

Abstract

The design principles for experience-centric cultural services. Willy Faché

Increasingly service organizations are placing the customer experience at the core of their service. They deliver “experience-centric services” These services enhance the customer experience through the careful planning of tangible and intangible service elements in an experiential setting from a customer perspective.

In the cultural sector, the market offering is in most cases inherently experiential. But simply having an experiential offering is different from actively and deliberately managing that offering in an experiential way from the perspective of the customer. This paper addresses this difference by introducing a framework through which cultural managers can strategically enhance and deliver their inherently experiential cultural offerings

In this paper, we focus on the design principles for experience-centric cultural services. Building on current literature about experiential services and case studies of experience-centric services in the cultural sector, we developed principles for experience-centric services. A purposive sampling strategy was used to select cases that offered the best opportunities to build theory.

Our research confirms the importance for the cultural sector, what Zomerdijk and Voss (2007) identified for experience-centric retail, restaurant, theme park and hospitality sector, as the *customer journey and touch points design principle*. All the touch points need to be carefully designed and managed

Other principles to ‘staging experiences’ as cultural management strategy are:

- In addition to the cultural performance, also *the context* in which an activity occurs, should be paid attention in order to create a positive *total customer experience*
- Harmonize positive *signals and clues* and eliminate negative clues
- Create *value innovation* from the perspective of the customer
- Create *supplementary services*, that extend the customer journey
- Making the transition from a cultural venue to *a cultural destination for an evening* or day out, by building in a wide range of choices.
- Providing *memorabilia*
- Develop a *cohesive theme*, when relevant
- Soliciting *feedback* for continuous improvement

Reference: Zomerdijk and Voss (2007). Service design for experience-centric services. *Journal of Service Research*, 13(1), 67-82.