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Article

On Service Innovation as an Interactive Process: A Case Study of the Engagement with Innovation of a Tourism Service

Lars Fuglsang [1,*] and Anne Nordli [2,*]

[1] Department of Social Sciences and Business, Roskilde University, 4000 Roskilde, Denmark
[2] Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, Inland Norway University of Applied Science, 2418 Elverum, Norway
* Correspondence: fuglsang@ruc.dk (L.F.); anne.nordli@inn.no (A.N.)

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Abstract: In the innovation studies literature, the process of innovation has been described as an interactive process that engages many different actors over time in the development and regeneration of goods and services. In the development and regeneration of tourism services, this often includes community actors. Yet, little attention has been paid to the way in which actors grasp the societal environment with which they interact, for example in intimate relationships or interactions with a wider community, and how such interaction formats may in turn affect the innovation process; for example, its desirability and visibility. The paper contributes to service and tourism innovation research by drawing on the concept of engagement to explain three cognitive formats of social interaction between innovators and their social environment. These are familiar engagement, engagement in plan, and engagement in justifiable action. The contribution to service and tourism innovation literature is to show how the varied capabilities of engagement impact innovation. Furthermore, based on a case study on a tourism service, the paper argues that the different formats of engagement typically must be combined and balanced in the innovation process.

Keywords: innovation; service innovation; engagement theory; narrative method; interactive capabilities

1. Background

A rapidly changing society places great demands on tourism companies' competences to adapt and change. Companies must be able to utilize existing facilities and resources in new ways to serve the guests in line with new demands. In other words, there are great demands for innovation and the regeneration of practices. Innovation theory in the neo-Schumpeterian tradition tends to treat innovation and regeneration as interactive processes (Lundvall 1988, 2013). The innovation process requires that people collaborate and give mutual support and feedback to each other in order to change multiple aspects of practices, thereby solving problems in new ways. Innovations cannot be obtained by anonymous and abstract relations in the market or through purely individualistic behaviors; they need stronger efforts of coordination and co-creation. Accordingly, the literature has emphasized varied forms of interaction. Yet the literature pays little attention to the cognitive format of these interactive practices, that is, how actors grasp the environment on which they depend as personal or general relations. For example, innovative actors may have different horizons and ambitions for engaging with their social and economic environment. In some cases, the ambitions may be strategic and societal, and in others more hedonistic, for the pleasure and care of those involved. It may be asked whether higher levels of engagement are always needed for innovations to emerge, and whether innovations are always explicitly desired and socially justified. For example, at lower

levels of engagement, innovations can be generated and become accepted within a familiar world to which people are attached by personal affinities and emotional ties. Only at the higher levels, when more societal visibility and acceptance is required, can more explicit and codified plans and justifications be required for innovations to become generated and accepted.

We argue that the issue of innovation raises the question of how innovative actors deal cognitively and emotionally with their societal environment and that this issue has largely been neglected in innovation studies. Our aim is not to determine the structure of a relationship, such as a network, but the social ambitions for, and cognitive format of, societal relations and their impact on innovation. We assume that those actors that initially promote innovations may cognitively grasp the societal environment in a variety of ways that in turn affect the interaction and innovation process.

This paper presents a case study of a tourism business that has regenerated and innovated their services. The paper is intended to analyze different interaction formats that were activated during the innovation process and explore how they affected the innovation process. For the purpose of the paper, we draw heavily on the ideas of Laurent Thévenot and his theory of engagement, which we serendipitously discovered during our research to illustrate how the social formats of interaction may affect the innovation process. In his work on engagement, Thévenot seeks to analyze how actors relate to their environment, using varied cognitive formats that enable coordination with the environment. Thévenot also argues that these cognitive formats are affiliated with a search for guaranteed goods:

> 'I chose "engagement" rather than a vocabulary of action or practice, as these focus attention exclusively on the human agent. My reasons were twofold. First, "engagement" emphasizes the person's dependence on the environment she relies on while grasping it by means of a certain cognitive format. Second, the term refers to a quest for a guaranteed good (as in the engagements of marriage or a contract) that makes it possible to assess what is relevant to know.' (Thévenot 2007)

Following these ideas, we argue that innovative actors interact with their societal environment through various cognitive formats of engagement. Thévenot (2001, 2007) argues that three such formats of engagement can be distinguished: Familiar engagement, engagement into plan, and engagement into justifiable action. The more specific research question that we address, based on the engagement theory of Thévenot, is what implications the capability to engage in the societal environment has for innovation in a community context. We contribute to service and tourism innovation research by arguing that the concept of engagement can be used to analyze the various ways in which innovative actors deal interactively with their societal context.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. First, we briefly review the literature on service innovation and its limitations with regard to a more basic concept of societal interaction. We argue that service innovation research tends to be divided between process views and system views that could be better connected. Engagement is a process concept that describes how actors relate to interactive systems; hence, it is also a bridging construct between process and system views. Second, we present the analytical framework derived from Thévenot that we use in a case study of service innovation. Third, we present our method, case study, and findings. We conclude by discussing the potential contribution to service innovation studies.

2. Innovation in Services as an Interactive Process

There is no single way to define the concept of innovation, but there is agreement that innovation involves the process of realizing an idea in practice. In service innovation research, Sundbo defines innovation as " ... the effort to develop an element that has already been invented, so that it has a practical-commercial use, and to gain the acceptance of this element" (Sundbo 1998). Hence, Sundbo's definition refers to innovation as a process whereby an invention becomes adopted in a societal and/or organizational context. The definition implies that some elements of the innovations are reproduced

(cf. Toivonen et al. 2007). The inventions do not need to be new to the world or to the market to count as innovation but may be new in a given context or organization.

Innovation in services can be interpreted in a rather broad way as the development of new behavioral forms of service with certain technological and nontechnological characteristics (see, for example, Rubalcaba et al. 2012). An assimilation approach to service innovation assumes that innovation in services is fundamentally similar to innovation in manufacturing. This approach has a strong focus on technology and R and D and has led to quantitative research, including community innovation surveys (CIS) (Coombs and Miles 2000; Tether 2005). A contrasting approach is that of demarcation, following criticism that the assimilation approach does not consider the specificities of service innovation (Coombs and Miles 2000; Gallouj and Savona 2008; Tether 2005). This approach focuses on service features, such as intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability, and perishability (IHIP). Furthermore, the literature on service innovation may be divided into at least two streams, which can be called the (1) process and (2) system views of innovation. Both of these views conceptualize innovation as an interactive process. The process views are mostly micro-oriented, and the system views are mostly macro-oriented.

1. Process Views of Innovation: Research on innovation in services has identified several types of interactive processes in innovation relevant for different types of service companies, such as the stage gate model (Alam and Perry 2002), which is a formalized phase model of innovation applicable mostly to large service companies. Less formalized incremental types of innovation processes have also been identified, such as ad hoc innovation (Gallouj and Weinstein 1997), rapid application innovation (Toivonen et al. 2007), a posteriori recognition of innovation (ibid.), or practice-based approaches, such as bricolage, which is solving problems on the spot using resources at hand (cf. also Baker and Nelson 2005; Fuglsang 2010; Fuglsang and Sørensen 2011). Generally, service innovations are shown to be highly interactive, yet more incremental, less R and D-based and less formalized than innovation in manufacturing (Rubalcaba et al. 2012), and the interaction between manager, employee, and customer is shown to be important. The literature shows that innovation processes can be both employee-driven and management-guided (Fuglsang and Sundbo 2005; Rubalcaba et al. 2012), and service innovation processes can be problem-solving activities that create continuity between the past, present, and future. Although service innovation research stresses the role of the customer and customer-based innovation (Sundbo and Toivonen 2011), it generally tends to take a "productionist" and managerial view of the interaction, with customers as one source of innovation that must be combined with others. Customer orientation is seen as linked to service employees' experience of customers and capacity to manage them.

Recent conceptualizations of service innovation have placed greater stress on the customer's role. This approach is inspired by customer-oriented research stemming from the service marketing literature (Grönroos and Voima 2013; Vargo and Lusch 2008). This literature conceptualizes service as a "resource" developed for customers. Hence, in this view, a service innovation is a new resource made available to customers through interaction with them. This differs from the previous distinction between product and process innovation that otherwise dominates the innovation literature (Rubalcaba et al. 2012; Skålén et al. 2013). The value of a service is not seen as embedded in a service or product but is created through the customer's use of the resource. The provider's role as innovator is to make a new value proposition to the customer, yet the customer creates value by using the resource independent of, or in collaboration with, the provider. The literature focuses on the firm, the customer, and the interaction between them. Innovation becomes an intentional move towards creating a meaningful value proposition for a customer.

2. Systems Views of Innovation: The systems approach to innovation is interactive but usually macro-oriented. The purpose of this approach is to analyze and understand how varied policy measures and support structures at the societal level can influence innovation processes in companies (Edquist 2005). Research identifies activities, functions, or institutions at the societal level (national, regional, or sectorial) that influence innovation processes at the micro level. Innovation systems have

also been seen as multilevel interactive processes stressing that government support activities emerge in interaction with company-level activities (Bergek et al. 2008; Hekkert et al. 2007). Furthermore, it has been argued that more historical, industrial specific, and contextual models are needed (Asheim and Coenen 2005; Cooke and Morgan 1998; Miettinen 2002; Sørensen 2007). Hence, the process and systems approaches may converge around a notion of innovation as a context-dependent interactive process. Alternative approaches to innovation systems in service have suggested that they are loosely coupled interactive systems (Sundbo and Gallouj 2000) or problem-based systems (Tether and Metcalfe 2004) emerging from practical problem-solving around a particular challenge acting as a focal device. Thus, in the service-oriented literature, the term "innovation system" may refer to the practices formed by specific interactions of actors at the micro level rather than the wider societal support structure. Another convergence of system and process views is found in service-dominant (S-D) logic (stemming from the service marketing literature), in which a system is defined as an interaction of resources: "A service system is an arrangement of resources (including people, technology, information, etc.) connected to other systems by value propositions" (Vargo et al. 2008).

In the process and systems views, both the classical "productionist" service innovation literature and the "customerist" service marketing literature generally stress that innovation is an interactive process involving a variety of actors in processes of mutual influence and feedback. In addition, providers and customers are often seen to belong to different spheres and to have different roles (Grönroos and Voima 2013). Thus, a major problem in the literature is perhaps the relatively sharp distinction that is often made between the provider and the customer sphere, and the subsequent "interactionist" view of them, at least if "interaction" in this context means dyadic relations between a provider and a customer (see also Heinonen et al. 2013). The literature tends to neglect that a provider and a customer are connected to varied forms of societal interaction at different levels of engagement and societal interest; for example, as professional practitioners or as members of a community.

Process views have lately received attention in management and business research. In this literature, process perspectives have been contrasted with variance perspectives. Process perspectives "address questions about how and why things emerge, develop, grow, or terminate over time" (Langley et al. 2013). Variance perspectives describe systemic patterns of relationships surrounding an organizational phenomenon (Langley 2007). Variance perspectives are seen as the "normal science", while process perspectives are rarer (Welch and Paavilainen-Mantymaki 2014). However, process studies are relevant to improving our knowledge of how patterns and systems can emerge. Process perspectives "provide the temporally embedded accounts that enable us to understand how ... patterns come to be" (Langley 2007). In service innovation research, process views are more usual, because they deal with the ways in which innovations emerge and are reproduced over time. However, little attention is given to the interconnections of systems and process perspectives. Nevertheless, the concept of "engagement" as we use it in this paper is a bridging concept that may help to bridge system views with process views. It provides a better framework to describe how societal actors relate to and grasp the societal environment with which they interact during the innovation process. This is relevant to both theory and practice because it provides a better explanation of how innovators enact various capabilities of social engagement, ranging from personalized to generalized approaches to the environment.

3. Engagement

Thévenot understands engagement to be a cognitive relationship between a human agent and her environment (for the following, see also Fuglsang 2015; Thévenot 2001, 2007). The agent oscillates between personalized and generalized assessments of the environment. Generalized formats of engagement provide an opportunity to coordinate actions with more stakeholders. Personalizing the environment increases convenience but also narrows the scope for action. At the center of interest is the cognitive format of engagement rather than its content. Furthermore, Thévenot explains how varying formats of engagement can guarantee different types of goods for the agents. Unfortunately,

Thévenot does not define what he means by the term "good" in a very precise way. He argues that various conceptions of "the good" govern a given relationship. Such normative conceptions of a good interact with the actual material and desirable response that occurs in reality (Thévenot 2001). Thus, a good has both a normative and a material side.

On this basis, Thévenot distinguishes three types of engagement: (1) Familiar engagement, (2) engagement in plan, and (3) engagement in justifiable action.

1. Familiar engagement is personalized engagement with the environment. In personalized engagement, an actor evaluates his or her environment as something with which they could be at ease and confident. The environment becomes a bricolage of all kinds of things that have accumulated over time in a way that appears to be convenient for the agent. An agent's relationship with their resources can be highly tacit and emotional. The kind of good that governs this relationship is thus convenience and comfort. Yet the downside is inquietude, as this comfort is fragile in reality. Thévenot compares familiar engagement to "inhabiting a home". In our homes, resources are organized in a messy and personalized way, and we are usually comfortable and at ease in this environment.

2. Engagement in plan occurs when an individual creates a plan, thereby projecting themselves into the future. The good governing this type of approach to the environment is the prospect of being an "individual endowed with autonomy and capable of projecting herself successfully into the future" (Thévenot 2007). Setting up a plan requires the use of conventions to accomplish the plan and to enable coordination with relevant stakeholders. Moreover, such a plan represents an "investment in form"; that is, an investment in certain codes of conduct that by convention are easily understandable as useful. The disadvantage of a plan may be that details are lost, and convenience and familiarity may suffer. Thévenot compares this "conventional utility" to renting one's home to another person. In this case, it is necessary to organize the home in a conventional way to make it useful to another person. Engagement in plan equals effective, coordinated, and intentional action.

3. Engagement in justifiable action means actors' attempts to justify certain actions and conventions in terms of the societal/collective goods that they are intended to produce. This can be triggered by a dispute, when a person feels that a relationship does not meet an agreed standard (cf. the tenant of the home). In such a case, it may be necessary to frame arguments in terms of a common good to reshape the relationship.

We can use this framework to describe three ways in which an innovative enterprise can approach its environment. (1) An enterprise and its managers/employees may stress that the environment is a personalized set of resources made available for them over time. (2) The enterprise may seek to formulate a realizable plan and approach the environment accordingly. The plan must be recognizable as useful for more stakeholders and enable greater coordination with them. (3) A company may also take a more societal approach, evaluating its relationship with its environment in terms of whether the enterprise can create societal value, for example, by developing a region or generating sustainable development.

The various types of engagement can be used to describe actors' capability and desire to approach the societal environment in an innovation process—the different formats represent varying degrees of extension of a person or a company into the environment as well as varying degrees of disengagement from the most personalized aspects. The three types of engagement are distinct cognitive frameworks governed by different desirable goods that they are supposed to produce: Convenience, autonomy, and common goods.

In the context of this paper, we argue that this concept of societal engagement can be used to improve our understanding of processes and systems of interaction in an innovation process. In a case study, it was observed that the creation of a new innovative system was influenced by the ways in which the actors approached and evaluated their environment in terms of familiarity, planning, and justification.

4. Method

The method is a case study of one of Norway's biggest alpine centers, "Norwegian", and how it was transformed from a winter destination to a year-round destination through the establishment of "Norwegian" Bike Park. The bike park offers downhill cycling experiences during summertime. Downhill cycling is a recent activity, and it remains under development. It is a form of cycling in the mountains using a special type of mountain bike, security equipment, bike trails, and turns and jumps that are constructed in the mountains using a spade or an excavator. The activity is conducted by highly trained cyclists as an elite sport, but it is also an amateur family activity, much like downhill skiing. As an elite sport, it has special tournaments, such as the Norwegian championship, the Nordic championship, the European championship, and the UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale) World championship.

4.1. The Case

The case study is a single longitudinal case study that followed the development of "Norwegian" Bike Park from when it was started from scratch in 2001 until 2014, when it hosted the World Championships in Downhill Cycling and Mountain Biking. The case study method is relevant when the researcher wishes to collect contextual expertise about a phenomenon (Flyvbjerg 2001) and when the boundaries of the phenomenon are not very clear (Yin 2003). The capability for societal engagement and its impact on innovation is not a very clear phenomenon in innovation research. Moreover, we argue that downhill cycling in "Norwegian" is an extreme case. Extreme cases (Flyvbjerg 2006) "often reveal more information because they activate more actors and more basic mechanisms in the situation studied" (p. 229). The development of "Norwegian" Bike Park can be seen as an extreme case for several reasons. First, the growth has been extreme—since starting from scratch 13 years prior to this study, when the first bike track was dug manually, to hosting the UCI World Championships in 2014 with 1900 participants and 40,000 expected spectators. Second, "Norwegian" Bike Park has been a great success both nationally and internationally. It is unique because it is the only ski destination in Norway that has become a profitable and sustainable downhill venue. Third, "Norwegian" has overcome great challenges in justifying its relevance vis-à-vis the municipality and local landowners. In addition, it relies largely on the personal engagement of the core actors. Case studies may be used for theory building through "recursive cycling among the case data, emerging theory, and later, extant literature" (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). We used the case together with the theoretical construct of engagement to theorize various formats of interaction and engagement that are activated in the case. The case study was selected by a strategic choice method using the following criteria: It should be possible to define the innovation as an emerging new service practice, the practice should represent a reproducible innovation, and it should be possible to recognize various forms of societal interaction in the case. We discovered the concept of engagement during our research and found it very suitable. We then used engagement as an emerging theory of the different interaction forms observed in the case. Downhill cycling can be defined as an emerging new service practice—that is, a coherent cooperative human activity (MacIntyre 1985)—that is relatively stable in time and socially recognized (Gherardi 2006). It is an innovation because the case develops downhill cycling in a unique way. This represents an innovation in itself that in addition consists of a bricolage of many small, ad hoc, and incremental innovations. Finally, it is possible to recognize various capabilities of societal engagement during the innovation process, as further explained in the section on findings.

The data gathering process in the study was based on two primary data sources and some secondary data in the form of newspaper articles and a book. The primary data sources were: (1) In-depth retrospective interviews with the key innovators of the services and (2) long-term observations by one of the authors who worked for several years in close relation to the bike park. As a result of that, it was possible to identify and contact the five key players in the development process of "Norwegian" Bike Park and to arrange in-depth interviews with them.

4.2. The Interviews

The interviews with the five informants were open and unstructured, with several questions to guide their recounts of the development of "Norwegian" Bike Park. A main question that all the informants were asked was: "Could you please describe and explain the most critical incidents in the development process of "Norwegian" Bike Park?" This line of questioning builds on Flanagan (1954) and Chell (1998). This so-called critical incident technique can be used to study innovation from a process perspective by asking respondents about key moments in the history of an organization that presently points towards the future (Fuglsang 2017). Having five informants representing different angles and perspectives on the phenomenon helped to reduce the interview bias of retrospective sense making, in addition to impression management in the stories told (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). The five key players were Gert, Sverre, KT, Kurt, and Jens. Gert was the General Manager of "Norwegian" and the man who started the cycling and summer operation initiative at "Norwegian". Sverre is a local bike enthusiast and a former skeleton and bob driver on the Norwegian team. Sverre and some friends began secretly digging bike tracks in "Norwegian" for fun. Later, Sverre became the department manager of summer and bike activities at "Norwegian". KT is a local restaurant owner in "Norwegian" who had the idea of bike events to generate more traffic to his restaurants during summer. Kurt is a world-class Norwegian downhill biker who lives and works in "Norwegian". Jens is Gert's successor as the General Manager of "Norwegian". The longitudinal information has been taken from a variety of sources: Interviews reflecting the same periods from different angles, observations from the overall period, and documentary material made it possible to double-check the interview data and to reduce bias to a minimum.

4.3. The Narrative

Narrative inquiry is an umbrella term that captures personal and human dimensions of experience over time and takes account of the relationship between individual experience and cultural context (Clandinin and Connelly 2000a, 2000b). It is argued that narratives are an appropriate method of assessing interactions between society, community, and people (Salzer 1998). That is why narratives have become an important research strategy in developing process studies (Langley 1999). Because of the process nature of the innovation in this case study and our desire to understand the intertwining concepts of innovation, engagement, and stabilization of the innovation over a period of 13 years, we chose a narrative approach to the analysis. Narratives are very helpful for assessing data from several data sources, as in this case. They include interviews, observations, and documentary evidence (Boje 2001; Riessman 1993). Based on the various data sources, a full narrative of the single case was developed. Scene and plot work together to create the experiential quality of a narrative (Connelly and Clandinin 1990). Scene (or place) is where the action occurs, and time is essential to plot. The full narrative is sequenced into scene stories, each told chronologically. Examples include "the birth of the bike park", "the first years", "growth of rental and events", and "track development and maintenance". After the full version of the narrative was developed, a new condensed version was composed. The condensed version codifies the data based on our interpretation of the data and our interpretation of the three types of engagement mentioned by Thévenot. This means that the condensed version is further sequenced into three sections: (1) Familiar engagement, (2) engagement in plan, and (3) engagement in justifiable action. This version highlights and explains key events (scene stories) of the case, shedding light on our perspective of understanding innovation and stabilization and its value in group practice. In principle, other forms of engagement may be found as well.

The interpretation of data drew on the Flanagan critical incident technique (Flanagan 1954), yet by studying "events, processes and issues" related to specific problems (Chell 1998), we took a broader and more phenomenological approach to critical events of the narrative.

5. Findings

In the following section, we present our findings in the form of a brief narrative that has been codified by means of the three concepts of engagement: Familiar engagement, engagement in plan, and engagement in justifiable action. Critical events for these forms of engagement have been listed numerically and are explained further in the text below the numbered list. We outline the types of engagement and the goods provided by the different formats of engagement during the innovation process. The development of the whole bike park is seen as an innovation in itself, but it entails a number of ad hoc innovations, incremental innovations, and a bricolage of innovations that emerge throughout the stages of engagement. In this way, innovation and engagement are intertwined processes. The case study analysis and its relation to the concept of engagement are summarized in Table 1.

5.1. Familiar Engagement

1. Gert, leader of "Norwegian", was experimenting with downhill cycling.
2. One day, he met Sverre in Salt Lake City.
3. Sverre was also experimenting with downhill cycling.
4. It emerged that Sverre was digging cycling routes in "Norwegian" (in secrecy), where Gert was the leader.

When "Norwegian" began developing downhill cycling, it was initially based on a capability for personalized and familiar engagement with the environment. It was conducted without an explicit plan and under the radar of the formal bodies of "Norwegian", with personalized use of resources.

Gert, the General Manager of "Norwegian" Alpine Centre AS during the years 2003–2009, had a passion for snow, snow production, slope construction, and preparation of slopes. He travelled with his core staff to gain inspiration and learn from the world's largest ski resorts. Gert had a fascination for the summer bike activities in the largest ski resorts. He came to believe that ski resorts had to develop summer activities if they wished to survive and remain competitive.

Gert worked in Park City Ski Resort in Salt Lake City during the 2002 Olympics and happened to meet the Norwegian skeleton participant Sverre. Gert mentioned his fascination with the bike trails that had been built in Salt Lake City. Sverre listened closely because he, in addition to his skeleton career, was an active cyclist. Since childhood, he had built jumps, turns, and runs in the woods for biking. Sverre told Gert about his hometown in Norway and that he and some friends had dug bike trails without permission in the local ski resort. It turned out, to the surprise of both, that Sverre had dug bike trails in the very alpine center of which Gert was the General Manager.

Gert eventually hired Sverre to develop trails on the mountain. Gert understood quickly that he did not have the support of the board of "Norwegian". This meant that at first, Gert allowed Sverre to dig trails in the woods secretly. Gert convinced the board that the chair-lift could be a great summer attraction for tourists, and the board agreed to a limited number of summer operations in 2003. Secretly (without the board's knowledge), Sverre and Gert built unique custom racks mounted on the chairs to transport bikes up the mountain. This made it possible to sell day passes to downhill bikers during the summer season.

The overall innovation of "Norwegian" Bike Park itself began with both Sverre's and Gert's personal and familiar engagement. Their engagement led to several smaller innovations (ad hoc, incremental, and varied innovations). Gert allowed Sverre to build secretly in the woods, motivating Sverre towards further innovative and experimental development of tracks. Their cooperative engagement also led to the development of purpose-built racks for transporting bikes with a chair-lift. This case clearly shows how engagement and innovation are intertwined processes.

Table 1. Partly adapted from Thévenot 2001 and 2013. Cf also Thévenot 2007.

	Familiar Engagement	Engagement in Plan	Engagement in Justifiable Action
Relation to societal environment	Personal adjustment to the surroundings.	Implementing an individual plan.	Justification of one's actions for the common good.
The desirable good that governs the relation to the environment	The personal and local convenience of a familiar milieu.	Ability to implement a plan: Autonomy, self-confidence, visibility, and recognition.	A collective convention of the common good.
Examples from case	Sverre's personal passion for biking and track building since childhood. Sverre's competences learned from being a skeleton carrier. Gerts' belief in a year-round operation. Secretly using resources at "Norwegian".	A project group is established and visions formed, from small bike events to World Championships. The use of social media in marketing, a forum where bikers affirm their support.	Establishing good relations with local stakeholders through dialogue, diplomacy and justification. *The landowners* (Sverre keeps them informed through dialogue) *The Hospital* (dialogue through the bicycle patrol) *The new management* (a dialogue about systemizing budgets for the Bikepark).
Innovations	Track building. Unique custom racks for the chairlift.	A change from using spades to excavators in track building. Unique bike tracks. The reliance on local bikers and a volunteer milieu. Unique picture and movie material for media and marketing use.	Permission from landowners to use new land for track building. Custom-made budgeting system for the bike park. Cooperation regarding injury management with the hospital.
Disadvantage	Limited resources. Limited autonomy to act.	Badly coordinated with stakeholders and community. Badly justified in relation to local stakeholders.	Loss of detail and convenience. Loss of individual autonomy.
Types of actors	Personally engaged actors (Sverre, Gert, and KT).	Employees in "Norwegian" and the bike park. Local bikers, volunteers and customers.	Local stakeholders such as landowners, hospital, a new management, municipality.

Case analysis—The format of engagement and the good provided: In the initial stages of the innovation process, the actors involved had a capability to conceive the societal environment as a personalized place with resources available for use. By contrast, they ignored the fact that the innovation they developed was undesirable in the wider context of "Norwegian". The good guaranteed by this relationship with the environment was thus the comfort and ease by which the two innovators made use of the available resources for pleasure and fun. Resources were easily available in the shape of the knowledge and skills of Sverre, who could easily build tracks in which he had confidence, because of the skills that he had developed since childhood. However, the type of engagement enacted by Gert and Sverre has some limitations and sacrifices. First, the two core people, without the support of the board, had very limited resources and limited autonomy to act. Furthermore, they were in deep trouble with the board and other stakeholders in the area to whom they had not yet explained their actions.

5.2. Engagement in Plan

5. KT, a restaurant manager in "Norwegian", sought out Gert because he wished to arrange a downhill cycling competition. He wished to attract more summer tourists.
6. Gert reported that Sverre had already begun digging trails in the mountain on his own initiative and suggested that they should meet.
7. They began a project and formed a project group.
8. They formulated visions for the future.
9. They arranged the Norwegian Championships with the help of friends and acquaintances.
10. They used social media and a new media agency for inexpensive marketing.
11. They arranged Norwegian Cups, World Cups, and eventually the World Championship.

Eventually, Gert and Sverre became much more future-oriented and engaged in specific plans. Yet, to some extent, they were still forced to rely on a framework of familiar engagement using available family members and friends who could easily be recruited as staff and with whom they were at ease.

Their engagement in more extensive plans increased considerably when KT, a local restaurant manager, contacted Gert for a meeting. For the meeting, KT had prepared an excellent presentation of a complete package for the arrangement of a venue and cycling events to appeal to experienced bikers, families with children, and tourists. Based on his experiences from organizing ski competitions and thorough research on the requirements for bike events, he managed to convince Gert that his idea was workable, and Gert answered as follows:

> This is interesting! I want to go ahead with this, but first you need to meet someone. His name is Sverre Pedersen, and he uses tactics that are a little bit different from yours! He is digging biking tracks up here without permission!

Gert arranged a meeting between Sverre, KT, and himself. They felt that a strong triumvirate had been born. Gert dreamt that "Norwegian" would be a year-round destination offering continuing positions to the core staff. KT had a dream of hosting major events that would cause people to flock to "Norwegian". Sverre's dream was to build some of the world's best downhill biking tracks and one day to host the world's best cyclists. Sverre and KT together managed to motivate a local bicycle community and to establish a local downhill bicycle club to become engaged in voluntary work for "Norwegian", which was about to emerge as one of several leading downhill destinations in the world. Yet in the initial years, they were only allowed to use one of the chair-lifts and the upper part of the alpine center because of restrictions imposed by landowners.

After several successful Norway Cup events, they arranged the Norwegian Championships, followed by the Nordic Championships. According to KT, the success was possible because of the strong partnership between Sverre, Gert (with the power to act), and KT, who continued to seek new challenges. They applied for the European Championships, which, surprisingly, they were granted.

Sverre was also committed to making "Norwegian" Bike Park a leading user of social media. Therefore, he worked hard to make specific parts of the trails perfect for photography, with green grass and wonderful views. Sverre emphasized the importance of photos and movies in marketing, and he reported how they initiated a corporation for a newly founded company, Anti Media, founded by bikers with a passion for biking, photography, and movies. In addition, Sverre monitored the development in Whistler, Canada, one of the largest and leading downhill destinations in the world. Sverre was keen to learn from the best in taking the right decisions.

For several years during the event work, KT built the event staff with the help of friends, acquaintances, and volunteers. This became increasingly challenging as the number of events grew. Before the European Championships, KT applied for financial support from the municipality, the county council, and other public bodies, but the application was rejected. Again, KT was forced to build his event committee with the help of a group of friends and volunteers. Despite the impossible task, hard work, and exhausted volunteers, the European Championships were a great success. The resulting 210 min of television coverage in 70 countries finally caught the attention of the municipality and the local public. In the meantime, Gert quit his job in "Norwegian" because of disagreements and internal conflicts and pursued a new career as project manager, constructing the Olympic alpine arena of Rosa Kutor in Sochi. This was a huge loss for KT and Sverre in deciding whether to apply for a World Cup Event. KT made the following statement.

> Everything up to this point was built on pure will, interest and volunteering by those who participated. No one got paid anything. For so many years, everything was built on volunteerism and volunteers! It had to end eventually. Arrangements had become so large that my family, my friends, and Sverre's family and friends were not enough! We needed hundreds of officials, so we had to move on to get professionalized!

"Norwegian" hosted the World Cup Final 2012/2013 and the World Championships in 2014. These events were accepted on the condition that there would be financial support to organize them.

Three visions rooted in initial familiar engagement with downhill cycling, or three innovative ideas comprising an overall vision, illustrate how the environment became enacted as a plan. The actors felt sufficiently compelled and self-confident to shift the engagement format to drive the development further and to succeed with their visions. The engagement in the plan then led to new smaller innovations, such as a local bicycle environment, cooperation with Anti Media, and the development of Facebook as a marketing tool. The concepts of familiar engagement and engagement in a plan can capture how the innovators at various stages of the innovation process change the engagement and interaction with the environment but also demonstrate that they are bound to combine these aspects.

Case analysis—The format of engagement and the good provided: The capability to engage in plans entails a visionary, open, self-confident, and future-oriented approach to the environment with specific events to be organized, which become recognized and coordinated by the board and the local community. Furthermore, the innovation moves from personally desired and accepted to becoming desired by a larger community. The good created by this format is expressed in greater visibility, recognition and autonomy to act. Brief quotes from supporters on Facebook illustrate how the capability to engage in and carry out the plans successfully eventually spurred greater desire for this innovation:

"So sick, must visit next season", "Thanks for the awesome time we spent last summer. It was one of the most amazing times of the year", "Best park in Europe!!!", "Full credit to the builders for such awesome tracks", "Well deserved Sverre! You and the guys are doing some great work". Sverre responded: "Wow! Big words guys! Thank you so much! Hope to see you here soon Chris. Absolute honour to work with you!"

However, there is still a limitation and sacrifice to this enthusiastic engagement with such visionary future-oriented plans, namely, that they are badly coordinated with stakeholders in the local community. The plans are not very well justified in relation to some of the local stakeholders.

5.3. Engagement in Justifiable Action

12. There are challenges from landowners.
13. There are challenges from the hospital and the municipality.
14. There are challenges from "Norwegian".

Eventually, "Norwegian" downhill cycling must justify itself in relation to at least three local stakeholders: The landowners, the local hospital, and new management at "Norwegian".

The landowners: In Norway, there are no restrictions on trail construction in the natural environment, as long as landowners have approved the project. This is quite different from other countries, such as New Zealand, where it is quite inconceivable that people would be allowed to build bike trails similar to those in "Norwegian". This means that Norwegian destinations have significantly better conditions for building downhill trails than those in other countries. The only barrier is consent from landowners. Along with the rapid growth of "Norwegian" Bike Park and the downhill track development at "Norwegian", new challenges emerged in relation to landowners. Gert and another internal resource person with a long record of cooperating with landowners established contracts and agreements with landowners in the beginning, and were therefore intermediaries between Sverre, who was building the tracks, and the landowners. The fast track-building processes continued to make it challenging to follow up good dialogue with landowners and adjust contracts. This created challenges for "Norwegian" Bike Park and Sverre during those years. In the transition period between Gert's and Jens's times as General Manager, there was a major focus on cleaning up contracts with landowners. Gert, Sverre, and Jens were heavily involved in this work. Some owners became strongly opposed to trail building on their land, mostly because they were not well informed and had not been consulted. Jens states:

> One of my first assignments when I started at "Norwegian" was to contact the many landowners who were furious because land was excavated without permission. Because I came from "Norwegian", I was scolded by a landowner whom I had never met before. But we got along well after the first conversation as soon as he realized that I was there just to clean up the collaboration contracts.

When Sverre and Jens were in more direct contact with landowners about the track building along with a thorough renegotiation of landowner contracts, a focus on communication made it possible to establish a much stronger relationship of trust with the landowners.

The hospital: Downhill biking is an action sport, with a high risk of serious injuries. Unlike many ski/bike destinations, "Norwegian" is only 17 km (or 10 min) from the nearest hospital, Lillehammer hospital, which manages acute care. It has an ambulance service and a helicopter. Despite the proximity of the hospital, "Norwegian" has a bicycle patrol corresponding to a ski patrol in winter. Sverre told the authors about the careful recruitment of ambulance personnel from Lillehammer for the bicycle patrol. This is not only to obtain maximum possible expertise in medical treatment but also to create a good working relationship with the hospital. Sverre reports that Lillehammer hospital is divided in its attitude towards the bike park. Some of the staff members at the hospital are very upset at the injuries that come in because of "Norwegian". Meanwhile, others who know the bike park or work there praise its safety. On several occasions, Sverre and the bike park have invited the ambulance service staff to cycling and guiding events in "Norwegian". The guided tour has included inspection of the security conditions and access paths for reaching injured riders on the bike trails.

The new management at "Norwegian": A new era began at "Norwegian" when Jens was employed as the general manager to replace Gert. Jens had previously worked in several companies in organizational development and had expertise in manufacturing and the power industry. Because of his lack of experience and competence in ski/bike resort operation, Jens spent several months gaining a thorough understanding of the organization at all levels. Jens believed that tourism companies in general, including "Norwegian", were suffering from accounting-based budgeting. He came to

"Norwegian" with the goal of assigning more responsibility and authority to department managers through budget implementation at the department level. Jens developed his own budget planning system using Excel, a system that was custom-made for "Norwegian" and the different departments.

Sverre and the bike park were now forced into operating as a separate department, and as a department manager of summer activities and biking, Sverre needed to engage in budget planning. At the same time, this required operational changes from the way in which they had operated when Gert was the General Manager. The budget planning of the bike park led to a separate accounting department, which again made it possible to ascertain whether the bike park was capable of breaking even. Budget planning was a tool to make new investments possible for the bike park, such as the building of the high-level track (roller coaster) and increasing the number of rental bikes in the rental shop.

Case analysis—The format of engagement and the good provided: It was a challenge for the bike park that other concerned actors that were not part of their familiar entourage, such as the landowners and the local hospital, were initially more or less ignored. The personal and familiar engagement with the design of trails, slopes, and jumps left little attention for these actors and their varied needs and engagement. This lack of consideration led to conflicts about the bike park. Dialogue, diplomacy, and justification were needed to restore relations. When Sverre began to show more interest in the landowners' rights, as well as to explain Jens's reasons for using a spreadsheet, positive relations among various people with familiar engagement were created through mutual respect and justification. "Norwegian" Bike Park is developing its capability to justify its activities to the relevant stakeholders in the community. Constructing a common good is a result of this capability of engagement. This entails a dialogue with landowners, the municipality, and the "Norwegian" management around the issues of property rights, security, and the ability to break even. Table 1 below summarizes the findings of the study.

6. Contribution and Conclusions

This paper has used the concept of engagement in a case study of service and tourism innovation (Thévenot 2001, 2007) to show the role of varied formats of engagement for the development of "Norwegian" Bike Park as an innovation. Based on research by Thévenot, three formats of engagement were distinguished: Familiar engagement, engagement in plan, and engagement in justification. The main contribution to service and tourism innovation research is, thus, the emphasis on the concept of engagement as a construct for describing innovation as an interactive process. The construct of engagement enables us to elucidate in greater detail how cognitive formats may influence interactive innovation processes, namely in the shape of people skills, capabilities, and desires to grasp their societal environment and act within it.

In innovation theory, innovation is often seen as an interactive process. However, little attention is paid to the ways in which actors approach and grasp the environment with which they interact, and how this in turn affects the innovation process, for example, in terms of its desirability and the generation and acceptance of innovation. Taking into account the engagement capabilities of actors may explain better how actors can be confident with innovation processes and how they develop their conceptions of the environment and capability to interact with it during the innovation process. Thus, while earlier research on service innovation tends to take either a process perspective on innovation or a system perspective on innovation, this study links the two perspectives.

The paper also showed how capability at lower levels of engagement may be a path to higher levels of engagement. In the case study, at least in the first stages of innovation, the innovators tended to take a familiar and personalized approach to their environment by involving family and friends and using the available land without asking for permission, but this approach meant sacrificing autonomy and visibility. To maintain and to develop the innovation further, they needed to become more involved in plans and justifiable actions and to see themselves as people capable of realizing a plan. They started to conceptualize their relations with the environment in terms of plans, which meant

sacrificing comfort and ease. The case study shows how combining a variety of types of engagement may be important to the innovation process. It also shows the key role of familiar engagement in service innovation, where actors grasp the environment by means of what is familiar and desirable to them personally. Furthermore, from the case study, it appears that lower levels of engagement are important for commencing the innovation process, while more highly institutionalized cognitive formats may be important at later stages in order to justify innovations in a larger societal context.

Furthermore, the engagement construct helps to explain the variety of goods that may dominate innovation, such as convenience, plan, and justification. Engagement, as the term has been used here, implies that actors enact various types of relationship that appear to guarantee certain desirable goods. For example, the familiar conception of the societal environment is the cognitive capability to conceive resources as available in a convenient and easy way. Resources are treated as if they can be used for convenience in a personalized way. Engagement in plan is the capability to see the environment in a more utilitarian way—as something that can be transformed according to a conventional plan. This in turn produces greater autonomy, utility, visibility, and coordination with other stakeholders. Hence, using the engagement approach may help to elucidate what types of societal capabilities innovators enact to succeed in innovation and what societal goods these formats of engagement and interactions are intended to provide. One contribution to innovation research is to map the critical roles of these different types of goods, both for the successful development of innovations, for the confidence of actors in different stages of the innovation process, and for the promotion of the desirability of innovation in a social context. Moreover, this approach also demonstrates that innovation may fly under the radar of formal organization and may appear undesirable in a societal context.

Sometimes it is assumed in research that highly institutionalized and formalized formats of engagement and innovation are preferable to familiar forms. However, the case study shows that actors must also be able to feel confident with resources and need to be able to activate them in a personalized way to accomplish innovative goals and regenerate tourism services. Yet engagement in innovation also entails an ability to project oneself into the future and to accomplish a plan. However, in the engagement approach, it is clear that innovation does not develop according to a strict plan. Rather, a plan can be seen as a form of engagement enacted by agents that carries a good in itself that can dominate a relationship, such as a plan to regenerate a service.

To summarize, the engagement approach may thus pave new ground for innovation research by stressing its societal character and dependence on social and cognitive skills. Furthermore, it makes it possible to explore how the resources, goods, and benefits of innovation may be conceived throughout the innovation process.

Compared with recent customer-oriented approaches to innovation stressing the interaction of providers and customers, the engagement approach delivers a more differentiated view of interaction with customers. The provider and the customer may conceptualize each other in different ways and at different levels, corresponding to the three forms of engagement. The implication is that co-creation is not merely a question of interaction between a customer and a provider, but also of having the capability and social skill to progress societal engagement.

Regeneration of tourism services is referred to as renewal or redevelopment of existing facilities and infrastructure: Something that "Norwegian" Bike Park is a successful example of. Therefore, an understanding of the three forms of engagement may help to underpin strategies for regeneration in such contexts. Regeneration is rarely carried out overnight, as the yearlong project with the bike park shows. If the manager understands the different engagement forms, it might become easier to grasp potential innovation ideas and allow them to grow into successful regeneration projects. The overall plan for future development should take into account different levels of engagement, seeking to balance interaction between theme in valuable ways.

Future research could compare the impact of engagement capabilities on innovation in different contexts. For example, different cognitive formats may dominate in different industrial, service, and tourism sectors. Future research can also explore how an engagement-oriented approach can be

combined with quantitative studies of innovation in services. The impact of cognitive formats on innovation may be explored in a more statistical and quantitative way. Finally, future research could apply the engagement construct to entrepreneurship theory. Entrepreneurs operating in a community context with multiplex network relations, such as family, friendship, work, and policy may apply sophisticated mixes of engagement forms in order to design new practices.

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