

## Service Design meets Chinese Culture

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### Abstract

Service Design (SD) and Design Thinking (DT) share many pillars - both are human-centred, holistic, iterative, real, collaborative - and DT cognitive processes are widely used to design services. Both have Western roots and both are informed by culture (Thoring et al., 2014), therefore, Western culture is mirrored in how these processes are structured, comprehended and applied. With her research, the author aimed at gaining new understandings on the practice of SD outside Western culture. What happens when a Western thinking model and its application into the services sector are “moved” into a different culture? In order to create value, a process should be crafted for its users and their culture (Stickdorn et al., 2017); hence the hypothesis that China needs a Service Design process tailored to its unique way of thinking and context. The outcome is a process that considers the Chinese cultural and contextual characteristics and aims at guiding designers to create valuable services for that context. The key Chinese characteristics: the concepts of “connections” and “human value”, a fluid and flexible structure that reflects the Chinese synchronic perception of time, the pragmatic approach, team alignment moments to enhance teamwork. This aims at being a trigger project; many “Chinese barriers” relate to SD methods and methodologies such as brainstorming and ethnographic research (Ann, 2017). Further explorations could address these topics to widen the just started research.

Interestingly, although the research focused on the Chinese context, this process can adapt to other cultural realities.

Keywords: service design, cultural influence, china, design process

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