From Artefact Design to Service Design Thinking Innovations

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From Artefact Design to

Service Design

Thinking Innovations

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Abstract

This research will explore the effect of the introduction of service design methods to graphic designers, and whether graphic designers are limited to the design of ephemeral artifacts or instead can play a significant role in the innovation of products and services among larger industry and community based projects in Perth, Western Australia, and perhaps even enrich service design processes themselves. This thesis will examine established graphic design disciplinary processes as well as alterations to those practices via the introduction of service design methods. In addition, these service design processes will also be applied to a complex live service orientated project in order to assess how graphic design skills fit within a service design context and from this, how innovated outcomes are reached.

The field of graphic design is one that has historically battled to assert itself as offering a specialised skill set which can be utilized by a broad range of industry and community business sectors. Cameron Tonkinwise (2011), Director of Design Studies at Carnegie Mellon University, asserts that graphic designers have been depicted as merely making products ‘look good’ but in fact the powerful system of creative tools incorporated to develop effective visual communication outcomes should be vocalized (p. 535). The perceptions of graphic design have been determined by the artifacts it produces and not the skills from which these products are derived.

The key theorists of service design, an emerging field of design, advocate the innovation of products and services through positive user/customer experiences via a multi-disciplinary approach. This service design thinking structure incorporates graphic designers alongside other disciplines so as to deeply investigate what product or service is needed or whether it is needed at all.
Introduction
A Place to Start...

Throughout history, graphic designers have contributed to design outcomes which are considered among the most important in civilization, such as books. The definitive creative skills and visual techniques of graphic designers have helped form iconic global identities such as The Coca Cola Company, Apple Inc. and Nike, Inc., which these companies fiercely protect through trademarks, patents and swift legal action. Since the first use of the term ‘graphic design’ in 1922 by William Addison Dwiggins, a revered book designer (Meggs, 1998, p. xiii), this design field has continuously adapted the way in which it has worked. The continuous refinement of graphic design practices was necessary to successfully transition through major changes within this discipline over time. The results of which are a specialization of communication skills and creative methods, which can be applied to myriad design projects.

Graphic designers however, have constantly struggled to vocalize how important their specialised creative communication skill set is. From my perspective, one of the key issues is that graphic design outcomes, if given a cursory glance, seem to be limited to ephemera. Urban designers, for example, create interactive human spaces within our cities and towns. Graphic designers, instead, seem to be connected only with artefacts associated with commercial business needs such as logos, flyers, brochures, websites and signage. Even service design, a relatively recent term that seems to have arrived hand in hand with ‘design thinking’ has captured the imagination of governments and big business while graphic design seems to continue on its humble path. Therefore, my project will seek to establish a working definition of service design practices in order to analyse the role of the graphic designer among these.

Defining service design methods will also enable me to apply these practices consistently throughout my methodology. From this, I will investigate how service design can change the practices of up-and-coming graphic designers (or students on the precipice of commencing a career in offering graphic design services), and how graphic design can enrich service design thinking. However, to thoroughly test this service design system in real life terms, I will also explore graphic design and its role in service design through a major exhibition project for the SCA (School of Communications and Arts at ECU). Service design is multi-disciplinary user focused approach, which investigates complex community based issues in order to deliver holistically driven design outcomes. By employing service design methodology to a substantial design project such as the SCA 2014 Graduate Exhibition, I hope to uncover the of impacts of graphic designers within this arrangement as well as how user enriched experiences are reached.

Stickdorn & Schneider (2011), authors of This is Service Design Thinking, assert that, “The approach of service design refers to the process of design rather than its outcome” (p. 14).
They state that design needs to consider the larger picture when considering design issues (which are predominantly presented as client requests for artefacts) and propose that “the outcome of service design process can have various forms: rather abstract organisational structures, operation processes, service experiences and even concrete physical objects” (p. 14). These design issues, which will be defined in the literature review in the context of service design, are complex and are not solved via simple solutions such as artefacts. This new design field concerns itself with innovating a greater system of service interactions or ‘touchpoints’ (Benchmann, 2011, p. 15) and does not pivot around designing commodities. These ‘touchpoints’ are the necessary interactions that take place to access a service or product and the number of ‘touchpoints’ are increasing rapidly. “Whereas in the past, a user of banking services would primarily communicate with a teller, and receive a monthly bank statement by post, today consumers can organize and customize their banking services via various channels” (Enninga & Manschot et al., 2013, p. 13). Currently, the service design touchpoints of these finance driven communicative channels include recognizable outputs such as internet banking, smart phone application banking, telephone banking and so on.

These touchpoints were previously limited in terms of a bank’s trading hours and monthly statement delivery. However, through a newly available extended range of touchpoints, users can not only have more options to complete banking transactions but, during this broadened range of banking channels, are becoming more familiar with this banks identity and company ethos. Users gather experiences of this bank when they see the colours of this banks logo in its internet banking website, touch designed interactions in its smart phone application and hear designed verbal responses which are heard when using telephone banking. These connected service designed touchpoints are creatively formulated to encapsulate this financial institutions’ ideology. Offering users an holistically designed selection of service options such as demonstrated in this scenario, can generate positive user experiences of this company.

The international design community is debating this push for change, and prominent graphic design author, Lucy Kimbell (2011), joins this ongoing global dialogue about service design thinking. In her journal article, “Service Design at a Crossroads”, Kimbell contends “it is going to shift designers away from their traditional preoccupation with objects and their roles in co-creating the world of unsustainable mass consumption that we live in” (p. 62). Service design thinking instead focuses its attention upon the customer or user and their experiences of these ‘touchpoints’ in an attempt to thoroughly understand who the customers are and what they might consider valuable with regards to service based interactions.

Service design thinking, unlike traditional graphic design practices, doesn’t automatically assume to design a product and then attempt to sell it to the individual who might use it. Instead, service
design thinking approaches concentrate “on user-centred issues through a filter that identifies appropriate methods for understanding people” (Grefé, 2011, p. 28). This involves immersing designers into the lives of the individual who will potentially access their products or services, to be empathetic to their everyday needs and desires and subsequently design from the root of these “user-centred issues” (p. 28).

Raymond Williams’ (1958) theory, “Culture is Ordinary”, will provide a perspective through which to understand the benefits of engaging in the “everyday events of the ordinary person” (p. 86). His theory reveals the valuable contributions that individual people can make to a larger populated structure, such as a society. According to service design thinking authors, to view people as individual and gain knowledge of their vital roles within a community, provides useful insight with regards to developing effective design outcomes.

Some graphic designers in Perth, Western Australia, consider that the local design industry is behind in current international trends with regards to service design thinking. Perth design authors, Kueh, Medley & Price (2013), declare that “while this focus is already a norm in many countries, the current design direction in Western Australia is still very much focusing on aesthetic, retail and object outcomes” (p. 2). Internationally however, the diversity in approach to service design thinking has been inconsistent and without a fixed set of working methods to incorporate here in Perth. This ‘mixed bag’ of practices, has been described by Kimbell (2011) as “messy, emergent and communal” (p. 62). Sangiori (2009), who presented a paper at the 8th European Academy of Design Conference in Scotland, expressed that there “is a strong emphasis on methodologies, with less focus on the development of foundational theoretical frameworks” (p. 418). Stickdorn and Schneider (2011) also consider this field undefined and state that “service design is an evolving approach, this is particularly apparent in the fact that, as yet, there is no common definition or clearly articulated language of service design” (p. 29).

The role of the graphic designer will also require scrutiny within this service design thinking context so as to confirm graphic design practices, which I propose are broader than the design of artefacts. I will engage ethnographic observation, which will involve viewing the designing processes of up-and-coming graphic designers while they work upon complex community based projects. This is to discover whether there is an alteration to their creative practices once service design methods are introduced. This ethnographic observation will also extend to the design team of the live service orientated project in order to evaluate whether alterations to graphic design processes are prevailing within a ‘real life’ service design context. Consequently, I will investigate rigorously how graphic design’s specialised skills and creative techniques may fortify their position among community-based projects and the innovation of service-based outcomes.
What did you find when designing around the users of your project outputs?:

“Design is influenced by so many people”
Significance

The implications of this honours project, with reference to the design community of Perth, Western Australia, is an insightful evaluation of service design and the need for change within the discipline of graphic design. “IDEO, A Design and Innovation Consulting Firm”, to the fore of service design practices internationally, incorporates the role of the graphic designer among their projects. Tim Brown (2014), president and CEO, details the benefits of including creative minds among their projects and state that “thinking like a designer can transform the way organizations develop products, services, processes, and strategy” (¶. 6). Specifically, the aim of my research is to examine graphic design techniques and visually demonstrate what it is that graphic designers can do in terms of service design projects. This includes exploring individual methods, such as empathy for example, within the sequence of the other stages of the service design process. Specifically designed diagrams and photographs will appear throughout this thesis to demonstrate the key service design project phases such as research techniques, conceptual exploration and prototyping. From this, I hope to provide critical insight into not only what service design can do for the graphic designer but also what graphic designers can do for the field of service design.

Currently, such visual documentation of the sequence of graphic design methods in the service design context does not appear in design literature. This thesis project, therefore, will result in a textbook style publication of these methods applied in their entirety to a live service design project. The outcome of this can then be then used by graphic designers, but also by service designers and business communities in order to gain a greater understanding of graphic design’s role among service design projects.

The visual documentation of the research is vital in that it is investigating and documenting typical definitions of graphic design roles. It is, therefore, relevant to investigate how graphic designers must adapt to establish their significance among the collaborative design settings that service design thinking promotes. From observing a group of ‘up- and-coming designers’, during the introduction of service design methods to their traditional graphic design practices, this research will generate insight into the positive as well as negative reactions to this collision of creative processes. This thesis builds upon the theories of prominent graphic design figures such as Grefé (2011), Brown and Katz (2011), Lupton (2011) as well as others, who promote the move towards service design in an effort to further innovate products and services as well as promote graphic design’s important role within this emerging practice.
Service design theorists, such as Tim Brown and Barry Katz (2011) claim in their article, “Change by Design”, that “the inherent scalability of design thinking has led us to invent new and radical forms of collaboration that blur the boundaries between creators and consumers” (p. 382). This statement alone foreshadows the extreme upheaval of traditional graphic design practices already occurring among globally established design firms and the need for inquiry into the potential effects of this upon design practices within the local design community of Perth.

**Aim and Research Questions**

The aim of this honours research is to evaluate the changes, if any, that the application of service design approaches might bring to the established disciplinary practices of graphic designers in Perth, Western Australia. This evaluation will be made by examining up-and-coming graphic designers as they work towards designing the 2014 graduate exhibition for Edith Cowan University’s School of Communications and Arts.

**Principle Research Question**

How does the introduction of service design processes into the established disciplinary practices of up-and-coming graphic designers in Perth, Western Australia, alter their creative practices?

**Sub-Research Questions**

How does the introduction of service design processes help to deepen investigation into user-centred approaches within the existing disciplinary practices of graphic design?

How can service design methods and approaches help graphic designers develop holistic community-focused projects?

How can service design benefit from incorporating the graphic designer among its practices when innovating products and services?
Methodology

This research will investigate whether the design practices of up-and-coming graphic designers (my research participants who are also design students at ECU) alter substantially after the introduction of service design processes. If this occurs, I will then examine if there is deepened investigation into the origins of the project issues. And if this occurs, I will evaluate whether this deepened insight provides greater insight into how to proceed with the project overall.

To gather an insight into the potential alterations to graphic design practices once service design is introduced, I will apply a qualitative research methodology which involves interviewing my research participants and also viewing and documenting their design practices, this is otherwise known as ethnography. Ethnography is described by Crouch & Pearce (2012): “Typical ethnographic methods are participant observation and in-depth interviewing, which lead to the creation of ‘thick’ descriptions of the cultural practices being observed. In early examples of ethnographic research these strategies for collecting data were thought of as ways for an outside observer might come to know another culture as an insider might know it. In other words there was an expectation that participation would lead to a direct or realistic understanding of the experiences of others, through researcher participation in the culture and practices studied.” (p. 90). The “analysis of qualitative data” (p. 68) will be drawn from the participants written as well as visual communication design outputs which will be developed during their work on a community focused project.

Crouch & Pearce (2012) discuss the benefits of ethnographic research and point out that “there is still much to be learned from asking questions such as what is this culture like, how does it operate and what are its characteristic practices” (p. 90). These questions are relevant to my project, as I will need to ask ‘what is this current graphic design culture like in Perth, Western Australia, how does it operate and what are its current characteristic practices’ before I can evaluate the possible alterations that are made to this culture from introducing service design.

From using ethnographic techniques such as observation and interviews, I will gain information on graphic design methods that are prevailing within the design culture of Perth, Western Australia, how these methods are embodied in the practices of up-and-coming designers, and what transformations occur to those methods with the introduction of a new design practice such as service design.

With this in mind, the ethnographic research methodology should then be further narrowed to critical ethnography. Critical ethnography assumes there is a struggle between the individual
Were there benefits from the introduced service design methods?:

“Definitely forces you to explore realms that you never thought you’d explore”
and their system (p. 91). In this case, the individual is the student as a graphic designer and the system is the current practices of graphic design in Perth, Western Australia. These students will face the issue of asserting the value of their trade to business industries in this location, and have to voice the specialised skill set that they have to offer beyond the design of artefacts such as business cards, posters and brochures.

Another significant research offshoot of ethnography is autoethnography, which will further benefit my thesis. Patton (2002), author of Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods, asserts that “here, the researcher’s own experiences become a ‘primary data source’” (p. 86). Through this research method, I will be able to draw on my own experiences as a practicing graphic designer of twelve years in Perth. This design trade experience will give me clearer vision into the difficulties that may be relevant to introducing a new form of design thinking to the research participants. My history will serve as a valuable source of information. It will provide greater comprehension when evaluating the experiences of the participants during their assessment of design issues.

Through these informative ethnographic approaches, I will also be able to note any limitations that the participants may encounter during their design processes. From this perspective, I will be able to form key comparisons to global service design literature.
Research Plan of Action

Graphic design authors have written extensively about the variations in their creative practices in an effort to clarify the evolution of their design techniques. This research will delve into the creative skills set of the graphic designer and along with an accompanying investigation of global literature, will explore graphic design in order to better define its creative practices. An analysis of the literature will demonstrate that while graphic design has been an ever-changing and growing set of methods there is still consideration for change within this field of design. The most recent of which is service design and a proposed shift towards its holistic design approaches.

The field of graphic design is in a constantly transitional state with regards to its practices and methods. Since it was first titled, ‘graphic design’ by Dwiggins in 1922 (p. xiii), this field has taken on a myriad of labels to establish a suitable definition that encapsulates its practices. Some of these titles include commercial artist, information architect and even “human-centred interface designer” (Heller, 2007).

These labels however barely touch on the extensive array of skills and techniques that the creative field of graphic design now encompasses. In Paul Rand’s (1987) essay, “Design is Goodwill”, he describes graphic design as a vast field that “embodies visual ideas, from the typography of a Shakespearean sonnet to the design and typography of a box of Kelloggs Corn Flakes” (p. 65). This statement depicts the extreme diversity in design projects to which graphic designers may need to adapt to on a daily basis.

The following four chapters will encompass findings from my research investigating graphic design thinking in the service design context, and will be presented alongside my literature review. My research results and review of global design literature will also be delivered in tandem with my exegesis. My exegesis pivots around a live service design project; the School of Communications and Arts 2014 graduate exhibition. The SCA exhibition project is a complex service structure which revolves around a large group of people including academic staff, administration staff, research participants, an exhibition design team, exhibiting students, the service users and many more. I have chosen to examine this immense service system so as to thoroughly investigate the common stages of a service design project as identified in the literature, as well as the significant role that the ‘graphic designers’ can play within every stage of this substantial service design process. Through the perspective of Raymond Williams’ (1958) theory, “Culture is Ordinary” and from combining my research findings, literature review and exegesis together, I hope to clearly
show the relevance of this thesis and why a change from current graphic design practices to a user-focused holistic approach such as service design should occur.

Williams’ (1958) theory, “Culture is Ordinary”, investigates cultural hegemony through the lens of his own working class upbringing. From this background, he declares that ordinary people provide a valuable contribution to a culture. He dismisses class driven ideals, which proposed that to be cultured was to be educated in the fine arts and literature. Williams (1958) contends that the social actions of the higher classes “is not culture” (p. 84) and that no-one should have to assimilate to these behaviours to be considered ‘cultured’. Culture is, in fact, offered in the everyday things and everyday events of the ordinary person. “A culture is common meanings, the product of a whole people, and offered individual meanings, the product of a man’s whole committed personal and social experience” (p. 86). He argues that these “offered individual meanings” (p. 86) are distinct interpretations of personal as well as social experiences and that these should be considered as important contributions to cultural identities. From this point of view and via the documentation of a live service design project, I hope to demonstrate the value in the shift towards a user-focused holistic approach such as service design and a move away from the existing, client driven graphic design practices which make assumptions about the needs of the users of its project outcomes, or artefacts.

The design of the SCA exhibition project for 2014 was developed by a group of ten up-and-coming designers; six of which were graphic design students whilst the other four students came from a range of technical and theoretical backgrounds including photomedia, spatial design, digital media and game design. This arrangement provided substantial insight into the changing role of graphic designers within the service design context. Service design does not as yet have a fixed toolkit of design methods to apply to any given project, however, I have found seven common methods which appear repeatedly among recently documented service design projects. These seven regularly cited service design methods also feature within this research, and are practices which appear predominately among service design literature. These methods are: empathy; a redefinition of project issues; prototyping; multi-disciplinary design structures; co-design; visual organization of project information; and touchpoints. Explanations of these service design methods as well as their positive and also negative affects on the role of the graphic designer within a live service design project will be revealed within chapters two, three and four of this thesis. Supporting diagrams will accompany these definitions to demonstrate how they work within the service design project framework.

Chapter one will clarify the current role of the graphic designer in Perth, via the definitions of this role provided by the research participants (six up-and-coming graphic designers). My qualitative
research methods included interviewing participants before the introduction of the seven service design methods as well as after these have been demonstrated. Through this methodology I hoped to see a change occur from an existing artefact-based design process to a broader investigation into the design issues that graphic designers are presented with. Consequently I hoped to see innovation in the outputs that are possible. The aim was to not only expose the valuable skill set of graphic designers but to reveal that the outcomes generated via these skills can assist in developing more holistic service design outcomes or touchpoints.

Chapters two and three will establish the changing role of the graphic designer during a live service design project and the consequences of this change. Whilst analysing this service design structure, I hoped to also uncover limitations and restrictions to service design practices that may arise during the course of a live service design project which are not documented in service design literature. Most of the literature discusses the need to move away from designing artefacts to engage in “user centred issues” (Grefé, 2011). Chapters two and three will explore the reasons for this move as well as attempt to establish definitions for key terms within this field.

Service design is the latest important development for the design disciplines. There is no exact consensus as to its definition, as service design can encompass all fields of design. Broadly speaking it can be described as planning and organising all of the elements connecting a service to its users. In some cases the planning and design is done collaboratively with the end-users of the service. To compare it with the much narrower term ‘graphic design’, service design considers the artefacts produced (be it websites or posters in graphic design, or furniture or utensils in product design) as ‘touchpoints’ in the user’s experience of the service. Service design’s holistic practices, as described in design literature, are considered essential in the move away from designing artefacts and instead shifting towards user-focused outcomes. Therefore, this research will attempt to identify a consistent system of service design approaches in order to evaluate their affect upon the graphic designers creative processes within the service design context.

Chapter four will be a demonstration of the service design project touchpoints which were the result of the live service design project. The designed outputs for the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition event will be documented in photographic, diagrammatic and written forms in order to determine whether these are in fact service innovations similar to those that global service design literature discusses.
#1

What on Earth Do We Do?
Within this chapter, I will reveal the findings from the first of two interviews which I undertook with research participants before they were introduced to service design methods. I wanted to find out the current definition of the role of a graphic designer in Perth, and to clarify their skills set.

I asked each participant to share insight into their own work practices as an up-and-coming graphic designer and to draw on design experiences which might reveal client expectations of their role:

“As a graphic designer, can you explain what you do?”

Four out of six participants found trying to answer the question overwhelming and responded with ‘oh my god’ or similar at the idea of attempting to encapsulate the definition of graphic design. These participants deemed it ‘difficult to describe’ and ‘broad in its context’ to try and explain briefly. Five out of six participants defined the role of a graphic designer via a list of artefacts that they have either designed themselves or are informed that graphic designers produce. Most commonly mentioned outputs included websites, logos, brochures, etc. Two out of six participants declared that the underlying role of the graphic designer is to problem solve design problems. One went further to state this as “fixing client issues via design”. Two out of six participants connected communication with the graphic design role; one saying that “we design content for communication” and the other that “we communicate information via outputs”, or in other words, artefacts. When asked how participant’s acquaintances defined their discipline, five out of six, or a majority, found that their family or friends had a lack of understanding or even confusion about the role of a graphic designer and they too described it via commonly known design artefacts such as business cards or posters.

From this initial data, it seems as though the current role of the graphic designer in Perth, Western Australia, is not easily determined by some of those who are up-and-coming in the field. The differences in definitions submitted by participants shows that the practice has no unified understanding of its role by some of those emerging within the discipline. This uncertainty is not only perceived by these graphic designers but also extends to their subsequent social groups, or in other words, the general population of Perth, Western Australia.
The discipline of graphic design has been transitional and adaptive in its practices since W.A. Dwiggins used the term in 1922, “to describe the wide range of jobs he personally tackled” (Heller, 2007, ¶. 3). Before this well-known label was forged, “commercial artist’ was the accepted label for the inter-related acts of drawing, spec-ing, comping and laying out” (¶. 3). Quentin Newark (2002), author of What is Graphic Design, clarifies his reasons for this title by saying that “Dwiggins saw graphic design as almost entirely concerned with the preparation of the artwork to be printed. One of Dwiggin’s alternative terms for graphic design was ‘super printing’ (super meaning ‘above or ‘before’)” (p. 10). Steven Heller (2007), who wrote “What Do We Call Ourselves Now?” for Eye Magazine, considers the title of graphic design as limited in modern terms. He states: “As professionals we are hired to be clarifiers, organisers and even namers for our clients. So, if we don’t know what to call ourselves, who does? ” (¶. 1). Heller elaborates and even mocks this scenario saying that “since graphic design is not a licensed profession, we can call ourselves anything we want, with the exception of maybe doctor or Monsignor” (¶. 1).

Clearly the title of graphic design is not going to fully encompass this field. Analysing the practices of graphic design may better aid in defining this field. In A History of Graphic Design, Meggs (1998) writes, that “the evolution of graphic design is closely bound to the evolution of illustration, photography and printing technology” (p. xi). The link with printing is the most tightly connected of these. “In recent years graphic design has expanded beyond traditional boundaries and now encompasses motion graphics, environmental communications, and new media” (p. xi). Heller (2007) adds that graphic design now also includes “timebased media, information design and associated disciplines such as writing and producing, as well as the blurring of boundaries between fine art and design” (¶. 2). These descriptions provide valuable insight into the complex work environment in which graphic designers now operate.

How the confusion over the definition of the graphic designer came to be can be clarified through the perspective of Raymond Williams’ (1958) theory, “Culture is Ordinary”. Williams (1958) examines some of the effects of industrialisation upon cultural identities. He discusses the development of mass communication and its debilitating affect of eroding an individual’s identity: “the improvement in communications, in particular the development of new forms of multiple transmission of news and entertainment, created unbridgeable divisions between transmitter and audience” (p. 88). These communications provided information direct to people’s homes. Individuals no longer needed to attend ‘face to face’ environments to find out important societal communications. They could receive these messages in an anonymous context through their radio or even later via television broadcasts. This growing lack of individual identity among people
What on Earth Do We Do?

HISTORIC GRAPHIC DESIGN PROCESSES

Figure 1.1. In this arrangement the client and designer are separated from each other during the decision making and concept development stages of the project.
in society “led to the audience being interpreted as an unknown mass” (p. 88).

When viewing the discipline of graphic design in this way it is possible to see that designers have created unbridgeable divisions between themselves, the “transmitter”, and the general public, their “audience”. Their isolated work practices have reduced an understanding of the skills set that they have to offer a broad range of projects. From this point of view it is clearer how the cultural identity of the graphic designer has been lost.

What is transparent from this research however is that instead of being able to express a clear interpretation of the practice of graphic design, the role of the graphic designer is instead most commonly ascribed to the artefacts that we produce. It is expected that a graphic designer’s main directive is to construct a variety of outputs such as websites, business cards, packaging, etc. These designed artefacts traditionally embody client instruction, addressing an issue identified by the client. This design issue is usually presented as a need for an artefact (see figure 1.1.). An example of this would be a client who asks a designer to construct a website for their business. The design issue, in this case, is a need to provide a particular set of communications to an audience. The website is the chosen output for this which the client has typically pre-decided is the most appropriate artefact. The graphic designer then focuses on addressing this design issue in terms of how to produce the most effective website design for their client’s users.

To uncover how these artefact driven practices occur, the question: “How do you commence a graphic design job?” was put to participants.

All participants stated that they commenced their design work with an initial client meeting. The purpose of this, uniformly by all, was to gather more information about the client’s requirements for the job. All projects were introduced by the client and posed as a request for an artefact such as an annual report, website, poster, etc. The next phase in the graphic design process, as stated by all participants, was researching the artefact. An investigation into existing designed materials through easily accessible avenues such as printed publications or websites was the same research technique used by all six participants. Pinterest, which is an online virtual pinup board of creative work which can be submitted by anyone, was one website which five participants accessed as a resource to view previously completed graphic designed outputs. These same participants then used ideation in the form of hand sketching to generate ideas and move forward with the design process (see PH.19-22 pg.22). These five up-and-coming graphic designers reviewed existing published graphic design examples as a vehicle for recognizing their client’s artefact expectations. These output precedents are therefore used as launching points, or a place to start, for a graphic design project.
I then asked: “Would you question the instructions, or brief, provided by the client?”

Three out of six participants said they do partake in additional inquiry but only in terms of further clarifying the artefact specifications required by the client and not to find out why the output has been requested initially. The other three participants do not question the brief at all. One participant added that further inquiry into a brief would only take place once an “established relationship existed” between them and the client. Another participant pointed out that questioning the brief would “depend on the client” and another stated that “some clients do not like to be questioned”. Four out of six research participants declared they would offer the client variations to the brief but only in terms of creative options for the already specified output. They did not mention the possibility of alternate artefacts or even the option of no artefact at all. The two remaining participants said they would consider offering clients alternate outcomes. However, one went further to add that this scenario had not yet arisen because they regularly followed the client brief. The other concluded that convincing the client to veer off the pathway of the existing brief may be challenging even if the new outcome that is presented to the client is positive. This participant declared that in questioning the brief and from a clients’ perspective “you could be viewed as being difficult”.

One out of the six research participants on this project provided an insightful view into her concerns on this matter and conveyed that her hesitance in questioning the brief is attributed to her minimal professional history in the field of design. She stated that “I have no reputation, I’m starting from the bottom” and in the event that she does have questions she shared that “I tell my manager to tell the client as she has fifteen years experience”. This participant proposed that the possible outcome from this type of client enquiry is that “It could cost us the sale where they could go somewhere else”. For these up-and-coming designers, inquiry into the client brief appears daunting and their hesitation into this procedure seems to be predominantly driven by the fear of losing the job. Reflecting on my own extensive background within the field of graphic design and in particular on scenarios such as these, I can recount that I too had aimed to follow the brief and in turn appease the client requests. However, with a vast number of graphic design jobs behind me, I now have less concern over questioning client instructions in order to push for effective outcomes. My accumulated breadth of professional design projects has given me a rich catalogue of experiences from which to draw and therefore base my reasoning when questioning my clients’ design directives.

Rand (1987) reveals the complexities within this client/graphic designer relationship when he states that, “design is one of the most perplexing pursuits in which to excel” (p. 65). He points
How do you describe the discipline of graphic design?:

“Posters, logos... as much as that is what we do on paper, there is so much more behind it”
out how “the designer must contend with encyclopedic amounts of information, a seemingly endless stream of opinions, and the day-to-day problem of finding ‘new’ ideas (popularly called ‘creativity’)” (p. 65). This client directed system may have the client determining a specific output or artefact but if and how the client’s customers interact with that artefact is now the burden of the graphic designer. For graphic designers this can mean that, even though we may not choose the artefacts that we design, we can be to blame for where and how they end up. This steps way beyond the boundaries of graphic design’s historical realms in print when designers were asked, for example, to make a printable layout of text with images look good. Graphic designers then generally did not consider that the content of their designs was something that they themselves, could be responsible for.

Victor Papanek began exploring these changes as far back as 1972 in his book, Design for the Real World, by saying that “the job of form-giving and reshaping has become the designer’s responsibility” (p. 220) and points out “it is a fact that the designer often has greater control over his work than he believes he does” (p. 234). Design theorist, Christopher Kueh (2012) reiterates the breadth of graphic design’s emerging disciplinary responsibility and says, that “this means designers will be contributing creative solutions in social innovation, business consultancies, and government sectors” (p. 3). These social design interactions lead to wider considerations for designers and Papanek (1972) points out “that quality, new concepts, and an understanding of the limits of mass production” (p. 234) could have impacts upon global communities and not just the intended immediate users. In which case, designers need to continue to adapt their design skills to ensure ‘good’ design outcomes for a greater spectrum of usage. Consequently, designers will have greater responsibility.

Brown & Katz (2011) contend that designers have to think beyond their artefact driven practices, not just in terms of social responsibility, but also to survive within the field of graphic design; “the problems that challenged designers in the 20th century - craft a new object, create a new logo, put a scary bit of technology in a pleasing or at least innocuous box - are simply not the problems that will define the 21st” (p. 381). Designers now face larger problems, especially in terms of community-based projects. Gregory cites Bason (2012): “The general argument is that public services face a number of wicked social problems that are complex in their causes and often open to interpretation” (p. 131) and adds that “public services are not up to the task of providing solutions to these problems, and as such there is a need to innovate to meet these shortcomings” (p. 131). From these statements it is clear that graphic designers need to adapt their design processes to focus on the root of these problems and not just concern themselves
With artefact based outcomes for which they are now accountable.

From the research gathered so far, it seems that following client direction is standard graphic design practice for up-and-coming designers in Perth, Western Australia. These designers never rigorously investigated the issue presented to them in regards to why an artefact was requested and whether there were other possible design alternatives. This existing system is considered successful in its outcome when a graphic designer produces a ‘good’ artefact via a client’s output driven instruction. The term ‘good’ is established among this client/designer relationship when the designed artefact, meets or even moves beyond its clients’ expectation. In terms of a website for example, this could mean that the appearance of its user interface incorporates aesthetic considerations and that the company identity (or visual brand) is easily identifiable.

The practices of graphic design, historically, have made no inquiry into the identities, wants or needs of the individual users of products or services. The field has designed from the top down, from the end of the project and not from the bottom up as per service design approaches (see Figure 1.1. pg.25). This field has traditionally followed client direction, whilst making assumptions about the ‘mass’ audience for whom their designed outcomes are destined. Bettencourt (2010) states “the secret to successful service innovation is understanding how customers define value” (p. 25). This is not possible whilst viewing people (or customers) as an ‘unknown mass’.

The pitfalls of this ‘mass’ view is one of Williams’ (1958) key points. He argues that we should not overlook the individual as someone who can offer something significant and this point of view is more prevalent than ever in demonstrating the need for change within the service industry. Bettencourt (2010) reiterates this from a business perspective and says “the secret to true service innovation is that you must shift the focus away from the service solution and back to the customer” (p. 1). Brown, T. & Katz, B. (2011), authors of Change by Design, describe how this has come to be: "In the early years, companies would dream up new products and enlist armies of marketing experts and advertising professionals to sell them to people - often by exploiting their hopes, fears, and vanities" (p. 382). They invented new ‘needs’ to sell and their audience had no reason not to believe these new ‘needs’ to be true. Papanek (1972) explained the devastating results of this marketing method by stating that “today the myriad of objects of daily use are mass produced to a utilitarian and aesthetic standard often completely unrelated to the consumer’s need” (p. 220). In other words, all of these products were produced utilising the core marketing agenda: would it sell? Historically established design practices like these, which pivoted around producing artefacts, have resulted in design being titled as a “wasteful business” (Butler cites Thomas, 2008) and “that we have filled more dumps and landfills than any other
Service design, unlike traditional graphic design practices, doesn’t automatically assume to design a product and then attempt to sell it to the individual who might use it. Instead, service design approaches concentrate on getting to know the user of the product or service at a level of understanding that they consider valuable. This involves immersing (Enninga & Manschot et al., 2013 p. 13) designers into the lives of the individual who will potentially access their products or services, to be empathetic to their everyday needs and desires and subsequently design from the root of these “user-centred issues” (Grefé, 2011, p. 28). Enninga & Manschot et al., (2013) describe the approaches of service design like this:

Products and services are designed by people to be used by people, to achieve interaction between products and people, or between people and other people. In their search for good designs, designers are thus focused on people - the users. (Enninga & Manschot et al., 2013, p. 14)

From examining the work processes of up-and-coming graphic designers, it is also apparent that questioning the client brief is a daunting task to these graphic designers. A majority of them consider a lack of experience in the field and therefore a lack of confidence in themselves in the role as graphic designers, to be the reason for this. Extended time as a practicing graphic designer appears to play a vital part in whether these designers would question the brief and therefore offer the client the possibility of alternate project outcomes. After 12 years as a practicing graphic designer, I have experienced a vast range of design scenarios. In terms of client requests, I can reflect upon a comprehensive history of graphic design projects and relate both the positive and negative implications of these. This gradually accumulated broad understanding of my practice and subsequent confidence in my design abilities makes it easier for me to question a client about the specifications of their requested artefact or whether they need that artefact at all.

Interestingly, some participants elaborated on why they would not commence further inquiry into the brief beyond their client’s instruction. They shared that they believe clients already know their own design needs, and there is therefore no need to question the brief. This is not in trend with international documentation of user sentiment in regards to clients and what they know about their users.

The consumer, in more recent years, has more say than ever in what they expect from
corporations and therefore products and services. Researchers from both HU University and Delft University of technology, Enninga & Manschot et al., (2013), conducted observations of many service design projects, and a selection were chosen for a more detailed analysis in their book Service Design, Insight from Nine Case Studies. They discovered “as consumers grow more critical, and competition in the public sector services increases, it becomes more important to design these services more effectively” (p. 13). Gale Porter (2012), former chief marketing officer of Virgin America, says “there is too much information out there about brands, about experiences” and that “you can’t pull the wool over someone’s eyes” (Bloomberg, 2013). This statement simplifies the global literature on graphic design practices in terms of how users no longer believe everything they are told and because of this they cannot be sold to like they used to be. Graphic designers, should therefore not assume to know their needs even if their clients do. Instead they should get to know their needs, wants and desires. This is not the current methodology in use by up-and-coming graphic designers in Perth, Western Australia.
#2
That's Not Your Problem:

Evaluating Project Issues...
Near completion of my first interview with my research participants and before they were introduced to service design methods, I wanted to investigate whether up-and-coming designers are typically client-led down a graphic design project pathway. To find this out, it was necessary for me to investigate how the client provided information to the designer. This was to determine if graphic designers consider the user during their design process or whether they designed outcomes based upon the client brief only.

Service Design Method 1: Empathy

To commence this inquiry, I asked my research participants:
“Do you consider the user of this designed artefact?”

Five out of six participants felt that they had considered the user of the artefact during their graphic designing processes when following the client brief. Two out of six participants declared that the client knows their own users and therefore they considered no further investigation necessary. One participant noted that, during their designing stages, they gave substantial consideration to how people might come into contact with their designs. With this said however, this participant did not further investigate what the needs and desires of these users might be. All participants admitted to assuming to know the users of their designed outputs even though they had no direct contact with them during the project. Three out of six participants used stereotypical labels provided by the client such as nurses, housewives or the elderly to categorise their users. One participant determined their users as age groups, such as 25-35 year olds, to better understand the needs for which the designed artefact was destined.

Categorising people in this way is an initial start into accessing who they are and what they might need. However, these designers did not look beyond this basic information to better understand the people that will eventually access their graphic designs. Williams’ (1958) argues against this ‘mass’ view of populations by declaring “there are in fact no masses, but only ways of seeing people as masses” (p. 88). He asserts that viewing people as a mass, removes their individual
offerings to a community as well as a nation, and therefore a culture. Williams’ theory asks us to look at a population as individuals, to investigate their common everyday messages and experiences and to value these as rich cultural contributions.

In terms of service design thinking, the “consumer’s need” (Jedlicka, 1972, p. 220) is sought through questioning: “Whom is the thing supposed to serve, and what do ‘they’ want/need?” (p. 130). Kimbell (2011) agrees but looks closer in terms of social responsibility with “an emphasis on accountability” (p. 62) and asks “who or what is service design serving?” (p. 62). Papanek (1972) was a pioneer of this approach. He urged designers to “design for the people’s needs rather than their wants, or artificially created wants” (p. 234). These ‘wants’, according to Papanek, are the products that are pushed to “a level of desire so as to create ‘need’” (Jedlicka, 2010, p. 130) and “are the bulk of what drives our current economy” (p. 130). Examples of these include “dog biscuits, designer coffee, diamonds, detergents, hair gel, cigarettes, credit cards, sneakers, butt toners, light beer and heavy-duty recreational vehicles” (Garland, 1999, ¶. 2). Ken Garland, who in 1964, called for graphic designers to put their skills to better use, declared, “the profession’s time and energy is used up manufacturing demand for things that are inessential at best” (¶. 2) and concluded that “unprecedented environmental, social and cultural crises demand our attention” (¶. 4). Brown & Katz (2011) reinforce a grass roots approach by stating that “we can connect with the people we are observing at a fundamental level. We call this ‘empathy’” (p. 382) (see Figure 2.1.).

At the commencement of the live service design project, the initial brief directive was based upon
‘how to get users to attend the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition event?’. The group of ten up-and-coming designers along with myself, investigated potential users of the event as individuals to find out their wants, needs and desires so as to incorporate their valuable cultural contributions into the project outcomes. This starting point was important in ensuring that the designed outcomes would be developed from an holistically driven core to determine whether users would access these as intended. This process was particularly interesting as the group of up-and-coming designers working on the exhibition project were also potential users of the service system as well. This designer/user structure provided additional as well as immediate insight into the users and their needs for the SCA exhibition event. With this in mind we also approached a greater pool of people who might access this particular exhibition event. It was essential to gather substantial findings so as to have a greater understanding of users. We needed to find out their wants and desires in terms of why and how they would interact with the exhibition event. To help gather this information we developed a simple and casual style interview to provoke conversation with potential users about the upcoming SCA graduate exhibition event. We wanted those being surveyed to feel comfortable and consequently share their personal experiences about the show.

Questions we asked users included: “Have you attended previous SCA graduate exhibitions? If so, can you share your positive as well as negative experiences? and If you did not attend, why not?” To refine our findings we also asked: “If you did attend, did you encounter any issues during the course of the event, such as difficulty in navigating, comfort concerns, information supply, etc?” and “If there is anything you could change about the event, what would that be?” Responses from this conversation included that not many users knew when the event was on or even that it existed. In addition, some users didn’t know if they were allowed to attend due to the assumption that the SCA graduate exhibition was to be attended by graduates only. This was extremely important to uncover as it deepened our design inquiry beyond the initial design issue which pivoted around ‘the assumption that users new about the show’. On top of this it was also revealed that of those users who did attend previous years’ shows, some had trouble finding their way between the spaces within the show and others missed areas of the show completely as they weren’t aware of them.

It was now apparent that new project issues had arisen such as ‘why did these users not know about the event?’; ‘why did they feel they were not allowed to attend the event?’; ‘why couldn’t they find their way around the event?’; and ‘how comfortable were they while at the event?’ The empathetic service design technique of ‘getting to know the user’ uncovered fundamental information which provided insight into known user issues, such as a lack of user attendance, at
Will you use prototyping in the future?:

“Yes, there’s something about pencil and paper that makes more things come out of my brain”
preceding SCA graduate exhibition events. More importantly it also uncovered issues that were not previously apparent, such as users not knowing it was on or whether they were allowed to attend. This newly found vital data changed the project's predetermined artefacts and instead had opened the door to the possibility of an innovated service design pathway towards different project outcomes.

Williams’ (1958) discusses the benefits of removing predetermined beliefs about individuals. This reflects the user assumptions that could have been made within the live service design project. He notes that “all the channels of expression and communication should be cleared and open, so that the whole actual life, that we cannot know in advance, that we can only know in part while it is being lived, may be brought to consciousness and meaning” (p. 86). From this he is declaring the need to stop hypothesizing about users and instead begin a clear conversation so as to understand the valuable contributions that they can make to the SCA graduate exhibition event.

**Service Design Method 2: Redefinition of Design Issues**

My research participants had now been introduced to service design methods and I wanted to find out their reactions to these new practices. Specifically, I needed to determine if they too had engaged in a deepened investigation into their project’s design issues just like the exhibition design team as previously mentioned in the previous section of this thesis. If this had happened, I then needed to find out whether research participants were also presented with unexpected project issues, again just like exhibition design team.

At the commencement of interview two, this question was put to participants: “Was there a deeper investigation into issues from using service design methods?” and if so “Did new issues arise from this investigation?”

Five out of six participants agreed that the service design techniques that had been introduced had resulted in a deeper inquiry into the initially presented project problem. One participant stated that “it was great to navigate these new issues as these did not arise when following a clients’ graphic design brief”. One participant declared that “a deepened investigation into the original design issue resulted in finding core issues far beyond the client requested artefact”. In this participants’ case, additional concepts were developed and presented to the client that revealed these discoveries. Only one participant followed the design brief comprehensively and did not
engage with further enquiry into the client presented design issue. This participant perceived that the client already knew who their users were and subsequently would also know the most appropriate artefact required to meet the needs of those users. This participant embodied the existing graphic design process which is prevalent in Perth, Western Australia. These methods employ no intrinsic exploration into the initial design issues presented and assumptions about the target audience are commonplace.

The five participants who did push beyond the boundaries of the brief, found that subsequent issues arose from deepened investigation into the initial problem that they were provided with. Three out of five of these participants agreed that these new issues lead to unexpected challenges during the project timeline (see Figure 2.2.). One elaborated to share that pursuing these new unanticipated problems ultimately resulted in a greater innovation of the final design outcome.

In one example, a participant shared that her project group were asked to design a newsletter, website and yearbook for a local football club. During their investigation they found a deeper issue in that this sporting group was losing members. In addition to redesigning the requested artefacts for the client, this service design group created a concept for this football club, which saw some of its members teaching primary school students how to play football through an afterschool football mentoring program. The development of this new concept meant that the project group had to incorporate additional design development within their project timeline. This meant the group now had an unforeseen challenge to overcome however this uncovered vital
information could determine how and why users might want to interact with this football club and whether they would consider becoming a member.

These newly found issues may appear problematic during the commencement of a design project, however additional scrutiny into the original client design issue can pave the way towards greater holistically focused user-driven designs. From this “user centred” (Grefé, 2011, p. 28) approach, Williams’ (1958) theory aligns with service design in terms of viewing communities from the grass roots upwards. He asks that we dig a little deeper so as to not overlook pivotal individual offerings, discovery of which could reduce the damaging gap between ‘transmitter’ and ‘audience’. These ethnographic practices enable service designers to make no assumptions about their audience and to avoid viewing people (or customers) as an ‘unknown mass’. It helps them understand who will not only want to use this proposed service, but will continue to want to use over a sustained period.

This ambiguous scenario mirrors the live service design project in that, after deeper investigation into the initial brief, new issues arose which were unexpected. These included that some of the potential users of the SCA graduate exhibition event did not know when the exhibition was scheduled to commence or whether they were allowed to attend this opening event. This uncovered data was intrinsic to the project overall as we now knew that we needed to organise a specific project strategy to address these new issues. We had to design a service system that would connect these users to the exhibition event. It was integral to explore beyond the traditional design artefacts which had been used for previous shows, such as posters, emails, etc., as this existing process was not reaching all users. Instead it was important to examine these conventional media among a broader range of touchpoints to determine which of these outputs would connect with users and why. Along with the previously used artefacts of posters and emails, the exhibition design team investigated social media (a Facebook page and Instagram account), multiple websites (one specific to the event as well as other online advertising spaces), signage (banners, flags positioned in prominent, high user traffic positions), and human points of contact (such as volunteers as well as word of mouth). The intended result from applying this service design process was for users to know when the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition event was on and that they were allowed to attend.

During the investigation into the touchpoints, a concept emerged which entailed maintaining a constant relationship with users up until the exhibition event opened. Unlike a poster or email which you may only see once, the exhibition design team posed that an ongoing connection with the user during the lead up to the event would ensure that users would know ‘when the show was on’. The exhibition design team were able to provide a grass-roots perspective as event users and shared, that Instagram was a popular online application among their peers. By
also drawing from their own specialised disciplines such as photomedia, digital media and game
design, these up-and-coming designers proposed that this social media tool could generate a
continual relationship with users of the SCA graduate exhibition event. Their digital concept asked
that users photograph their own creative artwork and upload it onto the event’s Instagram page. From this online interaction, the exhibition design team intended that the social media tool
of Instagram would promote ongoing user interest and consequent attendance to the SCA 2014
graduate exhibition event.

Through ethnographic practices such as observing a particular group of people within the context
of their everyday lives, service designers get to know their users individually; to understand their
needs, wants and desires so as to regard as significant their everyday individual, personal as well
as social experiences. The ten members of the live service design project not only observed the
users of the exhibition event, they too were users and were submersed in the cultural framework
of these people. They had an insider view and thorough understanding of their needs, wants and
desires in terms of the SCA graduate exhibition event. For Bettencourt (2010), author of Service
Innovation, “all customer needs are not created equal - not in the eyes of the customer, and not
from an innovation perspective” (p. 22). Through the application of ethnographic methods service
design outcomes are user driven. This results in service interactions that individuals not only want
to use, but will continue to want to use. This can be attributed to participants in service design
projects claiming ownership of the final outcome to which they have made valuable contributions.

Through a grass roots approach and by incorporating a specific touchpoint such as Instagram,
many SCA graduate exhibition event users engaged in an ongoing interaction with the exhibition
event during the lead up to its opening night. By uploading their own artwork onto the events
Instagram site, users of this social media system became part of the output and a loyalty to
this system was apparent when they voluntarily continued to upload these individual cultural
contributions. This adopted loyalty is frequent within Co-design practices.

Service Design Method 3: Co-design

The empathetic process of working alongside community members has been described by many
design authors as co-design. Gregory cites Bason (2012) in his journal article, “Leading Public
Sector Innovation: Co-Creation for a Better Society, to describe the processes of co-design”:

Co-creation is presented as the use of a number of qualitative techniques (from
interviews to video-recordings) of citizen interactions with services to generate
Ers & Stappers (2008), suggest that citizens get more deeply involved in the design processes: “Co-design refers, for some people, to the collective creativity of collaborating designers. We use co-design in a broader sense to refer to the creativity of designers and people not trained in design working together in the design development process” (p. 6) (see Figure 2.3.).

Emily Pilloton (2010) is a designer who addresses the issues of traditionally practiced design processes and how service design thinking is a more sustainable approach for design projects. Pilloton (2010) is the author of several publications endorsing co-design methodology, which is one of the significant principles of service design theory. During her presentation, Teaching Design for Change, at Oxford University in the UK, she detailed the practical foundations of a series of co-design projects that she initiated within a small town in the USA. One such project was constructed in order to promote education as fun to primary school students who, within a particular school in this American town, had previously achieved extremely poor academic results. The co-design team included Pilloton’s design team, members of the school staff as well as some of the school students and together they designed a game of solving mathematical equations. Approximately twenty old car tyres were half submerged within the sand pit of the school playground. The teacher could write a differing number in chalk upon each tyre. With
everyone ready to play, the teacher could call out a mathematical equation, such as “what is seven plus nine?”. The students could then run and find the tyre with the correct answer and once found could sit on it, determining them the victor of the game. One of the positive outcomes of implementing this service design methodology was that the local community developed ownership of the implemented design projects, which in turn, created a natural sustainability to the solutions. “It’s not about designing for the client anymore but designing for people and letting appropriate solutions emerge from within” (2010). This project involved developing design solutions which were specific to the needs and wants of the people in this town, which in turn rendered these customised design outcomes as ‘original’.

Co-designing with event users was implicit within the work processes of the live service design project as the majority of the exhibition design team were also users of the SCA graduate exhibition event. These users, not only shared their own perspective on their wants and needs for the exhibition event but they were also surrounded by the points of view of other users within their student community. Intimate access to how these people wanted to experience the SCA graduate exhibition event provided a strong foundation from which to commence the design process. Andrew Shea (2012) wrote in his book, Designing for Social Change, that “in order to accurately understand a community’s needs, it is extremely important to gain a thorough knowledge of the community and experience firsthand the lives and environment

EMPATHY-IMMERSION

Figure 2.4. The SCA graduate exhibition design team engaged in an immersive method of empathy for the project. They were designers but also users and were constantly surrounded by other users during the lead up to the event.
of community members* (p. 13). He used the term “immersion” (p. 13) to describe the many ways in which you can experience a community and the people who exist within it (p. 13) (see Figure 2.4.). Focus groups have been used regularly in the past by marketers of products to develop an understanding of what consumers might need but as Jedlicka (2010) points out, this provides “only a sketch of what a potential buyer thinks” (p. 130). Instead she proposes that “an ethnographic study, though still more subjective than actual purchase data, can work with each subject in a place with no distractions or outside influences, [to] observe each audience member in his or her natural environment” (p. 132). Shea (2012) confirms this as an effective method and suggests a two-pronged approach by saying that “sometimes you may need to fade into the background and observe, while at other times you need to work side by side with members of the community” (p. 13).

The exhibition design team, via these ethnographic approaches, were able to both fade into the background to observe other event users and were also the community members for which the rest of the exhibition design team were able to work alongside for the duration of the live service design project.

From using a co-design structure in this way, the exhibition design teams’ resulting Instagram touchpoint for the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition project, saw substantial participation in the service design driven social media concept. Many users continually uploaded their artwork to Instagram for the duration of the exhibition campaign to showcase their skills to their peers, industry and beyond. This concept kept users, as intended, engaged with the event up until its opening. They maintained a sustained interest in the Instagram output and their uploaded creative artwork contributed to the visual identity of the exhibition event on the SCA Instagram site (see PH.25 pg.34).
#3

Many Hands Make Light Work:

Additional Disciplines + Communicating the Concept...
Many Hands Make Light Work

PH.34

PH.35

PH.36

PH.37

PH.38
I have now established that the majority of my research participants do not question the client brief or that design processes should revolve around a requested output, such as a website, poster or business card. Having uncovered this as commonplace among the current work practices of these up-and-coming graphic designers in Perth, Western Australia, I now wanted to determine if a shift towards more holistic user-focused practices had occurred since introducing the service design methods.

Service Design Method 4: Prototyping

During interview two, I asked participants to interpret any of the introduced service design methods, and then translate their process. I put to them:

“You have been introduced to differing methods to approach design issues. Can you explain any of these methods?”

Five out of six participants recognised the immediate value of prototyping. Prototyping, which is typical among service design projects, is the testing of design concepts in two dimensional formats (which can include sketches of the proposed concept ideas) or three dimensional formats (which can include hand made models of the proposed concept ideas). Prototyping can be used to clarify the service design project concepts to all of the people who are working on a particular project and also to uncover any issues with these concepts which, without prototyping, may have been previously unapparent (see Figure 3.1, pg.50). Several participants asserted that prototyping was valuable for discovering unforeseen issues within their project. Four participants added commentary on the benefits of involving the client during this process so that they too can witness the testing. One participant claimed that their prototypes assisted in explaining their design ideas and overall project concept to the client. It seems that incorporating the client into the design process via the use of prototypes can help to reduce the impact of issues that Raymond Williams theory identified such as “unbridgeable divisions between transmitter and audience” (1958, p. 88).
Williams promotes a breaking down of culturally constructed communicative walls to reveal a more transparent method of message transmission so as to avoid misinterpretations between the sender and receiver of information. Williams declares that “A writer’s job is with individual meanings, and with making these meanings common” (p. 96). From a graphic design perspective the individual meanings are the design concepts and from this point of view, designers can portray these creative ideas in a more transparent way when using prototypes. Graphic designers can visualise their ideas and this process is just one of the valuable skills that they can offer within the service design context.

As service design thinking continues to take a more recognisable form globally, graphic designers are pushing their skill set in order to demonstrate how they can contribute among these evolving practices. “IDEO, A Design and Innovation Consulting Firm,” (n.d) to the fore of service design practices internationally, incorporates the role of the graphic designer among their projects. Tim Brown (2014), president and CEO, illustrates the value of the specialised methods and techniques of graphic designers among his firm with their “ability to be intuitive, to recognize patterns, to construct ideas that are emotionally meaningful as well as functional, and to express ourselves through means beyond words or symbols” (¶. 7). These skills are being applied to many areas of service design at IDEO including “business model prototyping, data visualization,
innovation strategy, organizational design, qualitative and quantitative research” (¶. 8). These roles move far beyond the traditional graphic design artefact-driven outcomes of the past.

Just like the designers at IDEO, the exhibition design team developed a series of prototypes to test their project designs. These visual devices were also used to clarify their project concepts to the client. The exhibition group detailed their design issues and resulting design ideas within a meeting environment. Verbal explanations of their project concepts to the senior academic staff of the SCA (or the SCA exhibition client) were bolstered by the demonstration of their prototypes. Using black and white as well as coloured drawings, this process allowed them to clearly explain their SCA graduate exhibition event ideas and demonstrate how the resulting touchpoints would look. The prototypes delivered a clear message of what was possible in terms of design outcomes without investing too much time or money in the early phases. This service design method was intrinsic to the exhibition event touchpoints as it also exposed issues within the project which could have been possibly overlooked.

For example, the exhibition catalogues, which are used to showcase student work from a wide range of disciplines from within the SCA, were previously delivered in a large brochure format (see PH.64 pg.70). A deepened investigation into this type of artefact for the exhibition event included talking with event users about the previously produced artefact, researching alternate ways to deliver this kind of event information and posing further questions as to whether this kind of artefact was necessary at all. This inquiry revealed that the existing exhibition brochure was a widely recognised printed format which users understood as a showcase of art works from multiple disciplines within the academic student body of the SCA. In addition to this vital data, the approximately A1 previously printed brochure was found by the exhibition design team to be readily disposable and therefore unsustainable, from both an environmental and also promotional perspective. With this in mind, we therefore wanted to produce an historically understood promotional touchpoint but also one which would provide users with a sustained interaction with the exhibition event as well as an ongoing connection with the School of Communications and Arts.

From this service design foundation, a new catalogue design was developed and demonstrated to the client with the use of prototypes (see PH.24 pg.34). These prototypes were shown as multiple sketches (two dimensional), which were useful to reveal how the visual components of the exhibition event would look within this touchpoint (such as how the images would be placed). We also showcased a mock catalogue prototype (three dimensional) which was made from a similar paper type to the proposed printed version so that the client could understand the scale
as well as the texture of the intended artefact. They could touch and feel this prototype to see how it worked.

This new concept was an interactive format as its design revolved around a set of playing cards. The idea was that users could play with them regularly in a myriad of ways which provided ongoing exposure to the catalogue content. The cards were developed to promote a sustained usage of the catalogue instead of its more traditional use, which saw the output either shelved or disposed of shortly after viewing. However, it was brought to our attention, during the presentation of the prototypes to the client, that cultural sensitivity could be an issue. One of the SCA senior academic staff pointed out how playing cards could be viewed in connection with gambling due to their usage within gambling culture, which is viewed negatively by many cultural backgrounds around the world. This was valuable insight, as SCA is culturally diverse in terms of its staff, students and their families as well as sister schools in international locations. Vital project information such as this was only gained due to a concise visual demonstration of the design concepts using prototypes.

The service design method of prototyping enabled an intense analysis of the exhibition catalogue concept and the resulting sharing of meaningful information for the project, changed its initial design direction dramatically. From this aspect, an alignment can be made with the context of Williams’ (1958) view of how cultures should be interpreted. He states that “Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, its own meanings” (p. 96). And he reinforces this remark by declaring that, “the making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under pressures of experience, contact, discovery and writing themselves into the land” (p. 96). This text creates a parallel to the live service design project as the exhibition design team could have easily overlooked the importance of seemingly trivial cultural details in regards to how the catalogue output would be understood by its users. From this outlook, it can be determined that no cultural contribution should be considered whimsical and that every detail of a people’s daily habits is relevant in terms of how users would decipher the entire range of touchpoints for the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition event.

The visual presentation of the exhibition project prototypes to senior academic staff (the client of the SCA graduate exhibition project), along with the accompanying debate of how the catalogue concept could be interpreted in connection with gambling, resulted in an amendment to the original project playing cards catalogue concept. An evaluation of vital concept feedback meant that a ‘common meaning’ was found among the service design practices of the SCA exhibition project. It was in the form of the cultural diversity of event users and this ‘common meaning’
Many Hands Make Light Work

would now be incorporated into the amended SCA catalogue touchpoint as well as all other connecting touchpoints for the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition event. Brown & Katz (2011) declare that designers are capable of delivering substantial outcomes of service design: “to translate observations into insights, and insights into the products and services that will improve lives” (p. 382). These outcomes are no longer the artefacts of the past.

The design of objects is no longer restricted to form, function, material and production. Design is arguably now focused on the interactions between people and technology, and products serve as platforms for experiences, functionality and server offerings. (Buchanan, 2001 cited in Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011) (p. 56).

Jedlicka (2010) adds that designers should consider projects through an holistic perspective: “Rather than seeing design problems as something to be divided down into the smallest bits, the systems view sees them as opportunities for interconnecting the world back together again” (p. 146). Benchmann (2011) summaries the importance of this user-centred service system in his article, “Your Service Is Your Brand In Action”, by stating: “All the touchpoints between the company and the rest of the world carry a message. Everything communicates” (p. 14), adding that “a company could define its brand in a perhaps different-but much-more-tangible way than before: as the sum of all touchpoints” (p. 15).

Service Design Method 5: Visual Organisation of Information

Graphic designers can visually demonstrate concepts, and prototypes are just one method of the service design process where a graphic designers’ skill set is valuable. A prototype is a powerful tool which reinforces designed ideas and make a project clearer to all who view it. Sketches, illustrations, three dimensional models and so on are just some of the ways in which we can demonstrate the critical information of projects. However, graphic designers are able to go much further by visually constructing information using ‘systems of seeing’ (Medley, 2012) to deliver concise messages about a project. Stickdorn, M. & Schneider, J. (2011), authors of This is Service Design Thinking, point out in specific detail how valuable graphic designers can be among within the service design context: “The special perspective they possess in interpreting how graphic information and culturally coined visual codes work is valuable for creating functioning design propositions” (p. 78).
Why did you visually present the project information?:

“"I can’t really explain things by talking to people...they need to see visually what I am trying to do"
The diagrams within this text are an example of how graphic design skills can be used to organise and visually represent complicated information (see figure 3.2). I have constructed them using graphic design techniques such as typography, diagrams, grids, colour theory, etc. in order to create a visual identity which connects them together. There are ten diagrams which complete the visual diagrammatic system and these pictures have been developed to assist readers of this thesis in the understanding historic graphic design practices, the seven service design methods identified in this research.

The SCA graduate exhibition design team also had to visually organise their project information to assist their client in understanding the many aspects of the live service design project. Not only did they need to visually explain the project deliverables with sketches and illustrations (or prototypes) but they also needed to present this information within an organised visual arrangement in order for the client to understand how their service system concepts would work. Using traditional graphic design techniques such as those mentioned above, the exhibition design team constructed a visually organised information system (in the form of several A1 printed panels) to incorporate the entire range of proposed exhibition event touchpoints (PH.38 pg.48). The client could view these panels in order to grasp how this intended service system would work and how it would connect with its users via the project touchpoints. This goes far beyond the existing discipline of graphic design which is currently determined by artefacts in Perth, Western Australia, and fits instead within a service design context: “Design’s role is to illustrate
and represent the complexity of the system to make it more understandable as well as represent
the added value that the product brings to the company” (2011, p. 67). Prominent graphic
design authors push the value of the specialised skills of designers and promote the integration
of graphic design among larger community based projects. They endorse the move beyond the
traditional artefact driven processes of previous years but also warn graphic designers to not
forget to argue for the relevance of their design foundations within these new interdisciplinary
areas.

Brown & Katz (2011) discuss the results of the changing role of graphic design in their article
“Change By Design” which was included in the Journal Of Product Innovation Management:
“Today, rather than enlisting designers to make an already developed idea more attractive,
the most progressive organisations are challenging us to create ideas at the outset of the
development process” (p. 381). This process removes the graphic designer from the end of
the concept process, where a designer would make an already conceived product look good.
Instead they are positioned at the beginning, allowing creative methods to have affect before any
intrinsic decisions have been made. Poynor cites Mau (2000) who proposed this same view:
“The designer undertakes research and the refinement of ideas from the project’s inception,
sometimes alongside the writer, sometimes exploring other possibilities independently” (p. 122).

According to Jedlicka (2010), graphic designers can apply “a big picture view that includes other
perspectives” (p. 146). Stickdorn & Schneider (2011) endorse these comments by adding that
“Graphic designers have a distinctive visual imagination and think early about how a planned idea
will work in practice” (p. 78). Brown & Katz (2011) point out that when the graphic designer is at
the end of the design process, their role “is tactical; it builds on what exists and usually moves it
one step further” (p. 381) and they state that when they are moved to the beginning of the design
process, their role is “strategic; it pulls “design” out of the studio and unleashes its disruptive,
game-changing potential” (p. 381). Showing the client all the drawings of the design process
towards the final outcomes demonstrates the value of that process. They can see the extensive
design skills which are needed in order to resolve their design issue and they can fathom the
essential role that graphic design has to play in this service design framework.

Whilst a visual organisation of information via the “representation of the complexity of the system”
(Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011, p. 67) is vital to making the project clear to the client, it is also
apparent that clients should be involved in a co-design process early in the project timeline.
Historical graphic design practices have seen no disclosure of the design concepts to the client
until the graphic designer feels they are resolved. The eventual revealing of project concepts
to the client during this scenario can be met with mixed reactions. The exhibition design team experienced this first hand. During the first project meeting with the client (the senior academic staff of the SCA), the exhibition design group presented their catalogue concept, the purpose of which was to showcase student work from a multitude of disciplines within the SCA. The new playing card design, which was approximately A6 in its folded down (or finished) size, was dramatically different from the large format brochure design from the previous exhibition event, which was almost A4 in its finished size. The client was surprised by the contrast in this touchpoint.

I too had encountered such a response from a client when reflecting upon my own previously completed design jobs. My graphic design practices had often involved presenting concepts to clients after they have been developed and not during the designing processes. In hindsight, it is clear that the client meeting should have been scheduled earlier on during the live service design project timeline. From establishing a co-design relationship with the client near the onset of the project, it is possible to reduce potential difficulties in convincing the client of new project directions. Importantly, changes can be made early, before time and money are heavily invested. Exposing to the client project concepts in their developmental stages, creates a lucid project environment and avoids “unbridgeable divisions between transmitter and audience” (Williams, p.88) avoided. A secondary benefit is that it can also affirm the extensive skill set that graphic designers can offer throughout the course of a service design project. Through a transparency of graphic design work methods early on within the service design context, we can show how our skills can be incorporated into every stage of the service design process and not just at the end to produce artefacts.

“It is none the less important to understand that the role of the graphic designer does not lie in sticking a previously developed logo on each and every surface.” Stickdorn, M. & Schneider, J. (2011). (p. 77).

Brown & Katz (2011) discuss the internationally prevailing changes in the role of the graphic designer in their article “Change By Design” which was included in the Journal Of Product Innovation Management: “Today, rather than enlisting designers to make an already developed idea more attractive, the most progressive organizations are challenging us to create ideas at the outset of the development process” (p. 381). This statement confirms what this research has uncovered in previous chapters about the changing role of graphic designers and their increasing importance among larger design processes such as service design.
Service Design Method 6: Multi-Disciplinary Design Structures

One of the most prominent service design methods, which is written about consistently among global service design literature, is multi-disciplinary design. This method incorporates many disciplines within a single project in an aim to draw from a range of technical backgrounds (see figure 3.3.). This structure is different from co-design which, for some people, refers “to the collective creativity of collaborating designers” (Ers & Stappers, 2008, p. 6) and, as established in chapter two of this research is more recently defined by leading service design authors, as incorporating the user within the designing process. Instead, a multi-disciplinary design framework gathers together specific disciplines so as to access their specialised skills when needed.

Among the multi-disciplinary structure of the exhibition design team, the technical skills came from varied disciplines such as photography, spatial design, digital media, graphic design and game design. The extended multi-disciplinary framework of the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition event included additional disciplines such as visual arts, writing, marketing, project management, administration, security, maintenance and even horticulture. A myriad of skilled individuals could be consulted when technical project issues arose for which the exhibition design team, within their own discipline, were not familiar. For example, one the design concepts for the SCA 2014
graduate exhibition event was sustainable furniture. This idea was developed to allow event guests to rest and relax in particular areas around the show during the events opening night. This touchpoint was designed using wooden packing pallets. These were re-used to ensure low impact on the environment as well as simple construction before the event and also simple deconstruction after the closure of the exhibition event. The exhibition team designers had very little experience in terms of furniture construction using such material. Therefore, visual artists who had expertise in building sculptural artworks from similar materials, were consulted and the furniture was successfully produced (see PH.9 pg.6). To find out whether research participants considered a multi-disciplinary structure helpful when developing their own service design projects, I asked them during interview two:

“Does working collaboratively assist in innovating the design outcome?”

One participant revelled in the group work environment and stated that the value of working multi-disciplinarily was the opportunity to forge stronger design concepts than those constructed individually. Two other participants disclosed the initial difficulties of working in tandem with unknown personalities in regards to their projects work colleagues. They declared that “working relationships needed to be in ‘sync’ for the group dynamic to succeed”. Five out of six participants were either hesitant to work together due to previous negative experiences of multi-disciplinary work or found that issues arose due the collaborative process which wouldn’t have occurred working individually. The majority of participants concluded the reason for this is differing personalities and therefore opposing points of view. All participants however agreed to the many benefits of working together. One described a positive outcome as “allowing you a broader scope for the output”. Another said “ideas were investigated more which resulted in more effective concepts due to the variety of inputs”.

The consensus among all participants was that, when a broad range of disciplines contributed to design approaches, the developed outputs are greater in innovation than those concepts generated from a single discipline such as graphic design. This was credited to several factors: a wide range of skill sets to access for specific project parameters; sharing of the project work load so that these specialist disciplines can focus on these particular areas of the project where needed; and an exposure of the project issues to a broad range of eyes which can assist in clarifying complex project issues. One participant shared how the scope of disciplines within her service design group aided their project concept. This team were designing a newsletter, website and mentoring workshop for a local football club (as mentioned in chapter 2 of this thesis). One of the group members was a photographer, another was a website designer and the participant
herself, was a graphic designer. This multi-disciplinary framework was considered valuable to the development of this group project when the participant stated that “Our resources expanded”. The individual disciplines within this collection of people were able to offer specific knowledge and technical expertise from within their own skillset to the benefit their service design project. Richard Grefé (2011), author of Experience Design is the Only Design, discusses the challenges facing designers in the 21st century. Grefé (2011) contends that design problems are ever increasing in complexity and that they require multiple disciplines to achieve simple, authentic solutions (p. 26). Raymond Williams’ (1958) theory, “Culture is Ordinary”, addresses the intrinsic value of the individual and what this person can offer to a wider cultural framework. His argument proposes that each and every person within a culture can provide valuable individual experiences which should be considered when assessing a societal group. Within a service design context, this valuable contribution can be offered by individuals from a spectrum of disciplines.

For the exhibition design team, my own gathered extensive experience from my disciplinary field of graphic design arose as valuable cultural contributions for our multi-disciplinary project framework. The live service design project, as previously mentioned, consisted of ten designers from various backgrounds such as graphic design, spatial design, photomedia, game design, digital media and game design. Throughout the project’s duration I preformed the role of art director so as to create a point of access between the additional disciplines and the exhibition design team. This position was useful in terms of drawing on my accumulated design experiences to mentor the up-and-coming designers and propel the live service design project along its timeline. This role proved crucial when an issue arose where a group member was not attending project meetings and consequently not contributing their share of the work load. I was able draw on my many years of working in design with many different people so as to advise the exhibition design team of the possible available pathways to resolving these issues. In this scenario, I advised on a re-distribution of the workload to compensate for the team member’s lack of attendance and advised that the exhibition design team focus on the project and not on the missing group member.

From my point of view, it appeared that my gained experience in the field of graphic design proved as valuable contributions for the SCA exhibition project on how a multi-disciplinary design environment is maneuvered and consequently how a successful or innovative design outcome reached. However it also seemed that these multi-disciplinary issues were only easily remedied due to my broad design experience upon which these up-and-coming designers do not have to draw. This evaluation of collaborative work arrangements and the subsequent issues which may arise from them is missing among the international conversation by leading service designers. It requires further analysis and therefore understanding in terms of navigating working relationships and the possible problems which can emerge from within a multi-disciplinary design structure.
#4
The Pretty Things:

Live Service Design Project Results...
Service design is a relatively new design practice as far as the label is concerned. However, the principles of service design have been in the making for decades. While no complete consensus exists on its definition, generally speaking, service design can encompass all fields of design, and in particular graphic design, as demonstrated in this research, it regards the artefacts produced for this service system (whether these are furniture, appliances or posters) as ‘touchpoints’ in a larger user experience.

Service Design Method 7: Touchpoints

This chapter will reveal the effects of graphic design within the service design context and how holistically user-focused outcomes were reached for the live service design project. This section will also illustrate the designed touchpoints of the School of Communications and Arts 2014 graduate exhibition event. Touchpoints are the moments where the users come into contact with a product or service. Service design practice does not merely design artefacts for a service system, instead it considers each and every possible moment where a user may come into contact with its designed product or service. Service design methods, such as those recognised in this research, are used to strategically design around this moment. The aim of such design is to deliver an extensive range of connecting touchpoints, that together, form a broad identifiable service system that users can comprehend and access with ease. This service design outcome is considered as effective or ‘good’ design when these holistically driven outcomes ensure a positive user experience.

The incorporation of graphic designers within a service system arrangement and the positive consequences of the inclusion of their specialised skill set has resulted in an extensive range of outputs designed for the SCA graduate exhibition event. These touchpoints were the outcomes of early investigation into the initial design problem of ‘how to get users to positively experience the SCA graduate exhibition event’.
Has this project demonstrated what graphic designers can do?:

“\[\text{I am sure I only}
\text{understand}
\text{a portion}
\text{of the extent}
\text{of what graphic}
\text{designers can do}\]”
Through applying service design methods, such as empathy; a redefinition of design issues; prototyping; a multi-disciplinary design structure; co-design and a visual organization of project information, the exhibition design team were able to develop the following service system of user-focused touchpoints:

**VISUAL IDENTITY**
- Catalogues
- Invitations
- Posters
- Flyers
- Banners
- Maps (Posters)
- Maps (Hand held)

**HUMAN**
- Speeches
- T-shirts
- Volunteers
- SCA Reception

**SPATIAL**
- Exhibition Spaces
- Floor Navigation
- Food Areas
- Drink Areas
- Projections
- Talking Wall Interactive Area

**ONLINE**
- 2x Websites
- 2x Instagram Promotions
- Email Campaigns
- Facebook Page

From this extensive list of outputs, I will complete an evaluation of three key touchpoints in order to illustrate how the exhibition design team developed these user contact moments. I will also demonstrate why these outcomes, which were the products of a complex service design system, were considered design innovations for the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition event.
Navigation

In previous years, the SCA exhibition event area spread across several buildings. These spaces included exhibition rooms, a food and beverage zone, speech area and the concourses connecting these. During early project research users shared that they had ‘difficulty finding particular areas’ or ‘did not know that certain areas existed’. Uncovering this essential user information, the exhibition design team explored the concept of reducing the breadth of the event’s overall footprint. Pathways were simplified and distances between event spaces decreased so that users would be less likely miss parts of the show. In order to create a user-focused service system, the event space was designed to rotate around one main outdoor area which was visible from most areas within the event and was linked by a central concourse.

The exhibition design team also wanted to ensure that users recognized each area of the SCA exhibition event. The teams’ research revealed that the most effective examples of navigation incorporated permanent construction techniques. These included imperishable paint or labels positioned on floors or walls in public buildings, such as hospitals, to enable users to find their way. One wayfinding installation for the event, consisted of a series of coloured lines painted on floors which users could follow to their destination. As the SCA graduate exhibition event runs for only two weeks of the year, a removable adhesive label system was prototyped. It proved successful for indoor areas but not outdoor areas due to the range in varying surface types on which the labels would not adhere to consistently. An application such as removable labels would have resulted in a visually disconnected navigation system and consequently an intermittent wayfinding system for users to try and navigate.

Further investigation into this issue by the exhibition design team saw chalk spray emerge as a plausible medium for applying the event navigation. Testing of the paint revealed that it was easy to apply, consistent upon all floor surfaces and easily removed with water when needed. The team’s graphic designers developed eight circular navigation patterns which were designed to represent each of the eight exhibition areas of the event for users to locate. Each pattern had its own colour and exhibition area title. The Design exhibition navigation pattern for example, was given the colour red and included the word ‘design’ within the centre of its pattern. This visual identity was incorporated into as many event touchpoints as possible, such as the catalogue for example, so that users could easily identify each of the eight academic areas within the show. The red Design dots were then chalk sprayed onto the ground via the use of a laser cut template (a piece of cardboard with the circular design pattern image cut out). These dots, which were approximately twenty centimetres in diameter, were sprayed every thirty centimetres in a line (see
ZINE PROJECT

A zine is a small circulation of original texts and images usually self-published at low cost.

Students were required to choose a domestic artefact and tell its story within two differing print formats: digital and analogue. The aim was to discover if these two differing production methods affected how the stories were perceived.

Project parameters included constructing 32 pages, using only two colours and producing five copies per print format.
PH.46, 47, 49, 50 pg.66). They lead from the central hub area in the middle of the exhibition grounds and continued all the way to both doors of the Design exhibition space. The chalk spray was applied to inside floor areas as well as outside and with additional adhesives was effective across all surfaces. The touchpoint proved successful, with all exhibition areas individually represented, easily recognised and found. In addition, the service designed wayfinding system was easily removed once the exhibition event concluded.

The floor navigation system was supported by printed maps which duplicated this wayfinding dotted system but on a smaller scale. Hand held maps (A6 in size) (see PH.48 pg.66) were handed out by volunteers, who were recognisable in their SCA exhibition event t-shirts and were available to offer additional assistance to users. Large maps (A1 poster versions) (see PH.51 pg.66) were also placed in prominent areas throughout the exhibition areas to further assist in using the exhibition team’s service designed system. One colleague witnessed a mother with her son, interpreting our visual wayfinding configuration by reading the map and then following the floor navigation to their desired destination. In addition to efficiently finding the exhibition spaces, they seemed to be enjoying the process. This positive result was an holistically user-focused touchpoint system in action. The service designed navigation system tied these previously disconnected spaces together, uniting the SCA graduate exhibition into one connected and enjoyable user experience.

Event Spaces

The exhibition design team had now designed a way for users to find their way around the many event spaces within the show through using the navigation system. We also recognised, from applying service design methods such as empathy and redefining project issues early on in the project timeline, that it was important to not overlook how users interacted with the exhibition spaces themselves. It was determined that from the eight academic exhibition sections, the Design space was an exhibition area unlike other arts disciplines. This exhibition zone included graphic design, spatial design, animation, game design and digital media. In previous SCA graduate exhibitions, the academic artworks had been installed in a similar vain to visual arts. This included hanging printed books on racks, placing three dimensional models on plinths within a particular space and projecting animated movies onto a television screen. The exhibition design team interviewed previous event goers regarding this space and asked users how they interpreted the design exhibits from previous SCA graduate exhibitions. Users said they had been unsure of the meaning of the individually presented artefacts. In one example, a user shared how
they “didn’t understand the significance of a printed book design” which was on display. They didn’t know “who it was for?” or “what the purpose was for the students in doing the exercise?” From this data, it was evident that the Design exhibits required explanation of their designers’ intentions to be clearly understood by their users.

The exhibition design team developed a series of informative devices to install alongside Design exhibits. Three dimensional items were brought into the exhibition space to support two dimensionally exhibited works. Two dimensional works, such as posters for example, can appear flat and often be overlooked when viewed from afar. In order to draw the viewer into the exhibit, and to provoke interest from all users into why a particular design is significant, we positioned three dimensional items within the artefact’s vicinity. These items were each chosen for their connection to an exhibit. One student project, which focused on a navigation system for cyclists in the City of Fremantle, was explained through A1 posters (didactics). A bicycle was positioned adjacent to this exhibit to give the explanation a concrete and tactile dimension that could attract viewers from a distance and be viewed from all angles (see PH.54 pg.68).

In addition to adding a new depth to the displays, supporting explanation panels were installed within the project spaces to explain academic motivations for why students designed each project. A description of the project directive was printed in large text on an A1 panel hung from the ceiling above or next to each exhibit. All projects within the Design exhibition area were allocated a ‘project summary’ panel. The vaulted positions of these ensured readability from most positions within the Design space, even when it was crowded (see PH.41 pg.62). Users could easily distinguish between each of the now individually recognisable exhibits and understand the motivations behind these. A user-focused, holistically driven exhibition space had been created by the exhibition design team and positive user experiences of this touchpoint achieved. This was evident when several event attendees shared with me their correct evaluations of the context of some of these projects as well as their interest in how they came to be.

Catalogue

Whilst visiting the eight individual academic areas of the SCA exhibition event, such as the Design area for example, users were able to pick up an exhibition catalogue, available from prominent positions within these spaces. In an earlier section of this thesis, which evaluated the service design method of prototyping, I explained that the exhibition design team had established the SCA 2013 exhibition catalogue as a powerful artefact. This printed brochure was delivered in a
widely recognised format understood by users to showcase art works from multiple disciplines. The brochure could also be taken home after attending the event. The existing catalogue incorporated six academic areas of student artwork. Each disciplinary area was presented as an A1 printed brochure, which was then cross folded to a finished size of approximately A4 (see PH.63, 64 pg.70). However, the team discovered that, due to its size, users had had difficulty holding the catalogue whilst eating and drinking. For the new catalogue, the exhibition design team posed: “How do you hold an A4 folder and keep it in its original condition when consuming food or beverages?”. Further inquiry asked “what size format is easier to hold when consuming food or beverages?” and finally “does the format actually need to be held when consuming food or beverages?”. 

Catalogue designs were prototyped based on these questions and a pocket sized catalogue was designated for each of the individual academic areas participating in this year’s show. This new format consisted of a strip of eighteen panels printed back and front which were then folded down (concertina-style) to A6 for the finished size. Each brochure section could still incorporate the amount of content of a previous catalogue section due to multiple folds within the design, and yet its final size fit comfortably into a standard rear jean pocket or handbag (see PH.61, 62 pg.70). This design was modeled upon the size of a widely used smart phone, such as the Apple iPhone. The SCA 2014 graduate exhibition incorporated eight participating academic areas (see PH.69 pg.76) as opposed to six the year before. In keeping with the previous exhibition, each catalogue section cover incorporated the unified exhibition event branding (inclusive of a custom designed logo), an allocated colour and specific exhibition title. The Writing catalogue section for example, was given the colour pink and included the word ‘Writing’ upon its cover (see PH.58 pg.70). This visual system was used throughout the exhibition touchpoints (in accordance with the previously mentioned navigation touchpoint where the wayfinding design for Writing was also pink (see PH.46 pg.66)). This service designed approach ensured that users could identify these visually connected outputs and distinguish between each of the eight SCA academic exhibition areas.

The SCA exhibition catalogue was found to be, during the exhibition team’s service design research, a vital promotional format delivery, which extended beyond the closure of the annual SCA graduate exhibition event. The design team engaged a deepened enquiry into this medium by testing the existing brochure whilst incorporating user feedback on the previous catalogue design. We examined many printed brochure artefacts to see how they looked and felt. We also reflected on our own personal usage of brochures to see if we all used them in a similar way. This investigation uncovered that it was commonplace to dispose of printed brochures, such as the
SCA graduate exhibition catalogue, shortly after picking them up. It was also typical of users to take them home and then pack them away from view in their home or office with no subsequent viewings. Historically, printed brochures are designed for short term usage even though these artefacts usually require many contributors as well as money to print. This prompted the exhibition design team to explore an innovated version of this recognisable medium. The concept of the new version would provide users with a sustained interaction with the exhibition event as well as an ongoing connection with the School of Communications and Arts.

We wanted users of the live service design project to keep looking at their catalogues long after the closure of the SCA graduate exhibition event so the exhibition design team developed a playing card system, which promoted users to continually play with the cards. However (as explained in the service design method 4: prototyping section of this thesis), prototyping with the client found this to be an inappropriate catalogue delivery due to its link to gambling. With this in mind, the exhibition design team worked with the basic premise of the playing cards concept as they still wanted to incorporate additional viewing options for users and to avoid the exhibition catalogue being stored permanently on a shelf. Instead these catalogue ideas included mimicking the size of playing cards, that playing cards can be individually viewed or within multiple configurations and that each card includes a designated design for both its front and back.

The individual sections of the catalogue were folded via perforations and not the conventional folding format of a score line as the printer suggested. This allowed a catalogue section to be viewed in several ways: a standard book format using its folded configuration; a long cartoon-style strip; and a series of individual cards (see PH.73 pg.78). Finally, each panel of any of the eight catalogue sections was designated as a single exhibiting space. These individual panels included either an image of an exhibit or a body of text detailing an exhibiting work. This holistic user-focused catalogue design promoted flexibility and a sustained enjoyment of this touchpoint. Its new playful format reduced the possibility of immediate disposal which may have had occurred with the previous SCA exhibition catalogue design. This outcome was noticeable when several users were seen enjoying viewing their catalogues in varying ways during the exhibition event as well as afterwards. Some academic staff, were seen long after the exhibiton closure with them open on their office desks with their academic discipline to the fore of the box.

In addition to the eight individual catalogue sections, an optional casing was available to users and was developed to house the complete catalogue range. The new catalogue carton was based upon an existing business card box dieline (or shape) that printers use as a packaging
device for their client's business cards. For users, the business card box enables safe transport of cards from the printer to their office. Once its perforated lid is removed, however, the carton performs as a storage container from which a business card can be easily taken when required (see PH.58, 59, 60, 65 pg.70). In drawing from this existing design for the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition catalogue, this adjustable container offered event users a similar continual access to the eight individual catalogue sections. These catalogue contents were on hand to users whenever they desired instead of them being stored away from view. This casing still presented a challenge for users at the SCA exhibition event in terms of ‘how it would be held whilst consuming food or beverages’ as, when inserted into this box, the exhibition catalogue no longer fit in a standard jeans back pocket. However this new holistically focused service designed system gave the viewer the option of choice. Users could either take any or all of the eight individual catalogue sections, which would fit comfortably in a standard rear jean pocket, or the whole catalogue range within the custom designed carry case. The event guest could decide how they wished to view and also transport this innovated catalogue touchpoint.

The catalogues were available in many spaces within the SCA exhibition event, with the appropriate section to the fore of the catalogue casing. For example, within the Design exhibition space, the Design catalogue section was the first to be viewed when users picked up the box containing the complete range of eight catalogue components (see PH.71 pg.76, PH.72 pg.78). Users were spotted throughout the event either carrying a catalogue carton in their hand or with them sticking out of their pocket or handbag.
A Summary of all Touchpoints

The application of service design practices and the significant role of graphic design within the user-driven methods of service design have provoked a gamut of positive responses from the users of the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition event. A range of positive comments from event users followed the opening night. Event organisers provided feedback on the successes of navigating all event areas as well as on the overall enjoyment and comfort of event facilities. The majority of touchpoints accurately addressed user needs as well as desires in order to generate positive user interactions with the extensive live service designed system.

Several event users shared that they now understood the significance of the projects that were hung with the Design exhibition space due to the context accompanying each work. Another said that they could easily find their way through the various exhibition areas of the show due to the navigation and maps. Multiple users noted that they enjoyed the interactive options included within the exhibition catalogue design. One user went further to state that he chose the option to remove the individual catalogue sections from the catalogue case and instead pop them into his rear jeans pocket so that he didn’t have to hold them in his hand. Most of all, many users recognised when the event was on and that they were allowed to attend even if they, themselves, were not a graduating student. The introduction of service design methods to the graphic designers of the SCA 2014 graduate exhibition project (see PH.77 pg.82) aided the development of holistically community-focused touchpoints and in turn, this complex live service designed system benefited from incorporating the graphic designer in terms of innovating its spectrum of products and services.
Conclusions:
Service design, at an international level, is evolving at a rapid pace (Kueh, Medley & Price, 2013, p. 2). Sangiorgi (2009) insists that “there has been description of the methods and tools these designers use, but relatively little theory-building” (p. 418). Regardless of this, the underlying themes among service design literature are consistent: “understanding value and the nature of relations between people and other people, between people and organisations, and between organisations of different kinds, are now understood to be central to designing services” (p. 51).

The need for change within design practices, from artefact driven to broader thinking approaches, is an important trend identified in the global literature and is reflected in this thesis. This research has established that disciplines such as graphic design and service design are complex, and succinct definitions are seemingly unattainable. Instead, the push for concise methods and frameworks for the effective application of service design takes precedence and the graphic designer is seen by some as an integral part of the service design framework (see figure 5.1.). Although the extent of their specialised skill set is not investigated thoroughly among service design literature, the graphic designer’s pivotal role within a service design context has been demonstrated in this honours research via the documentation of a substantial live service design project.

Graphic designers also need to move away from artefact driven outcomes if they are to continue to survive in their profession. Corporations can source cheap design solutions from agencies that use pre-designed templates, which churn out business cards, websites and other design artefacts at a fraction of the cost local graphic designers would charge for their specialised skill set. As Poynor (2008) points out: “Other people can do what graphic designers do for less money” especially if what graphic designers do is the plethora of throw away products such as flyers, brochures and packaging. Some companies even offer design processes when they themselves are not designers. An example of this is global consultation company, Deloitte (n.d.).
Figure 5.1. In this service design arrangement, the graphic designer and the client are integrated into every stage of the project. They are represented among the multiple disciplines within this project framework.

- PROJECT ISSUE
- USER EMPATHY + CO-DESIGN
- MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES
- REDEFINITION OF PROJECT ISSUE
- REDEFINED PROJECT ISSUE
- VISUAL ORGANIZATION OF INFORMATION
- PROTOTYPING
- TOUCHPOINTS
This company’s services include "audit, tax, consulting, and financial advisory services to public and private clients" (¶. 8) and their website declares; “Design Thinking and diversity of thought are the new currency" (2012, ¶. 4). This adoption of design foundations, without the use of the designer, is now common. In these instances, the special ways of working that graphic designers incorporate when addressing design issues, is lost.

The SCA 2014 graduate exhibition event was a clear demonstration of the role of the graphic designer among service design projects. An analysis of this complex live service design system has revealed the graphic designers’ broad skill set and importance in projects which, unlike those found in the traditional graphic design context, are not driven towards artefact outcomes. When research participants were asked to reflect on the seven introduced service design processes as identified in this thesis, these up-and-coming graphic designers of Perth, Western Australia shared how these new methods have certainly altered their creative practices. One participant stated “until I had actually experienced them, I didn’t know how crucial they were” and “our prototypes made it so much easier for us to explain our new concepts to the client and also find issues which we didn’t know were there”.

Another participant, who was also on the exhibition design team, put forth that “designs from working in a group are so much better because of everyone’s input” and “the designs were even more resolved once we really looked at how people might use them”. She then elaborated upon her previous comments to proclaim “I saw event guests following our navigation so we pulled it off, that was like ‘well it worked!’”. One designer in particular pointed out that her design approach had intrinsically changed when she said “I’ve already noticed that I’m thinking a bit differently, i’m looking into design problems more deeply and considering the users of my outcomes more”. In terms of whether these up-and-coming designers would consider incorporating these methods among the graphic design processes of their future jobs, one declared “I already am!”

Hence this research has exposed how graphic designers not only can but need to change their practices (yet again) following the introduction of a new, broader methodology in service design. It has also revealed how graphic designers can contribute to the application of user-focused work practices. This thesis has found that the skill set of graphic designers to not only be extremely valuable among complex community based projects but there is also an urgency to adapt our work methods to more holistically driven processes, such as those in the emerging service design framework, if we are to continue to design at all. The documentation of this project may in turn added to the literature...
SCA PRESENTS...

2014 flourish
CONNECTING CREATIVITY
ECU SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ARTS GRADUATE SHOW
References:

Who said what and who owns what...
Literary References


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### Photographic References

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