Service design: Suggesting a qualitative multistep approach for analyzing and examining theme park experiences

TRACY - MARY - NANCY
MAIN SECTIONS:

MS01 - Introduction
MS02 - Literature review
MS03 - Proposing a multistep qualitative approach
MS04 - Methodology
MS05 - Discussion
MS06 - Limitation
MS07 - Conclusion
✓ Propose and apply a multistep qualitative approach for evaluating service experiences

✓ Adapted from the emerging field of service design offers effective methods for analyzing and developing complex service experiences in a theme park

✓ The multistep approach delivers comprehensive insights into customer experiences, identifies critical incidents that take place during the service experience by applying ‘persona’, ‘observation’, ‘guided interviews’, and ‘visualization’ methods to a theme park at the Gold Coast, Australia

✓ Suggest a new method of how to analyze and evaluate service experiences
Pre – 2005
✓ Design was seen as a profession that operates in specialized areas

2006 – 2009
✓ ‘Design Centered Design’ to ‘User Centered Design’
✓ The emergence of ‘service design’ builds on service-dominant logic and services marketing
✓ Service design uses participatory design, which makes clients part of the project and adapts special tools and methods from service marketing

Post – 2009
✓ The key characteristic of service design is the visualization of experiences conferring tangibility by considering the emotional context
Service design tools offer an alternative to conventional approaches for analyzing and evaluating service experiences
✓ The centrality of user-centered design and co-creation in service design thinking give profound insights into customers experience visualizes the processes being effective for handling the complexity and variety of service experiences
Figure 1. The theme park product (Wanhill, 2002)
A theme park

‘A family amusement complex oriented towards a range of subjects or historical periods, combining the continuity of costuming and architecture with edutainment through rides and other attractions, catering and merchandising, to provoke an experience for the imagination’
<table>
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<th>Armed forces</th>
<th>Industry</th>
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<td>Art and media</td>
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<td>Built environment</td>
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<td>Human body</td>
<td>War and conflict</td>
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Facilitating and supporting services/products & Augmented services

- **Facilitating and supporting services/products**
  - Ex: Retailing, catering, special needs access, internal transport, car parking

- **Augmented services**
  - All customer experiential requirements are met visitor
  - Ex: Orientation, queue entertainment, complaints handling, shows, presentations
Figure 2. Experience clues in theme parks (Berry et al., 2006)
**Functional Clues**
- Concern the technical quality of the offering.
- Are the “what” of the service experience, revealing the reliability and competence of the service.
- Anything that indicates or suggests the technical quality of the service—its presence or absence—is a functional clue.

**Mechanic Clues**
- Mechanic clues come from actual objects or environments and include sights, smells, sounds, tastes, and textures.
3 Humanic Clues

- Emerge from the behavior and appearance of service providers—choice of words, tone of voice, level of enthusiasm, body language, neatness, and appropriate dress.

- Ex: The typically friendly manner of Southwest Airlines flight attendants as they interact with passengers and their distinctive uniform of a polo shirt and khaki slacks illustrate humanic clues.

4 Co-creation Clues

- ‘The theme’ and ‘co-creation’ are additional components due to the centrality of the theme and the co-creation of experiences by other visitors.
Figure 3. Clue Influences on Customer Perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clue Categories</th>
<th>Customer Perceptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Calculative perceptions of quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanic</td>
<td>Emotional perceptions of quality</td>
</tr>
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<td>Humanic</td>
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Manager should recognize that technical competence in service performance is not enough if they aspire to build a reputation and build preference.

The best service companies manage the emotional components of the customer service experience with as much rigor as they bring to the functional components.

Firms compete best when they combine functional and emotional benefits in their market offer.
Proposing a multistep qualitative approach
Proposing a multistep qualitative approach

Figure 3. Multistep approach for analyzing service experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personas</th>
<th>Immersion into the target groups’ every day life and examination of their attitudes, values, characteristics and demands.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Observation of visitors through the theme park and examination of touchpoints during their journey; focus on emotions, body language and senses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guided Interview</td>
<td>Customers evaluate the touchpoints, identify critical incidents and speak about their experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customer Journey Map</td>
<td>Visualization of results and categorization of the experience into experience clues.</td>
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A persona is ‘a technique that employs fictitious users to guide decision making regarding features, interactions, and aesthetics’

The strength of the persona technique: to be the user sensitizing impact, adapted from user-centered design

The creation of the personas is based on a small number of archetypal users, and each profile should represent a composite of a subpopulation of users

The persona technique is increasingly recognized because it offers insight regarding customers’ attitudes, behaviors, and interests
Proposing a multistep qualitative approach

Observation

✓ Observation is used to give a more comprehensive understanding during the analysis process

✓ The observer may have a clear picture of the persona in mind when following the visitor through the service experience

✓ Special attention should be paid to body language, emotions, and reactions as well as to influences by other guests and interactions with employees
✓ Guided interviews are used to understand visitors’ behaviors and experiences

✓ Conducting interviews in addition to observation can have the advantage of allowing research participants to express ideas to understand the customers’ experiences

✓ The importance of gaining a holistic viewpoint of service is the importance of identifying critical incidents experiences
Proposing a multistep qualitative approach

Visualization

✓ Visualization techniques can **transform ideas and processes into visible dimensions** that may create greater clarity about the service experience.

✓ The three main reasons for service designers using visualizations:

1. to articulate insights gained from the collected data
2. to communicate insights to clients
3. to retain empathy as a way of keeping the data “alive” during the process.
Methodology
Children (age of between 3 and 12 years) and teenagers (age of between 12 and 19 years) from NSW and QLD as target groups.

(1) they own an annual pass, (2) they visited the theme park at least once during the year 2010, and (3) they live in one of the two Australian states of NSW and QLD,

Five children and 7 teenagers were randomly selected.

The data points for the persona profiles were derived from user interviews.

The results were clustered into information about daily routines, favorites, motivations and frustrations, and typical sources of information used by the selected persons.
Figure 4. Randomly selected personas.
Note: NSW = New South Wales; QLD = Queensland.
Fictive persona ‘Julia’, 7, Student

- Siblings: none
- Father: 37, electrician
- Mother: 34, salesperson
- Education: Third Year, Secondary School, Tweed Heads
- Personality: active, competitive, social
- Influencers: parents, friends, school
- Leisure Activities: swimming, soccer, watching TV
- Favorites: competitions, new challenges, food, action, sports idols, animation heroes
- Dislike: loosing, uncertainty, prohibitions, unfairness

Fictive persona ‘David’, 17, Student

- Siblings: 1 younger brother (12 years), 1 younger sister (10 years)
- Father: 47, teacher
- Mother: 45, nurse
- Education: Last Year, Secondary School, Currumbin
- Personality: active, social
- Influencers: friends, Internet
- Leisure Activities: socializing, sports, action movies
- Favorites: Surfing, new challenges, hanging out with friends, being with family, cars
- Dislike: staying indoors, work when friends have fun
2nd STEP: OBSERVATION

- 12 participants are observed.
- Observation’s duration between 5 and 8 hours.
- Notes: the used services, period of time spent at the different theme park attractions, their reactions and body language changed during and resulted from the service experiences, and what interaction she or he had with employees.
- Data created from transcribed observation into Excel data sheets using a timeline by checking and describing the contact points in the service experience journey.
3rd STEP: GUIDED INTERVIEWS

• Structured ad one-on-one interviews (two groups)
• Interview’s duration between 45 and 65 minutes.
• Targets: to discover uncover underlying motivations, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings found during the observation.
• The researcher followed the laddering technique to ask additional subquestions based on information provided by the participants during the interviews.
• All interviews were transcribed verbatim and review to determine the sample about the expected source, triggers, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and postservice act.
Result: four critical incidents were identified:
(a) The importance of interactions with animation characters.
(b) A consistent theme through the whole customer journey.
(c) Rest areas that are protected from the atmosphere.
(d) The design of and entertainment within queuing areas.

The first two critical incidents support the importance of creating experiences that enable the visitor to escape from daily routines. Quiet rest areas and queue entertainment are also identified as critical incidents.
‘Julia’ (representing children) has a great experience at the theme park and is delighted about her stay.

‘David’ (representing teenagers) gets bored after a few hours and is dissatisfied at the end.
Figure 7. Customer journey ‘Julia’—how children experienced their theme park visit.
Figure 8. Customer journey ‘David’—how teenagers experienced their theme park visit.
Discussion
The findings from the application of the multistep approach:

1. By developing personas based on socio demographic, psycho graphic and behavioral data such as daily routines, favorites, motivations, and frustrations, this method provided a holistic picture of target groups.

2. Because of the observation, participant observation was successful in surfacing where the observed persons spent their time as well as their expressions, body language, reactions, and emotions during the service consumption.

3. The guided interviews, closed the information gap and enabled a holistic view of how the visit was experienced by the two target groups.

4. Furthermore, potential misinterpretations by the researcher were avoided by letting the observed persons talk about their experiences in their own words. It was thereby possible to identify critical incidents which lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

5. The use of a customer journey as a visualization technique made the results manageable and understandable. It was possible to visualize how the two target groups experienced their theme park visit.

6. Moreover, the two customer journeys outlined and rated all touchpoints the visitor had during the theme park experience, including the pre- and postservice period.
MS 6

Limitations
• Employees’ viewpoints should be integrated within the analysis
• A small sample within only one theme park cannot be generalized to all theme parks
Conclusion
• The findings of this study may also contribute to the ongoing field of service design, especially with regard to the development of an accepted methodology.
• This is primarily due to its user-centered and qualitative approach. It provides information about how the customer experiences services, which may not be found by methods so far used on theme parks.
• The visualization technique’s results, with the aid of service design tools and an analysis of the service experiences in a customer-centered view, makes the complex theme park experience transparent, tangible, and designable.
THANKS
TRACY - MARY - NANCY