Self-assessment by
Rodion Sorokin

A summary about me:

I am a strategic designer, navigating the complex world of business with a blend of curiosity and skepticism.

In this journey, my role is to be the catalyst, the questioner, the skeptic, and the visionary, all rolled into one. My goal? To help you see your business not just as it is, but as it could be - simpler, clearer, and ready for the future.

I currently work as a/at:

Founder of Curiosity Office™
https://curiosityoffice.com/

My LinkedIn profile:

https://www.linkedin.com/in/rodionsorokin/

My social media channels:

https://medium.com/@rodionsorokin
https://facebook.com/raptir/

My educational background:

My journey of learning is hands-on, diving into experiences and emerging with insights. My approach is built on a rich blend of threads: my Master's Degree in Civil Engineering, a keen interest in experience design and architecture, the interest in music, the stories of people, and the immersive realms of gaming.

Think of the diverse projects I've tackled: from crafting meal kits that turn dinner into an adventure, to transforming a major bank's loyalty system. I've reimagined a museum's patronage program, turning support into an art, and reshaped the way we buy concrete, making it less about the material and more about the experience. In this variety of projects, I see patterns that transcend industries, revealing the universal language of design.

The following theories are the key components of my approach to service design:

1. Human-centered systems thinking.
Understanding systems is crucial to service innovation. Examining system actors, their interactions and value exchange are fundamental to rethink services and business models.
2. TRIZ, the "Theory of Inventive Problem Solving"

SDN∞
SERVICE DESIGN NETWORK

An engineering systemic approach to innovation helps me better understand systems dynamics and evolution.

3. Mental models.

Behavioural sciences play a significant role in how I understand people's motivation and the way they perceive products, services and experiences.

4. Behavior Model by B.J. Fogg

B.J. Fogg provides a very simple and actionable approach to behavior change.

These are the most relevant resources I base my work on and I recommend them as a body of knowledge in service design:

1. Service Design for Business: A Practical Guide to Optimizing the Customer Experience
A nice overview of service design approach based on experience of Livework Studio.

2. Orchestrating Experiences: Collaborative Design for Complexity
Experiences are complex and require a collaborative approach to design. This book shows a holistic view approach, orchestrating various components – like context, channels, and touchpoints – to create coherent and compelling user experiences.

3. Thinking in Systems, Donella H. Meadows
This book explains that many of the challenges faced by businesses and societies are due to a lack of understanding of how systems work. By thinking in systems – recognizing patterns, interconnections, and the dynamics of systems – one can better anticipate and solve complex problems. It's like seeing the forest and not just the individual trees.

4. Liminal Thinking, Dave Gray
This book explores the concept of change through altering one's thought processes. The book essentially argues that to create change, we must first change the lens through which we view the world, akin to switching from a microscope to a telescope to gain a different perspective.

5. Design for How People Learn, Julie Dirksen
Defined my approach to teaching and explaining things. It's about moving beyond just presenting information to ensuring it is absorbed, retained, and applied.

I have X years of working experience in service design:
6

My working experience in service design includes involvement in:
- Service design projects
- Service design consultancy
- Service design training

I have particular experience in the following service sectors:
Retail, Finance, Real Estate, B2B, FMCG, Government

I have conducted X service design projects that aim at creating improvements or innovations within organisations:
30

These are the service design projects I have successfully delivered:
1. Reimagined the loyalty system for Privatbank
Instead of polishing the old loyalty system, we decided to transform the bank into a marketplace conductor, enhancing the relations between customers and merchants. We equipped customers with a golden ticket—a Privatbank card that unlocks exclusive merchant discounts, making it the card of choice over any other.
Customers now enjoy a personalized shopping experience, merchants get a direct line to their audience, and Privatbank secures its status as the

go-to in every wallet.

2. Helped VISA to launch push payments in Kazakhstan
Now, merchants can shoot invoices straight to customers' mobile bank apps, enabling a one-click payment instead of fumbling with banking details and IBAN numbers.

3. Discovered a new city-store format for COMFY
Helped COMFY, one of Ukraine's electronics retail giants with over 90 stores, to envision a closer, more frequent interaction with their clientele in neighbourhood stores.
The new format wasn't just a downsized version, but a reimagined retail space tailored to serve the unmet needs of the city folks.
Now, grabbing a new toaster or a pack of batteries on your way to work or home isn't a mall-trip marathon. It's a swift swing by the friendly neighborhood COMFY.

4. Tailored the purchase experience of construction materials at Kovalska
When it comes to building new structures in Kyiv, about half of them are standing strong thanks to Kovalska's concrete. Each construction firm and dealer is needing a unique blend of attention and processes from the Kovalska crew - be it the managers, dispatchers or the production unit. The daily hustle could easily turn into a chaotic rave without a clear vision of the customer experience.
We rethought the customer experience from scratch and enabled customers with digital tools. Imagine a foreman at the construction site, now with the power to order concrete from his mobile and track its journey just like summoning an Uber.

5. Rethought the way entrepreneurs open a bank account in Privatbank
We whittled down a 20-step marathon into a 5-step sprint, making the entire digital process of opening a business account a breeze. Now, entrepreneurs could breeze through the account creation process without having to step foot inside the bank.

I have provided service design training sessions and/or other educational experiences for X years:

6

My philosophy as a trainer is:

1. Learning by Doing
Instead of purely theoretical lessons, I emphasize active participation and practical application. Trainees don't just learn about service design; they actually do it. This method mirrors the real-world scenarios they'll face, embedding the learning more deeply.

2. Co-creation
When people from different backgrounds and with different skill sets collaborate, the creative potential multiplies. It's about opening the floor to a wide range of voices, not just the designers or the company leadership. This approach transforms service design into a democratic, more inclusive process.

3. Solving Real-World Problems
We move beyond hypotheticals and case studies, engaging trainees with challenges faced by actual businesses and services. This method not only makes the learning more relevant and relatable but also provides trainees with a sense of accomplishment and impact.

4. Systems Thinking
Focusing on the bigger picture helps trainees understand how individual problems are often symptoms of larger systemic issues. By encouraging them to think holistically, I am not just teaching them to solve a problem; I am teaching them to understand an entire ecosystem.

5. 85% of Success
This principle strikes a balance between challenge and achievement. By aiming for an 85% success rate, I ensure that trainees are learning and succeeding enough to stay motivated, but also encountering sufficient challenges to truly develop their skills.

These are the service design training sessions and/or other educational experiences I've facilitated within the last year:

November 24, 2023, 1 day
"Customer insights to uncover strategic value"
Poster
10 participants
Kyiv, Ukraine

April 4, 2023, 1 day
"How To Create Things That Will Be Relevant in 10 Years"
Platforma Camp
30 participants
Bukovel, Ukraine

January 18, 2023, 2 hours
"How to design value for customers"
Legal Startup Crash Test
50 participants
Kyiv, Ukraine

I mostly provide my training offerings in the following language(s):

Ukrainian, Russian, English

I mostly provide my training offerings in the following countries/cities:

Ukraine

I cover the following topics during my training offerings:

- Definition of service design
- Relationship of service design to agile, scrum and lean
- Service dominant logic
- User research/deep customer insights
- Designing and conducting co-creation workshops
- Creativity and ideation processes
- Visualisation techniques
- Facilitation skills for service design
- Prototyping of services
- Implementation of service design concepts
- Business model development
- Measuring impact of service design, relating it to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Leadership/management of service design projects
- Building in-house service design capabilities
- Working with complex service systems
- Exploration of systems
- Service design for cultural change
- Organisational development

My training participants typically have the following level of experience:

- Novice (new to service design)
- Fundamental (basic knowledge)

• Advanced (practical application)

These are my favourite cases I use to inform participants about the impact and value of service design:

I have a vast project portfolio in different domains so I prefer to provide examples from personal experience. However, in my trainings I like to show following cases:

London Olympics Design by Alex Nisbett from Livework
as an example of design of a large multifaceted experience
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q6vZC8axzIc

Finnish Pharmacy Redesign by Hellon
as an example of human-centered approach in retail and healthcare
https://www.service-design-network.org/case-studies/hellon-peoples-pharmacy

NYC Home-Stat by in-house Service Design Studio at the Mayor's Office
as an example of lifecycle analysis and service design case studies in non-commercial sector
https://civicservicedesign.com/home-stat-cb33905555b9

These are the service design methods and tools that I use during my sessions:

1. System Mapping
System mapping is like creating a detailed map of the city, showing how different parts (like departments, processes, or stakeholders) are interconnected. It's crucial for identifying bottlenecks, understanding impacts of changes, and spotting opportunities for improvement. It's like having a GPS for navigating the complexities of the business.

2. Customer Journey Mapping
This is like putting yourself in your customer's shoes and walking their path from start to finish. It's a visual story of a customer's interaction with the service, highlighting pain points, moments of delight, and opportunities for deeper engagement.

3. Service Blueprinting
It's like an architect's blueprint for a building, but for services. It goes deeper than the customer journey, revealing the backstage processes and people that make the customer's experience possible. It's vital for aligning front-end and back-end operations, ensuring that what the customer sees and what happens behind the scenes are in harmonious sync.

4. Storytelling & Storyboarding
It's about crafting compelling stories around the service, which can be visualized through storyboarding, much like a comic strip. This approach brings ideas to life, fosters empathy, and makes complex services more tangible and relatable.

5. Service Prototyping
It's like a rehearsal before the big show, allowing you to experiment, gather feedback, and iterate before launching the final service. It reduces risks and helps ensure that the service will resonate with customers.

6. Change Planning
This is about strategically planning how to implement changes in a service. It involves understanding the impact of changes, planning the steps to enact them, and preparing for challenges. Effective change planning ensures a smoother transition and better adoption of new initiatives or improvements in the service.

After successfully attending my training sessions, participants will typically be able to:

1. Conduct user research and understand people's needs
2. Visualize the current and future state of services

3. Identify service gaps and eliminate them

4. Design customer-oriented services

5. Create and test service prototypes

6. Turn ideas into a service implementation plan

7. Operate with customer-centric metrics

8. Evaluate the business value of your solution

9. Plan the project and manage the working group

I apply the following evaluation tools to make sure the participants have understood the content of my sessions and gained the expected competencies and skills:

1. For long-form courses, maintaining a reflection journal is essential. I encourage trainees to keep a public journal and provide them with reflective questions after each session. This approach allows me to gauge their understanding of new knowledge and ensures we have substantial material for in-depth discussions in subsequent sessions.

2. In short-form training sessions, I prompt students to identify three concepts that altered their perspectives during the training. Recognizing and acknowledging these shifts in understanding lays the foundation for building new knowledge.

3. For project-based training, I ask students to craft a compelling narrative about their challenges and solutions. The clarity and coherence of their story serve as indicators of their depth of understanding of the subject matter.

4. In group formats, I've found using Kahoot! for quizzes to be highly effective. It offers a gamified, engaging experience that fosters a safe environment for learning and facilitates lively public discussions.

I systematically evaluate and improve my offerings based on feedback. These are examples of feedback that have led to improvements:

1. Feedback: Students noted that after a session with slides, it was difficult to recall the context and lacked the details that were spoken aloud.
Improvement: I prepared summaries for each lesson, helping to structure knowledge, dive deeper when desired, and included references to tools, cases, and examples discussed during the session.

2. Feedback: A student pointed out that the results of the practical service design project in the training were focused on customer experience, but in their company, business metrics were the primary focus.
Improvement: In the next training, I incorporated the connection between customer experience and business metrics, discussing what is important for the business, what to measure, and how to react.

3. Feedback: Course participants mentioned that while the course covered all stages of a service design project, their company was like a fast-moving train, and it was often unclear where to start.
Improvement: In the next course, I added a separate topic on how to start service design in a company. We analyzed what could be done at each level of company maturity and participant role.

I have participated in the following service design-related activities in order to stay up to date, share my experiences with peers and receive their supervision within the last 12 months:

• SDN Chapter Activity

I actively support the local or national service design community through:

1. Personal course on Service Design in Projector Design Institute.

2. Invited lecturer in Product Design, Product Management and Urban Design Professiums in Projector Design Institute.

3. Public talks and workshops on Service Design on major conferences in Ukraine.

4. Public posts on Service Design on Facebook and Medium.

5. Organized a specialized international conference on Service Design in Kyiv "Servant" with 120+ attendants.

6. Organized Kyiv Service Jam 2018 (50 participants), Kyiv Gov Jam 2018 (50 participants), Kyiv Service Jam 2019 (100 participants), Kyiv Service Jam 2020 (100 participants)

I have participated as a speaker in the following events:

"How To Create Services That People Love"
Projector Design Institute, Kyiv
December 7, 2017

"Service Thinking"
Servant Conference, Kyiv
December 8, 2018

"Service Design for Non-profits"
ProBono Club Ukraine webinar, Kyiv
April 2, 2019

"Designer, What's Your Value?"
WIX Fresh Meetup, Kyiv
April 24, 2019

"Human Centered Design Process"
Kyiv School of Economics, MBA Innovation course, Kyiv
October 6, 2019

"Project Management in Service Design"
Customer Experience Show, Kyiv
October 23, 2019

"How to stop coming up with ideas and design value for customers"*
Legal Startup Crash Test #24, Kyiv
December 17, 2019

"Service Design: From Product Strategy to Customer Experience"
Projector Institute, Lviv
March 6, 2020

"Where Design Ends"
Service Design Lectorium @Projector Design Institute, Kyiv
February 8, 2020

"Small Data: Discovering human stories to create better experiences"
Projector Design Institute Design Meetup, Prague
July 7, 2020

"How To Create Things That Will Be Relevant in 10 Years"
Platforma Camp, Bukovel
April 4, 2023

I have published the following books/articles on service design and related fields:

My publications on Service Design in English: https://medium.com/humanized-design

My publications on Service Design in Russian: https://medium.com/humanized-design-ru

My publications on human-centered design on Telegraf, the largest Ukrainian media on design: https://telegraf.design/author/rodion_sorokin/

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