

Guest Editorial: Service Marketing and the Winds of Change

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Journal of Service Theory and Practice and ANZMAC Conferences

This *Journal of Service Theory and Practice (JSTP)* special section continues a longstanding tradition of collaboration (Finsterwalder and Garry, 2011; Sajtos, 2015; Leo and Sweeney, 2017; Mathies and Patterson, 2017; Finsterwalder and Tombs, 2018; Tuzovic and Finsterwalder, 2020) between the journal and the annual Antipodean ANZMAC conferences organised by the Australian and New Zealand Marketing Academy. In 2019, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, hosted the event from 02 to 04 December 2019. As for prior iterations, JSTP's editors Professor Marianna Sigala, University of Piraeus, Greece, and Professor Chatura Ranaweera, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada, have again generously provided space for a special section with selected papers from the conference. All papers underwent JSTP's double-blind reviewing process, and it is our pleasure to present the *ANZMAC 2019 Journal of Service Theory and Practice's (JSTP)* special section. It comprises a selection of papers initially submitted to the conference's *Services Marketing Track*.

Our special section is entitled "Service Marketing and the Winds of Change". This title is in line with the conference's overall theme of "Winds of Change". In the

conference's call for papers the organisers recognised “a world of technological, social and political turbulence, challenging marketers to produce robust and actionable research” (ANZMAC, 2019). In summary, the conference organisers challenged “marketers to address global issues” and “to push the boundaries and consider the future for Marketing in disruptive and uncertain times” (ANZMAC, 2019).

Service Marketing and the Winds of Change

Little was known at the time of the call for papers or during the conference that one of the biggest global issues was just entering people's lives, disrupting society and communities worldwide and causing service mega-disruptions and changes to service ecosystems (Finsterwalder and Kuppelwieser, 2020; Kabadayi et al., 2020; Ostrom et al., 2021). With COVID-19 making for turbulent times and modifications as to how consumers, service businesses and service organisations operate in this world, humanity has to rethink its approach to interacting with nature and one another in an increasingly complex world. While constant change is nothing new and topics relating to the “winds of change” have been tabled for quite some time in other disciplines, such as in connection with atmospheric science (McVicar and Roderick, 2010), social movements (Haveman et al., 2007), political and economic change (Neher and Marlay, 2018), climate change and business responses (Kolk and Levy, 2001), among others. However, the acceleration with which changes to our environment and living conditions occur appears to be increasing.

More recently, some streams of research in the service discipline have focused on the “bigger picture” and investigated how service systems respond to disruptions and can restore balance to achieve service ecosystem wellbeing, regeneration and sustainability (Field et al., 2021; Finsterwalder and Tombs, 2021; Frow et al., 2019;

Leo et al., 2019). Some of this research has also focused on the disruptions caused by COVID-19 (Brodie et al., 2021; Finsterwalder and Kuppelwieser, 2020). Another stream of research has centred on the actors that purposefully and either individually or collectively shape service ecosystems and markets, such as firms and customers (Fehrer et al., 2020; Hawa et al., 2020; Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014; Kleinaltenkamp et al., 2021; Koskela-Huotari and Siltaloppi, 2020). The two papers in this special section focus on the latter group of actors, that is, customers taking a more pro-active role in becoming participatory players in the market place.

The first paper, “I’m no expert, but...? Consumer use of supportive digital tools in health services” by Helen Bocking, Rebekah Russell-Bennett and Kate Letheren (Bocking et al., 2022), investigates consumer perceptions and preferences relating to supportive digital tools and of the relevant interactive experience in a preventative health services context. Drawing on social support theory (SST) and the passive-interactive-proactive (PIP) framework, the authors adopt an exploratory qualitative approach comprising 30 semi-structured interviews of customers trialling supportive digital tools. Indicating the complexity of motivations for using such tools as well as the multifaceted and interactive social support desired, this research offers important contributions in clarifying the role of the proactive features of such tools. It also offers insights into the varied role of social support elements, beyond the commonly offered informational support. Resultant managerial implications guide future developments and adoption of such tools, in turn positively influencing the broader healthcare system.

The second paper, titled “Why do consumers become providers? Self-determination in the sharing economy” by Bodo Lang, Joya Kemper, Rebecca Dolan, and Gavin Northey (Lang et al., 2022), examines the way in which users of sharing economy services become providers of such services, as well as the motivators for such

switch in roles. This study is founded in self-determination theory and takes an exploratory approach, drawing on in-depth interviews of Airbnb guests who had switched to becoming Airbnb hosts. As an important contribution to theory and practice, the research identifies a four-phase process of switching – catalysts, enablers, divers, and glue, as well as the relevant intrinsic and extrinsic role switch motivators. Furthermore, varying roles of psycho-social self-determination needs – autonomy, competence and relatedness – across the different phases emerge from the results, leading to strong recommendations for practice on how to better encourage sharing economy users to take on the role of providers, as well as to persist with that role over time.

Conclusion

The two papers in this special section demonstrate further advances in service research in regard to the active role actors should play to shape their own lives and the service ecosystem they are embedded in to co-create value and better both individual and community wellbeing. Future research projects should continue to focus on the importance of shaping markets and service ecosystems, including service ecosystem (re-)design (Koskela-Huotari et al., 2021; Vink et al., 2021). In addition, a stronger focus is still needed in regard to wellbeing transformation at individual and collective levels, in particular given the recent disruptive changes caused by COVID-19, but also in anticipation of future natural or man-made turbulences that might disrupt lives, markets and service ecosystems.

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