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Olivier Guerreau

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**THÈSE EXECUTIVE DOCTORATE IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
DE L'UNIVERSITÉ PARIS-DAUPHINE**

OLIVIER GUERREAU

**DESIGN OF A TOOL FOR SENSITIZING MANAGERS
TO ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF CREATING VALUE
FROM A MARKETING PERSPECTIVE**

Soutenue le 19 juin 2020

JURY

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“*Quand on veut, on peut.*” (Papa, 1937-2014)

“Where there’s a will, there’s a way.” (Scott, 1836 – Adapted from Herbert, 1640)

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ABSTRACT

Value is a central concept in both managerial practice and marketing research. Yet, it is one of the most ill-defined concepts such that it currently remains poorly understood by many managers. Value is divided into two main streams of research: (1) Value creation processes (i.e. created value via actions) and (2) value outcome determination (i.e. perceived value via mental processes), while customer experience can serve as a link between both. At the turn of the 21st century, many new marketing perspectives (i.e. schools of marketing thought) with their own paradigm have emerged, thereby reflecting the changes in business practices and the diversity of marketing as a managerial discipline.

One of the most essential purposes of management is to apply perspective to the company's business, whereby managers use a specific reasoning for solving problems and conduct business in a specific way for reaching their goals. Thus, a dominant logic emerges in companies that both enables and frames the way managers think and act as a result of focusing their attention on specific aspects of their business. However, many managers are not necessarily aware of the set of assumptions that they rely upon for creating value, and they also do not necessarily realize that companies and customers follow their own logic.

From an Institutional Logics Perspective, marketing perspectives can be considered as competing institutional logics that can be analyzed at both the individual and organizational level such as for example determining if a manager's conception of value creation is convergent with his/her company's value creation process in terms of marketing perspective. Design Science proposes a methodology that can help to design a tool for sensitizing managers to alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted marketing perspective, thereby enabling them to reflect upon the managerial implications of each marketing perspective.

Keywords: Value, value creation, marketing perspective, dominant logic, institutional logics perspective, design science

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The table below is a list of all the abbreviations and acronyms that are used throughout this thesis and their meaning.

Abbreviation	Meaning
4 P's / Four P's	Product, Price, Place, Promotion
AMA	American Marketing Association
B2B	Business-To-Business
B2B2C	Business-To-Business-To-Consumer
B2C	Business-To-Consumer
B2G	Business-To-Government
BN	Business Networks
CCT	Consumer Culture Theory
CDL	Customer-Dominant Logic
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CRE	Creator (of value)
DEF	Definition (of value creation)
EDBA	Executive Doctorate in Business Administration
GDL	Goods-Dominant Logic
GE	<i>Grande Entreprise</i> (Large-sized company = 500-999 employees)
ILP	Institutional Logics Perspective
IMP	Industrial Marketing and Purchasing
JTBD	Jobs-To-Be-Done
ME	<i>Moyenne Entreprise</i> (Medium-sized company = 50-499 employees)
MIC	<i>Micro Entreprise</i> (Micro company = 0 employee)
MCQ	Multiple-Choice Questionnaire
MRQ	Main Research Question
MSI	Marketing Science Institute
PE	<i>Petite Entreprise</i> (Small-sized company = 10-49 employees)
PRO	Process (of value creation)
R&D	Research and Development
RM	Relationship Marketing
RRQ	Related Research Question
SD	Service Design
SDL	Service-Dominant Logic
SL	Service Logic
SM	Services Marketing
SS	Solutions Selling
SU	Start-Up Company (0 employee and < 2 years old)
TGE	<i>Très Grande Entreprise</i> (Very large-sized company = 1 000 + employees)
TM	Traditional Marketing (GDL and/or SM)
TPE	<i>Très Petite Entreprise</i> (Very small-sized company = 1-9 employees)
US	United States

1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. MANAGERIAL ISSUE

1.1.1. Fast-changing business environment

More than ever, we live in a world that is evolving quickly due to major disruptive technological innovations that contributed to the advent of globalization, digitalization, and uberization. In turn, these major phenomena led to important changes in society. As a result, the business environment is also evolving at a faster pace so that companies need to keep innovating on an on-going basis if they want to remain competitive in the long run.

Globalization is the increasing interaction among different countries and the progressive integration of their respective markets that fosters more cultural, economic and social exchanges among people, companies, and governments. Due to the remarkable technological improvements in transportation and communications, companies can more easily market products and services to different actors around the world. Thus, domestic and foreign competition has greatly intensified such that there is tremendous pressure on companies to differentiate their offerings with compelling value propositions so as to be able to stand out in the crowded marketplace.

Digitalization is the rising assimilation of digital technologies by people and companies that facilitates everyone's social and economic activities respectively. Because of the tremendous technological developments in the Internet, people can more simply create and share information on social media websites, while companies can more swiftly reach additional customers via e-commerce websites. Hence, customers have become more empowered as they can compare more effortlessly companies' offerings, purchase more easily products on the go and at any time, and share more rapidly with others their experiences about brands so that they can now have a direct impact on companies' image and reputation.

Uberization is the growing use of digitized platforms that enables new peer-to-peer interactions and transactions. Thanks to the significant technological advances in smartphones and mobile

applications, new types of services emerged, and customers can more quickly get in touch directly with a greater number of potential service providers. As a result, the role of many companies as traditional middlemen between potential service providers and service beneficiaries has been considerably reduced, as more people can also be self-employed and perform activities that were previously carried out only by companies.

Accordingly, this fast-changing business environment forces companies to keep up the pace by innovating on an on-going basis, while reducing the time-to-market of new products and services in order to preserve their competitive edge. However, this creates a vicious circle. On one hand, product lifecycles are considerably shortened such that products potentially become old-fashioned or obsolete more quickly due to the overwhelming launch of new products. On the other hand, customers' needs and preferences potentially become more versatile such that companies find it more difficult to achieve customer loyalty. Consequently, companies are constantly seeking new growth opportunities and new ways of conducting business in order to survive or be more successful than their competitors.

1.1.2. On-going business innovation for survival and success

That being exposed, on-going business innovation has become a priority for many companies who either need to survive or to succeed better than their competitors in this fast-changing business environment. In *PwC's Innovation Benchmark Report* from 2017, Staack and Cole from the consulting firm PwC present key insights on how companies view innovation and what they do in order to better reap its rewards. Their findings are based on the responses of 1,222 executives from 44 countries.

When asked "What is your organization's greatest strategic challenge to successful innovation?," 54% of the respondents replied that they struggled to bridge the gap between innovation strategy and business strategy. Their main challenge is to bring people in charge of business strategy into the innovation process as early as the ideation phase of any new potential innovation so that it can pay off in the long run. They claim that this requires knocking down existing silos within their company.

When asked “What operating models does your organization currently use to drive innovation?,” 61% of companies use open innovation, 59% use design thinking, 55% use co-creation with customers/partners/suppliers, and only 34% use traditional R&D. It shows that innovative organizations are spanning the boundaries of innovation both inside and outside of their company by breaking down the traditional barriers.

When asked “Who are the most important external and internal partners for innovation at your organization?,” 60% of companies mention internal employees, 50% mention technology partners, 44% mention channel and business model partners, and only 35% mention customers (via focus groups, data mining, and feedback). It demonstrates that successful innovation requires more than technology-driven skills. It also involves relying on human experience and insights for generating new solutions and offerings that ultimately bring value to both markets and businesses.

According to this survey, several conclusions can be made. First, most innovating companies are looking for solutions to foster more collaboration across their organization throughout the different stages of the innovation process so as to better align their business and innovation strategies in the long run. Next, most innovating companies are seeking ways to improve their innovation process by capitalizing more on the input of actors outside of their own R&D department in order to break down the traditional barriers of closed innovation. Finally, most innovating companies are also relying more on human skills rather than just technology to drive innovation so that they cooperate with different actors outside of their organization so as to create more valuable offerings. However, only one-third of these innovating companies actually collaborate with their customers who normally are the main beneficiaries of their offerings.

While innovation has become a priority for many companies, a lot of managers still struggle to change their set way of conducting business. When companies need to innovate, some of them frequently hire external consultants who have the expertise to help them because their managers do not necessarily possess the required know-how. In general, most consultants use methods and tools that have been developed by mainstream consulting firms or that have been designed by academic researchers. In fact, what company managers need the most are user-friendly tools that can help them to better capture, visualize, understand, share, and manage the business process that they need to change in order to improve their ability to create value.

Nowadays, some of the most widely used management tools developed by academic researchers for creating value include the Blue Ocean Strategy (Kim and Mauborgne, 2005, 2015) based on value innovation, the Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010) based on value creation/delivery/capturing, and the Value Proposition Canvas (Osterwalder et al., 2014) based on value proposition. As discussed in section 2.3.6, each one of these value creation frameworks has a clear method with its inherent business logic, but none of them really addresses value creation in terms of perspective more specifically.

1.1.3. Why business perspective and business logic matter

As Heinonen and Strandvik (2015) pointed out: “Perspectives are important in academic research and business practices.” For instance, marketing is a managerial discipline that includes many different schools of marketing thought, which Shaw and Jones (2005) defined as: “A substantial knowledge of body developed by a number of scholars describing at least one aspect of what, how, who, why, when, and where of performing marketing activities.” (cf. appendix 1 for a list of schools of thought compiled by Vargo and Lusch upon presenting their new marketing perspective Service-Dominant Logic in a seminal article in 2004). In fact, schools of marketing thought are commonly referred to as marketing perspectives in the marketing literature. Each marketing perspective is based on a specific paradigm with its own theoretical framework, that is, its own set of assumptions, principles, concepts, models, and so forth. At the time being, several marketing perspectives currently co-exist such as the Goods-Dominant Logic (a.k.a. the traditional marketing perspective), the Service-Dominant Logic (Lusch and Vargo, 2004), the Service Logic (Grönroos, 2006), and the Customer-Dominant Logic (Heinonen et al., 2010) among many others (cf. appendix 1).

With respect to these four marketing perspectives, the term “logic” refers to a specific reasoning and an inherent way of conducting business for reaching goals (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). Furthermore, the term “dominant” implies that service plays a dominant role in Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) just like the customer plays a dominant role in Customer-Dominant Logic (Heinonen et al., 2010; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). Likewise, a company that implements a Goods-Dominant Logic focuses mainly on product-related aspects for driving its business including products’ costs, positioning, promotion, after sales service, and so on. Thus, from a marketing standpoint, a company is driven by a prevailing

marketing perspective, that is, a marketing dominant logic that focuses on specific aspects of its business. Accordingly, this managerial focus of attention both enables and frames the way company managers think and act for conducting business.

There are many reasons for investigating business perspectives. As Drucker (1974) explained, “management is essentially a process of applying perspectives to the company’s business” (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). For instance, managers are not necessarily aware of the set of assumptions that they rely upon so that they might “apply different perspectives, which result in different interpretations of events” within the same company (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). Even companies and customers might apply different perspectives resulting in major business challenges, which can actually be better tackled as a result of scrutinizing the business perspective or business logic. Since the business environment constantly changes, managers “need to revise – or at a minimum reflect upon – applied perspectives in order to stay competitive” (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). Due to the increasing competition resulting from globalization and the increasing empowerment of customers resulting from digitalization, the application of “deeply-rooted perspectives” might lead to a lack of appropriate responses to these major changes in the business environment (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015).

On one hand, a company’s logic is reflected in its business model (i.e. value creation process), which revolves around a specific type of organizational structure (e.g. activities, resources, partners...), a specific type of offering (e.g. products, services, solutions...), and a specific type of interaction with customers (e.g. transactions, relationships, networks...). On the other hand, a customer’s logic “is anchored in customer activities, resources, experiences, tasks, goals” (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2018), which represents the customer’s life that can then influence the kind of offering and the kind of interaction sought from companies. If they want to increase customer loyalty, companies thus have to go beyond the mere identification of a customer’s generic needs and wants by seeking to better understand a customer’s logic (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2018).

Consequently, company managers need to know the type of marketing perspective that they apply in order to be able to reflect upon it as well as compare it to alternative marketing perspectives. In turn, this can help them to envision alternative ways of creating value so as to better cope with their fast-changing business environment.

1.2. ACADEMIC RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

1.2.1. Recent shifts in and broadening of marketing paradigms

As a result of increased competition in the global business environment, most economies have shifted paradigm by moving from a supply-dominated market (whereby demand exceeds supply) to a buyer-dominated market (whereby supply exceeds demand) (Kotler et al., 2016). Now, the challenge for most companies is to try to differentiate their offering in a compelling way so as to keep attracting customers that are faced with an abundant choice of product and service providers. This paradigm shift forces companies to improve customer-perceived value and place more emphasis on customer relationships so that mainstream marketing is currently moving towards a customer-perceived value dominant logic (Kotler et al., 2016).

With respect to managerial practice, many Anglo-Saxon company managers tend to conduct marketing activities more from a product-oriented and a transactional perspective, whereas many European company managers tend to focus more on a customer relationship approach with a service-oriented and a relational perspective (Kotler et al., 2016). In both cases, their marketing goal more than ever remains to create more value so as to better satisfy customers' needs and wants.

With regards to marketing research, the most noteworthy shift in marketing paradigm was proposed by Vargo and Lusch in their seminal article called "Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing" (2004). Both scholars presented their alternative marketing perspective that they coined as a Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) in contrast to the traditional marketing perspective that was prevailing until then, and which they referred to as a Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL). In order to compare some key differences between both marketing perspectives, I actually designed table 1 below.

Table 1. Key Differences between Goods-Dominant Logic and Service-Dominant Logic

Constructs	Goods-Dominant Logic	Service-Dominant Logic
1. Basis of economic exchange	Good and service = Unit of output for sale to a customer (in exchange of money)	Service = Application of resources (knowledge and skills) for the benefit of another actor (in exchange of service)
2. Role of goods	Outputs embedded with utility (value) through product attributes	Mechanisms for service provision (e.g. drilling machine = To make holes)
3. Value creation	Value is created by the company for the customer	Value is always co-created by a service provider and a service beneficiary
4. Value determination	Value is determined by the company that proposes a price to the customer	Value is always uniquely determined by the service beneficiary

Source: Adapted from Vargo and Lusch, 2004.

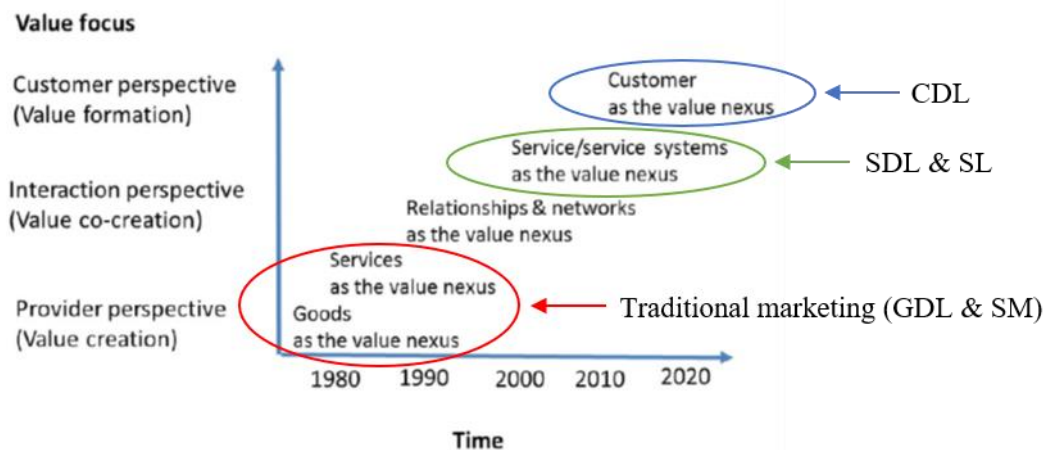
- 1. Basis of economic exchange.** SDL considers that the basis of exchange in economies is service in exchange of service. For instance, Lusch and Vargo explain that a fisherman and a farmer do not exchange fish for grain, which represents the GDL perspective of exchanging production outputs. Instead, they exchange “the application of protein-provisioning competences for the application of carbohydrate-provisioning competences” (Lusch and Vargo, 2014), that is, fishing services in exchange of farming services. When money is involved in an exchange process, it is considered as rights to future service (Lusch and Vargo, 2014).
- 2. Role of goods.** SDL considers that goods are not just objects per se, but that instead their main role is to render a service to its user. For example, a screwdriver used in a computer assembly line is an appliance for manufacturing service when combined with other resources such as labor (e.g. employee’s skills) and computer spare parts (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). As another classic example, a drilling machine renders the service of making a hole in a wall so as to hang a painting when combined with the user’s skill to drill a hole and to fix a nail in the wall.
- 3. Value creation.** Third, SDL considers that value is always co-created through the interaction of actors. For example, when a doctor provides medical service to a patient, they co-create value together and not independently, even if the doctor gives a medicine (good) to the patient for later medication at home as it is an appliance that enables the medical service (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). In both cases, value is co-created through the use of this doctor-provided service.
- 4. Value determination.** SDL considers that value is always uniquely determined by the service provider. The reason is because each service exchange “takes place in a different context involving the availability, integration, and use of a different combination of resources and actors” (Lusch and Vargo, 2014).

Today, **Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL)** and its complementary discipline Services Marketing (SM) are considered as the traditional marketing perspective. This new terminology stems from the fact that three new marketing perspectives with their inherent paradigm have been developed by marketing scholars since the beginning of the 21st century:

1. **Service-Dominant Logic (SDL)** presented by Vargo and Lusch in 2004 as an alternative marketing perspective to GDL (and SM).
2. **Service Logic (SL)** introduced by Grönroos in 2006 in response to the advent of SDL.
3. **Customer-Dominant Logic (CDL)** proposed by Heinonen, Strandvik, Mickelsson, Edvardsson, Sundström, and Andersson in 2009 as a result of the emergence of both SDL and SL.

Figure 1 below shows the evolution of the nexus and focus of value since the 1980's, whereby "the value nexus represents the central and focal point of value creation" (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2018).

Figure 1. Evolution of the Nexus and Focus of Value



Source: Adapted from Heinonen and Strandvik, 2018.

Under the Goods-Dominant Logic, the provider (i.e. company) focused on enhancing goods with more/better attributes as a way to increase their value in exchange (of more money). In this case, value is considered to be mostly controlled by the provider and thus referred to as value creation. Then, Services Marketing focused on interacting with the customer "as a differentiating factor compared to the marketing of products" (Grönroos, 1982). Hence, value

creation became a matter of “perceived service value” based on the customer’s interpretation of the provided service. Later, the provider focused more on the relationship with the customer so that the core component of the offering became the relationship per se (Relationship Marketing).

At the turn of the 21st century, Service-Dominant Logic introduced the concept of “co-creation of value” described as “the process actors go through of increasing the viability of a system via the development of specialized and applied knowledge and skills, service exchange, and resource integration” (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). With regards to Service Logic, the provider focuses on providing a total service offering to the customer through direct interactions, which are viewed as platforms of co-creation out of which value emerges through the dyadic exchange (Grönroos, 2015). As of more recently, the provider is focusing beyond the service encounter itself by also paying attention to the different contact points at each stage of the customer journey (Richardson, 2010; Rosenbaum and Otolara, 2017). Thus, “value is thought to be created in these contact points and is defined as value co-creation” (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2018).

Finally, Customer-Dominant Logic focuses on the customer’s reality and life as the starting point of value formation. From the customer’s perspective, “value is continuously emerging when an offering is used either mentally or physically in the customer’s context” (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2018). As a result, a provider must focus on how an offering “can be embedded in the customer’s contexts, activities, practices, and experiences” in order for value to be formed for the customer (Heinonen et al., 2010).

As Heinonen and Strandvik (2018) clearly pointed out, “the change in nexus and focus over time is depicted as being represented in different theoretical marketing management perspectives,” while also being a reflection of on-going changes in the business environment. However, most company managers are not even aware of the existence of all of these different marketing perspectives. To the best of my knowledge, no management tool comparing Goods-Dominant Logic, Service-Dominant Logic, Service Logic, and Customer-Dominant Logic altogether though a set of key constructs has been designed thus far. Hence, that type of tool could help them to be aware of different marketing perspectives as alternative ways of creating value so as to potentially open up their mind for envisioning new ways of conducting business.

Let us now see how the design of such a management tool represents an academic research opportunity in the current marketing context.

1.2.2. Bridging theory and practice in marketing

In his article “Integrating Theory and Practice in Marketing” (2017), Kumar (editor in chief of the Journal of Marketing) introduces the special issue of the Journal of Marketing on seven papers that were presented at the *2015 Theory + Practice in Marketing Conference*. To start with, he claims that “the significant evidence-based knowledge created through academic research in marketing and related fields has provided organizations valuable insights for managing their businesses.” He further mentions that academic scholars acknowledge the need for theory to drive practice and for practice to spur the development of theory. However, he asserts that even though companies aim at understanding emerging topics in marketing, marketing scholars are actually not providing them much help with regards to making sense of the changing landscape. He further explains that a company’s ability to develop strategies/tactics depends on its ability to acquire and apply knowledge. While companies constantly learn and adapt to marketplace pressures, the precise transfer of know-how is crucial in order to ensure that the theoretical knowledge is accurately translated to strategies/tactics. In the end, he concludes that the goal of this special issue is to foster alignment between academics and practitioners so as:

**“...to bridge the gap between substantive contributions
and practical relevance in marketing research.”**

(Kumar, 2017)

Call for further research from Service-Dominant Logic scholars

In their seminal book *Service-Dominant Logic: Premises, Perspectives, Possibilities*, Lusch and Vargo (2014) explain in detail their alternative marketing perspective that represents a major shift in marketing paradigm. In the concluding chapter of their book, there is a final section that calls for “Bridging theory and practice with mid-range theory.” In fact, the following passage stresses on the need to link their highly abstract meta-framework with more actionable management tools so as to help companies to apply more easily this new marketing logic in their business practices:

“...S-D logic is a meta-idea. It was developed as a framework at a high-level of abstraction so that it could provide a transcending perspective... While it is still work in progress, the framework is sufficiently in place **to begin to connect the meta-framework with compatible, more actionable tools.** (...) Many of these, **such as “blue-ocean strategy,” “jobs-to-be-done,” “lean consumption,”** and “experience innovation,” already have a presence in the practitioner literature. (...) What remains is the need for organizing these around the core concepts of S-D logic...”

(Lusch and Vargo, 2014)

Call for further research from Customer-Dominant Logic scholars

In their article “Customer-Dominant Logic: Foundations and Implications” (2015), Heinonen and Strandvik analyze the theoretical and practical implications of adopting a Customer-Dominant Logic of service by focusing on how companies can become involved in the customer’s context. At the end of their article, they propose several potential guidelines as a call for further empirical research such as the one named “Road map for translating a dominant logic into business action,” which is quite explicit in terms of potential benefits for companies and their managers:

“In academia, the debate has often relied upon contrasting underlying assumptions and principles from different viewpoints to clarify important issues (Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014). How these differences translate into practice is not always detailed. Consequently, **from a manager’s standpoint, a map of different [marketing] perspectives and their characteristics might be helpful for understanding their similarities and differences, along with a roadmap to reveal how the perspectives can be translated into business action. Future research should create detailed managerial guidelines for applying a dominant logic.”**

(Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015)

Call for further research from practitioners (as well)

The Marketing Science Institute (MSI) is a US-based non-profit organization founded in 1961. Since its creation, it has developed a “network of marketing academics from the best business

schools world-wide, and marketers from 60+ leading global companies” (MSI, 2016). It sets its research priorities every two years by asking its members to give them some input regarding the type of research that should guide their activities over the following years. In its “Research Priorities 2016-2018” agenda, one of its 5 top main priorities is referred to as “Innovation, design, and strategy in an age of disruption,” in which its members including practitioners clearly express their need for new management tools in order to cope with their quickly-changing environment:

“Given the disruption and change in marketing and in markets, members placed significant emphasis on the topics of innovation, design, and strategy. In particular, new knowledge and new models are needed in the area of innovation: designing, developing, and bringing new products, services, and experiences to market.”

(Marketing Science Institute, 2016)

As shown above, many scholars and practitioners call for the need to create actionable management tools so as to help companies to better deal with major changes in their business environment. Let us now turn to my research topic and research plan in order to bridge theory and practice based on the aforementioned the academic research opportunity.

1.3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.3.1. Research topic

New marketing perspectives with their inherent marketing paradigm have recently emerged. Each one of them corresponds to a specific value creation process as well as focuses its attention on specific aspects of business. These contemporary marketing perspectives have been developed in parallel by academic scholars from different countries over time, but to the best of my knowledge no management tool has been created thus far for comparing all of them altogether through a set of key constructs. Doing so would certainly help company managers to envision creating value in different ways depending on the perspective that could be applied. In fact, my objective is not to make company managers change their prevailing marketing perspective per se, but rather to help them to become aware of the existence of alternative marketing perspectives and their respective managerial implications.

Consequently, my research topic deals with the design of a management tool for sensitizing managers to alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted marketing perspective. This research topic should enable to bridge theory (i.e. emerging alternative marketing perspectives with their own paradigm) and practice (i.e. need for actionable management tools). Even though there currently exist several other marketing perspectives such as Relationship Marketing, Solutions Selling, and Service Design among others, my research work will focus exclusively on the comparative analysis of Goods-Dominant Logic, Service-Dominant Logic, Service Logic, and Customer-Dominant Logic. The main reason for selecting exclusively these four marketing perspectives is twofold:

1. As the most recent marketing perspectives (except for Goods-Dominant Logic), they are gaining increasingly more attention in the marketing literature, but so far they only have been compared on the basis of a limited number of constructs. Thus, there is a clear need to show their similarities and differences through a common framework with a more complete set of key marketing constructs.
2. As reflected in their respective name, they are the only four marketing perspectives that are based on a clearly defined (dominant) logic, that is, a specific way of creating value by each focusing on specific aspects of business. Hence, there is a real need to show the managerial implications of each marketing perspective as alternative ways of creating value.

In order to design my tool, I am going to draw on an existing framework known as the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002), which is normally used for identifying the prevailing marketing practice of a company based on the way it relates to its market through business-customer interactions. Instead, I want to use the same type of tool for identifying the prevailing marketing perspective of a company based on the way it creates value.

1.3.2. Research questions

That being exposed, my main research question (MRQ) is thus as follows:

MRQ: What tool(s) can be designed in order to sensitize managers to alternative ways of creating value from a marketing perspective?

In turn, my main research question raises the following related research questions (RRQ):

RRQ1: How do the managers in charge of creating value define value creation and describe the value creation process of their company?

RRQ2: On what elements of value creation do managers focus their attention when designing strategies and offerings?

RRQ3: To which marketing perspective do managers' conception of value creation and their company's value creation process correspond, and are they convergent?

(Please note that the words "artifact" and "artefact" convey the same meaning but can be spelled in two different ways such that they have been used alternatively throughout this document.)

1.3.3. Research plan

That being exposed, my research plan is displayed in table 2 below.

Table 2. Research Plan

Choice	Description
Research topic	The identification of the marketing perspective applied in companies
Research context	All types of companies so as to come up with a generic tool
Level of analysis	Company managers in charge of creating value
Research objective	To design a tool that can sensitize managers to alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted marketing perspective
Scientific paradigm	Design science (Simon, 1996; Dresch et al., 2015a)
Research aim	Prescriptive (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014)
Research paradigm	Critical realism: 1. Marketing research (Maclaran et al., 2010) 2. Design science research (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014; Dresch et al., 2015a)
Research strategy	Design science research (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014; Dresch et al., 2015a)
Research methodology	Design Science Research Process Model (Peffer et al., 2006)
Knowledge contribution	Design science research: Exaptation (Gregor and Hevner, 2013) of the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002)
Scientific method	Abductive
Main research question	What tool(s) can be designed in order to sensitize managers to alternative ways of creating value from a marketing perspective?
Related research questions	1. How do the managers in charge of creating value define value creation and describe the value creation process of their company? 2. On what elements of value creation do managers focus their attention when designing strategies and offerings? 3. To which marketing perspective do managers' conception of value creation and their company's value creation process correspond, and are they convergent?
Data collection	Qualitative research method divided into 2 research fields: 1. Research field #1 – Problem insight and research theoretical framework elaboration via an exploratory study 2. Research field #2 – Artifact demonstration and evaluation via a case study
Data analysis	1. Coding method (Saldaña, 2016) with NVivo 12 Pro: a. First cycle – A combination of structural, attribute, magnitude, descriptive, in vivo, and process coding b. Second cycle – Pattern coding via themes 2. Analysis method (Miles et al., 2014): Cross-case analysis
Research contributions	1. Academic research: To develop a comparison matrix based on a set of key marketing constructs so as to show the similarities and differences between the four marketing perspectives as alternative ways of creating value 2. Managerial practice: To design a multiple-choice questionnaire for identifying the marketing perspective applied in a company so that managers can reflect upon it and become aware of the specific set of assumptions that they rely on in relation to the different ways that value can be created 3. Education: To create a module for students and a workshop for practitioners around the core marketing concept of value and its dichotomic nature as both a creation process and an outcome determination

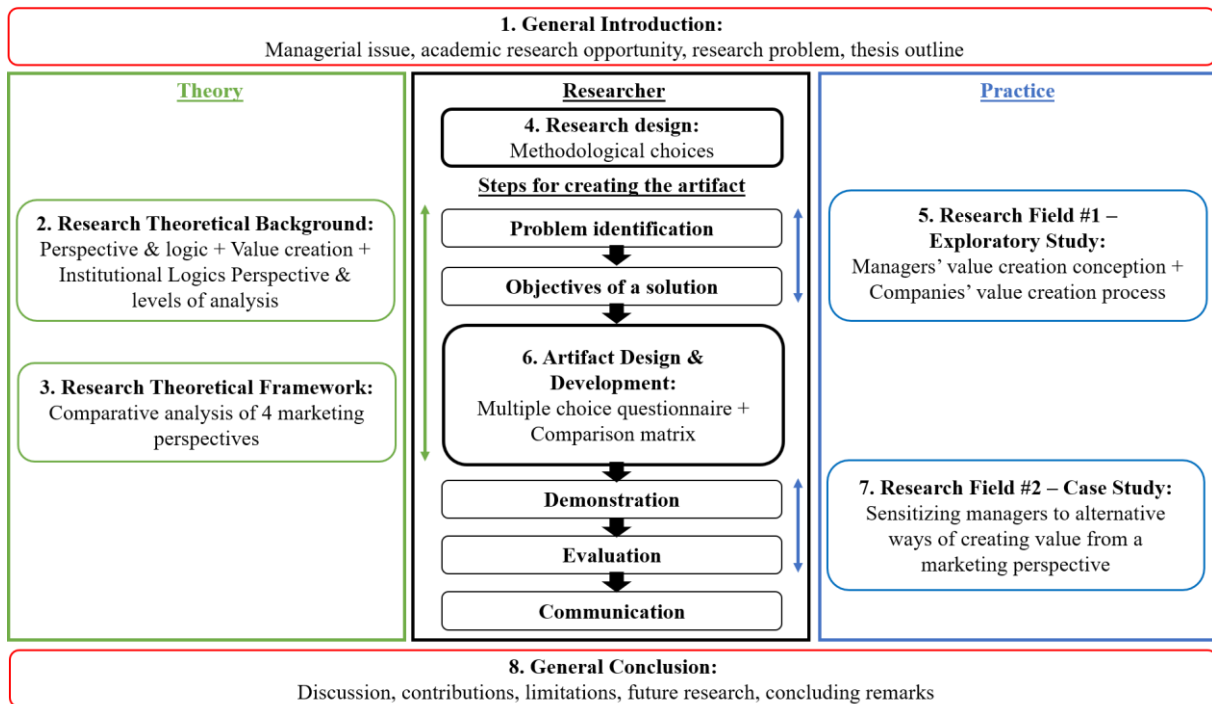
Source: Author.

1.4. THESIS OUTLINE

As shown in figure 2 below, the thesis is divided into 8 main parts: (1) General introduction, (2) research theoretical background, (3) research theoretical framework, (4) research design, (5) research field #1 – exploratory study, (6) artifact design and development, (7) research field

#2 – case study, and (8) general conclusion. Let us now briefly describe the content of each part.

Figure 2. Thesis Outline



Source: Author.

1. **General introduction.** The first part of the thesis (that was just covered) introduces the managerial issue at stake as well as identifies a related research academic opportunity for addressing it. Then, the research problem is presented by describing the research topic, the research questions, and the research plan. Finally, it ends with the outline of the thesis.
2. **Research theoretical background.** The second part of the thesis covers the literature review based on the theoretical choices that were made and which serve as a basis for building the theoretical framework. It also includes a complementary section on change.
3. **Research theoretical framework.** The third part of the thesis presents the four selected marketing perspectives. It describes each one of them in terms of set of principles and value creation processes, then shows how they are compared in the marketing literature, and finally ends with a comparison matrix built around a set of key constructs.
4. **Research design.** The fourth part of the thesis deals with the research choices that were made in terms of scientific and research paradigms, research strategy and methodology,

scientific and data collection methods. It also includes a section describing the existing framework that I adapted for creating my own management tool.

5. **Research field #1 – Exploratory study.** The fifth part of the thesis presents the exploratory study that was conducted. It explains the objective of the exploratory study, how it was organized, who participated in it, the way data was collected and then analyzed, and the resulting research findings.
6. **Artifact design and development.** The sixth part of the thesis describes the objectives of the management tool, how it was created, and how it works. It also explains what type of additional elements have been developed in order to better test the management tool via a case study.
7. **Research field #2 – Case study.** The seventh part of the thesis presents the case study that was conducted. Just like for the exploratory study, it explains the objective of the case study, how it was organized, who participated in it, the way data was collected and then analyzed, and the resulting research findings.
8. **General conclusion.** The eighth part of the thesis summarizes the research work. It includes a recap of the managerial issue and a discussion on the research questions, then it shows the contributions and limitations of the research. It also proposes future research and ends with some concluding remarks.

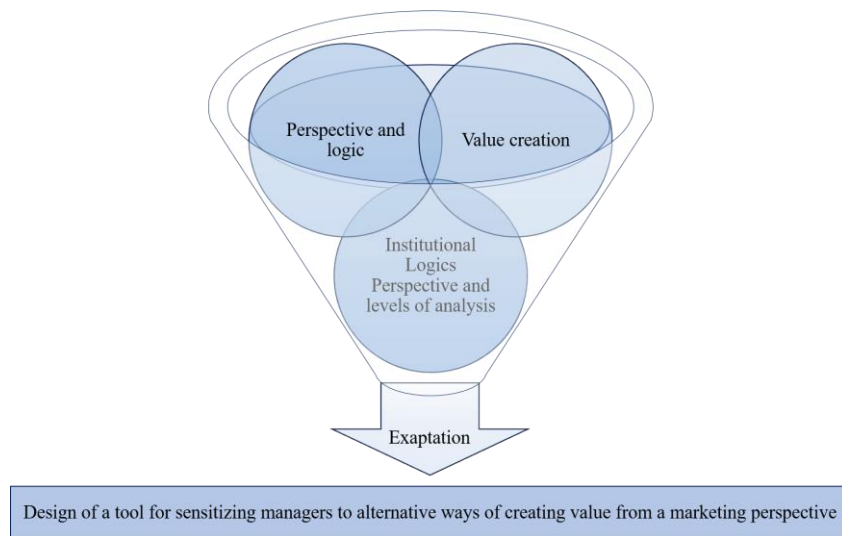
Let us now start out by going over the research theoretical background.

2. RESEARCH THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Figure 3 below shows the theoretical choices that were made for the thesis.

Figure 3. Theoretical Choices for the Thesis



Source: Author.

Table 3 below shows the main academic references used for the theoretical choices.

Table 3. Main Academic References Used for the Theoretical Choices

Theoretical choices	Main academic references
Perspective and logic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategy as perspective (Mintzberg, 1987; Mintzberg et al., 2009) - Dominant logic (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986; Prahalad, 2004)
Value creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Value creation processes (Gummerus, 2013) - Goods-Dominant Logic as the traditional marketing perspective (Kotler, 1972; Kotler et al., 2016; Kotler and Armstrong, 2018) - Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008, 2016; Lusch and Vargo, 2014) - Service Logic (Grönroos, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2015) - Customer-Dominant Logic (Heinonen et al., 2010; Voima et al., 2010; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018)
Institutional Logics Perspective and levels of analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institutional Logics Perspective (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012)
Exaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exaptation (as Design Science Research knowledge contribution) (Gregor and Hevner, 2013) of the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002)
Artifact design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design Science Research Process Model (Peppers et al., 2006)

Source: Author.

2.2. PERSPECTIVE AND LOGIC

2.2.1. Introduction

As a result of globalization, digitalization, and uberization, companies currently evolve in a fast-changing business environment. In order to better survive, they need to at least reflect upon their applied business perspective or business logic as it is a key aspect of management (Drucker, 1974). However, managers are not necessarily aware of the set of assumptions upon which relies their applied perspective so that they might not respond appropriately to changes in their business environment (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). At this point, let us see the type of strategy that managers can use for conducting their business, and what might explain the formation of a prevailing perspective or logic within a company.

2.2.2. Definitions

Depending on the context of analysis, some concepts can convey different meanings. In order to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding, table 4 below displays some selected definitions taken from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2019) regarding three key concepts that are referred to throughout the thesis: (1) “Paradigm,” (2) “perspective,” and (3) “logic.”

Table 4. Definitions of Paradigm, Perspective, and Logic

“Paradigm”	“Perspective”	“Logic”
“A philosophical and theoretical framework of a scientific school or discipline within which theories, laws, and generalizations and the experiments performed in support of them are formulated.”	1. “A mental view or prospect.” 2. “The interrelation in which a subject or its parts are mentally viewed. (Point of view)”	1. “The formal principles of a branch of knowledge.” 2. “A particular mode of reasoning viewed as valid or faulty.”

Source: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

In the marketing literature, the terms “paradigm,” “perspective,” and “logic” “refer to overarching notion of streams of research that share underlying assumptions and can be distinguished from other paradigms” (Holmlund et al., 2017). Let us thus go through some other definitions that several academic scholars came up with for these three concepts.

With respect to **paradigm**, Allison (1971) referred to this concept as “a systematic statement of the basic assumptions, concepts, and propositions employed by a school of analysis.” For instance, a research paradigm is defined as “a set of commonly held beliefs and assumptions within a research community about ontological, epistemological, and methodological concerns” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014).

With regards to **perspective**, Mintzberg (1987) defined this concept as both “an ingrained way of perceiving the world,” and “an organization’s fundamental way of doing things.” Through the use of a metaphor, Strandvik and Heinonen (2015) compare the different marketing perspectives to “buildings; each has its own foundation or fundamental assumptions, with additional stories consisting of models, concepts, and methods.”

As for **logic**, Anker, Sparks, Moutinho, and Grönroos (2015) stated that logics can be considered as “structural lenses that significantly influence the context of discovery (e.g. what researchers explore and how they do it) as well as the context of interpretation (e.g. how researchers make sense of what they find).” As a result, they defined a marketing logic as “a converged-upon framework of theories, principles, ontological assumptions and epistemological axioms, which governs all action in a given marketing context” (Anker et al., 2015).

In many cases, different scholars have used these three terms in different contexts such that in reality they conveyed the same meaning. For example, Kuhn (1970) stated that “a particular science at any point in time can be characterized by a set of ‘shared beliefs’ or ‘conventional wisdom’ about the world that constitutes what he called the ‘dominant paradigm’.” While Prahalad and Bettis (1986) later coined the term “dominant logic” as: “A mind set or world view or conceptualization of the business and administrative tools to accomplish goals and make decisions in the business. It is stored as a shared cognitive map (or set of schemas) among the dominant coalition. It is expressed as a learned problem-solving behavior.”

Unless specified otherwise, I will use these three terms in the following marketing context: As previously mentioned, each marketing perspective (i.e. Goods-Dominant Logic, Service-Dominant Logic, Service Logic, and Customer-Dominant Logic) is based on a specific paradigm with its own theoretical framework (i.e. set of assumptions, concepts, models...). With regards to the marketing perspective of Goods-Dominant Logic, the term “logic” refers

to a specific reasoning and an inherent way of conducting business for reaching goals on one hand, and the term “dominant” implies that company managers focus mainly on products-related aspects including products’ costs, positioning, promotion, and so on. In short, from a marketing standpoint, a “dominant paradigm” or “dominant logic” can also be considered as a prevailing marketing perspective that drives a company’s business.

2.2.3. Strategy as perspective

The Five P’s for Strategy

In the seminal book *Strategy Safari* (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, and Lampel, 1998, 2009), Mintzberg provides five definitions of the term “strategy” (based on a previous research that he conducted in 1987), which he coined as the “Five P’s for Strategy.” According to him, although the term “strategy” has already been formally defined in a way such as “top management’s plans to attain outcomes consistent with the organization’s missions and goals” (Wright et al., 1992: 3), he claims that it has also been used implicitly in so many different way for such a long time that one definition is just not enough so as to fully grasp the concept of “strategy.”

Table 5 below displays the “Five P’s for Strategy,” which reflects the five ways of defining what strategy is. In addition, it shows how each definition corresponds to the concept of “Strategic Thinking as Seeing” in a specific direction.

Table 5. Five P’s for Strategy

Strategy Is A...	Definition	Strategic Thinking As Seeing
1. Plan	A direction, a guide or course of action into the future / A path to get from here to there	Seeing ahead
2. Pattern	Consistency in behavior over time.	Seeing behind
3. Position	The locating of an organization in the external environment. / The locating of particular products in particular markets	Seeing out / Seeing below
4. Perspective	An ingrained way of perceiving the world / An organization’s fundamental way of doing things	Seeing in / Seeing above
5. Ploy	A specific ‘maneuver’ intended to outwit an opponent or competitor	

Source: Adapted from Mintzberg, 1987 and Mintzberg et al., 2009.

Let us now briefly explain the “5 P’s for Strategy” and their connection to the concept of “Strategic Thinking as Seeing” below:

1. When strategy is a **plan**, it represents the course of action of a company into the future, in which case it is referred to as an *intended* strategy (Mintzberg et al., 2009). In addition, a company’s “intentions that are fully realized can be called *deliberate* strategies,” while “those that are not realized at all can be called *unrealized* strategies” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Thus, strategy as plan looks *ahead* into the future.
2. When strategy is a **pattern**, it denotes the consistency of a company’s stream of actions over time. When a pattern is *realized* while it was not expressly *intended*, it is called an *emergent* strategy (Mintzberg et al., 2009). In that case, it is the result of actions taken “one by one, which converged over time to some sort of consistency or pattern” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Hence, strategy as pattern looks *behind* at past stream of actions.
3. When strategy is a **position**, it implies locating an organization in the external environment, that is, placing a company’s products in specific markets (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Therefore, strategy as position looks *out* (from the company) to the external marketplace as well as *down* to where the product meets the customer (Mintzberg et al., 2009).
4. When strategy is a **perspective**, on one hand, it can signify “an ingrained way of perceiving the world” from the vantage point of the company or a “collective intuition about how the world works” from the point of view of the company (Mintzberg, 1987). On the other hand, it can also correspond to the company’s fundamental way of doing things (Mintzberg et al., 2009). In this case, strategy as perspective looks *in* the company or “inside the heads of the collective strategist” (Mintzberg, 1987) as well as looks *up* to the grand vision of the company (Mintzberg et al., 2009) as guidance for decision-making.
5. When strategy is a **ploy**, it means “a specific ‘maneuver’ intended to outwit an opponent or competitor” (Mintzberg, 1987). For example, a company “may threaten to expand plant capacity to discourage a competitor from building a new plant,” such that “the real strategy (as plan, that is, the real intention) is the threat, and not the expansion itself” (Mintzberg, 1987). Eventually, we could say in this case that strategy as ploy looks *around* the company (and more specifically looks at its competitors) or is on the *lookout* as a way to protect its business and thus ensure its survival.

With respect to my research work, I will retain the definition of “strategy as perspective.” In fact, I am interested in finding out from which perspective (in terms of point of view and way of doing things) companies actually create value.

Strategy formation as a collection of ten distinct perspectives

In *Strategy Safari* again, Mintzberg, Alhstrand, and Lampel (2009) also present ten different “schools of thought” regarding the strategy formation process in strategic management. They conducted an extensive field review of strategic management based on both literature and practice so as “to set out its different angles, orientations, and tendencies” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). According to them, “ten distinct points of view did emerge, most of which are reflected in management practice,” and “each has a unique perspective that focuses (...) on one major aspect of the strategy formation process” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). While the different schools of thought “tilt toward the art, the craft, or the science (meaning analysis) of managing,” it turns out that they emerged at different stages in the development of strategic management such that “a few have already peaked and declined, others are now developing, and some remain as thin but nonetheless [generate] significant trickles of publication and practice” (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

Table 6 below displays some of the dimensions of the ten different schools of thought in strategic management: (1) Design school, (2) planning school, (3) positioning school, (4) entrepreneurial school, (5) cognitive school, (6) learning school, (7) power school, (8) cultural school, (9) environmental school, and (10) configuration school. There are many other dimensions for comparing them, but the ones shown hereafter actually lie within the scope of my research work.

Table 6. Some of the Dimensions of the Ten Different Schools of Thought

Schools of Thought	Key Words	Strategy As	Basic Process
1. Design school	Congruence / fit, distinctive competence, SWOT, formulation / implementation	Planned perspective	Personal, judgmental, deliberate
2. Planning school	Programming, budgeting, scheduling, scenarios	Decomposed plans (or positions)	Formal, deliberate
3. Positioning school	Generic strategy, strategic groups, competitive analysis	Planned generic positions, also ploys	Analytical, deliberate
4. Entrepreneurial school	Bold stroke, vision, insight	Unique perspective (vision)	Visionary, intuitive, deliberate umbrella, (positions can emerge)
5. Cognitive school	Map, frame, schema, interpretation, cognitive style	Mental perspective	Mental, emergent
6. Learning school	Incrementalism, emergent strategy, sense making, venturing, champion, core competence	Learned patterns	Emergent, informal
7. Power school	Bargaining, conflict, coalition, stakeholders, collective strategy, alliance	Political and cooperative patterns and positions, also ploys	Conflictive, emergent (micro), deliberate (macro)
8. Cultural school	Values, beliefs, myths, symbolism	Collective perspective	Ideological, collective, deliberate
9. Environmental school	Adaptation, evolution, contingency, selection, complexity, niche	Specific generic positions (niches)	Passive, imposed, emergent
10. Configuration school	Configuration, archetype, stage, life cycle, transformation, revolution, turnaround, revitalization	Any of the above, in context	Integrative, episodic, plus all of the above, in context (deliberate for transformations)

Source: Adapted from Mintzberg et al., 2009.

The first three schools of thought (1-3) are considered as *prescriptive* in nature, that is, they are “more concerned with how strategies should be formulated than with how they necessarily do form” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). The next six schools of thought (4-9) are considered as *descriptive* in nature, that is, they “have been concerned less with prescribing ideal strategic behavior than with describing how strategies do, in fact, get made” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). The last school of thought (10) is considered as *integrative* in nature, that is, it really combines the others by clustering the different elements of strategic management – “the strategy making process, the content of strategies, the structure of the organization and its context” (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

At the end of the introduction of their book (2009), Mintzberg, Alhstrand, and Lampel conclude by claiming:

“...the teaching of strategic management has highlighted the rational and prescriptive side of the process, namely our first three schools... Strategic management has commonly been portrayed as revolving around the discrete phases of formulation, implementation, and control, carried out in cascading steps... Pervasive strategic failure in many large corporations may well be attributed to the army of business school graduates who have been sent out with an incomplete tool kit. This book seeks to open up the range of perspectives by providing a more varied set of ideas for such students as well as practicing managers.”

(Mintzberg et al., 2009.)

The cognitive school and strategy as a mental perspective

As shown in the boxes shaded in gray in table 6 above, the cognitive school deals with strategy as a mental perspective since it views strategy formation as a mental process. In fact, this school of thought lies in the middle of the book (position 5) and acts as a “bridge between the more objective schools of [1] design, [2] planning, [3] positioning, and [4] entrepreneurial, and the more subjective schools of [6] learning, [7] power, [8] cultural,” and (9) environmental (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

In the cognitive school of strategic management thought, strategy formation is considered as a cognitive process taking place in the mind of managers in charge of the company’s strategy (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Consequently, strategies emerge as mental perspectives in the form of maps, schemas, frames, interpretation, and cognitive style that shape how managers handle inputs from the environment (Mintzberg et al., 2009). While the “objective wing” of the cognitive school claims that “these inputs (...) flow through all sort of distorting filters before they are coded by the cognitive maps,” “the subjective wing” considers them as “merely interpretations of a world that exists only in terms of how it is perceived” such that the world can be modelled, framed, and constructed (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

With regards to the “objective wing” of the cognitive school, managers can be considered as workers processing information for themselves, for their colleagues, and for the company as a

whole. Therefore, sharing processed information can create considerable problems since incoming information can be distorted via cognitive biases. As will be discussed in section 2.4.5, individuals and organizations process information in parallel “along essentially the same principles” (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

For my research work, I will retain the notion of strategy as a mental perspective from the cognitive school. Not only am I interested in discovering the way managers both define value creation and describe the value creation process of their companies, but I also would like to find out to which marketing perspective correspond their conception of value creation.

Let us now see how the prevailing perspective within a company is actually formed.

2.2.4. The dominant logic of a company

The connection between diversification and performance

In their seminal article “The Dominant Logic: A New Linkage Between Diversity and Performance,” Prahalad and Bettis (1986) proposed a conceptual linkage regarding the connection between diversification and performance in organizations by using the corporate management team as their unit of analysis. They initially referred to it as a “dominant general management logic” (or dominant logic) consisting of “mental maps developed through experience in the core business and sometimes applied inappropriately in other businesses” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).

Their conceptual framework was based on the following four premises:

1. The top management team of a diversified firm is a “collection of key individuals” (i.e. a dominant coalition) that can greatly influence “the style and process of management, and as a result the key resource allocation choices” (Donaldson and Lorsch, 1983). These managers use schemas, that is, preexisting knowledge systems representing “beliefs, theories, and propositions that have developed over time” based on their personal experiences. These schemas help them “to categorize an event, assess its consequences, and consider appropriate actions (including doing nothing), and to do so rapidly and often

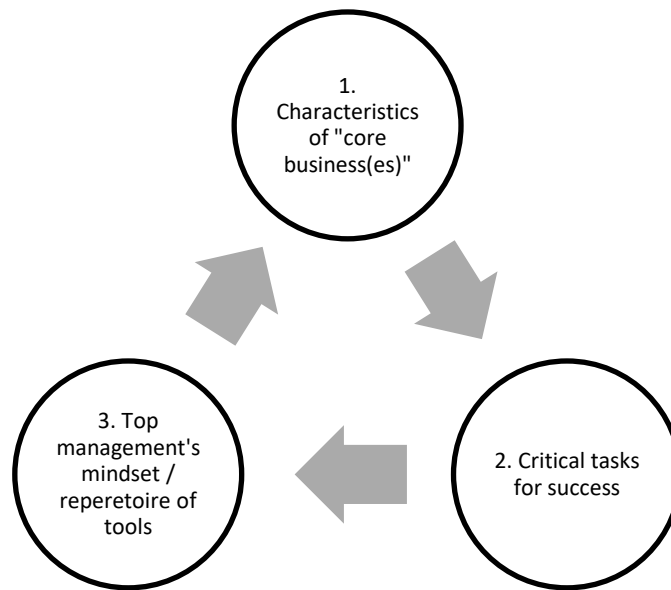
efficiently” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986). In short, a schema corresponds to a “general mental structure that can store a shared dominant general management logic” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).

2. The differences in the strategic characteristics of the businesses of a diversified firm has an impact on the top management team’s ability to manage. In other words, “complexity of the top management process is a function of the strategic variety, not just the number of distinct businesses or the size of those businesses” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).
3. While the strategically similar businesses of a diversified firm can be managed using a single dominant general management logic, a diversified firm with strategically different businesses needs to be managed with multiple dominant general management logics. The dominant logic can thus be represented as both a knowledge structure (i.e. what type of process to use in specific situations) and a “set of elicited management processes” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).
4. The dominant general management logic of a diversified firm limits the ability of a top management team to manage a diversified firm. In reality, top managers’ experiences determine what types of administrative tools to use as well as their view of the world or mindset. In addition, the dominant general management logic of a diversified firm is “influenced by the largest business or the “core business” which was the historical basis for the firm’s growth” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).

Figure 4 below depicts the process by which a dominant general management logic evolves:

1. “The characteristics of the core business” is often the source of the process,
2. Which “tend to cause managers to define problems in certain ways” along with a set of inherent tasks,
3. So as to “develop familiarity with, and facility in the use of,” a specific repertoire of tools that is “particularly useful in accomplishing the critical tasks of the core business” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).

Figure 4. Evolution of Dominant General Management Logic



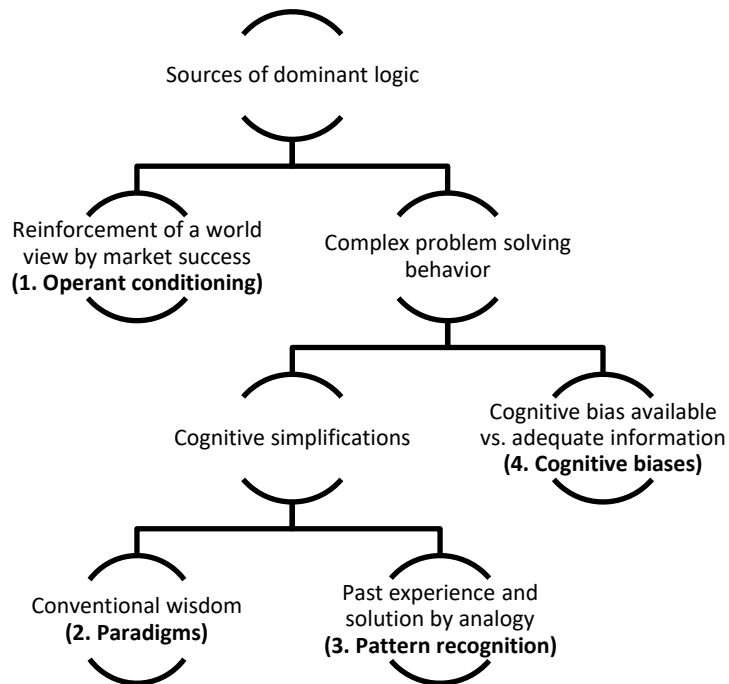
Source: Adapted from Prahalad and Bettis, 1986.

The sources of dominant logic

Ultimately, Prahalad and Bettis (1986) formally defined “dominant logic” as: “A mind set or world view or conceptualization of the business and administrative tools to accomplish goals and make decisions in the business. It is stored as a shared cognitive map (or set of schemas) among the dominant coalition. It is expressed as a learned problem-solving behavior.”

Figure 5 below shows the relationship between the four streams of research regarding the development of cognitive maps and the associated problem-solving behavior, which serves as the conceptual foundations of dominant logic.

Figure 5. Conceptual Foundations of Dominant Logic



Source: Adapted from Prahalad and Bettis, 1986.

Let us now go through the main concepts of the four streams of research:

- 1. Operant conditioning.** In his seminal work on operant conditioning, Skinner (1953) stated that behavior was a function of its consequences. For instance, behavior that was (positively) reinforced tended to be repeated more over time, whereas behavior that was ignored or punished (negatively reinforced) tended to diminish over time. By comparison, a dominant logic can be perceived as the positive reinforcement resulting from managing well a business. For instance, “when top managers team effectively perform the tasks that are critical for success in the core business, they are positively reinforced by economic success” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986). In turn, this positive reinforcement will then influence them to focus their effort on the behaviors that led to economic success, thereby encouraging them to “develop a particular mind set and repertoire of tools and preferred processes” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).
- 2. Paradigms.** The concept of dominant logic is also based on the work of Kuhn (1970) on scientific paradigms and of Allison (1971) “on the importance of alternate paradigms in the context of analyzing government actions during the Cuban missile crisis.” Kuhn (1970) stated that “a particular science at any point in time can be characterized by a set of ‘shared beliefs’ or ‘conventional wisdom’ about the world that constitutes what he called the

‘dominant paradigm’” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986). In his work, he cites several examples to show how difficult it is to shift dominant paradigms, including “the shift from the Ptolemaic view of the universe (earth-centered) to the Copernican view of the universe (sun-centered) in astronomy” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986). Thus, it can be inferred that conceptually the dominant paradigm is to science what the dominant logic is to business. As for Allison (1971), he showed how different paradigms used by different parties resulted in a different analysis of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. He defined a paradigm as “a systematic statement of the basic assumptions, concepts, and propositions employed by a school of analysis” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).

3. **Pattern recognition.** There has been some extensive research on how chess experts make decisions in a chess game (de Groot, 1965; Simon, 1979). It has been demonstrated that better players could remember more (familiar) ‘patterns’ (about 50,000 for masters or grandmasters) of previous games than the lesser players (about 1,300 for class A players) (Simon, 1979). Hence, chess players make effective decisions by comparison with previous games or based on their past experience of what worked for them before, and not necessarily based on the implementation of some best strategy.
4. **Cognitive biases.** “The psychology of cognitive biases is the study of how people in making decisions sometimes make systematic (and often severe) errors” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986). When people deal with uncertain and complex tasks, they usually rely on a limited number of heuristic principles in order to simplify their decision process. The principle of “availability heuristic” takes place when people “make decisions by using information that can be easily brought to mind (i.e. information that is available),” which can thus cause severe and systematic errors (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986). In fact, people do not necessarily evaluate analytically the information content of available data or search for ‘adequate information’ for making decisions (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). This research suggests that “the mind set and repertoire of tools that constitute the dominant logic are likely to be inappropriately applied by managers confronted with a ‘different’ business, and that there is significant ‘learning’ that precedes change in those biases” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).

While a dominant logic may help an organization to perform well in the short-run, its managerial focus might also “act as a blinder to peripheral vision” in the long-run (Prahalad, 2004). According to Prahalad (2004), an organization can find new business opportunities and thus change its business logic by looking beyond the borders of its industry as well as geography, that is, by including the periphery that lies around its regular sphere of operation.

Let us now go through the different marketing perspectives and their underlying dominant logic.

2.2.5. Emergence of new marketing perspectives with a dominant logic

As mentioned by Strandvik and Heinonen (2015), “throughout the history of marketing theory, there have been different understandings of what marketing is and should do in practice.” Since the beginning of the 20th century, many different schools of marketing thought evolved as a result of major changes in society. Nowadays, several different marketing perspectives currently co-exist, which reflects both the diversity and complexity of marketing as a managerial discipline.

In the early 1900’s, the “Commodity School” initially focused on the distribution and exchange of commodities and manufactured products. By the 1920’s, the “Functional School” started to focus on activities that were needed to facilitate marketing exchanges by contributing to the development and improvement of the classification of marketing functions (Zinser and Brunswick, 2016).

In the 1950’s, the “Functional School” turned into the “Marketing Management School,” which was based both on a decision-making approach to managing the marketing function and on a major focus on the customer. Progressively, the role of marketing became to satisfy the customer at a profit by targeting a market segment and then making optimal decisions on the marketing mix made up of the 4 P’s: (1) Product, (2) price, (3) place, and (4) promotion (Zinser and Brunswick, 2016).

In the late 1970’s and early 1980’s, “Services Marketing and Management” emerged as a complementary discipline as scholars recognized the inadequacies of product marketing as a dominant logic for dealing with issues related to services marketing (Zinser and Brunswick, 2016). The notion of customer perception of services was introduced so that measuring perceived quality and perceived value became the norm in order to assess customers’ expectations (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). The main focus was on company-controlled service episodes (short-term interactions) or “moments of truth” (Grönroos, 1990) because the

service was considered to be delivered during these encounters (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015).

In the 1980's, the Industrial Marketing and Purchasing (IMP) group conducted research on "Business Networks" (BN) in industrial business (Turnbull, Ford and Cunningham, 1996; Ford and Håkansson, 2006; Håkansson, 1982; Ford, 1980) According to the BN perspective, "both the buyer and the seller can take an active role" such that their processes should be "analyzed simultaneously" (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). "Thus, the unit of analysis for IMP is not individual actors, but the processes that take place between them in dyads, and on a network scale" (Ford, 2010).

In 1985, "Consumer Culture Theory" (CCT) emerged by conducting research on consumer culture and practices. On one hand, its focus is "on the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings" (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). On the other hand, its emphasis is "on consumers' heterogeneous meanings and the diversity of overlapping cultural groupings" (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015).

In the 1990's, "Relationship Marketing" (RM) represented a new development in marketing theory. It extended the time perspective of managerial scope by shifting the focus from brief service episodes to relationships with customers (Liljander and Strandvik, 1995; Storbacka et al., 1994). The relationship became the core component of an offering so that ultimately "Customer Relationship Management" (CRM) emerged and consisted in compiling customer information in databases for improving the company's value creation process (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). However, the customer was still considered as a passive agent in the service process. At the same time, the usefulness of the 4 P's (or marketing mix) as an innovative or adaptive force was challenged such that nowadays it is considered merely as a handy framework (Vargo and Lusch, 2004).

In the early 2000's, "Solutions Selling" emerged as a field focusing on a system of network partners providing a tailored service that meets most or all of the customers' needs. The tailoring aspect can take place at either the design, delivery, or implementation phase of the service process, such that the final solution can either be totally customized or just made up of different standardized components with a customized assembly (Nordin and Kowalkowski, 2010). The

starting point of this field is the company's and its network's capabilities and resources despite the fact that it aims to provide customer-specific solutions (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015).

When it emerged in 2004, "Service-Dominant Logic" represented a major shift in marketing paradigm by focusing more on the role of service as a process and not as an outcome (as advocated in "Goods-Dominant Logic" or traditional marketing). As mentioned earlier, the main premise is that service is exchanged for service between two or more actors, who co-create value jointly as a result of their interaction based on resource integration in a service ecosystem.

As a result of the advent of "Service-Dominant Logic" (SDL), Grönroos developed his principles on "Service Logic" (SL) as a service and marketing perspective in 2006, which actually represented a synthesis of his work since the 1980's (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). Although both marketing perspectives share the concept of value co-creation between a service provider and a service beneficiary, SDL claims that it is driven by the service provider while SL asserts that it is driven by the service beneficiary. Furthermore, SDL uses a systemic approach to value co-creation between two or more actors, while SL uses a relationship approach between a service provider and a service beneficiary through dyads only.

Around the same time period, "Service Design" evolved as a field considering services as processes by implementing design thinking (Holmlid and Evenson, 2008). Over time, service design thinking changed its focus from single service interactions to service systems (Patrício et al., 2011). Moreover, the expression "Design for Service" instead of "Service Design" is also used to denote "an open approach where service designers view design as a platform for action involving different actors" (Kimbell, 2011).

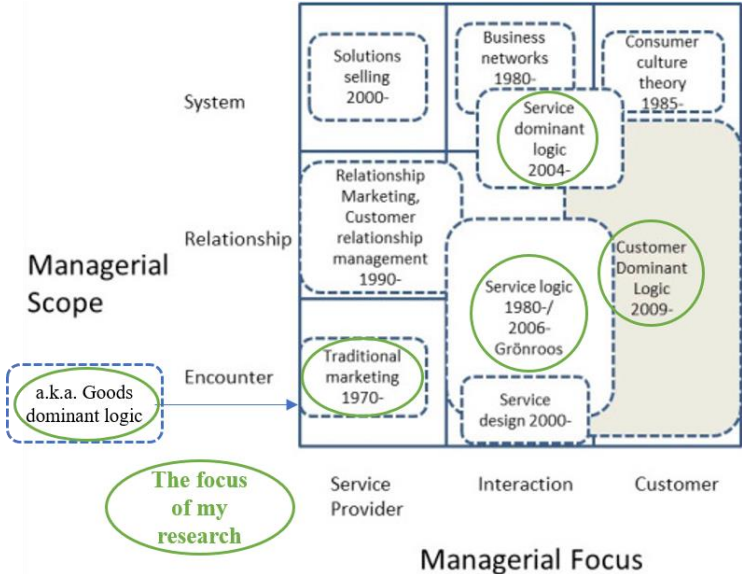
The first working paper on "Customer-Dominant Logic" (CDL) was published in 2009 and subsequently in a more complete version in 2010. In "Goods-Dominant Logic" (GDL), the starting point of value creation is the service company and its internal processes or those visible within the service encounter or relationship so that it is a provider dominant logic (Heinonen et al., 2010, 2013). In CDL, the starting point is the customer's reality and life or ecosystem (defined as a system of actors and spheres that a customer is involved in) so that it is a customer dominant logic (Heinonen et al., 2010, 2013). As a matter of fact, CDL is interested in how value emerges for the customer, and how the customer constructs his experience of value

through a sense-making process when a service provider participates in his tasks and activities. Thus, CDL focuses on how the offering of a service provider “can be embedded in the customer’s contexts, activities, practices, and experiences,” as well as what are the managerial implications for the company (Heinonen et al., 2010).

As exposed above, many shifts in theoretical thinking occurred in marketing due to major changes in the business environment since the beginning of the 21st century. For instance, scholars placed more focus on services as opposed to products such that this marketing shift is now more integrated into managerial practice. In addition, customers have become more empowered due to major developments in information and communication technology such that companies need to better understand the customer’s logic in order to make sure to both attract and keep them (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015).

Figure 6 below displays the new major contemporary marketing perspectives that emerged over time in a matrix. In fact, it shows their relative position based on managerial focus (i.e. “where is emphasis placed when designing strategies and offerings”) and managerial scope (i.e. “how broadly the offering and its context are considered based on the paradigm”) (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015, 2018). Their different positioning based on these two dimensions are analyzed in more detail in section 3.6.2. The marketing perspectives circled in green represent the focus of my research work.

Figure 6. Emergence of New Marketing Perspectives Over Time



Source: Adapted from Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015, 2018.

2.2.6. Conclusion

According to Mintzberg (1987, 2009), strategy is a concept that has been used in so many different ways for such a long time that it can actually be defined in at least five different ways. Strategy as perspective refers to both the way of perceiving the world and the fundamental way that a company does things. There are ten different schools of strategic management thought, each with a unique perspective that is focused on one aspect of strategy formation. For instance, the cognitive school views strategy formation as taking place in the mind of the manager such that strategy emerges as a mental perspective, thereby shaping the way managers deal with inputs from their business environment.

According to Prahalad and Bettis (1986), the characteristics of the core business tend to cause managers to define problems in certain ways so as to develop a set of tools that can help them to successfully accomplish their critical tasks. Thus, the concept of “dominant logic” refers to a mindset or conceptualization of the business and tools in order to reach goals, such that it is stored as a cognitive map and is expressed as a learned problem-solving behavior. One of the sources of a dominant logic involves cognitive biases, whereby people usually rely on a limited number of heuristic principles when dealing with uncertain and complex tasks, such as using information that is easily available and which thus can cause major errors. In addition, since it is the source of a company’s past success, a dominant logic frames how its managers think and act, thereby limiting their ability to innovate. Hence, changing a dominant logic becomes difficult as it implies that a once-successful company needs to reassess and modify its prevailing key assumptions about value creation.

Since the advent of marketing during the 20th century, scholars have consecutively proposed many shifts in theoretical thinking so as to help practitioners to better cope with the fast-changing business environment. For instance, companies started to place more emphasis on the relational rather than the transactional aspect of interactions with customers, and they started to place more emphasis on services tied to products rather than just on products per se. In fact, many different marketing perspectives with their inherent value creation logic have emerged over time, namely Goods-Dominant Logic, Service-Dominant Logic, Service Logic, and Customer-Dominant Logic among many others. Nevertheless, managers are not aware of the

co-existence of all of these different marketing perspectives and their alternative ways of creating value, which reflects both the diversity and complexity of marketing as a managerial discipline.

That being said, let us now explore the interrelated concepts of value, value creation, and value perception before focusing on the different ways that value can be created (i.e. value creation).

2.3. VALUE CREATION

2.3.1. Introduction

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2019), there are eight different definitions for the term “value” including the following ones: (1) “The monetary worth of something,” (2) “a fair return or equivalent in goods, services, or money for something exchanged,” and (3) “relative worth, utility, or importance.” This multitude of definitions reflects the fact that many researchers noted that value is one of the most misused terms/concepts in the management literature (Khalifa, 2004; Leszinski and Marn, 1997; Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007).

Historically, the definition of value dates back at least to Aristotle who made the first distinction between the notions of “use value” and “exchange value” (Aristotle, 4th century B.C.; Fleetwood, 1997; Vargo et al., 2008) as well summarized in the following quote:

“This division came about through Aristotle’s efforts to address the differences between things (e.g. automobile) and their attributes, which included the qualities (e.g. red, fast, sporty), quantities (e.g. one car), and relations (e.g. lease, ownership) of such things (Fleetwood, 1997). Use-value was recognized as a collection of substances or things and the qualities associated with these collections. For example, an automobile is a collection of qualities, both specific (e.g. red and fast) and overarching (e.g. transportation and status). (...) Alternatively, exchange-value was considered as the quantity of a substance that could be commensurable value of all things.”

(Vargo et al., 2008)

Even though Aristotle considered money and need as commensurable in exchange (i.e. measurable by the same standard), he ended up rejecting both (Vargo et al., 2008). He concluded that “money could not be a measure of value because for money to measure a substance, the substance itself must already be commensurable,” and that even though need was the basis of exchange, need does not have a unit of measurement (Vargo et al., 2008).

Much later, the Medieval Schoolmen considered that the basis of exchange was consumers’ needs, thereby highlighting the role of use value in economic exchange (Dixon, 1990; Vargo et al., 2008). Until the middle of the 18th century, use value turned out to be the prevailing perspective among “those who recognized the role of satisfaction and fulfillment in value” (Vargo et al., 2008).

Ultimately, Adam Smith (1776/2000), who is considered as the “father of economics,” claimed that value had two different meanings: (1) “Value-in-use” defined as “the utility of some particular object,” and (2) “value-in-exchange” defined as “the power of purchasing other goods which the possession of that object convey” (Smith, 1776/2000; Vargo et al., 2008). In turn, he tied these two different meanings of value to two additional concepts: (1) “Real value” defined as “the labor required to afford the necessities and pleasures of life” (i.e. value-in-use), and (2) “nominal value” defined as “the price paid in market exchange” (i.e. value-in-exchange) (Adam Smith 1776/2000; Vargo et al., 2008). During the Industrial Revolution, the aim of Smith was to increase the wealth of England through international trade (Vargo et al., 2008; Lusch and Vargo, 2016). Hence, he determined that “the production and the export of surplus tangible goods” represented the source of national wealth so that he coined them as “productive” activities, thereby emphasizing the role of value-in-exchange. By contrast, he considered as “unproductive” labor (e.g. services provided by doctors, lawyers, and so forth) all activities which “did not result in units of output that were tangible and exportable” (Vargo et al., 2008).

Some subsequent economic scholars (Say, 1821; Mill, 1929) did try to shift back the emphasis to value-in-use because all activities that contribute to well-being are productive per se (Vargo et al., 2008; Lusch and Vargo, 2014). However, Smith’s model of value based on tangible goods with embedded utility (i.e. value-in-exchange) emerged at a time when the model of science was Newton Mechanics, which was based on “the study of matter with embedded properties” (Vargo et al., 2008). Consequently, value-in-exchange became the generally accepted view among scholars, thereby enabling economic thought to move from a status of philosophy to one

of science (Vargo et al., 2008; Lusch and Vargo, 2014). In turn, value-in-exchange paved the way for marginal utility theory (Marshall, 1927; Walras, 1954), which became the basis of neoclassical economics that was progressively adopted by other business disciplines (Vargo et al., 2008; Lusch and Vargo, 2014). As Vargo and Lusch demonstrated when they initially introduced Service-Dominant Logic as a new marketing perspective in 2004, economic science was thus built on a Goods-Dominant Logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, Vargo et al., 2008; Lusch and Vargo, 2014), whereby products are embedded with value via attributes/features/properties in exchange of money (i.e. value-in-exchange).

2.3.2. Value as a central concept in marketing

Nowadays, the American Marketing Association (AMA), which holds the official definition of marketing along with other American marketing organizations, has regularly updated its definition of marketing in order to reflect the increasing role of value as a central concept in marketing (Anker et al., 2015). Table 7 below displays the evolution of the definition of marketing as defined by the AMA.

Table 7. Definitions of Marketing by the American Marketing Association

Year	Description
1935	Marketing is the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producers to consumers.
1985	Marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives.
2004	Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders.
2007	Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.

Source: Anker et al., 2015.

The original AMA definition from 1935 reflects the traditional Goods-Dominant Logic, whereby companies deliver goods and services to consumers through a one-way value creation process (Anker et al., 2015). Companies identify the needs of customers as passive objects in the market, and then they conceive a marketing offering with functional value through product or service attributes that satisfies customers’ needs or solves customers’ problems, such as beverages for thirst or bicycles for either transportation or leisure or sports.

The 1985 AMA definition reflects the fact that marketing theorists started to challenge “the objectification of consumers as passive agents and receivers of value” during the 1980’s (Anker et al., 2015). This first revision shows that they started to acknowledge the importance of mutual satisfaction between producers and consumers in the value creation process. In addition, it formalized the key role of the marketing mix framework also known as the 4 P’s (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) developed by McCarthy in 1960 (Anker et al., 2015).

The 2004 AMA definition reflects the emergence of relational thinking in marketing with the reference to customer relationships. However, this second revision still considers consumers as passive agents and thus objects of companies since it “conceptualizes marketing as a process for managing customer relationships” (Anker et al., 2015).

The 2007 AMA definition better reflects contemporary marketing thinking for 2 main reasons:

1. It defines marketing as a set of activities and processes that create value for not only companies and their customers but also for all other stakeholders.
2. However, it does not specify who is in charge of carrying this out.

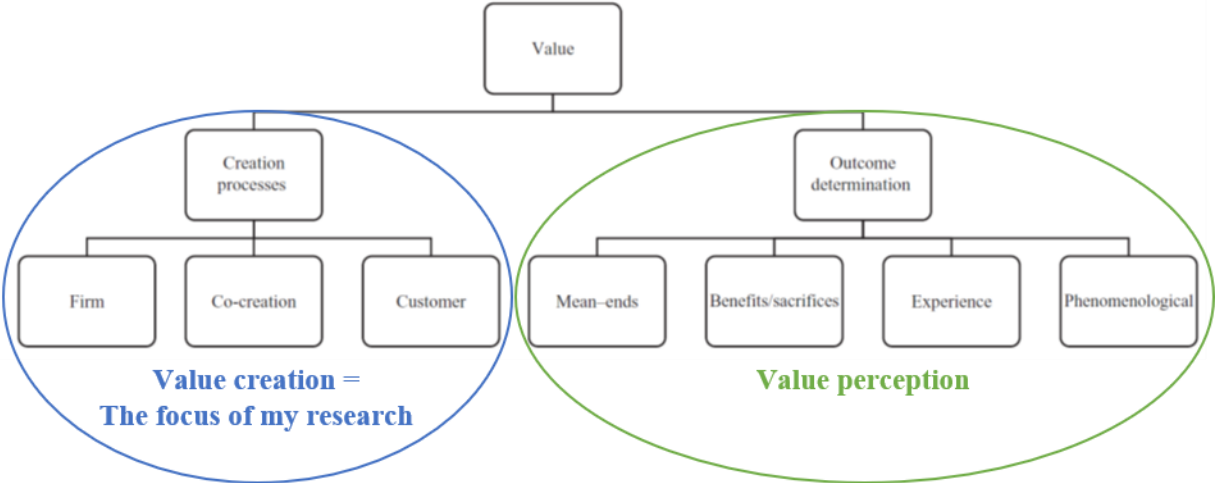
As a result, this third and last revision corresponds better to relational thinking and also responds better to the aspirations of both Service-Dominant Logic and Service Logic, which advocate that value can emerge as a process between different agents (i.e. value co-creation).

2.3.3. The main streams of research on value

As aforementioned, marketing is currently defined as “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large” (AMA, 2013). On one hand, the main goal of most companies is to create value for themselves and for their customers. On the other hand, the main goal of most customers is to capture value as a result of consuming or using an offering purchased or rented from a company. In reality, companies can create value in many different ways, just like customers can also capture (and thus perceive) value in many different ways.

In her seminal article “Value creation processes and value outcomes in marketing theory: Strangers or siblings?” (2013), Gummerus claims that research on value can be divided into two main streams: (1) Value creation processes (i.e. created value) and (2) value outcome determination (i.e. perceived value). The former aims to understand how value comes to be (or is created via actions), and it considers the activities, resources, and actors among other elements involved in the value creation process. The latter aims to understand what value is and how it is evaluated (or perceived via cognition and feelings), and it takes into consideration the types of value outcomes perceived by customers as a result of their reactions and experiences. As indicated by the blue circle in figure 7 below, the focus of my research is on the value creation processes.

Figure 7. Value Theory Categorization



Source: Gummerus, 2013.

2.3.4. Value creation processes

As Gummerus (2013) points out, the value creation process was traditionally placed within the company because it was considered as the creator of value since it processes resources into end products (Kotler, 1972; Porter, 1985; Treacy and Wiersema, 1993). At the beginning of the 21st century, Service-Dominant Logic emerged and advocated that value was a co-creation process because the basis of economic exchange is service [defined as the application of resources (knowledge and skills) for the benefit of another actor], such that service is exchanged for service between two or more actors (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). As a matter of fact, the value co-creation process was also previously addressed by Parolini (1999) in terms of value-creating

systems as well as by Normann and Ramirez (1994) in terms of value constellations. Later, Service Logic (Grönroos, 2006) claimed that direct interactions between a provider and a customer create a platform for co-creating value, but that in the end value was always driven and determined by the customer. Finally, Customer-Dominant Logic (Heinonen et al., 2010) asserts that the starting point of value creation is the customer's reality or personal sphere in which a company may be allowed to enter, such that value is created by the customer as a result of the way the offering of a company is integrated and experienced in his or her life.

Consequently, with respect to the value creation process logic, value can be created: (1) By companies (as described in Goods-Dominant Logic), (2) in the interaction between a company and a customer (referred to as a co-creation process in Service-Dominant Logic and in Service Logic), and (3) by customers (as explained in Customer-Dominant Logic). Let us now go through each value creation process logic in more detail.

1. Company value creation

This relates to how companies create customer value through a sustainable competitive advantage. There are several frameworks that deal with company value creation. For instance, Michael Porter came up with its competitive “five forces” framework (1985) analyzing the impact of a company's micro-environment forces on its profitability and “value chain analysis” (1985) showing how a company's set of activities can add value. The “resource-based view” describes how competitive advantage depends on “the rarity and value of resources used in activities, and knowledge about selecting, using, and combining these resources” (Priem and Butler, 2001a, 2001b). Also, “capabilities” defined as “complex bundles of skills and accumulated knowledge” (Day, 1994) help to use the firm's resources to their maximum (Gummerus, 2013). According to Hunt and Morgan (1995, 1996) who worked on “market positioning,” competitive advantage results “from a combination of superior customer value and relative resource costs” (Gummerus, 2013). Since they noticed that the “value chain” (i.e. transforming inputs into products) approach did not suit service firms, Stabell and Fjeldstad (1998) proposed the “value shop” (i.e. solving customer problems) and “value network” (i.e. linking customers) as additional value configurations with distinct value creation logics.

2. Value co-creation

This deals with how value is co-created between a company and a customer. For example, value can be co-created through customer participation in a company's product development process such as in focus groups among other activities. According to Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004), value can be co-created through the interaction of the customer (as the service beneficiary) integrating the resources of a company (as the service provider) through mutual service provision. As for Service Logic (Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014), a direct interaction between the company and the customer leads to the formation of a "co-creation platform" out of which value can be co-created.

3. Customer value creation

This refers to what customers do with products and services in their life sphere (Gummerus, 2013). As early as 1980, Toffler explained that "consumers may produce goods or services for their own use, thereby becoming 'prosumers'" (Gummerus, 2013). In fact, customer value creation can be viewed in terms of processes (Grönroos, 2004; Payne et al, 2008; Wikström, 1996) and practices (Korkman, 2006; Schau et al., 2009). Concerning customer processes, Wikström (1996) claims that "when consumption is seen as a productive process, the consumers themselves perform the final and crucial activities in the 'value-creating process'." Moreover, value can be created by customers "in a series of activities performed by the customer to achieve a particular goal" (Payne et al., 2008). Since the customer sets up his/her own activities, he/she can decide to choose from several alternatives such as: "To produce his or her own resources instead of acquiring them through exchange (e.g. in-house production and growing one's own food), to arrange competing activity (e.g. putting up a subsidiary and farming cooperatives), or to skip the process altogether" (Gummerus, 2013). In turn, practices refer to "the more or less routinized actions, which are orchestrated by tools, know-how, images, physical space, and a subject who is carrying out the practice" (Korkman, 2006). According to Schau et al. (2009), "value underlies all activities and that engagement in practices is an act of value creation." As a result, "practices are the unit of analysis, rather than the outcomes of these practices" (Gummerus, 2013).

2.3.5. Value outcome determination

As stated by Gummerus (2013), value outcome determination deals with the way an actor determines the value outcome. With regards to value outcome determination logic, value can be determined (or perceived) as: (1) Means-ends, (2) benefits/sacrifices, (3) experience outcomes, and (4) phenomenological processes (as in both Service-Dominant Logic and Service Logic). Let us now go through each value outcome determination logic in more detail.

1. Value as means-ends

Value as means-ends is based on the means-end chain, which states that product attributes allow customers to achieve certain benefits that in turn help them to reach a higher-order personal value. A means-end chain is thus a conceptual structure linking a product (defined as a bundle of attributes) and a customer (regarded as a holder of values) through the positive/negative benefits (consequences) derived from the attributes. According to Grunert and Grunert (1995), means-end chains “can be primed either from the bottom (attributes-performances-goals) or from the top (goals-performances-attributes),” whereby “bottom-top priming leads to cognitive processing of firm offerings, whilst the top-bottom priming leads to goal-directed actions” (Gummerus, 2013).

2. Value as benefits/sacrifices

Value as benefits/sacrifices considers “value as a cognitive judgement of utility (Bolton and Drew, 1991; Grewal et al., 1998; Zeithaml, 1988) made by a customer based on inputs (benefits) and outputs (sacrifices)” (Gummerus, 2013). In short, it can be viewed as “a ratio between service quality (benefits) and costs (sacrifices) (Brady et al., 2005)” or “an assessment of a product being a good buy (Dodds et al., 1991)” (Gummerus, 2013). Zeithaml (1998) initiated this research stream thanks to a study on value as interpreted by customers in a pre-purchase situation, through which “she discovered three price-laden views on value [‘value as low prices’, ‘value as quality/price ratio’, and ‘value as what I get for what I give’] and one view emphasizing benefits [‘value as whatever I want in a product’]” (Gummerus, 2013).

3. Value as experience outcomes

Value as experience outcomes is based on the initial work of Hirschman and Holbrook in 1982 that depicted “humans as emotional sensation-seekers” (Gummerus, 2013). In fact, Holbrook (1994) defined “value as an ‘interactive, relativistic experience’, meaning that value is an experience based on the interaction between a subject and an object as well as relative” (Gummerus, 2013). The term “relative” denotes three aspects of value: “Value is comparative (varying between objects for a certain person), personal assessment (what is valuable for one person need not be that to another), and situational, that is, context specific” (Gummerus, 2013). In addition, Holbrook (1994) describes that value has three dimensions: (1) Extrinsic value (i.e. an object is a means for further ends) versus intrinsic value (i.e. value for its own sake), (2) self-oriented value (i.e. driven by self-interest) versus other-oriented value (i.e. sought for the other’s sake), and (3) active value (i.e. the subject is acting upon an object or experience that results in value) versus reactive value (i.e. the subject is passive and lets the object or experience have effects on him/her) (Gummerus, 2013).

4. Value as phenomenological processes

Value as phenomenological processes is based on axiom 4 and foundational premise 10 of Service-Dominant Logic (SDL): “Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary” (Vargo and Lusch, 2008). According to the founders of SDL, each service exchange between a company and a customer “takes place in a different context, involving the availability, integration, and use of a different combination of resources and actors” (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). As a result, each instance creates a different experience as well as a unique assessment of value by the beneficiary (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). As for Helkkula and Kelleher who worked on the “circularity of customer service experience and customer perceived value” (2010), customer perceived value “emerges as a complex phenomenon, which includes dynamic interrelating processes of experiencing and conditioning value perceptions.” In other words, perceived value is based on personal experience in the context of the customer’s lifeworld (Helkkula and Kelleher, 2010).

Let us now go through a selection of some value creation frameworks and value perception frameworks in more details so as to better understand their specific approach regarding how value can be created and how value can be perceived respectively.

2.3.6. Overview of four value creation frameworks

Introduction

With regards to value creation, four different frameworks were selected: (1) The Value Chain, Value Shop, and Value Network (a.k.a. value configuration models) (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998), (2) the Blue Ocean Strategy (Kim and Mauborgne, 2005, 2015), (3) the Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010), and (4) the Value Proposition Canvas (Osterwalder et al., 2014). The first framework is regularly cited and used by the academic community mostly for research purposes, while the other three frameworks have been largely spread among the business community through the publication of a best-selling book such that they are actually used by practitioners for improving their business.

Value Chain, Value Shop, and Value Network (Value Configuration Models)

In their article “Configuring value for competitive advantage: On chains, shops, and networks” (1998), Stabell and Fjeldstad propose three value configuration models for understanding and analyzing the value creation logic of companies by building on Thompson’s (1967) typology of long-linked, intensive, and mediating technologies. They actually used Porter’s value chain framework (1985) as a starting point for proposing two additional value configuration models because the value chain failed to fit with non-manufacturing companies. Table 8 below shows an overview of the three generic value configuration models.

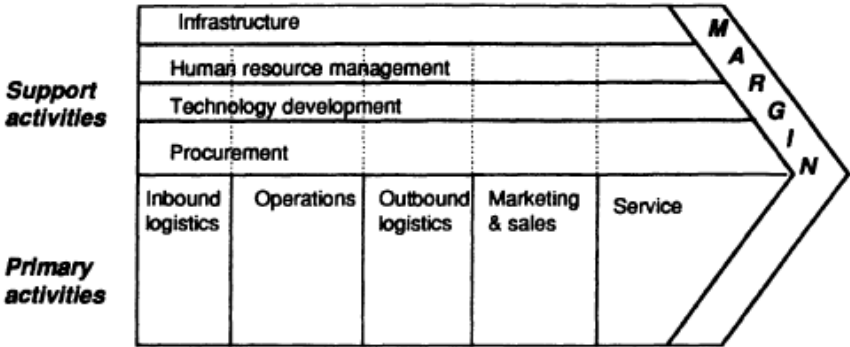
Table 8. Overview of Three Generic Value Configuration Models

	Value Chain	Value Shop	Value Network
Value creation logic	Transforming inputs into products	(Re)solving customer problems	Linking customers
Primary technology	Long linked	Intensive	Mediating
Primary activity categories	1. Inbound logistics 2. Operations 3. Outbound logistics 4. Marketing 5. Service	1. Problem finding and acquisition 2. Problem solving 3. Choice 4. Execution 5. Control/evaluation	1. Network promotion and contract management 2. Service provisioning 3. Infrastructure operation
Business value system structure	Interlinked chains	Referred shops	Layered and interconnected networks

Source: Adapted from Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998.

With respect to the **value chain**, it is based on “a long-linked technology (Thompson, 1967), where value is created by transforming inputs into products” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998). In this model, primary activities create and bring value to customers, while support activities “enable and improve the performance of the primary activities” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998). For instance, there are five primary activity categories: (1) “Inbound logistics” refers to suppliers sending raw materials and intermediate products to the company’s facilities, (2) “operations” involves transforming them on-site into semi-finished or final products, (3) “outbound logistics” implies shipping the products to customers, (4) “marketing” includes developing, promoting, and selling the products, and (5) post-purchase “service” helps to handle customer requests such as proper product use, product repair, product replacement, and so on. As a result, the value chain “performs a set of fixed activities that enables it to produce a standard product in large numbers” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998). In short, the role of the product is to transfer value from the company to the customer. Since the value chain of a company “is embedded in a system of interlinked value chains” (Porter, 1985), the corresponding business value system can be sequentially depicted as follows: Value chain of supplier → value chain of company → value chain of distributor, and so forth. Figure 8 below shows the representation of value creation for the value chain.

Figure 8. The Value Chain Diagram

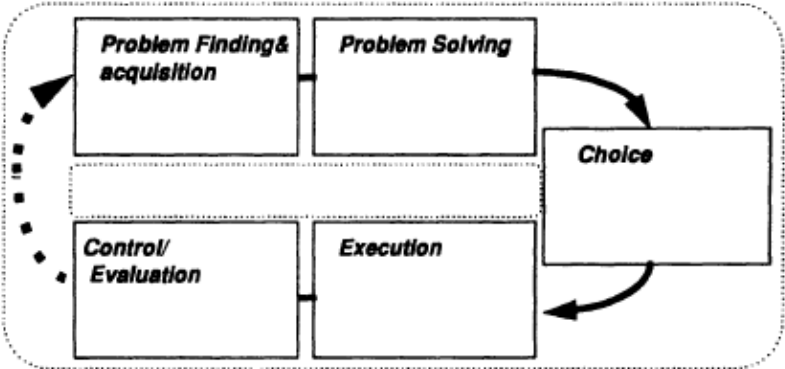


Source: Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998 – Adapted from Porter, 1985.

Concerning the **value shop**, it is based on “an intensive technology (Thompson, 1967) to solve a customer or client problem” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998). In this model, activities are scheduled, and resources are applied in proportion to the needs of the customer’s problem such that “the problem to be solved determines the ‘intensity’ of the shop’s activities” (Stabell and

Fjeldstad, 1998). Consequently, value is created through problem solving, which can be defined as “the change from an existing to a more desired state” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998). In fact, the object of interest can either be a human being such as in health care (e.g. curing a patient of a sickness) and education (e.g. teaching skills to a student) or an artifact such as creating an e-commerce website or modifying a company’s information systems. Examples of value shops are services provided by experts and professionals such as in consulting, law, medicine, and engineering among many others. There are five generic primary activity categories: (1) “Problem finding and acquisition” includes formulating the problem at stake and choosing the appropriate problem solving approach, (2) “problem solving” deals with generating and evaluating alternative solutions, (3) “choice” is about choosing the best solution among the different proposed alternatives, (4) “execution” means implementing the chosen solution, and (5) “control/evaluation” refers to “measuring and evaluating to what extent the performance of the implementation has solved the initial problem statement” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998). Finally, the business value system corresponds to a network of relations and reputations among companies, which is based on either referral (e.g. a general practitioner sends a patient to a medical specialist) or subcontracting (e.g. a highway operator subcontracts a road renovation contract to a public works company). Figure 9 below depicts the representation of value creation for the value shop.

Figure 9. The Value Shop Diagram

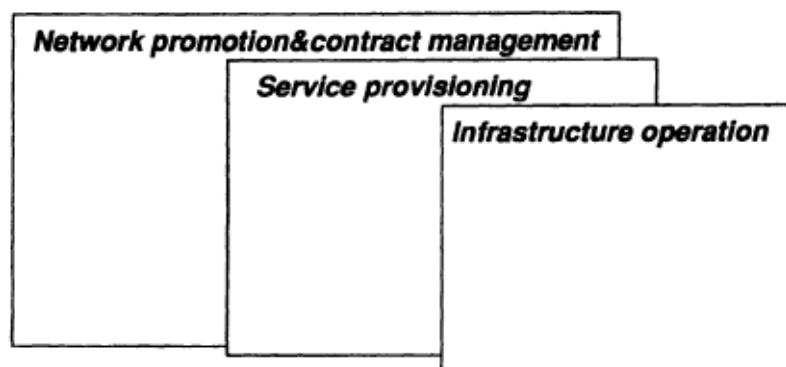


Source: Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998.

Regarding the **value network**, it is based on “a mediating technology (Thompson, 1967) to link clients or customers who are or wish to be interdependent” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998). In this model, the company itself is not the network, but instead “it provides a networking service” through a mediating technology that “facilitates exchange relationships among customers

distributed in time and space” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998). Examples of value networks include companies such as phone operators (i.e. directly linking customers through phone calls) retail banks [i.e. indirectly linking “a group of customers through access to a common pool of funds” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998)], and online social media (i.e. directly linking customers through a digital platform) among many others. In this case, value is created by the network of customers that are connected and “whom it enables the customer to communicate with” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998). There are three primary activity categories: (1) “Network promotion and contract management” involves inviting potential customers to join the network and then managing the contract (in terms of service provisioning and payments) of those who have been selected, (2) “service provisioning” refers to “establishing, maintaining, and terminating links between customers and billing for value received” (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998), and (3) “network infrastructure operation” implies “maintaining and running a physical and information infrastructure” and taking care of customer requests (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998). At last, the business value system structure is made up of layered and interconnected networks such as in the telecommunication industry, whereby carrier networks provide the infrastructure for communication between local networks of service providers, and access networks organize local networks of end users. Figure 10 below displays the representation of value creation for the value network.

Figure 10. The Value Network Diagram



Source: Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998.

That being exposed, the three value configuration models are based on a specific value creation logic that focuses on distinct primary activity categories and relies on a different type of technology. According to the following passage in the discussion section of their article, the

authors clearly propose that companies could potentially use a combination of elements from two different value creation logics:

“The long-linked technology transforms objects according to a predefined set and sequence of activities. The intensive technology solves problems by a custom combination of activities. The mediative technology is provided by a standard combination of activities at multiple levels. **The distinctive dimensions are thus to what extent the technologies rely on standard or custom combinations of activities and to what extent the value creation logic is transformative or mediative. A customized mediative service has elements of both the shop and network. Firm strategy might involve choosing what value creation logic to emphasize.”**

(Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998)

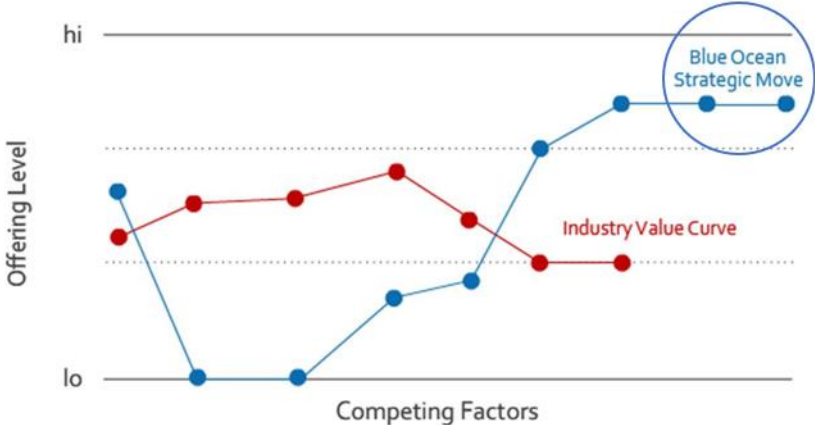
Blue Ocean Strategy

In their book *Blue Ocean Strategy*, Kim and Mauborgne (2005, 2015) explain how to create uncontested market space by capturing new demand while making the competition irrelevant. They actually studied about 150 business launches in more than 30 different industries between 1880 and 2000. It turns out that 86% of them were line extensions in existing markets (i.e. incremental innovation), while 14% of them were new-to-the-world products and services aimed at creating new markets (i.e. value innovation). According to them, red oceans represent all the industries in existence today, that is, the known market space. Blue oceans denote all the industries not in existence today, that is, the unknown market space. In red oceans, industry boundaries are defined and accepted, and the competitive rules of the game are known. Companies try to outperform their rivals so as to grab a greater share of existing demand. As the market space gets crowded, prospects for profits and growth are reduced. Products become commodities, and cutthroat competition turns the red ocean bloody. By contrast, blue oceans are defined by untapped market space, demand creation, and the opportunity for highly profitable growth. In reality, competition is irrelevant because the rules of the game are waiting to be set.

In order to help companies to build a Blue Ocean Strategy, Kim and Mauborgne created the Strategy Canvas, the Four Actions Framework, and the Buyer Utility Map among other tools. As displayed in figure 11 below, the Strategy Canvas helps to visualize the current competitive

landscape of any given industry by identifying the key factors that an industry is competing on and investing in (horizontal axis), while also indicating the offering level (from low to high) that buyers are receiving across all of these key factors of competition (vertical axis). The value curve is a graphic representation of a company's relative performance with respect to the industry's key factors of competition.

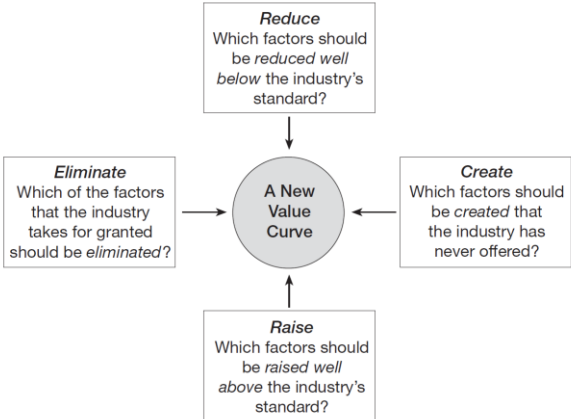
Figure 11. Strategy Canvas of the Blue Ocean Strategy



Source: <https://www.blueoceanstrategy.com/tools/strategy-canvas>

As depicted in figure 11 above, a new value curve can be created by challenging an industry's strategic logic and business model thanks to the Four Actions Framework displayed in figure 12 below. In fact, this tool helps to break the traditional value-cost trade-off by answering the four questions displayed in the boxes.

Figure 12. Four Actions Framework of the Blue Ocean Strategy



Source: Kim and Mauborgne, 2005.

On one hand, acting upon the questions related to “eliminate” and “reduce” helps a company to achieve cost savings by eliminating and reducing some factors that are not necessarily essential from the buyer’s standpoint. On the other hand, acting upon the questions related to “raise” and “create” helps a company to lift buyer value by raising and creating elements that an industry has never considered before (a.k.a. the blue ocean space). Thus, the Four Actions Framework helps to simultaneously achieve both cost savings (by reducing and eliminating trivial components of an offering) and more buyer value (by raising and creating essential components of an offering).

This simultaneous pursuit of low cost and differentiation is the cornerstone of Blue Ocean Strategy, which ultimately leads to value innovation.

As displayed in figure 13 below, the Buyer Utility Map enables companies to create more utility for their customers by focusing on two dimensions: (1) The six stages of the buyer experience cycle (on the horizontal axis) and (2) the six utility levers (on the vertical axis).

Figure 13. Buyer Utility Map of the Blue Ocean Strategy

		The Six Stages of the Buyer Experience Cycle					
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
		Purchase	Delivery	Use	Supplements	Maintenance	Disposal
The Six Utility Levers	Customer productivity						
	Simplicity						
	Convenience						
	Risk						
	Fun and Image						
	Environmental friendliness						

Source: Kim and Mauborgne, 2005.

According to Kim and Mauborgne, a buyer’s experience can be broken down into a sequence of six stages ranging from the purchase all the way to the disposal of a product. (Unlike most models in marketing, the pre-purchase stage is not included.) For each one of these stages, a set of questions can be used in order to determine the quality of the buyer’s experience. In addition, the six utility levers represent “the ways in which companies can unlock exceptional utility for

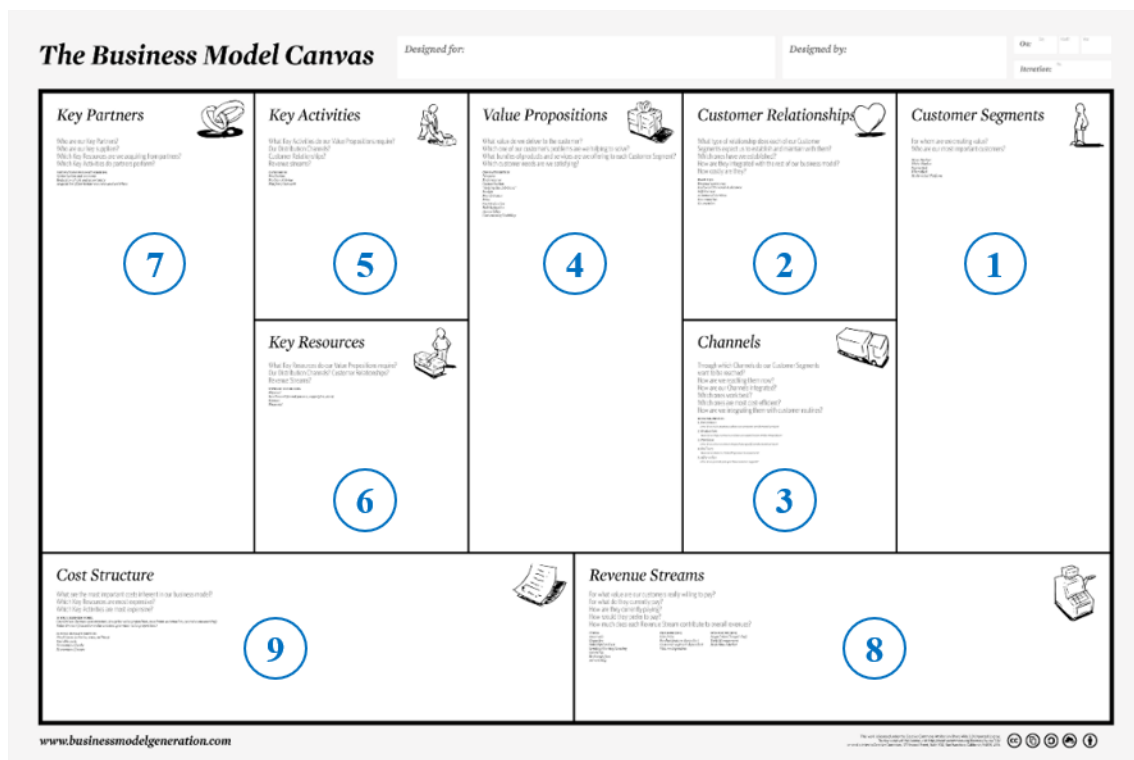
buyers” (Kim and Mauborgne, 2005). In the end, the objective is to make sure to remove the blocks to utility across all six stages in order to propose a compelling experience to the buyers.

Business Model Canvas

In their book *Business Model Generation*, Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010) explain how to create a business model, which they define as “the rationale of how an organization creates, delivers and captures value.” In fact, this book is based on the doctoral thesis of Alexander Osterwalder “The business model ontology: A proposition in a design science approach,” which he completed in 2004 under the supervision of his thesis director Yves Pigneur. Ultimately, the outcome of his research work led to the creation of the “Business Model Canvas” as a management tool for designing business models.

As shown in figure 14 below, the Business Model Canvas is a visual chart that can be used either to design, test, and build new business models or simply to document and transform existing ones.

Figure 14. Business Model Canvas



Source: <https://strategyzer.com/canvas/business-model-canvas>

The Business Model Canvas is composed of nine essential building blocks that are divided into four main areas of business (from right to left and top to bottom):

1. **Customers.** (1) **Customer Segments** describes the different groups of people or organizations that a company wants to target such as a niche market (i.e. small specific/specialized segment) or several segments with different groups of customers sharing similar needs. (2) **Customer Relationships** defines the ways that a company interacts with specific Customer Segments, which can include through a dedicated personal assistance, a hotline, a community platform, and so on. (3) **Channels** refers to the way a company communicates with and reaches its Customer Segments with a Value Proposition such as through its own stores or a network of retailers/wholesalers or an e-commerce website.
2. **Offering.** (4) **Value Proposition** represents the types of products and services (e.g. new, high-performance, user-friendly, customized...) that create value for a specific Customer Segment.
3. **Infrastructure.** (5) **Key Activities** defines the types of actions that a company must undertake so as to make its business model including production (e.g. manufacturing goods), solving customer problems (e.g. providing unique services), and operating a platform/network (e.g. linking partners/customers). (6) **Key Resources** describes the most important assets (e.g. physical, human, financial...) required to make a business model work. (7) **Key Partners** refers to the network of suppliers and partners necessary to make the business model work for either creating economy of scale or reducing risk and uncertainty or even getting access to specific resources.
4. **Financial viability.** (8) **Revenue Streams** corresponds to the sales revenues that a company generates from each Customer Segment in the form of transactions (e.g. asset sales or usage fees) or recurring revenues (e.g. subscription fees, renting, licensing...), and through either fixed pricing (i.e. predefined prices) or dynamic pricing (i.e. subject to changes in market conditions). (9) **Cost Structure** determines all the most important costs to be incurred in order to operate a business model, which can be either cost-driven (i.e. minimizing costs for the company) or value-driven (i.e. maximizing value for the customer).

Building on important concepts in the business literature, the authors present 5 major business models patterns that most companies can actually choose from, even though a single business

model can incorporate several different patterns. Let us now briefly describe each one of them: (1) The “unbundling” business model, (2) the “long-tail” business model, (3) the “multi-sided platforms” business model, (4) the “free” business model, and (5) the “open” business model.

1. **The “unbundling” business model** is based on the fact that a “bundled” company has many activities that are so different that they could actually be separated into different businesses. In fact, there exists “three fundamentally different types of businesses: Customer relationship businesses, product innovation businesses, and infrastructure businesses” (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010). Even though each one of them has different imperatives and can co-exist within a single company, “they are ‘unbundled’ into separate entities in order to avoid conflicts or undesirable trade-offs” (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010). Examples of “unbundling” business models include the mobile telecom industry and the private banking industry.
2. **The “long tail” business model** involves focusing on proposing “a large number of niche products, each of which sells infrequently” (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010). The aggregate sales of a vast array of niche items (i.e. “non-hit” co-existing with “hit” items) can generate high revenues. Examples of “long-tail” business models include eBay (e.g. large choice of miscellaneous non-branded products along with known brands), Netflix (e.g. large choice of many non-blockbuster movies along with some in-house TV services) ...
3. **The “multi-sided platforms” business model** unites distinct but interdependent groups of customers. Value is created as a result of the interaction of multiple actors on different sides via a platform, and value is increased as more actors interact thanks to the network effect. Examples of “multi-sided platforms” business models include Visa (i.e. sellers and buyers), Financial Times (i.e. advertisers/writers and readers), LinkedIn (i.e. professionals and recruiters) ...
4. **The “free” business model** implies that one non-paying Customer Segment can benefit from an offer for free as long as it is financed/subsidized by another paying Customer Segment. Examples of “free” business models include *Metro* newspaper (i.e. free newspaper financed by advertisers), Skype (i.e. users of free version financed by users paying for Skype Credits willing to reach non-Skype users at low rates), Avast Antivirus [i.e. users of free version financed by users paying for an upgraded version with premium services (a.k.a. “freemium”)] ...
5. **The “open” business model** refers to a company collaborating with external actors (e.g. suppliers, distributors, customers) so as to improve internal business processes together or

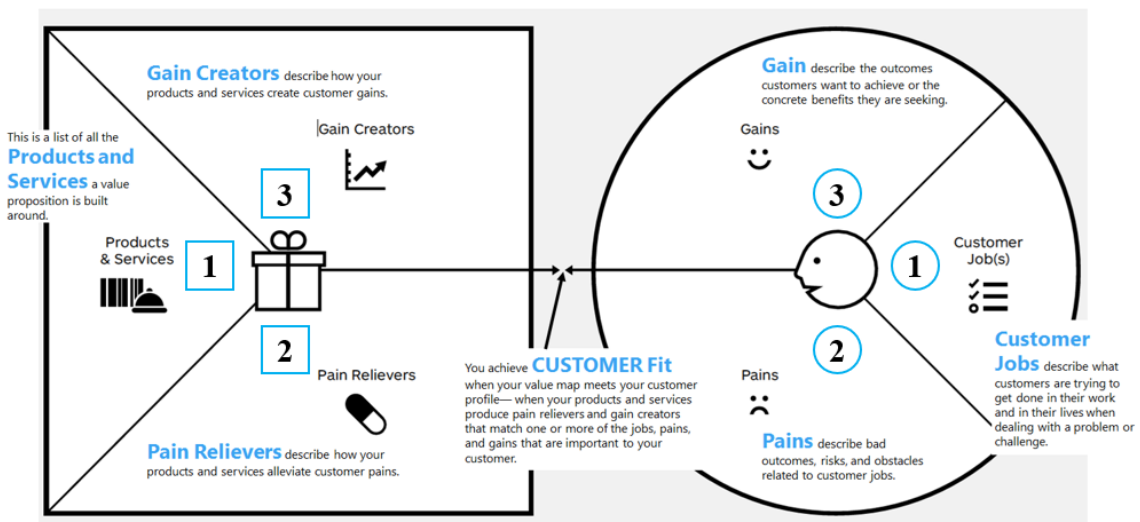
to co-create products, services, solutions, and so on. Examples of “open” business models include P&G Connect + Develop (i.e. P&G platform inviting external actors to find solutions for P&G’s current needs or to submit their own innovation), InnoCentive (i.e. crowdsourced innovation platform linking solution seekers to problem solvers) ...

Value Proposition Canvas

In the book *Value Proposition Design* (Osterwalder et al., 2014), the authors explain how to design a value proposition by matching an offering’s features to a customer’s job-to-be-done. Their tool is based on the “Jobs-To-Be-Done” (JTBD) theory, which was popularized by Christensen in his article “Marketing Malpractice: The Cause and the Cure” (2005) published in the *Harvard Business Review*, as a complement to his theory on “Disruptive Innovation” presented in his book *The Innovator’s Dilemma* (1997). JTBD theory tries to understand the “job” (or task to accomplish) for which customers need to “hire” (or use) a product or service for solving a specific problem. In turn, this can help companies to create well-tailored offerings by defining what customers are trying to do or accomplish when using a product or service.

As shown in figure 15 below, the objective of the Value Proposition Canvas is to achieve a fit between the Customer (Segment) Profile on the right-hand side and the Value (Proposition) Map on the left-hand side. This can be done when a company’s offering’s (i.e. bundle of attributes) matches the benefits sought by a customer who is trying to get a job done.

Figure 15. Value Proposition Canvas



Source: <https://www.strategyzer.com/canvas/value-proposition-canvas>

On the right-hand side, the circle represents the Customer (Segment) Profile, which helps to get a good understanding of the customer. The Customer Profile is divided into 3 parts:

1. **Customer Jobs** represent the jobs that a customer tries to get done such as satisfying a need or completing a task. There are three main types of Customer Jobs: (1) Functional jobs (e.g. performing a specific task or solving a specific problem), (2) social jobs (e.g. the ways customers want to be perceived by others such as based on the type of clothes they wear or the type of car they drive), and (3) personal/emotional jobs (e.g. feeling relaxed after a massage in a spa & wellness center). In addition, there are three supporting jobs that customers can perform during their customer journey: (1) Buyer of value (e.g. jobs related to buying value such as comparing offers and purchasing a product), (2) co-creator of value (e.g. jobs related to co-creating value such as participating in product development), and (3) transferrer of value (e.g. jobs related to the end of the customer journey such as disposing of or reselling a product). The job context should be taken into consideration as Customer Jobs can be context-specific (e.g. business travel vs. leisure travel).
2. **Customer Pains** describe the undesired outcomes, obstacles, and risks that a customer wants to avoid. Pains can be functional (e.g. non-working solution), social (e.g. feeling stressed out when speaking in public), or even emotional (e.g. feeling guilty when eating too many candies). Obstacles refers to what prevents customers from starting or even finishing a job (e.g. lack of skills or time), while risks refers to what could go wrong and have negative consequences (e.g. damaging one's reputation or image).
3. **Customer Gains** describe the expected or desired outcomes and benefits that a customer seeks. There are four types of Customer Gains: (1) Required gains (e.g. gains without which a solution does not work such as an iPad must work with apps), (2) expected gains (e.g. gains that are awaited from a solution even though it could work without it such as a well-designed iMac), (3) desired gains (e.g. gains that one would love from a solution such as an iPhone compatible with all other types of electronic devices), and (4) unexpected gains (e.g. gains that go beyond one's expectations for a solution such as when Apple came up with the iPod device and its iTunes service proposing music on-demand for the first time).

On the left-hand side, the square represents the Value (Proposition) Map, which helps to determine how to create value for that customer. The Value Map is divided into 3 parts:

1. **Products and Services** represents the offers that a company can propose to its customers. These offers can be physical/tangible (e.g. products such as manufactured goods), intangible (e.g. services such as a hotline), digital (e.g. video on-demand), or financial (e.g. life insurance or consumer credit).
2. **Pain Relievers** describe how the offer alleviates specific Customer Pains, that is, anything that can annoy a customer before, during, and after they are trying to get a job done. Pains can be alleviated when products and services help to either: Save time or money or efforts, reduce or eliminate physical or financial risks, and overcome personal and social obstacles.
3. **Gain Creators** describe how the offer creates specific Customer Gains, that is, anything that generates benefits and outcomes that customers want or expect. Likewise, gains can be created when products and services help to either: Outperform existing offers with higher quality and/or better performance, create positive social and emotional consequences, and improve one's work or life through better accessibility and usability.

In the end, a company can achieve **Customer Fit** when its Value (Proposition) Map (i.e. products and services) meets its Customer (Segment) Profile (i.e. job that the customer tries to get done). There are three types of fit: (1) Problem-solution fit (e.g. evidence that the designed value proposition addresses jobs/pains/gains that customers care about), (2) product-market fit (e.g. evidence that products/services/pain relievers/gain creators create customer value through increasing demand), and (3) business model fit (e.g. evidence that the designed value proposition can be embedded in a profitable and scalable business model).

Brief comparison of the four value creation frameworks

Based on the work of Gummerus (2013) concerning the streams of research on value creation processes, table 9 below shows a comparison of the four value creation frameworks: (1) The Value Configuration Models, (2) the Blue Ocean Strategy, (3) the Business Model Canvas, and (4) the Value Proposition Canvas.

Table 9. Comparison of the Selected Value Creation Frameworks

Framework	Main purpose	Company value creation	Value co-creation	Customer value creation
Value Configuration Models	Value configuration via the company's value creation logic, primary technology and activity	Value chain (If standard products), Value shop (If standard services)	Value chain (If customized products), Value shop (If customized services), Value network (Linking customers / Network effect)	
Blue Ocean Strategy	Value innovation via the company's pursuit of both low cost and differentiation	Strategy canvas (Competitive benchmarking), Four actions framework (Product and service innovation)	Buyer utility map (Removing blocks to utility for buyers)	
Business Model Canvas	Value creation / capturing / delivery via the company's description of a list of ideas in nine building blocks organized in a specific dynamics pattern	Nine building blocks (Company-focused business environment), "Unbundling" BM [Customer relationship management, product innovation (if closed), infrastructure management], "Long tail" BM (Selling a large number of niche items), "Free" BM (Free-of-charge use financed by other actors paying for something else in parallel)	"Unbundling" BM [Product innovation (if open)], "Multi-sided" BM (Facilitating interactions / Network effect), "Open" BM (If external actors co-create new solutions with companies)	"Open" BM (If external actors create new solutions for companies)
Value Proposition Canvas	Value proposition via the matching of the company's offer with a customer's job-to-be-done	Customer jobs (If customer is buyer of value)	Customer jobs (If customer is co-creator of value), Customer fit (If company's offer meets customer's job-to-be-done)	

Source: Author.

As depicted in the table above, the four frameworks were designed for different purposes with respect to value creation. Even though some of the components/tools/models of these frameworks can actually fit in different categories of value creation, their main purpose is not to use perspective as a focal point in particular for showing how value can be created by different actors. In essence, they were primarily designed so as to help managers to understand how to create value from the company's perspective by focusing mainly on the configuration of its own business processes. Sometimes, value co-creation can arise when a company is willing to assign a more active role to a customer within its own value creation process. Hence, based on the comparison of these specific value creation frameworks, there seems to be an

opportunity to create a tool whose main purpose is to help managers to become aware of alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted perspective.

Let us now go through a selection of some value perception frameworks.

2.3.7. Overview of four value perception frameworks

Introduction

With respect to value perception, four frameworks were selected: (1) The Components of Consumer Value (Aurier, Evrard, and N'Goala, 2004), (2) the Internal Customers' Perceived Value (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015), (3) the B2C Elements of Value Pyramid (Almquist, Senior, and Bloch, 2016), and (4) the B2B Elements of Value Pyramid (Almquist, Cleghorn, and Sherer, 2018). The first two frameworks have been developed by academic scholars, whereas the last two frameworks have been developed by business practitioners.

Components of Consumer Value

In their article "*Comprendre et mesurer la valeur du point de vue du consommateur*" ("Understanding and measuring value from the consumer's point of view," 2004), Aurier, Evrard, and N'Goala propose an integration of the work of five scholars on consumer value and a conceptual framework based on Functional Attitude Theory in which they identify six components of consumer value: (1) Utilitarian, (2) knowledge, (3) experiential stimulation, (4) social link, (5) self-expression, and (6) spiritual. In addition, they present an integrative model explaining total value (i.e. ratio between benefits and sacrifices) through the components of consumer value.

In their introduction, the authors clearly mention that indeed in marketing value is a matter of point of view:

“While value creation occupies a key role in the current reflection on management, the notion of value takes different forms depending on the adopted perspective (instantaneous, cumulative), the type of partner (shareholder, staff, customer...) or even the discipline

(marketing, finance, strategy...). In marketing, two approaches prevail. The first one consists in estimating the value of a customer *from the company's point of view* as being the source of present turnover (or value). (...) The second approach (...) consists in understanding the value of a product (service) *from the consumer's point of view*, during the consumption process, that is to say, the valorization of supply by demand."

(Translated from Aurier et al., 2004)

In marketing, the analysis of value from the consumer's point of view is addressed through either a global or analytical perspective, which in fact corresponds to the dichotomy used by economists between "value in exchange" and "value in use." The former deals with the total value of a product and falls within the perspective of exchange (i.e. customer value). It arises from a confrontation between the benefits and sacrifices associated to consumption. It is defined as "the total evaluation of the utility of a product based on the perceptions of what I get is what I give" (Zeithaml, 1988) or "the ratio between perceived benefits and sacrifices" (Monroe and Krishnan, 1985). The latter deals with consumer value and thus lies within the field of consumption or possession experiences (Aurier, Evrard, and N'Goala, 1998). Holbrook and Corfman (1985) define it as "a relative preference (comparative, personal assessment, situational) characterizing the experience of an individual interacting with an object." This relativist and interactionist perspective falls within the debate on the "objectivity" versus "subjectivity" of value, which opposed the "absolutist" (Plato) point of view for which value is an object to the "relativist" (Aristotle) point of view for which value is assessed by an individual.

After identifying and comparing the work of five scholars (Holbrook, 1994; Holt, 1995; Lai, 1995; Richins, 1994; Evrard and Aurier, 1996) on the meaning of value associated to consumption and possession, they defined a framework for integrating the scholars' respective approach based on three criteria ("Intrinsic/extrinsic," "self-oriented/other-oriented," "active/reactive"). Then, they put in perspective the literature on Functional Attitude Theory such that in the end they came up with four families of value along with two criteria as depicted in table 10 below, which presents a synthetic typology of the components of value.

Table 10. Synthetic Typology of the Components of Value

	Extrinsic	Intrinsic
Self-Oriented	1. Instrumental value (Utilitarian, knowledge)	2. Hedonic value (Pleasure-enjoyment, experiential stimulation)
Other-Oriented	3. Communication (Self-expression, social link)	4. Spiritual value, social practice

Source: Translated from Aurier et al., 2004.

Let us now go through the four families of value.

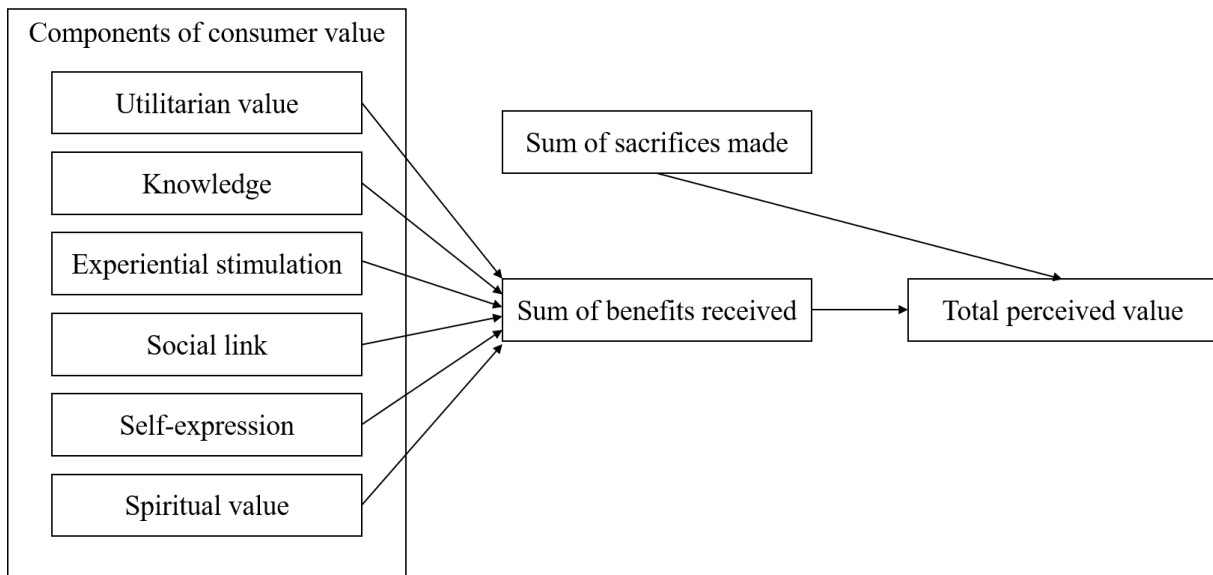
1. **Instrumental value (“Self-Oriented” and “Extrinsic”).** In this family, *utilitarian value* refers to the “value that a customer receives based on a task-related and rational consumption behavior” (Babin et al., 1994). *Knowledge value* corresponds to the desire for knowledge, enrichment, and structuration of the environment so as to take better advantage of it (Katz, 1960). It is linked to the feeling of controlling the product category and feeling competent. It is characterized by a behavior based on a constant search for information that stimulates the individual (Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 1992).
2. **Hedonic value (“Self-Oriented” and “Intrinsic”).** (This family could also be labeled as “aesthetics” considering that it corresponds to the definition that Kant gives for the judgement of taste as being “disinterested.”) *Pleasure-enjoyment value* is based on the work of Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) in which they claimed that consumers seek out pleasurable products and experiences. *Experiential stimulation value* corresponds to the experience’s capacity to stimulate an individual’s senses, to absorb him/her up to the point that he/she forgets his/her direct physical environment and feels a sensation of well-being (Evrard and Aurier, 1996).
3. **Communication (“Other-Oriented” and “Extrinsic”).** In this family, *self-expression value* refers to the capacity of a product or service to project self-expression (towards others as well as towards oneself), to play a role in social communication as a reflection of one’s personality (Solomon, 1983; Belk, 1988). It plays a key role in the analysis of conspicuous consumption, especially in the cultural field (Bourdieu, 1979), and it is a one-way communication. *Social link value* refers to the role of a product as an aid for social interaction and for interindividual exchange including via conversations. It is a two-way communication from oneself towards the others and reciprocally.
4. **Spiritual value (“Other-Oriented” and “Intrinsic”).** In this family, *spiritual value* is based on Holbrook’s definition (1994), and it can be connected to what Holt called

“communing with others” (i.e. humanity). It can also be connected to the function of defending one’s ego, which is characterized as a central element of motivation as proposed by Katz (1960). *Social practice value* (Evrard and Aurier, 1996) is close to Holt’s dimension called “game,” which generates entertainment via contact with others.

According to the latter typology, an individual values a product or service insofar as it responds effectively to one or several functions. Thus, consumer (or use) value does not replace the approach on total value, defined as a ratio of benefits/costs, but complements it by enabling the identification of its antecedents. As a result, Aurier et al. (1994) propose that the components of consumer value aforementioned help to define total utility as a sum of benefits received (or to be received), which when compared to the sum of sacrifices made (or to be made), leads to the judgement of total value.

Figure 16 below displays the links between the components of consumer value and total value that they tested empirically by administering and analyzing a questionnaire on the evaluation of cinema in general to 200 students of a major university in Paris.

Figure 16. Links between Components of Consumer Value and Total Perceived Value

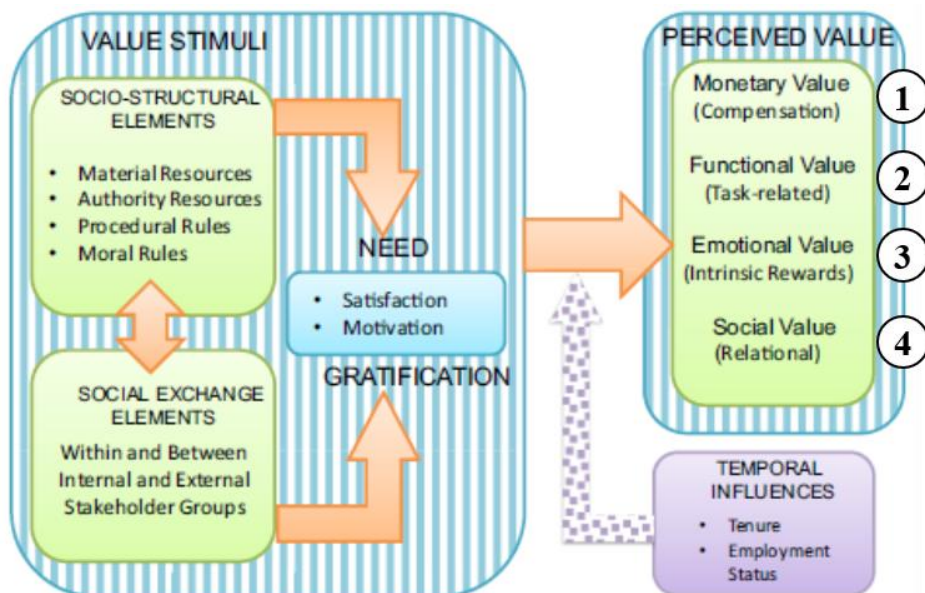


Source: Translated from Aurier et al., 2004.

Internal Customers' Perceived Value

In their article “Value Creation: An Internal Customers’ Perspective” (2015), Grace and Lo Iacono propose a conceptual model for trying to understand how internal customers (i.e. employees of a company) “perceive value within the social landscape of the firm” (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015). In their framework, they sketch out the value co-creation process between a company and its internal customers’ (i.e. employees) from the latter’s perspective, by “taking the view that value is created through the interpretation of and meaning derived from the value co-creation process” (Ind and Coates, 2013). In other words, internal customer perceived value (ICPV) represents the outcome (i.e. actual created value from the internal customer’s perspective) of the value co-creation process, “which involves resource integration of the firm and internal customers” (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015). Based on their research questions (RQ), their conceptual model serves three purposes: (1) To identify the dimensional nature of ICPV (RQ1), to establish the key antecedents (i.e. value stimuli) to ICPV (RQ2), and (3) to propose other key influences in the value co-creation process (RQ3). Figure 17 below shows value creation from the perspective of an internal customer including their perceived value.

Figure 17. Perceived Value Elements from the Internal Customers’ Perspective



Source: Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015.

In the figure above, Grace and Lo Iacono used the PERVAL model of Sweeny and Soutar (2001) as a theoretical foundation for the four dimensions of internal customers’ perceived

value: (1) Monetary value (compensation), (2) functional value (task-related), (3) emotional value (intrinsic rewards), and (4) social value (relationships).

1. **Monetary value (compensation)** is defined as “the internal customer’s perception of value derived from the salary package elements offered as compensation for participation in the value co-creation process” (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015). While the perceived value of an external customer is related to the exchange of money for products and services (Sweeny and Soutar, 2001), that of an internal customer is tied to the exchange of money for labor.
2. **Functional value (task-related)** refers to “the internal customer’s perception of value derived from the firm’s support/opportunity associated with effective task performance in the value co-creation process” (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015). While an external customer perceives value depending on the quality of product or service performance (Sweeny and Soutar, 2001), an internal customer perceives value in relation to his/her function or task performance.
3. **Emotional value (intrinsic rewards)** corresponds to “the internal customer’s perception of value derived from the feelings or affective states aroused in the value co-creation process” (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015). On one hand, an external customer perceives value as a result of the emotional benefits provided by the consumption of products or services (Sweeny and Soutar, 2001), such as for example feeling nicer after getting a haircut at the barber shop. On the other hand, an internal customer perceives value as a result of emotional benefits gained in the value co-creation process with other stakeholders, such as for example feeling anxious for not being able to finish on time an important project initiated by one’s boss.
4. **Social value (relationships)** represents “the internal customer’s perception of the value derived from the social and relational benefits generated in the value co-creation process” (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015). While an external customer derives “social value via the social acceptance and approval associated with product usage” (Sweeny and Soutar, 2001), an internal customer derives value from both social benefits associated to individual exchanges with others and relational benefits tied to relationships development.

That being exposed, **internal customer perceived value (ICPV)** is thus defined as “the total utility derived from the assessment of monetary value (compensation), functional value (task-related), emotional value (intrinsic rewards) and social value (relational)” (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015). In this value co-creation process, Grace and Lo Iacono assert that the sources of

perceived value (i.e. value stimuli) are twofold: (1) Socio-structural elements and (2) social exchange elements.

1. **Socio-structural elements.** According to the structuration theory of Giddens (1984), “the elements of social structure, which combine and determine social practice, include material resources, resources of authority, procedural rules and moral rules” (Giddens, 1984). The various combinations of these elements determine structured practices (Giddens, 1984), which in turn “are articulated through human conduct (social exchange elements) that continually maintain and reproduce the social structure” (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015). The company’s socio-structural elements correspond to the structural mechanisms that influence the value stimuli for the value co-creation process.
2. **Social exchange elements.** According to the social exchange theory of Homans (1958), “exchange is a negotiated process between parties (of at least two) that may result in economic or social benefit” (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015). For instance, exchanges within and between internal and external stakeholders lead to social and relational benefits via workplace interactions and relations, which also provide a source of value for internal customers.

Nonetheless, Grace and Lo Iacono state that the relationship between value stimuli and perceived value is not direct but rather enabled by the gratification of needs including satisfaction and motivation. According to the two-factor theory (Herzberg, et al., 1959) and the need gratification theory (Wolf, 1970) associated to need fulfillment, “measurable and direct consequences of need gratification include job satisfaction and job-related motivation” (Grace and Lo Iacono, 2015). Finally, they assert that temporal influences such as tenure and employment status may have strong moderating influences on their model.

B2C Elements of Value Pyramid

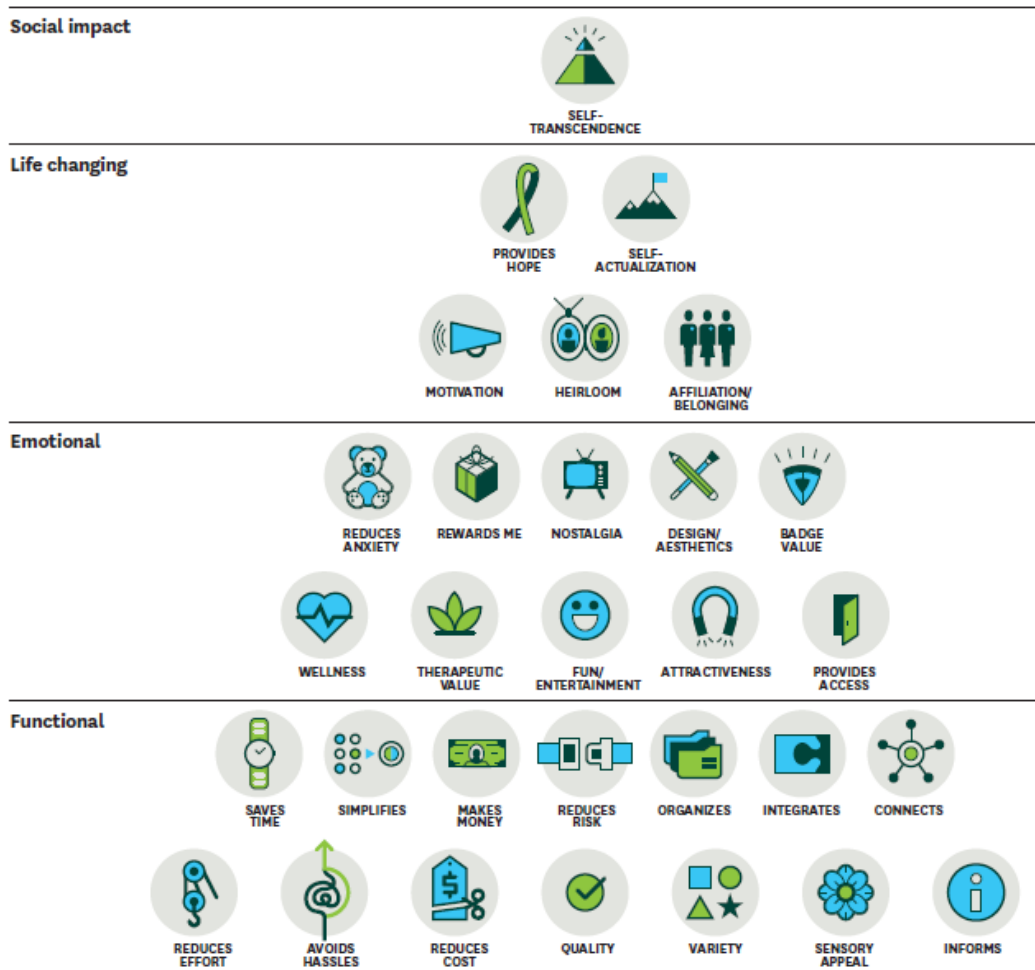
In the article “The Elements of Value: Measuring – and Delivering – What Consumers Really Want” published in the *Harvard Business Review* in 2016, Almquist, Senior, and Bloch from the consulting firm Bain & Company presented the Elements of Value Pyramid in a business-to-consumer (B2C) setting, which classifies 30 “elements of value” into four categories: (1) Functional, (2) emotional, (3) life changing, and (4) social impact. Their heuristic model (practical but not theoretical) is based on the “hierarchy of needs” model of the psychologist

Abraham Maslow (1943), who classified human needs in a 5-level pyramid. Moving upward, at the bottom of the pyramid lie the basic needs [(1) physiological and (2) safety], at the center lie the psychological needs [(3) love and belonging as well as (4) esteem], and at the top lie the self-fulfillment needs [(5) self-actualization]. According to Maslow, needs that are located at a lower level in the hierarchy have to be completely satisfied before one can move on to fulfilling needs at a higher level.

As a matter of fact, the B2C Elements of Value Pyramid is an extension of Maslow's work "by focusing on people as consumers – describing their behavior as it relates to products and services" (Almquist et al., 2016). It is the result of "three decades of experience doing consumer research and observation for corporate clients," that helped them "to identify these 30 fundamental attributes, which were derived from scores of quantitative and qualitative customer studies" including the "laddering" interviewing technique (Almquist et al., 2016). The idea is that "when customers evaluate a product or service, they weigh its perceived value against the asking price" (Almquist et al., 2016). As a result, marketers focus on price management in order to raise profits because it can be quickly achieved upon a simple decision, whereas identifying what consumers truly value is psychologically more difficult to evaluate.

Figure 18 below shows the B2C Elements of Value Pyramid that reflects the 30 fundamental attributes (i.e. elements) of perceived value from the customer's perspective in a B2C setting.

Figure 18. Perceived Value Elements from the Customer's Perspective (B2C)



Source: Almquist et al., 2016. (© Bain & Company Inc. 2015)

In order to check if the elements of value were linked to company performance in terms of customer relationships and revenue growth, they “collaborated with Research Now (an online sampling and data collection company) to survey more than 10,000 U.S. consumers about their perceptions of nearly 50 U.S.-based companies” (Almquist et al., 2016). Their findings showed that companies performing well on multiple elements of value had more loyal customers as well as experienced higher revenue growth than other companies. In addition, “the relevance of elements varies according to industry, culture, and demographics,” except for perceived quality that was rated as the single most important element of value for both products and services across all industries. (Almquist et al., 2016). In fact, table 11 below shows the top five elements that influence customer loyalty, that is, what customers value in products and services in three out of the ten types of businesses included in their data.

Table 11. Top 5 Elements that Influence Customer Loyalty by Industry

Ranking	Discount Retail	Food and Beverages	Smartphones
#1	Quality	Quality	Quality
#2	Variety	Sensory appeal	Reduces effort
#3	Reduces cost	Variety	Variety
#4	Saves time	Design / Aesthetics	Organizes
#5	Rewards me	Therapeutic value	Connects

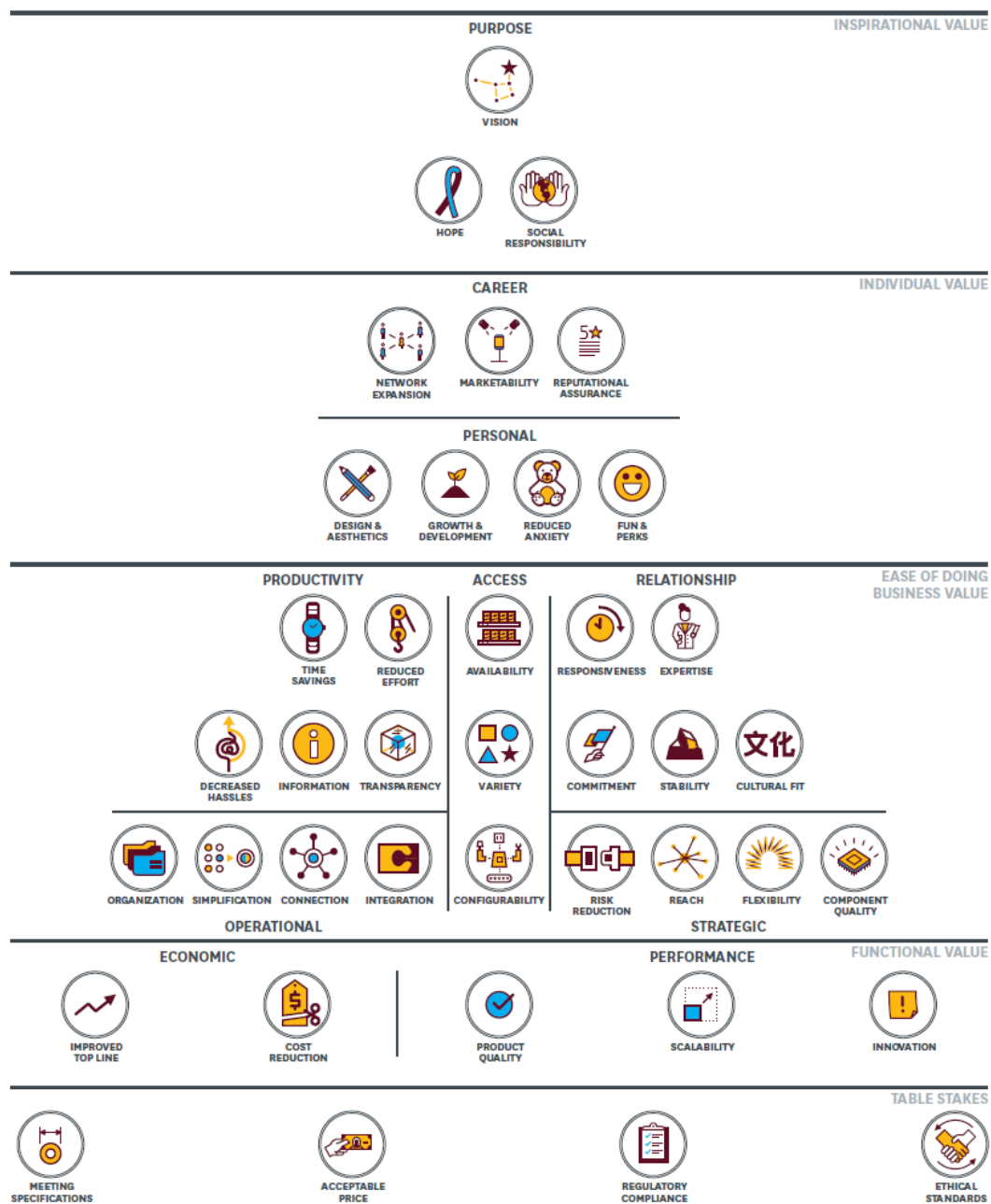
Source: Adapted from Almquist et al., 2016.

B2B Elements of Value Pyramid

In a subsequent article “The B2B Elements of Value: How to Measure – and Deliver – What Business Customers Want” published in the *Harvard Business Review* in 2018, Almquist, Cleghorn, and Sherer from the consulting firm Bain & Company presented a B2B (business-to-business) model of their initial B2C (business-to-consumer) Elements of Value Pyramid. In this B2B model, they classify 40 “elements of value [as opposed to 30 in the B2C model] in five different categories [instead of four in the B2C model]: Table stakes, functional, ease of doing business, individual, inspirational” (Almquist et al., 2018).

Figure 19 below depicts the B2B Elements of Value Pyramid that reflects the 40 fundamental attributes (i.e. elements) of perceived value from the business customers’ perspective. Just like their initial B2C model, this B2B model is a heuristic one as it is more practical than theoretical.

Figure 19. Perceived Value Elements from the Business Customers' Perspective (B2B)



Source: Almquist et al., 2018. (© Bain & Company Inc. 2018)

At the base of the pyramid are the elements that provide more objective value, and the higher the level in the pyramid, the more subjective and personal value the elements contain. “Table stakes value” elements are defined as those “meeting specifications at an acceptable price in compliance with regulations while abiding by ethical standards” (Almquist et al., 2018). “Functional value” elements correspond to those that deal with a company’s economic or product performance such as “cost reduction” and “product quality” respectively. “Ease of doing business value” elements represent those that facilitate business and include “the first set

of elements that involve subjective judgements from buyers,” such as a supplier’s “responsiveness” or level of “expertise” in a business relationship (Almquist et al., 2018). “Individual value” elements provide even more subjective value since they address the priorities of an individual buyer, “whether they are personal (‘reduced anxiety’), appealing (‘design & aesthetics’) or career related (increased ‘marketability’ or ‘network expansion’)” (Almquist et al., 2018). At the top of the pyramid lie the “inspirational value” elements, which offer “vision” and “hope” for the future of an individual buyer or of the company “or even improve a company’s “social responsibility.”

In order to check if the elements of value were linked to company performance in terms of loyalty more specifically, they “collaborated with Research Now and Lucid to survey more than 2,300 corporate decision makers in two industries: IT infrastructure and commercial insurance” (Almquist et al., 2018). They collected information on the perceptions of how sellers performed on the 36-non-table-stakes value elements only (because they considered that the four table stakes ones are a prerequisite for being in business). Just like in their B2C (business-to-consumer) model, their findings revealed that companies performing well on multiple elements of value had more loyal customers than other companies.

Brief comparison of the four value perception frameworks

Based on the work of Gummerus (2013) regarding the streams of research on value outcome determination (and leaving aside value as phenomenological processes), table 12 below shows a comparison of the four value perception frameworks: (1) The Components of Consumer Value, (2) the Internal Customers’ Perceived Value, (3) the B2C Elements of Value Pyramid, and (4) the B2B Elements of Value Pyramid.

Table 12. Comparison of the Selected Value Perception Frameworks

Framework	Main purpose	Value as means-end	Value as benefits/sacrifices	Value as experience outcomes
Components of Consumer Value	To identify the components of consumer value from the consumer's perspective		Components of consumer value make up the sum of benefits (in parallel to the sum of sacrifices) and are thus antecedents of total perceived value	
Internal Customers' Perceived Value (ICPV)	To identify the elements of perceived value from the internal customer's perspective (Employee)			ICPV is the outcome (i.e. actual created value) of a co-creation process between the firm and the employee
B2C Elements of Value Pyramid	To identify the elements of perceived value from the customer's perspective (B2C)	B2C elements of value pyramid shows the benefits that a customer gets from an offering's attributes		
B2B Elements of Value Pyramid	To identify the elements of perceived value from the business customer's perspective (B2B)	B2B elements of value pyramid shows the benefits that a business customer gets from an offering's attributes		

Source: Author.

As depicted in the table above, the four frameworks were designed for different purposes with regards to value outcome determination so that each framework lies in a different category of value perception. Just like in the comparison of the four value creation frameworks, it shows that value can be perceived in different ways depending on the adopted perspective along with the main purpose for which the tool was intentionally designed. As stated before, this confirms that there seems to be an opportunity to create a tool whose main purpose is to help managers to become aware of alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted perspective.

2.3.8. Linking value creation and value determination via customer experience

As previously mentioned, value creation processes take into consideration the combination of activities, resources, and actors altogether for creating value, while value outcome determination involves the type of value outcomes that are perceived by customers or any other party (Gummerus, 2013). As illustrated in figure 20 below, Gummerus (2013) also proposes that “experience is the missing link and the common denominator of value creation processes and value outcomes.”

Figure 20. Linking Value Creation and Value Determination via Customer Experience



Source: Adapted from Gummerus, 2013.

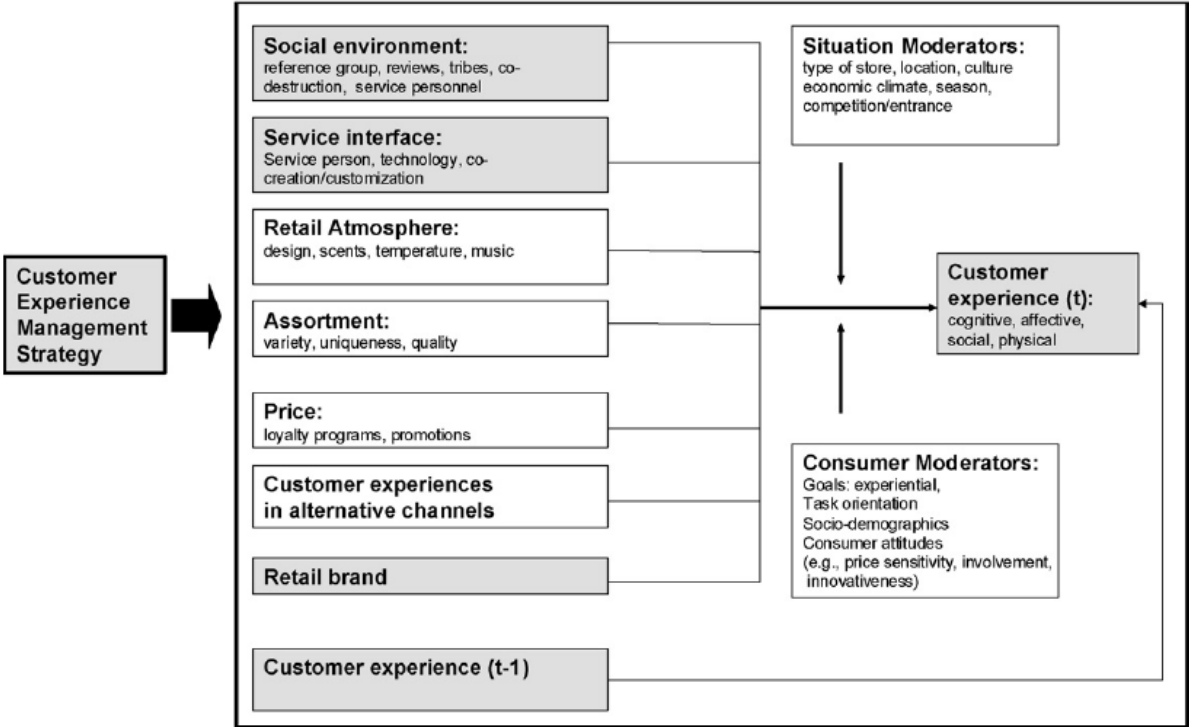
In fact, Gummerus' (2013) proposition is based on two assumptions: "(1) Customers provide the frame for interpreting creation/co-creation activities (e.g. Cova and Dalli, 2009; Peñaloza and Venkatesh, 2006; Rowley et al., 2007), and (2) when customers engage in creation/co-creation activities, service experiences are created (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004a, 2004b) as customers act, sense, and think during these events." As mentioned by the author, Helkkula and Kelleher (2010) also proposed that experiences affect perceived value, which in turn affect successive experiences via an on-going circular process.

In reality, the proposition that (created) value is always determined via the customer's experience is in line with the set of assumptions proposed by three different marketing perspectives: (1) Service-Dominant Logic, (2) Service Logic, and (3) Customer-Dominant Logic. According to Service-Dominant Logic, Foundational Premise 10 (cf. section 3.3.1) claims that "value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary" (Vargo and Lusch, 2008). In other words, each service-for-service exchange between the service provider and the service beneficiary creates a different service experience in a specific context (i.e. specific combination of resources and actors) and thus a unique assessment of value by the service beneficiary (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). With respect to Service Logic, Principle 3 (cf. section 3.4.1) states that "value (as 'value-in-use') is uniquely, experientially, and contextually perceived and determined by customers" (Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014). Likewise, value is created by customers during their usage of resources in a specific context that "determines the experience of value-in-use" (Grönroos and Voima, 2013). As for Customer-Dominant Logic, Principle 1 (cf. section 3.5.1) asserts that "customer value formation is customers' emerging behavioral and mental processes of interpreting, experiencing and integrating offering in their everyday lives/businesses, with either positive or negative outcomes" (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015). Similarly, customers perform activities that require the use of certain products and services (i.e. offering) such that the specific goals and tasks (i.e. needing; Strandvik et al., 2012) that they need to fulfill in their everyday lives/businesses

ultimately determine how these products and services can be experienced when they are used (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015).

In their influential article “Customer Experience Creation: Determinants, Dynamics and Management Strategies” (2009), Verhoef et al. developed a conceptual model of customer experience creation by drawing from prior research on different aspects of customer experience. According to the authors, customer experience is “holistic in nature and involves the customer’s cognitive, affective, emotional, social, and physical responses to the retailer” (Verhoef et al., 2009). They further claim that experience emerges from elements that are controlled by the retailer “(e.g. service interface, retail atmosphere, assortment, price)” as well as by elements outside of his/her control “(e.g. influence of others, purpose of shopping)” (Verhoef et al., 2009). In addition, they propose that customer experience must embrace “the *total* experience, including the search, purchase, consumption, and after-sales phases of the experience” (Verhoef et al., 2009). Figure 21 below displays their holistic conceptual model of customer experience creation.

Figure 21. Conceptual Model of Customer Experience Creation



Source: Verhoef et al., 2009.

Let us go through the determinants that have an impact on customer experience. With regards to the social environment, not only can a customer be influenced by both the opinion of friends or family relatives shopping with him/her as well as the (positive or negative) behavior of other shoppers in the store, but he/she can also be influenced by customer reviews posted online in the social media, blogs, or even on the retailer's website. With respect to the service interface, the store's personnel advice and the type of technology-based systems such as "self-service check-out counters" can play a considerable role too (Verhoef et al., 2009). Concerning retail atmosphere, the store layout and design as well as the stimulation of a customer's five senses via the use of scents, special lighting effects, or even music can drastically improve the shopping experience. Moreover, the type of product assortment (in terms of variety, quality and uniqueness) and the type of pricing policy (e.g. everyday low prices vs. premium prices) including price promotions as well as loyalty programs for rewarding customers can have an impact on customer experience. The authors also claim that the customer's experience of a retailer brand (i.e. a private label as opposed to a national brand) has an impact on his/her overall perception of the retailer, which in turn can influence his/her subsequent purchases. Besides the customer's interaction within the store, other experiences in alternative retail channels (e.g. online) in addition to "multiple (...) and repeated experiences within a channel" may altogether affect the total customer experience that evolves over time (Verhoef et al., 2009). Thus, "prior customer experiences will influence future customer experiences" (Verhoef et al., 2009).

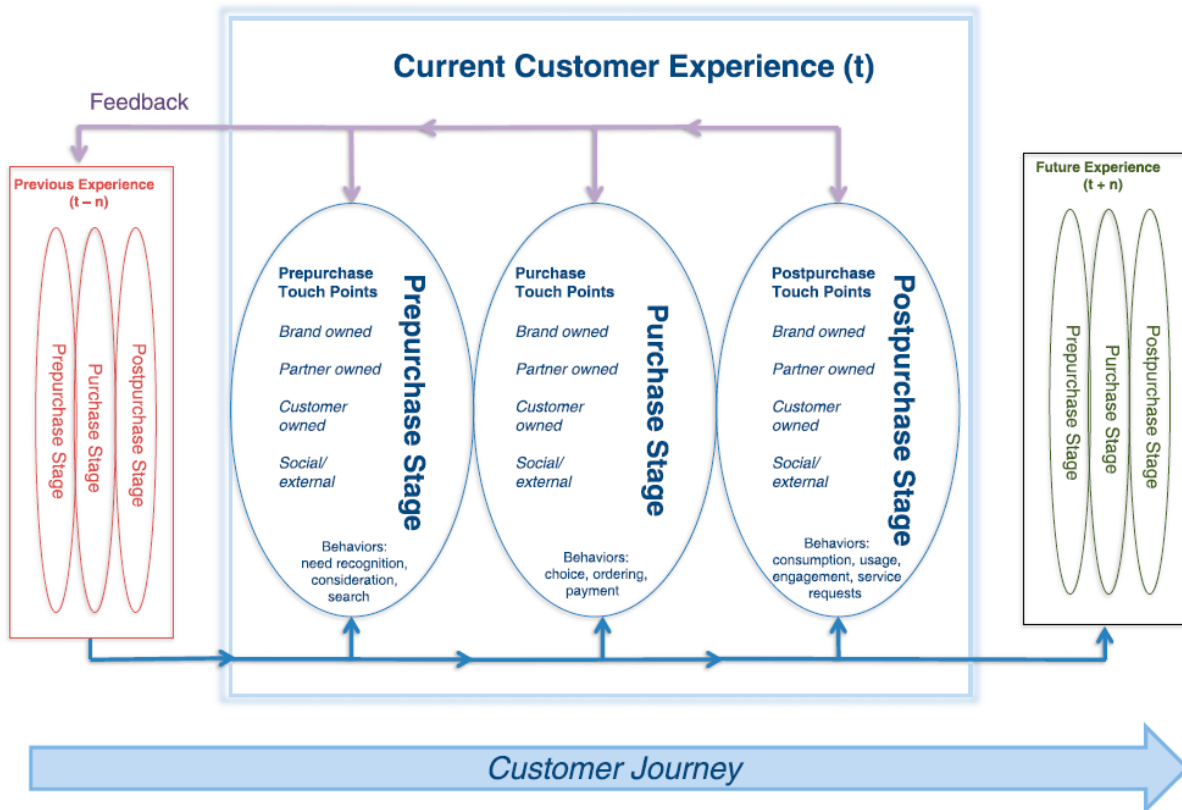
According to the authors, all of these determinants are moderated by two types of factors: (1) Consumer factors and (2) situational factors. Consumer moderators include goals for shopping in a store such that a task-oriented customer may be more inclined to "consider the assortment of the store as a more important driver of customer experience" than an experientially oriented customer who might be paying more attention to the retail atmosphere (Verhoef et al., 2009). Accordingly, these goals are shaped by other factors such as socio-demographics (e.g. personality and lifestyle) and consumer attitudes (e.g. price sensitivity and level of involvement) (Verhoef et al., 2009). As for situational moderators, they include: "The type of store (e.g. discount vs. full service, specialty vs. general), channel (e.g. store vs. Internet), location (e.g. mall vs. city center), culture (e.g. masculinity, individualism), season (e.g. regular vs. holiday), economic climate (e.g. recession vs. expansion), and competitive intensity (e.g. Burgess and Steenkamp, 2006; Lamey et al., 2007, Sloot and Verhoef, 2008; Verhoef, Neslin, and Vroomen, 2007)" (Verhoef et al., 2009).

More recently, Lemon and Verhoef (2016) developed a dynamic model of “the customer experience as a ‘customer journey’ with a firm over time during the purchase cycle across multiple touch points,” whereby touch points are defined as “individual contacts between the firm and the customer at distinct points in the experience” (Homburg et al., 2015; Schmitt, 2013). Just like for the concept of value creation (Gummerus, 2013), the authors explain that the concept of customer experience can be viewed from three different perspectives: (1) From the company’s point of view, (2) from the customer’s point of view, and (3) from a cocreation point of view.

After reviewing the academic literature on the contributions to customer experience research (cf. appendix 2), they define customer experience as “a multidimensional construct focusing on a customer’s cognitive, emotional, behavioral, sensorial, and social responses to a firm’s offerings during the customer’s entire purchase journey” (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016), which can be linked to other more focused constructs. For instance, “customer satisfaction” could be considered as a component of customer experience as it focuses “on the customer’s cognitive evaluation of the experience” by comparing the expectations of a customer with the actual delivered performance of an offering (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Also, “service quality” (and its constituent elements) could be regarded as an antecedent of customer experience because it provides “the context in which experiences arise,” which can then be evaluated by customers via a reflected experience (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). “Commitment” could be a consequence of customer experience because it measures “a customer’s connection with a company” (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). “Trust” could have an impact on customer experience since “it reduces cognitive effort and attention paid to monitoring a relationship” (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Finally, “customer engagement” pays attention to how the customer “reaches out and initiates contact with the firm” via “touch points along the customer journey [which] results in cognitive, emotional, behavioral, sensorial, and social responses on the part of the customer,” such that “customer engagement” represents “specific touch points along the customer journey” per se (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).

Figure 22 below displays the process model of customer journey and experience.

Figure 22. Process Model of Customer Journey and Experience



Source: Lemon and Verhoef, 2016.

As shown in the figure above, the customer experience is divided into three distinct stages: (1) The pre-purchase stage, (2) the purchase stage, and (3) the post-purchase stage. In the pre-purchase stage, customer behavior typically includes the recognition of a need/goal/impulse, the search for alternative solutions, and the consideration of a set of solutions (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). In the purchase stage, customer behavior normally involves the choice of a specific offering, ordering of as well as payment for the selected offering. In the post-purchase stage, customer behavior usually comprises the consumption and usage of an offering, post-purchase engagement with the company, and after-sales service requests (e.g. maintenance and repair) (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).

According to the authors, a customer can be exposed to four categories of customer experience touch points at each stage of the customer journey: (1) Brand-owned, (2) partner-owned, (3) customer-owned, and (4) social/external. Brand-owned touch points are defined as “customer interactions during the experience that are designed and managed by the firm and under the firm’s control” (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). On one hand, they include brand-owned media

such as the company's website, advertising campaigns, point-of-sale materials, and loyalty programs, and on the other hand, they include brand-controlled elements of the marketing mix such as product attributes, packaging, services, and price (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Partner-owned touch points are defined as "customer interactions during the experience that are jointly designed, managed, or controlled by the firm and one or more of its partners" (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Partners can include marketing and advertising agencies as well multichannel distribution partners among many others (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Customer-owned touch points are defined as "customer actions that are part of the overall customer experience but that the firm, its partners, or others do not influence or control" (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). They include a customer's choice of payment method or even video tutorials posted on YouTube by customers proposing to use a company's offering in unintended or unexpected ways (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Social/external touch points are defined as "touch points that recognize the important roles of others in the customer experience" (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). They include the presence of other customers when shopping, the influence of peers, and third-party information sources such as the social media (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). At each stage of the customer's experience, previous experience may also influence current experience (and thus future experience as well). Likewise, the customer's dynamic external environment (e.g. weather conditions), extreme crises, and the economic situation can significantly influence customer experience (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).

2.3.9. Conclusion

Over time, the American Marketing Association regularly updated its definition of marketing in order to reflect the increasing role of value as a central concept in marketing. Meanwhile, many researchers noted that value is one of the most misused terms/concepts in the management literature (Khalifa, 2004; Leszinski and Marn, 1997; Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007) such that it still remains poorly understood by many managers. In order to clarify this key concept in marketing, Gummerus (2013) showed that research on value can be divided into two main streams: (1) Value creation processes (i.e. created value) and (2) value outcome determination (i.e. perceived value). On one hand, value can be created: (1) By companies (as described in Goods-Dominant Logic), (2) in the interaction between a company and a customer (referred to as a co-creation process in Service-Dominant Logic and in Service Logic), and (3) by customers (as explained in Customer-Dominant Logic). On the other hand, value can be

determined (or perceived) as: (1) Means-ends, (2) benefits/sacrifices, (3) experience outcomes, and (4) phenomenological processes (as in both Service-Dominant Logic and Service Logic).

Many different popular value creation frameworks and value perception frameworks have been developed by academic researchers and mainstream consulting firms. As for the value creation frameworks, most of those that I covered have been designed so as to help managers to understand how to create value from the company's perspective by focusing primarily on their own business processes, while sometimes also incorporating the customer and thereby giving rise to a value co-creation process. A tool that could help managers to compare different marketing perspectives as alternative ways of creating value could enable them to consider other value-creating aspects of business that they might have neglected thus far.

No matter who creates value, in the end value is always determined via the customer's unique experience. Consequently, customer experience can potentially represent the missing link between value creation processes and value outcome determination and thus needs to be taken into account by companies. Customer experience can be influenced by many factors throughout the customer journey (i.e. pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages) such as the customer's goals for shopping, the customer's social environment, the customer's experiences in alternative channels, the company's service interface, or even a retail store's atmosphere, assortment, and pricing policy. Likewise, a customer can be exposed to different categories of customer experience touch points that represent any direct or indirect individual contacts between a company and a customer, some of which are controlled by the company and many others that are not. Overall, the previous experiences of a customer may significantly influence his/her current and thus future experiences as well.

At this point, let us now explore the possibility of combining multiple levels of analysis for my research work.

2.4. INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS PERSPECTIVE AND LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

2.4.1. Introduction

According to Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury (2012), the level of analysis that researchers decide to choose a priori does determine “the selection of problems and tools for investigating a problem and therefore what they are likely to observe.” By combining multiple levels of analysis, researchers can thus get a more precise picture of the problem at stake because observation across levels can help to “see the workings of mechanisms and – according to the Institutional Logic Perspective – the contradictory nature of logics” (Thornton et al., 2012). By definition, a manager working in a company is thus embedded in both the individual and the organizational level. Let us then see what the Institutional Logics Perspective can bring to my research work.

2.4.2. Multiple levels of analysis in Institutional Logics Perspective

In the 1970’s, Meyer and Rowan (1977) as well as Zucker (1977) proposed a new approach to Institutional Theory by highlighting the role of culture and cognition. Meyer and Rowan (1977) analyzed organizations from a macro perspective and “emphasized the role of modernization in rationalizing taken-for-granted rules, leading to isomorphism in the formal structures of organizations” (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). Zucker (1977) analyzed organizations from a micro-perspective by also stressing on “the taken-for-granted nature of institutions, and the role of cultural persistence as a measure of institutionalization” (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). Building on the work of Meyer and Rowan (1977), DiMaggio and Powell (1983) extended the “focus on isomorphism from the societal level to the level of organizational fields” by emphasizing on coercive, normative, and mimetic sources of isomorphism (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). Subsequently, the work of several researchers (Friedland and Ashford, 1991; Haveman and Rao, 1997; Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Scott et al., 2000) led to the creation of Institutional Logics as a new approach to institutional analysis, and whose aim is to define “the content and meaning of institutions” (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). In fact, the focus of Institutional Logics is “no longer on isomorphism...but on the effects of differentiated institutional logics on individuals and organizations in a larger variety of contexts, including markets, industries, and populations of organizational forms” (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008).

Initially, the term “institutional logics” was first coined by Alford and Friedland (1985) as a description of “the contradictory practices and beliefs inherent in the institutions of modern western societies.” They explained that capitalism, state bureaucracy, and political democracy were three institutional orders with diverse practices and beliefs that determine how individuals get into political struggles (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). Later, they “further developed this concept of exploring the interrelationships between individuals, organizations, and society” (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008).

According to Thornton and Ocasio (2008), an “institutional logic” refers to “the socially constructed, historical patterns of cultural symbols and material practices, including assumptions, values, and beliefs by which individuals and organizations provide meaning to their daily activity, organize time and space, and reproduce their lives and experience.” The aim of the Institutional Logics Perspective is to provide “a metatheoretical framework for analyzing the interrelationships among institutions, individuals, and organizations in social systems” (Thornton et al., 2012). This analytical framework attempts to demonstrate how individuals and organizations can be influenced within the interinstitutional system depending on their situation in the different institutional orders that they belong to, that is to say, the family, the community, the religion, the state, the market, the profession, and the corporation. In fact, each institutional order is based on “unique organizing principles, practices, and symbols that influence individual and organizational behavior” and thus in turn determine “how reasoning takes place and how rationality is perceived and experienced” (Thornton et al., 2012).

The institutional logics perspective is based on four fundamental metatheoretical principles: (1) The duality of agency and structure, (2) institutions as material and symbolic, (3) institutions as historically contingent, and (4) institutions at multiple levels of analysis (Thornton et al., 2012). Let us now go over each one of them in detail.

1. The duality of agency and structure

A key principle is that “the interests, identities, values, and assumptions of individuals and organizations are embedded within prevailing institutional logics” (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). As a result, several orienting strategies have served as a guideline to solve the issue of agency and structure. An orientation strategy is defined as “a metatheoretical structure

consisting of a system of interrelated assumptions and conceptions of the actor, action, and order” (Thornton et al., 2012). First, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) proposed a theory of “structural isomorphism,” whereby mimetic and normative isomorphism consider that “social relations are patterned and constraining to free individuals and organizations,” while coercive isomorphism considers that powerful regulatory actors have some degree of “agency other than conformity and habitual behavior.” Second, Giddens (1984) developed the concept of “structuration” with “the duality of structure and action” by claiming that “individual actors are simultaneously constrained and enabled by existing social structures.” Third, due to the lack of a theory in the Neoinstitutional Perspective, several scholars (DiMaggio, 1988; Fligstein, 1997, 2001; Garud, Jain, and Kumaraswamy, 2002; Munir and Philips, 2005; Levy and Scully, 2007) worked on the concept of the “institutional entrepreneur,” who engages “in a competition for the ability to own and frame an idea in hopes that they can express their self-interest in shaping how the idea is institutionalized.” Fourth, Swidler (1986) proposed that individuals use culture as a “toolkit,” whereby “people may share common aspirations, while remaining profoundly different in the way their culture organizes their overall pattern of behavior.” That being exposed, the aim of the Institutional Logics Perspective is to investigate “how individuals and organizations are situated within and influenced by the spheres of different institutional orders, each of which presents a unique view of rationality” (Thornton et al., 2012).

2. Institutions as material and symbolic

Another key principle is that each institutional order in society is made up of both material and symbolic elements that “are intertwined and constitutive of one another” (Thornton et al., 2012). The material elements of institutions refer to structures and practices, while the symbolic elements refer to ideation and meaning. For instance, Becker (1974) shows that family and religion “are directly involved in the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services” even though they are not considered as part of the economic sphere. Also, for Granovetter (1985) markets “are directly shaped by culture and social structure, including networks of social relationships, as well as structures of power, status, and domination” even though they are not considered as part of the cultural sphere. Consequently, the aim of the Institutional Logics Perspective is to combine both symbolic and material elements of institutions so as to integrate “research on culture and cognition” and thus examine how culture shapes action (Thornton et al., 2012).

3. Institutions as historically contingent

Another core principle is that institutions are historically contingent. According to Friedland and Alford (1991), several studies on economic and organizational effects demonstrated that findings that are valid in one time period are not in other time periods. Thanks to the use of anecdotal data, they showed that “the definition of the common terms profit and debt change with a shift in accounting procedures and tax laws as these concepts are subject to larger societal change pressures” (Thornton et al., 2012). Hence, the aim of the Institutional Logics Perspective is to observe the social mechanisms “that mediate between cause and effect and unfold over time” (Gross, 2009).

4. Institutions at multiple levels of analysis

A last key principle is that “institutions operate at multiple levels of analysis and that actors are nested in higher order levels – individual, organizational, field, and societal” (Thornton et al., 2012). For instance, when organizations are subject to change, the key question is to find out whether it is due to a change in actors or in the structure, and also whether there are some cross-level interaction effects (Thornton et al., 2012). In order to answer these questions, it is important to identify the different cause-and-effect mechanisms, which are elements that operate at different levels of analysis and can contribute, “if specified, [to] make the theory more precise and general” (Stinchcombe, 1991). Therefore, the aim of the Institutional Logics Perspective is to combine multiple levels of analysis in order to be more precise since observation across levels helps to “see the workings of mechanisms and – according to the institutional logics perspective – the contradictory nature of institutional logics” (Thornton et al., 2012).

2.4.3. The Interinstitutional System as ideal type

In their concept of Interinstitutional System, Friedland and Alford (1991) propose a typology of ideal type categories that can be used as a tool for empirical research. “According to the latent-variable approach, individuals act based on their socialization to cultural norms and values within particular domains such as families and corporations” (Thornton et al., 2012). As a theoretical model, the ideal type categories do not try to describe “an organization field,

research context, or level of analysis,” but instead they intend to define and identify the boundaries of institutional orders by evaluating “the relative distance of the observations from the pure form or ideal type” (Thornton et al., 2012). In fact, this methodology can be compared to the way “a researcher might use a statistical model for predicting and estimating the characteristics of a population” (Thornton et al., 2012).

Figure 23 below shows a revised version of the Interinstitutional System Ideal Types.

Figure 23. (Revised) Interinstitutional System Ideal Types

Y-Axis:	X-Axis: Institutional Orders						
Categories	Family 1	Community 2	Religion 3	State 4	Market 5	Profession 6	Corporation 7
Root Metaphor 1	Family as firm	Common boundary	Temple as bank	State as redistribution mechanism	Transaction	Profession as relational network	Corporation as hierarchy
Sources of Legitimacy 2	Unconditional loyalty	Unity of will Belief in trust & reciprocity	Importance of faith & sacredness in economy & society	Democratic participation	Share price	Personal expertise	Market position of firm
Sources of Authority 3	Patriarchal domination	Commitment to community values & ideology	Priesthood charisma	Bureaucratic domination	Shareholder activism	Professional association	Board of directors Top management
Sources of Identity 4	Family reputation	Emotional connection Ego-satisfaction & reputation	Association with deities	Social & economic class	Faceless	Association with quality of craft Personal reputation	Bureaucratic roles
Basis of Norms 5	Membership in household	Group membership	Membership in congregation	Citizenship in nation	Self-interest	Membership in guild & association	Employment in firm
Basis of Attention 6	Status in household	Personal investment in group	Relation to supernatural	Status of interest group	Status in market	Status in profession	Status in hierarchy
Basis of Strategy 7	Increase family honor	Increase status & honor of members & practices	Increase religious symbolism of natural events	Increase community good	Increase efficiency profit	Increase personal reputation	Increase size & diversification of firm
Informal Control Mechanisms 8	Family politics	Visibility of actions	Worship of calling	Backroom politics	Industry analysts	Celebrity professionals	Organization culture
Economic System 9	Family capitalism	Cooperative capitalism	Occidental capitalism	Welfare capitalism	Market capitalism	Personal capitalism	Managerial capitalism

Source: Thornton et al., 2012 – Adapted from Thornton, 2004.

In the figure above, the x-axis depicts the seven institutional orders that altogether make up the interinstitutional system. In fact, each institutional order is defined as “a different domain of institutions built around a cornerstone institution that represents the cultural symbols and material practices that govern a commonly organized area of life” (Thornton et al., 2012). In addition, each institutional order embodies “a governance system that provides a frame of reference” within which actors can make sensemaking choices (Thornton et al., 2012). Finally, each institutional order offers “the root symbols and metaphors through which individuals and organizations perceive and categorize their activity and infuse it with meaning and value” (Thornton et al., 2012).

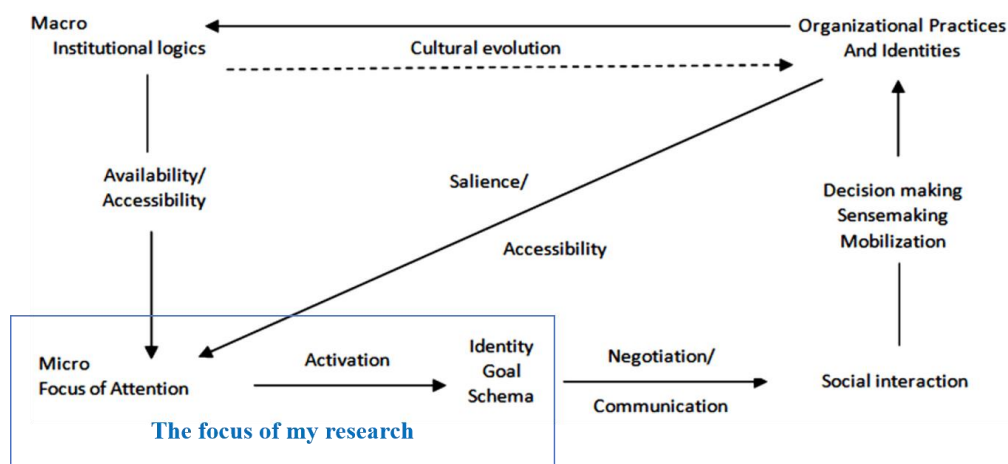
The y-axis displays the building blocks that actually represent the cultural symbols and material practices of each institutional order. These building blocks are the organizing principles around which individuals and organizations develop their “preferences, interests, and repertoire of behaviors by which interests and preferences are attained within the sphere of influence of a specific order” (Friedland and Alford, 1991: 232). Furthermore, these building blocks also denote how individuals and organizations, “if influenced by anyone institutional order, are likely to understand their sense of self and identity: that is, who they are, their logics of action, how they act, their vocabularies of motive, and what language is salient” (Thornton et al., 2012).

2.4.4. Integrative Model of the Microfoundations of Institutional Logics

In order to better grasp the microfoundations of the Institutional Logics Perspective, Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury (2012) developed a model based on the assumptions that humans are “situated, embedded, and boundedly intentional actors” as well as on the theory of dynamic constructivism (Hong et al., 2000; Morris and Gelfand, 2004) and of symbolic interactionism. According to the dynamic constructivist approach, “culture is best understood as a network of learned knowledge structures, distributed amongst cultural members” (Thornton et al., 2012). It also claims that the actions of individuals “depend on the availability, accessibility, and activation of cultural knowledge” (Thornton et al., 2012). [Availability refers to the knowledge and information that can be used by individuals in their cognitive processes. Accessibility denotes the knowledge and information that comes to mind. Activation signifies whether available and accessible knowledge and information are actually used in social interaction. (Thornton et al., 2012)] From an Institutional Logics Perspective, this implies that individuals learn various “contrasting and contradictory institutional logics through social interactions and socialization” (Thornton et al., 2012).

Figure 24 below depicts their Integrative Model of the Microfoundations of Institutional Logics that combines macro-micro and micro-macro levels.

Figure 24. Integrative Model of the Microfoundations of Institutional Logics



Source: Thornton et al., 2012.

According to the model in the figure above, institutional logics starts with the fact that the attention of individual actors is focused through cultural embeddedness (Ocasio, 1997; Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Thornton, 2004). In turn, this activates a social actor’s situated identities, goals, and action schemas, which along with “the shared focus of attention shape social interaction” (Goffman, 1974; Collins, 2000, 2004). Accordingly, this creates “communication and resource flows, and interdependencies, resulting in social practices and structures, including organizations and institutional work” (Thornton et al., 2012). Finally, “situated practices are selected and retained through processes of cultural evolution” out of which emerge institutional logics at the levels of organization, institutional field, and society (Thornton et al., 2012).

As stated by Thornton et al. (2012), both cognition and behavior are guided by social actors’ (1) Identities, (2) goals, and (3) schemas that are elements of situated, bounded intentionality.

1. **Social Identities.** “Individuals have multiple social identities, defined both in terms of group or category membership, as per psychological social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Hogg and Abrams, 1988), and in terms of identification with particular social roles, as per sociological identity theory (Stryker, 1968; Burke and Tully, 1977; Stryker, 1980)” (Thornton et al., 2012). For example, with respect to managers, the relevant category identities can include their industry, profession, or occupation, and regarding role identities that are defined in terms of relationships among social actors, it can include their position within a company or within a team project. In Institutional Logics, research has been

conducted on “the concept of identity in order to explain both stability and change in organizations and institutions” (Thornton et al., 2012). For instance, Rao, Monin, and Durand (2003) identified “nouvelle cuisine as an identity movement, generating a new institutional logic in contrast to classical French cuisine” (Thornton et al., 2012).

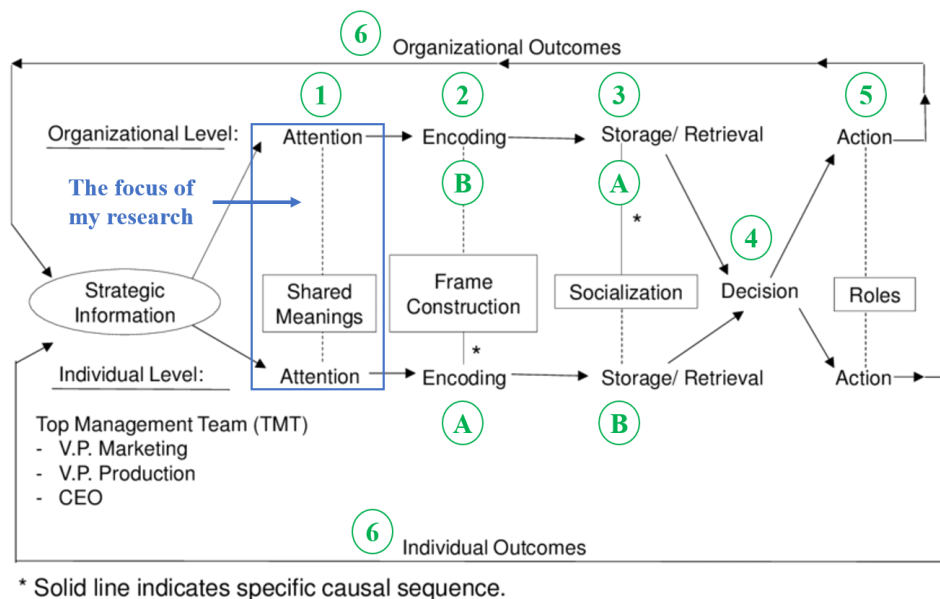
2. **Goals.** Individuals (Simon, 1955; Ford, 1996) and organizations (Cyert and March, 1963; Ethiraj and Levinthal, 2009; Joseph and Ocasio, 2010) also have multiple goals that guide cognition and action. As asserted by the Institutional Logics Perspective, goals are also “culturally embedded within alternative institutional logics,” and “conflicts among goals remain unresolved but are activated by the focus of attention (Simon, 1955; Cyert and March, 1963; Ocasio, 1997)” (Thornton et al., 2012). For instance, Thornton (2002) showed that higher-education publishing in the U.S. moved from an editorial logic with goals based on prestige and sales growth to a market logic with goals focused on short-term profits.
3. **Schemas.** Schemas are top-down knowledge structures that help social actors to process information and guide decisions (Thornton, 2004). In a top-down approach to information processing (Nisbett and Ross, 1980), “schemas are learned, organized cognitive structures that shape attention, construal, inference, and problem solving” (Thornton et al., 2012). Since individuals are limited in their capacity to focus their attention on all environmental stimuli and action responses (Simon, 1947), organizations “develop structures and processes that shape individuals’ and groups’ focus of attention (March and Simon, 1958; March and Olsen, 1976; Ocasio, 1997)” (Thornton et al., 2012). In fact, “institutional logics shape the focus of attention through action schemas” (Thornton et al., 2012), that is, what problems are addressed and what solutions are considered for making decisions (Ocasio, 1997; Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Thornton, 2004).

2.4.5. Information processing at the individual and organizational level

As already mentioned in section 2.2.3, according to some proponents of the cognitive school in strategic management, managers can be viewed as workers processing information for themselves, for their colleagues, and for the company as a whole. As a result, sharing processed information can create considerable problems since incoming information can be distorted via cognitive biases. As proposed by Corner, Kinicki, and Keats (1994), figure 25 below depicts the parallel process model of strategic decision making, which integrates both individual and organizational level information processing perspectives through a series of linking

mechanisms. This model is grounded in concepts derived from academic literature and is based on two main assumptions: (1) “At the individual level, it focuses only on members of the top management team since they are responsible for strategic decision making,” and (2) “at the organizational level, it applies to ongoing, established organizations rather than emerging ones” (Corner et al., 1994). However, since top management teams have a direct influence on strategic decisions and most organizations are beyond their emerging phase, these assumptions do not seem to limit so much the usefulness of this model (Corner et al., 1994).

Figure 25. Parallel Process Model of Strategic Decision Making



Source: Corner et al., 1994.

According to the model above, individuals and organizations process information similarly along the six following stages: (1) Attention, (2) encoding, (3) storage/retrieval, (4) decision, (5) action, and (6) outcomes. In fact, “the organizational level is viewed as the context within which individual level information processing takes place” such that strategic choice is considered as “a function of both collectively shared context and individual cognitive processing” (Corner et al., 1994).

1. Attention

Attention denotes “a focus on information” (Corner et al., 1994). and determines “what information will be processed and what will be ignored” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). At the

individual level, selective attention acts as a filter that limits the amount of incoming information to top managers for making pertinent strategic decisions (Corner et al., 1994). At the organizational level, group attention is focused on the environmental scanning performed by the top management team, which “determines which data are available for interpretation by the group” (Corner et al., 1994). Thus, the routines of the top management team for gathering and sharing information limits the group’s capacity for attention. The individual and organizational level attention processes are linked by meanings shared among the members of the top management team that actually provide a consensus view within the group (Corner et al., 1994). This shared definition of information that is appropriate for the group’s attention enables the top management team “to separate information (potentially meaningful data that deserves attention) from extraneous data” (March and Shapira, 1982; Feldman and March, 1981).

2. Encoding

Encoding means “interpreting or understanding information” and occurs when individuals or teams compare “information about a phenomenon to existing knowledge of that phenomenon” (Corner et al., 1994). Consequently, encoding can lead to biased decisions, that is, “choices grounded in an understanding of information that is actually different from initially observed situation,” simply because part of the existing knowledge is used in the understanding of the new information (Corner et al., 1994). As shown in figure 25 above, individual level encoding (2A) precedes organizational level encoding (2B) “and provides the medium from which collective meaning emerges” (Corner et al., 1994). At the individual level, encoding involves “the transformation of strategic information into an abstract internal representation, which is then infused with meaning” (Fiske and Taylor, 1984). In turn, “meaning infusion is accomplished through a feature matching process governed by structures known as categories,” (Duhaime and Schwenk, 1985; Schwenk 1984, 1988) whereby categories are sets of equivalent items usually designated by a name that “encompass prototypes or idealized examples of a category member” (Corner et al., 1994). Hence, this feature matching process that looks for a fit between incoming information and existing categories can potentially create either (1) stereotypes for everything that is placed in a given category or (2) bias since nuance within a given category progressively becomes impossible (Mintzberg et al., 2009). At the organizational level, information is interpreted interactively among the members of the top management team “because the complexity of many strategic decisions [that they face] exceeds

the cognitive limits of any given member (Jacobs and Jacques, 1987; Schweiger et al., 1989). As group members interact, their individual cognitive processing generates bundles of information that invoke a group knowledge structure known as a frame (Corner et al., 1994). Frames encompass images that are both “shared representations of an ideal choice” (Corner et al., 1994) and “the collective analog of individual level prototypes” (Mitchell and Beach, 1990). Organizational level encoding takes place via an interactive feature matching process during which the top management team “members collectively match information contained in bundles against image features” (Corner et al., 1994). Hence, the individual and organizational level encoding processes are linked by frame construction, which takes place when members of the top management team “share and discuss alternative interpretations of information” (Daft and Weick, 1984; Frost and Morgan, 1983; Levitt and March, 1988). During this process, individual cognitions of the top management team members “are woven into a collectively shared frame that is used to encode information” (Corner et al., 1994).

3. Storage/Retrieval

Storage/Retrieval refers to “the preservation of interpreted information” (Corner et al., 1994), which is then “retrieved when a strategic decision is required” (Finney and Mitroff, 1986). At the individual level, the opportunity for a strategic decision triggers a search for information, which is stored in memory (Mintzberg et al., 1976) within an associative network of nodes each containing an item of information (Corner et al., 1994). “Connections between the nodes reflect relationships between items that become stronger with repeated use (Hastie, 1980) and learning (Langer, 1978)”. Then, information is retrieved from memory during the search phase via a “spreading activation” phase (Corner et al., 1994). This “activation spreads from node to node via the connections between them so that related events and ideas tend to be recalled together” (Fiske and Taylor, 1984). At the organizational level, a group also searches its collective memory when confronted to a strategic choice opportunity (Levitt and March, 1988; Walsh and Ungson, 1991). “Experience-based knowledge is stored in routines or organizationally legitimized patterns of responses (Nelson and Winter, 1982),” which include “forms, rules, procedures, conventions, strategies, technologies, culture, and frameworks” (Corner et al., 1994). This knowledge “can be retrieved from collective memory and applied to newly noticed problems or issues” (Corner et al., 1994). The individual and organizational level storage/retrieval processes are linked by socialization, which is defined as “the process by which an individual acquires the social wisdom and skills necessary to assume an organizational

role” (Van Maanen and Schein, 1979). As shown in figure 25 above, established routines at the organizational level (3A) “lead to socialization, which in turn integrates individuals into a firm’s collective storage pattern” (3B) (Corner et al., 1994).

4. Decision

Decision or strategic decisions “are based on information retrieved from storage” (Corner et al., 1994). Since strategic choices are made collectively in most organizations (Cyert and March, 1963; Ginsberg, 1990; Prahalad and Bettis, 1986; Thompson, 1967; Walsh and Fahey, 1986), the decision process is depicted as a single level stage in figure 25 above. In addition, decisions are also considered “as outcomes of previous process stages” (Corner et al., 1994).

5. Action

Action is defined as “the enactment of a strategic decision at both individual and organizational level” (Corner et al., 1994). At the individual level, the action of a top management team member is “the enactment of the strategic decision within his or her sphere of responsibility (e.g. functional department)” (Corner et al., 1994). At the organizational level, “collective action is the concerted effort required to implement a strategic decision” (Corner et al., 1994). The individual and organizational level actions are linked through the roles of the top management team members as they “provide for integrated individual behavior patterns capable of achieving a concerted action” (Corner et al., 1994).

6. Outcomes

Outcomes represent “the results of decision enactment” (Corner et al., 1994). While outcomes at the individual level “result from role performance in the context of a collective action,” outcomes at the organizational “are the consequences of collective action” (Corner et al., 1994). In the end, the outcome of an action initiates the beginning of the feedback process, whereby “individuals and organizations make sense of their choices and feed this understanding into the ongoing processing of information – namely back to attention, encoding, storage/retrieval,” decision, action, and outcome (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

Ultimately, feedback provides a great opportunity for learning at both the individual and organizational level. However, the main challenge for individuals and organizations is that sometimes information processing is influenced “by past learning which must be unlearned” in order to solve new emerging problems or issues that were never encountered before (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

According to this model, attention represents the starting point that will have a considerable impact on the rest of the entire process. Since the individual and organizational levels are linked by shared meanings, then managers and companies must focus on the same aspects of business so as to share a common marketing perspective. In other words, a manager’s conception of value creation should correspond to the company’s value creation process in order to be convergent (and thus shared). If not, then it might be interesting to explore what individual and organizational characteristics might explain a lack of convergence between both entities.

2.4.6. Conclusion

The Institutional Logics Perspective provides an appropriate theoretical framework for my research work. According to this organizational theory, individuals and organizations can be influenced within the interinstitutional system depending on their situation in the different institutional orders to which they belong. Each institutional order is based on inherent principles, practices, and symbols that influence individual and organizational behavior and thus determine how reasoning actually takes place. Considering that institutions operate at multiple levels of analysis, the key question thus becomes whether the change taking place in an organization is due to a change in actors or in its structure, such that it becomes crucial to identify the different cause-and-effect mechanisms as well as which elements operate at the different levels of analysis.

According to the Integrative Model of the Microfoundations of Institutional Logics, the process starts with the fact that the attention of individual actors is focused, in turn this activates a social actor’s identities, goals, and action schemas, which along with the shared focus attention shape social interaction, thereby ultimately creating flows and interdependencies that result in social practices and structure. One way to bring about institutional change is when individuals identify market problems and solutions with different types of frameworks including the “dominant

logic” defined as “an information filter on managerial attention” (Thornton et al., 2012). It turns out that individuals who have been exposed to different organizational contexts are less likely to take for granted the functioning of their current organization and thus are more likely to drive innovation so as to create institutional change.

Likewise, some proponents of the cognitive school in strategic management consider managers as workers processing information for themselves, for their colleagues, and for the company as a whole. As a result, sharing processed information can create considerable problems since incoming information can be distorted via cognitive biases. In their Parallel Process Model of Strategic Decision Making, Corner et al. (1994) integrate both individual and organizational level information processing perspectives through a series of linking mechanisms. According to them, information processing goes through the following sequence in parallel at both levels: (1) Attention, (2) encoding, (3) storage/retrieval, (4) decision, (5) action, and (6) outcome. The starting point of the entire process is attention that links the individual and organizational levels through shared meanings. Hence, a manager’s conception of value creation should correspond to the company’s value creation process via marketing perspective as a linking mechanism in order to be shared.

A cross-case analysis of the informants’ responses based on specific characteristics related to their personal profile (e.g. socio-demographics in appendix 4) and their company’s profile (e.g. firmographics in appendix 5) could help to check to what extent a marketing perspective (i.e. marketing dominant logic) is related to individual and organizational characteristics. For instance, as proposed by the Interinstitutional System Ideal Types (cf. figure 23 in section 2.4.3), the data could thus be compared on the basis of an informant’s management level position (i.e. top level manager, middle level manager...) and profession (i.e. marketing, sales, finance...) as well as on the basis of a company’s proposed offerings (i.e. products, services, solutions...) and markets served (i.e. B2B, B2C, B2G...). According to Institutional Logics Perspective, the latter four criteria actually correspond to the concept of “identity” such that they are further investigated in section 5.4.9.

2.5. REFLECTING UPON AN APPLIED PERSPECTIVE BEFORE IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

2.5.1. Introduction

As already explained, the objective of my research work is not to change the prevailing marketing perspective and thus the inherent value creation process of companies (i.e. business model, offering, etc.) per se. In fact, the aim of my management tool is to help managers to identify the applied marketing perspective and get a complete overview of how value can be created in different ways depending on the adopted marketing perspective (i.e. marketing dominant logic). Hence, focusing on a specific theory of organizational change is not really that relevant with regards to my research topic. However, Experiential Learning Theory proposes an interesting model that is worth mentioning just to better understand the importance for managers, at some point in their day-to-day activities, to take the time to think and reflect upon their work experience (e.g. applied perspective) before taking further action (e.g. implementing change such as adopting another marketing perspective with different managerial implications if necessary).

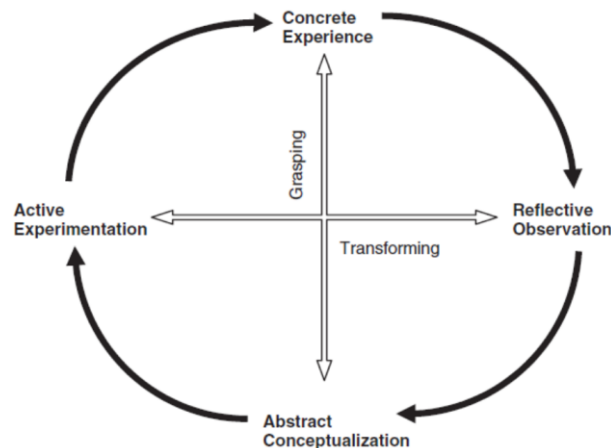
As a matter of fact, situations in business can suddenly change such that an established strategy can quickly become ineffective. While prescribing strategic change might come easily, managing that change is a difficult task, “especially when it involves shifting perspective” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). In general, the role of strategy is to “protect people in the organization from distraction,” thereby impeding “their capacity to respond to changes in the environment” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Thus, strategy as a mental set can blind the organization so that in reality “strategies are to organizations what blinders are to horses: they keep them going in a straight line but hardly encourage peripheral vision” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Therefore, understanding the basics of how to change a dominant logic, an institutional logic, and even the function of an artifact (such as a product or a management tool) via exaptation can also provide insightful food for thought to managers. In fact, it can help to them to envision new fundamental ways of creating value through group discussions in case they feel the need to actually implement change in their company.

Let us first look at how the experiential learning cycle works in organizations and then describe how managers could eventually implement change in their company if necessary.

2.5.2. The experiential learning cycle in organizations

According to Experiential Learning Theory, learning is defined as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience,” while “knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience” (Kolb, 1984; 41). As shown in figure 26 below, this theory proposes a model that depicts two dialectically related modes of “grasping” experience, namely Concrete Experience and Abstract Conceptualization, and two dialectically related modes of “transforming” experience, namely Reflective Observation and Active Experimentation (Kolb and Kolb, 2009). Since “experiential learning is a process of constructing knowledge among the four learning modes,” it is depicted “as an idealized learning cycle” whereby an individual learns through the different modes successively, that is, “experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting in a recursive process” (Kolb and Kolb, 2009).

Figure 26. The Experiential Learning Cycle in Organizations



Source: Kolb and Kolb, 2009.

Based on the Experiential Learning Theory model above, Concrete Experience is the starting point for both observation and reflection (i.e. Reflective Observation), which is then “assimilated and distilled into abstract concepts” (i.e. Abstract Conceptualization), out of which “new implications for action can be drawn” and then actively tested (i.e. Active Experimentation) so as to create new experiences (i.e. Concrete Experience) (Kolb and Kolb, 2009). That being exposed, in her book *The Organizational Learning Cycle*, Dixon (1999) actually links “the individual learning cycle of experiential learning to the organizational level by introducing the concept of dialogue (...) in the reflection and conceptualization phases of

the individual learning cycle” (Kolb and Kolb, 2009). In fact, Dixon (1999) shows that organizational learning is a cycle that works the following way: The direct experiences of an employee (Concrete Experience) can be shared via dialogue (Reflective Observation) so that they are “interpreted collectively to create collectively shared meaning” (Abstract Conceptualization), which then serves “as the basis for responsible action” (Active Experimentation) (Kolb and Kolb, 2009). Consequently, the process of team learning from experience actually becomes the link between individual and organizational learning (Kolb and Kolb, 2009).

With respect to my research work, the multiple-choice questionnaire can serve as a management tool –

- For identifying the applied marketing perspective in a company (Concrete Experience),
- Which can be reflected upon via a group discussion (Reflective Observation),
- So that managers become aware of the specific set of assumptions that they rely on in relation to the different ways that value can actually be created (Abstract Conceptualization),
- Before eventually deciding to adopt (or not) another marketing perspective with its inherent managerial implications (Active Experimentation).

In which case, let us now see how to change a dominant logic, an institutional logic, and even the function of an artifact (such as a product or a management tool) via exaptation.

2.5.3. Changing a dominant logic

According to Prahalad (2004), “the dominant logic of the company is, in essence, the DNA of the organization,” and “it is embedded in standard operating procedures.” Since it is the source of a company’s past success, a dominant logic frames how its managers think and act, thereby creating a “lens through which managers see all emerging opportunities” but also making it “hard for incumbent companies to embrace a broader logic” (Prahalad, 2004). As a company becomes successful, its business model and business processes become embedded in the company and represent its dominant logic, thus limiting its managers’ ability to innovate or even identify new opportunities and threats in their environment. Over time, a market leader is

thus unable to anticipate or even recognize the threat of a new entrant that challenges the dominant logic such as “the way Amazon did in book retailing” (Prahalad, 2004). This is due to the fact that it is difficult to change a dominant logic because it implies that a once-successful company needs to reassess and modify its prevailing key assumptions about value creation.

Prahalad (2004) proposes four solutions for helping companies to get rid of the blinders of their prevailing dominant logic so as to seize business opportunities that lie on their periphery: (1) Focus on next practices, (2) experimentation, (3) look beyond an industry’s borders, and (4) look beyond geographic borders.

1. **Focus on next practices.** Company managers should avoid benchmarking the best practices of other companies because this reflects an industry’s current dominant logic towards which all companies converge. Instead, company managers should explore new business approaches that have not been tried yet so as to develop ‘next practices’ and thus set a new way of doing business.
2. **Experimentation.** Company managers should implement “low-cost experimentation that is rapidly deployed” (Prahalad, 2004), which in turn yields rapid learning. In other words, company managers should design small experiments that attempt to discover ‘discontinuities’ that they could take advantage of in order to challenge the prevailing dominant logic.
3. **Look beyond an industry’s borders.** Company managers should look into what is taking place in other industries because technological innovations are redefining industry boundaries so that in many instances the traditional value chain model is moving more towards a value network model. For example, Apple has created user-friendly electronic devices (e.g. iPod, iPad, iPhone...) that revolutionized customer experience by taking advantage of the opportunities arising from the convergence of information technology, communications, and entertainment, which in turn led to the emergence of new markets and new business models.
4. **Look beyond geographic borders.** Company managers should also consider geographic markets that are currently not served by their competitors and see how business can eventually be conducted differently than in the markets in which they currently operate.

2.5.4. Changing an institutional logic

The interinstitutional system is a dynamic social system, and institutional orders evolve over time. According to Neoinstitutional Theory, “there is an evolutionary development of institutions that occur with the structuration of an organizational field (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) and the modernization of world society (J. W. Meyer et al., 1997).” As for the Institutional Logics Perspective, “each institutional order has a different age of origin” and “the typology of the interinstitutional system implies a progression toward modernity” (Thornton et al., 2012). Even though scholars have some difficulties to trace back the origin of each institutional order, there seems to be some evidence that the sequence of origins is as follows: Family → community → religion → state → market → professions → corporation. For example, the family and religion initially evolved in parallel as family fidelity was reinforced through norms and beliefs by all major world religions (Thornton et al., 2012). Likewise, “early rulers used religion to justify the central authority of the states, playing dual roles of political and spiritual leaders” (Schermer, 2004). Even though the scope of authority of the family declined in the Western world, it still “remains an influential institutional order in business and economic policy” (Greenwood et al., 2010), and in many countries “the state takes explicit account of families in tax, welfare, housing...” (Thornton et al., 2012).

Throughout history, the interdependence of the institutional orders (x-axis) and their elemental categories (y-axis) have been subject to multiple changes with numerous consequences for the interinstitutional system. For instance, “the medieval plagues exposed and discredited religion as ill-equipped in the public’s eyes to remedy issues of health” (Thornton et al., 2012). In fact, this propelled medicine to a new institutional space, that is, “the professions – centered not in the church, but in science and the university” (Thornton et al., 2012). Accordingly, “this shift illustrates a decline in the scope of authority of religion (Chaves, 1994) and a concomitant rise in the scope of authority of the professions” (Thornton et al., 2012).

During periods of technological disruption such as during the industrial and Internet revolutions (Baron and Shane, 2008: 40), entrepreneurial and innovative behavior tends to intensify because of “combinatorial evolution” (Arthur, 2009). This concept is based on Schumpeter’s (1934) “idea that entrepreneurs innovate by recombining existing materials,” and Ogburn’s (1922) “thesis that with more technologies available in society, more ‘cultural material’ (meaning technology) is available in which to invent” (Thornton et al., 2012). From the

Institutional Logics Perspective, cultural material is not technological but rather institutional – meaning symbols and practices (Thornton et al., 2012).

According to neoinstitutional scholars, there is a direct connection between institutions and entrepreneurial undertakings that can have a fundamental impact on institutional change. Kizner (1997) claims that institutions yield “a contrast effect that fuels entrepreneurial alertness and reveals ideas and opportunities” such that entrepreneurs identify market problems and solutions thanks to different types of frameworks (Thornton et al., 2012). In the strategy literature, Prahalad and Bettis (1986) use the concept of “dominant logic” that refers to “an information filter on managerial attention” (Thornton et al., 2012). In the entrepreneurship literature, Shane (2000) developed the concept of “knowledge corridors” resulting from comparative case studies, which showed that “individuals recognized new ideas and acted on them because they possessed different knowledge, information, and experience across markets and professions” (Thornton et al., 2012). While Baron and Shane (2008) argue that “individuals use prototypes and cognitive frameworks to recognize patterns and make connections between unrelated events and trends,” Shepherd and DeTienne (2001) claim that “the broader an individual’s experience, the higher their chance of pattern recognition” (Thornton et al., 2012).

That being exposed, this interorganizational research seems to demonstrate that the act of “crossing contexts highlights contradictions in symbols and practices, making them a source of innovation” (Thornton et al., 2012). For instance, Greenwood, Suddaby, and Hinings (2002) found that individuals who have been working in many different organizational contexts “are less likely to take for granted the functioning of their current organization,” such that their awareness of heterogeneous institutional arrangements combined with the opportunity of action in an organization, can “trigger their reflective capacity to innovate and create institutional change” (Thornton et al., 2012). Moreover, Greenwood et al. (2002) argue that when institutional entrepreneurs define a problem to be solved, they use the concept of “theorization” referred to as rendering “a solution in understandable and compelling formats that are justifiable in the public’s eyes” (Thornton et al., 2012). In fact, the aim of “theorization” is “to obtain resources, mobilize support, justify possible solutions to new courses of action, and translate interests to often-diverse constituents” (Strang and Meyer, 1993; Tolbert and Zucker, 1996); Lounsbury and Glynn, 2001; Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; Zilber, 2006; Martens, Jennings and Jennings, 2007; N. Jones, Jones, and Walsh, 2008).

Table 13 below shows the typology of change in Institutional Logics, which is divided into transformational change and developmental change processes. With respect to developmental change, most of the prevailing practices and symbolic representations remain, while others change (Thornton et al., 2012). With regards to transformational change, there are more radical changes in both prevailing practices and symbolic representations (Thornton et al., 2012).

Table 13. Typology of Change in Institutional Logics

Forms of Change		Definition	Sample Study
Transformational Change	Replacement	One institutional logic replaces another	Rao, Monin, and Durand (2003)
	Blending	Combining dimensions of diverse logics	Glynn and Lounsbury (2005)
	Segregation	Separation of logics from a common origin	Purdy and Gray (2009)
Developmental Change	Assimilation	Incorporation of external dimensions	Murray (2010)
	Elaboration	Endogenous reinforcement	Shipilov, Greve, and Rowley (2010)
	Expansion	Shift from one field to another	Nigam and Ocasio (2010)
	Contraction	Decrease in logic's scope	Reay and Hinings (2009)

Source: Adapted from Thornton et al., 2012.

According to Glynn and Lounsbury (2005), “vertical specialization within and horizontal generalization across institutional orders results in heightened pattern recognition and the reflective capacity to visualize and reframe problems and solutions by not only the blending but also by segregating elemental categories of different institutional orders” (Thornton et al., 2012). Figure 27 below shows how three cultural entrepreneurs through their “vertical specialization in unusual combinations of institutional orders enabled their capacity for horizontal generalization in creative ways across institutional orders” (Thornton et al., 2012).

Figure 27. Individuals Visualize Problems and Innovations by Transposing Logics from Different Institutional Orders

Steps in Innovation Process	J.C. Penney	John Sperling	R.P. Ettinger
Recognize & Articulate Problem	One fair price for all customers & trust of absentee-owned retail stores in small Midwestern towns in the early 1900s	Accreditation by professional associations to educate nontraditional students	Expansion capital beyond resources of family capitalism in a craft industry
Theorize, Translate, Legitimate Solution	Switched referent categories from family to religion & corporation logics to legitimate innovation of fair pricing and chain of Golden Rule Stores	Switched referent categories from professions to market logics to legitimate innovation in education	Blended referent categories from family, state, market & corporation logics to capitalize & scale business
Mobilize Community of Solution Advocates	Evangelized “managers as associates,” & “customers as neighbors” to employees, public, & charities	Mobilized students as customers & educators as shareholders to Wall Street	Evangelized editors as entrepreneurs to family of companies tied together by stock options & profit sharing

Source: Thornton et al., 2012.

As depicted on the figure above, these three entrepreneurs actually transposed logics from different institutional orders, that is to say, they applied existing logics to new contexts. When founding the Golden Rule retail stores (later known as the J.C. Penney department stores), J.C. Penney segregated the institutional order of the family and blended the institutional orders of religion and the corporation. When founding the University of Phoenix, Prof. John Sterling segregated the institutional order of the professions and blended the institutional orders of the corporation and the market. When founding the Prentice-Hall publishing company, Prof. Richard Prentice Ettinger blended the institutional orders of the family, the state, and the market. (Thornton et al., 2012)

2.5.5. Changing the function of an artifact via exaptation

Description of exaptation

Just like the three latter managers created institutional change by applying existing logics to new contexts, I would like to develop a management tool (i.e. artifact) by applying an existing tool to a new context. Before explaining that in more detail in section 4.7.2, let us now describe this process commonly referred to as “exaptation.”

According to the Oxford Dictionary (2019), exaptation is a term coming from biology, and which is defined as “the process by which features acquire functions for which they were not originally adapted or selected.” In fact, Gould and Vrba first introduced this new concept to evolutionary biology in their seminal article “Exaptation – A Missing Term in the Science of Form” (1982), in which they claimed:

“We suggest that such characters, evolved for other usages (or for no function at all), and later coopted for their current role, be called exaptations... They are fit for their current role, hence *aptus*, but they were not designed for it, and are therefore not *ad aptus*, or pushed towards fitness. They owe their fitness to features present for other reasons, and are therefore *fit (aptus) by reason of (ex) their form, or ex aptus.*”

(Gould and Vrba, 1982.)

In their article, Gould and Vbra make the distinction between exaptation defined as “the emergence of a new function for an existing trait,” and adaptation defined as “the improvement of a trait through natural selection driven by a preexisting fitness function” (Andriani et al., 2017).

In their article “Exaptation as a source of creativity, innovation, and diversity: Introduction to the Special Section” that was published in *Industrial and Corporate Change*, Andriani and Cattani (2016) state the following:

“Exaptation is one of the most important and, yet, little studied evolutionary mechanisms in the history of species, ecosystems, and artifacts (e.g. technologies). Many, if not most, of all biological traits and human artifacts that were developed for particular functions started as something different: feathers were most likely selected for thermal insulation, bones originated as excess calcium repositories, microwaves ovens started life as radar magnetrons. Exaptation thus describes a discontinuous process resulting from a functional shift of an existing trait or artefact.”

(Andriani and Cattani, 2016)

Outside of the field of biological evolution, exaptation is still a largely unknown concept. A first case of exaptation that is accounted for in modern history can be traced back to 1865 when

Joseph Lister, a British microscopist and surgeon, was the first to perform a surgery with carbolic acid as an antiseptic for dressing wounds and thus preventing infection, although it was initially used as an agricultural anti-parasite. As a result, he was able to reduce “post-surgery mortality from about 40% down to 15%” so that he became known as the “father of modern surgery” (Andriani and Cattani, 2016).

Throughout the history of science and innovation, there have been numerous examples of discoveries that turned out to be “the result of the often-serendipitous emergence of new functions in existing artifacts when they were exposed to new contexts” (Andriani et al., 2017). For example, noticing that the candy bar in his pocket melted when he was close to the radar, an engineer working for Raytheon (a major U.S. military contractor) discovered in 1945 that the radar component magnetron was responsible for this effect. As result, Raytheon applied for a patent and commercialized the first microwave oven in 1947, thereby entering the kitchen appliances sector (Andriani and Carignani, 2014). Moreover, the drug Marsilid was originally designed to fight tuberculosis, but since it considerably improved the mood of patients taking it, this unexpected side effect discovered in 1952 led the drug to become the first synthetic anti-depressant (Andriani and Carignani, 2014; Andriani et al., 2017). Likewise, Viagra was initially developed as an antihypertensive drug, but its side effects turned out to be useful against the problem of erectile dysfunction, which then helped the “blue pill” to become the fastest selling drug in history (Andriani et al., 2017). In turn, this enabled Pfizer to become the fifth most profitable company in the United States (Loe, 2004).

A new channel driving the emergence of novelty

In general, the appearance of novelty (including radical innovation) is explained by the fact that “first new functions emerge, and then new artefacts are designed to perform those functions” (Andriani and Cattani, 2016). According to Arthur (2009), new functions and corresponding artefacts usually stem from one of the following two channels: (1) The discovery of a new phenomenon in science and technology triggers the exploration of possibilities that ultimately leads to the elaboration of new artefacts and processes [conventionally summarized as “supply-push” (Dew and Sarasvathy, 2016)], or (2) the expression of a need initiates the formulation of functions that consequently leads to the creation of new artefacts [conventionally summarized as “demand-pull” (Dew and Sarasvathy, 2016)]. However, the antiseptic innovation of Lister is an example of exaptation, whereby an existing artefact (carbolic acid) is used for a new function

(antiseptis method) that it was not originally designed for (agricultural anti-parasite method). Thus, exaptation provides “a third channel driving the emergence of novelty: a functional shift of an existing artifact that is not traceable to the discovery of a new phenomenon or the pull derived from clearly defined needs” (Andriani and Cattani, 2016).

In short, while novelty is driven by the “form-follows-function” process, exaptation is based on the “function-follows-form” process. For instance, microwave ovens were not developed because someone came up with the idea of cooking by microwave (“form-follows-function”), but the serendipitous discovery of the effects of the radar’s magnetron ultimately generated the function of cooking by microwaves (“function-follows-form”) (Andriani et al., 2017). In the same way, the first antidepressant drug was not the result of a program to develop a drug that could alleviate depression symptoms (“form-follows-function”), but the observation of the euphoric side effects of the antituberculous drug Mianserin subsequently generated its antidepressant function (“function-follows-form”) (Andriani et al., 2017).

Most of the time, it is assumed that “new-to-the world functions can be performed only through the development of new technology” simply because “technology is effectively embodied functionality” (Andriani et al., 2017). The assumption that function is embodied in the technology fails to take into consideration the fact that a new function can also be the result of “the exposure of current artifacts to new contexts” (Andriani et al., 2017). Consequently, the functionality is not contained in the artifact per se, but rather in the set of interactions between the artifact, the actor, and the context. (Andriani et al., 2017).

The crucial role of functional fixedness

Every artifact has two sets of functions. While the first set of functions “includes historically determined functions that define the artifact,” the second set of functions “consists of potential (mostly exaptable) functions” whose number are indefinite such that “no association with specific markets can be established ex ante” (Andriani and Cattani, 2016). In other words, the second set of functions necessarily implies a functional shift, which then raises the question as to how new functions can actually emerge?

According to the concept of affordances, the main forces driving innovation via exaptation are attributed to artifacts, agents, and environments (Andriani and Cattani, 2016). Affordances is

defined as “the perceived possibilities that actors or organisms have related to objects and environments” (Andriani and Cattani, 2016). In short, affordances suggest that functions are not inherent to an artifact per se but rather that they reflect “a relation between the artifact and other artifacts and/or agents within a specific context” (Andriani and Cattani, 2016). Conceptually speaking, this relational property between different entities changes function “from an attribute of an entity (artifact) to a set of relations linking the central artifact to an agent (and possibly to other artifacts and agents) within a shared context” (Andriani and Cattani, 2016). As a result, a functional shift thus implies a shift in existing relations, that is to say, a change in context.

If the set of interactions between artifacts, agents, and environments can create radical innovation such as antiseptics, microwave ovens, and antidepressants, then this raises question as to why the role of exaptation has not been accounted for in technology and innovation (Andriani and Cattani, 2016)? Due to a lack of theory and clear understanding of exaptation, many exapted products and services have been either ignored or simply attributed to either luck or serendipity on one hand, but “it also partly reflects an anthropological difficulty in dealing with functional shift in the absence of a morphological change” on the other hand (Andriani and Cattani, 2016).

One major difficulty for preventing individuals to imagine potential functional shifts is due to a cognitive bias known as functional fixedness. In 1890, the psychologist William James already mentioned some key aspects of functional fixedness:

“Many objects of daily use – as paper, ink, butter, overcoat – have properties of such constant unwavering importance, and have such stereotyped names, that we end by believing that to conceive them in those ways is to conceive them in the only true way. Those are no truer ways of conceiving them than any others; there are only more frequently serviceable ways to us.”

(Felin et al., 2016.)

The concept of functional fixedness has been further discussed in psychology. For instance, the Gestalt psychologist Karl Duncker (1945) defined it as a “mental block against using an object in a new way that is required to solve a problem” (Felin et al., 2016). Also, German and Barrett (2005) claimed that “cognitive systems underwriting the acquisition and representation of knowledge about artefacts” generally depend on “functional fixedness, where the uses of a thing

are determined by common public understandings and history rather than novel possibilities” (Felin et al., 2016).

As a matter of fact, functional fixedness represents a general cognitive bias that tends to force individuals to “seeing things in a conventional way, as fixed” thereby preventing them to use creative and “out-of-the-box” thinking whenever needed (Felin et al., 2016). In addition, functional fixedness can explain in part “the nature of cognitive impediments on strategy formation,” whereby “it prevents the creative use of current resources and limits the entrepreneurial possibilities of reorienting the business toward novel opportunities” (Felin et al., 2016). Similarly, functional fixedness can also shed light on “the nature of myopia of organizations” as described by March and Levinthal (1991, 1993), whereby “the exploitation of current resources (and their specific affordances and uses) represents a trap for the exploration of new possibilities” (Felin et al., 2016). To sum it up, functional fixedness is “what allows one to exploit, in a stable manner, the environment – given the attributed functionality – and, at the same time, what prevents the exploration of *unactualized* possibilities of novel uses” (Felin et al., 2016).

2.5.6. Conclusion

Once again, the objective of my research work is not to change the prevailing marketing perspective and thus the inherent value creation process of companies per se. In fact, the aim of my management tool is to help managers to identify the applied marketing perspective and get a complete overview of how value can be created in different ways depending on the adopted marketing perspective (i.e. marketing dominant logic). Since shifting perspective or logic seems to be difficult for companies, at some point managers really need to take the time to think and reflect upon their applied perspective before eventually taking further action if necessary, as advocated by the Experiential Learning Theory model (Kolb and Kolb, 2009). Moreover, understanding the basics of how to change a dominant logic and an institutional logic can provide insightful food for thought to managers should they feel the need to actually change their fundamental way of creating value.

According to Prahalad (2004), a dominant logic frames how managers think and act, thereby creating a “lens through which managers see all emerging opportunities” but also making it

“hard for incumbent companies to embrace a broader logic.” Thus, he proposes four solutions for helping companies to get rid of the blinders of their prevailing dominant logic so as to seize business opportunities that lie on their periphery: (1) Focus on next practices, (2) experimentation, (3) look beyond an industry’s borders, and (4) look beyond geographic borders.

According to neoinstitutional scholars, there is a direct connection between institutions and entrepreneurial undertakings that can have a fundamental impact on institutional change. Kizner (1997) claims that institutions yield “a contrast effect that fuels entrepreneurial alertness and reveals ideas and opportunities” such that entrepreneurs identify market problems and solutions thanks to different types of frameworks (Thornton et al., 2012). In fact, interorganizational research seems to demonstrate that the act of “crossing contexts highlights contradictions in symbols and practices, making them a source of innovation” (Thornton et al., 2012). The typology of change in Institutional Logics is divided into transformational change and developmental change processes. In the former process, most of the prevailing practices and symbolic representations remain, while others change (Thornton et al., 2012). In the latter process, there are more radical changes in both prevailing practices and symbolic representations (Thornton et al., 2012). In any case, individuals visualize problems and innovations by transposing logics from different institutional orders.

The concept of exaptation can be basically defined as the emergence of new functions in artifacts when exposed to new contexts (Andriani et al., 2017). Throughout the history of science, technology, and innovation, many discoveries can be attributed to exaptation such as the antiseptic method in surgery, the microwave oven, and the first antidepressant drug among others. Besides the discovery of a new phenomenon leading to the elaboration of new artifacts and the identification of a need leading to the creation of new artifacts, exaptation provides a third channel driving the emergence of novelty thanks to the functional shift of an existing artifact. Nevertheless, the difficulty in imagining functional shifts lies in the fact that artifacts do not undergo a morphological change. This can also be due to a cognitive bias known as functional fixedness, once simply defined by Dunker (1945) as a “mental block against using an object in a new way that is required to solve a problem” (Felin et al., 2016). In other words, functional fixedness tends to force individuals to seeing things in a conventional and fixed way, thereby preventing them to use creative and “outside-of-the-box” thinking.

As will be further discussed in section 4.7.2, part of my research work consists in expanding the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002), which is normally used for identifying the contemporary marketing practice of a company based on the way it relates to its market through business-customer interactions. Instead, I want to use the same type of tool (known solution) in order to identify the prevailing marketing perspective of a company based on the way it creates value (new problem) as opposed to the way it interacts with its customers (known problem). By helping company managers to become aware of the four different marketing perspectives, this could in turn give them the opportunity to think outside of their current box (i.e. prevailing marketing perspective) by envisioning alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted marketing perspective.

2.6. KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM MANAGERIAL AND ACADEMIC LITERATURE REVIEW

The world is evolving at an increasingly faster pace due to major disruptive technological innovations that led to the advent of globalization, digitalization, and uberization. In turn, these phenomena created major changes that also had a tremendous impact on the business environment. As a result, companies are constantly looking for new growth opportunities and new ways of doing business in order to survive.

In their struggle for on-going innovation, companies are facing several challenges. Many of them have some difficulties aligning their business and innovation strategies. A lot of them also need help so as to break away from traditional closed innovation normally driven by their R&D department. Even though several of them rely more on the input of external actors in order to improve their offerings, about only one-third of these innovating companies actually rely on their customers who normally are the main beneficiaries.

In their quest for innovation, many companies use external consultants who use methods or tools that have been either developed by mainstream consulting firms or designed by academic researchers. Many of these management tools are very useful and efficient, but they also have some limitations since they usually rely on a specific dominant logic that both enables and constrains the mindset of their users. Thus, many companies still have some difficulties to think outside of the box because they are not aware of all the different marketing perspectives that could provide them alternative ways of creating value for themselves and for their customers.

Since the emergence of marketing in the 20th century, this management discipline has evolved considerably thanks to the different shifts in theoretical thinking that were successively proposed by scholars and progressively adopted by practitioners. On one hand, companies have shifted their focus from a transactional approach to a relational approach with regards to their interactions with customers. On the other hand, companies have also shifted their focus from the core offering of a product to an extended offering providing more full services around their product.

Moreover, the role of marketing evolved by focusing more on the creation of value for both the company and its customers (as well as other stakeholders). Unfortunately, many companies still view the value creation process from their own perspective as in the Goods-Dominant Logic. Nevertheless, while value can be either created by the company only or co-created with its customers, value is always determined by the customers in the end. Since companies and customers follow their own logic, the former needs to better understand the latter in order to attract and keep them. Consequently, company managers need to become aware of the existence of the different marketing perspectives so as to help them to think outside of their current box (i.e. prevailing marketing perspective) by envisioning alternatives ways of creating value depending on the adopted marketing perspective.

Let us now turn to a comparative analysis of the four selected marketing perspectives.

3. RESEARCH THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Thus far and to the best of my knowledge, no comparison matrix has been designed for comparing the four marketing perspectives altogether through a set of key constructs such that there is no common framework in order to understand their differences and similarities. As will be further explained in section 4.7.2, the exaptation of the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002), which is normally used for identifying the contemporary marketing practice of a company based on the way it relates to its market through customer-business interactions, can provide a solid foundation for designing a tool that can instead identify the prevailing marketing perspective of a company based on the way it creates value.

As mentioned earlier, nowadays, marketing scholars consider both Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL) and its complementary discipline Services Marketing (SM) as the traditional marketing perspective. Once again, this new terminology stems from the fact that three additional marketing perspectives with a distinct paradigm have been developed by scholars since the beginning of the 21st century: Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) by Vargo and Lusch since 2004, Service Logic (SL) by Grönroos since 2006, and Customer-Dominant Logic (CDL) by Heinonen et al. since 2009.

As previously exposed, a marketing logic can be defined as “a converged-upon framework of theories, principles, ontological assumptions and epistemological axioms, which governs all action in a given marketing context” (Anker et al., 2015). In addition, logics are considered as “structural lenses that significantly influence the context of discovery (e.g. what researchers explore and how they do it) as well as the context of interpretation (e.g. how researchers make sense of what they find)” (Anker et al., 2015). At this point, let us compare the four marketing perspectives on the basis of their founding principles, value creation processes, locus of value, value ontology, and relative positioning with respect to some key constructs.

3.2. GOODS-DOMINANT LOGIC

3.2.1. Axioms and corollaries of Traditional Marketing

In his influential article “A Generic Concept of Marketing” published in the *Journal of Marketing* in 1972, Philip Kotler laid the foundations of what is now considered as the traditional marketing perspective by:

1. Describing the boundaries of marketing,
2. Proposing a set of axioms and corollaries for marketing as a discipline,
3. Redefining the classifications of marketing activity based on three typologies of marketing,
and
4. Listing the basic tasks of marketing management.

According to Kotler (1972), the generic concept of marketing implies that “marketing is specifically concerned with how transactions are created, stimulated, facilitated, and valued,” whereby a transaction is defined as “the exchange of values between two parties” (e.g. goods for money, spare time for charity, etc.).

Table 14 below displays the 4 axioms and 17 corollaries of traditional marketing as proposed by Kotler (1972).

Table 14. Axioms and Corollaries of Traditional Marketing

Description
A1) Marketing involves two or more social units, each consisting of one or more human actors.
C1.1) The social units may be individuals, groups, organizations, communities, or nations.
A2) At least one of the social units is seeking a specific response from one or more other units concerning some social object.
C2.1) The social unit seeking the response is called the marketer, and the social unit whose response is sought is called the market.
C2.2) The social object may be a product, service, organization, person, place, or idea.
C2.3) The response sought from the market is some behavior toward the social object, usually acceptance but conceivably avoidance.
C2.4) The marketer is normally aware that he is seeking the specific response.
C2.5) The response sought may be expected in the short or long run.
C2.6) The response has value to the marketer.
C2.7) Mutual marketing describes the case where two social units simultaneously seek a response from each other. Mutual marketing is the core situation underlying bargaining relationships.
A3) The market's response probability is not fixed.
C3.1) The probability that the market will produce the desired response is called the market's response probability.
C3.2) The market's response probability is greater than zero; that is, the market is capable of producing the desired response.
C3.3) The market's response probability is less than one; that is, the market is not internally compelled to produce the desired response.
A4) Marketing is the attempt to produce the desired response by creating and offering values to the market.
C4.1) The marketer assumes that the market's response will be voluntary.
C4.2) The essential activity of marketing is the creation and offering of value. Value is defined subjectively from the market's point of view.
C4.3) The marketer creates and offers value mainly through configuration, valuation, symbolization, and facilitation.
C4.4) Effective marketing means the choice of marketer actions that are calculated to produce the desired response in the market. Efficient marketing means the choice of least cost marketer actions that will produce the desired response.

Source: Kotler, 1972.

According to **axiom 1** and its related corollary, marketing is only a human activity. For instance, even though animals might produce and consume things, they do not exchange goods per se, nor do they design distribution channels (Kotler, 1972). In addition, any marketing activity must involve at least two human actors. Thus, this excludes any activity in which a person does something on his own that involves an interactive relationship either with things (e.g. driving a car) or with himself/herself (e.g. jogging) (Kotler, 1972).

According to **axiom 2** and its related corollaries, the role of the marketer consists in undertaking actions so as to influence the response of other persons (in the market) with respect to some specific "social object" defined as "any entity or artifact found in society, such as a product, service, organization, person, place, or idea" (Kotler, 1972). In other words, a marketer

attempts to shape both the level (i.e. quantity) and the composition (i.e. type of customers) of demand for his/her offering (Kotler, 1972). Furthermore, the concept of marketing is closer to a “selling” activity than a “buying” activity in the sense that selling something necessarily requires a purchase response from a person, whereas buying something for sale just represents the act of purchasing per se unless the buyer negotiates the sale’s terms with the seller (Kotler, 1972).

According to **axiom 3** and its related corollaries, marketing activity can only take place in “a market that is free and capable of yielding the desired response” (Kotler, 1972). If a person cannot respond to an offering due to a lack of interest or resources (e.g. money), then there is no market, and if a person must respond to an offering out of addiction or brand loyalty, then this constitutes a market but with “little need for marketing activity” (Kotler, 1972).

According to **axiom 4** and its related corollaries, the role of the marketer is to capture value from the market by proposing offerings with attractive values. In fact, value can be created in four different ways: (1) “To design the social object more attractively” (i.e. configuration) in terms of shape, colors, and so on, (2) “to put attractive terms [of exchange] on the social object” (i.e. valuation) with respect to the price, mode of payment, and so on, (3) “to add symbolic significance to the social object” (i.e. symbolization) by associating meanings to the object such as with celebrity endorsement in advertising, and (4) “to make it easier for the market to obtain the social object” (i.e. facilitation) in terms of accessibility to the offering (Kotler, 1972). As a matter of fact, these four activities correspond to the marketing mix framework also known as the Four P’s (McCarthy, 1960) and used by many marketers in order to stimulate exchange: (1) Product, (2) price, (3) promotion, and (4) place (Kotler, 1972).

3.2.2. Postulates of Goods-Dominant Logic

When Vargo and Lusch (2004) initially presented Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) as a new marketing perspective, they referred to traditional marketing as a Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL). Ten years later, in their seminal book called *Service-Dominant Logic: Premises, Perspectives, Possibilities*, Lusch and Vargo (2014) actually listed five postulates of Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL) in order to show the main differences between both marketing perspectives. Table 15 below summarizes these five postulates.

Table 15. Postulates of Goods-Dominant Logic

Description
P1) The purpose of economic activity is to make and distribute things that can be sold.
P2) To be sold, these things must be embedded with utility (value) during the production and distribution processes and must offer to the consumer superior value in relation to competitors' offerings.
P3) The firm should set all decision variables at a level that enables it to maximize the profit from the sale of output.
P4) For both maximum production control and efficiency, the good should be standardized and produced away from the market.
P5) The good can then be inventoried until it is demanded and then delivered to the consumer at a profit.

Source: Adapted from Lusch and Vargo, 2014.

According to the **first postulate**, GDL considers that the goal of economic activity is to create and deliver goods (and services) that are perceived as units of output, which can be sold to customers in exchange of money. According to the **second postulate**, GDL considers that goods (and services) are embedded with utility (value) depending on the number/quality of product (or service) attributes and on how easily they can be accessed by customers. According to the **third postulate**, GDL considers that the price of goods must be set at a level that can yield profit maximization, and it can be raised by increasing the value of goods through the addition or enhancement of product attributes. According to the **fourth postulate**, GDL considers that goods are produced by companies who are proactive actors in various industries for customers who are passive actors in pre-existing markets. In addition, goods should be standardized in order to lower their unit cost and thus increase economies of scale for the company. According to the **fifth postulate**, GDL considers that goods can be inventoried and then delivered when demanded by customers but always at a price that can guarantee a profit to the company.

3.2.3. The value creation process

In Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL), the value creation process is linear and unidirectional. As shown in figure 28 below, the aim of the value creation process of GDL is first and foremost to create value for the customers and then to capture value from customers in return. There is a clear line of separation between the company (as the central value creator) and the customer (as the distant value recipient).

Figure 28. Value Creation Process of Goods-Dominant Logic



Source: Kotler and Armstrong, 2018.

In the first step, the starting point of the marketing process is to perform an environment analysis. The objective is to identify the needs of customers that are either latent or currently unmet so that ultimately a company can satisfy them through the elaboration of a value proposition, which is the set of benefits that a company promises to deliver to its customers. Once a company gathered sufficient information on potential customers (buying and consumption habits, type of media exposure...), it also collects information on its competitors (target customers, types of products/services, pricing, strengths and weaknesses...), as well as on the macro-environment through a PESTEL analysis that assesses external factors that might have an impact on the company's activities but over which it has no control whatsoever. This environment analysis helps the company to gain a better understanding of marketplace dynamics and of customers' needs and wants.

In the second step, the company designs a customer-driven strategy that involves: Segmenting the market into groups of customers that share similar needs and wants, targeting the most attractive customer segment(s) (depending on segment size, growth perspective, level of competition...), and then positioning the offering by focusing on key points-of-differentiation that can provide a competitive advantage to the company. A company can differentiate its offering in a more compelling way than its competitors by enhancing its products attributes (design, features, performance, quality...) and its services attributes (product delivery & installation, product maintenance & repair, product returns & customer requests handling...).

In the third step, the company develops an integrated marketing program that provides superior customer value to its target segments more effectively than its competitors. This is also referred to as the marketing mix or the Four P's, which consists in proposing: (1) The right Product (in terms of features, packaging & labeling, related services...), (2) at the right Price

(by taking into consideration the product's costs, the price of competitors and substitutes, customers' perceived value, price elasticity of demand...), (3) in the right Place or distribution channel (such as in a retailer's stores, one's own stores, e-commerce websites...), and (4) with the right Promotion or communication (including in-store promotions, point-of-sale materials, advertising in offline and online media...).

In the fourth step, company managers use customer relationship building tools, including online, mobile, and social media in order to engage customers more interactively with their brands. In turn, this helps companies to build profitable relationships with their customers as their brands become a more meaningful part of their customers' personal and social lives. The end-goal is to achieve customer loyalty, whereby a customer's repeat sales generally provide a steady stream of revenues to the company over the long-run.

In the fifth step, customer loyalty leads to high customer equity defined as "the total combined customer lifetime values of all of the company's customers" (Kotler and Armstrong, 2018). This is how the company can capture value from its customers in return. (Finally, the value creation process can be improved when a company assesses its marketing performance by comparing the stated objectives to the actual results of its annual marketing plan. As a result, corrective measures can be taken if it performs below its expectations.)

3.2.4. Value-in-exchange as the locus of value

According to Goods-Dominant Logic, companies embed value in products and services so that value is added by enhancing or increasing the number of attributes/features/characteristics of their offerings. Value is determined by the price at which customers are willing to acquire the products or services created by companies for them in exchange of money. Hence, the locus of value (i.e. where value is created) lies in the exchange of an offering for money so that it can be referred to as "value-in-exchange" (Kotler, 1972; Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008, 2016; Grönroos, 2006, 2008).

3.3. SERVICE-DOMINANT LOGIC

3.3.1. Axioms and foundational premises of Service-Dominant Logic

As already explained, Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) represented a major shift in marketing paradigm in relation to the traditional marketing perspective also known as the Goods-Dominant Logic. As shown in table 16 below, SDL is based on 11 foundational premises including 5 axioms. When they introduced their alternative marketing perspective to traditional marketing in 2004, Lusch and Vargo came up with just 8 foundational premises. In the first revision of SDL that took place in 2008, they added two extra foundational premises so as to reach 10 foundational principles. In their second revision of SDL that occurred in 2016, they added one more foundational premise, which turns out to be an axiom as well. For the sake of simplicity, let us just focus on the description of the 5 axioms of SDL.

Table 16. Axioms and Foundational Premises of Service-Dominant Logic

Description
A1 & FP1) Service is the fundamental basis of exchange.
FP2) Indirect exchange masks the fundamental basis of exchange.
FP3) Goods are distribution mechanisms for service provision.
FP4) Operant resources are the fundamental source of strategic benefit.
FP5) All economies are service economies.
A2 & FP6) Value is co-created by multiple actors, always including the beneficiary.
FP7) Actors cannot deliver value but can participate in the creation and offering of value propositions.
FP8) A service-centered view is inherently beneficiary oriented and relational.
A3 & FP9) All social and economic actors are resource integrators.
A4 & FP10) Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary.
A5 & FP11) Value co-creation is coordinated through actor-generated institutions and institutional arrangements.

Source: Vargo and Lusch, 2016.

According to **axiom 1**, service is the fundamental basis of exchange. Service is defined as “the application of operant resources for the benefit of another actor” so that service is exchanged for service (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). In fact, resources are considered as “anything that an actor can draw upon for support,” and they are divided into two categories: (1) Operand resources that can provide a benefit only when other resources act on them (e.g. natural resources), and (2) operant resources that can act on other resources in order to create a benefit (e.g. knowledge and skills) (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). When actors interact in order to be better off, they actually

exchange a service (i.e. do something for one another) even if it involves some type of good because the latter is considered as a mechanism that renders a service. In turn, this entails three implications: (1) Goods are appliances for service provision (FP3), (2) all businesses are service businesses (A1 & FP1), and (3) all economies are service economies (FP5) (Lusch and Vargo, 2014).

According to **axiom 2**, value is co-created by multiple actors always including the beneficiary. Traditionally, the term “value added” refers to the process of how firms transform the form, time, place, and possession of matter through efforts and costs so that it is typically identified as a source of utility (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). However, both tangible and intangible offerings are not embedded with value (i.e. “value-in-exchange” from Goods-Dominant Logic) or utility per se, but instead value occurs when the offering is actually used by its beneficiary (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). While unsold/non-used offerings might have economic value, Service-Dominant Logic claims that value creation is only possible when the market proposes offerings that are actually used by the beneficiary actor, thereby contributing to his/her well-being within a specific usage context (Lusch and Vargo, 2014).

According to **axiom 3**, all economic and social actors are resource integrators. As a matter of fact, actors are resources integrators since “they create resources by combining other resources” (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). Accordingly, resource integration can thus describe the process of innovation through the following causal logic: “(1) All economic and social actors are resource integrators, (2) resource integration results in resource creation, and (3) as new resources are created they are integrated with other resources” such that the process of resource integration and resource creation repeats itself on an on-going basis (Lusch and Vargo, 2014).

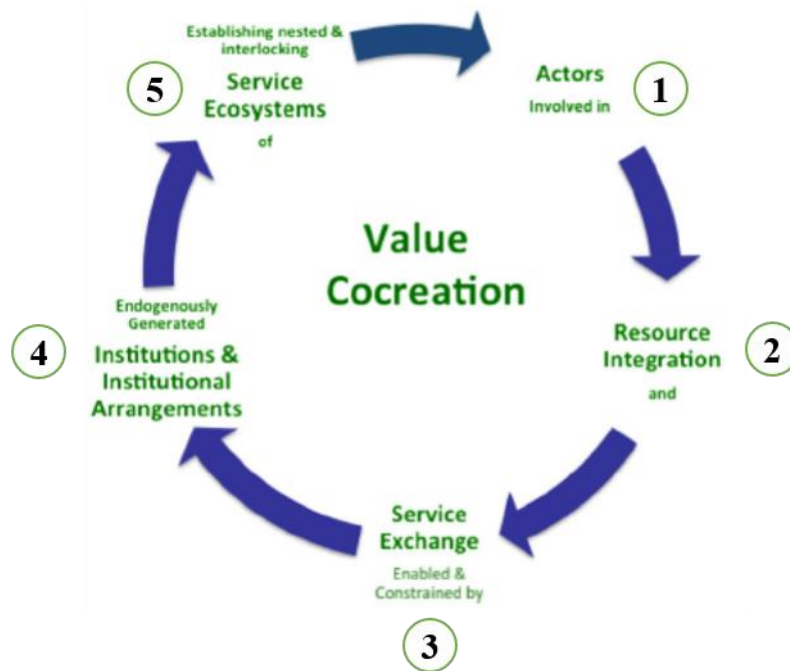
According to **axiom 4**, value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary. The term “beneficiary” reflects the generic nature of actors. Every service exchange creates a different experience for and thus a unique assessment of value by the service beneficiary. The reason is because each service-for-service exchange “takes place in a different context involving the availability, integration, and use of a different combination of resources and actors” (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). Consequently, value is uniquely experienced and determined differently by each beneficiary.

According to **axiom 5**, value co-creation is coordinated through actor-generated institutions and institutional arrangements. Value is co-created among actors that are loosely coupled and nested within a service ecosystem, that is, a network of actors based on mutual value creation through service-for-service exchange (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). These actors must constantly “invite other actors to exchange service by making compelling value propositions that result in transactions” (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). In order to coordinate activities among them, actors need shared institutions that in turn can help the service ecosystem to function effectively (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). For example, language is a shared institution that can facilitate communication, coordination, interaction, and exchange between actors (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). Moreover, representational practices, such as a product form or style as depicted through a set of related images, is a shared institutional logic that helps actors to represent the market as an institutionalized solution to a problem (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). In addition, normalizing practices, such as values, norms and governing principles, represent another important aspect of shared institutional logics in a service ecosystem since they help to guide exchange transactions between actors (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). “When institutions are shared at a superordinate level, the actors that make up the system have a relationship” that can help them to co-create value (Lusch and Vargo, 2014).

3.3.2. The value co-creation process

In Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), the value co-creation process takes place within a system approach between multiple actors. Figure 29 below shows the value co-creation process of SDL that forms a loop and which is defined by Lusch and Vargo as follows: “Resource-integrating, reciprocal-service-providing actors co-creating value through holistic, meaning-laden experiences in nested and overlapping service ecosystems, governed and evaluated through their institutional arrangements” (Vargo and Lusch, 2016).

Figure 29. Value Co-Creation Process of Service-Dominant Logic



Source: Vargo and Lusch, 2016.

According to SDL, the value co-creation process can be represented by the following five major components:

1. **Actors** can refer to individuals, households, non-profit and government organizations. They are entities that have agency, that is, the ability to act purposefully.
2. Resources are anything that an actor can use for supporting his activities including value creation. Actors are **resources integrators** since they create resources by combining other resources.
3. Service is the application of operant resources (i.e. physical and mental skills) for the benefit of another actor so that **service is exchanged for service** between 2 or more actors.
4. Actors are bounded relationally to other actors as well as to society through **shared institutions** (i.e. rules, norms, beliefs, practices) **and institutional arrangements** (i.e. interrelated sets of institutions as a coherent assemblage facilitating the coordination of activity). Actors act within these structures that both enable and constrain their actions.
5. All actors integrate resources to enhance the viability of a relevant system which rests on adaptability, flexibility, resiliency, and well-being. A **service ecosystem** is “a relatively self-contained, self-adjusting system of resource integrating actors that are connected by

shared institutional logics and mutual value creation through service exchange” (Lusch and Vargo, 2014; Vargo and Lusch, 2016).

3.3.3. Value-in-context as the locus of value

As stated before, Service-Dominant Logic claims that companies do not create value per se but rather propose value to customers. In fact, customers are considered as co-creators of value with companies in the sense that a provider’s service (i.e. knowledge and skills) is exchanged for a beneficiary’s service (i.e. knowledge and skills). Also, each service-for-service exchange takes place in a different context involving a specific combination of resources and actors. Hence, the locus of value (i.e. where value is created) lies in the use of an offering in a given context so that it can be referred to as “value-in-context” (Vargo and Lusch, 2008; Lusch and Vargo, 2014).

3.4. SERVICE LOGIC

3.4.1. Principles of Service Logic

Once again, Service Logic (SL) was introduced by Grönroos (2006) in response to the advent of Service-Dominant Logic. As a matter of fact, SL is a synthesis of all the research work conducted by Grönroos since the 1980’s. As shown in table 17 below, SL is based on 11 principles. Instead of analyzing each of these principles, let us then just summarize the key concepts related to SL.

Table 17. Principles of Service Logic

Description
P1) In a value generation sphere closed to the service provider (a customer sphere), customers, or any user, create value in the form of value-in-use, emerging out of or being created from integrating new resources with existing resources and applying previously held knowledge and skills.
P2) Value (as value-in-use) evolves in a cumulative process, or is sometimes destroyed, throughout the customer's value-creating process.
P3) Value (as value-in-use) is uniquely, experientially and contextually perceived and determined by customers.
P4) Firms as service providers are fundamentally value facilitators in a value generation sphere closed to the customer (a provider sphere), such that they develop and provide potential value-in-use for customers and other users.
P5) If a platform of co-creation exists or can be established through direct interactions among actors in the value generation process, the service provider can engage with customers' value creation, and opportunities for co-creation of value among actors arise.
P6) Between the customers and individuals in their ecosystem, social value co-creational activities that influence the customers' independent value creation process may take place.
P7) Service is the use of resources in a way that supports customers' everyday practices - physical, mental, virtual, possessive - and thereby facilitate their value creation.
P8) The goal of marketing is to engage the service provider with customers' processes to enable reciprocal value creation among the actors, with service as a facilitator.
P9) As service providers, firms are not restricted to making promises through value propositions.
P10) In direct interactions, using a platform of co-creation, through interactive marketing, firms as service providers can directly and actively influence customers' value fulfilment and thereby keep promises made, as well as contribute to the establishment and maintenance of customer relationships, marketing is extended beyond a predominantly promise making function.

Source: Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014.

According to SL, service is defined as “support for customers’ individual processes in a way that facilitates their value creation processes, and this support is enabled when knowledge and skills are used on resources” (Grönroos, 2015). In return, the service provider can capture value from the relationship with the customer through the service process. The service provider and the customer must engage in a relationship so that the service provider can gain insight into the customer’s everyday processes and thereby achieve mutual value creation. The objective is to seek direct contact with the customer in order to build a customer database and develop a customer-centric service system. In fact, each direct contact with the customer creates a “platform of cocreation” out of which mutual value creation emerges via their interaction.

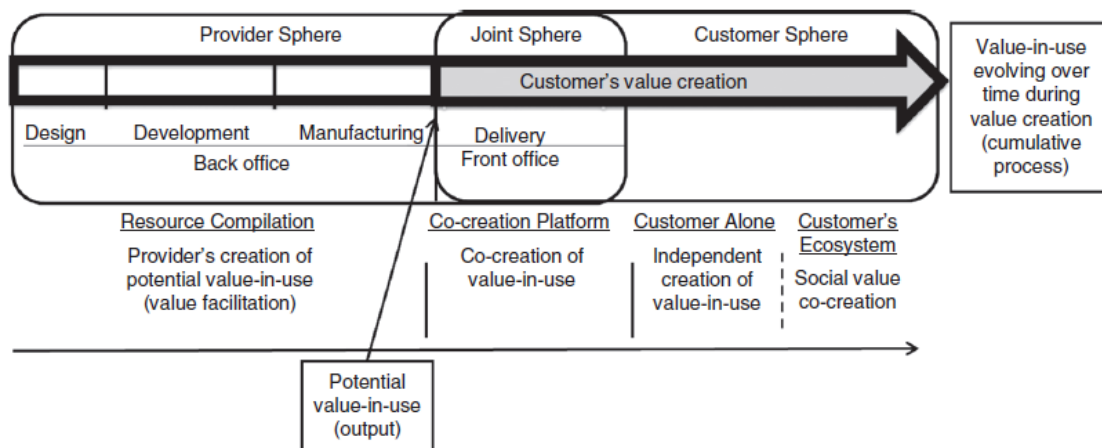
According to SL, customers do not only seek goods and services from companies per se, but they also expect a more holistic service offering that can improve their overall customer experience including product information, delivery, installation, repair, maintenance, replacement, and so on. Thus, a company must be able to manage these additional elements of the offering better than its competitors regardless of its position in the distribution channel. As such, “the solution to customer problems seen as a total service offering thus becomes service”

whereby “this total offering becomes service provision, instead of mere delivery of a physical product or a service” (Grönroos, 2015). In order to develop a “total service offering,” a company must thus not only focus on providing recognized services, that is, activities directly related to the core service provided to the customer and thus perceived as services (e.g. repair, maintenance, etc.), but it should also focus on improving hidden services, that is, administratively managed activities that are not seen and thus not perceived by the customer as services but rather as “nuisances” (e.g. invoicing, complaints handling, etc.), which turn out to be also value-enhancing activities for the customer that can lead to a powerful competitive advantage for the company (Grönroos, 2015).

3.4.2. The value generation process

In Service Logic (SL), the value generation process is not necessarily linear. As shown in figure 30 below, it is made up of 3 spheres: (1) The provider sphere, (2) the joint sphere, and (3) the customer sphere.

Figure 30. Value Generation Process of Service Logic



Source: Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014 – Adapted from Grönroos and Voima, 2013.

1. The **provider sphere** is closed to the customer and represents the company’s back office. Its role is to facilitate the customer’s value creating process with “resources that offer the potential to support the customer’s creation of value-in-use” (Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014). In this sphere, the provider is thus a (direct) value facilitator.
2. The **joint sphere** is where direct interactions between the provider and the customer creates a platform for co-creation of value. If both actors actually use this platform, then co-creation

of value-in-use actually takes place. The role of the company's front office is to seek direct contact with the customer as it is the only way to actually co-create value. In this sphere, the provider is thus a value co-creator.

3. The **customer sphere** is closed to the company. It represents the zone where value-in-use is created independently. If the customer and other actors in the customer's ecosystem engage in direct interactions, then "the independent value creation depends on a collective social value co-creation process as well" (Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014). In this sphere, the provider is thus a(n) (indirect) value facilitator.

As stated earlier, this value generation process is not necessarily linear. Different spheres can be intertwined so that value co-creation actions can also occur in the provider sphere. For example, if the customer participates in product or service development with the provider, then direct interactions take place and a value co-creation platform is formed.

3.4.3. Value-in-use as the locus of value

According to Service Logic, companies create products (i.e. value-supporting resources) and services (i.e. value-supporting processes) that facilitate the lives of their customers. When these offerings are integrated by customers with other resources that are available to them, customers create value out of the use of all of them altogether. Consequently, the locus of value (i.e. where value is created) lies in the use of offerings so that it can be referred to as "value-in-use" (Grönroos, 2006, 2008, 2015).

3.5. CUSTOMER-DOMINANT LOGIC

3.5.1. Principles of Customer-Dominant Logic

In order to portray value creation in relation to previous research on this topic, CDL relied on the Four Dimensions of Value model of Heinonen (2004) as a structuring tool, which they expanded by adding a subsequent dimension. Hence, this Five Value Formation Questions framework (Voima et al., 2010) built on the Four Dimensions of Value (Heinonen, 2004) helps to answer the following questions:

1. How is value created? (Value formation process)
2. Where is value created? (Value formation location)
3. When is value created? (Value formation time)
4. What is value formation based on? (Value formation outcome)

In turn, this set of four questions led to the subsequent question:

5. Who determines value? (Value formation determination)

Table 18 below displays the principles of CDL that were initially derived from the 5 dimensions of the generic value model aforementioned, and which were later extended plus refined by Heinonen and Strandvik in their article “Customer-Dominant Logic: Foundations and Implications” (2015).

Table 18. Principles of Customer-Dominant Logic

Description
P1) Customer value formation is customers’ emerging behavioral and mental processes of interpreting, experiencing and integrating offerings in their everyday lives/businesses, with either positive or negative outcomes.
P2) Customer logic, tasks and needing (not needs) determine how the offering is experienced and forms value-in-use.
P3) Value is formed in two separate but related processes, one for customers and one for providers. The customer value formation process is driven by customer logic and activities and is influenced by the actions of other actors. The provider value formation process is driven by the provider’s business logic and activities and is influenced by other actors’ actions.
P4) Value-in-use always emerges for a customer in a certain context. In the customer’s world, activities and experiences occur that are related and unrelated to a specific provider and may lead to value formation.
P5) Value-in-use evolves as a process that extends over an indefinite time, including favorable and unfavorable phases and elements. Value-in-use is interpreted and re-interpreted, and it is a relative evaluation at different points of time.

Source: Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015.

Based on previous research, Customer-Dominant Logic (CDL) identified 3 aspects with respect to value creation:

1. Value can be created either by the company or by the customer or by both together
2. The customer can be an active or passive actor in the value creation process
3. Value creation can be an activity-based or mental experience

According to the **first principle**, CDL considers that value is not created but rather formed as a result of value-in-use (Heinonen et al., 2010, 2013). In fact, customer value formation emerges in the customers' "behavioral and mental processes of interpreting, experiencing and integrating offerings in their everyday lives/businesses, with either positive or negative outcomes" (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015).

According to the **second principle**, CDL considers that value is neither based on what the service provider does nor on the customer's interaction with the service provider (Heinonen et al., 2013). Instead, the customer's logic, tasks and goals (i.e. needing; Strandvik et al., 2012) determine how the offering is actually experienced by the customer (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015).

According to the **third principle**, CDL considers that value is not experienced just by the customer since the reality of the customer is interconnected to the realities of others (Heinonen et al., 2013). Value is "embedded in the dynamic, collective, and shared customer realities." Therefore, CDL proposes a customer-dominant ecosystem view, whereby its primary unit is the customer (Heinonen et al., 2013).

According to the **fourth principle**, CDL considers that value formation does not only take place in the isolated sphere of the service controlled by the company (Heinonen et al., 2010, 2013). Instead, value is formed in "the customer's often uncontrollable ecosystem and life sphere" (Heinonen et al., 2013).

According to the **fifth principle**, CDL considers that the scope of value-in-use must be extended to a longitudinal experience perspective such that value is part of the customer's dynamic and multi-framed reality, that is, value-in-experience. In other words, "this reality recognizes value before, during, and after customer experiences as part of the customer's cumulated life and reality" (Heinonen et al., 2010, 2013).

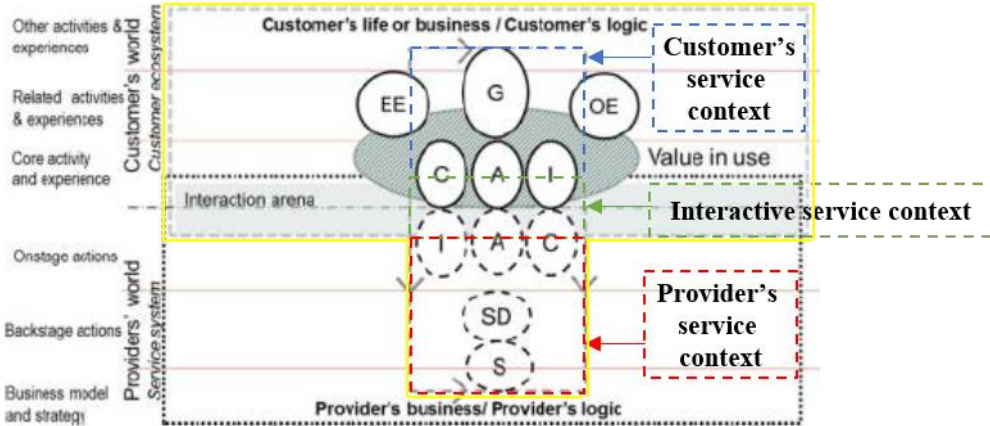
3.5.2. The value formation process

In Customer-Dominant Logic (CDL), the value formation process is made up of 3 different zones: (1) The provider's world (i.e. the company), (2) the interaction arena (i.e. the meeting

zone between the company and the customer), and (3) the customer’s world. As a matter of fact, this process closely resembles that of the value generation process of Service Logic (SL), which is also composed of 3 different spheres: (1) The company’s sphere, (2) the joint sphere, and (3) the customer’s sphere. However, the value generation process of SL is a value co-creation process that is driven by the customer, while the value formation process of CDL represents how value can also emerge for the customer even outside of the interaction zone with the company.

Figure 31 below displays the different factors influencing the value formation process in CDL. This model is referred to as the T-model (Heinonen et al., 2010) due to its shape representing the letter “T” as delineated by the yellow line. In order to better understand this figure, I also added beneath it 2 boxes with the description of each lettered element.

Figure 31. Value Formation Process of Customer-Dominant Logic



Source: Adapted from Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015.

- Provider’s world
- (I) Information about customers and markets
 - (A) Direct and indirect service activities
 - (C) Marketing communication
 - (SD) Service design activities
 - (S) Strategy processes

- Customer’s world
- (EE) Earlier experiences related to the service and service provider
 - (G) Customer’s goals and tasks
 - (OE) Other’s experiences related to the service and different service providers
 - (C) Communication with the provider and others
 - (A) Activities in relation to the provider
 - (I) Collecting information about different providers

Source: Adapted from Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015.

According to the model above, service is divided into the provider's service context, the interactive service context, and the customer's service context, whereby the grey arrows indicate the dynamism of all activities linked to the service rendered as well as the interplay between all three contexts that influence one another (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015).

1. In the **provider's world**, the company is involved in strategy processes (S) and service design activities (SD) that are mostly invisible to the customer.
2. In the **interaction arena**, the provider: (1) Collects information about the market and customers (I), (2) performs direct and indirect service activities (A), and (3) provides marketing communication. Conversely, the customer: (1) Communicates with the provider and others (C), (2) carries out activities related to the provider (A), and (3) collects information about different providers. All this takes place in the interactive service context and represents the customer's core activity and experience related to a specific service.
3. In the **customer's world**, further away from the interactive service context, there lies the customer's goals and tasks (G), earlier experiences related to the service and service provider (EE), and other's experiences related to the service and different service providers (OE).

Accordingly, the customer's value-in-use is influenced by the interactions with the service provider and by other factors in the customer's life/business such that in reality providers and customers follow their own logic (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015). As a matter of fact, value-in-use also includes physical and mental experiences such that value is experienced differently by the provider and the customer (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015).

3.5.3. Value-in-experience as the locus of value

According to Customer-Dominant Logic, customers engage in activities and integrate products and services (i.e. offerings) in their daily lives/businesses so that their goals and tasks (i.e. needing; Strandvik et al., 2012) determine how a product or service is experienced when it is used. As such, value is formed through customers' integration and experience of offerings in their everyday lives/businesses with either positive or negative outcomes. Therefore, the locus of value (i.e. where value is created) lies in the customers' experience of offerings that are either

“mentally or physically present in their lives” (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015) so that it can be referred to as “value-in-experience” (Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013).

3.6. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS IN THE MARKETING LITERATURE

3.6.1. Comparison based on value ontology

In their article “Consumer dominant value creation: A theoretical response to the recent call for a consumer dominant logic for marketing” (2015), Anker, Sparks, Moutinho, and Grönroos compare Product-Dominant Logic (i.e. Goods-Dominant Logic), Service-Dominant Logic, and Consumer-Dominant Logic on the basis of ontological and semantic foundations. While Heinonen et al. (2010) use the term “customer-dominant,” whereby the “customer” is linked to the provider or seller via an agreement to engage in a relation of value creation, they prefer to use the term “consumer” so as to reflect the fact that during the consumption process consumers “are often disconnected from any direct relations to providers” or sellers (Anker et al., 2015).

Value ontology refers to “a description of the specific nature of values and their relations to fields, domains, and constructs” (Anker et al., 2015). Table 19 below shows the value ontology of the three marketing perspectives (that I completed by adding Service Logic) with regards to their: (1) Value concept, (2) ontological processes, (3) relational status, and (4) replication of product/service properties. Please note that in this case I use the term “Goods-Dominant Logic” as a synonym of “Provider-Dominant Logic.”

Table 19. Value Ontology of the Four Selected Marketing Perspectives

Value Ontology	Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL)	Service-Dominant Logic (SDL)	Service Logic (SL)	Consumer-Dominant Logic (CDL)
1. Value concept	Provider created value as product value	Co-created value	Co-created value	Consumer created value
2. Ontological value creation processes	Objective	Provider facilitated inter-subjectivity	Provider facilitated inter-subjectivity	Subjective or consumer facilitated inter-subjectivity
3. Relational status	Intransitive provider-consumer relation	Necessary transitive provider-consumer relation	Transitive provider-consumer relation	Contingent transitive consumer-provider relation
4. Replication of product/service properties	Homogeneous replication	Heterogeneous replication	Heterogeneous replication	Autonomous replication

Source: Adapted from Anker et al., 2015.

Let us now explore the value ontology of each marketing perspective in more details.

1. Value concept

In Goods-Dominant Logic, value is created by the provider (i.e. company) via a product/service with a set of inherent attributes that delivers functional value to customers by solving specific problems (e.g. a knife solves the need to cut the food for eating properly) (Anker et al., 2015). In Service-Dominant Logic, value is co-created when the service provider and the service beneficiary mutually exchange services (i.e. knowledge and skills). In Service Logic, value is co-created when the company engages in a direct interaction with the customer through which the service provided by the company helps to support the customer's value-generating process. In Consumer-Dominant Logic, value is created by the consumer as a result of integrating and experiencing the use of a product in his life.

2. Ontological value creation processes

In Goods-Dominant-Logic, while “value is objectively embedded in products” through product features and properties such that product value can be easily assessed by consumers on the basis of product quality or product performance, it can also be “defined through managerial communications” (Anker et al., 2015). With regards to Service-Dominant Logic and Service Logic, the three value creation spheres (Grönroos and Voima, 2013) used by Service Logic (cf. Figure 30) can help to explain for both of these marketing perspectives why value creation is a provider-facilitated inter-subjective process. In the provider's sphere, the provider is a value facilitator, then in the joint sphere he/she becomes a value co-creator, and finally in the customer's sphere he/she turns into a value facilitator again (Anker et al., 2015). As a result, even the independent value creation taking place in the customer's sphere is thus influenced by the provider (Anker et al., 2015). As for Consumer-Dominant Logic, value creation is not only a subjective process, but it can also be a consumer-facilitated intersubjectivity process. For example, value can emerge through consumer-to-consumer interactions in the social media in specific contexts, whereby providers or brands do not act at all as value facilitators (Anker et al., 2015).

3. Relational status

With respect to relational status, the four marketing perspectives can be compared on the basis of transitive characteristics (Anker et al., 2015). In Goods-Dominant Logic, a company develops and sells its products and services in exchange of money from its customers, who can be influenced by the company via marketing activities. In this process, “consumers are passive receivers of marketing value delivered by firms through products” and services such that their exchange relation is *intransitive* (Anker et al., 2015). In Service-Dominant Logic, the relational status is *necessary transitive* because each actor can influence each other regarding their shared goal when co-creating value, which implies that “the relation is *necessary* because value always emerges” from their interactions (Anker et al., 2015). In Service Logic, the relational status is *transitive* because each actor can influence each other when a value co-creation platform is formed, but the customer can also continue to create value independently in his own sphere outside of the company-customer relation. In Consumer-Dominant Logic, the relational status is *contingently transitive* because “consumers may choose to involve brands in their activities” such as by participating in product development, but they can also decide not to for various reasons.

4. Replication of product/service properties

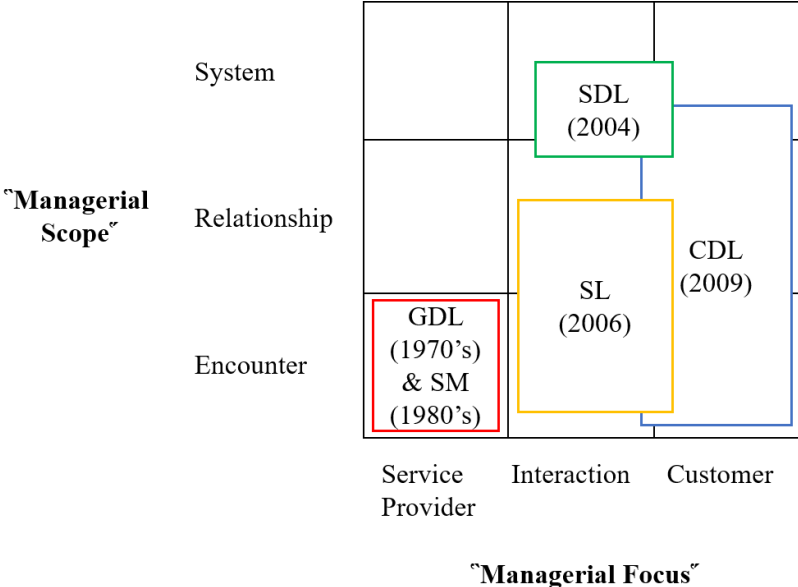
Replication of product/service properties refers to the idea that consumers expect that products and services will really fulfill the promise made by their marketers (Anker et al., 2015). In Goods-Dominant Logic, companies deliver value through standardized products such that “consumers expect a homogeneous replication of the promised product properties” in terms of quality each time that same product is purchased (Anker et al., 2015). In Service-Dominant Logic, value is co-created through a service-for-service exchange that always takes place in a different context with regards to the combination of resources and actors involved in the process. Consequently, the replication relation is thus heterogeneous. In fact, the same holds true for Service Logic. As for Consumer-Dominant Logic, “the replication relation is neither homogeneous nor heterogeneous, but autonomous” because consumers can both modify product properties and “redefine brand meanings, according to their own ideas and independently from corporate interaction” (Anker et al., 2015).

Even though Goods-Dominant Logic, Service-Dominant Logic, Service Logic, and Customer-Dominant Logic have different value ontologies, they can nevertheless be compared on the basis of several key constructs. Let us now go through some comparisons of the four selected marketing perspectives that I found during the literature review.

3.6.2. Comparison based on managerial scope and managerial focus

As displayed in figure 32 below, the four marketing perspectives can be located on a two-dimensional perceptual map so as to compare them on the basis of their managerial approach in terms of (1) managerial focus and (2) managerial scope.

Figure 32. Comparison Based on Managerial Scope and Managerial Focus



Source: Adapted from Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018.

These two dimensions are relevant because they capture two key aspects of marketing management that lead to different theoretical and practical implications. "Managerial focus" (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Holmlund et al., 2017) refers to the focal point of the value creation process, that is, value is created from the perspective of either: (1) The provider (who creates value for the customer), or (2) both the provider and the customer as a result of their interaction (so that value is co-created between both of them), or (3) the customer (who creates value for himself/herself and/or for the company). "Managerial scope" (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Holmlund et al., 2017) refers to the context of an offering as being based

on either: (1) An encounter between the provider and the customer with no or rare contacts beyond the transaction based on single offerings (i.e. products or services), or (2) a relationship between the provider and the customer built through repeated contacts based on a chain of services, or (3) a system including the customer, the provider and other parties based on a package of offerings (i.e. solutions).

In traditional marketing (TM) also now referred to as Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL), the starting point of the value creation process is to define the customer's needs and wants as defined by the company and then to create an offering based on the company's internal processes (i.e. resources and activities). An offering is proposed to the customer at the point of purchase and is completed via a transaction with no or rare contacts between the company and the customer beyond that point. In the 1980's, Services Marketing (SM) emerged as a complementary discipline because of the inability of TM to deal with issues related to the different nature of services in comparison to products. Scholars and practitioners started to measure customers' perception of service through perceived quality and perceived value. In addition, the main focus became "service episodes" (or short-term interactions) as the service was considered to be delivered during these "moments of truth" (Grönroos, 1990). Even though analyzing "critical incidents" and complaints so as to better manage customers' expectations became crucial (Gremler, 2004), the main focus was still on service encounters from the company's perspective.

In 2004, the emergence of Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) led to a new paradigm in marketing. SDL considers that value is always co-created through the interaction of actors, which is based on service-for-service exchange. Also, all actors are resource integrators who act within shared institutions and institutional arrangements in order to enhance the viability of the system that they are part of and also known as a service ecosystem (Lusch and Vargo, 2014; Vargo and Lusch, 2016).

In 2006, Service Logic (SL) emerged as a result of the advent of SDL. According to SL, the service provider is a value facilitator that must gain insight on the customer's everyday processes, whereas the customer is the driver of the value co-creation process since he integrates the service provider's resources with his own resources, thereby creating value-in-use. The objective of the service provider is to engage in a long-term relationship with a customer in order to achieve mutual value creation (Grönroos, 2015).

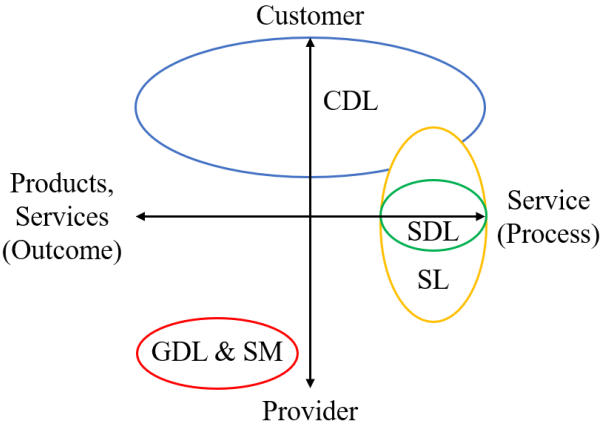
In 2009, Customer-Dominant Logic (CDL) emerged with a different paradigm than the other marketing perspectives. CDL goes beyond the mere identification of customer’s needs as the starting point of the value creation process. Instead, it considers that the starting point is the customer’s reality and life, or ecosystem defined as a system of actors and spheres that a customer is involved in (Heinonen et al., 2010, 2013). Thus, value is determined by the customer and results from the way he integrates and experiences the offering of a service provider through either an encounter, a relationship, or within a system of interrelated actors.

3.6.3. Comparison based on offering characteristics and actor focus

As shown in figure 33 below, Goods-Dominant Logic and its complementary discipline Services Marketing (GDL/SM), Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), Service Logic (SL), and Customer-Dominant Logic (CDL) can also be located on a two-dimensional perceptual map so as to compare them with respect to the following aspects of marketing management:

1. Horizontal axis – Considering that an offering can be either an outcome (i.e. a unit of output from a producer) such as a products/services (GDL & SM) or a process (i.e. through an interaction between a producer and a customer) such as a service (SDL and SL) or both altogether (CDL)
2. Vertical axis – Designing an offering from the perspective of either the provider (GDL/SM) or the customer (CDL) or both actors together (SDL & SL)

Figure 33. Comparison Based on Offering Characteristics and Actor Focus



Source: Adapted from Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015.

With regards to the vertical axis, the lower half of the perceptual map represents the assumption that the provider (i.e. company) is in charge of the value creation process and thus creates value for the customer (GDL/SM), while the upper half represents the perspective that the customer dominates the value creation process and thus creates value for himself/herself and eventually for the company (CDL). In addition, a central positioning implies that value is co-created by the company and the customer (SDL & SL).

As for the horizontal axis, the left side represents the assumption that the company focuses mostly on selling a product or service (i.e. purchase phase focus) to a customer and thus considers an offering as an outcome (of a production process) per se (GDL/SM), while the right side represents the perspective that a company also focuses on other aspects of an offering through related services (i.e. in the pre-purchase and post-purchase phases) and thus considers an offering as a process of interaction per se (SDL & SL). Furthermore, a longitudinal positioning implies that an offering can be considered as either an outcome or a process depending on the type of offering sought by the beneficiary (CDL).

Goods-Dominant Logic and its complementary discipline Services Marketing (GDL/SM) focus only on the provider's (i.e. company's) perspective of offerings, and how they can be managed and designed. In GDL/SM, the role of the customer is to consume offerings created for them by the provider. An offering (i.e. product or service) is considered as a unit of output and thus an outcome of a production process.

Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) focuses on both the provider and the customer simultaneously because it advocates value co-creation between a provider and its beneficiary. SDL views a product as an appliance that acts as an intermediary in service delivery, that is, a product is a vehicle for service provision. Also, service is viewed as the provider's application of competences (i.e. knowledge and skills) in exchange of a beneficiary's service (i.e. knowledge and skills). Thus, while products and services (i.e. outcomes of a production process) can be represented as a mean for rendering a service to its beneficiary, service-for-service exchange is a process of interaction between two or more actors that leads to value co-creation.

Service Logic (SL) also focuses on both the provider and the customer simultaneously because it advocates value co-creation as dyadic process based on the interaction between the provider

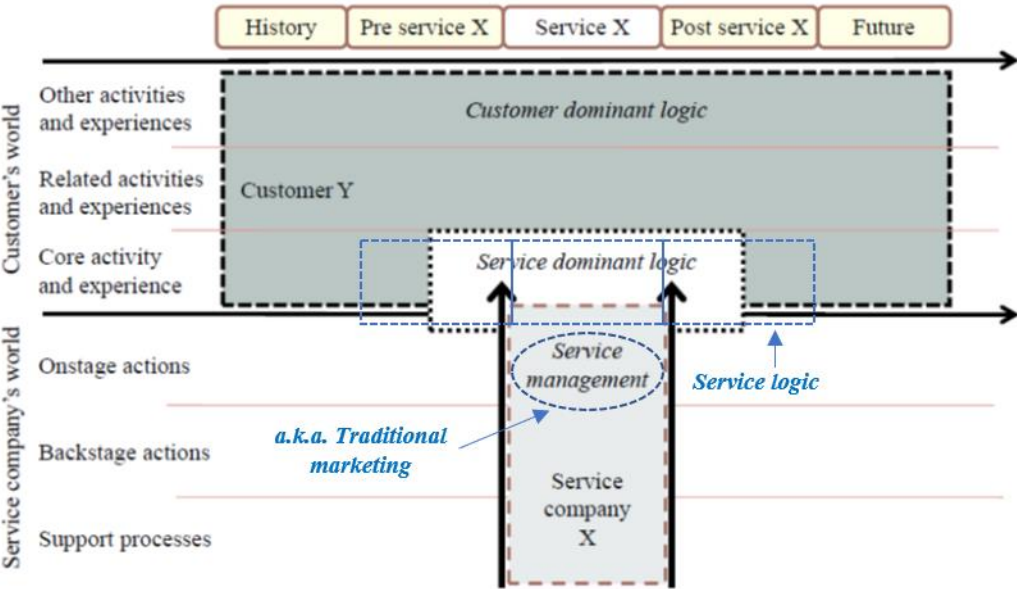
and the customer. SL also considers service as a process because the objective of a company is to provide a total service offering to the customer, which includes both recognized and hidden services such as access to product information, ease of payment and delivery, provision of maintenance and repair, handling of customers' requests and complaints, and so on.

Customer-Dominant Logic (CDL) focuses on the primacy of customers and how they embed service in their processes (rather than how companies provide service to their customers). CDL does not make a distinction between products or services and service as process of interaction, but instead it considers them all as the basis for value depending on the goals and tasks (i.e. needing; Strandvik et al., 2012) that they need to fulfill in their life or business.

3.6.4. Comparison based on time frame and analytical focus

Figure 34 below represents the T-model developed by Heinonen et al. (2010), which was used to compare Customer-Dominant Logic to other marketing perspectives. On one hand, it shows the service company's world in relation to the customer's world. On the other hand, it depicts the respective time frames and analytical foci of each marketing perspective.

Figure 34. Comparison Based on Time Frame and Analytical Focus



Source: Adapted from Heinonen et al., 2010.

This model shows that the customer's perspective does not only include the provider's service but also the customer's life comprised of all his activities and experiences. From the customer's perspective, a service is not only used but also potentially integrated in his on-going activities and experiences beyond the service process, as illustrated by the different time boxes at the top of the model. What happens during the service process is only part of the related and relevant activities and experiences in the customer's life.

Also considered as part of traditional marketing along with Goods-Dominant Logic, Service Management (as delineated by the shaded area in light gray surrounded by a brown dotted line) deals only with "Service X" (any service) by focusing on the design of service blueprints (Bitner et al., 2008; Patricio et al., 2008), identifying and developing service encounters (Shostack, 1985), measuring perceived service quality (Grönroos, 1982; Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988, 1991), and perceived service value (Zeithaml, 1988). Relationship Marketing does so too but by considering the accumulated service encounters with a service provider as well (Payne et al., 2009). Thus, this marketing perspective is centered mostly on the processes and actions of the service company.

In Service-Dominant Logic, service is the basis of exchange (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008, 2016; Lusch and Vargo, 2014) so that the service situation is the main focus. From the service provider's perspective, the customer's participation in its activities and the utilization of resources represents the use of "Service X," which creates a service experience and thus a value experience. The interaction between the company and its customer yields a value co-creation process of service ("Service X"). Hence, this marketing perspective is centered simultaneously on the service company's on-stage actions and the customer's core activity and experience.

Although the authors do not specifically refer to Service Logic in their T-model, this marketing perspective is based on a similar process as the one described for Service-Dominant Logic regarding "Service X," provided that it is extended to other time frames ("Pre-Service X" and "Post-Service X") as well. As depicted by the three blue-dotted boxes, Service Logic claims that the role of the company's front office is to seek direct contact with the customer during each time frame ("Pre-Service X," "Service X," and "Post-Service X"). In fact, a co-creation platform is formed each time the company and the customer interact throughout the entire customer journey.

According to Customer-Dominant Logic, the customer's understanding of service is different from the service provider's one. As indicated by the shaded area in dark gray, the emergence of value for the customer is influenced not only by the core activity and experience directly related to the use of a service, but also by the related as well as other activities and experiences that take place in the customer's life. This is the major difference with the other marketing logics, which only consider activities and experiences directly related to the service. Consequently, service providers should not only focus on the act of service alone but also on customer's intentions as well as resulting activities and experiences. This implies managing onstage and backstage actions so that they actually support the customer's independent activities and experiences.

3.7. COMPARISON MATRIX OF THE FOUR SELECTED MARKETING PERSPECTIVES

As we have just seen, all four marketing perspectives are based on assumptions, concepts, and models that are different and heterogeneous so that it is currently difficult to compare them in a coherent manner. To the best of my knowledge, no management tool has been conceived so far for comparing of all of them altogether through a set of key constructs. Based on the literature review conducted until now, many articles in academic journals compare either two or three marketing perspectives at a time on different topics, and only a few compare all four of them through a limited number of constructs. As previously stated, many different marketing scholars clearly expressed the need to conceive a tool that could help company managers to compare these different marketing perspectives and to show how they could be translated into business action. Consequently, a comparison matrix based on a set of key constructs could represent a starting point through which all four marketing perspectives can be compared.

Table 20 below displays the comparison matrix of the four marketing perspectives that were selected for conducting my research work.

Table 20. Comparison Matrix of the Four Selected Marketing Perspectives

Key Constructs	Goods-Dominant Logic	Service-Dominant Logic	Service Logic	Customer-Dominant Logic
Year of onset	1972	2004	2006	2009
Founding scholars	Kotler	Vargo and Lusch	Grönroos	Heinonen, Strandvik, Mickelsson, Edvardsson, Sundström, Andersson, Voima
Set of principles	4 axioms and 16 corollaries: Traditional Marketing (Kotler, 1972) / 5 postulates: Goods-Dominant Logic (Lusch and Vargo, 2014)	11 foundational premises including 5 axioms (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008, 2016; Lusch and Vargo, 2014)	10 principles (Grönroos, 2006, 2011, 2015; Grönroos and Voima, 2013; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014)	5 principles (Heinonen et al., 2010, Voima et al., 2010; Heinonen and Strandvik 2015; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)
Ontological value creation process	Objective (Anker et al., 2015)	Provider facilitated inter-subjectivity (Anker et al., 2015)	Provider facilitated inter-subjectivity (Anker et al., 2015)	Subjective or consumer facilitated inter-subjectivity (Anker et al., 2015)
Value creation process (How value is created)	Value creation process: Value is created by the company (Kotler, 1972; Porter, 1985; Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Vargo et al., 2008; Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013; Gummerus, 2013; Lusch and Vargo, 2014; Anker et al., 2015)	Value co-creation process: Value is co-created but driven by the firm (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008, 2016; Vargo et al., 2008; Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013; Voima et al., 2010; Gummerus, 2013; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014; Lusch and Vargo, 2014; Anker et al., 2015)	Value generation process: Value is co-created but driven by the customer (Grönroos, 2006, 2008, 2015; Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013; Voima et al., 2010; Grönroos and Voima, 2013; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014; Anker et al., 2015)	Value formation process: Value emerges in the customer's life or business (i.e. value is created by the customer) (Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013; Voima et al., 2010; Anker et al., 2015; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)
Value locus (Where value is created)	Value-in-exchange (Kotler, 1972; Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008, 2016; Grönroos, 2006, 2008; Vargo et al., 2008; Heinonen et al., 2010, 2013; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014; Lusch and Vargo, 2014)	Value-in-context (Vargo and Lusch, 2008; Vargo et al., 2008; Voima et al., 2010; Heinonen et al., 2010; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Lusch and Vargo, 2014)	Value-in-use (Grönroos, 2006, 2008, 2015; Heinonen et al., 2010, 2013; Voima et al., 2010; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Grönroos and Voima, 2013; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014; Anker et al. 2015)	Value-in-experience (Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013; Anker et al., 2015)
Managerial focus	Company (i.e. the company's processes) (Kotler, 1972; Porter, 1985; Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)	Interaction (Between 2 or more actors) (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008, 2016; Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Lusch and Vargo, 2014; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)	Interaction (Between a company and a customer) (Grönroos, 2006, 2008, 2015; Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)	Customer (i.e. the customer's physical and mental processes) (Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013; Voima et al., 2010; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)

Key Constructs	Goods-Dominant Logic	Service-Dominant Logic	Service Logic	Customer-Dominant Logic
Managerial scope	Encounter / Transaction (Kotler, 1972; Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Lusch and Vargo, 2014; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)	System / Network (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008, 2016; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Lusch and Vargo, 2014; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)	Relationship (Grönroos, 2006, 2008, 2015; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)	Encounter / Transaction or relationship (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)
Basis of exchange	A company's product / service embedded with value through attributes / features / characteristics in exchange of money (Kotler, 1972; Porter, 1985; Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Vargo et al., 2008; Voima et al., 2010; Lusch and Vargo, 2014; Anker et al., 2015)	An actor's service (i.e. knowledge and skills) in exchange of another actor's service (i.e. knowledge and skills) (Lusch and Vargo, 2004, 2008, 2016; Vargo et al., 2008; Lusch and Vargo, 2014)	A company's total service offering (i.e. recognized and hidden services) in exchange of value captured from the customer via the total service offering (Grönroos, 2006, 2008, 2015; Grönroos and Ravald, 2011)	A company's access to the customer's life or business if the offering (i.e. product, service, solution) fits with the customer's specific needing (i.e. goals and tasks) (Heinonen et al. 2010, 2013; Strandvik et al., 2012; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015, 2018; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015)
Value creation aim	To increase the company's wealth (Kotler, 1972; Porter, 1985; Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Vargo et al., 2008, Lusch and Vargo, 2014)	To increase the system's / network's viability (Vargo et al., 2008; Vargo and Lusch, 2014)	To increase the customer's well-being (i.e. being better off) (Grönroos, 2015)	To increase the customer's well-being (i.e. being better off) (Anker et al., 2015)
Offering characteristics	Product and service as an outcome (i.e. unit of output resulting from a production process) (Kotler, 1972; Porter, 1985; Vargo et al., 2008; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015)	Service as a process (i.e. interaction / doing something for someone else) (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008, 2016; Vargo et al., 2008; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Lusch and Vargo, 2014; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015)	Service as a process (i.e. interaction / doing something for someone else) (Grönroos, 2006, 2008, 2015; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015)	Product and service as an outcome (i.e. unit of output resulting from a production process) or a process (i.e. interaction / doing something for someone else) (Heinonen et al., 2009; Holmlund and Strandvik, 2011; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015)
Value creation frameworks	Four P's (McCarthy, 1960; Kotler, 1972; Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Lusch and Vargo, 2014), Value Chain (Porter 1985; Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998; Gummerus, 2013; Vargo and Lusch, 2014)	Not explicitly defined, only implicitly thru the visual representation of the Value Co-Creation Process (Vargo and Lusch, 2016), Value Network (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998)	Three Value Creation Spheres (Grönroos, 2006, 2011, 2015; Grönroos and Voima, 2013; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014), Value Shop (Stabell and Fjeldstad, 1998)	Five Value Formation Questions (Voima et al., 2010, Heinonen et al., 2013), T-Model (Heinonen et al., 2010; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015; Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015), Process Model of Customer Journey and Experience (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016)

Source: Author – Adapted from multiple sources.

Nowadays, there are many different marketing perspectives that co-exist in parallel. Even though they are based on different ontologies, Goods-Dominant Logic (as the traditional

marketing perspective), Service-Dominant Logic, Service Logic, and Customer-Dominant Logic can nevertheless be compared in relation to one another on the basis of several key constructs as shown above.

That being said, let us now go over the way I designed my research work.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1. RECAP OF THE RESEARCH THEORETICAL CHOICES

4.1.1. Perspective and logic

In strategic management, when strategy is a perspective, it represents both a specific way of perceiving the world from a company's standpoint and the fundamental way that a company does things (Mintzberg et al., 2009). More specifically, the cognitive school of strategic management deals with strategy as a mental perspective since it views strategy formation as a mental process taking place in the mind of managers in the form of maps, schemas, frames, and interpretations (Mintzberg et al., 2009). With regards to the "objective wing" of the cognitive school, managers can be considered as workers processing information for themselves, for their colleagues, and for the company as a whole (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Hence, sharing processed information can create considerable problems since incoming information can be distorted via cognitive biases (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

In strategic literature, the concept of "dominant logic" refers to "an information filter on managerial attention" (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986). In fact, the characteristics of the core business tend to cause managers to define problems in certain ways so as to develop a set of tools that can help them to successfully accomplish their critical tasks (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986). More precisely, the concept of "dominant logic" thus refers to a mindset or conceptualization of the business and tools in order to reach goals, such that it is stored as a cognitive map and is expressed as a learned problem-solving behavior (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).

In order to better survive in their fast-changing business environment, companies need to at least reflect upon their applied business perspective or business logic as it is a key aspect of management (Drucker, 1974). However, managers are not necessarily aware of the set of assumptions upon which relies their applied perspective so that they might not respond appropriately to changes in their business environment (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015).

4.1.2. Value creation

Over time, the American Marketing Association (AMA) regularly updated its definition of marketing in order to reflect the increasing role of value as a central concept in marketing. As stated before, many researchers noted that value is one of the most misused terms/concepts in the management literature (Khalifa, 2004; Leszinski and Marn, 1997; Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007) such that it still remains poorly understood by many managers. In order to clarify this key concept in marketing, Gummerus (2013) showed that research on value can be divided into two main streams: (1) Value creation processes (i.e. created value) and (2) value outcome determination (i.e. perceived value). The focus of my research work is on the three different ways that value can be created, that is, either: (1) By companies (as described in Goods-Dominant Logic), (2) in the interaction between a company and a customer (referred to as a co-creation process in Service-Dominant Logic and in Service Logic), or (3) by customers (as explained in Customer-Dominant Logic).

Many different popular value creation frameworks have been developed by academic researchers and mainstream consulting firms. Nevertheless, most of those that I covered have been designed so as to help managers to understand how to create value from the company's perspective by focusing primarily on their own business processes, while sometimes also incorporating the customer and thereby giving rise to a value co-creation process. In any case, while value can be either created by the company only, by the customer only, or co-created by both, in the end value is always determined by the customers. Since companies and customers follow their own logic, the former needs to better understand the latter in order to attract and keep them. Consequently, company managers need to become aware of the existence of the different marketing perspectives so as to help them to think outside of the box by envisioning alternatives ways of creating value depending on the adopted marketing perspective.

To the best of my knowledge, no management tool has been developed so far for comparing all of the four selected marketing perspectives altogether through a set of key constructs. Meanwhile, many different marketing scholars clearly expressed the need to conceive a tool that could help company managers to compare these different marketing perspectives and to show how they could be translated into business action.

4.1.3. Institutional Logics Perspective and levels of analysis

By combining multiple levels of analysis, researchers can get a more precise picture of the problem at stake because observation across levels can help to “see the workings of mechanisms and – according to the Institutional Logic Perspective – the contradictory nature of logics” (Thornton et al., 2012). According to this organizational theory, individuals and organizations can be influenced within the interinstitutional system depending on their situation in the different institutional orders to which they belong. Each institutional order is based on inherent principles, practices, and symbols that influence individual and organizational behavior and thus determine how reasoning actually takes place. Considering that institutions operate at multiple levels of analysis, the key question thus becomes whether the change taking place in an organization is due to a change in actors or in its structure, such that it becomes crucial to eventually identify the different cause-and-effect mechanisms as well as which elements operate at the different levels of analysis.

According to the Integrative Model of the Microfoundations of Institutional Logics, the process starts with the fact that the attention of individual actors is focused, in turn this activates a social actor’s identities, goals, and action schemas, which along with the shared focus attention shape social interaction, thereby ultimately creating flows and interdependencies that result in social practices and structure. Likewise, in their Parallel Process Model of Strategic Decision Making, Corner et al. (1994) integrate both individual and organizational level information processing perspectives through a series of linking mechanisms. According to them, information processing goes through the following sequence in parallel at both levels: (1) Attention, (2) encoding, (3) storage/retrieval, (4) decision, (5) action, and (6) outcome.

A cross-case analysis of the informants’ responses based on specific characteristics related to their personal profile (e.g. socio-demographics in appendix 4) and their company’s profile (e.g. firmographics in appendix 5) could help to check to what extent a marketing perspective (i.e. marketing dominant logic) is related to individual and organizational characteristics. For instance, as proposed by the Interinstitutional System Ideal Types (cf. figure 23 in section 2.4.3), the data could thus be compared on the basis of an informant’s management level position (i.e. top level manager, middle level manager...) and profession (i.e. marketing, sales, finance...) as well as on the basis of a company’s proposed offerings (i.e. products, services, solutions...) and markets served (i.e. B2B, B2C, B2G...). According to Institutional Logics

Perspective, the latter four criteria actually correspond to the concept of “identity” such that they are further investigated in section 5.4.9.

4.2. RECAP OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As stated before, my main research question (MRQ) is as follows:

MRQ: What tool(s) can be designed in order to sensitize managers to alternative ways of creating value from a marketing perspective?

Once again, the objective of my research work is not to change the prevailing marketing perspective and thus the inherent value creation process of companies per se. In fact, the aim of my management tool is to help managers to get a complete overview of how value can be created in different ways depending on the adopted marketing perspective (i.e. marketing dominant logic). In turn, this could help managers to at least reflect upon (if not reassess) their prevailing marketing perspective and its underlying assumptions, thereby also enabling them to think outside of their current box (i.e. prevailing marketing perspective).

In turn, my main research question raises the following related research questions (RRQ):

RRQ1: How do the managers in charge of creating value define value creation and describe the value creation process of their company?

The way managers define value creation in their own words reflects their personal conception of value creation. Also, the way managers describe their company’s value creation process reflects how value is really created by their company through specific practices and activities. Ultimately, the analysis of their respective definition and description can help to determine the set of assumptions that they rely upon, which correspond to a specific marketing perspective.

RRQ2: On what elements of value creation do managers focus their attention when designing strategies and offerings?

The starting point of the decision-making process is the focus of attention that conditions the type of information that is encoded, stored, and then retrieved in order to make strategic decisions, which will have a significant impact on the type of actions to undertake for reaching a desired outcome or goal. The elements of value creation on which managers focus their attention can thus help to determine which aspects of their business are taken into consideration for designing strategies and offerings. In turn, this can help to identify their company's prevailing dominant logic (i.e. marketing perspective).

RRQ3: To which marketing perspective do managers' conception of value creation and their company's value creation process correspond, and are they convergent?

The way a manager defines value creation and the way a company creates value reflects their marketing perspective based on a specific set of assumptions. In order to better succeed in their joint business undertakings, individuals and organizations should normally be linked by shared meanings such as a shared marketing perspective (i.e. convergent marketing perspectives). Comparing an individual's marketing perspective (based on his/her conception of value creation) to an organization's marketing perspective (based on his/her company's value creation process) can eventually help or not to potentially shed light on different marketing logics, that is, different ways of reasoning with a specific way of conducting business for reaching desired goals. In addition, comparing the responses of managers based on their personal characteristics (e.g. management level position, profession, etc.) and their company's characteristics (e.g. proposed offerings, markets served, etc.) can eventually help to investigate if these potential differences can be due or not to individual or organizational characteristics.

4.3. SCIENTIFIC PARADIGM

4.3.1. Main scientific paradigms

The goal of science is to create knowledge through discoveries as well as analyses of existing objects (Simon, 1996). As depicted in table 21 below, sciences are grouped into three different categories: (1) Natural sciences, (2) social sciences, and (3) design sciences.

Table 21. Categories of Science

Characteristics	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences	Design Sciences
Areas or fields of study	Physics, chemistry, biology	Anthropology, economics, politics, sociology, history	Medicine, engineering, management
Scientific purposes	Understand complex phenomena. Discover how things are and justify why they are this way.	Describe, understand and reflect on the human being and its actions.	Design. Produce systems that do not yet exist. Modify existing situations to achieve better results. Focus on solving.
Research aims conducted under this paradigm	Explore, describe, explain and predict when possible.	Explore, describe, explain and predict when possible.	Design and prescribe. Research is oriented to problem solving.

Source: Dresch et al., 2015b – Adapted from Dresch et al., 2015a.

4.3.2. Justification for selecting design science

Area or field of study

Design Science is defined as “the scientific study and creation of artefacts as they are developed and used by people with the goal of solving practical problems of general interest” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). Companies perform different types of activities such as purchasing raw materials from suppliers, delivering goods to distributors, training their sales force, and proposing after sales services to customers. These sets of activities are grouped together into coherent clusters also referred to as practices. In fact, a practice is defined as “a set of human activities performed regularly and seen as meaningfully related to each other by the people participating in them” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014).

The field of study of my research work is marketing, which is considered as a theory of a practice by marketing scholars as well as a function by business practitioners. Since marketing is a management discipline, the use of design science as a scientific paradigm is well-suited for marketing research as displayed in the table above.

Scientific purpose

As companies engage in various kinds of activities, they sometimes face practical problems. A practical problem occurs when a person perceives a gap between a current state and a desirable state. The latter state is preferable as it allows people engaged in a practice to perform better. Practical problems experienced by people can actually be solved with artifacts. In Design

Science, an artifact is “an object made by humans with the intention to be used for addressing a practical problem” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). The scientific purpose of my research work is to design a management tool that can help managers to envision value creation from different perspectives, and thus potentially decide to improve their value creation process by adopting a different marketing perspective. As depicted in the table above, this is also in line with the scientific purpose of design science, that is, to design a tool for solving practical problems.

Research aim

The aim of research is to contribute to the production of knowledge such as by describing, explaining and predicting phenomena or even prescribing solutions. As a result, several types of knowledge can be identified (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014):

1. **Definitional knowledge** helps to define constructs, concepts or classifications and serves as the basis for all other types of knowledge.
2. **Descriptive knowledge** describes, analyzes, and summarizes observations of phenomena.
3. **Explanatory knowledge** explains how objects behave and why events take place.
4. **Predictive knowledge** predicts outcomes based on underlying factors but without explaining cause-and-effect relationships.
5. **Prescriptive knowledge** involves prescriptive models or methods for solving practical problems.

As mentioned previously, I would like to design a management tool for helping managers to become aware of the different ways through which value can be created depending on the adopted marketing perspective. In fact, the aim of my research work involves the development of a step-by-step method that enables managers to first identify the marketing perspective applied in the company and then to compare it to other marketing perspectives. Accordingly, this corresponds to prescriptive knowledge since managers will understand the different managerial implications of each marketing perspective in terms of value creation, which in turn will thus help them to consider applying an alternative marketing perspective if needed.

4.4. RESEARCH PARADIGM

4.4.1. Main research paradigms

A research paradigm is defined as “a set of commonly held beliefs and assumptions within a research community about ontological, epistemological, and methodological concerns” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). In short, ontology inquires “What is reality?” – while epistemology asks, “How do we know about reality and how should we obtain that knowledge?” – and methodology questions “Which methods can be used to obtain knowledge?”

Table 22 below displays three main research paradigms (among others) that can be used by a researcher: (1) Positivism, (2) Constructivism, and (3) Critical Realism.

Table 22. Main Research Paradigms

Concerns	Positivism	Constructivism	Critical Realism
Ontology	Assumes that reality exists, independent of human actions and experiences	Assumes that the social world does not exist “out there”, independent of human actions and intentions, but instead assumes that the social world is constructed by people who carry out social actions and give meanings to them	Assumes that science goes beyond the observable by postulating structures, entities, and causal mechanisms that are not observable, and which generate events and behaviors which can be observed
Epistemology	Claims that objective knowledge about the social world is obtainable but only through observation and experimentation	Claims that researchers can only achieve a deep understanding of a social phenomenon by actively participating in that phenomenon together with the people who actually create it	Critical Theory claims that researchers should not only explain and understand social and cultural phenomena but also strive for human emancipation
Methodology	Prefers experiments and surveys as research strategies	Prefers case studies, action research, and ethnography as research strategies	Prefers the methodological approach of retroduction (i.e. abduction), which is a kind of reasoning that starts from some unexplained phenomenon and then moves on to proposing different structures or mechanisms that are able to explain the phenomenon

Source: Adapted from Johannesson and Perjons, 2014.

4.4.2. Justification for selecting critical realism

Critical Realism as a research paradigm for marketing research

Unlike other disciplines that built their own body of theory so as to create knowledge and to reach academic status, marketing has borrowed many of its theories mainly from psychology and economics (Mittelstaedt, 1990). In order to advance as a discipline, most scholars agree that marketing needs to reconsider its theoretical foundations and conduct more research accordingly (Maclaran et al., 2010). Even though there have been several calls for more emphasis on marketing theory, a consensus with respect to a common definition for theory has never been reached within the marketing academy because most scholars have a different orientation and thus a different view on what makes up theory (Maclaran et al., 2010). Let us briefly compare three different types of researchers so as to further illustrate the latter point.

A positivist researcher (Hunt, 1991) will start by formulating hypotheses based on the evaluation of prior research with a neutral and objective stance such that he considers the social world to be “independent” with regards to his own perspective. Next, he will test the hypotheses empirically so that if they are not refuted, then he can conclude that the theory is true. Finally, the theory can in turn lead to “law-like generalizations” (Hunt, 1991) that can “enable the prediction of marketplace and consumer behavior and is thereby used to inform managerial decision-making” (Arndt, 1985).

An interpretivist researcher questions the objectivity stance of positivism (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988) because he believes that he is not “separate” from the world but rather an active participant in it, such that his observation can have an impact on the outcome (Maclaran et al., 2010). Next, he thinks that findings emerge from the field such that his research design per se can be modified accordingly. As a result, he considers theory more as a narrative “that explains how researchers and informants construct their worlds and the relationship between certain events and actions” (Price, 2007).

A researcher using Critical Theory considers the production of theory “as a historically informed activity that aims to question the organization of society” (Maclaran et al., 2010). He also thinks that theory and practice are intertwined. This is due to the fact that Critical Theory revised its own theoretical perspective on the basis of empirical evidence collected via

qualitative methods (Fromm, 1962/2006), and that it viewed the production of theory itself as “adequate practice” (Lowenthal, 1987). Thus, Critical Theory does not only “try to describe or explain the nature of society, it wants to go beyond this and critique it, offering insights that serve to create a more ‘sane society’ than one predicated on consumerism” (Fromm, 1976/2007).

Consequently, “scientific realism seems to make the most sense for marketing... It is a good candidate for providing a philosophical foundation for marketing research” (Hunt and Hansen, 2010). Scientific realism recognizes that knowledge claims are provisional and thus can be revised on the basis of further evidence. In fact, scientific realism embraces critical realism, which stresses the importance of constantly developing “ever-better measures of constructs, research procedures for empirical testing, and epistemological norms for developing scientific knowledge” (Hunt and Hansen, 2010).

Critical Realism as a research paradigm for design science research

In addition, just like in Design Science, Critical Realism aims to not only describe and explain the world, but it also tries to change it. While Critical Theory strives to increase human freedom by encouraging people to create such a change, Design Science generates change by designing and introducing new artifacts, that is, tools made by humans in order to solve practical problems (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014).

As already explained, the objective of my (marketing) research work is to design an artifact (i.e. a management tool) for helping company managers to envision different ways of creating value depending on the adopted marketing perspective. This can be a possible solution (i.e. thinking outside of the box via an alternative perspective) to the practical problem of a prevailing marketing perspective (i.e. marketing dominant logic) framing the way managers think and act. Since Critical Realism is the research paradigm that is generally most often used in both marketing research and design science research, it seems to be the best-suited research paradigm for my research work.

4.5. RESEARCH STRATEGY

4.5.1. Main research strategies in management

As shown in table 23 below, there are three main research strategies that can be used in management (and thus marketing as one of its subdisciplines): (1) Case study, (2) action research, and (3) design science research.

Table 23. Main Research Strategies in Management

Characteristics	Case Study	Action Research	Design Science Research
Epistemological paradigm	Traditional sciences (natural and social)	Traditional sciences (natural and social)	Design Science
Objectives that can be achieved	- Assist in the understanding of complex phenomena. Test or create theories. - Explore, Describe, Explain and Predict	- Solve or explain problems of a system generating knowledge for both practice and theory. - Explore, Describe, Explain and Predict	- Develop artifacts that allow satisfactory solutions to practical problems. Contribute to the building of theories (mid-range theories). - Design and Prescribe
Main activities planned for a proper conduction of research	- Define Conceptual Framework - Plan Cases - Conduct Pilots - Collect Data - Analyze Data - Generate Reports (Cauchick Miguel, 2007)	- Plan Action - Collect Data - Analyze Data and Plan Actions - Implement Actions - Evaluate Results - Monitor (Continuous) (Turrioni and Mello, 2012)	- Define the Problem - Suggest - Develop - Evaluate - Conclude - Communicate [Manson (2006), Peffers et al. (2007), Takeda et al. (1990), Vaishnavi and Kuechler (2009)]
Research results	- Constructs - Hypotheses - Propositions - Descriptions - Explanations	- Constructs - Hypotheses - Descriptions - Explanations - Actions	- Artifacts (Constructs, Models, Methods, Instantiations, Design Propositions)

Source: Dresch et al., 2015b – Adapted from Dresch et al., 2015a.

4.5.2. Justification for selecting design science research

Objectives that can be achieved

As already stated, my objective is to create a management tool that will help company managers to envision value creation from different perspectives. As shown in the table above, Design

Science Research is the appropriate research strategy for conducting my research work based on the objective of developing an artifact (i.e. a management tool).

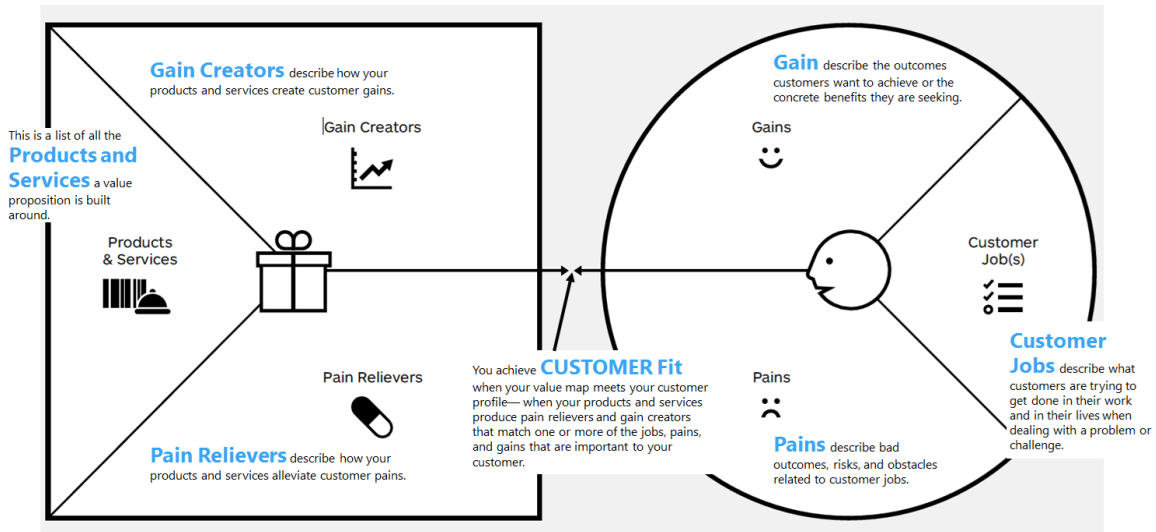
Research results

In Design Science Research, the results of research are based on the creation of artifacts. As a matter of fact, four types of artifacts (excluding design propositions) can be developed: (1) Constructs, (2) models, (3) methods, and (4) instantiations. In order to better illustrate each one of them, let us once again use the example of the Value Proposition Canvas presented in the book *Value Proposition Design* (Osterwalder et al., 2014), which I already covered in section 2.3.6 dealing with value creation frameworks. Afterwards, I will then explain the type of artifact that I chose to create.

Constructs are “terms, notations, definitions, and concepts that are needed for formulating problems and their possible solutions” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). As shown in figure 35 below, the constructs of the Value Proposition Canvas are the 7 building blocks (in **blue bold letters**) along with their definition that altogether make up the value proposition.

Models are “representations of possible solutions to practical problems, so a model can be used for supporting the construction of other artifacts” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). Figure 35 below depicts the visual representation of the 7 building blocks of the Value Proposition Canvas. This model is a description of the relationship between the 7 elements in order to design a value proposition.

Figure 35. Constructs and Model of the Value Proposition Canvas



Source: Osterwalder et al., 2014.

Methods express “prescriptive knowledge by defining guidelines and processes for how to solve problems and achieve goals” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). A method can explain how to create an artefact such as through a set of specific tasks to perform. It can be very formal such as the self-contained step-by-step set of operations to be performed by an algorithm or relatively unformal such as the explanation of a standard way of doing things in a best practice. As shown in table 24 below, the authors of the Value Proposition Canvas propose a 4-step method in order to create products and services that customers want. The first step explains how to fill out the Value Proposition Canvas. The second step shows how to design products and services based on the ideas generated with and exposed on the Value Proposition Canvas. The third step describes how to test these products and services before launching them full scale. The fourth step presents how an organization can evolve as a result of implementing the Value Proposition Canvas in its business processes. In addition, this last step also illustrates how to combine the Value Proposition Canvas with the Business Model Canvas, which is based on the doctoral thesis of Alexander Osterwalder “The business model ontology: A proposition in a design science approach,” that he completed in 2004 under the supervision of his thesis director Yves Pigneur. As presented in their book *Business Model Generation* (Osterwalder et Pigneur, 2010), the aim of the Business Model Canvas is to help companies to define their business model.

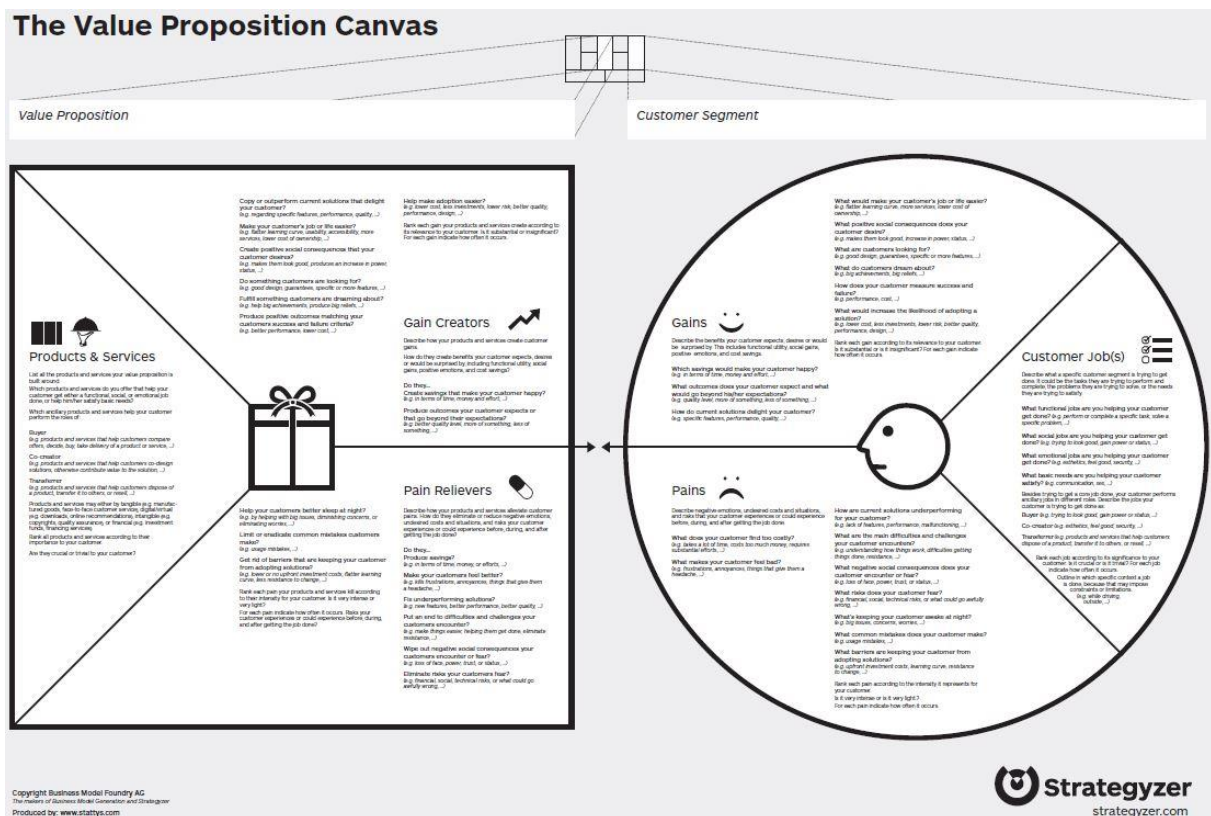
Table 24. Method of the Value Proposition Canvas

1. Canvas	2. Design	3. Test	4. Evolve
1.1 Customer profile	2.1 Prototyping possibilities	3.1 What to test	4.1 Create alignment
1.2 Value map	2.2 Starting points	3.2 Testing step-by-step	4.2 Measure & monitor
1.3 Fit	2.3 Understanding customers	3.3 Experiment library	4.3 Improve relentlessly
	2.4 Making choices	3.4 Bringing it all together	4.4 Reinvent yourself constantly
	2.5 Finding the right business model		
	2.6 Designing in established organizations		

Source: Adapted from Osterwalder et al., 2014.

Instantiations are “working systems that can be used in a practice” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). As displayed in figure 36 below, the instantiation of the Value Proposition Canvas is the software that was designed as a web application so that people can generate a value proposition online, which can then be printed and shared with others.

Figure 36. Instantiation of the Value Proposition Canvas



Source: <https://strategyzer.com/canvas/value-proposition-canvas>

My research result is a step-by-step method using the following set of tools:

1. Step #1 – Administer a multiple-choice questionnaire to company managers derived from the exaptation of the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002) and based on the way companies create value as opposed to the way they relate to their market through business-customer interactions
2. Step #2 – Identify the prevailing marketing perspective of the company based on the responses of the managers
3. Step #3 – Show through a comparison matrix how the prevailing marketing perspective of the company relates to and differs from the other three marketing perspectives in terms of alternative ways of creating value

4.5.3. Main differences between design science and design thinking

In the article “Design Thinking” published in the *Harvard Business Review* in 2008, the designer Tim Brown defined the concept of “design thinking” as “a discipline that uses the designer’s sensibility and methods to match people’s needs with what is technically feasible and what business strategy can convert into customer value and market opportunities.” In addition, he further explains that “design thinking” is “a methodology that imbues the full spectrum of innovation activities with a human-centered design ethos” (Brown, 2008). Just like design thinking, design science is based on the development of artifacts and more specifically on the creation of original artifacts that are different from the ones that already exist.

That being said, design science and design thinking have a difference purpose with respect to their generalizability and their contribution to knowledge (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). On one hand, design thinking is a process for developing a solution that may be applicable to a single actor, such that the resulting work of design thinking is sometimes only relevant for a local practice, that is, a practice which involves just one single entity (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). On the other hand, design science aims at producing and communicating knowledge of general interest, such that the resulting work of design science is relevant for a global practice, that is, a community of local practices as well as the research community (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014).

As a result of the different purposes of design thinking and design science, design science research must also fulfill three additional requirements:

“Firstly, the purpose of creating new knowledge of general interest requires design science projects to make use of rigorous research methods. Secondly, the knowledge produced has to be related to an already existing knowledge base, in order to ensure that proposed results are both well founded and original. Thirdly, the new results should be communicated to both practitioners and researchers.”

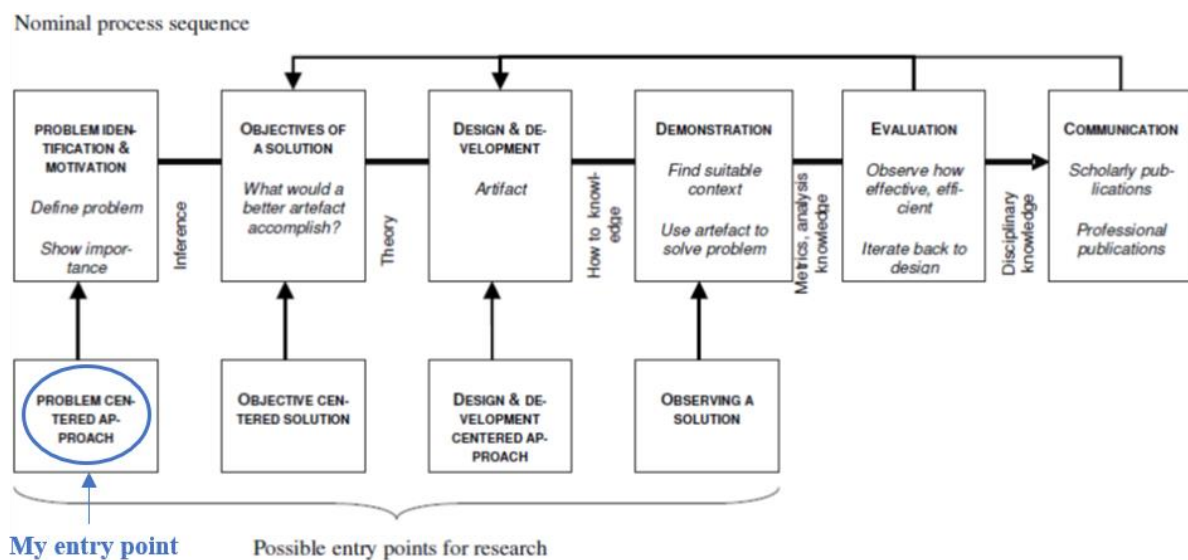
(Johannesson and Perjons, 2014)

4.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.6.1. The Design Science Research Process Model as a research methodology

As shown in figure 37 below, I used the Design Science Research Process Model that was developed by Peffers et al. (2006). It is a process model which is divided into 6 main activities that follow a nominal process sequence: (1) Problem identification and motivation, (2) objectives of a solution, (3) design and development, (4) demonstration, (5) evaluation, and (6) communication.

Figure 37. Design Science Research Process Model



Source: Peffers et al., 2006.

4.6.2. Activity #1 – Problem identification & motivation

In the first activity, the objective is to first define the specific research problem by investigating as well as analyzing a practical problem, and then also to justify the value or importance of a solution. This is a possible entry point for research, if the idea for the research resulted either from the observation of the problem or from suggested future research in a paper from a prior project (Peffer et al., 2006).

Justification for selecting a problem-centered approach as my entry point

In my case, I used a problem-centered approach as a point of entry for my research work. Based on the literature review that I conducted, I discovered that both academic scholars and practitioners called for further research as follows:

1. Marketing research should aim more at bridging the gap between theory and practice (Kumar, 2017).
2. The abstract framework of (some) marketing perspectives should be linked to more actionable management tools (Lusch and Vargo, 2014).
3. A comparison of different marketing perspectives (as different value creation logics) and how they can be translated into business action would be useful to company managers (Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015).
4. New knowledge and new models are needed in the area of innovation due to the disruption and change experienced in marketing and in markets (Marketing Science Institute, 2016).

Consequently, my point of entry for research is a problem-centered approach that leads to my main research question:

What tool(s) can be designed in order to sensitize managers to alternative ways of creating value from a marketing perspective?

4.6.3. Activity #2 – Objectives of a solution

In the second activity, the objectives of a solution should be inferred from the problem definition. This is a possible entry point for research if it results from a consulting experience in which the expected outcome of the mission falls short of the client's expectations so that a better job could be done in the future (Peffer et al., 2006).

As already explained, the objective of my research work is not to change the prevailing marketing perspective and thus the inherent value creation process of companies per se. The aim of my management tool is to help managers to get a complete view of how value can be created in different ways depending on the adopted marketing perspective (i.e. marketing dominant logic). For example, they could eventually design offerings that are better suited to customers' expectations if they adopt a Customer-Dominant Logic. The reason is because this marketing perspective focuses on customer logic and analyzes the customer's ecosystem of activities, actors, experiences, tasks, and goals as a starting point. This would imply to learn more about the way a customer integrates and experiences an offering in his/her daily life from his/her own perspective and thus lead to the elaboration of an offering that is more adapted to his/her goals and tasks (i.e. needing; Strandvik et al., 2012).

4.6.4. Activity #3 – Design & development

In the third activity, the desired functionality and structure of the artefact must be determined, and then the artefact must be created. It can be defined as a construct, model, method, or instantiation. The theory that contributes to the artefactual solution should also be explained. This is a possible entry point for research if an existing artifact has not been formally thought through yet as a solution for the explicit problem at stake (Peffer et al., 2006).

The set of tools has been designed and developed as a result of the research findings derived from both the literature review and the exploratory study. On one hand, the literature review helped to get a thorough understanding of the research problem at stake so as to set up the basis of the research theoretical framework. In addition, this helped to design an interview guideline for conducting an exploratory study so as to further refine the research problem at stake. In turn, this enabled me to design and develop the multiple-choice questionnaire and the comparison

matrix to be demonstrated and tested via a case study, that is, during an in-house workshop in a company.

4.6.5. Activity #4 – Demonstration

In the fourth activity, the developed artefact must be implemented in a suitable context so as to demonstrate its efficacy for solving the research problem. This demonstration could involve experimentation, simulation, a case study, or proof. This is a possible entry point for research if the observation of a practical solution, that worked previously in another setting, might help researchers to reach a design science solution by working backwards with rigor (Peffer et al., 2006).

Before going over this part in more detail in section 7, I set up a case study in order to implement the set of tools that I developed. In fact, I selected one of the companies that already participated in the exploratory study in order to conduct an in-house workshop. First, I asked managers to fill out the multiple-choice questionnaire. Next, I analyzed their responses in order to identify their company's prevailing marketing perspective. Finally, I used a comparison matrix showing the similarities and differences between the four marketing perspectives. This helped them to become aware of the alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted marketing perspective.

4.6.6. Activity #5 – Evaluation

In the fifth activity, how well the artefact fulfills the requirement and to what extent it can solve the problem must be evaluated. This activity involves the use of relevant metrics and analysis techniques including objective quantitative performance measures or client feedback, which can help to compare the stated objectives of the solution to the observed results. At the end of this activity, the researcher can either iterate back to the third activity so as to improve the effectiveness of the artefact or move on to the last activity.

In short before further explanation in section 7, I evaluated the results by analyzing how effectively the managers in the selected company were able to comprehend both key concepts related to value creation and alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted

marketing perspective. I actually conducted a collective feedback session plus an individual interview with each participant so as to verify the efficacy of my set of tools.

4.6.7. Activity #6 – Communication

In the sixth activity, the importance of the problem solved, the utility of the artefact, and the rigor of its design must be communicated to researchers and practicing professionals. The accumulated knowledge and experience must be shared.

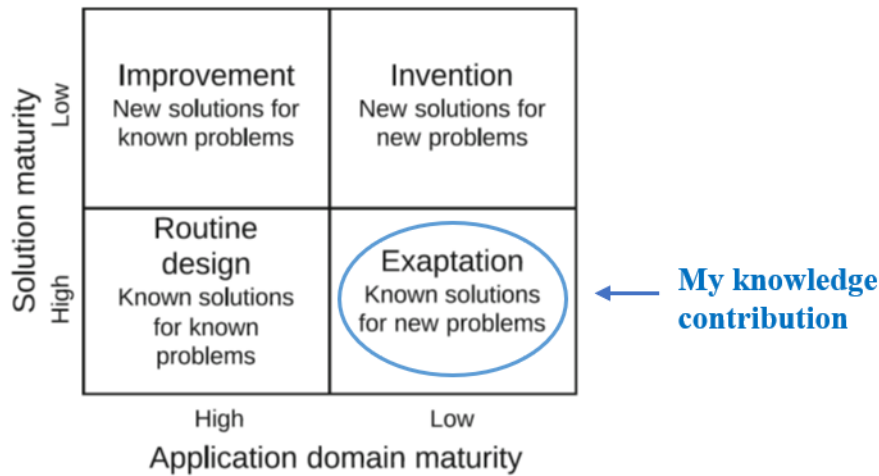
My research findings are actually communicated in the EDDBA thesis that can be accessible to interested academic researchers and business practitioners. In addition, I could ultimately propose an article to an academic journal related to my research work, and/or write a book for managers and students, and/or conduct training workshops for business practitioners as well as deliver lectures to business school students.

4.7. KNOWLEDGE CONTRIBUTION

4.7.1. Main knowledge contributions in Design Science Research

In Design Science Research, there exists four types of knowledge contributions depending “on the nature of the designed artifact” (Gregor and Hevner, 2013): (1) Invention (i.e. new solutions for new problems), (2) improvement (i.e. new solutions for known problems), (3) exaptation (i.e. known solutions for new problems), and (4) routine design (i.e. known solutions for known problems). Figure 38 below depicts a matrix based on the Design Science Research Knowledge Contribution Framework developed by Gregor and Hevner (2013), which shows the positioning of the four types of knowledge contributions depending on their application domain maturity and their solution maturity. “Application domain maturity is about the maturity of the practice for which the contribution is intended,” while “solution maturity is about the maturity of artefacts that could be used as a starting point for finding solutions” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014).

Figure 38. Design Science Research Knowledge Contributions



Source: Johannesson and Perjons, 2014 – Adapted from Gregor and Hevner, 2013.

Let us briefly explain each type of knowledge contribution:

1. **Invention.** “True invention is a radical breakthrough – a clear departure from the accepted ways of thinking and doing” (Gregor and Hevner, 2013). This type of contribution addresses new problems with new solutions. Examples of inventions include the telephone for talking to someone in a remote location or the car for transporting people on long distances.
2. **Improvement.** This type of contribution proposes new (i.e. better) solutions for known problems. Improvements include designing more efficient and more effective products in terms of quality, usability, safety, and so on. Examples of improvements include the incorporation of fluoride in toothpaste so as to prevent tooth decay or using a cardboard tube packaging instead of an aluminum bag for potato chips so as to avoid crushing them.
3. **Exaptation.** This type of contribution adapts a known (i.e. existing) solution “to a problem for which it was not originally intended” such that “an existing artifact is repurposed, or exapted, to a new problem context” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). Examples of exaptations include gunpowder initially used as a medical elixir in China before being “repurposed for powering fireworks and firearms” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014), or even the blue pill Viagra initially developed as an antihypertensive drug that turned out to be useful against the problem of erectile dysfunction.
4. **Routine design.** This type of contribution proposes known solutions for known problems “by making minor modifications to an existing solution” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014).

A typical example of a routine design is the design of a new electronic device such as a smartphone or a tablet with slightly better specifications than the previous version.

4.7.2. Justification for selecting exaptation

During my literature review, I read an article that presented a tool for identifying the prevailing marketing practice of companies based on the way they relate to their market through business-customer interactions. As a result, I decided to exapt the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002). In other words, I want to use a similar type of tool (known solution) for identifying the prevailing marketing perspective adopted by a company based on the way it creates value (new problem) as opposed to identifying their prevailing marketing practice based on the way it relates to its market through business-customer interactions (known problem).

In the article “How Firms Relate to their Markets: An Empirical Examination of Contemporary Marketing Practices” (Coviello et al., 2002), the authors examined the marketing practices of 308 companies in the United States and four Western countries so as to understand how different companies relate to their markets. Their comparative study analyzed companies that served different customers (mainly consumers and businesses) with different offerings (mainly products and services) by addressing the following questions:

1. How do different types of firms relate to their markets in terms of their contemporary marketing practices?
2. What is their relative emphasis on transactional and relational aspects of marketing?

In order to answer these questions, the authors operationalized a conceptual framework that was initially developed by Coviello, Brodie, and Munro (1997) and itself based on the previous work of Grönroos (1991), Webster (1992), and Berry (1995). They actually completed their conceptual framework thanks to the synthesis of a broader literature review about how companies relate to their markets through their various decisions and activities by integrating the transactional and relational views on marketing.

According to their literature review, they concluded that marketing was characterized by multiple complex processes that could be grouped into four different types of contemporary marketing practices:

1. **Transaction marketing** refers to managing the marketing mix so as to attract and satisfy customers.
2. **Database marketing** deals with technology-based tools used to target and retain customers.
3. **Interaction marketing** denotes developing interpersonal relationships to create cooperative interaction between buyers and sellers for mutual benefit.
4. **Network marketing** relates to developing interfirm relationships in order to allow for coordination of activities among multiple parties for mutual benefit, resource exchange, etc.

A self-administered structured questionnaire was designed in order to collect data pertaining to the different aspects of marketing practice and firmographics (i.e. industry, size, culture...) of companies. All respondents were involved in the marketing activities of their company. Their model was developed by using items that reflected the nine dimensions previously operationalized by Coviello, Brodie, and Munro (2000): (1) Purpose of exchange, (2) nature of communication, (3) type of contact, (4) duration of exchange, (5) formality of exchange, (6) managerial intent, (7) managerial focus, (8) managerial investment, and (9) managerial level. Each of the nine dimensions consisted of a set of variables reflecting each of the four marketing practice constructs: (1) Transaction marketing, (2) database marketing, (3) interaction marketing, and (4) network marketing.

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to test convergent and discriminant validity of the four constructs combined simultaneously, and to further refine the measures so that the final number of items reasonably reflected each of the four constructs. After comparing the scores of the four constructs across all types of companies in order to identify significant differences in how they related to their markets, the authors used cluster analysis so as to group them meaningfully on the basis of their marketing practices as opposed to the conventional categories such as product offered or market served.

Figure 39 below shows the components of the measures used in the comparative study of contemporary marketing practices.

Figure 39. Comparative Study of Contemporary Marketing Practices

<p>1. Purpose of Exchange: When dealing with our market, our focus is on Generating a profit or other “financial” measure(s) of performance. [TM] Acquiring customer information. [DM] Building a long-term relationship with a specific customer(s). [IM] Forming strong relationships with a number of organizations in our market(s) or wider marketing system. [NM]</p>	<p>Mainly at an informal, social level. [DM]* At both a formal, business and informal, social level. [IM/NM]*</p>
<p>2. Nature of Communication: Our marketing communication involves Our organization communicating to the mass market. [TM] Our organization targeting a specifically identified segment(s) or customer(s). [DM] Individuals at various levels in our organization personally interacting with their individual customers. [IM] Senior managers networking with other managers from organizations in our market(s) or wider marketing system. [NM]</p>	<p>6. Managerial Intent: Our marketing activities are intended to Attract new customers. [TM] Retain existing customers. [DM] Develop cooperative relationships with our customers. [IM] Coordinate activities between ourselves, customers, and other parties in our wider marketing system. [NM]</p>
<p>3. Type of Contact: Our organization’s contact with our primary customers is Impersonal (e.g., no individualized or personal contact). [TM]* Somewhat personalized (e.g., by direct mail). [DM]* Interpersonal (e.g., involving one-to-one interaction between people). [IM/NM]*</p>	<p>7. Managerial Focus: Our marketing planning is focused on issues related to Our product/service offering. [TM] Customers in our market(s). [DM] Specific customers in our market(s) or individuals in organizations we deal with. [IM] The network of relationships between individuals and organizations in our wider marketing system. [NM]*</p>
<p>4. Duration of Exchange: When a customer buys our products, we believe they expect No future personalized contact with us. [TM]* Some future personalized contact with us. [DM]* One-to-one personal contact with us. [IM]* Ongoing one-to-one personal contact with people in our organization and wider marketing system. [NM]*</p>	<p>8. Managerial Investment: Our marketing resources (e.g., people, time, money) are invested in Product, promotion, price, and distribution activities (or some combination of these). [TM] Technology to improve communication with our customers. [DM] Establishing and building personal relationships with individual customers. [IM] Developing our organization’s network relationships within our market(s) or wider marketing system. [NM]</p>
<p>5. Formality of Exchange: When people from our organization meet with our primary customers, it is Mainly at a formal, business level. [TM]*</p>	<p>9. Managerial Level: In our organization, marketing activities are carried out by Functional marketers (e.g., marketing manager, sales manager, major account manager). [TM]* Specialist marketers (e.g., customer service manager, loyalty manager). [DM] Nonmarketers who have responsibility for marketing and other aspects of the business. [IM] The managing director or chief executive officer. [NM]</p>

*Indicates an item that was deleted from the final construct.

Notes: The related construct (TM, DM, IM, or NM) is given in square brackets.

Source: Coviello et al., 2002.

This comparative study showed that companies which related to their market on the basis of their marketing practice could be classified into the following four different groups: (1) Transaction marketing, (2) database marketing, (3) interaction marketing, and (4) network marketing. However, it also further demonstrated that companies competed on the basis of an approach that was either predominantly transactional, predominantly relational, or a transactional/relational hybrid. Finally, it proved that managerial thinking had to extend beyond the prevailing dual perspective of transactional marketing (using the traditional marketing mix model) versus purely relational. In other words, it confirmed that managers had to become aware of the potential role of each marketing practice in order to understand their nuances and implications regarding strategic choices that could be made by companies.

A similar type of multiple-choice questionnaire can be designed in order to reflect the prevailing marketing perspective of a company as opposed to the four contemporary marketing practices currently used in the framework. The first step consists in determining which key marketing constructs related to the company's value creation process can be used. The next step involves including four possible answers for each marketing construct that would actually correspond to the four marketing perspectives that I selected: (1) Goods-Dominant Logic, (2) Service-Dominant Logic, (3) Service Logic, and (4) Customer Dominant Logic. The last step implies identifying the prevailing marketing perspective of the company based on the analysis of all the responses provided by the company managers. In turn, the results can then be used to inform them of the existence of other marketing perspectives via a comparison matrix so as to show them how value can be created in different ways depending on the adopted marketing perspective.

4.8. SCIENTIFIC METHOD

4.8.1. Main scientific methods

There are three main scientific methods, that is, perspectives on how knowledge is created: 1) The inductive method, 2) the deductive method, and 3) the hypothetical-deductive method (Dresch et al., 2015a). The inductive method is based on the process of inferring an idea from previously ascertained or observed data (Saunders et al., 2012). In the deductive method, the scientist starts from laws and theories to propose elements, which may serve to explain or predict a given phenomenon (Chalmers, 1999). The hypothetical-deductive method consists in identifying a problem based on previous knowledge, and then proposing and testing hypotheses, which ultimately results in predictions and explanations (Shareef, 2007).

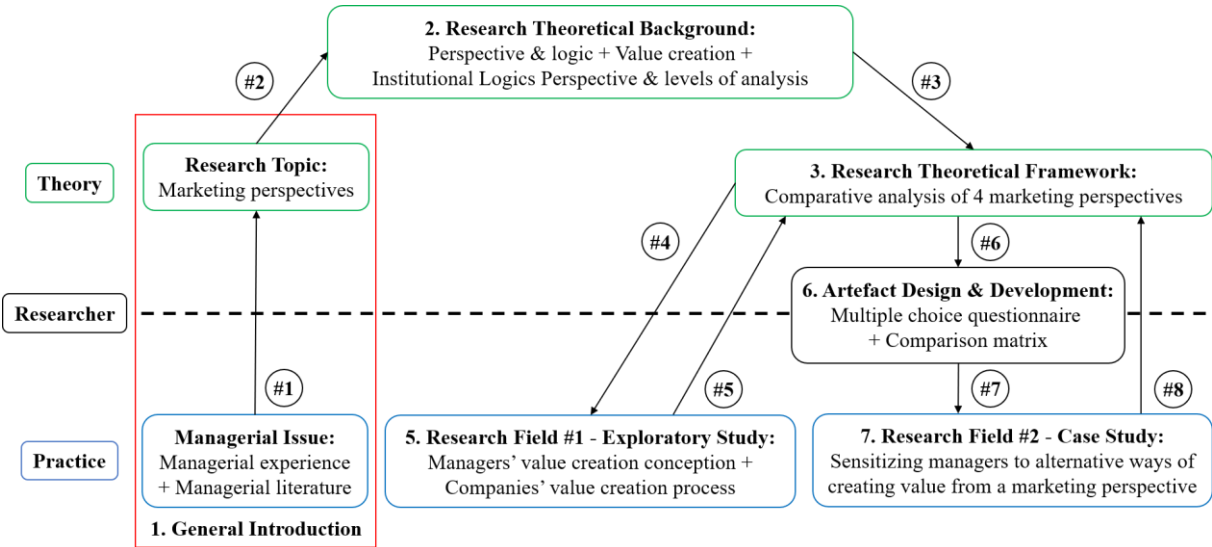
4.8.2. Justification for selecting the abductive scientific method

In Design Science Research, there is a fourth scientific method referred to as the abductive method. The abductive method consists in studying facts and proposing theories to explain them, such that it is a process based on creating explanatory hypotheses for a given situation (Dresch et al., 2015a). When a researcher proposes possible solutions so as to solve a practical

problem with creative reasoning, then the abductive method is the most appropriate one. Since my research work attempts to create an actionable management tool by going back and forth between both practice and theory, the abductive scientific method seems to be the best choice for me. (In addition, an iterative method can also be used. For instance, if the evaluation phase is not conclusive during the in-house workshop in the company where it is tested, then the artefact might need to be refined. As advocated by Design Science Research, this iterative process will be repeated as many times as possible until the artifact is understood and adopted by the participants during the in-house workshop.)

Figure 40 below illustrates the abductive scientific method used for my research work, which is based on going back and forth between practice and theory.

Figure 40. Abductive Scientific Method of Research Work



Source: Author.

In **phase #1**, the researcher has identified a managerial issue (i.e. practical problem) based on his managerial experience (i.e. consulting, training, and teaching) and by reading articles in the managerial literature (i.e. major consulting firms reports), which corresponds to an existing academic topic, that is, “marketing perspectives” in my case (cf. **1. General Introduction**). In **phase #2**, he links via induction his own research topic (i.e. marketing perspectives) to several theoretical concepts drawn from the academic literature review that actually can serve as his research theoretical basis (cf. **2. Research Theoretical Background**). In **phase #3**, he attempts to identify via abduction a research gap that needs to be addressed, that is, an actionable tool

that can help managers to compare four selected marketing perspectives in my case (**cf. 3. Research Theoretical Framework**). In **phase #4**, he conducts an exploratory study so as to check that his research theoretical basis can be tested empirically (**cf. 5. Research Field #1 – Exploratory Study**). In **phase #5**, the findings from the exploratory study then help to refine the research theoretical framework and serve as a basis for designing and developing via deduction the proposed artefact in **phase #6** (**cf. 6. Artefact Design & Development**). In **phase #7**, the proposed artefact is then tested via a case study (i.e. in-house workshop) so as to verify its effectiveness (**cf. 7. Research Field #2 – Case Study**). If the findings from the case study do not prove to be conclusive, then the research theoretical framework needs to be reevaluated in **phase #8**. Accordingly, a modified artifact needs to be redesigned (**phase #6** again) and then retested via a new case study (**phase #7** again) through an iterative process, until the tested artifact is finally understood and adopted by all the participants.

4.9. DATA COLLECTION METHOD

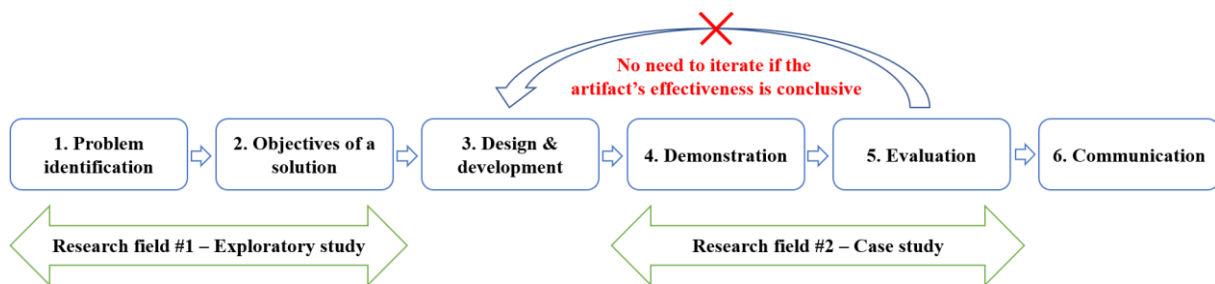
4.9.1. Two research fields

Figure 41 below shows the data collection method that I used, which is divided into two research fields:

1. The first research field corresponds to the entry point of my research, which includes problem identification and objectives of a solution via an exploratory study.
2. The second research field corresponds to the demonstration and evaluation of the artifact that was developed via a case study.

Based on the Design Science Research Process Model (Peffer et al., 2006), figure 41 below also displays how the data was collected during my fieldwork.

Figure 41. Data Collection Method



Source: Author.

4.9.2. Data triangulation

As mentioned earlier, to the best of my knowledge no management tool has been conceived thus far for comparing the four marketing perspectives altogether through a set of key constructs. Based on the literature review conducted so far, many articles in academic journals compare either two or three marketing perspectives at a time on different topics, and a few compare all four of them together through a limited number of constructs.

That being said, my data triangulation includes the following elements:

1. **Field interviews.** The aim of the field interviews is to gain more insight on value creation by collecting primary data from the selected informants. With regards to the exploratory study, interviews help to further refine my research theoretical framework. With respect to the case study, interviews enable to demonstrate and validate the efficacy of the set of tools that I designed and developed.
2. **Documents on graphic representations.** Another aim is also to analyze the type of graphic representations that informants might currently use for their value creation process and the design of an offering. For example, it can include visual tools that facilitate their decision-making process so that this type of document can provide additional insight for the elaboration of a management tool.
3. **Secondary sources.** Besides the books and articles that I read during my literature review, I asked all the informants to give me any type of document such as PowerPoint presentations related to their value creation process so as to gather additional material for improving the quality of my research work. In addition, I browsed on the corporate website of all the

informants in order to get additional valuable information related to my research work that they might have omitted to share with me.

5. RESEARCH FIELD #1 – EXPLORATORY STUDY

5.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE EXPLORATORY STUDY

The objective of the first research field is to conduct an exploratory study so as to fully understand the main issues related to companies' value creation processes and also to the managers' conception of value creation. In addition, this exploratory study should help to challenge my theoretical framework so as to enable me to then design and develop an actionable tool, which can be later tested during the second research field via a case study (i.e. in-house workshop).

5.2. DATA COLLECTION METHOD

5.2.1. Organization of the exploratory study

Since my intention is to design a generic tool dealing with the value creation process of companies (from a marketing perspective) that can be used by any type of organization, I decided to contact company managers holding a position related to general management, marketing, or sales (cf. appendix 4), and working in different types of organizations of various sizes and in various business sectors (cf. appendix 5). For practical reasons, I selected company managers who are part of my personal and professional networks working in France such that all interviews were conducted in French.

Initially, all company managers have been contacted by phone in order to explain to them my research topic as well as the purpose of my exploratory study. Once people accepted to participate in the exploratory study, they received an e-mail confirming the following elements:

1. Time, date and location of the interview,
2. A reminder that the interview is audio-recorded in order to get a transcription of the conversation for further analysis (with a copy of the transcript sent to them subsequently),
and

3. A reminder that the interview is confidential such that neither their name nor that of their company will be disclosed during the presentation of the research findings.

As a result, data was collected through semi-structured interviews that were conducted in France via two different rounds of interviews: (1) Round 1 between January and May 2018 with 19 managers working in established companies, and (2) round 2 in April 2019 with 4 managers working in emerging (i.e. start-up) companies. An interview guideline (cf. appendix 3) was elaborated and validated with my thesis supervisor prior to conducting the interviews. The first interview helped to successfully test the interview guideline in terms of clarity and comprehension. Each interview was audio-recorded and then transcribed in a Microsoft Word document.

5.2.2. The interview guideline

Although English was the working language in some cases, the use of an interview guideline in French (cf. appendix 3) helped to ensure the reliability of the answers across the data sample, thereby avoiding any potential translation and interpretation problems. Again, all interviews were semi-structured. As reflected in the interview guideline, the interview follows a general structure designed around specific themes and their related concepts to be explored, while giving the informant some freedom with respect to the way questions can be answered. Even though a total of 49 questions has been split around seven specific themes, affirmative or negative answers for certain questions (Q11, Q14, Q35, Q39, Q44, and Q47) actually leads to different subsequent sets of questions such that each informant can respond to a maximum number of 43 questions. As explained in the paragraphs below, the specific themes and their related concepts were derived from the literature review.

The interview guideline was thus structured around the seven following main themes:

1. **Theme #1 – *L'organisation marketing/commerciale de l'entreprise* » (Q01 – Q05 = The company's marketing/sales organization).** The aim of this theme is first of all to get an account of the informants' professional background, and then to find out the way their company is organized in terms of marketing/sales.

2. **Theme #2 – Définition de la « création de valeur » (Q06 – Q08 = Definition of “value creation”)**. The aim of this theme is to find out how informants define the concept of value creation as well as how they describe its constitutive elements.
3. **Theme #3 – Description du « processus de création de valeur » (Q09 – Q13 = Description of the “value creation process”)**. The aim of this theme is to get a description of the companies’ value creation process and to identify which of the companies’ practices/activities really create value for them. Also, the aim is to determine whether the value creation process is formally taken into account in their company’s strategy.
4. **Theme #4 – Représentation du « processus de création de valeur » (Q14 – Q20 = Representation of the “value creation process”)**. The aim of this theme is to find out if companies use a representation (e.g. diagrams/models/methods) of their value creation process as well as what are the main difficulties and limitations when using it. If no representation is used, then the aim is to find out if informants can cite some tools that can represent the value creation process.
5. **Theme #5 – Composition du « processus de création de valeur » (Q21 – Q34 = Composition of the “value creation process”)**. Building on the three spheres of the value generation process of Service Logic (Grönroos and Voima, 2013; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014) and on the three worlds of the value formation process of Customer-Dominant Logic (Heinonen et al., 2010; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015), this theme is actually divided into three parts: (1) The company’s sphere (Q21 – Q23), (2) the customer’s sphere (Q24 – Q26), and (3) the sphere of interaction (between the company and its customers = Q27 – Q34). The aim of this theme is to first determine what are the elements in each of these spheres that companies currently take into consideration for creating value, and then to discover what are some other potential elements that should be taken into account according to the informants. In addition, the aim is to find out what are the roles of the company, of the customer, and of the interactions/exchanges between companies and their customers in the value creation process.
6. **Theme #6 – Gestion du « processus de création de valeur » (Q35 – Q42 = Management of the “value creation process”)**. The aim of this theme is to find out if and how companies manage their value creation process. In other words, do companies use tools/methods for measuring the value that they created, and do they use methods/procedures for improving their value creation process?
7. **Theme #7 – Réflexion sur la « création de valeur » (Q43 – Q49 = Reflection on “value creation”)**. The aim of this theme is to reflect upon who creates value for the company

according to the informants at the end of an intensive interview on the topic of value creation. Regardless of their answer, all informants were also asked to describe how value could be co-created by the company and the customer as well as how value could be created by the customer.

5.2.3. Selected informants for the exploratory study

As shown in table 25 below, twenty-two interviews were face-to-face and one interview with Informant 16 (**shaded in yellow**) was conducted over the phone (since it was cancelled at the last minute and could simply not be rescheduled due to conflicting agendas). In addition, in three companies not one but two managers with different work occupations were interviewed (**bold colored numbers**). In total, twenty-three managers working in twenty different companies were interviewed.

Table 25. Selected Informants for the Exploratory Study

Informant	Occupation	Company	Business Activity	Duration	Pages
1	Co-Owner / General Manager	1	Human resources consulting & training	29:10	9
2	Co-Owner / General Manager	2	Computer & digital solutions	59:51	13
3	Owner / General Manager	3	International relations website & training	50:14	11
4	Marketing & Sales Director	4	Wine producer / Hotel & restaurant	59:45	13
5	Consultant	1	Human resources consulting & training	48:42	12
6	Co-Owner / General Manager	5	Wine retail store / Wine training	45:38	11
7	VP Commerce, Communication, Marketing	6	Building & public works / Water & waste management	40:52	11
8	Owner / General Manager	7	Apparel retail store	59:28	16
9	Head of Direct to Consumer	8	E-commerce merchandising website	38:24	12
10	Team Manager	9	Private banking services	1:17:00	13
11	Owner / General Manager	10	CRM consulting & training	37:47	11
12	Marketing & Communication Director	11	Electronic goods manufacturer & merchant	1:09:31	15
13	Strategic Marketing Director	12	Wine producer & merchant	40:21	11
14	Sales Director	12	Wine producer & merchant	48:18	11
15	Project Manager	13	Innovation platform for the industry	53:33	16
16	Owner / General Manager	14	Wine & spirits magazine	34:26	7
17	Co-Owner / Chief Marketing Officer	15	Digital application	50:59	11
18	Regional Sales Manager	16	Medical diagnosis solutions	1:04:46	14
19	Business Unit Manager	9	Private banking services	48:32	10
20	Co-Owner / Chief Operating Officer	17	Electric bicycles rental	39:38	13
21	Co-Owner / Chief Executive Officer	18	Digital application	25:46	9
22	Co-Owner / Chief Executive Officer	19	Digital application	38:56	12
23	Co-Owner / Chief Executive Officer	20	Digital solutions for cultural heritage	46:45	14
Total				18:28:22	275
Average				48:11	12
Median				48:18	12

Source: Author.

5.3. DATA ANALYSIS

5.3.1. Transcriptions of the audio-recorded interviews

As shown in table 25 above, 23 interviews were audio-recorded for a total of 18h28m22s of audio-recordings. The shortest interview lasted 25m46s (Informant 21), and the longest lasted

1h17m00s (Informant 10) such that the average duration of an interview was 48m11s. Each interview was transcribed into a (single-space, Times New Roman, 12) Microsoft Word document for a total of 23 transcriptions and 275 pages. The shortest transcription was 7 pages long (Informant 16), and the longest was 16 pages long (Informant 15) such that the average size of a transcription was 12 pages long.

5.3.2. Selected software for coding the interviews

In order to analyze the interviews conducted during the exploratory study, I used the NVivo 12 Pro software, which is a Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CADQAS) that was developed by QSR International. This software helps to store and sort all the audio-recordings, transcriptions, and documents resulting from the different interviews. Moreover, it also helps to assign codes to groups of words as well as attributes to cases (i.e. units of analysis) when processing the data. These codes are called nodes, and they can be categorized in and visualized as a list with different hierarchical levels.

The data can then be further analyzed by using framework matrices, which help to condense the large volume of interview transcripts data into more manageable quantities, with grids comprised of rows representing cases (i.e. individuals or organizations) and of columns representing theme codes, whereby each cell can be automatically filled in with the coded text for comparative purposes. Likewise, node (i.e. code) matrices can be created, whereby the content of a cell can be replaced by a number (instead of text) so as to display either the number of files (i.e. informants) or the number of references (i.e. coded text) for comparative purposes as well.

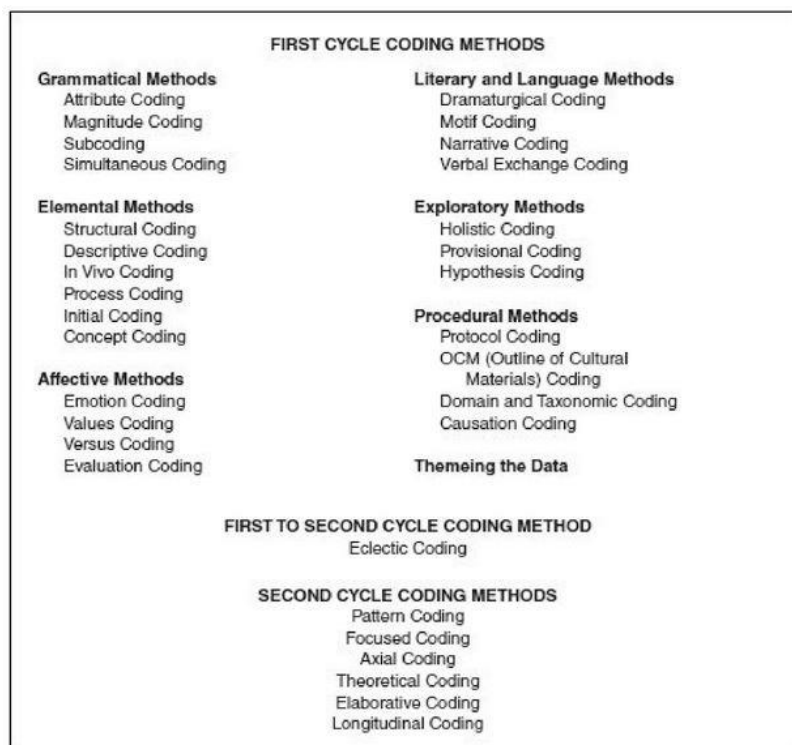
5.3.3. Coding methods

According to Saldaña (2016), a code is “most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data.” Fundamentally, coding is “the ‘critical link’ between data collection and their explanation of meaning” (Charmaz, 2001) such that it cannot be considered as an exact science but rather an interpretative act (Saldaña, 2016).

As explained by Saldaña (2016), coding is a cyclical rather than a linear process that can be divided into two cycles with their inherent coding methods. Once a code is assigned to a chunk of data during the First Cycle coding, the researcher can then proceed to Second Cycle coding so as to highlight the salient features of these coded chunks of data, and thus generate meaningful categories that can be further refined into themes and even concepts (Saldaña, 2016). While Friese (2014) recommends that the final total number of codes should lie anywhere between 50 and 300 different codes, Creswell (2013) advises to group codes into 25 to 30 categories that can be further combined into 5 to 6 major themes at most.

As shown in figure 42 below, First Cycle coding methods are divided into seven subcategories: (1) Grammatical, (2) elemental, (3) affective, (4) literary and language, (5) exploratory, (6) procedural, and a final method called (7) theming the data. Furthermore, Second Cycle coding methods are divided into six subcategories: (1) Pattern coding, (2) focused coding, (3) axial coding, (4) theoretical coding, (5) elaborative coding, and (6) longitudinal coding.

Figure 42. First Cycle and Second Cycle Coding Methods



Source: Saldaña, 2016.

5.3.4. Methods used for First Cycle coding

My corpus of data mainly consists of interview audio-recordings and transcripts resulting from the exploratory study. During the First Cycle coding, I used a combination of both grammatical (attribute, magnitude) and elemental (structural, descriptive, in vivo, process) coding methods for different parts of my interview transcripts. Grammatical coding methods do not refer “to the grammar of language but to the basic grammatical principles of a technique” (Saldaña, 2016). Elemental coding methods are “primary approaches to qualitative data analysis” with “focused filters for reviewing the corpus” of data, thereby laying a solid foundation for Second Cycle coding (Saldaña, 2016).

Before importing my interview transcripts (saved as Microsoft Word documents) into the NVivo 12 Pro software, the first step consisted in formatting the text of all of them so as to be able to use the “automatic coding” function proposed by this software. As shown in table 26 below, I used the following Microsoft Word styles for formatting the interview transcripts.

Table 26. Microsoft Word Styles Used for Formatting Interview Transcripts

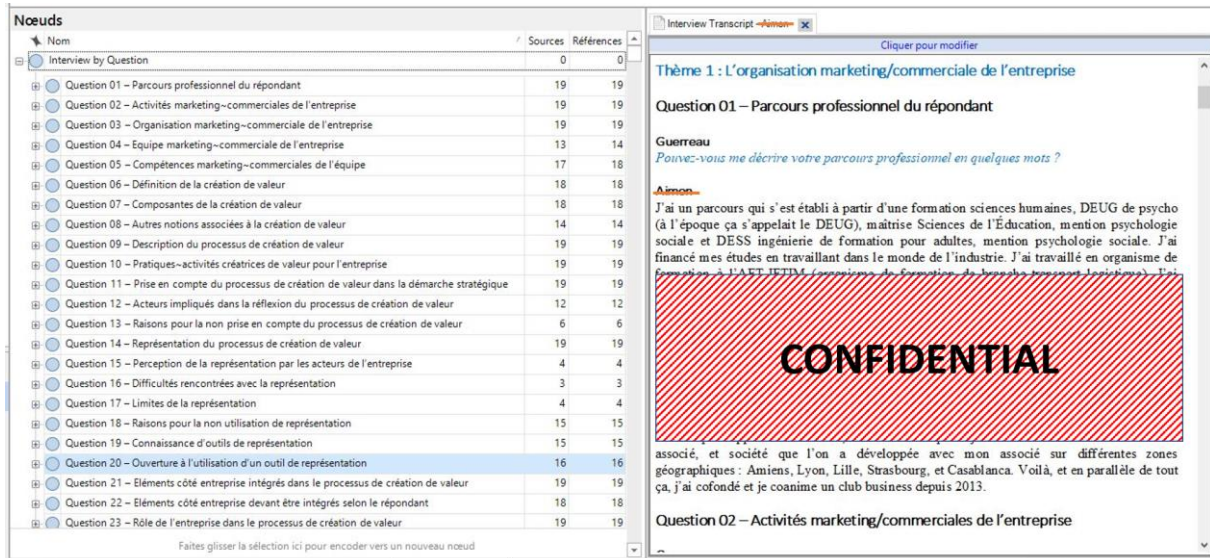
Style	Item
Heading (Calibri light, 14, Bold, Blue)	Title of specific theme (for more clarity when reading the transcript)
Heading 1 (Calibri light, 14, Bold, Black)	Question 1, Question 2...
Heading 2 (Calibri light, 12, Bold, Black)	Name of interviewer, Name of informant
<i>Normal (Times New Roman, 12, Italics, Blue)</i>	<i>Interviewer’s spoken text (for more clarity when reading the transcript)</i>
Normal (Times New Roman, 12, Black)	Informant’s spoken text

Source: Author.

Accordingly, this step actually enabled me to use structural coding, which “applies a content-based or conceptual phrase representing a topic of inquiry to a segment of data to both code and categorize the data corpus” (Saldaña, 2016). In fact, structural coding can be a solid starting point for organizing data prior to further coding in more details. It is particularly appropriate for qualitative studies involving multiple participants and semi-structured data-collection protocols (such as my exploratory study) so as to gather topics lists of major categories or themes (Saldaña, 2016).

After assigning a topic to each of my question, I was then able to use the software’s automatic coding function for grouping automatically my corpus of data by question as shown in figure 43 below.

Figure 43. Outcome of NVivo Automatic Coding Function



Source: Author.

The second step consisted in coding each answer in all my interview transcripts. Depending on the type of question, I used a combination of the following five coding methods:

1. **Attribute coding.** “The notation, usually at the beginning of a data set rather than embedded within it, of basic descriptive information such as fieldwork setting,” participant characteristics, and so on (Saldaña, 2016). It is particularly appropriate for qualitative studies involving multiple participants. I used this coding method only for “Theme 1 – *L’organisation marketing/commerciale de l’entreprise* (The company’s marketing/sales organization)” by assigning codes not only related to the informants’ level of education, single or multiple business sector work experience, managerial and/or entrepreneurial profile, but also with codes related to the companies’ dedicated or non-dedicated marketing/sales structure, traditional and/or digital marketing activities, etc.
2. **Magnitude coding.** It “consists of and adds a supplemental alphanumeric or symbolic code or subcode to an existing coded datum or category to indicate its intensity, frequency, direction, presence, or evaluative content” (Saldaña, 2016). For instance, I used this coding method only for “Theme #1 – *L’organisation marketing/commerciale de l’entreprise* (The

company's marketing/sales organization)" by indicating whether informants had a weak or strong job specialization, whether companies had weak or strong marketing activities, etc.

3. **Descriptive coding.** It "assigns labels to data to summarize in a word or short phrase – most often as a noun – the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data" (Saldaña, 2016). By far, this is the coding method that I used the most extensively throughout First Cycle coding. For instance, I used a lot of nouns and short phrases that summarized the informants' definition of value creation, their description of the company's value creation process, their explanation of the different elements taken into consideration by the company for creating value, and so forth. In short, I used this coding method for 5 main themes, that is, theme #2 through theme #6.
4. **In Vivo coding.** It "uses words or short phrases from the participant's own language in the data record as codes" such that it is particularly appropriate "for beginning qualitative researchers learning how to code data" (Saldaña, 2016). I used this coding method a couple times when I could not come up with a noun or short phrase that could summarize the informant's answer until the next coding cycle.
5. **Process coding.** It "uses gerunds ("-ing" words) exclusively to connote observable and conceptual action in the data" (Saldaña, 2016). Although the interview transcripts and the coding process are done in French, I used this coding method (using French words ending with "-ant" similar to "-ing" in English) only for "Theme #7 – *Réflexion sur la création de valeur* (Reflection on value creation)" by listing the different ways that value could be created either by the company, the customer, or both according to the informant.

5.3.5. Method used for Second Cycle coding

While the First Cycle coding phase initially enabled me to recap segments of data, the aim of the Second Cycle coding phase was to group these segments of data into a smaller number of categories or themes. As a result, I used pattern coding, which is "a category label ('meta code') that identifies similarly coded data" so as to "organize the corpus into sets, themes, or constructs and attributes meaning to that organization" (Saldaña, 2016).

Building on my literature review, I decided to use the following parent codes for the following questions with their associated themes, as displayed in table 27 below in order to group my data into the following sets of themes: (1) Managerial focus, (2) value creation logic, (3) role of

actors in value creation, (4) role of offering in value creation, (5) creator of value, and (6) marketing perspective. [A complete list of all the codes (both parent and children) along with their description is exhibited in appendix 6.]

Table 27. Parent Codes and Questions with Associated Themes Covered in Thesis

Parent Codes *	Questions with Associated Themes
1. Managers' focus of attention	Q06 – Definition of value creation
	Q07 & Q08 – Constitutive elements of value creation
	Q10 – Practices/activities that create value for the company
	Q11 – Formal integration of the value creation process in the company's strategy
	Q21 – Elements of the company's sphere taken into account for creating value
	Q22 – Other potential elements of the company's sphere that should also be taken into account according to the informant
	Q24 – Elements of the customer's sphere taken into account for creating value
	Q25 – Other potential elements of the customer's sphere that should also be taken into account according to the informant
	Q27 – Objective of interactions/exchanges between the company and the customer
	Q30 – Elements taken into account for developing an offering
	Q35 – Tools/methods for evaluating value created by the company
2. Value creation logic	Q09 – Description of the company's value creation process
3. Role of actors in the value creation process	Q23 – Role of company in the value creation process
	Q26 – Role of customer in the value creation process
4. Role of offering in the value creation process	Q34 – Role of offering in the value creation process
5. Creator of value	Q43 – Who creates value for the company
6. Marketing perspective	Q06 – Definition of value creation
	Q07 & Q08 – Constitutive elements of value creation
	Q09 – Description of the company's value creation process
	Q34 – Role of offering in the value creation process
	Q43 – Who creates value for the company

Source: Author. * (Children codes are not shown in the table, but they were also used.)

5.3.6. Framework developed for analyzing managers' focus of attention

Table 28 displays the framework that I developed for analyzing manager's focus of attention. Once again, building on the three spheres of the value generation process of Service Logic (Grönroos and Voima, 2013; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014) and on the three worlds of the value formation process of Customer-Dominant Logic (Heinonen et al., 2010; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015), I actually divided the framework into three parts: (1) The company's sphere, (2) the customer's sphere, and (3) the sphere of interaction.

Table 28. Framework Developed for Analyzing Managers' Focus of Attention

Focus on the sphere of the company				
n				
Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to revenues/costs	Elements linked to offerings
n	n	n	n	n

Focus on the sphere of interaction			
n			
Elements linked to transactions	Elements linked to relationships	Elements linked to co-creation thru dyads	Elements linked to co-creation thru networks
n	n	n	n

Focus on the sphere of the customer				
n				
Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to experience	Elements linked to goals
n	n	n	n	n

Source: Author. (n = Number of informants)

Based on the literature review, I decided to link the informants' responses (i.e. elements) to a set of specific codes in each sphere (cf. appendix 6 for the description of each code). In the sphere of the company, the codes correspond to some of the building blocks of the Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010), which is partly centered on the company's processes. In the sphere of the customer, the codes correspond to some of the elements used in both Service Logic (Grönroos and Voima, 2013; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014) and Customer-Dominant Logic (Heinonen et al., 2010; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015). As for the sphere of interaction, the codes that I selected help to determine the way companies interact with their customers based in part on the work of Vargo and Lusch (2004, 2008, 2014) related to Service Dominant Logic as well as that of Heinonen and Strandvik (2015, 2018) related to Customer-Dominant Logic.

5.3.7. Case analysis methods

According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), a case is defined as "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context" such that it represents the level of analysis. A case can be defined in different ways such as an individual (e.g. man or woman), an organization (e.g. company or public authority), a role (e.g. CEO or consultant), and so forth. In my fieldwork, the phenomenon is the manager, and the context is the company. However, my level of analysis is twofold since I am interested in exploring the adopted marketing perspective of both the manager and his/her company.

In addition, the data can be analyzed via two different methods: (1) Cross-case analysis and (2) within-case analysis. In cross-case (or multiple cases) analysis, the purpose can be to “enhance generalizability or transferability to other contexts” and/or “to deepen understanding and explanation” (Miles et al., 2014). In within-case analysis, the purpose is “to describe, understand, and explain what has happened in a single-bounded context – the ‘case’ or site,” be it an individual, an organization, or even a community (Miles et al., 2014)

5.3.8. Justification for selecting cross-case analysis

Since the purpose of my exploratory is to gain a deeper understanding of how managers define value creation and how their companies create value across the board so as to determine their respective marketing perspective, I decided to select the method of cross-case analysis. In turn, this can enable me to create a matrix displaying the four selected marketing perspectives in the columns (i.e. horizontal axis) as well as a selection of both individual and organizational characteristics linked to the informants in the rows (i.e. vertical axis) so as to identify potential patterns across all cases.

Let us now go through the main findings resulting from the cross-case analysis.

5.4. RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM THE EXPLORATORY STUDY

5.4.1. Introduction

As stated before, the aim of this exploratory study is to gain a deeper understanding of how managers define value creation and how their companies create value across the board. As depicted in table 29 below, the research findings resulting from the cross-case analysis cover the seven main themes from the interview guideline.

Table 29. Main Themes of the Exploratory Study

#	Main Themes	Questions
1	The company's marketing/sales organization	01 – 05
2	Definition of value creation	06 – 08
3	Description of the value creation process	09 – 13
4	Representation of the value creation process	14 – 20
5	Composition of the value creation process	21 – 34
6	Management of the value creation process	35 – 42
7	Reflection on value creation	43 – 49

Source: Author.

5.4.2. Theme #1 – The company's marketing/sales organization (Q01-Q05)

Introduction

The aim of this theme is to first get an account of the informants' professional background, and then to find out the way their company is organized in terms of marketing/sales. The detailed profiles of informants are exhibited in appendix 4, and the detailed profiles of companies are exhibited in appendix 5.

Main characteristics of informants

Let us first go through the main characteristics of informants. As shown in table 30 below, 3 women and 20 men participated in the exploratory study. On average, women were 40 years old, they completed 5 years of post-baccalaureate studies, and they have worked 5 years in their company. On average, men were 44 years old, they completed 5 years of post-baccalaureate studies, and they have worked 9 years in their company. In fact, most of the participants (10/23) were in their 40's, most of them (19/23) hold a master's degree, and most of them (16/23) have worked between 1 and 9 years in their company.

Table 30. Informant Breakdown by Gender, Age, Post-Bac Studies, Company Seniority, and Academic Degree

Informants	Gender	Age	Post-Bac Studies	Company Seniority
Female	3	40	5	5
Male	20	44	5	9
	Average	44	5	8

Age	Total
20-29	3
30-39	3
40-49	10
50-59	7
Total	23

Academic Degree	Total
Baccalaureate	1
Bachelor	1
Master	19
Doctorate	2
Total	23

Company Seniority	Total
01-04	9
05-09	7
10-14	3
15 +	4
Total	23

Source: Author.

As shown in table 31 below, even though all the informants who took part in the exploratory study are in charge of creating value for their company, 6 of them are part of middle-level management, while 17 of them are part of top-level management, out of which 12 are owner/co-owner of the company they work for. With respect to their profession, most of them are in marketing & sales (8/23), some others in banking & finance (4/23) as well as in consulting & training (4/23), and the rest (7/23) are scattered among 5 different other professions.

Table 31. Informant Breakdown by Management Level Position and Profession

Management Level Position	Total
Top-level management	17
1. Owner, Co-owner	12
2. Other top-level managers	5
Middle-level management	6
1. Branch Manager, Department Head	2
2. Other middle-level managers	4
Total	23

Profession	Total
Marketing & Sales	8
Banking & Finance	4
Consulting & Training	4
Editing & Publishing	2
Retailing	2
Culture	1
Design	1
Engineering	1
Total	23

Source: Author.

As depicted in table 32 below, 9 informants only worked in one sector, whereas 14 of them have already worked in two or more sectors. In addition, 9 informants have always worked as a company employee, 2 of them have always been an entrepreneur, and 12 of them have work experience as both a company employee and entrepreneur.

Table 32. Informant Breakdown by Work Experience and Employment Status Experience

Work Experience	Total
Mono-sector	9
Multi-sector	14
Total	23

Employment Status Experience	Total
Company employee only	9
Entrepreneur only	2
Company employee and entrepreneur	12
Total	23

Source Author.

Let us now go through the main characteristics of companies.

Main characteristics of companies

As displayed in table 33 below, 16 companies are established companies, whereas 4 of them are emerging (i.e. start-up) companies that have been in business for less than 2 years and do not have any (salaried) employees yet. There is a good diversity in terms of company size (based on French standards) except for the fact that no large-sized company has taken part in the exploratory study. In addition, 17 companies are primary establishments (i.e. headquarters), while 3 are secondary establishments (i.e. subsidiaries).

Table 33. Company Breakdown by Company Size and Type of Establishment

Company Size	Total
<i>Start-up (SU)</i> / (Start-up company = 0 employee and < 2 years old)	4
<i>Micro-Entreprise (MIC)</i> / (Micro-sized company = 0 employee)	1
<i>Très Petite Entreprise (TPE)</i> / (Very small-sized company = 1-9 employees)	6
<i>Petite Entreprise (PE)</i> / (Small-sized company = 10-49 employees)	1
<i>Moyenne Entreprise (ME)</i> / (Medium-sized company = 50-499 employees)	4
<i>Grande Entreprise (GE)</i> / (Large-sized company = 500-999 employees)	0
<i>Très Grande Entreprise (TGE)</i> / (Very large-sized company = 1 000 + employees)	4
Total	20

Type of Establishment	Total
Primary (i.e. headquarters)	17
Secondary (i.e. subsidiary)	3
Total	20

Source: Author.

As shown in table 34 below, there is also a good diversity in terms of business activity and economic sector. There are 4 companies involved in construction/production/manufacturing activities related to the secondary economic sector, 6 companies involved in sales and non-intellectual services activities related to the tertiary economic sector, and 10 companies involved in information/intellectual/digital activities related to the quaternary economic sector, half of which (5/10) deal with digital applications & solutions.

Table 34. Company Breakdown by Business Activity and Economic Sector

Business Activity	Total
Secondary Economic Sector	4
Construction, production & manufacturing	4
Tertiary Economic Sector	6
Retailing & e-commerce (i.e. sales)	3
Non-intellectual services	3
Quaternary Economic Sector	10
Media (i.e. knowledge production)	2
Intellectual services & solutions	3
Digital applications & solutions	5
Total	20

Source: Author.

As depicted in table 35 below, there is again a good diversity in terms of the type of offering that companies sell to their customers with most of them proposing either solutions only (7/20) or both products and services (7/20). Also, most of them serve B2B markets only (6/20) or both B2B and B2C markets (5/20). Finally, those who make their own products (3/20) turn out to serve the most different types of markets since they also sell indirectly to consumers via distributors (i.e. B2B2C) in addition to selling directly to businesses (i.e. B2B) and to consumers (i.e. B2C) separately.

Table 35. Company Breakdown by Type of Offering and Type of Market Served

Type of Offering	Total
Products only	3
Services only	3
Solutions only	7
Products and services	7
Total	20

Type of Market Served	Total
B2B only (i.e. businesses)	6
B2C only (i.e. consumers)	3
B2G only (i.e. public authorities)	1
B2B and B2C	5
B2B and B2G	1
B2B and B2B2C	1
B2B, B2C, and B2B2C	3
Total	20

Source: Author.

As exhibited in table 36 below, even though all companies carry out basic marketing activities (i.e. at least customer targeting/acquisition and offering development/promotion), only 9 of them have a formal marketing organization in charge of performing dedicated marketing activities. In addition, most of the companies (19/20) exhibit strong marketing activities. As for the only company exhibiting weak marketing activities, this is simply due to the fact it is a start-up company that does not have a formal marketing plan in place as it serves the B2G market with different institutional rules. While most of the companies (17/20) have a staff with strong marketing skills, only 3 of them have a staff with weak marketing skills who turn out to be scattered among very diverse professions (i.e. culture, design, and engineering).

Table 36. Company Breakdown by Type of Marketing Organization, Activities, and Skills

Formal Marketing Organization	Total
Yes	9
No	11
Total	20

Marketing Activities	Total
Weak	1
Strong	19
Total	20

Marketing Skills	Total
Weak	3
Strong	17
Total	20

Source: Author.

Discussion

With respect to the informants, the data sample includes 3 women and 20 men. **On average, the 23 informants are 44 years old, they completed 5 years of post-baccalaureate studies so that they hold a master's degree, and they have been working 5 years in their company.** About half of them (13/23) are in a top-level management position, and about one-third (8/24) work in Marketing & Sales. Most of them (14/23) have worked in at least two different sectors of activity, and about half of them (12/23) have a work experience as both a (salaried) company employee and an entrepreneur.

With regards to the companies, **the data sample includes 4 emerging (i.e. start-up) companies and 16 established companies.** In addition, most of them (17/20) are primary establishments (i.e. headquarters). About one-third of them (7/20) sell solutions only, and about one-third of them (7/20) sell both products and services. Half of them (10/20) serve at least two types of markets, and about one-third of them (6/20) serve only a B2B market, while only two of them serve the B2G market. Although all the companies carry out at least the most common basic marketing activities, only about half of them (9/20) have a formal marketing organization in charge of performing dedicated marketing activities. **Most companies (19/20) actually exhibit strong marketing activities, and most of them (17/20) have a staff with strong marketing skills.** As a result, the selected data sample seems to be diverse enough in many

respects for enabling me to ultimately create a generic management tool that could be used by all types of companies.

5.4.3. Theme #2 – Definition of value creation (Q06-Q08)

Introduction

The aim of this theme is to find out how informants define the concept of value creation as well as how they describe its constitutive elements. In addition, I analyzed on which elements of value creation informants actually focused their attention in order to gain some additional insight regarding their conception of value creation. Finally, I determined to which marketing perspective corresponded their definition of value creation.

Main findings

Table 37 below is a summary of the elements on which the informants focused their attention when defining value creation (Q06). (The elements with **bold blue numbers** are covered in detail further down.)

Table 37. Definition of Value Creation (Q06)

Focus on the sphere of the company				
n = 17				
Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to revenues/costs	Elements linked to offerings
3	2	3	3	15

Focus on the sphere of interaction			
n = 4			
Elements linked to transactions	Elements linked to relationships	Elements linked to co-creation thru dyads	Elements linked to co-creation thru networks
1	0	3	0

Focus on the sphere of the customer				
n = 12				
Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to experience	Elements linked to goals
1	0	2	5	7

(n = 23: An informant can mention different elements in several categories.)

Source: Author.

Most of the informants (15/23) proposed a definition of value creation that is focused on their offering (e.g. product, service, solution), which in fact represents the outcome of the company's value creation process. According to them, **value is created in the form of a differentiated offering that is perceived as providing superior value with regards to competition**, as exemplified by the following four quotes:

« La création de valeur, c'est la création d'une différence par rapport aux concurrents... La différenciation est l'élément qui vous crée de la valeur par rapport aux autres. On fait des produits qui sont non nécessaires et abstraits pour beaucoup de consommateurs, et donc il est important de créer une valeur autour du produit pour susciter l'attrait et l'achat. »

(Informant 4)

« C'est un produit qui va être perçu comme supérieur par l'acheteur et/ou consommateur. Si je prends la nutrition infantile, c'est la perception à travers la maman. Il faut que la valeur du produit, à travers le packaging global mais aussi l'expérience du produit, soit perçue comme supérieure par rapport à la concurrence. »

(Informant 13)

« La création de valeur est énormément immatérielle. C'est là qu'on fait la différence : c'est dans la capacité à présenter une offre dans le vin, c'est ce qui fait la différence. Avec les progrès techniques ces dernières années il y a assez peu de différences sur la qualité intrinsèque des produits, la création de valeur se fait de moins en moins là-dessus. Elle se fait de plus en plus sur la capacité à faire un storytelling, à pouvoir tout simplement magnifier les produits que l'on a, et c'est le travail surtout du marketing. »

(Informant 14)

« La création de valeur vis-à-vis du client, c'est la notion de service associé au produit. Aujourd'hui, ce n'est pas le produit qui va faire la différence, mais c'est ce qu'il y a à côté. »

(Informant 18)

In addition, many informants (7/23) also gave a definition of value creation that is focused on fulfilling a customer's goals, which in fact represents the outcome of the customer's value consumption process. They claim that **value is created when a customer's needs are satisfied**

or when a customer's problems are (re)solved as a result of using the proposed offering.

The following three quotes illustrate well this point:

« Je pense que le plus important pour un client, c'est que le service ou l'outil que l'on puisse lui apporter ou que l'on puisse lui vendre, lui permette à lui de créer de la valeur supplémentaire au niveau de ses clients et au niveau de son entreprise... Je pense que notre approche, en tous les cas en termes de services et d'outils, est fondée là-dessus, c'est-à-dire qu'on doit répondre aux besoins de notre client... »

(Informant 2)

« La création de valeur pour nous c'est, est-ce qu'il y a un usage conséquent de notre solution à la hauteur des attentes du client... C'est vraiment notre définition de la valeur : est-ce que notre solution répond à un besoin et se traduit vraiment par un usage des utilisateurs de la solution ? C'est comment on définit la valeur pour nos clients. »

(Informant 17)

« Pour moi, la création de valeur, c'est au travers... sans chercher à trop conceptualiser, un client à qui on propose de bons services financiers, à qui on amène le bon niveau de conseil, va d'une certaine manière utiliser la banque. Et la création de valeur se fait comme ça. S'il est satisfait et qu'il consomme nos produits et services, on peut lui en amener d'autres – à partir du moment où ils sont toujours adaptés à ses besoins – et on crée une valeur additionnelle. »

(Informant 19)

Finally, some informants (5/23) came up with a definition of value creation that is focused on the customer's experience. The majority of those who did so (4/5) propose offerings based on the use of the Internet or mobile applications. For them, **value is created when the experience of the end-user is positive or maximized**, as stated in the following three quotes:

« Pour nous au sens large, la création de valeur va être toute la pénibilité que je vais éviter à mon client au sens large... On a une approche assez particulière, c'est à dire une approche par les risques. »

(Informant 20)

« Pour moi, la création de valeur c'est apporter quelque chose à un client... Nous ce qu'on permet de faire, c'est d'automatiser les flux financiers, la résolution des litiges. Typiquement, une place de marché aujourd'hui traite les litiges utilisateurs de manière très résiduelle et bâclée. Nous, on apporte du sérieux dans ce domaine, une indépendance, et au final il y a une vraie création de valeur puisque là où il y a un manque de confiance, des arnaques, on arrive à rétablir un certain équilibre. »

(Informant 21)

« Pour moi, la création de valeur aujourd'hui est vraiment axée au niveau de l'utilisateur final d'un service ou d'un produit. Par moment, il y a deux visions différentes qui se complètent d'ailleurs. Il y a la vision de l'entreprise qui veut essayer de créer de la valeur pour son utilisateur. En tout cas, ma vision c'est vraiment de se focaliser sur l'utilisateur final et ainsi de maximiser son expérience. »

(Informant 22)

Let us now see on which elements the informants focused their attention when describing the constitutive elements that make up value creation (Q07 & Q08), as depicted in table 38 below. (The elements with **bold blue numbers** are covered in detail further down.)

Table 38. Constitutive Elements of Value Creation (Q07 & Q08)

Focus on the sphere of the company				
n = 22				
Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to revenues/costs	Elements linked to offerings
7	5	4	2	10

Focus on the sphere of interaction			
n = 5			
Elements linked to transactions	Elements linked to relationships	Elements linked to co-creation thru dyads	Elements linked to co-creation thru networks
0	3	1	1

Focus on the sphere of the customer				
n = 18				
Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to experience	Elements linked to goals
2	2	1	7	14

(n = 23: An informant can mention different elements in several categories.)

Source: Author.

Almost all informants (22/23) listed elements in the company's sphere, very few (5/23) cited elements in the sphere of interaction, and many informants (18/23) also mentioned elements in

the customer’s sphere. In the sphere of the company, some of the most listed elements were as follows:

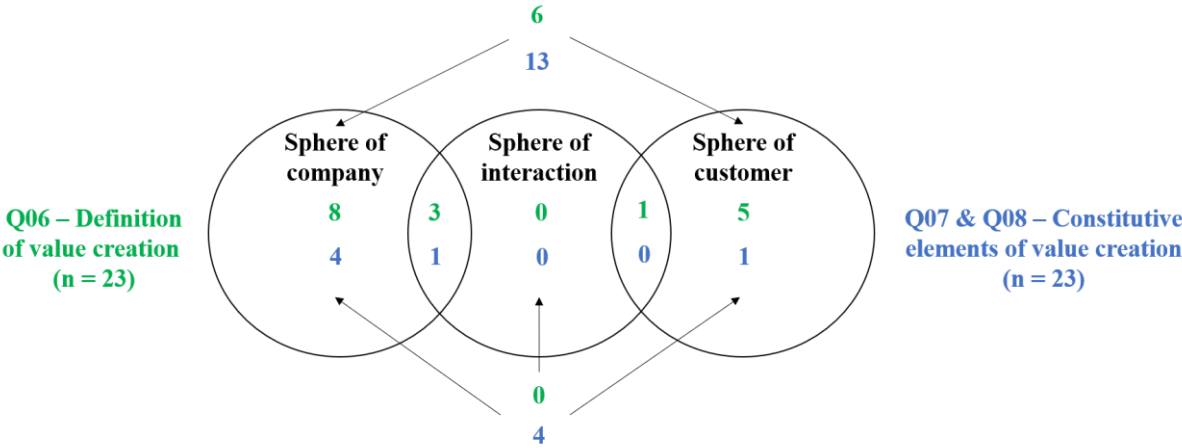
1. **Activities – Innovation** (Informants 7, 10, and 15), **taking the time to think and analyze** (Informants 1 and 2)
2. **Resources – Internal know-how and expertise** (Informants 5 and 21)
3. **Actors – Teamwork among company employees** (Informants 18 and 22)
4. **Offerings – Quality of the proposed offering** (Informants 4, 5, 6, 8, and 17), **a unique offering** (Informants 4, 6, and 16)

While in the sphere of interaction **building customer relationships** was the most listed element (Informants 4 and 12), some of the most listed elements in the sphere of the customer were the following ones:

1. **Experience – Customer referral from satisfied customers** (Informants 12 and 19)
2. **Goals – Satisfying a customer’s need with a suited offering** (Informants 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 19, and 23)

Figure 44 below shows the number of spheres on which informants focused their attention when defining value creation (Q06) and when listing the constitutive elements that make up value creation (Q07 & Q08), thereby reflecting an extension of their focus of attention.

Figure 44. Focus of Attention for Value Creation Definition (Q06) and its Constitutive Elements (Q07 & Q08)



Source: Author.

When asked to define value creation (Q06), all the informants focused their attention on elements that are present either in one sphere only (13/23) or in two spheres (10/23) but none in the three spheres altogether. However, when asked to describe the constitutive elements that make up value creation (Q07 & Q08), most of the informants extended their focus of attention by listing elements that are present either in two spheres (14/23) or three spheres (4/23).

Based on the way informants defined value creation and described its constitutive elements, let us determine the marketing perspective of the informants, as displayed in table 39 below. Beforehand, here is a brief definition that summarizes each marketing perspective:

1. **Goods-Dominant Logic** – Value is created by the company as a result of adding value in an offering (i.e. product, service, solution) that is proposed to customers through transactions.
2. **Service-Dominant Logic** – Value is co-created by actors who exchange services via the integration of resources (i.e. knowledge and skills) within a network/ecosystem of actors.
3. **Service Logic** – Value is co-created by the company and the customer during direct interactions that enable the company to support the customer’s processes through a total service offering (i.e. recognized and hidden services).
4. **Customer-Dominant Logic** – Value is formed by the customer as a result of integrating and experiencing the company’s offering (i.e. product, service, solution) in his/her life or business.

Table 39. Informants’ Marketing Perspective based on Value Creation Definition (Q06)

Goods-Dominant Logic	Service-Dominant Logic	Service Logic	Customer-Dominant Logic
17	4	2	0

(n = 23)
Source: Author.

By far, most informants (17/23) define value creation with a Goods-Dominant Logic such that according to them value is created by the company. As for the rest of them, some of them (4/6) give a definition implying that value is co-created through a network/ecosystem as in Service-Dominant Logic and others (2/6) through a dyad as in Service Logic. Finally, none of them

proposed a definition stating that value can be created by the customer as in Customer-Dominant Logic.

Discussion

On one hand, many informants (15/23) provided a definition of value creation (Q06) based on elements mainly related to the company's offerings (i.e. outcome of the company's value creation process). On the other hand, many of them (14/23) listed elements mainly related to fulfilling the customer's goals (i.e. outcome of the customer's value consumption process) when explaining what are the constitutive elements that make up value creation (Q07 and Q08). Consequently, it shows that **most informants focus their attention on the end-result of value creation (and consumption) so that they have an outcome-based view of value creation.** This reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic, whereby value is created by the company for the customer in the form of products, services, and solutions that help customers to either satisfy their needs or solve their problems or perform their tasks.

What is interesting to point out is that the responses of about half of the informants (11/23) reveal a lack of coherence. On one hand, when asked to provide a definition of value creation (Q06), many informants provide a definition by focusing on elements that lie in the sphere of the company, thereby meaning that value is created by the company. On the other hand, when asked to list the constitutive elements that make up value creation (Q07 and Q08), most of these informants give a list of elements that lie in the sphere of the customer, thereby reflecting that value is created by the customer. This seems to show that **the informants' conception of value creation is not coherent** so that it deserves to be further investigated (cf. section 5.4.9).

In addition, **while some informants seem to be focused on elements that are present in one sphere only, most others are focused on elements that are present in two different spheres.** Moreover, the few informants (4/23) who focused on elements present in three different spheres only did so when taking the time to think more deeply about the constitutive elements that make up value creation (Q07 and Q08).

When only taking into consideration the definition of value creation, most informants (17/23) adhere to the Goods-Dominant Logic, some others (4/23) to Service-Dominant Logic, and very few (2/23) to the Service Logic. **No informant seems to adopt a Customer-Dominant Logic.**

5.4.4. Theme #3 – Description of the value creation process (Q09-Q13)

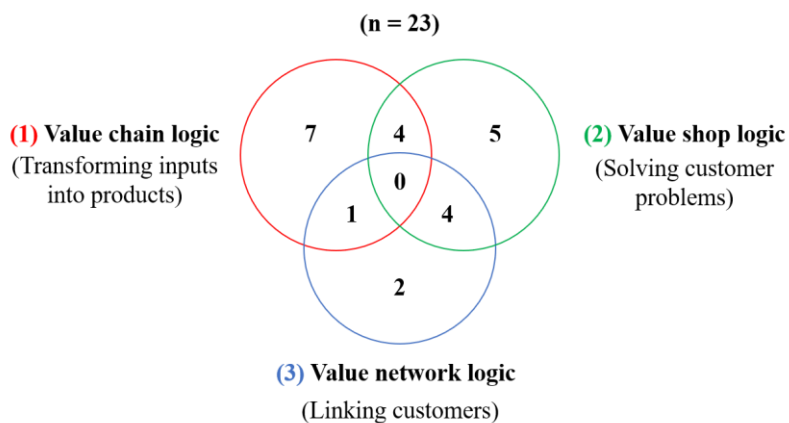
Introduction

The aim of this theme is to get a description of the companies' value creation process and to identify which of the companies' practices/ activities really create value for them. Also, the aim is to determine whether the value creation process is formally taken into account in their company's strategy.

Main findings

Drawing on the work of Stabell and Fjeldstad (1998), figure 45 below shows to which value creation logic corresponds a company's value creation process based on the description of the informants (Q09).

Figure 45. Description of the Company's Value Creation Process (Q09)



Source: Author.

While most informants (14/23) described their company's value creation process in a way that corresponds to a single value creation logic, many others (9/23) described it in a way that includes two different value creation logics. Let us go through four examples reflecting a hybrid value creation logic.

« On a une méthode simple. On est intimement convaincu que, quelle que soit la méthode que l'on va choisir et quel que soit le résultat que l'on va proposer ensuite à notre client, s'il n'est pas coconstruit avec les principaux acteurs qui vont utiliser demain les nouveaux outils ou les nouvelles applications, la capacité d'appropriation des équipes sera extrêmement compliquée. Donc, une fois que l'on a fait ce constat, bien évidemment on essaye dans un premier temps de travailler et de créer des groupes de travail avec l'entreprise, de façon à analyser ensemble, déjà demander aux acteurs et à ceux qui ont connaissance de leur processus, de nous décrire leur processus... » **(Value shop logic)**

« Puis, on prend rendez-vous avec des opérationnels sur le terrain, c'est un élément extrêmement important. Des opérationnels du client et du coup on rencontre aussi les clients de notre client. On confronte un peu le processus tel qu'il a été cartographié par l'entreprise, par les gens qui doivent l'utiliser sur site... » **(Value network logic)**

(Informant 2)

Informant 2 is a consultant and trainer who co-owns an established company proposing computer & digital solutions (B2B). The objective of consulting is to solve customer problems **(Value shop logic)**. In his case, he goes one step further by systematically meeting the clients of his clients in order to confront the client's process directly with a pool of end-users and thus improve its interoperability among all the users **(Value network logic)**.

« Historiquement, c'est moi qui allais chercher les articles et le contenu, à 100 %. Progressivement, de manière à élargir la base d'auteurs et le contenu, j'ai établi des partenariats avec des revues qui m'autorisaient à reprendre une partie de leur contenu... » **(Value chain logic)**

« De plus en plus, comme le site est connu, il y a des auteurs qui proposent des articles : on en refuse trois sur quatre (au moins) ... On fabrique aussi du contenu avec un partenariat avec la société X, le deal étant que nous produisons pour eux des interviews de chercheur sur les questions stratégiques, qui nous fournissent donc du contenu... Le bénéfice pour moi, c'est que j'ai accès au carnet d'adresses des chercheurs de la société X qui sont quand même plutôt bons. Par ailleurs, les vidéos sont publiées plus ou moins en même temps sur [nos sites respectifs], ce qui me permet d'aller ratisser sur le site de la société X et de gagner aussi en crédibilité dans cet espace, même si le nombre de visites sur le site de la société X est probablement dix à quinze fois inférieur à celui de [mon site]. Ce ne sont pas les mêmes

personnes et donc cela peut être aussi intéressant de se faire voir là. » (Value network logic)
(Informant 3)

Informant 3 is an editor and publisher who owns an established international relations website (B2B, B2C). Initially, the objective of the website was to reproduce high quality articles that had already been published in various academic and professional print media (**Value chain logic**). As a result of increased reputation, new authors are proposing first-hand articles, and new strategic partnerships are giving access to even more new potential authors. In parallel, social media accounts have been set up in order to promote the website and to develop a community of engaged followers who generate and share content related to international relations issues (**Value network logic**).

« La particularité de la banque privée par rapport à la banque de détail ou au réseau d'agences, c'est justement d'avoir une approche patrimoniale globale qui permet de détecter des besoins que parfois les clients n'avaient pas forcément identifiés eux-mêmes. C'est basé avant tout sur une connaissance client la plus exhaustive possible. C'est le plus de connaissances sur des sujets qui ne sont pas que financiers. Derrière, c'est deux choses (pour le coup, je vais me répéter) : l'expertise et les outils. On a des outils qui nous aident à faire un diagnostic patrimonial global, puis on a des solutions adaptées. » (Value shop logic)

« Et, si on détecte des problématiques un peu plus pointues, on va faire appel à un métier d'expertise qui va amener au client une solution globale. On va aller parfois sur des sujets patrimoniaux, conseiller le client d'aller voir son notaire, faire des choses qui ne sont pas forcément liées directement au domaine bancaire, mais cela peut être des donations ou des choses comme ça. Et la base, c'est la connaissance client la plus exhaustive possible. » (Value network logic)

(Informant 19)

Informant 19 is a banker who works in an established private bank (B2B, B2C). In retail banking, the objective is to provide a networking service to customers including access to a pool of funds among other services (**Value network logic**). In private banking, the objective is to propose tailored solutions to wealthy individuals (**Value shop logic**) as well as to provide access to an extra network of non-banking services including legal advice such as for business and/or heritage issues (**Value network logic**).

« Il y a deux choses : lorsque le client nous contacte parce qu'il a un problème, et lorsque l'on démarche et on propose une solution à un problème qu'ils n'ont pas forcément identifié... C'était le cas pour la ville X... on a réalisé une application de découverte de la ville X il y a deux mille ans, donc un parcours avec de la réalité augmentée et de la réalité virtuelle. Donc, une application complètement innovante parce que ça ne se faisait pas encore de mélanger les deux technologies. Et on y est allé en fait presque avec le produit clé en main. » (Value chain logic)

« Après, il y a l'autre aspect où on est contacté directement, et on nous propose, on nous expose un souci. Et on réfléchit effectivement à la manière la plus simple parce que nos clients à 99% sont des entités publiques, donc avec un budget public... Donc, on essaie systématiquement de calibrer un projet en fonction de leurs besoins, en fonction de leur budget. » (Value shop logic)

(Informant 23)

Informant 23 has an academic and professional background in culture and works in an emerging (i.e. start-up) company proposing digital solutions for cultural heritage to public authorities (B2G). He developed a new and unique technology based on mixing both virtual and blended reality that he proposes as a standardized solution to the qualified clients that he personally identified beforehand (**Value chain logic**). More and more, he proposes tailored solutions that correspond to the needs and budgets of public authorities that contact him directly for specific projects as a result of his increasing popularity (**Value shop logic**).

Let us now see on which elements the informants focused their attention when describing the practices/activities that create value for their company (Q10), as depicted in table 40 below. (The elements with **bold blue numbers** are covered in detail further down.)

Table 40. Practices/Activities that Create Value for the Company (Q10)

Focus on the sphere of the company				
n = 17				
Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to revenues/costs	Elements linked to offerings
10	4	3	0	6

Focus on the sphere of interaction			
n = 7			
Elements linked to transactions	Elements linked to relationships	Elements linked to co-creation thru dyads	Elements linked to co-creation thru networks
0	2	5	0

Focus on the sphere of the customer				
n = 10				
Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to experience	Elements linked to goals
1	1	0	3	5

(n = 23: An informant can mention different elements in several categories.)

Source: Author.

Since this question directly addresses the issue of company practices and/or activities (without clearly defining both terms), most informants (17/23) focused their attention mainly (but not exclusively) on elements linked to activities in the company's sphere. Hence, the most listed elements that create value are the following ones:

1. **Activities – Performing competitive benchmarking** [*« Une analyse régulière du marché en termes de benchmarking »* (Informant 1), *« Par exemple, on arrive à avoir des informations de la communication, sur ce qui se passe en Allemagne, Hollande ou Belgique »*, (Informant 12), *« Je pense que la veille... On a une veille qui est assez poussée ... »* (Informant 23)]
2. **Resources – Using new technologies** [*« L'outil qui nous permet de créer de la valeur aujourd'hui, c'est le digital »* (Informant 10), *« Je dirais que c'est vraiment la plateforme technologique »* (Informant 22), *« Réadapter des technologies open source pour pouvoir proposer des expériences »* (Informant 23)]
3. **Actors – Relying on people's skills** (company employees and partners) [*« C'est l'autonomie des individus ou en tout cas leur laisser à penser qu'ils ont la possibilité de prendre des risques ... on arrive à un seuil où le risque ou l'autonomie devient plus génératrice de valeur »* (Informant 4), *« Après, la création de la valeur passe par les compétences, c'est évident et je l'ai bien ressenti. Je suis en train de restructurer l'équipe »*

(Informant 13), « *Le trait saillant, c'est qu'on fait le plus possible appel aux personnes en externe parce qu'on est jeune et qu'on n'a pas les compétences en interne* » (Informant 20)]

4. **Offerings – Proposing a high-quality offering** [« *Ensuite, il y a la 'premiumisation', qui est une démarche claire de l'entreprise. Et ça tombe bien, parce que c'est là où va le marché aussi* » (Informant 13), « *On revient toujours à la phase de graphisme et de brief éditorial pour nous différencier* » (Informant 16), « *Ce qui est très important, c'est la capacité à toujours être à la pointe dans la qualité des voix* » (Informant 17)]

Concerning the most listed elements that create value in the sphere of interaction, they are linked to **co-creation through dyads** and include: **Helping the customer to find the solutions that already exist internally** [« *On se rend compte a contrario que bien souvent la création de valeur existe déjà dans l'entreprise. Si elle était réellement alimentée ou si on lui donnait la chance de s'exprimer, cette création de valeur existerait déjà en interne. Donc, on sert souvent comme arrosoir pour que la graine puisse germer et que ça puisse devenir une belle plante.* » (Informant 2)], **matching the company's capacities with the customer's needs** [« *Il faut avoir la bonne connaissance du projet client, il faut avoir la bonne connaissance de notre capacité à produire, ce que l'on sait faire et ce que l'on ne sait pas faire. C'est vraiment à ce niveau qu'on va identifier les gisements de valeur, clients et interne.* » (Informant 7)]

Regarding the most listed elements that create value in the customer's sphere, they are linked to **goals** and include: **Answering customers' questions** [« *C'est de la valeur ajoutée pour eux. Et d'ailleurs, que ce soit de nous ou de nos petits jeunes, sachant que nos petits jeunes sont formés à un niveau qui doit pouvoir répondre à 90 % des questions (nous répondons aux 10 % restants).* » (Informant 6)], **good knowledge of customers' needs so as to propose suited offerings** [« *Je dirais au niveau du site e-commerce, plutôt local France, ça revient sur le point qu'on évoquait avant, sur la bonne compréhension des besoins, des passions de nos clients pour pouvoir avoir la gamme de produits et le service qui correspondent.* » (Informant 9)]

When asked if the value creation process was formally taken into account in their company's strategy (Q11), 15 informants responded in a positive way, 5 informants responded in a negative way mainly due to lack of time or manpower, and 3 informants claimed that it was taken into account but in an informal way (such that it was treated as a negative response). Table 41 below depicts on which elements the informants focused their attention when describing how the value creation process was formally taken into by their company.

Table 41. Value Creation Process Formally Taken into Account in the Strategy (Q11)

Focus on the sphere of the company	Focus on the sphere of interaction	Focus on the sphere of the customer
10	2	3

(n = 15)

Source: Author.

In the sphere of the company, some of the elements of the value creation process that are formally taken into consideration in the company's strategy include: **Improving the positioning of offerings** (Informant 1), **analyzing and questioning internal practices and activities** (Informant 6), **developing a shared vision among collaborators** (Informant 7), and **evaluating business opportunities with business plans** (Informant 9).

In the sphere of interaction, the elements of the value creation process that are formally taken into consideration in the company's strategy include: **Stressing on the value created by the company's solutions during both the initial contacts with the customer and the co-construction of the offering with the customer** (Informant 2), **ensuring that each interaction with a customer generates profits** (Informant 10).

In the sphere of the customer, the elements of the value creation process that are formally taken into consideration in the company's strategy include: **Moving towards a premiumization strategy so as to increase the products' perceived value by B2B and B2C customers** (Informant 14), **working only with customers for whom the proposed offering makes sense** (Informant 21), **proposing solutions focused on relieving the end-users' pains during the customer journey** (Informant 23).

Let us finally determine the marketing perspective adopted by companies based on the description of their value creation process, as shown in table 42 below.

Table 42. Companies' Marketing Perspective Based on Description of Value Creation Process (Q09)

Goods-Dominant Logic	Service-Dominant Logic	Service Logic	Customer-Dominant Logic
14	6	3	0

(n = 23)

Source: Author.

Most companies (14/23) seem to adopt a Goods-Dominant Logic, some others (6/23) a Service-Dominant Logic, and very few (3/23) a Service Logic. Also, none of them seem to have adopted a Customer-Dominant Logic.

Discussion

Most informants (14/23) describe their value creation process in a way that corresponds to a single value creation logic. Many others (9/23) describe it in a way that includes two different value creation logics. Based on the informants' description of their company's value creation process, a hybrid value creation logic seems to prevail in the following cases:

- 1. Value chain / Value shop logic** – When a company proposes standard offerings to its customers (**value chain logic**) and then also adapts certain of its offerings to satisfy a specific customer's needs (**value shop logic**).
- 2. Value chain / Value network logic** – When a company proposes standard offerings to its customers (**value chain logic**) and then also provides a platform for its customers to generate/modify/share brand- or company-related material (**value network logic**).
- 3. Value shop / Value network logic** – When a company adapts certain of its offerings to meet a specific customer's needs (**value shop logic**) and then also provides a platform for its customers to generate/modify/share brand- or company-related material (**value network logic**).

As a result, **these findings seem to corroborate with the proposition/hypothesis of Stabell and Fjeldstad (1998) regarding the characteristics of companies with a hybrid value creation logic.**

In addition, the practices/activities that really create value for the company include performing competitive benchmarking, proposing a high-quality offering, and answering customers' questions. Also, not all companies (15/23) formally take into account value creation when designing their strategy mostly due to lack of time or adequate manpower. At last, most companies seem to adopt a Goods-Dominant Logic.

5.4.5. Theme #4 – Representation of the value creation process (Q14-Q20)

Introduction

The aim of this theme is to find out if companies use a representation (e.g. diagrams/models/methods) of their value creation process as well as what are the main difficulties and limitations when using it. If no representation is used, then the aim is to find out if informants can cite some tools that can represent the value creation process.

Main findings

What is striking is that most companies (15/23) do not use a representation of their value creation process (Q14). In most cases, the main reasons are primarily because of lack of time and of manpower. Among these companies, only a few managers (7/15) were able to list some tools that could actually help them to do so such as the following ones: Porter's Value Chain Analysis (Informants 4 and 13), reporting software (Informants 10 and 12), the Business Model Canvas (Informants 16 and 20), and mind mapping (Informant 21).

As for the companies using a representation (8/23), they principally use simple tools that have been developed internally such as: **Excel spreadsheets with key performance indicators** (Informants 5, 8 and 9), **business plans** (Informants 11 and 20), **process diagrams** (Informant 17), and **mock-ups** (Informant 23). According to the informants, the main difficulties and limits of those representations is that they are basic representations that do not necessarily allow much in-depth analysis. Likewise, the lack of time and of financial resources prevents them from using better-suited representations.

Discussion

Most companies do not have a representation of their value creation process. Also, the few companies that actually use a representation handle primarily basic tools that have been developed internally. Finally, **most managers are not aware of tools that could help them to represent their company's value creation process.**

5.4.6. Theme #5 – Composition of the value creation process (Q21-Q34)

Introduction

This theme is actually divided into 3 parts: (1) The company's sphere (Q21 – Q23), (2) the customer's sphere (Q24 – Q26), and (3) the sphere of interaction (Q27 – Q34). The aim of this theme is to first determine what are the elements in each of these spheres that companies currently take into consideration for creating value, and then to discover what are some other potential elements that should be taken into account according to the informants. In addition, the aim is to find out what are the roles of the company, of the customer, and of the interactions/exchanges between companies and their customers in the value creation process.

Main findings – Company's sphere

Table 43 below displays the elements in the company's sphere that are currently taken into consideration for creating value (Q21). (The elements with **bold blue numbers** are covered in detail further down.)

Table 43. Value Creation Elements in the Company's Sphere (Q21)

Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to revenues/costs	Elements linked to offerings
11	13	19	2	3

(n = 23: An informant can mention different elements in several categories.)

Source: Author.

Concerning current elements (Q21), most of the informants focused their attention mainly on value creation elements linked to (1) Actors, (2) resources, and (3) activities respectively. Furthermore, 14 informants claimed that their company could also include additional potential elements other than those already taken into account (Q22). Many of these elements turned out to have been listed by informants from other companies in the previous question.

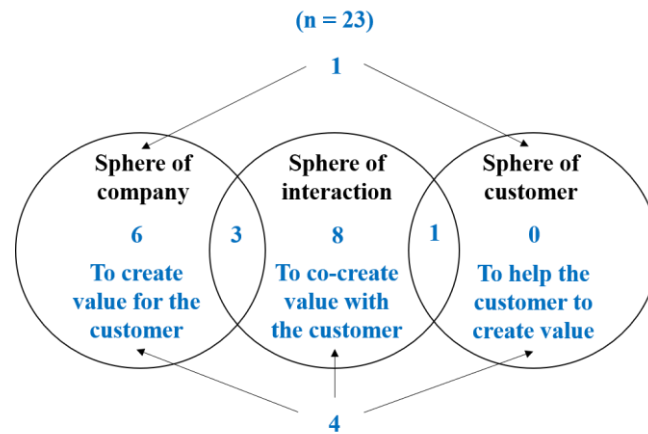
1. With regards to **actors**, most informants highlight the importance of the human dimension of a company [*« La partie humaine, c'est vraiment ce qui va tout définir »* (Informant 23)] so that **employees' skills** contribute to value creation, and more specifically the employees' ability to use their soft skills with customers: *« C'est par l'agilité et la compétence de nos*

collaborateurs que nous développons la consommation de la banque par nos clients » (Informant 10). In many cases, they must be completed with technical skills in order to provide better customer support: *« Le commercial n'est plus là pour vendre le produit mais il est là pour bien le connaître. Les processus d'accréditation qualité et traçabilité demandent aussi d'énormes compétences, pas seulement sur le produit mais aussi en assurance qualité, en accompagnement pour accréditer le produit »* (Informant 18). In addition, **the network of partners** (e.g. suppliers, distributors...) is a building block of the value creation process: *« Il y a tout le réseau de partenaires fournisseurs qui sont essentiels dans notre création de valeur puisque, sans eux, on n'aurait plus de valeur »* (Informant 20). Thus, the selection of quality partners becomes essential for companies: *« On ne fait appel qu'à des feelances de qualité »* (Informant 16).

2. With respect to **resources, information collected from customers** if well exploited can help to improve products and services and thus lead to value creation: *« La manière dont on va gérer et traiter l'information client, et comment on va rechercher dans l'information clients ... les gisements de développement pour nous et donc de service client »* (Informant 7). Accordingly, **the use of effective tools** can help to better manage internal processes on one hand, and it actually is the backbone of companies proposing computer and digital solutions on the other hand: *« Nous, on est une start-up tech. Donc, ça sera tous les développements informatiques »* (Informant 21).
3. Regarding **activities**, the most important element that helps to create value is by far **marketing and sales support** : *« Pour des dossiers importants, comme des achats de machine ou des contrats de réactifs importants ou des réponses à des appels d'offres, on est en train de mettre un dossier qui représente l'interlocuteur privilégié des laboratoires, son commercial qui va être le chef de projet et derrière on va représenter l'équipe marketing, le soutien commercial, le soutien SAV, etc., pour que les clients visualisent bien le monde qu'il y a derrière la société »* (Informant 18). Some major marketing and sales activities listed by several informants include: **Competitive benchmarking** [*« Il y a forcément une analyse benchmark de la concurrence pour savoir où positionner les prix de nos produits »* (Informant 12)], **new product development** [*« C'est la capacité de développement produits »* (Informant 17)], and **improving customer loyalty** : [*« Pour développer nos affaires, il faut absolument qu'on utilise notre fonds de commerce, nos clients. La fidélisation de notre clientèle est essentielle »* (Informant 10)].

Let us now see how informants consider the role of the company in the value creation process (Q23), as shown in figure 46 below.

Figure 46. Role of Company in the Value Creation Process (Q23)



Source: Author.

What is striking is that while several informants (14/23) claimed that the company played a single role in the value creation process, many others (9/23) asserted that the company could actually play multiple roles. In addition, no informant reported that the sole role of the company was to help the customer to create value, that is to say, the customer cannot create value for the company per se (when stated the other way around).

The few informants (4/23) who asserted that their company could play three different roles depending on the situation could actually not provide clear answers in order to back up their claim, as expressed in the following quote: « *On est parti du petit a) [to create value for the customer] pour arriver de plus en plus vers le petit c) [to help the customer to create value], c'est-à-dire que le schéma des 15-20 ans qui viennent de s'écouler visait beaucoup à mettre à disposition une offre aux clients [to create value for the customer], et c'est de plus en plus de l'associer à partir de ses besoins [to co-create value with the customer]* » (Informant 19). In this case, it turns out that the informant thinks that the company is now helping the customer to create value, whereas in reality the company is co-creating value with the customer (« *l'associer à partir de ses besoins* »).

Let us now go through two examples in which the informants consider that their company plays two different roles in the value creation process.

« On crée des services et on les propose aux clients... » **(To create value for the customer)**

« Même si à un moment donné, dans certains cas (pas tous les cas) on va demander un avis à certains représentants de la clientèle pour valider que ça peut être intéressant avant de sortir l'artillerie lourde, la communication etc. » **(To co-create value with the customer)**

(Informant 11)

« En très grosse majorité, on a des produits standardisés. Par exemple, notre produit phare s'appelle X qui permet de vocaliser les sites internet. C'est un produit 'out of the box'. Une grosse majorité de nos clients sont dans cette catégorie. » **(To create value for the customer)**

« Après, on va avoir de gros clients qui vont nous demander d'aller plus loin. Ils vont par exemple nous dire : on a besoin de la synthèse vocale pour aboutir à tel objectif. Du coup, cela s'appelle de la customisation, un usage un peu détourné ou autre de telle solution. On part donc dans du project management, mais c'est moins le cas. » **(To co-create value with the customer)**

(Informant 17)

According to these two examples, the role of the company also depends on the type of role that the company is willing to let the customer play in the value creation process. When a company does not use the customer's input for developing an offering or when it proposes a standard offering to its customers, then the customer plays a passive role in the value creation process since its sole role is to consume the value created by the company. This reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic. However, when a company uses the customer's input for developing an offering or when it proposes a customized offering to its customers, then the customer plays an active role in the value creation process so that value is co-created by both parties as a result of their interaction. This reflects a Service Logic.

In the end, there are some clear examples of companies playing single or dual roles in the value creation process. However, there are no clear examples of companies playing a triple role, and there is also no example of a company whose sole role is to help the customer to create value.

Main findings – Customer’s sphere

Table 44 below displays the elements in the customer’s sphere that are currently taken into consideration for creating value (Q24). (The elements with **bold blue numbers** are covered in detail further down.)

Table 44. Value Creation Elements in the Customer’s Sphere (Q24)

Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to experience	Elements linked to goals
4	5	11	7	10

(n = 22: An informant can mention different elements in several categories.)

Source: Author.

Only Informant 12 was not able to answer this set of questions (Q24 & Q25) simply because he explained that this type of issue was managed by the company’s headquarters located in a far-away country. As for the other 22 informants, most of them focused their attention mainly on current elements linked to (1) actors, (2) goals, and (3) experience respectively (Q24). Moreover, 13 informants asserted that their company could also include additional potential elements other than those already taken into account (Q25). Again, many of these elements turned out to have been listed by informants from other companies in the previous question.

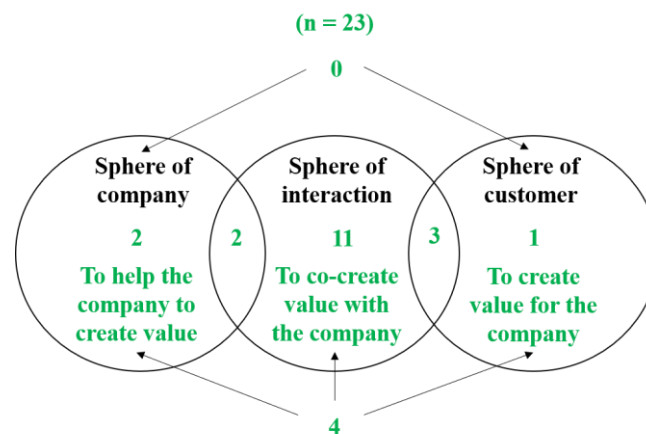
1. With respect to **actors**, only two elements were listed by two different informants: the **customer’s reputation** [Informant 5 (Human resources consulting, B2B) and Informant 23 (Digital solutions for cultural heritage, B2G)] and the **customer’s competitors** [Informant 1 (Human resources consulting, B2B in this case) and Informant 13 (Wine producer & merchant, B2B in this example)]. All the other elements were only mentioned by just one informant such that there was no real homogeneity in terms of responses. In fact, some of the other elements included: **the customer’s ability to generate customer referral** [Informant 8 (Apparel retail store, B2C)], **the customer’s psychology** [Informant 10 (Private banking services, B2B and B2C)], **the customer’s profile** [Informant 14 (Wine producer & merchant, B2B, B2C, and B2B2C)], etc.
2. Concerning **goals**, the majority of the informants (10/10) responded **customers’ needs**, while customers’ preferences were only listed once. Customers’ needs is thus by far the most important element that all informants agree on since it is systematically taken into consideration, as if it were an undisputable element.

3. As for **experience**, all the informants mentioned a different element such as for example: **the customer's satisfaction** [Informant 3 (International relations website & training, B2C and B2C)], **the customer's triggered emotion** [Informant 4 (Wine producer / Hotel & restaurant, B2C, B2C, and B2B2C)], **that the proposed solution makes sense for the customer** [Informant 23 (Digital solutions for cultural heritage, B2G)], etc.

Indeed, answering this set of questions (Q24 and Q25) actually proved to be a rather difficult exercise for the informants.

Let us now see how informants consider the role of the customer in the value creation process (Q26), as depicted in figure 47 below.

Figure 47. Role of Customer in the Value Creation Process (Q26)



Source: Author.

Once again, what is interesting is that while several informants (14/23) claimed that the customer played a single role in the value creation process, many others (9/23) asserted that the customer could play multiple roles. This time, at least one informant was able to provide some clear examples showing how customers could actually play three different roles in the value creation process. The three quotes below are excerpts from the interview with Informant 15, who works for an innovation platform that provides services to industrial companies (B2B).

« J'ai envie de dire qu'on est un peu dans les trois cas. On a le premier cas de cocréation typiquement avec la société X, on mutualise leurs équipements, on va en faire la promotion et ils vont faire la promotion des nôtres. La

plupart des locataires qu'on a ici sont des prestataires de la société X. C'est la société X qui a fait la promotion de la plateforme pour qu'ils s'y installent. »

(The customer co-creates value with the company.)

The quote above describes how the customer co-creates value with the company (i.e. innovation platform). The customer is hosted with his own equipment in the innovation platform's facilities that offers both office space and equipment for rental in addition to consulting services. As a result, the innovation platform mutualizes the customer's equipment in addition to its own equipment and promotes it to other host companies, and in return the customer promotes the innovation platform's facilities and services to other potential customers.

« Côté client qui réintégrerait, on l'a par deux ou trois clients qui le font, notamment pour la réalité virtuelle. On a l'agence X qui est un 'client partenaire' entre guillemets qui fait des prestations d'ergonomie et d'aide à la performance industrielle. Et ils intègrent ma prestation d'ergonomie virtuelle dans leurs prestations. »

(The customer helps the company to create value.)

The quote above explains how another customer (i.e. public agency) helps the company (i.e. innovation platform) to create value. In this case, the public agency performs consulting missions, and it acts as both a customer for and a partner with the innovation platform. In their offering, the public agency also proposes to its own customers one of services provided and performed by the innovation platform.

« On a la même chose avec un bureau d'études qui utilise nos équipements comme étant un des leurs, pour faire la promotion de ses produits. Typiquement il vient présenter ses machines en réalité virtuelle. Je les ai formés à utiliser l'outil et ils viennent présenter leurs machines à leurs clients en réalité virtuelle directement à la salle. »

(The customer creates value for the company.)

The quote above shows how another customer (i.e. engineering consultancy) creates value for the company (i.e. innovation platform). In this case, the engineering consultancy uses the innovation platform's equipment for designing virtual reality machines, and then it purposely presents its products to its customers in the innovation platform's facilities pretending that the equipment used for making the machine is their own.

Based on the three latter examples, the role of the customer in the value creation process is described in terms of what the customer can bring to the company as a result of their interactions. When a customer embeds a company's offering (i.e. product or service) as an essential mean for his/her own value creation process, then the customer creates value for the company. This reflects a Customer-Dominant Logic. When the interaction is based on service-for-service exchange, then the customer and the company co-create value. This reflects a Service-Dominant Logic. When a customer uses a company's offering (i.e. product or service) just for reaching a specific goal (i.e. satisfy a need, solve a problem, perform a task...), then the customer helps the company to create value. This reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic.

When a company does not use the customer's input for developing an offering or when it proposes a standard offering to its customers, then the customer plays a passive role in the value creation process since its sole role is to consume the value created by the company. This reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic. However, when a company uses the customer's input for developing an offering or when it proposes a customized offering to its customers, then the customer plays an active role in the value creation process so that value is co-created by both parties as a result of their interaction. This reflects a Service Logic.

Main findings – Sphere of interaction

As depicted in table 45 below, companies pursue different objectives with respect to their interactions/exchanges with their customers (Q27). There can be four different types of objectives: (1) To perform transactions (i.e. unique and/or brief encounters with no further contact beyond transactions), (2) to build a relationship (i.e. episodic and/or long-lasting encounters based on repeated contact with the customer), (3) to co-create through dyads (i.e. one-on-one customer support, customer training, partnership with the customer), and (4) to co-create through networks (i.e. exchange of services based on the integration of resources within a network/ecosystem of actors). Let us first go through some types of objectives cited by the informants, and then let us explore the number of objectives that companies can pursue simultaneously with their customers. (The elements with **bold blue numbers** are covered in detail further down.)

Table 45. Objectives of Interactions/Exchanges between Company and Customer (Q27)

Elements linked to transactions	Elements linked to relationships	Elements linked to co-creation thru dyads	Elements linked to co-creation thru networks
8	15	6	9

(n = 23: An informant can mention different elements in several categories.)

Pursuit of 1 objective	Pursuit of 2 objectives	Pursuit of 3 objectives	Pursuit of 4 objectives
11	9	3	0

(n = 23)

Source: Author.

Clearly, each company has different objectives with regards to their interactions/exchanges with their customers. Here is a list of some types of objectives listed by different informants:

1. **Transactions – To improve our services in order to add value for the company** (Informant 6), **to gather cold information on customers** (Informant 12), **to foster transactions for our Fintech** (Informant 22)
2. **Relationships – To gain a better mutual knowledge of one other** (Informant 1), **to build a seamless relationship with business customers so as to remain their supplier** (Informant 18), **to build a relationship with business customers who can help us to grow our business** (Informant 20)
3. **Co-creation through dyads – To create long-lasting partnerships with each business customer in our fast-changing environment** (Informant 2), **to ensure that each customer promotes the company through referrals and word-of-mouth** (Informant 3), **to make sure that our customers feel privileged as a result of being at their disposal so that they can become our best ambassadors vis-à-vis their family, friends, and colleagues** (Informant 19)
4. **Co-creation through networks – To use the social media for engaging our consumers in interactions between our brands and their network** (Informant 14), **to build relationships based on trust in order to densify our relations and create a network** (Informant 23)

What is even more interesting is that some companies pursue several different objectives simultaneously regarding their interactions/exchanges with their customers. The three following quotes show examples of companies who actually pursue three different objectives simultaneously.

« Vous avez le client de réseau, c'est tous ces chefs d'entreprise qui viennent d'Amiens etc., de très bonnes relations et j'y tiens aussi forcément, mais là, ce sont plutôt des relations de réseau. [Network] Après, on a aussi 60 % de notre clientèle, c'est beaucoup de personnes qui viennent passer un moment de détente, donc de relation commerciale en directe comme vous avez dit. [Relationship] Ensuite, vous avez aussi ceux qui viennent et qui attendent de nous, par rapport à notre nom etc., ils sont toujours en attente de quelque chose de la part du commerçant. [Transaction] Donc, il y a trois types de clients. »

(Informant 8)

Informant 8 is a retailer who owns an established group of apparel stores (B2C). Some of his customers come from a business club that he belongs to and whose aim is to network in order to grow the business of its members (i.e. network customers). Then, 60% of his customers are loyal customers who regularly come to his stores not necessarily for making purchases but also for enjoying the stores' nice ambiance (i.e. relationship customers). Finally, all of his other customers are one-time customers who mostly seek good deals (i.e. transaction customers). In this case, the informant links the type of objective to the type of customer profile.

« Encore une fois, c'est la transaction bien évidemment. C'est ce qui fait régulièrement le chiffre d'affaires de la banque, les abonnements etc. [Transaction] Le relationnel avec le client et le suivi client, cette mise en confiance aussi. [Relationship] Puis, le réseau, c'est le développement bien évidemment. [Network] Les trois sont imbriqués. On ne peut pas occulter le réseau, le relationnel avec le client (sinon il s'arrête de consommer ou il va consommer chez un confrère) [Relationship], le réseau (si on se cantonne à ce qui existe, on est mort à terme [Network], et le transactionnel (c'est le business quotidien, c'est ce qui fait tourner la maison) [Transaction]. Donc, les trois s'imbriquent et on ne peut absolument pas occulter les trois. Et si on oublie un levier, on est mort. »

(Informant 10)

Informant 10 is a banker who works for an established private bank (B2B and B2C). He states that the main objective of the bank is to develop customer transactions such as customer subscriptions, as it is what contributes the most to the net banking income on a daily basis. Then, another objective is to develop customer relationships such as customer follow-up and

trust, otherwise customers stop consuming products and services from the bank and eventually switch to competition. Finally, another objective is to develop the banking network (i.e. system) such as offline/online services to customers, otherwise the bank will be dead in the long run. In this case, the informant links the type of objective to the type of activity carried out by the bank for the customer such that all activities are intertwined in the bank's overall set of activities.

*« C'est un peu des trois. Au départ ils consomment nos offres **[Transaction]**, après on installe une relation de confiance et d'échanges réguliers **[Relationship]** et du coup ils font partis de notre réseau. Et la plupart d'entre eux nous recommandent quand quelqu'un leur demande **[Network]**. Mais ce sont des phases différentes, d'abord ils consomment avant de nous recommander. »*

(Informant 11)

Informant 11 is a consultant and trainer who owns a CRM consulting & training agency (B2B). She claims that at first the customer consumes the company's offering (i.e. transaction phase). Afterwards, a relationship based on trust and regular exchanges between the company and the customer emerges (i.e. relationship phase). Finally, the customer becomes part of the company's network for growing the business through customer referrals (i.e. network phase). In this case, the informant links the type of objective to the type of phase in the customer lifecycle, which is depicted as a series of successive phases that the customer goes through.

Table 46 below displays which elements on both the company's side and the customer's side are taken into account for developing an offering (Q30). (The elements with **bold blue numbers** are covered in detail further down.)

Table 46. Elements Taken into Account for Developing an Offering (Q30)

Elements from the sphere of the company				
n = 23				
Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to revenues/costs	Elements linked to offerings
4	7	2	11	10

Elements from the sphere of the customer				
n = 23				
Elements linked to activities	Elements linked to resources	Elements linked to actors	Elements linked to experience	Elements linked to goals
4	6	7	5	8

(n = 23: An informant can mention different elements in several categories.)

Source: Author.

On the company's side, the most listed elements that are taken into account are linked to: (1) Revenues/costs, (2) offerings, (3) resources, (4) activities, and (5) actors respectively. Here is a list of some of the most listed elements for the top 3 categories:

1. **Revenues/costs – Profitability** (Informants 4, 6, 9, 11, 14, 19, 20, and 23)
2. **Offerings – Positioning** (Informants 4 and 13), **points of differentiation** (Informants 15 and 16), **regulatory constraints** (Informants 15 and 20)
3. **Resources – Production capacity** (Informants 1 and 21), **Internal know-how** (Informants 3 and 5)

On the customer's side, the most listed elements that are taken into account are linked to: (1) Goals, (2) actors, (3) resources, (4) experience, and (5) activities respectively. Here is a list of some of the most listed elements for the top 3 categories:

1. **Goals – Needs to be satisfied** (Informants 1, 2, 17, and 19), **problems to be solved** (Informants 20 and 22)
2. **Actors – Customer's profile** (Informants 4 and 10), **fashion trends** (Informants 8 and 12)
3. **Resources – Customer's budget** (Informants 7, 11, 16, 23)

Let us now see how informants consider the role of the offering in the value creation process (Q34), as depicted in table 47 below. (The elements with **bold blue numbers** are covered in detail further down.) As a reminder, each marketing perspective defines the role of an offering in a different way that could be summarized as follows:

1. **Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL)** – To propose value through the addition/enhancement of attributes in an offering (i.e. product/service/solution) → Value proposition by company
2. **Service-Dominant Logic (SDL)** – To exchange services between actors through the integration of resources (i.e. knowledge and skills) within a network → Value co-creation through service exchange (in a network)
3. **Service Logic (SL)** – To support a customer's processes through a total service offering (i.e. recognized and hidden services) that facilitates his/her life or business → Value co-creation through service facilitation (in a dyad)
4. **Customer-Dominant Logic (CDL)** – To match a company's capabilities and resources (i.e. offering) with a customer's goals and tasks (i.e. needing) → Value formation by customer

Table 47. Companies' Marketing Perspective Based on the Role of the Offering (Q34)

Goods-Dominant Logic	Service-Dominant Logic	Service Logic	Customer-Dominant Logic
12	2	6	0

(n = 20)

Source: Author.

In fact, here are some quotes from the informants explaining the role of their offering in the value creation process:

1. **Value proposition by company (GDL) – Proposing an offering (i.e. product, service, solution) with value added** [*« Mon job est de produire des trucs intelligents. »* (Informant 3), *« Le fait de faire bar à vins permet d'augmenter les prix puisqu'on ajoute de la valeur dans le service, dans le bar à vins etc. »* (Informant 6), *« C'est pour ça qu'on veut monter dans l'échelle de valeur justement, de devenir donneur d'ordre plutôt qu'exécutant de travaux. Nous, on est en bas de la liste et on devient les vulgaires creuseurs de trous ou casseurs de cailloux, donc la valeur ajoutée est très mal perçue chez nous. »* (Informant 7), *« On n'est pas forcément dans l'écoute directe de nos clients actuels pour savoir ce qu'ils veulent. On est dans une logique aujourd'hui d'amélioration de prestation... »* (Informant 15), *« On est très techno, clairement. On empile les capacités technologiques dans le produit, c'est vraiment l'approche historique. »* (Informant 17)]
2. **Value co-creation through service facilitation (SL) – To support a customer's processes with appropriate services** [*« Que derrière on mette les moyens et la stratégie*

en place pour résoudre le besoin du client, qu'on se mette d'accord sur les éléments de base, comment on va procéder, comment ça va se passer. » (Informant 5), « C'est vrai que dans notre approche nous on va plutôt être vraiment à l'écoute du client. Et du coup, être dans la capacité à effectivement lui offrir les ressources pour qu'on puisse ajouter des services qui lui correspondent. » (Informant 20)]

Discussion

With regards to the company's sphere, employees' skills and the network of partners are considered as the most essential elements for creating value so that the human dimension of a company is of the utmost importance. In addition, marketing and sales support play a crucial role through key activities such as competitive benchmarking, new product development, and improving customer loyalty. Some informants (6/23) claim that the role of the company is to create value, whereas many others (8/23) assert that its role is to co-create value with the customer. Meanwhile, the rest of them (9/23) think that the company can have different roles alternatively since they propose both standard and customized offerings as well as sometimes involve some customers in the development of new products.

With respect to the customer's sphere, once again elements directly related to actors (such as a customer's reputation) are considered as important, but satisfying customers' needs (related to goals) is by far the single most important element taken into consideration by many informants (10/23) for creating value. Furthermore, about half of the informants (11/23) stated that the role of the customer is to co-create value with the company when focusing on the customer's sphere, whereas about only one-third of them (8/23) stated that when they were asked to focus on the company's sphere previously. Likewise, many informants (9/23) think that the customer can play different roles alternatively in the value creation process pretty much for the same reasons that they already mentioned when discussing the role of companies.

Regarding the sphere of interaction, most informants (12/23) pursue at least two of the following four **objectives when interacting/exchanging with their customers** (in order of importance): Building a relationship (15/23) such as to better know each other, co-creating value thru networks (9/23) such as via customer engagement in the social media, performing transactions (8/23) such as to gather customer information, and co-creating value thru dyads

(6/23) such as creating long-term partnerships in a fast-changing environment. When developing an offering, on the company's side, many informants (11/23) take into account elements related to revenues/costs such as profitability, and many others (10/23) take into consideration elements related to offerings such as positioning. Likewise, on the customer's side, many informants (8/23) take into consideration elements related goals such as needs to be satisfied, and many others (7/23) take into consideration elements related to actors such as the company's profile in terms of firmographics. Based on the way they develop their offering, most companies (12/20) adopt a Goods-Dominant Logic, several others (6/20) adopt a Service Logic, few others (2/20) adopt a Service-Dominant Logic, and none adopt a Customer-Dominant Logic.

5.4.7. Theme #6 – Management of the value creation process (Q35-Q42)

Introduction

The aim of this theme is to find out if and how companies manage their value creation process. In other words, do companies use tools/methods for measuring the value that they created, and do they use methods/procedures for improving their value creation process?

Main findings

Only 3 informants (6, 7, and 16) claimed that they did not use tools/methods for measuring the value that they created (Q35). (This does not mean that they do not measure value per se because all of them have access to their company's sales turnover, which is one way of measuring value in terms of generated revenues.) As for the other informants (20/23), what they actually measure also reflects their perception of where value is actually created, (knowing that an informant can use different tools/methods for measuring different elements of value creation).

With respect to the tools/methods used for measuring elements lying in the company's sphere, about half of the informants (9/20) claim that they use mostly **Excel spreadsheets for measuring key performance indicators related to sales turnover and profitability** (Informants 1, 3, 5, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, and 20). In addition, some informants (3/20) assert that they conduct **surveys for measuring their brands' (i.e. offering's) image** (Informants 4, 9,

14). With regards to the tools/methods used for measuring elements lying in the sphere of interaction, two of the latter informants also use a **software for customer relationship management** (Informants 1 and 20).

Concerning the tools/methods used for measuring elements lying in the customer's sphere, some of the informants (4/20) use **applications for evaluating the digital uses of end-users** (Informants 2, 3, 9, and 17). Finally, many informants (7/20) use **different tools/methods (including the Net Promoter Score) for measuring their customers' level of satisfaction** (Informants 1, 10, 11, 12, 18, 22, and 23)

In addition, what is noteworthy is that many informants (10/23) state that their company does not use methods/procedures for improving their value creation process (Q39). In most cases, the main reasons are due to the lack of time and training for established companies and because of the lack of formal procedures in general for emerging (i.e. start-up) companies.

As for the other informants (13/23), some of the most cited methods/procedures that are used by companies for improving their value creation process are as follows (knowing that an informant can use different methods/procedures): **Setting up regular meetings among collaborators including for sharing best practices** (Informants 1, 7, 13, and 14), **recruiting skilled people** (Informants 3 and 10), **evaluating the digital uses of end-users** (Informants 9 and 22), and so on.

Discussion

The majority of companies (20/23) use tools/methods for measuring the value that they create. Most of them use Excel spreadsheets for measuring key performance indicators related to sales turnover and profitability, thereby reflecting the fact that value is created in exchange (i.e. an offering as a unit of output in exchange of money). Most of them also measure their customers' level of satisfaction, thereby reflecting the fact that value is also created in the customer's experience (i.e. a customer evaluates an offering's performance as a result of his/her experience with the offering).

Over half of the companies (13/23) use methods/procedures for improving their value creation process. Most of them rely on the skills/know-how of their employees so that they are

focused on improving company-related processes, while two of them that have online activities are concerned with improving their end-users' experience so that they are focused on customer-related processes. The companies who don't use methods/procedures is because of lack of time and training for established companies and because of lack of formal procedures for emerging (i.e. start-up) companies.

5.4.8. Theme #7 – Reflection on value creation (Q43-Q49)

Introduction

The aim of this theme is to reflect upon who creates value for the company according to the informants at the end of an intensive interview on the topic of value creation. Regardless of their answer, all informants were also asked to describe how value could be co-created by the company and the customer as well as how value could be created by the customer.

Main findings

Table 48 below depicts who creates value for the company according to the informants (Q43). In general, most informants did not provide much details when answering this question.

Table 48. Informants' Marketing Perspective Based on Who Creates Value (Q43)

Goods-Dominant Logic	Service-Dominant Logic	Service Logic	Customer-Dominant Logic
12	4	3	4

(n = 23)

Source: Author.

For many informants (12/23), value is created by the company as advocated by Goods-Dominant Logic. For half of them (6/12), **value is created by the people working for the company** (Informants 1, 7, 9, 14, 17, 18): « *Ce sont les techniciens de bureaux d'études, et ce sont ceux que l'on appelle chez nous les conducteurs de travaux qui sont dans l'application des études réalisées. C'est dans la justesse de la manière dont ils vont dérouler, exécuter les travaux qu'on va créer de la valeur.* » (Informant 7), « *J'ai envie de dire quand même que le commercial*

en crée beaucoup puisqu'il est le premier interlocuteur avec le client, c'est l'image de la société. » (Informant 18).

For some informants (4/23), value is created by the customer (Informants 8, 10, 13, and 16) as proposed by Customer-Dominant Logic. For two of them, the main reason is simply because **no customer means no value**: *« S'il n'y a pas de marché, il n'y a pas de valeur. »* (Informant 13), *« Ce sont les clients parce que s'il n'y a pas de clients, l'entreprise n'a aucune valeur. »* (Informant 16).

For many other informants (7/23), value is co-created by the company and the customer (Informants 3, 11, 15, 19, 20, 21, and 22) as asserted by both Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) and Service Logic (SL). In most cases (4/7), it takes place through a network (as in SDL) such that **value co-creation can also include the company's partners in the process**: *« C'est les auteurs et les clients. »* (Informant 3), *« C'est l'entreprise, le client et les partenaires. Les partenaires c'est important parce que c'est eux qui peuvent souvent nous débloquer. »* (Informant 22).

Let us now go through some descriptions of the informants regarding how value can also be co-created by the company and the customer (Q44), and how value can also be created by just the customer (Q47).

With regards to how value can be co-created by the company and the customer (Q44), the informants proposed the following ways among some others: **By establishing a solid relationship based on trust** [*« En mettant (j'insiste bien) en place une relation avec le client qui est une relation de confiance, mais pas sur un terme galvaudé et péjoratif, une vraie relation de confiance soudée où on peut se dire les choses. »* (Informant 1), *« Oui, on pourrait cocréer en améliorant nos relations avec nos clients, en les faisant beaucoup plus intervenir dans la vie quotidienne de l'entreprise. »* (Informant 8)], **by really taking into account customers' inputs** [*« Avec le consommateur final, certainement aussi. Même si j'avais émis des doutes sur la valeur de l'input que peut donner le consommateur, c'est quand même lui qui achète le produit et qui peut donc définir des besoins, exprimer des besoins. »* (Informant 4), *« D'intégrer, de leur demander ce qu'ils pensent du magasin, quels sont nos points négatifs et positifs, leur demander si on a été mauvais ces dernières années, pourquoi ils viennent chez nous, etc. »* (Informant 8)], **by working on projects that help to build a network of partners** [*« Je ne*

vois que dans la forme de réseau, sur l'organisation d'évènements ou ce genre de choses. On l'a déjà fait avec certains clients comme la société X qui a volontairement fêté ses quinze ans ici. Ils ont invité tous leurs clients pour faire connaître notre société. » (Informant 15), « On a besoin de rencontrer des gens qui ont eu des expériences similaires auparavant, etc. Et donc, il y a tout cet aspect partenaires, réseau, autour du projet c'est quasiment aussi important... Parce que nous on exécute, mais on ne peut pas exécuter si on n'a pas toutes les clés en main. » (Informant 22)], and so on.

With respect to how value can be created by the customer (Q47), the informants proposed the following ways among some others: **By communicating on (i.e. promoting) the company or its offering** [*« Ce que le client a produit pour nous, c'est le bouche-à-oreille, c'est la publicité. (...) 'N'hésitez pas à en parler autour de vous,' 'N'hésitez pas à communiquer autour de vous.' (...) Voilà, notre publicité s'enclenche comme ça en permanence, et les gens font cet effort, parce qu'on répond à leur besoin. »* (Informant 6), *« Après, si on parle du client conso, il crée de la valeur à travers les réseaux sociaux, la création de partages et d'expériences. »* (Informant 13), *« Bien sûr, que le client peut créer de la valeur pour l'entreprise, bien sûr. Oui, oui. La com. »* (Informant 23)], **by providing constructive feedback on the company's offerings** [*« En étant honnête dans ses retours. »* (Informant 4), *« C'est peut-être une vision start-up, mais vraiment de nos clients sur la création de valeur, ce qu'on attend c'est vraiment qu'ils nous feedent, en feedback du coup, qu'ils nous donnent leur avis sur notre produit, et qu'ils nous permettent de le faire évoluer. »* (Informant 20)], **by giving the company the opportunity to get into the customer's sphere for gaining better insight** [*« En nous donnant la possibilité d'aller chez eux, éventuellement de visiter un site par exemple, d'interviewer un homologue d'un poste qu'on aurait à pourvoir. Ce serait déjà très bien ! »* (Informant 5)], and so on.

Discussion

There is no clear evidence that value is created specifically by one actor rather than by another or by both altogether. According to the informants who claim that value is created by the company (12/23), people working in the company are the actors who actually create value, and value is actually embedded in the company's offering via its attributes. This reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic. As for those who state that value is created by both the company and the customer (7/23), it is a process that can take place either through dyads between just the

company and the customer as in Service Logic, or through a network that also includes the company's partners as in Service-Dominant Logic. According to those who assert that value is created by the customer (4/23), they claim that there is no business if there are no customers such that for them customers are the source of value creation.

Even though informants take a firm stance and thus adopt a specific perspective when explaining who creates value for the company, they are also able to give some examples of how value could be created from another perspective. Nevertheless, this proves to be a rather difficult task for them due to their deeply rooted perspective.

5.4.9. Comparison of informants' and of companies' marketing perspective

Table 49 below displays the marketing perspective of the informants and of their companies with regards to three constructs: (1) The informants' definition of value creation (Q06), (2) the description of their company's value creation process (Q09), and (3) the informants' claim regarding who creates value, that is to say, who is the value creator (Q43). When an informant's definition of value creation (DEF) corresponds to the same marketing perspective as that of their claim regarding who is the value creator (CRE), then his/her conception of value creation is coherent (DEF = CRE). Leaving aside the issue of who is the value creator that was asked at the very end of the interview, when an informant's definition of value creation (DEF) corresponds to the same marketing perspective as that of the company's value creation process (PRO), then there is a convergence (DEF = PRO) between both marketing perspectives.

According to the Institutional Logics Perspective, a marketing perspective as an institutional logic focuses the attention of an individual through cultural embeddedness (Ocasio, 1997; Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Thornton, 2004), which in turn activates a social actors situated identities, goals, and action schemas (Goffman, 1974; Collins, 2000, 2004). With respect to the concept of "identity," I thus added the informants' position (i.e. management level position) and profession as well as their company's proposed offering(s) and market(s) served. In turn, this can help to check for potential patterns related to individual (i.e. personal) and organizational (i.e. corporate) characteristics respectively. (Rows that are colored similarly correspond to two different individuals working in the same organization, that is to say, there were three companies in which two different informants were interviewed.)

Table 49. Marketing Perspective of Informants and of their Companies

Informant	Individual Characteristics		Organizational Characteristics		Marketing Perspective				Coherence (DEF = CRE)	Convergence (DEF = PRO)	
	Management Level Position	Profession	Offering(s)	Market(s)	Goods-Dominant Logic	Service-Dominant Logic	Service Logic	Customer-Dominant Logic			
1	Top Level 1	Consulting & Training	Services	B2B, B2C	DEF, CRE, PRO			Yes	Yes		
2	Top Level 1	Consulting & Training	Solutions	B2B	CRE	DEF, PRO		No	Yes		
3	Top Level 1	Editing & Publishing	Products, services	B2B, B2C	DEF, PRO	CRE		No	Yes		
4	Top Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Products, services	B2B, B2C, B2B2C	DEF, CRE, PRO		PRO	Yes	Yes		
5	Middle Level 2	Consulting & Training	Services	B2B, B2C	DEF, CRE			Yes	No		
6	Top Level 1	Retailing	Products, services	B2B, B2C	DEF, CRE, PRO			Yes	Yes		
7	Top Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Products, services	B2B, B2G	DEF, CRE, PRO			Yes	Yes		
8	Top Level 1	Retailing	Products	B2C	DEF, PRO		CRE	No	Yes		
9	Middle Level 1	Marketing & Sales	Products	B2C	DEF, CRE, PRO			Yes	Yes		
10	Middle Level 2	Banking & Finance	Products, services	B2B, B2C	DEF	PRO	CRE	No	No		
11	Top Level 1	Consulting & Training	Services	B2B	DEF		CRE, PRO	No	No		
12	Top Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Products, services	B2B, B2C, B2B2C	DEF, CRE, PRO			Yes	Yes		
13	Top Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Products, services	B2B, B2C, B2B2C	DEF, PRO		CRE	No	Yes		
14	Top Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Products, services	B2B, B2C, B2B2C	DEF, CRE, PRO			Yes	Yes		
15	Middle Level 2	Engineering	Services	B2B	DEF, CRE, PRO			Yes	Yes		
16	Top Level 1	Editing & Publishing	Products	B2B, B2B2C	DEF, PRO		CRE	No	Yes		
17	Top Level 1	Marketing & Sales	Solutions	B2B	DEF, CRE, PRO			Yes	Yes		
18	Middle Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Solutions	B2B	CRE, PRO		DEF	No	No		
19	Middle Level 1	Banking & Finance	Products, services	B2B, B2C	DEF	PRO	CRE	No	No		
20	Top Level 1	Banking & Finance	Solutions	B2B	DEF	CRE, PRO	DEF	No	No		
21	Top Level 1	Banking & Finance	Solutions	B2B, B2C		DEF, CRE, PRO	CRE, PRO	No	No		
22	Top Level 1	Design	Solutions	B2C		DEF, CRE, PRO		Yes	Yes		
23	Top Level 1	Culture	Solutions	B2G	DEF, CRE, PRO			Yes	Yes		
Top Level 1: Owners, Co-Owners / Top Level 2: Other top-level managers (e.g. CEO, CMO, VP, General Manager...)									Yes	12	16
Middle Level 1: Branch Manager, Department Head / Middle Level 2: Other middle-level managers (e.g. Regional Manager, Project Manager, Consultant...)									No	11	7
DEF: Manager's definition of value creation (Q06-08) / PRO: Company's value creation process (Q09) / CRE: Manager's claim regarding who is the value creator (Q43)									Total	23	23

Source: Author.

Coherence/convergence matrix

Based on the findings in table 49 above, table 50 below positions the informants in a coherence/convergence matrix. (The informants with **bold blue numbers** are covered in detail further down.) Let us first look at the issue of coherence with respect to the informants' conception of value creation and then turn to the issue of convergence between the marketing perspective of the informant and of his/her company.

Table 50. Coherence/Convergence Matrix

		Coherence	
		Yes (DEF = CRE)	No (DEF ≠ CRE)
(n = 23)			
Convergence	Yes (DEF = PRO)	1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 17, 22, 23	2, 3, 8, 13, 16
	No (DEF ≠ PRO)	5	10, 11, 18 , 19, 20, 21

Source: Author.

For about half of the informants (12/23), their definition of value creation (DEF) corresponds to the same marketing perspective as that of their claim regarding who is the value creator (CRE) so that their conception of value creation is coherent (DEF = CRE). For the rest of them (11/23), there is an incoherence (DEF ≠ CRE) as exemplified in the quotes below from informants 16 and 18 respectively.

Value Creation Definition (DEF)	Value Creator (CRE)
« Pour moi, la création de valeur, si tu connais les États-Unis, c'est le 'Unique Selling Proposition'. Après, à chacun de trouver dans son domaine. Concernant le mien, c'est un style éditorial différent, une approche atypique au niveau des vins et des spiritueux, quand la plupart des magazines touchent une cible BtoB, on est différent puisqu'on est sur une ligne éditoriale lifestyle et donc on touche éventuellement du BtoC avec un intérêt important sur la ligne graphique et éditoriale. » (Goods-Dominant Logic)	« Ce sont obligatoirement les clients. On raisonne de façon pragmatique, ce sont les clients parce que s'il n'y a pas de clients, l'entreprise n'a aucune valeur. » (Customer-Dominant Logic)

(Informant 16)

Informant 16 is an editor and publisher who owns an established wine & spirits magazine (Top level 1 manager / Products / B2B and B2B2C). According to him, value is created by the

company through its Unique Selling Proposition, which he defines as a differentiated editorial and graphic line for wine & spirits specifically based on lifestyle as opposed to other wine & spirits magazines which are not. This reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic. However, he claims that in the end value is created by the customer since the company has no value without its customers. This reflects a Customer-Dominant Logic. In this case, there is thus an incoherence in the manager's conception of value creation since according to his definition value should normally be created by the company for the customer (i.e. Goods-Dominant Logic).

Value Creation Definition (DEF)	Value Creator (CRE)
<p>« La création de valeur vis-à-vis du client, c'est la notion de service associé au produit. Aujourd'hui, ce n'est pas le produit qui va faire la différence, mais c'est ce qu'il y a à côté. Bien sûr, on peut parler aussi de prix, mais c'est autre chose. Avec toutes les normes, les accréditations, c'est la manière dont on va accompagner le client. Un client qu'on va aider pour accréditer la technique, une fois que la technique est accréditée, il ne va pas changer. C'est donc toute cette notion de service, de formation. D'ailleurs, on organise dorénavant des formations au siège sur différents domaines d'activité (bactériologie etc.), ce qui permet de donner une bonne image et de faire découvrir à des gens qui ne connaissent qu'une partie de ce que l'on fait, l'étendue de notre action. » (Service Logic)</p>	<p>« J'ai envie de dire quand même que le commercial en crée beaucoup puisqu'il est le premier interlocuteur avec le client, c'est l'image de la société. Un commercial qui est réactif et à l'écoute, on lui pardonne tout et il donne une bonne image de la société. Le souci n'est pas d'avoir un problème avec un produit ou une livraison, c'est la réactivité. Un client qu'on rappelle de suite pour dire 'Oui Monsieur, je sais que vous avez un problème', le problème est déjà résolu à 50 %. Donc, le commercial a un rôle très important. S'il ne sait pas argumenter ou chercher l'information au bon endroit dans la société, ou faire agir la bonne personne, l'image pour le client sera mauvaise. » (Goods-Dominant Logic)</p>

(Informant 18)

Informant 18 is a sales manager who works in an established company proposing medical diagnosis solutions (Middle level 1 manager / Solutions / B2B). According to him, value is not only created through the services linked to the products that are sold altogether as solutions, but it is also created through the different types of personalized customer support (e.g. help for accreditations) and personalized customer training (e.g. module on bacteriology) that his company can provide. This reflects a Service Logic. Nevertheless, he claims that in the end value is created by the company via its sales managers' ability to handle customers' problems as soon as they arise. This reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic. In this case as well, there is an incoherence in the manager's conception of value creation since according to his definition value should normally be co-created by both the company and the customer, while the process should be driven by the customer (i.e. Service Logic).

For most informants (16/23), their definition of value creation (DEF) corresponds to the same marketing perspective as that of their company's value creation process (PRO) so that there is

a convergence (DEF = PRO) between both marketing perspectives. For the rest of them (7/23), there is a divergence (DEF ≠ PRO) as exemplified in the quotes below from informants 5 and 11 respectively.

Value Creation Definition (DEF)	Value Creation Process (PRO)
<p>« On leur apporte un service (déjà ça, c'est sûr) et des compétences qui pourraient leur manquer dans l'entreprise ou qu'ils n'ont pas réussi à trouver par eux-mêmes. » (Goods-Dominant Logic)</p>	<p>« On a divisé en six séquences, avec une partie d'analyse du besoin. On écoute le besoin du client, on essaie de le retranscrire en critères qui donnent lieu à un profil derrière... Ensuite, on a toute une partie communication sourcing, où on leur diffuse des annonces, on va chercher les candidats, on communique (un peu de marketing en même temps) ? Et puis, on va chercher les candidats, en menant des démarches actives pour aller les chercher sur des CVthèques ou en approche directe, sur des réseaux sociaux, des fichiers, etc. Une fois cette phase terminée, on sélectionne les candidats, sur papier mais aussi en entretien téléphonique complémentaire. Ensuite, on voit les candidats pour évaluer leur personnalité. On confronte avec le client lors de débriefings et des échanges. Une phase de décision, mais dans notre cas c'est plutôt une phase d'aide à la décision, d'apporter (ou pas) un avis selon la demande du client. Et puis, c'est une phase d'accompagnement à l'intégration qui est plus ou moins importante selon les clients. » (Service Logic)</p>

(Informant 5)

Informant 5 is a consultant who works in an established human resources consulting & training firm (Middle level 2 manager / Services / B2B and B2C). According to her, value is created by the company via the services or competences proposed to their customers. This reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic. However, she explains the six steps of the company's value creation process in a way that actually describes a value co-creation process between the company and its B2B customers through direct interactions between both parties. This reflects a Service Logic. In this case, there is a divergence between the informant's marketing perspective (i.e. Goods-Dominant Logic) and that of her company (i.e. Service Logic).

Value Creation Definition (DEF)	Value Creation Process (PRO)
« C'est ce qui permet à une entreprise de se différencier par rapport à son concurrent. » (Goods-Dominant Logic)	« On est beaucoup en dialogue avec nos clients existants et ce sont eux qui nous en parlent. Ensuite, on identifie si cela fait partie de notre cœur de métier. Si c'est oui, on va commencer à regarder. C'est moi d'abord pour voir si effectivement il y a quelque chose à faire ou si ça peut être bénéfique pour l'entreprise, si ce besoin peut être partagé par d'autres entreprises. Et si je détecte que oui, soit seule, soit à plusieurs (en général c'est à plusieurs) on crée un projet et on commence à travailler dessus pour identifier toutes les composantes du service qu'on va proposer. » (Service Logic)

(Informant 11)

Informant 11 is a consultant who owns an established CRM consulting and training firm (Top level 1 manager / Services / B2B). According to her, value is created by the company through a differentiated offering in relation to its competitors. This reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic. Nevertheless, she asserts that the company converses a lot with its existing customers who occasionally suggest new service offerings, which they actually develop if she sees that these new offerings can be beneficial for the company and other customers as well. This reflects a Service Logic, whereby a customer's input is really taken into account by the company for developing a new service that is beneficial for both the company and its customers. In this case as well, there is a divergence between the informant's marketing perspective (i.e. Goods-Dominant Logic) and that of her company (i.e. Service Logic).

Let us now try to look for patterns across all cases based on individual and organizational characteristics.

Cross-case patterns based on individual and organizational characteristics

Based on the individual characteristics of informants, most of those (7/11) who do not have a coherent conception of value creation are top level 1 managers, that is, individuals who are either owners or co-owners of their organization. In addition, all informants (4/4) working in Banking & Finance and all those (2/2) working in Editing & Publishing do not have a coherent conception of value creation. However, **there seems to be no significant patterns related to management level position and profession that could account for variations based on individual characteristics.**

Based on the organizational characteristics of the companies in which these informants work, about one-third of those (4/11) who do not have a coherent conception of value creation propose only solutions to their customers and about another third propose both products and services to their customers. Moreover, about a third of those (4/11) who do not have a coherent conception of value creation serve only B2B markets, and about another third (4/11) serve both B2B and B2C markets. Nevertheless, **there seems to be no significant patterns related to proposed offering(s) and market(s) served that could account for variations based on organizational characteristics.**

According to these findings, **it seems that the selected data sample is too small and too diverse in order to reasonably explain any significant patterns across all cases.** No main conclusion can really be drawn on the basis of the individual and organizational characteristics that were actually chosen.

Let us now briefly compare the responses of managers working in the same company.

Comparison of responses from managers working in the same company

As shown by the rows that are colored similarly in table 49 above, in three companies (1, 9, and 12), not one but two managers were actually interviewed (Informants 1, 5, 10, 13, 14, and 19). In fact, the aim of this deliberate choice was to explore if individuals working in the same organization really shared the same marketing perspective. As it turns out, some of the managers’ responses just did not match when taking into consideration the individual characteristic of occupation (as opposed to profession that was initially used in table 49 above).

Table 51 below compares the responses of informants 1 and 5 working in company 1.

Table 51. Comparison of Responses from Informants 1 and 5 in Company 1

Company	Seniority	Business Activity	Size	Offering(s)	Market(s)
1	Established	Human resources consulting and training	Small	Services	B2B, B2C

Informant	Management Level Position	Occupation	GDL	SL
1	Top Level 1	Co-owner / General Manager	DEF, CRE, PRO	
5	Middle Level 2	Consultant	DEF, CRE	PRO

Source: Author.

With respect to company 1, the difference between informant 1 and informant 5 concerns their description of the company’s value creation process (**PRO**). Based on their respective responses, informant 1 (Top level 1 manager) describes it in a way that corresponds to a Goods-Dominant Logic, while informant 5 (Middle level 2 manager) describes it in a way reflecting a Service Logic. In this case, the difference seems to be attributed to the fact that the role of informant 1, as Co-Owner and General Manager, is to manage the company by also sourcing new missions with key accounts to be carried out by the team of consultants, whereas the role of informant 5, as Consultant, is to perform full-time missions whose success is based on solving customer problems through direct interactions. Thus, informant 1 is more focused on securing contracts with customers as additional sources of revenue for the company that he manages (i.e. Goods-Dominant Logic), while informant 5 is more focused on providing personalized customer support to in order to solve their unique problems (i.e. Service Logic).

Table 52 below compares the responses of informants 10 and 19 working in company 9.

Table 52. Comparison of Responses from Informants 10 and 19 in Company 9

Company	Seniority	Business Activity	Size	Offering(s)	Market(s)
9	Established	Private banking services	Very large	Products, services	B2B, B2C

Informant	Management Level Position	Occupation	GDL	SDL	SL	CDL
10	Middle Level 1	Business Unit Manager	DEF	PRO		CRE
19	Middle Level 2	Team Manager	DEF	PRO	CRE	

Source: Author.

With regards to company 9, the difference between informant 10 and informant 19 concerns their claim regarding who is the value creator (**CRE**). Based on their respective responses, informant 10 (Middle level 2 manager) claims that in the end value is created by the customer (i.e. Customer-Dominant Logic), whereas for informant 19 (Middle level 1 manager) value is co-created by the company and the customer (i.e. Service Logic provided that the process is driven by the customer). In this case, the difference seems to be attributed to the fact that the role of informant 10, as Team Manager, is to manage the wealth of his customers who place their money in the bank so as to get positive yields in return, whereas the role of informant 19, as Business Unit Manager, is to ensure that customers are pleased with the overall banking services so that they continue to place their money in the business unit that he manages. Hence,

informant 10 is more focused on the amount of money that customers can place in the bank without which no revenues can be generated (i.e. value is created by the customer as proposed by Customer-Dominant Logic), whereas informant 19 is more focused on the quality of services provided to customers as a *sine qua non* condition for keeping their business (i.e. value is co-created by both but driven by the customer as proposed by Service Logic).

Table 53 below compares the responses of informants 13 and 14 working in company 12.

Table 53. Comparison of Responses from Informants 13 and 14 in Company 12

Company	Seniority	Business Activity	Size	Offering(s)	Market(s)
12	Established	Wine producer and merchant	Medium	Products, services	B2B, B2C, B2B2C

Informant	Management Level Position	Occupation	GDL	CDL
13	Top Level 2	Strategic Marketing Director	DEF, PRO	CRE
14	Top Level 2	Sales Director	DEF, CRE, PRO	

Source: Author.

As for company 12, the difference between informant 13 and informant 14 is also related to their claim concerning who is the value creator (**CRE**). Based on their respective responses, informant 13 (Strategic Marketing Director) states that in the end value is created by the market, that is to say, customers as a whole because if there is no market then there is no value (i.e. Customer-Dominant Logic). Meanwhile, informant 14 (Sales Director) asserts that value is created by people working in the company (i.e. Goods-Dominant Logic). In this case, the difference seems to be attributed to the fact that the role of informant 13, as Strategic Marketing Director, is to identify market trends as well as customers’ needs and preferences so as to develop and promote the right products accordingly, while the role of informant 14, as Sales Director, is to guarantee that the wines produced by the winegrowers and winemakers are actually sold through by his sales force. Consequently, informant 13 is more focused on customers as a source of value creation for the company (i.e. Customer-Dominant Logic), whereas informant 14 is more focused on internal employees as a source of value creation for the company (i.e. Goods-Dominant Logic).

5.4.10. Conclusion

The exploratory study helped to gain more insight on how managers define value creation and how their companies create value across the board. As already stated in the numerous discussions above, most informants focus their attention on the end-result of value creation (and consumption) so that they have an outcome-based view of value creation, which actually reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic. While most informants describe their value creation process in a way that corresponds to a single value creation logic, many others also describe it in a way that includes two different value creation logics. In fact, my findings seem to corroborate with the proposition/hypothesis of Stabell and Fjeldstad (1998) regarding the characteristics of companies with a hybrid value creation logic. In addition, most companies do not have a representation of their value creation process, and most managers are not aware of tools that could help them to represent their company's value creation process.

With regards to the company's sphere, employees' skills and the network of partners are considered as the most essential elements for creating value so that the human dimension of a company is of the utmost importance. With respect to the customer's sphere, once again elements directly related to actors (such as a customer's reputation) are considered as important, but satisfying customers' needs (related to goals) is by far the single most important element taken into consideration by many informants for creating value. Regarding the sphere of interaction, most informants pursue at least two out of four objectives when interacting/exchanging with their customers.

In addition, the majority of companies use simple tools/methods developed in-house for measuring the value that they create. Furthermore, there is no clear evidence that value is created specifically by one actor rather than by another or by both altogether. Finally, it seems that the selected data sample is too small and too diverse in order to reasonably explain any significant patterns across all cases.

In the end, the exploratory study proves that there is a clear need for a tool that could help managers to better capture and understand the different ways of approaching value creation based on the adopted marketing perspective. Since many managers tend to focus their attention on different elements of different value creation spheres depending on the business issue at stake, this tends to show that they exhibit a hybrid marketing perspective. Hence, the tool should

take this fact into consideration by breaking down the value creation process into distinct key constructs so as to help managers to better see on which specific aspect(s) of business they might have a different perspective (i.e. point of view) than their company and/or colleagues.

Let us now turn to the design and development of the artifact per se.

6. ARTIFACT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

6.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE ARTIFACT

As advocated by the Design Science Research Process Model (Peffer et al., 2006) presented in section 4.6.1, the third activity consists in designing and developing the artifact. The objective of the artifact (as a set of tools) is to allow a satisfactory solution to a practical problem. In essence, the prevailing marketing perspective (i.e. marketing dominant logic) of a company frames the way managers think and act, thereby preventing them to see and apply alternative solutions. Thus, the objective of my set of tools is to help managers to become aware of alternative ways of creating value so as to think outside of their current box (i.e. prevailing marketing perspective). This set of tools should be both understood and adopted by all the participants that will have been exposed to it.

As briefly mentioned before, my artifact is a step-by-step method using the following set of tools:

1. Tool #1 – A multiple-choice questionnaire derived from the exaptation of the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002) and used for identifying a company's marketing perspective based on the way it creates value (as opposed to identifying a company's marketing practice based on the way it relates to its market through business-customer interactions)
2. Tool #2 – A comparison matrix showing the similarities and differences between the four selected marketing perspectives in terms of alternative ways of creating value

Let us now go over both tools in detail.

6.2. TOOL #1 – THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONNAIRE

6.2.1. Proposed common framework

Even though each marketing perspective is based on a different ontology, the academic literature review has nevertheless shown that several scholars compared them up to a certain extent on different occasions. That being said, the exploratory study demonstrated that managers could focus their attention on different aspects of business depending on the key issue at stake. Thus, if managers have to identify their prevailing marketing perspective on the basis of one paragraph summarizing the distinct characteristics of each marketing perspective, then this will not help them to shed light on which specific aspect(s) of business they might have a different perspective (i.e. point of view) than their company or colleagues. As a result, the multiple-choice questionnaire can be developed on the following set of constructs that can serve as a common framework for comparing each marketing perspective: (1) Managerial focus, (2) value creation logic, (3) value proposition, (4) purpose of exchange, (5) value determination, and (6) creator of value.

1. **Managerial focus** – The main elements on which managers focus their attention for designing their marketing/sales strategy, which is the starting point of the entire decision-making process.
2. **Value creation logic** – The main process or method used by companies for creating value, which represents their core business activity.
3. **Value proposition** – The outcome of the value creation process through which companies actually propose value to their customers, which represents their total offering.
4. **Purpose of exchange** – The main reason for which companies engage in business with their customers.
5. **Value determination** – The main criteria used by customers for determining value, which reflects the locus of value, that is, where value is actually created.
6. **Creator of value** – The designation of the main actor(s) in charge of creating value, which reveals who really controls the value creation process.

At this point, let us briefly summarize in one paragraph the main characteristics of each of the following four marketing perspectives through the use of the proposed common framework

above: (1) Goods-Dominant Logic, (2) Service-Dominant Logic, (3) Service Logic, and (4) Customer-Dominant Logic.

1. Goods-Dominant Logic

According to Goods-Dominant Logic, the elaboration of a company's marketing/sales strategy is primarily focused on issues related to its product/service/solution offerings (i.e. managerial focus). Moreover, the core business activity of companies consists primarily in designing and promoting product/service/solution offerings (i.e. value creation logic). Also, their marketing/sales activities consist primarily in proposing product/service/solution offerings with value added via the enhancement of their inherent attributes (i.e. value proposition). In addition, the purpose for dealing with their market is primarily to sell their product/service/solution offerings for a profit (i.e. purpose of exchange). Furthermore, their customers determine the value of their offerings primarily via the price that they pay for their products/services/solutions in relation to the perceived quality (i.e. value determination). In the end, value is created primarily by the company for the customer (i.e. creator of value).

2. Service-Dominant Logic

With regards to Service-Dominant Logic, the elaboration of a company's marketing/sales strategy is primarily focused on issues related to the networks of relations among the different actors (companies and/or people) within its ecosystem/platform (i.e. managerial focus). Moreover, the core business activity of companies consists primarily in linking different actors (companies and/or people) together (i.e. value creation logic). Also, their marketing/sales activities consist primarily in proposing an ecosystem/platform of service provision fostering exchanges among different actors (companies and/or people) (i.e. value proposition). In addition, the purpose for dealing with their market is primarily to develop the network of relations among actors (companies and/or people) so as to expand their ecosystem/platform (i.e. purpose of exchange). Furthermore, their customers determine the value of their offerings primarily via the knowledge and skills that they can gain from the rendered service (i.e. value determination). In the end, value is created primarily by both the company and the customer, but the process is driven by the company (i.e. creator of value).

3. Service Logic

With respect to Service Logic, the elaboration of a company's marketing/sales strategy is primarily focused on issues related to the interpersonal relations with each of its customers (i.e. managerial focus). Moreover, the core business activity of companies consists primarily in solving their customers' problems (i.e. value creation logic). Also, their marketing/sales activities consist primarily in proposing a total service offering facilitating their customers' everyday life and/or business (i.e. value proposition). In addition, the purpose for dealing with their market is primarily to seek direct contacts with each customer so as to better support them individually (i.e. purpose of exchange). Furthermore, their customers determine the value of their offerings primarily via the use that they can make of their products/services/solutions in their life and/or business (i.e. value determination). In the end, value is created primarily by both the company and the customer, but the process is driven by the customer (i.e. creator of value).

4. Customer-Dominant Logic

Regarding Customer-Dominant Logic, the elaboration of a company's marketing/sales strategy is primarily focused on issues related to the life and/or business of its customers (i.e. managerial focus). Moreover, the core business activity of companies consists primarily in (re)configuring their resources and competences based on the goals and tasks to be fulfilled by their customers (i.e. value creation logic). Also, their marketing/sales activities consist primarily in proposing customized product/service/solution offerings to each customer (i.e. value proposition). In addition, the purpose for dealing with their market is primarily to help their customers to better integrate their offerings in their life and/or business so as to improve their well-being (i.e. purpose of exchange). Furthermore, their customers determine the value of their offerings primarily via their experience as a result of integrating companies' products/services/solutions in their life and/or their business (i.e. value determination). In the end, value is created primarily by the customer for the company (i.e. creator of value).

6.2.2. Proposed multiple-choice questionnaire

Accordingly, the multiple-choice questionnaire can thus be based on the following set of constructs used in the proposed common framework above: (1) Managerial focus, (2) value creation logic, (3) value proposition, (4) purpose of exchange, (5) value determination, and (6) creator of value. For each question, there are four possible answers to choose from, whereby each answer corresponds to a distinct marketing perspective: (a) Goods-Dominant Logic (GDL), (b) Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), (c) Service Logic (SL), and (d) Customer-Dominant Logic (CDL). (cf. appendix 7 for the French version that was administered to the participants in the case study.)

1. **Managerial focus:** The elaboration of our company's marketing/sales strategy is primarily focused on issues related to –
 - a. Our product/service/solution offerings (GDL)
 - b. The networks of relations among the different actors (companies and/or people) within our ecosystem/platform (SDL)
 - c. The interpersonal relations with each of our customers (SL)
 - d. The life and/or business of our customers (CDL)
2. **Value creation logic:** Our core business activity consists primarily in –
 - a. Designing and promoting product/service/solution offerings (GDL)
 - b. Linking different actors (companies and/or people) together (SDL)
 - c. Solving our customers' problems (SL)
 - d. (Re)configuring our resources and competences based on the goals and tasks to be fulfilled by our customers (CDL)
3. **Value proposition:** Our marketing/sales activities consist primarily in proposing –
 - a. Product/service/solution offerings with value added via the enhancement of their inherent attributes (GDL)
 - b. An ecosystem/platform of service provision fostering exchanges among different actors (companies and/or people) (SDL)
 - c. A total service offering facilitating our customers' everyday life and/or business (SL)
 - d. Customized product/service/solution offerings to each customer (CDL)
4. **Purpose of exchange:** The purpose for dealing with our market is primarily to –
 - a. Sell our product/service/solution offerings for a profit (GDL)

- b. Develop the network of relations among actors (companies and/or people) so as to expand our ecosystem/platform (SDL)
 - c. Seek direct contacts with each customer so as to better support them individually (SL)
 - d. Help our customers to better integrate our offerings in their life and/or business so as to improve their well-being (CDL)
5. **Value determination:** Our customers determine the value of our offerings primarily via –
- a. The price that they pay for our products/services/solutions in relation to the perceived quality (GDL)
 - b. The knowledge and skills that they can gain from the rendered service (SDL)
 - c. The use that they can make of our products/services/solutions in their life and/or business (SL)
 - d. Their experience as a result of integrating our products/services/solutions in their life and/or their business (CDL)
6. **Creator of value:** As a manager, I believe that in the end value is created primarily by –
- a. The company for the customer (GDL)
 - b. Both the company and the customer but the process is driven by the company (SDL)
 - c. Both the company and the customer but the process is driven by the customer (SL)
 - d. The customer for the company (CDL)

While questions 1 thru 5 are intended to reflect the set of practices actually carried out by companies, question 6 is phrased in a way so as to reflect the manager's perception of who actually creates value. In fact, the objective of question 6 is simply to check if the manager's perception is actually convergent or not with his/her company's set of practices in general.

Before coming up with the proposed multiple-choice questionnaire above, I had presented a draft version to my thesis supervisor beforehand. Based on his feedback, several changes were made in order to come up with a proposed version that is clearer as shown in table 54 below.

Table 54. Draft Version vs. Proposed Version of the Multiple-Choice Questionnaire

Draft Version of MCQ	Proposed Version of MCQ
All answers – “Companies and/or people” (except when written in parenthesis after the word “actors” for more clarity)	All answers – “Customers”
Question 1 – The core business activity of our company... b. The network of relations... c. Our interpersonal relations with each customer	Question 1 – Our core business activity... b. The networks of relations... c. The interpersonal relations with each of our customers
Question 2 – d. (Re)configuring our resources and capacities...	Question 2 – d. (Re)configuring our resources and competences...
Question 3 – a. Product/service/solution offerings with value added depending on their inherent attributes	Question 3 – a. Product/service/solution offerings with value added via the enhancement of their inherent attributes
Question 4 – a. Generate sales/transactions for a profit	Question 4 – a. Sell our product/service/solution offerings for a profit
Question 5 – b. The specific context (available resources and actors) within which the service is rendered	Question 5 – b. The knowledge and skills that they can gain from the rendered service
Question 6 – a. The company only d. The customer only	Question 6 – a. The company for the customer d. The customer for the company

Source: Author.

6.2.3. Pre-test version of the multiple-choice questionnaire

Before administering the proposed multiple-choice questionnaire (MCQ) during the in-house workshop, it has been submitted as a pre-test version to a panel of five experts (i.e. practitioners) working in different companies. The MCQ was presented in a two-column table as follows: (1) Each question and its four answers were placed in a box in the left column, and (2) a corresponding empty box (for writing comments) was placed in the right column. In addition, instructions were as follows:

- *Answer each question.*
- *Write the letter that best corresponds to your case in the corresponding box.*
- *Thank you for adding potential comments (e.g. words or phrasing not understood, etc.) in the corresponding box in order to improve this multiple-choice questionnaire.*

As a matter of fact, it turns out that all experts completed the MCQ and returned it to me via e-mail without adding any comments in the corresponding boxes. Also, no particular comments pertaining to the contents of the MCQ were written in their e-mail message as well. In other

words, the MCQ made perfect sense to all of them in terms of clarity. As a result, the pre-test version helped to validate the MCQ before administering it in the case study.

6.3. TOOL #2 – THE COMPARISON MATRIX

6.3.1. Reproduction of the multiple-choice questionnaire

The second tool is the comparison matrix that helps managers to see how each answer actually corresponds to a distinct marketing perspective for each question. As shown in table 55 below, the comparison matrix is just a reproduction of the multiple-choice questionnaire. On one hand, the first column displays each question with its corresponding theme (i.e. key construct). On the other hand, the next four columns display each answer with its corresponding marketing perspective. (The **bold text** in parenthesis at the end of each answer refers to a concept further explained in section 6.3.2 dealing with managerial implications.)

Table 55. Comparison Matrix Based on the Multiple-Choice Questionnaire

Key Construct with Question	a. Goods-Dominant Logic	b. Service-Dominant Logic	c. Service Logic	d. Customer-Dominant Logic
1. Managerial focus: The elaboration of our company’s marketing / sales strategy is primarily focused on issues related to –	Our product / service / solution offerings (Zone of company)	The networks of relations among the different actors (companies and/or people) within our ecosystem / platform (Zone of interaction)	The interpersonal relations with each of our customers (Zone of interaction)	The life and/or business of our customers (Zone of customer)
2. Value creation logic: Our core business activity consists primarily in –	Designing and promoting product / service / solution offerings (Value chain)	Linking different actors (companies and/or people) together (Value network)	Solving customers’ problems (Value shop)	(Re)configuring our resources and competences based on the goals and tasks to be fulfilled by our customers (Value facilitator)
3. Value proposition: Our marketing / sales activities consist primarily in proposing –	Product / service / solution offerings with value added via the enhancement of their inherent attributes (Outcome of a production process)	An ecosystem / platform of service provision fostering exchanges among different actors (companies and/or people) (Interaction process)	A total service offering facilitating our customers’ everyday life and/or business (Interaction process)	Customized product / service / solution offerings to each customer (Outcome of a production process or interaction process)
4. Purpose of exchange: The purpose for dealing with our market is primarily to –	Sell product / service / solution offerings for a profit (Transaction)	Develop the network of relations among actors (companies and/or people) so as to expand our ecosystem / platform (Network)	Seek direct contacts with each customer so as to better support them individually (Relationship)	Help our customers to better integrate our offerings in their life and/or business so as to improve their well-being (Transaction or relationship)
5. Value determination: Our customers determine the value of our offerings primarily via –	The price that they pay for our products / services / solutions in relation to the perceived quality (Value-in-exchange)	The knowledge and skills that they can gain from the rendered service (Value-in-context)	The use that they can make of our products / services / solutions in their life and/or business (Value-in-use)	Their experience as a result of integrating our products / services / solutions in their life and/or their business (Value-in-experience)
6. Creator of value: As a manager, I believe that in the end value is created primarily by –	The company for the customer (Company-created value)	Both the company and the customer, but the process is driven by the company (Co-created value)	Both the company and the customer, but the process is driven by the customer (Co-created value)	The customer for the company (Customer-created value)

Source: Author.

As opposed to Service Logic that divides its value generation process into three “spheres” and Customer-Dominant Logic that splits its value formation process into three “worlds,” I decided

to use the term “zone” for separating the value creation process into three “zones.” According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the term “sphere” can refer to “an area or range over or within which someone or something acts, exists, or has influence or significance,” and the term “world” can refer to “the sphere or scene of one's life and action.” Based on my research findings from the exploratory study, the term “zone” seems more appropriate to me as it can refer to “one of the sections of an area or territory created for a particular purpose.” The term “zone” suggests that, when a company and a customer engage in business (i.e. the value creation territory), each have their own “zone” with their own underlying logic as well as own specific goals and tasks that are more or less visible to one another. As a result, the objective is to improve the access to each other’s “zone” via interaction as a linking “zone,” which can help them to gain more insight (i.e. visibility) on each other’s underlying logic as well as specific goals and tasks so as to better match their mutual interest (i.e. value creation).

6.3.2. Managerial implications

In order to be actionable, the artifact should also show to managers the managerial implications of each marketing perspective so as to enable them to contemplate more easily alternative ways of creating value. As displayed in the table above, the bold text in parenthesis at the end of each answer refers to a concept that can help them to better understand in a nutshell the nuances of each marketing perspective depending on the key construct at stake.

For example, with regards to **managerial focus**, the objective is to show them that the attention of managers is focused on a specific value creation zone when elaborating their company’s marketing/sales strategy. In Goods-Dominant Logic, managerial focus is on the company’s offering and its support processes (i.e. zone of company), whereas in Customer-Dominant Logic, managerial focus is on the customer’s overall life/business and his/her related (physical and mental) processes (i.e. zone of customer). As for Service-Dominant Logic, managerial focus is on the relations between actors at the network level (i.e. zone of interaction), whereas for Service Logic managerial focus is on relations between the company and its customers at the dyadic level (i.e. zone of interaction). As a result, by identifying to which marketing perspective corresponds managerial focus, managers can in turn better see what the managerial implications on the elaboration of their marketing/sales strategy could be if they decided to adopt a different marketing perspective.

The same holds true with all the other key constructs. Concerning **value creation logic**, the objective is to show them the managerial implications of each marketing perspective depending on the different processes or methods that companies can use for creating value. With respect to **value proposition**, the objective is to show them the managerial implications of each marketing perspective depending on the different types of offerings that companies can propose to their customers. Regarding **purpose of exchange**, the objective is to show them the managerial implications of each marketing perspective depending on the way companies interact with their customers. As for **value determination**, the objective is to show them the managerial implications of each marketing perspective depending on the way customers determine value. With regards to **creator of value**, the objective is to show them the managerial implications of each marketing perspective depending on their own assumption as to who creates value.

At this point, let us turn to the case study so as to find out where and how the artifact that I designed and developed was tested.

7. RESEARCH FIELD #2 – CASE STUDY

7.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE CASE STUDY

As advocated by the Design Science Research Process Model (Peppers et al., 2006) presented in section 4.6.1, the fourth activity consists in implementing the artifact in a suitable context so as to demonstrate its efficacy for solving the research problem. Therefore, the objective of the second research field is to set up a case study so as to both demonstrate and evaluate the artifact (i.e. set of tools) that I designed and developed. In fact, testing in the business field the artifact based on theoretical concepts enables the researcher to reach the three following objectives: (1) To validate the theoretical concepts, (2) to define the limitations of the research work, and (3) to propose an agenda for future empirical research.

7.2. DATA COLLECTION METHOD

7.2.1. Organization of the case study

To start with, I called back several informants who had already been interviewed during the exploratory study so as to evaluate their interest for participating in a workshop aimed at testing my set of tools. In the end, I decided to organize the workshop with Informant 7 (referred to as Participant 1 from hereon) from Company 6 (referred to as Group Alpha from hereon) for the following reasons:

1. As a member of the executive committee, Participant 1 agreed to organize an in-house workshop with at least four top-level managers in charge of defining the corporate strategy and holding different occupations such that, in theory, they are each potentially focusing (or not) their attention on different strategic issues related to their responsibilities. With regards to the link between focus of attention and identity in the Integrative Model of the Microfoundations of Institutional Logics (cf. figure 24 in section 2.4.4), this can help to check if their individual answers on the multiple-choice questionnaire potentially vary (or not) on the basis of their occupation, which is considered as a relevant category identity in Institutional Logics Perspective (cf. section 2.4.4).

2. Group Alpha is a very large-sized company (“*Très Grand Entreprise*”), which proposes two types of offerings (i.e. products and services) out of three potential ones (along with solutions), and which serves two markets (i.e. B2B and B2G) out of three potential ones (along with B2C regarding direct exchanges only). This diversity could potentially yield (or not) a larger probability of more diverse answers as each top-level manager might potentially focus (or not) on different aspects of business and hence potentially cover (or not) a larger spectrum of possible marketing perspectives.

Prior to conducting the workshop, I sent an e-mail to Participant 1 confirming the following elements:

1. A reminder of the objectives and contents of the in-house workshop,
2. A reminder that each participant must be interviewed at the end of the in-house workshop, and that the interview is audio-recorded in order to get a transcription of the conversation for further analysis (with a copy of the transcript sent to them subsequently), and
3. A reminder that the interview is confidential such that neither their name nor that of their company will be disclosed during the presentation of the research findings.

The in-house workshop was finally scheduled and conducted at the headquarters of Group Alpha in November 2019.

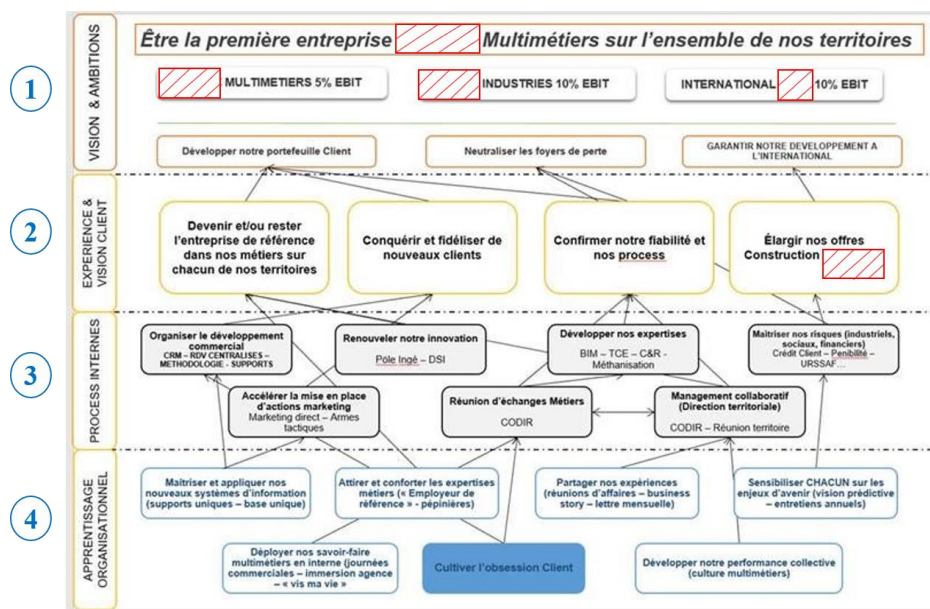
7.2.2. Presentation of Group Alpha

Group Alpha is a 100-year old privately-owned group operating mainly in France with two foreign offices in America and Asia respectively. It has more than 1 000 employees worldwide and generated more than 200 million euros in total (consolidated) revenues in 2018. It is divided into several business activities including: Building works, public works, water management, waste management, depollution services, and materials among others. It is also divided into several commercial territories serving both B2B (i.e. companies) and B2G (i.e. public authorities) markets.

Group Alpha is managed by a president and an executive committee in charge of defining the corporate strategy and setting corporate objectives, which are altogether formalized via 7-year

strategic plans with a focus on specific business issues each time. As Participant 1 pointed out, they are nonetheless influenced by external consultants who help them to design their strategy through the use of management tools: “As for us, our strategy... We use two or three, at most, strategy tools. But we are nonetheless clearly influenced...” (“*Puisque nous, notre stratégie... On a deux ou trois, au grand max, outils de stratégie. Mais on est quand même clairement influencé...*”) For instance, figure 48 below shows one of them, which is the Strategy Map that Group Alpha designed so as to communicate more easily its overall objectives to all of its employees. The Strategy Map is based on the Balanced Scorecard, which is a management system that helps companies to focus on their big-picture strategic goals.

Figure 48. Strategy Map of Group Alpha



(Confidential parts were hidden by the author.)

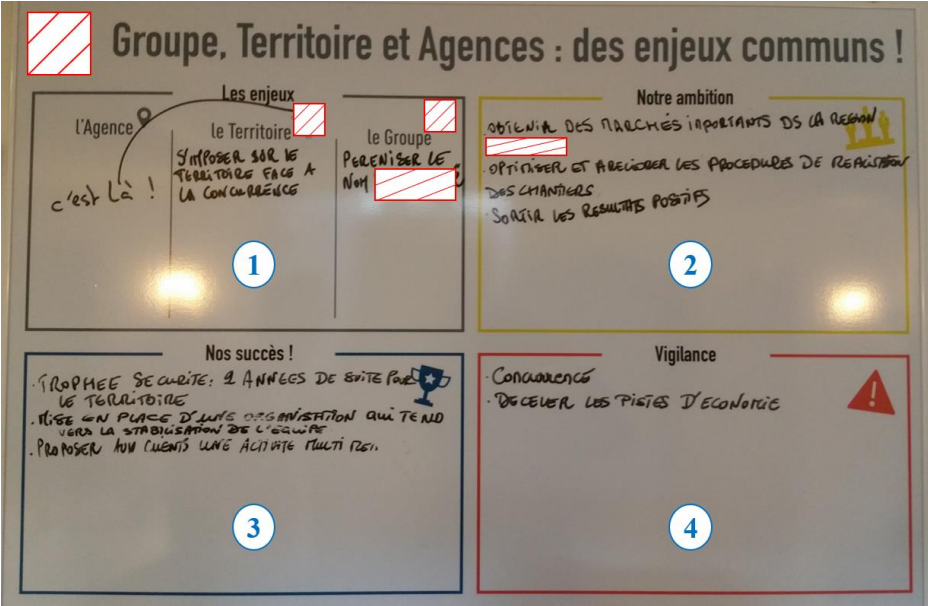
Source: Group Alpha.

As shown in the figure above, the Strategy Map is divided into four perspectives: (1) Vision (written in large font size at the top of the diagram) and ambitions (with financial objectives), (2) customer experience and vision, (3) internal business processes, and (4) organizational learning and growth. Arrows show the cause-and-effect relationships between the objectives set among the four perspectives. As stated in the Strategy Map, Group Alpha’s vision and ambition is “to be the first multi-activity [i.e. multi-service] company in all the territories where it operates” (“*Être la première entreprise multimétiers sur l'ensemble de nos territoires*”). While “conquering and retaining new customers” (“*Conquérir et fidéliser de nouveaux clients*”) is a customer-focused objective, the other three other objectives of Group Alpha’s perspective

on customer experience and vision are company-focused such as the following two: “Confirming our reliability and our processes” (“*Confirmer notre fiabilité et nos process*”) and “extending our public works offerings [internationally]” (“*Elargir nos offres construction [à l’international]*”). As for Group Alpha’s perspective on internal processes, two objectives are driven by sales and marketing (and thus geared towards customers), while the other five objectives are aimed at improving internal (i.e. company-focused) processes. Finally, Group Alpha’s most important objective in terms of organizational learning and growth perspective is labeled “Nurturing passion for a customer-focused approach” (“*Cultiver l’obsession client*”) as shown in the blue-shaded box, while the other six objectives are all company-focused objectives. As a result, a quick glance at the Strategy Map seems to reveal that Group Alpha’s objectives are mainly company-focused, thereby reflecting the fact that value is mostly created by the company for the customer.

At the operational level, each territory operates as an autonomous business unit, which is managed by a director supervising a set of local single-activity-based (i.e. single-service-based) agencies. Accordingly, each agency is specialized in one of the different business activities (i.e. services) that Group Alpha proposes altogether to its local customers. Figure 49 below shows a simple management tool used to display the local goals for each agency of Group Alpha.

Figure 49. Local Goals Displayed in each Agency of Group Alpha



(Confidential parts were hidden by the author.)
Source: Group Alpha.

As shown in the figure above, local goals are regularly updated with a marker on a whiteboard representing a grid labeled “Group, Territory, and Agencies: Joint stakes!” (“*Groupe, Territoire et Agences : Des enjeux en commun !*”). The grid is divided into four key elements: (1) Stakes (i.e. challenges), (2) our ambition, (3) our successes, and (4) caution (i.e. special elements that require more careful attention). In addition to the big-picture goals of the strategy map, this grid helps managers to also focus their attention on agency-specific goals so as to better develop business locally. A quick glance at this grid seems to reveal that local objectives are all company-focused, except for one in “our successes” that is geared towards customers: “Proposing a multi-activity [i.e. multi-service] offering to our customers” (“*Proposer aux clients une activité multimétiers*”). Just like in the Strategy Map, this reflects the fact that value is mostly created by the company for the customer.

Since the beginning of this millennium, sustainable development lies at the core of Group Alpha’s corporate strategy with a zero-waste objective set for all of its business activities. In fact, local recycling platforms have been set up in areas where it operates so as to recycle the used materials that it collects from the various construction sites. In order to be more even eco-responsible, it also uses special techniques with specific raw materials that help to reduce both natural resources depletion and greenhouse gas effects. In addition, low energy consumption is the rule for all the activities of its entire value chain including operations, logistics, and so. As a matter of fact, it has about 1 000 construction machines scattered in about 200 construction sites on a daily basis so that a specific business activity dedicated to equipment (as a core company asset) is managed by Participant 2.

With respect to human resources, Group Alpha tries to recruit mostly local employees for its different offices worldwide, including young people from local schools who are trained in-house via work-study contracts and internships. In spite of the strong male image linked to most of its business activities, it also strives to increase the number of female employees working for the company. As Participant 3 stated in the following quote, its general policy is to recruit people from different horizons with different backgrounds since diversity is considered as a major component of long-term success: “We are fortunate to have a recruiting process, whereby you just don’t recruit guys that are like you. And so, this creates diversity. We always have to fight over that, it’s actually an on-going fight because you always want to recruit someone who is like you; there is nothing you can do about it.” (“*On a la chance d’avoir un processus d’embauche, qui fait que tu n’embauches pas que des mecs qui te ressemblent. Et donc, ça créé*”).

une diversité. Il faut toujours qu'on lutte là-dessus, c'est quand même une lutte de tous les jours parce que t'as toujours envie d'embaucher le mec qui te ressemble ; il n'y a rien à faire.”)

7.2.3. Selected participants for the case study

Initially, four participants had been planned to attend the workshop at the headquarters of Group Alpha. Upon my arrival, I was informed that one participant was requested to attend another meeting taking place in a room nearby at the same time so as to sign a major contract with an important client. As a result, only three participants actually attended the workshop that was conducted in French since it is Group Alpha's official working language. That being exposed, the three participants are all members of the executive committee in charge of defining the corporate strategy. Table 56 below shows the profile of each participant in the case study.

Table 56. Selected Participants for the Case Study

Participant	Gender	Age	Post-Bac Studies	Company Seniority	Occupation	Management Level Position
1	Male	47	4	4	VP Commerce, Marketing, Real Estate	Top Level 2
2	Male	58	5	7	VP Innovation & Equipment	Top Level 2
3	Male	52	5	25	VP International & Business Development	Top Level 2

Source: Author.

7.2.4. Program of the in-house workshop

In order to conduct the in-house workshop in a seamless and coordinated manner, a PowerPoint presentation was specifically created for the occasion. After presenting it to my thesis supervisor, some modifications were made by rearranging the order of certain parts, improving the contents of certain slides, and merging some slides together so that the presentation could be more synthetic.

Table 57 below displays the program that was used for conducting the in-house workshop. The topics were presented at the beginning of the PowerPoint presentation but with much less details concerning the description of the contents provided in the table hereafter.

Table 57. Program of the In-house Workshop

Topic	Contents
Introduction	- Description of the contents of the workshop
Objectives	- Description of the objectives of the workshop
Multiple-choice questionnaire (MCQ)	- Administering of the MCQ (Debriefing of the MCQ only after covering the key concepts and performing the group exercise) - Overview of the main theme related to each MCQ question - Overview of the four marketing perspectives related to each MCQ answer
Key concepts	- Overview of some definitions of value - Overview of three ways through which value can be created - Overview of three mental processes through which value can be perceived - Visual representation of the customer journey linking pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase activities to customer experience and value determination - Visual representation of the three zones (company, interaction, customer) with a single example showing how value can be created in the three different zones - Visual representation of the three value creation zones' framework
Group exercise	- Visual representation of the value creation process of Goods-Dominant Logic within the three value creation zones' framework followed by a group exercise based on this marketing perspective - Same as above but with Service-Dominant Logic, Service Logic, and Customer-Dominant Logic successively - Visual representation of all marketing perspectives within the three value creation zones' framework on the same slide so as to compare them
Debriefing of MCQ	- Overview of the comparison matrix (cf. table 55 in section 6.3.1) - Graph comparing the participants' MCQ answers (cf. section 7.4.3 and appendix 9) - Overview of some company-level and individual-level characteristics that can influence the marketing perspective
Interviews	- Collective feedback session - Individual interviews

Source: Author.

In addition to taking notes on the various comments and observations made by the participants throughout the workshop, a collective feedback session followed by individual interviews further helped to collect additional data. On one hand, the aim of the collective feedback session was to provide to the participants an opportunity to freely express themselves so as to gather in a non-structured manner their overall impressions on the contents and outcomes of the workshop. On the other hand, the aim of the individual interviews was to evaluate the set of tools that were presented and tested during the workshop.

7.2.5. The interview guideline

Concerning individual interviews, an interview guideline (cf. appendix 8 for the French version) was elaborated and validated with my thesis supervisor prior to conducting the workshop. The aim of this guideline was to evaluate the efficacy of my set of tools during the individual interviews. The interview guideline was structured as follows:

Phase 1 – Instructions

- *Remind the respondent that the interview is going to be audio-recorded.*
- *Mention to the respondent that the conversation is confidential such that anonymity will be guaranteed.*
- *Inform the respondent that he/she will receive a transcription of the conversation in Word format.*

Phase 2 – Main Themes

Theme 1 – Evaluation of individual efficacy

1. Did this workshop help you to gain additional professional knowledge on the theme of value creation? How so? What did you get out of it?

Theme 2 – Evaluation of the construct's efficacy

2. Does the concept of the 3 value creation zones (i.e. Zone of company, zone of interaction, zone of customer) enable you to better understand the different areas where value can be created? How so? What did you get out of it?

Theme 3 – Evaluation of the method's efficacy

3. Does this method (i.e. questionnaire and PowerPoint presentation) enable you to envision more easily alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted perspective? How so? What did you get out of it?

Theme 4 – Evaluation of collective efficacy

4. Did the group exercise help you to work efficiently together so as to identify additional sources of value creation for the company? How so? What did you get out of it?

Phase 3 – End of interview

- *Inform the respondent that the conversation is over.*

7.3. DATA ANALYSIS

7.3.1. Transcription of collective feedback session and individual interviews

As stated before, the three members of the executive committee in charge of defining the corporate strategy and setting corporate objectives have been exposed to my set of tools that were new to them. Throughout the in-house workshop, they made several comments and observations that were collected via handwritten notes for further analysis. Moreover, they performed a group exercise so that pictures of their work were also taken for further analysis and displayed in the research findings below as well. In addition, the collective feedback session with all three participants was audio-recorded. It lasted 20 minutes and 24 seconds and was transcribed into a (single-space, Times New Roman, 12) Microsoft Word document for a total of 12 pages. Finally, the semi-structured individual interviews based on a set of four questions were also audio-recorded and each transcribed into a (single-space, Times New Roman, 12) Microsoft Word document.

7.3.2. Coding methods used

Unlike for the exploratory study, I only used two types of coding method: (1) Descriptive coding and (2) magnitude coding.

1. **Descriptive coding.** It “assigns labels to data to summarize in a word or short phrase – most often as a noun – the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data” (Saldaña, 2016). I used this coding method by assigning the name of the concepts related to the comments that participants made on the contents of the workshop such as value creation, perceived value, customer journey, etc.
2. **Magnitude coding.** It “consists of and adds a supplemental alphanumeric or symbolic code or subcode to an existing coded datum or category to indicate its intensity, frequency, direction, presence, or evaluative content” (Saldaña, 2016). For instance, I used this coding

method for evaluating the degree efficacy of the artifact on a three-point scale such as being either null or partial or total, as further explained in section 7.5.2.

7.4. RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM THE CASE STUDY

7.4.1. Introduction

Initially, the in-house workshop was scheduled to take place from 9:30 AM till noon so as to last about two hours and a half. Since a major client was present at the same time in a nearby room in order to sign an important contract, I was informed upon my arrival at the headquarters of Group Alpha that the workshop might have to be shortened by half an hour so that some of the participants could eventually attend the end of the meeting next door. Taking into consideration this unexpected last-minute constraint, I constantly kept track of time throughout the workshop and eventually spent less time on some parts but overall managed to cover all the slides that had initially been planned by 11:30 AM (as opposed to noon). In the end, it turned out that the PowerPoint presentation was nonetheless followed by a collective feedback session and then individual interviews as originally planned.

Before going over the main findings of the group exercise and then of the multiple-choice questionnaire (MCQ), it is worth mentioning that the three participants filled out the MCQ without any problem. In fact, they answered all six questions fairly quickly and did not make any comments at all after completing it. (Consequently, this confirms the findings of the pre-test version, whereby the panel of five experts had successfully validated the current version of the MCQ.)

Once all the participants had completed the MCQ, I simply reminded them that we would first cover some key concepts and then perform a group exercise prior to checking and comparing their MCQ answers. That being exposed, let us now go over the group exercise and then the MCQ.

7.4.2. Group exercise

Introduction

Once the participants had been exposed to key concepts including the specific value creation process of each marketing perspective, a group exercise based on one of Group Alpha's business activities (i.e. proposed services) was performed. The aim of this part of the workshop was to apply each marketing perspective to a practical problem so that managers could better grasp the essence of each one of them.

The group exercise was structured as follows:

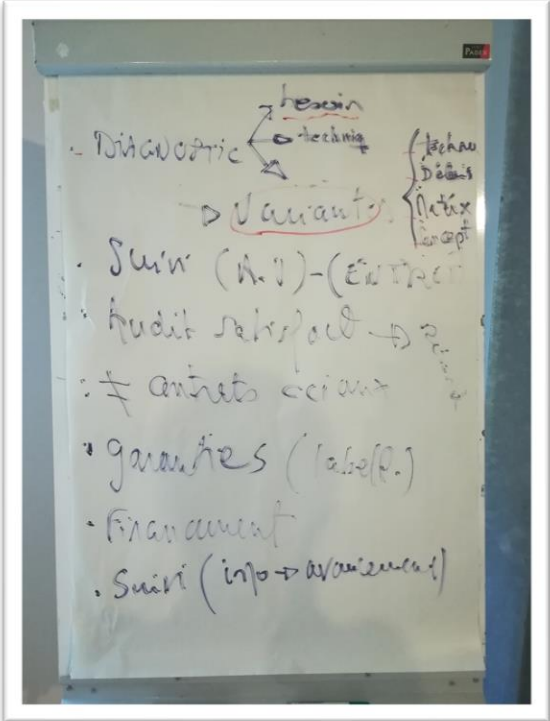
- **Topic** – The mayor needs to redo the roadway of one of his/her city's districts.
- **Exercise A** (Goods-Dominant Logic) – Make a list of different types of offerings (i.e. products, services, solutions) that your company can propose to the customer.
- **Exercise B** (Service-Dominant Logic) – Make a list of knowledge and skills within the company's ecosystem in order to carry out this project successfully.
- **Exercise C** (Service Logic) – Make a list of different tools/solutions that your company can set up for interacting with the customer at each stage (i.e. pre-purchase, purchase, post-purchase) of the customer journey so as to facilitate the management of this project.
- **Exercise D** (Customer-Dominant Logic) – Make a list of the different uses/activities related to the roadway and indicate how you can improve the experience of end-users and neighbors.

For each exercise, the participants collectively listed a number of different elements with a marker on a flipchart poster. Each time, a different participant was asked to write the list of elements on the whiteboard. Personally, I acted more as an observer such that I never intervened except for the following three situations: (1) Answering potential questions related to the comprehension of the exercise, (2) keeping track of time so as to move on to the next exercise, and (3) making a brief concluding remark at the end of each exercise. The specificity of this exercise is that it corresponds to a B2G market, whereby the mayor (as a public official) has to submit a public tender in order to find a contractor in charge of constructing/renovating the roadway. Of course, all three participants master the specificity of the public tender process.

Main findings

With regards to Exercise A that was based on a Goods-Dominant Logic, it proved to be a rather easy exercise for all three participants. Figure 50 below displays a picture of the flipchart poster for exercise A with a translation of elements next to it. (As a reminder, the topic of this group exercise is also mentioned systematically next to the picture.)

Figure 50. Flipchart Poster of Exercise A in the Case Study

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Topic</u></p> <p>The mayor needs to redo the roadway of one of his/her city's districts</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Exercise A</u></p> <p>Make a list of different types of offerings (i.e. products, services, solutions) that your company can propose to the customer</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Translation of elements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diagnostic –<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Need2. Technical aspects• Variants [Alternative solutions] –<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Technical aspects4. Deadline5. Services6. Concept7. Follow up (After sales) → Meeting8. Satisfaction survey → Delays?9. Social contracts10. Warranties (Labels)11. Financing12. Follow up (Info → Work in progress)
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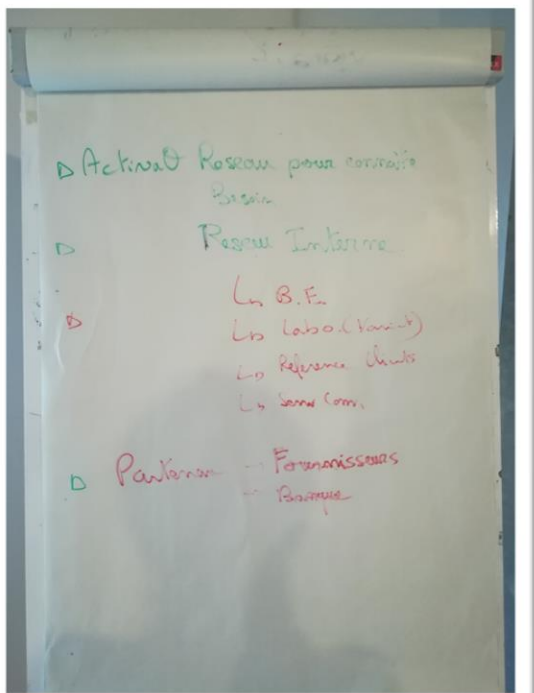
Source: Group Alpha.

During exercise A, ideas were flowing very smoothly with a lot of interactions among the three participants. They listed a lot of different elements that their company could propose to the customer as part of the offering albeit in a non-chronological order. Furthermore, it is only towards the end of the exercise that they realized that they had forgotten to start out by first identifying the customer's real need (*“Oui mais attendez, on doit d'abord identifier le besoin*

du client. C'est quoi son vrai besoin?”, Participant 3). In total, they listed 12 elements in this exercise.

With respect to Exercise B that was based on a Service-Dominant Logic, it turned out to be an exercise that required more thinking for all participants because they are not necessarily used to think at the network level. Figure 51 below shows a picture of the flipchart poster for exercise B with a translation of elements next to it.

Figure 51. Flipchart Poster of Exercise B in the Case Study

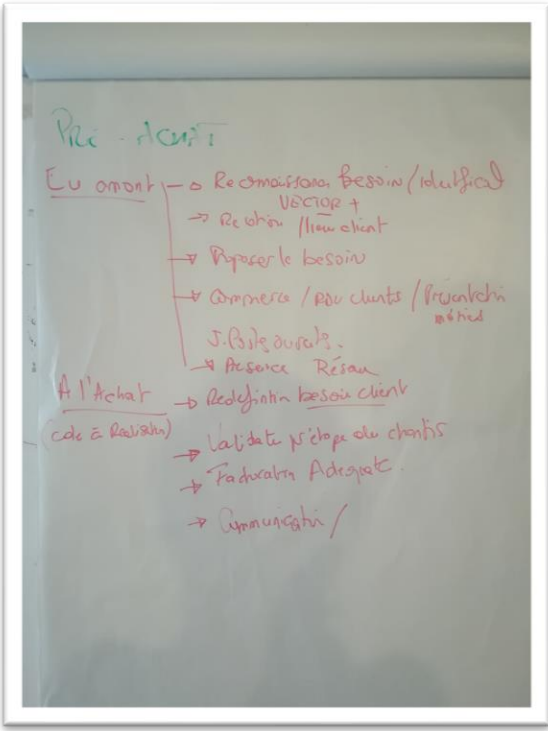
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Topic</u></p> <p>The mayor needs to redo the roadway of one of his/her city's districts</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Exercise B</u></p> <p>Make a list of knowledge and skills within the company's ecosystem in order to carry out this project successfully</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Translation of elements</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To activate our network so as to identify the need <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal network – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Design/technical office 3. Labs 4. Customers' referrals 5. Communication department • Partners – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Suppliers 7. Bank
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Source: Group Alpha.

During exercise B, all participants also gave their own input by discussing a lot before coming up with different elements within the company's ecosystem. This time, they started out by first focusing on the necessity to identify the customer's need via their network (i.e. company employees and officials that they know who can be in contact with the mayor). Afterwards, they listed elements related to their internal network (i.e. inside the company) including different departments. Then, they came with a list of elements related to the external partners (i.e. outside the company) who could help them to carry out this project: Suppliers (for outsourced raw materials and extra manpower) and bank (for financing). In total, they listed 7 elements in this exercise.

Concerning Exercise C that was based on a Service Logic, it proved to be another simple exercise for all three participants even though they did not cover one of the three parts. Figure 52 below depicts a picture of the flipchart poster for exercise C with a translation of elements next to it.

Figure 52. Flipchart Poster of Exercise C in the Case Study

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Topic</u></p> <p>The mayor needs to redo the roadway of one of his/her city’s districts</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Exercise C</u></p> <p>Make a list of different tools/solutions that your company can set up for interacting with the customer at each stage (i.e. pre-purchase, purchase, post-purchase) of the customer journey so as to facilitate the management of this project</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Translation of elements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-purchase (Upstream) – 1. Need recognition/identification 2. (Vector +) Customer relations/ties 3. To propose the need 4. Commerce, meetings with customer, presentation of services 5. Open jobs postings 6. Network presence • Purchase (Order to fulfill) – 7. To redefine customer’s need 8. To validate the construction site’s phases 9. Adequate billing 10. Communication
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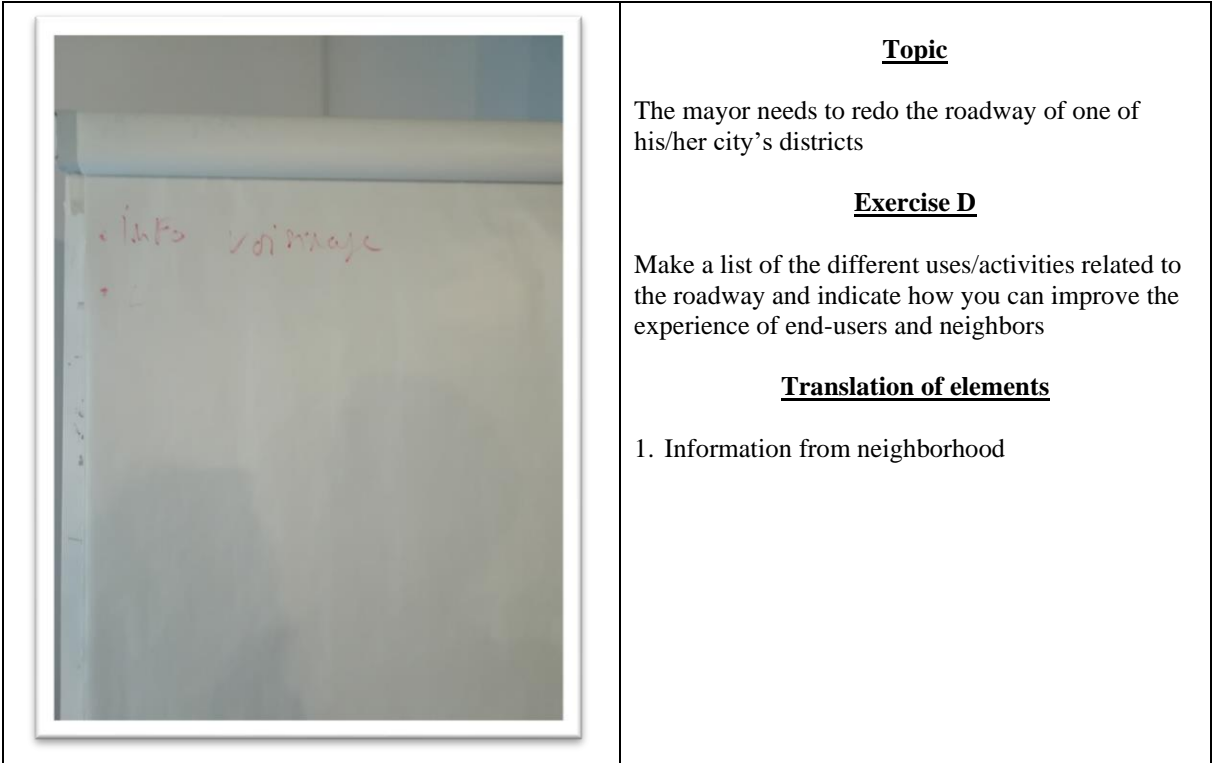
Source: Group Alpha.

During exercise C, they first listed elements related to the pre-purchase stage of the customer journey that they labeled as “upstream” in reference to the planning phase of the public tender, which includes meetings with the customer for need identification, presentation of services, and so on. Then, they listed elements related to the purchase stage that they labeled as “order to fulfill” in reference to the contract phase of the public tender, which includes refining the customer’s need, validating the construction site’s phases, and so forth. At the end of the exercise, I pointed out that they had forgotten to cover the post-purchase stage. As a result, participant 1 replied that they needed to improve on that part: “It’s true, we still have some

efforts to make with respect to that.” (“*C’est vrai, on a encore des efforts à faire de ce côté-là.*”) In total, they listed 10 elements in this exercise. In order to finish the workshop on time, I decided to move on to the last exercise (even though they had omitted to work on the pre-purchase phase).

Regarding Exercise D that was based on a Customer-Dominant Logic, it turned out to be a striking revelation. Figure 53 below exhibits a picture of the flipchart poster for exercise D with a translation of elements next to it.

Figure 53. Flipchart Poster of Exercise D in the Case Study



Source: Group Alpha.

During exercise D, they started by talking a lot among themselves and did not write anything down for a long time. To start with, they realized that they lacked internal processes for following up the project once the construction work was completed. Hence, they proposed that, for example, they could go visit the mayor a year later so as to get an update and evaluate his/her level of satisfaction. Also, they realized that they do not take into consideration at all the end-users and neighbors when constructing or renovating roadways. Consequently, they identified and listed the fact that they had to gather information from the neighborhood, while mentioning orally (but without writing them down) several elements including noise level due to traffic

issues among some others. In the end, they were so surprised to realize that they had to focus more on both end-users and neighbors so as to include them into the overall process as well, that they spent more time searching for ways of improving their internal processes, rather than making a list of both uses/activities related to the roadway and customer experience improvements. In total, they listed 1 element in this exercise. In order to finish the workshop on time, I decided to move on to the debriefing of their MCQ answers, even though they would have found more elements if they had been given more time.

Discussion

The group exercise adapted to one of Group Alpha's business activities (i.e. services) enabled managers to focus on specific aspects of business depending on the applied marketing perspective. Furthermore, it also helped to highlight some areas of improvement with regards to Group Alpha's practices. As summarized below, a quick glance at the different flipchart posters helps to see the number of elements listed in each exercise, which can reflect up to a certain extent the level of adoption/comprehension of the essence of each marketing perspective:

- **Exercise A** (Goods-Dominant Logic) = 12 elements listed in relation to the different types of offerings that their company can propose to the customer
- **Exercise B** (Service-Dominant Logic) = 7 elements listed in relation to the knowledge and skills within their ecosystem that can help them to carry out this project successfully
- **Exercise C** (Service Logic) = 10 elements listed in relation to the tools/solutions that can be set up by their company for interacting with the customer at each stage of the customer journey (except that they did not cover the post-purchase stage)
- **Exercise D** (Customer-Dominant Logic) = 1 element listed in relation to how the experience of both end-users and neighbors can be improved (without first making a list of different uses/activities related to the roadway)

In general, the three participants felt at ease with **exercise A**. As it is typically the case in a Goods-Dominant Logic, they initially focused their attention on the company's internal processes and only turned to the customer's needs towards the end of the exercise. Overall, they spent more time thinking about potential elements in **exercise B** than in the previous exercise.

While a Service-Dominant Logic implies to think more at the ecosystem/network level, they were able to come up on their own with a list of elements describing available resources and actors that could be useful, as advocated by this marketing perspective. Globally, **exercise C** turned out to be a simple exercise even though they did not complete it as requested. The topic of this exercise involves a public tender such that many companies tend to approach this type of B2G project in terms of contract management and not in terms of customer journey management. As a result, they were able to list elements in the pre-purchase and purchase stages ending up with the fulfillment of the customer's order, that is, delivering a renovated roadway to the mayor. However, they did not even cover the post-purchase phase related to after sales service (such as maintenance for example) as normally done in a Service Logic. As for **exercise D**, it turned out to be a striking revelation. It helped them to realize that they just do not take into consideration the activities and experiences of their customers when developing their offerings, which is the starting point of a Customer-Dominant Logic. Consequently, they spent a considerable amount of time discussing potential processes that could help them to overcome this major weakness.

While they would have found more elements for each exercise if they had been given more time, performing this group exercise based on a topic related to one of Group Alpha's business activities truly helped them to grasp the essence of each marketing perspective. **The group exercise really helped all managers to focus on aspects of business that they did not necessarily take into account until then, thereby highlighting potential additional sources of value creation for the company and for its customers.**

7.4.3. Multiple-choice questionnaire

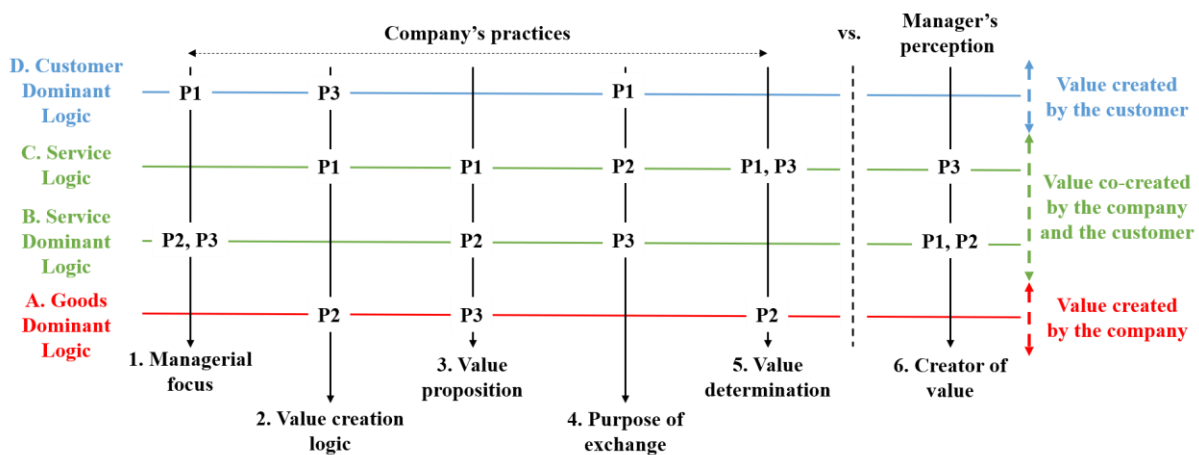
Introduction

After completing the group exercise that enabled managers to better understand each marketing perspective from a practical standpoint, I moved on to the debriefing part of the PowerPoint presentation by going over the multiple-choice questionnaire (MCQ) answers. The aim of this part of the workshop was to identify the prevailing marketing perspective through a set of key constructs related to the company's practices and the manager's perception.

Main findings

To start with, I presented a slide displaying the comparison matrix and showed them how each answer corresponded to a specific marketing perspective for each theme (cf. table 55 in section 6.3.1 for the English version). Using the theme of managerial focus as an example (cf. section 6.3.2), I went over the managerial implications of different answers so that they could better understand the nuances of each marketing perspective with respect to that key construct. Then, in order to compare more easily their MCQ answers, I presented another slide by plotting each participant's MCQ answers on a graph visually reproducing the themes of each question on the x-axis and the corresponding marketing perspective for each answer on the y-axis. Figure 54 below is a reproduction of the slide comparing the MCQ answers of each participant (cf. appendix 9 for the actual picture of the PowerPoint slide with red marker notes on it). As a reminder, questions (i.e. key constructs) 1 thru 5 are intended to reflect the company's practices, while question 6 is intended to reflect the manager's perception of who actually creates value (cf. table 55 in section 6.3.1).

Figure 54. Comparison of MCQ Answers of Participants on a Graph



(P1 = Participant 1, P2 = Participant 2, P3 = Participant 3)

Source: Author.

Once the answers of each participant were plotted on the graph above, they all realized that they did not share the same marketing perspective such that they had different points of view for many different themes (i.e. key constructs). As exposed by the Institutional Logics Perspective, I explained to them that some of these differences could be due to several reasons. At the company level, it could be attributed to different characteristics such as the business activity

(e.g. construction vs. services vs. information technologies) or even the type of offering proposed (e.g. product vs. service vs. solution). At the individual level, it could be attributed to different characteristics such as occupation (e.g. production vs. finance vs. marketing) or even management level position (e.g. CEO vs. marketing director vs. sales manager).

At the end of my explanation, Participant 1 stood up, went directly to the whiteboard, and pointed out to the fact that most of their answers lied in the service zone (in green) by stating: “We have different answers, but nonetheless we see that we are mainly in the service zone!” (*“On a des réponses différentes, mais on voit quand même qu’on est principalement dans la zone de service !”*). On one hand, this reassured them considering that Group Alpha strives to position itself and be perceived as a multi-service company by proposing to each of their prospects and customers all the different types of business activities (i.e. services) that they currently carry out. On the other hand, this sparked a group discussion on the different perception of participants with regards to value creation. For instance, participant 3 claimed: “But you see, it does not shock me at all that perception can be completely different within the company... That your perception can be different from mine. Well, that we all have a different perception of the company’s value creation.” (*“Mais tu vois, moi ça ne me choque pas du tout qu’il y ait une perception complètement différente dans l’entreprise... Que ta perception puisse être différente de la mienne. Enfin, qu’on soit tous différents sur la perception de la création de valeur de l’entreprise.”*) To which participant 1 replied: “Except that at one point, it becomes less effective.” (*“Sauf qu’à un moment donné, tu perds en efficacité.”*) In the end, Participant 3 concluded by saying: “I think that it needs to be shared, but however, it must not be corrected; it must be shared.” (*“Je pense qu’il faut que ce soit partagé, mais en revanche, c’est pas à corriger ; c’est à partager.”*)

That being exposed, table 58 below exhibits a comparison of their MCQ answers in terms of marketing perspective for further analysis. As stated before, questions (i.e. key constructs) 1 thru 5 are intended to reflect the company’s practices, while question 6 is intended to reflect the manager’s perception of who actually creates value (cf. table 55 in section 6.3.1).

Table 58. Comparison of MCQ Answers in terms of Marketing Perspective

Participant #	1. Managerial Focus	2. Value Creation Logic	3. Value Proposition	4. Purpose of Exchange	5. Value Determination	6. Creator of Value
1	CDL	SL	SL	CDL	SL	SDL
2	SDL	GDL	SDL	SL	GDL	SDL
3	SDL	CDL	GDL	SDL	SL	SL

Marketing perspective	Partially (mis)aligned	Totally misaligned	Totally misaligned	Totally misaligned	Partially (mis)aligned	Partially (mis)aligned
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(GDL = Goods-Dominant Logic, SDL = Service-Dominant Logic, SL = Service Logic, CDL = Customer-Dominant Logic)

Source: Author.

Participant 1 is a 47-year-old male, who is Vice President of Commerce/Marketing/Real Estate and who has been working in the company for the last 4 years. With respect to the company’s practices, his answers correspond to both a Service Logic (value creation logic, value proposition, value determination) and a Customer-Dominant Logic (managerial focus, purpose of exchange). With regards to his perception of who creates value, his answer corresponds to a Service-Dominant Logic. As the top-level manager in charge of customer acquisition as well as the promotion of the company’s services and real estate, his answers lie in the zones of interaction (4/6) and of the customer (2/6). This seems to be in line with his work occupation, which requires to be focused mostly on service provision/promotion and customer satisfaction.

Participant 2 is a 58-year-old male, who is Vice President of Innovation & Equipment and who has been working in the company for the last 7 years. With respect to the company’s practices, his answers correspond to a Goods-Dominant Logic (value creation logic, value determination), a Service-Dominant Logic (managerial focus, value proposition), and a Service Logic (purpose of exchange). With regards to his perception of who creates value, his answer corresponds to a Service-Dominant Logic. As the top-level manager in charge of innovation and equipment management for the different construction sites, his answers lie in the zones of the company (2/6) and of interaction (4/6). This seems to be in line with his work occupation, which requires to be focused mostly on internal operations’ efficiency as well as service design and improvement.

Participant 3 is a 52-year-old male, who is Vice President of International & Business Development and who has been working in the company for the last 25 years. With respect to the company’s practices, his answers correspond to a Goods-Dominant Logic (value proposition), a Service-Dominant Logic (managerial focus, purpose of exchange), a Service

Logic (value determination), and a Customer-Dominant Logic (value creation logic). With regards to his perception of who creates value, his answer corresponds to a Service Logic. As the top-level manager in charge of business development both domestically and abroad, his answers lie across all three value creation zones but with a strong emphasis in the zone of interaction (4/6). This seems to be in line with his work occupation, which requires to be focused mostly on business growth opportunities via service provision.

At last, comparing the MCQ answers of the three participants by key construct can help to see if their marketing perspective is either aligned or misaligned as follows:

- Totally aligned – All three participants share the same marketing perspective.
- Partially (mis)aligned – Only two participants share the same marketing perspective.
- Totally misaligned – No participant shares the same marketing perspective.

As shown in table 58 above, for none of the six key constructs is their marketing perspective totally aligned. For instance, their marketing perspective is partially (mis)aligned for three of the six key constructs (managerial focus, value determination, creator of value). Also, their marketing perspective is totally misaligned for three of the six key constructs (value creation logic, value proposition, purpose of exchange).

Discussion

The multiple-choice questionnaire (MCQ) and the comparison of the participants' answers enabled to show that, while they work in the same company, the three managers have a different point of view regarding both Group Alpha's value creation practices and their own perception of who creates value. This can be due to the fact that, as members of the executive committee, they each have different work occupations that require to focus on different aspects of business such that they carry out their respective business activities in different ways for creating value. Nevertheless, most of their answers lie in the zone of interaction, which is associated to the notion of service provision (as a process and not as an outcome). This is in line with the fact that Group Alpha strives to position itself and be perceived as a multi-service company by proposing to each of their prospects and customers all the different types of business activities (i.e. services) that they currently carry out.

7.4.4. Conclusion

As mentioned above, the in-house workshop conducted at the headquarters of Group Alpha helped me to test my artifact (i.e. set of tools) in the business field. To start with, the PowerPoint presentation allowed managers to reach the following objectives:

- To learn and understand some key concepts related to value creation
- To discover and visualize the three value creation zones' framework
- To compare and understand the four selected marketing perspectives
- To debrief and compare visually their MCQ answers

From a practical standpoint, the group exercise also enabled managers to better grasp the essence of each marketing perspective by forcing them to focus on aspects of business that they did not necessarily take into consideration until then. In addition, it highlighted potential areas of improvement that represented additional sources of value creation for both the company and its customers. As for the MCQ, it showed them that they had different points of view with respect to both their company's value creation practices and their own perception of who creates value in terms of marketing perspective. Accordingly, this reflected their different ways of conducting their respective business activities (i.e. fundamental ways of doing things). Therefore, it seems that the proposed artifact (i.e. set of tools) helped Group Alpha's managers to both understand and envision alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted marketing perspective.

7.5. EVALUATION OF THE ARTIFACT

7.5.1. Introduction

As advocated by the Design Science Research Process Model (Peppers et al., 2006) presented in section 4.6.1, the fifth activity consists in evaluating the artifact so as to establish the validity of research. In Design Science, the main goal of the evaluation of an artifact is "to determine to what extent an artefact is effective for solving the problem for which it has been proposed"

(Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). Besides setting up the case study via an in-house workshop for testing the artifact, one of the methods that can be used for evaluating an artifact is “client feedback” (Peppers et al., 2006). In my case, I decided to conduct individual interviews because Design Science considers them as “effective instruments for gathering stakeholder opinions and perceptions about the use and value of an artefact” (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014).

At the end of the workshop, I thus used an interview guideline (cf. section 7.2.5 for English version and appendix 9 for French version) for conducting a semi-structured interview with each participant. The aim of these individual interviews was to evaluate the degree of efficacy of the artifact (i.e. set of tools) with respect to the four following themes: (1) Evaluation of individual efficacy, (2) evaluation of the construct’s efficacy, (3) evaluation of the method’s efficacy, and (4) evaluation of collective efficacy. Each individual interview was audio-recorded and then transcribed into a (single-space, Times New Roman, 12) Microsoft Word document. In order to measure the degree of efficacy, I decided to use the magnitude coding method based on a three-point scale that I designed as follows:

- Null – The participant answered negatively to the question.
- Partial – The participant answered affirmatively to the question but not in a categorical way.
- Total – The participant answered affirmatively to the question in a categorical way.

7.5.2. Main results

Let us now go over the results for each of the four following themes: (1) Evaluation of individual efficacy, (2) evaluation of the construct’s efficacy, (3) evaluation of the method’s efficacy, and (4) evaluation of collective efficacy.

Theme 1 – Evaluation of individual efficacy

Firstly, table 59 below displays the relevant quotes from each participant and the degree of efficacy based on their answers to the following question:

“Did this workshop help you to gain additional professional knowledge on the theme of value creation? How so? What did you get out of it?”

Table 59. Evaluation of Individual Efficacy

Relevant Quotes	Degree of Efficacy
Participant 1: « <i>Oui, en réactualisant les données, et puis en remettant en perspective, justement, au-delà sûrement où se portaient nos priorités. Voilà, c'est un reset, un petit peu. Une mise à jour, plutôt, des infos. C'est intéressant.</i> »	Total
Participant 2: « <i>Oui, totalement. La manière, elle est très simple, c'est qu'elle a organisé ce qui est à mon sens induit, inné, que l'on a tous chacun à notre manière en nous. Mais là, c'était structuré, organisé : le pré-achat, l'achat, le post-achat.</i> »	Total
Participant 3: « <i>Oui, il m'a permis en effet d'enrichir mes connaissances par une formalisation, par une description des différentes étapes des choses qui peuvent être... C'est toujours pareil, à partir du moment où on arrive à mettre des mots, et qu'on arrive à formaliser les choses, ça permet de mieux comprendre.</i> »	Total

Source: Author.

For all three participants, the workshop totally helped them to gain additional knowledge on the theme of value creation. For Participant 1, it helped him to get an update on the concept of value creation and to put in perspective new potential priorities for the company. For Participant 2, the structuring/organization of the workshop helped him to better understand the concept of value creation including the different stages of the customer journey. For Participant 3, it helped him to gain additional knowledge thanks to the formalization/description of the different value creation processes.

Theme 2 – Evaluation of the construct’s efficacy

Secondly, table 60 below shows the relevant quotes from each participant and the degree of efficacy based on their answers to the following question:

“Does the concept of the 3 value creation zones (i.e. zone of company, zone of interaction, zone of customer) enable you to better understand the different areas where value can be created? How so? What did you get out of it?”

Table 60. Evaluation of the Construct's Efficacy

Relevant Quotes	Degree of Efficacy
Participant 1: « <i>Oui, très clairement. Bah, de pouvoir identifier où on devrait faire des efforts. Donc, je trouve que ce séquençement permet d'aller flécher les efforts à faire.</i> »	Total
Participant 2: « <i>Totalement. Non mais la réponse elle est simple, je trouve que ça a mis des mots, et ça a organisé une réflexion que l'on a, à mon avis à peu près tous, et qu'on pourrait déployer en dehors de ce domaine purement marketing... Et puis, on voit la section de l'entreprise, la section co(création) valeur entreprise-client, et puis (la section) du client. Donc oui, ça me permet d'avoir dans ma tête une synthèse.</i> »	Total
Participant 3: « <i>Oui, parce qu'en plus dans notre cas, comme on a plusieurs métiers, suivant le métier t'as un peu plus soit de l'expérience client... Enfin, soit la partie création de valeur côté client ou plus côté entreprise. Et ça c'est pareil, on ne l'analyse pas en réalité. Et l'analyse de ça te permettra de mieux hiérarchiser l'organisation, les actions. Enfin, de planifier les actions. Moi, je vois globalement tout ça comme étant un bon outil d'analyse qui te permet de mieux comprendre ce que tu vis, et de mieux comprendre ce que tu ne fais plutôt pas trop mal, ou là où tu as des manques. Et donc de mettre en face une stratégie et un plan d'action.</i> »	Total

Source: Author.

For all three participants, the three value creation zones framework totally helped them to better understand the different areas where value could be created. For Participant 1, it helped him to identify where the company needs to make some efforts with respect to the zones that have been either overlooked or underserved. For Participant 2, it helped him to put words on concepts and visualize them in addition to generating group thinking. For Participant 3, it helped him to better see what they live through, what they do correctly, and what they can improve depending on their business activity so as to design both a strategy and an action plan.

Theme 3 – Evaluation of the method's efficacy

Thirdly, table 61 below exhibits the relevant quotes from each participant and the degree of efficacy based on their answers to the following question:

“Does this method (i.e. questionnaire and PowerPoint presentation) enable you to envision more easily alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted perspective? How so? What did you get out of it?”

Table 61. Evaluation of the Method's Efficacy

Relevant Quotes	Degree of Efficacy
Participant 1: « <i>Oui, oui. Le cœur du sujet transpire bien à travers les documents et à travers la méthode. Donc, moi ça me va bien.</i> »	Total
Participant 2: « <i>Oui, je pense qu'on peut le simplifier. Si on le simplifie, on peut le faire.</i> »	Partial
Participant 3: « <i>Par rapport à notre auditoire, celui qu'on a vécu aujourd'hui, je pense que ce n'est pas mal adapté... Donc à la fois de faire un QCM, ça permet de mettre un peu d'interactivité, un peu d'échange. Ça permet de casser un peu le côté professoral d'une présentation pure et dure. Donc, ça c'est une bonne chose. Derrière, le débriefing permet d'avoir cet échange entre collègues et de se rendre compte qu'on n'a évidemment pas la même perception.</i> »	Total

Source: Author.

For Participant 1 and Participant 3, the method (i.e. questionnaire and PowerPoint presentation) totally enabled them to envision more easily alternative ways of creating value depending on the adopted perspective, while it did so only partially for Participant 2. For Participant 1, the central topic transpires well through the documents and the method. For Participant 3, the MCQ along with the debriefing of answers help to have an exchange between colleagues and to realize that they do not have the same perception. As for Participant 2, it was helpful, but some slides in the PowerPoint presentation could be simplified.

Theme 4 – Evaluation of collective efficacy

Finally, table 62 below lists the relevant quotes from each participant and the degree of efficacy based on their answers to the following question:

“Did the group exercise help you to work efficiently together so as to identify additional sources of value creation for the company? How so? What did you get out of it?”

Table 62. Evaluation of Collective Efficacy

Relevant Quotes	Degree of Efficacy
Participant 1: « <i>Ça me laisse dire que si on travaillait en groupe longtemps, on en trouverait. Là, l'exercice était trop rapide pour nous. Mais probablement qu'un atelier plus complet, ou en tout cas cet exercice-là plus complet, permettrait de sortir un certain nombre d'idées, de leviers. Oui, sûrement.</i> »	Partial
Participant 2: « <i>Oui, par le partage et par une vision différente. On était que trois, et on a pu se rendre compte qu'à nous trois, on avait à la fois une trame commune quand même, bon on la retrouve très Service Client, mais on a des fluctuations. Et d'entendre les autres, je trouve que c'est toujours enrichissant.</i> »	Total
Participant 3: « <i>Oui, alors ça, de manière évidente. Tu vois, ouvert comme on l'a fait, ça permet les échanges, et ça permet justement de voir qu'on a pas la même perception. Ça permet d'avoir une idée qu'il a et que je n'avais pas parce qu'on a pas le même caractère.</i> »	Total

Source: Author.

For Participant 2 and Participant 3, the group exercise totally helped them to work efficiently together so as to identify additional sources of value creation for the company, while it did so only partially for Participant 1. For Participant 2, exchanging between colleagues helped to realize that they share a common frame based on customer service but with nuances so that it was instructive. For Participant 3, exchanging between colleagues helps to see that they do not have the same perception, and it also enables to come up with different ideas because people have different characters (i.e. backgrounds). As for Participant 1, it was helpful, but spending more time on the same group exercise could enable them to come up with more ideas regarding additional sources of value creation.

7.5.3. Conclusion

The individual interview with each participant helped to evaluate in a positive way the overall efficacy of my artifact (i.e. set of tools) and thus validate the theoretical concepts used in my research work. Based on the answers of participants that only partially validated the efficacy of the artifact, the only areas of improvement would be to eventually give more time to people for doing the group exercise (according to Participant 1) and to eventually simplify some slides in the PowerPoint presentation (according to Participant 2).

Nevertheless, the best evidence/proof of the efficacy of my artifact comes from the following statement made during the collective feedback session by participant 1, who actually helped me to organize the in-house workshop conducted at the headquarters of Group Alpha in November 2019:

« Je disais qu'en intro je m'étais noté : 'Convention ?' Evidemment, c'est une réflexion. Je ne dis pas qu'on va le faire, on va en discuter. Mais l'idée, c'est de savoir, si tant est qu'on décide qu'on parle de cette notion de création de valeur, et que ce soit un fil rouge pour l'année 2020 et au-delà, auquel cas ce serait intéressant de commencer... Il faudra qu'on y aille doucement. Mais le point de départ pourrait être la convention qui a lieu en février [2020]. Et à ce moment-là, on pourrait faire une espèce de questionnaire interactif. Chacun verrait et constaterait qu'il a une perception de la valeur différente... On s'apercevrait très vite que l'intérêt de tout ça, c'est de mettre le nez devant un constat qui dise : 'Oui, ça nécessite un travail personnel ou un travail de groupe.' »

(Participant 1)

The enthusiastic statement above clearly shows that the concept of value creation can become the central theme of the company's strategy as of 2020 and beyond. In fact, the idea would be to design an interactive questionnaire that could eventually be proposed to the company's personnel during its upcoming convention in February 2020. According to Participant 1, it could help to demonstrate that many employees have a different perception of value, which would then serve as a starting point for performing either an individual or team work on the theme of value creation. To sum it up, the fact that Participant 1 potentially intends to use a questionnaire during the company's next annual convention clearly shows that he has both understood the benefit and validated the efficacy of my multiple-choice questionnaire.

8. GENERAL CONCLUSION

8.1. MANAGERIAL ISSUE

As a result of the advent of globalization, digitalization, and uberization, the business environment is changing at an incredibly fast pace so that companies need to keep innovating on an on-going basis if they want to remain competitive in the long run. Hence, companies are constantly seeking new growth opportunities and new ways of conducting business in order to survive or be more successful than their competitors. While innovation has become a priority for many companies, some of them end up hiring external consultants who have the expertise to help them because their managers do not necessarily possess the required know-how. In general, most consultants use methods and tools that have been conceived by mainstream consulting firms or academic researchers. Among the multitude of existing management tools, the most popular ones enable companies to (re)design their innovation strategy, their overall business model, or simply their offerings so as to create more or better value. While many of these value creation frameworks propose a clear method with a distinct business logic, none of them really addresses value creation in terms of perspective more specifically.

In business, it turns out that perspective does matter. For instance, managers are not necessarily aware of the set of assumptions that they rely upon so that they might “apply different perspectives, which result in different interpretations of events” within the same company (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). Since the business environment constantly changes, managers “need to revise – or at a minimum reflect upon – applied perspectives in order to stay competitive” (Strandvik and Heinonen, 2015). In other words, they need to know the type of marketing perspective that they apply in order to be able to compare it to other marketing perspectives, as each one of them represents a specific “ingrained way of perceiving the world” and “fundamental way of doing things” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). At the time being, several marketing perspectives currently co-exist including the Goods-Dominant Logic (a.k.a. the traditional marketing perspective; Kotler, 1972), the Service-Dominant Logic (Lusch and Vargo, 2004), the Service Logic (Grönroos, 2006), and the Customer-Dominant Logic (Heinonen et al., 2010) among many others. In fact, the four latter marketing perspectives can provide alternative ways of creating value so as to help companies to better cope with their fast-changing business environment.

8.2. DISCUSSION

8.2.1. Research questions

As reflected in their respective name, Goods-Dominant Logic, Service-Dominant Logic, Service Logic, and Customer-Dominant Logic are the only marketing perspectives that are based on a clearly defined (dominant) logic, that is, a specific way of creating value by each focusing on distinct aspects of business. Prahalad and Bettis (1986) formally defined “dominant logic” as “a mind set or world view or conceptualization of the business and administrative tools to accomplish goals and make decisions in the business.” Furthermore, Prahalad (2004) claims that “the dominant logic of the company is, in essence, the DNA of the organization,” and “it is embedded in standard operating procedures.” Since it is the source of a company’s past success, a dominant logic thus frames how its managers think and act. In the marketing literature, these four marketing perspectives have only been compared on the basis of a limited number of constructs so far. Consequently, there was a clear need to show their nuances through a common framework based on a more complete set of key marketing constructs, which turned out to represent an academic research opportunity for bridging theory and practice.

Let us now go over my main research question (MRQ) and the three related research questions (RRQ), which further helped me to design and develop my artifact (i.e. set of tools).

MRQ: What tool(s) can be designed in order to sensitize managers to alternative ways of creating value from a marketing perspective?

During my literature review, I read an article that presented a tool for identifying the prevailing marketing practice of companies based on the way they relate to their market through business-customer interactions. The authors designed a self-administered multiple-choice questionnaire based on nine dimensions: (1) Purpose of exchange, (2) nature of communication, (3) type of contact, (4) duration of exchange, (5) formality of exchange, (6) managerial intent, (7) managerial focus, (8) managerial investment, and (9) managerial level. Each of the nine dimensions consisted of a set of variables reflecting each of the four marketing practice constructs that they came up with: (1) Transaction marketing, (2) database marketing, (3)

interaction marketing, and (4) network marketing. Their tool actually confirmed that managers had to become aware of the potential role of each marketing practice in order to understand their nuances and implications regarding strategic choices that could be made by companies.

Inspired by their work, I decided to adapt the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002). In other words, I decided to create a similar type of multiple-choice questionnaire (known solution) for identifying the prevailing marketing perspective adopted by a company based on the way it creates value (new problem), instead of identifying their prevailing marketing practice based on the way it relates to its market through business-customer interactions (known problem).

RRQ1: How do the managers in charge of creating value define value creation and describe the value creation process of their company?

Over time, the American Marketing Association regularly updated its definition of marketing in order to reflect the increasing role of value as a central concept in marketing. Meanwhile, many researchers noted that value is one of the most misused terms/concepts in the management literature (Khalifa, 2004; Leszinski and Marn, 1997; Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007) such that it still remains poorly understood by many managers. In order to clarify this key concept in marketing, Gummerus (2013) showed that research on value can be divided into two main streams: (1) Value creation processes (i.e. created value) and (2) value outcome determination (i.e. perceived value), while customer experience can serve as a link between both.

Considering that my research work is based on value creation, let us just take into consideration the fact value can actually be created in three different ways, that is, either: (1) By companies (as described in Goods-Dominant Logic), (2) in the interaction between a company and a customer (referred to as a co-creation process in Service-Dominant Logic and in Service Logic), or (3) by customers (as explained in Customer-Dominant Logic). Building on the three spheres of the value generation process of Service Logic (Grönroos and Voima, 2013; Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014) and on the three worlds of the value formation process of Customer-Dominant Logic (Heinonen et al., 2010; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015), I actually developed a framework made up of the company's sphere, the customer's sphere, and the sphere of

interaction. This framework helped me to gain more insight on managers' conception of value creation and their companies' value creation process.

In addition, I relied on the Three Value Configuration Models of Stabell and Fjeldstad (1998) for understanding and analyzing the value creation logic of companies, which is itself built on Thompson's (1967) typology of long-linked, intensive, and mediating technologies. The Three Value Configuration Models include the three following value creation logics: (1) The "value chain" consists in transforming inputs into products (as in Goods-Dominant Logic), (2) the "value shop" consists in solving customers' problems (as in Service Logic), and (3) the "value network" consists in linking customers (as in Service-Dominant Logic).

To start with, the main findings revealed that the responses related to managers' conception of value creation were usually not coherent. On one hand, when asked to provide a definition of value creation (Q06), many informants provided a definition by listing elements that lied in the sphere of the company, thereby meaning that value is created by the company. On the other hand, when asked to list the constitutive elements that make up value creation (Q07 and Q08), most of these informants gave a list of elements that lied in the sphere of the customer, thereby reflecting that value is created by the customer. This lack of coherence was thus further investigated in RRQ3 below.

Next, while most informants described their company's value creation process in a way that corresponds to a single value creation logic, many others described it in a way that includes two different value creation logics. In other words, a hybrid value creation logic seems to prevail in the three following cases:

1. "Value chain / Value shop logic" – When a company proposes standard offerings to its customers ("value chain logic") and then also adapts certain of its offerings to satisfy a specific customer's needs ("value shop logic").
2. "Value chain / Value network logic" – When a company proposes standard offerings to its customers ("value chain logic") and then also provides a platform for its customers to generate/modify/share brand- or company-related material ("value network logic").
3. "Value shop / Value network logic" – When a company adapts certain of its offerings to meet a specific customer's needs ("value shop logic") and then also provides a platform for

its customers to generate/modify/share brand- or company-related material (“value network logic”).

As previously stated, these findings seem to corroborate with the proposition/hypothesis of Stabell and Fjeldstad (1998) regarding the characteristics of companies with a hybrid value creation logic.

RRQ2: On what elements of value creation do managers focus their attention when designing strategies and offerings?

In strategic management, strategy as perspective represents both a specific way of perceiving the world from a company’s standpoint (i.e. point of view) and the fundamental way that a company does things (Mintzberg et al., 2009). In strategic literature, the concept of “dominant logic” refers to “an information filter on managerial attention” (Prahalad and Bettis, 1986).

In addition to that, the Parallel Process Model of Strategic Decision Making proposed by Corner et al. (1994; cf. figure 25 in section 2.4.5) integrates both individual and organizational level information processing perspectives through a series of linking mechanisms. According to their model, individuals and organizations process information similarly along the six following stages: (1) Attention, (2) encoding, (3) storage/retrieval, (4) decision, (5) action, and (6) outcomes. With regards to attention only, it denotes “a focus on information” (Corner et al., 1994). and determines “what information will be processed and what will be ignored” (Mintzberg et al., 2009). At the individual level, selective attention acts as a filter that limits the amount of incoming information to top managers for making pertinent strategic decisions (Corner et al., 1994). At the organizational level, group attention is focused on the environmental scanning performed by the top management team, which “determines which data are available for interpretation by the group” (Corner et al., 1994). The individual and organizational level attention processes are linked by meanings shared among the members of the top management team that actually provide a consensus view within the group (Corner et al., 1994).

With respect to strategy, only two-thirds of the informants confirmed that the concept of value creation was formally taken into account in their company’s strategy. The majority of these companies turn out to focus their attention on elements that lie in the sphere of the company

such as focusing on improving their offering's positioning or developing a shared vision among collaborators. This reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic focused on the company's internal processes.

With regards to offerings, all informants confirmed that they participated in the design of their company's offerings. This time, many companies took into account elements that lied both in the sphere of the company and of the customer for designing their offerings. However, based on their answer related to the role of an offering in terms of value creation, half of them responded in a way indicating that their offering mainly proposed value added. Again, this reflects a Goods-Dominant Logic focused on the company's internal processes.

RRQ3: To which marketing perspective do managers' conception of value creation and their company's value creation process correspond, and are they convergent?

One of the key principles Institutional Logics Perspective is that "institutions operate at multiple levels of analysis and that actors are nested in higher order levels – individual, organizational, field, and societal" (Thornton et al., 2012). By combining multiple levels of analysis, researchers can get a more precise picture of the problem at stake because observation across levels can help to "see the workings of mechanisms and – according to the Institutional Logic Perspective – the contradictory nature of logics" (Thornton et al., 2012). According to this organizational theory, individuals and organizations can be influenced within the interinstitutional system depending on their situation in the different institutional orders to which they belong such as their market, their profession, or even their corporation. Each institutional order is based on inherent principles, practices, and symbols that influence individual and organizational behavior and thus determine how reasoning actually takes place.

Moreover, according to the Integrative Model of the Microfoundations of Institutional Logics (cf. figure 24 in section 2.4.4), institutional logics starts with the fact that the attention of individual actors is focused through cultural embeddedness (Ocasio, 1997; Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Thornton, 2004). In turn, this activates a social actor's situated identities, goals, and action schemas, which along with "the shared focus of attention shape social interaction" (Goffman, 1974; Collins, 2000, 2004). Concerning social identities, "individuals have multiple social identities, defined both in terms of group or category membership, as per psychological social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Hogg and Abrams, 1988), and in terms of

identification with particular social roles, as per sociological identity theory (Stryker, 1968; Burke and Tully, 1977; Stryker, 1980)” (Thornton et al., 2012). For example, with respect to managers, the relevant category identities can include their industry, profession, or occupation, and regarding role identities that are defined in terms of relationships among social actors, it can include their position within a company or within a team project.

That being said, the aim of this research question was thus to determine and compare the marketing perspective of managers to the marketing perspective of their company, that is, to combine two different levels of analysis so as to check for convergence. In the meantime, I also decided to further investigate the main findings from RRQ1, which revealed that the conception of value creation of most managers did not seem to be coherent. On top of that, I also decided to select some individual and organizational characteristics so as to check for cross-case patterns that could reasonably explain any potential variations in the results. In the end, all of this was displayed in table 59 in section 5.4.9 combining the following elements: (1) Individual characteristics of each informant based on “management level position” and “profession,” (2) organizational characteristics of each informant’s company based on proposed “offering(s)” and “market(s)” served, (3) the marketing perspective with respect to three constructs [i.e. informant’s definition of value creation (DEF), informant’s claim regarding who creates value (CRE), company’s value creation process (PRO)], (4) coherence of managers’ conception of value creation (DEF = CRE) based on marketing perspective, and (5) convergence of manager’s definition of value with their company’s value creation process (DEF = PRO) based on marketing perspective.

That being done, I decided to combine the results related to coherence and convergence via the elaboration of a coherence/convergence matrix (cf. table 50 in section 5.4.9). After analyzing the results, it seems that the size of the data sample is too small and too diverse in order to reasonably explain any significant patterns across all cases altogether. Unfortunately, no main conclusion can really be drawn on the basis of the individual and organizational characteristics that were actually selected. Meanwhile, it shows that only half of the informants have a conception of value creation that is coherent, and that only two-thirds of the informants have a marketing perspective that is convergent with that of their company.

However, when comparing the responses from managers working in the same company based on “occupation” as opposed to “profession” that was initially used in table 49 (cf. section 5.4.9),

there are some nuances. During the exploratory study, there were three companies in which two different informants with a different occupation were interviewed. In all three cases, each informant exhibited a different marketing perspective for at least one of the three constructs aforementioned. This time, the individual characteristic based on “occupation” seemed to explain these variations.

Overall, the main findings of the exploratory study also demonstrated that most companies do not use a representation of their value creation process primarily because of lack of time and of manpower (Q14). At best, they use simple tools that have been developed internally such as Excel spreadsheets with key performance indicators, business plans, process diagrams, and mock-ups. At last, many informants stated that their company does not use methods/procedures for improving their value creation process (Q39). In most cases, the main reasons are due to the lack of time and training for established companies and because of the lack of formal procedures in emerging (i.e. start-up) companies.

8.2.2. Managerial implications

Thanks to the literature review, the research questions, and the main findings from the exploratory study, I was able to create an artifact based on the following set of tools:

1. Tool #1 – A multiple-choice questionnaire (MCQ) derived from the exaptation of the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002) and used for identifying the marketing perspective that is applied in a company. It is based on six questions that are related to the following set of key constructs: (1) Managerial focus, (2) value creation logic, (3) value proposition, (4) purpose of exchange, (5) value determination, and (6) creator of value. For each question, there are four possible answers to choose from, whereby each answer corresponds to a distinct marketing perspective: (a) Goods-Dominant Logic, (b) Service-Dominant Logic, (c) Service Logic, and (d) Customer-Dominant Logic (cf. section 6.2.2 for English version and appendix 7 for French version).
2. Tool #2 – A comparison matrix showing the similarities and differences of each marketing perspective. It is a simple reproduction of the multiple-choice questionnaire. On one hand, the first column displays each question with its corresponding theme (i.e. key construct). On the other hand, the next four columns display each answer with its corresponding

marketing perspective. In addition, each answer is linked to a concept that can help to better understand in a nutshell the nuances of each marketing perspective depending on the key construct at stake. (cf. table 55 in section 6.3.1)

The efficacy of this artifact (i.e. set of tools) was tested and validated via a case study. An in-house workshop was organized with different members of the executive committee of a very-large-sized company in France. The theme of the workshop was based on “value creation” and helped these top-level managers in charge of their company’s corporate strategy in several respects.

It turns out that the debriefing of the MCQ demonstrated that all managers had different points of view with respect to both their company’s value creation practices and their own perception of who creates value. For each of the six questions (i.e. key constructs), their marketing perspectives were at best partially aligned but never totally aligned. Since they each have a different work occupation and are thus each in charge of managing different aspects of business, this can actually reflect their different ways of conducting their respective business activities (i.e. fundamental ways of doing things). Breaking down each marketing perspective into a set of different key constructs enables to shed light on which specific aspects of value creation managers might have different points of view. By sharing their MCQ answers, managers can thus better realize the set of assumptions upon which they rely for making decisions, which in turn can help them to better understand each other and thus work better together. As a team, it can enable managers to come up with alternative solutions collectively thanks to their different points of view and even create shared meaning, which is what actually links the individual-level and organizational-level attention processes (cf. figure 25 in section 2.4.5).

8.3. RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

8.3.1. Contribution to academic research

My contribution to academic research is the development of a comparison matrix that helps to compare the four marketing perspectives in terms of value creation via a common framework comprised of a set of key constructs. In marketing research, conceptual advances can be made with respect to either constructs, relationships/theories, procedures, domains, disciplines, and

science. Table 63 below shows the conceptual approaches and sub-approaches that can be used in marketing research for creating knowledge. There are 4 conceptual approaches that are broken down into 2 sub-approaches as follows: (1) Envisioning (i.e. identifying vs. revising), (2) explicating (i.e. delineating vs. summarizing), (3) relating (i.e. differentiating vs. integrating), and (4) debating (i.e. advocating vs. refuting) (Anker et. al, 2015).

Table 63. Conceptual Approaches and Sub-Approaches in Marketing Research

Conceptual Approaches		Sub-Approaches	
Envisioning	Discovers new phenomena or conceptualizes known territory in new ways	Identifying	Identifies and describes emerging or overseen marketing phenomena
		Revising	Represents established phenomena in a new way and provides a corrective to existing knowledge and received wisdom
Explicating	Reveals general structures that tie together a number of different constructs, supported by references to empirical research or logical rationales	Delineating	Outlines the ontological foundation of a given marketing phenomenon (landscape) and its relationships to other entities
		Summarizing	Reduces complexity in a given domain by condensing large sets of constructs, data, or relations into overarching concepts
Relating	Compares entities in a given domain in order to study the relationship between wholes and parts	Differentiating	Analyses or decomposes a given entity into its basic constituents (i.e. necessary and/or sufficient preconditions)
		Integrating	Provides a new perspective that represents a complex domain or set of constructs within one consistent framework of overarching concepts
Debating	Describes and analyses reasons that are taken to provide validity for a given proposition (e.g. idea, belief, claim, or hypothesis)	Advocating	Argues that a number of reasons justify a given proposition
		Refuting	Argues that a number of reasons demonstrate that a given proposition is unjustified

Source: Anker et. al, 2015 – Adapted from MacInnis, 2011.

As shown in the boxes shaded in grey in the table above, my contribution with respect to the conceptual approach is to:

- **“Relate,”** that is,
- To compare different perspectives (i.e. entities)
- In marketing (i.e. given domain)
- In order to study the relationship between the proposed set of key constructs within each marketing perspective (i.e. wholes and parts).

With regards to my sub-approach contribution, it is more specifically to:

- **“Differentiate,”** that is,
- To analyze or decompose each marketing perspective (i.e. given entity)
- Into their core marketing constructs (i.e. basic constituents) so as to show the similarities and differences between each marketing perspective through a common framework.

The selected conceptual approach and sub-approach (i.e. “relate” and differentiate”) involve comparative reasoning as a thinking tool that can be undertaken by using a comparison matrix as a facilitating tool. As a result, it becomes easier for managers to visualize and understand in a snapshot the similarities and differences between the four selected marketing perspectives through a comparison matrix.

Consequently, this can serve as a basis for bridging the gap between theory and practice as advocated by the specific call for further research in that direction from Customer-Dominant Logic (among other marketing perspectives as well):

“...from a manager’s standpoint, a map of different [marketing] perspectives and their characteristics might be helpful for understanding their similarities and differences, along with a roadmap to reveal how the perspectives can be translated into business action. Future research should create detailed managerial guidelines for applying a dominant logic.”

(Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015)

8.3.2. Contribution to managerial practice

Taking into consideration the experiential learning cycle in organizations, my contribution to managerial practice is the design of a multiple-choice questionnaire that can serve as a management tool for identifying the marketing perspective applied in a company (i.e. concrete experience), which can be reflected upon via a group discussion (i.e. reflective observation), so that managers become aware of the specific set of assumptions that they rely on in relation to the different ways that value can actually be created (i.e. abstract conceptualization), before eventually deciding to adopt (or not) another marketing perspective with its inherent managerial implications (i.e. active experimentation). At some point in their day-to-day activities, managers really need to take the time to think and reflect upon their business activities and related experiences before taking further action. As a result, the multiple-choice questionnaire can help them to envision the possibility of carrying out new marketing activities so as to take advantage of additional sources of value creation for both their company and their customers if necessary.

8.3.3. Contribution to education

My contribution to education is the potential creation of a general course/workshop on the four marketing perspectives around the core concept of value and its dichotomic nature as both a creation process and an outcome determination. This course/workshop could be taught to students in business schools as well as to practitioners in companies or in executive education programs. Nowadays, most (albeit not all) general marketing courses/workshops are based on the Goods-Dominant Logic or its complementary discipline Services Marketing, which are both considered as the traditional marketing perspective. Unfortunately, these courses only present one marketing perspective, thereby preventing students and practitioners from having a complete overview of the different ways that marketing activities can be carried out depending on the adopted marketing perspective. In addition, this should help students and practitioners to better understand the difference between created value and perceived value, and how they can potentially be linked via customer experience. As a result of attending this course/workshop, students and practitioners could more easily think outside of their current box (i.e. prevailing marketing perspective) by envisioning alternative ways of creating value thanks to their newly acquired knowledge.

8.4. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

That being exposed, my research work has certain limitations that can be overcome thanks to future research. Let us now go over some of them.

To start with, only four marketing perspectives (namely Goods-Dominant Logic as the traditional marketing perspective along with Services Marketing, Service-Dominant Logic, Service Logic, and Customer-Dominant Logic) were selected out of the large array of existing marketing perspectives (such as Consumer Culture Theory, Relationship Marketing, Solutions Selling, and Service Design among others). For example, during the analysis of the interviews from the exploratory study, some answers could also have been attributed to Relationship Marketing as it is a marketing activity that is widely used by many companies. This restricted choice of marketing perspectives was in part conditioned by the fact that, as reflected in their respective name, they are the only ones that are based on a clearly defined (dominant) logic, that is, a specific way of creating value by each focusing on distinct aspects of business. Consequently, it might be interesting to conceive a comparison matrix with additional marketing perspectives.

Next, all marketing perspectives were compared on the basis of value creation through the lens of the company so as to come up with an actionable tool that managers can more easily implement from the company's point of view. However, Customer-Dominant Logic (CDL) stipulates that value emerges in the customer's life/business as a result of integrating and experiencing offerings even outside of the control zone of the company when there is no company-customer interaction. From a CDL standpoint, it can be inferred that value can be created by the customer for the company (e.g. user-generated content in social media) or by customers just for themselves as well (e.g. growing one's own food in the garden for self-consumption). For the sake of simplicity and homogeneity, I thus decided to focus more specifically on how customers could actually create value for the company (and not just for themselves as well), when comparing CDL to other marketing perspectives during the in-house workshop.

Furthermore, only six key constructs were used for designing the multiple-choice questionnaire and the comparison matrix: (1) Managerial focus, (2) value creation logic, (3) value proposition, (4) purpose of exchange, (5) value determination, and (6) creator of value. Nevertheless, as depicted in the comparison matrix in section 3.7, several others can also be used such as managerial scope, basis of exchange, value creation aim, offering characteristics, and so on. As a matter of fact, the data that was gathered during the exploratory study via the interview guideline (cf. appendix 3 for the French version) also showed that the three following constructs can also potentially be used: (1) Role of company (Q23), (2) role of customer (Q26), and (3) role of offering (Q34). Therefore, it might be interesting to add those other constructs so as to further improve the proposed artifact.

In addition, the multiple-choice questionnaire, which was both pre-tested with a panel of experts and then tested empirically with managers, was only administered to a fairly restricted number of respondents via a case study on only one site in France. As a result, this can limit the generalizability or the transferability of the results. Ideally, this multiple-choice questionnaire should be tested on a larger scale with company managers from several countries by using a quantitative research method, just like the way it was done for the Contemporary Marketing Practices Framework (Coviello et al., 2002). In turn, the results could help to refine the constructs and the items used in the multiple-choice questionnaire, while also enabling to empirically check for potential hybrid marketing perspectives as exposed in the main findings of the exploratory study.

With regards to the third related research question, the issue of convergence also merits further research. After determining and comparing the marketing perspective of managers to the marketing perspective of their company and thus combining two different levels of analysis, unfortunately no major conclusion can be drawn so far due to the limited number of informants in the exploratory study and of participants in the case study. As a result, a quantitative study with a large data sample could help to gain more insight on which individual characteristics and which organizational characteristics can eventually account for (non)convergence. In turn, this could also help to eventually explain the (mis)alignment among managers working in the same company, as discovered in both the exploratory study and the case study. Ultimately, this could serve as a starting point for creating shared meaning during group discussions so that managers can better understand each other, better work together, and thus better create value altogether.

8.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

As already stated, one of the most essential purposes of management is to apply perspective to the company's business, whereby managers use a specific reasoning for solving problems and conduct business in a specific way for reaching their goals. Consequently, a dominant logic emerges in companies that both enables and frames the way managers think and act as a result of focusing their attention on specific aspects of their business. However, many managers are not necessarily aware of the set of assumptions that they rely upon for creating value, and they also do not necessarily realize that companies and customers follow their own logic. Hence, a multiple-choice questionnaire that can identify the marketing perspective (i.e. marketing dominant logic) applied in a company can help managers to better understand as well as reflect upon the set of assumptions that they rely on for conducting their business. In addition, it enables them to become aware of the existence of other marketing perspectives as well such that they can more easily compare the managerial implications of each one of them, thereby providing them an opportunity to change their fundamental way of creating value if necessary.

Based on the research work presented in this thesis, the artifact that I designed can thus be a valuable tool for sensitizing managers to alternative ways of creating value from a marketing perspective. In conclusion, this management tool can really be "value-able" ...

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1. SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON MARKETING THEORY AND PRACTICE

Timeline and Stream of Literature	Fundamental Ideas or Propositions
<p>1800–1920: Classical and Neoclassical Economics Marshall (1890); Say (1821); Shaw (1912); Smith (1776)</p>	<p>Economics became the first social science to reach the quantitative sophistication of the natural sciences. Value is embedded in matter through manufacturing (value-added, utility, value in exchange); goods come to be viewed as standardized output (commodities). Wealth in society is created by the acquisition of tangible "stuff." Marketing as matter in motion.</p>
<p>1900–1950: Early/Formative Marketing •Commodities (Copeland 1923) •Institutions (Nystrom 1915; Weld 1916) •Functional (Cherington 1920; Weld 1917)</p>	<p>Early marketing thought was highly descriptive of commodities, institutions, and marketing functions: commodity school (characteristics of goods), institutional school (role of marketing institutions in value-embedding process), and functional school (functions that marketers perform). A major focus was on the transaction or output and how institutions performing marketing functions added value to commodities. Marketing primarily provided time and place utility, and a major goal was possession utility (creating a transfer of title and/or sale). However, a focus on functions is the beginning of the recognition of operant resources.</p>
<p>1950–1980: Marketing Management •Business should be customer focused (Drucker 1954; McKitterick 1957) •Value "determined" in marketplace (Levitt 1960) •Marketing is a decision-making and problem-solving function (Kotler 1967; McCarthy 1960)</p>	<p>Firms can use analytical techniques (largely from microeconomics) to try to define marketing mix for optimal firm performance. Value "determined" in marketplace; "embedded" value must have usefulness. Customers do not buy things but need or want fulfillment. Everyone in the firm must be focused on the customer because the firm's only purpose is to create a satisfied customer. Identification of the functional responses to the changing environment that provide competitive advantage through differentiation begins to shift toward value in use.</p>
<p>1980–2000 and Forward: Marketing as a Social and Economic Process •Market orientation (Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Narver and Slater 1990) •Services marketing (Gronroos 1984; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry 1985) •Relationship marketing (Berry 1983; Duncan and Moriarty 1998; Gummesson 1994, 2002; Sheth and Parvatiyar 2000) •Quality management (Hauser and Clausing 1988; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1988) •Value and supply chain management (Normann and Ramirez 1993; Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey 1999) •Resource management (Constantin and Lusch 1994; Day 1994; Dickson 1992; Hunt 2000; Hunt and Morgan 1995) •Network analysis (Achrol 1991; Achrol and Kotler 1999; Webster 1992)</p>	<p>A dominant logic begins to emerge that largely views marketing as a continuous social and economic process in which operant resources are paramount. This logic views financial results not as an end result but as a test of a market hypothesis about a value proposition. The marketplace can falsify market hypotheses, which enables entities to learn about their actions and find ways to better serve their customers and to improve financial performance.</p> <p>This paradigm begins to unify disparate literature streams in major areas such as customer and market orientation, services marketing, relationship marketing, quality management, value and supply chain management, resource management, and network analysis. The foundational premises of the emerging paradigm are (1) skills and knowledge are the fundamental unit of exchange, (2) indirect exchange masks the fundamental unit of exchange, (3) goods are distribution mechanisms for service provision, (4) knowledge is the fundamental source of competitive advantage, (5) all economies are services economies, (6) the customer is always a coproducer, (7) the enterprise can only make value propositions, and (8) a service-centered view is inherently customer oriented and relational.</p>

Source: Vargo and Lush, 2004.

APPENDIX 2. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: CONTRIBUTIONS TO CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Historical Perspective: Contributions to Customer Experience		
Time Frame	Topic Area	Representative Articles
1960s–1970s	Customer buying behavior: process models	Lavidge and Steiner (1961); Howard and Sheth (1969)
1970s	Customer satisfaction and loyalty	Oliver (1980); Zeithaml 1988; Bolton and Drew (1991); Gupta and Zeithaml (2006)
1980s	Service quality	Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988); Bitner (1990, 1992); Rust and Chung (2006); Bitner, Ostrom, and Morgan (2008)
1990s	Relationship marketing	Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987); Morgan and Hunt (1994); Berry (1995)
2000s	Customer relationship management	Reinartz and Kumar (2000); Verhoef (2003); Bolton, Lemon, and Verhoef (2004); Reinartz, Krafft, and Hoyer (2004); Rust, Lemon, and Zeithaml (2004); Payne and Frow (2005); Kumar and Reinartz (2006); Neslin et al. (2006); Kumar and Shah (2009)
2000s–2010s	Customer centricity and customer focus	Sheth, Sisodia, and Sharma (2000); Gulati and Oldroyd (2005); Shah et al. (2006)
2010s	Customer engagement	Libai et al. (2010); Van Doorn et al. (2010); Brodie et al. (2011); Kumar, Peterson, and Leone (2010); Kumar et al. (2013); Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014)

Contribution to Customer Experience	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encompassed path to purchase • Broad, experiential focus • Conceptual linkage models • Considered customer experience and customer decision making as a process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified key metrics to begin to assess overall customer experience • Empirical linkage models to identify key drivers • Assessed and evaluated customer perceptions and attitudes about an experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporated atmospherics and environment • Early journey mapping through blueprinting • Linked marketing and operations—focus on quality • Identified the specific context and elements of the customer experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded to B2B contexts • Identified key attitudinal drivers • Broadened the scope of customer responses considered in the customer experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabled return-on-investment assessment • Identification of key touch points and drivers • Data driven • Incorporated multichannel aspects • Identified how specific elements of the customer experience influence each other and business outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer perspective throughout organization • Embedded the customer and customer data deeper into the organization • Focused on redesigning customer experience from customer perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognized value of nonpurchase interactions • Incorporated positive and negative attitudes, emotions, and behaviors • Conceptual platform to incorporate social media • More clearly recognized the customer's role in the experience 	

Source: Lemon and Verhoef, 2016.

APPENDIX 3. INTERVIEW GUIDELINE FOR THE EXPLORATORY STUDY (FRENCH VERSION)

Considering that all the informants were company managers working in France, all the interviews were conducted in French. Although in some cases English was the working language, the use of an interview guideline in French helped to ensure the reliability of the answers across the data sample, thereby avoiding any potential translation and interpretation problems.

Phase 1 – Instructions préliminaires

- *Rappeler au répondant que la conversation va être enregistrée.*
- *Préciser le caractère confidentiel de la conversation : L'anonymat sera garanti.*
- *Informers le répondant qu'il/elle recevra la retranscription de la conversation en format Word.*

Phase 2 – Thèmes principaux

Thème 1 – L'organisation marketing/commerciale de l'entreprise :

1. Pouvez-vous me décrire votre parcours professionnel en quelques mots ?
2. Pouvez-vous me décrire dans les grandes lignes les activités marketing/commerciales de votre entreprise ?
 - Comment ciblez-vous vos clients ? Comment faites-vous la promotion de vos offres ?
Comment fidélisez-vous vos clients ?
3. Comment l'entreprise est-elle organisée d'un point de vue marketing/commercial ?
4. Combien de personnes y a-t-il dans l'équipe marketing/commerciale ?
5. Quelles sont les compétences marketing/commerciales des membres de l'équipe ?

Thème 2 – Définition de la « création de valeur » :

6. Pour vous, c'est quoi la « création de valeur » ?
 - Comment définiriez-vous la « création de valeur » ?
7. Quelles sont les composantes de la « création de valeur » ?
 - Quels sont les éléments constitutifs ?
 - Est-ce par exemple être à l'écoute du client pour satisfaire au mieux ses besoins, proposer des produits/services de qualité supérieure, offrir des délais de livraison courts ?
8. Avez-vous en tête d'autres notions associées à la « création de valeur » ?

Thème 3 – Description du « processus de création de valeur » :

9. Pouvez-vous me décrire le « processus de création de valeur » de l'entreprise ?
 - Comment transformez-vous la matière première et ensuite la proposez-vous à vos clients ? Ou
 - Comment identifiez-vous les problèmes à résoudre pour vos clients et ensuite comment les aidez-vous à mettre en place des solutions ? Ou
 - Comment organisez-vous et facilitez-vous les échanges entre vos usagers/clients ?
10. Pour vous, quelles sont les pratiques/activités de l'entreprise qui permettent de créer de la valeur ?
 - Parmi les différents éléments du « processus de création de valeur » que vous venez de décrire, lesquels permettent de créer véritablement de la valeur pour l'entreprise ?
11. Le « processus de création de valeur » est-il un élément formellement pris en compte dans la démarche stratégique de l'entreprise ?
 - De quelle manière ?

Si réponse 11 affirmative –

12. Quels sont les acteurs impliqués dans la réflexion du « processus de création de valeur » ?

Si réponse 11 négative –

13. Pourquoi n'est-ce pas pris en compte dans la démarche stratégique ?

Thème 4 – Représentation du « processus de création de valeur » :

14. Votre entreprise représente-t-elle son « processus de création de valeur » ?
 - Utilisez-vous des outils comme des schémas/modèles/méthodes pour représenter le « processus de création de valeur » ?

Si réponse 14 affirmative –

15. La représentation est-elle satisfaisante pour l'ensemble des acteurs dans l'entreprise ?

16. Quelles sont les difficultés rencontrées avec la représentation ?

17. Quelles sont les limites de la représentation ?

Si réponse 14 négative –

18. Pourquoi l'entreprise n'utilise-t-elle pas de représentation ?

19. Pouvez-vous citer des outils de représentation du « processus de création de valeur » ?

20. Si vous disposiez d'un outil de représentation facile d'utilisation, seriez-vous prêt à l'intégrer dans votre démarche stratégique ?

Thème 5 – Composition du « processus de création de valeur » :

Thème 5A – Sphère de l'entreprise :

21. Pour l'entreprise, quels éléments de l'entreprise entrent dans la définition du « processus de création de valeur » ?
 - Quels éléments côté entreprise permettent de créer de la valeur ?
 - Les activités ? Les ressources ? Les acteurs ?
22. Et pour vous, quels devraient être les éléments que l'entreprise devrait retenir ?
23. Pour vous, quel est le rôle de l'entreprise dans le « processus de création de valeur » ?
 - Est-ce par exemple d'élaborer une offre et la promouvoir auprès client ? Ou
 - Est-ce par exemple de développer une offre en collaboration avec le client ? Ou

- Est-ce par exemple d'identifier les objectifs et tâches du client puis ensuite mettre à sa disposition tout ce qu'il faut pour l'aider à les accomplir ?

Thème 5B – Sphère du client :

24. Pour l'entreprise, quels éléments du client entrent dans la définition du « processus de création de valeur » ?
- Quels éléments côté client sont pris en compte pour permettre à l'entreprise de créer de la valeur ?
 - Les activités ? Les ressources ? Les acteurs ?
25. Et pour vous, quels devraient être les éléments du client que l'entreprise devrait retenir ?
26. Pour vous, quel est le rôle du client dans le « processus de création de valeur » ?
- Est-ce par exemple de consommer la valeur créée par l'entreprise ? Ou
 - Est-ce par exemple de cocréer de la valeur avec l'entreprise en élaborant une offre ensemble ? Ou
 - Est-ce par exemple de créer de la valeur pour l'entreprise en intégrant votre offre dans ses activités/pratiques habituelles ? (Ex. : Pour les réseaux sociaux, les usagers génèrent du contenu sur les sites et donc ce sont eux qui créent de la valeur.)

Thème 5C – Sphère d'interaction :

27. Quel est l'objectif des interactions/échanges entre l'entreprise et ses clients ?
- Est-ce qu'on est plutôt dans une optique d'effectuer des transactions, de développer une relation, de constituer un réseau ? C'est quoi l'objectif ?
28. Pouvez-vous me décrire comment vous développer une offre ?
- Qu'est-ce qui déclenche l'élaboration d'une offre ?
29. Utilisez-vous des outils/méthodes pour élaborer une offre ? Lesquels ?
30. Quels éléments côté entreprise et côté client sont pris en compte dans l'élaboration d'une offre ?
31. Qui participe à l'élaboration de l'offre ?
32. Pouvez-vous me décrire les composantes de l'offre principale de l'entreprise ?
33. Parmi toutes ces composantes, quels éléments clés de l'offre sont mis en avant auprès des clients ?
34. Pour vous, quel est le rôle de l'offre dans le « processus de création de valeur » ?
- Est-ce par exemple d'incorporer de la valeur dans un produit/service en améliorant ou en ajoutant plus d'attributs ou de caractéristiques ? Ou
 - Est-ce par exemple de mettre en place les ressources et capacités adéquates côté entreprise qui permettent aux clients d'accomplir leurs objectifs et leurs tâches ?

Thème 6 – Gestion du « processus de création de valeur » :

35. Utilisez-vous des outils/méthodes pour mesurer la valeur créée par l'entreprise ? Lesquels ?
- Si réponse 35 affirmative –**
36. Quelles sont les difficultés rencontrées avec ces outils/méthodes ?
37. Quelles sont les limites de ces outils/méthodes ?
- Si réponse 35 négative –**
38. Pourquoi n'utilisez-vous pas d'outils/méthodes ?
39. Utilisez-vous des méthodes/procédures pour améliorer le « processus de création de valeur » ? Lesquelles ?

Si réponse 39 affirmative –

40. Quelles sont les difficultés rencontrées avec ces méthodes/procédures ?

41. Quelles sont les limites de ces méthodes/procédures ?

Si réponse 39 négative –

42. Pourquoi n'utilisez-vous pas de méthodes/procédures ?

Thème 7 – Réflexion sur la « création de valeur » :

43. Selon vous, qui crée la valeur pour l'entreprise ?

- Est-ce l'entreprise ? Est-ce le client ? Est-ce l'entreprise et le client ensemble ?

44. L'entreprise pourrait-elle cocréer de la valeur avec le client ? De quelle manière ?

Si réponse 44 affirmative –

45. Qu'est-ce qui pourrait aider l'entreprise à mettre en place une démarche de cocréation de valeur avec le client ?

46. En quoi serait-ce utile pour l'entreprise de mettre en place une telle démarche ?

47. Et le client pourrait-il créer de la valeur pour l'entreprise ? De quelle manière ?

Si réponse 47 affirmative –

48. Qu'est-ce qui pourrait aider l'entreprise à capter et intégrer la création de valeur par le client dans sa démarche ?

49. En quoi serait-ce utile pour l'entreprise de mettre en place une telle démarche ?

Phase 3 – Clôture de l'entretien

- *Indiquer au répondant que la conversation est terminée.*
- *Demander au répondant s'il est possible de récupérer un exemplaire de tout document utilisé par l'entreprise en lien avec le sujet de recherche.*

APPENDIX 4. PROFILES OF INFORMANTS FROM THE EXPLORATORY STUDY

Informant	Gender	Age	Post-Bac Studies	Company Seniority	Occupation	Management Level Position	Profession	Work Experience	Employment Status Experience
1	Male	43	5	10	Co-Owner / General Manager	Top Level 1	Consulting & Training	Multi-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
2	Male	46	4	4	Co-Owner / General Manager	Top Level 1	Consulting & Training	Multi-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
3	Male	57	8	18	Owner / General Manager	Top Level 1	Editing & Publishing	Multi-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
4	Male	47	5	9	Marketing & Sales Director	Top Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Multi-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
5	Female	32	5	9	Consultant	Middle Level 2	Consulting & Training	Mono-sector	Employee
6	Male	52	5	7	Co-Owner / General Manager	Top Level 1	Retailing	Mono-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
7	Male	47	4	3	VP Commerce Communication Marketing	Top Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Multi-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
8	Male	36	0	7	Owner / General Manager	Top Level 1	Retailing	Mono-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
9	Male	53	4	8	Head of Direct to Consumer	Middle Level 1	Marketing & Sales	Multi-sector	Employee
10	Male	52	5	28	Team Manager	Middle Level 2	Banking & Finance	Mono-sector	Employee
11	Female	47	5	5	Owner / General Manager	Top Level 1	Consulting & Training	Mono-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
12	Male	51	5	2	Marketing & Communication Director	Top Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Multi-sector	Employee
13	Female	41	5	2	Strategic Marketing Director	Top Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Mono-sector	Employee
14	Male	44	5	14	Sales Director	Top Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Mono-sector	Employee
15	Male	38	8	3	Project Manager	Middle Level 2	Engineering	Multi-sector	Employee
16	Male	50	3	20	Owner / General Manager	Top Level 1	Editing & Publishing	Multi-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
17	Male	53	5	14	Co-Owner / Chief Marketing Officer	Top Level 1	Marketing & Sales	Multi-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
18	Male	45	5	5	Regional Sales Manager	Middle Level 2	Marketing & Sales	Mono-sector	Employee
19	Male	48	5	15	Business Unit Manager	Middle Level 1	Banking & Finance	Multi-sector	Employee
20	Male	29	5	1	Co-Owner / Chief Operating Officer	Top Level 1	Banking & Finance	Multi-sector	Entrepreneur
21	Male	29	5	1	Co-Owner / Chief Executive Officer	Top Level 1	Banking & Finance	Multi-sector	Employee, entrepreneur
22	Male	23	5	1	Co-Owner / Chief Executive Officer	Top Level 1	Design	Multi-sector	Entrepreneur
23	Male	46	5	2	Co-Owner / Chief Executive Officer	Top Level 1	Culture	Mono-sector	Employee, entrepreneur

APPENDIX 5. PROFILES OF COMPANIES FROM THE EXPLORATORY STUDY

Company	Establishment	Size *	Economic Sector	Main Industry	Business Activity	Offering(s)	Market(s)	Marketing Team
1	Primary	PE	Quaternary	Consulting	Human resources consulting & training	Services	B2B, B2C	No
2	Primary	TPE	Quaternary	Computer	Computer & digital solutions	Solutions	B2B	Yes
3	Primary	MIC	Quaternary	Mass media	International relations website & training	Products, services	B2B, B2C	No
4	Primary	ME	Secondary	Wine	Wine producer / Hotel & restaurant	Products, services	B2B, B2C, B2B2C	Yes
5	Primary	TPE	Tertiary	Retail sales	Wine retail store / Wine training	Products, services	B2B, B2C	No
6	Primary	TGE	Secondary	Construction	Building & public works / Water & waste management	Products, services	B2B, B2G	Yes
7	Primary	TPE	Tertiary	Retail sales	Apparel retail store	Products	B2C	No
8	Secondary	TGE	Tertiary	Entertainment	E-commerce merchandising website	Products	B2C	Yes
9	Secondary	TGE	Tertiary	Financial services	Private banking services	Products, services	B2B, B2C	Yes
10	Primary	TPE	Quaternary	Consulting	CRM consulting & training	Services	B2B	No
11	Secondary	TGE	Secondary	Electronic goods	Electronic goods manufacturer & merchant	Products, services	B2B, B2C, B2B2C	Yes
12	Primary	ME	Secondary	Wine	Wine producer & merchant	Products, services	B2B, B2C, B2B2C	Yes
13	Primary	TPE	Tertiary	Manufacturing services	Innovation platform for the industry	Services	B2B	No
14	Primary	TPE	Quaternary	Mass media	Wine & spirits magazine	Products	B2B, B2B2C	No
15	Primary	ME	Quaternary	Computer	Digital application for text vocalization	Solutions	B2B	Yes
16	Primary	ME	Quaternary	Healthcare	Medical diagnosis solutions	Solutions	B2B	Yes
17	Primary	SU	Tertiary	Rental services	Electric bicycles rental	Solutions	B2B	No
18	Primary	SU	Quaternary	Computer	Digital application for e-payments	Solutions	B2B, B2C	No
19	Primary	SU	Quaternary	Computer	Digital application for crowdfunding	Solutions	B2C	No
20	Primary	SU	Quaternary	Culture	Digital solutions for cultural heritage	Solutions	B2G	No

* Please turn over for meaning.

* Size	Meaning	# of Employees
SU	Start-up company	0 and < 2 years old
MIC	<i>Micro Entreprise</i> = Micro company	0
TPE	<i>Très Petite Entreprise</i> = Very small-sized company	1 – 9
PE	<i>Petite Entreprise</i> = Small-sized company	10 – 49
ME	<i>Moyenne Entreprise</i> = Medium-sized company	50 – 499
GE	<i>Grande Entreprise</i> = Large-sized company	500 – 999
TGE	<i>Très Grande Entreprise</i> = Very large-sized company	1 000 +

APPENDIX 6. LIST OF CODES USED FOR THE EXPLORATORY STUDY

Parent and Children Codes	Description
1. Managerial focus	On what does the manager focuses his/her attention...
1.1. Focus on the sphere of the company	Sphere closed to the customer that represents the company's business processes such as design, manufacturing...
1.1.1. Elements linked to activities	Activities carried out by the company such as marketing, innovation, benchmarking...
1.1.2. Elements linked to resources	Resources exploited/developed by the company such as infrastructure, equipment, know-how...
1.1.3. Elements linked to actors	Stakeholders working for/with the company such as employees, shareholders, partners...
1.1.4. Elements linked to revenues/costs	Monetary elements such as revenues, profits, margins, costs...
1.1.5. Elements linked to offerings	Offerings proposed by the company such as products, services, solutions...
1.2. Focus on the sphere of interaction	Sphere of direct interaction/exchange between the company and the customer
1.2.1. Elements linked to transactions	Unique and/or brief encounters with no further contact beyond transactions...
1.2.2. Elements linked to relationships	Episodic and/or long-lasting encounters based on continuous contact with the customer...
1.2.3. Elements linked to co-creation through dyads	One-on-one customer support, customer training, partnership with the customer...
1.2.4. Elements linked to co-creation through networks	Exchange of services based on the integration of resources within a network/ecosystem of actors...
1.3. Focus on the sphere of the customer	Sphere closed to the company that represents the customer's business (B2B), private (B2C) or public (B2G) life...
1.3.1. Elements linked to activities	Activities carried out by the customer such as business/corporate (B2B), personal/professional (B2C), political (B2G) ...
1.3.2. Elements linked to resources	Resources exploited/developed by the customer such as tools, knowledge, skills...
1.3.3. Elements linked to actors	Actors related to the customer such as colleagues/clients/end-users (B2B), family/friends (B2C), staff/citizens (B2G) ...
1.3.4. Elements linked to experience	Cognitive and emotional processes of the customer such as experience, emotions, satisfaction, feedback...
1.3.5. Elements linked to goals	End goals sought by the customer such as to satisfy a need, to (re)solve a problem, to accomplish a task...
2. Value creation logic	The process or method through which a company creates value...
2.1. Value chain logic	A company transforming inputs into products such as business/consumer goods with/without post-purchase services...
2.2. Value shop logic	An expert/specialist (re)solving a customer's problems such as in consulting, law, medicine, engineering...
2.3. Value network logic	A company organizing and facilitating exchange between customers such as phone companies, retail banks, digital platforms...
3. Role of actors in value creation	The function performed by actors with regards to value creation...
3.1. Value is created by company	Value is created by the company for the customer... (Goods-Dominant Logic)
3.2. Value is co-created by company and customer	Value is created jointly by the company and the customer... (Service-Dominant Logic, Service Logic)
3.3. Value is created by customer	Value is created by the customer for the company... (Customer-Dominant Logic)

Please turn over for additional codes...

Parent and Children Codes	Description
4. Role of offering in value creation	The function performed by an offering with respect to value creation...
4.1. Value proposition by company	To propose a product/service/solution with added value to a customer... (Goods-Dominant Logic)
4.2. Value co-creation through service exchange (in a network)	To exchange services between actors through the integration of resources (i.e. knowledge and skills) within a network... (Service-Dominant Logic)
4.3. Value co-creation through service facilitation (in a dyad)	To support a customer's processes through a total service offering (i.e. recognized and hidden services) that facilitates his/her life or business... (Service Logic)
4.4. Value formation by customer	To match a company's capabilities and resources (i.e. offering) with a customer's goals and tasks (i.e. needing) ... (Customer-Dominant Logic)
5. Creator of value	Who creates value for the company...
5.1. The company	The company is the creator of value... (Goods-Dominant Logic)
5.2. Both via a network/ecosystem	Both the company and the customer via a network/ecosystem of actors... (Service-Dominant Logic)
5.3. Both via a dyadic relationship	Both the company and the customer via a dyadic relationship... (Service Logic)
5.4. The customer	The customer is the creator of value... (Customer-Dominant Logic)
6. Marketing perspective	The type of marketing perspective that prevails...
6.1. Goods-Dominant Logic	Value is created by the company as a result of adding value in an offering (i.e. product, service, solution) that is proposed to customers through transactions...
6.2. Service-Dominant Logic	Value is co-created by actors who exchange services via the integration of resources (i.e. knowledge and skills) within an ecosystem/network of actors...
6.3. Service Logic	Value is co-created by the company and the customer during direct interactions that enable the company to support the customer's processes with its offering (i.e. product, service, information) ...
6.4. Customer-Dominant Logic	Value is formed by the customer as a result of integrating and experiencing the company's offering (i.e. product, service, solution) in his life/business...

APPENDIX 7. MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CASE STUDY (FRENCH VERSION)

Considering that all the participants were company managers working in France, the multiple-choice questionnaire was administered in French (cf. section 6.2.2 for the English version). The main theme (i.e. key construct) of each question was not displayed in the version that was administered to participants. It was only shown to them during the debriefing part.

Instructions

- *Répondez à chacune des questions.*
- *Encerclez la lettre qui correspond le mieux à votre cas.*
- *Une seule réponse par question possible.*

Questionnaire à Choix Multiples

1. L'élaboration de notre stratégie marketing/commerciale est principalement axée sur des problématiques liées –
 - a. A nos offres de produits/services/solutions
 - b. Aux réseaux de relations entre les différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) au sein de notre écosystème/plateforme
 - c. Aux relations interpersonnelles avec chacun de nos clients
 - d. A la vie et/ou aux affaires de nos clients
2. Notre cœur de métier consiste principalement à –
 - a. Concevoir et promouvoir des offres de produits/services/solutions
 - b. Relier différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) entre eux
 - c. Résoudre les problèmes de nos clients
 - d. (Re)configurer nos ressources et compétences en fonction des objectifs et tâches à réaliser par nos clients
3. Nos activités marketing/commerciales consistent principalement à proposer –
 - a. Des offres de produits/services/solutions avec de la valeur ajoutée via l'amélioration de leurs caractéristiques inhérentes
 - b. Un écosystème/plateforme de services favorisant les échanges entre différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers)
 - c. Un ensemble de services complet facilitant la vie et/ou les affaires quotidiennes de nos clients
 - d. Des offres de produits/services/solutions personnalisées pour chaque client
4. L'objectif des échanges avec notre marché consiste principalement à –
 - a. Vendre nos produits/services/solutions pour faire du bénéfice
 - b. Développer le réseau de relations entre les acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) pour élargir notre écosystème/plateforme
 - c. Etablir des contacts directs avec chaque client pour mieux les accompagner individuellement
 - d. Aider nos clients à bien intégrer nos offres dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires pour améliorer leur bien-être

5. Nos clients déterminent la valeur de nos offres principalement via –
 - a. Le prix qu'ils payent pour nos produits/services/solutions par rapport à la qualité perçue
 - b. Les connaissances et compétences que peuvent leur apporter nos prestations de service
 - c. L'usage qu'ils peuvent faire de nos produits/services/solutions dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires
 - d. L'expérience vécue à la suite de l'intégration de nos produits/services/solutions dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires
6. En tant que manager, je pense qu'en fin de compte la valeur est principalement créée par –
 - a. L'entreprise pour le client
 - b. L'entreprise et le client ensemble mais sous le contrôle de l'entreprise
 - c. L'entreprise et le client ensemble mais sous le contrôle du client
 - d. Le client pour l'entreprise

APPENDIX 8. INTERVIEW GUIDELINE FOR THE CASE STUDY (FRENCH VERSION)

Considering that all the participants were company managers working in France, all the interviews were conducted in French.

Phase 1 – Instructions préliminaires

- *Rappeler au répondant que la conversation va être enregistrée.*
- *Préciser le caractère confidentiel de la conversation : L'anonymat sera garanti.*
- *Informé le répondant qu'il/elle recevra la retranscription de la conversation en format Word.*

Phase 2 – Thèmes principaux

Thème 1 – Evaluation de l'efficacité individuelle

1. Est-ce que cet atelier vous a aidé à enrichir vos connaissances professionnelles sur la thématique de la création de valeur ? De quelle manière ? Qu'est-ce que vous en reprenez ?

Thème 2 – Evaluation de l'efficacité du construit

2. Est-ce que le concept des 3 zones de création de valeur (c.a.d. Zone de l'entreprise, zone du client, zone d'interaction) vous permet de mieux comprendre les différents espaces où l'on peut créer de la valeur ? De quelle manière ? Qu'est-ce que vous en reprenez ?

Thème 3 – Evaluation de l'efficacité de la méthode

3. Est-ce que cette méthode (c.a.d. Le questionnaire et la présentation PowerPoint) vous permet d'envisager plus facilement des façons alternatives de créer de la valeur en fonction de la perspective adoptée ? De quelle manière ? Qu'est-ce que vous en reprenez ?

Thème 4 – Evaluation de l'efficacité collective

4. Est-ce que l'exercice en groupe vous a aidé à travailler efficacement ensemble pour identifier des sources de création de valeur supplémentaires pour l'entreprise ? De quelle manière ? Qu'est-ce que vous en reprenez ?

Phase 3 – Clôture de l'entretien

- *Indiquer au répondant que la conversation est terminée.*

APPENDIX 9. COMPARISON OF MCQ ANSWERS OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE CASE STUDY

MCQ Answers of Participant 1

Instructions

- Répondez à chacune des questions.
- Encerclez la lettre qui correspond le mieux à votre cas.
- Une seule réponse par question possible.

Questionnaire à Choix Multiples

- L'élaboration de notre stratégie marketing/commerciale est principalement axée sur des problématiques liées –
 - A nos offres de produits/services/solutions
 - Aux réseaux de relations entre les différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) au sein de notre écosystème/platforme
 - Aux relations interpersonnelles avec chacun de nos clients
 - A la vie et/ou aux affaires de nos clients**
- Notre cœur de métier consiste principalement à –
 - Concevoir et promouvoir des offres de produits/services/solutions
 - Relier différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) entre eux
 - Résoudre les problèmes de nos clients
 - (Re)configurer nos ressources et compétences en fonction des objectifs et tâches à réaliser par nos clients
- Nos activités marketing/commerciales consistent principalement à proposer –
 - Des offres de produits/services/solutions avec de la valeur ajoutée via l'amélioration de leurs caractéristiques inhérentes
 - Un écosystème/platforme de services favorisant les échanges entre différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers)
 - Un ensemble de services complet facilitant la vie et/ou les affaires quotidiennes de nos clients
 - Des offres de produits/services/solutions personnalisées pour chaque client
- L'objectif des échanges avec notre marché consiste principalement à –
 - Vendre nos produits/services/solutions pour faire du bénéfice
 - Développer le réseau de relations entre les acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) pour élargir notre écosystème/platforme
 - Etablir des contacts directs avec chaque client pour mieux les accompagner individuellement
 - Aider nos clients à bien intégrer nos offres dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires pour améliorer leur bien-être
- Nos clients déterminent la valeur de nos offres principalement via –
 - Le prix qu'ils payent pour nos produits/services/solutions par rapport à la qualité perçue
 - Les connaissances et compétences que peuvent leur apporter nos prestations de service
 - L'usage qu'ils peuvent faire de nos produits/services/solutions dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires
 - L'expérience vécue à la suite de l'intégration de nos produits/services/solutions dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires
- En tant que manager, je pense qu'en fin de compte la valeur est principalement créée par –
 - L'entreprise pour le client
 - L'entreprise et le client ensemble mais sous le contrôle de l'entreprise
 - L'entreprise et le client ensemble mais sous le contrôle du client
 - Le client pour l'entreprise

MCQ Answers of Participant 2

Instructions

- Répondez à chacune des questions.
- Encerclez la lettre qui correspond le mieux à votre cas.
- Une seule réponse par question possible.

Questionnaire à Choix Multiples

- L'élaboration de notre stratégie marketing/commerciale est principalement axée sur des problématiques liées –
 - A nos offres de produits/services/solutions
 - Aux réseaux de relations entre les différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) au sein de notre écosystème/platforme**
 - Aux relations interpersonnelles avec chacun de nos clients
 - A la vie et/ou aux affaires de nos clients
- Notre cœur de métier consiste principalement à –
 - Concevoir et promouvoir des offres de produits/services/solutions
 - Relier différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) entre eux
 - Résoudre les problèmes de nos clients
 - (Re)configurer nos ressources et compétences en fonction des objectifs et tâches à réaliser par nos clients
- Nos activités marketing/commerciales consistent principalement à proposer –
 - Des offres de produits/services/solutions avec de la valeur ajoutée via l'amélioration de leurs caractéristiques inhérentes
 - Un écosystème/platforme de services favorisant les échanges entre différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers)
 - Un ensemble de services complet facilitant la vie et/ou les affaires quotidiennes de nos clients
 - Des offres de produits/services/solutions personnalisées pour chaque client
- L'objectif des échanges avec notre marché consiste principalement à –
 - Vendre nos produits/services/solutions pour faire du bénéfice
 - Développer le réseau de relations entre les acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) pour élargir notre écosystème/platforme
 - Etablir des contacts directs avec chaque client pour mieux les accompagner individuellement**
 - Aider nos clients à bien intégrer nos offres dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires pour améliorer leur bien-être
- Nos clients déterminent la valeur de nos offres principalement via –
 - Le prix qu'ils payent pour nos produits/services/solutions par rapport à la qualité perçue**
 - Les connaissances et compétences que peuvent leur apporter nos prestations de service
 - L'usage qu'ils peuvent faire de nos produits/services/solutions dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires
 - L'expérience vécue à la suite de l'intégration de nos produits/services/solutions dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires
- En tant que manager, je pense qu'en fin de compte la valeur est principalement créée par –
 - L'entreprise pour le client
 - L'entreprise et le client ensemble mais sous le contrôle de l'entreprise
 - L'entreprise et le client ensemble mais sous le contrôle du client
 - Le client pour l'entreprise

MCQ Answers of Participant 3

Instructions

- Répondez à chacune des questions.
- Encerclez la lettre qui correspond le mieux à votre cas.
- Une seule réponse par question possible.

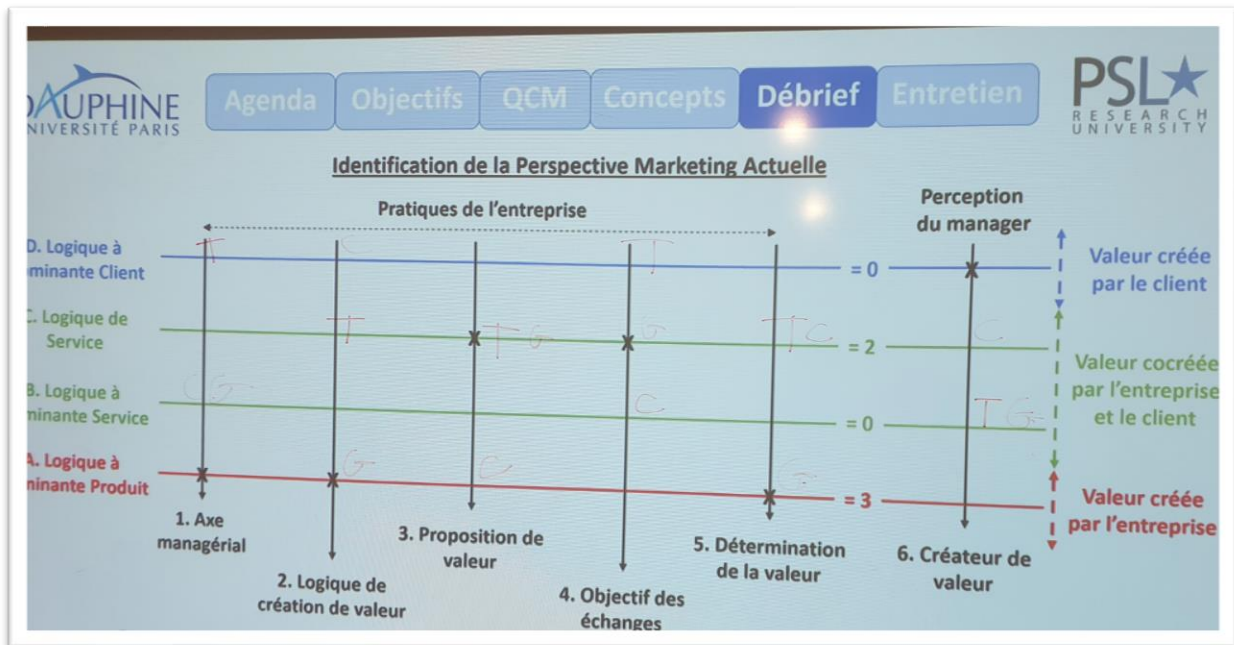
Questionnaire à Choix Multiples

- L'élaboration de notre stratégie marketing/commerciale est principalement axée sur des problématiques liées –
 - A nos offres de produits/services/solutions
 - Aux réseaux de relations entre les différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) au sein de notre écosystème/platforme**
 - Aux relations interpersonnelles avec chacun de nos clients
 - A la vie et/ou aux affaires de nos clients
- Notre cœur de métier consiste principalement à –
 - Concevoir et promouvoir des offres de produits/services/solutions
 - Relier différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) entre eux
 - Résoudre les problèmes de nos clients
 - (Re)configurer nos ressources et compétences en fonction des objectifs et tâches à réaliser par nos clients
- Nos activités marketing/commerciales consistent principalement à proposer –
 - Des offres de produits/services/solutions avec de la valeur ajoutée via l'amélioration de leurs caractéristiques inhérentes
 - Un écosystème/platforme de services favorisant les échanges entre différents acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers)
 - Un ensemble de services complet facilitant la vie et/ou les affaires quotidiennes de nos clients
 - Des offres de produits/services/solutions personnalisées pour chaque client
- L'objectif des échanges avec notre marché consiste principalement à –
 - Vendre nos produits/services/solutions pour faire du bénéfice
 - Développer le réseau de relations entre les acteurs (entreprises et/ou particuliers) pour élargir notre écosystème/platforme
 - Etablir des contacts directs avec chaque client pour mieux les accompagner individuellement
 - Aider nos clients à bien intégrer nos offres dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires pour améliorer leur bien-être
- Nos clients déterminent la valeur de nos offres principalement via –
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 - L'usage qu'ils peuvent faire de nos produits/services/solutions dans leur vie et/ou leurs affaires
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- En tant que manager, je pense qu'en fin de compte la valeur est principalement créée par –
 - L'entreprise pour le client
 - L'entreprise et le client ensemble mais sous le contrôle de l'entreprise
 - L'entreprise et le client ensemble mais sous le contrôle du client
 - Le client pour l'entreprise

maison parce qu'un bon pour donner des qualité.

Source: Author.

MCQ Answers of Participants Plotted in Red on the PowerPoint Slide *



Source: Author.

* See figure 54 in section 7.4.3 for better details.