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# SERVICE EXPERIENCE: FROM CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TO SERVICE DESIGN EVIDENCE FROM CAR RENTAL INDUSTRY FOR TOURISM OF THAILAND

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## ABSTRACT

Tourism is a service-intensive industry that is dependent on the quality of customers' service experiences and their consequent assessments of experiences. From a demand perspective, the new tourist is increasingly well informed, more quality sensitive, and more willing to quickly react towards shifts in the tourism industry. In addition, service design designs services in the interest of the customer and at the same time takes entrepreneurial interests into account by involving its own employees. This makes it possible to offer services of the highest quality. In the past, the studies showed a framework for creating a service experience. Therefore, the study aims to analyze customer experiences from service experience for service design in regard to rental cars in the tourism business in Thailand. The research methods used utilize data collection from a sample size of 400 relevant tourists and 6 entrepreneurs of the car rental business. The results of this experiment indicate that the survey participants had a high-level rental experience. Based on the customer experiences analysis include touch points identification, experience assessment, branded experience design, implementation and evaluation, and experience enrichment. The results also identify 5 new elements from the factor analysis which consist of service experience enhancement, outstanding experience design, service efficiency, service touch point design, and experience processing at every touch point.

## Keywords:

Service experiences, Customer experience, Service design

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## Introduction

International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) worldwide grew 4% in 2019 to reach 1.5 billion, based on data reported by destinations around the world. Based on current trends, economic prospects and the UNWTO Confidence Index, UNWTO forecasts a growth of 3% to 4% in international tourist arrivals worldwide in 2020. (World Tourism Organization, 2020). Tourism has grown very much, mostly because people's lifestyles have changed. Tourism spend more money on travelling than previous generations did. Travelling has also become cheaper and more affordable. The rise of budget airlines has made it possible to afford trips to faraway countries. Tourism is a worldwide industry. In many countries it is the most important largest source of income (Chetthamrongchai, & Jermstittiparsert, 2019; Jermstittiparsert & Chankoson, 2019). Travel & Tourism contributed US\$8.8 trillion to the global economy in 2018. This equates to 10.4% of global GDP. Travel & Tourism was the second fastest-growing sector in 2018, only marginally behind Manufacturing, which grew by 4.0% (World travel and tourism council, 2019). The tourist industry provides jobs and brings a country foreign currencies. Many groups profit from tourism: travel agencies, store owners, airports and airlines, hotels, restaurants, etc. Tourism is mainly a service industry which relies on knowledge, experiences, creativity, and a large labor force. The service industry is also based on natural resources and culture which makes this industry vital for the development and the changes of each country (Mingkwon Khaosaart and Komsan Suriya, 2008).

Thailand has significantly set one of its main focal points on tourism. In addition to the developmental benefits of the tourism industry, transportation provides the positive practical benefit of carrying passengers from their starting point to the end of their journey. For tourists, transportation is more than just a starting point. It also includes returning points and each intermediate destination which the tourist needs to

go to (Boonlert Tangjitwattana, 2013). The transportation business has grown in line with the tourism industry, especially in the car rental business. Since the overall car rental business in Thailand is highly competitive (due in part to competition with the growth of the low-cost airline industry), this causes a high amount of tourists to seek out car rentals for tourism purposes. In turn, there is a large demand for short-term car rentals. During the high season or any other festive seasons, it has been discovered that the supply of car rentals is not enough to serve the consumer's demand (Thansettakij, 2016).

Vehicle rental business operators should be well-prepared in various fields in order to strengthen their business potential. As well as, build a competitive advantage amid the intensifying competition. Vehicle rental business operators can specifically target their market by creating good experiences for consumers by creating the most convenient and agile service. Car rental business operators could do so through various service innovations, namely, social media, websites, mobile applications, and etc. (Chainarong Yokthongma, 2013). Moreover, People like to take a few days off to travel. The internet has changed the way people organize their holidays. But not only is the travel industry affected by the development - likewise are the customers, learning how to use these new information and communication technologies to their interest (Freyer, 2009). Therefore, customer experience has become increasingly important for service organizations that see it as a source of sustainable competitive advantage, and for service design. Understanding the customer experience is the groundwork of a service design effort. The customer has an experience due to interact with a company, and every aspect of what surrounds customer contributes to that experience. The customer need to buy the service need the support services for achieve a rich, comprehensive, and integrated view of the service experienced by the customer (Grenha Teixeira, 2010).

The competitiveness of any service ultimately depends on the customer satisfaction, which is determined by the consumer's assessment of expectations towards a certain service and the actual experiences with the service process and the perceived service experience. A firm's service orientation is a decisive factor in the improvement of profit, growth, and both customer and employee experience and loyalty (Zehrer, A., 2009). Due to this potential, this research aims to analyze customer experiences of the car rental for tourism business by concentrating on the part of touch point identification, experience assessment, branded experience design, implementation and evaluation, and experience enrichment. These research results can be beneficial by using the results of this study as a guideline in designing the tourist experiences of the car rental business. In addition to strengthening the latest knowledge base, the results of this study will provide useful study results related to create service experience in systematically for response the customer need at every touch point designs by service design will be offered by this study results.

## Literature Review

### 1.1 Service Experience

Service experience is the end-to-end set of customer experience that add value to a service. This is typically viewed from the customer perspective with a journey whereby the customer discovers, purchases, experience and participates in a service. The basic elements of service experience consist of brand image, service design, service delivery, customer service, service quality, customer journey, and brand culture (Spacey, 2018). In the past, there was studies involved with the service experience about customer service experience and perceived value towards satisfaction (Nutnicha Husainee, 2018). Moreover, some studies observed learning enhancement using data from user experience (Thanapa Ngewtong, 2018) and studied about participation and service experience (Chai et al, 2005). Research was to offer a discussion, definition and comprehensive conceptualization of service

experience, smart services and the differences between regular and smart services (Kabadayi, S., Ali, F., Choi, H., Joosten, H. and Lu, C., 2019). Three characterizations of the concept of service experience are identified in the literature review: phenomenological service experience (which relates to the value discussion in service-dominant logic and interpretative consumer research); process-based service experience (which relates to understanding service as a sequential process); and outcome-based service experience (which relates to understanding service experience as one element in models of service linking a number of variables or attributes to various outcomes) (Helkkula, A, 2011).

### 1.2 Customer Experience

Customer experience is the product of an interaction between an organization and a customer over the duration of their relationship. This interaction is made up of five parts: touch points identification, experience assessment, branded experience design, implementation and evaluation, and experience enrichment. A good customer experience means that the individual's experience during all points of contact matches the individual's expectations. Gartner asserts the importance of managing the customer's experience (Esteban Kolsky and Ed Thompson, 2004). Customer experience encompasses every aspect of an organization's, quality of customer care, of course, also advertising, packaging, product and service features, ease of use, and reliability (Schwager and Meyer, 2007). Customer experience focuses on the relationship between a business and its customers. It includes every interaction, no matter how brief and even if it doesn't result in a purchase. It's a call to a contact center, exposure to an ad, or even something as mundane as the payment of a bill, every exchange between customers and businesses builds (or damages) the relationship. Most important, it's how customers view experiences in aggregate that matters (Johnston, R., Kong, X., 2011). A positive customer experience is crucial to the success of your business because a happy customer is one

who is likely to become a loyal customer who can help you boost revenue. The best marketing money can buy is a customer who will promote your business for you, who's loyal to your company, promotes your business through word-of-mouth marketing, and advocates for your brand and product or service (Becker, L., Jaakkola, E., 2020). Past studies have researched the total customer experience and expectations for the customer experience (Yupa Somkiet, 2010). In Addition, The investigators are studying relation between customer experience and brand loyalty (Kittichai Srichaiyaphum, 2013) and implication of service scape, emotion and trust to a positive customer service experience (Kabadayi, S., Faizan, A., F., Choi, H., Joosten, H., Lu, C. (2019).

### 1.3 Service Design

Service design is a process in which the designer focuses on creating optimal service experiences. This requires taking a holistic view of all the related actors, their interactions, and supporting materials and infrastructures. Service design often involves the use of customer journey maps, which tell the story of different customers' interactions with a brand, thus offering deep insights and directly related to the business model. There is a commitment to discover the exactly needs of customer (Stickdorn and Schneider, 2012). Additionally, service design is the activity of planning and organizing a business's resources (people, props, and processes) in order to (1) directly improve the employee's experience, and (2) indirectly, the customer's experience, (Birgit Mager, 2004). To designing a service is designing the end-to-end view of the service, or designing a service moment. Within that service, there are environments, systems, people, and tools (Stefan Moritz, 2005) (Service design as a practice results in the design of systems and processes aimed at providing a holistic service to the user (Secomandi, F., Snelders, D. 2011) and service design is, as the service design network puts it, and interactions driving the delivery of services, using a human-centered perspective today it is

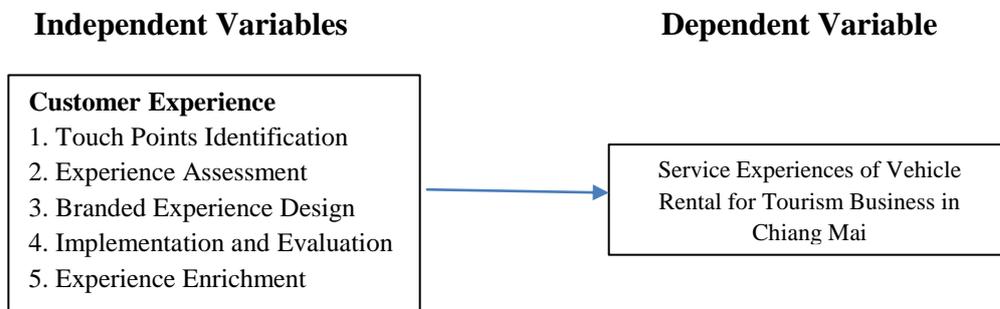
applicable across multiple sectors (Jane Spencer, 2003). The investigators have observe service design process for solving a community problem (Thanakit Kokthong, Popporn Eiamsai, 2017).

At the present, businesses must be more profitable, react quicker, and offer higher-quality services, and do it all with fewer people and at lower cost. An essential requirement in this process is effective knowledge creation and management. (Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E., 2014) and witnessing profound shifts across all industries, marked by the emergence of new business models, the disruption of incumbents and the reshaping of production, consumption, transportation and delivery systems. On the societal front, a paradigm shift is underway in how to work and communicate, as well as how to express and inform (Klaus Schwab, 2019). The development of the technology gives customers access to products and various services easily. Anyone can compare information of similar products. In advance, access to the same services from various channels. These behaviors result in demand trends of the consumer market that changed significantly. For example, from the day when people used to be delighted with the most advanced technology. Today, they only need technology that can be connected to the world with daily life (Voss and Hsuan, 2009). People change industries. People change markets. Therefore, the decision to focus on people before products, services and processes are important because they're the ones driving change to help clients adapt to these changes in the business environment effectively (Pennie Frow, 2007). Service design is critical to customer experience. Customer experience focuses on the design, implementation, and management of interactions that happen across the entire customer journey to launch service experience. This includes the interactions that take place as customers discover, evaluate, buy, access, use, get support, reengage, and leave. Then, service design, like customer experience, focuses on the design and implementation of interactions that

happen across the entire customer journey. Service designers also design the behind-the-scenes activities that enable those experiences to be delivered as planned (Manning, H., Bodine, K., Bernoff, J., 2012). As for the overlap between customer experience and service experience have

envisioned this growing as companies learn to integrate the two activities. The main purpose is to create a quality and successful service experience for tourism. Considering the literature review, the conceptual framework can be set as follows.

**Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1 Conceptual Framework**

**Methodology**

This study is a mixed research method that consists of a quantitative research and a qualitative research (Creswell, 2013) aims to analyze customer experiences from service experience for service design in regards to rental cars in the tourism business in Thailand. The population and Samples were classified into tourists and entrepreneur of car rental business. The first step for quantitative research was making a letter that requested the cooperation in the collection of data to the car rental businesses. Then, getting official authorization from car rental business administration, concerned executives have been requested to assist in distribute the surveys to customers who ever rent the vehicle. The data collection tools are a set of questionnaire gathered from 400 relevant tourists utilized nonprobability sampling and accidental sampling techniques to select the samples that suited the desired amount without any criteria by using the method of calculating the size of the samples. 500 surveys have been distributed to customer and selected complete surveys of 400 surveys. Based on the previous literature 5 variables consist of touch point identification, experience assessment,

branded experience design, implementation and evaluation, and experience enrichment (Wittaya danthamrongkul, Pipop Udon, 2006). Each of the questions was a rating scale out of 5 that was used for the assessment of the opinions of the respondents followed by Thanin (2011). Descriptive statistics was employed (Mean and standard deviation) and analyze new factor by factor analysis. For qualitative research, concerned executives have been requested to assist in distribute the surveys and invitation letter for focus group to 6 entrepreneurs of the car rental business obtained by snowball sampling. The data collection tools are a structured interview and focus group based on service design based on inspiration, ideation, and implementation (Ideo, 2008). Likewise, collection of secondary data obtained from the collection of related documents, a review of relevant literature, with representatives and the entrepreneur of the car rental business. Finally the data collection is used for analysis, interpretation, synthesis, conclusion and research reports.

**Data Analyses**

The information available for decision making exploded in recent years. Until recently, much of

that information just disappeared. It was either not collected or discarded. Today this information is being collected and stored in database, and it is available to be mined for improved decision making. Some of that information can be analyzed and understood with simple statistics, but much of it requires more complex (Hair Jr, William C, Barry J, Rolph E, 2014). Two of the most popular ways to measure variability or volatility in a set of data are standard deviation and average deviation,

also known as mean absolute deviation. Though the two measurements are similar, they are calculated differently and offer slightly different views of data )Field, 2000(. Therefore, to begin with the discriminant standard deviation of the measurement was assessed. The measurement design of the research is explained in Table 1. Then, the results obtained were analyzed for factor analysis.

**Table 1** The average and standard deviation of the customer experiences

The customer experiences of the car rental business	Mean	Standard Deviation	Experience level
1. Implementation and Evaluation	4.42	0.30	Highest
2. Experience Enrichment	4.42	0.38	Highest
3. Touch Points Identification	4.40	0.44	Highest
4. Branded Experience Design	4.40	0.41	Highest
5. Experience Assessment	4.37	0.44	Highest
<b>Total</b>	4.40	0.32	Highest

Factor analysis is an interdependence technique whose primary purpose is to define the underlying structure among the variables in the analysis. Obviously, variables play a key role in any multivariate analysis. Whether with regression, predicting success or failure with discriminant analysis, or using any other multivariate techniques, we must have a set of variables upon which to form relationships. As such, variables are the building blocks of relationships. The analyzed factors were Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: KMO,

Communality: h<sup>2</sup>, Total Variance Explained, and Rotated Component Matrix using Orthogonal Rotation by way of Quartimax method to analyze the component identifiers. In which the researcher analyzed each element and discovered the survey results of service experiences of the car rental for tourism business (Hair Jr, William C, Barry J, Rolph E, 2014). The coefficients of correlation were statistically related in significance at the level of 0.01 and 0.05, and in total of 351. This demonstrated that the variables were related, and therefore it could be categorized in the same component followed by Table 2 and Table 3.

**Table 2** KMO and Bartlett's Test of tourist experience

<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure</b>		0.875
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	Approx. Chi-Square	3683.904
	df	351
	Sig.	0.000

For the bartlett’s Test of sphericity was equal to 3683.904 in which  $p < 0.01$ . The correlation matrix of the indicators was different from unit matrix in

statistical significance, thus, this set of data is suitable for future confirmatory factor analysis. It also conformed to Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure

of Sampling Adequacy; the analyzed result is equal to 0.875 which means the samples are highly suitable to analyzed factor analysis of customer experience. The result of communality was from 0.282 to 0.736. Hence, this could explain the result of the variation of the variables, and also each message could be measured in terms of communality components. The % of variance of the 1st component was equal to  $7.635/27 \times 100 = 28.278\%$  which means the 1st component could be used to explain all of the 28.278% of the variance. While the % of variance

of the 2nd component was equal to  $2.107/27 \times 100 = 7.804\%$ ; this means that the 2nd components could be used to explained all of the 7.804% of the variance. When all 5 components combined, they could explain the variance of all 27 questions by 50.460%, in the social sciences, where information is often less precise, it is not uncommon to consider a solution (Hair Jr, William C, Barry J, Rolph E, 2014). This number was enough in order to be a representative of the components considering its Eigenvalue that was more than 1

**Table 3** Rotated Component Matrix of customer experience

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.635	28.278	28.278	7.635	28.278	28.278	3.294	12.199	12.199
2	2.107	7.804	36.082	2.107	7.804	36.082	2.644	9.791	21.990
3	1.339	4.960	41.042	1.339	4.960	41.042	2.640	9.777	31.768
4	1.298	4.807	45.849	1.298	4.807	45.849	2.542	9.415	41.182
5	1.245	4.611	50.460	1.245	4.611	50.460	2.505	9.278	50.460
6	1.190	4.409	54.869						
7	1.136	4.208	59.077						
8	0.920	3.407	62.484						
9	0.904	3.346	65.830						
10	0.877	3.250	69.080						
11	0.781	2.892	71.972						
12	0.700	2.591	74.563						
13	0.685	2.535	77.099						
14	0.640	2.370	79.468						
15	0.610	2.260	81.728						
16	0.586	2.170	83.898						
17	0.566	2.098	85.995						
18	0.549	2.033	88.028						
19	0.458	1.697	89.725						
20	0.445	1.649	91.374						
21	0.418	1.547	92.921						
22	0.374	1.385	94.306						
23	0.358	1.325	95.631						
24	0.336	1.245	96.875						
25	0.299	1.107	97.983						

26	0.282	1.043	99.025
27	0.263	0.975	100.000

Rotated Component Matrix showed the components could be categorized into 5 components to establish new factor of customer experience. The value indicator was between 0.429-0.734. The new 5 components of the customer experience were as follows 1) Service experience enhancement 2) Outstanding experience design process 3) Service efficiency 4) Service touch point design and 5) experience processing at every touch point. The researcher had compared all the questions involving the customer experience and new 5 components of customer experience to designed service design and launched new service experience.

### Discussions and Conclusion

The result can be concluded that the customer experience is experience processing at every touch point, what the customer gets from the interaction with the organization. Each interaction can create a customer experience. The faster service the provider can serve, the better experience the customers can receive. The organization have to launch service experience enhancement for the customer. The customer experience is vital to focus on service by emphasizing the sincerity of service, quality of service, putting effort to the customer and concerning on the value that will give to the customer. Service touch point design is necessary in designing the experience management to be in line with the different target (Supawan Rakngam, 2012). Touch point identification have to build customers experience for all service aspects through all kind of communication that regardless with or without the staff and self-service technology. It will definitely be a positive result if the customers can receive services from any channels in a timely manner, at the same time, the service provider can respond to customer 24 hours (Wittaya Danthamrongkun and Phiphob Udon, 2006). Outstanding experience design process designs customer experience by the customer journey map, which is the path of

customer decision making. The service provider can deliver the right things to the right customers at the right place with the right time. The businesses can understand more about choosing the right channel for each customer behavior. This journey can help the businesses understand more about choosing the right channel for each customer behavior. Moreover, customer can spending budget worthily and bring better results via online channels by online technologies such as social media, website, application, in every step of customer journey to serve the needs of customers in terms of the outstanding service performance, speed, convenience, and also able to gain trust among the customers. In addition, the development of service design under the customer experience in order to survive in service industry requires the outstanding service performance for the improvement of the customer service by increasing the customer experience and the organization efficiency to serve the needs of customer to maintain service efficiency (Wallin Andreassen, 2016). Finally, the result focused on most profound changes of the tourist to the emerging service design for customer. Additionally, to achieve better service experience. Experience research should enable more direct, empirically validated effects upon customer behavior to improve accountability. Even strong advocates of the virtuous cycle between service quality, customer satisfaction and customer behavior admit that this chain is difficult to make operational (Phil Klaus, 2011). Thus, service experience is the process or activity, the customers experience is their personal interpretation of the service process and their interaction and involvement with it during their journey or flow through a series of touch points, and how those things make the customers feel (Pullman and Gross, 2004).

### ***Implications of the Study***

Experience is far broader and less bordered than the concept of product or service quality that it replaces; hence its measure is far more complex. However, experience is not all-encompassing and it is incumbent on the researcher to uncover what attributes and dimensions are in or out, and which ones matter most (Phil Klaus, 2011). A challenge that seems to be emerging from the literature is how organizations can systematically engineer their customer experiences in order to achieve not only better for the customer but also better for the organizations staff and better for valued which are cheaper and more efficient (Bate and Robert 2007). The benefits the customer gets from using and experiencing the service includes how they perceive they have profited or gained from the service provided and their experience of well requirements and needs have been met. Another outcome of the service from a customer's point of view will be their conscious or unconscious assessment of the service provided (Zomerdijk and Voss, 2010).

### ***Limitations and Future Research Direction***

The limitation of this research is the timing of data collection because it is inevitable to collect information about the tourism business with factors related to the tourism season. As a result, the collection of information in each period of information that cannot be answered comprehensive with the research. Moreover, change to the environment that mean the situation and the status of the respondents may change over time. Therefore, researching should be with repetitive observations from the same respondent, and long-term studies are recommended to help obtain more accurate investigations. Furthermore, future study should be prepared to study the readiness of the service to cover all aspects to create a good experience for users in the service industry, including the readiness of personnel, service experience, technology for both communication between service providers and customers, technology related to traveling, traveling or doing business. In addition, the next

research should understand the risk management guidelines that affect the tourist service design of service industry for take advantage of positive events and control the loss from negative events to building good experiences for tourists. Moreover, to operation and preparation when businesses have service risks.

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