to join the unemployment fund. The Unemployment Fund Act (työttömyyskassalaki 603/1984) states clearly that it is not possible to join an unemployment fund without employment but for the applicant it can be a big problem if they are inadvertently failed to join in it.

To aid the applicant in filling in the required information correctly, the team would like to add boxes to the online application form. By clicking the box, the applicant would see a clarification about the requested information.

It is possible to submit the form without choosing to join the unemployment fund and it is very unusual for someone to join the trade union only. The member registry team suggests that there would be a box that the applicant could tick off in case they do not want to join the unemployment fund, the default would be that they join in it automatically. Currently it is the other way round. Also, the member needs to mark down the date they want to join in the trade union and the unemployment fund. In case the applicant's employment contract begins on a later date than the day they are filling in the application, the automation sets the date of joining to the unemployment fund as the first day of the employment. The date of joining to the trade union is automatically put as the date the application is filled, so it is possible to have two different dates on the application. It is recommended to join both on the same date, because it is clearer and in case the applicant is transferring from another unemployment fund and trade union, the dates of ending previous memberships would be different as well. The person needs to be employed at the time of joining. The member registry team suggests that the dates would have to be the same.

5.5 Suggestions for the member registry team

For the member registry team, the suggestion is to extend the phone customer service hours. For example, by returning to previous service hours, which were 9-12 every weekday or adding service hours for one afternoon in a week. Because of serious overload of work and under-manning, the phone service hours were cut to two hours a day Monday-Tuesday and Thursday-Friday about a year ago. The member registry team discussed about a chat feature or a chat bot for an additional way of contact but at the moment it is seen unnecessary. The chat bots tend to work quite poorly and mainly add the workload and unpleased customers. Chat feature is not data secure way to handle membership issues either.

Member registry team can be reached by post, email, phone and via e-services Jässäri and Operetti. Members are encouraged to contact the member registry team via e-services because the connection is data secure. The extended phone service hours would be enough for the time.

A decision was made to re-design the paper application form. There will not be a separate printed form but a pdf-file that can be filled in on computer or print it out and fill in by hand. It will be in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. It will be simpler and clearer to fill in. Discussions are ongoing about if it is still needed to include the authorisation form for deducting the member fee from salary in it. The form will be in Finnish and in Swedish.

5.6 Suggestions for the service provider and ERP

Concerning the ERP, the service provider needs to address the reliability issues. Also, the known problems need to be fixed faster. There are several known problems and faults in the system that are not fixed despite constant reminders. The service provider has promised more automation, but they have not delivered in agreed time.

The most important feature for automation is the authorization to collect membership fees from salary and sending it directly to payroll services. Currently the authorization form is downloaded from the system, sent for the member via email and the member forwards it to their payroll services after signing it. The automatization would be easier, because the member could authorize the member registry to do it for them. That would benefit the organization by reducing the unpaid membership fees. There is a significant lapse of time between the start of the membership and when the first membership fees are paid. Also, some members never forward the authorization form to their payroll services.

When the membership application is processed in advance and the member joins the union in a future date, and pays the membership fee themselves, the system does not allow sending the payment information before the first day of membership. Being able to send the payment information at the time the membership is approved, would save time for the member registry team.

Concerning Jässäri and Operetti, the e-services for members and actives of the regional associations, the message feature is slow for the member registry team to use. It is not possible to answer directly to the message of the member, but it needs to be copied to a mailer service. Also, it has come to member registry team’s attention, that even though it is supposed to be impossible to log in and use Jässäri without an email address, some of the members have managed to log in and send questions for member registry team without leaving any contact information to get back to them.

Concerning the process of applying as a member the current two stages is seen unnecessarily difficult. Almost weekly there is an applicant who has problems with the first stage of identification and logging in to fill out the application. There is a known problem with the identification concerning members who are transferring from certain other trade unions. The service provider is unable to fix this issue.

As previously mentioned, the members have quite a lot of problems concerning logging in the e-services and even though some difficulties can be explained by the user who has not read the instructions or has forgotten their password, there is something wrong with it, but the service provider is not interested or capable to fix the issues. The suggested change to electronic trust service identification would fix these issues, too.

A one stage joining process via identification by either internet banking codes or mobile identification code, mobile certification, or certificate card, would likely reduce the problems. It will be easier for the member as well more data secure way. The problem with this option seems to be the cost and that the service provider does not offer such technology themselves. Other solution to replace the current two-stage logon is to take out the part in which the password is sent either to a mobile phone number or as a link to the applicant's e-mail, but that is less secure and more vulnerable to misuse.

Also, some ideas for clarifying the application form came up. The membership of the unemployment fund could be linked to the membership of the union so that the member would join to both at the same date automatically. It is often needed to reach out the applicant because they have chosen either different dates to join in the union and the unemployment fund or failed to choose the unemployment fund membership completely.

5.7 Implementation

The ideas and suggestions that came up during this study has been forwarded and some improvements are in progress. The service provider takes their time in delivering the suggested improvements and features. I presented the results of the workshop and the development ideas to the organization's information management officer. I interviewed her to receive comments and feedback about the findings.

Regarding to the problems with the login are known to the service provider. Concerning new members who transfer from some other unions and thus have had difficulties in being able to log in to application form, the service provider claims they have fixed the issues, even though there still are problems quite regularly. There is still a request to continue working with the issue.

The suggestion to add a box for additional information to the online application is not technically possible. According to the organization’s information management officer (interview 20.4.2021) the application form has one place in which additional information could be added.

Trade Union Jyty is interested in implementing the identification via electronic trust service but the development of it is in the very beginning by the service provider. The service provider does not provide the technology, but they have organized a tender competition and the partner has been chosen. The service is estimated to be available in the end of the year 2021 at the earliest. The available solution to the in-logging problem is to replace the current two-stage joining process with one-stage process that does not require logging in the services. It would be a membership application form which the applicant fills in on webpage via data secure connection. The other organizations, who use the same ERP, are not interested in this and neither is Trade Union Jyty. (Jyty’s information management officer, 20.4.2021.)

The changes for the membership fee authorization form have been delayed until fall 2021 (Jyty’s information management officer, 20.4.2021).

Regarding the sending of the payment information for a member who joins the union in a future date, the service provider had claimed that it was not a recurring problem and there is no need for fixing it. The service provider has been provided with more information and a new request to fix it as soon as possible.

Changes and clarifications for the application in pdf-form will be implemented soon. There will not be a similar printed application form as currently but a pdf-form that can be filled in on computer or printed out and filled in on hand. Many member associations have requested a printable application form because with that they can help the applicant in filling it out. The new, improved form that is in line with the General Data Protection Regulation is soon in use.

Other development ideas that the member registry team came up with have been received well but it is not known when and if these could be implemented. Cost estimate for the changes depends on many things and is between the service provider and the finance department.

6 Conclusions

The thesis project begun by finding out the answer to the sub-question *What is the current application process of the Trade Union Jyty?* I created a process description of the current member application process and visualized it in a swim lane diagram. The process description was reviewed it with the member registry team and Jyty's information management officer. The main research question was *How the current member application process can be improved from the views of the new member and the Trade Union Jyty?* The member registry team discussed about points needing improvement and development ideas together in a workshop. The process description and ideas of the member registry team were presented to the information management officer of Jyty.

The ideas to improve the service and develop the joining process that came up in this thesis study are quite simple, but they would make a significant difference for the customer and for the member registry team and benefit the organization. Concerning the member application process the only identified bottleneck is the first stage of the application, the logging in to the application.

In my opinion the organization could benefit from more customer-focused approach. The members of the Trade Union Jyty work in many different fields and professions and have different backgrounds from education to work experience and place of residence. To make sure that all members feel welcomed to the Union and can have the best service possible, it is important to offer several different ways to contact the union but all of them needs to be working properly. System that does not work may result in the potential member to change their mind about applying.

6.1 Opinions of the student and reflection of learning

For me, it was interesting to find out that the ideas and suggestions for creating an ideal member application process are simple and it seems to be possible to implement. I got interested in service design during my studies at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences and I am pleased to have been able to learn more during this thesis process. I have learned that small changes and adjustments can make a significant impact even though the system seemed impossible to improve without big investments. In my opinion the results of this study are in line with the theory and answers to the research questions.

6.2 Ideas for further development

The development of processes should be continued further and study all processes of member registry team from the view of service design and customer centricity in mind. In addition to that, the distribution of work and responsibilities among the team members should be addressed to improve communication, professional development, and happiness at work. The personnel have changed almost completely several times during just a few past years and the employee turnover has created many challenges.

Also, the co-operation and communication with the membership fee team is almost non-existent. Member registry team and membership fee team could strengthen co-operation and agree on common practices to make work more efficient and provide better service for the members.

Trade Union Jyty’s website will be renewed during 2021 and the member registry team has some suggestions to it. Adding more online forms to inform the member registry team and the membership fee team about changes in membership, such as resigning from the membership, would benefit the members. Member registry team hopes for more informative website regarding the stages of membership and suggests adding a frequently asked questions section on the website, the idea needs to be developed further.

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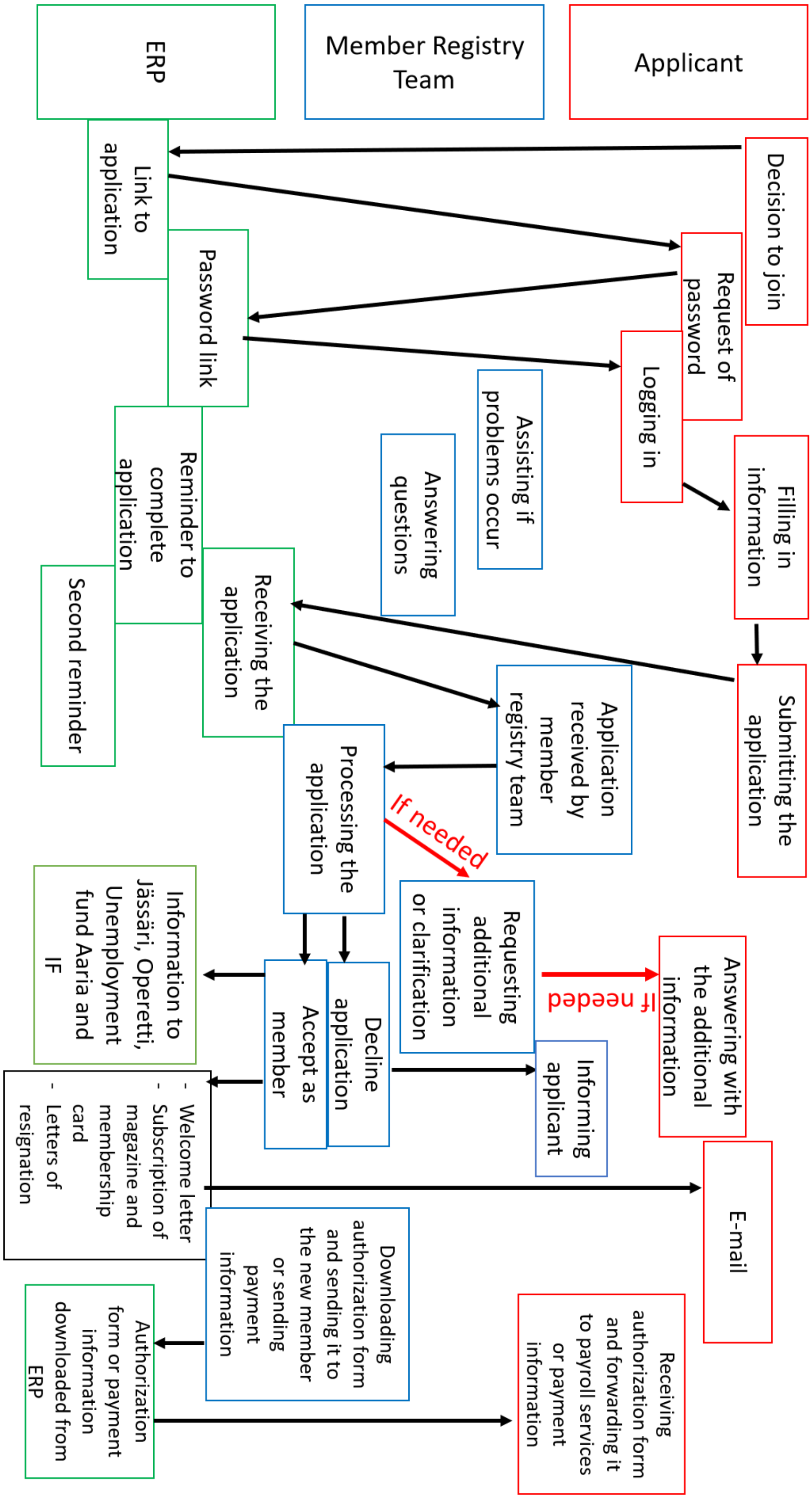
Attachments

Appendix 1. The current member application process

Swim lane diagram of the member application process from student's view



The joining as a member of Trade Union Jyty begins with the decision to join. The members join the union by recommendation, after a company or school visit by a regional representative of Jyty, shop steward or a member of one of the associations, getting to know the union in a business fair, expo, lecture, or other professional event or by their own interest. Many of the new members join by a recommendation of a work colleague or the shop steward. The regional representatives meet members and potential members regularly and keeps in contact with companies and workplaces.

It is recommended to choose a trade union by collective agreement or profession because the expertise in their fields of business will benefit the member the most. It is beneficial for everyone the more organized members there are in the place of employment when negotiating better conditions for a workplace. There are several other reasons to join, too, including dissatisfaction on a previous labour union, willingness to take part in training and education Jyty provides, the membership fee is less expensive than in another union, membership benefits like free travel insurance, and active regional associations (Member survey, 2019).

There are two ways to join the Trade Union Jyty. The easiest and recommended way is to fill out an online application form that can be found on the website, the second way is to fill an application form on paper or as a pdf-file and send it to the union or to the regional association by post or email.

The paper application form is used mainly in events, because it is easy to fill right away. Some of the regional associations prefers paper forms as well, because they can be filled together with the member and it is easy to help them, if needed. Also, some people do not have an email address or do not feel comfortable to use the online application form. The pdf-form is used in case there is a problem in logging in the online system. There are few reasons, why the logging in does not work, one being a known issue concerning the transferring members from other unions who use the same ERP. The service provider is unable to fix the problem. This is a very inconvenient problem that has occurred since changing to the current ERP.

Paper and pdf-forms produce the most work in the member registry team because all the information must be transferred to the system by hand. It is slow and sometimes hand-written information is difficult to read. There is also a delay because the paper forms are often sent by post.

Often the new member has already tried to fill in the online form and contacted the member registry team regarding a problem before they are asked to fill in a paper- or pdfapplication form. The members may need advice in submitting the online form, or there can be a technical problem. The member registry team answers for troubleshooting and assisting the members. However, the amount of time that it takes to admit a new member after them first having problems and then submitting the hand filled application is excessive compared to what it takes to process an online application form that works. Also, the information security risk is higher if sending the form by uncoded email.

Online form can be found on www.jytyliitto.fi website. It has two stages. First the member needs to fill in their contact and personal information as well as accept the terms and conditions. To sign in the form, they are then sent a link to log in by email or a password by text message. Then they will log in and are able to continue with the second stage. They choose the membership type, a student member, or a permanent member.

Students can join the union when they are enrolled to a school. Apprentices are considered as permanent members. Student members, who do not have employment, are not by law, the Unemployment Funds Act (603/1984), eligible to belong to the unemployment fund but has all the other benefits and services available for them as a permanent member. Some student members work while studying and joining in the unemployment fund is beneficial even when the periods of employment are short. The right to the earnings-related allowance can be accumulated from several shorter periods of employment and studying increases the time of accumulating the working weeks up to 9 years (The Social Insurance Institution of Finland 2021). Permanent members join the Unemployment fund Aaria when joining as a Trade Union Jyty member.

After logging in, the member needs to provide following information:

1. date they want to join to the unemployment fund and the union
2. which regional or professional association they would like to join. This is optional, the member registry team will recommend or choose the most beneficial one for the member.
3. information about their education (optional)
4. information about their current employment: employer, start date, type and duration of work contract, collective agreement applied, and job title
5. payment of membership fee, authorizing the employer to deduct it from salary or paying it by oneself
6. if transferring from other labour union and/or unemployment fund, authorisation of termination of previous membership
7. if joining by recommendation of someone, providing the name of that person
8. additional information (optional)
9. submitting the application

The member registry team will process every application and approve or decline the applicants as union and unemployment fund members. Sometimes there is information missing or needs clarifying so the member registry team will contact the applicant. Depending on the chosen method of the payment of the membership fee, the new member is sent either an authorization form or payment information. This is done manually via email and sometimes also by post.

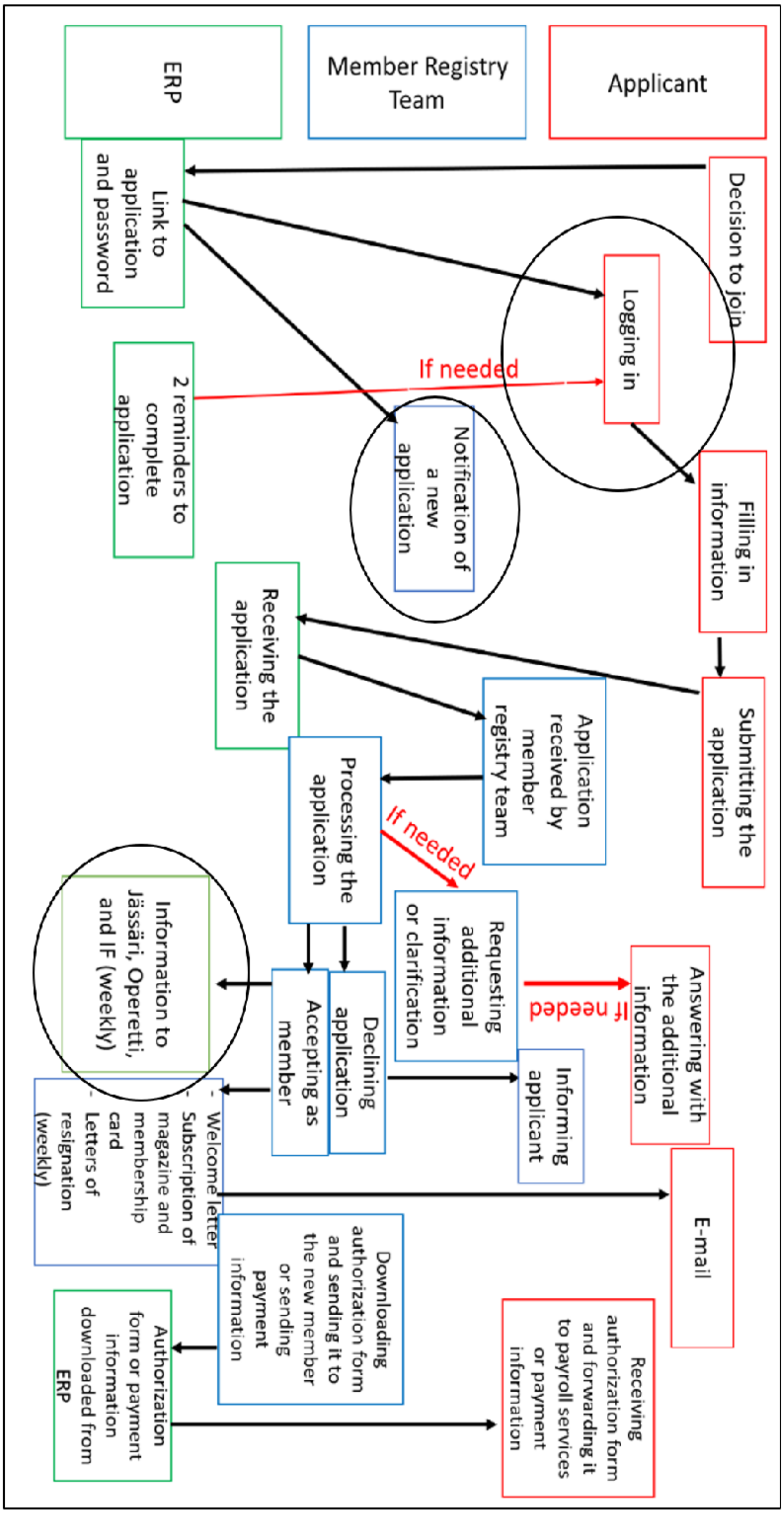
The ERP has a feature that automatically sends letters to the member.

1. If the applicant has only partly completed the application form, the system will automatically send two reminder messages by email asking the applicant to complete the application. First reminder is sent on the next day and second a day after the first reminder. If the application is not completed, the form will disappear after 30 days, but the applicant can apply again from the beginning. If they cannot continue with the application, they can contact the member registry team and get assistance with it.
2. When the application is processed and membership approved, the system will send a welcome letter by email that has information about the joining.
3. In case the new member has authorized Jyty to terminate their previous membership in another labour union and/or unemployment fund, the system will send a notice of resignation by post. The notice of resignation can also be sent manually in case the applicant authorises the termination after the application is already approved or some other reason. Automatization works only while the application is approved, after that it needs to be sent manually.
4. When membership is approved, a subscription of the Jyty member magazine and membership card is added automatically. The member cards will be ordered from the printing house by the member registry team once a month and it will be sent by post. A mobile membership card is available to the members from March 2021 and in future they can choose from plastic and mobile membership cards or have both.

Other automatized features include the transfer of information to the electronic member service Jässäri as well as the e-service for regional association actives, Operetti. The member associations will receive the information about a new member and their contact information via Operetti. Member can hide their contact information from the association, but their name will be listed. Also, the insurance company will receive the information about new members. From the first day of membership the member can access Jässäri.

Appendix 2: The member application process updated during the thesis project

Corrected swim lane diagram of the member application process



During this thesis project the Unemployment fund Aaria was formed. Trade Union Jyty's unemployment fund The Public and Private Sector Unemployment Fund JYTK, together with the Unemployment fund Statia merged with the Unemployment fund JATTK and formed the Unemployment fund Aaria from 1.1.2021. The collaboration with the Unemployment fund Aaria is different from previous. The information of new members transfers via software update monthly. Also, the Unemployment fund Aaria employees handling the Jyty members, can access to the trade union's ERP and check out their information and membership status from there.

Concerning the service description, unlike I previously had understood, the applicant will receive the password automatically after filling in their contact information on the online form. The link or the password is sent to the applicant's email or phone number, they continue to log in and can fill in the rest of the application. Also, at this moment the ERP creates a notification about a new application in progress and it can be seen in the member registry team member's job queue. If the application is not completed, the notification will disappear and if it is submitted, it is ready to be processed.