



# MARKETING AND DESIGN IN THE SERVICE SECTOR

Enhancing the Customer Experience

Edited by

SALOOMEH TABARI  
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# **Marketing and Design in the Service Sector: Enhancing Customer Experience**

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

*I dedicate this book with love to my best friends and confidante, Daniel, and my parents Sarah and Mohsen, thank you for your constant love and support. You all have been my inspiration, and my world is a better place because of you all. . .*

Saloomeh Tabari

*Thanks to everyone who helped me so much during this very special time in my life. Special thanks to Jinping and the kids; your love makes me strong.*

Wei Chen

*To Stavros, Eleni, Magda, Murat, Alex Ege and Alina, for making our shared experiences so memorable.*

Stella Kladou

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*Salomeh, Wei and Stella*

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# Introduction

*Saloomeh Tabari<sup>a</sup>, Wei Chen<sup>b</sup> and Stella Kladou<sup>c</sup>*

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Customer experience has long been central in the pursue of a sustainable competitive advantage, leading to numerous explorations and reviews of the concept in scholarly research (e.g., [Becker & Jaakola, 2020](#); [Rose et al., 2011](#)). Customer experience research develops in services marketing, consumer research, service-dominant logic, online marketing, branding, experiential marketing and service design, as either responses to managerial stimuli or responses to consumption processes ([Becker & Jaakola, 2020](#)). The ultimate objective remains progressing the research agenda in a way that will facilitate businesses, organisations and institutions to better understand how customers process and evaluate their experiences. In this manner, managers obtain a roadmap on how to establish long-term relationships with their customers and customers benefit from a memorable, rewarding experience (e.g., [Kim, 2010](#); [Rose et al., 2011](#)).

This book contributes towards this direction by looking through the space-scape and designscape to improve service performance to better address customer needs and desires. In specific, this edited volume aims to provide a practical, evidence-based vision of how to enhance and enrich customer experience through tangibles, exterior and interior design and space within the service industry.

In doing so, the book focuses on the new perspective of design in marketing within the service sector and explores how the spacescape and designscape impacts on customer experience. We look at fresh and recent research to provide a new perspective on design, offline and online spaces in customer-oriented services, such as retail, healthcare, sports, restaurants, cafes and hotels. The book explores new ideas and approaches on the importance of the internal and external environment as seen from the customers' experience.

A key characteristic of experience-centric services is that they are designed to engage customers, that is to enable the customer to connect with the service in a personal, memorable way ([Beltagui & Candi, 2018](#); [Pine & Gilmore, 1998](#); [Pullman & Gross, 2004](#)). A context consists of the physical and relational elements in the experience environment. It includes the physical setting, the social

actors and any social interactions with other customers and/or service facilitators (Gupta & Vajic, 2000; Kumar et al., 2019). The context can be used to intensify engagement and emotional connections and is the primary concern of experience design (Pullman & Gross, 2004; De Keyser et al., 2020). The context of a service sends cues to customers that create and influence their experience. Bitner (1992), in her first approaches to the servicescape, distinguishes among people, processes and physical evidence that send cues to customers.

The importance of internal and external environment (interior and exterior) and the product design have been discussed by many researchers in the past as part of designscape; however, the COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented changes to the service industry. As a result, the product design, delivery design and setting of the sector faced a holistic change. The service sector tries to provide customers with comfort and, in the process, we witness innovative ways to meet the demand, including, for instance, contactless delivery or robots for delivery even in the healthcare industry. Even before the pandemic, the hospitality, travel and tourism industry had started attracting attention for innovations in terms of designing spaces, with the introduction of the spacescape and an enhanced experiencescape which provided a unique stress-free experience for their customers (e.g., silent airport). The pandemic outbreak has impacted on the industry, leaving destinations and relevant businesses struggling for the resilience of the sector and exploring their options through intense focus on the customer experience and the designscape on offer.

The experiences gained from service digitalisation during the recent pandemic crisis offer fruitful learning for digital innovation, transformation and service design and development. The easy access to services without waiting in a queue (e.g., e-banking, takeaway and remote working) changed customer perspective towards the spacescape and designscape. In the meantime, the pandemic served as a reminder to both businesses and consumers that we ought to be more sustainable and aware of our environment. This edited volume contributes towards the challenges hereby set, by collecting chapters which bring theory and practice together as well as relevant and fresh case studies.

## **The Structure of Edited Book**

The book begins with an exploration of the role of industrial design in developing the designscape. In Chapter 1, Hassan Sadeghi Naeini and Mahdie Jafarnejad Shahri discuss the importance of service design for industrial design. According to the authors, as customer experience becomes increasingly more important in order to inspire loyalty and boost performance, focus moves from the physical characteristics of products to memorable, holistic service experience. The conceptual approach of this chapter helps the reader to build one's understanding by step-by-step navigating from one concept to the next one and their in-between relationship. Industrial design helps enhance customer experience by creating products, systems and services that can foster emotional engagement and user experience in order to boost loyalty. Taken the complexity and interdependency

of products and services, industrial designers need to employ design thinking, product–service system (PSS) approaches and sustainability principles. Design thinking hereby develops as a problem-solving approach to grasp customers' needs and emotions in order to develop innovative products and services. Similarly, the PSS reflects a business innovation on its own, by embracing approaches that take the complete service experience into consideration in order to design interconnected products and services as part of a cohesive system. Service design prioritises the complete service experience. Thus, incorporating its principles into industrial design facilitates positive customer experience beyond the level of experience with a physical product, which is important in terms of developing and maintaining a competitive advantage and for the success of marketing and branding strategies.

The conceptual approach of Chapter 1 smoothly passes the baton to Chapter 2 in which Saloomeh Tabari, Dave Egan and Helen Egan take on board the aspect of servitisation of the modern business landscape of the previous chapter to discuss the challenges of creating unique environments and servicescapes in the café industry. The authors used an auto-ethnographic approach as café flaneurs to report on how dimensions such as the place identity and its welcoming character, along with safety perceptions relate with their café experience and decision-making. Reporting back to three case studies and their experiences at Manchester's Northern Quarter, Gainsborough and Lincoln in the United Kingdom (UK) reveal that, next to the food and beverage, perceived authenticity of the café and its *genius loci* were the most important elements contributing to the café experience. Thus, Egan, Egan and Tabari recommend to independent coffee shop businesses to focus on both the external (e.g., architecture and street art) and the internal environment (e.g., music, crockery, furniture, dishes and blends of tea and coffee) in order to attract and satisfy the café flaneurs.

Chapter 3 then takes us to another part of the hospitality industry (i.e., accommodation), picks up specifically the element of music and explores its role to emotional reactions and memory. Yunyan Wu and Saloomeh Tabari follow a mixed methods approach to investigate the connection of musical variables (musicscape, as they name it) in hotel lobbies to enhance customer satisfaction. Data collected at a hotel in the South of the UK, through a structured questionnaire and online interviews, reveal that background music has a significant impact on customer satisfaction and the time customers wish to spend at the lobby. Additional analysis suggests this impact changes according to customers' age and gender. Thus, practitioners are advised to consider the findings of this study, adjust lobby background music according to their targeted segments and harvest the benefits of sound marketing.

Chapter 4 delves into physical attributes of hotel interior and exterior design to evaluate their effect on customer satisfaction and hotel choice. In specific, Minhan Wang, Saloomeh Tabari and Wei Chen adopt a mixed methodology design to survey and interview customers on the influence of hotel design on their selection process and satisfaction. Wang et al. hereby look into a variety of aspects, such as the hotel room design, but also the geographical location and the local cultural landscape of the hotel. Analysis reveals that hotel design stimulates guests' visual

experience to some extent and boosts satisfaction. Yet, in line with [Lo \(2010\)](#), design should be people-oriented and place customer needs in the centre. Thus, hotels should continue to pay increased attention to facilities and services in order to make sure that design, customer needs and psychological integration are considered holistically when designing and delivering the hotel experience.

Chapter 5 then moves on to innovative service, processes and product design in the accommodation industry. Hassan Ali Khan hereby looks into how the aforementioned types of design help create engaging and custom-made customer experiences. In-depth interviews with experts, guest surveys and case studies employed highlight the importance of a variety of elements, such as market research and intelligence in order to stay tuned with guests' expectations and wants, employee training and development, the adoption of emerging technologies, and timely response to sustainability requirements.

Chapter 6 looks more into online marketing innovation. In this chapter, Joanna Kuczevska, Agnieszka Nawrocka and Aleksandra Borowicz seek to unearth pioneering solutions within the domain of online marketing and discern relevant opportunities. Focussing on three small companies located in Poland, the authors investigate whether these companies utilise innovative marketing tools on Instagram to fulfil their business objectives. Instagram emerges as an important platform for these companies, not simply as a platform used for promotion but also as a facilitator of co-creation opportunities, an image enhancer and a relationship builder for the companies with their customers.

Hassan Ali Khan acknowledges the importance of virtual design to create memorable experiences. Therefore, in Chapter 7, he examines how virtual reality, augmented reality and other digital technologies are implemented in other facets of the hospitality experience, such as room and restaurant decoration and staff responsiveness to customer needs. Interviews with experts, guest surveys and in-depth analysis of the virtual design of hotels put in the scope help investigate the potential outcomes and advantages of virtual design on the hotel and its clientele and confirm its importance in the pursue of customised services, customer loyalty and competitive advantage.

Chapter 8 then introduces digital detox and the act of intentionally disconnecting from digital devices in order to more fully engage with the physical environment. Serap Özdemir Güzel and Ismail Uzut particularly focus on digital detox tourism experiences and their potential to promote mindfulness and enhance the overall travel experience. The thematic analysis of Tripadvisor posts reveals the experiential focus and health philosophy of digital detox tourism, as well as the importance of digital detox to connect and relax during the travel experience. Building on these findings, the authors invite tourism stakeholders to concentrate on such conscientious consumers and factors these travellers appreciate, namely novelty, technostress, well-being and health, relaxation, social bonding and self-expression.

The following two chapters shift the interest from the hospitality and tourism industry to the sports industry. First, Sardar Mohammadi, Abed Mahmoudian and Manuel Alonso Dos Santos in Chapter 9 focus on the consumption experience of in sportswear retail stores. Qualitative research carried out in Iran with

sports marketing experts reveal that sports stores consider aspects of human resources, products, interior design, exterior space, technology and interaction and communication in their marketing strategies. In fact, the authors confirm that the priority of sportswear retail stores is to inspire purchase but also boost satisfaction and loyalty by creating a unique experience for their customers.

Chapter 10 acknowledges limited research on the design of sports customer experience. In response, Sardar Mohammadi, Abed Mahmoudian and Mike Rayne attempt to identify the areas of creating customer experience in sports and recreational environments by focussing on the case of the Engalab sports and recreational club in Iran. The content analysis of interview data reveal the use of functional, comprehensive, human, physical, performance, aesthetic, sensory, social, emotional and sharing aspects in the marketing strategies of sports and recreational clubs. According to the authors, such aspects provide a memorable customer experience and may lead to satisfaction and loyalty.

The final chapter of the book, Chapter 11, takes us back to the hospitality industry to investigate how customer experience drives innovation and how changing values, precipitated by social, economic and behavioural flux, mean that hospitality and tourism brands are creating new systems and processes. Michael Donald and Ashleigh Donald in this chapter present the findings of their interviews with four hospitality leaders from various sectors of the hospitality industry based in the UK. According to these data, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated trends, and technology has been leveraged to meet customers' expectations for instantaneous service. Personalised marketing, omnichannel experiences, sustainability, ethical practices and customer feedback emerge as key performance metrics for the future of the hospitality industry.

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## Chapter 1

# The Role of Industrial Design in the Designscape Development Based on the Marketing and Customer Experience Design

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### Abstract

Nowadays, product and service design play a crucial role in people's daily life and marketing settings; however, both of the product and service design process have always been affected by various factors, including the growth of technology, economic tensions and endemic and pandemic health challenges. Undoubtedly, the importance of service and product design is increasing in the near future, and these changes are also associated with customers' experience. In this regard, some factors have a prominent place such as customer preferences, marketing improvement, technology push-marketing pull and different aspects of sustainability. Since the development of product-service systems (PSSs) should be based on the requirements and needs of users on the one hand, and environmental and technological considerations on the other hand, the role of product and service designers in the context of presenting creative and innovative ideas is important. The mentioned features are known as the main pillars of industrial design. Industrial design as an integrated science of art and technology concerns customers' experience, user experience (UX) design, innovative design, customer-oriented service development and so on. Industrial design make value not only for customers but also for producers. Besides, some new designscape may develop by industrial design considerations. In this chapter, authors explain the industrial design scope towards customer experience orientation in service design, enhance the experiencescape, design thinking (DT), PSS approaches and sustainability.

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## **Introduction**

In the modern business landscape, customers seek more than just products or services; they desire a complete experience. Companies that can deliver exceptional customer experiences have a distinct advantage in today's competitive market. This chapter delves into the integration of industrial design into service design, aiming to enhance the overall customer experience. Industrial design encompasses creating aesthetically pleasing, functional and user-friendly products, systems and services. Traditionally, the focus has been on physical products, but with the emergence of service design, industrial designers must shift their attention to the holistic service experience. Service design involves crafting every aspect of the service journey, from initial customer contact to post-service follow-up. This chapter explores how industrial designers can employ DT, PSS approaches and sustainability principles to create customer-centric service designs. Additionally, it delves into the significance of emotional and UXs in industrial design and how technology can be leveraged to elevate the overall customer experience. The modern business landscape is constantly changing, driven by various influences and shorter innovation cycles. This also affects traditional manufacturing companies that historically focused on developing, producing and selling physical products. However, these companies are now facing increasing pressure as customers' expectations shift from just products to the overall value they provide. As a result, these companies are exploring new business models that combine products and services, offering customers unique utility and value while fostering loyalty. Developing these product-service combinations in a modular and customisable way is key to delivering this new value proposition. This transformation towards offering services alongside products, known as servitisation, can be facilitated through PSSs. However, systematically developing these combinations poses significant challenges, which existing literature addresses through various PSS process models (Richter et al., 2019). A successfully crafted PSS can effectively address uncertainties associated with both products and services, such as product deterioration speed, ultimately leading to enhanced value creation. Designing a PSS is a more intricate task compared to designing its individual product component. This complexity arises not only from the integration of services but also from the interdependencies between products and services. Previous empirical research has highlighted the challenges faced by manufacturers, particularly in harnessing these dependencies, especially during the synthesis stage of PSS design (Sakao et al., 2022).

## **The Importance of Customer Experience in Industrial Design**

The impact of the customer experience on customer loyalty and repeat business cannot be underestimated. Industrial designers play a pivotal role in cultivating a positive customer experience by designing aesthetically pleasing, functional and