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A23E10000 Service Business Strategy

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Aalto University
School of Business

Department of Marketing

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1. How to complete the course?

The course encompasses the following elements, which are explained in more detail in following:

1. Independent work (60%)
    a. Starting assignment: Reflection note (20%, 0-20 points)
    b. Thematic package 1: Learning reflection: mind map & video/audio (10 %, 0-10 points)
    c. Thematic package 2: Learning reflection: mind map & video/audio (10 %, 0-10 points)
    d. Thematic package 3: Case Study – report (10%, 0-10 points)
    e. Thematic package 4: Learning reflection: reflection note on two articles (10 %, 0-10 points)
        i. Each Thematic package includes one quiz (pass/fail) (Quizzes need to be *passed* to complete the course)
2. Group work (40%)
    a. Lean Service Creation project (40 %)

In order to pass the course, you have to successfully complete all the assignments due on the dates and times given. Extensions may be requested on justified grounds but delayed submissions will be sanctioned (-20% of the points the student would have otherwise received) in overall grading of the assignment. All the assignments need to be submitted to a designated inbox in MyCourses section "Assignments".

Each assignment is graded separately and the course overall grading consists of the sum of points per each assignment. In this course book, you will find more information of the content and grading of the assignments.

On the course you can earn max. 100 points, which will be converted to the final grade as follows:

Points	Grade	
90 points and over	5	Excellent
80 to 89 points	4	Very good
70 to 79 points	3	Good
60 to 69 points	2	Fair
50 to 59 points	1	Poor
49 points and lower		Fail

2. Course assignments

2.1 Independent work (60 %)

2.1.1 Starting Assignment: Reflection note (20 %, 0-20 points)

Idea:

The starting assignment consists of two parts:

Part I: Reflect on your preconceptions before the start of the course.

1. How do you understand (would define) the concept of "service". Do you feel that you already know a lot about the topic, and what is your motivation to study more about it? (4 p)
2. What do you think are the most topical or urgent issues that the service sector is facing 2021 and in near future? Justify your choice(s). In your answer, you may, for example, choose 1-2 current trends or challenges that you think are actual. (4 p)
3. Describe shortly your intention towards the course: How do you plan to work during the course? What you aim for and how do you plan to achieve your goals? (2 p)

Part II: Assess your preconceptions, regarding **the question 2 in Part I,** against the views of some economic journal or magazine (e.g. Harvard Business Review, Forbes, The Economist, Kauppalehti, Inc., Wired or similar – all these are available in Aalto Finna / Primo). Browse the magazine publications from recent years. Did your perception change somehow, if you now reflect on: What do you think are the most topical or urgent issues that the service sector is facing 2021 and in near future? If your perceptions did change, how? Does the view you get from the magazine describe similar issues than you considered as actual? (3 p)

Then, select two magazine articles that discuss some topical or urgent issue for services. The purpose is to select one issue to reflect on, so select two articles that discuss the same issue – their perspective to the issue may, however, be different. The issue may be same than one of those you reflected on in the Part I or it may be something totally different. Answer the following questions.

1. Shortly describe the main idea of the articles you reflect on. What is the topical or urgent issue the articles discuss? How do the authors justify that the topic is important? (4 p)
2. What kind of questions does the topic raise in you? Identify also at least three questions that you think service managers need to ask regarding this issue, to sustain in the competition? Why do you think these questions are important? You may assess the questions in general or reflect on e.g. single industry or a company, based on your own interests. (3 p)

Format and timeline:

1. Participants are asked to write approximately one (1) word page per each part (altogether two [2] pages), addressing the questions above. The maximal total length is 3 pages. The length of the answer is not the key. Instead pay attention to the content.
2. Grading of the assignment will be based on a scale from 0-20 points. The questions are weighted as indicated vis-a-vis each question. The grading follows the general grading instructions given under heading "3. General instructions for the assignments".
3. The task is designed as an individual work.
4. **The deadline for submitting the assignment is May. 28, 2021, 23.59 Finnish time. Please upload your answer document to the respective assignment box on the MyCourses homepage. Do not forget to clearly indicate your name on the submission and the respective files!**

Thematic Packages

Idea in general:

Idea for each thematic package is similar.

1. For each thematic package, there is a designated section (e.g. Thematic package 1: Introduction to services) in MyCourses platform. Under each section you'll find all the learning material you need in order to complete the package.
2. First, watch the introduction video to the topic.
3. Study the learning material that consist of videos, podcasts and academic articles.
4. After careful study of all the material, take a Quiz. Each thematic package includes one quiz, that consists of 10 question related to the core contents of the package. The questions are designed you to make sure that you have reached the learning outcomes of each thematic package. Quiz is graded pass / fail and each quiz need to be passed in order to finish the course. 7/10 points are needed to pass the quiz. The quiz can be taken twice but if you get fail, the teacher may offer you with alternative (similar) assignment. However, the quizzes are designed to be easily passed for a student that has studied all the material.
5. After completing the quiz, go to the MyCourses section "Assignments". Each Thematic package includes one assignment that will be graded.

   Instructions for each assignment are explained in the following:

2.1.2 Thematic package 1: Introduction to services

Idea:

Learning reflection: mind map & video/audio (10 %, 0-10 points)

Reflect on your learning from the thematic package 1. Summarize in 1-2 sentences, what do you think was the key message of the package? Prepare then a digital mind map, in which you place your summary in the center of the pattern. Enrich your mind map by answering to the following questions.

1. Name two important and central things you learned. Describe in your own words, how do you understand these things? Did what you learned support your understanding so far, or did your perception change, if so, how? Do you disagree with some of the ideas presented to you?
2. How do you think things relate to the whole of marketing and managing services?
3. How important and timing do you think these issues are to service businesses and service managers today and in future?

You may reflect your thoughts to your own experience or to e.g. social, environmental, firm or industry specific issue based on your own interests. Or, if you think these issues are not relevant to the service managers and the service industry, argue and justify.

Format and timeline:

1. Prepare a digital mind map (one template) using 10-50 items. As items, used may be, for example, graphical illustrations, key words, quotes, photos or short phrases. You may build your mind map in whatever way you see fit. However, avoid using long sentences. There is no one way to do the mind map but you are encouraged to be creative.
2. As a tool, you are suggested to use Miro, but using any other digital mind mapping app, tool or software is equally fine. (Instructions to use Miro you'll find: https://help.miro.com/)
3. Prepare also a videotaped presentation, in which you explain your mind map (i.e. the narrative, your answers to the questions). In addition to the mind map, you are not expected to include any additional visual content to your video. Also, plain voice audio record (and the mind map as separate file) is enough, if you can make sure that your audience can follow your narrative. The maximal total presentation time is 5 minutes.
4. The task is designed as an individual work.
5. Submit both, your min map (photo or a link to the Miro template) and the videotaped (max. 5 min) presentation.
6. Grading will be based on a scale from 0-10 points. Grading of the assignment will be based on, primarily to the content of your narrative and secondary, to the visual

presentation of your mind map. The grading follows the general grading instructions given under heading "3. General instructions for the assignments".

7. **The deadline for submitting the assignment is June. 2, 2021, 23.59 Finnish time. Please upload your answer document to the respective assignment box on the MyCourses homepage. Do not forget to clearly indicate your name on the submission and the respective files!**

2.1.3 Thematic package 2: Managing service excellence

Idea:

Learning reflection: mind map & video/audio (10 %, 0-10 points)

Reflect on your learning from the thematic package 1. Summarize in 1-2 sentences, what do you think was the key message of the package? Prepare then a digital mind map, in which you place your summary in the center of the pattern. Enrich your mind map by answering to the following questions.

1. Name two important and central things you learned. Describe in your own words, how do you understand these things? Did what you learned support your understanding so far, or did your perception change, if so, how? Do you disagree with some of the ideas presented to you?
2. How do you think things relate to the whole of marketing and managing services?
3. How important and timing do you think these issues are to service businesses and service managers today and in future?

You may reflect your thoughts to your own experience or to e.g. social, environmental, firm or industry specific issue based on your own interests. Or, if you think these issues are not relevant to the service managers and the service industry, argue and justify.

Format and timeline:

1. Prepare a digital mind map (one template) using 10-50 items. As items, used may be, for example, graphical illustrations, key words, quotes, photos or short phrases. You may build your mind map in whatever way you see fit. However, avoid using long sentences. There is no one way to do the mind map but you are encouraged to be creative.
2. As a tool, you are suggested to use Miro, but using any other digital mind mapping tool or software is equally fine. (Instructions to use Miro you'll find: https://help.miro.com/)
3. Prepare also a videotaped presentation, in which you explain your mind map (i.e. the narrative, or your answers to the questions). In addition to the mind map, you are not expected to include any additional visual content to your video. Also, plain voice audio record (and the mind map as separate file) is enough, if you can make sure that your audience can follow your narrative. The maximal total presentation time is 5 minutes.
4. The task is designed as an individual work.
5. Submit both, your min map (photo or a link to the Miro template) and the videotaped (max. 5 min) presentation.
6. Grading will be based on a scale from 0-10 points. Grading of the assignment will be based on, primarily to the content of your narrative and secondary, to the visual

presentation of your mind map. The grading follows the general grading instructions given under heading "3. General instructions for the assignments".

7. **<u>The deadline for submitting the assignment is June. 09, 2021, 23.59 Finnish time. Please upload your answer document to the respective assignment box on the MyCourse homepage. Do not forget to clearly indicate your name on the submission and the respective files!</u>**

2.1.4 Thematic package 3: Technology-driven service strategies

Idea:

Case study – report: (10 %, 0-10 points)

The module also features case teaching. The case study the participants are asked to analyze is: *HEMA IN CHINA: IS ALIBABA AHEAD OF AMAZON IN RETAILING?* Case studies give you a practical arena or context to apply what you have learned into a real-life situation. We will follow the Harvard Business School case study method, which is described as follows:

[The] case method is a profound educational innovation that presents the greatest challenges confronting leading companies, nonprofits, and government organizations—complete with the constraints and incomplete information found in real business issues—and places the student in the role of the decision maker. There are no simple solutions; yet through the dynamic process of exchanging perspectives, countering and defending points, and building on each other's ide-as, students become adept at analyzing issues, exercising judgment, and making difficult decisions—the hallmarks of skillful leadership. […]

Preparation is key for a good study experience. For you to get the most out of a case session, you need to read through and reflect on the case material. It is highly encouraged to share ideas and re-flections with your fellow course participants before class. Within the classroom, you will be given an opportunity to argue your position and get feedback on your thinking by listening to other participants' ideas. The course covers one case entitled **"."**

Participants are asked to reflect on the following four questions when analyzing the case study:

1. How would you define Hema/Amazon Go's digital strategies? (2 p)
2. What are the key differentiators (value propositions) of Hema and Amazon Go? Do they differ a lot from traditional grocery retail? (3 p)
3. What are the success factors in traditional and in the new retail grocery? (2,5 p)

4. Provide examples of how prospective analytics is helping Amazon and Alibaba improve their services? (2,5 p)

Format and timeline:

1. Answer the four case study questions in a max. three page word document. In addition to that, you may use tables or charts, but they are not required. You may format the assignment using question numbers (1-4.) i.e. the answer does not need to be a coherent piece of text with introduction and conclusions.

2. The task is designed as an individual work.

3. Grading of the case study report will be based on a scale from 0-10 points. The grading follows the general grading instructions given under heading "3. General instructions for the assignments".

4. <u>**The deadline for submitting the case study report is June. 18, 2021, 23.59 Finnish time. Please upload your answer document to the respective assignment box on the MyCourses homepage. Do not forget to clearly indicate your name on the submission and the respective files!**</u>

2.1.5 Thematic package 4: Emerging themes in services: strategies to perform societal impact

Idea:

Learning reflection: reflection note on two articles (10 %, 0-10 points)

You are asked to read two academic articles related to thematic package 4 topics. Participants are asked to reflect on articles, addressing the following questions:

1. *Compare articles*. What is/are the topic(s) that the articles address on? What are the main research questions of the articles? (2 p)

2. *Compare articles*. How are these questions answered? What methods are used? What are the findings the authors have made? (2 p)

3. *Compare articles.* What kind of theoretical contributions or managerial implications do the articles offer (if any)? How timing do you think these implications are for service managers and / or for societies (decision makers) today? (3 p)

4. *Compare articles.* Do you think the article is relevant to service businesses in order them to face the challenges of today and future? Why or why not? What kind of services would benefit the most from this article? You may reflect your thoughts to e.g. social, environmental, economic or industry specific challenges based on your own interests. Or, if you think the article offers nothing useful to service industry, argue and justify. (3 p)

You are free (but not required) to use any sources in addition to the two given articles.

Format and timeline:

1. Participants are asked to write 2-3 word-pages of reflection on articles, addressing the questions above. Please note, that three pages should NOT be exceeded.

2. The task is designed as an individual work.

3. Grading of the case study report will be based on a scale from 0-10 points. The grading follows the general grading instructions given under heading "3. General instructions for the assignments".

4. **The deadline for submitting the assignment report is July. 2, 2021, 23.59 Finnish time. Please upload your answer document to the respective assignment box on the MyCourses homepage. Do not forget to clearly indicate your name on the submission and the respective files!**

2.2 Group Work (40 %)

Idea and Timeline:

The module also features designing solution to a business problem, using Lean Service Creation (LSC) - approach. In teams of 3-6 students (depending on the final number of participants), participants will ideate a service-related problem of their interest and create a solution to it using Lean Service Creation – method. The Group work starts with ***Kick Off - session,*** held in ***June 3, 9-12 a.m via Zoom,*** in which the details of the assignment are presented and participants are allocated in groups. ***Second group work - session*** is held in ***June 17, 9-12 a.m via Zoom.*** The final outcomes will be presented in the ***Presentation – session,*** held in ***July 1, 9-12 a.m. via Zoom.*** In the Presentation – session, each group will also get and give feedback to other presentations.

Please note, that participation to workshops is highly recommended to successfully participate in the group work! In case of compulsory reason, absence is allowed and possible to compensate with an alternative assignment.

Format and grading:

The group work consists of two assignments that will be evaluated separately: Written report (max 2 word-pages) and the presentation of the idea. Grading of the group work will be based on a scale from 0-40 points and it consists of the points that the group receives from these two assignments. Both assignments are graded on a scale from 0-20 points. Detailed grading criteria, deadlines and assignment specific instructions will be given in the Kick Off session. However, the deadline for written report will be July 4, 2021.

What is LSC?

"Lean Service Creation (LSC) is a systematic and customisable way for multidisciplinary teams to create new services. LSC is rooted in our experience working on thousands of software products. It stands on the shoulders of Lean Startup, Agile methods and Design Thinking. But LSC is a bit more than just a service design process. In addition to providing a structure for creating digital services, it uses a comprehensive set of canvases to guide you through the process in a manner that makes sure you're asking the right questions and solving the right problems.

Why go with LSC? In a world filled with new ideas and concepts, making a difference is harder than ever. To stand out from the competition, you need to innovate but creating new things can be a risky business. LSC makes sure you spend your time and money on services and features your customers really need. People love services that address a real need. Success is a matter of understanding that need. Who are you building the service for? Does it support your company strategy, values and narrative? How should it be implemented? Can you change direction when necessary? LSC helps you answer these questions - and many more."

(More about LSC: www. futurice.com/lean-service-creation/)

3. General Instructions for the assignments

Format:

- Clearly indicate your name and student number on the front page of your submission.
- Name your file to indicate "the name" of the assignment and your Last Name. E.g. "StartingAssignmentSeittu"
- In all written reports, use 12 Times New Roman and spacing 1.
- Please use pdf-file in your submissions, if not otherwise instructed.
- Use references to indicate, weather, you are speaking from your own point of view or referring to another (which?) source. Use a separate reference list.
- References should be cited properly according to the American Psychological Association (APA) citation guidelines: https://www.apastyle.org/.
- Stick to the defined page or word counts, if one is given to you; only content provided within the given assignment specific instructions will be graded.

Grading:

In general, I will evaluate your work based on the following questions:

- *How carefully the questions are considered in the answer?* Try to tackle the essence of the question and pay attention to signal words used in the question (e.g., describe, depict, discuss, explain etc.).
- *How well the reader can recognize the question that the participant is referring to?* Good idea is to e.g. build your sentences by repeating the question in the beginning: "The main implications of the article are.."
- *How logical is the flow of argumentation and how well the arguments are justified?* Build a logical flow of argumentation in order to develop a convincing storyline. You may use examples to illustrate and support your line of reasoning.
- *How visible and multifaceted is the respondent's own reflection?* Reflect on your own thoughts and surrounding environment (e.g. discuss pros and cons of an issue). Try to provide convincing rationale for suggestions or evaluations that you may give. You are encouraged to give such in all reflection assignments and in the group work.
- *How coherent and grammatically fluent is the answer?* Your English skills will not be evaluated but use clear, easy-to-understand language and submit structured and organized texts. Before submitting your texts, read them through and pay attention the readability. If you cannot make sense of the core idea of your sentences, there is a huge possibility that the reader will not understand them either.

- ***Excellent*** answers typically precisely cover the core of the questions, define relevant concepts in a clear manner using easy-to-understand language, develop a coherent line of argumentation, and offer concrete implications which are meaningfully substantiated (i.e., do not strike the reader out of the blue). Most importantly, writer should show her ability to critically deal with the subject of interest by including her <u>own</u> grounded, personal assessment of the matter (e.g., by discussing pros and cons of

an issue). Typically, these answers offer insightful thoughts and arguments, that are elaborated and well justified. In general, these answers show ambiguous and throughout work. ***Very good*** answers typically are close to excellent answers but lack some core elements.

- Answers that get ***grades below*** excellent or very good, typically discuss the topic in a too general level, essential concepts or ideas are dealt narrowly or something essential is left unaddressed. For example, some question may lack answer. In these answers, student may also show intermediate / poor skills in showing that she has read and internalized the text / audio / video, and is able to distinguish the central from the less essential. Typically, these answers offer arguments that are not elaborated of justified at all. The answer might also be too short taking into consideration what is requested. Typically, ***good*** answers have elements from excellent or very good answer but they also include some deficiencies. The more deficiencies in the answer, the lower the grade will be. To get ***poor (or fail)***, the student shows that she has not invested in the work at all.

- Grammatical coherence is not evaluated, but difficult-to-read texts, in which e.g. verbs are lacking or the meaning is otherwise impossible to make sense of, cannot be graded as excellent.

- We will check for plagiarism; in extreme cases of plagiarism, the submission might be declared as invalid and the candidate fails this part of the course. We suggest you to use Turnitin before you submit. (More info: https://wiki.aalto.fi/display/turnitin/)

Enjoy your study!

"Without Studying the Soul Sick"

- ***Seneca***