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Acknowledgement

"No man is an island, entire of itself;

every man is a piece of the continent"

-John Donne

Abstract

This Master's thesis sought to answer the research question of:

"How can service design methods support improvement of the customers' experience in an existing service system?"

To answer the research question, an approach constituting two different perspectives respectively a customer-centred approach and one from the view of the service provider, has been applied. Data collection consisted of qualitative methods such as interviews with customers, contextual interviews with front-line employees, and observations at the service provider's concert venue. Interviews were further facilitated by the method of customer journeys. To carry out analysis a created Definition and Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry's (1990) RATER and Gaps model, was applied. The conclusion is that applying service design methods supporting analysis of the customers' desired experience, and applying service design methods supporting analysis of the company's performance, constitute a framework for improving an existing service system.

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Introduction

Introduction

This Master's thesis is a culmination of the end of my time as a master student in the programme, Service Systems Design at Aalborg University Copenhagen.

An important personal objective, have been to use the thesis as a tool in a way of testing out areas and methods connected to the field of service design. Further, it is as the semester projects have been, an opportunity to gain hands on practical experience within the field. Not to say that the previous semester projects carried out during the study, haven't had the same objectives, but with the Master's thesis, the topic is not pre-defined, and we as students are free to choose according to interest and wish. Although the project is limited by learning objectives and a time duration, it is an opportunity to focus some time on topics and areas, which have caught an interest during the two years of study. Further, for me the thesis has been a way of testing my abilities, and my areas of interest.

The past two year as a Master student, have been a roller-coaster of experiences, up as well as down. With a background in marketing, and coming from an academic and theoretical bachelors education, to a design programme, took some getting used to. Although not everything was completely new, and most of the knowledge gained from my previous educations was transferable to the world of services, the approach and many of the methods were new. I therefore had to rethink my perspective, and wrap my mind around how my previous educations could be combined with the new.

Finding out the world of design, and using new creative and interdisciplinary tools and methods, to think out of the box, see the box in a holistic system of boxes, and perhaps turn the box inside out, has been a challenge, but also very educational.

The field of Service Design has grown on me, and every day I have a stronger idea of the width and depth and how I can practice it in a way that makes sense to me, by integrating my past educations and knowledge acquired throughout the years. I believe there is still some way to go, and there are still some pieces of the puzzle, which are some tricky parts with blue ocean and sky, and therefore take a bit more time to put together, but optimism is present, because I know that with exploration and testing, they will fit, and I will find my place in the service design field.

Motivation and inspiration

The following section accounts for the motivation and inspiration for this master thesis, as well as their connection and relevance for the field of Service Systems Design.

A story from the life of a customer

It is afternoon on a weekday I am in my apartment contemplating what to eat for dinner. I already know what to make, only a few ingredients are necessary, and often I have two out of four. I check the fridge, and see I only have one of the things needed. I therefore have to make a trip to the supermarket to buy the rest. It must be a specific supermarket, since one of the ingredients (a truffle cream) is only sold there. Although I am a person willing to try different supermarkets, if the first don't have it, I still try to do my shopping in one place if possible. I go to the destined supermarket, I enter, grab the few things, pay, exit, and return to the apartment. It turns into dinnertime, and I am looking forward to it. I take the ingredients out of the fridge, and as I do, I notice the jar with the cream I just bought, looks really strange. Normally it has a creamy texture, but now it looks like the substance has parted, like vinegar and oil. My first thought is that maybe it just needs a stir, and then it will be fine, so I open the jar and smell the substance. I check the date on the lid of the jar, and it reveals that the product has expired four months ago. My disappointment is major, I was looking forward to this dinner, and it is definitely not the same enjoyment, without this specific cream. For a minute I consider my options, but there is no other option, now I have set my mind on this.

I therefore go back to the supermarket, still in an ok mood. The idea of the meal still succeeding, just by swapping the old jar to a new one, keeps me optimistic. I enter the supermarket for the second time that day, find an employee at the checkout counter, and explain to her my issue. The women behind the counter, is very nice, she apologizes for the trouble, promise me a complementary coffee, and will give me my money back. I'm very pleased with her respond, and I feel she makes it very easy to return this product. I explain I would rather like to swap it for a new fresh one, and propose that I can go get one myself, because I know where they are. This is fine by her. I find the right shelf and grab the first one. Learning from my previous mistake, I check the date, and to my disappointment this jar has also expired, so has the one behind it, and the next one, and actually all the jars on the shelf. My disappointment is growing. I stop an employee, as she passes me, and share with her my frustration. My expectation is that she will empathize with me, and try, the best she can, to provide me with the product. Contrary my expectations, she doesn't seem to fully understand my situation. Of course I don't expect her to understand exactly why I need this product, but I do expect her to understand the "trouble" I have had, because they do not check the dates on the products they sell. She opens a drawer at the bottom of the shelf, finds some jars of the kind I am looking for, but they have also expired. So she say: "then we probably don't have it", and she starts to walk away. In my mind, this is not a concluding answer, so I ask if they have more somewhere else, or maybe at another one of their stores near by. But she looks confused and hesitantly says no, then starts to walk away again. This is where my mood shifts and I am negatively surprised, not because the supermarket is out of the product, but because I normally associate this supermarket with good products and a service staff that are knowledgeable and very service-minded. This girl though, obviously doesn't want to at least try to solve my problem. I am annoyed, she prefers to brush me of and doesn't provide any kind of apology for the inconvenience. Although annoyed, I am

not giving up, so I ask if she could find out if another store nearby has it, by maybe calling them. Now she seems annoyed, sighs, and says she does not do that, but perhaps one of her colleagues can call. Again she turns and walks away. So I wait for 5 minutes... 10 minutes... and 15 minutes. The wait annoys me, because I actually don't know if she went to find her colleague, or if she just disappeared. After 20 minutes, she comes back and says that another store nearby has the product I am looking for. This makes me really happy, and although I actually don't mean to, since her service has been critically bad, I thank her and go back to the checkout counter. The nice woman from before gives me a refund, the complementary coffee, and I head for the other supermarket, where I have been promised the product. When I arrive I look for an employee, but when I can't find one, I try to search for the product with no luck. I then locate an employee, who turns out to be the one, which the other store has been in contact with. He takes me to the shelves, where the product should be, and takes out a jar. To my great disappointment, this is not the right product, although it does look like it, same type of jar, same colour of content, but not the same. I tell him "this is not the right product", and further fill him in on the trouble I have had with the previous product that I had to return. Again I find an employee who does not seem keen on helping me. He carelessly explains that on the phone, he just assumed that it was the same product, and confirmed that they had it. Then he takes out the jar he thought it was, and try to "sell"

me that. I ended up going home with a product that was definitely not the same thing (very different flavour), and my dish was no way near what it should have been.

They did give me a complementary coffee, for finding an expired item, and for many other people this would probably have given them a good experience, but unfortunately I do not drink coffee, so it really had no effect. Further, the woman at the counter was very nice, helpful and dedicated to meet my needs. However, it was overruled by the other employees, and the bad coordination between the stores (how hard is it to check the bar code, and make sure it is the same product, before you send a customer to another store?). Therefore all together my total experience was dissatisfying, the need I had was not fulfilled, and in the moment where a problem in the service provision happened (all their products was expired), the employees did not seem to have the necessary resources to handle it, and make me happy. Looking back on this service experience, I cannot help feeling that I have been led down by a brand that I normally associate with high quality and experienced capable employees. The loyalty I normally had to the supermarket has become weak, and I strongly consider other supermarkets for future grocery shopping.

A future of services

We are constantly surrounded by services. Some are digital some more physical than others, some are public, some private, some are necessary and some are more enjoyable, lets just say that they come in all "shapes and sizes". Today service-offerings are often delivered by complex Service Systems, which are configurations of different components, such as people, technologies and other resources, functioning as a holistic whole, needed to carry out a service provision, to satisfy a customer need and create value (Patricio, et al., 2011). According to Barbieri et al. (2013) the field of services has become a primary source of economic dynamism globally. For many countries the service sector contributes to the largest share of their gross domestic product, and covers a wide field of activity (Nasution et al., 2014). Since the future of the world is more services, I will argue, also based on my disclosed experience, companies need to understand how to design value-providing service systems in order to obtain a competitive advantage by attracting and maintaining new and loyal customers who will use and buy their services.

A need for Service Design

The importance of Service Systems Design, I believe, is therefore evident, further considering the unique character and nature of a service system. Unlike products that consist of tangible shapes and forms, services are intangible since they are performance and experience rather than objects (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990). Further they are heterogeneous, because their performance varies dependent on producer, customer and the time of performance. Together with the fact that they are process and activity based makes service systems complex constellations (Morelli, 2002). Because services are process based, unlike products that are produced and consumed at different times, they are co-produced simultaneously with consumption through service encounters between the company and the customer, for service provision (Bitner, Ostrom & Morgan, 2007). Services are not produced in a linear manner, but unfolds over a period of time through a sequence of events and steps, involving the customer, who performs a role in the production activity, i.e. steps in the service process (Johnston & King, 2011). The intangible, activity based, co-produced, sequencing nature of a service, and the configuration of the service providing system, calls for design approaches and methods, which are able to organize, and visualize the structures and unique characters of services. Further the systemic nature of a service system, calls for methods that can scale between the holistic view of the service system, and down to the detailing level of each system element and service touch points, in order to deliver value to the customers (Patricio et al., 2011). As mentioned a service system is a configuration of people, technologies and other resources, demanding the expertise and knowledge of different fields, thus demanding interdisciplinary and co-creative methods. According to Stickdorn & Schneider (2011) a common definition for the field of service design does not exists yet, however the Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design provides a definition, which reads:

"Service Design is an emerging field focused on the creation of well thought through experiences using a combination of intangible and tangible mediums. It provide numerous benefits to the end user experience [.] Service design as a practice generally results in the design of systems and processes aimed at providing a holistic service to the user. This cross-disciplinary practice combines numerous skills in design, management and process engineering. [.] Consciously designed services that incorporate new business models are empathic to user needs and attempts to create new socio-economic value in society." (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011; p.30).

Importance of the customer experience

However, consumers today desire and demand "engaging, robust, compelling and memorable" experiences, and it is therefore not enough for companies to just deliver products and services, they also need to design for memorable experiences in order to differentiate themselves (Pine & Gilmore, 1998 in Nasution, et al. 2014; p.254-255). "Actually improving service in the eyes of customers is what pays off. When service improvement investments lead to perceived service improvement, quality becomes a profit strategy. Excellent service pays off because it creates true customers-customers who are glad they selected a firm after the service experience, customer who will use the firm again and using the firm's praises to others" (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990; p.12). Services always come with an experience, and the service experience arises from a set of interactions between a customer and a company (or part of an organization), which provoke a reaction (Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007). As mentioned, services are co-produced simultaneously with consumption, through interactions between the company and the customer, therefore the experience of the service provision influences the perceived service quality (Bitner, Ostrom & Morgan, 2007). This supports my argumentation concerning the importance of the customer experience when designing services, as it is tightly connected to- and influences a customer's perception of the value gained from the service, thus influencing the customer's perception of a service or a service company as in my experience with the supermarket.

Further, a customer's experience is not limited to only one interaction with a service touchpoint instead it can be affected by a combination of experiences, and repeated experiences evolving over time (Verhoef et al., 2009). Thus to say that when designing new, or improving existing service systems, a service design approach should be holistic, and consider the different service encounters and components as small parts of a whole, in order to support focus on the entire customer experience. Based on interest, own experiences and its argued importance to service design, the leading topic chosen for this master thesis is the "customer experience", and a focus on methods that can support improvement.

Collaborating with a company

I found it important to collaborate with a company for this Master's thesis, partly because it is encouraged in the Service Systems Design Master's study guide, and because I believe it brings the project closer to practicing service design. It has been important for me to include practical work as well as theoretical, therefore a collaboration with a company seemed to be able to support this wish. Choosing to work with the Foundation VEGA was based on their focus on the customer experience, and an interest in their existing service system (Appendix 1). They were interested in collaboration since that might provide them with new insights and perhaps bring ne insights for inspiration.

Problem statement

The problem statement has been chosen, based on the theme of customer experience, the collaboration with the Foundation VEGA and the objective of the Service Systems Design Master's that states: *"In the Master's thesis the student has to demonstrate the acquisition of competences, skills and knowledge that allow him/her to master the profession of service design.*
(Service Systems Design programme of Aalborg University, Copenhagen, 2012; p.35) (model 1).

The research question chosen for this Master's thesis is therefore:

"How can service design methods support improvement of the customers' experience in an existing service system?"

Service design theory and methods

VEGA
Case study

Customer
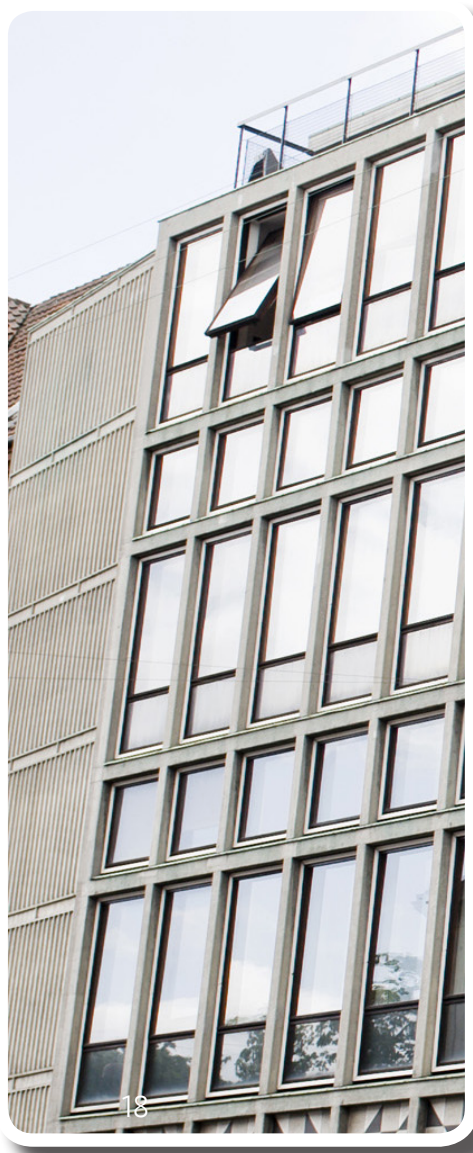Experience

Model 1: Problem framework

Empirical field of research (VEGA)

VEGA is a music venue located at Vesterbro in Copenhagen. It is owned and operated by the foundation "Koncertvirksomhedens Fond", created with the sole purpose of hosting concerts (vega.dk, Appendix 1). The foundation mainly receives grants by the municipality, the Danish state, and is managed by a board of seven members. VEGA employ around hundred-and-sixty people, where about twenty-five are full-time employees, and the rest is service and technical staff.

The venue VEGA

The building was constructed in 1956, and is the old "Folkets Hus", which it was for many years. In 1996, after a comprehensive restoration, the house was reopened as the "House of Music". The music venue is one of the youngest listed buildings in Denmark, and is known for the beautiful interior and broad music programme, which is one of the reasons VEGA is known as one of the leading concert stages in Europe. The building was designed and built by the Danish architect Vilhelm Lauritzen, and makes the house architectural unique. With its original 50's design, the building have a unique atmosphere, with dark wood panelling, mahogany floors, friezes, and many original details of railings, balustrades and lamps in unique details in typical Scandinavian style. VEGA feature three separate concert halls: The great hall, "Store VEGA", with a capacity of 1.550 guests, the middle hall, "Lille VEGA", accommodating 500 guests, and "Ideal Bar Live" with a capacity of 250 guests. Ideal Bar

further operates as cocktail bar, and lies on the ground floor of the building, thus makes it possible to walk in from the street. All the concert halls are able to host concerts at the same time, supported by VEGA's comprehensive "in-house" service system, servicing customers and the performing musicians.

The music

The music venue yearly hosts about 300 concerts and events. From these 300, VEGA's own production covers about 170 each year. Besides a focus on optimal technical sound equipment and lighting conditions, to guarantee a perfect experience, VEGA has an objective to find the right balance between new artists and established names within rock, pop, soul, hip hop, electronic, world music, and club concepts. In

2013, VEGA was announced the best concert arena in Europe by the international music magazine Live, with approximately 270.000 visitors (vega.dk). On VEGA's list of performed artists read international stars such as; Prince, David Bowie, Björk, Suede, Kylie Minogue, Norah Jones, Moby, Foo Fighters, Blur and many others. Club parties have furthermore entailed international DJ's such as: Fatboy Slim, Girl Talk, Erol Alkan, Skream & Benga, DJ Shadow and others.

Other activities

Besides the many concerts hosted in VEGA, they also act as venue for celebrations, receptions, lectures, press conferences, etc. Some of the unique spaces in the building are further rented out to small and medium sized companies.

VEGA's existing service system

VEGA's service system is a system of sub services and consists of different components (Appendix 1-4):

- Digital platform services such as the VEGA website, their smartphone App and an App for tablets.

- Physical in-house services consisting of the physical service scape, ticket sale, bar services, wardrobe service, security/ticket check service, toilets, stage, sound and light system etc.

- To support service provision, VEGA employs approximately 120 experienced persons to fill the positions of front-line wardrobe employee, bartender, runner, security guard, concert manager, technician etc. The service personnel (front-line) are all part-time employees, and many of them are students.

- Promotional efforts such as the VEGA magazine, distributed program posters, initiatives at festivals and more.

As mentioned the music venue consists of three stages "Store VEGA", "Lille VEGA" and Ideal Bar, who each have their own customer serving service system. However the empirical research has been demarcated to focus on concerts held in Store VEGA, their main music hall. The next section elaborates on the existing service system of Store VEGA.

The service scape

The doors for Store VEGA open an hour before a concert. Store VEGA consists of three separate floors connected by stairs. There is the foyer at the ground floor, where customers enter the venue from the street. In the foyer you find a ticket both, where it is possible to buy a ticket if a concert have not sold out. Moving into the foyer, you see a long desk straight ahead, which constitutes the wardrobe service. On your left you find a small bar, and the entrance to Ideal Bar. On your right you find the merchandise both, if the artist performing have any merchandise. If you keep going to the right you will encounter a small desk and two security guards on each side. These two will scan your ticket and check your bag. Passing by the security guards, you have the choice of going either left or right up the stairs. They both lead up to the first floor, but on each side of the concert hall. On the first floor you find the concert hall and two adjoining rooms with bars. At the back of the concert hall there is another bar. For most concerts, the floor in the concert hall is cleared, and people stand up during concerts. If it is a seated concert, they line chairs up on the floor, and Store VEGA seats 900 customers. On several floors there are both men's and women's bathrooms.

If you from the stairs don't go into the concert hall, but continues up to the second floor, you will find the balcony. The balcony has seating, and overlooks the stage of the concert hall. The balcony as well has a small bar.

Wardrobe service

Store VEGAS wardrobe service is located at the ground floor, is the first thing you see when you enter the foyer from the street, and it opens an hour before the concert starts, thus when the doors of Store VEGA opens. The wardrobe is divided into four sections, each with a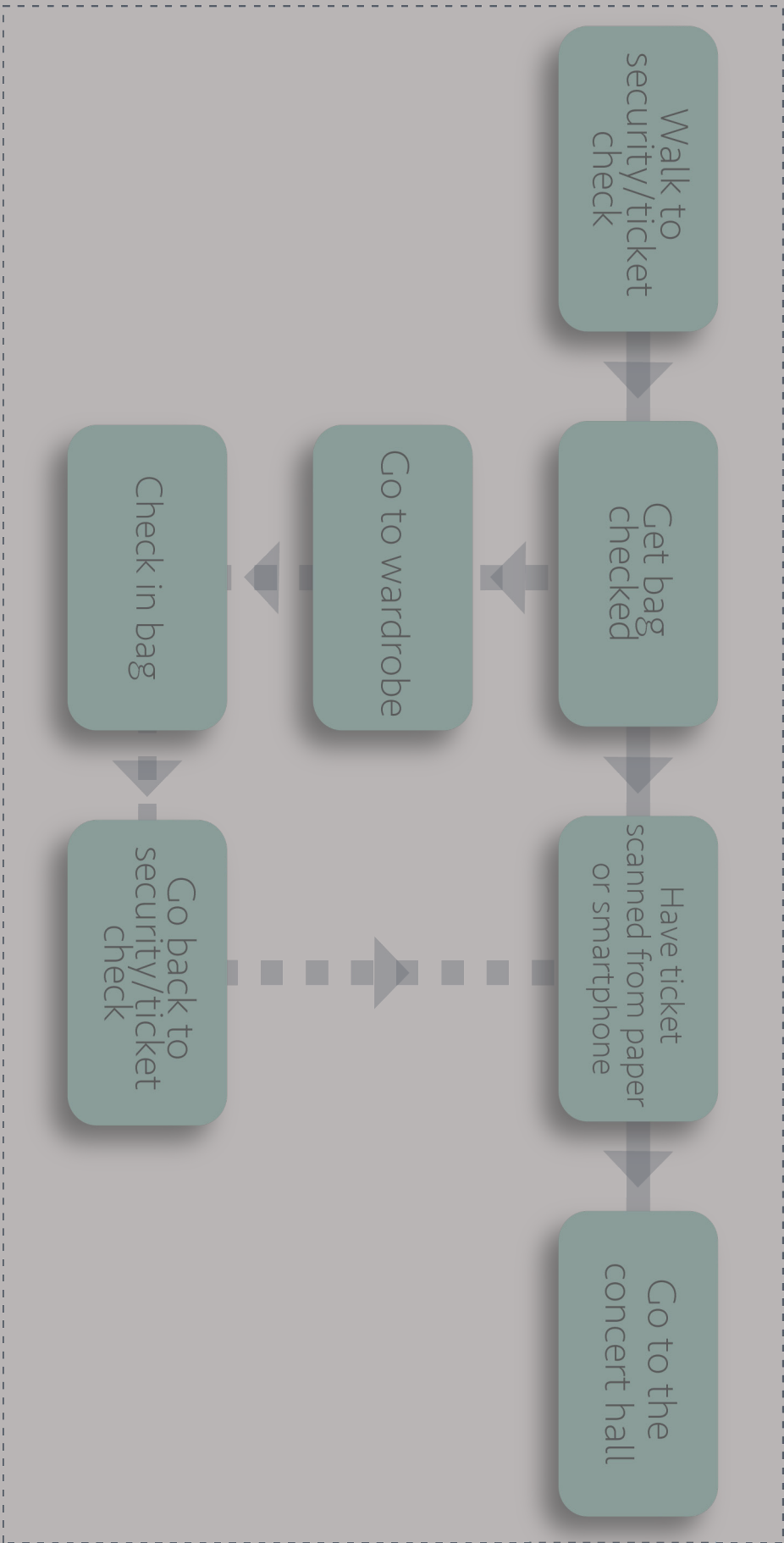 colour (red, green, blue, yellow), and depending on the amount of tickets sold, it is operated by two female employees per section. The service cost is 20 DKK, which can only be paid in cash to the girls behind the counter. The service is somewhat mandatory, since it is not allowed to bring big purses and jackets/coats into the concert hall. The wardrobe service consists of two main service interactions, the 'hand-in' and the 'hand-out'. In the hand-in customers hand in their purses, jackets, bike helmets or other items they cannot bring to the concert hall, pay the 20 DKK, and then receive a physical wardrobe paper ticket, with a unique number, equivalent to a number attached to the item or the hanger where their jacket has been hung. The numbers have colours, and correspond to the colour of the section where you have checked in your items. If people don't have 20 DKK, they are able to go to the bar in the foyer and withdraw the money there. If for some reason a customer wishes to retrieve something in their jacket or purse, after handing it into the wardrobe, they just hand over their ticket in the wardrobe, receives the item they requested, and it is put back in the wardrobe after, and the customer receives the ticket again. The second main service interaction is the hand-out, which takes place after the concert finishes, or for some reason a customer wants to leave before. The customer hand over their ticket to the employees in the wardrobe, who locates the customer's item(s) and hands them over to the customer. The wardrobe closes when the last jacket has been picked up, however if Ideal bar is open after a concert, after approximately an hour, the remaining jackets are transmitted to the wardrobe in Ideal bar. Model 2, shows the flow of the wardrobe (Appendix 2,3).

Wardrobe hand-in

```
Enter foyer
    ↓
Walk to wardrobe
    ↓
Hand in jacket, purse or other item  ←  Go to foyer bar  ←  Withdraw money from bar
    ↓                                                              ↑
Pay 20 DKK  ┄┄┄┄→  Go back to wardrobe  ┄┄┘
    ↓
Receive wardrobe ticket  →  Continue to security check
```

Wardrobe hand-out

```
Walk to wardrobe
    ↓
Hand over wardrobe ticket
    ↓
Receive jacket, purse or other item
    ↓
Leave VEGA venue
```

Model 2: Wardrobe service

Walk to security/ticket check

Get bag checked

Go to wardrobe

Check in bag

Have ticket scanned from paper or smartphone

Go back to security/ticket check

Go to the concert hall

Model 3: Security/Ticket service

Security/Ticket service

The second stop on the way to the concert hall, is right before the stairs leading up to the hall with the stage, adjoining rooms with bar areas, toilets and the balcony. On each side of a counter, stands a security guard with a scanner. His job is to scan customers' tickets with a handheld digital scanner, and check customers' bags for liquids weapons and other prohibited items. Customers' tickets can be a printed piece of paper with a barcode, or a digital version of the ticket on the customer's smartphone. If a customer's bag is found to big by the security guard, the customer is sent back to the wardrobe to check it in. Besides scanning tickets and judging the size of people's bags, the security guards also patrol the venue, keeping an eye on the customers, making sure there is no trouble. If something should happen, they step in and break people up, or escort customers out of the building if they have behaved in a prohibited manner. Model 3 shows the general customer flow of the security/ticket check service.

Bars

Store VEGA has a total of six bars, a smaller one in the foyer, four on the first floor, (one in the music hall, three in the adjoining rooms) and again a smaller one on the balcony. Depending on the size of the bar, they are operated between one and three people. The bar sells different products, such as draft beer, drinks, sodas, cider, redbull, coffee, chips and earplugs (see picture?). In the bars, the bars customers can pay cash or with credit cards on the terminals. In the adjoining rooms on the first floor, couches and tables have been set up in connection to the bars, where people can stand and sit with their drinks. At each concert, a certain amount of 'runners' (bust boys) are working, and takes care of many ad hoc assignments, such as making sure the bars are equipped with all the necessities. The runner carries a radio, and is thereby connected to a radio in the bars, the wardrobe, security and the concert manager. Model 4 shows the general customer flow of the bar service.

Model 4: Bar services

```
Goes to bar
      ↓
Wait to get served
      ↓
Place an order with the bartender
      ↓
Wait for order
      ↓
Receive ordered on the counter
      ↓
Pay with cash or card
      ↓
Receive receipt and change
      ↓
Takes the purchased and go
```
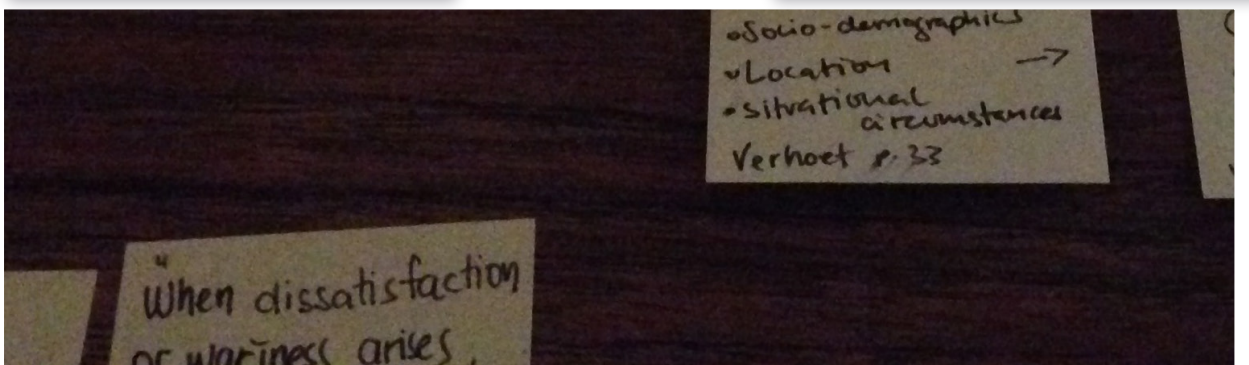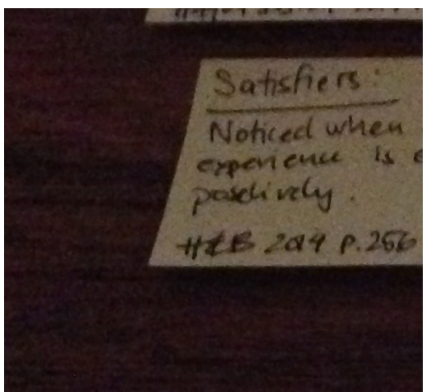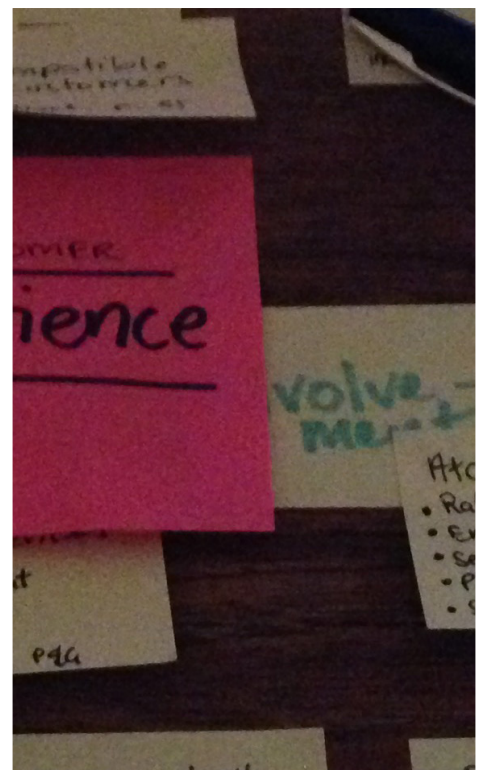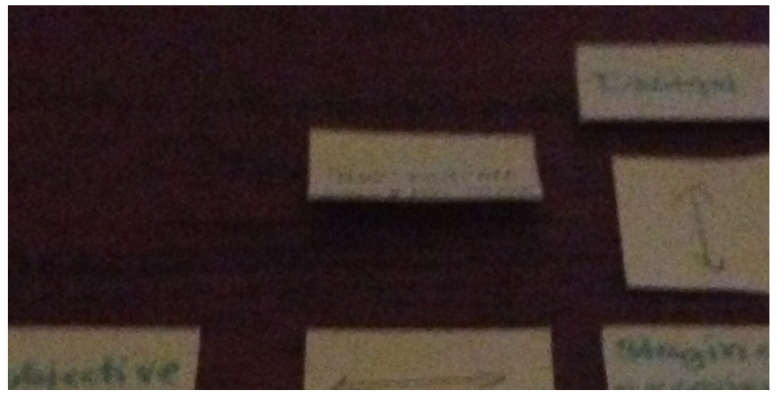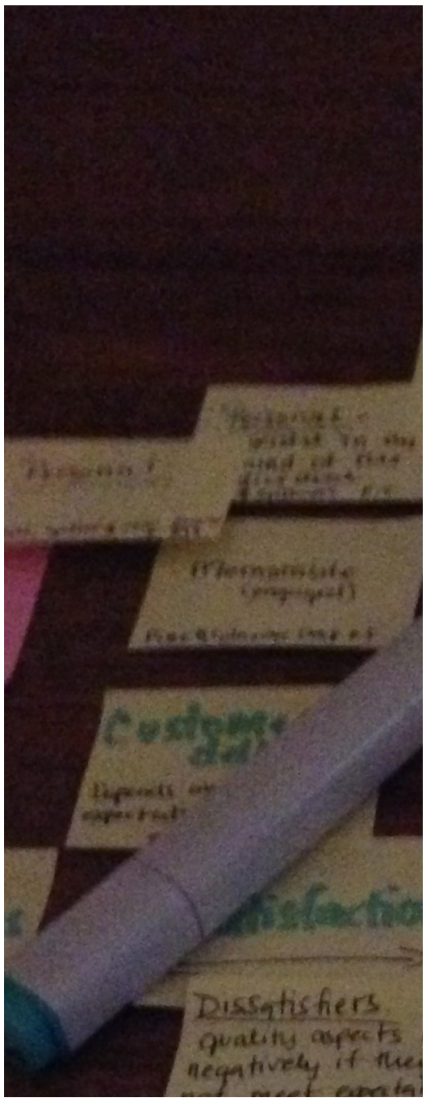
Project theme

The chosen theme for the project is 'customer experience', and in this next section, I will account for a definition of the concept.

Understanding the concept of experience can be complex, especially when you are a native Dane, and the word means two different things: "opleve" and "erfaring" but are interrelated. This has also been addressed by Palmer (2010) who criticise marketers' confusion of experience as a verb with experience as a noun. The literature offers various suggestions to a conceptualisation of customer experience, thus creating a definition seemed further important, to reduce confusion and support clarity and comprehension concerning the conceptualisation applied throughout this master thesis.

Collecting and structuring knowledge for a definition

Exploration of the customer experience revealed that it is a complex topic involving different elements, and interconnections (Heinonen et al. 2010). The definition has been constructed based on exploration of existing literature on the concept. Exploration consisted of searching, collecting and reading, and then further finding articles referenced in the studied literature.

To make sense of the staggering amount of literature, and structure the acquired knowledge, I used a combination of methods. First I applied the method, "Affinity Diagramming" to structure the knowledge gained from the literature (Spool, 2004; p.4). According to Spool, affinity mapping is often used in a team setting, where the members can contribute their ideas, these can then be structured into categories, and decisions can be made. I found that the method have proved useful in the past on other projects, where I have used the categorization element of the method to gain an overview of large amounts of knowledge or data. When reading the many articles, I would write down occurring themes related to the concept of customer experience, on post-its. The post-its were then pasted to a large surface, and continuously while reading the articles I would add more themes or provide small explanations to the themes and aspects posted. The method proved valuable as an analytical tool, as it helped create a visual overview of the literature, I was able to see consensus in themes, and could group some of the post-its together. The visualisation made it possible to see the themes in a context, whereas a chronological Word document on the computer with a long text would have made it difficult to see the bigger picture, and the interconnections between the themes. Following the affinity mapping method, I used the method of "Mind Mapping", to visualize the existing connections between the themes, in order to understand their interdependencies (Brown, 2009; p.9). I found the two methods complementing each other well, as the affinity mapping made the themes visual and provided a tool for grouping, and the mind map, supported the understanding of the connections between the themes.

Memorable

Customer
Depends on expectations

...satisfaction

Dissatisfiers
Quality aspects negatively if the...

Satisfiers:
Noticed when experience is e... positively.
H&B 2014 P.266

...bjective

...magine

Derives from the interaction between the staged event and the individuals state of mind.

Company to customer

R...tions

Customer to customer

...mpatible customers

Experience

an exp...
Entertain...
Educati...
Esthetic
Escapest

...volve ment

At...
• Ra
• E...
• S...
• P...
• S...

• Socio-demographics
• Location →
• Situational circumstances
Verhoet p.33

"When dissatisfaction or wariness arises,

''The Customer Experience originates from a set of interactions between a customer and a product, a company, or part of its organization, which provoke a reaction. This experience is strictly personal and implies the customer's involvement at different levels (rational, emotional, sensorial physical and spiritual). It's evaluation depends on the comparison between a customer's expectations and the stimuli coming from the interaction with the company and its offering in correspondence of the different moments of contact or touch-points.''

(p. 397)

Definition

This paragraph will provide a definition applied for this thesis, and elaborate on; what an experience is, how it occurs, and what influences it.

Conducting desk research on the concept indicated how existing literature is very comprehensive inclusion has therefore not been exhaustive due to time limitations and focus of this project. Other perspectives than included in the definition exists, such as for example an elucidation of the psychological influences personal needs have on the customer experience. However this would require further investigation. The desk research showed, how authors take different approaches to defining a customer experience, from the view of the service provider, and others from the view of the customer (Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007; Nasution et al. 2014; Verhoef et al., 2009). I chose to draw upon different authors, to provide an inclusive definition. Despite varying conceptions and terminology, some elements seemed to be recurring. To frame what a customer experience is, I chose to draw upon Gentile, Spiller & Noci's (2007), since I found it to include concepts considered fundamental for the customer experience (See page 20).

It is a response

As the definition of Gentile, Spiller & Noci (2007) state, a customer experience is an internal and subjective response a customer can have to a direct or indirect contact with a service provider and their offerings. However Meyer & Schwager (2007) expands this to also include interactions with other physical and relational elements in the experience environment, which might be out of the control of the service provider. The experience environment therefore also includes interactions beyond the service provision environment. Experience consists of the customer's involvement at different levels, such as rational, sensorial, physical and spiritual (Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007). Customer's involvement and engagement in an interaction is what builds the emotional connections, in form of an impression, which is able to create a marker in the memory of the customer, and affect future behavior such as repeat purchase of a service and positive word-of-mouth recommendations of a service provider, or the opposite (Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010; Heino en et al., 2010).

Occurs from set of interactions

An experience occurs from a set of interactions between a customer and a service provider, or other physical and relational elements in the experience environment, which involves the customer on different levels (Meyer & Schwager, 2007; Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007, Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). When an interaction (service provision) takes place, the customer interprets elements, current and remembered and forms an impression about the service quality gained (Heinonen et al., 2010). The experience is therefore connected to the perceived service quality, as it has an influence on the customer's perception of the service provision. Meyer & Schwager (2007) differentiate between direct and indirect interactions. A direct interaction is often initiated by the customer, and occurs when a purchase is made, and a service is used. An Indirect interaction is often unplanned, and can be with the company service, brand etc. and is word-of mouth recommendations or criticism, advertising, reviews and so forth.

Holistic

A customer experience is not limited to interactions in a physical place alone, rather it is impacted by sub-experiences evolving over time (search, purchase, consumption and after-sale), starting before and ending after the actual moment of service delivery (Verhoef et al., 2009). The collected sub-experiences and their composition of perceived elements are gathered throughout the customer's interactions with the service provider or other physical and relational elements in the experience environment (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). These will then form the accumulated customer experience, and influence thoughts, feelings, the perceived service quality and possibly lead to customer intentions and behaviour, which can consist of a repurchase, recommendation or in worst case criticism and/or a complaint (Nasution et al., 2014; Johnston & Kong, 2011).

Subjective

An experience is inherently personal, as it exists in the mind of the customer, interpretations are therefore subjective, thus two people cannot have the same experience, and companies cannot fully control an experience (Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010; Johnston & Kong, 2011).

Expectations

Expectations are partly set by past experiences with a service provider's offerings, and instinctively compare each new experiences with previous (Meyer & Schwager, 2007). According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), expectations are further set by a customer's personal characteristics herein their needs, thus making them personal and subjective. Expectations further stem from word-of-mouth communication such as recommendations or criticism and a company's external communication (direct/indirect messages of promise). Customers' expectations are dynamic, and changes over time, as competition increases, tastes changes, and customer's become more knowledgeable.

Experience gap

The gap between a customer's expectations of a service and the actual experience, determines how a service is perceived and assessed (Hagen & Bron, 2014). Therefore the perceived quality of a service, results from an internal evaluation of comparing expectations of a service, with the experience of a company's actual performance (Qiu, 2013). If the actual experience exceeds expectations, the customer will experience positive emotions, and the overall service quality will be perceived satisfying, however if the opposite occurs, the service quality will be perceived dissatisfying (Hagen & Bron, 2014).

Experience environment

According to Gupta & Vajic (2000), the service delivery and experience takes place in a context consisting of influential physical and relational elements in the experience environment (in Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). The context includes "the physical setting, the social actors, and any social interactions with other customers and/or service facilitators" (in Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010; p. 68). Zomerdijk & Voss (2010), suggest that the presence of fellow customers can improve or damage a customer's experience, especially if customers are in close range of each other, have to share resources and if waiting-time occurs. This adds to the statement that the company cannot fully control a customer's experience, since it is influenced by elements (the mind of the customer and other customers), which are out of their control.

Experience clues

Authors suggest that elements of the experience environment (physical and relational) send stimuli to customers that create and influence their experience (Zomerdijk & Voss, 2006; Nasution et al., 2014). Some are controlled and some not controlled by the service provider. According to Berry, Wall & Carbone (2006) the stimuli is called 'experience clues', and refers to "anything in the service experience the customer perceives by its presence – or absence. If the customer can see, hear, taste, or smell it, it's a clue" (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006; p.2). The authors further distinguish between 'functional' and 'emotional' (mechanic and humanic) clues (see next page) (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006; p.2). Functional clues mainly influence the customer's cognitive and calculative, thus rational perception, where mechanic and humanic clues mainly influence the customer's emotional perception. Roberts (2004), suggests that the senses can be a direct connection to the customer's emotions, and the more an experience engages the senses, the more memorable it will be (in Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). Functional, mechanic, and humanic clues play specific roles in creating the customer's service experience, and influence their perception of the service quality (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006).

I will use the reference of 'the Definition' with capital D, when further referencing to the theories defined here, throughout the rest of the report.

Functional clues:
These clues are the 'what' of a service experience, and are everything in the service provision that indicates or suggests technical reliability and quality of a service (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). Such as: "Does the bar-code on the bought and printed concert-ticket work, when it is scanned? "Do I get my jacket when I return the wardrobe ticket after the concert?" Functional clues support the core of any service because they should address the problem that brings the customer to the service in the first place.

Mechanic clues:
Mechanic clues come from inanimate objects presented in the service system Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). They can be a representation of the intangible service offering, and include all the senses (sights, smells, sounds, tastes, and texture) (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). Examples are furniture, facility design, signs, colours, textures, sounds, smells, lights and others. The mechanic clues influence a customer's first impression, expectations and service perceptions, and give customers information about what to expect during a service performance. "The physical environment or stimulus (S) (i.e., mechanic clues) causes an evaluation by a person or organism (O), which results in a response (R)" (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006; p.2).

Humanic clues:
These clues are stemming from the behaviour and appearance of the service provider or a representative, e.g. a front-line employee's choice of words, their tone of voice, body language and charisma (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). Mechanics and humanic clues are the 'how' of the service experience, and say something about an organization's understanding and commitment to satisfying customer's wants and needs (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). Humanic clues created by employees are most obvious for labour-intensive and interactive services. The human interaction offers the chance to cultivate emotional connectivity that can possibly extend respect and esteem to customers, and in doing so, possibly exceed their expectations, strengthen trust, and deepen their loyalty to the service provider. Perception of the employees' effort in delivering service has a particular strong impact on service satisfaction and loyalty. According to Berry, Wall & Carbone (2006), excellent mechanic clues can overcome poor humanic clues.

Project overview

Methodology and approach

The methodology accounts for the project process, theory and methods applied to answer the research question.

The purpose of this Master's thesis, have been to apply theories and service design methods, to understand and reflect upon how they can support improvement of customers' experience with a service provider's existing service system. As mentioned in the motivation, VEGA was chosen to provide the empirical field of research, and served as study case for applying theory and methods, in order to create knowledge and support analysis and reflection. The research design is therefore argued to be a 'Case Study', since this Master's thesis project consisted of a detailed exploration of a single case (Bryman & Bell, 2007; p. 39). The focus of the project lies in the application and reflection of theory and methods.

Project process

The project process has been iterative of nature, since research has lead to analysis and then again back to research, which has further helped to shape the focus of the research question (Bryman & Bell, 2007; p.407).

The Definition suggested that a gap between customers' expectations and the actual service delivered, affects their experience of the perceived service quality, as dissatisfying and influence customers' emotional connection and behaviour towards a service provider (loyalty to service, recommendations, re-purchase of tickets) (Hagen & Bron, 2014; Johnston & Kong, 2011).

A process for improving the customer's experience with an existing service system is therefore suggested to consists of two perspectives:

- First, application of theory and methods to support, analysis of customers' expectations and experiences, to understand their desired experience for a concert service (perspective 1).

- Second, application of theory and methods to support analysis of VEGA's performance, thus delivery of service (perspective 2).

The next section will account for the theoretical framework and methods applied in respectively perspective 1 and 2. Arguing for the this thesis to have a user-centered approach, most emphasis have therefore been on the first perspective (understanding customers' desired experience), to support understanding of .

Each perspective will be divided into first analysis, and then reflection of theory and methods.

Theoretical framework

Perspective 1

As mentioned, a suggested process for improving customers' experience with an existing service system, consist partly of perspective 1, thus theory and methods, which could be applied, to support analysis and an understanding of the customers' definition of a desired concert experience.

Qualitative approach

Observation

The Definition stated, an experience occurs from a set of interactions between a customer and a service provider, or other physical and relational elements in the experience environment, which involves the customer on different levels (Meyer & Schwager, 2007; Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007, Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). Since a customer's concert experience occurs from interactions with elements in the experience environment, it is argued that to understand the customers' concert experience, exploration of the experience elements and the environment is suggested. According to Bryman & Bell (2007), *an ethnographic method as observation is an approach to data collection, "in which the researcher is immersed in a social setting for some time in order to observe and listen with a view to gaining an appreciation of the culture of a social group"* (p. 404).

Thus the qualitative ethnographic method of observation was suggested applied, in order to gain a general perception of the empirical research field and insights about stimuli influencing customers in the service environment (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Although originating from the ethnographic field, I would argue this to support the statement of service design being interdisciplinary in nature service design (Patricio et al., 2011).

Interviews

To gain insights regarding the customers' desired experience, Patricio et al. (2011) propose the use of qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews, to get a profound and detailed understanding of the levels of the customer experience. The authors point out that a qualitative study enables *"mapping the overall customer activity, service activities, and service tasks, which are related to the different levels of the customer experience"* (p.184). According to the view of Bryman & Bell (2007), there is much greater interest in the interviewee's point of view in qualitative research, which thereby matches with Johnston & Kong (2011) arguing that in order for a company to increase customers' experience, the service should be viewed through the eyes of the customers, to inform improvement approaches and activities, since an experience is inherently personal. A qualitative research strategy consisting of interviews with customers is applied aimed at understanding the customers' desired experience, since it supports collection of rich, detailed statements emerging directly from the customers themselves.

Customer journey method

Patricio et al. (2011) point out that understanding the overall customer activity, service activities and service tasks is important to understand the factors that enable or inhibit the desired service experience. Zomerdijk & Voss (2010) suggest *'The customer Journey'* to involve all activities and events related to service delivery, from the perspective of the customer (p. 74). They elaborate that this method as part of the service design framework, can be used to understand how cus-

tomers throughout a journey behave, feel and what their motivation and attitude are (Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). Hagen & Bron (2014) define a customer journey to be *"a schematic representation (from the customer's perspective) of the provision of service offered by a (railway) company"* (p.1). It consists of various episodes, including corresponding moments of contact" (Hagen & Bron, 2014). Following the schematic representation by means of the episodes of contact, it is possible to find out what the service experience is in each episode of the Customer Journey (Hagen & Bron, 2014). Further, emotions influence the customer's perception of the experienced (Hagen & Bron, 2013). Understanding the customers' desired experience is therefore argued to entail, recognition of customers' emotional perception of the concert service and how they judge it. Therefore Hagen & Bron's (2013) 'Emotional Curve' was applied as part of the customer journey method to capture the emotional layer of the customers' experience, when interacting with the service provider, or other elements within the experience environment. The customer journey thereby becomes an emotional customer journey. Based on these grounds, the method of the customer journey is applied, to understand the customers' overall activities, service activities, thus interactions with the provider of the concert service, the customers' behaviour, feelings, emotions and attitudes.

SERVQUAL-RATER model

Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, (1990) propose SERVQUAL as an operational framework to service quality management. The framework entails the RATER model, which propose five dimensions representing the core criteria that customer employ in evaluating service quality. The RATER model is therefore applied to structure customer findings and support understanding of their desired customer experience.

The five dimensions of the RATER model are:

- Reliability (The service provider's ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.

- Assurance (Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence.)

- Tangibles (The appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communications material)

- Empathy (Caring, individualized attention the firm provides its customers)

- Responsiveness (Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service)

Perspective 2

The second perspective concerns application of theory and methods to support analysis of VEGA's organisational performance. To collect and analyse data, a theoretical framework and several qualitative methods were applied such as observation, interviews with front-line employees and meetings with representatives of VEGA's management.

Qualitative approach

Contextual interviews

According to Stickdorn & Schneider (2011), an understanding of the social and physical environment surrounding the service being examined, can be supported by the method of contextual interviews. The method consists of *"The interviewer visits the interviewee within the environment in which they interact with the service under review, and uses a combination of questions and observations in order to generate the desired insights"* (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011; p. 162). Therefore to understand the performance of VEGA's concert service system, the front-line employees and their interactions with the customers, the organisational culture, their work processes and the structures of the organisation, the method of contextual interviewing is applied.

Meetings with management

Several meetings with management was carried out to understand their vision, organisational structure, culture, service management and more.

Gaps model

The gaps model is part of the SERVQUAL operational framework of Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, (1990), and propose operations for improving customers' experience, by closing the gap possibly existing between a customer's expectations and a service provider's performance (see model 5). They argue, that closing gap 1-4, which constitutes shortfalls within the service provider's organisation, narrows gap no 5 and improves the service experience. This framework has therefore been applied, to analyse VEGA's organisation and service system performance.

The five gaps consists of:

1.   Gap between customer expectations and management perception

2.   Gap between management's perception and service quality specification

3.   Gap between service quality specifications and service delivery

4.   Gap between service delivery and external communication

5.   Gap between expected service and experienced service

Gap 1: between customer expectations and management perception

According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), Gap 1 is the difference between what customers expect and what management perceives them to expect.

Key factors resulting in Gap 1 are:

- Lack of marketing research

- Inadequate upward communication

- Too many levels of management

Gap 2: between management's perception and service quality specification
Although management might understand what customers want, a second gap can arise from not utilizing the knowledge by setting service-quality standards for the organization (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990).

Key factors resulting in Gap 2 are:

- Inadequate commitment to service quality

- Lack of perception of feasibility

- Inadequate task standardization

- Absence of goal setting

Gap 3: between service quality specifications and service delivery
The third gap is the service-performance gap, and suggested to arise when employees are unwilling or unable to perform the service at the desired level (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990).

Key factors resulting in Gap 3 are:

- Role ambiguity

- Role conflicts

- Poor employee-job fit

- Poor technology-job fit

- Inappropriate supervisory control systems

- Lack of perceived control

- Lack of teamwork

Gap 4: between service delivery and external communication
According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, (1990), gap four is the gap between what a service provider promises for a service and what it actually delivers. This entails accurate and appropriate external communication (advertising, personal selling, PR). Differences between service delivery and external communications, in form of promises or the absence of information concerning service delivery aspects can strongly affect customers' perception of service quality

The key factors resulting in Gap 4 are:

- Inadequate horizontal communication

- Propensity to overpromise

Gap 5: between expected service and experienced service
Gap five represents the potential discrepancy between the expected and perceived service from the customer's standpoint (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990).

Word of mouth communications

Personal needs

Past experience

Expected service

Gap 5

Perceived service

Customer

Provider

Service delivery (Incl. pre/post contacts)

External communications to customers

Gap 4

Gap 1

Gap 3

Translation of perceptions into Service quality specs.

Gap 2

Management perceptions of consumer expectations

Model 5: Gaps model (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990)

Perspective 1

Understanding customers'
desired experience

Analysis 1

The purpose of the analysis was to extract findings from the conducted field research, and apply chosen theory in order to understand the customers' desired customer experience.

Subjective experience

The findings from the three interviews with customers showed that motivation for buying a ticket and going to a concert, was stemming from their subjective needs (Appendix 5-7). Customer 1's motivation for going to the Dolly Parton concert was to have a fun and social experience with her friends (Appendix 1). According to her, it could have been any other artists (within reason), motivation for going was the expectation of extending or recreating the fun and social experience they had at that party, where they got inspired to go to the concert together. However one of her friends had other expectations to the concert, since she had a special emotional connection to the music of Dolly Parton, which would make the concert nostalgic for her, and satisfy a different need. Two persons going to the same concert, thereby have different expectations caused by their subjective personal characteristics. Further, the interview with customer 2 showed that it is his interest in music creating a need for a special musical experience when he visits VEGA, thus expectations for the concert venue to provide a good sound experience (Appendix 6).

"I focus a lot on the sound when watching live music, and that you still get a relatively full sound. It will never be as if you were either sitting with headphones on, or just in front of the stereo system, because then you have completely peace an quiet, and are able to pick up every detail, but yeah I emphasize that the sound is good, and you are able to hear the artist" (p.1).

Finally customer 3 is often inspired to go to concerts, by friends recommending artists whom she doesn't know in advance (Appendix 7). She defined a need expanding her musical 'vocabulary', and actively sought out inspiration from YouTube or Spotify. I would argue that the findings thereby support Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), who stated that needs are personal, as they stem from a person's individual characteristics, and sets the target group of VEGA apart on different layers. On this background, it is thereby suggested that VEGA's customers is diverse in nature, with different needs and thereby expectations and experiences.

RATER dimensions

Although the customers are defined to be different in needs, expectations, and thereby experiences, application of Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry's (1990) RATER model showed similarities in criterion. From analysing the findings I found that all five of the RATER dimensions proved to be core criterion for the customers' desired concert experience. However some of the dimensions were rated as more important than others.

Reliability

Findings showed that reliability was a core criterion for customers desired concert experience. According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), reliability is the service provider's ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. The dimension of reliability was evident in two different areas.

High sound quality

All the interviews showed that customers value a good sound quality when attending concerts (Appendix 5-7). The sound therefore constitutes a functional clue since it refers to the customers' rational perception of the sound quality, and perception of service quality is thereby dependent on the reliability of the service provider delivering this (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). In other cases the sound was found to constitute a mechanical clue, being the music and lyrics, and emotional perceived by the customers'. I believe this further show the subjectivity of perception and experience amongst the customers, since one thing can be perceived and mean different things to different customers.

Customer 2, expressed that the quality of the sound should support you being able to hear the artist that you have chosen to see, and that although the sound can't be the same as if you were listening to it at home, the quality of the sound was for him rated as the most important when going to a concert (Appendix 6, customer journey 2). He further said that he like VEGA, because his impression is that they have a good sound system, which provide the level of quality he expects (Appendix 6). I therefore argue that a desired customer experience entails a high quality sound experience, and that choosing where to see concerts, can depend on the reliability of the venues music system.

A comprehensible service script

When arriving at the concert venue, customer 1 enters to the foyer with all the other customers. She expresses her irritation of not knowing what to do or where to go.

" My impression is that it was some very bad steps [.] It wasn't a very nice experience [.] it seemed unstructured, if I have to say it, because you are standing there with your ticket, and who am I showing it to, oh hi-no you didn't want to see that (security guard), and you would rather look in my purse, so you take my water, ok hi, goodbye" (Appendix 5; p.6).

This is argued to be related to a functional and mechanical clue, or the lack thereof, since customer 1 states that there were no signs (mechanical) with informing text (functional) of where to go, and no explanation from the guards, of why she weren't allowed to take her water inside for the concert. According to Berry, Wall & Carbone (2006), functional clues are what suggest technical reliability and quality in the service provision, and influences the rational perception of the service. I therefore argue that if these are missing, the customers' perception of the quality of the service can be dissatisfying. Further, mechanic clues give customer's information about what

to expect during a service performance, and I therefore suggest that if these are not clear, this reflects badly on the rest of the service, as this experience will create expectations for the rest of the service journey (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). The interview with customer 1 therefore showed that a desired concert experience entails a comprehensible and structured service journey, thus organised and designed in a way, which makes it clear where you need to go, and what you have to do.

Assurance

Findings further showed that assurance was a core criterion for customers desired concert experience, since it concerns the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990). This was evident in relation to two different features.

Confidence in wardrobe employees

First, customer 2 and customer 3, expressed that it was important for them when interacting with the employees working in the wardrobe, to feel reassurance and trust when handing in their belongings to the wardrobe (Appendix 6,7). Customer 2 explains, "It is about trust. It's about that it is a sensible person who is there. It should preferably feel effective, as if she did not start work yesterday, that it is done prompt, and that they hang the jacket up nicely, and I watch them attach the number, and I get the other part of the number. I find this important, it provide reassurance" (Appendix 2; p.5-6). The perceived service quality therefore relies on the humanic and functional clues elicited by the employee in the wardrobe, such as the quality of the service provision, thus her effective and prompt handling of belongings (functional), and her appearance, ability to exhibit certainty, thus body language when interacting with the customers (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). Customer 2 further express that as customer you need to feel the certainty of them taking care of your belongings (Appendix 7). I therefore argue, that the customers' desired experience entails the employees' ability to convey trust, assurance and confidence when interacting with customers handing in their belongings in the wardrobe. Further I would argue the importance of this feature, as VEGA's wardrobe is mandatory due to fire safety, and customers therefore cannot choose not to use the wardrobe, unless they do not bring any overcoats or big bags.

Security guards to support friendly safety feeling

The second feature was further related to assurance, and the employees' ability to convey trust and confidence. All three customers mentioned that the function of the security guard could have an important influence on the experience (Appendix 5-7). The security guards are often one of the first things you meet, when entering a concert venue. Customer 2 and 3 agreed that the presence of the security guard is necessary, as they maintain peace and order during concerts. Further the customers agreed that the presence of the security guards gave them a feeling of reassurance and security, and was able to put them at ease, knowing that they have checked the people led in to the concert and their bags. However, the customers were further of the same mind of wanting the security guards to exude authority, but not in a 'police-man' manner. This was further supported by an experience of customer 1 who in Forum had an interaction with a security guard who showed authority, but in a manner that made her feel accused of doing something wrong (Appendix 5). When passing through the ticket/security check in Forum, a guard looks in her bag, and takes the water that she has in there, but he does it in a manner,

expressed by the customer, which made her feel that she was being accused of trying to sneak it in, which had a bad influence on her experience. Further because the guard lacked to tell her the reason for him taking the water. Again I would argue that this rely on humanic and functional clues elicited by the security guard, such as the quality of the service provision, thus carrying out their tasks with authority, but also their body language, the tone of their voice, and the words they chose to use when interacting with customers (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). Based on the statements of the customers, I therefore argue, that the customers' desired experience, entails the presence of security employees who elicit authority to provide a feeling of security and reassurance but in a friendly and not accusing manner.

Tangibles

Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), states tangibles to be the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communications material. Although not shared by all the customers and rated as high as the other criterion, findings showed that tangibles was a criterion for a desired concert experience.

Physical ticket

Customer 2 expresses in his interview, the importance of printing out the concert ticket, and hanging it up on the fridge (Appendix 7). Although he finds the possibility of getting your ticket on your smartphone effective, he has a special relation to the printed out paper tickets, as he states:

"Holding the ticket in your hand, its about me feeling that I have bought something special, then I feel I have bought a product, not just a barcode" (Appendix 6; p.3).

The printed ticket is an important mechanical clue, providing him with an emotional connection to the concert experience and an evidence of a purchase since it is a physical evidence of the intangible concert experience (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). He emphasizes that he would most like to have a cardboard version of the ticket, although he do not wish to pay extra for it. The ticket serves another emotional purpose, of being a reminder of an experience to look forward to, or a reminder of a good experience. Both customer 2 and 3, hang their printed-out tickets up somewhere (the fridge), to know where it is, but also as a reminder that something good is in store for them (Appendix 6,7). Customer 3 said that having the ticket to look at before a concert, inspires her to listen to the music on YouTube or others, and becomes a way of warming-up to the concert (Appendix 7). They both mentioned that a sign of a good concert experience was if they felt the urge to put the ticket back on the fridge after the concert, as a reminder (Appendix 6,7). I therefore argue, that the customers desired experience, can entail the tangibility of the printed-concert ticket, to evidence the purchase, and serve as a reminder for something good in store, or a good past experience.

Concert stage

The interviews further showed that Store VEGA's concert stage room, influences the customers' experience in a good way (Appendix 6,7). Customer 3 mentions that the acoustics that the room provides, and the open balcony, support an atmospheric feeling which puts her in a certain mood of being at a concert (Appendix 7). I would therefore argue that she has a specific emotional connection to VEGA, as they provide the frames for a certain feeling in her. Customer 2 said something similar, and argued that he like going to concerts in VEGA, as the concert-stage room gives

him a theatrical feeling, and again influences the experience with the live artists and creates an atmosphere (Appendix 6). The desired customer experience can thereby further entail the physical room for the stage, supporting the atmosphere during live performances.

Empathy

Empathy and the employees' caring and individualized attention to customers further showed as a high rated core criterion for customers' desired concert experience. All three customers stated that feeling welcome when arriving at a concert at a music venue, is very important (Appendix 5-7). When looking at the customer journey of customer 1, first time she expresses an experience to be dissatisfying, is when she enters the concert venue, where she have the first contact and interaction with the service provider (Customer journey 1).

"There was no positive smile, such as Hi, Welcome- it was more a raised finger as in, you can't take this in there (water bottle) and we need to see your ticket, because you are not allowed to sneak in, than it was, welcome, come and have a good experience " (Appendix 5; p. 6).

The security guards' lack of smiles, their tone of voice, and reasoning (mechanic clues), left customer 1 with a feeling of being accused and alienated from the concert environment, Instead of feeling welcome and gaining an emotional connection to Forum and their employees (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006; Appendix 5). As her customer journey illustrates, this experience affected her impression of the service as being dissatisfying and influencing her experience in a negative way (Customer journey 1). I believe this further supports the theory of Zomerdijk & Voss (2010) and Heinonen et al. (2010), who argues that Customer's involvement and engagement in an interaction is what builds the emotional connections, by forming an impression, which is able to create an emotional marker in the memory of the customer, and guide future behavior such as repeat purchase of a service and positive word of mouth about a service provider or the opposite. This claim was further supported by customer 2, who emphasized the importance of the first meeting you have with the service provider, being friendly, they say welcome, and gives you the feeling that they are there for you, and wants to deliver something good (Appendix 6). Therefore based on the statements from the three customers interviewed, I would argue that a desired customer experience entails front-line employees caring and greeting them welcome when arriving to the concert venue, to support the feeling of them being there for you and want to deliver something good, and feeling welcome as customer.

Responsiveness

Responsiveness, and the front-line employees' willingness and promptness when providing service was further a high rated core criterion for customers desired concert experience.

Customer 1 and 2 both state that waiting a long time in line for the bar during a concert, have a bad influence on their concert experience, since seeing and listening to the artist with their friends is basically what they paid money for (Appendix 5-6).

"I was in the line thinking I would rather get back to what I actually paid for" (Appendix 5; p. 7).

I would argue that the bar service entails a functional clue, and the interaction with the bartender in the bar, is therefore influenced by the customers' rational perception, since they calculate the investment they have made (ticket price, time away from seeing the artist) against the value they receive (beverages), and the bar's service provision, therefore consists of a functional clue (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006).

"I'm thinking, I don't want to go back down there and stand in line, it simply took too much time to the bar, although I could have drunk some more water" (Appendix 5; p.8).

The interview with customer 1 further revealed that having the first unsatisfying experience with the service provision at the bar hindered her from going back and buying more throughout the concert. I would therefore argue that the dissatisfying perception of the service quality influenced her intend to make a future purchase, which is supported by Meyer & Schwager (2007), who claimed an expectation is partly set by previous experiences with a service provider's offerings. Therefore based on the statements of customer 1 and 2, I would argue that a desired customer experience entails fast and prompt bar-service provision, especially when the artist is performing, in order for the customer to feel they get the desired value for money.

Other elements for the desired experience

Besides the five dimensions of the RATER model, other criterion was found during the analysis of the customer journeys and the interviews, showing an influence on the customers' experience (Appendix 5-7; customer journey 1-3). The influences found entails: other customers and friends in the experience environment. I would argue that these two criterions both support social aspects, provided by people in the experience environment, but out of the control of the service provider. I have therefore chosen to group these two together under ' sociality'.

Sociality

Atmosphere during the concert
All the customers expressed that the ambiance during a concert, influences their experience. Customer 2 said: "Music still is best live, so the ambiance from the other people, and because it becomes more a party of some kind. That is the best concerts, I think, where you feel it is one big party and not just a thousand people who have shown up in the same place, to stand and listen by them selves, it is some collective feeling of being there" (Appendix 6; p.2). According to the interviewed customer 2, the ambiance is an important part of going to a concert, since it influences the feeling of being at a live concert. The feeling that the people, who are gathered at this concert, are creating this ambiance and mood together, this was important to him. I would argue this support the claim of Zomerdijk & Voss (2010), who suggested the presence of other customers could improve or damage a customer's experience, especially if customers are in close range of each other. Customer 3 also argued that the presence of the other customers have an influence (Appendix 7). "I look at the other guests, because the mood rubs of, it is really cool if people dance, I like to do that myself, it actually means a lot, if the other guests are in a good mood" (Appendix 7; p.2). She further tells me about the concert she went to, where it was split between two artists. In the first half the audience did not seem to know the artist that well, because for the second half, the mood and the ambiance completely changed, with people clapping and dancing, this put her in a mood, and gave her a good experience. Based on these statements, I would argue that the customers' desired experience entail the presence of other customers who support in a co-creation of the mood and ambiance.

Influences of the ambiance during the concert, was further mentioned to be the artists themselves. Customer 3 said, "When the concert starts, it is important that you can feel they are excited, you can feel they hare happy, then the sound is important. I think it is important that

they say something between the numbers that they show they are glad to be there" (Appendix 7; p.5). Both customer 2 and 3 expressed that they expect something from the artists they expect them to help create a good ambiance (Appendix 6,7). It is therefore argued to be important that the artists deliver and are ready to deliver, otherwise the actual experience does not exceed the expectations, and the experience will be considered dissatisfying. Based on these statements, I would argue that the customers' desired experience further entail that the artists are happy and ready to deliver a good show, to support co-creation of the ambiance.

Opportunity to 'warm-up' with friends

The journey of customer 1, reveals that four out of five of the most satisfying sub-experiences (green smileys), was connected to her being social with her friends (Customer journey 1).

"I think we thought it could be cosy, to do something social, before going to see the concert, where you don't really talk with each other or communicate, so it was important to see each other and be social in a different way, and just catch-up on how things are going, drink some wine, eat some sushi, talk, and have a nice time before- Warm-up in our own manner" (Appendix 5; p.5).

I believe this shows that going to the concert was initiated by her need, thus expectations to have a fun and social experience (Appendix 5). It was therefore important for her to meet and hang out with her friends before the concert, since she had an expectation of not being able to talk with her friends as much during the concert, where there would be loud music. The expectation could be related to past experiences, where she haven't felt that she have been able to talk to her friends during the concert, and support the statement of Meyer & Schwager (2007) suggesting expectations to be partly set by past experiences with a service offering. Being able to meet up with her friends before a concert and warm-up is therefore a desired experience of customer 1. Although meeting up before the concert and 'warming-up' goes beyond VEGA's service provision, it support the claim of Verhoef et al. (2009), who suggested that the customer experience comprises the total experience (including search, purchase, consumption, and after-sale phases) (Verhoef et al., 2009). I would argue that both customer journey 1 and 2 make it evident, how in the mind of some customers, the concert-experience spans beyond the actual service provision (Appendix 5,7, customer journey 1,3).

Analysis sum up 1

As mentioned the analysis showed the diversity in the customers' needs, expectations, and experience due to the subjectivity of perception and interpretation. Understanding that the target audience is various, I believe is an important recognition for a company, since this support the claim, that you cannot design an experience, and understanding the diversity of the target group is therefore necessary, in order to improve customer's experience. However, the analysis also showed that some criterion are shared amongst customers. Through analysis of findings, by applying the RATER model by Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), I was able to determine 10 criterion for the customer's desired concert experience. 8 of these were divided amongst the five dimensions, and two was not found applicable to any of the five dimensions, but important to the customers and their concert experience, and therefore grouped under 'sociality'. I would argue that all the criterion are valuable for VEGA to recognize, as they are a link towards improving the customers' experience. Although some of the criterion are out of VEGA's control, understanding these needs is still important I would argue, since it has been defined as part of the concert experience, and thereby influences the experience of the customers.

The criterion found are:

Reliability

High sound quality

A desired customer experience entails a high quality sound experience, and that choosing where to see concerts, can depend on the reliability of the venues music system.

Comprehensible service script

A desired customer experience entails a comprehensible and structured service journey, thus organised and designed in a way, which makes it clear where you need to go, and what you have to do.

Assurance

Confidence in wardrobe employees

A desired customer experience entails the employees' ability to convey trust, assurance and confidence when interacting with customers handing in their belongings in the wardrobe.

Security guard to support friendly safety

A desired customer experience entails the presence of security employees who elicit authority to provide a feeling of security and reassurance but in a friendly and not accusing manner.

Tangible

Physical ticket

A desired customer experience can entail the tangibility of the printed-concert ticket, to evidence the purchase, and serve as a reminder of something to look forward to, or a good past experience.

Concert stage

A desired customer experience can thereby further entail the physical room for the stage, supporting the atmosphere during live performances.

Empathy

Feeling welcome
A desired customer experience entails front-line employees caring and greeting them welcome when arriving to the concert venue, to support the feeling of them being there for you and want to deliver something good, and feeling welcome as customer.

Responsiveness

Prompt bar service provision
A desired customer experience entails fast and prompt bar-service provision, especially when the artist is performing, in order for the customer to feel they get the desired value for money.

Sociality

Atmosphere during concert
A desired customer experience entail the presence of other customers who support in a co-creation of the mood and ambiance.

A desired customer experience further entail that the artists are happy and ready to deliver a good show, to support co-creation of the ambiance.

Opportunity to warm-up with friends
Being able to meet up with her friends before a concert and warm-up is therefore a desired experience of customer 1

High sound quality	Comprehensible service script	Confidence in wardrobe employees
Security guard to support friendly safety	Physical ticket	Concert stage
Feeling welcome	Prompt bar service provision	Atmosphere during concert	Opportunity to warm-up with friends

Reflections 1

This section entails reflections concerning the theory and method applied to analyse findings and understand the customers' desired customer experience, thus a concert service from the perspective of the customers. The methods used consisted of qualitative field research and comprised: Interviews with facilitation of emotional customer journey mapping and an observation. Further to analyse the findings, the theory of Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), consisting of their RATER model was applied.

Interviews

Three interviews were carried out to understand the customers' desired concert experience (Appendix 5-7). The first two interviews took place in private homes, which proved to be a good setting, since there were no interruptions, and not the risk of the interviewer or interviewee to loose their strain of thoughts. This was realized, since the third interview was conducted in a café, where interruptions by serving staff, could have decreased the volume of insights. I don't believe this was the case, however the awareness will have me consider the interview environment in the future.

The three interviewed persons were picked from my own network:

Customer 1
28-year-old women from Copenhagen. Her last concert experience was with Dolly Parton in Forum last year. During the interview, it turned out she had never visited VEGA for a concert, but once for a party. According to her, she had no recollection of the VEGA venue. The findings from the interview, was decided usable anyways, since Forum's concert service system, constitute some of the same elements as VEGA's. I would further argue that the data has been transferrable to the case of VEGA since the customer showed no emotional attachment to a specific music venue, but turned out to be a potential VEGA customer. Therefore findings still proved useable for the analysis, as the interview and the customer journey showed her general needs when going to a concert, and how she set expectations, and experiences service provision. The interview was based on her latest concert experience.

Customer 2
33-year-old male from Copenhagen. He frequently goes to live concerts and have been many times in VEGA to see artists. The interview with him was based on his general impression of VEGA, his specific memory of touch points and interactions, and his expectations for a concert experience.

Customer 3
27 year old women from Copenhagen. She frequently goes to live concerts, and often to VEGA. Her interview was based on her general perception of VEGA's services, and her most recent visit a few weeks before the interview.

Validity of sample size

The three persons reflect a small sample size, and are therefore not representative of VEGA's entire target group. However, the purpose of collecting data has been to apply and understand methods to support improvement of the customer experience, thus not to provide recommendations for improvements. I therefore argue that the sample size have been valid for this purpose, as it supported analysis and application of the RATER model, thus providing an indication of variety as well as similarities between customers. The validity of the approach is supported by Bryman & Bell (2007), who states: "The findings of qualitative research are to generalize to theory rather than to populations" (p.424). If VEGA were to carry out improvements, I would argue for a 'segmentation', to ensure representation and a reliable image of the variety of their target group (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Jobber, 2007; p.275). Segmentation could be supported with a quantitative method such as a survey, to collect measurable data on the target group (Bryman & Bell, 2007; p.56). Further the segmentation could be supplied with the method of 'personas' as they can convey both qualitative and quantitative data and support focus on improvement aspects (Pruitt & Grudin, 2003).

Interview guide

I suggest the interviews conducted, followed a 'semi-structured approach, since they were executed based on an 'interview guide' with topics, and not a closed set of questions (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Appendix 8). The interview guide functioned as checklist during the interviews, to ensure data collection on the planned topics. However, it showed that following the topics was not as important as letting the interviewee steer the conversation in directions relevant to his/her specific experience, as this provided useful data concerning the customers criterions for a desired experience (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The flexibility of the method, made it possible, to adjust the planned approach during the interview, according to the nature of the customer, and his/her specific context.

Different methods for different people

As Zomerdijk & Voss (2010), and Nasution et al. (2014) stated, needs, thus expectations and experiences are inherently personal and subjective, as they exist in the minds of the individual. The statement was supported by the analysis of the customer interviews, and the customer journeys, which showed, needs, expectations and experiences are subjective and customers categorise and make sense of their reality in different ways (Appendix 5-7; customer journey 1-3). This became evident during customer journey mapping with customer 2. The nature of the journey is to map the activities and steps of a journey related to service consumption (Patricio et al., 2011). However according to customer 2, in his mind the concert experience took place when he was in front of the stage, listening to the music, everything else was secondary, and he did not find it relevant to the concert experience. Therefore creating a customer journey did not come natural to him, as he did not see the experience as a journey (Appendix 6). In this case an association exercise, asking about specific features of the service provision was more relevant for him. Although he claimed that only the music was relevant, asking him about specific touch points still evoked reflections, feelings and attitudes revealing expectations, and previous experiences. Further, when providing him with a mental walk through of service encounters trying to evoke his emotional and rational layers, he were able to locate features that would make the experience more or less pleasant.

Influences of interviewers perception

A challenge rising from the interview method, was how to know what I perceive they say, is actually what they mean. From the iterative process of conducting the interviews, I learned from each interview, that my own mental frames, influences how I perceive what the customer say. I therefore found it useful to validate my own perception, by confirming an interpreted customer statement, by asking them if that was what they meant. In several occasions this approach was found relevant, as they were able to elaborate, and get their intentional meaning across. In this sense the interview approach is very supporting, as it offers the opportunity for immediate confirmation.

Emotional customer journey mapping

Facilitation of the emotional customer journey method was carried out in the three individual interviews with customers (Appendix 5-7; customer journeys 1-3, model 6,7,8). Facilitating and applying the method of customer journey mapping, have been part of the iterative process, as the outcome of the first use of the method, affected and readjusted the approach for the facilitation of the next and so forth. I would argue this demonstrate the flexibility of the method, as you can then facilitate the journey to fit your specific project. This was for example evident by the creation of a user journey template. In the first interview, the journey was mapped, using big post-its, which constituted the steps stated by the customer, and then using smaller post-its to capture details related to each step. This technique was effective in collecting the data, and the flexibility of post-its made it possible to move them around if needed. However this proved to also be a time-consuming technique, and I therefore created a template after the first interview to use in the two other interviews (Appendix 9). The template reduced the time of moving post-its around, and helped communicate the execution of the journey method to the interviewee, since they could see it consisted of connected boxes which could be filled out, instead of them having to imagining how you build a journey with post-its. In this way 'learning by doing' have been an important part of understanding how the method of customer journey mapping can work in connection to gaining insights and having the interviewee express expectations and experiences. This reflection comes from the revelation that planning for the facilitation of a method, can only take you so far, and it is the actual practical use of the method that gives you an understanding of how it can be used.

Support capturing experiences
According to Gentile, Spiller & Noci (2007), a customer experience is an internal and subjective response a customer can have to a direct or indirect contact with a service provider. I would argue that the customer journey, made it possible to understand the customers experience, or the "internal respond" to interactions, by the use of the customer journey. Application of the customer journey consisted of mapping the customer's overall activities, their service activities, and interactions with the concert provider, as well as interactions with other elements in their experience environment (friends, other customer's, weather). The mapping of the activities, lead to the customers being able to reflect and address the response or reactions they have had with the service provider, or expected to have, thus being able to communicate their experience. The Definition stated that a customer's total experience is impacted by sub-experiences evolving over time, and the sum of these influences thoughts, feelings, the perceived service quality and lead to intend (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). I would argue that the application of the customer journey, helped illustrate the extent of the customers concert experience, by having them mapping out activities that they find relevant for being part of, and influencing their experience.

Emotional curve

There are many emotions a person can feel, but understanding each and every emotion connected to the customers' concert experience, have not been an objective in this master's thesis (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). Instead the emotional curve was used in a more general sense, as a way for the interviewed customers, to express their emotions through dissatisfaction (red sticker), indifference (yellow sticker) or satisfaction (green sticker) connected to the experienced interactions in the service provision or in the general experience environment. In practice the emotional curve represented a way of defining an experiential layer on top of the mapped customer journey. Literally I had the customer's attach red, yellow and green 'smiley' stickers onto the journey maps (see pictures). The Definition stated, that an experience occurs from a set of interactions between a customer and a service provider, or other physical and relational elements in the experience environment, which involves the customer on different levels (Meyer & Schwager, 2007; Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007; Zomerdijk & Voss, 2010). Also in this relation I found the customer journey, and especially the application of the emotional curve useful to support the understanding of the customers' involvement, on rational, emotional, sensorial, physical or spiritual levels (Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007). I believe this became evident in the analysis, when having to understand the customers' desired experience that the customer journey was a good way of capturing customers' involvement in conjunction with the activities mapped, to understand feelings connected to the specific activity. When carrying out the analysis it was possible to see that for example customer 1 had an activity where she interacted with a security guard, he acted in a way that made her feel accused an unwelcome, therefore she marked the activity with a red unhappy sticker (Appendix 5, customer journey 1).

Model 6: Customer journey 1

Listen to music at a party	Talk about going to concert	Putting date into calendar	Discussing again to go to concert	Decidin...con...
1	2	3	4	
Social experience initiated the idea of going to concert Good mood. Ticket are expensive but they have their joint account for experinces.	Expectations of fun and social concert (social need) Wanting to continue extend the experience with friends. Not big fan of the music, but it would be a 'new' experience	Calendar in mobile phone	Using a tread on Facebook to discuss back and forth if they should go	Good experie actually happ did not expec tions are ther

Stop at kiosk to buy water	Enter concert venue	Stand in line	Bag and ticket check by security	Find...
10	11	12	13	
Warm day and after the wine they needed to get some water. Expectation of buying beer at the concert	Bad experience, unclear directions of what to do and where to go. Possible expectations about a structured service (rational perception)	Bad experience, too many people going through the same place, unclear what to do	Bad experience, don't know which security guard is doing what- missing communication Bad experience, take her water, feeling accused, no freindly welcome (expected)	Finding seat from the ma

Goes back to seat with water	See rest of concert	Leave concert before last number	Stand in line	Leave con...
19	20	21	22	
Bad experience, difficult to carry glases(3) up the stairs Expectations, don't want to go back to the bar, because she expects there to be a line based on previous experience	Good experience, the concert was fun. Good experience, other customers were dressed-up Good experience, had fun with her friends	Bad experience, miss the last songs, beacuse they leave the concert, because it is too warm in the room. Expectation, they will have to satnd in line if they wait till it finishes	Bad experience, short line to get out	Talks about g getting a bee them have t from work.

g to go to cert (5)	Transfer money from joint account (6)	Planning the concert day (7)	Meet to eat before concert (8)	Bike to concert venue (9)
nce that it ens, probably t this, expecta- efore exceeded	Using money from joint 'experience account' to pay for tickets- otherwise they would not have gone.	Using Facebook and face-to-face to discuss what to do before the concert	Good experience to do something social before the concert 'warm-up' (talking, eating, drinking). Expectation that they can't talk and communicate at the concert.	Nice that theconcert venue is close. If an artist is playing somewhere she can't bike to, she would take the necessary mean of trans-portation.

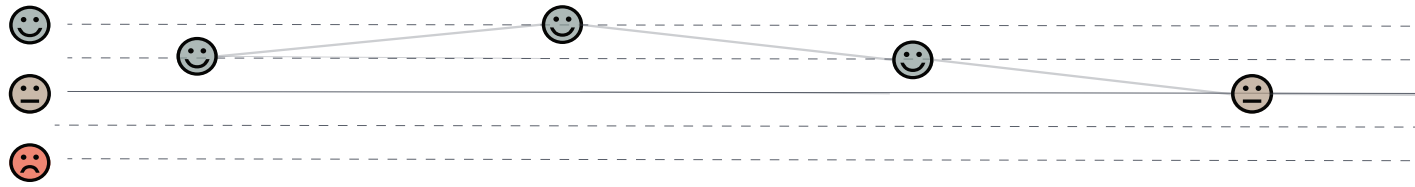| d seats (14)	Concert starts (15)	Get up to go to the bar (16)	Stand in line (17)	Buy water at the bar (18)
s gives some ai any people	Bad experience with the sound. Bad experience, the physical environment was very warm- maybe aircondition-ing was not working	Bad experience, need to buy water because the one she bought was taken by security, and it was warm. Have to miss some of the concert	Bad experience, because she would rather see the music she paid for with her friends than standing in line Bad experience, the employ-ees are very slow serving customers	Bad experience, the service employees have no surplus caused to stress, and have no smiles. Need changed buys water instead of beer

ncert venue (23)	Ride bikes to bar (24)	Buy beer and talk (25)	Go home (26)
going out an er after, two of he next day off	Choose a random bar near by.	Good experience, talking about the concert, and that they had fun. Expectations, would not see the artist again, expect it to be the same experience, seemed like routine jokes	Musically, the experience was one of many. Socially the experience was good. She would not go back to the music venue Forum

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Model 7: Customer journey 2

Buying ticket for a concert	Printing out ticket and hanging on the fridge	Transportation to concert venue	Arriving at concert venue
1	2	3	4

Newer been easier since it can be done online.

Annoying to see he is being charged a fee- would rather just have the price in total.

Like to have the ticket printed on paper, evidence of having bought something. Puts it on the fridge to know where it is an for something to look forward to

By bike or by taxi depending on the weather, important to have the freedom to have a beer.

Important for the experience that the first people you meet are friendly and welcomes you, gives you the feeling that they are there for you, and wants to deliver something good.

Seeing warm-up band	Waiting for main artist	Seeing/hearing main artist	Standing in line for wardrobe
9	10	11	12

Experiences has been mixed, don't know what to expect.
It is no what he came to see Experience of warming up to the main act, having a beer, he likes that

Experience, waiting for hip-hop artists can be annoying, he don't want to wait too long, he finds it a bit disrespectful

Experience, good when the atmosphere is good, like being at a big party.
Like theater feeling in VEGA Expectations, quality sound, something extra from the artist, not being crushed

Always a bad experience, everyone is leaving at the same time, to avoid this, you miss the rest of the concert.

Handing jacket over to the wardrobe 5	Security and ticket check 6	Toilets 7	Buying drinks at the bar 8
He expect the wardrobe to be safe, that they don't loose his jacket, and that the employees providing the service seem competent. Like to see them hang the jacket on a hanger effectively	Glad that they are there, makes him feel safe. Should show authority, without being 'policeman'	Expecting the men's room to be gross, smelly, have water on the floor and toilet paper all over. Will be pleasantly surprised if they were nice. Don't remember VEGA's	Experience, nice to have a beer or others. Expect their to be a bit of a wait, but that the employees acknowledges you are there. An effective and fast service, won't stand in line during the music.

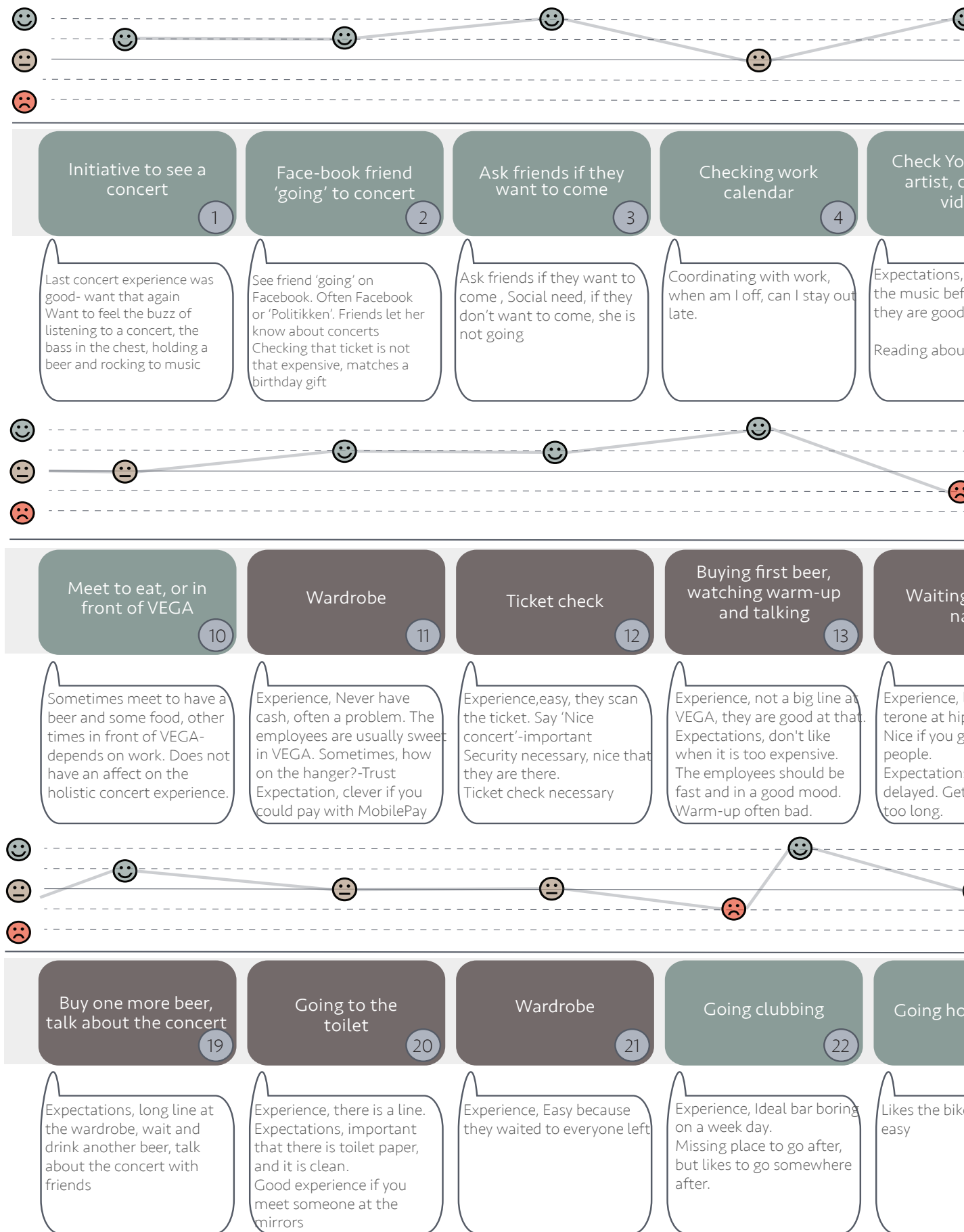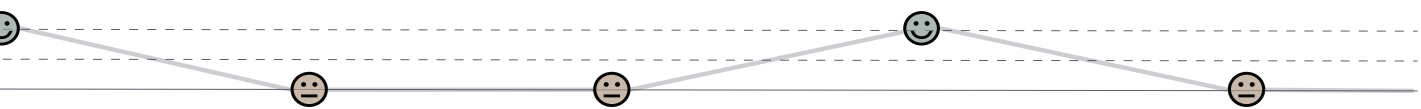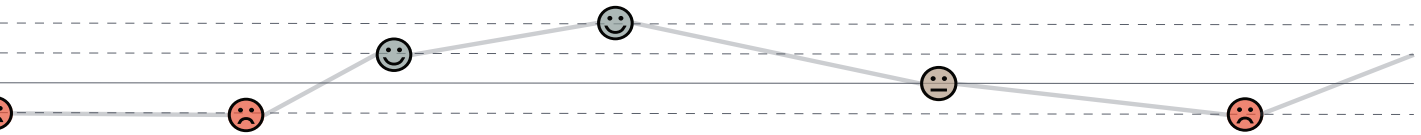| Getting jacket from the wardrobe 13	Continuing the party or going home 14	Going home 15	Hanging ticket on the fridge 16
Expectation, that the employees are effective	Expectation, when concert is over, you go home or find a place the continue the party, nothing more at the concert venue. Either more music, or somewhere quiet to talk		Hangs ticket on the fridge if it has been a memorable or unique concert

Model 7: Customer journey 2

Initiative to see a concert	Face-book friend 'going' to concert	Ask friends if they want to come	Checking work calendar	Check Yo... artist, ... vid...
1	2	3	4	

Last concert experience was good- want that again
Want to feel the buzz of listening to a concert, the bass in the chest, holding a beer and rocking to music

See friend 'going' on Facebook. Often Facebook or 'Politikken'. Friends let her know about concerts
Checking that ticket is not that expensive, matches a birthday gift

Ask friends if they want to come , Social need, if they don't want to come, she is not going

Coordinating with work, when am I off, can I stay out late.

Expectations, ...
the music bef...
they are good...

Reading abou...

Meet to eat, or in front of VEGA	Wardrobe	Ticket check	Buying first beer, watching warm-up and talking	Waiting... na...
10	11	12	13	

Sometimes meet to have a beer and some food, other times in front of VEGA- depends on work. Does not have an affect on the holistic concert experience.

Experience, Never have cash, often a problem. The employees are usually sweet in VEGA. Sometimes, how on the hanger?-Trust
Expectation, clever if you could pay with MobilePay

Experience,easy, they scan the ticket. Say 'Nice concert'-important
Security necessary, nice that they are there.
Ticket check necessary

Experience, not a big line at VEGA, they are good at that.
Expectations, don't like when it is too expensive.
The employees should be fast and in a good mood.
Warm-up often bad.

Experience, ...
terone at hip...
Nice if you g...
people.
Expectation...
delayed. Get...
too long.

Buy one more beer, talk about the concert	Going to the toilet	Wardrobe	Going clubbing	Going ho...
19	20	21	22	

Expectations, long line at the wardrobe, wait and drink another beer, talk about the concert with friends

Experience, there is a line.
Expectations, important that there is toilet paper, and it is clean.
Good experience if you meet someone at the mirrors

Experience, Easy because they waited to everyone left

Experience, Ideal bar boring on a week day.
Missing place to go after, but likes to go somewhere after.

Likes the bik...
easy

Youtube for concerts videos (5)	Buy ticket online (6)	Print ticket at work, hangs it up (7)	Listen to music, share videos (Youtube) with friends (8)	Planning time and place to meet (9)
Listening to fore to hear if in concert t the artist	Buy ticket via concert venues web page	Expectations, hangs it up, because she is looking forward to it. Are unsure if you need to print the ticket. printing depends on the look of the ticket. Convenient in your phone.	Good experience to do something social before the concert 'warm-up' (talking, eating, drinking). Expectation that they can't talk and communicate at the concert.	Check time of concert

g on main ame (14)	Concert starts (15)	Seeing/hearing main artist (16)	Concert ends (17)	Lights turned on, people leave (18)
like the testos- p-hop concerts et to talk to s, always annoyed if it is	Expectations, Are the band ready. Are they happy to be there. Nice sound system Not to much bass. Experience, has an affect that the other guests are in a good mood	Expectations, Recognizing songs, Surprises from the band, Atmosphere from the audience, Min. 1 hour.	Extra numbers Important with goodbye. You feel high	Experience, often interrupted moment, the lights are switched on. Nice with some transmission music, and if it is possible to stay for another beer.

ome by bike (23)	Maybe sharing photo on Facebook/Instagra (24)	Looking through pictures before going to sleep (25)	Maybe sharing pictures with friends who were there (26)	Listening to the artist afterwards (27)
e because it is	Shares the concert if it has been good.	Good experience, talking about the concert, and that they had fun. Expectations, would not see the artist again, expect it to be the same experience, seemed like routine jokes	Records video during concert and post it on Instagram or Facebook. Looks at it again if she tells a friend about it.	Listening to the recordings, and the music. Good experience that you now know a new artist.

Ranking experiences

After first mapping the journey, and then adding stickers connected to interactions, I had the interviewees rank their experiences against each other. The ranking gave me an idea of the affect of the different activities of the user journey, and their possible influence on the accumulated experience. For customer 1 both meeting with her friends before a concert, the actual performance of the artist and going to a bar after the concert to talk, was perceived as good experiences. But was one of them better than the other, and why? The extra ranking offered another way to dig deeper, and get even more understanding of the customers preferences and personal needs.

Throughout the field research, an important focus has been the depth of the answers, I therefore applied the technique of "The Five Why's" method, since it is "a chain of questions used to dig below the outward symptoms of a user experience in order to uncover the motivations that are at its root cause" (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011; p.166). I found this technique valuable to understand the context of the customers' statement, intended behaviour and sources for perceptions and emotions. The method further proved valuable since the answers provided me with insights that could help confirm some of the statements of the definition, such as the connection between behaviour and experience and experience and expectations.

Support visualisation

Incorporating the customer journey as part of the interview, showed to have a desired effect, since it supported visualisation, as the customers' activities were made visible by writing on post-its or in the template, and mapping them next to each other. I believe this triggered the memory and reflection of the interviewed, as he/she was able to imagine or remember the experience through the steps of the journey, and draw out more details. An example of the customer journey triggering memory showed when interviewing Customer 2. Having him going through the steps, made him realize that he had more thoughts and feelings about certain elements, which he at first had dismissed. In the beginning of the interview he expressed that all that mattered was the music, thus the artist and the quality of the sound (Appendix 6). As we went through the customer journey, he realized that more elements induced some emotional connections.

"Yes, my experience with wardrobes, I don't think... again, it is not a focus point for me, as long as I feel my clothes are secured, and I will get it back, then I am happy, but no, somehow it does matter, because I hand in my jacket, which is sort of my purse, so in some sense it does matter"

(Appendix 6; p.3). The customer journey are in this sense a useful method for triggering the minds of the informant, and a way of helping them to either imagine the situations or remember past ones. Further it supported the communication between the interviewed and me, as we could use the visual steps as a tool for communication, and it was possible to point and relate actions and elements to each other. I realized during the interviews that it also helped me as interviewer by inspiring associations and thereby more questions, which I believe gave the interview more depth and detail. I would argue that to further support visualization, and trigger the customers' memory of experiences, pictures of the physical setting, as it looks during a concert, could have been used in the interviews.

Support analysis

The method of customer journey mapping, was further transferred into the analysis phase. To support analysis, the customer journeys created throughout the interviews, were digitalized, and more details from the interviews were added (Customer journey 1-3). The digitalized customer journeys supported the analysis by presenting much of the findings in one place, thus showing the customers' experiences in an overall context. The three digital journeys were constructed according to the same layout to make comparison possible, and I found this useful for understanding differences and locating patterns in the three interviews, as presented in the analysis section of perspective 1. The emotional layer as seen in the customer journeys, provide a quick overview, of where the service provision can be improved, since the red stickers, serves as pointers for dissatisfying experiences and low expectations. This claim is supported by Hagen & Bron (2013) who states: "by recording the customers' emotions for each episode of the Customer Journey and by mapping their experiential values of the service on an emotional curve. This affords an insight into the peak and end moments in the current service and illustrates where, from the perspective of the customer, there is improvement potential" (p. 257).

Observation

A qualitative general observation was conducted. The observation is argued to be an ethnographic research method since it is a method carried out in the field and took place in the natural setting (the concert venue VEGA) (Millen, 2000). The observation was during a concert in Store VEGA on a Saturday evening, which provided a general overview of the front-office service environment, and the behaviour and flows of the concert customers (Appendix 2). Going into the field, provided a sense of scope, and an understanding of the environment that customers reside in, when consuming service. The observation methods proved useful, since according to the stated definition, an experience deals with feelings and emotions stemming from the stimuli elicited by the environment of the experience (Berry, Wall & Carbone, 2006). When in the experience environment, customers are therefore physical and mentally influenced by the stimuli, which provide the response, thus the experience. In order to understand how this feels, and empathise

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with the customers, I found it important to try and feel the things the customers feel, see the things they see, hear and smell the things they do, in order to better understand the statements and the experiences that they express in an interview. Since I am not a stranger to the concert environment beyond the project, I have had my shares of concerts, and already had an understanding of how the service works, also the one of VEGA. I found that creating empathy in this context became a paradox. On one hand, I would argue that being a concert customer my-self, helped understand some of the feelings the interviewee uttered, but on the other hand, I might have taken some experiences for granted, and assumed I understood, when in fact the interviewed was thinking something else. In the end I believe the observation supported a better understanding of the customers' experience, as it provided insights about going to a concert, and how that feels.

RATER model and stated Definition

The theory of the stated Definition and of Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), proved useful for carrying out the analysis. The stated Definition, supported an understanding of the nature of an experience, thus elements constituting and influencing an experience, and thereby proved to be a frame of reference when looking for and drawing experiences out of the findings from the interviews and the user journeys. Even though, in the final analysis, experiences and expectations were both used, as indicators of the customers' desired experience, the Definition made it possible to locate the two. Further I would argue that the theory of experience clues by Berry, Wall and Carbone (2006), enabled an understanding of the emotions, the customers connected to the experiences, thus supporting an understanding of the affect of the stimuli elicited by touch points and other elements in the experience environment. I would argue this insight support a company when managing the customers experience, since they are then able to manage the stimuli that affect intend. Further the RATER model proved useful in supporting the analysis since it structured the found experiences and expectations into 5 dimensions of customer criterion, and offers specific examples of elements that constitute these dimensions, and further how to manage them (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990). Based on the application of the RATER model for analysis, I would argue that the model serves as a tool for extracting basic criterion, that are generalizable across a target group, and relates directly to criterion for the service environment. However, since two criterion were found not to fit the RATER model, I would argue that the model is limited to only consider criterion that affect the experience concerned with the service delivery, although the analysis showed that some of the customers' perception of their experience went beyond the service environment. Therefore only applying the RATER model for managing the service quality and improving customer experience, is argued to delimit the possibility of managing it holistically.

Perspective 2

Understanding company's
service performance

Analysis 2

The purpose of this second analysis was to apply chosen theory to findings from the conducted field research, in order to understand VEGA's performance, thus the service from the provider's perspective. The analysis was carried out by applying the Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry's (1990) Gaps model (see model?) to findings from observations, contextual interviews and meetings with VEGA's management (Appendix 1-4).

Gap 1 between customer expectations and management perception

"Knowing what customers expect is the first and possibly most critical step in delivering quality service" (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry 1990; p.51).

As already introduced, Gap 1 is the difference between what customers expect and what management perceives them to expect. This gap was suggested to stem from lack of marketing research, inadequate upward communication and too many organisational layers (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry 1990).

All the managers I talked to, expressed how the customer experience is a strong focus for VEGA, and most of the initiatives they take, is aimed towards providing customers with satisfying experiences (Appendix 1). I further found, from management, a willingness to understand customers' needs and expectations, but by using resources already available, such as managers own gained knowledge or information stemming from front-line employees. In general, my impression from talking with respectively the bar, and the PR-communications manager, is that they both have many years of experience with either managing concert service systems or communicating VEGA's services, and that they believe they have a strong sense of who their core customers are (Appendix 1). In regards to structured marketing research, the communications manager, mentioned a survey conducted among their customers, a few years ago, however I did not get the impression that this was a regular and often recurring initiative. I would argue that the reason for not conducting structured research might be because they rely on the knowledge they have, or gain informally. From the interviews with the two front-line employees, who respectively works in the wardrobe and the bar service, it was evident, that they have much knowledge concerning the needs, wants and expectations of the customers, and that this knowledge has been acquired from interacting with customers during service provision throughout several years (Appendix 3,4). This was evident when talking to the employee from the wardrobe who stressed she know the customers very well (Appendix 3). It was further observed, during the contextual interview, where the same employee, advices a customer to leave her scarf in the wardrobe, because it will be very warm during the concert, and she knows from experience that customers

often brings the scarf back during the concert (Appendix 3). It therefore seems that individually management and the front-line employees each have their acquired knowledge concerning the customers, but in an informal and unstructured fashion.

Management encourages front-line employees to share valuable insights they gain from their interactions with customers, such as needs, wants, complaint or ideas for improvements (Appendix 1,3,4). Communication of these insights is possible in several manners. The wardrobe employee explained that if they have valuable suggestions, they could turn to the concert manager, who then evaluates it and takes it further to management, if it is found useful (Appendix 3). The interview with the bar manager, revealed that sometimes the employees receives no feedback on their suggestions, also because sometimes the insights are delivered to the bar manager in a hurry during a concert (Appendix 1,3). The interview with the bartender revealed that when she gets an idea concerning something that could be improved, or changed regarding VEGA's service offerings, she is sometimes hesitant, and tells her self that management probably already had that idea, and she is just missing the reasoning for why it can't be done, thus the idea do not get any further than her mind (Appendix 4).

Based on this I would argue that VEGA's management to some extent informally collects information concerning the needs and expectations of their customers, although it depends on the individual front-line employees' willingness and commitment to share. Further if front-line employees only share customers' complaints, I would argue that their informal collection of information is insufficient. This is based on Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry 1990, who suggests that complaints are good for trouble shooting, and fixing failures and break-downs, but is rarely sufficient to understand customer's expectations (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry 1990). I therefore argue that VEGA is lacking structured marketing research, to collect insights of customers' expectations, thus a possible gap one exists.

Gap 2 between management's perception and service quality specification

"Management may not be willing (or able) to put the systems in place to match or exceed customers' expectations" (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990; p. 71).

Gap two arises from management not being willing to utilize knowledge concerning customer expectations by setting service-quality standards for the organization (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990). The authors suggest that key factors resulting in gap two consists amongst others of inadequate commitment to service quality and lack of perception of feasibility.

Commitment to service quality
According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), an indication of management committing to service quality, is if resources are located to departments to improve service quality. I would argue that VEGA's management is committed to service quality, and facilitates it as a strategic

goal. This is based on the fact, that the biggest expense VEGA has, is the salaries of their service (front-line) employees (Appendix 1). From general knowledge, I know that other music venues and music festivals, makes extensive use of volunteer workers. This is not the case for VEGA, and I would argue this to be due to the requirements of dedicated and committed workers. Further, to retain the employees' motivation, besides a salary, the employees get free entrance to a certain amount of concerts and are able to bring a friend (Appendix 3,4). Management also throws different parties, and provide employees with benefits such as cheap drinks, and allowing employees to socialize and party after their concert shifts. I would argue that these initiatives together show a commitment from VEGA's management, to allocate resources in a "department" committed to service quality.

Further, in the four larger bars in store VEGA, they have installed self-counting draft beer systems (Appendix 4). The draft beer system is centralized, thus the draft beer comes from beer kegs in a centralized location. Further the system automatically counts, when a beer is poured, and exempts the bartender from entering orders and payment into a cash register, in order to save time. The same applies for the liquors, which also counts when poured, and is further automatic so it only allows the precise amount of alcohol for a drink. I would argue that implementation of this system, support that VEGA views service quality as a key strategic goal, as the system support front-line employees in fast service delivery, especially during concerts.

Based on these argumentations, gap two is valued to be closed.

Perception of feasibility

In the contextual interview with the wardrobe employee, she mentions several times, that customer's ask for either MobilePay or the ability to pay with their credit card (Appendix 3). "We can sense that there have been an enormous change with this MobilePay, and that people would really like to pay with credit card" (Appendix 3; p.6). The interviewed wardrobe employee has been working in VEGA in a total of seven years, and through all those years, the credit card question has been asked by customers. She has mentioned it to management, however the answer has been that it will take longer time to expedite customers, and if they introduce the card machine, customers will get use to it, and think that they do not have to bring cash when they visit VEGA (appendix 3). Having 20 DKK ready to pay the wardrobe when you receive your wardrobe ticket, I believe is the fastest way of payment. However, in all the cases where customers do not have change, they are redirected to the foyer bar to, perhaps stand in line, withdraw money, and go back to the wardrobe to get the ticket and pay. In this case, paying with MobilePay and credit card is argued to be a much quicker solution. In this sense I would argue that VEGA's existing operations system does not enable customer expectations to be met.

Therefore, even if resources are located to specifically improve service quality (front-line employees, automated bar system), not responding to direct customer requests, I believe creates a gap two.

Gap 3 between service quality specifications and service delivery

The third gap is the service-performance gap, and suggested to arise when employees are unwilling or unable to perform the service at the desired level (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990). The authors point out that especially in labour intensive services where service providers and customers interact, opportunities for mistakes and misunderstandings can happen. Key factors resulting in Gap three are role ambiguity, lack of perceived control and others.

Role ambiguity

Role ambiguity concerns employees who do not possess the information or training needed to perform their job (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990). In the case of VEGA, role ambiguity was not located from the interviews I had with the two front-line employees. In fact, VEGA management showed several initiatives supporting their employees in receiving the necessary information and training, to carry out their job (Appendix 3,4). Findings showed that new employees in VEGA are selected based on their experience with similar occupations and their approach to service provision. The bar manager emphasised that it is important that the employees are extrovert, and can approach customers, not stand in a corner and hide (Appendix 1). When new employees are hired at VEGA, training consists of peer training, where the new employee learns the service processes by watching the experienced employee, and learning-by-doing (Appendix 1). A new employee has a couple of trial shifts, and is then evaluated and found suitable or not. Providing employees with the necessary information to perform their service tasks is argued to be of high priority. This statement is based on three things. First, new initiatives, products sold in the bar and others, are communicated to the employees on staff meetings, where everyone has the chance to hear and further ask questions (Appendix 1). Second, VEGA has an Intranet, with an internal database for employees, consisting of information about the concerts, how many tickets sold, formalities about the artist, employees assigned and their place of work etc. Third, before every concert, the concert manager, gathers the bartenders, the runners and a representative from the wardrobe staff, and informs them about the evenings event, and if there is any special things that the employees need to be aware of. When asked about missing information she need to perform her job, the interviewed bartender answers no, since these three forms of communication provide her with the required information, and because she sais that the job is pretty standard (Appendix 4).

Perceived control

According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), a factor possibly leading to gap three is perceived control, and the extend to which an employee perceive they can act flexible when servicing the customers. Both interviewed employees, expressed a perception of their possibility of servicing customers in a flexible way, which they see fit (Appendix 3,4). The bartender elaborates "I believe there is a lot of freedom with responsibility, It's very much about seeing it in a context of providing the customer with the best experience, naturally you cannot experiment whit a bunch of stuff, if it removes focus from what the job is actually about- that the customer receives a good experience" (Appendix 4; p.3). The bar manager support the two employees' perception, as his intention is that employees are able to evaluate a situation and then react accordingly (Appendix 1).

The wardrobe employee explains how through her seven years of working in VEGA, she has develop what she calls *"wardrobe neerdiness"* (Appendix 3; p.5). She elaborates "Its really silly- but before people come down, because on the hangers there are scarves and everything, then some times I, go and turn the numbers so you can see them, so it goes faster, and it is easier for me to hand-out jackets, just because you want to do a good job for the customers" (Appendix 3. P.5). I would argue that the employees perception of control, lies in VEGA's internal culture, which based on the interviews is flexible and exhibits trust.

From the discussed, I will argue that a gap between service quality specifications and service delivery does not exist.

Gap4 Gap between service delivery and external communication

" We propose that the fourth major cause of low service-quality perceptions is the gap between what a firm promises about a service and what it actually delivers" (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990; p.115). The authors suggests that inconsistencies between service delivery and their external communications, in connection to promises or the absence of information about aspects of the service delivery, can affect customer's perception of service quality. The key factors resulting in gap four is inadequate horizontal communication and propensity to overpromise.

Horizontal communication
According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), communication between different departments in an organisation are necessary to understand and achieve the common goal of the organisation. In my meetings with VEGA's management, I learned that they every week meet to evaluate the past weeks events and situations (Appendix 1). I believe the meetings might have been a result of past experience with discrepancies in goals. The bar manager explained that when VEGA had the big nightclub, it was a great success. Although due to lack of communication and reconciliation of objectives, the nightclub did not survive. Since then management meets every week, in order to align expectations. I imagine that these meetings is a chance for the responsible of PR and communications, to correspond with the bar manager and others in charge of service operations. Findings relating to this gap proved to be scarce.

Communication and propensity to overpromise
VEGA's advertisement and communication consists of their music program posters, flyers, magazine, and advertisements on Facebook, communication on Instagram and Snapchat to their followers. Looking at their website, they communicate the different artists playing in VEGA, by introducing the music calendar on their Homepage. Further they through their website communicate the quality of their sound system, by specifying the type and the effect. The variety of music and the quality of music is therefore argued to be a focus for VEGA's external communication.

Based on the limited findings connected to VEGA's external communication, due to scarce research data, it has not been possible to suggest if there exists a gap 4.

Sum up of analysis 2

The analysis Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry's (1990) gaps model showed 2 possible gaps in VEGA's organisational performance. Gap five of the gaps model, represents the potential discrepancy between the expected and perceived service from the customer's standpoint (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990). The analysis showed the possible gaps causing discrepancies, due to a company's organisational performance. In order to close these gaps, an understanding of the Customer's desired experience of a concert is therefore argued to be necessary, in order to improve customers experience. It is therefore proposed for the company to apply the approach of perspective 2, to close this gap.

Gap 1

It is argued that a possible gap 1 exists, since VEGA is lacking structured marketing research, to collect insights of customers' expectations, and only rely on informal information and knowledge received from front-line employees, thus a possible gap 1 one exists.

Gap 2

Despite of VEGA's commitment to service quality, evident from investments in service employees and initiatives to motivate them, and investments in service supporting technology, to support fast service delivery by bartenders. Not responding to direct customer requirements and wishes creates a gap 2.

Gap 3

It is argued that there have not been perceived a gap 3 due to findings directing at a fulfilment of information needs, in order for the employees to carry out their tasks, and further an alignment between management and front-line employees, offering freedom and trust to perform service delivery tasks as seen fit, in order to provide the customers with the best experience possible.

Gap 4

It was not possible to determine a possible gap 4 due to scarce findings.
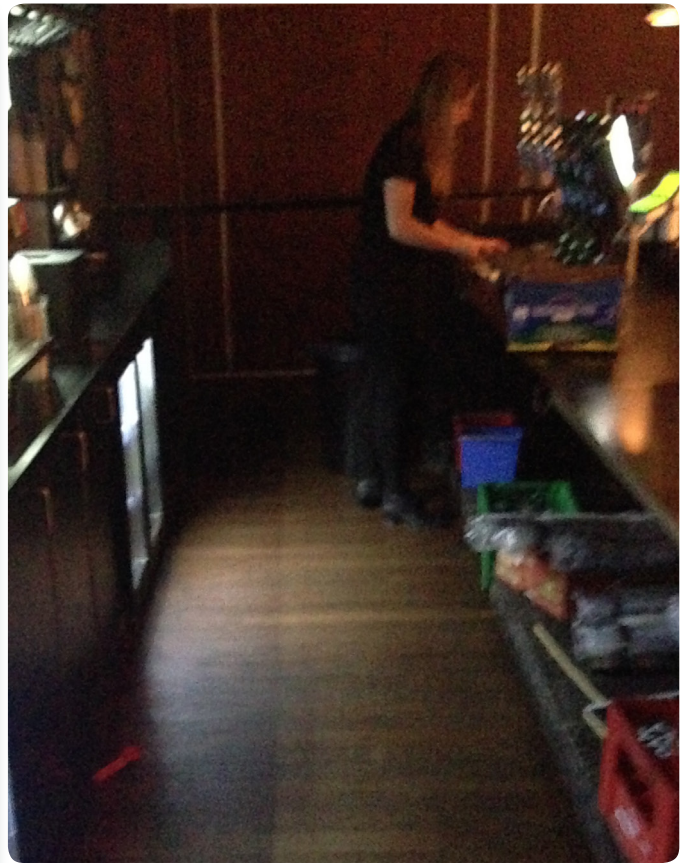
Reflections 2

This section entails reflections concerning application of the theory and methods applied to support analysis of VEGA's organisational performance. To collect and analyse data, a theoretical framework and several qualitative methods were applied such as contextual interviews with front-line employees including observation, and meetings with representatives of VEGA's management.

Contextual interviews+ Observations

Two contextual interviews with front-line employees were carried out (Appendix 3,4). The interviews consisted of me following the two on an entire shift at a concert in Store VEGA. The interviews are argued to be semi-structured, since an interview guide with main questions were carried out to ensure data collected on specific topics (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Appendix 10). The interview was semi-structured which gave the opportunity to ask questions about the observed, and areas that the interviewee would raise them selves. I found it relevant to follow areas that they would mention, since the purpose of the interview was to understand their tasks, and their understanding of the service. The approach consisted of following them while they would perform their service tasks, and I would then observe and ask questions along the way. I would argue that the method proved useful, as it was possible to collect a rich amount of data, concerning the specific employee, but further about the organisations, their culture and the service provision. I believe that in the case of VEGA, this method provided much data about the organisation and its structure since they have a flat organisations structure therefore management often interacts with the front-line employees. In other organisations where the structure is not as flat, this method might not provide the same scope of data, and it is therefore argued that other layers of an organisation would need to be included in order to gain the same insights about the structure of the organisation. I would argue that research including the service staff (front-line employees) is very important in order to understand and analyse the performance of a service provider, since they are the ones who carries out the actual provision and have the interaction with the customer's.

Observations

Observations were carried out in conjunction with the two contextual interviews, with the front-line employees (Appendix 3,4). These observations are also argued to be an ethnographic research method since they as well took place in the natural setting (Millen, 2000). The two observations are argued to show the service environment from the service provider's perspective (Appendix 3,4). This is argued since during the observation in relation to the interview with the employee from the wardrobe, I was standing behind the counter of the wardrobe, facing the foyer, and could observe the line of interaction and the customers as they approached the wardrobe service. This provided a different context than from the first observation, since the perspective of observation shifted, and became focused on how the service provider delivered the service, and how customers are perceived from that side of the counter. This time the purpose was to create empathy for the front-line employees, understanding their work processes, and interactions with customers. I would argue that the observations connected to the interviews, were able to give a sense of the context the service is delivered in, such as the information needed to carry out the tasks, the collaboration amongst the employees in respectively the wardrobe and the bar. Though I would argue that the method of observation cannot stand alone, since just observing, gives you an idea of what is going on, but to understand what specifically is happening, the observation must be supported by additional methods, that serves a deeper detail level. I would therefore argue that the combination of conducting contextual interview and further observing the context proved valuable for understanding the performance of the service provider. The contextual interviews with front-line employees, supported triangulation, since it support a cross-check of findings (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

GULE NUMRE

BARKORT

VEGA

Meetings with VEGA management

During the project process, several (5) meetings was held with different representatives from VEGA's management, although four out of the five meetings was with VEGA's bar manager, who also represented my contact person during the process (Appendix 1). The meetings were semi-structured, since I provided an informal agenda of topics to discuss. Unfortunately I weren't able to record the meetings, and therefore had to rely on my notes taken during the meetings. This approach proved unreliable for two reasons. First, capturing all details in hand-written notes were not possible, and second, having to write notes during a conversation, proved to be distracting, and took some focus away from the conversation. Despite the issues of not having audio files from the meetings, they showed to be valuable in terms of understanding how VEGA is managed, the focus of management, organisational structures, and the culture. I would argue that the observations, the interviews with the front-line employees, and these meetings, offered triangulation, since these three methods provided three different angles of the same topics (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Questions about topics asked to management, was also asked to the two employees, in order to locate discrepancies.

Gaps model

To analyse VEGA's service performance, the Gaps model with Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry's (1990) 5 gaps was applied. The model was found applicable to the case of VEGA and supported analysis of organizational performance and its affect on the service provision. The model offered a clear 5 step approach for analysis, by proposing 5 possible gaps influencing the customers' perception of service quality. By elucidating possible gaps in an organisation, leading to dissatisfying perception of service quality by customers, I would argue, the Gaps model offer an approach to experience management. However, the importance of implementing the first perspective (the customer perspective) in the gaps model is argued in order for the company to understand and further adjust their performance according to customers' desired criterion.

Conclusion

The purpose of the Master's thesis was to answer the research question:

"How can service design methods support improvement of the customers' experience in an existing service system?"

To answer the research question, a process consisting of two perspectives was proposed. The first from a customer's perspective consisted of application of theory and methods to support, analysis of expectations and experiences, to understand customers' desired experience of a concert.

To carry out the first analysis theories of the stated Definition of the Master's thesis and Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry's (1990) RATER model, was applied. The Definition offered a theoretical frame of reference for drawing experiences and expectations out of findings and locating experience clues to determine emotional connections and affect. Further the RATER model proved useful for structuring experiences and expectations. Although the model was determined to be limited by only considering criterions affecting experiences concerned with the service delivery, when analysis showed that customers' perception of their experience went beyond the service environment. It was therefore concluded that only applying the RATER model for managing the service quality and improving customer experience, is not sufficient from a holistic view.

To collect data for the analysis, an observation of VEGAS's venue was carried out and argued to support creation of empathy with customers' feelings and experiences, although creating a paradox based on the students own experience with concerts. Further a qualitative semi-structured interview approach was applied. For this case study, a small sample size of three customers proved useful to support analysis and thereby illustrate diversities as well as similarities between customers. However it was argued that to carry out improvements, quantitative methods should support the process. To facilitate the interviews, the method of customer journey mapping was applied. It was argued that the method supported insights of the customers' desired experience. Understanding was possible by means of the customer journey as it captured activities emotions and other elements constituting extent and nature of customers' expectations and experiences, by enabling visualisation and thereby reflection and communication. It was further argued that the emotional curve supported the mapping of a deeper layer of experiential emotions, thus supporting communication of feelings connected to specific activities, and ranking of experiences to show affect. The customer journey further supported analysis, as it conveyed and visualised data in a context. The flexibility of the method was argued to support the variety of the customers, and their mental frames, thus subjective experiences, as found in the analysis. The applied research methods were concluded to support the analysis, by providing customer insights concerning their subjective and individual experiences and expectations.

The second perspective consisted of application of theory and methods to support analysis of VEGA's performance, to understand how the service system supports experience.

To carry out the second analysis Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry's (1990) Gaps model was applied. The model was found applicable to the case of VEGA and supported analysis of organizational performance and its affect on the service provision. The Gaps model was determined to offer an approach to experience management. However, the importance of implementing the first perspective (the customer perspective) in the gaps model was further stated in order for the company to understand and further adjust their performance according to the customers' desired criterions.

To collect data for the analysis, qualitative methods were applied, such as contextual interviews in conjunction with observations and meetings with VEGA's management. It was argued that the method of contextual interviewing and observation proved useful, as it was possible to collect a rich amount of data, concerning the specific employee, but further about the organisations, their culture and the service provision. It was further argued that the observations, the interviews and meeting with managers supported triangulation, to locate discrepancies.

Concluding in general terms, applying service design methods supporting analysis of the customers' desired experience, and applying service design methods supporting analysis of the company's performance, constitute a framework for improving an existing service system.

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Photos:

Cover: Mathias Christensen

(http://politiken.dk/kultur/musik/ECE1587696/sniksnak-under-koncerter-vil-ingen-ende-tage)-2/4-2015

Page 10: Jesper Edvardsen (http://vega.dk/docs/editor/downloads/Pressebilleder/folkets_hus_1_stor.jpg)- 1/5-2015

All photos used in the report, which are not credited, are the students own.

Appendices

All the appendices are stored in a Google drive:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzHom2AxGgFxMGxuVE56dEdybE0/view?usp=sharing

Appendix 1- Interviews with VEGA management (transcribed)

Appendix 2- Participant observation (transcribed)

Appendix 3- Contextual interview employee (wardrobe) (transcribed)

Appendix 4- Contextual interview employee (bar) (transcribed)

Appendix 5- Interview with customer 1 (transcribed)

Appendix 6- Interview with customer 2 (recording)

Appendix 7- Interview with customer 3 (recording)

Appendix 8- Interview guide- customers (document)

Appendix 9- Customer journey template

Appendix 10- Interview guide- Employees