

# Lost Luggage(s)

## Without Things or From Products to Services

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**Abstract—** Industrial design is no more a discipline that designs the physical attributes or the products of an intended use, but also a discipline designing immaterial services and experiences. In this respect Design Management specialization area students of Izmir University of Economics, Dept. of Industrial Design develops a project, called “Product to Service: Material to Immaterial” where the process begins by eliminating a functioning product in life, say iron, and design a service which will sustain the function of that product, say ironing. It is like physically making products disappear but design services that maintain the functions and fulfillment of needs. It is like making washing machines and/or irons disappear, yet keeping clean and ironed clothes through services.

This paper discusses the economical and social consequences of these transformational design experiences regarding mainly “traveling (with or without luggages)”. It will also bring about a wider discussion about the role of physical things and their experiential significations in our lives.

**Keywords—** *Product Design, Service Design, Experiential Service Design*

### I. INTRODUCTION

“Imagine there are no big cases those we carry while travelling but everything we want are being delivered, or like, imagine there are no irons or washing machines in our houses and yet we get everything cleaned and ironed whenever demanded. In fact, who enjoys carrying those huge cases, whatever branded or how stylish they are. They want their things delivered from one place to another. Or, who wants washing machines and irons. What people want are clean and ironed clothes.” The service design project in the curriculum of Izmir University of Economics, Department of Industrial Design, Design Management Specialization Area starts with such imaginary scenarios and the instructors ask the students to replace physical utilitarian products with experiential services and develop a business model. The aim is to employ design thinking in a process where utilitarian efficiency we expect from industrial products are being improved by replacing them with so called experiential services. Some requirements of the project are to employ IT like mobile applications, to employ people in the services, to develop a business model with

qualitative and quantitative aspects from cooperate identity applications to a business file stating the feasibility of the service in the market, and evidence that the service design developed is a contribution in terms of social and environmental responsibility of designing. Through a set of practices from observations to qualitative and quantitative research, the students come up usually with an industrial product, like washing machine, to be replaced with a more efficient and experiential cleaning service in the form of a business model, like franchise.

### II. FROM PRODUCTS TO SERVICES

Service, which can also humorously be associated with the “oldest profession in history”, is relatively a new business concept and its association with design process is newer. Though we do not see it in the older version of the definition of industrial design of ICSID – International Council of Societies of Industrial Design, it appears in the recent definition, as “ a creative activity whose aim is to establish the multi-faceted qualities of objects, processes, services and their systems in whole life cycles. Therefore, design is the central factor of innovative humanization of technologies and the crucial factor of cultural and economic exchange” [1] since 1999. Designing was usually associated with a physical creation professionally. Artists, architects, engineers, followed by industrial designers after industrial revolution were all the agents of a creative material phenomenon for some kind of a purpose; either purely aesthetic as in the case of artists, or purely utilitarian as in the case of engineers, or both as in the case of architects and industrial designers. Herbert A. Simon, 1978 Nobel Laureate in Economics writes “ Everyone designs who devises course of action aimed at changing situations into preferred ones. The intellectual activity that produces material artefacts is no different fundamentally from the one that prescribes remedies for a sick patient or the one that devises a new sales plan for a company or a social welfare policy for a state. Design, so constructed, is the core of all professional training; it is the professional mark that distinguishes the professions from the sciences. Schools of engineering, as well as schools of architecture, business education, law, and medicine are all centrally concerned with the process of design”[2]. Thus, fundamentally designing can not only be associated with

material things but also with immaterial, abstract, conceptual, and fictional formations as well. The outcome, being fully material is not a necessity. Joseph Pine II and James Gilmore puts it even as an economical shift from designing commodities towards experiences. In their nicely titled book “The Experience Economy: Work is theatre and every business a stage”(1999), they discuss the importance of this new kind of economy not by selling products but by selling experiences .

TABLE 1. Economic Phases Of Design

PHASE	ECONOMY	OFFERING	DEMAND
1st	Agrarian	Commodities	Characteristics
2nd	Industrial	Goods	Features (Identities)
3rd	Service	Services	Benefits
4th	Experience	Experiences	Sensations

The shifts from from Agrarian Economy does not fully exclude the characteristics of the previous phase where industrial goods (products) includes agrarian commodities, services include industrial designs, and experiences include both. In terms of design practice, designing industrial goods is an activity covering designing commodities, whereas designing experiences covers designing both experiences, services, goods and commodities. All economic experiences offered in the market from Disneyland to Starbucks in the form of design include also the offerings of the previous economic phases. Of course the characteristics of the qualitative and quantitative aspects of previous phases change in each phase. Designing a washing machine for cleaning in Industrial Economy includes designing a utilitarian device as a commodity with different even extra qualities either to develop an identity for differentiation or technically improved features in terms of innovation Also designing a cleaning service in the Service Economy includes also some kind of products for washing, maybe less in quantity but more in terms of complexity. In the Experience Economy, an extra design aspect of sensation should be added to the services which do not exclude commodities and goods as well.

### III. CONSEQUENCES OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

Following the design problem of carrying and/or delivering stuff while travelling, any device to carry stuff in the form of a commodity is a necessity and should be designed in the Agrarian model. When it becomes a good, an industrially manufactured mass product reflecting a cooperate identity with its designed features marketed and sold to individuals in masses, it turns out to be an industrial product design in the Industrial Economy A lot have been, will be, and can be said about this type of industrial system of production. Any luggage that we use for travelling today in the form of an industrially designed, produced and sold product in the market has a potential for the following:

- a) Putting toxic waste into soil, water, air if not penetrating potentially cancerogen chemicals into the stuff we carry in it.
- b) Producing dangerous materials which will require vigilance in the future not only during production but especially by turning into waste after a short use (mostly not by loosing its functional qualities).
- c) Requiring thousands of complex regulations either technical, national, international, legal or even ethical, pretending to keep people and natural systems safe.
- d) Creating prosperity and also economical and social polarity and instability by diminishing natural and even vital resources
- e) Eroding the diversity of species and cultural practices
- f) Creating a momentary satisfaction of fulfilling an intended purpose, being individually special and unique or belonging to some special and unique group followed by a dissatisfaction or lack of experience, if not totally a negative experience as in the case of luggages while travelling.
- g) If not it is the travel cases to blame but most of the products, creating unemployment by replacing humans with products as in the case of ATMs or dispensers.

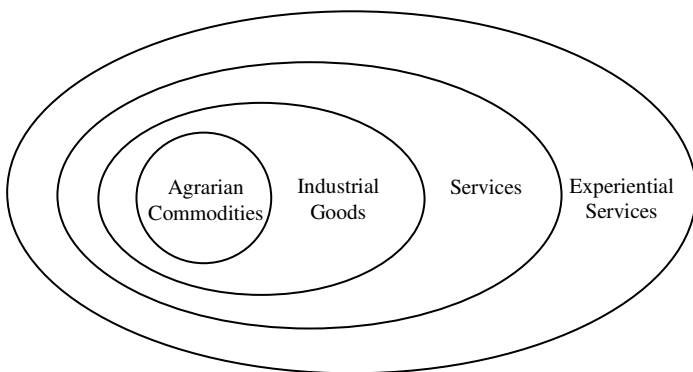


Fig.1 Economic Phases In Terms Of Design Practice



Fig.2. A Rimowa Salsa Air: Selected as one of the best 50 luggage bags by The Independent (Source: <http://www.independent.co.uk/extras/indybest/fashion-beauty/the-50-best-luggage-7782434.html> - Accessed 15 October 2013)

#### IV. PRODUCTS OF SERVICE

In the Service Economy, a concept like *Product of Service* can be introduced to reduce, if not to remove completely, the negative consequences of industrial products mentioned above [4]. Industrial waste produced by either artificial obsolescence or mass production of travel cases can be reduced by less in production and more in use by a system similar to leasing or rent a car. Instead of purchasing, a(ny) travel case, big or small, casual or avant-garde, cheap or expensive can be rent for a temporary service in this model. In this scenario consumers purchase not the product, but the service the product offers for a period of use. In this way products can be produced less but used more and when their life cycles are completed, they can be broken down into their components each of which can find a way to be used for some purpose again, either in the form of a detail or material in a new product, or in the form of a totally new material or composition. As in the case of IBM which experienced such a transformation from a production company to a service company in the 90s and 2000s, most of the industrial products have a potential to become Products of Service without less changes in the existing system of production, but more in the existing system of consumption strictly bound to consumption habits of the society. IBM is not an exceptional case and we see this shift from Industrial products to the products of services in a number of examples. Like IBM not marketing the M concept in its brand but mainly the services these machines provide, automotive companies next to marketing their products in the form of individual purchase, they are also marketing their products even more in the form of fleets to be leased by car rental companies as products of service. In this model of product of service when the user (or the customer, or the consumer) wants to replace the

product employed, the producer can upgrade it with a newer model or the user can change the provider of the products of service, as in the case of mobile network providers. In the case of mobile communications, the priority is usually given to the services rather than the products provided, and usually the service company provides a diverse variety of products of use.

Coming back to our travelling case, yet, a better service can also be designed without experiencing all the burdens of travelling with all the hassles of carrying a big case on all types of cramped surfaces, and in all types of cramped spaces, either in the form of an airport stair, a taxi trunk, or a hotel elevator. In this form of service design we can go through a process more likely a pizza order or a hotel reservation service:

- First, we can easily define the items to be delivered, the exact times and locations of collection and delivery by using mobile and internet technologies;
- Next we can compile and prepare the items at the location of collection on time;
- And finally, we travel light and wait for the items to be delivered on the destination, or rather we find them delivered and ready for unpacking... All without a nicely designed big travel case.

Such a service design will definitely reduce the negative mass consequences of industrial products of the Industrial Economy. Definitely less waste, less energy consumption, less harm to natural resources, less complexity can be achieved by a Service Economy, even with more employment (of people by services). No economic system on earth can ever be successful without bringing solutions for the increase in population and life expectancy. And creating unemployment by design is not a solution for these issues at all. Yet what makes this service different than an ordinary but improved courier or delivery service. In fact this brings us to the stage from an idea being implemented to existing systems to designing something, not a thing but an experiential service.

#### V. EXPERIENTIAL ASPECTS OF DESIGN

Every design, either product, or service, or system requires an experiential matrix in order to fulfill the requirements intended and change existing situations to preferred ones [5]. Such a matrix tabled below also gives hints about what type of design contributions are needed, or what type of priorities should be set while designing. Temporary fulfillment of the utilitarian purpose never creates a full satisfaction as we see in the world of consumption. Any intended purpose can only be fulfilled by the fulfillment of *Physical, Emotional, Social, and Cultural Experiences*. An important aspect is that, while Physical and Emotional Experiences are being experienced individually, Social and Cultural ones are being shared with others.

TABLE 2. Experience Matrix For Designing Services And Products

Experience Design	Individual – Personal		Shared with others	
	Physical	Emotional	Social	Cultural
Product A	Low	Low	Not Applicable	Average
Product B	High	Low	High	Low
Service A	Low	High	Low	High
Service B	Not Applicable	Average	Not Applicable	Low

- a) *Physical Experiences:* They are the experiences being fulfilled either by physical labour spent during use, or the quality of the physical experiences. They vary from physical comfort and ease as in the case of conventional sitting units like chairs and coaches, to pushing the human dimensions and capabilities as in the case of extreme sport items, or to physical security and safety as in the case of child care products. Though the physical experiences with luggage bags are usually negative and even frustrating, features like ease of carriage, collapsibility of the design, sturdiness, lightness are all contribute to the physical experience. Though in the case of a delivery system mentioned above, the lack of the physical experience of carrying a luggage while travelling can be the real contribution in terms of physical experience, any service design should never ignore the importance of physical, i.e. bodily experiences. Services and we as users are usually falling into the mistaken attitude of eliminating any physical experience in the name of comfort, ending either with some kind of dissatisfaction, ..or obesity.
- b) *Emotional Experiences:* Related mainly to human processes of cognition and perception, emotional experiences vary from “love at first sight” like affections to disinterested (not related to some kind of interest, gain, or expectation) aesthetic experiences. Smells, visuals, some kind of sound, i.e. music all contribute to service design as we see in Starbucks or likes in terms of emotional experiences. The formal, visual and textual qualities of any design, including travel luggages create some kind of emotional like-dislike, beautiful-not beautiful like feelings. The moments of owning, as in the case of gifts, or the moments of purchasing also arise some kind of positive emotional experiences. As aesthetic experiences mostly related with art, emotional experiences are strongly tied to time and place. That’s why we do have different feelings about design in different times and places and that’s why emotional experiences are the most unstable ones due to their sensory and time-place bound characteristics. It doesn’t mean that they can not be designed. Even, this unstable and ever changing characteristics of emotional experiences provide a dynamic design approach, some kind of responsive design aspects when time, place and people change, like the change

of music styles in bars and cafes according to the seasons, people, or occasions.

- c) *Social Experiences:* Physical and Emotional experiences never make a design, either product or service fully satisfactory. Sometimes lack of social experience is the main cause of dissatisfaction that people experience in most of the situations. Even the most beautiful sunset moment does not completely create a sense of fulfillment if it has been experienced individually. That’s why we do have these “share” buttons on our new media devices, or “blogs”, or “twits”, turning personal-individual experiences into social ones. Even the most extreme personal experiences, like climbing unto the top of Mount Everest or circumnavigating the earth solo in a sailboat, turn out to be a social experience in different forms from storytelling in a friends’ meeting or a book to be published later to be experienced socially, if not shared on real time. Sailing a boat in a group is definitely a far more better social experience than travelling alone with a big luggage and the main problem to be solved with services is that unless they are performed as a group in shared circumstances, they are more artificially optimized and performed in a series of so called invincible civilized and polite codes. The book I purchase from Amazon ever reaches me not as a designed experience, but as a mechanical delivery operation.
- d) *Cultural Experiences:* Different than social experiences where product designs or services are shared in a group, cultural experiences are more like sharing values and habits through design. Using certain items or certain services create a cultural value around these designs. Using bicycles while commuting instead of a car or public transport, is not only a physical, emotional, or a social experience, but it also is a cultural experience depending on values (of energy, consumption, pollution, health) in a society. Like bicycles, any luxurious car brand or any public transport service also create cultural experiences depending on values for the people who use or employ them. Any design activity, any design thinking, any design process should include the cultural values and habits not in the form of abstract concepts, but in the form of design for experience. Travelling itself is a cultural habit and has a cultural value in our society. People make their choices of design regarding types, tools, or services of travelling according to their cultural values. A luxury branded luggage bag offers totally a different cultural experience than a second hand military backpack. A luxury branded second hand military backpack looking design surely is another cultural experience.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Whether it is a product design in the form of a luggage bag or some kind of a service design aiming to deliver items from one location to another, physical, emotional, social and cultural experiences are the basics to be designed. Any luggage bag design lacking social and cultural experiences, or any delivery service lacking, even eliminating physical and emotional experiences are doomed to be not satisfactory in terms of experiential aspects. It is no different for a washing machine or a cleaning service aimed at fulfilling a need, or a demand in society. Replacing products with services is no progress or contribution in terms of design, unless services also provide the experiences the products have provided, or vice versa.

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