

Christian Grönroos

Research themes according to the Legend in Marketing classification 2013:

1. Service Marketing
2. Service Management
3. Service Logic
4. Service Quality
5. Marketing Theory
6. Relationship Marketing
7. Marketing Communication
8. Internal Marketing

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Main research streams since 1975:

1. Service research

Current main project: Turning organisations into *Service Providers* through *Servification*

2. Marketing theory research

Current main project: Reforming marketing through defining/understanding marketing as *Phenomenon*  
( with Tore Strandvik and Kaj Storbacka)

## Service research stream:

- Grönroos, Christian (1978). A Service-orientated Approach to Marketing of Services. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 12, No. 8, pp. 588-601 1637
- Grönroos, Christian (1983). *Strategic Management and Marketing in the Service Sector*. Research report, Hanken (also published by Chatwell-Bratt, UK/Marketing Science Institute, USA) 4517
- Grönroos, Christian (1984). A Service Quality Model and Its Marketing Implications. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 36-44 14461
- Grönroos, Christian (1990). Service Management: A Management Focus for Service Competition. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, lead article, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 6-14 502
- Storbacka, Kaj, Strandvik, Tore and Grönroos, Christian (1994). Managing Customer Relationships for Profit: The Dynamics of Relationship Quality. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, Vol. 5, No. 5, pp. 21-38 2359
- Grönroos, Christian (2011). Value co-creation in service logic. A critical analysis. *Marketing Theory*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 279-301 2605
- Grönroos, Christian and Ravald, Annika (2011). Service as business logic: implications for value creation and marketing. *Journal of Service Management*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 5-22 1507
- Grönroos, Christian and Voima, Päivi (2013). Critical service logic: making sense of value creation and co-creation. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 133-150 3929
- Grönroos, Christian and Gummerus, Johanna (2014). The service revolution and its marketing: service logic vs. service-dominant logic. *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp. 206-229 820
- Grönroos, Christian (2024). Business model innovation based on service logic: evolving to servification. *Journal of Service Theory and Practice* (online 18 December 2023) -
- Grönroos, Christian (2015). *Service Management and Marketing. Managing the Service Profit Logic*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons (First edition 1990) 17734

## Marketing theory research stream:

- Grönroos, Christian (1990). Marketing Redefined. *Management Decision*, Vol. 28, No.8, pp. 5-9 261
- Grönroos, Christian (1990). Relationship Approach to Marketing in Service Contexts: The Marketing and Organizational Behavior Interface. *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 20, No. 1 pp. 3-11 3515
- Grönroos, Christian (1994). From Marketing Mix to Relationship Marketing: Towards a Paradigm Shift in Marketing. *Asia/Australia Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 9-30.  
Also in *Management Decision*, lead article, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 4-20 6794
- Ravald, Annika and Grönroos, Christian (1996). The Value Concept in Relationship Marketing, *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 1996, pp. 19-30 4288
- Grönroos, Christian: Relationship Marketing: Strategic and Tactical Implications, *Management Decision*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1996, pp. 5-14 1335
- Grönroos, Christian (1997). Value-Driven Relational Marketing: From Products to Resources and Competencies. *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 407-419 1629
- Grönroos, Christian (2006). On Defining Marketing: Finding a New Roadmap for Marketing. *Marketing Theory*, Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 395-417 688
- Grönroos, Christian (2009). Promise Management: Regaining Customer Management for Marketing. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 24, No. 5/6, pp. 351-359 450
- Finne, Åke and Grönroos, Christian (2017). Communication-in-use: Customer-integrated marketing communication. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 51, No. 3, pp. 445-463. 2017
- Grönroos, Christian (2023). Towards a marketing renaissance: challenging underlying assumptions. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, Vol. 31, No. 4, pp. 270-278. 4

## Current projects:

1. Towards a marketing renaissance: challenging underlying assumptions  
(published in *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 31,4, pp. 270-278)
2. Business model innovation through adoption of service logic: evolving to servification  
(published in *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*; online 18 December 2023)
3. Conceptual clarity of the value co-creation concept with a conceptual framework for future research  
(with Hannu Makkonen, VY, lead author, and Jaakko Aspara +1)  
(submitted to JSM; 1st round)
4. The role of the intermediary in the service process  
(with Danilo Brozovic, Högskolan i Borås, lead author, and Teresa Puga, Red Bull)  
(submitted to JBR; 2nd round)
5. Behavioural service economics: economic decisions in a market of interactivity and reciprocal agency  
(submitted to JOSM; 1st round)
6. Relationship productivity: an approach for win-win relationships  
(with Katri Ojasalo, Laurea and Pekka Helle)  
(submitted to JB&IM; 2 round)
7. Redefining service(s) marketing  
(to be submitted to JSM)

## Turning organisations into *Service Providers* through *Servification*

Business model innovation based on service logic: evolving to servification.

*Journal of Service Theory and Practice* (online 18 December 2023)

Purpose: To demonstrate how manufacturing enterprises can be turned into service providers based on 1) service logic and 2) service as a higher-order phenomenon, thereby evolving from servitization to *servification*

1. Understanding service not as *what it is*, but as *what it does* for customers and others (that is, as a phenomenon).

- ➔ Generally, customers want to *be helped* to manage their everyday work processes/life processes. Therefore, what service should do is *to provide help to customers' important/necessary processes*.
- ➔ Thus, adopting service logics means that an organisation 1) intends to and 2) performs in a way that it helps its customers' important/necessary processes, such that the customers can successfully manage them and their work/life.
- ➔ This requires an extended understanding of the offering, which must cover all element needed to provide help not only to a core process of a customer (e.g., production), but also to other important/necessary processes (e.g., resolving product quality service failure problems, keeping production/administrative processes operational).

## 2. To enable *business model innovation* (from product manufacturing to service provision)

- ➔ Adding services to the offering is not sufficient, most processes of the manufacturing firm need to be focussed on providing help.
- ➔ A *helping strategy* is needed, which in turn requires a *business mission* focussed not on excellent products and such, but on providing help to customers.
- ➔ All resources, competences and activities of an organisation need to be turned to help provision, that is, be *Servificated*, e.g.,
  - *hidden services*
  - the corporate language ("*talking service*" instead of product-centric language)

## 3. The purpose of Servification:

*Servification* is the process of 1) developing an enterprise's business mission and 2) creating a strategy/strategies as well as identifying and developing the firm's resources, competencies and activities to be including in an extended offering, such that the organisation provides help to its customer's important or otherwise necessary processes, such that the customers can manage their organisational work processes or individual life processes in a way that is satisfactory and value creating.

- ➔ In this way, servitization with its roots in "service infusion" is evolving to servification.

Reforming marketing through defining/understanding marketing as *Phenomenon*

Towards a marketing renaissance: challenging underlying assumptions.

*Australasian Marketing Journal*, Vol. 31, No. 4, pp. 270-278

Purpose: To 1) identify and scrutinise the implicit assumptions underlying mainstream marketing and  
2) based on that identify alternative assumptions and a develop an alternative perspective  
on marketing, in which the discipline is understood as a phenomenon, not as an activity.

Starting point: AMA's marketing definition (2007, re-endorsed 2023)

"Marketing is the activity, a set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society ta large".

AMA's 1935 definition: Marketing is the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producers to consumers.



Assumptions underlying mainstream marketing, mostly hidden and not articulated:

Focus on **Activities** over Phenomenon, *Structure* over Process, *Exclusivity* over Generality, *One-sidedness* over Multi-sidedness, *Demand stimulation* over Demand satisfying

Conclusions:

- ➡ Inside-out focus over Outside-in focus (violating the marketing concept)
- ➡ Marketing focusses on doing things *without a clearly defined and articulated understanding of what the purpose of such activities is*, beyond exchanging offerings that have value, or satisfying needs (the 1985 AMA definition)
  - ➡ Marketing in practice is mostly tactical focussed on traditional and mostly contemporary activities
  - ➡ Marketing research is overly focussed on tactical issues and methods over strategic and broader issues
    - ➡ Marketing is marginalised both in firms and in academia

## A marketing-as-meaningfulness perspective

As the focus on Activities is the root cause for marketing's challenges, the focus is elevated to marketing as **Phenomenon**:

As customers look for help to their work/life processes, it is likely that they turn to firms that can be expected to be *meaningful* to them in their search for helping offerings.

- ➔ As marketing is supposed to enable a firm to achieve exchange of offerings with customers, marketing should aim to *make the firm meaningful to its customers*, such that its offerings are attractive to them.

### Defining the marketing phenomenon based on meaningfulness:

- ➔ Marketing as a Phenomenon can be described as the process by which an organisation is made meaningful to the users of its offerings with the aim to make the organisation/its offerings attractive to them
  - ➔ Marketing becomes focussed on *Outside-in* thinking
  - ➔ The choice of marketing activities are depending on their meaningfulness in any given context
  - ➔ To become meaningful, both demand stimulation (promise making) and demand-satisfying activities (promise keeping) must be considered in the firm's marketing planning and implementation