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Conceptual paper

Social layers of customer-to-customer value co-creation

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Abstract

Purpose – Approached from the customer-dominant (C-D) logic perspective, this paper aims to extend current value co-creation discussions by providing conceptual insights into co-creation within customers' social sphere. Focusing on socially dense contexts in which customers consume together in dyads or collectives, the paper seeks to provide recommendations of how service managers can facilitate customer-to-customer (C2C) co-creation. **Design/methodology/approach** – The paper bridges current thinking on value within the C-D logic with service management perspectives on C2C interactions and social science concepts on consumer communities. Examples from literature and practice are drawn on in the discussion. **Findings** – The proposed framework reveals C2C co-creation as a dynamic, multi-layered process that is embedded in customers' social contexts. Value emerges in four distinctive social layers: “detached customers”, “social bubble”, “temporary communitas” and “ongoing neo-tribes”. **Research limitations/implications** – This paper is conceptual. Further validation of the framework in a variety of socially dense consumption settings is needed, using field-based qualitative methods such as participant observation and interviews. **Practical implications** – Awareness of the multi-layered nature of C2C co-creation and specific practices in which value is formed provides service managers with opportunities to create value propositions that help facilitate such co-creation. Service managers across various sectors benefit from understanding how customers can be “nudged” into more socially immersive co-creation layers. **Originality/value** – The paper contributes by introducing a C2C co-creation perspective, conceptualizing the social layers within which value is formed, and providing specific propositions to service managers with regard to servicescape structuring and other strategies that facilitate C2C co-creation.

Keywords: Customer-dominant logic, Customer-to-customer, Shared consumption, Value co-creation

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1. Introduction

The service-dominant [S-D] logic of marketing (Vargo and Lusch, 2004; 2008) conceptualizes value co-creation in terms of interactive processes between the customer and the service provider. However, not enough attention is given to co-creation that take place as customers interact *with each other*. In certain socially dense consumption contexts such customer-to-customer [C2C] co-creation processes can have very important implications. During visits to shopping malls, organized leisure or adventure tours, golf tournaments, cruises, or special events and festivals, services are consumed simultaneously by a number of customers who socialize, interact and share their consumption experiences with each other. With a small number of exceptions (e.g., Baron and Harris, 2008; Finsterwalder and Kuppelwieser, 2011; McColl-Kennedy *et al.*, 2012), service research does not commonly consider these C2C processes as a potential source of value co-creation - a gap this paper attempts to address conceptually.

The recently emerged customer-dominant [C-D] logic (Heinonen *et al.*, 2013; 2010; Voima *et al.*, 2010) offers a useful basis for understanding C2C co-creation as it places customers' value creation in centre of enquiry. C-D logic does not, however, explain where precisely within the customers' social sphere value is actually created, or formed, and whether/ how such C2C co-creation could be managerially facilitated. This paper bridges current customer-dominant logic in service research on value co-creation and formation with management-oriented perspectives from services marketing but also with social science concepts outside the management discourse, in order to suggest new insights into how 'social layers of C2C value co-creation' can be conceptualized. A framework is proposed that positions customers' C2C co-creation in a number of social layers, and provides propositions and recommendations for service managers who wish to facilitate C2C co-creation of value in socially dense consumption contexts more effectively.

2. Co-creation of value in services research

Service-dominant logic and service-related value co-creation

S-D logic in marketing conceptualizes value and re-defines the relationship between the service organization and customers. Introduced by Vargo and Lusch in 2004 as a new paradigm in marketing, S-D logic focuses on customers' role in co-creating value and valuable experiences with the service organization. Vargo and Lusch (2004) argue that, in the increasingly dynamic, process-oriented context of customer experiences, the role of the service provider is limited to offering 'value propositions' to customers. Value is co-created as both the service organization and its customers employ and integrate various 'operand' (tangible resources that can be allocated or 'acted upon', such as natural resources) and 'operant' resources (often infinite and intangible skills or competencies over which the actors have 'authoritative' capability and that 'act on' other resources to produce effects) (ibid).

Conceptualization of value realized through co-creation in S-D logic builds on Holbrook's notion of value as something that "resides *not* in the product purchased, *not* in the brand chosen, *not* in the object possessed, but *rather* in the *consumption experience(s)* derived therefrom" (1999, p. 9 emphasis in original). The highly subjective and phenomenological value-in-use (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) is co-created with and ultimately determined by the customer as a result of their service experience. In their later re-conceptualizations of value Vargo and Lusch (2008) emphasize the importance of networked nature of value beneficiaries and contextual features of consumption. Value-in-use is supplemented with a broader 'value-in-context' that can go well beyond the value proposition intended by the marketer. In co-creating value-in-context, customers draw on a number of social resources which include family relationships, communities, and commercial relationships (Arnould *et al.*, 2006), thus 'determining and enhancing' their experiential value outcomes in a contextualized manner (Baron and Harris, 2008).

Because of the emphasis of co-creation research on the subjective, phenomenological nature of value determinations of networked customers, researchers typically aim to establish or quantify specific types of realized value outcomes perceived by customers or customer communities. For instance, typologies of social, epistemic and conditional consumption value (Sheth *et al.*, 1991) or other-oriented 'status' and 'esteem' consumer value (Holbrook, 1999) are utilized to determine perceived utility of consumption choices on the purchase decision-making level (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Similarly, social aspects in consumption situations are taken into consideration when determining potential customer value outcomes (Bearden and Etzel, 1982; Belk, 1975). However, while such research aims to reflect a customer-oriented perspective and the social influences on value co-creation, it tends to focus

predominantly on the emergence of *provider- or service-related value*, i.e. value that necessarily pertains to contextualized experiences of using service providers' value offering (Payne *et al.*, 2008; Vargo and Lusch, 2006).

In order to fully acknowledge customers' perspective on value, marketing needs to adopt a mindset in which the customer is the sole creator of value, while the firm joins in as a supporter/ facilitator of customers' value creation (Grönroos, 2008). In addition, understanding how customers define or experience value as outcomes remains an important subject in marketing. Nonetheless, the processes through which value is actually created are equally as important as a research subject (Gummerus, 2013). The notion of value being created throughout customers' social experiences and practices as seen in the emerging customer-dominant perspective is in line with this mindset. It gives primacy to *value creating processes* that may be embedded in customers' wider social context, outside the service providers' influence.

Customer-dominant logic and value formation

Helkkula *et al.* (2012) point out that customers' value experiences do not always correspond with service providers' proposed value offerings, as these may not be integrated into the customers' complex social contexts. Experiences staged by festival organizers, for instance, do not necessarily correspond fully with the deep social meanings that committed customers attach to their membership in on-going social networks (Begg, 2011; Kim and Jamal, 2007). Retail customers in online environments construct and manifest their own social experiences both on-line and off-line (Rosenbaum, 2008; Rowley *et al.*, 2007), while service contexts and value propositions serve merely as the focus of such experiences. Value creation in these circumstances could then be described as taking place primarily in the customers' sphere (Grönroos, 2008), with marketer-provided value propositions serving merely as a 'platform' for customers' C2C value creation (Gummerus, 2013).

Such customer-centric orientation is evident in the very recently emerged *customer-dominant (C-D) logic* (Heinonen *et al.*, 2010; 2013; Voima *et al.*, 2010), which helps us to refocus attention away from value creation as something that is always service-related toward something that stems from the social experiences and practices among customers. The C-D perspective posits that rather than treating their customers as partners in co-creation, service organizations should strive to find out what customers actually do with the service in the

context of their lives and to accomplish their own goals. As Heinonen *et al.* (2010, p. 533) point out, service providers would benefit from “a holistic understanding of the customers’ lives, practices and experiences, in which service is naturally and inevitably embedded”. Such contextual and interpretative enquiry into the dynamic interplay between customers’ social activities, practices and experiences could be converted into concrete ways for service providers to support and facilitate customers’ value creation (Grönroos and Voima, 2013).

C-D logic develops further S-D logic’s view of value as a phenomenological construct. The notion of ‘value-in-the-experience’ (Helkkula *et al.*, 2012) is introduced. Building on Husserl’s ([1936] 1970) phenomenology and the concept of lived experiences, this perspective emphasizes not only the intra-subjective interpretations of value within lived experiences, but also inter-subjective value that emerges from individually determined social contexts (Helkkula *et al.*, 2012). In this way, value-in-the-experience differs from previous experiential value notions in that it does not limit itself to subjectively perceived value outcomes that are merely influenced by some social contextual factors, as suggested by traditional value perspectives. Rather, these social factors are already inherent in customers’ value creation processes. As consumption in these settings takes place in the company of other customers, experiences are often shared, rather than purely personal and subjective. Thus, the inter-subjective (i.e., mutual or dyadic co-creation between two and more customers) and collective (i.e., co-creation experiences shared among a group of community of customers) value dimensions also need to be explored (Edvardsson *et al.*, 2011; Pareigis *et al.*, 2012; Voima *et al.*, 2010).

Furthermore, as value emerges mostly in the customers’ sphere, beyond the visibility of the service provider (Heinonen *et al.*, 2010), focusing on customers’ social experiences within specific service contexts becomes problematic. The C-D perspective therefore emphasizes customers’ *ongoing social practices and experiences in the context of their lives*. This ‘emerging’ nature of value in customers’ experiences and practices is reflected in C-D logic abandoning the term value co-creation in favor of value creation or *formation*. While this paper still utilizes the term ‘C2C co-creation’, we view it in line with C-D logic’s value processes conceptualization; that is, as an umbrella term for *both inter-subjective (customer-to-customer) and collective processes in which value-in-the-experience is formed*. This perspective focuses on the ‘where’ and ‘how’ of C2C co-creation rather than on its outcomes.

3. Conceptualizing social layers of C2C value co-creation

Conceptually, C-D logic is useful in helping to understand C2C co-creation. Nevertheless, little is known about where in the customers' social sphere value-in-the-experience is formed in socially dense consumption contexts. Researchers who explore C2C interactions in such contexts mostly adopt a subjectivist, experiential perspective in that they focus predominantly on the perceived positive, negative or neutral value outcomes of social atmospherics (e.g., Uhrich and Benkenstein, 2011), or the influence of other customers on service experiences (Huang and Hsu, 2010). While these studies highlight the fact that customers co-create value with each other, other customers are viewed merely to comprise a social element of the servicescape that may impinge on individuals' service experiences.

A small number of studies have explicitly explored C2C co-creation processes within the realms of collective consumption. For instance, Baron and Harris (2008) looked at how a customer group integrated their operant resources to co-create a collective kind of value in their bid to save a local cinema. Finterwalder and Kuppelweiser (2011) conceptualized co-creation in group-forming processes within co-consumer groups and McColl-Kennedy *et al.* (2012) explored value-creating practices of patient networks in healthcare settings. While these studies advance to some extent our understanding of C2C co-creation, there is still a gap in knowledge with respect to a move toward a holistic conceptualization of customers' social sphere in which value is formed.

Table 1 summarizes the 'where' of C2C co-creation in socially dense consumption contexts in *four layers*: 'Detached Customers', 'Social Bubble', 'Temporary Communitas' and 'Ongoing Neo-tribes'. The characteristics of each layer (the 'who' and 'what') are discussed in detail in what follows, together with opportunities and recommendations for service managers to facilitate value formation, and also to potentially 'nudge' customers into 'higher-order' layers. Examples from tourism and festivals in particular are drawn on in the discussion as they represent a useful context for theoretically exploring C2C co-creation. Festivals not only offer an opportunity for a variety of customer social units to come together to bond, socialize and commune in one place (Gibson and Connell, 2012), but also to form long-lasting, neo-tribal communities of interest (Begg, 2011). As such they can offer interesting insights for service managers dealing in a variety of other socially dense consumption contexts.

* Table 1 about here

'Detached Customers' layer

In many socially dense contexts there is typically a small number of customers who visit on their own or with a single partner, co-creating within a 'Detached Customers' layer.

Individualism and need for privacy can be relatively high with few opportunities for active interactions with strangers sought, giving way to insular and territorial behaviours. Wilks (2012) writes about the tendency of couples visiting opera festivals to 'close themselves off' in festival environments and not interact with anyone else at the festival. Couples at campsites often seek distance from others by camping away from the crowd, or by seeking out quieter corners in the service landscape, in order to relax and contemplate together. Tourists on beaches may erect windbreakers around themselves in order to protect their privacy.

A generally friendly social atmosphere can nevertheless still be present even if the Detached Customers co-creation layer prevails. Couples in tourism and leisure settings often assist strangers; for instance, campers who may not normally seek out interactions with strangers will still lend their mallet to 'tent neighbours' or offer lifts to a stranger (Filimonau *et al.*, 2013). Similarly, individuals in retail, hospitality and leisure environments may want to occasionally provide advice to other customers (McGrath and Otnes, 1995; Rosenbaum, 2008).

Service management implications:

Tourism and leisure experiences in particular often represent an opportunity to escape from the usual social environment (Kim and Jamal, 2007; Kozinets, 2002). For some customers the socially dense context represents an opportunity to experience a different kind of holiday with their partner, with other customers in the settings as mere background to their interpersonal co-creation. While insular practices may seem detrimental to the emerging social value-in-the-experience, self-contained tent areas that spring up at festival campsites can help to facilitate a sense of separation (Begg, 2011). In such cases the physical setting can be designed to allow for private contemplation. For instance, relaxation areas with smaller sectioned-off, cosy spaces with books and magazines, or areas where individuals and couples can play parlour games, help facilitate practices and experiences within this layer.

To help 'nudge' customers into more socially intensive co-creation layers service managers should support positive critical incidents among customers-strangers both within the service contexts and outside it. Collaborative and helping practices should be nurtured through an

appropriate ‘code of conduct’; for instance on their website festivals encourage customers to arrange shared transport. Amiable encounters and conversations with strangers can be facilitated by introducing dining areas with smaller tables. ‘Customer compatibility’ (Martin and Pranter, 1989) can be managed by targeting and bringing together individuals and couples with similar features in specific situations, such as special-interest workshops.

‘Social Bubble’ layer

Consumption experiences are often shared in larger groups of known acquaintances, friends and family members. Time spent together and the sharing and remembering of specific experiences is one of the main sources of value in the Social Bubble layer. Groups of women go shopping together to catch up over lunch as well as affirm their fashion choices. Smuggling alcohol into festival venues can be seen by groups of friends as ‘an adventure’ that re-enforces the bonds among them, while shared memories last long after (Lehto *et al.*, 2009). Families may use shared consumption as an opportunity to reinforce particular family traditions and identities; Kyle and Chick (2002) discuss how family gatherings at an annual agricultural strengthen family rituals and traditional gender roles.

Customers co-creating within the Social Bubble layer tend to be less insular; for example, groups may invite strangers to join into their activities, playing Frisbee, football or tennis are popular group activities in leisure settings that may involve strangers. The goal-oriented nature of together overcoming some challenge may give rise to a sense of social flow among those participating (Arnould and Price, 1993; McGinnis *et al.*, 2012; Walker, 2010), thereby veering into the more collective temporary community-like co-creation layer.

Service management implications:

By targeting family and friend group customer segments service managers can support the formation of strong bonding value-in-the-experience. The importance of introducing family members and friends to new experiences is of significance, as traditions that revolve around shared consumption in specific contexts could lead to future loyalty behaviors (Kyle and Chick, 2002). Physical space can be arranged so that groups can be near each other; campsite operators can for example section off family-specific pitches and encourage visitors to come together, so that such social units do not need to break up. Online intra-group co-creation can also be leveraged, for example by tapping into family and friend groups sharing their consumption experiences on social media platforms. In the spirit of the new ‘kinship

economy' recently coined in marketing practice (Smith, 2012), service organizations can aim to integrate themselves with customers' communication practices with their social peers. Organizations in retail and tourism sectors for instance already encourage sharing of branded content through social media such as Twitter or Facebook prior- or post- consumption (Binkhorst and Den Dekker, 2009; Neuhofer *et al.*, 2012).

Furthermore, supporting inter-group bonding through flow-inducing activities and program features aimed at families and larger groups could help to nudge numerous 'Social Bubbles' toward the Temporary Communitas layer. Festivals for instance can organize child-friendly crafts workshops, and hotels and campsites can provide team-games facilities, helping to involve strangers in co-creation practices of known-groups.

'Temporary Communitas' layer

C2C co-creation within a 'Temporary Communitas' reflects the 'liminoid' (Turner, 1995) nature of many socially dense contexts. According to Turner (1995) customers in liminoid environments find themselves removed from their ordinary place and time, in a 'place out of place' where 'rites of integration' help to reverse everyday, conventional norm and rule structures. Such rituals lead to the production of a sense of closeness and camaraderie among participants, which Turner (1995) describes as *communitas*.

Temporary communitas typically form during leisure and tourism experiences, but can also emerge in a variety of 'third places', such as cafes and diners, bars, cinemas and health establishments. Festival attendees, for instance, experience shared feelings of goodwill and a sense of being part of something bigger. The unity and leveling of social barriers in liminoid environments is intensified in conditions where customers find themselves in a similar 'back-to-basics' states, forced to leave most possessions behind (Arnould and Price, 1993).

Consequently, they identify themselves with strangers, typically introducing themselves by first names only and then developing very strong friendships and connections which may transcend the immediate social situation.

Service management implications:

Service managers benefit from creating environments that facilitate the leveling of social barriers and enhancing communing practice among customers. Attracting customers with a common interest and for a common purpose can help facilitate a sense of unity. More importantly, however, leveling of social barriers can be leveraged by emphasizing the

liminoid features of the consumption setting. For example, festivals and shopping malls mark out the ritualistic transformation from the usual to the ‘other-worldly’ consumption space through colorful gateways, flags, lighting and festivity symbols such as circus-like structures and art-based performances. Dressing customers in costumes or uniforms also helps to facilitate a sense of shared identity and equality (Arnould and Price, 1993), and can also provide an entertainment element.

Customers are encouraged to form a shared sense of excitement by well-trained staff and through effective programming. Initiatives such as ‘flash mobs’ can enliven retail and public spaces and temporarily create a sense of togetherness among those present. For instance, Roskilde music festival organizers bring large numbers of people who do not know each other together in the setting and, using pre-recorded media messages played on participants’ media devices, orchestrate on-site customer activities such as ‘silent disco’ or ‘mass hugging’. Managers then benefit from facilitating formation of more permanent bonds and socialization outside the service context, and supporting emergence of on-going customer neo-tribes.

‘Ongoing Neo-tribes’ layer

‘Ongoing Neo-tribes’ as the fourth C2C co-creation layer reflects social practices performed among members of consumer subcultures and neo-tribes (Maffesoli, 1996 [1988]). Customers often express their belonging to a specific neo-tribe by wearing particular clothes, consuming particular food and drinks or using particular discourse (Maffesoli, 1996 [1988]). Specialist knowledge, skills and experience are often shared and exchanged when neo-tribe community members come together both in physical and online contexts (Schau *et al.*, 2009). For instance, VolksWagen campervan owners interact on www.vwforum.com; and, backpackers visit the www.couchsurfing.org forum in order to look for accommodation, meet new like-minded people and exchange advice and specialist knowledge. Community membership that goes beyond the physical service experience can form basis for formation of social capital, such as reciprocity, social trust and well-being, through what Cova (1997) terms ‘linking value’.

Service management implications:

This layer can prove the most hard to reach for service providers, as the members of neo-tribes often take their co-creation practices away from specific service contexts. Nonetheless,

a number of researchers argue that service managers can access this layer in order to source from their customers potential input for product and service improvement and innovation (Pongsakornrunsilp and Schroeder, 2011; Russo-Spena and Mele, 2012; Rowley *et al.*, 2007). In this vein, service managers might attempt to host Internet forums and social media sites in which customer communicate with each other about their interests and experiences. On site, managers can then foster the exchange and sharing of interest-specific know-how and resources through programming and special design, such as ‘open-mike’ and ‘round-the-fire’ jamming sessions at music festivals, or ‘speed-dating’ style resource trading events at campsites or in retail settings, where experienced individuals can help and share their know-how with less experienced customers.

A sense of belonging and emotional connection can be fostered by tapping into, and mimicking to some extent, tribal practices and symbolism (Rosenbaum and Massiah, 2011); for instance, festival organisers catering to folk music enthusiasts serve ale in pewter tankards and incorporate retail units on site that sell alternative clothing and musical instruments. T-shirts and various accessories could be sold that combine in their design a specific brand with symbolism familiar to the community of interest.

Conceptual framework

Framework presented in Figure 1 summarizes the discussion so far. The four C2C co-creation layers are illustrated in the lower half of the framework as a progression of customers’ practices within ‘Customers’ social sphere’. Customers may or may not progress from the less socially immersive ‘Detached Customers’ layer, through group-centric ‘Social Bubble’ layer, toward more spontaneous socializing and connecting with other unknown customers in the ‘Temporary Communitas’ layer, and finally forming long-lasting bonds within the ‘On-going Neo-Tribes’ layer. Value-in-the-experience that is formed in practices within each layer is also highlighted.

* Figure 1 about here

Recommendations for service managers provided with respect to how C2C co-creation within each layer could be supported through configuration of hard and soft service aspects of the servicescape (Bitner, 1992; Rosenbaum and Massiah, 2011) are illustrated in the ‘Service manager sphere’ in the top half of the framework. The large down-pointing arrow indicates the role of service managers in embedding their onstage and online activities in customers’ on-going practices and experiences (Heinonen *et al.*, 2013). Boundaries between each C2C

co-creation layer offer opportunities for managers to potentially ‘nudge’ customers into more socially immersive C2C co-creation layers. Strategies include facilitating stranger encounters and positive critical incidents; leveling social barriers and highlighting the liminoid features of the service experience; and, supporting on-going memberships in customer communities and neo-tribes.

4. Conclusion

This paper highlighted under-researched, yet very important issues in co-creation research. We have argued that as experiences in socially dense consumption contexts are often shared with friends, family and unfamiliar strangers, C2C co-creation needs to be considered as a dynamic and holistic phenomenon that is embedded in customers’ social sphere and at the same time can progress through multiple social layers. Through conceptualizing these layers we hope to have been able to provide useful insights for those who wish to facilitate and support customers’ C2C co-creation processes and the value formed in these.

The discussion in the paper revolves largely around examples from tourism and festival contexts. The framework provided is nevertheless of interest to managers in various other service contexts where consumption is shared and collective, such as shopping mall visits, sports events, visiting night clubs, dining in restaurants, attending business networking events, political gatherings, arts performances, support groups within public health initiatives, or speed-dating events. Furthermore, insights presented here indicate how value formed in insulating, bonding, communing and belonging practices could help illuminate the appeal of shared consumption experiences in physical contexts in particular. While customers increasingly interact with each other on Web 2 and social media platforms (Neuhofer *et al.*, 2012), service organizations such as shopping malls can benefit from recognizing the importance of actually bringing customers together in physical contexts (Storper and Venables, 2004), as festivals and gatherings do.

Future research should apply and test the framework empirically in a number of socially dense consumption contexts. Such enquiry would benefit from adopting qualitative methodological approaches grounded in an interpretivist, as opposed to a positivist, outcome-oriented paradigm. In-depth ethnographic approach, for instance, would take the unique and often complex social elements of the consumption context into account (Goulding and

Shankar, 2011; Kozinets, 2002), and at the same time would offer a more exhaustive overview of specific practices within the different C2C co-creation layers.

Furthermore, value-in-the-experience exemplified in the C2C co-creation layers will likely emerge differently for different customers and customer groups, depending on a number of factors. For instance, customers' goals and motivations (McColl-Kennedy *et al.*, 2012) and operant resources (Arnould *et al.*, 2006), as well as a number of context- and situation-specific factors, such as those identified in the framework, will potentially influence which layer value is formed in. While a closer inspection of these factors is outside the scope of this paper, future research should aim to identify and explore in depth the personal and contextual elements that influence C2C co-creation.

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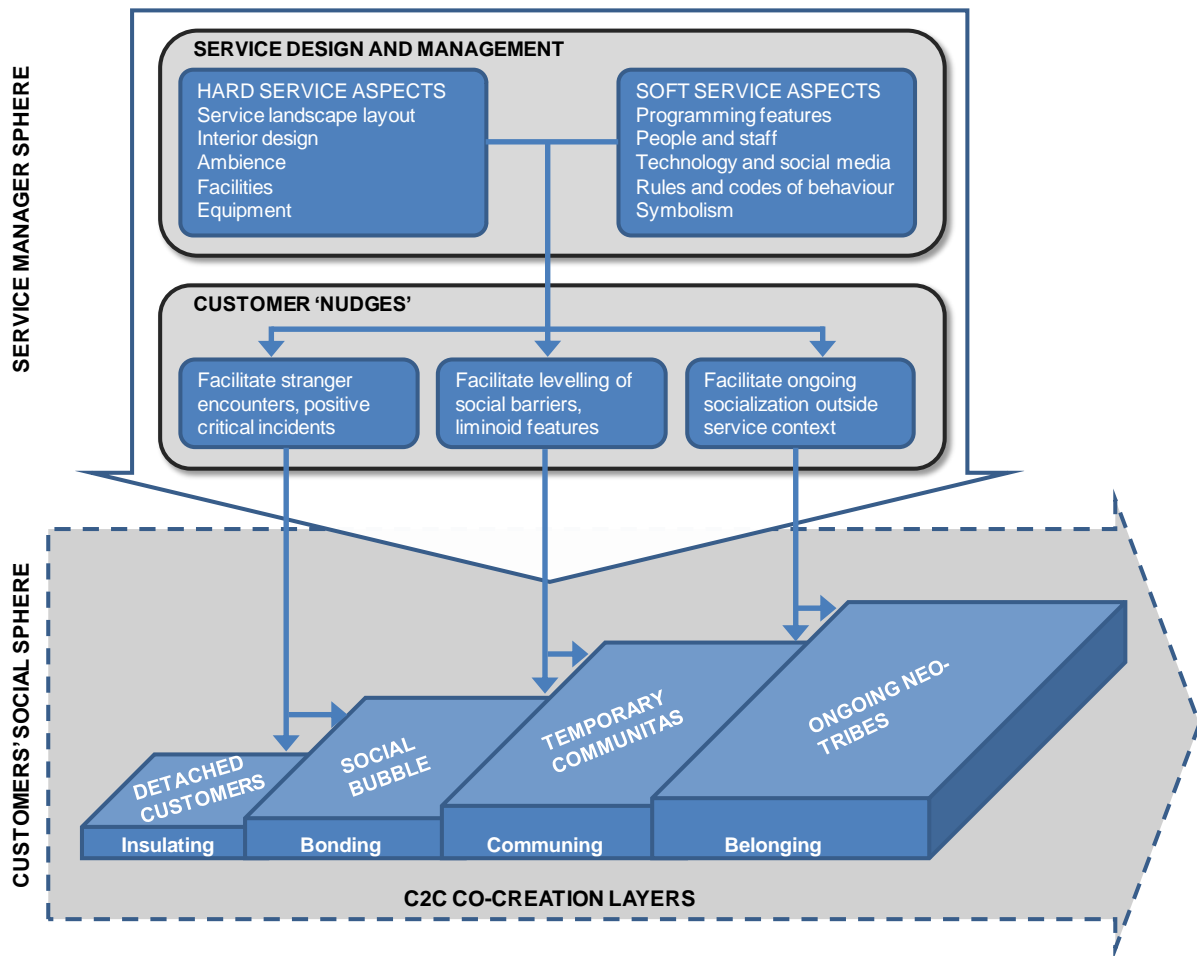


Table 1: Conceptualizing C2C co-creation layers

| Co-creation layers | Who co-creates | Characteristics | Examples from service literature |
|------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <i>Detached Customers</i> | Single customers, known-customer dyads (couples, pairs) | Insularity-, privacy-seeking Relaxation and escapism Affirmation of shared consumption choices and attitudes <i>Helping and assistance to strangers may be present</i> | Day visitors at festivals (Wilks, 2012) Hospitality, entertainment, leisure customers (Rosenbaum, 2008) Retail customers (McGrath and Otnes, 1995) |
| <i>Social Bubble</i> | Known-customer groups (families, friends) | Reinforcing of group/family rituals, roles and traditions Sharing and remembering consumption experiences (on- and off-line) <i>Strangers may be invited into group activities and rituals</i> | Families and friends visiting festivals together (Gibson and Connell, 2012; Kyle and Chick, 2002; Lehto <i>et al.</i> , 2009) Friendship groups in retail and hospitality settings (Rosenbaum, 2008). |
| <i>Temporary Communitas</i> | Un-known temporary customer communities | Breaking down of social barriers, feelings of goodwill and unity Temporarily shared sense of togetherness and solidarity <i>Communing may transcend physical setting</i> | Participants in adventure tours and sport activities (Arnould and Price, 1993; McGinnis <i>et al.</i> , 2012) Festival attendees (Arnould and Price, 1993; Begg, 2011; Gibson and Connell, 2012). Tourists at campsites (Filimonau <i>et al.</i> , 2013) Customers in ‘third places’ (Rosenbaum, 2008) |
| <i>Ongoing Neo-tribes</i> | Ongoing customer collectives and neo-tribes | Regular consumption and involvement in ongoing collectives (on- and off-line) Identification through symbolism centred on specific activity, brand, interest Sharing of specialist knowledge and resources | Football fans (Pongsakornrungrungsilp and Schroeder, 2011) Clubbers (Goulding and Shankar, 2011) Brand communities (Rowley <i>et al.</i> , 2007; Schau <i>et al.</i> , 2009) Committed festival attendees (Begg, 2011; Kim and Jamal, 2007) |

