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Proceedings
Welcome Message

Dear Participant,

This year La Londe International Research Seminar in Service Management has suffered from two sad events. The first is the death of one of its founder, Pierre Eiglier, and the second the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to this second event, we were neither able to hold the conference, nor to devote some time to remember and celebrate the memory of Pierre.

Despite these unfortunate times La Londe Seminar is alive and healthy. This is witnessed by the number of submissions we received. This year, 33 full-papers and 34 short papers were selected, and we would like to thank all authors and participants for their contribution. This year the task of selecting papers was carried out by the Scientific Committee made up of Professors Bart LARIVIERE, Martin SPRING, and Mahesh SUBRAMONY. May they be warmly thanked here.

We also wish to thank Martial PIAT and Aude CASTILLE-BONNEFOY who took care of the initial steps of the administrative tasks of the Seminar.

This booklet contains the abstracts of the full and short papers of the authors that agreed to publish them. You can also find the authors’ email in case you wish to contact them and have more information.

We wish you an insightful and inspiring reading.
Tribute to Pierre Eiglier, Founder and President of La Londe Service Conference who passed away in February 2020

Pierre Eiglier was Professor Emeritus, of Marketing and Management at the “Institut d’Administration des Entreprises, Aix-en-Provence”, Aix-Marseille University. Since the beginning, his research has focused on service businesses marketing and strategy and he has been involved in consulting assignment for large international companies in this domain. He received in 2015 the Grönroos Service Research Award “in recognition of excellent achievements in service research challenging common understanding and demonstrating significant originality”.

Pierre, along with Eric Langeard, was a pioneer in seeding and nurturing the emergence of services as a distinct academic discipline in the late Seventies. And, for over three decades, he continued to foster the growth of the discipline in multiple ways, most notably through the series of La Londe conferences that have brought many scholars from around the world together for deep intellectual discussions about service and for strengthening our service research community.

Those who have met him personally have come to appreciate the person he was. His easy style masked a brilliant and creative mind that was always able to combine theoretical rigor and managerial relevance.

We, as his former students, remember the stimulating teacher and mentor he was. As colleagues, we remember the way he challenged our minds and our ideas. As his friends, we remember and deeply miss his love and generosity.

Such a wise and gentle giant we have lost.

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Table of Contents

Welcome Message ................................................................................................................................. 1
Table of Contents ................................................................................................................................. 3
Committees ........................................................................................................................................ 6
Committees......................................................................................................................................... 8
Full Paper Section ............................................................................................................................... 9
  How to design the service delivery system for customer experience in a utilitarian context? .......... 9
  Alignment in Customer Ecosystems - a review and potential framework ........................................ 9
  The Field of Service Failure and Recovery at the Crossroads: Recommendations to Revitalise the
  Domain and to Prevent its Decline ...................................................................................................... 10
  Consumers’ attitudes toward Sharing Economy Platforms: A Legitimacy Perspective .................. 10
  Underdogs, champions, emotional rollercoasters, and the money games: An employee perspective
  on pay-what-you-want pricing ........................................................................................................... 11
  The Direct, Indirect, and Conditional Effects of a Foreign Employee’s Accent on Customer
  Participation in Services .................................................................................................................... 11
  Who to Trust: Peer or Professional? Analyzing The Influence of User and Expert Reviews on Video
  Game Sales ......................................................................................................................................... 12
  Going from goods to services: How environmental issues and perceptions of renting influence
  consumers’ intention to choose renting over buying technological objects ........................................ 12
  Can Frontline Financial Service Firm Employees Help Consumers Improve Their Financial
  Wellbeing? ......................................................................................................................................... 13
  Towards a Conceptualization of Luxury Services ............................................................................ 13
  Behavioral consequences of soliciting online consumer reviews .................................................... 14
  Making Personalization Work: A Review of 45 Years of Personalization Research and its Customer
  Outcomes ......................................................................................................................................... 14
  Smartness battle – How and why do businesses smart-up their products and services .................... 15
  Service Provision on Digital Collaborative Platforms: A Psychological Contract Perspective on the
  Structure of Service Provider Relationships ....................................................................................... 15
  Video Killed the Text Star: Online Video C2C Reviews and Their Impact on Consumers’ Uncertainty
  Reduction .......................................................................................................................................... 16
  When users by-pass intermediation platforms to exchange directly with their peers: An exploratory
  study to understand collaborative consumption resistance behaviors ............................................ 16
  Synthesizing the state-of-the-art of human-robot interaction for designing the organizational
  frontline OF the future ....................................................................................................................... 17
Loyalty program or consumer club? How do different mental representations of relationship programs impact their efficiency ................................................................. 17

What We (Don’t) Know About Webcare: Systematic Review, Synthesis and Research Agenda ...... 18

The Business of Fun: An Integrative Literature Review on Gamification .......................................... 18

Relative effectiveness of compensation across the offline and online service mediums .............. 19

Opportunities, Tools and New Insights: Evidence on Emotions in Service from Analyses of Digital Traces Data ........................................................................................................... 19

A Blessing in Disguise: Implementing Exploration in an Exploitation-Driven Multinational Financial Services Provider to Become Ambidextrous .............................................................................. 20

Half human, half machine—augmenting service employees with AI for interpersonal emotion regulation .................................................................................................................. 20

From emotional labor to customer satisfaction: a multilevel mediation approach .................. 21

Extended Abstract Section ............................................................................................................... 22

Optimization or quality of service, should you choose? The case of health care supply chain in French hospitals .................................................................................................................. 22

Quasi-experiment to measure the suitability of design innovation in service processes - The case of autonomous vehicles for mobility service .............................................................................................................. 22

Pinch Points: Investigating the Effects of Multi-level Effort-reward Program Designs in the Freemium Game Context through a Field Experiment .......................................................... 23

Impact of service provider social CRM efforts on consumer engagement ........................................ 23

Emotions and diffusion of sharing systems: the role of the anxiety sentiment .................................. 24

Together forever? How co-creation influences usage of digital services over time ....................... 24

Actor Engagement: Former Customers’ Role in Online Social Networks .............................................. 25

Grateful to whom? Managing the dark side of gratitude-generating encounters .............................. 25

How does social influence effect customers’ preference to use mobile proximity payment services? ............................................................................................................................... 26

The sense or nonsense of implicit measures in service research ....................................................... 26

A Framework of Online Rapport-Building Behaviours: An Exploration of Twitter ....................... 27

Many Voices: Dialectic Tensions and the Elderly ............................................................................. 27

Offense et incident de service, deux objets différents. Une approche exploratoire .............................. 28

Humans versus Machines: Understanding the relational mechanism underlying customers’ evaluations of frontline service interactions ............................................................. 28

Should digital marketing practices be more transparent? An empirical investigation on the roles of consumer digital literacy and privacy concerns in self-service technologies .......................................................... 29

Modeling of expected co-creation in services ................................................................................. 29

Using smart services to shift distances and enhance alternative urban mobility experiences ....... 30

Investigating the foundations of a B2B Customer Experience conceptual framework ............ 30
The role of wearable activity tracking devices in servicescapes .......................................................... 31
Collaborative intelligence - employee need fulfillment in an AI-based internal service encounter. 31
Transformation of Actors’ Roles in Service Systems: A Multi-Level Analysis ........................................... 32
Do young frontline employees have different responses to organizational HRM practices than older employees? .................................................................................................................................................................................. 32
Exploring the effects from managing simultaneous service encounters on service provider satisfaction ........................................................................................................................................................................................................... 33
Studying resource exchange through interactions between smart city actors: alliencing and collaboration ........................................................................................................................................................................................................... 33
Examining Predictors & Consequences of Service Climate in Public Sector Emergency Departments ........................................................................................................................................................................................................... 34
Finding an Adequate Service Strategy to Manage Product Recalls: Effects of Perceived Risk, Perceived Convenience, and Time Horizon ........................................................................................................................................................................................................... 34
The Servicescape Challenge: Can luxury servicescape be digitized ............................................................ 35
Why consumers do not protect their data privacy when experiencing digital online services .......... 35
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Marketing Track
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Bart Larivière, PhD., is Associate Professor of Service Management at KU Leuven (Belgium). He has been founder and Executive Director of the Center for Service Intelligence in Ghent University. His research interests include the mix of customers, employees and technology in creating the service experience. He intensively collaborates with different companies bridging the gap between academia and practice. He has published in the Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Service Research, Journal of Interactive Marketing, Journal of Service Management, Journal of Service Theory and Practice, Journal of Services Marketing, Journal of Business Research, the European Journal of Operational Research, and Expert Systems With Applications. He has won several awards, including the Finalist Best Paper Award for the Journal of Service Research (twice), the Best Paper Award for the Journal of Service Management (twice), the Best Practitioner Paper Presentation Award at the Frontiers in Service Conference (three times), and the Best PhD Tutor Award from Ghent University’s Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. He serves on the editorial boards for Journal of Service Research, Journal of Service Management, Journal of Service Theory and Practice, Journal of Business Research and Journal of Services Marketing and is ad hoc reviewer for Journal of Marketing and Journal of Interactive Marketing.

Human Resources Track
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Mahesh Subramony joined the Department of Management of Northern Illinois University after serving as an Assistant Professor of Industrial/Organizational (I/O) psychology at the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh. He received his Ph.D. in I/O Psychology from Central Michigan University and an M.A. degree in Applied Psychology from the University of Delhi, India. Prior to joining academics, he worked for two Fortune 500 companies in their human resources (HR) functions and brings this experience to bear in his human resource management (HRM) courses and applied research. Mahesh's research interests are in the emerging field of strategic HRM. Specifically, he is interested in examining the reasons why organizations make various types of human resource (HR) investments, and the processes through which these investments affect employee, customer and financial outcomes. Mahesh has published several articles in top tier scholarly journals including Human Resource Management and the Journal of Applied Psychology.
Martin Spring is Professor of Operations Management at Lancaster University Management School, UK. He is also Director of the School’s Centre for Productivity & Efficiency. His research has focussed on supply chain relationships and business-to-business services. In the business services field, he has published (with Luis Araujo) widely-cited papers on the conceptualisation of services in relation to products. Currently, he is working on a project funded by the UK Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, examining the adoption of Artificial Intelligence by mid-tier law and accounting firms, and a project funded by the European Commission on ‘responsible innovation’ in the networks associated with additive manufacturing. He is also working on aspects of management practices in SMEs. He has published in many leading academic journals and is Associate Editor at Journal of Operations Management and the International Journal of Operations & Production Management. A mechanical engineer by training, Martin worked for large international manufacturing firms before moving into academia (over 25 years ago!).
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How to design the service delivery system for customer experience in a utilitarian context?

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This research sets out to explore how organisations can design the service delivery system to support the customer experience in a utilitarian context. We develop a conceptual framework proposing that the service delivery system is designed to support the realisation of the customer experience and experience quality perceptions are formed when the customer interacts with the delivery system. Experience quality drives specific emotional responses (i.e. prevention emotions), which in turn influences customer satisfaction. The framework is explored through two in-depth case studies in the context of retail banking and pharmacy. The cases provide a rich source of information obtained through various data collection activities and contributors from the two organisations and their customers. The design characteristics of the service delivery system and the relevant experience quality dimensions are captured. The findings also reveal the mechanisms explaining how design characteristics effect experience quality dimensions, which in turn elicit prevention-oriented consumption emotions.

Alignment in Customer Ecosystems - a review and potential framework

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Research on service ecosystems is easily found in a variety of literature streams (e.g. service research, strategy, business-to-business, IT, etc), but very scarce on customer ecosystems, or ecosystems defined from the customer’s point-of-view. This paper conceptualizes customer ecosystems and presents a framework describing how ecosystem actors may converge in alignment to help create value for customers. The framework is synthesized from a semi-systematic review of the overarching concept of alignment spanning disparate literature - B2C, B2B, C2C, and networked perspectives. It details multiple dimensions of inter-actor alignment, and suggests potential mechanisms for alignment, structural and relational.

The paper contributes in two ways: first, in highlighting the importance of considering the customer’s viewpoint when defining ecosystems; and second, in developing a structured approach to help both academics and practitioners map ecosystems based on relevance to customer value, ultimately to design better services that align with the principle stakeholder, the customer.
The Field of Service Failure and Recovery at the Crossroads: Recommendations to Revitalize the Domain and to Prevent its Decline

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The authors wish to thank William Blais, a research assistant at the Chair Omer DeSerres in Retailing at HEC Montréal, for his excellent work of codification and organization of the 74 reviewed articles.

The general purpose of this editorial is three-fold: 1) to examine the evolution of “service failure and recovery” (SFR) research over time, 2) to analyze recent SFR research published in impactful journals, and 3) to provide guidelines for revitalizing the field so it can maintain its success. First, we show that the SFR literature is at a stage of maturity with roughly the same number of articles published in major marketing journals during the past 10 years. Second, we reviewed 74 recently published articles in nine elite marketing journals, and organized them into four categories based on two dimensions: “behavioral-quantitative” and “fundamental-managerial.” Third, based on the categorization scheme, we highlight obvious gaps that have been under-researched, such as the exploration of new contexts allowing for novel theory development. Finally, we formulate specific recommendations from the perspective of the traditional SFR domain—that is, the “behavioral-managerial” stream. We suggest that the traditional domain could learn from methodological advances (i.e., data and analytics) used in the other three streams. However, despite its limitations, we argue that the traditional domain still plays an important role as the main contributor to robust theories and recovery insights.

Consumers’ attitudes toward Sharing Economy Platforms: A Legitimacy Perspective

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This research adopts an institutional perspective to examine the impact of legitimacy perceptions of sharing economy platforms on consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions. Results show that (1) consumers make evaluations of legitimacy through comparisons with traditional companies from the industry where the platform is operating rather than with other sharing economy platforms, (2) lack of legitimacy impacts negatively consumer attitudes and adoption intentions, and (3) consumer relativism moderates the relationship between legitimacy perceptions and consumers’ adoption intentions. This study is among the first to investigate consumer adoption of sharing economy platforms from a legitimacy perspective and thus differs from past studies which have mostly focused on new services’ characteristics to predict adoption. This research views sharing economy platforms as new actors operating in a new market category that needs to gain support from other market actors in order to operate. Findings indicate that securing legitimacy is critical to the adoption of a platform.
Underdogs, champions, emotional rollercoasters, and the money games: An employee perspective on pay-what-you-want pricing.

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Pay-What-You-Want (PWYW) pricing, a pricing system that allows customers to pay any price above or even equal to zero, receives significant attention from researchers and practitioners. The literature mainly takes a customer and organizational perspective, leaving the frontline employee perspective unexplored. Employees, however, typically collect customer payments, making them the first observers of how much customers pay. This paper reports the results of 33 qualitative in-depth interviews with tour guides, designed to understand (i) how working frontline employees react to working under a PWYW pricing system, both within and across service encounters, and (ii) which tactics frontline employees implement to maximize customer payments under a PWYW pricing system. The results reveal a complex and diverse set of reactions to working under a PWYW pricing system. First, frontline employees display various cognitive (e.g. appraisal of the PWYW pricing system), emotional (e.g. anger) and behavioral (e.g. counterproductive work behavior toward customers and the organization) reactions, both within and across service encounters. Second, we identify significant diversity in employees’ long-term reactions to working under a PWYW pricing system. While some employees become ‘champions’ that thrive under a PWYW pricing system and consider it a ‘game’, others become ‘underdogs’ that are burdened by this pricing system. For example, the constant variation in customer payments puts underdogs on an emotional rollercoaster. Third, our results suggest that employee long-term reactions (across encounters) are contingent upon their financial dependence as well as the organization’s policy (people-oriented versus profit-oriented). Finally, we identify various payment maximizing strategies employed by the frontline employees that complement organizational payment maximizing strategies identified in prior research.

The Direct, Indirect, and Conditional Effects of a Foreign Employee’s Accent on Customer Participation in Services

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In intercultural service encounters, customers use an employee’s accent to infer their ethnicity, which may trigger out-group categorization. However, it is unclear how an employee’s accent affects customer behavior. We address this research gap by examining the influence of employee accent on customer participation (CP). We find that an employee’s accent negatively affects CP through reduced intelligibility, while perceptions of cultural distance do not play a mediating role. Rather, it is the valence of a particular accent that comes into play. In particular, consumers’ accent-based perceptions of an employee’s attractiveness and dynamism mediate the relationship between accent type and CP. Furthermore, a negatively valenced accent has a negative influence on CP, whereas the effect of a positively valenced accent is non-significant. We also show that a negatively valenced accent leads to lower voluntary participation but higher replaceable participation, indirectly through reduced trust.
Who to Trust: Peer or Professional? Analyzing The Influence of User and Expert Reviews on Video Game Sales

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During the last years, video game sales have grown massively and the video game market has emerged as the biggest entertainment market. Despite the huge economic importance, there is a surprising lack of research on factors influencing video game sales. This study addresses this gap by analyzing the influence of user and expert reviews on video game sales. Building on signaling theory and insights on quality of information, the authors predict that user and expert reviews have a positive influence on sales, which is nonlinear such that more extreme ratings exert disproportionally stronger effects. Furthermore, they posit that in the video game market, contrary to most other markets, expert reviews play a more important role than user reviews. To test these predictions sales data of 931 games, matched with 683,347 user and 54,204 expert reviews, is analyzed. Most of the theory-driven predictions are supported, providing important theoretical and managerial implications.

Going from goods to services: How environmental issues and perceptions of renting influence consumers’ intention to choose renting over buying technological objects

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This study aims to determine the main factors influencing consumers’ willingness to rent a phone instead of buying it. A quantitative study on 1261 respondents reveals that the explicit perspective that a rented product will recirculate after use may be a deterrent to renting for some consumers. Consumers concerned for privacy and appropriation related issues for renting are reluctant to choose renting over buying when circularity is explicit. Materialism also leads to avoid explicit circularity in renting. Explicit circularity may however convince social hoarders (consumers who tend to keep used objects for others) to rent instead of buy a product, as they feel the used product will be useful to someone. The more consumers perceive the environmental effectiveness of renting, the more willing they are to choose renting. Our results suggest underlining the environmental effectiveness of access-based consumption in order to promote it but taking the privacy and appropriation concerns of potential renters into serious consideration.
Can Frontline Financial Service Firm Employees Help Consumers Improve Their Financial Wellbeing?

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Research on financial planning behaviour has focused on financial counselling and consumer financial savings in advanced societies. Little is known about how firms and especially frontline employees (FLEs) support consumer financial wellbeing at the base of the pyramid (BOP). The existing research addressing BoP issues has focused on financial planning and financial wellbeing as consumer responsibility rather than how financial service firms support consumers in their financial wellbeing journey. This study employs social learning and self-regulation theories to addresses how FLEs contribute to regulating BOP consumer financial planning behaviour. Drawing on matched data of 255 FLEs and 255 consumers, and 45 branch managers, the findings show that FLEs customer orientation behaviour supports consumer financial planning behaviour and that this relationship is stronger when FLEs pay greater attention to detail. The findings demonstrate the important role of managers and their leadership style in supporting FLEs. Finally, the results show that consumers who engage in financial planning behaviour exhibit higher financial wellbeing.

Towards a Conceptualization of Luxury Services

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The market for luxury is growing rapidly. While there is a significant body of literature on luxury goods, academic research has largely ignored luxury services. The purpose of this article is to open luxury services as a new field of investigation by developing the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings to build the luxury services literature and show how luxury services differ from both luxury goods and from ordinary (i.e. non-luxury) services. Design/methodology/approach – This paper uses a conceptual approach drawing upon and synthesizing the luxury goods and services marketing literature. Findings – This article makes four contributions. First, it shows that services are largely missing from the luxury literature, just as the field of luxury is mostly missing from the service literature. Second, it defines luxury services and contrasts their characteristics and related consumer behaviors with luxury goods. It thereby provides a conceptual foundation for luxury service research. Third, the paper defines key constitutive features of luxury services and explains their implications for luxury service research and practice. Finally, it provides an agenda for future research on luxury services. Practical implications – The paper offers guidelines for managers of luxury services and those who seek to design extraordinary commercial experiences. Originality/value – This is the first paper to define luxury services and their characteristics, apply and link frameworks from the service literature to luxury, and to derive consumer insights from these for research and practice.
Behavioral consequences of soliciting online consumers reviews

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Purpose: As online consumer reviews (OCRs) become increasingly important for firms, firms nowadays actively solicited OCRs from consumers. The purpose of this study is to gain deeper insights into how OCR solicitation affects consumers’ OCR writing behavior and subsequent information quality of solicited reviews. This study will not only look at traditional business-to-consumer models, but also to collaborative consumption. The specific nature of this new peer-to-peer business model makes OCRs even more important. Methodology: We use text-mining and automated content analysis tools to test the hypothesis. This study uses OCRs which were extracted from a third-party OCR platform. In total, 123,549 reviews were collected, representing two different business models (B2C and P2P) and four different industries (financial industry, hospitality, human resource, transportation). Findings: At the time of writing, most of the empirical studies are still ongoing. But some preliminary results can already be shared. Specifically, our findings suggest that OCRs acquired via review solicitation are more positive, but also shorter and perceived as less helpful. These effects are especially prominent in peer-to-peer settings. OCRs written in a peer-to-peer setting are considered as more helpful than in traditional B2C settings. Contribution/Value: This study is the first to investigate both quantitative and qualitative review characteristics as a result of review solicitation. Additionally, this study contributes to the growing literature on collaborative consumption, where most studies on OCR content focus on existing Airbnb datasets. This study extends this scope and investigates more contexts and services other than Airbnb, providing more insights into the subjective experiences of users of collaborative consumption.

Making Personalization Work: A Review of 45 Years of Personalization Research and its Customer Outcomes

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Over the last 45 years, increased attention for personalization characterized marketing efforts. Meanwhile, 80 percent of marketers are set to abandon personalization efforts by 2025. In this context, this study aims to gain insight into the key components of personalization and the conditions under which this one-to-one marketing strategy can generate positive or negative customer outcomes. Based upon a content analysis of 91 articles identified in a systematic way, this study presents eight personalization components, which aggregate into four building blocks (learning with manner and timing components; tailoring with initiation, dynamics, and level components; delivering with orientation and channel components; evaluating with scope). If companies implement personalization components while taking customer preferences, their cultural orientation, and the type of offerings into consideration, positive customer outcomes are more likely to emerge. By integrating these insights into a personalization framework, this study advances academic research and managerial practice.
By creating ever-smarter products and services, businesses are engaging in a smartness battle. While extant research provides guidance for developing technology-based innovations, it remains unclear how and why businesses smart-up their offerings. Therefore, this research investigates (1) the dimensions of smartness in which businesses invest, (2) the patterns along which these smartness dimensions develop over time, and (3) the strategies underlying these development decisions. This research relies on a multiple case study design to provide insight into how (smartness dimensions and smartness patterns) and why (smartness strategies) businesses develop ever-smarter offerings. Case analyses identified awareness, connectivity, actuation and dynamism as key smartness dimensions and unraveled smartness patterns ranging from no to continuous increases. Further analyses revealed that each pattern goes along with specific strategies, including survival, protection, experience, growth, and leadership strategies. The identified patterns can guide businesses to develop smartness along the four dimensions to effectuate their envisioned strategy.

Service provision by individuals on digital collaborative platforms is on the rise, constituting a novel and unique work environment. While platform research is growing, this rapidly evolving field of service delivery remains poorly understood. Building on psychological contract research and 40 interviews with individual service providers of ten different platforms, we explore the dual relationships of the service provider with its customers and the platform operator on digital collaborative platforms. We identify relevant perceived transactional and relational obligations in the service provider’s relationships. In addition, we reveal the obligation’s parallel, multi-layered structure by illustrating four types of psychological contracts that service providers form. Thereby, we contribute to literature on service delivery on digital collaborative platforms and give initial guidance for platform operators on managing service providers on the platform.
Video Killed the Text Star: Online Video C2C Reviews and Their Impact on Consumers’ Uncertainty Reduction

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Online reviews have become an important source of information supporting consumers’ decision making and, therefore, a powerful influencer of companies’ performance. Scholars have addressed different issues related to online reviews from the perspective of both consumers and companies. However, previous studies have predominantly focused on textual reviews, while overlooking video reviews, which are rapidly increasing in popularity among consumers searching for information about products and services online. This study addresses the lack of knowledge about video reviews by (1) developing a typology of video reviews and defining the most common communication techniques used by reviewers; (2) investigating the impact of video reviews on consumer perceptions about the communicated message in relation to commonly used textual reviews; (3) determining what types of video reviews are more powerful in influencing consumers. The study contributes to the literature on eWOM, and provides practical implications, suggesting that companies should pay more attention to video reviews and encourage their consumers to share such reviews with peers.

When users by-pass intermediation platforms to exchange directly with their peers: An exploratory study to understand collaborative consumption resistance behaviors

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Despite a growing literature on the emergent trend of peer-to-peer sharing, only a few marketing studies have focused on participants’ negative and antagonistic reactions. In particular, there isn’t any study investigating consumers’ avoidance behaviors. Yet evidence shows that some users intentionally by-pass intermediation platforms to exchange directly with other peers. The purpose of this study is to examine consumer resistance behaviors practices in the context of collaborative consumption exchanges. To do so, we leverage the consumer resistance literature, and apply a multi-method qualitative approach. Based on our findings, first we propose a typology of participants’ behaviors with varying degrees of resistance, from passive to more active practices, either individual or collective. Second, we identify different drivers leading to by-passing behaviors. These drivers can be related to either a (1) motivational state of resistance, or a (2) situational state of resistance, or finally associated to (3) individual characteristics.
Synthesizing the state-of-the-art of human-robot interaction for designing the organizational frontline of the future

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Service robots are increasingly deployed in the organizational frontline and service research is beginning to unravel the implications for customer-firm interactions. However, human-robot interaction is not a ground zero. Other fields, such as human-computer interaction (HCI) and psychology have amassed a wealth of empirical findings that can inform service research and provide a head-start in successfully designing the future of service interactions. To this end, the underlying paper reports a systematic literature review across academic disciplines, evaluating more than 10,000 research articles. Through a rigorous, iterative coding process, 175 articles with direct implications for service interactions are identified. On the basis of this dataset a comprehensive framework and a future research agenda on service robots in the organizational frontline in different service contexts are developed. Service researchers and managers benefit by understanding when and how to implement various types of social robots in different service settings and what relationships still need to be investigated.

Loyalty program or consumer club? How do different mental representations of relationship programs impact their efficiency

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In this research, we show that the label of a loyalty program (‘loyalty program’ or ‘customer club’) is associated with specific attributes in consumers’ minds, which can be central or non-central to the meaning of the concept. Findings from a study (N=245) show that consumers clearly associate a ‘loyalty program’ to savings and recognition benefits which appear to be their core attributes. For a ‘customer club’, a larger number of attributes emerge as central, with primarily recognition/special treatment attributes. Then, an experiment (N=253) shows that whereas displaying the most central attributes is enough to drive a loyalty program’s efficiency, it is not sufficient for a customer club where displaying more attributes could be necessary to ensure positive effects. These results suggest that a relationship program labelled ‘loyalty program’ could limit itself to savings and recognition attributes, while for a relationship program labelled ‘customer club’ a larger number of attributes, maybe less central and unexpected, might be needed to increase perceived value. The research enriches previous literature by participating to the debate on the type of benefits that relationship programs should grant, introducing an original approach that demonstrates the importance of attribute centrality (depending on the program’s label).
What We (Don’t) Know About Webcare: Systematic Review, Synthesis and Research Agenda

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Electronic word-of-mouth can have significant (un)favorable effects on brand evaluation, choice, and loyalty. In this context, brands have started to engage in webcare, that is intervening in online consumer interactions, to increase the likelihood of positive outcomes. During the past decade, webcare has received increased attention across various domains, including marketing, management, information systems, and linguistics. Altogether, these efforts have produced a rich and diverse knowledge base on webcare. However, to date, no work exists seeking to integrate this fragmented literature. Building upon a systematic, multidisciplinary literature review of 69 empirical studies, we develop an integrative conceptual framework that serves as a structured ‘knowledge map’ and helps understand the current state of the webcare field. We also provide guidance for future research by identifying and elaborating on the gaps that remain in current knowledge. Last, we put forth a set of managerial recommendations aimed at helping managers in better building their webcare practices.

The Business of Fun: An Integrative Literature Review on Gamification

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The potential of gamification to impact behavior, improve marketing outcomes, and drive value has been signaled by practitioners across various industries. In recent years, a multitude of studies on gamification have emerged in computer science, education, health and medicine, but less so in business and management, and with very limited representation in service research. The aim of this study is therefore to integrate the rapidly growing and cross-disciplinary scattered contributions on gamification research, determine how gamification has been defined across the extant literature, what the key concepts and theories related to gamification across disciplines and contexts are and how these different perspectives can converge and contribute to service research? Through a systematic literature review, 113 articles were selected and analyzed. This study presents an overview of this literature and preliminary qualitative results. We provide a comprehensive conceptual model of the antecedents and outcomes of gamification and highlight important opportunities for service research.
Relative effectiveness of compensation across the offline and online service mediums

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Service recovery efforts are acknowledged for their role in trust recovery but it has not been a focus of service recovery literature. Compensation is preferred by the customers but its value and type lead to varying satisfaction. Furthermore, differing characteristics of traditional and online shopping are expected to generate varying post-recovery attitudes for different compensation types and levels. An experimental study, 3 (compensation level: 20%, 50%, 100%) x 2 (compensation type: refund, coupon) x 2 (service medium: offline, online) was devised to test the hypotheses. The significant interactive effect of compensation level, medium and compensation type, and the conditional effects of the focal predictor show that the offline customers are more satisfied with a refund, whereas online customers exhibit more satisfaction for a coupon. Furthermore, refund recovers more trust of offline customers and that of online customers is recovered through a coupon.

Opportunities, Tools and New Insights: Evidence on Emotions in Service from Analyses of Digital Traces Data

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No one can live and work in the 21st century without digital service interactions. We use archival traces of digital service interactions to examine and document the experience of emotion in service conversations between customer and service agents. We use automated sentiment analyses to decipher objectively what happens in terms of customer and employee expressions of emotions during service interaction. Our data also show the research benefits of digital age technologies, which provide a gold mine of archives of service conversations and unique opportunities to promote our understanding of emotions in service delivery. Our analyses show what emotions customers or service agents feel or express, finding expression of much more positive emotion than currently recognized. We also show how emotions evolve through service conversations, showing that this evolution can predict customer satisfaction. We further show the emotions that service agents encounter during their work shifts, which helps explain the high level of employee burnout. And we test the reciprocal emotional influence between customers and service employees. Our analyses give new insights into emotions in service delivery and into new opportunities afforded by digital service platforms.
A Blessing in Disguise: Implementing Exploration in an Exploitation-Driven Multinational Financial Services Provider to Become Ambidextrous

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This study investigates the phenomenon of organizational ambidexterity in financial services, an industry characterized by its knowledge-intensity and dynamic environment. We provide a nuanced understanding of how a multinational financial services provider implemented exploratory activities to complement its exploitation business to eventually become ambidextrous. We show how capability-shifting and capability-building processes were combined to balance exploitation and exploration and elaborate on capabilities that were shifted inside the organization and those that had to be built to achieve ambidexterity. Following an inductive research design, we conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with internal and external stakeholders to develop a holistic multi-level view of the organization. Learning from four distinct business units, we outline patterns of structural and contextual mechanisms that foster the implementation of a dual-orientation across business units to simultaneously pursue exploitation and exploration. We report key factors in the implementation of ambidexterity and discuss implications for theory and practice.

Half human, half machine—augmenting service employees with AI for interpersonal emotion regulation

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Purpose – With the advent of increasingly sophisticated AI, the nature of work in the service frontline is changing. The next frontier is to go beyond replacing routine tasks and augmenting service employees with AI. The purpose of this paper is to investigate whether service employees augmented with AI-based emotion recognition software are more effective in interpersonal emotion regulation (IER) and whether and how IER impacts their own affective well-being. Design/methodology/approach – For the underlying study, an AI-based emotion recognition software was developed in order to assist service employees in managing customer emotions. A field study based on 2,459 call center service interactions assessed the effectiveness of the AI in augmenting service employees for IER and the immediate downstream consequences for well-being relevant outcomes. Findings – Augmenting service employees with AI significantly improved their IER activities. Employees in the AI (versus control) condition were significantly more effective in regulating customer emotions. IER goal attainment, in turn, mediated the effect on employee affective well-being. Perceived stress related to exposure to the AI augmentation acted as a competing mediator. Practical implications – Service firms can benefit from state-of-the-art AI technology by focusing on its capacity to augment rather than merely replace employees. Furthermore, signaling IER goal attainment with the help of technology may provide uplifting consequences for service employee affective well-being. Originality/value – The present study is among the first to empirically test the introduction of an AI-fueled technology to augment service employees in handling customer emotions. This paper further complements the literature by investigating IER in a real-life setting and by uncovering goal attainment as a new mechanism underlying the effect of IER on the well-being of the sender.
From emotional labor to customer satisfaction: a multilevel mediation approach

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We examined the cross-level relationships between emotional labor strategies (i.e. surface and deep acting), and customer service satisfaction, and we also examined the multilevel mediating mechanism of emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction in three different service contexts (banking, hospitals and telecom). Results show that frontline employees’ emotional exhaustion mediates the cross-level relationship between engagement emotional labor strategies and customer service satisfaction in banking and hospitals. Further, results found that emotional labor strategies enhance customer service satisfaction through the multilevel mediating effects of frontline employee job satisfaction. Implications to theory and practice are discussed.
Optimization or quality of service, should you choose? The case of health care supply chain in French hospitals

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The new reform of the French healthcare system calls for greater optimization and standardization of the organization of care, in order to close the financing gap. At the same time, the challenge is also to maintain or to improve the quality of services. This trade-off between productivity, which requires greater standardization, and customer satisfaction, which implies greater personalization of the service, is at the heart of debates in service management research and also in health care research. How does this ambivalence between standardization and individualization question health and hospital supply chains performance? Does it modify the division of tasks between BO and FO?

Quasi-experiment to measure the suitability of design innovation in service processes - The case of autonomous vehicles for mobility service

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Different methodologies exist to foster innovation. The well-known ones are Design Thinking, User-Experience Design and Service Design. What all these methodologies have in common is the user-centred principle and the iterative process. These recommend frequent testing of the product or service under development with users during the innovation process. While these tests are certainly useful, they are not sufficient to properly validate the innovation. Therefore, in this paper, the combination of pre-experimental and quasi-experimental methods is proposed to validate an innovation and its implicit assumption that the innovation corresponds to a problem solving that significantly improves the life of users. In this research, authors demonstrate how to use pre-experiment and quasi-experiment in the design process to validate progress from one iteration to the next. This is illustrated by a case study of an autonomous vehicle as public transportation service for people with disability and reduced mobility in a touristic context.
Pinch Points: Investigating the Effects of Multi-level Effort-reward Program Designs in the Freemium Game Context through a Field Experiment

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Multi-level effort-reward programs (MLERPs) are programs with multiple levels where users exert effort to receive rewards for each subsequent level. MLERPs are found in many marketing contexts including loyalty programs, gamified services, and games. Traditional MLERPs use an exponential effort design, i.e., the effort required to achieve each subsequent level follows a gradually steeper slope. We propose a MLERP design called pinch point where the customer follows an exponential effort design with a gentler increase in slope for a few levels (e.g., 4 levels) followed by a steep slope for one level, where the total effort required for each set of 5 levels is the same as the exponential effort design. We empirically test these two MLERP designs with a large-scale randomized field experiment in the context of a freemium game app. We find the pinch point design substantially improves conversion of free-to-paid users, in-app purchase amounts, and user retention.

Impact of service provider social CRM efforts on consumer engagement

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Service providers are among the companies that have started to use social media as part of their strategy to engage service customers via social CRM. The paper reports on a preliminary study that applied a relationship investment model to assess the impact of service providers' social CRM antecedents (responsiveness and interactivity of the service provider's social media platforms, and perceived social CRM relationship investment) on social CRM mediators (perceived social CRM relationship quality; consumer confidence in social CRM engagement; and trust in service provider implementing social CRM), and the subsequent effects of these mediators on relationship commitment and advocacy. Preliminary data were collected in a survey and analyzed using SEM. Results show that responsiveness and perceived social CRM relationship investment positively influence relationship quality, confidence, and trust; however, interactivity does not. At the same time, confidence and trust positively impact relationship commitment and advocacy, but relationship quality does not.
Emotions and diffusion of sharing systems: the role of the anxiety sentiment

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This paper studies the role of emotions on the institutionalization of the sharing economy in particular of P2P car sharing. Using different sources of data, it shows that the anticipated emotions of anxiety, worry and fear associated with participation in P2P car sharing are fundamental factors that put potential users off these schemes. As these emotions are shared with others in online interactions, a sentiment of anxiety takes root. We contend that this sentiment may halt the diffusion processes as it puts more potential users off the market. The marketplaces' effort to counteract this anxiety sentiment with euphoric and care-free messages are not effective. This paper enriches our understanding of the process of resistance to innovation by showing the role played by emotions. It also unveils the "burdens of sharing" that limit the diffusion process of innovations. Finally, it contributes to the emerging sociocultural accounts of emotions in market-making, by conceptualizing a new sentiment – anxiety - that has gone undertheorized and yet could be fundamental as a structuring force in new markets.

Together forever? How co-creation influences usage of digital services over time

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Extant research shows that customers’ intentions to adopt digital services are crucially determined by their willingness to co-create (WCC) and the required level of co-creation (LCC). However, investigations in prior research were limited to effects of one of the both constructs at a certain point of time (mostly prior to usage), disregarding the interaction between WCC and LLC and the fact that most digital services generate revenues through continuous usage of customers. To close these gaps, we investigated effects of both constructs and possible interactions on customers' usage over time (four waves, n=352). Results show, that WCC is the main driver of usage in early stages, while LCC becomes the main driver of usage in later stages. Furthermore, our findings point to a certain matching logic in consumption of co-created digital services, such that customers who have a high (low) WCC also expect a high (low) LCC.
Actor Engagement: Former Customers’ Role in Online Social Networks

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Although former customers can potentially be highly beneficial to firms in terms of influence value, the extant literature concentrates predominantly on current customers, while the role of former customers remains under-investigated. This research utilizes the conceptual lens of actor engagement (AE) to understand the role of former customers focusing on their influence on others in online social networks. The results of an online survey and two experimental studies demonstrate that former customers engage in actor influencing behavior (AIB) via e-WOM about products and services they no longer use, although their motives for doing so differ from those of current customers. Further, actors with small networks and strong social ties have the highest influence on other actors; followed by those with large networks and utilitarian ties. Practically, this research highlights the need to move beyond a focus on the dyadic firm–customer relationships and embrace network relationships among high influence actors.

Grateful to whom? Managing the dark side of gratitude-generating encounters

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Research shows that gratitude drives customer loyalty. This study adds to existing debates by identifying a latent dark side of gratitude that can weaken loyalty. As an emotion grounded in interpersonal interactions, following positive service encounters, customers can develop gratitude toward a front line employee (FLE) that is independent of gratitude toward the firm. Gratitude to the FLE, in turn, can lead to loyalty to the FLE over the firm. In three studies, we test the mechanisms explaining the bright and dark sides of gratitude. Companies can reduce the threat posed by the dark side of gratitude by signalling that the firm consistently delivers excellent service or that it is a good employer. These reputational cues suggest that the positive encounter is not only a result of the individual but also due to organizational characteristics. The study raises critical implications for the management of gratitude-generating service encounters.
How does social influence effect customers’ preference to use mobile proximity payment services?

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The effect of social influence on customers’ use of mobile technology has predominantly focused at the pre-adoption stage and intention to use. This study investigates how social influence affects the ongoing use of mobile technology within the service experience. Social influence is viewed as an effect from the social environment on the customer value created when a mobile phone is used to make a payment in person. A sequential multi-method qualitative design of self-observations and in-depth interviews provides an understanding of the value phenomena and value creating activities that occur in the service experience. The results show that social value exists in the form of: social confirmation, social pressure, and social setup. These themes exist at differing stages of the service experience and have differing inter-relationships with other customer value constructs. The findings show that opportunities exist for mobile payment providers to increase adoption through the social influence of existing users.

The sense or nonsense of implicit measures in service research

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This paper offers an in-depth discussion of implicit measures of human behavior and their potential for the service field. To date, the use of implicit measures in the service research domain is limited. This is surprising given the exciting potential they could hold to advance service research. The aim of this paper is to highlight how and if the service field can benefit from applying implicit measures in our toolkit. To do so, several types of implicit measures along with their benefits and obstacles are discussed. Further, this paper synthesizes studies adopting implicit measures from a variety of domains (e.g., consumer behavior, psychology, marketing) and discusses the use of implicit measures in practice to highlight potential avenues of how service research could integrate these types of measures.
A Framework of Online Rapport-Building Behaviours: An Exploration of Twitter

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Online social media encounters are growing rapidly, yet there are few studies around establishing rapport with customers in online channels of interaction. To date, most research focuses on rapport-building in face-to-face and call centre channels. This research aims to identify the behaviours used by service employees to build rapport with customers during social media encounters. The study employs netnography to analyse 600 customer-employee conversations on Twitter obtained from twelve companies, who are leading exponents of this approach, in six service sectors. Findings suggest that Twitter is a unique medium of interaction making it ideally suited for rapport building. Four distinct rapport-building behaviours are used by service employees when interacting with their customers; emotional contagion, interjections, netspeak ‘lingo’, and tools of wider engagement. The study’s contribution lies in extending the concept of rapport to online channels of interaction and providing managers with insights into rapport-building behaviours that they can develop.

Many Voices: Dialectic Tensions and the Elderly

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Ageing of the population is something to celebrate, demonstrating improved health and elder care. It also represents a challenge since a larger ageing population demands increasing levels of eldercare services. In this ethnographic study, we sought to understand the practices, experiences and interactions within eldercare homes from the perspectives of the elderly and the providers. Our major finding is the ubiquitous friction between what we call Graceful Disengagement and Full Force approaches that both the elderly adopt, and the service organization subscribe to in their care and practices. Graceful Disengagement is the facile acceptance and adoption by the elderly of the decreasing capabilities and scope of engagement in life activities. Full Force is the commitment to fight and resist any decrease in the scope of life. We found that the push and pull between these two strategies manifest in four major areas of tension: Choice/Freedom, Anticipation, Responsibility and Life Course.
Offense et incident de service, deux objets différents. Une approche exploratoire

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This study focuses on the theme of the offense, as perceived by the customer, in the context of customer-employee interactions during a service process. First we will specify what characterizes the offense of a client by one or more employees of a company, while differentiating the service failure from the offense, which is a moral fault of the offender. We will also distinguish the offense from other related concepts related to it, such as injustice. This research is supported by a thematic analysis and a lexical analysis to identify the emotions associated with the offense and the perception of the offender by the customer.

Humans versus Machines: Understanding the relational mechanism underlying customers’ evaluations of frontline service interactions.

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Frontline service technologies are increasingly replacing human employees at the organizational frontline. Moreover, there is a tendency to program frontline service technologies to act as social partners. Given that frontline service interactions are fundamentally social interactions, relational components play a vital role in understanding the implications of automation on customers’ experiences. This empirical study examines the relational mechanism – consisting of three relational perceptions (social cognition, trust, and rapport) and two driving social perceptions (social presence and psychological discomfort) – underlying customers’ evaluations of human versus automated service interactions. Based on five experimental studies, we (1) present and test the relational mechanism, (2) show that the type of service interface influences the relational mechanism, (3) present two manageable factors (i.e. type of behavior and robot design) that impact the relational mechanism, and (4) demonstrate that social presence is sometimes undesirable due to its possible negative influence via embarrassment.
Should digital marketing practices be more transparent? An empirical investigation on the roles of consumer digital literacy and privacy concerns in self-service technologies

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The growth of self-service technologies has led to an increasing demand for transparency. More and more services are delivered online and require that, in this information asymmetry situation, customers overcome their lack of technical knowledge and risks associated with their personal data disclosure and dissemination. This article proposes a three dimensional conceptualization of digital transparency (objectivity, limpidity, openness) and examines how customer's digital literacy and privacy concerns influence the way they perceive their provider's transparency and, indirectly, their engagement to their provider. Based on an empirical research study in e-commerce (N=445), this research demonstrates the differential effects of objective and subjective digital literacies on perceived transparency and examines how customers’ privacy concerns lower each dimension of perceived transparency. Finally, since each dimension of perceived transparency actually influence customer engagement, this paper urges firms to pay a specific attention to customer segments with a lower digital literacy and a higher concern for privacy.

Modeling of expected co-creation in services

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Economic value creation manifests itself in the interaction between the firm and the consumer. The paper presents a qualitative study of consumers’ decision making processes in service selection, highlighting the aspects of value co-creation in consumer preferences. The empirical study was based on a series of focus group discussions analysing them by a qualitative text-analytical software. On the transcribed interviews a content analysis was conducted applying the MAXQDA software. Analysing the transcript based upon preference-proportion of the different contents, it turned out that proportion of co-creation related concepts was remarkable. By tagging of the transcript with a code structure expectations on co-creation could be identified, like communication, value proposition, availability, versatility and experience. Nevertheless, complexity of service makes influence on co-creation expectations. Expectations for co-creation can be different by personality of potential customers, as well. Findings of the research have been built into a proposed model of co-creation expectations.
Using smart services to shift distances and enhance alternative urban mobility experiences

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Smart cities offer many technological solutions and smart services to address environmental challenges like reducing solo car use. To better manage urban mobility, Mobility as a Service (MaaS) solutions have emerged to offer the best user experience as possible by integrating a system of services in order to facilitate the use of sustainable modes (public transport, cycling, carpooling, etc.). But sometimes the car remains objectively the most efficient mode (in terms of distance, time, comfort, etc.). Thus, smart services, such as MaaS solutions, should be well designed to make the user choose more sustainable modes of transportation and mobility. The experiences from those modes are less valued compared to car experience through MaaS apps. Our research objective is to better understand the mobility experience to optimize MaaS solutions. This experience can be directly affected by the real distance the user has to travel, but also by the perceived distances by the user in terms of time, space, relationships with others or likely events encountered along the way (temporal, spatial, social, and hypothetical distances). It reminds the four different dimensions of psychological distance from Trope and Liberman (2003) but the concept has many limitations when applied to the urban mobility experience. How much distance is present in mobility experience? How do distances impact smart services design like MaaS solutions?

After introducing MaaS concept and psychological distance limits, this paper presents results from individual interviews (Study 1) and the focus groups’ expected results (Study 2) to complete the first study for a revised submission.

Investigating the foundations of a B2B Customer Experience conceptual framework

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Practitioners increasingly recognize the impact of delivering better customer experiences in B2B markets. However, despite this growing interest and a larger volume of B2B spending vs. B2C, B2B Customer Experience (CX) hasn’t yet been much investigated by academia. Our investigation of B2B CX reveals important differences between B2B and the seminal CX construct in the consumer and service marketing literature. We propose a conceptual B2B CX framework which integrates the main elements of B2C CX (focal point on the individual, consideration for multiple layers, phased journey and touchpoints), while extending the model by considering how the individual and the organizational journey differ, how individual experiences influence organizational behaviors, and how co-created touchpoints add to the established range of touchpoints. We consider three important influencing factors: the organizational structure, the buying situation and the relationship complexity. This paper is a first step towards the development of a comprehensive theoretical B2B CX framework.
The role of wearable activity tracking devices in servicescapes

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Wearable activity tracking devices, such as smartwatches, are among the most widely adopted technology in the Internet of Things (IoT), which encompasses a broad set of smart devices that are connected to consumers, other devices and service providers via the internet (Hoffman & Novak, 2017). Such technological developments challenge the nature of service delivery (Henkens, Verley & Larivière, 2018), especially that of servicescapes. The aim of this paper is to explore the role wearable activity tracking devices play as a servicescape. On the basis of a qualitative study among French joggers, we identify how this type of servicescape functions in the activity tracking services: by rationalizing the jogging activity, motivating the jogger, and objectifying the activity tracked, connected servicescapes appear to foster customers’ involvement with regards to both the activity of jogging and the activity tracking service.

Collaborative intelligence - employee need fulfillment in an AI-based internal service encounter

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While literature has started to conduct first studies on the effects of artificial intelligence (AI) on customer and employee outcomes, we aim to shed light on the effects of a distinct form of AI, namely collaborative intelligence (CI). To this end, we introduce CI with its five sub-dimensions to service literature and define it as an interactive technology that offers service to a customer (i.e., employee) in an internal service encounter. Drawing from service encounter needs theory and technology acceptance literature, we expect that CI will have a positive effect on employee need fulfillment. Furthermore, we investigate moderating effects of employee’s threat perception and risk. To this end, we conduct two studies relying on a 2x3 and a 1x5 between-subject scenario-based experiment. Our research contributes to literature by introducing a new concept and thoroughly testing its effects on employee needs fulfillment.
Transformation of Actors’ Roles in Service Systems: A Multi-Level Analysis

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Digital technologies and international competition are inherently challenging for service organizations that need to adapt to their agile environment. Service organizations are shifting increasingly towards technology-mediated co-production and co-creation of value with multiple actors (e.g., business partners, customers, etc.) to achieve real mutual value. This transformation process requires not only new value creation processes and structures but also the definition of different roles and responsibilities for actors in a service system. Further, technology has become an actor with agency. While academia proposed multiple methods, models, and frameworks for designing innovative value propositions, actors have received limited attention. This research article provides first insights on how actors’ roles in the digital era need to change for fostering the creation of joint spheres for mutual value creation. The preliminary insights from two case studies show how capabilities, routines, and value creation processes of actors in service systems are currently transformed.

Do young frontline employees have different responses to organizational HRM practices than older employees?

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Many service organizations rely on young workers to deliver quality customer experiences, yet youth have rarely been studied in a work context. Due to developmental processes adolescents undergo, it is necessary to understand whether this group responds to commonly applied work practices differently than adults. This research aims to investigate the moderating roles of age and psychosocial maturity on the relationship between work characteristics and work engagement. A conceptual model is presented upon which a series of statistical tests will be undertaken. The data collection is in its final stages, based on a cross-sectional design with a representative sample of 200 adult workers (30 years and older) and 200 adolescent workers (under 20 years old). Results will be analyzed and the conclusions presented at the conference. This is, to our knowledge, a first empirical study to explore how young age may affect worker motivational processes and perceptions of HRM practices.
Exploring the effects from managing simultaneous service encounters on service provider satisfaction

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Faced with ever-increasing demand, limited resources, and volunteer turnover, child helplines must find a way to continue supporting children while keeping volunteers satisfied. Through online chat, volunteers can help two children simultaneously, but it is not known how this “multicommunication” affects volunteer satisfaction. The purpose of this study is to understand, when helping two children simultaneously, how volunteer satisfaction with the second parallel chat (chat 2) is impacted by the volunteer’s roles (adviser versus listener) and the problem controllability of both overlapping chats. A multilevel model was estimated using data from overlapping chat encounters (N = 1582) from 248 volunteers at a child helpline. Results indicated that volunteers were most satisfied with chat 2 when they assumed the role of an adviser in both chats. Volunteers were also more satisfied when the chat’s problem controllability differed between the two chat sessions.

Studying resource exchange through interactions between smart city actors: alliancing and collaboration

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Purpose. The detrimental effects of rapid urbanization have led to the urgent need to reconstruct the way in which cities operate and utilize resources. Smart cities have emerged as a possible solution towards more efficient urban environments. Methodology. In order to identify these resources, 70 qualitative interviews with senior staff from representative organisations from the university, government and industry have been performed. These were used to map the dyadic and triadic interactions that occur between organisations within the smart city service ecosystem. Findings. Findings suggest that human capital appears to be the most valuable resource and is typically considered as rare in the public sector. Connections enabled through intra-actor collaboration create future opportunities and access to future markets. Consortiums/alliances between public actors, universities and some industrial players are almost essential to secure funding from public resources.
Examining Predictors & Consequences of Service Climate in Public Sector Emergency Departments

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This paper presents the findings from a study that assessed nurse’s perceptions of service in the emergency department (ED) where they work. Using a modified version of the Service Profit Chain, this research examined the mediating role of service climate (SC) by exploring predictors of SC - service training (ST), managerial practices (MP), physical design (PD), job design (JD), job satisfaction (JS), and employee empowerment (EE) on consequences of SC, which are service quality (SQ), patient satisfaction (PS) with service, and patient empowerment (PE). The proposition being that certain structural variables, through their impact on SC, have the potential to positively influence outcomes in the ED. Registered nurses (n = 180) from EDs throughout one province in Canada provided information about the quality of the internal service environment. Furthermore, these nurses provided information on external SQ, PS with service, and PE by responding to questions from the vantage point of the patient. Structural equation modelling was implemented using linear structural relations. SEM analyses showed that JS and EE only partially mediated the relationship between MP, PD, and JD and SC. ST was non-significant in the model. External SQ, PS, and PE were fully mediated by SC. In addition, MP and PD have a direct impact on SC, as does MP on SQ.

Finding an Adequate Service Strategy to Manage Product Recalls: Effects of Perceived Risk, Perceived Convenience, and Time Horizon

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This research addresses product recalls from a service-oriented perspective, seeking to find a service strategy that accounts for customers’ preferences when eliminating a product defect. The paper describes current business practices in recall management, including preconditions for an appropriate recall strategy by conducting qualitative interviews and analyzing archival data. Further, it examines customers' needs regarding product recall management in an experiment. As such, this research sheds light on affected car owners’ preference regarding recall processes and their antecedents. The authors draw on the protective action model (Lindell/Perry, 1992), considering product recalls as protective actions that can either be conducted immediately (i.e., separate appointment) or procrastinated (i.e., combined with the next regular inspection). The experimental results show that the first option is favored the higher the risk associated with the defective product and the later the next regular inspection is due, even though a separate appointment entails additional effort for customers.
The Servicescape Challenge: Can luxury servicescape be digitized

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Why consumers do not protect their data privacy when experiencing digital online services

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