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Developing Integrated Solutions within B-to-B Service Networks

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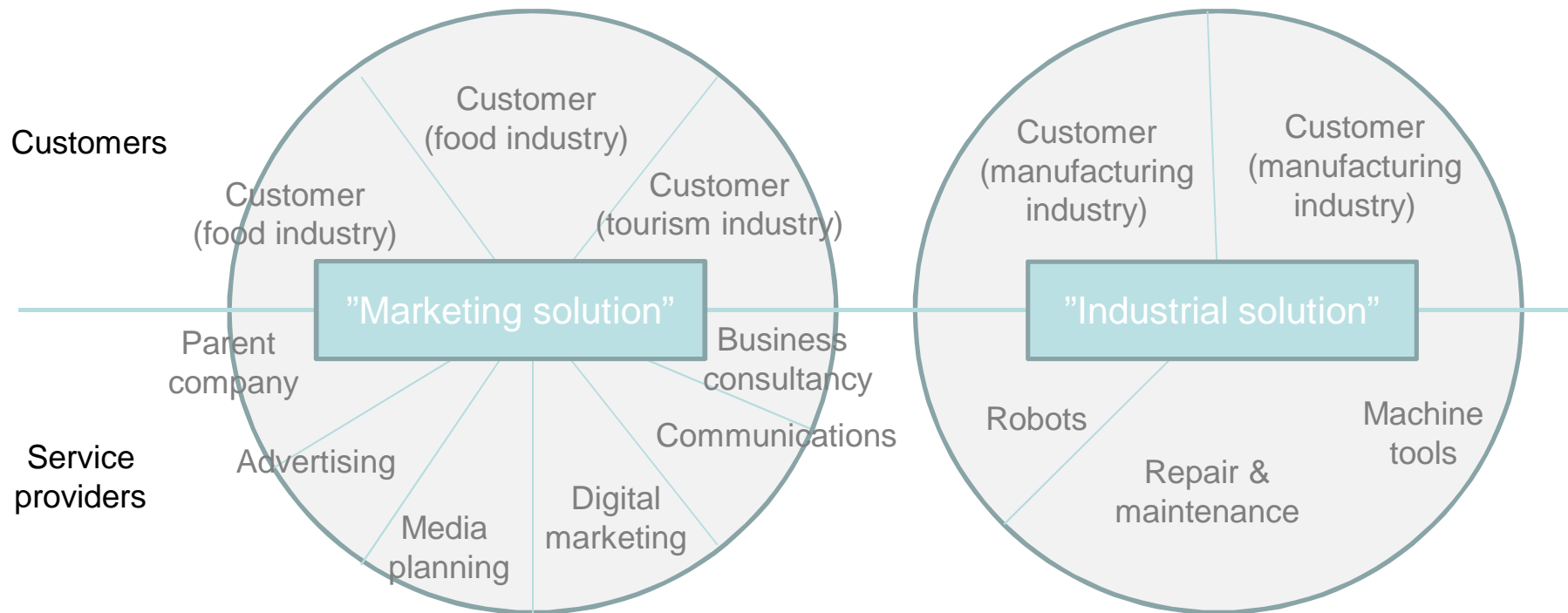


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Background of the paper

- Collects the main results of VersO-project (2009 – 2011)
- Research strategy: Qualitative multiple case study (n = 38)



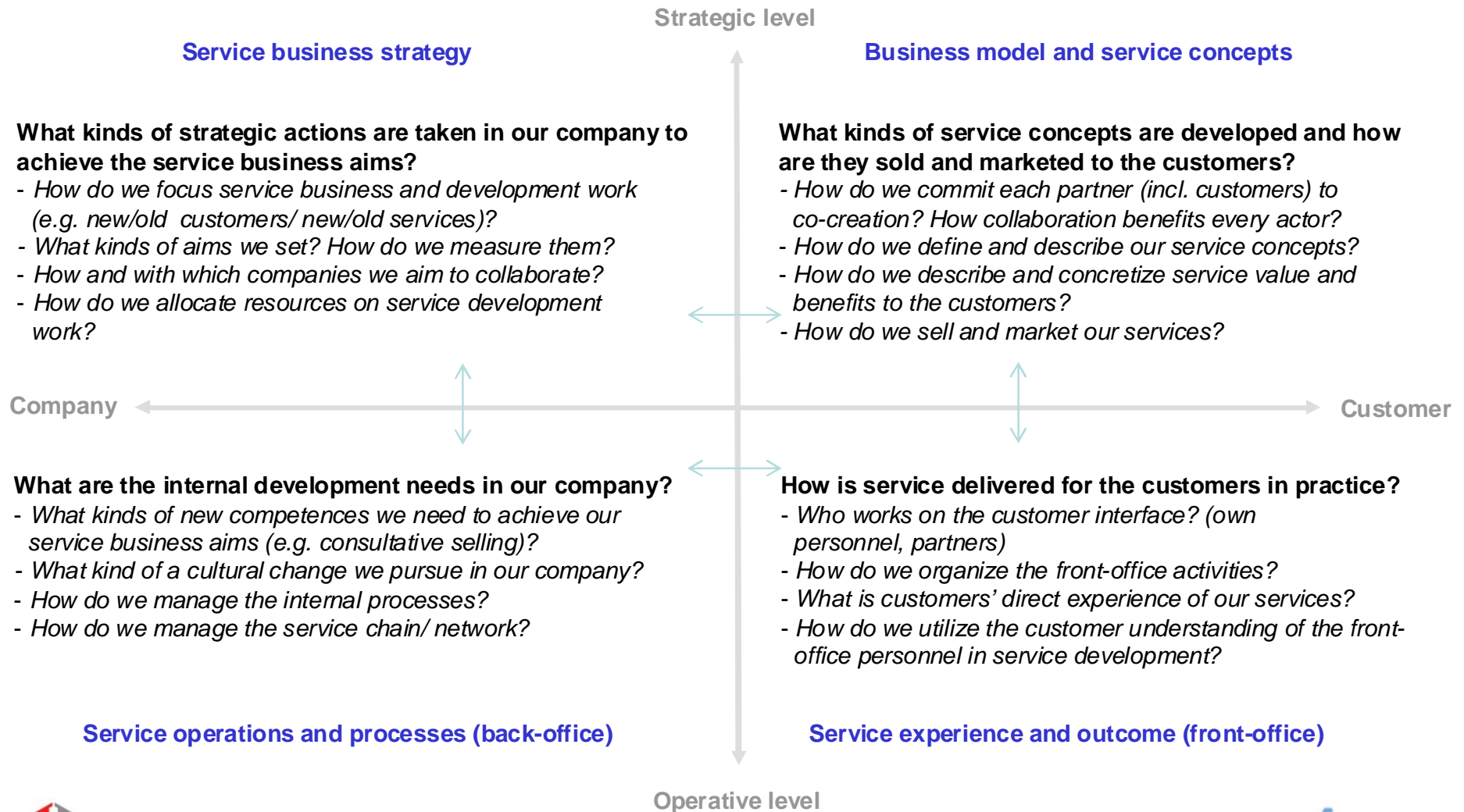
Theoretical background

- Solutions marketing literature: The prevailing focus in research has been inherently product-centred, with the solution basically taking the form of a good augmented with service (e.g. Windahl & Lakemond, 2006; 2010; Davies et al., 2007; Cova & Salle, 2008; Kapletia & Probert, 2010) and there has been a shortage of research on **solutions originating from service industries** (Nordin & Kowalkowski, 2010).
- Value creation literature: Authors in different domains have emphasized the **collaborative, systemic nature of value creation** (Normann & Ramirez, 1993; Kothandaraman & Wilson, 2001; Davies, 2004), and called for more research on value creation at the level of **service networks** and value chains (Windahl & Lakemond, 2006; Cova & Salle, 2008; Matthyssens et al., 2009; Ostrom et al., 2010; Vargo & Lusch, 2010).

The purpose of the paper

- The aim of our paper is to increase knowledge on the **development of integrated solutions within b-to-b service networks**.
- More specifically, the purpose of our paper is:
 - 1) to address the **value** (i.e. benefits/ sacrifices) of integrated service solutions to all the network actors,
 - 2) to address the common **challenges** faced in developing and delivering integrated solutions within b-to-b service networks, and
 - 3) to provide **two frameworks** to facilitate and systemize service business development in companies.

The dimensions of service business development



Service provider(s)

Service business strategy

Strategic level

Business model and service concepts

What kinds of strategic actions are taken in our company to achieve the service business aims?

- How do we focus service business and development work (e.g. new/old customers/ new/old services)?
- What kinds of aims we set? How do we measure them?
- How and with which companies we aim to collaborate?
- How do we allocate resources on service development work?

Service concepts are developed and how marketed to the customers?
 How do we collaborate with each partner (incl. customers) to ensure that collaboration benefits every actor?
 How do we define and describe our service concepts?
 How do we describe and concretize service value and service delivery to customers?
 How do we identify and market our services?

Customer

What are the internal development needs in our company?

- What kinds of new competences we need to achieve our service business aims (e.g. consultative selling)?
- What kind of a cultural change we pursue in our company?
- How do we manage the internal processes?
- How do we manage the service chain/ network?

How are services delivered for the customers in practice?
 How do we design the customer interface? (own and external partners)
 How do we organize the front-office activities?
 How do we ensure customers' direct experience of our services?
 How do we improve the customer understanding of the front-office in service development?

Service operations and processes (back-office)

Service experience and outcome (front-office)

Operative level

Customer interface

Service business strategy

Business model and service concepts

What kinds of strategic actions are taken in our company to achieve the service business aims?

- How do we focus service business and development (e.g. new/old customers/new/old services)?
- What kinds of aims we set? How do we measure them?
- How and with which companies we aim to collaborate?
- How do we allocate resources on service development work?

What kinds of service concepts are developed and how are they sold and marketed to the customers?

- How do we commit each partner (incl. customers) to co-creation? How collaboration benefits every actor?
- How do we define and describe our service concepts?
- How do we describe and concretize service value and benefits to the customers?
- How do we sell and market our services?

Company

Customer

What are the internal development needs in our company to achieve the service business aims?

- What kinds of new competences we need to achieve the service business aims (e.g. consultative selling)?
- What kind of a cultural change we pursue in our company?
- How do we manage the internal processes?
- How do we manage the service chain/network?

How is service delivered for the customers in practice?

- Who works on the customer interface? (own personnel, partners)
- How do we organize the front-office activities?
- What is customers' direct experience of our services?
- How do we utilize the customer understanding of the front-office personnel in service development?

Service operations and processes (back-office)

Service experience and outcome (front-office)

Operative level

Summary

- **The main challenges** in developing integrated solutions within b-to-b service networks:
 - How to deliver a *seamless* solution: a coherent service experience and service value from all the service providers?
 - How to convince the customer of the value of the integrated solution?
- **The framework** to facilitate and systemize the development of integrated service solutions:
 - Collaboration between organizational groups and companies.
 - Systemic approach for service business development.

A low-angle photograph of a large tree trunk, looking up towards the canopy. The sun is shining through the leaves at the top, creating a bright glow. The tree trunk is thick and textured, with some moss or lichen visible. The background is filled with green leaves and branches.

Thank You!

Questions, comments?

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