

## Self-assessment by Thomas Brandenburg

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### I currently work as a/at:

<https://brandenburgservicedesign.wordpress.com/>

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### My educational background:

MA, Master of Design Methods, IIT Institute of Design

BFA, Graphic Design, the University of Illinois in Chicago

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

The following six principles guide my approach to service design:

#### Be holistic

No man is an island. I believe this is true of service design as well; no problem exists entirely on its own. Understanding its context and the complex ecosystem is essential.

#### Be relevant

Ask if we solving the right problem for the right audience in the right way? Keeping users at the center of problem-solving while developing solutions and always remembering me-search is not research.

#### Be empathetic

Remembering that empathy doesn't end with user research. Actively listening to everyone and finding ways to collaborate throughout the project with different stakeholders paves the way for successful engagements.

#### Believe in building evidence

It's not enough to collect evidence through research and continued input through the project. Given that we are visual creatures having immersive artifacts that we build together helps us all shape the narrative.

#### Be goal oriented

Having clarity on the change/impact we would like to make helps everyone get on the same page. Developing clear KPI's and continually referring back to them in order to evaluate success and progress.

#### Be curious

Continual learning at the intersection of the world, design and human behaviors. Staying up-to-date on my craft and everything that impacts it.



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

Service Design: From Insight to Implementation by Andy Polaine, Lavrans Løvlie, and Ben Reason

This is Service Design Thinking by Marc Stickdorn and Jakob Schneider

Service Design Show by Marc Fontejn

Practical Service Design Blog by Megan Erin Miller and Erik Flowers

101 Design Methods: A Structured Approach for Driving Innovation in Your Organization by Vijay Kumar

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

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**I have particular experience in the following service sectors:**

Non-profit organizations, intersections of physical and digital spaces and retail

**These are the service design projects I have successfully delivered:**

For two years, I worked as a primary service design at a major retailer (Sears Holding Company) in the United States. My role was to enhance or reform cross-channel service offerings for such initiatives as Kmart Transformation, Young Families, Get Fit, Aging in Place, and Health & Wellness.

In addition to my professional practice, I teach three classes at the Illinois Institute of Technology. For each of these classes, I have developed a curriculum based in service design. A specific example that was successful was a partnership with the Kohl's Children Museum to produce a pop-up exhibit solution that increased awareness of the museum and traffic back to the museum.

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

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**My philosophy as a trainer is:**

I believe group work is the best approach for learning and service design activities. There are many benefits which translate to preparing trainees to be more effective in the professional world.

At the outset of an exercise, one should outline the benefits, give context, and illustrate them with real-world examples. This helps manage expectations of purpose, outcomes, and outputs.

The introductory part of the session should be clear, concise, but kept short, because it is very important to give the groups enough time to get hands-on with the activity and be able to iterate.

All training session should always include discussion sessions. If time is limited then at the very least have one near the end of the work session. This allows all the trainees to reflect, verbalize and have an exchange of what they did, the challenges they had, and what that they learned.

Aside from the assessment and feedback are given to the group work, I also provide opportunities for one-on-one consultations.

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

For Illinois Institute of Technology, IIT, 24-28 students



- Digital Service Design Innovation - Spring and Fall semester course
- STEM Project Collaborations for Museum & Non-Profits - Spring and Fall semester course
- Innovating Downtown and Neighborhoods Walkability - Spring semester course
- Creating & Prototyping Concepts for the Museum-of-the-Future - Summer semester

For Communities in School, CIS, 16 professionals

- Introduction to Design Thinking, one-day summer workshop

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

English

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

United States of America, Chicago

**I cover the following topics during my training offerings:**

- Differentiation of service design to other approaches like design thinking, service marketing and service branding
- Relationship of service design to agile, scrum and lean
- User research/deep customer insights
- Visualisation techniques
- Prototyping of services
- Business model development
- Measuring impact of service design, relating it to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Organisational development
- •

**My training participants typically have the following level of experience:**

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

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

Museums & Education: N. W. Harris Learning Collection at The Field Museum 400 unique exhibit cases (mini-dioramas) and 50 hands-on learning kits available for loan. They estimated the collections reached 65,500 students at schools or at their homes in the Chicagoland area. Other cultural institutions offer something similar, but The Field Museum collections program is the largest and oldest.  
<http://harris.fieldmuseum.org/>

Social Responsibility: City Harvest has a long successful track record, now 35 years of rescuing nutritional food that from farms, restaurants, grocers, and manufacturers might be thrown away and redistributing the goods to those in need. This year collected 61 million pounds of good and delivered it 1.2 million struggling New Yorkers.  
<https://www.cityharvest.org/>

Shared Economy: Lyft and Uber. About 5 years ago it was the norm to not have easy access to a taxis in the urban areas, let alone the litany of other customer service issues logged against taxi Companies like Lyft and Uber rapidly changed that by being very convenient and accessible. In response to the disruption caused by ridesharing taxis also have become more customer-centric, complaints against taxis dropped significantly, evidence of this is found in this news report.  
<https://uxdesign.cc/lyft-re-design-case-study-3df099c0ce45>  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/01/05/why-taxi-drivers-are-suddenly-getting-nicer/?utm\\_term=.fec2e6821664](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/01/05/why-taxi-drivers-are-suddenly-getting-nicer/?utm_term=.fec2e6821664)

Retail: Amazon's Prime Student is rolling this program to universities across the US. With an annual prime membership fee students can order products and receive them within 2 days (some cases within 2 minutes) in an Amazon locker on campus.



<https://shoppermarketingmag.com/amazon-elbows-back-school-season>

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

- Mind Mapping
- User Research Plan
- User Observation frameworks such as POEMS or 9 Dimensions of Observation
- User Empathy Mapping
- Stakeholder Mapping
- Value Web
- User Journey Map & Blueprint
- Storyboarding Scenario Development
- Conceptual Modeling
- Big Idea Concept Poster
- Business Model Canvas or Business Case Worksheets
- Pitch Deck

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

- Plan and execute gorilla to bonafide user research
- Learn how to distill user research into customer insights that tell a story
- Brainstorm and ideate to arrive a refined service concept
- Create physical and digital prototypes
- Map a user journey and blueprint
- Translate user needs and tasks to a new service offering
- Build a foundation for a business case for a service

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:

I apply a five-point evaluation tool for team and individual performance. I also have team members do a peer-review evaluation.

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

Not too long ago I solicited feedback from another seasoned instructor that I since incorporate. She told me although it is important to provide good real-world examples that relate to the activities, it better to illustrate the series of activities using one company profile so the trainees/students can more readily see the connections between all the activities and outputs.

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 Global Conference
- SDN National Conference
- SDN

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

- Co-organized the SDN US National Conference and SDN US Midwest Conference with the last year.
- Organized the SDN Chicago Chapter events for Design Thinking for Service Improvements for Libraries (panel discussion and tour) and the Nordic Service Design film screening and discussion.

I have participated as a speaker in the following events:

2015 American Theological Library Association National Conference; Presentation entitled Religion and Theology Digital Scholars: How They



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Research and What Tools They Use.

Presented a case on user-centered research to inspire innovative thinking for new products and services.

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

n/a

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