SAUMING PANG

Successful Service Design for Telecommunications

a comprehensive guide to design and implementation

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To the memory of my late mother

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The idea of writing this book came from the frustration of trying to describe what I do as a *service designer* and what *service design* is about. Even to the professionals within the telecommunication and service provider sectors (i.e. the companies that provide telecommunication/Internet services), it is often difficult to articulate the concept and purpose of service design. However, I have seen so many projects and service developments fail because there were no service designers in the project team.

Service designers are the people who have the skills to consider all aspects of a service during the design stage. They see how the solution works as a whole (i.e. the end-to-end service), ensuring that nothing is missing from the solution. Service design skills require one to look at the service solution holistically, with the customer experience at the heart of the design. Service design skills are greatly in demand, and yet they are very poorly understood. This book sets out to change that.

The technology sector in general and the telecommunication companies in particular operate in increasingly competitive environments. The companies that survive and excel are those offering the most compelling range of products and services. Since the underlying technologies tend to offer similar features and functionalities, the only differentiation is the services created from these technologies. The method used to create a great service is service design.

There are many books on the market relating to new product development (NPD). Most of them are based on manufacturing products that do not need to be monitored and maintained (or require little monitoring and maintenance), once sold to the customers. To design and introduce a service that needs after-sales care with the maintenance of different technologies is a completely different ball game, and not many people recognize the challenges.

Providing services is where your customers perceive they are served. Your customers normally feel that they are served by human actions, rather than features of your service. In this technology age, feature and functionalities have been taken for granted. It is the human actions or the systems/applications that enable the human actions that make the difference.

The major difference between service design and product development is the concept of providing a service. Designing in capabilities for monitoring and maintaining the service performance and designing the facilities to deliver after-sales support is much more complicated than designing a product. This is especially important for managed telecommunications services and managed information technology (IT) service solutions, where the service providers are expected to resolve the problems when they arise or to fix faults before the customers or end users realize there is a fault.