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CUSTOMER JOURNEY ANALYSIS BETWEEN LOCKING INDUSTRY COMPANY AND RESALE CHANNEL

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis is to study customer journey in a new setting by replacing the customer of the service provider with a retail channel of the service provider. Commission company of this thesis operates in locking industry. The theoretical part explains in detail the service design process, which this thesis can be seen as the first part of, from start to finish. In addition to that, the customer experience, customer journey and it's touchpoints which are the main subjects studied in the empirical part are also explained.

The empirical study was done by interviewing seven different CEOs of commission company's one particular retail channel. Based on the data gathered from interviews, customer journey maps were created to present interactions between the company and this particular retail channel. Reason for the commission company to provide this topic was to get a better understanding of how the retail channel representatives see the status quo of company's services.

The results reveal that it is possible to create a customer journey between a company and its retail channel. However, it was impossible to create detailed customer journeys covering every single interaction, because the interviewed representatives don't themselves handle every interaction related to the commission company. Customer journeys of this thesis give detailed information to the commission company about the parts of journey where they have succeeded and why and what parts are needed to be redesigned in order to lead customers toward better customer experience in the future. Recommendations for improving the customer experience are also being given in the discussion part of the thesis.

TIIVISTELMÄ

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Tämän pro gradun tarkoituksena on tutkia asiakaspolkua uudessa asetelmassa korvaten palvelun tarjoajan asiakkaan palvelun tarjoajan jälleenmyyntikanavalla. Tämän työn toimeksiantoyritys toimii lukkoteollisuudessa. Teoriaosuudessa palvelumuotoiluprosessi, jonka ensimmäistä osuutta tämän työn voidaan katsoa olevan, esitellään kokonaisuudessaan. Tämän lisäksi työn tutkittavat pääaiheet eli asiakaskokemus, asiakaspolku sekä sen kosketuspisteet esitellään.

Empiirinen tutkimus suoritettiin haastattelemalla seitsemää toimitusjohtajaa, jotka toimivat toimeksiantoyrityksen tietyssä jälleenmyyntikanavassa. Haastatteluista saatujen tietojen perusteella luotiin asiakaspolut koskien vuorovaikutuksia yrityksen sekä tämän jälleenmyyntikanavan välillä. Toimeksiantoyrityksen syy antaa tämä aihe tutkittavaksi oli saada parempi ymmärrys siitä, kuinka jälleenmyyntikanava näkee yrityksen palvelut tällä hetkellä.

Tulokset paljastavat, että yrityksen ja sen jälleenmyyntikanavan välinen asiakaspolku on mahdollista luoda. Kuitenkin, oli mahdotonta luoda tarkka asiakaspolku, joka käsittäisi joka ikisen vuorovaikutuksen, sillä haastatellut edustajat eivät itse vastanneet jokaisesta vuorovaikutuksesta koskien toimeksiantoyritystä. Tämän työn asiakaspolut antavat tarkkaa tietoa toimeksiantoyritykselle hyvin onnistuneet polkujen osat ja syyt onnistumiseen sekä osat, jotka uudelleenmuotoiltuna johdattaisivat tulevaisuudessa asiakkaat kohti parempaa asiakaskokemusta. Tutkimuksen keskusteluosiossa annetaan myös suosituksia asiakaskokemuksen parantamiseen.

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Writing this thesis has been once in a lifetime experience for me. Not once before has writing a single document put me through so many emotions. I have laughed, I have gotten angry, I have gotten anxious, I have stayed up nights, and now finally I fell more relieved than ever before after finishing writing something.

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My friends who have boosted my willpower to get through this thesis by giving me comments like ”are you still writing that one piece of paper?” and ”just get on with it already and then get a real job”.

My parents who have supported me through these last 6 years that I've spent studying at university. During this time they have helped me moving 11 times between 5 different cities and 2 countries. On top of that they have given me enough financial support to keep me fully focused on my studies without ever having the need to get a part-time job while studying. This is something I hope that I can pay back to them someday after I get that real job.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis revolves around topics of service design and customer journey. In this first introduction part, the background for this research is firstly introduced. After that follows a short literature preview which includes brief first-hand glimpse to the related theory topics, which are afterwards opened more broadly in the second part of this thesis. After preliminary literature review, comes the objectives and research questions which tell what are the actual subjects that are seeking answers in this thesis. After that comes the theoretical framework which tells the perspective and the main purpose of the research in a broader context. Then the key concepts are explained briefly before the chapter that includes research methodology and delimitations of this study. Finally the introduction part closures with the structure of the thesis chapter which opens how the rest of the thesis will carry on.

1.1 Background

Every company that offers either products, services or both want their customer to create value. According to Grönroos (2008) and Vargo et al (2008) value creation is a process where at the end customer becomes better off at some respect or customer's well being is increased. What separates services from products are the following characteristics: Intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability and perishability (Macintyre, Parry & Angelis 2011, 20).

- Intangibility: Services are not physical objects that can be transferred from possession of one to another. Services are activities or performances. (Macintyre, Parry & Angelis 2011, 21)
- Heterogeneity: Every service is unique. Behaviors of the provider and the customer are dependables in every single service. (Macintyre, Parry & Angelis 2011, 21-22)
- Inseparability: Highly linked with customers. Manufacturers can still produce and deliver products without knowing their end customers. Service, however, need the customers to be engaged in order to deliver the service. (Macintyre, Parry & Angelis 2011, 22)
- Perishability: Services cannot be stored in inventories and once the service is done, it can not be returned. (Macintyre, Parry & Angelis 2011, 22-23)

The ultimate goal of any service or product is to stimulate the company's customer's behaviors to keep buying from the company from time to time and to promote the services or products to his or hers social network. This can be organized by offering favourable experiences and keeping the customers satisfied. (Macintyre, Parry & Angelis 2011, 7) According to Fornell et al (2006) it is proved that companies providing quality experiences have seen it as sustainable, competitive advantage which has led to positive financial impact.

In this time and age, the competition is tougher than ever before. Easiness to become an entrepreneur and to start a business makes sure that monopolies are long gone. There are also huge chains and other big players from all around the world who are willing to take over your market share. Then of course there are the online-markets which ables the customers to buy almost every product or service from anywhere in the world. Moreover, the information provided by the internet and easy accessibility to everything has made the customers to be more knowledgeable and needy than ever before.

This has led companies to a situation where they need to adapt and evolve all the time. It isn't enough that a company has a product or service that currently sells well. There are always other companies who are waiting to reach and overpass you. Either they offer better quality products or services than you or then they offer the same products or services but at lower prices. Nevertheless, this means that companies have to be aware of the competition all the time and to stay in the competition they have to improve themselves. However, Improving doesn't always mean that the company has to reinvent the wheel and keep producing new products or services all the time. Improving can also be done to the current products and services. For example how to produce them more efficiently or faster or cheaper or anything to offer better value for the customers. To do these kind of improvements, many companies use service design.

Service design consists of empathic listening of the customers and getting close to them. Service design combines marketing professional's know-how and designer's ability to plan, visualize and solve the customer's problems. Good customer experiences lead to recommendations, bring in new customers and improve the corporate image. Great service is what stays in customer's mind, not the price. Customer engages in building the brand image via brand promise. Customer's trust to company usually strengthens when company's sent messages are honest and clear and when customer's experiences and company's products and services are in line with the brand promise. (Saarelainen 2019, 73) The uniqueness of the brand is built from recommendations and memorable encounters. Customers can be surprised by offering something to exceed his or her expectations. It doesn't have to be anything high in expenses, the main thing is personality and standing out. Company has to be clear and recognizable in its actions. The promise of unique experience should be brought to a part of the brand and the encounters should be perceptible and personalized. Products and services should be different from competitor's. The focus should be on the customer's most essential needs. Company should aim to create their products and services to be momentous, even irreplaceable for the customers. (Saarelainen 2019, 74)

This thesis is a commission by a company called Abloy. The topic for the thesis came from Marketing manager of Yale and service designer of Abloy. They are now facing a problem where they need to consider redesigning their service. The main goal in this study is to help the design process by giving them suggestions how to possibly enhance their offered services in one particular area. That particular area are the services that they offer to one of their resale channels. In order to enhance the services that are offered, it must be first clarified what are the services and how they are currently operating. Only after that it is possible to start thinking about how to advance the status quo.

To find out the current situation, customer journey maps have to be made. These customer journeys visually describe different events where the partners are in dealings with Abloy. Customer journeys are broken into touchpoints which shows the particular action step by step. These customer journeys are done based on the interviews that are collected from the partners. The commission company Abloy is introduced in chapter 3.2 and the research objectives are more specifically explained in chapter 1.3.

1.2 Literature review

For the last few decades, there has been a lot of studies done about services and customer experience. One of the most acknowledged approach has been the service blueprint, created by Shostack (1982). Service blueprint is used to break down the process of the service that is provided to the customer. It shows the whole service process in detailed manner including time that it takes to perform each service stage, what resources are needed to execute the service and what are the needed procedures happening either in front of customer or behind the visible service event. (Shostack 1982).

After service blueprint, a customer journey approach has emerged. In this approach the process of service delivery is described from customer's perspective (Stickdorn & Schneider 2010). This approach has been seen as a complementary tool to go along with the service blueprint. When service blueprint represents what service provider plans of doing to customer, the customer journey represents what the customer actually feels and experiences. (Zomerdijk & Voss 2010) Customer experience is usually conceptualized as holistic whole including customers' affective, social, sensorial, emotional and cognitive responses to company (Neslin et al 2006). Grönroos (1998) also states that customer service experience should be seen as a process instead of outcome.

Grewal et al (2009) state that organizations that seek to put strategic emphasis on customer experience must gather and decipher information about each individual customers' experience that happens over time between the company and it's products or services. Verhoef et al (2009) adds that relationship viewpoint should be taken and the experience needs to be seen as longitudinal perspective with chronological order instead of just emphasizing one point in time and ignoring the dependencies between touchpoints. Chen & Rao (2002) and Labroo & Ramanthan (2007) Have strengthen Verhoef's argument by proving that sequences where negative or positive events occur, matter when formatting retrospective evaluations.

One of the most used tool to help service designers, other practitioners and researchers to understand customer experience, has been customer journey map. According to Lemon & Verhoef (2016) it is the visual approach that provides deeper understanding of the experience. This map visualizes the customer's whole experience during the purchase cycle and it consists of multiple touchpoints. (Lemon & Verhoef 2016). Touchpoints are the moments in customer journey when customer interacts with the service provider in any way. (Halvorsrud et al 2016).

The research gap of this thesis is about getting a clear picture of a full customer journey that the partners go through with Abloy considering the Yale-products. The customer journey maps are made out of the results of the interviews and from those maps it is possible to point out the touchpoints that are working well and what could be done differently in order to collaborate even better. After these steps, proposals are made to upgrade or change existing practises. How this thesis differs from previous studies is the parties included in customer journey. Even though countless studies about customer experience exist, most of them are between the company and a customer, more precisely business-to-consumer customer (Hirschman & Holbrook 1982, Homburg et al 2017, Pine & Gilmore 1998). Zolkiewski et al (2017) stated that customer experience in B2B is much more complex than in B2C and needs to be studied more in order to manage the customer experience in B2B industry as well. I managed to found multiple quite recent studies that are related to this thesis. There are studies about customer experience management in business markets (Witell et al 2019, Zolkiewski et al 2017), customer experiences impact on B2B brand equity (Biebach & Marell 2010), B2B online customer experience (McLean 2017) and B2B customer journey and touchpoints (Aichner & Gruber 2017, Østerlund et al 2019). There exists also books and practical guides available about delivering exceptional B2B customer experience (Hauel & Hauel 2018). Still all these studies and books slightly differ from this thesis. Even though this research is definitely more in B2B than B2C settings, it is not about experiences between a company and its customer which the previous mentioned B2B studies talk about. After conducting an excessive search, There were no public researches to be found about customer experience or customer journey between a company and its retailer, which is what this thesis is about.

1.3 Objectives and research questions

This research is a commission by a company called Abloy. In 2014, Abloy launched a brand in Finland called Yale and has since been the executive representative of the brand. The product portfolio of Yale includes products like smart locks, padlocks and safes among many other locking industry products. (Yale 2020b)

Abloy sells Yale products nationwide through two different resale channels: Yale-partner locksmiths, who are accredited by Abloy and retail channel including hardware and electronics stores. (Yale 2020a) This study focuses on Yale-partners. The target is to create a customer journey map between The company and the first-mentioned resale channel, Yale-partner locksmiths. After creating the customer experience, touchpoints can be found and further analyzed. From these touchpoints the most crucial successes and improvement targets can be picked. This is done so information to Abloy could be provided about two things: What are the most well perceived interactions between the company and a specific resale channel and what are the ones that could be redesigned and improved by Abloy. In addition, some measures for improvement are also suggested. With these suggestion it is possible for the company to tackle into the found problems more deeply and directions can also be taken how to proceed the service redesign process which this thesis can be seen as a groundwork. Ultimate target what Abloy wishes to achieve with this study is to enhance the customer experience, to co-operate better with their resale channel and to help them to increase the sales.

Thus, the main research question of this study is:
What are the measures that could lead to a better customer experience for the accredited locksmith partners and therefore increase the sales?

In order to find out how to improve the customer experience it is necessary to deepen the knowledge about customer experience. In the theory part of this thesis, an in-depth look to a customer experience. Also the customer journey map, a tool that is used in this project is described there. Because there hasn't been any studies about customer journey maps in this context, it is possible to answer to the sub-question 1 by comparing the journey maps created from the interviews with the earlier studies.

Sub-question 1 is:
How the customer journey map between a company and a resale channel differs from customer journey map between a company and a customer?

After defining the customer journey maps it is crucial to put more focus on touchpoints. Therefore, it is needed to separate and examine different touchpoints throughout customer journeys. These touchpoints reveal all the points when partners are directly in contact with Abloy. Maps also reveal how the partner feels at each touchpoints. These feelings tell if the specific touchpoint is already working smoothly or if it could use redesigning to work better.

Sub-question 2 is:
How is customer experience currently perceived by accredited locksmith partners?

Only after the sub-questions are tackled it is possible to start finding answer to the main question and ultimately apply suggestions for theoretical and managerial implications.

1.4 Theoretical framework

The following theoretical framework helps to visualize how the thesis will proceed. The first cloud represents the service design, which is beginning of the whole process. The next cloud is customer experience which is the phenomena that is investigated in this thesis. To gain better understanding of the customer experience, a customer journey is made. Customer journey is then divided into touchpoints, both positive and negative. These touchpoints combined create the customer experience. There is also additional cloud between negative touchpoints and customer experience. That is the cloud where content is found conducting this research. The second customer experience cloud, now with added suggestions for improvement might ultimately lead to the last cloud which is increase in sales.

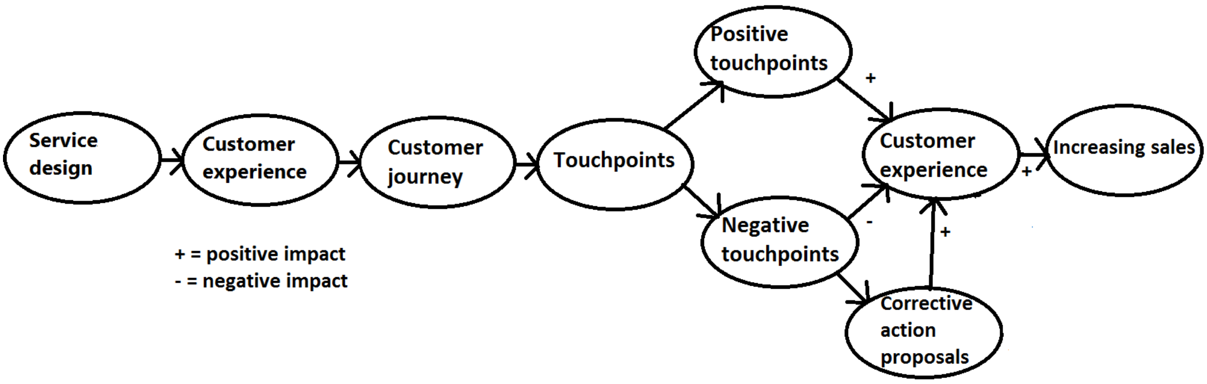

Figure 1. Theoretical framework

1.5 Definitions of key concepts

Service design:

”service design addresses the functionality and form of services from the perspective of clients. It aims to ensure that service interfaces are useful, usable and desirable from the client’s point of view and effective, efficient and distinctive from the supplier’s point of view.” (Mager 2008, 355)

Customer experience:

Customer’s sensorial, behavioral, social, cognitive and emotional response to company’s providings during the purchase process combined as multidimensional ensemble (De Keyser 2013)

Customer journey:

Path that customer takes with the company during the purchase process. Usually presented visually as customer journey map including touchpoints across the process. (Lemon & Verhoef 2016)

Touchpoints: ”Moments of contact between the customer and the organization” (Zomerdijk & Voss 2011)

1.6 Research methodology and delimitations

The theoretical part of this research is based on a broad literature review which is mainly gathered from printed books and online academic articles where topics revolve around service design and customer journey. All the information considering the commission company was gathered from the company’s website and company representatives.

The primary data of this research was collected by using a qualitative research method.
The method most suitable for creating the information for customer journeys was semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interview gave enough space for interviewees to answer as broad as they liked but the questions also narrowed down the possibility to start going sidetracked from the relevant topics. Same structure also made it possible that sub-questions could be added when needed to get more information about topics that needed further investigation.

The case study was done by interviewing accredited Yale-partner representatives. In order to get the most of the interviews, the interviewees were chosen to be the person who was in charge of the company’s decisions considering Yale. These persons were the CEOs of the businesses in question. To get as broad and detailed answers as possible from the representatives, the original plan was to do the interviews face-to-face in the interviewees' offices. Because of the current COVID-19 situation, the plan had to be changed and the interviews were then done via Microsoft Teams and sometimes via telephone.

The actual subject for this thesis was already quite narrowed down and specific when I received it from the commission company. They had already done customer journey maps in the past but not about this subject. This thesis differs from many other customer journeys in a way that the customer is not the actual end customer but a resale channel/partner of the company. This research is also narrowed down to prospect only the accredited partners while other resale channels are not included. The reason for this is that Abloy has noted that this particular channel doesn’t quite match the expected sales at the moment and they are looking for reasons what may cause that. Moreover, this thesis does not address other factors that may influence sales. Competitors, partner store’s internal actions, general market situation and other external factors are dismissed and this thesis only about the relations between Abloy and partners. This is to ensure that all the possible development targets that are found may then be affected by Abloy to enhance the current situation.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

The first chapter introduced the reader to the topic of this thesis by introducing the background to this study case followed by a literature review that shows what kind of studies have been conducted previously related to the topic of this thesis. After that objectives and research questions of this study are revealed. Then the theoretical framework is introduced, which gives a visual representation of how the thesis is constructed and what are the topics that are being studied in order to find answers to the research questions. After that, the most important concepts of the study are opened briefly, so that the reader will have at least a little hunch what are the concepts that are going to be talked about in the theoretical part of this study. Finally before this structure summary the methods of how the research was conducted and delimitated is told.

From now on the thesis will dive more deeply into the theoretical background in chapter 2. There the service design process is opened thoroughly, telling details about each part of the process along with different tools that are used in every part of the process. After getting a good understanding of the process, the reader will next learn about the customer experience, which is the main subject that is examined in the empirical part of the study. After that, customer journey is introduced, which is the path built of the data that is gotten from the empirical part. Finally the touchpoints are being introduced. Touchpoints are the interactions happening at certain time of the customer journey. Finally, the theoretical framework is revisited and view about what parts of it have been handled in theoretical part of the study and what are going to be dealt with in later parts of the thesis.

Chapter 3 starts by introducing the commission company of this thesis Abloy, followed by a brief introduction of Yale, which is the brand that is being investigated in this thesis. After that, reader gets information about how the data for this research was being collected and analyzed and what is the reliability and validity of this research. In Chapter 4, the collected and analyzed data are being turned into visualized and written customer journey paths that talks about interaction between the customer and the service provider. All the results and most important are summarized and talked about. Then answers to the research questions are being opened, followed by theoretical and managerial implications that this thesis offers. Last parts of the chapter is about concluding the whole thesis and discussing about limitations of this study and suggesting further research topics to fellow researchers who want to increase their knowledge about the theory that is being offered in this thesis.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter includes walkthrough of previously written theories about subjects related to this study. Included subjects in chronological order are service design, customer experience, customer journey and touchpoints.

2.1 Service design

At the beginning of the 2000's, all highly industrialized countries have become service economics. In 2015, the services already made the major portion of GDP in EU (71,2%), UK (79,6%) and US (77,6%) among many others. World-level was 62,4% and the number is constantly growing. Reasons for this kind of rise are many. For instance, demand-side of services is changed to a situation where services can satisfy higher needs than goods. On the other hand supply-side is also progressing and today many of the manufacturing industries are outsourcing more and more of their service activities to firms who are specialized in such services that are seeked by the company. (Foglieni et al 2016, 6)

Service design is comprehensive, user-centered approach that focuses on the providers and users relations. User of the service is experience's centre before, during and after using the service. User's experience is made possible by actors, activities and processes offered by the service provider. When service design competencies are applied within an organization, it might result solutions that bring bigger user satisfaction and new ideas to market. With service design it is also possible to create improved or totally new processes for creating and developing services that support increased innovative mindset. (Foglieni et al 2016, 30)

The term Service design was first introduced by Lynn Shostack. In 1982 Shostack published an article where she talked about differences between products and services. She said that even though a box of cereal is simply a product it is an end product preceded by a long series of marketed services and products. The starting point being farming service. She also stated that products and services can act simultaneously in order to create a bigger entity. By that time there had been product development for ages but Shostack felt that there was need to give services a good weight and proposition in the market entity context. Thus, she created a service blueprint. (Shostack 1982)

Service Blueprint

In figure 2. a simple market entity of shoeshining is showed. It shows the service (shoeshine), what is needed for producing the service (wax), where the service takes place (corner of sidewalk), how much the service costs (50 cents) and what's the image of particular service (convenient, fast, inexpensive).

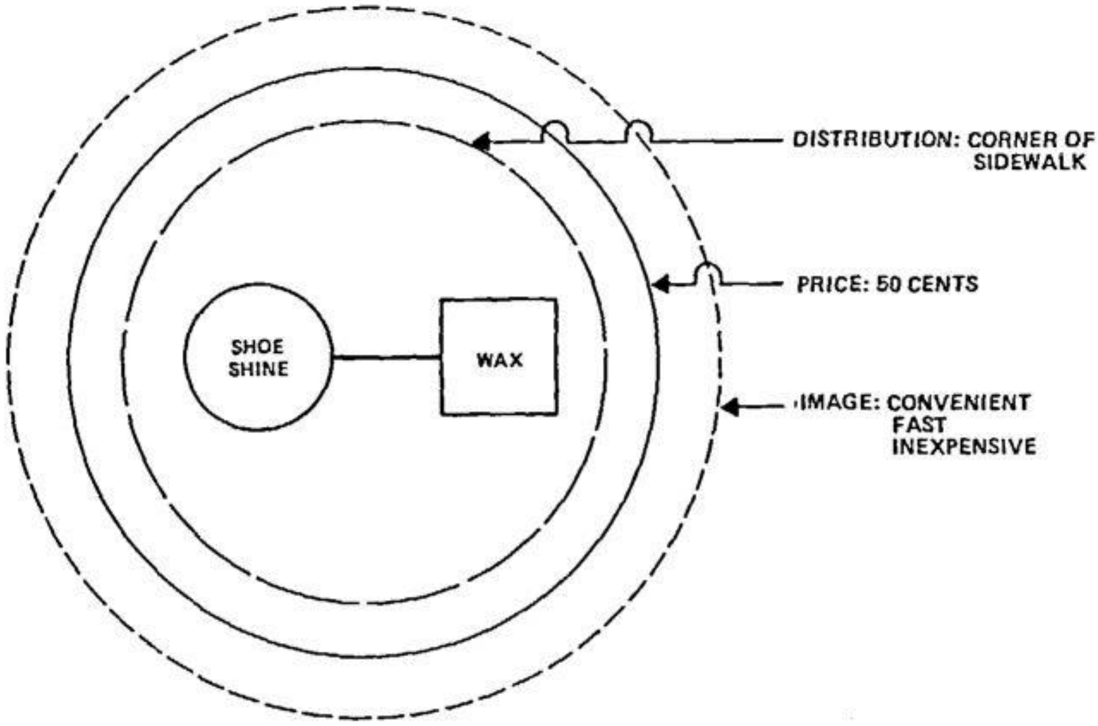

Figure 2. Model of simple entity (Shostack 1982)

In figure 3 the blueprint for the main service of the shoeshining entity is pictured. Top boxes in figure 3 shows four process steps in chronological order from left to right. Beneath those boxes is one possible fail point, wrong colored wax. In order to get back to the process and finish it properly, the fail point must be corrected before entering the next phase. (Shostack 1982)

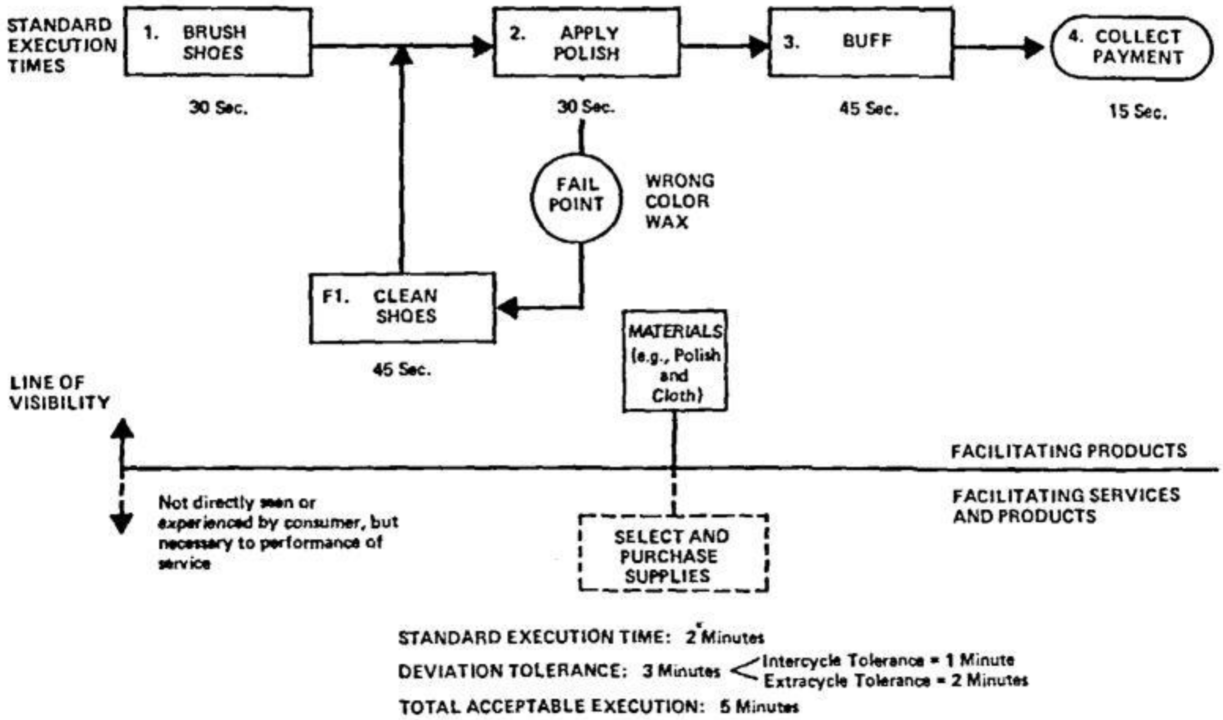

Figure 3. Blueprint for a simple service corner shoeshine (Shostack 1982)

Beneath the process is the line of visibility. In line of visibility all the facilitating products (polish and cloth) are shown above the line, and underneath the line are all the facilitating services and products (selecting and purchasing supplies) that are not directly visible for the customer, but are still crucial in order to provide the service. (Shostack 1982)

After creating the process model it is needed to identify customer benefits. When talking about shoeshining there are several: Having clean and shiny shoes, self-confidence uplift because of shiny shoes and protection from dirt and wear. These types of benefits should also be listed below the blueprint and researched before and after blueprint change. (Shostack 1982)

Next up is identifying standards and tolerances. In figure 3 the execution time of the process is shown. 2 minutes is the standard time and the deviation tolerance is 3 additional minutes. The tolerance is then divided into inter- and extra cycle tolerances. Inter-cycle deviation happens within the service process itself (extended buffing for example). Extra-cycle deviation example would be waiting in line for service. If the service time exceeds 5 minutes, the consumer will be dissatisfied and quality of the service suffers. But while there are two types of deviation, usually the inter-cycle deviation is the one that affects profitability. Therefore, while designing a service, the service tolerances should be set relating directly to the profit. (Shostack 1982)

Figure 4 is the profit analysis for the shoeshining process. From the figure it can be clearly seen that for example applicating wrong wax or spending too much time can reduce pre-tax profit significantly and after some time the service actually loses money even though the customer would tolerate the 5 minute execution time. Therefore it is important to set service standards and tolerances in alike way so the basis for measuring performance, basis for managing uniformity and quality and for rational process distribution. (Shostack 1982, 1984)

	Total Inter-Cycle Execution		
	2 Minutes	3 Minutes	4 Minutes
Price	50c	50c	50c
Costs			
1) Time @ 9 cents per minute	18c	27c	36c
2) Wax	5c	5-7c	5-7c
3) Other (brush, cloth, etc.— amortised	7c	7-8c	7-8c
Total Costs	30c	39-42c	48-51c
Pre-tax Profit	20c	8-11c	2-(1)c

Figure 4. Price table (Shostack 1982)

Figure 5 shows the modified version of the service which include some changes to gain better profitability.

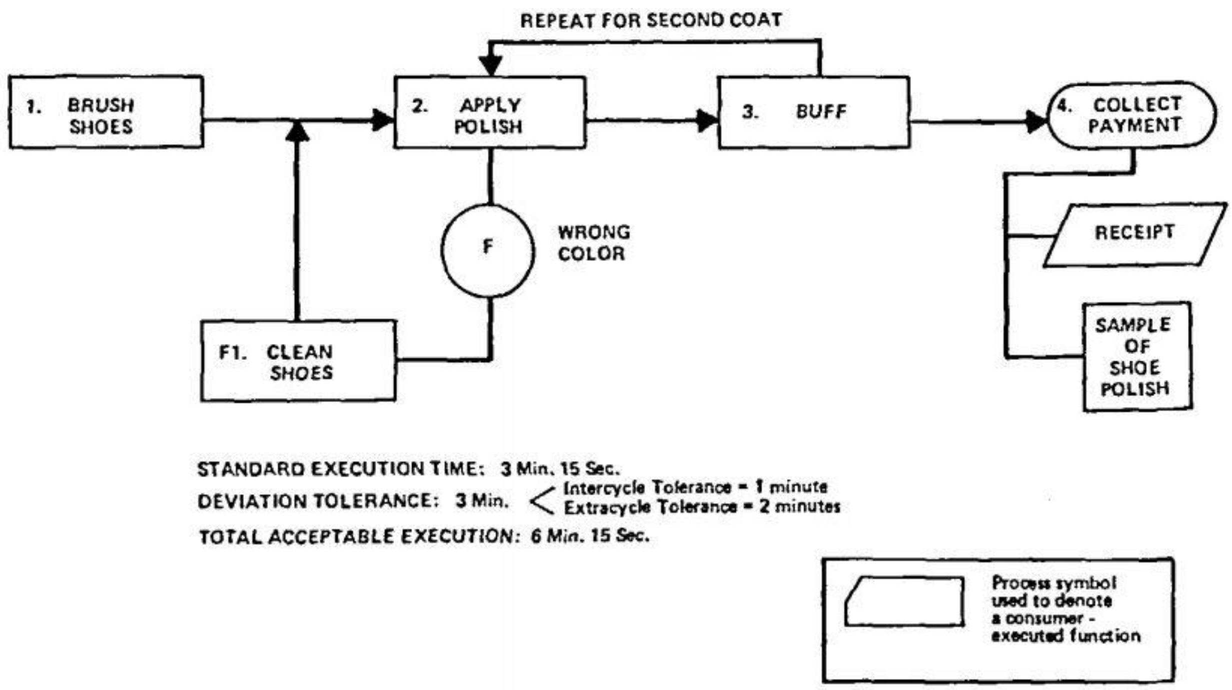

Figure 5. Modified design incorporating new service cycle, service evidence and product element (Shostack 1982)

After step 3 a repeated cycle of steps 2 and 3 can be done in order to create two-coat shine. This may be enough differentiation to allow a 20 cent price increase, simultaneously increasing the margin by one cent. Another example is what happens after step 4. There might be added service evidence like receipt or added product like sample of shoe wax. These are ways to remind the customer of the service or increase the price of service by offering premium service for a premium price. There is also a possibility that the shiner buys a buffing machine where customers could buff their own shoes. That way he could keep the same price but increase his margin with the time saved that way. (Shostack 1982, 1984)

The same kind of principles can be applied to more complex services than shoe shining. Benefits that come from using service blueprint are many. If changes happen randomly in a service, or the customers' behavior, the marketing can spot the problems and make modifications to the service in order to increase efficiency. (Shostack 1982)

When talking about existing services, service blueprint provides a benchmark when measuring executions, analysing modification proposals, comparing competitors, establishing prices and developing promotional plans. (Shostack 1982) It allows companies to test assumptions on paper to work out the bugs. Than service manager can test the prototypes of new design on potential customer and use the received feedback to modify the blueprint before another test. Service blueprint encourages new ways of thinking creatively, solving problems and implementing controlled. It reduces potential for failure and enhances effective thinking about new services (Shostack 1984)

Since Shostack's Service blueprint, service design has developed a lot and today it has become the number one driver for service-, social-, and user-centered innovation. Central issue in business is to tailor solutions that solve users' problems and fits their needs better than the current ones. In order to achieve that businesses need to involve their customers more when making changes in their services. Service design gives the tools and techniques to introduce new solutions and concepts. With service design, it is possible to make intangible elements such as relationships and experiences visible. Service design approach also helps other people within the organization to think like designers (Foglieni et al 2016, 21)

2.2 Service design process

Over the last couple of decades, practitioners and researches have published countless amount of different design processes. There are differences between terms and number of activities, which usually vary between three and seven. Ultimately they all share the same principles of service design. (Stickdorn et al 2018, 89) One of the most acknowledged and referenced frameworks for the service design process is the Double Diamond framework designed by the British Design Council. The framework is shown in figure 6. (Design council 2020)

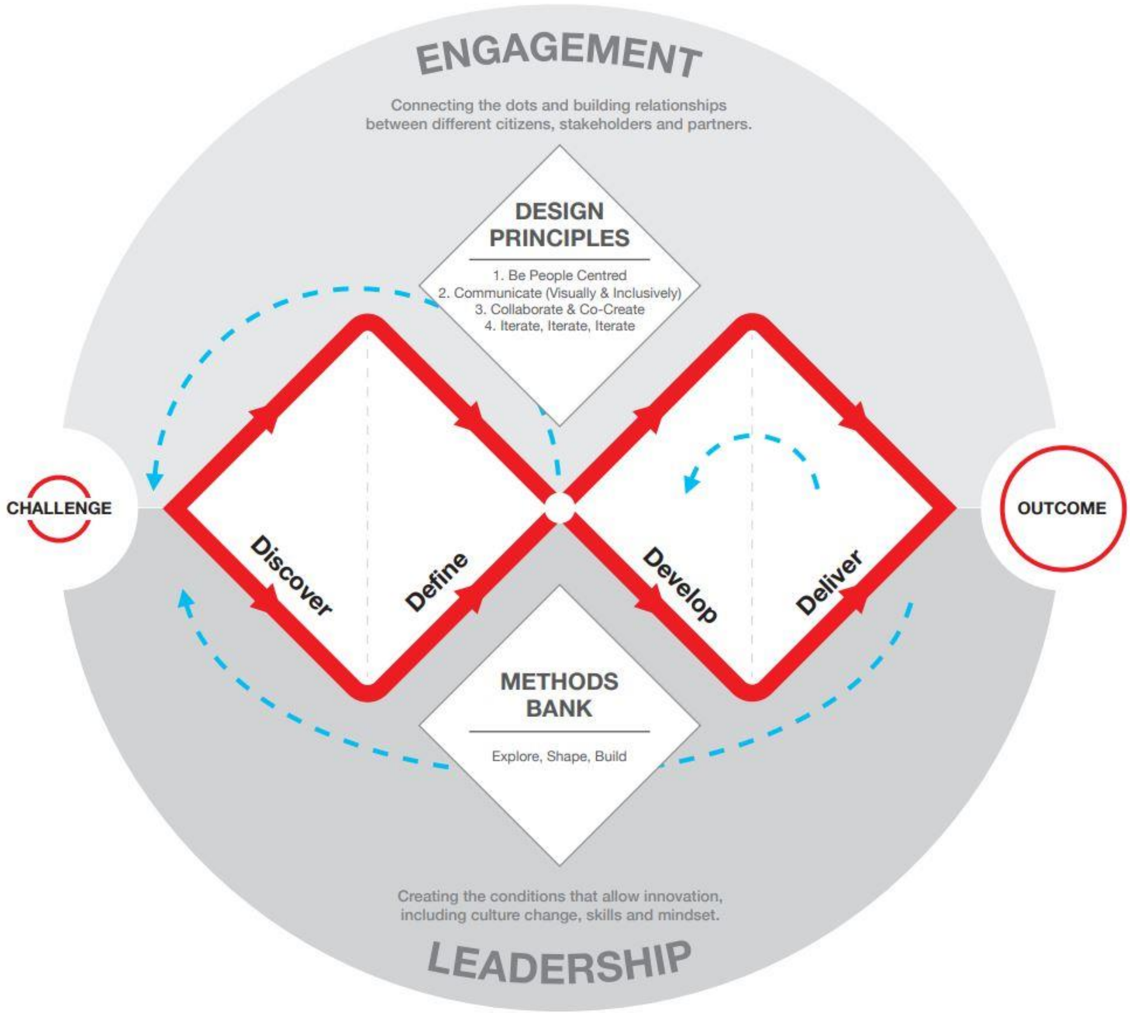

Figure 6. Double Diamond Model. Design Council (2019) [*https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/Double%20Diamond%20Model%202019.pdf*](https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/Double%20Diamond%20Model%202019.pdf)

Double Diamond shows four steps that are discovering the actual problem instead of assuming, defining the challenge with the insights gathered from discovering phase, developing different inspired answers to the defined problems and delivering solutions via testing and rejecting ideas that don't work and improving the ideas that. Core design principles are listed as well to help the designer to work effectively as possible when adopting the principles to his or her working. Method bank includes exploring challenges, needs and opportunities, shaping prototypes, insight and visions and building ideas, plans and expertise. On top of the circle, the "Engagement" means engaging between idea delivers and receivers but also connecting with other partners that could possibly think about different type of ideas. On the bottom of the circle the "Leadership" stands for encouraging, innovative leading that is needed from the supervisors in order to project to be open and agile and in order to designers to be experimental. (Design council 2020)

The following chapters are from service design process by Foglieni et al (2018, 33). They introduce their version of service design process, which was done by reading and analyzing before mentioned and dozens of other processes and combining the most crucial elements from all of them. They also state that following phases are needed to be tackled when facing service design or redesign project: Research, define, develop, validate, implement. After opening these phases, a new additional phase, evaluate, is introduced. (Foglieni et al 2018, 33)

Service design process: Research

Users play the most crucial role during the use of the service. That happens when user is directly interacting with the service and service provider. (Foglieni et al 2018, 34) Using or consuming the service is the same thing as experiencing the service (Grove & Frisk 1992). At the same time user experiences the service offering which is provided by the company through the tangible elements of service, called touchpoints. That’s why when designing a service, it is needed to understand what service experience needs are in customers mind and how to meet them in order to give positive experience, that leads customer to keep using the service. Thus, research is the primary component in service design process and should be done as the first step of the service design process. (Foglieni et al 2018, 34)

When conducting a research regarding service design Polaine, Lvølie & Reason (2013, 3) suggest that it is usually qualitative. This is because quantitative methods are great for creating knowledge and understanding, but they aren’t salutary when trying to translate the knowledge into action and do something with it. This is the gap that qualitative research bridges. (Polaine & al 2013, 3-4) And since the nature of service is experimental, research techniques are usually observational (Grove & Fisk 1992) However, quantitative research is not totally futile in service design. It is useful when the goal is to study the market at a wider scale or when investigating provider-side of service (resource and other costs, revenues, the flow of the process etc.) But in these cases, the qualitative insights are usually pertinent as well. (Foglieni et al 2018, 34)

There is a number of tools to use for exploring the environment where the design takes place. Some of the tools are strictly developed for the service design practice and some are brought from other disciplines such as marketing and ethnography (Moritz 2009, 127). Distinction between data collecting tools and data visualization and interpretation is also needed to be done. The role of visual is the key element that separates design tools from other methods. When service designer has great visualization skills, it makes data interpretation much easier, when complexity of services and customers can be shown in predigested formats. (Segelström 2009)

For data collection there are tools like interviews, focus groups, mystery shopping and direct or participant observations. Some of the tools are designed for observing individuals while others can focus on behaviors and interactions that happen within a group of people. Some tools also need the researcher to give guidance to the observation while in some cases the user can be trained to self-observe. There are also tools for then to interpret insights got from the research, such as creating a persona. A persona is archetype of observed people that shows common characteristics, behaviors and attitudes of them. One common way to visualize the results is conceptual maps. With these, researchers can focus on relationships, back-office activities, highlighting roles, actors and stakeholders or concentrate on touchpoints and the user journey. The before mentioned service blueprint is a great way to build a complete knowledge of the service since it includes both the user experience and back-office activities. All this data can then be complemented with quantitative data that is quickly available using questionnaires or surveys. (Foglieni et al 2018, 35)

Service design process: Define

In define phase, all the research insights and interpretations got from the research are then transformed into ideas. This means divergent thinking and involving users and other actors from provider company apart from service designers. Rather than designing for people this is the part where designing with people is happening. (Foglieni et al 2018, 36) Steen, Manschot and De Koning (2011) state that co-designing simultaneously gives benefits to service design project, customers and organization. Co-designing can also improve 4 areas at the same time: idea generation for the project, services outcoming from the project, project management considering for example business rationale and longer-term market or societal effects. Picture 7 shows all the benefits that were gotten from 3 very different cases: Co-designing with elderly people to develop health service concepts, co-designing with children to create ideas for new telecom service and co-designing with employees to improve logistic services. (Steen et al 2011)

Benefits for the service design project	Benefits for the service's customers or users	Benefits for the organization(s)
Improving idea generation:		
• Better ideas, e.g. from customers or users [M; Cases A and B], with high originality and user value [KMM] • Better knowledge about customers' or users' needs [R&S; M], e.g. changing existing views or validating ideas or concepts [Case A] • Better idea generation, e.g. by bringing together customers, users and employees [S;C&L; P&H; M; R&S]		• Improved creativity [M; R&S; Case B] • Improved focus on customers or users [B] and, e.g. better dissemination of findings about customers' or users' needs [Case A] • Better cooperation between different people or organizations, and across disciplines [B; M; Case C]
Improving the service:		
• Higher quality of service definition [K; Case C] • More successful innovations, e.g. reduced product failure risk [H]	• Better fit between service and customers' or users' needs, and better service experience [K; H; Case A] • Higher quality of service [K; R&S; Case C] • More differentiated service [A]	
Improving project management:		
• Better decision making, e.g. quality and speed [R&S] • Lower development costs [R&S] • Reduced development time or time-to-market [A; H; R&S] • Continuous improvements [H]		
Improving longer-term effects:		
	• Higher satisfaction of customers or users [K; R&S] • Higher loyalty of customers or users [R&S] • Educating users [A]	• More successful innovations, e.g. rapid diffusion [A] • Improved innovation practices, processes and capabilities [B; R&S] • More support and enthusiasm for innovation and change [B] • Better relations between service provider and customers [A; H] • Better public relations [A]

Figure 7. Benefits of co-design in service design projects (Steen et al 2011)

There are many tools that can be used to stimulate brainstorming sessions. Beforementioned personas, journey maps and blueprints are great ways to visualize the results of the research. Moreover, service scenarios can also play an important role. In service scenario a story about how the customer will act with a new service in the next future. These stories can be texted or visualized through storyboards or even videos. These scenarios can be later used for validating service ideas. These scenarios can either be results or kickstarts for ideation sessions. The main point of these sessions is to create a huge amount of ideas at a very high concept. That is followed by a selection process to pick the most potential concepts which will be further processed in the next steps of the process. (36-37)

Service design process: Develop

Service concepts are starting to get more detailed in developing phase. It entails both the service systems elements that ables the company to provide the service and service experience elements that the user needs to experience the service. (Foglieni et al 2018, 36) According to Glushko & Tapas (2009), The result of service outcome is never because of a single encounter between the service provider and consumer. Instead, it is a result of multiple actors inside and outside the provider company. Service system combines both back-office and front-office services, thus creating all the background and necessary prerequisites in order to make the final service encounter to happen. For this to succeed all the required competencies, resources and technologies and changes affecting them, needs to be taken into consideration (Foglieni et al 2018, 37). Of course the ”moment of truth” is the most visible service experience to the customer but making that moment happen, the whole service system was needed (Glushko & Tapas 2009).

When talking about the service experience, the service offering is also worth designing. Service offering is the actual interaction between the service and customer and the touchpoints that enables these interactions to happen (Foglieni et al 2018, 37). When developing the service offering not only the user needs and expectations need to be focused on but also the service positioning in the market compared to the competitors and similar solutions (Johnson, Menor, Roth & Chase 2000). The service offering is highly connected but a little bit different than value proposition that is defined by Grönroos & Voima (2013) as ”a promise that customers can extract some value from an offering”. Meaning that if for example thinking about hotel service, the offering could be for example different types of rooms or additional services like breakfast or spa, whereas the value proposition would be the values related to the offering like romantic atmosphere or good position (Foglieni et al 2018, 37).

To create this kind of complexities, service designers tend to use a lot of visual tools. These tools include:

- The offering map: Useful for defining the primary core service and additional or specific secondary services. These are then connected to the touchpoints
- The system map: Visualizes all the actors (staff, suppliers, partners etc.) in the service system and their relations
- The service map: When now used as a designing tool, details all the back-office and front-office processes in every service experience step also accenting the touchpoints and interactions
- The customer journey map: Focuses only on the user experience and highlights step by step every option that is available to the customer (Foglieni et al 2018, 38)

Service design process: Validate

After the service is defined and developed on paper, it needs to be transformed into a real experience. All the elements need to be validated individually but also the overall system and user experience has to be validated through iterative process. Rapid prototype of user experiences is usually used to prioritize, select and test the preliminary concepts. With rapid prototypes, it is possible to investigate the pivotal interactions occurring between the service and the final user. Through detailed prototypes that are as close to a real-life situation as possible, it is possible to validate the whole service experience including every touchpoint. (Foglieni et al 2018, 39) By doing this properly, is a primary way to minimize the possibilities to lose competitive advantage and to waste resources because of implementing a poor service (Rae 2007).

There are different techniques for both rapid and more complex prototypes. Role playing and scene enactment are few of the most used prototypes. For prototyping the overall user experience Miettinen (2009, 19) suggest using experience prototyping. With experience prototype the main purpose is to test the aptitude of the service, logistics, customer experience and the financial impact of the service product. And it is all done quickly and inexpensively. The experience prototype helps to understand, explore or communicate the service that is being designed (Miettinen 2009 19).

Service design process: Implement

Implementing the service is the last phase of service design process. At this point fully or partial version of the service is now launched on the market. While starting the implementation, the service roadmap needs to be made. (Foglieni et al 2018, 40) Service roadmaps are used for highlighting macro-level plans for a specific future period. Roadmap integrates service systems with other business elements such as markets, visions and technologies. (Cho & Lee 2014) After defining the roadmap, the provider needs to set up the service system. This includes establishing responsibilities and ownership, activating the system of suppliers, partners and structuring back-office activities that enables delivering the service. Moreover, front-office processes that are needed to deliver the service offering has to be operationalized, prices and communication systems have to be defined and also the touchpoint system that enables the service interaction, has to be realized. Only after these steps the service can finally be performed and experienced. (Foglieni et al 2018, 40)

According to Kimble (2011), The role of service design at this stage of the process is underexplored. Tether (2008) strengthens this by stating that even though there exist organizations that have developed internal service design teams, the implementation process is still mostly led by non-designers. Lee (2016) concludes this proposition by saying that while the earlier process phases are guided by service designers, implementation is solely delegated to the organization and is then led by product managers alongside with product development and customer departments.

Service design process: Evaluate

In their book Foglieni et al (2018 40-41) introduce another element to the service design process that has been yet barely treated in literature and practice of service design, evaluation. When looking at the literature of service design, there is still a lot to be written about. So far there has been little to none distinction between designing a new service or redesigning existing one. Moreover, the focus in designing is for and with users or customers but there hasn't been lot of focus in designing for the company that provides the service. Implementation parts are rarely explored or discussed and also values of developed solutions usually remains unseen both before and after the implementation. (Foglieni et al 2018, 41)

Even though there is a lot of good ways to gain understanding about changes in markets, society, users needs and expectations, they still only represent subjective and delimited cases. Even the most accurate user analysis and service built upon it doesn't provide information about the dynamics what lead to failure or success. (Foglieni et al 2018, 41) In her book *Designing the invisible,* Penin (2018, 301) Introduces a few tools for evaluating the outcomes of service design process. Each of the tools are quite different from another because there can be many different values that are wanted to be measured.

First tool is ROI or return on investment. ROI is a tool that focuses precisely on financial impact. The basic formula to calculate ROI is to take the return (net or gross profit – expenses) and divide the return with the invested resources. This tool however doesn't give any kind of knowledge about different factors such as client relationships. (Penin 2018, 301)

The second tool is SROI (social return on investment). SROI is an impact assessment tool that exceeds the understanding of the impact over financial facet, bringing social and environmental impacts of the service. The main purpose of SROI is to evaluate how new service may change lives in broader sense. It takes to account different stakeholder perspectives such as those who are actually affected by the new service. This is pivotal since the people who set the desired outcomes of the service are different then the people who will actually have to live with the resulting experiences of the goals. (Penin 2018, 301) While there are many different aspects that need to be taking under consideration, the basic formula of SROI is simply net present value of benefits divided by net present value of investments (Millar & Hall 2012)

The third tool was firstly proposed by Polaine et al (2013) Called the monetized blueprint. This model focuses also largely on financial aspects like ROI. However monetized blueprint does it in service design language. It is based on the earlier discussed service blueprint. This blueprint combines different key elements of service together including the two main concerns in service design first being channels and touchpoints across time and second being user experience and back-office operations. With monetized blueprint, it is possible to integrate business modelling into the design process and zoom in on specific customer journey moments. That way it is possible to verify costs and revenues relations to specific touchpoints and channels. This gives advantage to see what are the touchpoints where costs could be reduced, where revenue can be generated and where the value creation for customer happens. This blueprint simultaneously provides the overview of the whole process in addition to study and deconstruct the economics of every single touchpoint. (Polaine et al 2013; Penin 2018, 303)

The fourth tool is called RATER, created by Zeithaml et al (1990). It consists of different measuring scales in different dimensions of service. How RATER works is that experienced service quality can be measured by thinking about the differences between customer's expectations and their actual experience. When the expectations are higher than actual experience, the service is considered to be low quality. Vice versa when the actual experience is higher than expectations, the service is considered to be high quality. Framework in figure 7 explains all the 5 dimensions where the difference can be measured. (Penin 2018, 304)

Reliability	Organization performs the service in a reliable and accurate way.
Assurance	Staff is reassuring and courteous to customers, they know what they are talking about and they inspire trust and confidence.
Tangibles	Touchpoints, serviscapes, communication elements as well as staff is good.
Empathy	Staff relate to users in personable and relatable way.
Responsiveness	Staff and organization is willing to respond to users needs and promptly solve their problems.

Figure 8. RATER evaluation framework. (Penin 2018, 304)

The final tool provided for evaluating is the theory of change model. Its purpose is to help understanding complex systems. With the tool it is possible to establish goals, benefits and priorities and understand correlation between them. It is a helpful tool to test assumptions and detect risks. The theory of change canvas seen in figure 8 can be used as a cooperative tool between service designers and other project stakeholders. First the definition of the main problem that needs to be solved. Problem is followed by the long-term goal to be accomplished. Other boxes are auxiliary tools to achieve the goal. The theory suggests that the key assumptions behind each step should be reflected in order to foresee possible risks and opportunities. (Penin 2018, 304-305)

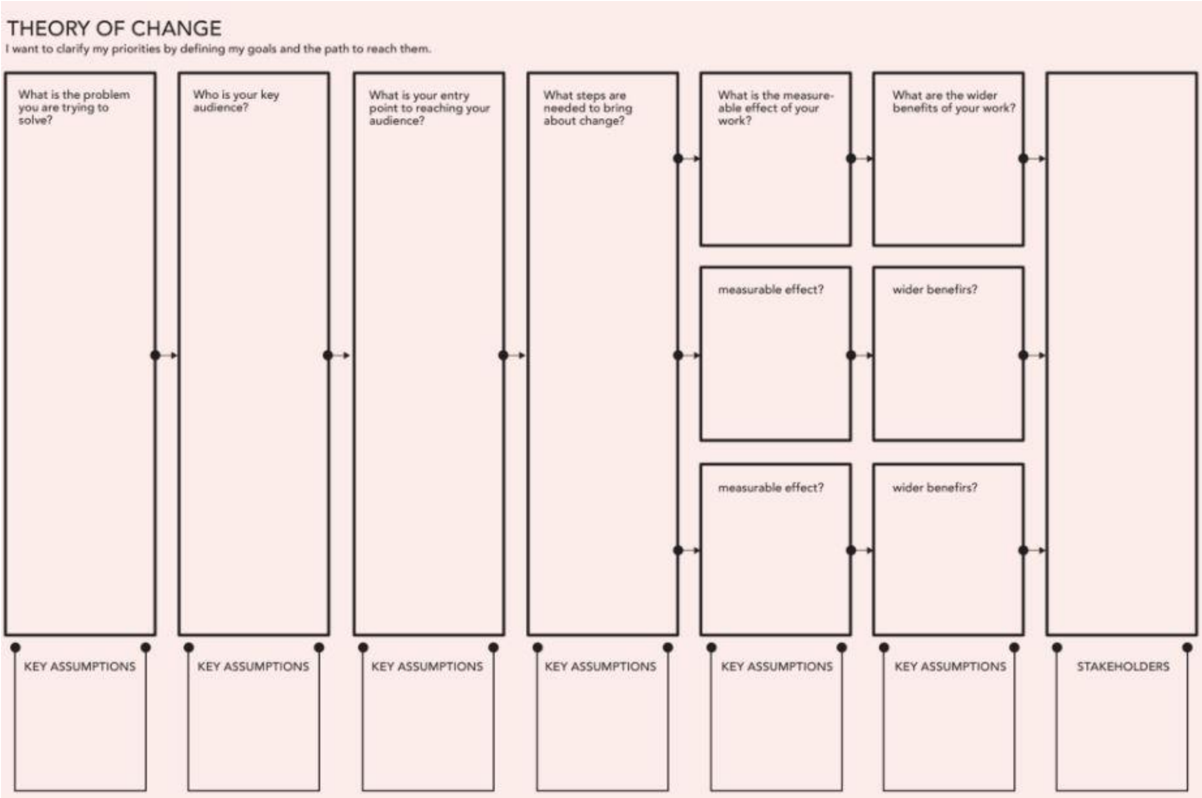

Figure 9. Theory of Change Canvas. (Penin 2018, 305)

2.3 Customer experience

Marketing research and practice have transformed a lot since the 1980’s when the focus was strictly on creating fast-moving consumer brands. The focus has since shifted towards creating relationships with customer through service marketing and today it is about creating gripping customer experiences (Klaus 2011). The importance of customer experience is even agreed by The marketing science institute. During the last few years their top research priorities have included a lot of related topics like new insights in customer journey in 2018-2020 priorities and customer value prioritizing at all touchpoints of customer journey in 2020-2022 priorities. (Marketing science institute 2018, 2020)

In order to gain a holistic understanding of customer experience, it must be taken into consideration that customers’ perceptions and evaluations of experiences don’t stay the same. Instead, they change as time goes on. Organizations should, therefore, start collecting longitudinal information about the customer experience. To obtain a more complete view, companies should collect and analyze data about customer's practices and interactions across every channel and at every touchpoint throughout the customer journey. By doing these, it is possible to get insights on how to enhance the customer experience to be meaningful and personalized. After that another research should be done about how the customer experience develops over time when for example the service matures or when customer's gain more experience. (McColl et al 2015)

This kind of longitudinal research is possible to do in three ways: Retrospectively, where journey and events are reconstructed and the motives, means and opportunities are clarified. In present time by using long term ethnographic observations of fluency of interactions and events. Or extrapolating the future with simulations or modelling techniques. (McColl et al 2015)

When defining customer experience, De Keyser et al (2013) distinguish three base dogmas that are foundation of every customer experience. First dogma being the interactional nature. Meaning that in customer experience there are always interactions between the customer and market actor, whether it is human interface like front-desk employees or non-human interface like self-service technologies. (De Keyser et al 2013) The service exchange or interaction is defined by Vargo and Lusch (2004) as ”application of specialized competences (knowledge and skills) through deeds, processes, and performance for the benefit of another entity or the entity itself”. Pollio et al (1997) adds that without the interaction there is nothing to be experienced.

The second basic dogma is that every customer experience is marked by a specific level of uniqueness (De Keyser et al 2013). Experiences specifically vary on a continuum ranging between ordinary and extraordinary (Bhattacharjee & Mogilner 2014). Ordinary experiences are common activities that happen frequently in everyday life (Carù & Cova 2003) and extraordinary experiences are uncommon experiences that don't happen frequently in everyday life (Bhattacharjee & Mogilner 2014). These extraordinary experiences are often more intense and can be seen as transcendent experiences that cause extreme enjoyment to the customer (Schouten et al 2007)

The third dogma relates to customer experience’s multidimensional nature. (De Keyser et al 2013) When talking about the richness of an experience, Gentile et al (2007) Propose that cognitive, physical, sensorial, emotional and social elements cover a wide range of basic human experience. All these elements combined create a unitary customer experience. However specific elements may be more or less present depending on the situation and context of the experience. (De Keyser et al 2013)

De Keyser et al (2013) Think that the defined customer experience constitute the ”raw” data that reveals the core cause of different processes that shape the consumer behavior. Customer experience is the result of interactions between customer and service provider marked by different uniqueness levels and composed of several elements whose embodiment varies depending on the context and situation. (De Keyser 2013)

Customer experience is a multidimensional ensemble that focuses on customer’s emotional, cognitive, sensorial, social and behavioral response to firm’s providings during the entire journey from pre-purchase to purchase to post-purchase phases. (Lemon & Verhoef 2016) Ranish et al (2017) argues that every organization big or small should see the customer experience as a valuable tool for achieving competitive advantage.

2.4 Customer Journey

Customer journey is the customer’s path that they take with the firm during the purchase cycle across multiple touchpoints. The total experience from prepurchase to purchase to postpurchase phase is a dynamic process. It contains past experiences such as previous purchases as well as external factors. In every stage, there are touchpoints that customer experiences and only some of them are controlled by the firm. (Lemon & Verhoef 2016) Dhebar (2013) add that holistic perspective should be taken on customer journey because interdependencies between consecutive service encounters are important to the overall customer experience.

The first phase is the prepurchase phase. This phase includes everything customer experiences before purchasing the product or service. This phase includes interacting with the brand, category and environment and related literature characterises that it includes behaviors like recognizing, searching and considering the brand. (Lemon & Verhoef 2016) Practically speaking Hoyer (1984) and Pieters et al (1995) state that this phase is about the customer recognizing a need/impulse/goal that leading into consideration on how to satisfy the need/impulse/goal with a purchase.

The second phase, purchase phase includes customers interactions with the brand and environment when conducting the actual purchase event. This phase is characterized by behaviors like choosing, ordering and paying. Although being the most straightforward phase of the three, the purchase phase has gained a substantial amount of attention among researchers. (Lemon & Verhoef 2016) In this stage there are actually many matters that can affect customers purchase decision. These matters are such as marketing activities (Kotler & Keller 2015), environment and atmosphere (Bitner 1990) and the service environment ”clues” (Berry et al 2002). Especially in retailing and B2C literature, much of weight has been put to the importance of shopping experience (Baker et al 2002, Ofir & Simonson 2007). Lemon & Verhoef (2016) add that concepts like purchase confidence, choice overload and decision satisfaction would also be relevant topics to focus on. All these elements may cause customer to either complete or suspend the purchase (Iyengar & Lepper 2000).

The third phase, postpurchase include the interactions with the brand after purchasing the service or product. It includes behaviors like, postpurchase engagement, service requests and usage and consumption. In theory, this stage could extend from purchase to the until the very future. In practice, this stage covers everything customer experiences related to the brand or the actual service or product after purchasing. In this stage, the actual service or product is critical touchpoint. (Lemon & Verhoef 2016) Studies of this stage have focused on service recovery (Kelley & Davis 1994), consumption experience (Hirschman & Holbrook 1982) and decisions to repurchase (Bolton 1998), return products (Wood 2001) or seek variety (McAlister and Pessemier 1982). Other nonpurchase are also being studied like word of mouth and other shapes of customer engagement (Van Doorn et al 2010). Managerial research has also extended the process with including loyalty loop to the end of overall customer journey. Loyalty loop happens if in postpurchase phase the customer gets triggered to either repurchase again from the company. Another option is that the customer goes back to prepurchase phase and starts looking the alternatives for the next purchase. (Court et al 2009)

2.5 Touchpoints

Touchpoints are the embodiment of communication between a customer and a service provider. In every touchpoint, three criterias has to be met to fulfil the definition of a touchpoint. Firstly, customer has to encounter in some way. Secondly, it has to be separate event that sets place in certain time. Lastly, it has to include some kind of interaction or communication between a customer and the service provider. (Halvorsrud et al 2016)

Lemon & Verhoef (2016) Identifies four touchpoint categories within customer journey: brand-owned, partner-owned, customer-owned and social/external. There is a chance that the customer will interact with each of the four categories in each stage of the experience. However, depending on the nature of the journey or the product/service, each category's importance and strength may differ in each stage. Brand-owned touchpoints are the touchpoints when customer's interaction during the experience are designed and managed by the company. These type of interactions include all company's owned media like advertisements, websites and loyalty programs. It also includes all marketing mix elements that are controlled by the company like packaging, price, sale force, service and convenience. Partner-owned touchpoints are managed, controlled or designed together by the company and one or more of its partners. These partners can be for example distribution partners, marketing agencies or communication channel partners. It is also added that the difference between partner- and brand-owned touchpoints can be sometimes hard to clarify. (Lemon & Verhoef 2016)

Customer-owned touchpoints are the independent actions of the customer that are not influenced or controlled by the firm or partners at all. These touchpoints are playing the most dominant part during post-purchase stage when individual consumption and usage take the lead role. Lastly, the social/external touchpoints are touchpoints where external influences may affect customer in his or her process. These influences include for example other customers, peers, environment and other independent information sources that surround the customer during customer experience. (Lemon & Verhoef 2016)

Theoretical framework revisited

First, the customer journey is created using the data gathered from the interviews. After that, all the touchpoints are being defined. Touchpoints declare all the moments when interactions between Abloy and partners happen. Then all the touchpoints are separated into positive and negative touchpoints. Combining these touchpoints will then tell about the overall customer experience of the partners. From negative touchpoints are also collected development targets which this thesis also seeks to find corrective action proposals. When these proposals finally may be implemented to be a part of the service design plan, more positive customer experience can be created, ultimately leading to increase the sales.

Now it is possible to revisit the theoretical framework of the thesis that was introduced in chapter 1.4 and summarize the parts that have been clarified so far. The red circle in figure X marks the already opened concepts of this thesis.

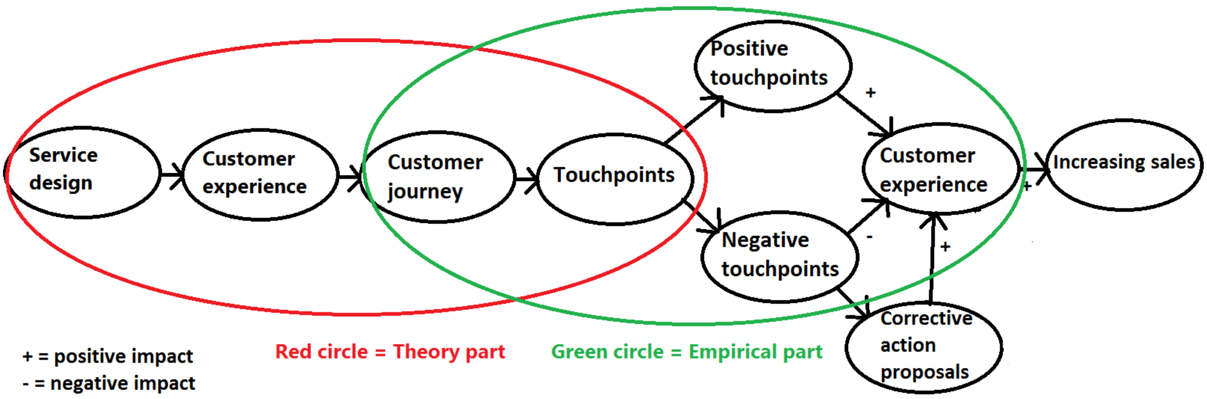

Figure 10. Revisited theoretical framework

The theory part started with the service design concept. Service design is comprehensive approach where service provides focuses on their relationship with their customers. Main thing with service design is to recreate existing service or create a new service in order to improve the existing relations. The theory part also opened the whole service design process including the research, define, develope, validate, implement and evaluate steps. Firstly, the research part is what starts the process by conducting a research about existing service experience. It is then followed by the defining part where all the insights collected from the research are turned into ideas. In validation part all the developed ideas are put into practice with real-life experiments. When the experiment has been validated to work, it is then time to implement the service partially or fully. Lastly, the evaluation part is to help understand if the service design process has been successful. In every process part there are also numerous tools introduced, which are commonly used when conducting service designing.

The next cloud ”customer experience” is opened more broadly to gain understand about the topic. It is relevant since it is the subject that is commonly investigated in the research part of service design process. That is also the case with this thesis. Customer experience captures the customer’s cognitive, emotional, social, sensorial and behavioral response to the company and it’s provided services during the entire process from pre-purchase to purchase to post-purchase stage. The third cloud ”customer journey” is also opened in theory because it is the actual path the customer goes during the purchase process. The fourth cloud ”touchpoints” gives more detailed description about each point in customer journey where customer interacts with the company or its service and it also describes how the customer feels at each interaction.

Now as the thesis is moving to its empirical part, the green circle indicates what are the topics that are going to be addressed next. The tool used in this research is customer journey maps so that’s why the ”customer journey” and ”touchpoints” cloud are also part of the empirical part. Next the ”positive touchpoints” and ”negative touchpoints” clouds are dealt in the findings part in chapter 4, where they can be found inside the customer journey maps. From these journey maps it is possible to view how the customers experience the current service.

That’s why the second ”customer experience” cloud is again featured. The last two clouds excluded from the two circles are finally covered in chapter 5, the discussion part.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This chapter is about the preparations done before the empirical research was conducted. First, the commission company Abloy is introduced. After that, the methods that were used to collect and analyze the data in the empirical part are introduced. Finally, the validity and reliability of this study is discussed.

3.1 Abloy

The story of Abloy started in 1907 when Emil Henriksson invented unique lock mechanism that got patented in 1919. Same year the industrial production for these locks started in Helsinki at a factory called Ab Låsfabriken – Lukkotehdas Oy. Later the name of the company shortened to Ab Lukko Oy and at those times the trademark Abloy was registered. In 1968 new lock factory was established in Joensuu. The same factory still remains as the main base for the company. In 1994 Abloy merged with its head rival, the Swedish company called Assa. From since the company has been called as Assa Abloy – concern. Today Abloy is a global company well known for their mechanical, electromechanical and digital safety- and access control solutions. (Abloy 2020)

According to Niskanen (2020) Abloy today operates in over 90 countries, has 700 employees in Finland and 240 in international operations. Their international sales make over 60% of their total sales and Assa Abloy’s turnover is 8,2 billion euros. Abloy is actively following today’s industry trends that include urbanization, evolving technology, sustainability and evolving standards and guidelines. Main customer segments for Abloy are business and public construction, residential and critical infrastructure. For each segment Abloy has different solutions especially for residential segment, Yale is one of the main brands. Originally American brand, Yale is Assa Abloy – concern’s consumer brand which is represented by Abloy

Oy in Finland. Yale's product portfolio includes mechanical products like locks and safes and Yale Smart Living products like smart locks, alarm systems and CCTVs. (Niskanen 2020)

3.2 Data collection and analysis

Data for this research was collected by conducting a semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interview also known as qualitative interview is usually used in qualitative researches due to a fact that it is the best way to get deep knowledge about something. It allows to get most of the interviewees when multiple open-ended questions that sometimes also require follow up questions like *why*? or *how*? are asked. (Newcomer et al 2015, 492-494) Appendix 1 shows the basic structure on interview. All of the questions were asked in same order from everyone but when the interviews went on, these questions were in some occasions accompanied with a corrective or more in-depth follow-up questions. This was done if one of the following situations happened: The interviewee was very limited in words and didn't answer as properly as needed, the interviewee didn't quite understand the question or the answer was somehow erroneous due to a wrong kind of question formulation, or in order to get more deeper knowledge if some kind of important insights were mentioned in passing.

For this research, seven interviewees were picked. The main thing when choosing the interviewees was that they have to be the ones who were responsible for making the decision considering Yale-products in their respective stores. In every case that happened to be the CEO of the store. A lot of other variables were also considered while choosing the interviewees. Although the point of this thesis is not to compare if the aspects or outcomes of answers are connected to some of the variables. Instead the purpose of choosing store that were quite different from each other was to get as unbiased and generalizable answers as possible. The southernmost store was in Helsinki metropolitan area, the northernmost was in Lapland and other stores were somewhere in between them. Other variables included such matters as the population of the city where the store is located, the share of Yale-product sales in total sales and increasing or decreasing sales numbers considering Yale-products during last year. While keeping the anonymity of respondents, list of the their info excluding the names and the operating cities of the respondent can be seen below in Table 1.

	Yale sale percentage	Recent changes in Yale sales	Population of the city
CEO 1	Medium	Stayed stable between 2018-2019	>30 000
CEO 2	Medium	Considerably Increased during 2019	<50 000
CEO 3	Small	Decreased from 2018 to 2019	10 000
CEO 4	Medium	Considerably increased during 2019	>60 000
CEO 5	N/A	N/A	<240 000
CEO 6	Big	Decreased from 2018 to 2019	<240 000
CEO 7	Big	Decreased from 2018 to 2019	>230 000

Table 1. List of respondents

The interviews were done with a different video/audio chat applications. Microsoft teams, Skype, WhatsApp and regular phone calls were used depending what was the most suitable option for the interviewee. Every interview was conducted between April and May of 2020. The duration of interviews ranged between 25 minutes and approximately one hour. The interviews were all recorder with my phone and laptop. After every interview was done the recordings were then transcribed word by word to Word documents. All the hesitation sounds like ”uhmm…” were also transcribed in order to get better feeling of the interviewees' emotions and moods during each answer.

After the data was collected it needed some organizing before jumping into journey maps. All the answers were highlighted with different color, each color representing a specific thing. For example if the interviewee talked about logistics, the answer was highlighted with yellow color and if he or she talked about problems with the products, the answer was highlighted with purple color. This helped to spot the recurring themes which helped to create insights. It also made doing the customer journeys easier when one color at a time could be picked and every interview could be browsed through without thinking if something left unnoticed regarding a certain touchpoint.

Customer journeys that were created didn’t quite follow the typical formula. Some liberties needed to be taken because in this situation, there was no clear pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase stages that would’ve been directly proportional to typical B2C or B2B customer journeys. Instead of one long linear path, multiple smaller customer journeys were created to present different transactions between Abloy and the retail channel. Figure 11 shows the basic principals of each customer journey map.

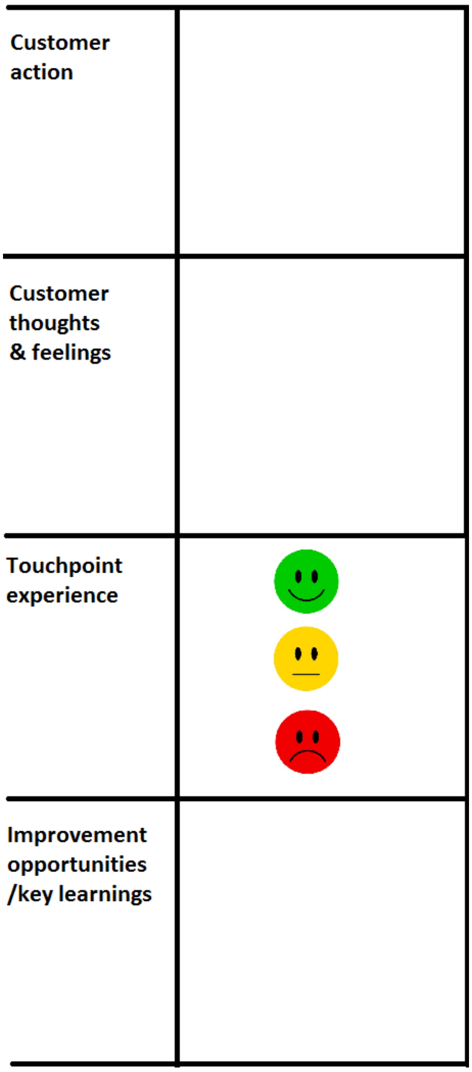

Figure 11. Customer journey map example

The uppermost row is called ”customer action”, which represents the actual interaction that happens during that particular touchpoint. The second row ”customer thoughts & feelings” tell about how the customer actually feel at each touchpoint. Of course, because every interviewee is telling about their personal feelings, there are certainly different opinions among the respondents of how touchpoint is experienced. These thoughts and feelings are generalized means gotten from interviews. Meaning that in many touchpoints, not all of the interviewees felt the way it is represented in the figure. However, most of the respondents are backing up at each thought and feeling that is shown. The third row ”touchpoint experience” includes three different smiley faces to represent how each touchpoint is felt. These smiley faces tell if the overall experience is seen as positive, neutral or negative. The fourth row ”improvement opportunities/key learnings” tell about two different things. If the written text is in suggestional form it means that it is a recommendation of how to improve the experience of particular touchpoint. If the text is more in a statement form, it tells what are the factors that make the particular touchpoint experience to be so positive among respondents. These key learnings are important to be maintained the same way to keep the experience the way they are seen at the moment.

3.3 Reliability and validity

There exists two kinds of research methods, qualitative and quantitative. According to Kananen (2011 12-15) The chosen research method is based on the phenomenon that is going to be investigated. Qualitative research is usually used when exploring new phenomena for which previous researched information or theory doesn’t exist. At the same time the factors affecting the phenomenon are being examined. When using quantitative research the target is usually to measure known factors, calculating relations between these factors and calculating the number of factors. (Kananen 2011, 12-15) Qualitative research enables to get a profound view of the phenomenon because it is based on a few observation units, which can be examined thoroughly with qualitative research methods. However, results can not be generalized, because they are only valid in target case. (Kananen 2017, 33)

The credibility of scientific works are usually examined using reliability and validity as measurements. Reliability means that the results of the work are permanent and continuous. If the research is repeated and same results occur, the reliability is in order. Validity of the work tells if correct things are being investigated. In order to be valid, right data collection and analyzing methods has to be chosen for the research. In qualitative research, the reliability usually stays on the estimation level, because unlike with quantitative research, the results can’t be evaluated. This means that the reliability lays on the hands of the researcher and is based on his presented estimations and results. (Kananen 2014, 146-147)

Reliability of this study can be reviewed by going through the interviews that were conducted to collect the data. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed word by word. Meaning that regardless if the interviews were to be done again with a different researcher, but using the same questionnaire and same respondents, the results would likely to be almost identical to current outcomes.

Validity of this study can be proved while first looking at the phenomenon that is being investigated and the reading through the chapter 2 of this thesis which explains how previous researchers have used the same data collection and analyzing methods to find out results to similar studies. Hence, it is safe to argue that semi-structured interviews and customer journey maps are right methods to examine customer experience and customer journeys.

Moreover, according to Huse & Landström (1997) whenever the case is related to entrepreneurship, where it is needed to generate models and concepts leading to improved understanding of an issue, the perspective and knowledge of insider is vital. Easterby-Smith & Malina (1999) joins this statement by saying that organizations, no matter what their size or stage of development is, are complex phenomena. Therefore to produce knowledge with high reliability and validity, insiders knowledge is required (Easterby-Smith & Malina 1999). Benington & Hartley (2004) add that researcher as an outsider, needs insiders assistance to understand and interpret certain organizational practices and norms as well as assistance in translating organizational phenomena to the concepts under study.

For this thesis assistance was gained from two insiders of the commission company throughout the whole process. These insiders were Janika Niskanen who is the marketing manager of Yale, and Katri Saraste, who is service designer for Abloy. While conducting the research, everything from creating questionnaire questions to choosing the interviewees, happened either within cooperation or under their supervision and approval.

4 FINDINGS

In this chapter all the customer journey maps were created based on the data collected from the interviews. The questionnaire that were used in interviews, follows chronological order considering the actions that Yale-partners experience when they are being in dealings with Abloy considering Yale. Therefore, the first created customer journey seen in figure 12 is about the first steps when Partners, or as they are expressed in these maps ”customers”, first hears about the brand, the products and the possibility to become a partner that sells Yale-products.

4.1 Becoming a Yale-partner

Customer action	Abloy's salesperson contacts customer and tells about Yale	Customer hears about new smart locks	Customer wants to start Yale partnership	Sales staff from Abloy arrives to customer's store	Customer reads through the contract, signs it and becomes a Yale partner
Customer thoughts & feelings	Customer is excited to hear about new brand	Customer thinks that new product family with new kind of products would be great	Customer thinks that they would benefit from being a partner and selling Yale products	Customer is pleased that he/she doesn't have to go anywhere to sign the contract	Customer thinks that contract is good and that overall the whole "becoming a partner" process was smooth
Touchpoint experience					
Improvement opportunities /key learnings	Customers have been overall very satisfied with the fact that Abloy contacts them whenever there are new brands or products available for partners				Not a single complaint rises about the whole process

Figure 12. Becoming a Yale-partner journey map

Touchpoint 1

According to all the respondents, the first interaction between Yale and customer have always happened on Abloy's initiative. Some customer's said that they first saw or heard about Abloy while in an event that was organized for Abloy's dealer. Some said that they had heard Yale from somewhere else. Below this chapter CEO 1 and CEO 6 share what was their first experience with the brand itself.

"I first heard about Yale at Abloy's dealer event where they announced the launch of Yale in Finland" CEO 1

"Originally we heard about Yale from Abloy. We heard that Abloy purchased Yale and then some sales manager approached us" CEO 6

However the way to becoming a Yale-partner started every time with receiving contact from Abloy's salesperson. Of course hearing about new brand is always seen as a positive possibility. Customer's also added that overall it is positive that Abloy has been very unprompted about keeping the partners up-to-date about new products and brands as can be seen from CEO 4:s thoughts.

"What happens every time when there is new things coming is that Abloy's salesperson contacts markets them to us." CEO 4

Touchpoint 2

Second touchpoint represents the moment when the Abloy's representative turns the conversation from introducing the brand to introducing Yale products to the customer. Like CEO 4 below puts it, especially the new, more convenient smart locks are the one that really gets the customers excited.

"Abloy used to have this Control+ system, that let you to open the locks with remote control. However it needed wires and was expensive. When these Yale products came, they brought much bigger markets to us. This new product was much easier to install and it is more user-

friendly and much cheaper. The old one needed all the wirings and cablings but this new product just runs on batteries. Much less trouble than the old product." CEO 4

Moreover, customers among CEO 6 below thinks that is nice to hear about a brand that offers every kind of home security locks in addition to traditional mechanical locks. This has been welcomed newness for consumer markets.

"As far as I am concerned, the consumer markets have never been big marketing target for us. Of course there was prospects and we were shown that these products were good and there would be more to come. The products like affordable smart locks were fit to fill the consumer void. " CEO 6

Touchpoint 3

After being contacted, customer thinks about if he/she should become a Yale-partner. It was noted from the interviews that for anyone it has been a no-brainer. New brand and new kind of products are more than welcome addition to every locksmith's store. There was plenty of reasonings for this. CEO 2 saw that expanding catalogue was good thing, while CEO 4 already knew that end-customers were asking Yale-products. For CEO 6 and 7 it was more of a foregone conclusion, because they have trust in Abloy's previous offerings and they knew that they wouldn't be disappointed with Yale-products.

"We saw that the product could be a good addition to our catalogue, we accepted this thought about being a partner and joined in." CEO 2

"It was nothing but a principle decision that let's do it. People were asking us about Yale-products so we thought that then we would sell them." CEO 4

"Of course we trust in Abloy's brand and their visibility and quality so we thought that they have probably made sure that the product is high-quality enough. The expected values were also in place so why not?" CEO 6

"In my previous life I have also worked with lot of constructors, and at some point I have done a lot of alarm devices and such. We have been in the field who does these decisions of what kind of locks should be in detached houses. So the minute Yale came we knew that it was a big thing. We joined straightaway. We saw it before we even sold these that this something that we need to be a part of." CEO 7

Touchpoint 4

When customer has decided to become a Yale-partner, they contact Abloy and the deal signing event is arranged. When the agreed day for signing the contract is, the salesperson from Abloy travels to customer's store with the contract. Customers are of course pleased that Abloy sends a salesperson to their store to sign the contract and they don't have to go anywhere.

Touchpoint 5

In this path's last touchpoint customer still keep up the positive experience. Customer reads through the contract and thinks that the deal is clear and fair. Like CEO 6 says, the process takes very little time and without further actions, the customer has become an accredited Yale-partner

"The signing process was very easy. We just briefly went through details and signed the contract. Nothing difficult about that" CEO 6

4.2 Ordering the product

After the customers have signed the contract and become as a partner, the next chronological step is ordering the products. From this map onward, the customer journey maps are not presented like the first one, because rest of these customer journeys are not about the first-time experience. Instead they represent everyday actions which are recurring events for the customers and these journey map's represent general experiences during every event that customers have with Abloy regarding their day-to-day operating. Chronology of these maps and the touchpoints included, were created from the data gotten from the interviews.

Customer action	Customer has a need to order Yale-products	Customer goes to Enet and chooses what products to order	Customer chooses between normal and express ordering channel	Customer gets a confirmation that all the ordered products are ready to be delivered	Customer waits for the delivery	Customer receives the delivery
Customer thoughts & feelings	Customer is pleased since all the previous products are sold and there is demand for more	Customer thinks that this process is quick and easy	Customer feels that there are lack of products available for express delivery	Customer is happy that all the wanted products are included	Customer has mixed feelings because the delivery might take anything from couple of days to 2-3 week	Customer is disappointed because some components are missing from the delivery
Touchpoint experience						
Improvement opportunities /key learnings		Ordering is easy because it follows the same protocol as other Abloy products	Updating the system/ Having more popular products immediately ready for delivering		Keeping the customer up-to-date about the delivery progress	Being certain that there are products left before confirmation/Again having more products and components ready

Figure 13. Ordering the product journey map

Touchpoint 1

Ordering Yale-product starts with customers' need to get more products to sell in their store. Like for every retailer in this situation, this touchpoint exceptionally involves positive feelings.

Touchpoint 2

What customer does when wanting to order more products? He or she goes to Abloy's Enet service, browses around the product catalogue and chooses the products and quantity of how much of each product is needed. This touchpoint is seen as a positive experience. That is reasoned by a fact told by CEO 2, that the system is familiar and easy for customers to use because all of them have used the same system to order other Abloy products for years and ordering Yale products doesn't deviate from the formula in any way.

"The ordering has been relatively easy. It follows the same protocol as ordering any other goods, so no problem. It flows like any other product ordering from Abloy." CEO 2

Touchpoint 3

Second touchpoint considering the ordering channels received some criticism. Until this point, customers had no problem with the old system but at this point the delivery channel choosing is seen a bit obsolete. While most, of the customers told that they don't react to this touchpoint, because they either are used to order products among with other Abloy products and don't pay too much attention to Yale products or they are not the ones in their store who handle the ordering. However, CEO 4 opens the problem in detail saying that sometimes there are not enough products ready for express delivery.

"I wish that there were more products for express deliveries. Now there is only the Yale Doorman so more products would be appreciated. Now I have to order other products trough normal channel and sometimes it might take up to two or three weeks to receive them. And after putting the order I have to call after them to ask if it could be possible to receive the products earlier. That is not good either. The same ordering system has been in use for many

years and I would like it to be reliable so I wouldn't have to call anyone after placing the order." CEO 4.

To improve this touchpoint it is adviced to think about updating the current system to give better information about the delivery time schedules and also add the amount of most popular products that would be available immediately.

Touchpoint 4

After completing the order, customer receives a confirmation saying that the order has been received and confirmed and that the ordered products are going to be delivered soon. This is seen as a positive experience, especially when all the wanted products were available to order. However like the next touchpoint will prove the delivery times can be quite variable.

Touchpoint 5

This touchpoint received somewhat mixed feelings from the interviewees. Others said that deliveries have worked great and that they are relatively fast. Others complaint that sometimes they can last very long up to two to three weeks. Of course Finland is big country so some customers naturally get shipments faster than others but even though some customer's who operate in rural areas, said that overall the logistical problems and delivery times have been reduced over the years.

"I'd say that the long delivery times are mostly somewhat in the past. Because this (Yale Doorman) is a bulk product and it gets sold a lot, it needs to be available instantly in big quantities. Customers don't see this as a product that needs to be ordered. Instead they just come to the store and pick it up. I think that Abloy has been trying to find it's level that how much products needs to be available and who delivers what and how to respond to the demand. All this has been improved." CEO 7.

Experience for this touchpoint could be improved by developing a reliable tracking system of which could be used to follow the real-time progress of the delivery.

Touchpoint 6

Usually receiving delivery is a positive experience, but not always everything goes as planned. At this touchpoint, customers complaint about one issue that many, including the example of CEO 3 below, have met multiple times. There has been errors in confirmations saying that everything that customer has ordered is available and ready to be shipped. After receiving the order customers have found out that some products that were confirmed to be included in the shipment weren't there after all.

"At one point we had little problems with getting Yale alarm products. We got a confirmation that there was products left even though there wasn't. And after getting the confirmation we never received the products. But it was momentary problem and now Abloy's end have learned from it." CEO 3.

However many of the customers like CEO 7 said, that this situation has somewhat improved recently.

"There has been challenges with the shipments. At some point there were lack of components that we couldn't receive. Also warranty products were running short. But mostly the shipments have been laudable and they have improved it." CEO 7.

Even though customer claim that this touchpoint has indeed developed recently a development idea would be again to have more products and components ready to be shipped via express delivery. Also carefulness should be increased considering the confirmations about the contents of shipments.

4.3 Marketing the product

Customer action	Customer puts products on display	Customer wants to order marketing material for Yale products	Customer contacts Yale's marketing manager	Customer receives the marketing material	Customer looks how Yale has advertised their products	Customer finds out his/her marketing budget obligation	Customer starts marketing the products
Customer thoughts & feelings	Customer is pleased with the received product stands. Additional material would be also appreciated	Customer knows who to contact regarding the marketing material	Customer thinks that ordering material is convenient	Customer thinks that brochures are informative	Customer thinks that Yale website is simple and easy to navigate/Yale has been clearly featured at events and website and social media has been getting good visibility	Customer thinks that the obligated annual marketing budget is way too high	Customer thinks marketing is easy and cheap on social media etc. and doesn't feel like spending so much money on more traditional marketing channels
Touchpoint experience							
Improvement opportunities /key learnings	Providing stores with more additional material that could be used when displaying the products	Customers are pleased how Abloy informs them about new marketing material		Customers would like more instructional material to be handed to end-customers who install the products themselves	Customers state that Abloy has created good hype around Yale products at events and in different marketing channels	Required marketing budget could be lowered/success of marketing could be measured otherwise	Customer's marketing actions should be less controlled if they can get enough visibility and/or sales with their own style of marketing

Figure 14. Marketing the product journey map

Touchpoint 1

After receiving the products first thing that customers do marketing-wise, is put the products on display in their stores. This touchpoint received positive feedback from almost everyone. Customers are pleased with the product stands that they got from Abloy.

”Yeah we have pretty decent-sized store and so when we started selling these products, we got shelves for Yale-products and own stand for Yale Doorman, where we could place them. We have the Yale selection on display as their own entirety.” CEO 3

However, two customers also hope that more additional material could be provided to them in addition to the stands for better demoing purposes. CEO 4 tells that promotional material used in events would be great and CEO 6 complained that they were promised a demo wall for demonstrating the products. This demo wall was never received.

”Two years ago we attended to this fair and Abloy lend us this Yale-door. It is just a regular-sized door with Yale-lock and our customer liked to play with it. Last year when we attended to the same event we didn’t get the door, so we made our own. It is on display at our store.” CEO 4

”In the beginning we were promised material for displaying but they never gave us anything finished. We had to make them ourselves and we did. More sales promotion material would be appreciated. Sure they gave us stands but not actual demo wall. But then again it is all in the past and now we have our own demo wall.” CEO 6

Touchpoint 2

When customers need to have marketing material for their store they are pleased to know the fact that they can get it straight by contacting Yale’s marketing manager Janika Niskanen.

"We usually get contacted by our Abloy's contact person saying that this and this is available. For example we order the material from Janika. She has them." CEO 4

Touchpoint 3

Customer calls to Janika and asks if there is any kind of material available for Yale products and when getting a reply that there is, customer orders them to be send to their store.

Touchpoint 4

In this touchpoint customer gave a lot of good feedback about the brochures that they get from Abloy. Brochures are very informative. Although CEO 4 wishes that for example instructional brochures could be made. These would be good to give to a end-customer when they purchase just the product and want to do the installing themselves.

"Marketing material should be updated to be as straightforward to the consumers as possible. At the moment it necessarily is not. For example this regular consumer living in detached house, if he wants to know what to check from his door he has to go online to seek the information. The pamphlets that are designed to be given to the consumers should include this information. We ourselves have made these clear check-in lists for customers that say what to check from their door. Because now we have a lot of consumer who build their own houses and want to install the locks themselves." CEO 4

Touchpoint 5

When customers talked about the Yale's marketing that Abloy has done they thought that end-customers have been very well-acknowledged about Yale products. Website is seen as simple and easy to navigate. Other marketing channels like social media also gained a lot of praises. Installing videos on YouTube have been very helpful for the end-customers. Customers also state that when they have attended to different events, Yale has been featured there actively and widely. CEO 2 and CEO 6 share their thoughts about the success of Yale's marketing as following:

"Of course Abloy has handled the marketing reasonably well. Yale has been featured in medias and people have pretty good awareness about it. Of course I have also done marketing myself but let's say that it has been quite easy." CEO 2

"I think we are very please with the visibility that Abloy has provided. Marketing and overall visibility are the number one reason why we are here. People ask for it (Yale products). The demand has been created and that is what works particularly well." CEO 6

CEO 6 adds though, that Abloy could give locksmiths a little bit of boost in their marketing strategy.

"And in marketing, I think that Abloy should really bring up more the installation part and say that people should include the installing service to the purchase. But do it in a way that they don't simultaneously spit on Gigantti. But while they don't have the installation service, then absolutely everybody will understand all the benefits when the product is purchased installed. I think that it would be a good matter to bring up in marketing." CEO 6

Touchpoint 6

When the interviews got to the point where customers talked about their own marketing considering Yale brand and products, few expressed that Abloy has set too high annual budget for locksmiths to spend. For some customers, including CEO 5, 2000 euros per year felt exaggerated based on the fact that the gross profit gotten from selling Yale products barely stays positive after investing the necessary amount for marketing.

"There are different kind of marketing issues. We are obligated to put a few thousand euros per year for marketing Yale, but we don't even get 2000 euro profit from those products annually, so we can't just flush the money down the drain." CEO 5

Touchpoint 7

Related to the previous touchpoint, customers kept saying that these days they reach lot of their end-customers best via online marketing, which is relatively cheap. That's why for example CEO 6 dislikes spending so much money on traditional and ”obsolete” marketing channels like newspapers etc. Customers again wish that the annual marketing budget could be lowered.

”I would wish for a new kind of marketing strategies. Radio commercials and paper ads are just not today. Marketing should happen on digital tools and 2000 euro investment per year… It comes to my mind that it could be focused a little better. We are active in social media and we do it ourselves and it doesn’t cost anything. I don’t like that we have to spend 2000 euros on marketing and buy some ads with that money. Instead we are active and we have visibility on social media and the visibility can be proved and we have done a lot on our website and different kind of campaigns on Facebook and such. It doesn’t exactly take 2000 euros to do that.” CEO 6

4.4 Selling the product

Customer action	Customer looks at the package of the product	Customer views the features of the product	Customer sets a price for the product	End-customer enters the store to buy a new lock	Customer demonstrates the product to the end-customer	Customer sells the product
Customer thoughts & feelings	Customer feels that Yale-product packages are classy	Customer thinks that Yale-products are quite reliable but could be more finished	Customer is not pleased with the pricing of the product because big hardware stores can almost sell products out with cheaper price than customer can buy them in	Customer is happy because it is easy to start selling Yale-products because they are superior compared to traditional locks	Customer thinks that Yale-products are easy to demonstrate and sell because end-customers are aware of the brand and have heard good things about the products	Customer is not pleased when end-customers are so aware of the prices in other stores and are able to lower the final price
Touchpoint experience						
Improvement opportunities /key learnings		Developing the product more before releasing it, Broadening the product portfolio/Collecting feedback about the products regularly	Even the price differences between partners and hardware store		Marketing has been successfull. End-customers don't need much convincing in the store anymore. They have already made the purchase decision before entering the store	Guiding end-customers to choose to buy from partners without reducing the prices and making loss

Figure 15. Selling the product journey map

Touchpoint 1

Customers feel pleased about the packaging and think that it is classy like CEO 3 says.

"I see selling these products to be a positive experience. People buy them and the packages are classy." CEO 3

Touchpoint 2

When asked about the products themselves, customers were pretty pleased. They said that compared to other locks that they were selling before being a Yale-partner, Yale products are more advanced and quite reliable.

"These products sell well, because they have gained a trustful reputation. They have worked decently. A product without any faults doesn't exist so…" CEO 3

Few constructive feedback was given about the products. CEO 6 says that the products are not completely finished when sold and need to be replaced relatively soon by a new version. CEO 7 wish that Yale would add more products to their product portfolio and few improvement suggestions, like CEO 4 demonstrates, also rose about some products.

"Abloy has a habit of bringing new products to the markets little bit too early. Meaning that the product is not entirely finished but they want to sell it. And then next version arrives and there's no spare parts anymore available for the previous version so we have to keep the spare parts here for five years or so. It comes to my mind that they are bringing products to the markets that are still not entirely ready. That's a little minus." CEO 6

"I wish that they were more courageous. I mean Yale has been a part of concern for a long time and they have so many fine things, so they shouldn't just keep them stored. In a way the life cycle of electronic products is limited so it would be good to broaden this Yale. And now they are going to, but it took a long time." CEO 7

"There's a challenge with the product (Yale Doorman) because it is only designed for detached house consumers. We have a lot of small enterprises who would like to get a similar product. But the amount of different users is limited. That's the biggest challenge. We have been trying a couple of years to get Abloy to develop it for a bigger user base but they have always shot us down. It is segmented for specific customers and to others they want to sell other products. Also it wouldn't hurt if they could come up with a product that is compatible for metal doors" CEO 4

Touchpoint 3

This touchpoint out of all received the most negative feedback. All the customers complained about the price of the product. Like CEO 3 explains, the main problem for customers was that when they compared the price how much it costs them to buy the products in to hardware stores outselling price, the difference is minimal. This means that making profit is extremely challenging with the prices that they have to set for the products.

"Let's just say that the price is right for the consumer, but to us in the entrepreneur's side, we are not left with much when these bigger chains sell these out with such a price. For example this Yale Doorman, they sell these out with the same price that we bought them in. This product shouldn't have went to hardware stores." CEO 3

Touchpoint 4

When talking about the actual selling process, customers praised Yale-products. Like CEO 4 explains below, it is easy to start offering new smart locks and other home security products to end-customers because they have so many benefits compared to traditional locks.

"It raises a lot of interest among people. People ask a lot and we have long conversation about all the accessories and what to check of their door. They are interested that how easy it is to install. The keyless product is very beneficial. Moreover, the online possibility to monitor who travels through the door is good for parents." CEO 4

Touchpoint 5

Customers said that more than often the end-customer are aware and familiar with the Yale-brand and its products. Like CEO 1 says, Demonstrating is easy and end-customers are interested in new technology. In many cases end-customers have already made the purchase decision even before coming to the store.

”Sometimes selling Yale-products is very simple but let’s say that customers have a lot of knowledge about the products. Many times when they enter the store they say ”hey I know quite a lot about this already”. The thing is that they have maybe done the purchase decision already. But what is the point where they finally do the decision and where they ultimately end up doing the purchase is a question mark. It is so easy to order it online. But maybe we could also step up our online selling game.” CEO 1

Touchpoint 6

This touchpoint is related to Touchpoint 3 about the product prices. End-customers are very aware of the prices and they are able to find out the cheapest price for the product from bigger hardware stores. This has many times led to price reductions in order to get the sale, again leading to minimal gross profit for the locksmith stores.

”Well the product has a price, right. That what is the difference between the purchase price and market price, is the thing we are most interested of. And that difference is very small. So marketing prices are very low. Markets have reduced the prices so low in some products, which has led the profit-making to be quite challenging.” CEO 1

”I think the pricing is the worst part of this product. In this competitive situation, there is not much that is left to us because it is very competed product” CEO 2

”It is perceived in a way that whatever the price is in Bauhaus is also our list price and we should be able to sell with that price and we have. We have jumped to that wagon that whatever is the price in hardware stores is the price in here. That means less profit but it also means that we sell more of them.” CEO 7

4.5 Installing the product

Customer action	Customer has sold the product plus installing service	Customer goes to the end-customers house and installs the product
Customer thoughts & feelings	Customer is happy because he gets more money when installation is also purchased	Customer feels pleased because the product is simple and easy to install
Touchpoint experience		
Improvement opportunities /key learnings		Customers have praised how the product development is going to right direction making installing the product easier all the time

Figure 16. Installing the product journey map

Touchpoint 1

When customer gets to sell an installation in addition to the product, it brings up a positive experience because additional sales always mean more profit.

Touchpoint 2

Installation process was praised to be very simple. Feedback was also given about the product development going into right direction, since the locks are easier and easier to install all the time.

”As far as the Doorman goes, it was really good improvement that they now include these two strike plates. Now there is two different sizes so it is really simple to install.” CEO 3

”Last year Yale brought these new mortise locks. They used to be bigger but now they install straight to 4190’s (standard Finnish doors). That was a very good improvement.” CEO 4

”Well the technical features in these products are not exactly pro-level quality but as fas as Doorman goes, installing it is easy and it installs well. Then all these other products, they don’t necessarily compete with the technical features but now we are positioning towards consumer markets which means that these products don’t have to be pro-level. I can’t say that there have been any major problems.” CEO 6

Installing the product (alternative path)

Customer action	Customer sells just the product and end-customer will install the product him/herself	End-customer goes home with the product
Customer thoughts & feelings	Customer is happy because sale is always a sale	Customers have gained positive feedback from the end-customers about the product being easy to install
Touchpoint experience		
Improvement opportunities /key learnings		Instructional YouTube videos have been received well and they are seen as helpful

Figure 17. Installing the product (alternative path) journey map

Touchpoint 1

Even if the installation is not included in the sale, the customer is always pleased when products are being sold.

Touchpoint 2

This touchpoint doesn't necessarily involve customers in it. Instead, this touchpoint was created from the feedback that end-customers have given about self-installing the product. The product is seen as simple to install and that almost everyone can do it. CEO 4 adds that the instructional videos on YouTube have also gained positive feedback for being very helpful.

”When it comes to the consumers installing the locks themselves, Yale has the Youtube page. Consumers can watch the videos there and they are very good assistance to the installation process. They support Do-it-yourself consumer and I think that it is really good thing.” CEO 4

4.6 Reclamation process

Final path that could be added to a customer journey between Abloy and Yale-partners is the reclamation process. However, it was impossible to create a solid, generalizable path about the process, since only a couple of the customers including CEO 1 have done any reclamations themselves. CEO 6 could however provide some information on how the employees who do the reclamation, have felt about it. The bottom line is that again the mode of operation follows the same pattern as with other Abloy products.

”I think the process goes quite smoothly. There are certain challenges with doing the customer feedback but that’s the way it goes and we just have to settle for it.” CEO 1

”No problem. Every reclamation that we’ve done has been handled. There has been some functional problems how to handle particular situations. Now they have improved those handling with the new contract. We’ve never had a collision course with them. The process though, is kind of a stiff and requires a lot of work. You do your normal warrant RMA to the system. I have to admit that I don’t do them myself, it is the sales staff that does them. But yeah, there are lot of forms to be filled when doing the reclamation.” CEO 6

CEO 5 and 7 brought up the same problem that Abloy should provide more warranty products ready to be installed immediately when end-customers complain about the product defects and the product has to be replaced.

”Well at one point there was this problem where flush locks were bad. I don’t know what was with them but the process went through the typical RMA-procedure, which is the same with every electrical lock. Abloy wanted that we would buy these flush locks to our stockpile and use them as warranty products. That way they could get more sales and our inventory value

would increase and we had warranty flush lock here all the time. I think that it should go another way where Abloy would provide us with few free warranty flush locks that we could use and give to our mechanic immediately." CEO 5

"Let's say that if we put out over 1000 Yale's and there is a defect in a product and Abloy's warranty process is not the fastest in the world. There should be some kind of vision how to handle the process as smoothly as possible to avoid the situation where customer has to be without a lock or where we have to give our own locks that are for sale, as a warranty product. There has been quite a hassle with setting the procedures in order. But it has evolved now. There are website and phone number for this." CEO 7

Summary

As the results speak for themselves there are many things that are operating smoothly between Abloy and their accredited locksmith partners. However there are plenty of room for improvement as well. The whole process starts with Locksmith becoming a Yale partner. According to the interviewees Abloy has been very active with approaching the customers and offering the possibility to be a Yale-partner. Next up is the ordering process. While customers enjoy using the familiar system to order the products, the system could be also updated to minimize the mistakes that have happened with the confirmations in the past. Customers also wished some consistency with delivery times and product availability. Yale products themselves were seen as good for the purpose. They are designed for consumers and while some technical features could be improved, they still are welcome addition alongside traditional locks.

According to the customers, Abloy and Yale have done their marketing commendably. End-customers are familiar with the products. This has also helped the selling process since the end-customers already have knowledge about the brand and products. Biggest subject of complaint was the pricing problem with the product. Customers are having a hard time with profit making in current situation. The marketing directives and especially the marketing budget are also been received with a great critic. What customers had to say about installing process was that both customers and end-customers have find Yale-products to be simple and easy to install. Yale’s website and YouTube page also provide helpful material for the do-it-yourself end-customers.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This last part of the thesis sums up the whole thesis and intertwine the empirical results of this study to the previous literature that has been written about the subject and what are presented in the theory part of this thesis. The research gap of this study was to find if it is possible to create a customer journey between Abloy and its retail channel. This kind of customer journey has not been conducted yet at least publicly since all the related researches study only the customer journeys between a company and its customers. This study shows that it is possible to create a map between a company and retail channel. Although it doesn’t go hand in hand with company-customer settings as far as the prepurchase, purchase, and postpurchase stages normally go, it can be clearly seen from the empirical part that there are lot of interactions between a company and its retail channel and the customer experience can be clearly analyzed from the customer journeys created with the data gotten from the interviews.

Based on the insights gathered from the empirical part, the current status of the Yale-partner’s customer experience is seen as a working in its entirety. There were journey’s were no problems were found from the status quo of the process. In other journey’s there were room left for improvement. Research questions of this study are more specifically answered in the next chapter.

5.1 Theoretical implications

SQ1: How the customer journey maps between a company and a resale channel differs from customer journey map between a company and a customer?

As can be seen from a results chapter of this thesis, the customer journey between company and a resale channel differs quite a lot from a typical customer journey between a company and a customer. According to Lemon & Verhoef (2016), Customer journey always includes prepurchase, purchase and postpurchase stages. In prepurchase stage customer has a need to be filled. Like Hoyer (1984) And Pieters et al (1985) expresses the structure of this stage include recognizing, and considering brand or a product over another. Based on the interviews the customer journey usually started other way between Abloy and the accredited locksmith partners. Of course the recognizing and considering part were still included while thinking about becoming a partner. How the process usually start was Abloy approaching the locksmiths, with a pitch about new brand and new kind of products. That can be seen as the recognizing part. When locksmith hears about the brand and products and starts to think if he or she should become a partner. That can be seen as the consideration part. However, in this case, the choice to become a Yale-partner doesn't exclude anything. Even if the locksmith starts to sell products of Yale-brand, it doesn't mean that he or she has to stop selling products from other brands.

In the purchase phase there are actions like choosing, ordering and paying (Lemon & Verhoef 2016) And many different matters like marketing activities (Kotler & Keller 2015) and environment and atmosphere (Bitner 1990) that may affect on customers actions. Lyengar & Lepper (2000) state that these matters among others can ultimately lead the customer to complete or discontinue the purchase. However, in this case, the possibility to stop purchasing process is not a possibility. When a locksmith has started to be a Yale partner, he or she will continue to order the products as long as they are partners. Even though the customer experience can be measured, there is not a single touchpoint, no matter how negative, that would've led the partners to stop the process.

The postpurchase phase according to Lemon & Verhoef (2016) Include the all the interactions that the customer has with the product or service after it's been purchased. This is also the phase where the service or product is in lead role. (Lemon and Verhoef 2016). In typical B2C Customer journey there are studied activities like consumption experience (Hirschman & Holbrook 1982) and decisions to either repurchase (Bolton 1998) or return products (Wood 2001) and start looking for alternative options for the next purchase (Court et al 2009). In this case there are lot more to the post-purchase phase. After partners have got the products they have to put them on display, start marketing them, sell them, install them and deal with end-customer's complaints that lead to a reclamation process. While all these activities are focused on the product it is a lot different than in B2C customer journey. At this phase the locksmiths themselves turn into the service provider and another customer journey between them and end-customer could be explored to get a better understanding about the overall situation.

SQ2: How is customer experience currently perceived by accredited locksmith partners?
This thesis strengthens the statement made by De Keyser et al (2013) and Lemon & Verhoef (2016) about customer experience being multidimensional ensemble focusing on customer's sensorial, social, behavioral, emotional and cognitive response to the company's actions during the entire process. This was discovered from the fact that the locksmiths have seen the overall experience with Yale to be positive. When the interview first had question about how the cooperation has worked and if there were any ambiguities, challenges or needs, the partners usually didn't have too much to complain. It wasn't until the interview moved to more detailed questions about different touchpoints along the journey, that the interviewees started to sharing knowledge, from which it was possible to point out things that could be improved.

RQ: What are the measures that could lead to a better customer experience for the accredited locksmith partners and therefore increase the sale?
Like mentioned in the chapter 1.3 where research questions were introduced, the main research question is quite specific and mostly considers the commission company which provided the topic of this thesis. While there might be general problems introduced in this thesis that can concern other companies as well, it is adviced that journey maps and results of this thesis are not seen as a foundation which to follow when doing related researches about company and their retail channel. Journeys, touchpoints and other processes differ between every company and their retail channels. This thesis however gives an example of what kind of customer journeys there are between a company and retail channel. Also, because there is no existing literature about the topic there is really no previous studies that this could be compared to. Therefore the answer to the main research question is more opened in next chapter, where guidelines to the commission company are provided.

So far customer journey has been a tool to investigate customer experience. Multiple studies have been produced that look into consumers' (Pine & Gilmore 1998, Homburg et al 2017, Hirschman & Holbrook) or B2B customers' (Zolkiewski et al 2017, Witell et al 2019) experience of the company's providings. These customer journey's have been then used as guidelines to design better services for the customers. However, what this thesis offers is a new look into the customer journey by replacing the customer with a retail channel. This thesis indicates that customer journey could be used as a tool also in channel management. Like Dent (2008, 267-268) says, retailers can be sometimes hard to deal with and it understands the company to know them. Retailers nowadays are also facing the challenges like evolving retail offer, moving from products to services, globalization, changes in consumer experience. (Dent 2008, 268) By using customer journeys to seek what could be improved when dealing with retailers, it would bring companies a probability to provide better deals to new potential retailers. Moreover, this thesis provides guidelines to improve the customer experience of the current retailers. This kind of improving can be used to prevent the danger of retailers turning their interest to competitors to get a better conditions (Moretti 2019, 64).

5.2 Managerial implications

It can be seen from the results chapter that there were quite a few touchpoints what could be managed by Abloy to provide better customer experience for their accredited Yale-partners. Based on the insights gathered from the empirical part, below is a brief summary of what are adviced to be the most important focus points of improvement regarding each created customer journey. Tackling these focus points would improve the customer experience of partners which could ultimately lead them to increase the sales.

Becoming a partner: According to the interviewees, becoming a partner is seen as a smooth process with not much to be improved.

Ordering the product: While some of the respondents were pleased with the ordering process, there were mentions about the system being a little out-dated. The main problems of the system included too imprecise delivery times and errors in product availability. If more products would be available immediately, more sales could be generated in shorter time, as opposed to waiting long times for the delivery and having to re-order when some of the ordered products were not included in the first order.

Marketing the product: To help the partners display the products inside the store, additional material would be appreciated, for with could be used to better demonstrate the products to the customers. Abloy's and Yale's own marketing is seen as well handled with good visibility but for locksmiths to get more profit, it would be adviced to boost their installing option in consumer marketing. Also guidelines could be changed regarding partner's Yale marketing. The marketing budget shouldn't be the only requirement. Instead the success of marketing could be measured otherwise. If partners could get more freedom regarding their marketing decisions, it would surely encourage them to use more contemporary marketing channels with a main thought of being to reach out as many customers as possible without having to worry about reaching the marketing budget set for them.

Selling the product: While the partners see the actual selling of the product easy, it is adviced to reconsider the pricing policy of the product. While the hardware store retail channel is able to buy and sell the products with cheaper price, it might lead the partners to start offering other products to customers because it ables them to get more profit. In the end it is the profit that matters the sellers most when conducting a business.

Installing the product: What partners said about installing product is mainly positive and reportedly the product development is improving all the time. However it is adviced that more info should be gathered from mechanics who do more installation than the CEOs.

Reclamation process: Reportedly the speed of handling reclamations could be improved and availability of warranty products could be increased. This would help the partners to be able to replace customer's locks faster, which would reduce the negative customer experience of the end-customers. Still this customer journey needs more investigating as well.

As Grewal et al (2009) and Verhoef et al (2009) expressed in their works, it is adviced to keep on researching this topic with a longitudinal perspective instead of this being just a one-time study. Meaning that whatever the measures are going to be implemented at the end of the service design process, they should be evaluated afterwards. Foglieni et al (2018) said that this is the part what is usually left unexplored after new or redesigned service is implemented. Because there are lot of changes in markets, society and user expectations and needs, there is a need to continue studying the service (Fogielini et al 2018). Because even if the redesigned service is a success after implementing, the overall changing surroundings might lead to a point where it is again time to redesign the service to keep up with different variables. In the chapter 2.2 there are plenty of tools provided to evaluate the implemented services.

Moreover, it would be adviced that Abloy would start collecting customer feedback on a regular basis. Because the market, customers and products are changing all the time, it would be their best interest to get fresh feedback at least quarterly. That would help not only the service designers but also the product development department to stay updated of all the recent needs that should be filled in order to give the best customer experience to the partners and the end-customers.

5.3 Conclusions

The aim for this thesis was to conduct a customer journey to Abloy about the customer experience between their company and accredited Yale-partners.

Theoretical part of this thesis provides a full explanation of the whole service design process, which this thesis is part of. While this thesis focuses only on the first steps of the process called the ”research” part, the theory part also gives a detailed cross-section of the whole process from start to finish. Tools to complete each process step were also introduced. Theory part then continues with opening the three terms that are studied in the empirical part: Customer experience, customer journey and touchpoints. Customer experience is opened to explain what is the actual topic that we are interested in this thesis. Customer journey explains how the customer journey can be studied and finally touchpoints is the part of the customer journey that tells what are the interactions happening during the customer journey and how the customer is reacting at each touchpoint.

The data for the empirical part of this thesis was gathered via phone interviews. Seven CEO's were picked to be the respondents and style of the interview was semi-structured. The gathered data was then transcribed and results were shown as a customer journey maps alongside more broad explanation about each touchpoint and citations of the respondents.

As could be seen from the results, there were still left some undiscovered parts from the customer journey. For example the reclamation process was not covered in this thesis because the interviewees rarely handled the reclamation and warranty related issues themselves. Therefore it is suggested that deeper knowledge about this process could be gained by conducting a interview for the sales staff. They could probably provide more insights to other customer journey maps as well. It is likely that even though the CEO of the company is responsible for making the decisions regarding the Yale products and partnership, it is the sales staff that interact with customers more in selling and installing processes. Hence, they would have more experience and knowledge about product features, customer encounters and pros and cons of installing the products.

5.4 Limitations and suggestions for future research

While this research contributes for the customer journey literature and acts as a source of information for the commission company about the relations between their company and one of their retail channel, this the has limitations. The biggest limitation of this thesis is the quality and quantity of empirical data. While it is well known that qualitative studies don't require too many respondents, it would've certainly be helpful to back up some claims with more data.

The reason why the amount of data would've been helpful to increase was the interviewees and the diversity of them. For example it wasn't the easiest job to generalize some of the touchpoint experiences when one or two respondents had a quite positive experience, then there were some respondents with neutral experience and not much to say about the topic at all. Finally two respondents with very negative experience. That may or may not have lead to a generalized touchpoint experience that might be seen as wrong if more interviews would be conducted. Luckily the odd amount of 7 interviewees made sure that at least there we're never a situation where half would be with a totally negative and half with totally positive experience so the generalizing could be done without making too many compromises.

Other limitations was with getting a deep understanding about each touchpoint. Even though the main purpose and main research question was to find about touchpoints that could be redesigned in a way that the experience would be better in the future, there was also a purpose that was about getting a clear picture of how the whole customer journey is seen as it currently is. When conducting the interviews it was lot easier to dive deeper whenever respondents have had a bad experience. They were eager to tell about what is wrong and what could be done to improve the situation. Then again whenever there were touchpoints that were experienced positively, most of the responses didn't include very detailed answers about why the touchpoint was felt as a positive. Instead, the responses were in the style of ”yeah nothing wrong with that” or ”everything goes pretty well”. While it is good to hear that some processes work smoothly it doesn't exactly give a lot to the researcher to write in-depth description of the touchpoint. It was possible to overcome this problem at some touchpoints with ”why?” and ”how?” follow-up questions but sometimes there was just nothing to be said about some of the touchpoints other than that they are good at the way that they currently are.

The third limitation is about not being able to get a complete picture of the customer journey. During the interview there were brief discussions about some touchpoints between Abloy and accredited partners that happen but not by the interviewees. For example the reclamation path wasn't possible to create because reclamations is mostly done by other people in the locksmith stores than the CEOs. Other topics that could be discussed with other staff like salespersons and mechanics include for example asking experiences regarding reaching out Yale’s technical support to ask questions about the products and other contacts towards Yale.

As far as the suggestions for further research goes, To gain a confirmation to the allegations of this thesis it is adviced to back it up with quantitative research. As Foglieni et al (2018) suggest, quantitative research would help to broaden the investigation to a wider scale. This quantitative research could be done as a survey and it could include all the customer journey maps included in this thesis. Survey should include propositions that are introduced in this thesis turned into a questions where numerical answers could be given. This kind of survey would be easy and fast to do and send online and it doesn’t require too much time from the researcher to make nor from the respondents to fill. However, by conducting this kind of survey it would be a convenient way to really discover if all the claims of this thesis can be generalized and if they represent the mindset of most of the accredited locksmith partners. Another outcome could be that quantitative research could provide opposite touchpoint experiences from what are introduced in this study.

This thesis can be seen as scratching the surface between a company and its retail channel. There are still few undiscovered customer journeys that could be researched between Abloy and its accredited Yale-partners. At a more general level there is also lot be studied about this type of customer journey. Every company has their own mode of operation so this thesis can’t be used as a standard customer journey between every company and their retail channel. There can be so many more different customer journeys and touchpoints to be discovered with different company and its retail channel. This thesis however proves that this kind of customer journey is in fact possible to create between parties that differ from the typical service provider – customer settings. In fact, this thesis proves that the whole customer journey exploration could be broadened to include customer journeys between a company and its other stakeholders like suppliers or distributors. These customer journey’s could help companies to improve their channel management with different stakeholders. While conducting the literature review for this thesis it seems that these kind of customer journey studies are yet to exist at least publicly.

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1. Interview questions in Finnish and English

Haastattelu / Interview

Osa 1. Taustatietoa haastateltavasta / Background information about the interviewee

a) Mikä on tittelisi ja tehtäväsi yrityksessä? / What is your title and main tasks in the company?

b) Kauanko olet toiminut kyseisessä tehtävässä? / How long have you been in that position?

c) Vastaatko yrityksen päätöksistä koskien Yale-tuotteita? / Are you responsible for making the company's decisions about Yale products?

Osa 2. Taustatietoa liikkeestä / Background information about the business

a) Kuinka monta lukkoliikettä yrittäjällä on? / How many lock stores does the entrepreneur have?

b) Kuinka monta henkeä yritys työllistää? / How many people is employed by the company?

c) Mikä on kilpailutilanne alueellanne? (Onko kilpailevia lukkoliikkeitä?) / What is the competitive situation in your area like? (Is there competing lock stores?)

d) Mikä on toimintanne strateginen painopiste? / What is the strategic focus of your operations?

Osa 3. Yale-partneruus / Yale partnership

a) Kuinka monta vuotta olette toimineet Yale-partnerina? / How many years have you been a Yale partner?

b) Mistä alunperin kuulitte Yalen tuotteista ja Yale-partneruus-mallista? / From where did you originally hear about the Yale products and Yale partnership model?

c) Kuinka päädyitte Yale-partneriksi? / How did you end up to be a Yale partner?

d) Miten partneruussopimuksen tekeminen sujui? / How the conclusion of the partnership contract went?

e) Miten yhteistyö Abloyn kanssa on sujunut Yaleen liittyen? / How has the cooperation worked out with Abloy regarding Yale?

f) Onko esiin noussut epäselvyyksiä Yale-partneruuteen liittyen? / Has there been any ambiguities regarding the Yale partnership?

g) Onko esiin noussut arjen haasteita tai tarpeita Yaleen liittyen? / Has there been any everyday challenges or needs regarding Yale?

h) Mitä odotuksia tai toiveita teillä on Abloyn suuntaan? / What kind of expectations and wishes you have towards Abloy?

i) Mitkä asiat Yale-partneruudessa ovat sujuneet erityisen hyvin? / What things have been going extremely well in Yale partnership?

Osa 4. Yale-tuotteet / Yale products

a) Millaista Yale-tuotteiden tilaaminen on? / What is it like to order Yale products?

b) Miten Yale-tuotteiden toimitukset ovat sujuneet? / How has the delivering of Yale products been?

c) Miten Yale-tuotteiden asettelu liikkeeseen on sujunut? / How has arranging the products into the store been?

d) Onko Yale-tuotteille ollut saatavilla tukimateriaalia koskien myyntiä tai markkinointia? / Has there been supporting sales or marketing material available for Yale products?

e) Kenen kautta olette kyseisiä materiaaleja tilanneet? / From whom have you ordered these materials?

f) Kuinka olet kokenut Yale-tuotteiden myymisen? / How have you experienced the sale process of Yale products?

g) Kuinka olet kokenut Yale-tuotteiden hinnoittelun? / How have you experienced the pricing of Yale products?

h) Kuinka olet kokenut Yale-tuotteiden asentamisen? / How have you experienced the installing of Yale products?

i) Kuinka olet kokenut Yale-tuotteiden reklamointiprosessin? How have you experienced the reclamation process of Yale products?

Osa 5. Vapaata keskustelua / Free conversation

a) Onko vielä jotain mitä haluaisit sanoa liittyen Yale-partneruuteen tai Yale-tuotteisiin? / Is there anything more you would like to add about the Yale partnership or Yale products?